



SCOTTISH
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Working together for a safer Scotland

Workshop Information Pack

Reducing Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals

Evaluating Options for
Responding to Automatic
Fire Alarms

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AGENDA

OPTIONS FOR RESPONDING TO AUTOMATIC FIRE ALARM ACTUATIONS

WEDNESDAY 24TH FEBRUARY 2021

ONLINE WORKSHOP

Morning Session

1000 - 1230

Welcome and Opening Remarks

From Head of Prevention & Protection

Presentation

Covering background, relevant legislation, scale of the problem and proposals.

Open Forum

Opportunity to get the views and opinions of staff and stakeholders.

SHORT BREAK

Introduction to Benefits/Risk Assessment Exercise

Covering format and methodology

LUNCH BREAK

Afternoon Session

1300 - 1600

Benefits/Risk Assessment Exercise

Workshop will split into panels and facilitators will take the panel members through the assessment and scoring exercise.

SHORT BREAK

Next Steps

Panels come together and the next steps of the options appraisal process are outlined.

Closing Remarks

From Head of Prevention & Protection

Workshop Briefing Notes

How we arrived at the shortlist



INTRODUCTION

This briefing note aims to provide you with a detailed account of the exercise that was conducted to arrive at the shortlist of options for responding to Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA) actuations. It covers the process, the criteria used, the scoring and workings to reduce a lengthy list of options to a final shortlist for in depth assessment

THE FINAL SHORTLIST

Table One contains the final shortlist (and scorings) of options for responding to AFA actuations. These alternatives are to be taken forward, to the more detailed stages of the options appraisal process, involving staff and stakeholders.

A more comprehensive description of each shortlisted option is attached at **Appendix A** of the briefing note. A detailed account of how this final shortlist was reached, is covered in the following sections.

OPTION REF	OUTLINE STRATEGY	FINAL SCORING
1a	Pre-COVID-19 Response (Do Nothing) – call challenge all AFA’s from non-domestic premises and respond with minimum one pump response. Exemptions apply to high risk premises and calls originating from Alarm Receiving Centres (ARCs)	100
2d	COVID-19 Interim Response – immediate response to unconfirmed AFA’s with blanket one pump response. Exemptions apply to high risk premises types.	120
3c	Call challenge all AFA’s from non-domestic premises and respond only to those where call challenging has failed to remove attendance, or premises type is high risk and exempt from call challenging. In these instances, weight of response is dependent on time of day and premises type.	127
3d	Call challenge all AFA’s from non-domestic premises and respond only to those where call challenging has failed to remove attendance. No exemptions to call challenging apply and weight of response is dependent on time of day and premises type.	129
4b	Non-attendance to all AFA’s from non-domestic premises, unless back-up 999 call is received. Exemptions apply to high risk premises and weight of response is dependent on time of day and premises type.	127

Table One - Final shortlist of options for responding to AFA actuations

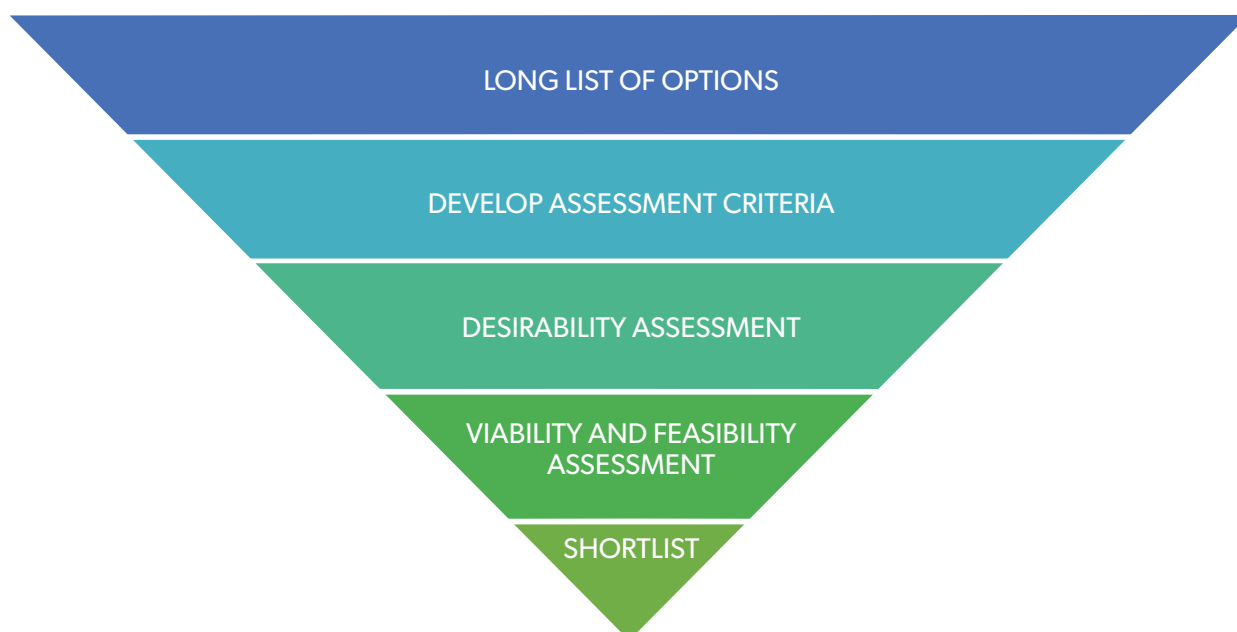
HOW WE ARRIVED AT THE FINAL SHORTLIST

A five-stage process was developed, then a working group comprising SFRS practitioners was formed, to reach a shortlist of options, for consideration by the Service's Strategic Leadership Team (SLT). The process, which is illustrated below, involved:

- Identifying a long list of options for responding to AFA's.
- Developing assessment criteria for scoring each option.
- Application of a desirability assessment, to appraise each option and narrow down the list.
- Application of a viability and feasibility assessment, to appraise the narrowed down list of options and arrive at an initial shortlist.
- Validating the initial shortlist, then recommending a final shortlist to the Project Board.

This process had regard to good practice guidance, published by public bodies and institutes¹, to ensure the wider options appraisal² process was underpinned by appropriate methodologies. Two workshops were held by the working group, to assess and score each option, and come to a decision regarding a final shortlist. The process, including decisions made during the workshops, was recorded for accountability and transparency.

Illustration One - Five-stage process for arriving at a shortlist



¹ Audit Scotland – Options Appraisal: are you getting it right? (2014)

² CIPFA – Appendix A4.3, General Guidance on Options Appraisal (2010)

LONG LIST OF OPTIONS

A sufficiently wide range of options were identified, to ensure that all reasonable alternatives for responding to AFA's would be considered and the ruling out of options would be done by design, rather than oversight. The SFRS Stocktake Review Report³, provided an overview of some of the alternative strategies for responding to AFA's employed by other UK Fire and Rescue Services (FRS).

This was the starting point for conducting a desktop study, to identify, categorise and define a long list of AFA response option strategies, that would enable each option to be appraised consistently using assessment criteria.

