

HOTLINE

The Fire Service College newsletter: Issue 15 2007
www.fireservicecollege.ac.uk



Unrivalled experience
Unequaled expertise

Paramedics experience USAR at FSC



Casualty Management

This month we bring you the news that the FSC facilitated a pilot course for the development of Yorkshire Ambulance Trust Paramedics at the request of the Department of Health. Both parties came together and created the course structure; a sequential development programme that utilised the bespoke training rigs and also the wider incident ground at the College. The course culminated in an assessment day with several medical dilemmas presented on the collapsed training rig.

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Welcome

In this issue of Hotline we feature two examples of how the Fire Service College's (FSC) unique incident ground can facilitate bespoke fire and multi-agency training. Our flexibility of approach to the use of our facilities, and the wide range of incidents that can be replicated at the College, mean that we support training for the full range of emergency services and other agencies.

Hosting the annual Networking Women in the Fire Service Annual Conference, held in mid-July, is one of the highlights of our year. This year's event was another great success with over 350 delegates attending.

The following weekend was a complete contrast, with the College transforming itself into a reception centre for people stranded by the flooding that affected so much of our locality. I am very proud of the positive way in which our staff, supported by their friends and relatives, responded to this emergency situation, and by the fact that we were ready for business as usual by the Sunday evening.

Finally, as this issue goes to press we are running the first one-week Gold Command course. This course represents a significant milestone in the development of the Centre for Leadership and we will report on it in the next edition of Hotline.

We welcome your input into this newsletter. Please contact Ceri Darrell with your comments and suggestions on 01608 812173, or e-mail enquiries@fireservicecollege.ac.uk

Gill Newton
Chief Executive

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The expertise of the Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) tutors was invaluable in interpreting the training needs presented by the Department of Health. “We rose to the challenge and provided realistic training to develop the paramedics, enabling them to provide clinical support within the hazardous environment of a collapsed structure,” said Bob Rea, Group Manager Specialist Operations.

The team of 14 paramedics, who had undergone a rigorous selection programme in order to attend our three-week course, undertook a foundation week in Yorkshire. Dedicated medical tutors taught them a range of clinical skills that the paramedics were required to use during the next two-week phase at the FSC.

Their two weeks at the College were demanding, both physically and mentally, with long days fully occupied by practical training activities. As the first week progressed the delegates were presented with a range of experiential scenarios to develop their skills, including: confined spaces, restricted access, unstable rubble and vehicles. In all of these environments the delegates performed clinical assessments and treated the patients. During the second week the delegates undertook three days of working at height and casualty extraction using rope and pulley systems.

The course reached a fitting climax in a simulated collapse structure incident with multiple casualties. This was observed by a visiting delegation from the Department of Health and the Yorkshire Ambulance Trust, who were impressed with the performance of their team and the facilities provided by the FSC, a job well done all round!



USAR casualty management

New USAR Development Courses

USAR10 – Advanced Technical Search Course

Experience our renowned USAR training first-hand on the new USAR10 course. It's a five-day programme that has been developed as part of a specialist open programme to support the New Dimension training. The course will help you develop knowledge, skills and understanding of Technical Search to a specialist level. It's an interactive and engaging experience aimed to extend and challenge your abilities in all aspects of USAR Technical Search, utilising the bespoke training venues available at the FSC. The course will be supported by a diverse range of tutors from differing agencies that all have an influence on the technical search phase of an incident. The prerequisite for attendance is successful completion of the technical search phase USRT1 and 2 or equivalent.



USAR11 – Collapsed Structure Search Managers Course

Calling all Team Leaders, are you responsible for controlling the technical search phase of USAR incidents? If you are, then this three-day course is right for you! Also part of the New Dimension training, this programme will provide the knowledge, skills and understanding required of Search Managers for the USAR environment. It will enable you to provide a link to the Incident Commander, demystifying USAR and assisting a successful resolution to the incident. It's an interactive course, supported by visiting tutors from agencies that will be in attendance at USAR incidents. The prerequisite for attendance is successful completion of the technical search phase USRT1 and 2 or equivalent.



