

## **WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

### **AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE**

**26 SEPTEMBER 2022**

#### **1. UPDATE ON CORPORATE RISK 6.1 – BUSINESS CONTINUITY ARRANGEMENTS**

Report of the Chief Fire Officer.

RECOMMENDED

- 1.1 THAT the Committee note the context and reasoning for the uprating of Corporate Risk 6.1 in June 2022 to 16 (RED), the highest rating, and consider the implications for the Service.
- 1.2 THAT the Committee consider what steps may be necessary to mitigate this risk, given the increased likelihood of Industrial Action within the short to medium term.

#### **2. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 2.1 This report was requested at the Audit and Risk Committee of 18 July 2022 following a verbal update on the uprating of CR 6.1 provided to Committee by Gary Taylor, Assistant Chief Fire Officer. It provides further details on the reasons behind the uprating of Risk Trigger 6.1.4.1 under Corporate Risk 6.1, the potential impacts of that Risk being realised and what mitigation may be needed.

#### **3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 [The Fire and Rescue Service National Framework](#) outlines that Fire and Rescue Authorities are required to assess the risk of emergencies occurring and ensure business continuity. Paragraph 2.11 explicitly states that the Authority “must make every endeavour to meet the full range of service delivery risks and national resilience duties and commitments that they face”.
- 3.2 Furthermore, the Fire and Rescue Authority has a statutory duty to ensure business continuity/contingency plans contained within [Section 2 of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004](#) “Duty to assess, plan

and advise”.

- 3.3 The West Midlands Fire Service (WMFS) Industrial Action Plan is designed to reduce the effects of Industrial Action on WMFS activity in line with the above duties. This currently relies on non-striking operational staff and volunteers within other parts of the service to provide operational cover in the event of industrial action.
- 3.4 In September 2019, it was recommended to the Fire Authority to engage with third party providers to enhance business continuity resilience arrangements. Following an Authority scrutiny process a report was presented by the CFO to the Fire Authority in November 2019. The recommendations were not approved by the Fire Authority on the basis of the resolution of the Scrutiny Committee, which recommended that the Fire Authority continues to use existing business continuity arrangements.

#### 4. **RISK ESCALATION**

- 4.1 Corporate Risk 6.1 is that; *“The Fire Authority is unable to provide business continuity arrangements, to maintain delivery of core functions, as a result of extensive disruption to normal working arrangements, including national and international deployments, significant and major events, resulting in increased community risk; reduced confidence; increased reputational damage; and external scrutiny.”*
- 4.2 Risk Trigger 6.1.4 relates to disruption caused by industrial action involving WMFS staff, and Risk Trigger 6.1.4.1 relates specifically to the ability of the WMFS Industrial Action Plan to provide operational services in the event of industrial action. This risk has now been escalated from 12 to 16 (Impact 4, Likelihood 4) representing the highest level of risk.
- 4.3 This escalation has been prompted by an increase in likelihood score from 3 to 4. The likelihood of industrial action has increased for multiple reasons including:
- 4.3.1 Cost-of-living pressures and thus far unsuccessful pay negotiations between Local Government Employers and the Representative Bodies. The 2% offer made to Grey Book Employees in June 2022 has been rejected, falling below the 5% offered to other public sector workers and well below the current and projected rate of inflation, which the Bank of England forecast could hit 13% before the end of

2022. Green Book staff have been offered a flat rate increase of £1,925 for all staff, equating to 10.5% for the lowest paid staff. Representative Bodies are consulting their members on this offer through September.

- 4.3.2 A background of other Trade Unions undertaking strike action over pay and conditions over the summer, or balloting for industrial action in the near future. This has included action or planned action by rail workers, barristers, airline staff and postal workers.
- 4.3.3 The Fire Reform White Paper, which has been received poorly by representative bodies. The Fire Brigades' Union have described it as "an attack on workers' rights by undermining collective bargaining and a proposal to remove frontline firefighters' voices". As a consequence, industrial action might be anticipated if and when elements of the Fire Reform White Paper are progressed.
- 4.4 The impact of Risk Trigger 6.1.4 has remained at 4 because current control measures are not sufficient to mitigate the consequence of a loss of staff because of industrial action.
- 4.5 It should be noted that the West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority (WMFRA) response to the recent White Paper consultation indicated confidence that the current arrangements under the Civil Contingencies Act were sufficient and that "Business continuity plans are already in existence and have proven to be effective and robust." This contrasts significantly with the WMFS response submitted by senior officers, and more generally with the elevation of Corporate Risk 6.1, which makes clear that current Business Continuity Plans for WMFS in event of strike action are not robust and that we cannot be confident in meeting statutory duties in the event of IA.
- 4.6 In August 2022, WMFS responded to a survey published by the National Fire Chief's Council (NFCC) on preparedness for Industrial Action, which will be used to RAG (Red, Amber, Green) rate Fire and Rescue Services according to the resilience of their Business Continuity Arrangements in the event of industrial action. These findings will be shared with the Home Office Fire, Resilience and Major Events Team. The full response can be found in **Appendix A**.
- 4.6.1 This return highlights the service's current resources, staffing, incident numbers and response times, as well as setting out the basis of our contingency plans and assumptions in the event of industrial action.

