

CABINET MEMBER FOR SAFER & STRONGER COMMUNITIES 30 NOVEMBER 2009

OXFORDSHIRE FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE – RESPONSE STANDARDS PERFORMANCE 2008/09

Report by Director for Community Safety and Chief Fire Officer

Introduction

1. Since April 2005 Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service has had local Response Standards for attending emergency incidents in the county. The Cabinet approved these standards on 22 June 2006 (Refer Item CA11). Additionally, the Director for Community Safety and Chief Fire Officer was required to report annually on the F&RS's performance against these standards and bring forward any recommendations as appropriate for future improvements, particularly to address life-threatening situations. This report fulfils that requirement.

Response Standards

2. Local Response Standards are based on the historical location and status of our current fire stations and are used as a basis for improvement planning in the future. The Standards provide a common performance target across the County based on risk and acknowledge that fire deaths and casualty reduction is a National Performance Target, which will drive future improvement options. The standards are as follows:
 - 80% of all emergency incidents will be responded to within 11 minutes
 - 95% of all emergency incidents will be responded to within 14 minutes.
3. The above is measured by the time it takes to get the first fire appliance to the scene from the time at which the fire station is first alerted.
4. In addition to the Response Standards for the first attending appliance, the Fire & Rescue Service will despatch a sufficient number of vehicles and personnel to safely and effectively deal with the type of incident reported as determined by national and local risk assessments.
5. OFRS attend a wide variety of incidents and not all are emergencies. Therefore, it is necessary to categorise incidents to enable improvement plans to concentrate on the highest priority areas. All Incident Commanders classify incidents they attend into one of three categories:
 - (a) Life threatening emergency
 - (b) Serious, but non-life threatening emergency
 - (c) Damage to property/heritage/environment.

6. Our operational effectiveness is measured against these three categories (a, b and c) which all require an emergency response.

2008/09 Performance – Response Standards - Monthly Summary

(Further geographical breakdown detailed in Appendix 1)

	Incidents in scope	No in 11 mins	% in 11 mins	No in 14 mins	% in 14 mins
Apr-08	241	188	78.01%	215	89.21%
May-08	303	244	80.53%	279	92.08%
Jun-08	278	242	87.05%	264	94.96%
Jul-08	344	274	79.65%	322	93.60%
Aug-08	255	203	79.61%	234	91.76%
Sep-08	318	249	78.30%	287	90.25%
Oct-08	301	249	82.72%	283	94.02%
Nov-08	312	250	80.13%	286	91.67%
Dec-08	291	232	79.73%	267	91.75%
Jan-09	348	252	72.41%	309	88.79%
Feb-09	320	234	73.13%	298	93.13%
Mar-09	294	235	79.93%	274	93.20%
Totals for year 2008/9	3605	2852	79.11%	3318	92.04%
Totals for Year 2007/8			80.53%		92.49%
Target Figures			80%		95%

7. There are a number of factors that have affected our performance against these targets:

- **Weather**

8. Jan/Feb 09's figures were affected by heavy snowfall and poor weather at various times, this is marginal in terms of overall percentages for the year but still had an effect.

- **Traffic Management**

9. The ongoing traffic measures put in place in a number of towns and villages have had an affect on attendance times. These traffic calming measures slow

down the arrival of retained personnel to stations and then can subsequently have an impact on the travel time to the incident.

- **Motorway**

10. On the Motorway and to a lesser extent the A34, there are some long travel distances between junctions e.g. J11 to 12 – Banbury to Gaydon, J9 to 8A – Bicester to Thame, A34 – Southbound towards Newbury. For some incidents it is necessary to traverse the whole section between two junctions and then return to get to the incident e.g. an incident between J9 and 10 or J11 and 12. The result is that some of the incidents are physically impossible to reach within the allocated target times. This also applies to a number of the remote areas within the County such as the Downs around Faringdon and Wantage and the villages on the County border with Berkshire in the Henley area e.g. Sonning Common etc.

Action Taken to Mitigate Risk

11. Community Safety activities are targeted in areas known to be outside 14 minute attendance times. These community safety activities are informed by software modelling which identifies the probable/likely locations of those most vulnerable from fire. Our activities are also subject to an equality impact assessment to ensure that we do not inadvertently discriminate against any group within the communities we serve.
12. Every 'failure' against the Standards is analysed by the relevant Station Manager who then reports this to their Fire Risk Manager (FRM) and where possible, appropriate action is taken.
13. The Senior Leadership Team receives a quarterly performance review against the response standards. Where there are discrepancies, further detail is sought of the action taken or justification for delays in attendance.
14. The Response Standards remain stretching with the slight increase in attendance times for 2008/9 reflecting the National Trend*. OFRS, through effective management, aims to achieve the most effective possible response whilst ensuring the safety of both crews and other road users.
15. *Attendance times are increasing as traffic volumes increase and traffic management systems become more widespread. The new 20mph speed restrictions within Oxford will be monitored as these may have a direct effect on the speed of response of retained personnel to Rewley Road and, in accordance with National Guidance, will reduce attendance speeds from 50mph to 40mph (it is recognised that emergency vehicles exercising due care and attention may proceed to incidents at a speed 20mph above the posted speed limit unless there are very exceptional circumstances).

RECOMMENDATION

16. **The Cabinet Member for Safer & Stronger Communities is RECOMMENDED to:**
- (a) note the contents of the report; and**
 - (b) request the Chief Fire Officer to report back to the Cabinet Member for Safer & Stronger Communities on performance against the response standards for 2009/10.**

JOHN PARRY

Director for Community Safety and Chief Fire Officer

Background papers: Cabinet 22 June 2006 CA11

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September 2009

Breakdown of Response Standards by District, Area and Station.

Response Standards by District

April 2008 - March 2009

Area	Incidents in Scope	Number in 11 minutes	% in 11 minutes	Number in 14 minutes	% in 14 minutes
City	1342	1286	95.83%	1330	99.11%
West	359	256	71.31%	331	92.20%
Cherwell	783	596	76.12%	706	90.17%
South	765	470	61.44%	637	83.28%
Vale	356	244	68.54%	314	88.20%

Response Standards by Station

April 2008 - March 2009

Station	Incidents in Scope	Number in 11 minutes	% in 11 minutes	Number in 14 minutes	% in 14 minutes
Banbury	344	312	90.70%	330	95.93%
Hook Norton	28	20	71.43%	26	92.86%
Chipping Norton	77	56	72.72%	70	90.91%
Charlbury	23	12	52.17%	22	95.65%
Woodstock	35	20	57.14%	28	80%
Kidlington	110	82	74.55%	105	95.45%
Bicester	238	153	64.29%	198	83.19%
Deddington	28	9	32.14%	19	67.86%
Eynsham	58	40	68.97%	55	94.83%
Witney	132	107	81.06%	125	94.70%
Burford	25	16	64%	19	76%
Bampton	44	25	56.82%	40	90.91%
Rewley Rd	539	527	97.77%	536	99.44%
Abingdon	180	135	75%	170	94.44%
Faringdon	95	57	60%	79	83.16%
Wantage	81	52	64.20%	65	80.24%
Goring	38	13	34.21%	18	47.37%
Henley	124	58	46.77%	81	65.32%
Thame	69	55	79.71%	66	95.65%
Wheatley	65	27	41.54%	50	76.92%
Watlington	103	53	51.46%	83	80.58%
Slade	803	759	94.52%	794	98.88%
Wallingford	94	45	47.87%	81	86.17%
Didcot	272	219	80.51%	258	94.85%
Totals	3605	2852	79.11%	3318	92.04%