**Covering Crew Shortages**

**Service Order 01.13**

**Document Overview:**

This document details the procedures to be adopted to cover crewing shortages arising at the Dorset & Wiltshire Service Control Centre.

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# 1.0 Introduction

### 1.1 Maintaining at least minimum crewing levels in the Control Room is essential to provide an effective response to the actual or anticipated workload and to provide appropriate support to operational incidents in a timely manner.

### As soon as it is known that minimum crewing cannot be achieved every effort must be made to provide cover for the identified shortfall.

**2.0 Crewing Levels**

2.1 Control crewing is planned to consist of 5 crew members, all of whom are at least in ‘Development’, with two supervisory managers one of whom should be a Watch Manager.

2.2 It is acceptable, as a consequence of sickness, scheduled leave, or other predicted absence, for the Control crewing level to be reduced to 4 crew members, all of whom are at least in ‘Development’, with two Supervisory Managers.

2.3 In the event of the crewing levels in 2.1 and 2.2 being compromised as a result of sickness or other unpredicted absence, every effort should be made to obtain cover to bring crewing back to these levels using the steps outlined in Section 3.0 and 4.0

2.4 If, after exhausting all measures shown in section 3.0 and 4.0, it is not possible to provide cover to bring crewing levels back to those outlined in section 2.1 and 2.2 the Duty Manager and Senior Duty Manager should be informed.

2.5 In these extreme circumstances the Duty Manager, Senior Duty Manager and

Control Station Manager and/or Control Station Manager – Training & GM Response Support (if on duty), should discuss the situation with a view to putting suitable support arrangements in place. These arrangements will vary depending on the experience and capability of the remaining Control staff on duty, but are likely to be one of the following arrangements.

1. 4 crew members with one of the Crew Managers acting up to Watch Manager and decision making support provided by the Control Tactical Advisor via telephone when required.
2. 4 crew members, one of whom is a Watch or Crew Manager, with support being provided via telephone by the Control Tactical Advisor.

# Procedure for Obtaining Cover

### 3.1 As soon as a crewing shortage is identified, efforts must begin to obtain resources to bring the affected watch back to minimum crewing.

3.2 The Control Station Manager shall be informed,or the Control Station Manager – Training in their absence, of all occasions when a crewing shortfall is identified.

* 1. It may be possible to arrange cover by utilising more than one person to work during the shift and opportunity should be made to use persons who offer limited availability from the options below.

### 3.4 The following sequence of actions should be followed to seek cover:

1. Determine if personnel from another watch can be approached to change duties.
2. Offer overtime cover to off duty Fire Control staff. If there is a need for Supervisory Officer cover then the off duty Supervisors are to be contacted first. If no Supervisory cover is required then Control Firefighters should be the first contact.
3. Cancel course attendance or other activities for members of the affected watch.
4. Consider any Fire Control staff seconded to other departments, for example Control Training Watch Managers.
5. Determine if other staff who maintain Control room competencies are available e.g. Control Station Manager/Control Station Manager Training/Station Manager NFCSP project.

**4.0** **Procedure if Supervisory Manager Cover is Unavailable**

4.1 The Control Station Manager shall be informed, when on duty, of all occasions when a shortfall in Supervisory Managers is identified.

4.2 It may be possible to arrange cover by utilising more than one person to work during the shift and opportunity should be made to use persons who offer limited availability from the options below.

### 4.3 The following sequence of actions should be followed to seek cover:

1. Determine if personnel from another watch can be approached to change duties.
2. Offer overtime cover to off duty Fire Control Supervisors.
3. Consider any Fire Control staff seconded to other departments, for example Control Training Watch Managers.
4. Offer overtime cover to Control Firefighters who are able to ‘Act up’.
5. Cancel course attendance or other activities for members of the affected watch.
6. Determine if other staff who maintain Control Supervisory Management competencies are available e.g. Control Station Manager/Control Station Manager – Training/Station Manager NFCSP project.
7. Liaise with the Control Station Manager or Control Station Manager -Training and Duty Manager to determine what support should be provided to the remaining Control staff for welfare and decision making.

**5.0 Pre-planned Overtime**

5.1 Pre-planned overtime requirements will be indicated on the spreadsheet locatated in Control X Drive.

1. Staff should indicated whether they are available by completing the relevant section on the spreadsheet.
2. The watch indicated as ‘1st Cover’ will have priority for that shift.
3. Watch Managers are responsible for ensuring that overtime is allocated fairly amongst their watch members.

**6.0 Degradation plan due to exceptional events**

6.1 Where an event such as severe weather is preventing control sfaff from attending their normal place of work, on duty staff will be asked to continue duty until it is possible to replace them with rostered staff or others that are able to attend.

6.2 The duty manager will be responsibe for making appropriate arrangements to maintain adequate crewing levels that may include the following;

1. The use of service 4 x 4 vehicles with qualified drivers.
2. The use of flexible duty officers to transport staff to and from their place of work.
3. The provision of local accommodation for staff who are not able to return to their home address.

6.3 In the case of a pandemic event consideration should be given to the use of non control room staff to give support in the event of significantly depleted numbers of available control staff.