4.6.2 The overall conclusion is that because our current Industrial Action Plan is reliant upon non-striking volunteers, there is **limited confidence or understanding** of the predicted cover that might be achieved for future periods of Industrial Action. Previous staff availability cannot be taken as a measure of intent due to the very different factors likely to be involved in a future period of industrial action (namely pay and cost of living).

## 5. **MITIGATION**

- 5.1 Given the limited confidence in the current business continuity arrangements and the increased risk of Industrial Action in the short to medium term, it is recommended that the Audit and Risk Committee consider what mitigating actions may be required.
- 5.2 On 30 August 2022, the Strategic Enabling Team recommended to the Chief Fire Officer that he engage with an external provider to enhance business continuity and resilience arrangements to enable the service to meet expected resilience levels. This would be for the provision of five PRLs and 25 personnel.
- 5.3 This would be to provide a minimum baseline of emergency response provision *in addition* to whatever provision is possible under current Business Continuity arrangements.
- 5.4 Such a step, while operational in nature and therefore a delegated matter to the CFO, would incur expenditure in excess of £250,000, which would make this a matter reserved to the Authority as set out in paragraph 6.2.3 of the Constitution. As such this matter will need consideration and approval by the Fire Authority.
- 5.5 Given that the primary cause of any likely Industrial Action in the short to medium term is the cost of living and the 2022/23 pay offer, the Authority may wish to consider making further representations on this matter to the Home Office, HM Treasury and Local Government Employers. The Chief Fire Officer has already made representations to this effect.

## 6. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 6.1 There are no specific Equalities Impacts as a result of this paper or recommendations.

7. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 As mentioned above, the Authority are subject to a legal duty to maintain robust business continuity arrangements under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and to provide for response to incidents such as fires, road traffic collisions and other emergencies within their area as set out within the Fire and Rescue Service Act 2004.

8. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 Steps required to further mitigate risk from Industrial Action, such as that proposed in section 5.2, would incur expenditure above the £250,000 delegated limit for the CFO. Such expenditure would also not be included within currently approved budgets.

The contact officer for this report is Gary Taylor, Assistant Chief Fire Officer and Director, Service Delivery.

PHIL LOACH  
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

**APPENDIX A****WMFS RETURN TO NFCC BUSINESS CONTINUITY SURVEY****Section 1 - Service Information****1.1 Industrial Action Lead Officer Contact Name**

Area Commander Samantha Burton

**1.2 Population of Service Area**

Based on 2021 census - West Midlands total 2,919,600

**1.3 Geographical Area (sq. miles)**

348 square miles

**1.4 Cities and larger towns within service area (where are major risks, populations above 20k)**

- Birmingham 1,144,900
- Coventry 345,300
- Dudley 323,500
- Sandwell 341,900
- Solihull 216,200
- Walsall 284,100
- Wolverhampton 263,700

**1.5 How many fire stations are in your service? (Please provide breakdown of Wholetime, On- all, Day Crewed (+), Mixed or Other- Specify)**

38 wholetime

**1.6 How many appliances does your service plan to have during a business-as-usual day? (Please provide breakdown of Wholetime, On-call, Day Crewed (+) or Other - Specify)**

Wholetime PRL 41

Wholetime BRV 19

**1.7 How many appliances does your service plan to have during a business-as-usual night (if different)? (Please provide breakdown of Wholetime, On-call, Day Crewed (+) or Other - Specify)**

Wholetime PRL's 40

Wholetime BRV's 11

Wholetime PRL (1000 – 1000)

Wholetime BRV's 9 (1000 – 1000)

Wholetime Business Support Vehicle (BSV) 3 (0700 – 1900)

- 1.8 Please detail any National Resilience assets currently in your service. (Include: USAR, CBRN(e) DIM, CBRN(e) MD, ELS, Boat Type B, Boat Type C, HVP, MTA Specialist Response), Other - Specify)**

USAR, CBRN(e) DIM, CBRN(e) MD, Boat Type B, Boat Type C, HVP and MTA Specialist Response.

