



Meeting	Service Leadership Team	Agenda Item	4f
	Performance & Resources Board		17
Meeting Date	9 March 2021		
	31 March 2021		
Report Author:	On-Call Conversion Project Manager		
Presented By	Moira Bruin, Director of Operations		
Subject	On-Call Conversion Project – Progress Report		
Type of Report:	Information		

SUMMARY

The On-Call Conversion Project (OCCP) successfully converted Dovercourt to on-call status in April 2020. The progress of this station continues to be closely monitored by the Project Management team. Appliance availability is improving and workforce levels continue to rise with additional training courses created to support the new recruits which are being run locally.

We expect to retire the day crewing shift system at Waltham Abbey on 31st July 2021, with the last two remaining stations following after this date. The project will continue to closely monitor and report on the status of all converting stations up until project closure of March 2022.

BACKGROUND

The OCCP was established in 2017 to manage the conversion of a number of stations from day crew to on-call status. In November 2020 there was a change in the project management team, with a new Senior Responsible Owner and Project Manager. Since then, a dynamic review of the project activities has been undertaken resulting in a SLT decision paper 4b of 8/12/2020 and a workshop facilitated by the Director of Operations between Essex County Fire and Rescue Service and the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner on 21/12/2020.

The purpose of the workshop was to set out the way forward for the On-Call Conversion Project (OCCP) to include:

- Confirmation of a review of the original objectives and scope of the project
- Confirmation of a review and refresh of the project governance
- A review, discussion and agreement on the timelines of the project

This work resulted in a further paper presented to SLT 12 January 2021 by the Director of Operations – On Call Conversion Project (OCCP) Next Steps.

In that paper the project executive articulated the transition milestones that will need to be achieved before the Day Crewed shift system can be retired at a location and the transition to on-call can commence. These are:

- The Stations will have an appropriate and competent management structure in place.
- Number of personnel sufficient to provide adequate availability.
- Sufficient drivers and other specialisms (i.e. ICS Competent)
- Have station succession plans in place to ensure long-term sustainability of Stations going forward.

PROJECT PROGRESS

On Call Conversion Project (OCCP) Next Steps paper identified the below actions. Progress against these is reported at the Strategic Change Board on a monthly basis, but a brief update is detailed next to each action below.

- A refresh of the governance structure of the OCCP - **Complete**
- Station Plans will be completed for each of the converting station clearly setting out the steps to achieving the conversions. – **In progress**
- In recognition of the different associated risk levels, local challenges, and success of recruitment campaigns, the plans may differ between the stations - **Complete**
- In recognition of the time that is required to recruit and develop individuals to OIC/Driver/BA team leader each plan will identify interim transitional arrangements to support the change to On-call. – **In progress**
- 100% availability cannot be guaranteed at any fully on-call station. The transition period of support will use whole-time/additional personnel to maintain availability – in line with our agreed risk appetite with particular attention to the provision of fire cover for the South Woodham Ferrers/Dengie area. – **In progress**
- For the reasons above, each plan can identify – in terms of interim arrangements - additional resources required to ensure all competencies are available to support availability to the agreed level i.e.: The Process will be to cease the day duty system at the stations then introduce a transition period of support from WT before moving fully to the on-call system. – **In progress**
- We will support these stations in line with the way we support Whole-time stations – for example through Mixed Crewing, Pre-arranged out-duties and Additional Shift Working to On-call stations or through temporarily attaching whole-time personnel to On-call stations. – **In progress**
- Communications and engagement to existing colleagues on each station will be increased, not decreased in the run up to the change of status - **Actioned**
- We will continue attraction and recruitment activity for all four stations throughout – but this will have been started prior to March 2021. – **On-going**
- Sufficient basic On-call recruitment courses will be provided in 2021 - to respond to the demand at each station so that there is no attrition of potential recruits due to excess waiting to access the training. - **Actioned**
- Having in place individual development plans to move Firefighters through to Crew and Watch Managers to ensure a long term 'succession pipeline' – **In progress**
- There will be sufficient driving courses allocated in 2021 to ensure that in the long term, there are adequate Fire-fighter drivers. - **Actioned**
- Work will be carried out with Director of People, Values and Culture and Director of Corporate Services, both members of the OCCP Board, to understand and increase if necessary, capacity within our recruitment and training. - **Complete**

