

# ***OPERATIONAL RESPONSE STRATEGY***

***2010 - 2015***



**CAMBRIDGESHIRE  
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE**

***RESPONDING TO EMERGENCIES***

“Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service has a vision of a safe community where there are no preventable deaths or injuries in fires or other emergencies.”

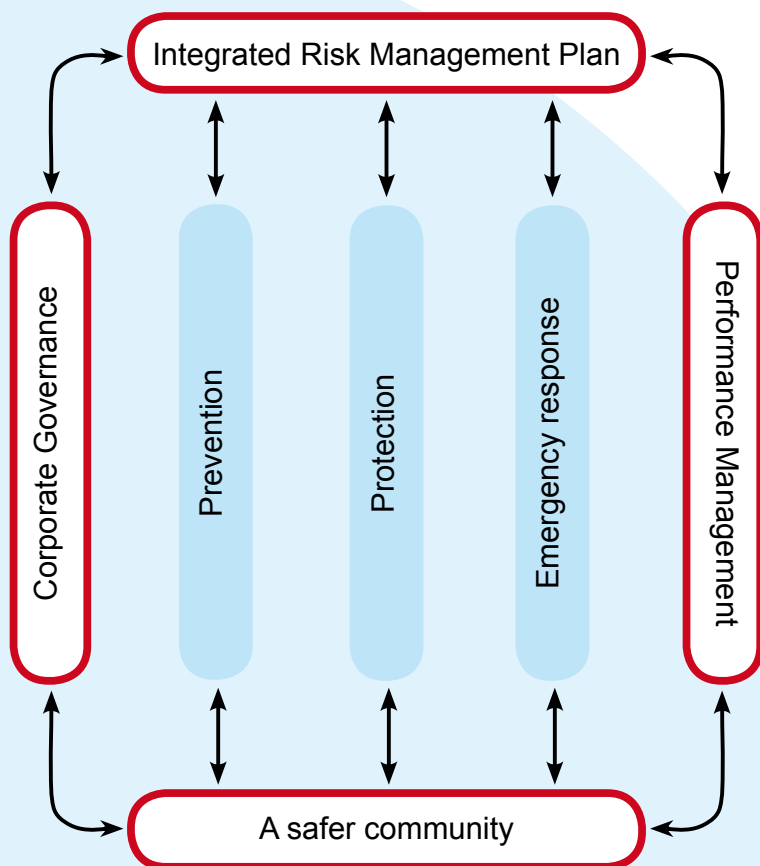
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority is directed to achieve outcomes set out in the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and the Fire Services National Framework (2008-11).

Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service is committed to achieving these outcomes and has a clear vision which places a safe community at the core of the organisation.

The Service has a vision of a **safe community where there are no preventable deaths or injuries in fires or other emergencies.**

The Service will constantly work towards achieving this vision by continuously assessing the risks that our communities face and mitigating them through a combination of prevention, protection and response strategies. This will improve community safety while also ensuring the safety of firefighters.

This strategy is the enabler to the service achieving its aim of Operational Excellence. It is influenced by the information derived from the IRMP process, the Service planning framework and external influencers including the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, the Fire Service National Framework and other relative legislation and national guidance.



This diagram shows how the Service identifies, manages and reduces risk to create a safer community.

## COUNTY PROFILE AND DEPLOYMENT OF RESOURCES

### LOCATION AND POPULATION

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is dissected by a number of major road routes, including the M11 and A1 (M), A14, A11 and A47. The section of the A14 between Cambridge and Huntingdon is the tenth most congested road in the country.

The population of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is approximately 750,000. Across the county as a whole the Census 2001 data shows

that the population increased by 8.2% between 1991 and 2001. However this growth varies considerably across the district council areas. For example the population in East Cambridgeshire District grew by 27% in the ten years to 2004, one of only two locations outside London reporting more than 20% growth and is forecast to be amongst the fastest growing over the next 15 years. In recent years there has been migration from the new EU communities, especially Eastern European. Peterborough grew and

developed rapidly in the seventies and eighties, following its designation as a 'New Town' in 1968. Three new residential townships were developed with a full range of social and economic facilities, and the fourth, Hampton, will continue this growth with over 5,000 homes and supporting infrastructure.

