Policy | Procedure

LFB
LONDON FIRE BRIGADE

The development and maintenance of operational professionalism – training note

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Owner: **Head of Fire Stations**
Responsible work team: **Central Operations**

Contents

Key point summary

Foreword

- This policy has been produced to assist station-based operational staff in the development and maintenance of the knowledge, skills and understanding that are required to carry out their roles. It includes instruction on what training and/or familiarisation is required; when it should take place; its duration, frequency; and who is responsible.
- It has been written in conjunction with a guidance note on hotwire http://hotwire/people/dop/operational_professionalism.asp 'Your Operational Professionalism' which will provide operational line managers with easy to understand directions on the planning, preparation delivery and evaluation of training. The guidance document contains information on how to organise training events that was previously found in the Station Training Planning Package.

1   Introduction

1.1   The Authority has a statutory duty to ensure that operational staff are trained to do their job effectively and safely.

1.2   To achieve this, training is provided in various forms to equip staff with the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding to carry out their role to the required standards. Initially, training for firefighters is provided by our training provider and subsequently most development and maintenance of skills will be carried out at station.

1.3   Once the initial learning phase has taken place, it will be necessary for staff to practise their new found skills, knowledge and understanding, in conjunction with, and in addition to, their existing skills, knowledge and understanding

1.4   This 'practice' is what is referred to as station-based continuation training and this training note, in conjunction with the guidance, sets out what is required to enable staff at stations to maintain their professionalism and competence by continually developing their skills, knowledge and understanding.

1.5   When station based staff are being provided with new skills, knowledge or understanding of a specialist nature, it may sometimes be necessary to programme that training off station, to be delivered by specifically trained staff, an example of this are FRU trained staff

1.6   All staff with an operational commitment must ensure that their knowledge of Authority Policies and Procedures is current.

2   Health and safety

2.1   The 1974 Health and Safety at Work Act requires that work activities should, as far as is reasonably practicable, be undertaken safely.

2.2   The Health and Safety Executive also recognises that the fire and rescue service is a hazardous occupation and consequently, to make training realistic an element of risk may be included. This can be done, provided that the level of risk associated with the training is controlled by carrying out a risk assessment during the planning phase of the training.

2.3   The person in charge of the training session is responsible for the conduct of the training and safety of the personnel taking part.

2.4 While it is not necessary to consult with health and safety representatives prior to training, it is good management practice to carry out consultation, and to consider their advice during the planning phase of more complex training. Detailed guidance on how to carry out risk assessments is contained in the accompanying guidance document.

3 The need to train

3.1 Operational staff at stations provide the front line fire and rescue service for London on a daily basis and they need to be competent to do their work safely and effectively.

3.2 Because staff may be exposed to dangerous situations, while carrying out their work, they need to be expert at what they do and familiar with all the equipment they may be required to use, and its correct use. They also need an understanding of incident procedures so as to reduce the risks, as far as is reasonably practicable, to themselves, to the public and to the environment.

3.3 As well as the core risk critical firefighting skills, there are other vital areas that make up the skills, knowledge and understanding required for the role of a firefighter. For example, we deal with increasingly diverse communities. Having a better understanding of that diversity means better interaction and ability to deal with incidents effectively and safely.

4 What training needs to be done at station level?

4.1 Every operational member of staff must be given opportunity to develop and maintain competence in the wide range of skills that are essential for operational staff to be able to carry out their role professionally.

4.2 The skills listed below are those that can be developed and maintained at station level.

Core risk critical skills

4.3 Being able to use the equipment stowed on Pumps and/or Pump Ladders, is defined as 'Core Risk Critical'.

4.4 This equipment has been separated into skill areas as follows:

- Breathing apparatus.
- Working at heights and below ground.
- Basic rescue and safety equipment.
- Pumps and associated firefighting equipment.

4.5 The core risk critical skills and knowledge were determined by consulting with operational station based personnel and by using the Health and Safety Services' 'Risk Mapping Project' findings, as published in 2005.

Specialist skills and knowledge

4.6 Specialist equipment and appliances, by their very nature, require specialist skills, knowledge and the understanding of relevant procedures to operate them.

