



Meeting	Performance & Resources Board	Agenda no.	8
Meeting Date	1st June 2023		
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Presented By	ACO Chris Parker		
Subject	On-Call (O/C) Support & Development- Team Priorities		
Type of Report	Information		
PFCC Action Point No.		For Publication	No

RECOMMENDATION(S)

Members of the Performance and Resource Board are asked to note this papers' content relating to O/C improvement activity, following the closure of the On-Call Programme (OCP) and Service investment in a dedicated team prioritising O/C Retention, Response and Recruitment.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY & BACKGROUND

OCP work has been assimilated into established structures, aligned to HR recruitment, O/C training and On Call Liaison Officer (OCLO) teams. In collaboration with the GM review a restructure of the Northwest command presented an opportunity to further align this work at the point of most influence. i.e. from within the Response team structure.

In addition to a focus on O/C retention and recruitment, simultaneous staffing activity will see a fully established OCLO team working within the new command structure by June 2023.

Diagram 1 illustrates this new team structure, noting that the Station Manager O/C also has responsibility for two stations within the NW Command, and Group Manager O/C is also the NW commander. All WM OCLO's are trained support instructors with operational competency in addition to primary recruitment, onboarding, and retention skillsets.

The hybrid team approach supports a holistic vision across the O/C duty system offering a cost-effective benefit unique to our service. i.e., Colleagues that recruit, run assessments, deliver training, maintain operational competence, provide operational cover, and influence change through a consistent positive O/C focussed message.

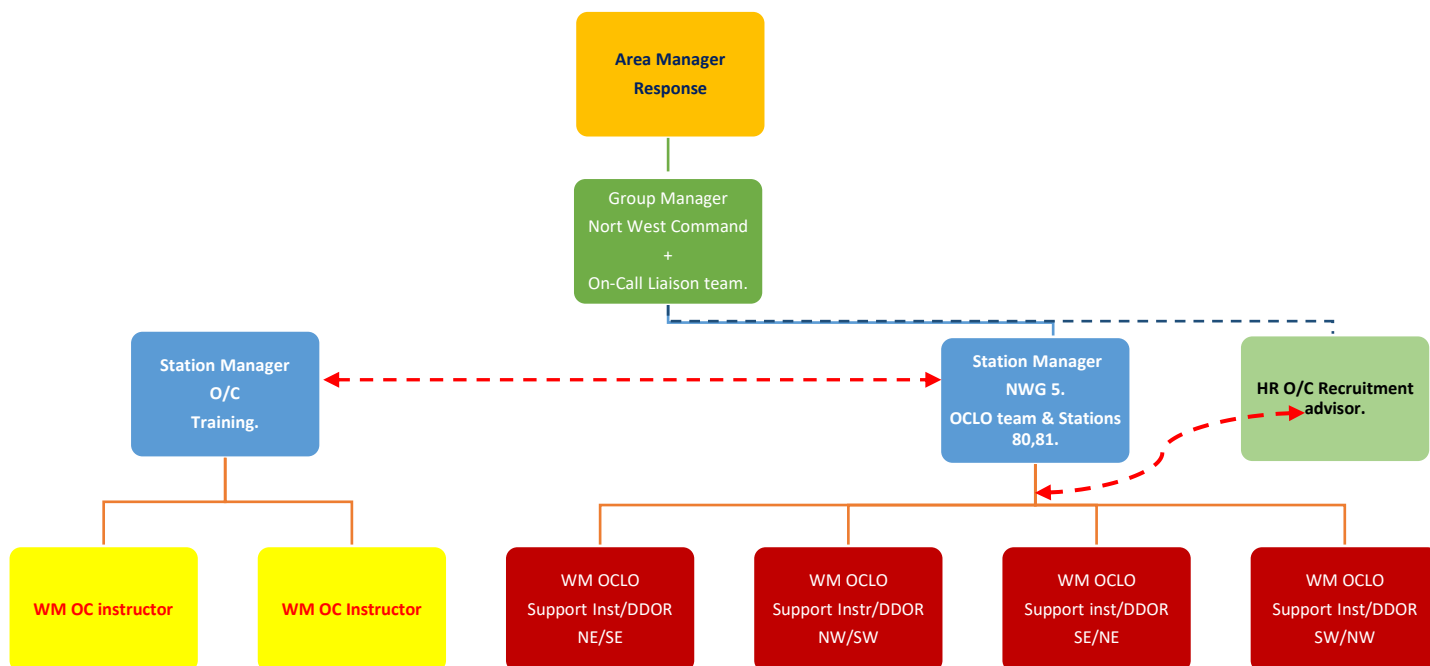


Diagram 1. New O/C development team structure across directorates.

OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS

OCLO TEAM PRIORITIES

The OCLO team vision aims to progress three key overarching areas. **Retention**, **Response** and **Recruitment**. The team priorities for the next 6-12 months are identified for convenience under these three key element headings.

Retention

Some of this work now sits with the people services Director. However, the OCLO and O/C training team are actively influencing, collaborating, or leading in many areas, such as:

- **Reversing the narrative** - O/C first, attendance on key working groups both internally and externally. e.g., PdrPro user group, Positive action, and inclusive recruitment stakeholder group, NOG project board. Externally NFCC O/C strategic and practitioners' forum, regional O/C group.
- **Equality of opportunity** - Advocates for equality influencing across the service and facilitating assessment events, recruitment events and onboarding journeys.
- **Recognition of commitment** - Organising, encouraging, and influencing the recognition of colleagues, families, and employers (O/C welcome events).
- **Management teams** - reorientation, training and supporting station management teams. Reverse mentoring newly promoted SMs with O/C responsibility.
- **OCLO Team** - voice of the O/C driving cultural change at all levels of our service and in our communities.
- **Identification and provision of training opportunities** - maximising O/C development opportunities especially at converted stations, OCLO team now upskilled as instructors all holding or working towards L3 - Education & Training. Working with the O/C training team, local management teams to minimise phase

1–2-time transition timescales. Including end point assessment coaching sessions aimed at maximising success rates ahead of phase 1-2 & 2-3 assessment days.

- **Flexible consistent policy application** - consistent interpretation, application and production of policy and guidance with O/C in mind. Management training and point of contact for advice interpretation in O/C context (GM & SM OCLO)
- **Amendment to initial onboarding approach** - Revised initial employment date moved 4 weeks prior to basic course start. Enabling directed training ahead of full basic course, aimed to improve attendance rates and end point assessment outcomes (safe to ride assessments). Facilitated and supported by WM OCLO's and O/C training team.

Response (ABC)

- **Autonomy target** - crewing independence, correct FTE to match the station need. (FTE review work included within the O/C Guidance document setting levels and signposting managers to inform succession planning)
- **Bridging the gap** - Flexible / supportive crewing arrangements to cover shortfalls and maximising development opportunities. Such as:
 - **Cluster crewing:** Forming core crews from multiple stations with partial crewing (standbys, reliefs & spate conditions).
 - **Resource Management Unit:** Support the RMU team to create a strategic reserve of O/C colleagues willing to plug global crewing gaps, maximising service wide availability.
 - **Tiered response model:** Flexible turn out weighting from 10-30 minutes. Colleagues that could respond to their own or another O/C station if the turn in area was increased from 5 minutes to 8,10,15 or longer.
 - **Specialist appliance cross training:** Training of multiple stations to crew and operate specialist appliances that can respond with fewer than core crew levels. e.g., Off road vehicles can operate with a minimum of 2 personnel.
 - **OCLO colleagues riding:** OCLO team riding as single reinforcements or collectively as a crew. As a crew to deliver training whilst maintaining cover, or as a roaming appliance deployed to plug an identified geographical gap whilst undertaking other suitable simultaneous duties.
 - **DDOR:** Support the RMU review of the DDOR policy identifying colleagues that could/should be providing cover. Support the training team to deliver core training for DDOR personnel assuring all operational day duty colleagues participate.
 - **Augmenting crew:** OCLO team balancing crews at strategic stations for short periods (ensuring a competent crew), minimising the need for standby moves at times coinciding with WT shift change or mitigating BA deficient crew standbys.
 - **Bespoke dual contracts:** WT personnel living within the turn-in area of an O/C station but unable to commit to a full contract. Employed on a pro-rata availability basis.

