



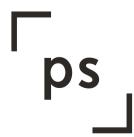
Emergency Cover Review.



Staff Consultation Report.

November 2022







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Summary.

Highlights from the emergency cover review consultation

Introducing the emergency cover review consultation.



The aim of the consultation was to seek views and gather feedback on the service's emergency cover review

The emergency cover review is to ensure that the service's emergency response remains effective and efficient, and that it is well equipped to respond to future challenges



Consulted with staff, stakeholders and the public between July and October 2022



The consultation was communicated and shared in various ways, such as through social media, making paper versions available in libraries and direct invites to email subscribers and key stakeholders



1,224 responses received across the public survey, staff survey and direct letters or emails

This comprises of 928 responses from local residents, 234 responses from staff and 62 contributions from stakeholders including town/parish councils, local authorities and neighbouring fire and rescue services



This report focuses on feedback from the staff consultation survey

Principles and approach to the emergency cover review.



Most staff respondents recognised the importance of many principles guiding the review, particularly the need to meet response standards

Four in five staff respondents feel considering the impact of any changes on staff is very important. Relative to other principles, considering the impact of climate change is seen as less important.



There are mixed views on whether the proposals within the review represent value-for-money

40% of staff agree with this whilst 29% disagree. But the agreement level is much higher amongst stakeholders (82%) and local residents (79%). The main reasons staff gave for disagreeing with this are potential costs for redeploying staff and effective use of personnel. There were a number of positive comments in recognition of long-term investment planned for the service.



This split in opinion between staff and those responding to the public survey is also present for whether the emergency cover review reflects the most effective and efficient use of resources for the whole of Lancashire 46% of staff agree with this statement compared to 77% of stakeholders and 75% of local residents who responded to the survey. Of the 32% of staff respondents who disagree with this, the main comments were about DCP already being an efficient duty system.

Feedback on proposed crewing arrangements.



Agreement with the proposal to introduce the flexible wholetime duty system is mixed amongst staff

43% of staff agree with the proposal but 34% disagree. Whilst the majority of staff agree that ensuring response standards can be met is the most important consideration if introducing a new system, more disagree than agree that the proposed flexible wholetime system would make the service more efficient and effective.



Firefighters are supportive of self-rostering, but are more likely to oppose proposed shift lengths and times

Three quarters of respondents agree with having the ability to self-roster annual leave and two thirds agree that they should be able to self-roster shifts. But 64% disagree with 8am-8pm/8pm-8am shifts and 58% disagree with the proposed 12-hour length. The main comments from staff relate to shift patterns not being family-friendly, concern about honouring pre-booked leave and the impact proposed shift patterns could have on staff wellbeing and morale.



Around two in five staff respondents disagree with the proposed introduction of flexible day crewing in St Annes and Penwortham, rising significantly for those currently working the day crewing plus duty system

Of 37 respondents on day crewing plus, 70% disagree with the proposal in St Annes and 62% in Penwortham. If the proposal was implemented, three quarters of these staff would prefer to work the day crewing plus system in another location. Feedback from staff was most likely to focus on concerns around staff relocation and response standards at night.

Climate change emergencies.



There is strong agreement amongst staff with the overall approach to dealing with climate change emergencies 85% of staff respondents agree with the approach (rising to 89% of residents and 95% of stakeholders). Comments reveal a recognition of the changing environment and need to be prepared and respond.



The majority agree with the proposal to introduce fire appliances with off-road capabilities, although a minority of staff respondents disagree

73% of staff respondents agree with the approach (this is lower than 93% of stakeholders and residents). The main reason for those staff disagreeing appears to be a view that any new appliances should be 'special' and additional to current appliances.



There is also strong agreement amongst staff specifically with the proposed introduction of specialist flood water incident management

82% of staff respondents agree with the approach (rising to 91% of residents and 93% of stakeholders). Some staff suggested in comments that the scope could be widened to more staff within the service.

Other proposals in the review.



Two thirds of staff respondents agree with the proposal to move resources around the county using dynamic cover software

Supportive comments on this proposal recognised the value of data and software in becoming more efficient so long as any systems are reliable and back up options are in place. Any disagreement with the proposal appears to be around a concern that the human and local input of such decisions would be lost and the disruption that moving staff and resources around could cause.



Three in five staff respondents agree with the proposal to expand training opportunities for on-call firefighters

90% of stakeholder and resident respondents agree with the proposal. Three in ten staff respondents disagree. Comments received are mixed - some recognise how it could make on-call firefighting more appealing for recruitment, but those who disagree question whether on-call staff could commit to extra training time (although on-call staff themselves indicate that they are able to) and feel relying on on-call firefighters can be challenging due to their workload and availability.



Comments on strengthening the response to incidents in high-rise and commercial buildings show recognition of the need to invest in this area

But feedback from staff respondents in this question was quite mixed. They are more interested in the specifics of how a 45m aerial ladder platform would be crewed and the impact on training.

Introduction.

Consultation background, methodology and response

Introducing the emergency cover review.



What is the emergency cover review?

Periodically Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service undertake an emergency cover review (ECR) to ensure that their emergency response remains effective and efficient, and that they are well equipped to respond to future challenges. Their strategic assessment of risk identifies the greatest risks to the people and communities of Lancashire, and their community risk management plan and supporting strategies set out how they respond to them.

They have assessed the locations, numbers and types of fire stations and appliances against community risks and incident levels across the county. Duty systems have also been reviewed to establish more sustainable and effective crewing arrangements. The ways they operate evolve as risks to public safety change.

The proposals in the ECR aim to strengthen the Service's response to climate change emergencies by introducing fire appliances that can travel off-road in areas prone to flooding and wildfires. They are also enhancing their capabilities in relation to high rise building and commercial fires, with no reduction in the overall number of fire stations or appliances in the county. Changes to crewing arrangements are proposed at some stations, based on risks and incident levels in the area, and the introduction of a more flexible and resilient duty system.