4.7 Some specialist equipment and/or vehicles may need little practice by qualified personnel to maintain their professionalism in the use of that equipment/vehicle. However, there are several types of specialist vehicle/equipment, that may require more time to be allocated, so that qualified personnel can work towards, and maintain, competence in the use of that equipment. It may therefore be necessary to allocate differing amounts of time for training and/or familiarisation, dependent on the appliances allocated to stations and/or related to the specialist skills and qualifications of personnel.

4.8 It is acknowledged that not all watch managers will have experience and knowledge in specialist areas and therefore may be unaware of the time and/or resources required for maintenance of these specialist skills. In addition, the watch manager may feel unable to accurately assess the performance of personnel with specialist qualifications.

4.9 In these circumstances, watch managers are to ensure that personnel with specialist qualifications are allocated sufficient training time so that they are able to maintain competence in specialist areas. Where concerns are raised regarding performance, watch managers must seek advice from the relevant training delivery department.

Procedures

4.10 Procedures exist to support the safe and effective management of incidents and can be found in various policies.

4.11 It is important that operational staff have the knowledge and understanding of how individual core risk critical skills can be used singularly or together, to support Incident commanders in resolving operational incidents in accordance with relevant Brigade procedures.

4.12 Exercises and composite drills are designed to test individual and team performance, and the effectiveness of procedural performance and strategic plans.

Core risk critical personal skills

4.13 The core risk critical personal skills are those skills that all staff must develop and maintain to work effectively in teams and with the communities they serve.

4.14 They must be underpinned with knowledge of, and the ability to put into practice, Policy number 346 - Diversity Policy and Policy number 529 - Harassment complaints procedure.

Physical training

4.15 Operational staff must maintain optimum levels of fitness to meet the demands of their operational duties.

Individual training needs

4.16 Personnel may have individual development needs that are unique to them. Sufficient time and resources should be made available to address those needs, over and above the allocated training time.

4.17 Where additional development time is required to address identified individual or team needs, the watch manager must discuss and agree an action plan and time allocation with the individual/team concerned and where necessary, their station manager.

Training needs analysis

4.18 There may be occasions when it is not clear what training and/or familiarisation is required; for example, where a member of staff is moving from a specialist post back to an operational post or when someone is returning from a secondment or a long period of sickness.

4.19 It is unlikely that anyone would need to be completely "re-trained". However, there is an obvious need to determine exactly what they do need so that health and safety for all can be ensured.

4.20 In these cases, it may be necessary to carry out a training needs analysis (TNA) to decide what training needs to be done. For further information and advice on how to conduct a TNA, please refer to the 'Your Operational Professionalism' site on hotwire.

5 How much training needs to be done?

5.1 Following consultation with operational personnel and by utilising the findings of the 'Risk Mapping Project' mentioned above, it has been determined that on average, station based personnel need to train for approximately **6 hours** per tour in order to maintain competence in the core risk critical skills and associated knowledge together with practise in the implementation of operational procedures.

5.2 It is recommended that approximately half (3 hours) is programmed for core risk critical training. The remaining time being used to address individual and/or team needs and any other training necessary to prepare for incidents relating to risk on that station ground. Where personnel have specialist qualifications, they may need to be allocated additional time, dependent upon the type of specialist equipment or vehicle that they are qualified to operate.

- Technical Rescue Centres should train for a minimum of 53% of available time registered on the training performance indicator.
- Technical Hazmat Centres should train for a minimum of 51% of available time registered on the training performance indicator.
- Technical Skills Centres should train for a minimum of 50% of available time registered on the training performance indicator.

This commitment to train is inclusive of the current expectation of 6 hours per tour for non FRU trained staff and performance training indicator of 24%.

6 When should training be carried out?

6.1 Training should be undertaken on both day and night shifts. Station and watch managers must give consideration to the surrounding environment and training that may generate excessive noise being undertaken whenever possible, to minimise impact on the local community.

6.2 It is recognised that single appliance stations need to frequently combine with other stations to conduct meaningful and worthwhile training. Watch managers are to organise inter station training (IST) activities with other stations, taking advantage where possible of their strategic resource allocation.

7 Who needs to train

7.1 All personnel are expected to take an active part in all training, including officers, mess managers, those performing standby duties or pre-arranged overtime and where appropriate and safe to do so, staff on light duties

8 Programming training

8.1 Watch managers are responsible for programming four types of training. These are:

- Core risk critical skills and knowledge (themed) as indicated on the training rota.
- Other training as directed by the borough commander or as deemed appropriate and necessary by the watch manager.
- Specialist equipment and/or appliances skills and knowledge.
- Physical fitness training.