Overall, Cambridgeshire county has a very low population density factor, with the exception of Peterborough and Cambridge.



The Service has 38 fire appliances and 10 specialist support vehicles, located at 28 fire stations. These stations are managed locally within six districts, which have been set up to reflect the local authority boundaries. This structure allows local managers to engage and respond proactively to local issues and initiatives, while still working within the context of the overall strategic corporate objectives and direction.



## **FUTURE POPULATION CHANGES**

There have been other centres of major urban development throughout Cambridgeshire, particularly around market towns such as Ely, St Ives and St Neots. In addition, two

townships are developing; one at Cambourne (west of Cambridge) that is well underway, and another at Northstowe (north-west of Cambridge). Both these developments fall within the administrative area of South Cambridgeshire, and in total will result in 9,000 new homes, with potential expansion

at Northstowe for a further 8,000 to 10,000 homes. The Authority will be able to access some local Government funding from the Cambourne development and is currently taking the opportunity to review the provision of emergency response cover within the South Cambridgeshire area.

## **DIVERSITY AND SOCIAL DEMOGRAPHY**

The social demography of Cambridgeshire varies considerably, with the cities of Peterborough and Cambridge being particularly multi-cultural and multi-racial with over 10% of the population from a non-white ethnic group (2001 census data). In comparison, the other four districts have a non-white population of

between 1.4% and 2.9%. The migration of citizens from the new EU countries into the county in the last few years has increased pressure on public services and is not reflected in the 2001 census data. The population is aging rapidly with the number of people aged 85 plus forecast to increase by 58% over the next 5 years, a 5% increase on the national average.

Across the county an average of 64.6% of people are in

employment, higher than the national average, and 68.7% are owner-occupiers which is consistent with the national average.

Social deprivation levels vary across the Authority area. For example, East Cambridgeshire is ranked 285th out of 354 authorities - with one being the most deprived - whereas Fenland, which is deemed to be the most deprived area in Cambridgeshire, is ranked 139th.



## **WHAT ARE OUR OPERATIONAL RESPONSE PRIORITIES?**

Our Service priorities have been expanded to take into account changing social and economic influences.

They are:

- To save life
- To protect property and the environment
- To undertake other emergency rescues.

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## **WHAT ARE OUR OPERATIONAL RESPONSE RISKS?**

The operational risk evaluation process for response activity has identified the following main risks:

1. Primary fires
2. Road traffic collisions (RTCs)
3. Water related incidents.



## HOW ARE WE CURRENTLY PERFORMING?

### 1. Primary fires

Over the last five years the Service has attended an average of 1,827 primary fires per year.

Examples of primary fires include fires in buildings fit for occupation, caravans, non-derelict vehicles, outdoor storage, plant and machinery, agricultural and forestry premises and property, outdoor structures such as post-boxes, tunnels and bridges.

They also include other fires where there are casualties, rescues or escapes, where

