

Human Resources

Crewing Policy

Document Management No.	
Author	██████████
Date Written	June 2010
Date Ratified	
Date for Review	
Version No.	
Managers Handbook Reference	



South Yorkshire
Fire & Rescue
WORKING FOR A SAFER
SOUTH YORKSHIRE

Crewing Policy

Introduction

1. The maintenance of optimum staffing levels at all Fire Stations throughout South Yorkshire is a key service delivery objective. For SYFR to achieve the vision of “a safer South Yorkshire”, it is imperative that the organisation has the right number of suitably qualified staff, at the right place and at the right time.
2. In order to improve service delivery, SYFR will provide operational (station based) staff with an opportunity to undertake alternative working arrangements in the context of the agreement previously reached through the National Joint Council NJC Circular 13/ 03 states:

“With effect from 7th November 2003 there is no barrier to any employee working on a combination of different whole-time, part-time and retained duty systems at the same or different places of work or to employees working on different duty systems making up the crew of the same fire appliance.”

3. The purpose of this policy is to facilitate crewing arrangements whereby firefighters working the whole-time and retained duty systems may form part of the same crew for any SYFR emergency response appliance. Consequently, this policy will support the maintenance of required staffing levels on whole-time and retained duty system stations. However, further benefits are anticipated with the implementation of this policy:
 - “Mixed Crewing” arrangements will contribute to an increased integration between firefighters from different duty systems. Staff from both duty systems will accrue a variety of skills and wider coaching / mentoring experience by working alongside staff from other duty systems.
 - Enhanced provision of safety critical training for RDS firefighters and an opportunity for RDS firefighters to attend more operational incidents by working alongside whole-time colleagues.

Scope

4. This policy facilitates the following:
 - RDS Firefighters being deployed to whole-time or alternative RDS stations on an ad-hoc, shift by shift basis.
 - RDS firefighters who may be engaged on other work such as providing instruction at TDC.
 - Whole-time staff deployed to RDS stations to support appliance availability during a tour of duty or, where appropriate, on a pre-arranged overtime basis.

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5. Whole-time staff working on the retained duty system will remain subject to the provisions of the Dual-Contract Policy.

Competence

6. SYFR acknowledge that a competent firefighter on the retained duty system should be able to work effectively and safely on the whole-time duty system. However, in some cases the reality may be that a firefighter on the retained duty system has not been presented with the opportunity, through lack of exposure to operational incidents / safety critical training, to acquire a level of experience that would support their effective transition to working the whole-time duty system.
7. Consequently, an application from a retained duty system firefighter wishing to work on a whole-time watch, will be subject to the following:
 - The Station Manager will make an assessment of whether the firefighter is competent within role, utilising the role map, national occupational standards, RedKite system, training record, etc.
 - The Station Manager will consider the firefighter's most recent PDR to ensure the individual is working in accordance with SYFR behavioral expectations.
 - The Station Manager will ensure that the firefighter has an acceptable sickness absence record, in line with the Absence Management policy, and is not subject to a "live" formal warning (whether for conduct, capability or sickness).
8. Firefighters working the retained duty system who are "in development" will not be eligible to apply to work on a whole-time watch until such time as they have achieved competence within their RDS post.

RDS Firefighters deployed to whole-time appliances

9. Where there are foreseeable whole-time firefighter staffing shortages, RDS firefighters will be offered the opportunity to attend for day or night shifts to maintain crewing levels.
10. The opportunity for RDS firefighters to work on a whole-time watch will apply to all roles, providing the individual has satisfied the requirements detailed at paragraphs 7 & 8 above. Considering the opportunity extends only to firefighters on the RDS that have demonstrated competence in their RDS post, all payments for working a whole-time shift will be at basic time using the competent rate of pay (non-pensionable). Travelling time or expenses will not be available.

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RDS Firefighters deployed to alternative RDS stations

11. In circumstances where RDS firefighters are available for duty, but their appliance is not “on the run” due to a shortage of available staff, those RDS firefighters that are available may be deployed to alternative RDS stations in order to maintain appliance availability elsewhere.
12. Where RDS firefighters (including Crew and Watch Managers) are deployed to an alternative RDS station to maintain appliance availability, the individual will receive their hourly rate for the period of time that they are in attendance at the alternative station. Travel time or expenses will not be paid, although every effort will be made to restrict the deployment to an alternative RDS station within the individual’s District.

Whole-time Firefighters deployed to RDS stations

13. Whole-time firefighters (of any role) may be deployed to RDS stations in order to maintain appliance availability at the RDS station. In such circumstances, the whole-time firefighter will be paid detached duty allowance in accordance with existing policy.

Procedure

14. The Availability Team will manage the deployment of RDS staff to either whole-time watches or alternative RDS stations. RDS firefighters will provide a 4 week projection of any periods when they are willing to work on a whole-time watch or at an alternative RDS station. The Station Manager will ensure that the individual’s RDS availability is not compromised by working additional shifts elsewhere.
15. The Availability Team will deploy RDS firefighters having prioritised the staffing demands of a particular watch.
16. There may be instances whereby RDS firefighters exceed the average weekly limit for working time. In such cases, the RDS firefighter in question will be requested to agree to “opt-out” of the average weekly limit for working time, thereby remaining eligible to work additional shifts on a whole-time watch or at an alternative RDS station. In all respects, the SYFR policy relating to “Working Time” will apply.

Kit

17. Any extra kit required by staff working additional shifts under this policy, e.g. kit bags, uniform and bedding, will be supplied.

**If you require any further guidance on this document, please contact
Human Resources – Resourcing & Development**