



# SHOUT!

The magazine of Hampshire Retained Firefighters Union

Monday, 21 March 2005

**RFU**  
Serving the community

## The View From Here

What a month February was! From the Service admitting their substantial failings with the launch of the RMS system, through to the first official 'Joint Trade Unions' meeting. Towards the end of the month a very special launch - things within the HRFU have been extremely busy and to top it all a new look newsletter!

With all of these things happening we identified the need to get information out to you quicker. This was manifestly apparent with the RMS system where we have had probably the biggest response from firefighters wanting to know what it is all about, their rights and what actions we advise.



For the record our advice is that you should accept and complete the RMS—but do read our

section in this newsletter for a lot more information.

There can be few logistically harder jobs than being a representative for RDS (retained duty system) Firefighters! You are spread throughout the county, meet once a week (and are busy enough then) and are probably one of the best groups of people in the country at 'just getting the job done'. Irrespective of management changes, union representations and technology you still deliver 110% when 'the bells go down'.

Consequently, we are extremely proud to invite you to visit our brand new website!

**WWW.HRFU.ORG.UK**

This new resource is available for you to visit 24x7 and contains resources to help you; dynamic news feed and a notice board to allow you to add and share your comments.

Our aim is to help each individual station, wherever it is in Hampshire, realise that it is an important part of a much larger group. With your feedback, thoughts and full integration into HRFU communication system we can serve you much better and provide a more informed and up to date response at HFRS meetings when we represent your views.

## RMS—THE INTERVIEW

This month, the project owner of the Retained Management System SDO Kevin Butcher granted us an interview to provide feedback on the new system. Look inside for the reasons why HFRS are promoting this and some of our thoughts.

### New Look Newsletter

Our new look newsletter reflects the growing brand of HRFU—we hope you appreciate it and come to recognise it as a fair and honest home of information for RDS Firefighters within HFRS.

## AGM

An invitation to all of our members. This month on Thursday 31st March we are holding our Annual General Meeting at Bishops Waltham Station from 19:45 hours.

Do you like what the HRFU is doing for you?

Have you any comments, rumours or ideas you want to discuss?

Download full details from the home page of our website.

**The HRFU represents you—come and tell us what you think.**

**The RFU newsletter—designed to educate, inform and entertain.**

**RFU** *part of the solution not the problem*





## 8/80 What is this really about?

The old standards of fire cover have gone; the A, B, C and D risk areas have gone; the times for in attendance related to A, B, C and D risk area at incidents has gone. Without a metric to measure efficiency, our employers had to replace it with something.

In line with the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) philosophy, a benchmark figure was arrived at by looking at what statistically, HFRS was achieving overall already. 8/80 is a catchy little phrase and although being a little higher than our previous level of performance overall was, apparently, too good a phrase to discard no matter what the implications.

- 8/80 as a specific localised benchmark is irrelevant to every fire station because every fire station is demographically and geographically different.
- 8/80 as a measurement of an individual stations efficiency is absurd as the target is generally not remotely applicable and therefore acts as a de-motivating factor.



- 8/80 is meaningless to the residents of Hampshire as it raises the question about the other 20 percent of the time; "am I in it and if so when do I get help"?

8/80 was presented at IRMP consultation meetings as a benchmark for Hampshire as a whole, a media relations figure, nothing more.

What this benchmark has become is actually a rod for our own backs, a tool by which senior management are browbeating the group managers and a tool for group managers to browbeat OiC's. To what end? Have IRMP targets been thought through and properly managed and presented? Once again we have the potential for disharmony and disenfranchisement from the process of change.

If HFRS really desire overall improvement a considered approach is needed. Throw away the sledgehammer and autocratic management style and instead engage with station personnel.

- Each station needs an individual response/ in attendance time profile to all parts of the administrative area based on past performance for an extended period. This will give a realistic benchmark to work from.
- A realistic consensual appraisal of current practice.
- A realistic consensual assessment of potential improvement areas.
- A structured time bounded/measurable implementation of improvement Ideas.