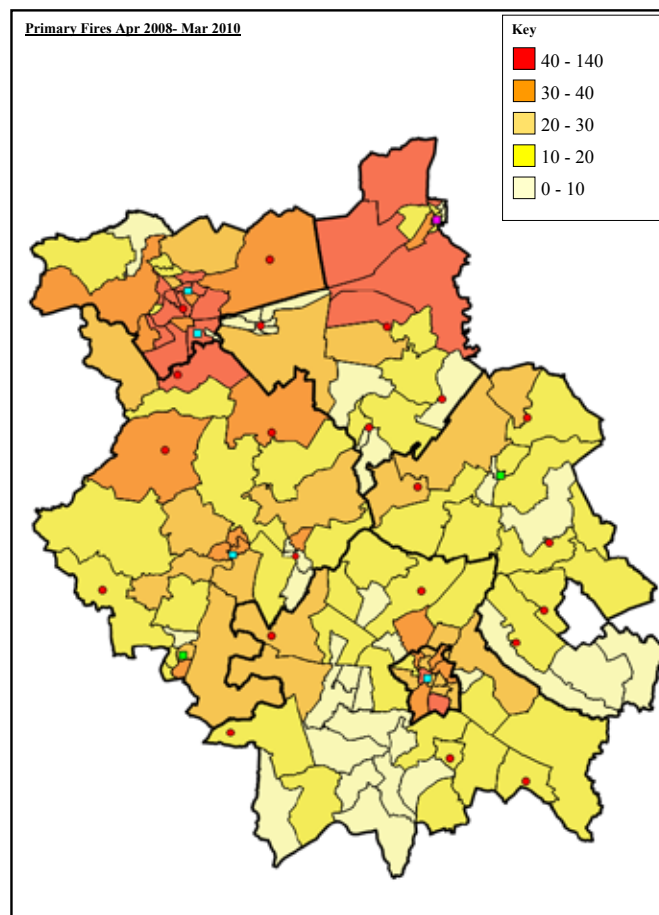
fire spreads from one location to another, or where fires are attended by five or more appliances where either the firefighters, appliances or equipment are deployed to fight the fire.

Between April 2008 and March 2010 the Service rescued a total of 66 people from fire related incidents with the majority of these being as a result of fires in the home. Although our figures are relatively low compared to the national average, over this time frame there have been a total of 14 fire related deaths and 169 fire related injuries

within the county.

The introduction of mobile data terminals on all appliances has enabled us to ensure that operational risk information is available at the touch of a button thus supporting improvements in incident management.

Upgrades in both appliances and equipment such as the introduction of Combined Aerial Rescue Appliances (CARAs) and enhanced electronic breathing apparatus sets have provided a significant improvement in the safe ways of working available to our firefighters.



## Improvement opportunities

The continued integration of our prevention, protection and response activities should ensure that where accidental fires do occur, deaths, injuries and fire spread are significantly reduced and therefore the resulting fire damage is restricted.

Our incident monitoring and debrief process will continue to provide invaluable information on both performance and areas

for improvement. The processes will influence both internal activities and where necessary partnership working.

We will continue to plan and exercise our response arrangements to local services and amenities such as schools, hospitals and larger shopping centres. We will also work in partnership with local commercial establishments to ensure that suitable risk information, access and water supplies are available.



## 2. Road traffic collisions

Geographically, the Service covers a number of major road networks which give rise to some of the most serious RTCs. The A14, M11 and A1 are major arterial road networks with high volumes of traffic load especially heavy goods vehicles and commuter traffic. The A1307 which runs from Cambridge towards the south of the county is classified as a high casualty route.

Over the last five years the Service has attended an average of 732 RTCs per year, which is approximately 25 per cent of the total RTCs occurring on the roads of Cambridgeshire and

Peterborough each year. This percentage difference is due to the fact that the Service only normally attends those incidents in which a rescue is required, there is a fire or a suspected vehicle fire