- 1.9 How many personnel (firefighter to watch manager) are employed by your service? (Please provide breakdown of Wholetime, On-call, Day Crewed (+) or Other- Specify)**

1,354 All wholetime

Of whom: Uniformed = 1,297 and Fire Control = 57

- 1.10 How many officers are employed in your service? (Station Manager or above)**

89

Of whom: Uniformed = 88 and Fire Control = 1

- 1.11 How many non-operational staff are currently employed by your service?**

431

- 1.12 What is your current average daily incident total? NB: we're still missing some incidents from April/May 2021 caused by a Vision issue, however it is anticipated this will not make a significant impact on the average daily total.**

Average operational incidents attended within WMFS is 71.6 per day in 2021-22 (26,124 incidents/365 days). With the Vision issue mentioned, this may increase to 72-73.

- 1.13 What is your current average incident response time to a life risk incident? NB: we're still missing some incidents from April/May 2021 caused by a Vision issue, however it is anticipated this will not make a significant impact, if any on this figure. 2 021-22 response time to Category 1 Life Risk was 04:42.**

- 1.14 What impact do you expect IA to have on the predicted average incident response time based on your industrial action business continuity plan?**

The current average incident response time is 4:42. Based on a 70-90% reduction in resources, this would lead to an increase in average response time of between ~1min 36s – 4min 23s minutes (to 6min 18s – 9m 5s), please note, this is based on there being no ongoing simultaneous incidents. Response times would increase with any ongoing activity. Full mapping can be viewed [here](#).

### **1.15 What is your response standard to a life risk incident during business-as-usual activity?**

Our Service Delivery Model (SDM) is built on our commitment to our 5-minute risk-based attendance standard for high-risk incidents, evidenced through our survivability study. We have developed risk-based attendance standards to ensure our response to incidents is appropriate and resourced sufficiently to deliver an assertive, effective and safe response alongside our prevention and protection priorities. Our Risk based attendance standards separate incidents into 5 categories, each with their own attendance time standard associated appropriate to the risk they pose, these are detailed below:

- Category 1 – High Risk - 5 mins
- Category 2 – Medium Risk - 7 mins
- Category 3 – Low Risk - 10 mins
- Category 4 – Secondary Fires that Attract a 20 Minute Attendance Time
- Category 5 – False Alarms (Excluding AFAs)

## **Section 2 - Business Continuity Planning and Risk Management**

### **2.1 Does your service have an operational degradation plan? If so, when was it last reviewed? Please provide a copy of the latest version of your degradation plan.**

The Dynamic Cover Tool (DCT) has replaced our operational degradation plan. The DCT is a software solution that enables us to dynamically relocate available vehicles in response to changing levels of fleet availability. It aids in ensuring our spread of cover is appropriate to the level of risk within our communities and in ensuring our response standards are maintained. The DCT allows us to see the impacts reduction in cover have on our response times and identify the most effective cover moves, or vehicle movements to make to maintain or improve these. The tool also has a pre planning mode where we are able to operate outside of the live mode to predict the impact of vehicle movements, availability and positioning.

The tool provides WMFS resource managers and risk planners with a real-time visual aid for deciding on appropriate resource configurations to provide the best possible service to the community. The information is displayed by the tool in a visual map-based format showing:

- Vehicle location
- Optimum vehicle locations
- Vehicle activity
- Vehicle status
- Risk
- Attendance times

The tool has a number of features which:

- Support effective positioning of our resources in the best location to maintain our 5-minute response time in a live and dynamic way, including the use of each vehicle type in the most effective way.
- Balances our response between risk and equity of cover across the area.
- Support us in making better use of our available resources.
- Provide live data in relation to attendance times across our delivery area.
- Provide guidance on the optimum cover moves to be made to enhance or maintain our attendance times to our category one to four incidents.
- Work with Automatic Vehicle Location System and have live positioning of all vehicles.
- Dynamically measure attendance times across the organisation.
- Enable us to understand key vehicles and locations for optimum fire cover and the locations and vehicles of least value.
- Produce hotspot maps of risk within our delivery area.
- Enable us to understand the impacts of changes in vehicle types and station locations.
- Enable us to have a more flexible and roaming fleet to enhance attendance times.
- Allows us to go back to a point in time to playback and assess coverage.
- Reflect actual reaction times for each of our fire stations.

