

| | | | |
|------------------|--|----------------------|---------------------|
| Circular number | 6/2010 | Date issued | 8 March 2010 |
| This circular is | For information | No response required | |
| This circular is | Relevant to the National Framework | | |
| Status | This circular notifies of the launch of the National Recognition Scheme for Primary Employers of Retained Duty System (On-Call) Firefighters. | | |

Retained Duty System (On-Call) Firefighters: A National Recognition Scheme for Primary Employers

Issued by:

John Dackombe

Fire and Rescue Service Development Division

Addressed to:

**The Chair of the Fire and Rescue Authority
The Chief Executive of the County Council
The Clerk to the Fire and Rescue Authority
London Fire Commissioner
The Chief Fire Officer**

Please forward to:

**Heads of Human Resources
Heads of Recruitment
Retained Managers
Retained Liaison Officers
FRS Communications Manager**

Summary

The National Employer Recognition Scheme has been developed in response to the conclusions from Government research that Fire and Rescue Services should do more to publicly acknowledge the contribution of local employers who allow staff to be Retained Duty System (On-Call) Firefighters.

For further information, contact:

| | | |
|---|-------------|--|
| John Dackombe or Mona Shah Fire & Rescue Development Division Communities & Local Government 3rd Floor, Zone D1, Eland House Bressenden Place London SW1E 5DU | Direct line | 0303 44 42945 (John Dackombe) 0303 44 42950 (Mona Shah) |
| | Fax | |
| | E-mail | john.dackombe@communities.qsi.gov.uk mona.shah@communities.qsi.gov.uk |
| | | |

Website **www.communities.gov.uk**

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 One of the key conclusions of the 2005 Retained Review Report was the absence of strategic engagement by Fire and Rescue Services (FRS) with local business to promote a better understanding of the vital role of Retained Duty System (RDS) or “On-Call” firefighters in protecting communities and encouraging their support by releasing employees for RDS duties.
- 1.2 Following that report, Communities and Local Government (CLG) undertook extensive research into the relationship between the FRS and the business community in areas served by RDS firefighters, examining the primary occupations and business sectors that tended to support the RDS, and surveying the views of over 1,000 businesses situated near RDS fire stations. The research concluded that Fire and Rescue Services should be engaging more effectively with local employers to encourage support. Furthermore, employers who already released staff for the RDS should be recognised for their contribution.
- 1.3 CLG has responded to the findings of the research by developing a series of key initiatives to support FRSs with local RDS recruitment strategies. The first of these initiatives, the Employers’ Information Toolkit and radio advert, was launched in October 2009 (see Fire Service Circular (65/2009)).
- 1.4 In addition CLG has developed, in consultation with stakeholders, a National Employer Recognition Scheme which was launched on 8 March 2010 by Fire Minister Shahid Malik at Skelmanthorpe Fire Station in West Yorkshire. The launch was supported by a second event at Billingshurst Fire Station in West Sussex attended by Sir Ken Knight, Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser.
- 1.5 The Scheme proposes that recognition is given to employers in the form of a Certificate which bears both the HM Government logo (to emphasise that this is a centrally-backed national scheme) and the logo of the local Fire and Rescue Service. The Certificate could be signed by the Chief Fire Officer and another appropriate person within the Service, e.g. the Station Manager.
- 1.6 Certificates and a template to allow personalisation will be supplied to Fire and Rescue Services by CLG. Details of the administration of the scheme are set out below.

2.0 Why ‘On-Call’

- 2.1 Research that led to the development of the above mentioned initiatives suggested that the term ‘On-Call’ would be more effective than ‘Retained Duty System’ when engaging with local employers, as the most simple way of describing to people outside the Fire and Rescue Service how the duty system worked. Both the Toolkit and the Recognition Scheme refer to ‘On-Call’ for this reason. For internal communications, ‘Retained Duty System’ continues to be used.

3.0 Aim of the Recognition Scheme

- 3.1 For those Fire and Rescue Services that do not currently operate a local recognition scheme, this initiative will:
 - Provide the opportunity to publicly thank employers (including the self-employed) who give the FRS and their community such valuable support;
 - Enable FRSs to strengthen ties and improve engagement with the business communities they serve, and
 - Encourage FRSs to keep up-to-date records about those employers who release staff

4.0 Roll-Out and Administration of the Scheme

- 4.1 We recognise that some Fire and Rescue Services might already have a similar Scheme in place. The Scheme is voluntary and it is up to individual Fire and Rescue Services to decide if they wish to use it. Those Fire and Rescue Services proposing to use the Scheme will be responsible for administering it in their area.
- 4.2 Recognition is in the form of a pre-printed certificate, with editable templates (to facilitate insertion of the badge/name of the Fire & Rescue Service; the name of the employer; and the names of the Chief Fire Officer and/or the Fire Station Manager, Retained Liaison Officer/another). It is entirely up to the FRS to decide the preferred names on the certificate.
- 4.3 CLG (through Fire & Resilience Directorate) will be responsible for administering the distribution of pro forma certificates to each Fire & Rescue Service, on receipt of a request from the Chief Fire Officer (or a designated officer such as the RDS Liaison Officer). CLG will also issue to each Chief Fire Officer (or the designated officer) with a Word document containing editable template.

5.0 Ordering the Certificates and Templates

- 5.1 Fire and Rescue Services who propose to use the Recognition Scheme locally will need to send details of the number of certificates required along with the contact details of the person administering the Scheme to Clive Botterill (details below). Further guidance of 'how to use' the templates will be issued upon receipt of the request.

6.0 Enquiries

- Ordering Certificates and Templates : Please e-mail number of certificates required and contact details to: Clive Botterill at Clive.botterill@communities.gsi.gov.uk
- If you have any queries about the Recognition Scheme please contact either John Dackombe on 0303 44 42945 or Mona Shah on 0303 44 42950.

John Dackombe

Fire and Rescue Service Development Division