



<b>Classification</b>	<b>Official</b>		
<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Performance and Resources Board</b>	<b>Agenda no.</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Meeting Date</b>	<b>24<sup>th</sup> September 2024</b>		
<b>Report Authors</b>	<b>AM Response – Craig McLellan</b>		
<b>Presented By</b>	<b>Director of Operations – Moira Bruin</b>		
<b>Subject</b>	<b>On Call Remediation Plans including converting stations update</b>		
<b>Type of Report</b>	<b>Information</b>		
<b>PFCC Action Point No.</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>For Publication</b>	<b>Yes</b>

## **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

This paper is primarily for information purposes only. Previous day crewed stations have now converted to On-Call status. All stations are now part of the on-going converted station action plan. Performance is being measured and tracked at the Converted Stations Transitional Board. This paper also outlines the remediation plans in place for standalone on call strategic stations where availability is below the expected level. Those stations are Braintree, Witham, and Canvey Island.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report provides an update on current availability of those stations that ECFRS has converted from Day Crewed to On-Call as part of the On-Call conversion project. It also outlines progress and plans at 3 On-Call stations that ECFRS has designated as standalone strategic stations where availability is below target.

August has seen the most significant increase in availability of Witham’s rescue Pump to 32.5% following the full return of the Watch Manager into the workplace with Dovercourt, Gt Baddow and Waltham Abbey also improving over this reporting period. As predicted and stated in last month’s report there has been a significant drop in availability at South Woodham Ferrers due to annual leave of key individuals (Officers and drivers), however Canvey and Braintree have remained stable.

Coverage across all strategic stations for the month of August, again, remained at 97% ensuring that communities have adequate fire cover at all 19 strategic and joint strategic stations.

This month’s report again highlights some of the challenges and fragility of the On-Call crewing model (which is shared nationally), however proactive local management actions across the commands have limited the impact at six out of the seven stations.

A station review is still planned with the Group and Station Managers Dovercourt in early September to give assurance around the improvement plans.

All stations within this report continue to be monitored, supported and scrutinised through regular Station and Command performance management meetings and new Group Managers now feedback through a monthly performance board.

### **Key Headlines:**

#### Dovercourt:

August saw an increase in availability of both appliances, 11P1 by 8.8% and 11P2 by 1.6% which was achieved through the proactive management of a limited resource and a reduction in summer leave.

The station specific plans in place (including performance improvement plans) to improve appliance availability remain in place however this is proving a challenge against ongoing sickness and a lack of drivers. Further work is ongoing to look at long term resourcing plans against development pathways of individuals with the potential to become drivers and managers in the coming years.

Coverage at Dovercourt during August was 98%, which has ensured that fire cover was maintained for the local community.

#### Canvey Island:

As the summer leave period continued through August, Canvey has seen a slight decrease in availability of 1.6% for 54P1 and 6% for 54P2.

This is reflective of the ongoing annual leave over the summer holiday period, however the service has maintained coverage at Canvey at 98% to ensure fire cover at the station. Recruitment is continuing with one firefighter having just passed their safe to ride and a further firefighter booked onto the next available training course which is scheduled for October.

#### South Woodham:

As predicted last month, SWF's availability throughout August has seen a significant drop to 18.3% due to annual leave of an officer and the only Firefighter driver. Unfortunately, with global resources limited due to the summer leave period strategic stations were prioritised when placing ASW's, out-duties, and DDOR's to maximise the efficiency of coverage across the county as a whole. It is expected that availability at SWF will increase significantly in the next reporting period with the return of key individuals. Local teams continue to positively work with the OCLo team to actively recruit and progress applicants on through the system, two of which have been approved for progression to basic training. There is ongoing work to encourage some Wholetime personnel who live locally to support short term dual contracts to fill the skills gap as the development pathways of station personnel continue.

#### Great Baddow:

Great Baddow have again continued to improve their availability by a further 6.2% in August by proactive local management of summer leave.

Crews are continuing to actively recruit new joiners by engaging with the local community, Community Safety Partnerships and social media however the return on actual recruits is an ongoing challenge.