Proposals for consultation within the emergency cover review



Introduce more resilient and flexible crewing arrangements Introduce a flexible wholetime duty system at seven fire stations and flexible day crewing at St Annes and Penwortham



Optimise emergency cover through dynamic cover software Introduce a software system that provides dynamic cover data to inform decision-making on how best to deploy resources to incidents



Strengthen response to climate change emergencies

Invest in fire appliances with off-road capabilities in areas at risk of wildfires and flooding and introduce specialist flood water incident management



Strengthen firefighting and rescue capabilities in high-rise and commercial buildings

Introduce a 45m aerial ladder platform and invest in two additional water tower appliances



Broaden on-call firefighting capabilities to strengthen operational response

Expand training opportunities to enable on-call firefighters at some stations to crew proposed new vehicles and equipment



Visit lancsfirerescue.org.uk/emergencycover for more about the emergency cover review

Consultation approach.



Consultation methodology

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service commissioned PS Research to support the consultation of the emergency cover review.

A public consultation survey was developed to capture views and feedback on proposals within the emergency cover review. This was aimed at local residents and stakeholders, such as local organisations/representatives, public sector partners and businesses. A separate staff consultation survey was developed with more specific information and questions relating to some of the proposals. This report focuses on the feedback from this staff survey.

Supporting the consultation survey was a consultation information document and a video explaining the emergency cover review and proposals covered in it. These were signposted within the online survey and available on the Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service website. In addition to an online survey, a paper-based version was made available in libraries across the county for anyone who might not have access to a computer or the internet.

The consultation launched on Friday 22 July and closed on Friday 14 October 2022, a period of 12 weeks.



How the consultation was shared

Public

- Available on service website and social media channels, and paper copies on request
- Paper copies available at 13 libraries across the county
- Sent to 60,000+ public email subscribers
- Shared in Facebook groups such as flood action groups and local community groups across the county
- Press release sent to the media
- Digital adverts across Lancashire
- Facebook adverts in St Annes and Penwortham
- Sent to young people via The Prince's Trust and Fire Cadets teams

Stakeholders

- Sent directly to 300+ key stakeholders including local authorities, town and parish councils and other emergency services
- Sent to business networks

Staff

- Available on service intranet, staff newsletter and paper copies on request
- 27 staff engagement sessions with firefighters plus additional sessions with managers
- Sent to the service's employee voice groups

207 responses to the staff consultation survey.

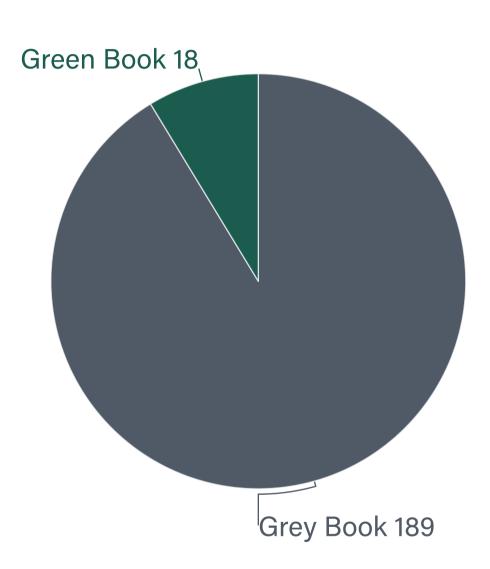
The majority of responses to the survey were from Grey Book staff

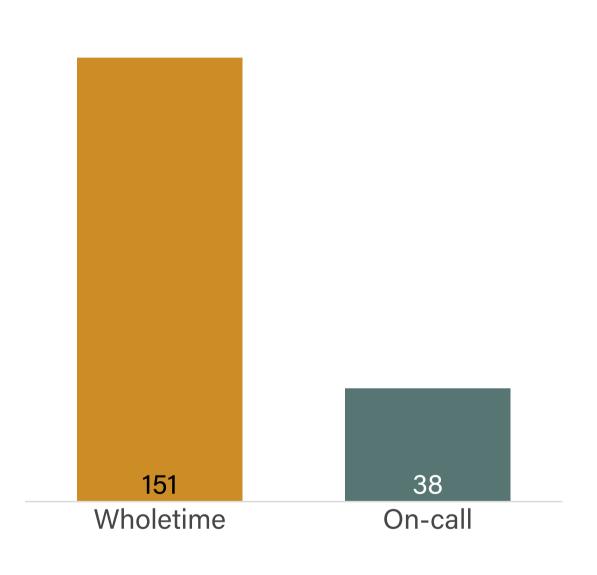


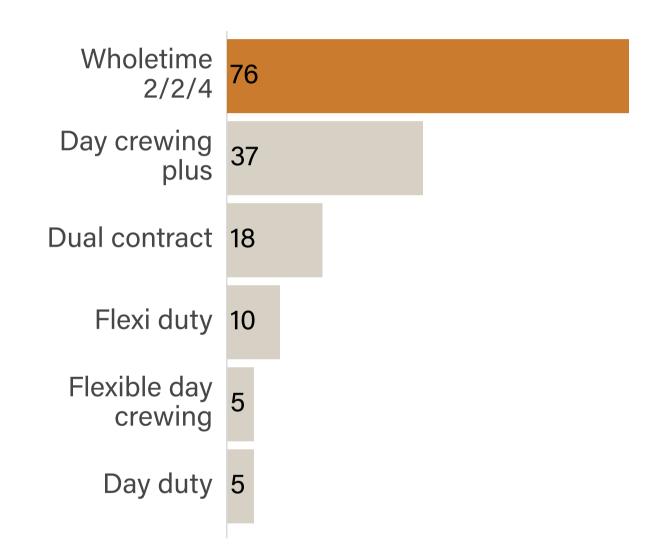
Of these Grey Book staff respondents, four in five were Wholetime



And of these Wholetime staff, they were most likely to be on the 2/2/4 system

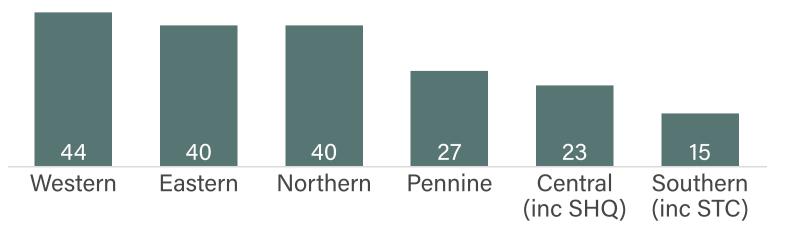








Grey Book staff responding to the survey were most likely to be stationed in Western, Eastern or Northern