USAR 36 Hour Exercises (a) and (b)

These programmes are continuous exercises, simulating an operational deployment to a USAR incident. The exercise will expose you to a realistic simulated environment allowing those attending to utilise all the elements of USAR response over an extended duration. You will experience the crew rotations of an operational deployment, developing your experiential knowledge and better preparing you for operational response. These exercises are facilitated by USAR tutors on a range of training venues at the FSC, where they will support the development of the exercise by employing their expertise to react to the operational tactics employed by the attending crews. Fire Authorities with a USAR capability are invited to send either individual delegates or groups of delegates. The prerequisite for attendance is successful completion USRT1 and 2, or equivalent.

Please contact your Relationship Management Team member to discuss the above courses, on frsmt@fireservicecollege.ac.uk

The FSC has a longstanding association with the London Fire Brigade (LFB), providing contracted training and facilities outside the College's standard programme since 1994. Initially the LFB used the College's incident ground, accommodation and other facilities to support its own Crew Command courses prior to the implementation of IPDS. However, as London recognised that the College's unique facilities provided a suitable environment for realistic incident simulations across a broad range of scenarios, the contracts have been developed and evolved. Today the College offers a range of bespoke packages exclusively designed for LFB. These support trainee and operational firefighters, using a mix of London and College training staff.

LFB has also purchased courses and training from the FSC which form part of its open programme offered to the UKFRS. As part of LFB's trainee firefighter programme this has allowed trainees to experience real fire training using our carbonaceous fire behaviour facility and wide range of incident ground simulation. As the bespoke contract is of two years duration it has allowed for negotiation of costs and resources, resulting in a more cost-effective outcome for LFB as well as business continuity for the College. "This total focus on customer needs and high degree of flexibility is characteristic of the way the College does business" said Sally Sheen, Director of FRS, International and Commercial Training Delivery.



Breaching and breaking – cutting through to casualty



LFB USAR training at midnight

FSC **bespoke** training for London Fire Brigade



Part of 36 hour exercise scenario



Timber shoring

The second bespoke contract involves the provision of ten 36-hour USAR exercises per annum. These are delivered as real time incidents, facilitated and supported by FSC staff. Now in its second year, this unique training takes place on the FSC's specialist USAR rigs with crew rotations running continuously from Friday evening to the early hours of Sunday morning. On-site catering and sleeping accommodation is provided for the duration of the exercise. Feedback from participating firefighters has been excellent with a very high degree of enthusiasm and professionalism demonstrated throughout. Training of this nature is essential to ensure that skills are maintained and consolidated as part of a programme of Continuous Professional Development.

Earlier this year LFB implemented a range of enhanced operational training interventions. This included the provision of two day tactical incident command training events for competent Crew and Watch Managers. The FSC incident ground has again proved vital to ensure that realistic scenario-based training can be achieved. This has resulted in a three-year contract generating further cost effectiveness and longer term savings for LFB. This flexibility has allowed a strong relationship to be built between the two organisations.

London Assistant Commissioner for Training and Development, Gary Dobson said: **"We have always enjoyed a productive relationship with the Fire Service College. The uniqueness of the site and the flexible approach engendered in recent years has allowed us to advance our operational training considerably."**

Managed Learning Service – e-learning and more!

The Managed Learning Service (MLS) project is now moving from development to delivery.

MLS will revolutionise the delivery of training; providing quality e-learning materials and tools, and introducing more flexible, smarter means of conducting and managing training and development.

But, importantly, the MLS is not just about e-learning.

It will also provide a system for FRSs that will underpin their delivery across all aspects of the Learning and Development Strategy.

