

Station Training Facilities

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

For further information about this report please contact Louise McKenzie, Assistant Chief Officer, on 01743 260280 or Andrew Kelcey, Head of Resources, on 01743 260240.

1 Purpose of Report

This report is to update the Strategy and Resources Committee on progress with the provision of training facilities at stations and to request additional capital funding for future years.

2 Recommendations

The Committee is asked to:

- a) Note the provisions of this report; and
- b) Consider the allocation of additional capital funding in future years to accelerate provision of facilities.

3 Background

At its meeting on 16 July 2008 the Fire Authority approved the allocation of £30,000 per year in its capital budget to provide improved training facilities at Retained Duty System (RDS) stations. At its meeting on 30 April 2008 a further £92,100 was allocated in order to accelerate the provision of these facilities. Members requested that a capital appraisal be completed for this additional funding and this paper acts as that assessment.

Training facilities are required at stations to ensure that staff are competent and able to perform their roles. During the Operational Assurance and Service Delivery audit of 2006 the lack of training facilities at stations was one of the few areas of weakness identified. This investment seeks to address this issue.

We have now consulted with station users and our training department to further clarify the training facility needs. As a result of this work we have developed a new drill tower design which provides greater training opportunities than previously envisaged. This new design, a copy of which is attached as the appendix to this report, incorporates a pitched roof, 'balcony' arrangement and a simulated drain or sewer access. These facilities enable not just the pitching of ladders and familiarity with working at heights, but also roof ladder training, line safety training and access to confined spaces.

As a result of these developments, the cost of the tower is approximately £40,000 each. The flexibility in training that this additional expenditure enables is believed to represent value for money.

In addition a new design of compound for Road Traffic Collision (RTC) training has been developed which provides more realistic training opportunities and improved health, safety and environmental protection. The cost of these compounds is approximately £10,000 each.

4 Proposed Implementation

Triangular drill towers at 6 of our stations were taken out of use approximately 15 years ago following structural engineers concerns regarding their stability. In addition facilities have never been provided at Craven Arms or Much Wenlock. There are therefore 8 stations not currently provided with drill towers:

- Bishops Castle
- Bridgnorth
- Church Stretton
- Clun
- Wem
- Whitchurch
- Craven Arms
- Much Wenlock

We have submitted planning applications, and received approval, for the provision of towers at each of these sites. Planning applications were submitted so that we understood where provision was possible before determining construction priorities. It is proposed that towers will be constructed in the following sequence over a number of years, as funding is made available:

- Bishops Castle
- Bridgnorth
- Craven Arms

After the first tower has been constructed at Bishops Castle, it will be evaluated before rolling out a similar design elsewhere in the county.

At this point further consideration will be given to the benefit of providing towers at the following remaining stations, which are close to sites with existing provision:

- Wem
- Whitchurch
- Much Wenlock
- Church Stretton
- Clun

Dedicated RTC training facilities are currently only provided at Ludlow and Telford stations and it is proposed that these should be provided at the following stations:

- Ellesmere
- Much Wenlock
- Whitchurch
- Clun
- Craven Arms

In addition, facilities will be provided at Shrewsbury and Wellington as part of the station redevelopment schemes.

5 Financial Implications

The cost of each tower is approximately £40,000 and each RTC compound is approximately £10,000. It is requested that consideration be given to increasing future capital allocations from £30,000 to £50,000 per annum to enable the provision of one of each type of facility each year.

6 Legal Comment

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

7 Equality Impact Assessment

This paper refers to financial arrangements for the funding of training facilities and therefore an Initial Equality Impact assessment is not required. The design of training facilities will be assessed to ensure there is no discrimination in provision.

