

## IMPACT REPORT OF ALIGNING THE PERMANENT, WHOLETIME FIREFIGHTER RESOURCE TO THE TIMES OF GREATEST DEMAND

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| ALIGNING THE PERMANENT, WHOLETIME FIREFIGHTER RESOURCE TO THE TIMES OF GREATEST DEMAND |   |  |
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| IMPACT ON;   | ASSESSMENT  | Rationale  |
| Emergency response   | Emergency response will be improved.  | During the evenings and weekends there will be an increase of immediately available fire engines.  |
| Community safety   | Community safety activity will be improved.   | There will be more firefighters available for community safety activities at the weekends.   |
| Finance  | The operating budget for the fire service could be reduced.   | Levelling out the rostering of firefighters will reduce the overall number of people needed to provide emergency response cover.   |
| Staff  | New shift systems will be unsettling for staff.   | Staff at Newport have worked the current shift system for a long time and changing the hours of the working day and reducing the number of night shifts will have an impact on personal lives. |
| Trade union relationship   | Relationships will be challenged and difficult due to national position from Fire Brigade Union regarding funding and firefighters on fire engines. | The National FBU has confirmed they do not want any reduction in the fire service budgets or personnel.  |
| Safety   | There will be no reduction in safety of staff.  | Safe systems of work will be in place to enable crews working the new shift system to operate safely and effectively.  |

### IMPACT ASSESSMENT – NUMBERS OF FIRE ENGINES IMMEDIATELY AVAILABLE

2. At present the IWFRS operates with whole-time firefighters based in Ryde and Newport and provides the following guaranteed minimum level of immediately available firefighters that crew a fire engine:
  - Newport Fire Station - 24 hours a day, seven days a week – five firefighters.
  - Ryde Fire Station - eight hours (9am to 5pm) on Monday to Friday – five firefighters.
3. Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm these minimum numbers are often exceeded, with sometimes as many as 20 firefighters on duty. This variance in crewing levels is not dependent on levels of demand and does not increase the number of firefighters outside of 9am to 5pm or at weekends.
4. Changing the shift system will even out the use of firefighters, providing a more efficient service. It will ensure staff are rostered to be available during times of peak demand and when the most effective community safety work can be carried out.
5. This new model will guarantee a minimum of 12 immediately available firefighters crewing fire appliances who can be used across the Island for 12 hours a day, every day.

6. The service currently has a minimum of five firefighters who are immediately available to crew one fire engine for 15 hours every night and over the weekends.
7. The impact of changing the shift system and levelling out the rostered firefighters will reduce the times when only one fire engine is available. Improving the emergency response on the Island for three hours every week day and 12 hours on Saturdays and Sundays.
8. The impact of these changes to ensure resources match the time of peak demand can be seen in the heat maps shown below:

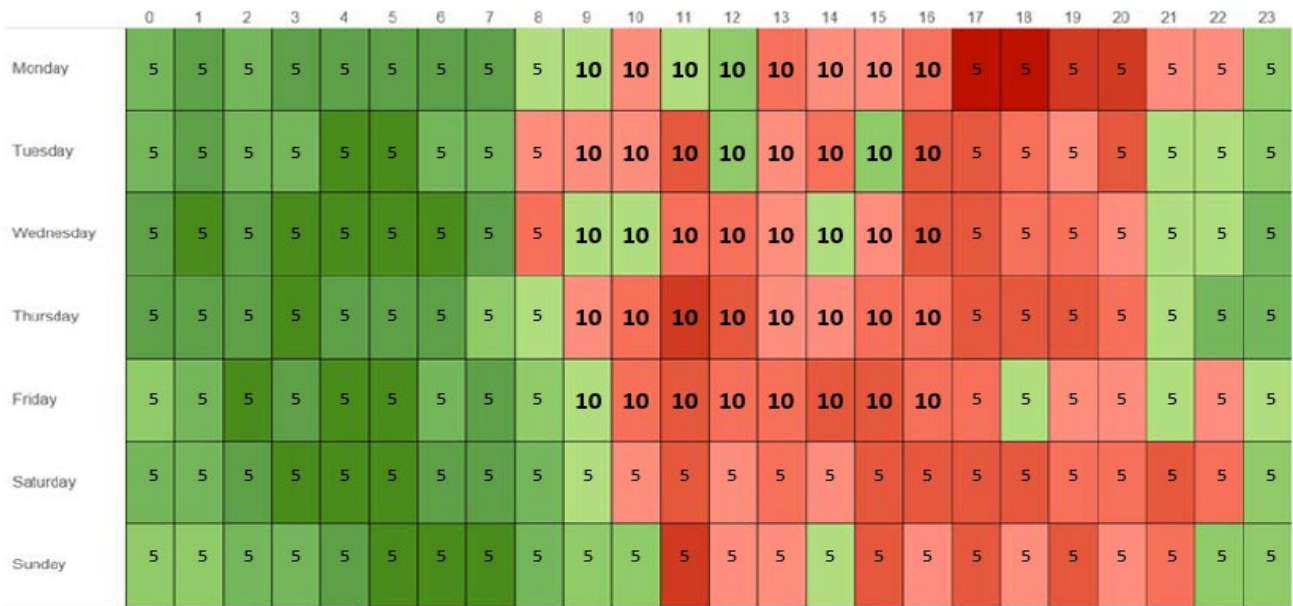


Figure One, heat map depicting the volume of incidents that occur in each hour of the week. The numbers indicate the current minimum number of immediately available firefighters crewing fire engines.