- **Flexible crewing** - As effectively applied during the pandemic. WT dual contracted colleagues sent back to their O/C station if global crewing supports.
- **Commitment to development** - Support succession plans, blended learning approach, OCLO team to provide operational cover/development shift training.

Recruitment

- **Attraction** - Awareness What's an O/C Firefighter. Engaging on social media platforms, service events supporting stations and with employers across the county.
- **Communication activity** - reach, engage, encourage potential candidates in person, social media platforms or other opportunities. OCLO team to manage own recruitment social media platforms in collaboration with stations and recruitment team.
- **Equality of opportunity** - continued focus on inclusion work all OCLO's dignity and inclusion advocates.
- **Positive action events**- targeted have a go day /outreach events linked to attraction and recruitment activity.
- **Nurture** - ongoing candidate support - positive application process experience throughout recruitment and onboarding phases. OCLO team heavily involved with facilitating recruitment activities.
- **Selection** - facilitating assessment days as well as support in collaboration with fitness teams prior to physical tests. Review assessment day especially interview timing - centralise the interview reducing hiring managers workloads and standardising approach.
- **Succession planning** - supporting station management teams with planning and recruitment activity based on need and in line with succession planning assumptions.
- **Celebrating success** - the current team have managed in collaboration to reduce the recruitment process from 8 months to 3 months. This is supported by two physical assessment days a month and provision of one basic course a month.

PROJECTS

The following projects will have a positive impact on On-Call colleagues and have been noted here for completeness.

Workforce Management

The Workforce Management Project has been moved from the Digital & Data Programme across to the Prevention, Protection and Response Programme to ensure closer alignment with other PP&R projects.

The project will deliver an electronic method of managing operational availability automatically. Currently, availability for our operational colleagues is managed and held in numerous locations and departments – therefore there is a risk that the information

we hold is not live. Our new system solution will mitigate this and be the one source of truth of our availability across all our stations.

OCLO team involvement in shaping the build work with O/C colleagues in mind has been active from inception. This will continue during role out and will be essential in the support of the PP&R projects team delivery plan.

Resource Management Unit

The project will implement centralised crewing that will manage all operational availability 24/7 in Wholetime, **On-Call**, Control, and the Flexi-Duty officers to meet the needs of the Service operationally. RMU will own and manage the workforce management solution previously mentioned and as such will also need OCLO support to fully embed the change. This will be most evident for dual or multi contracted colleagues and is liable to identify additional availability gaps requiring OCLO recruitment/succession planning.

RISKS AND MITIGATIONS

Risks identified in previous SLT OCLO decision papers relating to team staffing implications will be mitigated by June when the final OCLO team recruitment activity concludes.

LINKS TO FIRE AND RESCUE PLAN

The realised achievements and ongoing O/C support and development work links directly to our Fire & Rescue Plan priorities including but not limited to:

- Prevention, protection, and response
- Promote a positive culture in the workplace.

Also, of the service top 10 priority improvement commitments we aim to excel at, two are most reflective of this plan's priorities:

- **Equality**- To be an inclusive employer, that delivers inclusive services and takes proactive steps to recruit a diverse workforce.
- **On Call Firefighters** - *Increase our recruitment and retention; exploring flexible crewing models to improve response times.*

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None outside of previously identified and budgeted financial implications – i.e., established OCLO team.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

None identified specific to the O/C development work.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

Staffing implications as visually depicted in diagram 1.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

The actions being taken will not have a disproportionate impact on individuals with protected characteristics (as defined within the Equality Act 2010), when compared to all other individuals and will not disadvantage people with protected characteristics.

Race	N	Religion or belief	N
Sex	N	Gender reassignment	N
Age	N	Pregnancy & maternity	N
Disability	N	Marriage and Civil Partnership	N
Sexual orientation	N		

The Core Code of Ethics Fire Standard has been fully considered and incorporated into the proposals outlined in this paper.

HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

None identified.

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

RB's aware of restructure work and Person specifications relating to individual OCLO team role profiles.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AND APPENDICES

None.