

Station working routines

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1 Purpose

- 1.1 Station working routines are designed to ensure that officers are able to plan the work which will be undertaken at station level. They aim to make the best use of station personnel's skills and abilities in meeting the needs of the Brigade and the community it serves.
- 1.2 Station working routines enable station personnel in accordance with this policy to:
 - (a) be prepared for and undertake community fire safety activities and fire safety devolved to station level;
 - (b) be trained and prepared for operational incidents and contingencies in the most efficient and effective manner;
 - (c) maintain appliances, equipment and station areas to the required operational standards of hygiene, tidiness and safety;
 - (d) carry out the various administrative and clerical duties appropriate to a firefighter's fire safety and operational role;
 - (e) receive appropriate fitness training and adequate rest periods within the duty shift.
- 1.3 Personnel on duty must be available at all times to respond to emergency calls and to perform work related to the operational availability of appliances and equipment for emergency calls.

2 Definitions

- 2.1 Watch officer: station officer, acting up/temporary station officer, sub officer, acting up/temporary sub officer and leading firefighter +.

3 Working routines – duty shifts

- 3.1 The working routines in the boxes below outline the daily regime to be followed by station personnel. For more detailed information managers should consult the indicated guidance.

Working routines – duty shifts – including statutory public holidays and extra statutory leave days

Time	Activity
0930 - 2000	Station working routines inclusive of 1½ hours breaks for meals/refreshments
2000 - 2359	Station working routines inclusive of 1 hour break
Midnight - 0700	Stand down period, n.b. see next row
0640 - 0700	Prepare for station working routines, e.g. ablutions
0700 - 0930	Station working routines inclusive of 45 minute break

- 3.2 The station working routine is flexible to allow station-based officers to organise work activities based on local priorities and risks, whilst taking due account of the work that needs to be completed at area, borough, station and watch level to continually reduce fires, deaths, injuries, false alarms and special services.
- 3.3 Station working routines – include amongst other things, appliance checks and breathing apparatus tests at the commencement of the shift, training and staff development, community

safety, equipment testing/operational readiness, premises health and safety, fitness training and station administration.

- 3.4 Duty shifts will include a regular, reasonable pattern for meal and other breaks, which, along with stand down time, will be free from station working routine activities unless necessary to maintain resources available for mobilising or operational readiness. This pattern for breaks may vary from time to time in order to accommodate such activities as community safety or training. The break for breakfast is expected to be completed by 0815 hours, lunch is expected to be completed by 1530 hours and supper is expected to be completed by 2230 hours. On days a 15 minute refreshment break is expected to be taken either side of the lunch break. These two breaks are included within the 1½ hours breaks in the table above.
- 3.5. The periods allocated to station working routines are provided to enable station personnel to prepare for and meet the needs of the Brigade and the community it serves. For information station personnel should consult the following:
- **Station Diary**, and the **Work Queue**, for outstanding and upcoming appointments and tasks.
 - **Standard test board** – necessary for the testing of equipment etc. within the work routines e.g. standard tests, maintenance of equipment and appliances etc.

4 Stand-down period

- 4.1 Employees should be allowed to take rest periods every night between midnight and 0700, other than on those occasions where they are required to respond to emergency calls, perform work arising from emergency calls or perform other essential activities that:
- Arise from the integrated risk management plan (IRMP)
 - Are within the employee's role and responsibilities, and
 - Are appropriate during these hours
- 4.2 These arrangements shall be subject to consultation between the fire and rescue authority and recognised trade unions.
- 4.3 Examples of work arising from emergency calls or essential activities in line with 4.1 above include, but are not limited to:
- Replace and re-stow appliances, and the testing of equipment, to ensure that all appliances are available for emergency calls.
 - Any other matters that could impair or impact the operational efficiency and/or health and safety of the station or Brigade.

5 Meal breaks

Within this section certain provisions are made to facilitate the preparation and cooking of food. It is the responsibility of the officer in charge to ensure that the use of these provisions does not interfere with the mess managers or other firefighters' ability to maintain the required level of competence and operational efficiency.