The attached file provides an overview of the Dynamic Cover Tool.



## 2.2 How regularly are planning assumptions and resulting organisational plans for industrial action exercised and tested?

Resilience arrangements for industrial action rely on non-striking operational staff. Outside of a trade dispute, no communication has taken place to understand staff intentions. We do not routinely test and exercise, the last time this was tested was in 2018.

Many of the activities and processes that would take place for IA are used for other Business Continuity arrangements as well as BAU e.g. reviewing/developing communications, requesting and allocating volunteers, standing up the Incident Room, moving resources to the appropriate place, this is not badged as Industrial Action.

**2.3 When did the last exercise/test take place and did the test of the plan meet the requirements stipulated? Please outline any actions that resulted from the exercise/test.**

Resilience arrangements for industrial action rely on non-striking operational staff. Following the announcement of a period of industrial action, communication is sent to all staff, recognising employees right to take industrial action, and highlighting our statutory duty to provide an emergency response service to our communities. The communication arrangements that are in place if staff do not intend to strike and how their intention not to strike can be confidentially communicated in advance of the period of industrial action, to support pre-planning as much as possible.

Outside of a trade dispute, no communication has taken place to understand staff intentions.

**2.4 What contingencies do you have in your preparations for strike periods in excess of 48 hours?**

Following the announcement of industrial action, a request for volunteers would be made for non-striking operational staff.

Based on returns, availability and skills would then be analysed to maximise available fire cover during the period of industrial action. A rota would then be put in place, comprising of a number of shifts and down time to cover the period of industrial action.

This approach was implemented during the 4-day (96 hours continuous) period of industrial action in October-November 2014 (31<sup>st</sup> Oct – 4<sup>th</sup> Nov) and the 24 hours continuous period of industrial action, December 2014 (9<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> Dec). Alternative locations used during industrial action (Army Reserve Centres) have welfare and rest/sleeping facilities. The DCT referenced in Section 2 – 2.1 outlines how resources are managed to risk.

**2.5 What do you consider to be your Services primary risks? Please provide brief details and any specific response plans you have.**

We need to consistently evolve and adapt to meet the ever-changing needs of our communities, therefore the key element of our CRMP process is in reviewing and understanding the risk. There are several tools we use within this stage of our CRMP process to continually increase our knowledge of risk and build an evidence base. These tools can be found in the documents below;

[How WMFS review and identify risk](#)

[CRMP Risk identification Tools](#)

We have also begun to undertake our next review of Risk 2023-26 the main themes being highlighted through this are contained within the presentation attached below;

[SET Overview Risk Review 20221.pptx](#)

**2.6 What arrangements does your organisation have for training staff in business continuity specifically for periods of industrial action? Please provide details.**

Following the announcement of industrial action and the request for volunteers, an online form is sent to all volunteer officers to allow them to provide details of refresher training required. A schedule of refresher training sessions is then arranged and allocated to the appropriate staff. The below skills are included as part of the.

When preparing for industrial action, we have previously provided the below core skills refresher sessions for FDS:

- BA / Tac Vent (1 day) max 10 people per 5 SMAs
- BAECO Refresher (1 day) max 16 people per 2 SMAs
- BLS and Trauma refresher (1/2 day) max 16 people per 2 SMAs
- Extrication Refresher (1 day) max 10 people per 2 SMAs
- PRL & Volvo Refresher (1 day) max 2 people per day

Example overview from previous period of industrial action is attached.



**2.7 Is your industrial action business continuity plan linked with your local resilience forum community risk register? If not, why is this not included?**

Our Business Continuity Plan is not linked to our LRF Community Risk Register.

The local risk register considers all relevant risks included within the National Security Risk Assessment (NSRA). Firefighter industrial action was included in the 2019 NSRA and has therefore been assessed locally as part of the local risk assessment process. Firefighter industrial action is not specifically mentioned in the Community Risk Register publication - a public facing document to help inform communities of risks and provide information to increase their preparedness. The rationale being that the inclusion of information regarding firefighter industrial action would not enable the public to prepare, therefore the document focuses on providing information the public can act on, e.g. fire prevention and safety messages.

**2.8 Is your business continuity plan linked to your corporate risk register? If not please outline rationale.**

'Corporate Risk 6.1 Business Continuity and Preparedness' is continually monitored and reported monthly to the Chief Fire Officer and Strategic Enabling Team.