- To complete the move away from the Day-crewed system and realise the benefits we will need to have converted to On-call and relocated all current Day-crewed personnel by April 2022 it is likely that some watches/stations may have super-numerary posts. This will allow us to better support the proposals outlined in the action plans to support availability during the transitional period. - **Actioned**
- We will not move away from the day-crewed system at any of the three stations before 31st July 2021. - **Confirmed**
- Property assets associated with the day-crewing system will be disposed of once they become vacant to realise project benefits - **ongoing**

3.1 Station Progress Summary

Station	Current On-Call Crewing No.		Target FTE Crewing No.		Confidence RAG (Target to be achieved by 31/7/21)	Predicted Transition Shortfall	
Dovercourt	Officers	7	Officers	6		Officers	
	Drivers	12	Drivers	14		Drivers	
	FF On The Run	23	FF On The Run	23		FF On The Run	
	Headcount	23	Headcount	23		Headcount	
	FTE	14	FTE	12		FTE	12
Waltham Abbey	Officers	0	Officers	5		Officers	
	Drivers	0	Drivers	11		Drivers	
	FF On The Run	9	FF On The Run	18		FF On The Run	
	Headcount	9	Headcount	18		Headcount	
	FTE	6.5	FTE	12		FTE	12
South Woodham Ferrers	Officers	0	Officers	5		Officers	
	Drivers	1	Drivers	11		Drivers	
	FF On The Run	6	FF On The Run	18		FF On The Run	
	Headcount	6	Headcount	18		Headcount	
	FTE	5	FTE	12		FTE	12
Great Baddow	Officers	1	Officers	4		Officers	
	Drivers	1	Drivers	8		Drivers	
	FF On The Run	5	FF On The Run	14		FF On The Run	
	Headcount	8	Headcount	14		Headcount	
	FTE	5.25	FTE	12		FTE	12

BENEFITS AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Risks

There are two Risks that require treatment that provide the continued business justification of the OCCP to act as a Control Measure. These are;

- Individual tax implications: HMRC has previously expressed concern to the Service on the provision of houses, advising that they were being viewed as a benefit in kind. Whilst not acting on this at the time, it was indicated to the Service that this would be something that they may look at more closely in the future, which could lead to a significant tax liability put onto the individuals within Service Housing.
- Matzaks ruling on standby duty – this opens up a challenge to employees providing On-call cover deemed to be in positive hours. One of the key defences to the Service on this matter is flexibility on being able to book off and on when fulfilling the On-call element of your contract. Largely this facility does not exist within the Day-crewed model.

4.2 Project Risks & Issues

Below, is the current Risk Register for the OCCP;

Risk Register (current-target) v4



Service Unit: Change

Risk Ref	Risk Event/Description	Nature of Risk	Current Risk Rating	Controlled Risk Rating	Risk Owner	Risk Status
ONCON0014	There is a risk that the organisation will not be able to train required number of recruits.	Emergency Response	12	9	Paul Chipperfield	Treat
ONCON0020	There is a risk that changes in organisational/strategic direction and policies might impact the project.	Emergency Response	10	8	Dave Bill	Tolerate
ONCON0013	There is a risk that the Service are unable to attract and recruit sufficient number of on-call employees within the required time frames to enable a full conversion from day crew to on-call.	Emergency Response	9	9	Steve Tovey	Issue
ONCON0025	There is a risk that current tolerance levels for allowing members of staff to be available over the working time directive which could have legal implications for the organisations.	Emergency Response	9	3	Neil Fenwick	Treat
ONCON0015	There is a risk that the project will not be achieved as a phased approach due to insufficient number of employees and appropriate experience to support transition.	Emergency Response	9	6	Neil Fenwick	Treat
ONCON0021	There is a risk that there will be insufficient internal resources to deliver the project without overly impacting BAU activity.	Emergency Response	9	6	Matthew Stalker	Treat
ONCON0018	There is a risk that changes in funding will impact project delivery.	Emergency Response	6	6	Maira Bruin	Treat

4.3 Benefits Realisation

The project team is currently undertaking a full benefit realisation review.

