

Spotlight on...

WYFRS FIREFIGHTER SAFETY TEAM

What the need was and how we identified it:

In January 2016 WYFRS attended a Make Pumps 25 incident at Drummond Mills, Lumb Lane, Bradford. The initial stages of the incident saw approximately 60 Breathing Apparatus teams committed to attack a major fire in the basement of the mill complex. A team was put together post incident to identify all significant learning. The formal debrief identified a number of significant & critical learning points that if shared across the brigade would improve both operational tactics and Fire-fighter Safety.

In July 2013 firefighter Stephen Hunt died whilst tackling a major fire at Pauls Hair World, Oldham Street, Manchester. A WYFRS team led by Area Manager Nick Smith, was tasked with assisting the Greater Manchester Police Major Incident Team and the Health & Safety Executive with the investigation. The insight and knowledge gained by the team into a tragic Fire-fighter fatality, if shared throughout WYFRS should logically improve both operational tactics and Fire-fighter safety.

What we have done:

In May 2017 the WYFRS Fire-fighter Safety Team was formed consisting of:

Assistant District Commander Chris Bates

Watch Commander Simon Blackburn (BA Lead)

Jessyca Cummins (Admin Lead)

The team identified that, at the time, although learning from operational incidents was routinely shared with initial crews attending at a formal debrief and learning circulated via an **Operations Policy Information Document (OPID)**, no structured method existed for expanding significant learning from incidents throughout WYFRS in a timely manner. The Fire-fighter Safety Team aimed to address this.

It is recognised that Fire-fighting carries inherent risks and that training and/or operational learning cannot fully eliminate the possibility of a serious injury, or fatality within WYFRS. It was envisaged however, that with a new style of practical training and openness to learning WYFRS can reduce the risk of such an event occurring in brigade. The Fire-fighter Safety Team have contributed to the achievement of reducing the risk to Fire-fighters and improve knowledge & understanding of tactical options and operational procedures.

WYFRS is believed to be the only UK Brigade to have a dedicated Fire-fighter Safety Team.



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Progress

To date the team is well on course to deliver the following training over a 15 month period:

- Draft and deliver case studies on the Oldham Street, Manchester & Drummond Mill incidents. To be delivered during 55 full day seminars to all ranks across WYFRS.
- Delivered 25 x District level 6 pump BA Exercises across the Brigade- Live fire/offsite.
- Delivered 72 off site PPV training focusing on the Tac Vent Officer role to crews. To be delivered to all Watches.
- Ensured adequate training has been delivered to crews prior to the new piercing nozzle introduction programme. Live burn video to assess temperature reduction to ensure crew confidence.
- Draft and deliver a training package on heat stress and the effects on Fire-fighters (Maybe E-Learning)
- Promoted discussion and encourage fire-fighters to drive tactical decision making by reporting back conditions experienced to the Incident Commander.
- Delivered ten 4 pump high rise exercise (Jacobs Well)
- Explore and promote discussion on Fire-fighter decision making in critical BA environments.
- Explore and promote discussion on the expectations and culture of fire-fighting tactics at commercial premise.
- Investigate the feasibility of a practical evidenced based core body temperature monitoring system for BA Wearers. Forge close links with HART and Greater Manchester who are currently conducting tests with Salford University

- Deliver training on new WYFRS Ff fatality protocols
- Deliverer training to Station Commanders on the BA Sector Commander role

What difference are we making?

The feedback from operational crews for The Fire-fighter Safety Team has been near 100% positive. It is hoped that building on this success WYFRS can continue to move forward and develop ways of:

- Sharing operational learning
- Continue to implement a new culture of training as opposed to rigid assessment in an effort to improve operational performance
- Impact and influence Fire-fighter behaviour to increase their own accountability and safety

What next?

Following the successful introduction and trial of the WYFRS Fire-fighter Safety Team, the training philosophy and offsite exercise programme will continue. Specialist Fire Investigation Officers will deliver the seminars and WC Simon Blackburn will continue to run the 6 pump offsite training exercises.

This 'spotlight on' contributes to...



DELIVER A PROACTIVE FIRE PREVENTION AND PROTECTION PROGRAMME ENSURING WE DELIVER TO VULNERABLE GROUPS IN OUR COMMUNITY



**Equality priorities
Age: Young Adults**

To advance equal opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.



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