The current Corporate Risk rating for CR 6.1 is currently 16 based on likelihood 4, impact 4. This was increased in June following the publication of the White Paper in May and the recommended rejection of the 2% pay offer from the Fire Brigades' Union. The Audit and Risk Committee review the Corporate Risk Register on a quarterly basis and the full register on a 6 monthly basis.

In September 2019, evidence was presented to Fire Rescue Authority through the Audit and Risk Committee, for scrutiny, to enhance business continuity arrangements. The resolution from the Scrutiny Committee recommended that the Fire Authority continue to use existing arrangements for business continuity during industrial action, through the use of volunteers drawn from existing staff members. This recommendation was carried forward to Fire Authority in November 2019. The Corporate Risk rating has been at 12 consistently since November 2019.

In July 2022 it was raised through the Audit and Risk Committee that Corporate Risk had increased to 16, this will be presented formally to A&R in September 2022.

**2.9 What key risks do you consider to fire & rescue arrangements do you think will be under resourced during IA? How do you plan to mitigate these risks?**

Currently planning assumptions during industrial action prioritise Category One – High (life) risk incidents. As stated in the response to Question 1.15 all other incidents categories have an increased response time, the DCT enables resources to be located to ensure resources are in high-risk areas of the service.

Mobilising plans for Tall Building Fires require 13 personnel, if it is identified as persons reported then the attendance is increased to 16 and where flammable cladding is present the attendance is increased to 20. If there are multiple incidents during a period of industrial action, this may result in limited number of resources available to effectively resource a tall building fire, to ensure the safety of residents and operational staff.

The associated response actions plans for the following require a number of personnel to fill a range of roles on the incident ground or in specialist.

- MTA
- COMAH Sites
- Mitigation plan – regional and national support.
- UKISAR
- Prevention and Protection activities

WMFS have a local agreement with the FBU to enable response to a major incident during periods of industrial action. The FBU and WMFS jointly agree that the initial attendance to a Major Incident will need to be sufficient to provide an effective response and reduce risk. The purpose of this agreement is to ensure that any response is coordinated, appropriately resourced and well

managed to ensure the best outcomes for both members of the public and other agencies involved.

### **Section 3 - Planning for Industrial Action by Firefighters / Control Staff**

**3.1 Do you have a specific business continuity plan for industrial action by firefighters/ control staff? Please provide a copy of your industrial action plan.**

Yes, Industrial Action BCP and supporting guidance attached.

**3.2 On what planning assumptions is your plan predicated? (i.e., length of strike action/ days/ workforce involved/ appliances?)**

Planning assumptions within the plan in relation to length of strike action/ days/ workforce involved/ appliances include:

- The Reasonable worst-Case Scenario (RWCS) as identified in the National Security Risk Assessment is acknowledged within the plan (8-day continuous period of strike), however the plan includes the assumption that industrial action is likely to be discontinuous and intermittent and that industrial action may be for short periods not exceeding 24 hours at any one time. Strike tactics may vary with a difference between local and national strike, continuous/discontinuous, etc.
- Based on historical disputes e.g. 2013-15 pensions dispute, a small cadre of officers, sufficient to secure business continuity for a limited period only, have been used to maintain business continuity arrangements. However, recent National and local events and strength of feeling, along with data from volunteers requested in 2018, existing arrangements alone are no longer sufficient.
- Previous Home Office expectation required WMFS to maintain at least 30% of normal resources during industrial action. There is limited confidence this figure can be met.

**3.3 What is the assumed duration your planning is based on? (i.e., x days at 100%, y days at 50%)**

The planning assumptions are based on industrial action of up to 8 days of discontinuous strike action for periods not exceeding 24 hours at any one time.

**3.4 How many firefighters do you plan to have available during any period of strike action? (Please provide breakdown of Wholetime, On-call, Day Crewed (+), Mixed or Other - Specify)**

Resilience arrangements for industrial action rely on non-striking operational staff, there is currently limited confidence or understanding of the predicted cover that might be achieved for future periods of IA. Previous staff availability is not a measure of intent due to the driving factors previously outlined.

**3.5 How many appliances (excl specials) do you plan to have available during any period of strike action? (Please provide breakdown of Wholetime, On-call, Day Crewed (+), Mixed or Other - Specify)**

Resilience arrangements for industrial action rely on non-striking operational staff, there is currently limited confidence or understanding of the predicted appliance cover that might be achieved for future periods of IA. As above we are unable to gauge the level of resource availability due to the previous driving factors.