Benefits Description	SRO	Benefit Owner(s) (Business Change Manager)	Benefit Type	ECFRS Strategic Goal	Baseline Value	Observable Outcomes	Attribution																
Increased availability of OC appliances - <i>valid only at Dovercourt? Or for all stations post when we started recruitment?</i>	Director of Innovation, Risk & Future Development	Director of Operations	Non-financial	Service Lead	HR Workforce data - On call station averages for each year - speak to Lucy Clayton	Increase of on call appliances being available at converting stations	Where will we see it? Who will provide it? Increase number of on-call employees Improved wider service delivery.																
Increased on-call employees	Director of Innovation, Risk & Future Development	Director of Corporate services	Non-financial	Service Lead	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Joiners</th> <th>Leavers</th> <th>NET</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>17/18</td> <td>38</td> <td>6</td> <td>32</td> </tr> <tr> <td>18/19</td> <td>12</td> <td>9</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>19/20</td> <td>16</td> <td>9</td> <td>7</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Joiners	Leavers	NET	17/18	38	6	32	18/19	12	9	3	19/20	16	9	7	Increased number of on-call employees at converting stations.	Number of OC employees at converting stations. Annual workforce report from Workforce Analytics Lead.
	Joiners	Leavers	NET																				
17/18	38	6	32																				
18/19	12	9	3																				
19/20	16	9	7																				
Increased diversity within the service	Director of Innovation, Risk & Future Development	Director of People Values and Culture	Non-financial	Community Focused	HR workforce data Question on work force diversity from last staff survey - The following table presents the Service's headline diversity metrics as at 31 Dec 2019, no other baseline figures available Gender% that are female - 1.6% Majority Age Band - 25-35 %LGB 1.2% %Ethnic Minority - 2.3% % Disability	Increased diversity at the converting stations.	Converting stations to on-call increases the Services opportunity to improve diversity across the Service. Year end diversity statistics																
Reduction in firefighter salaries	Director of Innovation, Risk & Future Development	Director of Operations	Financial	Financially Sustainable	1,100,000 2,500,000 Finance Data	Cost of wholetime firefighters for the service will reduce as stations convert to on-call	Conversion of 2nd pump at Clacton station W/T to O/C Conversion of DC stations to O/C stations. Savings based on Services medium-term financial strategy.																
Sale of day crew houses	Director of Innovation, Risk & Future Development	Director of Operations	Financial	Financially Sustainable	6,250,000 937,500 3,125,000 2,187,500 Finance Property Services Data	Number of service owned properties will reduce	Selling DC houses will release funds (£6.25m / 20 houses = £313k) 3 x vacant properties sold June-Sept 2018. Tranche 1 - £3.75m - 10 houses vacance {8x31/03/20 & 4 x 31/07/20 Tranche 2 - £2.3m - 2nd tranche - 7 houses vacant (31/03/2021).																

OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS

No options are presented for consideration as part of this paper. The OCCP currently has a Green RAG Project Status and expects to deliver its primary objectives by the agreed project date 31st March 2022. This paper provides an update only.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The below additional roles have been identified as critical to the successful delivery of the OCCP. A separate paper requesting that these posts are funded from Service Reserves in the next Financial Year has already been submitted for consideration to the PFCC.

- On-Call Liaison Manager
- On-Call Liaison Officers x4
- Station Manager at STC
- Watch Manager Training Instructors x2
- HR Recruitment Advisor x2

The total amount of monies being requested from Service Reserves to support all posts is £589,444.

There will be additional costs to those detailed above as part of the transition arrangements for each Station. These are in the process of being forecasted and will form part of each Station's Transition Plan.

It is worth noting, that a very healthy financial justification for this project remains. The below cashable benefits have been identified as part of the project documentation.

- The sale of Service owned houses is expected to realise c£7.4m
- Savings in cost of fire cover from Day Crewed to On-Call c£2.3m p.a.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

There are no equality and diversity implications associated specifically with this paper, however in line with Service policy, action plans which impact on our people will be people impact assessed. All action taken following this paper will be in line with our Service policies and procedures around equality, diversity and inclusion.

WORKFORCE ENGAGEMENT

Key stakeholders continue to be involved in the project.

Station Managers and Group Managers of converting stations are invited to attend monthly meetings to discuss plans, progress, and issues.

Station Managers had 1-2-1 discussions with all affected Day Crewed staff in December to re-affirm the Service's intention to retire the day crewed shift system. Regular follow up meetings now occur.

All affected staff have also been written to thanking them for their on-going support to the project and detailing their personal circumstances and options before them.

On-Call Liaison Officers and Project Team continue to engage with key stakeholders, ensuring the appropriate information is provided in the right way, to the right people, at the right time.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Case law has demonstrated that there is a legal imperative to move from our current Day crewed systems (see section 5.1).

HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

None specific to this report.