8 Appendix

Drill tower elevation drawing

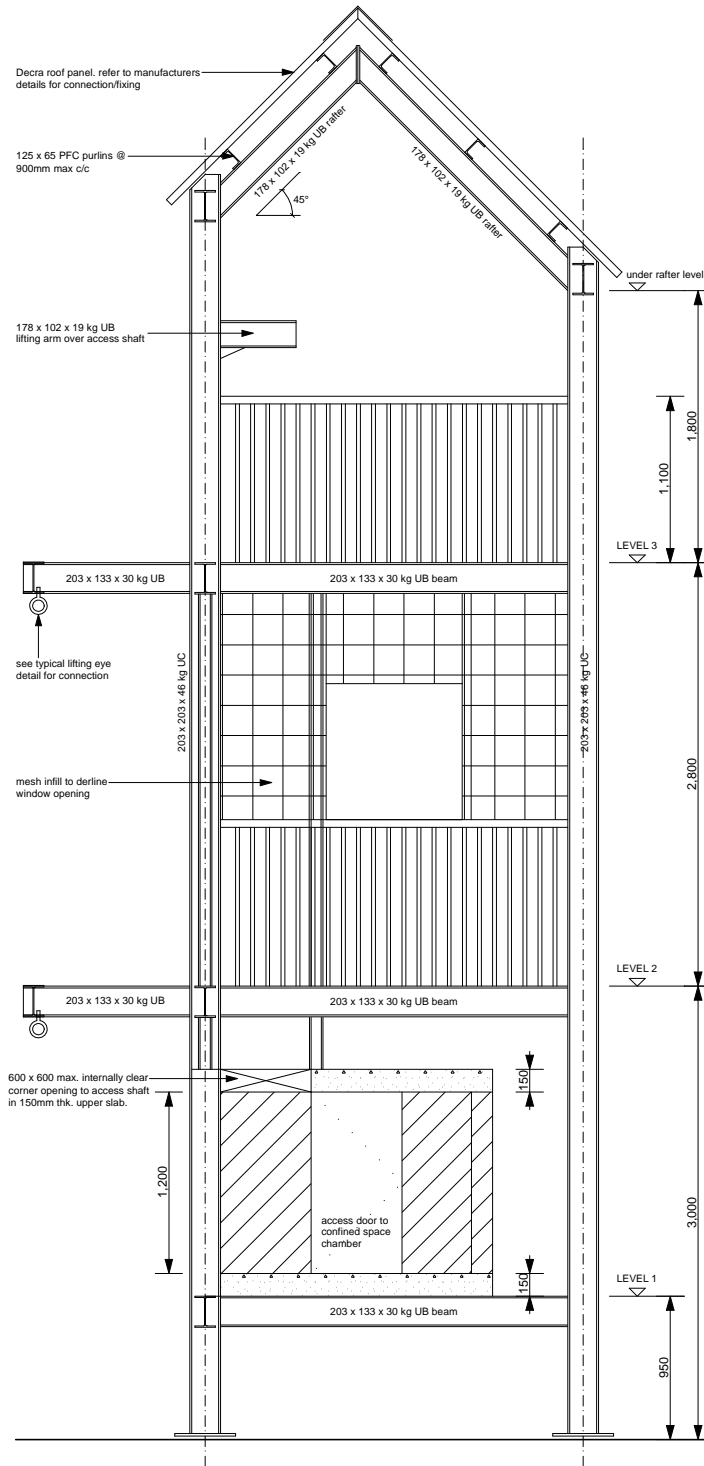
9 Background Papers

There are no background papers associated with this report.

Implications of all of the following have been considered and, where they are significant (i.e. marked with an asterisk), the implications are detailed within the report itself.

Balanced Score Card		Integrated Risk Management Planning	
Business Continuity Planning		Legal	
Capacity		Member Involvement	
Civil Contingencies Act		National Framework	
Comprehensive Performance Assessment		Operational Assurance	
Efficiency Savings		Retained	*
Environmental	*	Risk and Insurance	
Financial	*	Staff	*
Fire Control/Fire Link		Strategic Planning	
Information Communications and Technology		West Midlands Regional Management Board	
Freedom of Information / Data Protection / Environmental Information		Equality Impact Assessment	

Appendix to report on
Station Training Facilities
Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority
Strategy and Resources Committee
18 September 2008



PROPOSED ELEVATION OF DRILL TOWER SCALE 1:50 @ A4
 BAART HARRIES NEWALL ARCHITECTS AUGUST 2008