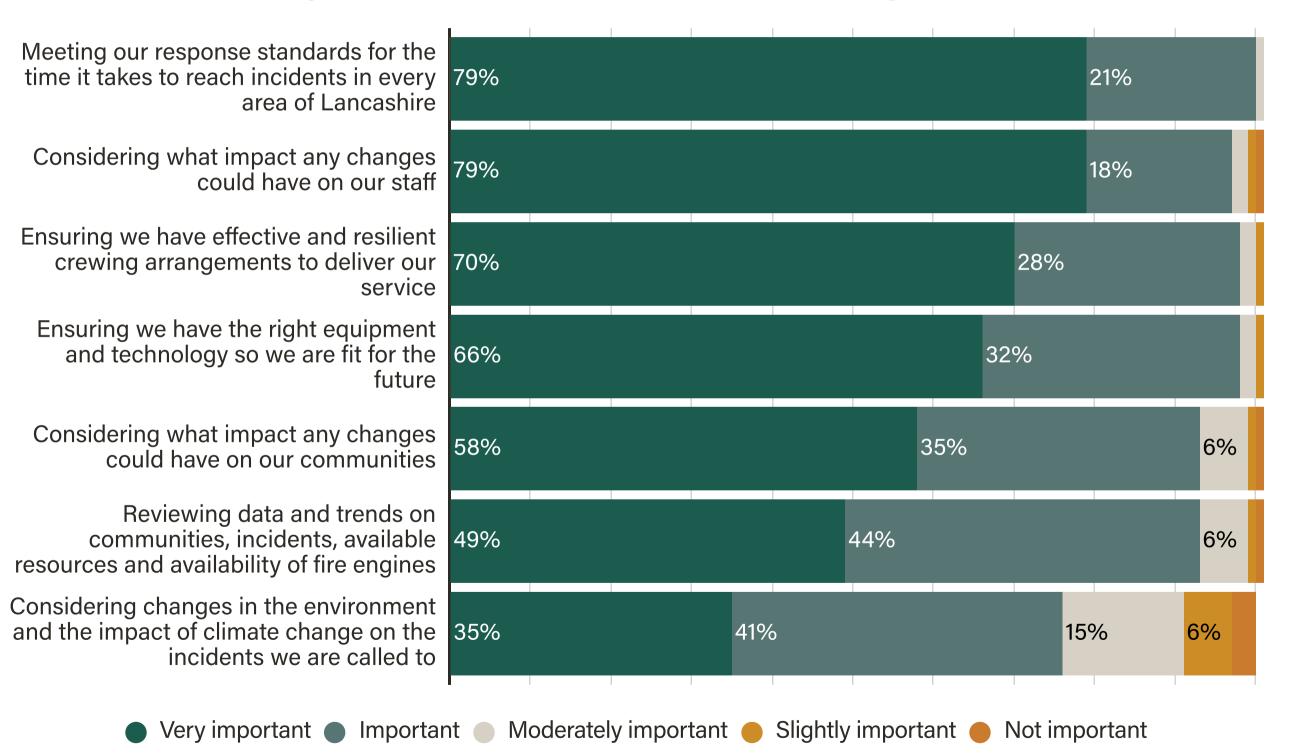


Overall approach.

Feedback on principles guiding the review, overall view and value-for-money

Four in five staff feel considering what impact any changes in the review might have on them is very important.

Q. How important do you think each of these should be in shaping an efficient and effective fire and rescue service? (n = 207)





Those staff who feel considering any impact of the review on them is very important rises to 84% amongst wholetime firefighters and 93% for those stationed in Western.

Staff respondents are less likely than residents and stakeholders to feel like reviewing data and trends should be very important in shaping an efficient and effective fire and rescue service: 49% feel this is very important compared to 66% of local residents.

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Staff suggest wellbeing should be another consideration for the emergency cover review.

Q. Is there anything else you think we should have considered when undertaking our emergency cover review?



Staff input is important and should be used to shape the emergency cover review



Impact on staff wellbeing and welfare of staff should be considered



Querying relevance and appropriateness of data used in the emergency cover review



Potential for co-responding



On-call availability needs to be factored in

"The impact on staff's mental wellbeing's in terms of creating new shift systems that will have negative connotations to their working and family life"

"Should take into account PDA responses for individual pump mobilisation turnout counts and not just counting a station ground incident as a single turnout for that one given area, making it look like the other neighbouring appliances are low on incident numbers"

"How lack of resources could effect the roles of others within the service and how Green Book could support Ops at incident and within other roles in the service."

"We have on call stations whose appliances are not always available - the review looks at it from a gold standard point of view with all appliances available and not reality. I believe significant improvement and investment need to occur within the on call to allow the ECR cover to be accurate and beneficial to the people of Lancashire."

Staff have mixed views on whether the proposals in the emergency cover review represent value-for-money.



40%

Staff respondents who agree that the proposals in the emergency cover review represent value-for-money 31% were neutral or do not know; 29% disagree

"It's not always about the newest equipment, more effective use of personnel (on-call) is what reduces the rating from strongly agree"

"The mere fact that relocation expenses may have to be paid may expand the costing."

"Any investment into improving front line response to emergency incidents is very welcome."

"I'm not sure that the plans invest the money in the right way, for the right reasons."

"I think the additional resources: AWD appliances, 45m ALP, additional Water Towers are a good idea. I don't feel that FWT shift system is the best value for money, nor is burdening On-call with additional responsibilities."



Staff commented that:

- Value-for-money is about more than equipment effective use of staff
- Questioning whether potentially redeploying staff would add costs
- Number of managers and senior officers
- Keeping staff and meeting challenges is more important than savings and efficiencies
- Positive comments about long-term investment in the service

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Again staff have mixed views on whether the review reflects the most effective and efficient use of resources.



