

**MINUTES OF THE
MEETING OF THE OFFICERS SECTION OF THE
HAMPSHIRE FIRE BRIGADES UNION
TO BE HELD ON MONDAY 26TH NOVEMBER 2009
AT 1600HRS IN THE
HARLAND ROOM AT SHQ**

1. Members Present

Andy Eades (Chair), Gary Jackson (Sec) , Dave Turner, Mark White, Dave Lock, , Chris Stephens, Al Heinrich, Tim Gates, Gary Roe, Steve Ransley, Steve Robinson, Nick Davies, Andy Lock, Lee Fisher, Alan Murray, Mick Johns, Paul Coates, Mark Wittcomb

2. Apologies

Jason Avery, Niall Hayden, Malcolm Freemantle, Steve Buchanan-Lee, Steve Ash, Keith Jones, Dave Smith, Steve Quinn, Shaun Rowlatt, Geoff Vaine, Mark Palmer, Ian Gray, Alec Martin, Tim Spencer-Peet, Ben Smith, Peter Watson, Steve Trevethick, David Marshall, Martin Walters, Mick Crennell, Tony Deacon, Tom Carr, Tim Vile, Charlie Harris, Malcolm Pinchin, Mark Raven, Dave Graham

3. Minutes of Last Meeting

Minutes of the last meeting were not available.

4. Update – Fitness, New Service Order

A Discussion took place around the revised fitness standard and the fact the it will be tied into CPD Payments. It was agreed that the level set was appropriate and that failure to reach the lower level would involve removal from operational duties for safety reasons, under capability

Members are reminded that under Grey Book conditions of service Section 4 Part A para 15. FDS members cannot be removed from the FDS Duty system except as a result of disciplinary action .

5. Flexible Duty System

Members were reminded that the revise FDS Duty System places the onus upon those on ‘Rota*’ days to recall themselves to duty when available.

The correct procedure is to contact Control by Phone and Recall themselves for periods no less than 3 hrs and members are reminded that it is vital that they remove themselves from recall as well once unavailable to avoid being requested later in the day.

It was pointed out that ‘OC’ days should be left free from meetings wherever possible however it is acknowledged that meetings organised by others do not always allow for this and that the more personnel who recall themselves from ‘Rota*’ days, the greater the flexibility for those on ‘OC’ days to make themselves temporarily unavailable to

attend meetings. There was agreement within the meeting that refusal to respond to a pager alert on an 'OC' day was entirely unacceptable!

A discussion took place around the arrangements for entering Officer attendance into the IRS system, There was doubt as to whether true attendance figures are being recorded, and concern that these figures would be used to justify a reduction in the numbers of FDS required.

There was a lengthy discussion over the issue of the minimum number of FDS being 9 and whether this was appropriate as a minimum with the added requirements of Command Support, Mentoring and Audit. There was also concern that members were interpreting the Service Order on Course leave to their advantage and that the current system within Control automatically removes personnel programmed for a course from the complete 24hr period when it may be more appropriate to make themselves 'unavailable 9-1700hrs and then be available for FDS upon return. The meeting approved the Chair and Sec. Enter into discussions with AM Andy Bowers with options to address the number of occasions the FDS cover level drops below the agreed minimum.

ACTION- Chair/Sec to contact Andy Bowers to discuss FDS Cover and ensure accurate Officer attendance recording in the IRS System.

6. Provided Cars

Mark White and Lee Fisher gave an overview of the project and arguments around cost savings. There was a call to have the 'Benefits in Kind' issue clarified before any further progress could be made as members did not really know what was on offer if there was a cost implication with provided vehicles.

The safety issue of the cars was debated with questions raised as to alternatives such as better lights/sirens, magnetic reflective strips, and leasing cars under the current HCC system but limiting model and colour to improve visibility. Members also questioned the standard of in-built safety features of the provided car against those fitted to the more 'premium' vehicles they had provided themselves or through the current lease scheme.

Questions were raised around 'off duty' and away from work use of the provided car and members were asked to submit their questions direct to Gary Jackson for inclusion in a FAQ section of the provided cars project (a selection of the questions already compiled is attached as Appx A). These will be submitted at the next meeting of the project working group scheduled for 13th November 2009 with the understanding that not all questions could be answered at present.

The environmental argument was questioned as most members would still require their own car in addition to the provided one, thus putting a further 60+ vehicles on the road.

Costings were questioned as to whether this had taken into account the fact that lease car users only cost 9p per mile at present and effectively users subsidise the mileage where vehicles operate at less than 50mpg. This cost would be fully met by the Service if the vehicle was provided.

ACTION – Gary Jackson to submit questions at next WG meeting

7. Any Other Business

- i. Concerns were raised over the failure to ask for 'expressions of interest' for the appointment of Stn Manager Havant as this was thought to be a recognised procedure when a post becomes vacant, and ensures members with a true interest in the post have an opportunity to be appointed.
- ii. Concerns were also raised as to how the current pilot protection/delivery GM post had evolved without the early involvement of the rep bodies. Cynically it was questioned whether this was a single person's idea to exploit the timely retirement of the current GM Southampton post had bypassed the agreed protocols for Trades Union involvement. ***ACTION – Gary Jackson/Andy Eades to raise this at the next JTU***
- iii. It was pointed out that there was talk of a separate pilot for WMs Protection, though details were unclear. ***ACTION – Chair/Sec to take this to BCM as not specific to Officers' Section***
- iv. There was a question as to why certain Service Orders are removed before the replacement is introduced and officially replaces it, leaving only the draft available SO7/3/5 was given as an example. ***ACTION – Gary Jackson/Andy Eades to raise this at the next JTU***
- v. Andy Eades stated that as he could potentially retire early in 2010 that members should consider whether they were willing to offer themselves for the post should he go. It was highlighted that the work involved many areas of the Service and was varied and interesting. It could possibly provide evidence be used as PQAs for potential promotion. Gary Jackson pointed out that the stagnation of the careers of both himself and Andy following their appointment as Secretary and Chair was entirely due to their own abilities rather than their involvement as Trade Union representatives!

8. Date and Time of Next Meeting

To be confirmed.

APPX A

FQAs for Provided Cars

1. Will I be able to choose which car I have?
2. Will all FDS Officers from Station to Area Manager get the same spec car?
3. Will I be able to use the provided car on my days off?
4. Will the car be insured for other family members?
5. I presently drop my children off at school on my way to work, will I still be able to?

6. Where do I get fuel, oil, screenwash, from?
7. When the car is not being used, will I have to park it on HFRS property?
8. Will I pay tax on the vehicle if I just use it whilst providing FDS cover?
9. Will I pay tax on the vehicle if I use it on my first and last journey whilst providing FDS cover?
10. I currently have a single allocated parking space and additional permits incur an annual cost, so who is going to pay this?
11. Can I do my weekly shopping in the car whilst I'm on call?
12. If I have to replace my current lease car with a 'family car' at the end of the term, how can this be environmentally beneficial?
13. Will the car be fitted with a Firelink radio?
14. Will I have to pay for any damage the car sustains?
15. Will I be able to use the car outside Hampshire?