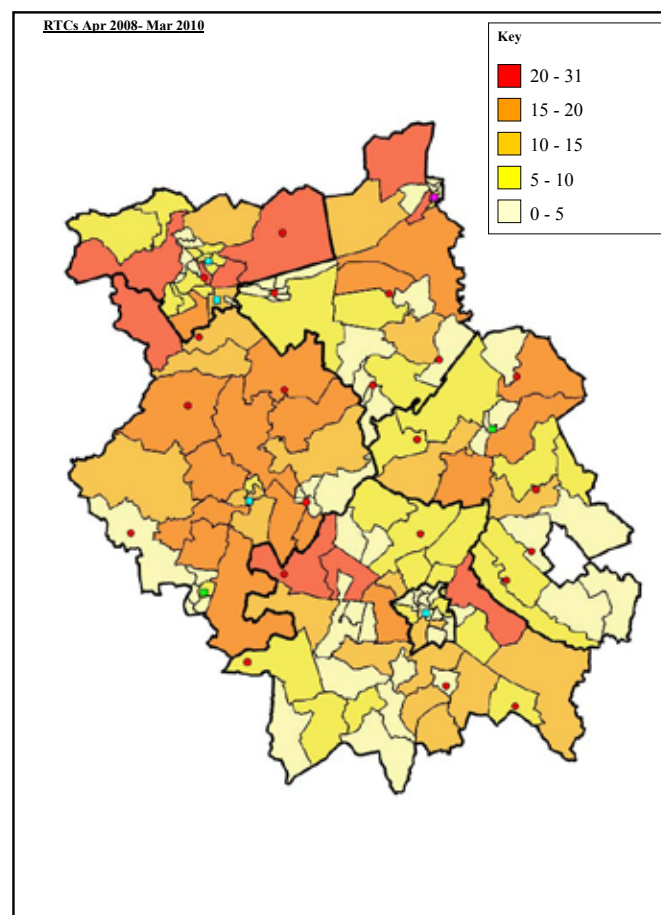
Between April 2008 and March 2010 the Service rendered assistance to 803 people trapped or injured as a result of an RTC and, while the number of serious RTCs within the county is reducing, the annual number of people killed on our roads remains in excess of one person per day.

Enhancements in both equipment and training continue to reduce the amount of time taken to extricate

a casualty from a vehicle, however improvements in vehicle construction and inbuilt safety devices make this an on-going process.

The specialist rescue equipment carried on front line appliances can also be deployed to other emergency incidents where persons are trapped such as those involving trains, planes and heavy duty machinery.

Along with chemical protection suits, emergency environmental protection equipment is also carried on specialist appliances enabling us to provide an emergency response to transport related hazardous material incidents.



## Improvement opportunities

A continual increase in partnership working between the emergency services will ensure that incident management and scene safety continue to improve.

In particular, increased partnership working with the Highways and Environmental Agencies will enable us to provide a more effective emergency response to transport related hazardous material incidents.



### 3. Water related incidents

The geography within the Fenland area of the county makes driving especially hazardous in relation to vehicles leaving the road and entering water. Specially equipped and trained personnel are mobilised to deal with such incidents. The geographical profile of parts of Cambridge and Peterborough also give rise to an increased tendency for environmental flooding. In

these instances the provision of specialist protective clothing, equipment and training to enable crews to undertake rescues and render assistance to persons trapped or affected by flood water.

Other water related incidents include animal rescues, boating accidents and persons trapped or immersed in water. Equipment and training provided to all front line crews enables them to provide an initial response

and prepare the scene should a more specialist type of rescue be required. The allocation of a high volume pump to the Service as part of the national resilience arrangements means that we are well placed to enhance our local response to environmental flooding. Improvements in resilience arrangements in relation to crewing will increase our ability to support protracted working.

### Improvement opportunities

Following on from the John Ash Report into the Bedlam Bridge incident, a review and increase in the provision of specialist protective clothing, equipment and training to specific crews will be undertaken.



## WHAT DIFFERENCE ARE WE AIMING TO MAKE?

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- By 2014/15 CFRS will increase Retained Duty System availability to 95 per cent.
  - By 2014/15 CFRS will respond to the most serious incidents within an average of 9 minutes for the first appliance and within an average of 12 minutes for the second appliance.
  - By 2014/15 CFRS will respond to the most serious incidents within 18 minutes on at least 95 per cent of occasions for the first appliance and within 25 minutes on at least 95 per cent of occasions for the second appliance.
  - In accordance with our training strategy and in line with local performance indicators, we will ensure that our firefighters continually maintain their competency levels.
  - In accordance with our fleet and equipment maintenance schedule we will ensure that our appliances and equipment remain available and fit for purpose.
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## HOW WILL WE MAKE THIS DIFFERENCE?