46%

Staff respondents who agree that the emergency cover review reflects the most effective and efficient use of resources for the whole of Lancashire 22% were neutral or do not know; 32% disagree



Staff commented that:

- General support for investment in equipment, but mixed comments on duty systems
- Comments about DCP shift system, e.g. "cheaper", "it works"
- General positive comments about approach set out in the emergency cover review

"LFRS is making changes for the better with regards to cover, I just don't agree with the Flexible Wholetime Duty System."

"The ECR talked about resilience as a reason, well that has not really improved through the ECR. We need more staff and more appliances available 24/7"

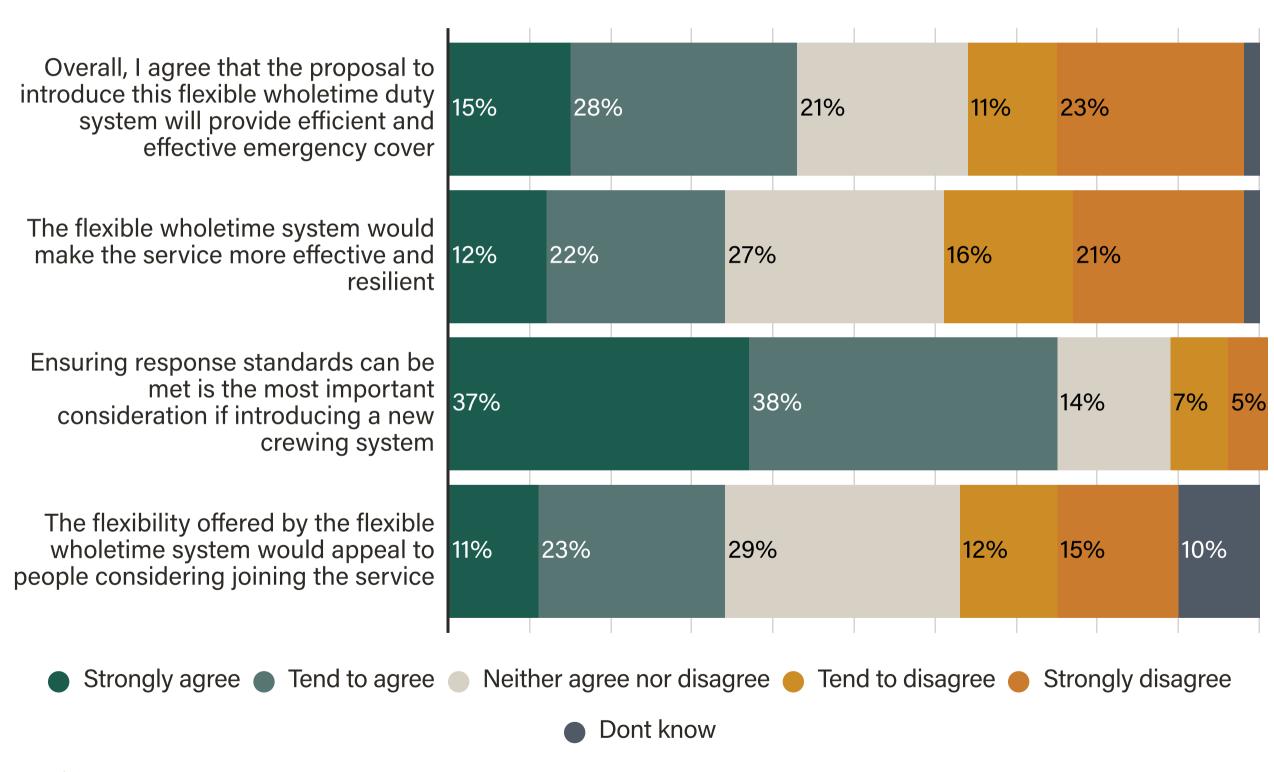
"I think I'd of done things differently if it was purely down to me but there is obviously reasons behind the proposal and has been done as a collective"

Changes to duty systems.

Feedback on proposed introduction of flexible wholetime crewing and flexible day crewing

Agreement with the overall proposal to introduce the flexible wholetime duty system is mixed amongst staff.

Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (n = 207)





43% of staff respondents agree that the proposal to introduce the flexible wholetime system will provide efficient and effective emergency cover, whilst 34% disagree.

Staff respondents broadly agree that ensuring response standards can be met is the most important consideration for a new crewing system, but slightly more disagree than agree that the flexible wholetime system would make the service more effective and resilient.

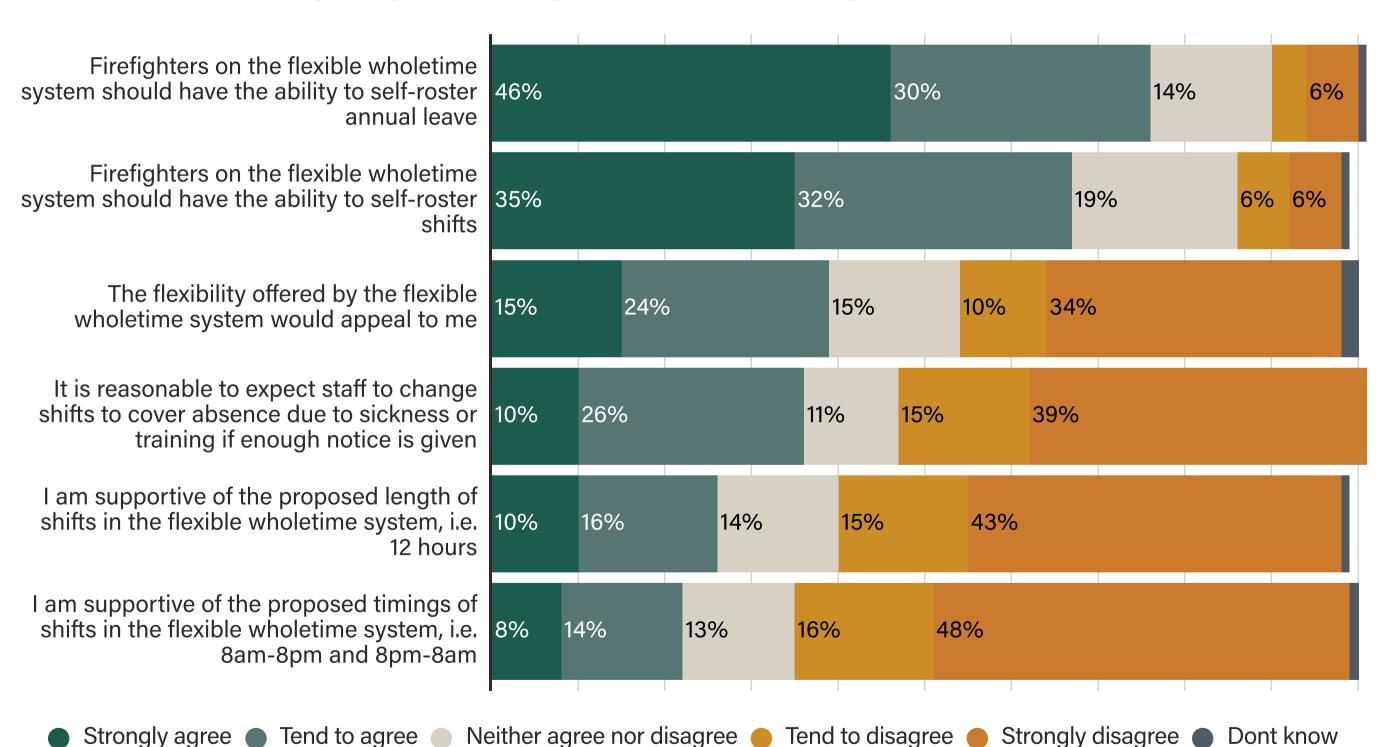
There are mixed views from existing staff as to whether the flexibility offered by flexible wholetime would appeal to people considering joining the service.



