

report

meeting	NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND CITY OF NOTTINGHAM FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY	
date	13 September 2006	agenda item number

REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE

UNITED KINGDOM NATIONAL EXTRICATION CONFERENCE 27 JULY 2006 & CHALLENGE EVENT – 27-29 JULY 2006

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To report back to Members on the attendance by the Chair of the Community Safety Committee and the Deputy Chief Fire Officer at the United Kingdom Rescue Organisations (UKRO) Conference and the results of the National Road Traffic Collision Extrication Challenge.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The Fire Service has held a national extrication challenge for many years. Since 2003 this has been organised by UKRO, which is an organisation set up and run by the Fire Service in order to promote the development of road traffic accident rescue skills. UKRO are affiliated to the World Rescue Organisation who have similar aims and run the world challenge event. The current world Champions are a team from Bridgend Fire Station in South Wales.

2.2 Nottinghamshire hosted the first UKRO national challenge and conference in 2003. Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire & Rescue Authority have supported this event for many years and Nottinghamshire teams during this time have made a significant contribution to improving the standard of extrication skills within the country. The Service has a number of teams that compete in a local event for the right to represent Nottinghamshire in the national challenge.

2.3 The 2006 conference and challenge was hosted by East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service in Brighton between 27 and 29 July 2006.

3. THE CONFERENCE

3.1 The conference took place on 27 July and was entitled 'The Chain of Care'. It was opened by the Minister for Fire, Angela Smith MP, and had seven major papers presented. The Minister in her opening address concentrated on three themes. The first theme was partnerships and singled out for special consideration in this area was the need to engage in co-responding schemes where there was a need, reducing the risk to vulnerable people in our communities, and the partnership between local and central government to provide the equipment for new areas of work. The second area was the changing role of the Service as outlined in the 2004 Fire & Rescue Services Act and the National Framework. Special mention was

made of the role in road traffic prevention and intervention, along with the need to make the workforce more diverse in its make up. The final area addressed was the need to get others to identify the contribution that the Fire Service has to play in making a difference, the car manufactures were singled out for a special mention in this area. The Minister stayed at the conference for some of the presentations, prior to visiting the challenge site. A summary of conference proceedings is attached as Appendix A to this report.

- 3.2 This was a very valuable conference that is growing in influence and is relevant to the work of the Fire and Rescue Authority. It is recommended that the Authority should positively consider attending in the future.
- 3.3 The extrication competition took place over two days and had 50 teams competing from 43 Fire and Rescue Services. Nottinghamshire was represented by two teams, one from officers drawn from throughout the Service and one from Carlton retained section. Overall, the Service finished 20 and 42 in the main event. Within the medical element the Service finished 12 and 30 respectively. In addition to the main challenge there was Trauma Challenge, which medics from both teams took part in. The Service came 16 and 12 respectively.
- 3.4 Both teams took the opportunity to work together in a large vehicle extrication workshop, which enabled them to learn new skills in heavy rescue. At this years event there was also a demonstration of working at height, which will form the basis of a competition in next year's event. The event also had many safety and operational displays. It was covered extensively by radio and television. Bus routes were changed in order to facilitate public attendance, which was very successful.
- 3.5 Both of our teams demonstrated a very high level of ability within a very competitive environment. They were a credit to the Authority and should be congratulated on their achievements. The feedback received from all the events will be analysed by the teams to improve future capabilities. The skills learned from this competition are used at RTCs in the county on a daily basis and fed into the training of all staff.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The cost of attending the conference, including accommodation, travel and subsistence was of the order of £400 per delegate. This has been met from the budgetary provision for Member Conference Expenses and Officer Conference Expenses.

5. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

There are no personnel implications arising from this report.

6. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

There are no issues of equality arising from this report.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Participation in this event and the training that led up to the event has improved the capability of the individual and so has reduced the risk to the community.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 That Members note the contents of this report.

8.2 That the Authority congratulate the teams on their efforts within the event, and supports the conference and the challenge next year, when it will be hosted by South Wales Fire and Rescue Service.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION

None.

Councillor Sybil Fielding
CHAIR OF COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE

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SUMMARY OF CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

The first conference paper was given by Mike Winett from GRSP who placed the road traffic collision (RTC) issue within a global context. It was emphasised that the UK rate of death and serious accident of 1.4 per 10,000 vehicles was low when compared with 700 per 10,000 vehicle in Africa. It was accepted that the UK rates were currently too high and could be reduced much further. The reasons for the global differences had been identified as the work undertaken in the UK in prevention, along with the standard of cars on the roads. Examples were sited of cars sold in the UK for a few hundred pounds and then exported to third world countries, thus making a profit from our redundant vehicles, the link to poverty was clearly made. Mr Winett highlighted that in the USA, 14 times more people died in RTCs each year than were killed in New York on 9/11, but the investment in prevention was far less. Predictions based on the growth of cars and accident rates in the third world showed that RTCs would be a bigger killer than Aids by 2020.