### DELIVERY:

We will deliver this by focusing on three cross cutting themes:

#### **THEME 1: RIGHT PEOPLE**

Ensure that our operational personnel are available and competent to deal efficiently and effectively with the operational risks present within our community.

#### **THEME 2: RIGHT EQUIPMENT**

Ensure that our appliances and equipment are fit for purpose and are relevant to the prevailing risks.

#### **THEME 3: RIGHT TIME**

Ensure our incident response arrangements are efficient, effective and relative to the prevalent risks.

**EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIP WORKING**

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### IMPROVEMENT:

We will improve the Service we deliver by:

- Ensuring that our operational personnel develop their competencies relative to risk.
  - Ensuring crewing arrangements are relative to risk.
  - Ensuring our arrangement for the command, management and supervision of incidents are suitable and sufficient.
  - Reviewing our current activity to ensure our resources are appropriate for existing requirements.
  - Reviewing our current resources to ensure they meet reasonably predictable future requirements.
  - Co-ordinating resources to ensure that they are aligned to those areas of greatest operational risk.
  - Working with partners to identify those areas of greatest operational risk.
  - Developing our analysis capability in order to proactively identify emerging operational risk.
  - Ensuring arrangements are in place to support cross-border working and national resilience if called upon.
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## RESOURCE ALLOCATION

The Service has 28 fire stations that cover Cambridgeshire and Peterborough providing a permanent base for our 38 fire appliances and 10 specialist vehicles. These are staffed on either a 24 hour basis, a day-time basis with retained cover at night or a permanent retained basis.