Visit <u>lancsfirerescue.org.uk/emergencycover</u> for information about the flexible wholetime duty system

Grey Book staff appear supportive of self-rostering but disagree with the shift length and timings proposed.

Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (n = 189)





Grey Book staff were asked to indicate how they felt about a range of additional statements relating to the wholetime duty system.

They were most likely to agree that firefighters should have the ability to self-roster annual leave and self-roster shifts.

Disagreement was strongest with the proposed timings of the shifts and length of the shifts.



Visit <u>lancsfirerescue.org.uk/emergencycover</u> for information about the flexible wholetime duty system

20 / 36

The main comments about the proposal relate to family-friendly shift patterns and the impact on teams.

Q. Please tell us why you feel this way about this proposal.



New shift pattern is less family friendly, e.g. 8pm finish, 12-hour shifts



Pre-booked leave should be honoured - not fair to expect staff to cover shortfalls



Won't be with the same team - impact on productivity and morale



Other impacts of proposal, e.g. self-rostering could cause friction between staff, increase in travel for some staff



Some positive comments on proposed shift patterns providing more flexibility for staff

"12 hour day shift is no family friendly at all- working till 8pm means I would get home and no see my children where as finishing at 6pm means i can see them. Also working till 8pm and starting the following day at 8am leaves little to no downtime recovery- I would much rather do a 24hr shift and stay at work."

"I feel 06:00-18:00 would be better for work life balance as 08:00-20:00 means you dont have any time either side of your shift for family, hobbies or social life for alot of the year due to daylight hours and working patterns of family and friends"

"Leave is leave and should be left alone. Let staff nominate when they can do additional shifts to cover absence."

"This will be entirely down to the individual but I think having another shift system gives another option to people it might suit. However, those who are forced to do it on those stations may be disgruntled as it wont fit their lives."

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Some staff feel the proposed crewing change would impact on staff wellbeing and morale.

Q. Do you have any comments about the impact, if any, you feel this proposed change to crewing arrangements could have?



Could have detrimental effect on staff wellbeing and morale



Negative impact of not working with same team, e.g. lose 'watch culture'



12-hour shifts will reduce efficiency and productivity



New shift pattern is not family-friendly / impact on work-life balance



Pre-booked leave should be honoured



Self-rostering could cause tensions between staff

"Negative impact of a less cohesive team due to working with new people everyday. Negative impact of less time in an evening spent with family, due to finishing later on a day shift."

"From a watch management perspective keeping up with skills training will be impossible as you may never work with some staff, also Apprentice mentoring and training will be virtually impossible"

"It would have significant social impacts on crews and their families. With travelling time and the proposed 8-8 there is no way to carry on a healthy out of work lifestyle. A 7-7 shift is far more reasonable"

"This will have a massive impact on staff, not being able to guarantee time off and leaving staff with an amount of uncertain in their private life."

Staff were most likely to suggest making changes to the timing and length of shifts.

Q. Is there anything you would change about the proposed flexible wholetime system? Please be as specific as possible.

Don't introduce it / keep 2-2-4

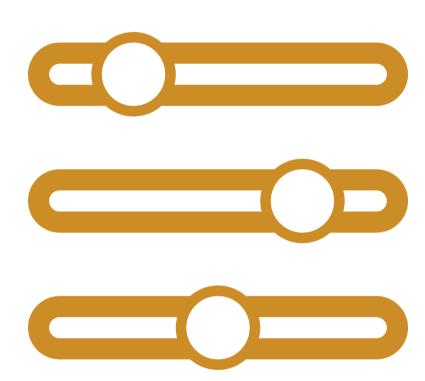
Keep 6pm finish time / don't finish at 8pm