MLS will support FRSs in a number of ways, including:

- A central catalogue of learning and development activities against IPDS role maps;
- Management information systems for assessing personal development;
- Tools for rapid development of learning materials for online or face-to-face delivery;
- Virtual classrooms; and
- Management of training centres;

The MLS will make it easier for individuals to track their own personal development and will allow FRSs to monitor development across the whole organisation.

The ‘competitive dialogue’ with potential system suppliers has been very positive. Final requirement specifications have now been issued to the shortlisted suppliers, with contracts expected to be awarded in the last quarter of 2007.

MLS Project Manager, Jonathan Chapman said: “We are now seeking to identify early adopters from within the FRSs, to be part of the pilot phase and provide critical influence on, and support to the overall implementation of the MLS.”

Spotlight on

News from the Centre for Leadership

Once again, there has been a great deal of activity for the Centre for Leadership (CfL) including developments in learning opportunities and accreditation for members of the team.

The first of the one-week Gold Command courses was run by the FSC in August. This course aims to refresh Brigade Managers and those who have a current operational responsibility for strategic command. In September we will run our two and a half/four and a half day ‘An Introduction to the FRS’ course; this course is aimed at direct entrant managers new to the FRS and provides background information and latest views on different FRS issues. Both courses will have input from invited speakers who are subject matter experts, appropriate for the level of the course participants.

Keep an eye out for The Leadership Toolkit and information package, which will be rolled out following the National Leadership

Programme launch in London. This toolkit will contain Supervisory level workbooks on Change, Leadership and Diversity and details of a range of diagnostic tools including a 360 degree diagnostic, a self-assessment on leadership and a 180 degree benchmarking survey. These diagnostic tools will be available from the launch date (or possibly earlier). The Leadership Toolkit will also contain information on a range of other leadership development activities and initiatives, including coaching skills, an Executive Leadership Programme, a menu of Principal Officers’ Development Opportunities and a Virtual Learning Resource Centre (VLRC) provided by Ashridge. Passwords for each UK FRS region to access the Ashridge VLRC are now available and an FRS customised portal is under development.

The Institute of Directors programmes which lead to the Certificate or Diploma in Company Direction, with the possibility of eventually working to Chartered Directorship, will run next year. These programmes represent a valuable opportunity to develop high level skills and knowledge.

Quality Assurance and Qualifications update

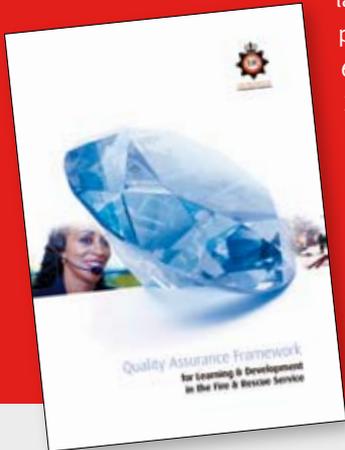
A formal launch of the Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) will take place in conjunction with Centre for Leadership at a CFOA led event to be held in London

later this year, provisionally 6 November 2007. Whilst the launch event was being defined the quality team visited a number of FRSs and

conducted a 'user testing' of the QA toolkit that supports the QAF. The toolkit was well-received during the user testing and, as hoped, has given the design team focus for final development prior to the launch. We thank those involved for their time.

Work has begun in collaboration with the FRSVSG (Fire Rescue Sector Vocational Standards Group) with regard to future provision of sector specific qualifications.

For more information about qualifications contact quality@fireservicecollege.ac.uk



LDS

Devised to support the modernisation of the UKFRS, the Learning and Development Strategy (LDS) Programme is now well underway and Hotline will regularly communicate news relating to these key projects.

Finally, we are pleased to announce that Area Manager Michael Laws has recently been successful in achieving the award of Chartered Manager (CMgr). He is the first manager in the Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) to achieve the award and one of eleven FRS managers nationally. Those in the FRS who have recently completed their Chartered Managers Award will be invited to an awards ceremony in London in the autumn.