It should be emphasised that at this stage of the appraisal process, the 15 options identified are broad options, not detailed accounts of how each option for responding to AFA's would operate in practice.

It was recognised that the more detailed operational and practical matters would be addressed once options were narrowed and progressed to the more detailed stages of the options appraisal process.

The long list of options that were identified for assessment are listed at **Appendix B**.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

A set of criteria, for 'ruling-in' and 'ruling-out' options from the long list was developed and agreed by the SFRS practitioners. The set of criteria chosen allowed each option to be consistently assessed, and included relative weighting, to ensure the importance of certain criteria was considered when assessing and scoring options.

The option of 'Do Nothing', which is the SFRS's permanent strategy for responding to AFA's pre-COVID 19, was adopted as the baseline comparator. The assessment criteria used during the appraisal of the long list of options is summarised in **Table Two**.

The full assessment and scoring against each option is set-out at **Appendix B**.

³ Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals – A Stocktake Review, March 2020

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	KEY POINTS
<p>DESIRABILITY</p> <p>Note*</p> <p>The current response (Do Nothing) option scored 100.</p> <p>This score was therefore used as the benchmark.</p>	<p>The degree to which each option meets the options appraisal objectives (the objectives are detailed at Appendix D). Each objective was weighted based on their prioritisation agreed by the Project Board. The weighting was added to the scoring of each objective, rated 0-5 by the working group.</p> <p>Score of 0 meant objective wasn't met and therefore weighting wasn't applied. Options scoring below 100* are ruled out and will not progress to the viability and feasibility stages. Scoring over 100, the option is ruled-in and progressed to the viability and feasibility stages.</p>
<p>VIABILITY</p>	<p>The degree to which each option is financially viable and sustainable. Each option is scored using a rating of 0-5.</p>
<p>FEASIBILITY</p>	<p>The degree to which each option can be implemented.</p>
<p>SHORTLIST</p>	<p>Viability and feasibility scores of each option are added to the desirability overall score. Options with a final score of over 120 go through to initial shortlist for validation. Final shortlist agreed by the working group and presented to the Project Board for consideration.</p>

Table Two – Assessment Criteria

DESIRABILITY ASSESSMENT

Using the desirability assessment criteria outlined in **Table Two**, a total of five of the 15 options were ruled out during this stage of the assessment and therefore did not progress to the viability and feasibility stage. Of the five ruled out, four were immediate response options, the other was a non-attendance option.

An overview of the five options ruled out at this stage, is covered in **Table Three**. The full desirability assessment and scoring of all options is detailed at **Appendix B**. This was underpinned by a decision log, capturing the decisions against each option at every stage of the process, for arriving at the final shortlist.

REF	OPTION	SCORE	RATIONALE - KEY POINTS
2a	Immediate response to unconfirmed AFA's with premises full PDA.	56	Scored below 100. Failed to meet 3 of the 5 options appraisal objectives (3,4 & 5); therefore, no score and weighting applied to these objectives.
2b	Immediate response to unconfirmed AFA's with blanket two pump response.	55	Scored below 100. Failed to meet 3 of the 5 options appraisal objectives (3,4 & 5); therefore, no score and weighting applied to these objectives.
2c	Immediate response to unconfirmed AFA's with blanket one pump response.	91	Scored below 100. Failed to meet one of the 5 options appraisal objectives (4); therefore, no score and weighting applied to this objective. Also, low score against objective 2.
2e	Immediate response to unconfirmed AFA's with business vehicle.	67	Scored below 100. Failed to meet two of the 5 options appraisal objectives (2 & 4); therefore, no score and weighting applied to these objectives.
4a	Non-attendance to all AFA's from non-domestic premises, unless back-up 999 call is received. No exemptions apply.	95	Scored below 100. Failed to meet one of the 5 options appraisal objectives (4); therefore, no score and weighting applied to this objective. Also, low score against objective 2.

Table Three – Options ruled out during desirability assessment

VIABILITY AND FEASIBILITY ASSESSMENT

A total of 10 options progressed to assessment of viability and feasibility. This included the ‘Do Nothing’ option as baseline comparator. Using the viability and feasibility assessment criteria outlined in **Table Two**, a further four options were ruled out during this stage. All four were immediate response options.

An overview of the four options ruled out during this stage, is covered in **Table Four** below. The full assessment and scoring is detailed at **Appendix B**. This was underpinned by a decision log which captures the decisions, against each option at every stage of the process, leading to the final shortlist.

REF	OPTION	FINAL SCORE <small>Combined scoring from all assessments</small>	RATIONALE - KEY POINTS
2d	COVID-19 Interim Response – immediate response to unconfirmed AFA’s with blanket one pump response. Exemptions apply to high risk premises types.	120	Did not score over 120. Low score for viability – still an immediate response being deployed, with reduced potential for maximising and sustaining efficiencies.
2f	Immediate response to unconfirmed AFA’s with weight of response determined by the premises risk type (e.g. commercial normal risk attracts a one pump response whereas a non-domestic sleeping risk attracts a two-pump response).	115	Did not score over 120. Low score for viability – still an immediate response being deployed, with reduced potential for maximising and sustaining efficiencies.
2g	Immediate response to unconfirmed AFA’s with weight of response determined by the time of day e.g. day/night, weekday/weekends/ public holidays etc.	115	Did not score over 120. Low score for viability - still an immediate response being deployed, with reduced potential for maximising and sustaining efficiencies.
2h	Immediate response to unconfirmed AFA’s with weight of response determined by a combination of the time of day and premises risk type.	118	Did not score over 120. Low score for viability - still an immediate response being deployed, with reduced potential for maximising and sustaining efficiencies.

Table Four – Options ruled out during viability and feasibility assessment

SHORTLIST

Through the process of ruling out options, using the desirability, viability and feasibility assessment criteria, an initial shortlist was narrowed down to six options for validation, prior to any recommendation going to the Project Board. The validation offered an opportunity for SFRS practitioners, to review the results, complete

some due diligence work covering the scoring and rationale recorded during the assessment process, and propose any amendments. The initial shortlist is listed in **Table Five**, and amendments agreed by the SFRS practitioners following validation, is summarised in **Table Six**.