12-hour shifts will impact on resilience, work-life balance, detachments

Don't enforce covering of absences

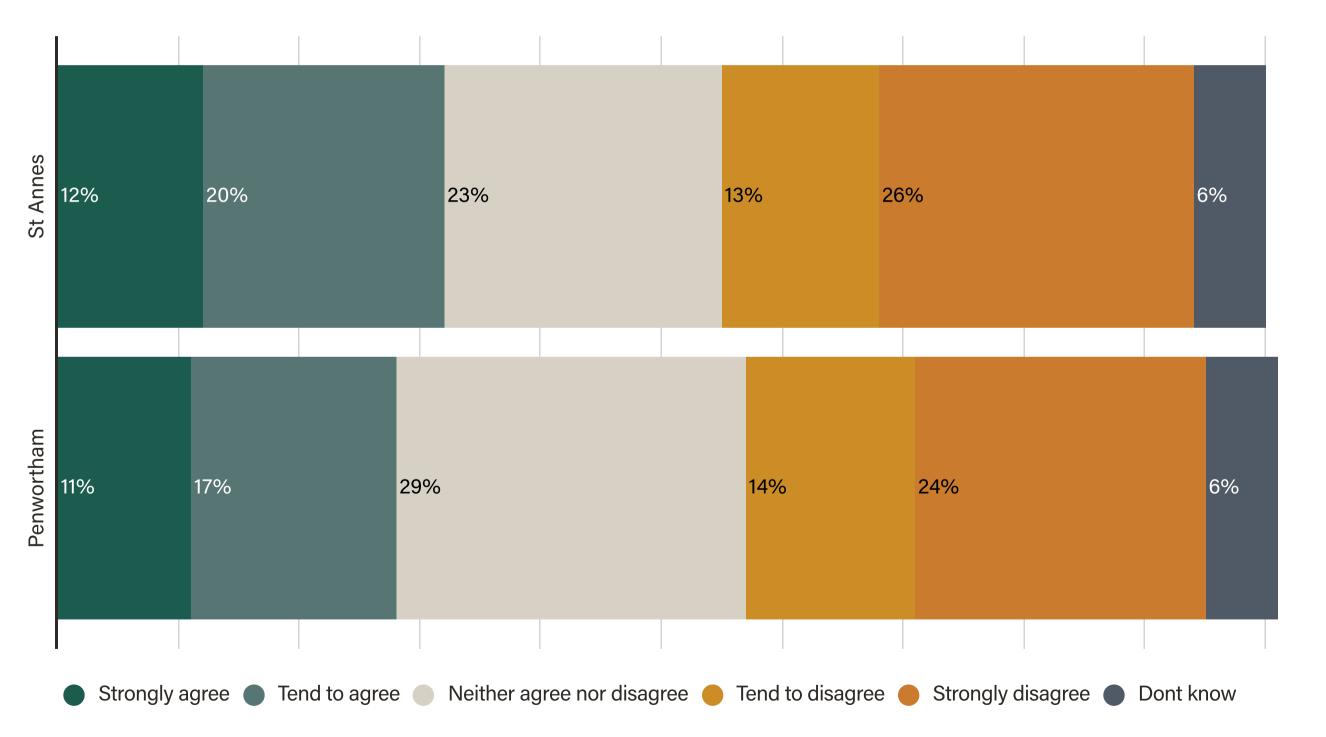
Mirror 2-2-4 (10-hour days, 14-hour nights, 8-6 / 6-8 timings work)

Allow 24-hour shifts as well



More staff disagree than agree with the proposals to introduce flexible day crewing in St Annes and Penwortham.

Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposals to replace day crewing plus (DCP) duty system with flexible day crewing (FDC) provides effective and efficient emergency cover in...?





Overall, around a quarter of staff respondents strongly disagree with the proposals to replace day crewing plus with flexible day crewing at St Annes and Penwortham.

Of the 37 respondents currently on day crewing plus, 70% disagree with the proposal in St Annes and 62% in Penwortham.

68% of staff respondents based in Western disagree with the proposal to introduce day crewing plus in St Annes.



Visit <u>lancsfirerescue.org.uk/emergencycover</u> for more information about flexible day crewing in St Annes and Penwortham

Specific feedback from DCP staff.

duty system elsewhere



70%

Of the 37 DCP staff who responded to the survey, the proportion who are permanent at DCP 27% are temporary at DCP with a substantive role on another



If the proposed new shift system was implemented at their station, three quarters would prefer to work the DCP system at another location

One in four would prefer to work a new shift system at their current location



When offered the choice of alternative shift systems, DCP is still most popular Caution sample size: based on 9 respondents. 5 of the 9 selected this as their number one

Caution sample size: based on 9 respondents. 5 of the 9 selected this as their number one preferred system. 2 of the 9 selected Wholetime 2/2/4 as their number one and 2 selected flexible wholetime.



DCP staff with plans to retire in the next few years 11 of the 37 preferred not to say; 26 indicated no plans



Comments on these proposals most likely to focus on staff relocation and response standards at night.



Q. Please tell us why you feel this way about these proposals.



Few crew live in these areas / cannot relocate to more affluent areas



Concern over reduced fire cover at night / don't agree with lowering standards at night



Penwortham is too busy for flexible day crewing - covers bigger area, traffic around station impacts on response times



St Annes is quiet - less of an issue

"No firefighter would be able to afford to live within 5 minutes of St Annes fire station. The current on call staff all have other jobs that allow them to earn enough money to afford to live there. If you are a firefighter who lives 10 miles away are you expected to move house?"

"Anything that increases response time, regardless of if it falls within certain parameters has to be negative, Especially for those people living in that area."

Climate change emergencies.

Feedback on proposals to introduce off-road fire appliances and specialist flood water incident management

There is general agreement for the proposal to introduce fire appliances with off-road capabilities.



73%

Staff respondents who agree with the proposal to introduce fire appliances with off-road capabilities in areas at risk of wildfires and flooding

- 13% disagree with this proposal; 13% are neutral
- Agreement is highest in Eastern (90%)



Staff commented that:

- There's an increasing need for off-road capability due to climate change
- Only agree if it does not result in a drop in crewing levels
- Any capability should be enhanced should not reduce current capability
- Should also keep current appliance these should be used as 'special' appliances, not responding to everyday incidents
- Disagreement tended to be because they do not feel it is necessary or that any appliances should be additions

"Fully open to the change but the change in vehicle cannot affect the availability or response that the service already gives to its community. The new vehicles must still go to all the incidents that the current type B appliances go to and have the further capability for wildfire and flood response."

"In my 10 year+ within LFRS the number of 'off grid' incidents has increased markedly"

"These should be additional resources not replacing those we already have in service. How often realistically is a unimog going to be utilised over a standard pumpin appliance over the course of the year"

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There is strong agreement for the proposal to introduce specialist flood water incident management.



