

Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service Action Plan

Regulation 28: Shirley Towers
(Coroner's report now made under Regulation 28 of the Coroner's Inquest Rules 2013 – formerly Rule 43)



Shirley Towers – Reference should also be made to NFRS Health and Safety Review – Shirley Towers Report Recommendations

Review Issue/Reference No ST	Recommendation/Action Required	Responsible Officer / Function	Progress/Notes Current Assurance Source	NFRS Action Requirement
1.	<p>Guidance and clarification is required with regard to search procedures as set out in technical Bulletin 1/97 (Breathing Apparatus Command and Control procedures), to ensure that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thermal imaging cameras are used to search for fire in smoky conditions. • Fire-fighters understand the importance of fully extinguishing fires before proceeding past or above the fire scene. • Methodical search patterns are undertaken e.g. area by area, room by room or floor by floor. • Search patterns are standardised across every FRS in the UK so that there is common understanding and procedure when fire-fighters from different FRSs are engaged in joint working. 	<p>AM HR L&D – Training GM FSS Equipment</p>	<p>TIC cameras currently on each frontline appliance. 3 types of TIC being evaluated by L&D/FSS as replacement to the current model.</p> <p>Taught as part of the Line Search technique presentation. Procedures developed and introduced in 2012 by L&D for fighting fires in compartments on opposite side of building to search pattern, so that crews do not pass a fire.</p> <p>Line search patterns used as standard with PPV, TIC and search coordinator.</p> <p>NFRS use Line Search which is the same search patterns as the neighbouring FRSs; TWFRS and Durham and Darlington FRS. Durham also use Room Clearance depending on circumstances. Lothian and Borders FRS use both search patterns. NFRS students are made aware of this on BA course.</p> <p><u>Direct Fire Fighting</u></p> <p>Fire behaviour techniques formed an integral part of breathing apparatus training courses in NFRS for approx 4 years. The 2014 course will cover all aspects of firefighting and branch techniques including gas cooling, back draft cooling and direct attack. These will be covered both</p>	<p>Procurement of TICs to ensure procedures and training fully up to date by means of Service Orders, training and learning outcomes</p> <p>DVD provided by Hampshire on all learning points issued for awareness to all Operational Personnel</p> <p>TIC techniques incorporated in both theoretical and practical sessions of breathing apparatus revalidation course 2014-2015</p> <p>Revisited on 15/16 BA Revalidation course</p>