## CFS Payments response



The biggest waste of resources is fighting between representative bodies so we will rarely bring ourselves to do this. However, we just want to scotch one rumour about RDS involvement in CFS. HRFU **have not** negotiated a pay decrease for community fire safety projects. In our discussions with senior management, they identified that this was a trial project and so would offer one hourly payment rate for firefighters involved with it. It was mutually agreed that should the project prove successful and be continued we would sit down and formerly discuss recompense.

It is our firm belief that so long as we are advised and they are well managed, we should help and encourage new and innovative projects within HFRS and not put up obstacles. If they prove successful then we can all sit down and discuss the finer points.



## From the RFU

Last month HRFU Chair, Secretary and committee member Chas McGill attended the RFU's National Executive committee meeting in Rugby and what a fascinating day. The variation in which Fire Services are treating their RDS members is astounding. Some Brigades have made their RDS crews specialists, running aerial appliances, large volume pumps etc and enabled RDS firefighters to become BA Instructors, RTA Instructors, while others still barely recognise the RDS firefighters and treat them as a second class resource.

The RFU is rising to the challenges of a changing fire service and plans to market itself to the advantage of its members with some great new offers that will benefit us all.

We will keep you informed....



# HRFU.ORG.UK—what's in it for you!

## Newsletters

The HRFU newsletter has proved to be extremely popular and generates lots of opinions! We think it is essential to ensure that you are given a monthly report on what is happening and what is about to happen. To dispel rumours and clear cloudy waters.

We now plan to distribute the newsletter via email and to ensure data protection policy, allow you to manage your own subscription. You can edit your details and unsubscribe at any time.

Every email that we have on file has been transferred over to the new system (you can remove yourself if you wish), and we invite anyone else who has an interest in the RDS in Hampshire Fire and Rescue to **[SUBSCRIBE]** subscribe.

**SIGN UP FOR YOUR FREE NEWSLETTER NOW!**



## Notice board

We have provided you with a notice board to let us (and others) know what you think. We encourage you to post your comments on the varied subjects that are available (or make up and monitor your own subject).

We are trying to create a feeling of teamwork and membership of the Hampshire Retained Firefighters Union and this facility will give you the opportunity to share your thoughts and opinions with others.



Currently subjects in the notice board include comments on the website, the RMS and Regional Controls—but we encourage you to write your own comments...

**GOT SOMETHING WORTH SAYING? TELL US!**

# WELCOME TO OUR WEBSITE

## SHOW YOUR SUPPORT!

**Latest News**  
As and when events occur which affect you we shall keep

**Quick Links**  
Quickly jump to some of the more important pages of our site.

**Resources**  
This shows links to both fire and web resources to make the page more than just useful but—we hope—a portal!

**The Toolbox**  
Keep an eye on this area—it's where we will road test new technology and ideas which may be useful to our members

**Newsletter**  
All of our newsletters archived for your perusal.

**Picture of the month**  
Be part of the website, send us your pictures for publication.

Show your support for the HRFU, visit our website and look for the downloads links (use the Quick Links option).

From here you can download posters and flyers to put up in your station to show you support a new positive RDS friendly Fire Service—you support HRFU.

## CENTRAL RESOURCE

If you are confused about a new acronym in the Fire Service, want to find what the 'Official' view is or want some background material for a subject—visit our website for a wealth of information both within the website and external.

**Subscription**  
Join our mailing list and get our newsletter straight to your inbox—hot off the press!

**Notice board**  
Got something to say share your views with others or start your own subject.

## CONTACT US

You can contact us through

Our preferred means of contact is by email. You can send us an email at:

**info@hrfu.org.uk**

You can phone the RFU chairman, Rikki Noble on **01489 893980** or the RFU secretary, Andy Needham on **01962 723020**