



working with Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service

Nottingham Business School

Snapshot

- The aim of Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service's (NFRS) Fire Cover Review was to look at where the county's fire and rescue resources are currently located and consider whether these need to be reconfigured or redeployed to best serve the region.
- Under the Integrated Risk Management Planning process, fire authorities are expected to map the level of risk to communities and reconfigure their services accordingly.
- Authorities may face legal or technical challenges when they choose to redeploy their services. This often results in an inquiry to determine whether the right decisions have been taken and to ensure they have been based on robust data.
- Staff from Nottingham Business School, part of Nottingham Trent University, were appointed as independent consultants to scrutinise the processes and methodology undertaken by NFRS.
- NTU's consultants were able to demonstrate that NFRS's Fire Cover Review was based on valid, robust data and intelligently processed and analysed on the latest up-to-date computer systems and models.

Challenge

Fire Authorities are required to produce Integrated Risk Management Plans (IRMPs) as part of the National Fire and Rescue Service Performance Framework. These plans should integrate all aspects of service delivery, including fire cover and fire safety, and lead to improved community safety and more productive use of fire service resources.

IRMPs require Fire and Rescue Services to strike an appropriate and reasonable balance between the key activities of prevention, protection and emergency response rather than relying on generic response times and national standards and benchmarks of the past for their assessment of the optimum deployment of their resources.

All Fire Cover Reviews arising out of the IRMP process have to be based upon a comprehensive and contemporary local risk assessment.

Solution

Staff from the Emergency Services Research Unit at NTU were appointed as independent consultants to "scrutinise and validate the processes and methodology undertaken and applied by Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service" in order to prepare the evidential base for the Fire Cover Review process.

The objective of this consultancy was to assure the Fire and Rescue Authority that the evidential basis used by the fire service for the initial stages of the Fire Cover Review was as comprehensive, appropriate and robust as was reasonably possible, taking into account the objectives of the Review – the data and intelligence, analytical tools and information currently available to the Service.

Benefits and outcomes

- The data sets used by NFRS were predominantly derived from government approved and nationally recognised systems for risk mapping and profiling. From these data sets, it should be possible to derive robust future profiles and forecasts for the future deployment of the Service's resources.
- Nottingham Business School provided an interim report on the data collection, analytical systems and computer modelling to the authority, when the evidential base and initial conclusions of the services review were presented to the board.
- A working party of the Authority then considered the findings and conclusions of the review and developed three alternative options for the future county-wide deployment of the Authority's resources.
- These three options were then considered at a board meeting when a further consultant's report on the evidential base was submitted by Nottingham Business School.
- The Authority will now undertake a public consultation exercise into their proposals.
- NTU was able to demonstrate that the data gathered by NFRS was appropriate to meet the Fire Cover Review's aims and objectives. It provided confidence to the Fire Authority that their considerations are underpinned by a robust and reliable evidential base.
- From their unique and independent position, NTU was able to identify a number of lessons or good practices that can be drawn from the approach that NFRS has taken with its Fire Cover Review.

“NBS gave us independent scrutiny and advice knowing both the local and national contexts. They completely understood the history, culture and antecedence of NFRS and provided the knowledge and expertise while working seamlessly with our project team.”

Frank Swann, Chief Fire Officer, Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service

The context

- The Nottinghamshire Fire Cover Review 2010 project was originally established to help deliver the Authority’s Creating Safer Communities Strategic Plan.
- In addition to combating fires, local fire and rescue services in the UK are now expected to respond to major traffic accidents; chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear exposures; severe weather conditions which endanger life; explosions and collapsed structures; and the rescue of people trapped in buildings, vehicles, by machinery or in water.
- The Fire and Rescue Act 2004 redefined the roles and functions of the Fire and Rescue Services to reflect their broader role. IRMPs came about because of the new statutory framework.
- As part of the IRMP process the government provided each fire and rescue service with a suite of software called the Fire Service Emergency Cover (FSEC) toolkit. This toolkit allows each fire service to undertake a risk-based assessment of their area using a common approach that has been thoroughly tested and independently validated.
- In 2010 the new Fire Minister, Bob Neill, confirmed that the coalition government would retain the Integrated Risk Management Planning process as this “provides a sound basis to allow for the provision of local services driven by the local agenda and based on local risks and the needs of the local community”.



The company

- Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) looks after more than one million people who live, work, visit or travel through Nottinghamshire every day.
- A team of over 1,000 people support this work from a variety of locations, including the fire stations, the NFRS headquarters, NFRS training and development centre, the Community Safety Centre and the driver training school and workshop.
- NFRS is run by the Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire Authority and the local councillors who are elected to its various committees.
- Much of NFRS’s work is carried out in partnership with other organisations who are working towards similar aims. The organisation has close links with local authorities, other emergency services and the voluntary and charity sector.

Nottingham Trent University

- NTU is one of the top new universities in the UK. *(The Complete University Guide, 2013)*
- 94% of our graduates* from full-time undergraduate courses are employed or engaged in further study six months after leaving. **of those available for work (DHLE survey 2010-11).*
- 97% of our postgraduates* (including full and part-time taught and research students) are employed or engaged in further study six months after leaving. **of those available for work (DHLE survey 2010-11).*
- NTU is in the top ten British universities for the number of students taking year-long work placements. (HESA 2010-11)
- NTU is among the top 25% of UK universities for investment in its facilities. £130 million has been invested since 2004.
- In the latest Research Assessment Exercise (2008), 74% of our research was ranked as internationally recognised, with 8% of our research considered world leading.

For more information on how NTU could work with your business contact us on +44 (0)115 848 8163, by email at business.info@ntu.ac.uk, or visit www.ntu.ac.uk/business.

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