REF	OPTION	FINAL SCORE	RATIONALE KEY POINTS
1a	Pre-COVID-19 Response (Do Nothing) – call challenge all AFA's from non-domestic premises and respond with minimum one pump response. Exemptions apply to high risk premises and calls originating from ARC's.	100	Automatically goes through as the baseline and therefore the comparator for assessing other options against.
3a	Call challenge all AFA's from non-domestic premises and respond only to those where call challenging has failed to remove attendance, or premises type is high risk and exempt from call challenging. In these instances, weight of response is one pump regardless of time of day.	123	Scored over 120. Option met all 5 appraisal objectives, scoring highly against objectives 1 & 5. Mid-range scoring against viability and feasibility criteria.
3b	Call challenge all AFA's from non-domestic premises and respond only to those where call challenging has failed to remove attendance, or premises type is high risk and exempt from call challenging. In these instances, weight of response is two pumps regardless of time of day	121	Scored over 120. Option met all 5 appraisal objectives, scoring highly against objective 2. Mid-range scoring against viability and feasibility criteria.
3c	Call challenge all AFA's from non-domestic premises and respond only to those where call challenging has failed to remove attendance, or premises type is high risk and exempt from call challenging. In these instances, weight of response is dependent on time of day and premises type.	127	Scored over 120. Option met all 5 appraisal objectives, scoring highly across all objectives. Mid-range scoring against viability and feasibility criteria.
3d	Call challenge all AFA's from non-domestic premises and respond only to those where call challenging has failed to remove attendance. No exemptions to call challenging apply and weight of response is dependent on time of day and premises type.	129	Scored over 120. Option met all 5 appraisal objectives, scoring highly across all objectives. Mid to high range scoring against viability and feasibility criteria.
4b	Non-attendance to all AFA's from non-domestic premises, unless back-up 999 call is received. Exemptions apply to high risk premises types and weight of response is dependent on time of day and premises type.	127	Scored over 120. Option met all 5 appraisal objectives, scoring highly against objectives 3 & 4. High range scoring against viability and feasibility criteria.

Table Five – Initial shortlist of options for responding to AFA's

Following validation, the amendments summarised in Table 6 were agreed by the working group then approved by the UFAS Review Project Board, to arrive at the final shortlist covered at the start of this briefing note. This final shortlist was presented to the Service’s SLT on 27 November 2020 and was subsequently approved for more detailed assessment.

REF	OPTION	FINAL SCORE	RATIONALE - KEY POINTS
2d	COVID-19 Interim Response –immediate response to unconfirmed AFA’s with blanket one pump response. Exemptions apply to high risk premises types	Option ruled into the shortlist, following being ruled-out during the viability and feasibility assessment.	Missed the initial shortlist by a very small margin. Estimated reductions in blue light journeys since its introduction and initial survey findings (See Section 3.9), indicate potential benefits of shortlisting this AFA response option for more detailed assessment.
3a	Call challenge all AFA’s from non-domestic premises and respond only to those where call challenging has failed to remove attendance, or premises type is high risk and exempt from call challenging. In these instances, weight of response is one pump regardless of time of day.	Merge options 3a, & 3b, with option 3c	Based on the key features of option 3c, it offers a hybrid of options 3a & 3b. Option 3c is therefore retained and options 3a & 3b removed from the shortlist.
3b	Call challenge all AFA’s from non-domestic premises and respond only to those where call challenging has failed to remove attendance, or premises type is high risk and exempt from call challenging. In these instances, weight of response is two pumps regardless of time of day.		
3c	Call challenge all AFA’s from non-domestic premises and respond only to those where call challenging has failed to remove attendance, or premises type is high risk and exempt from call challenging. In these instances, weight of response is dependent on time of day and premises type.		

Table Six – Agreed amendments to shortlist of options for responding to AFA’s



APPENDIX A

DESCRIPTION OF EACH SHORTLISTED OPTION

It should be emphasised that the descriptions do not provide a detailed account of how each option for responding to AFA's will operate in practice. The more detailed operational and practical matters will be addressed during the next stages of the options appraisal process, which will include staff and stakeholder engagement.

OPTION 1

Pre-COVID-19 Response (Do Nothing) – call challenge all AFA's from non-domestic premises and respond with minimum one pump response. Exemptions apply to high risk premises and calls originating from Alarm Receiving Centres (ARCs).

This is the SFRS's permanent strategy for responding to AFA's, which is covered within the existing SFRS Unwanted Fire Alarm Signal (UFAS) Policy and Procedures. It automatically goes through as the baseline and therefore the comparator for assessing other options against.

Call Challenge

Operations Control (OC) operator asks the caller a series of questions and following set criteria, determines an appropriate weight of response.

Weight of Response

There are four levels of AFA Pre-Determined Attendance (PDA), the one selected by OC is based on the outcome of the call challenge. Policy decision, is to mobilise at least one pump to every AFA call, with at least two pumps mobilised to sleeping risk premises. Calls confirming an actual fire, will attract an immediate full fire PDA response.

Exemptions

Sleeping risk premises are exempt from call challenging. Alarm Receiving Centres (ARCs) are generally exempt from call challenging.

OPTION 2

COVID-19 Interim Response – immediate response to unconfirmed AFA's with blanket one pump response. Exemptions apply to high risk premises types.

This was implemented in May 2020, in response to the fast-moving COVID-19 pandemic and is still in operation as the SFRS's interim strategy for responding to AFA actuations.

Immediate Response

On receipt of an unconfirmed AFA call, the OC operator will mobilise a response.

Weight of Response

A blanket one pump PDA is mobilised to premises, following receipt of an unconfirmed AFA call. Calls confirming an actual fire, will attract an immediate full fire PDA response.

Exemptions

Sleeping risk premises are exempt from call challenging amongst other certain high-risk premises.

OPTION 3

Call challenge all AFA's from non-domestic premises and respond only to those where call challenging has failed to remove attendance, or premises type is high risk and exempt from call challenging. In these instances, weight of response is dependent on time of day and premises type.

Call Challenge

OC operator asks the caller a series of questions and following set criteria, determines whether an emergency response is required following the actuation of an AFA. No response is mobilised, if questioning from the OC operator confirms there is no actual fire.

Weight of Response

If the call challenging process confirms an actual fire, a full fire PDA is mobilised. If the call challenging process cannot verify the cause of the AFA, the OC operator has the discretion to mobilise a PDA based on time of day and premises type is mobilised.

Exemptions

Sleeping risk premises will be exempt from the call challenging process and therefore receive an immediate response based on time of day and premises type.

OPTION 4

Call challenge all AFA's from non-domestic premises and respond only to those where call challenging has failed to remove attendance. No exemptions to call challenging apply and weight of response is dependent on time of day and premises type.

Call Challenge

OC operator asks the caller a series of questions and following set criteria, determines whether an emergency response is required following the actuation of an AFA. No response is mobilised, if questioning from the OC operator confirms there is no actual fire.

Weight of Response

If the call challenging process confirms an actual fire, a full fire PDA is mobilised. If the call challenging process cannot verify the cause of the AFA, the OC operator has the discretion to mobilise a PDA based on time of day and premises type is mobilised.

Exemptions

There are no exemptions to call challenging. The OC operator therefore follows the call challenge process for all AFA calls received, regardless of premises type and caller.

OPTION 5

Non-attendance to all AFA's from non-domestic premises, unless back-up 999 call is received. Exemptions apply to high risk premises types and certain times of day.

Non-attendance

There is no call challenging process on receiving a 999-call stating that an AFA has actuated. The OC operator advises the caller, that they ring-back using 999, if they discover a fire.

Weight of Response

Calls confirming an actual fire, will attract an immediate full fire PDA response.

Exemptions

Sleeping risk premises will be exempt from non-attendance, and therefore receive an immediate response based on time of day and premises type.