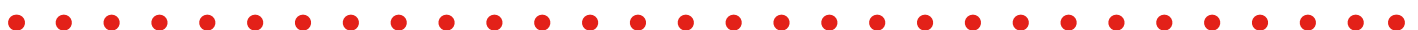
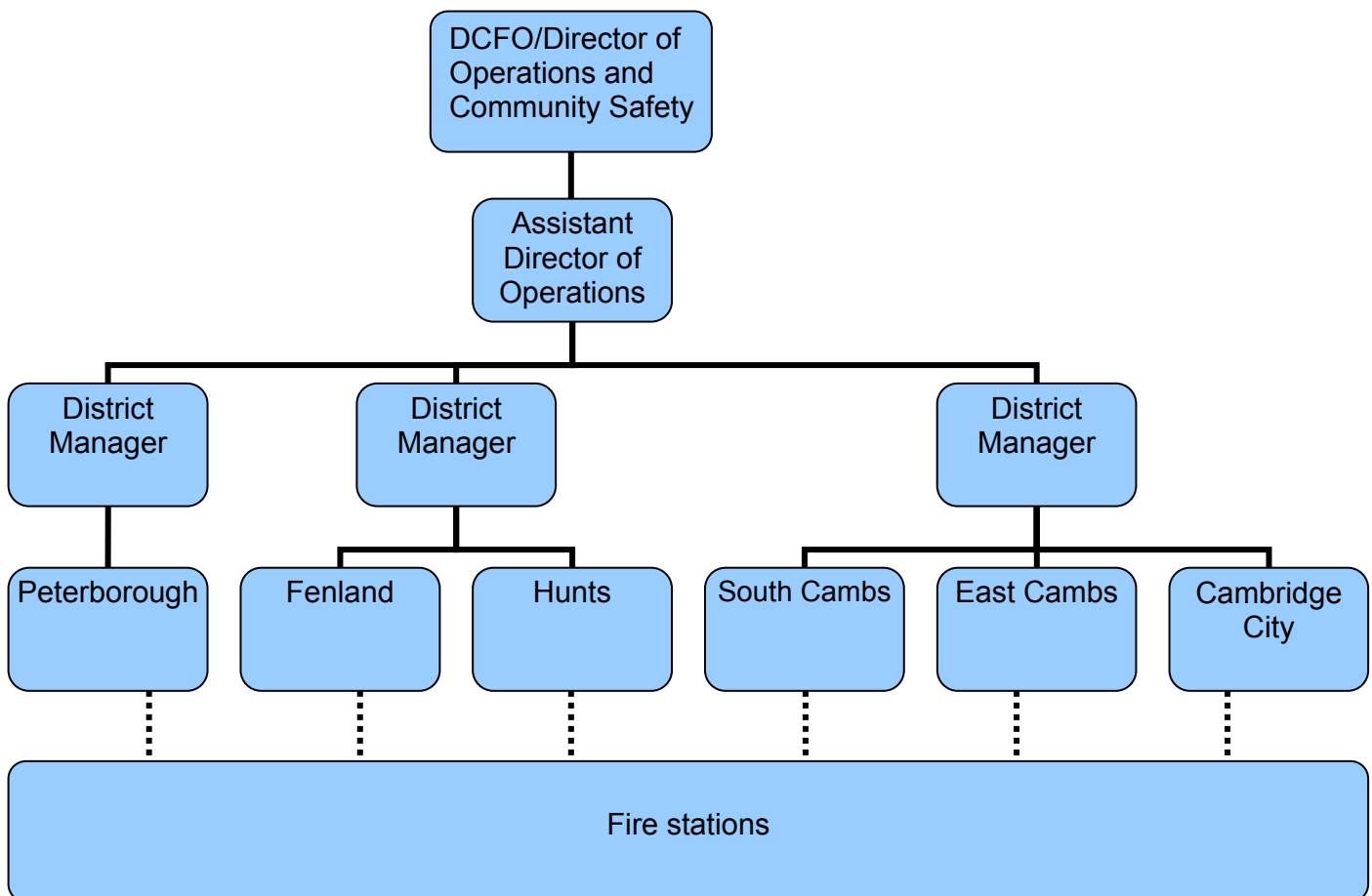
All frontline fire appliances are equipped to deal with a range of incidents including

fires, RTCs and chemical incidents. Specialist appliances are available to support our front line service at larger or more complex incidents requiring aerial capability, heavy duty RTC equipment, specialist hazardous materials equipment and in-water rescue equipment.

A central Operational Support Group develops the underpinning policy and co-ordinates Service wide initiatives. The Assistant Director of Operations has responsibility for ensuring the appropriate resources are available within

the two authority areas in order to match resources to the risk and deliver against this strategy. This process is supported by the work of an external company which undertakes analysis/modelling of current service delivery and provides forecasts in relation to options for change.

Overall, the Service will seek to make the most effective use of its resources in an integrated way to ensure the improved safety of the communities of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.



## MEASUREMENT AND REVIEW

The Service is committed to informing, consulting and involving representatives of the community and using their feedback to develop and improve our approach to operational response activities. We achieve this through our consultation within our Integrated Risk Management Plan process and our involvement in local partnerships and neighbourhood panels. The Service will ensure there is an effective performance management process in

place to monitor the success of this strategy. This will be delivered through group plans and progress monitored and reported at the both Directorate and District/Group level.

Performance measurement relies on the evaluation of achieved outcomes, compared to desired outcomes. Through this process the Service can improve performance, evaluate activity and align budget to strategic aims and organisational requirements. At an operational level, performance is measured via the use of incident monitoring

and incident debriefs. In order to measure and evaluate the effectiveness of our activity the Service will adopt the following assessment hierarchy:

- Outcomes (quantitative, what difference have we made), over:
- Outputs (qualitative, what we have achieved), over:
- Inputs (what we have done).

All activity undertaken is quality assured through evaluation to ensure that it is appropriate, relevant and directly contributes to our response strategy and therefore the Service's vision.

