**Community Volunteers FAQ’s**

Community Volunteers are part of the station team; they are an essential asset to being able to assist in the delivery of Community Fire Safety.

The key role of a station point of contact (Buddy) is to integrate the volunteer into station life, ensuring they are aware of as many activities that they can attend as possible, also to provide the local knowledge of the station to assist in the Community Safety Plan.

***How many Community Volunteers will I manage?*** -There is no management of volunteers involved in this role it is purely a liaison role to ensure communication links between the station and its team of volunteers are open and fluid.

***How many hours will this involve?*** - The Station’s Community Volunteer team should be encouraged to come to the station at least once every two months to ensure the station is aware of what actions are taking place and that they feel part of the team, however there is no reason why this couldn’t be more often.

There should be a Community Development planning meeting at least once every six months which should include the HAS. This meeting should be no longer than an hour and will involve discussing the stations Community Safety targets.

***How do Community Volunteers get in touch with me?*** - There should be regular communication with the team of Community Volunteers, email is the best option for this, however if there is a need for further communication the Community Volunteer should contact the Volunteer Coordinator who can pass urgent information on. Communication could also take the form of a space on a station notice board.

***What kind of activities can Community Volunteers get involved in?*** -Community Volunteers are covered by the same insurance as paid members of staff, they can take part in all sorts of activities for example they could:

* Gather referrals
* Be a casualty is a first aid exercise
* Be a victim in an RTC exercise
* Be an observer in any drill – *at the invitation of the Station Commander*
* Take part in any fundraising activity
* Play a key role in a station open day
* Be of assistance in a RPIT exercise
* Help with recruitment days
* Represent the service at events
* Deliver basic Fire Safety advice
* Complete Home Safety Checks (*Level 2’s only*)

Although a volunteer should be encouraged to be part of station life they should not in any way hinder operational activities.

***Do I have to train Community Volunteers?*** – Community Volunteers complete modular training to gain competency, however they should be included when possible in any generic training that is applicable at station level, for example Health & Safety, Safeguarding & E,D & I. You are not responsible for any direct training.

***Do I have to complete performance reviews*** – No reviews need to be conducted at station level. Community Volunteers sign up for six monthly terms of service, at the end of these six months the Volunteer Coordinator will conduct a review. Level 2 Community Volunteers will have regular competency reviews of Home Safety Checks completed by the Volunteer Coordinator.

***Do Community Volunteers wear uniform?*** *-* Community Volunteers wear DFRS uniform at all times whilst on duty; however they are clearly identified as volunteers by the pale blue epaulettes worn on their shirts & jackets.

***Can Community Volunteers ride on the appliance?*** - Volunteers are allowed to ride on the appliance to attend community safety events, however they must be made aware that in the event of a fire call they will have to make their own way back to station.

***Should Community Volunteers be included in catering?*** - How and if volunteers are involved in any catering is down to the individual and should be dealt with at a local level.

***Can Community Volunteers use the gym facilities?*** - Volunteers are free to use station gym facilities once they have completed an induction of the equipment available.

***Can Community Volunteers use office equipment?*** – Community Volunteers are encouraged to use the stations training PC to enter their referrals into the portal; this is to ensure the security of personal information collected at events. This information should then be shredded on station. At times the use of the stations training PC may be required for Community Volunteers PC based training although this is encouraged to be completed at home where possible.

***Can Community Volunteers drive station vans?*** – Once Community Volunteers have completed their driving awareness training they are covered to drive station vans or service cars for community safety use. They should be made aware of station rules for these vehicles including booking, fuelling up & cleaning.

***Do Community Volunteers have access to the station?*** –Community Volunteers are issued with an entrance fob for their local station; they also have ID and name badges which should be worn at all times.

***Do community volunteers need a locker?*** – There should be no need for Community Volunteers to have a locker although this is something that should be assessed on an individual basis and is at the discretion of the Station Commander.