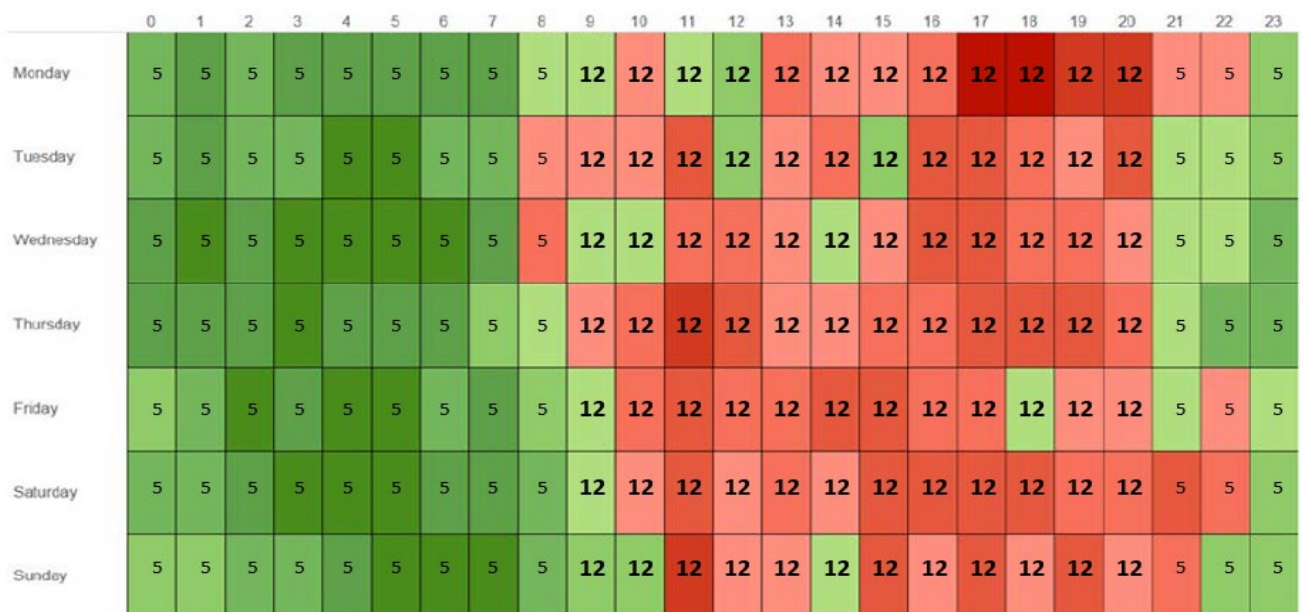


Figure Two, heat map depicting numbers of immediately available firefighters with a modified shift system.

9. This matches resources to when most incidents occur. Impact analysis has also shown that this change to the deployment of firefighters will not have any negative impact on response times.

#### IMPACT ASSESSMENT – NUMBERS OF FIREFIGHTERS ON FIRE ENGINES

10. The service policy is to plan to have five firefighters, immediately available, on all fire engines across the Island. To maximise the use of available firefighters, on occasions there may need to be four firefighters on a fire engine.
11. A new shift system will continue to allocate five firefighters to a fire engine when it is the only immediately available fire engine on the Island. When there is more than one fire engine immediately available crews will be rostered to provide the most effectiveness and efficiency. For example; rather than crewing two fire engines with six people each, three fire engines will be crewed with four people each - therefore, allowing more community safety work to be carried out across a wider area. This is an area of work which will be focused on to improve the provision of risk information for firefighters at incidents.
12. Modern equipment and techniques enable four firefighters to use safe systems of work and this is common practice across the country.
13. The number of firefighters required to resolve an incident varies depending on the type of incident. IWFRS will continue to send the total required number of firefighters to ensure that an incident is resolved safely.

#### IMPACT ASSESSMENT – EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS

14. The varying levels of firefighters currently provided by the shift system does not match the time of greatest demand, or times when training, community safety can most effectively be carried out. Rostering staff to match these times and levelling out the numbers on duty will reduce the total number of firefighters needed on operational teams. This will provide efficiencies and enable contribution to the council budget pressures or enable the reallocation of staff to community safety roles and risk reduction activity across the Island. During preparation for HMICFRS inspection it became evident we have a need to improve our risk-based inspection program, and provision of risk information. The additional staff will contribute to the findings of inspection.

#### IMPACT ON STAFF

15. The Cabinet member for community safety and public protection is meeting with all teams and the Fire Brigade Union during the development of these changes.
16. The National Fire Brigade Union is opposed to having less than five fighters on fire engines at any time. The Fire Brigade Union is opposed to any changes which see a reduction in staff numbers.
17. Staff are concerned that at night time there may be times when the only immediately available fire engine has four firefighters allocated to it.
18. Staff are also concerned that changes to the current shift system will negatively affect their 'work life balance'.
19. To address these concerns the Cabinet member has instructed the local senior fire officer to ensure five fighters are allocated to the fire engine at night times. The Cabinet member will receive performance reports to monitor this.
20. The Cabinet member recognises the importance of a 'work life balance' and has requested that staff are involved with developing a new shift system which balances the needs of the service and individuals.

## CONCLUSION

21. As part of the Cabinet decision in April 2018 to align whole-time firefighter resources to the times of greatest demand, an impact report was requested to be brought to Cabinet to describe the impact of the changes.
22. This report provides the assessment of the impact of introducing a new shift system for the IWFRS.