			<p>theoretically and practically in an attack 1 session and a direct firefighting exercise.</p> <p><u>Thermal Imaging Cameras</u></p> <p>During the direct firefighting exercise crews will be allowed to use the thermal imaging cameras, this is to familiarize crews with their safe operation and use e.g. casualty retrieval, fire plume identification, thermal signatures in wind driven fires, internal and external signs and symptoms of back draft and to assist crews to confirm the existence of fires away from their designated search pattern.</p>	Completed on 14/15 BA revalidation course
2.	<p>It is recommended that a review is undertaken to ensure that the teaching and training of those fire-fighting techniques used to contain and cool compartment fires, on the one hand fully complement techniques designed to attack and extinguish fires, on the other. A review should be undertaken into the training provided in relation to the circumstances and manner in which each technique should be used. For example, a pulse spray technique should not be used in a fully ventilated compartment fire, the severity of which will not be controllable by pulse spraying and gas cooling approach.</p>	AM HR L&D	<p>Students are taught different tactics which are used to deal with ventilated fire compartments, and a back draft compartment which is ventilated from outside first or fought with a jet to cool as a last resort. Students are taught to assess the situation in any compartment from signs and symptoms and visual assessment when carrying out door entry. Severe fire conditions in a ventilated compartment will be fought from a defensive position until the fire is reduced to a manageable state</p>	NFA
3.	<p>It is recommended that a review is undertaken to ensure the adequacy of teaching and training of tactical ventilation procedures in compartment fires to highlight the effect ad-hoc ventilation can have on fire development and to confirm the associated dangers.</p>	AM HR L&D	<p>Students cover this as part of current PPV course</p> <p>All operational personnel have been instructed on the use of ventilation methods including PPV and associated risks.</p>	NFA
4.	<p>It is recommended that all FRSs should consider the implementation of measures to reduce the risks associated with fallen cables. In particular consideration should be given to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing insulated wire cutters, or other means of severing cables, to all breathing apparatus teams • Modifying breathing apparatus sets to reduce the risk of cables becoming caught between the wearer's back and the cylinder. 	AM HR L&D	<p>Wire cutters currently being researched by L&D and FSS in liaison with Tyne and Wear and FSC. Recommendations will be implemented</p> <p>Straps to modify BA sets currently being issued – training included</p>	<p>NFA</p> <p>Cable entrapment rigs (X 2) constructed, trialed and training incorporated in breathing apparatus revalidation courses 2014-2015</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training all breathing apparatus wearers in the risks presented by fallen cables and how to reduce those risks. 		<p>Training delivery being developed.</p> <p><u>Cable entrapment</u></p> <p>A cable entanglement training unit has been developed and constructed by the BA Team in collaboration with other UK FRSs. The training in the unit will be delivered in conjunction with a training package on entanglement straps (All NFRS BA Sets) to demonstrate to crews their value in these situations. The L&D instructional staff are currently trialing two sets of cable cutters from FSS and will deliver evaluations upon completion.</p> <p>Anti-entanglement straps have been issued and training delivered.</p>	
5.	It is recommended that all FRSs and social housing providers consider the Rule 43 recommendations made by HM Coroner for Hertfordshire Mr. Edward Thomas following the inquest into firefighter fatalities at Harrow Court, in particular recommendation 8 made by the FBU.			<p>Part P of Building Regulations now insists on cages for cables and clips in retro fitting and new installations.</p> <p>There is no legislation to enforce Housing providers to replace current installations of plastic trunking. Advisory only.</p>
6.	It is recommended that Building regulations are amended to ensure that all cables, not just fire alarms, are supported by fire-resistant cable supports. This could be achieved by an amendment to BS 7671 92008 Institute of Electrical Engineers Wiring Regulations	GM FS Out of scope NFRS	This is not within the scope of Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service	NFA
7.	Social housing providers should be encouraged to consider the retro-fitting of sprinklers in all existing high rise buildings in excess of 30 meters in height, particularly those identified by the Fire and Rescue Services as having complex designs that make firefighting more hazardous and/or difficult. It is noted that current legislation requires that all newly built high rise buildings in excess of 30 metres in height must be fitted with sprinkler systems	GM FS	There is no social housing stock within the Northumberland area which exceeds 30 metres. Any future building proposals received which exceed 30 metres will be subject to the current legislation, enforced by NFRS Fire Safety Officers.	Any future building regulation consultations where the building exceeds 30 metres will be subject to the current legislation and enforced by Fire Safety Officers.
8.	<p>It is recommended that a review of training given to control staff is undertaken by all FRSs in UK in light of the guidance given in recent GRAs including GRA 3.2 of September 2008.</p> <p>All FRS should consider the implementation of measures to ensure that control staff are properly supervised when taking calls and are trained to capture and relay relevant information likely to assist operational firefighters.</p>	GM FSS SM F Control	All Control Room staff have viewed the DVD provided by Hampshire FRS	Supervision of Fire Control staff taking calls and gathering Risk critical information being reviewed as part of 2015/16 fire Control Modernisation

9.	<p>It is recommended that there should be an obligation to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide signage to indicate floor levels both in stairwells and lift lobbies in high rise premises, to assist the emergency services • Ensure that signage indicating flat numbers and emergency exits in high rise premises are placed at a lower level to increase visibility in smoke conditions <p>This could possibly be achieved by amending Article 38 of the Regulatory reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, which relates to maintenance of measures provided for the protection of firefighters. Alternatively new legislation may be required.</p>	GM FS	<p>There are no high rise accommodation buildings within the Northumberland area. NFRS will consult with Northumberland County Council to establish whether low level signage will be of value in low rise accommodation.</p>	<p>GM Fire Safety to contact Head of Strategic Housing for Northumberland County Council to discuss the value of providing low level signage in social housing buildings.</p> <p>This is advisory only for premises in Northumberland due to lack of high rise buildings.</p>
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