Accreditation and Contacts

Four CfL staff are now fully accredited Belbin assessors and there are a limited number of 'funded lives' on offer to the FRS. For more information contact Bridgette Schneider Browne: bbrowne@fireservicecollege.ac.uk

Zena Drew is now a trained Action Learning Set facilitator. For further details including the daily rate contact: zdrew@fireservicecollege.ac.uk

For more information on the Institute of Directors programmes, please contact Jill Adams: jadams@fireservicecollege.ac.uk

For more information on the Gold Command or Introduction to the FRS courses, please contact Kevin Arbuthnot: karbuthnot@fireservicecollege.ac.uk

To obtain login passwords for the Ashridge VLRC, please contact Alistair Angus: aangus@fireservicecollege.ac.uk

IPDS – We're All Ears

In some ways, IPDS has been with us for many years. The Central Fire Brigades Advisory Council (as was) formally adopted it in 2001 and the 2003 Pay settlement saw IPDS incorporated in Conditions of Service. But in some ways it's still new. For example, the National Firefighter Selection Tests and Assessment Development Centres were not a requirement until this year.

Throughout all that time, those responsible for IPDS have continued to seek the views of the Service and where necessary, IPDS has been developed and improved. The following developments are either in place or planned for the near future.

New Development Modules – Fire Investigation, Fire Safety, Wider Staff Group Standards, and Personal Qualities and Attributes; new National Occupational Standards – Watch Manager and Control Manager. New qualifications - Compartment Fire Behaviour Trainer, Emergency Response Driver and Incident Command at Bronze, Silver and Gold level. There will also soon be a third set of assessment centre exercises as well as changes to the In-Band interview. In terms of supporting you, IPDS will offer an enhanced development database as well as an e-portfolio specification. IPDS belongs to the Service and it will always adapt to meet the Service's need.

To keep up-to-date with the latest developments, visit the website on www.ipds.co.uk

NWFS Conference at the FSC – another great success!



The recent 3-day Networking Women in the Fire Service Annual Conference, which took place at the FSC in July, was another resounding success. The event was extremely well-attended and the programme offered a wide range of activities, workshops and seminars for delegates to enjoy.

Feedback from some of the attendees says it all:

“A fantastic event. Content, organisation and above all unique atmosphere (friendly, positive, non-hierarchical). I can’t find sufficient superlatives to describe it.”

“The entertainment was great, food and accommodation first class, and each activity and seminar was well organised and structured.”

“A very well organised event, professional, informative, fun, and a huge confidence boost. Thank you.”

“...the opportunity to try out new experiences in a completely safe, non-judgmental environment.”

“This experience totally exceeded any expectations I had before arriving.”

“This course has been superb! Well done to everyone involved in organising this event. Please can I come again!”

This is the fourth consecutive year that the College has hosted the NWFS Conference and we are delighted that two of our colleagues, Rachel Jones, Business & Customer Services Manager in the FSC Events Department, and Andy Young, who was seconded to the College from Wiltshire FRS, have been awarded an NWFS Silver Award ‘in recognition of their outstanding efforts over the years in support of NWFS, especially in the organisation of the NWFS Annual Conferences’.

Rachel said, “The 2007 NWFS Conference was another great success, due to the great partnership between the FSC and NWFS. We look forward to hosting the Conference in July 2008”

The Centre for Leadership (CfL) at the FSC has been working with key stakeholders from the Local Government Association and the Chief Fire Officers’ Association to develop the National Leadership Programme, a four year leadership development strategy for the FRS. This will be officially launched at an event in London in November for Chairs of Fire Authorities, Chief Fire Officers and HR Directors.

The Fire Service College helps flood victims



It was a case of 'All hands to the pumps' as staff at the FSC played a significant role in coming to the aid of hundreds of people affected by the floods on 20 and 21 July in the North Cotswolds.