APPENDIX B

LONG LIST OF AFA RESPONSE OPTIONS, COVERING ASSESSMENT AND SCORING OF EACH OPTION

DESIRABILITY ASSESSMENT

OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION		ASSESSMENT OF OPTIONS APPRAISAL OBJECTIVES					Overall Score
		Minimising risk to public safety and firefighter safety	Maintaining an effective response to confirmed fires originating as an AFA	Maximising efficiency savings through reducing mobilisations and expanding capacity to invest in prevention and other value adding activities	Having regard to relevant risk factors (e.g. time of day, occupancy, special risks)	Supporting the Service's commitment to achieving carbon reduction targets	
		If meets the objective then Score 1-5 and add weighting Weighting = 25	If meets the objective then Score 1-5 and add weighting Weighting = 25	If meets the objective then Score 1-5 and add weighting Weighting = 20	If meets the objective then Score 1-5 and add weighting Weighting = 20	If meets the objective then Score 1-5 and add weighting Weighting = 10 0 = not meeting the objective	
1	Do Nothing (Baseline Comparator)						
1a	Pre-COVID 19 Response – call challenge all AFA's from non-domestic premises and respond with minimum one pump response. Exemptions apply to high risk premises and calls originating from ARC's.	2 27	4 29	2 22	2 22	0	100
2	Immediate Response						
2a	Immediate response to unconfirmed AFA's with premises full PDA	1 26	5 30	0	0	0	56
2b	Immediate response to unconfirmed AFA's with blanket two pump response	1 26	4 29	0	0	0	55
2c	Immediate response to unconfirmed AFA's with blanket one pump response	3 28	2 27	3 23	0	3 13	91

2d	COVID-19 Interim Response –immediate response to unconfirmed AFA's with blanket one pump response. Exemptions apply to high risk premises types	3 28	4 29	3 23	3 23	1 12	115
2e	Immediate response to unconfirmed AFA's with business vehicle	4 29	0	4 24	0	4 14	67
2f	Immediate response to unconfirmed AFA's with weight of response determined by the premises risk type (e.g. commercial normal risk attracts a one pump response whereas a non-domestic sleeping risk attracts a two-pump response)	2 27	3 28	2 22	2 22	2 12	111
2g	Immediate response to unconfirmed AFA's with weight of response determined by the time of day e.g. day/night, weekday/weekends/public holidays etc.	2 27	3 28	2 22	2 22	2 12	111
2h	Immediate response to unconfirmed AFA's with weight of response determined by a combination of the time of day and premises risk type.	3 28	4 29	2 22	3 23	3 13	115

3 Call challenge

3a	Call challenge all AFA's from non-domestic premises and respond only to those where call challenging has failed to remove attendance, or premises type is high risk and exempt from call challenging. In these instances, weight of response is one pump regardless of time of day.	4 29	3 28	2 23	3 23	4 14	117
3b	Call challenge all AFA's from non-domestic premises and respond only to those where call challenging has failed to remove attendance, or premises type is high risk and exempt from call challenging. In these instances, weight of response is two pumps regardless of time of day.	3 28	4 29	2 23	3 23	3 13	116
3c	Call challenge all AFA's from non-domestic premises and respond only to those where call challenging has failed to remove attendance, or premises type is high risk and exempt from call challenging. In these instances, weight of response is dependent on time of day and premises type.	4 29	4 29	4 24	5 25	4 14	121
3d	Call challenge all AFA's from non-domestic premises and respond only to those where call challenging has failed to remove attendance. No exemptions to call challenging apply and weight of response is dependent on time of day and premises type.	4 29	4 29	5 25	5 25	4 14	122

4 Non-Attendance

4a	Non-attendance to all AFA's from non-domestic premises, unless back-up 999 call is received. No exemptions apply.	4 29	1 26	5 25	0	5 15	95
4b	Non-attendance to all AFA's from non-domestic premises, unless back-up 999 call is received. Exemptions apply to high risk premises types and weight of response is dependent on time of day and premises type.	3 28	3 28	4 24	5 25	3 13	118

If option scores **over 100**, then it goes through for assessment of viability and feasibility (highlighted above).

Option 1a (Do Nothing) automatically goes through as baseline comparator.

The rationale for the scores at this stage are recorded within the Decision Log.

VIABILITY AND FEASIBILITY ASSESSMENT

OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION		ASSESSMENT OF DESIRABILITY, VIABILITY AND FEASIBILITY			
		DESIRABILITY	VIABILITY	FEASIBILITY	FINAL SCORE
		The degree to which each option meets the options appraisal objectives This is the overall score from assessment of options appraisal objectives	The degree to which the option is financially viable and sustainable Score 1 - 5	The degree to which the options can be implemented Score 1 - 5	
2d	COVID-19 Interim Response –immediate response to unconfirmed AFA's with blanket one pump response. Exemptions apply to high risk premises types.	115	1	4	120
2f	Immediate response to unconfirmed AFA's with weight of response determined by the premises risk type (e.g. commercial normal risk attracts a one pump response whereas a non-domestic sleeping risk attracts a two-pump response).	111	1	3	115
2g	Immediate response to unconfirmed AFA's with weight of response determined by the time of day e.g. day/night, weekday/weekends/public holidays' etc.	111	1	3	115
2h	Immediate response to unconfirmed AFA's with weight of response determined by a combination of the time of day and premises risk type.	115	1	2	118
3a	Call challenge all AFA's from non-domestic premises and respond only to those where call challenging has failed to remove attendance, or premises type is high risk and exempt from call challenging. In these instances, weight of response is one pump regardless of time of day.	117	3	3	123
3b	Call challenge all AFA's from non-domestic premises and respond only to those where call challenging has failed to remove attendance, or premises type is high risk and exempt from call challenging. In these instances, weight of response is two pumps regardless of time of day.	116	2	3	121
3c	Call challenge all AFA's from non-domestic premises and respond only to those where call challenging has failed to remove attendance, or premises type is high risk and exempt from call challenging. In these instances, weight of response is dependent on time of day and premises type.	116	2	3	121

3d	Call challenge all AFA's from non-domestic premises and respond only to those where call challenging has failed to remove attendance. No exemptions to call challenging apply and weight of response is dependent on time of day.	122	4	3	129
4b	Non-attendance to all AFA's from non-domestic premises, unless back-up 999 call is received. Exemptions apply to high risk premises types and weight of response is dependent on time of day and premises type.	118	5	4	127

If an option scores **over 120**, it goes through to initial shortlist for consideration (highlighted above).

Option 1a (Do Nothing) automatically goes through as baseline comparator.

The **initial Shortlist** covered the following options:

- Option 1a (baseline comparator)
- Option 3a, 3b, 3c, 3d
- Option 4b

Following validation of the shortlist by the working group, the following decisions were made:

- Add option 2d to the shortlist
- Merge options 3a, & 3b, with option 3c

The **final shortlist** to go forward to the UFAS Review Project Board is:

- Option 1a (baseline comparator)
- Option 2d (Interim COVID 19 AFA Response Strategy)
- Option 3c, 3d
- Option 4b

The rationale for the scores at this stage are recorded within the Decision Log.