- 5.1 **Time available for meals** – Will be in accordance with 3.1 above. In addition and where appropriate the officer in charge of appliances may make alternative arrangements for stand easy off-station, e.g. during outside duties. Breaks during the day shift can be taken at any time during the "working routines" period subject to local consultation where the officer in charge will be mindful of the needs of the crew or the watch, provided the efficiency of the station is not impaired. The officer in charge is responsible for notifying station commanders of the planned meal times so a record can be maintained for their watch. Where it is necessary to change a

planned meal time at short notice, the station commander should be notified by email (see Policy number 354 - Station mess and stand-by food related allowances, regarding spoiled meals).

6 Kitchen hygiene

- 6.1 Officers and mess managers have responsibility for kitchen hygiene as per Policy number 928 – Food safety. Practical responsibility for kitchen and utensil hygiene falls to station personnel. Personnel who have cause to use the kitchen and its facilities have a responsibility to maintain standards of hygiene and cleanliness as per Policy number 928 – Food safety. Officers and mess managers are therefore to ensure that floors and kitchen surfaces are washed down and all equipment and utensils used are kept clean in accordance with manufacturers' instructions.

7 Spoiled food

- 7.1 Where a meal is spoiled as a result of an operational incident, an allowance is payable to fire station messes in accordance with Policy number 354 – Station mess and stand-by food related allowances. In respect of reasonable and justifiable claims that fall outside the specific criteria outlined in Policy number 354 – Station mess and stand-by food related allowances; station commanders, if they consider payment to be appropriate may authorise such claims as set out in Policy number 354 – Station mess and stand-by food related allowances.

8 Health and safety

- 8.1 Officers are responsible for health and safety issues on station and are reminded to consult Policy number 510 – Brigade premises health safety and environment inspections, for details of duties and frequencies of inspections etc.

Appendix 1 – Operational readiness

1 Outside duties – other than exercises

1.1 Appliances and crew activities

Each station will be required to undertake outside duties. Where an appliance is on outside duties it will be available:

- First line availability (green SR), immediately available for mobilising; or
- Second line availability (red SR) where it will be fully crewed and ready for mobilising at the request of Brigade Control.

Outside duties include:

- Inspections under Regulatory Reform Order (RRO)¹;
- inspections under Section 7(2)(d), including in relation to High Rise Premises;
- alleged Fire Risks;
- inspections of premises for entry of risks onto the Operational Risk Database;
- community safety activities;
- hydrant inspections;
- regulatory fire safety check visits.

- 1.2 The number and disposition of appliances to be allowed on outside duties at any one time will be the responsibility of RMC and the Deputy Commissioner.

2 Roll call

2.1 General

Personnel of the oncoming watch will muster in sufficient time for the roll to be called by the change of watch and their riding positions and other duties detailed. The oncoming watch is to parade in full. The oncoming watchroom attendant/'duty person' is to report to the watchroom.

Whichever watch is on duty should update StARS immediately. Within 10 minutes of the commencement of the shift ridership levels should be confirmed on StARS by one of the watch officers.

As early as possible into the shift the officer in charge (in accordance with 6.2(e) below) needs to check the availability of riders for the oncoming shift and ensure that staff are available to hang on if required.

2.2 Off-going watch – duties and responsibilities

Operational responsibilities

Members of the off-going watch are to ride to any call received before the time of changeover. They are also personally responsible for ensuring that, before going off duty, they have been relieved by their respective member of the oncoming watch. Individuals who have not been relieved by the change of watch should notify their officer.

¹ This is currently under discussion in the JCF.

Prescribed cleaning and checks

Before releasing individuals from duty or considering mutual exchanges, the officer shall be satisfied that they have fulfilled their responsibility for ensuring that the station is left in a hygienic, safe and tidy condition. Off-going watch members will also ensure that their personal gear is in good condition and cleaned.

Note: Where due to operational contingencies, a member of an off-going watch is unable to clean personal gear prior at the end of the normal duty shift, such cleaning will be completed immediately following their next roll call.

Change of watch – early relief of duty provisions (see also Policy number 001 – Mutual exchange of duties).

With the permission of the officer in charge and subject to section 2.2 above, members of the off-going watch may arrange early relief of duty with the respective member of the on-coming watch between 0730 - 0900 hours and 1800 - 1930 hours respectively. Early relief of duty will **not** be permitted during the last 30 minutes of a shift. Prior to releasing personnel from duty, work routines (s.3) and the necessary watch requirements are to be completed or handed over to the on-coming member of staff.

2.3 Inspection of duty watch

The officer is to make a thorough inspection of each individual's uniform and equipment and ensure that it is clean and in order.