At the request of Gloucestershire FRS, three of the College's fire appliances, which are used for training students, were called into action to support the rescue efforts of the emergency services. They were crewed by 20 staff and secondees from many different FRS's and rescued about 100 people and several family pets from their homes and stranded vehicles, in the area around Moreton. Retained firefighters, some whom are employed by the FSC, also played a key role in Gloucestershire FRS's rescue efforts.

Phil Langdale, Group Manager in Incident Command Training, from West Yorkshire FRS, was one of the College's fire officers who helped to rescue people in Moreton. Phil said: "People were cold, wet, and in distress. We had to use whatever was at hand to rescue some of the less mobile people, safely and securely. The sense of community spirit here was incredible".

The College also provided reception facilities to over 300 people who had been left homeless or were unable to complete their journeys home as a result of the floods. They were accommodated in the FSC's residential blocks over the course of the weekend and provided with dry clothes, beds, hot food and drinks.

College staff, many of whom had themselves been left stranded at work because of the floods, or who had been flooded out of their own homes, worked throughout the night to ensure that the flood victims were looked after. Family members of College staff who live locally also turned up to help. An army paramedic and two nurses, themselves stranded motorists, were able to offer invaluable medical advice and assistance to those traumatised by their experience.

Les Haines, Community Safety Manager for Cotswold District Council who was one of the Council's Emergency Response Team said: "Staff at the College responded immediately and professionally and set up an emergency rest centre. The local community is extremely grateful for all the help that was provided by staff and volunteers at the College, many of whom had to work very long hours until the emergency ended. This was an excellent example of teamwork in the face of crisis."

Gill Newton, Chief Executive, praised the efforts of everyone connected with the College who joined in the rescue and shelter operation. She said: "I am proud of the efforts made by College staff in assisting the rescue and accommodation of local people and stranded motorists. Many of these people had a very traumatic experience and I am glad that we were able to provide them with some respite and support at their time of great need."

Fire Leadership Academy

A key element of the leadership development strategy is elected member development. The Cfl has been working in partnership with the Improvement and Development Agency (IDEA) on a special Leadership Academy programme for councillors in Fire and Rescue Authorities, and the first pilot programme was delivered at Warwick University on 12 and 13 July 2007.

The programme, subsidised by capacity building funds, was aimed at Chairs and Vice Chairs and portfolio holders responsible for FRS. Ten participants attended the programme which had been designed to help them enhance their ability to lead change. It covered issues such as the roles and relationships between councillors and senior officers in providing leadership, the growing importance of partnerships and how to make them work for the benefit of the

Service and community. It also included aspects of public relations and community engagement.

Facilitators on the programme included Tony Hooton, Cheshire Fire Authority Chair and Steve McGuiirk, Chief Fire Officer of Cheshire Fire Authority and CFOA President, and Ian Bottrill, who was previously leader of Warwickshire County Council and Chair of the Fire Authority. Cllr Anthony Duggan, Chairman of Bedfordshire and Luton Fire Authority, and member of the LGA Fire Service Management Committee, leads for the Centre for Leadership on elected member development. Anthony opened and closed the two day programme and said "This course is so important; it encouraged leaders of the Fire and Rescue Authorities to develop and grow and has been really rewarding."

The programme content reflected the priority areas for support identified by members and senior officers. All participants provided very positive feedback following the event and believed further programmes would benefit colleagues.

In addition to the Leadership Academy, a bespoke FRS development programme is in the process of development by the Cfl at the College, aimed at newly-elected members. This programme will contain key and vital information about the history and background of the FRS, current issues and future developments. It is envisaged that this programme will take place over four days with high level speakers to ensure only the most up to date and relevant information is included.

Forthcoming events

- 20 – 21 September** Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) Health & Safety Practitioners Conference
- 25 – 27 September** Chaplains Conference
- 7 October** Fire Service National Benevolent Fund (FSNBF) Ladies Driving Challenge

Changing places

Martyn Brandrick has just completed a three-year secondment working as an instructor. Now back at Central Scotland FRS, Martyn reflects on the highlights of his time at the FSC.