Workshop Briefing Notes

Benefits and Risk Assessment



INTRODUCTION

A key part of the workshop on 24 February, will involve evaluating the benefits and risks of each of the options for responding to Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA) actuations at non-domestic premises.

To achieve this, the options will be evaluated against set assessment criteria and independent facilitators

will ensure a consensus is achieved by the workshop participants in awarding scores and ranking the options.

The remainder of this briefing note details the shortlist of options for responding to AFA actuations and provides an overview of the Benefits and Risks Scoring Exercise you will participate in during the workshop.

THE OPTIONS

Notes for your attention:

- Please refer to the '**How We Arrived at The Shortlist**' Briefing Note, contained within your information pack, for a full account of the process, criteria and workings that were used to rule out options and arrive at the final shortlist below.
- Under the exemptions for each option below, sleeping risk premises are classed as the premises listed at **Appendix One**.
- The options **do not alter our response to AFA actuations that are received from domestic dwellings**. The options for consideration relate to non-domestic premises.

OPTION 1

Pre-COVID-19 Response (Do Nothing) – Call challenge all AFA's from non-domestic premises and respond with minimum one fire appliance. Exemptions apply to sleeping risk premises and calls originating from Alarm Receiving Centres (ARC).

This is the SFRS's routine strategy for responding to AFA's, which is covered within the SFRS UFAS Policy and associated procedures and will be considered as the baseline for assessing the other four options against.

Call Challenge

Operations Control (OC) operator asks the caller a series of questions and following set criteria, determines an appropriate number of fire appliances to mobilise.

Weight of Response

There are four levels of AFA Pre-Determined Attendance (PDA), the one selected by OC is based on the outcome of the call challenge. Policy decision, is to mobilise at least one fire appliance to every AFA call, with at least two fire appliances mobilised to sleeping risk premises. Calls confirming an actual fire, will attract an immediate full fire PDA response.

Exemptions

Sleeping risk premises are exempt from call challenging. Alarm Receiving Centres (ARCs) are generally exempt from call challenging.

OPTION 2

COVID-19 Interim Response – immediate response to AFA’s from non-domestic premises with blanket one fire appliance response. Exemptions apply to certain premises types.

This was implemented in May 2020, in response to the fast-moving COVID-19 pandemic and is still in operation as the SFRS’s interim strategy for responding to AFA actuations.

Immediate Response

On receipt of an AFA call, the OC operator will mobilise a response.

Weight of Response

A blanket one fire appliance response is mobilised to premises, following receipt of an AFA call. Calls confirming an actual fire, will attract an immediate full fire PDA response.

Exemptions

Sleeping risk premises amongst other certain high-risk premises.

OPTION 3

Challenge all AFA’s from non-domestic premises and respond only to those processed through call challenging, or to premises types exempt from call challenging. In these instances, the number of fire appliances is dependent on time of day and premises type.

Call Challenge

OC operator asks the caller a series of questions and following set criteria, determines whether an emergency response is required following the actuation of an AFA. No response is mobilised, if questioning from the OC operator confirms there is no fire, or physical signs of fire.

Weight of Response

If the call challenging process confirms an actual fire, a full fire PDA is mobilised. If the call challenging process cannot verify the cause of the AFA, the OC operator has the discretion to mobilise an appropriate weight of response based on factors such as time of day and premises type.

Exemptions

Sleeping risk premises will be exempt from the call challenging process and therefore receive an immediate response based on time of day and premises type. The immediate response to exemptions are as follows:

- Residential Care Homes will receive 2 fire appliances regardless time of day
- All other sleeping risks will receive one fire appliance between 0700 – 1800hrs and two fire appliances out-with these hours.

OPTION 4

Call challenge all AFA's from non-domestic premises and respond only to those where the call challenging process cannot verify the cause of the AFA. No exemptions to call challenging apply.

Call Challenge

OC operator asks the caller a series of questions and following set criteria, determines whether an emergency response is required following the actuation of an AFA. No response is mobilised, if questioning from the OC operator confirms there is no fire, or physical signs of fire.

Weight of Response

If the call challenging process confirms an actual fire, a full fire PDA is mobilised. If the call challenging process cannot verify the cause of the AFA, the OC operator has the discretion to mobilise an appropriate weight of response based on factors such as time of day and premises type.

Exemptions

There are no exemptions to call challenging. The OC operator therefore follows the call challenge process for all AFA calls received, regardless of premises type and caller.

OPTION 5

Non-attendance to all AFA's from non-domestic premises, unless back-up 999 call is received. Exemptions apply to sleeping risk premises types and certain times of day.

Non-attendance

There is no call challenging process on receiving a 999-call stating that an AFA has actuated. The OC operator advises the caller, that they ring-back using 999, if they discover a fire.

Weight of Response

Calls confirming an actual fire, will attract an immediate full fire PDA response.

Exemptions

Sleeping risk premises will be exempt from non-attendance and therefore receive an immediate response based on time of day and premises type. The immediate response to exemptions are as follows:

- Residential Care Homes will receive 2 fire appliances regardless time of day
- All other sleeping risks will receive one fire appliance between 0700 – 1800hrs and two fire appliances out-with these hours.

THE BENEFITS SCORING EXERCISE

A benefits scoring exercise will be undertaken to score and rank each option in terms of their key benefits. This will be conducted using the benefit scoring matrix at **Table One**. The key benefits were identified through having regard to the options appraisal objectives, staff feedback¹ and previous research into options for responding to AFA actuations².

The relative weighting of each key benefit was set prior to the workshop, with points totalling 100 allocated and the criteria assessed as the most important allocated the most points. Time will be allocated to achieving a consensus on the key benefits and relative weightings, before the exercise commences.

Each key benefit will be subject to discussion for each of the 4 options proposing change. Conflicting views will be presented, discussed and challenged. To calculate the score for each, the relative weighting will be multiplied by the benefit delivery score. The scores for each key benefit will be totalled to give an overall benefits score for each option. The options will then be ranked.

Along with the workshop information booklet, the benefits descriptors at **Appendix Two**, provide a summary of evidence to support the benefits scoring exercise.

Each option will then be scored by workshop participants, on a benefit delivery scale from **1 to 5** against each key benefit as follows:

1	NO CHANGE in benefit
2	MARGINAL increase
3	SMALL increase
4	MODERATE increase
5	LARGE increase

¹ Review of the COVID-19 Interim Blanket One Pump Attendance to Non-Domestic AFA's – January 2021

² Costs and benefits of alternative responses to AFA's Fire Research Series 2/2008

TABLE ONE - BENEFITS SCORING MATRIX

Key Benefits	Relative Weight	Option 1 Status Quo (Base Case)	Option 2 COVID-19 Interim Response – blanket one pump response	Option 3 Call Challenge with exemptions time & risk variable response	Option 4 Call Challenge, no exemptions, time & risk variable response	Option 5 Non- attendance with exemptions, time & risk variable response
Improved firefighter and community safety through the reduction of blue light journeys	20					
Improved availability of resources for attending real emergencies	20					
Increased time available for training, prevention and diversionary activities	20					
Extra capacity to meet future challenges and risks, and do so much more for the communities of Scotland	20					
Reduced response costs	10					
Reduced fleet carbon emissions	10					
Total Weight/Score	100					
Ranking						

THE RISK SCORING EXERCISE

A risk scoring exercise will be undertaken to score and rank each of the options in terms of their key risks. This will be conducted using the risk scoring matrix at Table Two. The aim of this exercise is to assess the impact and probability of potential key risks inherent in moving to each option. As the options appraisal moves forward into the more detailed stages, this information will help to identify risk management strategies for the options proposing change.