8.2 All training will be programmed using the training rota. This is available by a direct link through the 'Your operational professionalism' site on hotwire.

8.3 This training rota is to be compiled by the watch managers and agreed with the station manager on a quarterly basis and must include training to meet the core risk critical needs of staff and those training needs relating to known risks on that station's ground.

9 Programming training at technical centres

9.1 Watch managers and crew managers are responsible for programming training to meet the needs of personnel stationed at technical centres. These needs should be based upon the designation of technical centre type i.e. Rescue, Hazmat, Skills.

9.2 Programming of training at technical centres will be as per the training rota at (*enter where training schedule can be located*).

9.3 Watch managers and crew managers are required to enter their programmed training in the station diary 3 months in advance.

10 Are standards being met?

10.1 Part of any line manager's function is the assessment of individuals against standards. This process of assessment is continuous and can take place whenever individuals are carrying out their role, whether that is on the incident ground, working in the community, at the station or while engaged in a training event. It is vital therefore that the person assessing must be fully conversant with the standards that are being applied at that time. For example:

- Are staff acting appropriately?
- Is the equipment being used correctly by individual and/or teams?
- Are relevant policies and procedures being adhered to?
- Are the desired outcomes being achieved as quickly as conditions allow, without compromising the safety of teams, equipment, the public or the environment.

10.2 The standards used for one particular event might include:

- Authority health and safety services policies (venue risk assessment and dynamic risk assessment (DRA).
- Authority Corporate Management Team Policies and Action Against Harassment and Bullying Policy
- Standard fire brigade operating procedures (how to pitch a ladder).
- Authority Instructions:
  - Policy number 466 – Respiratory Protective Equipment - breathing apparatus – operational procedures.
  - Policy number 238 - Incident command procedures.

Recording training

10.3 Station diary/STEP will allow watch managers to choose from a menu of standard drills, exercises and information/lecture packs, separated into core risk critical skill areas.

11 Who is responsible for training?

11.1 All staff within the Authority are required to take responsibility for developing their own skills to improve their performance through self assessment and pro-actively seeking training opportunities.

11.2 All staff also have a responsibility to pass on their skills and knowledge in order to help colleagues to improve their understanding and performance. They can do this by taking opportunities to

assist with the development of skills and competence of colleagues through demonstration and instruction.

Firefighters

(a) Identify needs

 – Firefighters have a duty to ensure that they are proficient in the identified skills knowledge and understanding required for their role and as such must bring their own, self identified, training needs, to the attention of their watch managers.

(b) Plan

 – Firefighters may be required to assist in the planning of watch based training and will be required to participate in programmed training both on and off station, whether at their own place of work or on standby duty at another station.

(c) Deliver

 – Firefighters may be required to deliver appropriate training to their watch, under the supervision and guidance of their watch managers.

(d) Evaluate

 – Firefighters may be required to assist in the evaluation of training, under the supervision and guidance of watch managers.

Crew and watch managers

(e) Identify needs

 – By assessing the performance of teams and individuals at all times, crew and watch managers are required to identify training and development needs for their staff.

(f) Plan

 – Watch managers must also ensure that the training programme encompasses the core risk critical areas identified and pre-programmed, by utilising the standard programming sheet provided.
 – In addition, watch managers will ensure that their quarterly training programme provides adequate opportunity for their staff to address those areas identified as training and development needs, together with the station ground specific training needs identified in the station/borough planning process.

(g) Deliver

 – Crew and watch managers will take part in the development of individuals and the team as a whole and are responsible for the delivery of training, coaching, on-the-job development and one-to-one feedback and support.

(h) Evaluate

 – Using various techniques, such as tests, observations of performance and discussions, crew and watch managers are required to measure team members' current skills, knowledge and performance against agreed objectives and standards. This will also include providing feedback resulting from the evaluation of the effectiveness of training and development activities.

 – Training records must be correctly maintained and monitored by watch managers.

Station managers

(i)   Identify needs

  − By monitoring and assessing the performance of watch managers in the performance of their complete role, station managers will be able to identify their training and development needs.