2.4 Policy/procedure notes and inspections, etc.

After the inspection the manager is to draw the attention of the personnel to any fresh issue of a policy/procedural note or any other instructions before dismissing the watch.

3 General appliance and equipment check/tests

At the conclusion of roll call personnel are responsible for undertaking appliance equipment inventories and tests in liaison with the vehicle driver.

4 Personal responsibilities for appliance and equipment check/tests**4.1 Breathing apparatus riders – inspection of BA sets**

Personnel will be nominated as BA wearers, BA entry control officers and/or GTCPS wearers during roll call. At the conclusion of the roll call, and whenever subsequently required to take over BA sets, all personnel are personally responsible for checking and testing their sets and recording the information required on the BA tally and in the appropriate log book. BA Comms wearers are to test BA Comms and change batteries and note this in the appropriate log book. Defective sets are to be reported to the officer in accordance with Policy number 466 – Respiratory protective equipment – breathing apparatus.

4.2 Drivers – handing over

The vehicles daily routines are to be carried out by the driver detailed to the vehicle. The weekly check is to be conducted once a week and is to include rebooting the SatNav, MDT (front cab) and Appliance Tablet (rear cab). A reboot once a week will ensure that all software is updated

and performing optimally and will provide crews with current and relevant information. The reboot should be included in the Station Diary to avoid being missed.

4.3 Crew members

Hydrant location information is available via the appliance MDT. A crew member is to be detailed the task of hydrant location on roll call.

5 Officers not available at roll call

The changeover of watches is not to be delayed because of the non-arrival of a officer in charge of the oncoming watch. The officer in charge of the off-going watch is to remain on duty for up to an hour, although may volunteer to hang on for longer.

6 Appliance crews

6.1 Normal crews

So far as available personnel will permit, appliances should be crewed as follows, the numbers to include the officer in charge of the appliance:

• Dual Purpose Pump Ladders -	5
• Pump Ladders -	5
• Pumps -	4
• Fire Rescue Units -	4
• Command Units -	3
• Turntable Ladders/Hydraulic Platforms -	2
• Fireboat -	5
• Operational Support Unit -	1
• Hose Laying Lorry -	Alternate Crewing
• Fire Investigation Unit -	1
• Bulk Foam Unit -	Alternate Crewing
• Incident Response Unit (permanently crewed) -	1

Minimum crews

In the event of there being insufficient personnel at a station to provide normal crews, the crews of the under mentioned appliances may be reduced in accordance with the following minimum scale, and RMC informed before appliances are taken 'off the run' for insufficient crew.

Dual purpose pump ladders at a 1 appliance station 5

Pump ladders at stations where there:

• is a pump ladder and pump	4
• Command Units	3
• Hose Laying Lorry	Alternate Crewing

All other appliances will maintain normal crews.

6.2 Action to be taken to keep appliances on the run even with minimum crews (see also 'Agreement in relation to redeployment of appliances'):

- (a) Every endeavour will be made by RMC to secure the necessary additional personnel on a standby basis from within the Brigade.

- (b) Where, owing to general shortage of personnel, it is necessary to take appliances off the run, the identity of such appliances is to be determined in accordance with the general principles detailed below, subject to the exigencies of the service. It will be the decision of RMC, in conjunction with the Control Commander at Control and the duty AC, to identify such appliances and take them off the run.
- (i) Pump Ladders at all stations are to be kept on the run.
 - (ii) At stations which normally crew a Pump Ladder and Pump together with one or more special appliances the Pump may be taken off the run in order to maintain crews on the Pump Ladder and on such special appliances.
 - (iii) At stations which normally crew a Pump Ladder together with one or more special appliances. **All** appliances are to remain on the run unless (iv) below applies.
 - (iv) At the discretion of RMC in liaison with the officer of the day or control commanders, one or more special appliances may be taken off the run if the proximity in the Brigade of other special appliances of the same kind makes this possible.
- (c) The general principles set out in (i), (ii), (iii), and (iv) of 6.2 (b) above will also apply in the event of a temporary shortage of personnel or absence of a driver occurring at a station at the change of watch pending the arrival of a 'standby' from another station.
- (d) Every effort is to be made to comply with the general principles set out in (b) above, by first obtaining volunteers from the off-going watch to remain on duty in order to keep pump ladders and special appliances on the run. Where volunteers are not forthcoming to maintain appliance availability personnel are to be ordered to perform overtime for up to 1 hour. Staff may volunteer to hang on for longer than 1 hour. In the event that staff refuse to hang on the officer of the day must be informed at the earliest opportunity.
- (e) When RMC have identified appliances which will be unavailable for the entire shift, they will inform the relevant stations, prior to the oncoming shift starting that there will be a requirement for crews to hang on for 1 hour only, for these identified appliances.
- (f) There is no requirement for the off going watch to hang on for an appliance identified as training as a watch (TaaW).
- (g) Those required to perform overtime in order to keep appliances on the run are to be given notice of the requirement at the earliest possible moment; for example, where it is known at the beginning of a shift that the need will arise at the end of the shift, the personnel concerned are to be told as soon as possible after the beginning of the shift. The manager in charge should ensure that details of staff remaining on duty are entered onto the roll call board.