The key risks were identified through having regard to staff feedback³ and previous research into options for responding to AFA actuations⁴. The adoption of the 5 x 5 risk assessment scale, at Appendix Three, will enable a standardised and consistent approach to assessment.

Each risk has been initially assessed for severity of impact and awarded a weighting of 4 across all risks. Time will be allocated to achieving a consensus on the key risks and relative weightings, before the exercise commences.

To calculate the score for each risk, the severity of impact will be multiplied by the probability of occurrence. The risk scores for each option will be totalled to give an overall risk score, then ranked.

During the exercise, each risk category for each option will be subject to detailed discussion in which conflicting views will be presented and challenged. Along with the workshop information booklet, the risk descriptors at **Appendix Four**, provide a summary of evidence to support the risk scoring exercise.

Each option will then be scored based on the probability of each risk occurring on the following scale:

1	VERY LOW	Where an occurrence is improbable or very unlikely.
2	LOW	Where an occurrence is possible but the balance of probability is against.
3	MEDIUM	Where it is likely or probable that an incident will occur.
4	HIGH	Where it is highly probable that an incident will occur.
5	VERY HIGH	Where it is certain that an event will occur.

³ Review of the COVID-19 Interim Blanket One Pump Attendance to Non-Domestic AFA's – January 2021

⁴ Costs and benefits of alternative responses to AFA's Fire Research Series 2/2008

TABLE TWO - RISK SCORING MATRIX

Key Benefits	Relative Weight	Option 1 Status Quo (Base Case)	Option 2 COVID-19 Interim Response – blanket one pump response	Option 3 Call Challenge with exemptions time & risk variable response	Option 4 Call Challenge, no exemptions, time & risk variable response	Option 5 Non- attendance with exemptions, time & risk variable response
Increased risk of building damage	4					
Increased risk to building occupants	4					
Increased risk to firefighter safety	4					
Fire and rescue reputational damage	4					
Retained and Volunteer Duty System (RVDS) retention and recruitment issues	4					
Total Risk Score	100					
Ranking						



APPENDIX 1

SLEEPING RISK PREMISES

Boarding House/B&B for homeless/asylum seekers

Boarding House/B&B other

Boarding School accommodation

Children's Residential Home

Hospital

Prison

Student Hall of Residence

Youth hostel

Military/barracks

Monastery/convent

Hostel (e.g. for homeless people)

Hotel/motel

Nurses'/Doctors' accommodation

Nursing/Care Residential Home

Other holiday residence (cottage, flat, chalet)

Other Residential Home

Retirement/Elderly Residential Home

Young offenders' unit



APPENDIX 2

BENEFITS DESCRIPTORS

Notes for your attention:

Under Options 3 & 4, Operations Control staff will use the call challenge process to determine if a response to an AFA is required. 15% has therefore been factored in to account for this discretionary mobilising, resulting in the estimated reductions of 61% for Option 3 and 85% for Option 4 respectively.

KEY BENEFITS	DESCRIPTOR					
Improved firefighter and community safety through the reduction of blue light journeys	<p>Travelling at higher than normal road speeds to attend emergency incidents is essential to improve the time from call to intervention. However, travelling at high speeds on public highways also presents additional risks to fire fighters as well as pedestrians and other road users. Many accidents have occurred where a fire appliance responding to what is thought to be an emergency incident has collided with another vehicle or person and it transpired that the incident was a false alarm from an AFA system actuation and therefore an unwanted fire alarm signal (UFAS).</p> <p>Based on the five financial years from 2015/16 to 2019/20, the SFRS responded to an average of 28,471 UFAS incidents every year. With an average of 2 fire appliances for every UFAS incident, this means an estimated 57,000 plus unnecessary blue light journeys every year.</p> <p>Based on SFRS H&S figures from 2015/16 to 2019/20, it's estimated that responding to UFAS incidents resulted in an average of 36 vehicle accidents every year and an average of 7 personal accidents/injuries every year⁵. The potential reductions in blue light journeys, vehicle accidents and injuries, when compared the do-nothing baseline (Option 1) are estimated as follows:</p>					
	Option 1 (Do nothing)		Option 2 (32%)	Option 3 (61%)	Option 4 (85%)	Option 5 (71%)
	Average of 57,000 blue light journeys per year	Estimated reductions	18,240	34,770	48,450	40,470
	Average of 36 vehicle accidents per year	Estimated reductions	12	22	31	26
	Average of 7 personal accidents/injuries per year	Estimated reductions	2	4	6	5

⁵ H&S accident figures associated with All False Alarms were cross-referenced with UFAS incidents drawn from SFRS Mobilising Systems

<p>Improved availability of resources for attending real emergencies</p>	<p>Once a fire appliance responds to an AFA actuation, it is committed until this is investigated thoroughly by fire crews and based on data from AFA actuations that have led to UFAS incidents, the average total time spent by fire crews is calculated at 30 minutes⁶ for every UFAS incident.</p> <p>During this time, any fire crews committed are unavailable to attend real emergencies and will lead to resources from other fire stations covering greater distances to respond to emergency calls for assistance. In an emergency where life and property is at risk, the availability of the nearest fire crews to respond quickly is critical.</p> <p>An average of 28,471 UFAS incidents every year, mean 14,235 hours of fire crew availability is lost to UFAS incidents every year. The potential improved availability of fire crews, when compared to the do-nothing baseline (Option 1), is therefore estimated as follows:</p>					
	Option 1 (Do nothing)		Option 2 (32%)	Option 3 (61%)	Option 4 (85%)	Option 5 (71%)
	Average of 14,235 hrs of availability lost to UFAS incidents every year	Estimated improvements in availability (hrs)	4555	8683	12,099	10,107
<p>Increased time available for training, prevention and diversionary activities</p>	<p>When a fire alarm activates and results in a UFAS incident, there is an impact on the fire crews that responded in terms of lost time. Time wasted on these calls can have a significant impact on the time available for vital activities such as prevention work and training to prepare for the wide variety of emergencies, that the SFRS now responds to.</p> <p>To demonstrate this point, based on the average total time spent by fire crews calculated at 30 minutes for every UFAS incident and responding to an average of 28,471 UFAS incidents every year, this equates to 14,235 hours of productive time in just one year.</p> <p>This time could be otherwise utilised, for example undertaking preventative fire safety activities such as Home Fire Safety Visits. The potential increased time available for fire crews, when compared to the do-nothing baseline (Option 1), is estimated as follows:</p>					
	Option 1 (Do nothing)		Option 2 (32%)	Option 3 (61%)	Option 4 (85%)	Option 5 (71%)
	Average of 14,235 hrs of availability lost to UFAS incidents every year	Estimated improvements in availability (hrs)	4555	8683	12,099	10,107

⁶ Figure based on average of two fire appliances responding to every UFAS incident and the time fire appliances were mobilised until time they were made available. This doesn't include the travel time returning to the station and any associated administration and recording.