In order to overcome the problems highlighted above it was suggested that Engineering, Education, Enforcement, Emergency Services training and Trauma Care training was needed throughout the world. Mr Winett highlighted the work that UKRO and the British Fire Service were doing in the third world by providing skills transfer and equipment. There was a plea for governments throughout the world to show commitment to reducing the preventable carnage that was happening on the roads throughout the world.

The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) President, Chief Constable Ken Jones, presented the second conference paper. He spoke about police road policy in relation to the 3200 people killed each year on the roads in the UK. He identified that the main threats to life occurred by drink driving, speed, mobile telephone usage, driver tiredness, drug driving, work related road safety, child/teen road safety and non use of seat belts. Ken highlighted the change in legislation that allowed the use of money from speeding fines to be used for prevention, this amounted to £110 million pounds per year. The police's RTC focus was on education, enforcement, road engineering and encouragement. The police in the near future would be concentrating on reducing attendance times, reducing the time roads were closed and reducing cyclist pedestrian deaths and serious injury events. In response to questions Mr Jones agreed that the Fire Service should be mobilised quickly to all RTCs where persons were involved, he said he would rather have us en route and not needed, than have our attendance delayed when people were in need of help. He said he would be speaking with Chief Constable colleagues in order to see what could be done.

The third and last paper of the morning was on the Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) road safety strategy, which has just been issued. This paper was presented by Susan Johnson, Chief Executive (Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service) and DCFO Frank Duffield (Humberside Fire and Rescue Service). The strategy was outlined along with its links to legislation and Integrated Risk Management planning. The size of the issue in relation to fire was explored, for example national fatalities in a year - 508 from fire and 3221 from RTCs. It was highlighted that the 'at risk' groups for fire and RTC were the same. In the area of prevention a call was made for greater information collection from RTCs, so that proper evaluation could be undertaken of activity. In the protection workstream it had been identified that tracking and location devices could be used to call for assistance where an airbag had activated. In the intervention workstream the increases in skills brought about by UKRO's challenge was highlighted, this was demonstrated by a video of

Nottinghamshire's team in action at the world event in New Zealand. Mr Duffield highlighted the Service's team leaders' command skills as an exceptional example.

After lunch Dr Richard Tay spoke about the difficulties in modifying driver behaviour, he challenged much of today's thinking, for example in the area of investigation he highlighted that the approach often taken was to look for blame and that this led the investigator to focus on the driver in order to identify what had gone wrong, when often the root cause of the accident could be engineered out by changes to roads or vehicles. He highlighted the myth that legal driving behaviour equals safe driving. Dr Tay explored the effect of personality and optimism bias on driver behaviour. In a section on change, a model of acceptance of the need for change was identified and the types of campaigns were linked to an individual's readiness to change. The effects of deterrent initiatives were explored along with models on health benefits and fear. The conclusion was reached that there were no easy solutions as individuals varied so much, but suggested linkages could be made between some societal groups and types of reduction campaigns.

CFO Martin Burrell of West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service looked at mobilising protocols and the effect of the FiReControl and Firelink projects. After explaining both projects, he outlined the change in approach to call taking, attribute mobilising and the increase in information from the new Firelink data communication system.

Dr James French outlined his research into RTCs where he took a patient centric approach by following the stages of an accident and examining the effects of different interventions. In order to do this he gathered together 15 sets of data held by different agencies, one of the most useful was the NHS TARN system, which was voluntary data set about trauma. Only the higher performing NHS trusts were collecting this data at this time. It was clear from his research, which continues, that we don't understand the basics of trauma and therefore our interventions are not based on evidence. The presentation concluded by a request for greater information gathering by all agencies, the sharing of that information via a central injury register and the mandatory use of the TARN system by the NHS.

In the last presentation Peter McCabe from Headway UK, a head injury rehabilitation trust, outlined that 500,000 people suffer from brain injury in the UK and of those injured, between 65 and 80% recover. The 'at risk' groups are men between 15 and 29 and those over 65. 50% of brain injuries occur in RTCs. The effects of brain injury depend on what part of the brain is affected and so it can result in physical and emotional problems. Neuro-rehabilitation has not kept pace with the advances in medical science and the type of care received was a postcode lottery. Headway were lobbying government to legislate the compulsory use of helmets for child cyclists, due to the high rate of accidents, high survival rates and effects on this group of our community.