What motivated a secondment at FSC?

My first visit to FSC was as a student attending core progression modules including the Junior Officer Advancement Course. I was impressed by the professionalism of the instructors and felt that I learnt a lot. When a secondment at the College became available, I jumped at the chance to take it.

Did you have any reservations?

It was only once I was accepted at the College that I began to really think about practicalities. Leaving the Service for three years and moving South were big changes to make. I'm a positive person however and took up the post in May 2005.

What were your early days like?

Starting at the College was like starting in any other position – it took time to settle in, but other seconded staff and support staff helped me along and it wasn't long before I felt part of the team.

Uniformed seconded staff at The FSC come from FRSs all over the country and bring with them different ideas, methods and experiences. But they all have one thing in common; they are all firefighters and there was a terrific bond between us.

I had 13 years' service and was working with guys that had been with the Fire Service for over 30, but I was always made to feel that my experience counted.

What were the greatest challenges of training as an instructor?

Being prepared was absolutely key. Learning from other staff proved invaluable to me while dealing with personal and work-related issues required tact and professionalism.

Was all your secondment based at the FSC?

No, I also visited many Fire Services on an outreach basis. This is becoming more and more a part of the role as an instructor and one that I found extremely interesting. Working outside the College with fewer facilities was sometimes a challenge but it was important to me that I offered the same level of training while tailoring course content to individual stations.

What was on offer socially?

Although all of us on secondments worked hard, we also had an active social life with regular games of football, barbecues, themed nights and excursions.

How did you stay in touch with your own FRS

Throughout the secondment I maintained close links with my FRS to ensure that I kept abreast of what was happening.

How was your work at the FSC evaluated?

I attended numerous courses during my secondment and benefited from the College's ongoing appraisal system, which helped me to structure further development.

Delegate feedback was invaluable to me, with praise and suggestions from participants on our training courses as useful as it was rewarding.

How do you feel you benefited personally from your time at the FSC?

I feel I am now a much stronger officer both professionally and personally. The job of an instructor is a respected post within the Fire Service and is a position recognised all over the world. FSC training is very highly regarded and my secondment was a great opportunity to develop my skills and potential.

I came away from my three years feeling I was more open to change, confident working with people from all backgrounds at all levels and

12th FSC Annual Conference: Fire Related Research and Developments (RE07) 7 – 8 November 2007

This annual event brings together delegates from a range of backgrounds including FRSs, senior policy-makers, universities, consultancies and international organisations interested in fire-related research and best practice.

This year's event includes a number of Panel Discussions with Chief Fire Officers as well as a range of innovative research and practitioner projects discussing contemporary issues.

Bookings are now being taken - check our website for full details of the Conference Programme:

www.fireservicecollege.ac.uk/Conference+and+Events/Research+Event

had greatly enhanced my communication and planning skills. Now back in my own Fire Service I am certainly reaping the benefits.

Debbie Faulkner MBE

The Fire Service College is proud to announce that Debbie Faulkner, Human Resources Manager, has been honoured by Her Majesty the Queen in her birthday Honours list. Now a Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE), Debbie's contribution to the work of the College's Human Resources Department, as well as her tireless dedication to her community and charitable work, has been recognised.



Throughout her 24-year Civil Service career, Debbie has always ensured that the College has excellent welfare and counselling facilities, and has personally provided support to many staff over a wide range of work, domestic, health and welfare issues. Debbie is also actively involved in many fund-raising initiatives for various charities, most notably during the last 10 years for Samaritans Purse. She is an active supporter of World Vision, sponsoring children in Ethiopia and Bangladesh.

On being awarded an MBE, Debbie commented: "I am thrilled to have received such an honour and to have been recognised in this way. I would like to acknowledge the support of family, friends and colleagues who have always responded to my community and charitable activities."