Extra capacity to meet future challenges and risks, and do so much more for the communities of Scotland

Scotland is facing changes in its population, its climate, its response to COVID-19 and managing the incredible costs of that and the expectations that the public has for all public services.

The result is that Scotland is facing ever more complex challenges, the consequences of which are having (and will have) profound impacts at a community level. In response to these significant risks and challenges, the SFRS is reviewing its future direction, to ensure that it can continue to meet the needs of the communities of Scotland.

Building extra capacity, to enable the SFRS to do more for the communities of Scotland, could be realised if time wasn't wasted on responding to UFAS incidents. The potential extra capacity when compared to the do-nothing baseline (Option 1), is estimated as follows:

Option 1 (Do nothing)		Option 2 (32%)	Option 3 (61%)	Option 4 (85%)	Option 5 (71%)
Average of 14,235 hrs of availability lost to UFAS incidents every year	Estimated improvements in availability (hrs)	4555	8683	12,099	10,107

Reduced response costs

It is difficult to quantify the exact costs of UFAS incidents because of the number of variables such as role related costs, fuel use and fire appliance wear and tear etc. However, reasonable assumptions of overall costs and therefore savings can be calculated using the scale of charges contained within the SFRS's standard charging policy.

To demonstrate this point, based on SFRS's current scale of charges and assuming 30 minutes of total crew time spent at every UFAS attended at £471.60 per hour,⁷ the estimated net costs for responding to an average of 28,471 UFAS incidents every year, equates to £6,713,462.

The potential reduced response costs when compared to the do-nothing baseline (Option 1), are estimated as follows:

Option 1 (Do nothing)		Option 2 (32%)	Option 3 (61%)	Option 4 (85%)	Option 5 (71%)
Estimated £6,713,462 response costs per year	Estimated reductions in response costs (£)	2,148,308	4,095,212	5,706,443	4,766,558

⁷ Costings taken from 2020/21 SFRS Scale of Charges and based on an average of 2 pumps mobilised to each UFAS, with a crewing model of 5 and 4 crew members.

Reduced fleet carbon emissions

Acknowledging its environmental responsibilities, the SFRS has committed to reducing carbon emissions through challenging targets. Assuming carbon emission estimates⁸ and responding to an average of 28,471 UFAS incidents every year, this equates to an estimated 575 tonnes of CO2 emissions (CO2e), which is the carbon equivalent of heating 230 averaged sized homes every year.

The potential reduced fleet carbon emissions when compared to the do-nothing baseline (Option 1), are estimated as follows:

Option 1 (Do nothing)		Option 2 (32%)	Option 3 (61%)	Option 4 (85%)	Option 5 (71%)
Estimated 575 tonnes of CO2e per year	Estimated reductions in CO2e	184	350	488	408

⁸ Estimates of carbon emissions were calculated by SFRS Sustainability Manager, using UK Government Conversion Figures for UK Greenhouse Gas and converted for normal bio diesel.



APPENDIX 3

5 x 5 RISK ASSESSMENT SCALE SEVERITY OF IMPACT SCALE

RISK ASSESSMENT					
IMPACT	POLITICAL	OPERATIONAL	FINANCIAL	LEGAL & REGULATORY COMPLIANCE	REPUTATIONAL/ STAKEHOLDER CONFIDENCE
	Effective Strategic Decision making, full engagement by Board and SLT and meeting in full the expectation of Scottish Government and Local Communities	No negative impact on our ability to deliver the service.	no impact on our ability to deliver a balanced budget	no adverse reputational damage to the service	Rumours, with potential for local public/political concern
1	Effective Strategic Decision making, full engagement by Board and SLT and meeting in full the expectation of Scottish Government and Local Communities	No negative impact on our ability to deliver the service.	no impact on our ability to deliver a balanced budget	no adverse reputational damage to the service	Rumours, with potential for local public/political concern
2	Minor reduction in Board engagement, minimal impact upon achievement of strategic objectives and no adverse comment from SG	There will be a very minimal impact on our ability to deliver the service.	our ability to deliver a balanced budget will be realised with minimal adjustments	Potential unexpected external scrutiny of our activities due to non compliance. Some adverse media attention received.	Some negative Local press interest or Local public/political concern.
3	Question raised over effectiveness of strategic decision making, noticeable impact upon service delivery, criticism by external bodies, partners	There will be a reduction in the ability for us to deliver our services and there may be minor service	action required to ensure delivery of a balanced budget. Potential adverse impact on service delivery.	Prolonged adverse media attention. Criticism of our service as a result of scrutiny by external bodies. Potential legal action.	"Limited damage to reputation. Extended negative local press interest. Some regional public/political concern.
4	Ineffective Board engagement, challenge over strategic decision making of SFRS, failure to deliver against agreed priorities and SG criticism	Service disruption for an extended period. Major consequences.	insufficient finances available to support service delivery	Ineffective governance arrangements identified resulting in Government intervention in the management of the service.	Loss of credibility and confidence in the service. National negative press interest. Significant public/political concern.
5	Failure to deliver against SG priorities, failure of Board and SLT to engage, intervention by SG and external monitoring bodies	Failure to deliver our services	failure to live within our means	failure of the service	Full Public Inquiry. International negative press interest. Major public/political concern.

PROBABILITY SCALE

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING RISK			
PROBABILITY	DESCRIPTION	NUMERICAL VALUE	PLAIN ENGLISH
1	Very Low – Where an occurrence is improbable or very unlikely	1 in 20,000	Never happened and doubt it will
2	Low - Where an occurrence is possible but the balance of probability is against	1 in 2,000	Has happened before but unlikely
3	Medium- where it is likely or probable that an incident will occur	1 in 200	Will probably happen at some point in the future
4	High- where it is highly probable that an incident will occur	1 in 20	Has happened in recent past and will probably happen again
5	Very High- where it is certain that an event will occur	1 in 2	It's already happening and will continue to do so