82%

Staff respondents who agree with the proposal to introduce specialist flood water incident management 16% are neutral; 2% disagree

"In a rapidly changing climate, we have to be ready for anything the weather throws at us. Strengthening our capacity to respond to flood incidents is an area that I agree we should go ahead with.."



Staff commented that:

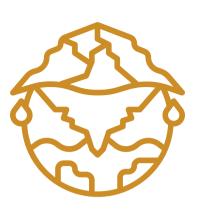
- General recognition of the need for this approach
- Some suggestions for widening scope to more staff
- Wider impact on flooding house building etc

"As we know flooding incidents are likely to increase and these incidents by their very nature are large scale and multi-jurisdictional, having specialist trained staff in the management of this would benefit Lancashire fire and rescue service."

"Improved knowledge is always welcome, but do we need to look at widening the scope of who goes on the FWIM to include the emergency planning team who are the people who work with and sit on the flood and severe weather groups"

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Most staff respondents agree with the overall approach to dealing with climate change emergencies.



dealing with climate change emergencies
11% are neutral; just 4% disagree with this Staff respondents who agree with overall approach to

Staff commented that:

- Makes sense/good proposal
- It is right to prioritise this issue
- General strong feelings around climate change and its impact

"Data confirms that climate change is already upon us. With events that have occurred over the past few years with regards to wildfires, I am excited to learn that as a firefighter I will be better equipped. The role of a firefighter has changed to adapt a wider pool of incidents throughout the years and I think we should continue to change and lead as FRS and set an example to other FRS."

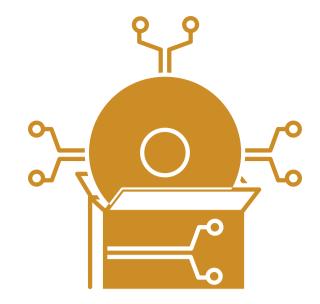
"Climate change programme isn't just about flooding and wildfire, its also about increase in other weather issues, although they can lead to increase in wildfire they also lead to other increases, i.e. deaths in water"

"It is important to recognise the change in our climate and to make sure we are provided with the correct equipment to protect the people and properties in Lancashire. "

Other proposals.

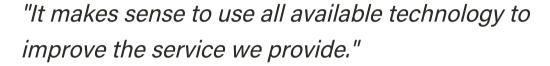
Feedback on proposals to optimise emergency cover through software, broaden on-call firefighting capabilities and strengthen rescue capabilities in high-rise and commercial buildings

Two thirds of staff respondents agree with the proposal to introduce dynamic cover software.



68%

Staff respondents who agree with moving resources around the county to provide the most effective and efficient emergency response using dynamic cover software 18% are neutral or do not know; 14% disagree



"If the system works then it is an important tool that could reduce attendance times to critical incidents and is a more effective option than the current process of key stations and closing in moves.

HOWEVER, I.T. across the service is not great as things stand."

"I feel that unless specials are primary crewed this system will move the pumps and the crew to different areas leaving the specials uncrewed and therefore unavailable."

"Using software will help to add resilience to the CSR and help to save time during emergencies"



Staff who agree commented that:

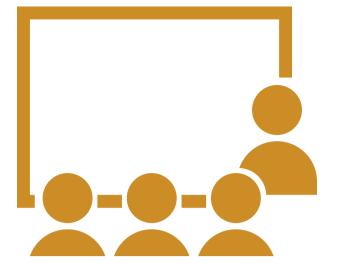
- If the software works, it is an obvious benefit
- Positive if it increases efficiency and leads to better response times

Staff who disagree commented that:

- It will take resources from current locations, leaving specials uncrewed
- Need human and local input
- Similar system already in place

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Three in five staff agree with the proposal to expand training opportunities for on-call firefighters.

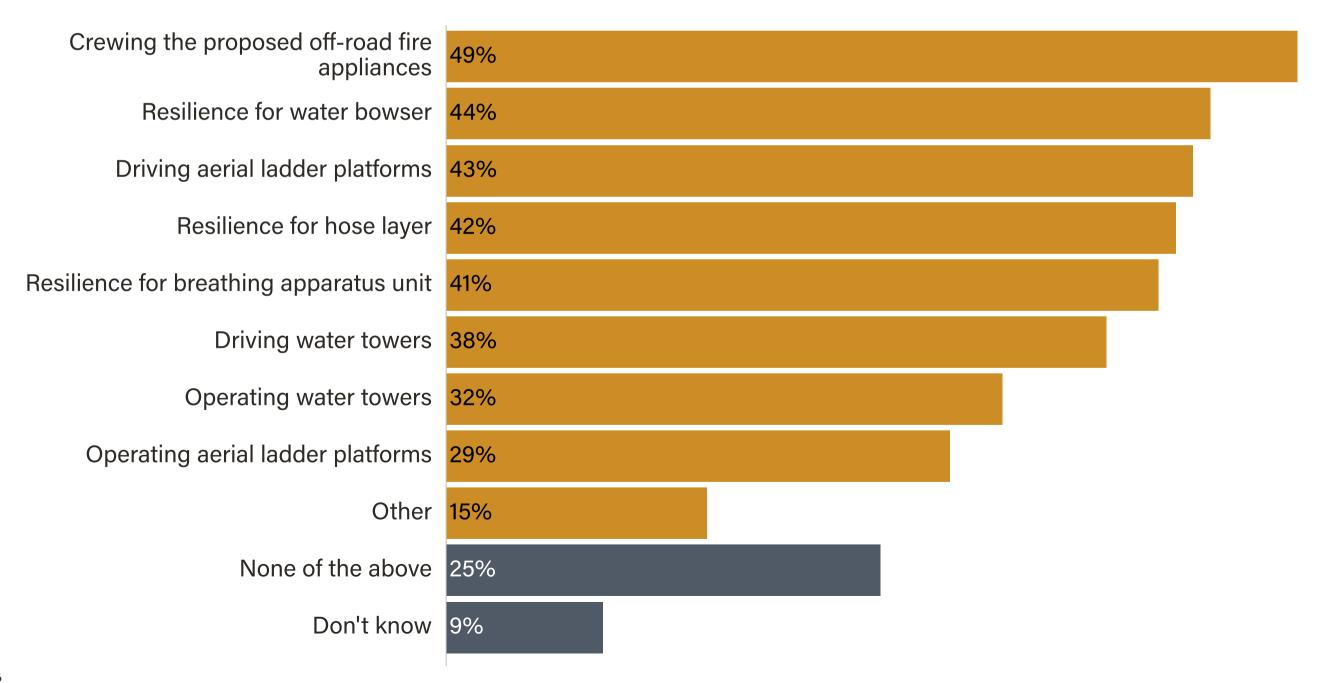


60%

Staff respondents who agree with the proposal to expand training opportunities for on-call firefighters to strengthen the operational response

30% disagree with this proposal; 10% are neutral

Staff were most likely to feel that on-call firefighters should be able to crew the off-road fire appliances





On-call firefighters were more likely than wholetime firefighters to select one or more of these additional activities.

