Fire cover – the problem

- We have a legal duty to make provision for firefighting and other emergencies
- We have never been able to guarantee emergency cover from the RDS
- On average 40% of retained appliances are not available during the day
- This has been the case for many years
- On Friday 25 Feb 2011, **41** out of **59** retained pumps were not on the run most of the day

Kent Fire & Rescue Service

Firefighter safety

- We have a legal duty to provide for H&S for staff
- In 2007, 4 RDS fire-fighters died in Warwickshire
- South East started work to identify H&S implications and training needs
- Minimum hours needed for training against risk-critical PDAs are not enough
- Training time needed for specials and risks in different areas

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Legislation

- 2007 Tribunal - retained should be treated as part-time workers for pension & sickness
  - Negotiation includes other T&Cs – still waiting outcome and backdated entitlement
  - Principle is either that retained jobs are designed to be minimum tasks and so T&Cs different
  - Or, if you accept that you do the same work and have same risks as wholetime, it’s only fair to give same T&Cs

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Other issues

- Working Time Directive
- Drivers Hours
- HASWA 1974 – Foreseeable injury clauses
- Commitment required
- Review of emergency response

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What does all this mean?

- Overall calls are reducing = less real experience – impact on competence [and less pay]
- No guarantee of resources for major incidents
- Assumes one size fits all
- On average, 24 pumps down every weekday
- Impossible to forward plan

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The solution

- Clusters - more flexible cover
- “One size does not fit all”
- Different approaches to staffing
- Guaranteed cover is foundation – there is more to come

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Retained to part-time

- Decision by Elected Members on 12 July 2010 to convert to part-time contracts with minimum number of hours
- Flexibility in type of contract from minimum with on-call to positive hours/annualised hours
- Need time to embed new contracts and continue to develop new duty system
- Must use this as foundation for future emergency cover requirements

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The Package

- Role of Fire Brigades' Union
- Pay – availability versus activity
- Training for risk-critical PDAs
- Training for special appliances and local risks
- Administration
- Management time – appraisals
- Staff at busy stations
- Wholetime/retained
- Contract & guarantee
- Work/life balance

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Training and Development

- Competency Frameworks for each station and cluster centred on PDAs
- Emphasis on integrated Group and Cluster training programmes
- Maintenance of regular weekly training events
- Individual Development Programmes
- Emphasis on personal responsibility and accountability

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Retained to Part time

- Guaranteed fire cover for Kent & Medway
- More flexible options for staff and KFRS
- Parity for all operational staff and integration between crews
- Improved focus on health and safety
- Improvements in training time and coordination
- Improvement in individual performance

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