SCORING EACH RISK

PROBABILITY	5	5	10	15	20	25
	4	4	8	12	16	20
	3	3	6	9	12	15
	2	2	4	6	8	10
	1	1	2	3	4	5
RISK MATRIX		1	2	3	4	5
		IMPACT				



APPENDIX 4

RISKS DESCRIPTORS

KEY RISKS	RISKS DESCRIPTORS
<p>Increased risk of building damage</p>	<p>The SFRS has a legal responsibility to deal with fires that may cause damage to any property. This risk is therefore considered as having a high impact if it was to materialise, following implementation of any options proposing change.</p> <p>This risk is considered within the context of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A single appliance being mobilised to an AFA actuation because at the time of call no fire or signs of fire were confirmed, and this single response arriving to find a developing fire (Option 2); • A developed fire due to SFRS not responding to an AFA actuation, because at the time of call no fire or signs of fire were confirmed and mobilisation was therefore delayed, or delays because of the time taken to call challenge and confirm a fire (Options 3, 4 & 5), and • The greatest likelihood of a fire not being confirmed would be during night time hours when less people are likely to be present in an alert state and therefore able to make an emergency call. <p>MITIGATING FACTORS</p> <p>A review of incident data from 2015/16 to 2019/20 and other information found the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only two per cent of AFA actuations from non-domestic properties that were received by the SFRS were actual fires; • Notably, almost two thirds of these actuations that led to fires, required no firefighting – they were out on arrival; • Overall, the property damage by fire was minimal, with no damage being recorded in over half of all properties involved; • The above statistics reflect the high levels of fire safety standards required of Dutyholders under the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005, and the broadly compliant fire safety levels found by the SFRS in the delivery of its Fire Safety Enforcement Policy Framework • A recent review of the COVID-19 Interim blanket One Pump Attendance to AFA actuations⁹ (Option 1), found no operational learning suggesting an increased risk of building damage because of this reduced response to AFA actuations.

⁹Review of the COVID-19 Interim Blanket One Pump Attendance to Non-Domestic AFA's – January 2021

Increased risk to building occupants

The SFRS exists to save lives from fire and other emergencies. This risk is therefore considered as having a high impact if it was to materialise, following implementation of any options proposing change.

This risk is therefore considered within the context of:

- A single appliance being mobilised to an AFA actuation because at the time of call no fire or signs of fire were confirmed, and on arrival this single response encountering a developed fire, which is putting occupants lives at risk (Option 2);
- A developed fire, putting occupants lives at risk, because of SFRS not responding to an AFA actuation, because at the time of call no fire or signs of fire were confirmed and mobilisation was therefore delayed, or delays because of the time taken to call challenge and confirm a fire (Options 3, 4 & 5), and
- The greatest life risk is likely to be those where the main use of the building is for residential care and sleeping accommodation (i.e. sleeping risk premises).

MITIGATING FACTORS

A review of incident data from 2015/16 to 2019/20 and other information found the following:

- AFA's that led to fire casualties in non-domestic buildings are low, representing under 2% of all fire casualties. These statistics reflect the high levels of fire safety standards required of Dutyholders under the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005, and the broadly compliant fire safety levels found by the SFRS in the delivery of its Fire Safety Enforcement Policy Framework.
- Based on fire safety management requirements, any potential delay to a response to an AFA actuation is not expected to have an impact on life safety where an AFA actuating at occupied premises should instigate on-site fire evacuation plans and investigations. There is no statutory obligation placed on the SFRS to respond to calls originating from an AFA system to establish if there is a fire, and Dutyholders should be considering any potential for a fire starting or spreading within their property at any time.
- Regarding life safety, the SFRS's Fire Safety Enforcement Policy Framework focuses on protecting high life risk premises (i.e. sleeping risk). Under all options being proposed, these sleeping risk premises are exempt and will therefore receive an immediate response, minimising the risk of unnecessary delays and potential increased risk to occupants.
- A recent review of the COVID-19 Interim blanket One Pump Attendance to AFA actuations¹⁰ (Option 1), found no operational learning suggesting an increased risk to building occupants because of this reduced response to AFA actuations.

¹⁰ Review of the COVID-19 Interim Blanket One Pump Attendance to Non-Domestic AFA's – January 2021

Increased risk to firefighter safety

The SFRS is committed to keeping firefighters, who work in dangerous and hazardous environments as an inherent part of their job, safe. This risk is therefore considered as having a high impact if it was to materialise, following implementation of any options proposing change and is considered within the context of:

- A single appliance being mobilised to an AFA actuation because at the time of call no fire or signs of fire were confirmed, and on arrival this single response having to deal with a developed fire (Option 2), and
- Firefighters having to deal with a developed fire, because of SFRS not responding to an AFA actuation, because at the time of call no fire or signs of fire were confirmed therefore delaying mobilisation, or delays because of the time taken to call challenge and confirm a fire (Options 3, 4 & 5).

MITIGATING FACTORS

- The incident data that has been presented, shows that a small proportion (two per cent) of AFA actuations occur because of an actual fire;
- A large proportion (two thirds) of AFA actuations that led to fires, required no firefighting (i.e. they were out on arrival);
- Ongoing core skills training, ensures firefighters can safely, competently and effectively deal with the risk of a more developed fire;
- The SFRS's operational assurance process enables the monitoring and reviewing of incidents, to ensure any lessons are learned and improvements in firefighter safety are made;
- A recent review of the COVID-19 Interim blanket One Pump Attendance to AFA actuations¹¹ (Option 1), found no operational learning suggesting an increased risk to firefighter safety because of this reduced response to AFA actuations, and
- Based on vehicle accident and injury statistics provided within the benefits assessment, it could be argued, that road risk from unnecessary blue light journeys is greater than any risk to firefighters from more developed fires because of implementing any of the proposed options.

¹¹ Review of the COVID-19 Interim Blanket One Pump Attendance to Non-Domestic AFA's – January 2021

<p>Retained and Volunteer Duty System (RVDS) retention and recruitment issues</p>	<p>RVDS firefighters primarily work in other occupations, and receive payments for every call-out they respond to. Around two thirds of SFRS's stations¹² are crewed by these firefighters, providing valuable emergency cover in the more rural areas and villages and towns.</p> <p>This risk is therefore considered as having a high impact if it was to materialise, following implementation of any options proposing change, and is considered within the context of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People being less inclined to work as RVDS fire-fighters; if the number of call outs to AFA actuations (and hence pay) reduces. <p>MITIGATING FACTORS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RDS and Volunteers have the opportunity, to get paid for undertaking other duties (e.g. Home Fire Safety Visits). Any lost earnings through less call-outs could be made-up through payment for undertaking these other duties. • SFRS is involving these staff in the decision-making process, through the options appraisal process. • Different remuneration models are being considered through the RVDS Strategy Project.
<p>Fire and rescue reputational damage</p>	<p>The SFRS is regarded by the communities it serves as a highly trusted and valued service,¹³ and is always striving to maintain and enhance its reputation.</p> <p>This risk is therefore considered as having a high impact if it was to materialise, and is considered within the context of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and stakeholders showing low support/opposition for any proposals that would lead to a reduced response to AFA actuations, and • Potential for court challenge via Judicial Review and/or Interdicts. <p>MITIGATING FACTORS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SFRS is involving staff and key stakeholders in the decision-making process, during key stages of the options appraisal process. • Decisions being made through options appraisal process has regard to all relevant evidence and information, including SFRS giving due regard to the General Equality Duty. • A formal public consultation is planned, to ensure that the full range of stakeholders are given the opportunity to have their say about any proposals.

¹² SFRS Fire Safety and Organisational Statistics 2019/20

¹³ SFRS Public Opinion Survey – May 2017.



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