Braintree:

The figures for Braintree are slightly misleading this month as they show a 15.5% decrease for 78P1 and a 10.4% increase for 78P2. This is due to 78P1 being taken off the run for a significant period due to a mechanical defect with 78P2 being crewed instead. Overall, the station availability has seen a 2.5% decrease on the previous month, but the single appliance availability remains above 80%. There continues to be some ongoing challenges with several personnel off the run for various reasons such as maternity leave, Fitness and a career break but the general availability remains stable.

The local management team continue to support development firefighters through their pathways and are looking to recruit into the vacant officer post shortly.

Witham:

As predicted last month, with the full return of the Watch Manager back into the workplace at Witham they have delivered a 32.5% increase in availability of 25P1 and a further 5.9% of 25P2. This has in turn boosted the morale of personnel at Witham and demonstrates the importance of key individuals in management roles being able to actively manage locally and provide availability. In addition, this has reduced the need for standby appliances into Witham as a key station whilst maintaining 96% coverage.

Waltham Abbey:

Again, with the return of some personnel from annual leave, Waltham Abbey have seen an increase in availability of 5.5% and it is expected to increase further in the next reporting period. One firefighter remains seconded back to Loughton to support global water rescue availability, however water rescue training for Loughton is scheduled for September which will facilitate their return. Local managers continue to support the progression of development firefighters which in time will reduce the need for embedded support.

## **BACKGROUND**

Within the current response strategy ECFRS has designated 12 stations as stand-alone Strategic Stations and an additional 7 pairs of joint strategic stations. This are key to ensuring the service optimises its response times. Of these the ones that are on call and standalone that are not performing to the agreed levels of availability are Braintree, Witham, and Canvey. The remediation plans outline the steps the teams are taking to increase availability to the required level.

Availability for the month of August 2024 for these stations and the converting stations is:

Station	First Pump Availability % And comparison against previous month	Second Pump Availability % where applicable and comparison against previous month
Dovercourt	69.7% +8.8%	1.8% +1.6%
Canvey	80.6% -1.6%	8% -6%
South Woodham Ferrers	18.3% -22.3%	
Great Baddow	40.7% +6.2%	
Braintree	68.1% -15.5%	18.7% +10.4%
Witham	75.6% +32.5%%	5.9% +5.9%
Waltham Abbey	38.5% +5.5%	

## RISKS

Risks are all linked to the station specific sections of this paper.

## LINKS TO FIRE AND RESCUE PLAN

These are the following links to the FRP:

- **Prevention, Protection & Response** – The recruitment of O/C to the converting stations, directly supports our station availability and meeting our response standards as detailed in our Response Strategy. We need to maintain the prevention, protection, and response that the day crewed stations have held and carry this through to the new duty system.
- **Be transparent, Open, and Accessible** – The project team undertakes numerous steps to engage and consult with all affected personnel within scope of the project. This includes current day crew and O/C employees existing and new. We continue to be accessible throughout this project journey.
- **Promote a positive culture in the workplace** – We remain true to this undertaken the recruitment of new O/C colleagues into the service and working with our day crewed employees.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There continues to be a financial impact on the service by dynamically covering On Call strategic stations with standby appliances, however the RMU continue to utilise individuals through ASW, DDOR or Out-duties where possible to minimise these costs whilst maintaining fire cover across all strategic stations to a target of 98%.

## LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Nothing to note.

## STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

This paper sets out the plans all the command teams are taking to ensure greater levels of availability at their stations. This is inextricably linked to the Availability Action

Plan and the key points from that plan are highlighted in the remediation plans which are already realising availability improvements across the service.

### **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

The actions being taken will not have a disproportionate impact on individuals with protected characteristics (as defined within the Equality Act 2010), when compared to all other individuals and will not disadvantage people with protected characteristics.

Race	N	Religion or belief	N
Sex	N	Gender reassignment	N
Age	N	Pregnancy & maternity	N
Disability	N	Marriage and Civil Partnership	N
Sexual orientation	N		

The Core Code of Ethics Fire Standard has been fully considered and incorporated into the proposals outlined in this paper.

### **HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

There are none specific to this report.

### **FUTURE PLANS**

Future plans for all stations are set out in the appendices to this paper.

### **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AND APPENDICES**