



## Freedom of Information Request FOI 19 26

### Vacancies and crewing levels

#### Query and response:

1. The total number of current vacancies for retained (part-time) personnel for your stations.

**Each retained station will have individual requirements to fulfil their prescribed level of operational cover. This figure is dependent on availability, skills and experience. Where a station has a full time equivalent vacancy, this can and often is, filled by several individuals. This results in a 'jigsaw' of operational cover, with firefighters combining their availability to crew the appliances at their station.**

**Whereas one station could require daytime cover (9am-5pm) another station could require cover for just the morning, the evening or overnight. As staff levels and individual circumstances of firefighters change, so does the operational requirement of a particular fire station.**

**Although retained crew members are associated to a specific station, some are often available to cover another fire station dependant on their location on a specific day or time. A self-employed carpenter for example, could be available to work at multiple locations.**

**As we multiply these possibilities across all 50 fire stations the calculations become extremely complex. Therefore, we are unable to provide a specific figure that will accurately reflect the number of retained vacancies across the services.**

2. Which position has been advertised for the longest period of time? (Please give in days.)

**We advertise retained vacancies on an ongoing rolling basis and therefore cannot provide a definitive timescale for the duration that vacancies are advertised as they are generally always open to applicants depending on the needs of the station and the number of hours that are required to be covered. We only withdraw stations from active advertising when all the hours that we require availability for have been covered.**

3. The current number of vacancies for full time (wholetime) personnel in your area for stations. Please detail which station.

**We currently have the following vacancies in substantive roles across the Service. However, because we have a number of individuals filling these posts temporarily whilst the substantive postholders are undertaking promotions or secondments elsewhere, this does not reflect a deficiency in overall numbers. Vacancies are managed in line**



with establishment controls, which allow us to respond flexibly and resource immediate and forecasted needs. We are in the process of recruiting three firefighters who are not included in the figures below.

Role	Number	Location
Area Manager	1	Across Service
Group Manager	1	Across Service
Station Manager	1	Across Service
Watch Manager	2	Response Support, Redhill
Crew Manager	3	Fire Safety (x2), On-call Support
Firefighter	5	Chippenham (x2), Swindon, Springbourne, Poole.

4. Which position has been advertised for the longest period of time?

**We are not currently advertising any wholetime vacancies externally.**

5. On how many occasions, has a fire appliance been unavailable due to insufficient crewing levels? For each occasion, please provide the date, length of time the appliance was unavailable, type of appliance and the station it is based at.

**Please see the attached Microsoft Excel spreadsheets, which detail and summarise the times where appliances have been unavailable due to insufficient crewing.**

**Please note:**

- These figures do not take into account occasions when crews were staffing other appliances or vehicles, such as the technical rescue units, associated with each station.
- Due to the implementation of a recording new system in June 2018, we cannot guarantee the accuracy of the data showing the number of occasions that an appliance was unavailable during the transition period of 6 June to 30 June 2018.
- Westlea, Springbourne, Redhill and Westbourne are wholetime stations
- Swindon, Stratton, Chippenham, Trowbridge, Salisbury, Weymouth, Poole and Christchurch are wholetime stations with a retained contingent
- All other stations are retained only

**These drops in availability have not detrimentally affected our response times and we maintain robust resilience plans, developed to ensure we are able to maintain effective operational cover across all our areas.**



6. Has your station been unable to attend incidents due to insufficient crewing levels? If so - how many times? Please give details.

**If an appliance were to be unavailable due to insufficient crewing then it would not be proposed for an incident, therefore this information is not held.**

7. What's the furthest station (in distance) you've had to call to provide assistance to an incident because of insufficient staffing levels?

**As above, this information is not held.**