6.3 Oncoming watch finding appliances away

In the event of the oncoming watch finding that the watch to be relieved is attending a fire or other incident, the manager is to update StARS with the availability of crews, call the roll, and to proceed with normal station routines. Upon the return of the appliance, status 1 availability should be confirmed as soon as practicable and ridership levels will need to be refreshed on StARS.

Appendix 2 – Training

1 Station training activities

1.1 DaMOP

As per Policy number 427 – DaMOP, watch officers are to lead and conduct the mandatory training listed in the Station Diary. Officers are to ensure that training periods are properly organised and monitored so that all personnel under their command receive a balanced schedule of practical and theoretical training as determined and listed and planned in the Station Diary. The officer in charge is to ensure that any outside training venues are correctly assessed via a 5532, and any additional training items, e.g., a scrap car, are ordered well in advance for the training session. Training sessions are uploaded into the Diary 3 months in advance and future planning and preparation should be conducted at regular intervals to ensure that any extra items or locations are planned for and booked in advance.

1.2 Fitness training

Such training will be undertaken by all operational station personnel in accordance with the Development and Maintenance of Operational Professionalism, and the Fitness Policy, Policy number 935.

2 Operational exercises and combined training

These will be conducted in accordance with Brigade policy guidelines.

Document history

Impact assessments

An equality, sustainability or health, safety and welfare impact assessment and/or a risk assessment was last completed on:

EIA	06/02/2024	SDIA	25/09/2023	HSWIA	18/08/2023	RA	
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Audit trail

Listed below is a brief audit trail, detailing amendments made to this policy/procedure.

Page/para nos.	Brief description of change	Date
Pages 3,4,5,6, + Appendices	Changes made throughout policy please read through.	09/06/2009
Page 4- 5 para 4.3 (a) and (b)	Cooks not available: weekday meals, weekend and evening meals deleted.	08/06/2009
Throughout	This policy has had minor amendments to support existing practices and has been reviewed as current. Please re-read to familiarise yourself with the content.	26/08/2010
Throughout	The term "control commander" has been replaced by "operations manager" in line with current role titles.	03/12/2010
Throughout	Reference to the CRR has been replaced by the ORD in line with current procedure.	01/04/2011
Page 10	Subject list and FOIA exemptions tables updated.	18/11/2014
Page 1	Amendments made to PN Owner and Responsible work team due to TMR.	09/10/2015
Page 3	Note added at the start of the policy.	26/05/2016
Throughout	Reviewed as current with no changes.	28/10/2016
Page 1	Owner title/Department name changed in line with the introduction of the London Fire Commissioner which now replaces the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority.	15/10/2018
Throughout	Major changes made to bring the policy up to date, as agreed with the FBU within the Joint Committee for Firefighters.	25/07/2019
Throughout	Changes made to reflect the change in organisational terminology following Role to Rank.	15/10/2019
Page 7	Change made to the minimum crewing of Command Units following integration.	20/04/2021
Throughout	Changes made to reflect IRU and SSU appliances no longer being available. Hyperlinks removed due to SharePoint migration. Control job titles updated.	05/07/2024
Section 4	Updated to align to grey book terminology.	
Section 6	Updated to reflect hanging on requirements and training as a watch implementation.	

Subject list

You can find this policy under the following subjects.

Stations	Station routines
Routines	

Freedom of Information Act exemptions

This policy/procedure has been securely marked due to:

Considered by: (responsible work team)	FOIA exemption	Security marking classification