



All Station/Brigade Reps – Briefing Note 01/19

Emergency Service - Dual Roles Position Statement

Over recent weeks we have noticed media interest in the dual role of an On-Call Firefighter and Special Police Constable (SPC). The background to this initiative relates to the Blue Light Collaboration Team in the South West Region which included Devon and Cornwall Police (DCP) and Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service (DSFRS). The Police and Crime Act 2017 introduced a duty on the Police, Fire and Rescue and Ambulance Services to collaborate to improve efficiency and effectiveness. In DSFRS funding was agreed to create a 2-year pilot to introduce 14 On-Call firefighter posts working a 21 hour contract to provide fire cover across the service, keeping On-Call appliances on-the-run in high risk areas which otherwise would not be available. In addition these posts have the following objectives:

- improve the ability of both services to identify risk and vulnerability
- increase the ability to deliver holistic community safety activities to homes and businesses
- sustain response times in rural locations
- improve connectivity with the public
- increase public confidence in both our emergency services.

The role of a SPC being undertaken by an On-Call firefighter is no different to any other member of the public who wished to undertake this voluntary role in addition to their normal occupation. It seems logical for an emergency service worker to perform, on a voluntary basis, the role of another emergency service worker and utilise their transferable skills in the process.

Our view is that this initiative, which is one of many undertaken by DSFRS, should be welcomed by the public, the services involved and our members. The dual role of On-Call firefighters and Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) have been successfully in operation over a number of FRs in recent years and this pilot is a variation on that model. It would appear that any negative publicity has been created by organisations that oppose change and modernisation of the firefighter role. In contrast the FRSA fully support this pilot which provides more opportunities for our members and improves public protection.

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Chief Executive Officer