- 92% of on-call firefighters feel they should be able to crew the proposed off-road fire appliances (38% of wholetime firefighters feel this way)
- 84% of on-call firefighters feel they should be able to drive aerial ladder platforms (32% of wholetime firefighters feel this way)
- 79% of on-call firefighters feel they should be able to operate water towers (27% of wholetime firefighters feel this way)

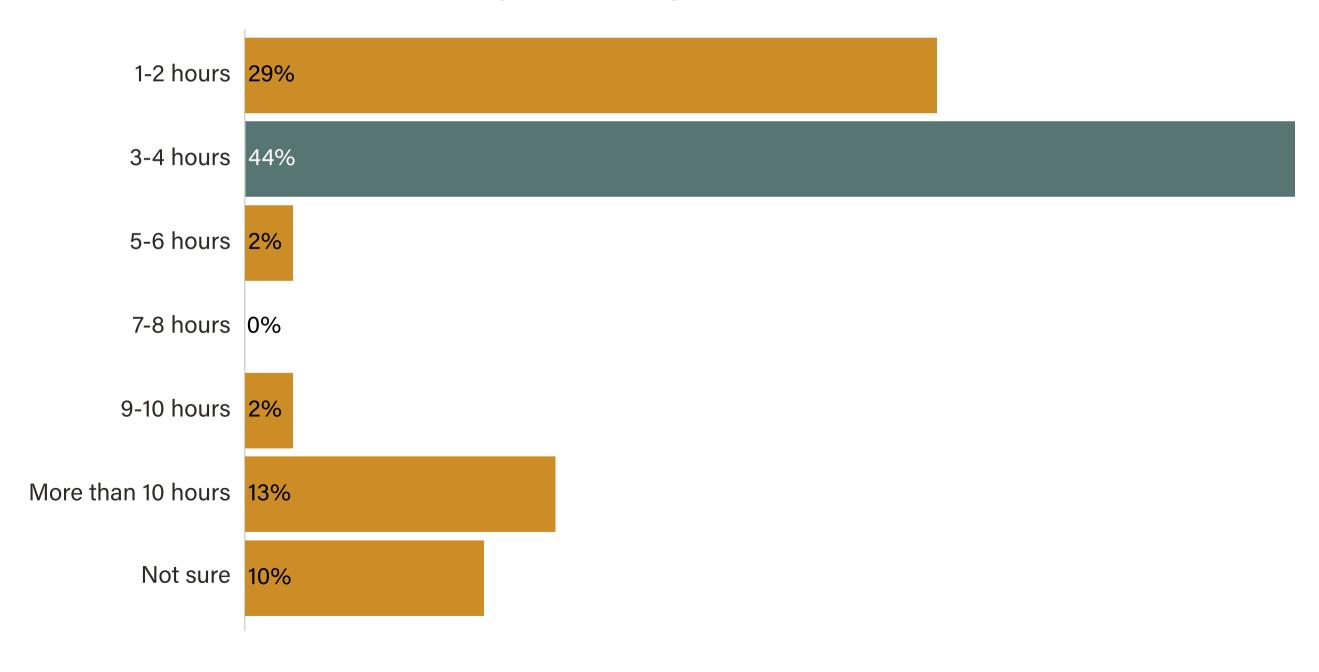
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Two thirds of on-call or dual contract staff feel able to commit more time for new training opportunities.

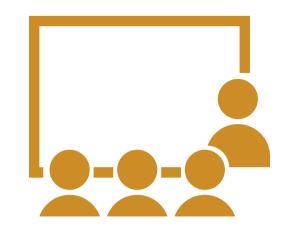
On-call or dual contract respondents (n=56) who feel they are able to commit more time to training for the additional activities
18% indicated 'maybe'; 14% selected 'no'



Of these able to commit more time, they are most likely to feel able to commit 3-4 hours a week (n=48)



Comments about expanding training opportunities for on-call firefighters are mixed.



Q. Please tell us why you feel this way about this proposal.



General positive or open comments about the opportunity



Could make on-call firefighting more appealing for recruitment

BUT...



Query whether on-call staff could commit to extra training time



Relying on on-call firefighters is a challenge - already a big workload, limited availability

"This will have a really positive impact for the Struggling On call duty system- it will make it much more appealing if the On call are being utilised more"

"Most on call will struggle to commit to the training for the specials with primary work and family commitments"

"Reliance on on call for cover tends to be unreliable as most are unavailable due to staffing a lot of the time"

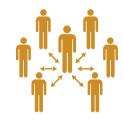
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Strengthening response to incidents in high-rise and commercial buildings.





Some feel a 45m aerial ladder platform (ALP) would be a good investment



Comments and questions on how a 45m ALP would be crewed



Comments about existing equipment for these incidents



Additional suggestions for dealing with incidents in high-rise buildings, e.g. stingers and water pressure



Impact of introducing a 45m ALP on training requirements

"It makes sense to upgrade the current ALP to a longer ladder to meet the requirements of the growing landscape"

"Would a stinger not be best based at headquarters as this could get to north and west of the county and you would only need to purchase 1 and save some capital for other projects"

"It's great having the new appliances but it's not so effective if there are not crewed appropriately. Surely we need to look at crewing them 24/7 instead of the current method."

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