**3.6 How many special appliances (e.g. Aerials Hose layers water bowsers etc.) do you plan to have available during any period of strike action? (Please provide breakdown of Wholetime, On-call, Day Crewed (+), Mixed or Other - Specify)**

We would aim to maintain as many special appliances as possible based on the skills volunteers - these would be dual-staffed.

**3.7 What National Resilience Assets that your FRS hosts will remain available during any period of strike action?**

National Resilience Assets we expect to have available during IA include MTA, Type B flood response and type C flood response. These would be dual staffed during periods of IA so would not require additional staff. We have only selected National Resilience assets that we can maintain due to contractual arrangements.

**3.8 How many officers (station manager and above) do you plan to have available during any period of strike action? Would any of these officers take an operational role during strike action? (Including riding fire appliances)**

Due to resilience arrangements for industrial action relying on non-striking operational staff, there is currently limited confidence or understanding of the predicted numbers of officers that may volunteer to work during periods of IA. Most officers that did volunteer would take an operational role during strike action, including riding fire appliances following refresher training as detailed in question 2.6.

**3.9 What arrangements does your service have to maintain a control capability during strike action?**

There are several members of FC who are not part of a trade union and who would be willing and able to work in FC during periods of industrial action. This includes the FC sector competent management team.

Flexi Duty Support Officers are trained in the role of FC Support Officer and have received input on managing the Control Room.

A call handling support group has been established which is made up of predominantly green book staff who have received training on emergency call management and mobilising as per manual fallback (paper based)

arrangements. This group of staff would require familiarisation training to support Fire Control during IA.

Ex Staffordshire FC members have previously been engaged and stood up to provide support in the management of SFRS on call availability.

***Attach plans here***

**3.10 If strike action includes Control staff, how many do you plan to have available during any period of strike action?**

Five Fire Control staff plus additional call handling support volunteers.

Previous planning assumptions were higher however due to a high turnover of new staff we are unable to predict the intentions of the new members.

**3.11 Will you have use of your primary Control during strike action, if not have you identified alternative sites? Please provide details of alternative sites including x, y co-ordinates.**

Primary Control – Yes

Alternative site – WMFS Command Development Centre, Potterton Way, Smethwick, B66 1AL. xy co-ordinates – Easting 401947 Northing 289516

**3.12 Outline what support arrangements your service has with other FRSs/control capabilities and if these are tested for extended periods of industrial action.**

Tri service buddy arrangement with London FC and North West FC. Quarterly exercises take place however do not last for more than 2 hours.

Operation Willowbeck – this arrangement is intended to support periods of spate conditions, however provides a national arrangement for all FC rooms to receive a percentage of other FC rooms calls

**3.13 Does your service have any arrangements with third party control providers? If yes, please provide details.**

No existing arrangements with third party control provider.

**Section 4 - Resilience Arrangements**

**4.1 In advance of any industrial action do you intend to contact operational staff asking if they would work during a strike?**

We have only contacted operational staff asking if they would work during a strike following the announcement of a period of industrial action. At present, no communication has been shared to gather this information prior to the announcement of industrial action.

**4.2 How frequently is this process repeated?**

We only contact operational staff asking if they would work during a strike following the announcement of a period of industrial action. This request will go out as soon as possible following the announcement of industrial action dates.

- 4.3 Do you utilise reserve/contingency firefighters during strike action? If YES go to question 4, if NO please answer N/A for questions 4 to 8.**

N/A

- 4.4 Is this arrangement secured through your service or via a third party? Who provides this service and please provide an overview of the costs associated with the provision of services.**

N/A

***Attach file***

- 4.5 What arrangements do you have for maintaining competence and availability of resilience crews?**

N/A

- 4.6 Have you experienced any challenges in maintaining this provision?**

N/A

- 4.7 Have you introduced local arrangements for improving resilience / firefighter availability that you consider good practice?**

N/A

- 4.8 In principle are you content for this practice to be shared with other Chief Fire Officers? (NB it will not be shared without your further consent.)**

N/A

- 4.9 What do you consider to be the main risks/threats to your services preparations/planning detailed above?**

The limited confidence in the number of volunteers that would work, alongside the limited understanding around the numbers due to no recent engagement to gather this information.

***Attach file***

- 4.10 Is there anything not covered in the questions above that you would like to have taken into consideration? Please provide details.**

***Attach file***

- 4.11 Would you be prepared to loan a fully equipped appliance for use by a strategic reserve which may be established during Industrial Action? If yes, how many appliances would your FRS loan?**

2 fully equipped appliances (this is what we have submitted previously)