  − In addition, station managers are required to oversee the preparation of watch based training programmes to ensure that the training needs of individuals and teams are addressed and that the station/borough plans are being taken into consideration.

(j)   Plan

  − Station managers will actively seek and plan development opportunities for their staff.

  − They will also ensure that they address any training needs identified from previous assessment, evaluation or by any other means such as the results of training debriefs or performance reviews of command.

  − Station managers will ensure that watch training plans are appropriate with achievable objectives and realistic time scales. They will ensure that they are delivered, and will monitor the effectiveness of the delivery through sampling training.

(k)   Deliver

  − Station managers will identify the support their staff need and make provision for appropriate development opportunities including coaching and mentoring.

(l)   Evaluate

  − Station managers will monitor the performance of their staff at operational incidents, at training events and in the day to day running of their watch to ensure that they are meeting the required standards.

  − Station managers will use authorised audit systems such as service standards, best practice assessments, incident monitoring systems and performance reviews of command to evaluate the effectiveness of the station training plan.

  − They will provide guidance to crew and watch managers on which systems and techniques to use for the assessment of their teams.

Borough commanders

(m)   Identify needs

  − The borough commander will accurately identify the development needs for all their staff, and give opportunities to help them to identify their own needs and those of the team as a whole.

(n)   Plan

  − The borough commander is responsible for reviewing the risks within their borough and ensuring that suitable training is put in place to address any identified training need associated with them. Training plans to address a specific risk may be contained within a borough planning process.

  − The overall training plan for the borough should be compiled by the borough commander in consultation with the station managers and should take into account any risks that are within their borough or neighbouring boroughs and if applicable, adjoining county. The

aim being to produce a cohesive plan that takes into account individual, watch, station and borough needs.

(o) Deliver

- Borough commanders will, by regular systematic sampling in conjunction with their station managers, ensure that training is delivered in accordance with the agreed programmes.

(p) Evaluate

- Borough commanders will, by regular systematic auditing, ensure that training is being monitored by station managers and that the outcome of the training is addressing the identified gap or need.

Area Deputy Assistant Commisioners (DACs)

(q) Identify needs

- By monitoring and assessing the performance of their borough commanders in the performance of their complete role, DACs will identify training and development needs and give appropriate training to address those needs.
- DACs are required to oversee the preparation and running of large scale exercises to ensure that Authority strategic plans accurately address the risks identified.

(r) Plan

- The area DAC is to ensure that the risks within their area are reviewed and that suitable training is put in place to address any identified training need associated with them.
- The area DAC will take overall responsibility for ensuring that training plans for the boroughs in their area, take into account any risks that are within their or neighbouring boroughs and if applicable, adjoining county.

(s) Deliver

- Area DACs will, where appropriate sample training to ensure that it is delivered in accordance with the agreed programmes.

(t) Evaluate

- Area DACs will, where appropriate, audit training programming and recording to ensure that it is being carried out in accordance with this policy and the provided guidance.

Document history

Assessments

An equality, sustainability or health, safety and welfare impact assessment and/or a risk assessment was last completed on:

EIA	24/04/2008	SDIA	01/07/2015	HSWIA		RA	

Audit trail

Listed below is a brief audit trail, detailing amendments made to this policy/procedure.

Page/para nos.	Brief description of change	Date
Throughout	Reviewed as current. No changes made	12/04/2010
Throughout	Reviewed as current, minor changes made including altering the names of the departments mentioned in this policy in line with the Top Management Review.	23/06/2011
Page 4 para 4.14	PN346 has been renamed from the Equality policy to the Diversity policy and this paragraph has been updated to reflect this.	17/10/2011
Throughout	Whole of policy changed to reflect Tec centres.	28/05/2012
Throughout	Changes have been made to the content of this policy. Please read to familiarise yourself with them.	20/03/2013
Page 10	Subject list and FOIA exemptions tables updated.	27/01/2015
Page 10	SDIA date added.	03/07/2015
Page 1	Amendments made to PN's Owner and Responsible work team due to the TMR.	09/10/2015
Throughout	Reviewed as current minor changes made to terminology and roles.	23/09/2016

Subject list

You can find this policy under the following subjects.

DaMOP	Professional development
Training	

Freedom of Information Act exemptions

This policy/procedure has been securely marked due to:

Considered by: (responsible work team)	FOIA exemption	Security marking classification