



**OFFICE OF THE
DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER**

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To: All Chief Fire Officers

Dear Chief Officer

DEAR CHIEF OFFICER LETTER 5/2004

This letter deals with matters described briefly below. More detailed information is contained in the relevant "Items" attached.

A GUIDANCE RELATING TO PERSONNEL ON DECKS OF AERIAL APPLIANCES

The purpose of this Item is to provide guidance and recommendations to brigades in relation to personnel, both operational and non-operational, who are required to access the deck of aerial appliances.

This guidance is the outcome of a Working Group set up following a death of a firefighter following a fall from the deck of an aerial appliance and the subsequent issue of an HSE Improvement Notice.

The guidance and recommendation contained in this Item will be of interest to brigade personnel concerned with both the maintenance and procurement of appliances.

Given the potentially serious nature of falling from the deck of an appliance Chief Fire Officers are strongly urged to consider both the management related issues and the physical control measures identified in this guidance and to take the appropriate action as necessary.

In actioning the recommendations brigades may find it useful to contact the Fire Service contacts identified in Annex C of the Item who have first hand experience of many of the salient points identified.

B NEW DIMENSION AIRWAVE TERMINAL CODE OF PRACTICE

Please see the attached Airwave Terminal Code of Practice which covers the mandatory responsibilities necessary to ensure the security of the information that is passed via these terminals.

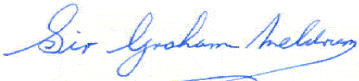
Attention is drawn to the need to appoint a Local Airwave Terminal Custodian to take responsibility of the terminals and the required security checks of personnel using this equipment.

C INCIDENT COMMAND - OPERATIONAL ROLE INSIGNIA

This item informs Fire and Rescue Services of the changes to Rank/Role insignia in the operational arena. The adoption of the Integrated Personal Development System [IPDS] has necessitated a change in the insignia used to identify Ranks within the operational field.

The new markings denoting the seven roles [Firefighter to Brigade Manager] consist of Helmet and Collar identification. These have been agreed by the Chief and Assistant Chief Officers Association Operations Committee.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sir Graham Meldrum". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

SIR GRAHAM MELDRUM CBE

OPERATIONS

INCIDENT COMMAND

Use of Role insignia in the operational environment

The Fire Brigades National Employers have recently issued Circular WMP/25/03 outlining changes from Rank to Role. Consideration has been given to the impact these new arrangements will have in the operational environment particularly on the incident ground and in relation to operational command.

Incident command is built upon best practice in the management of emergency incidents and has been developed throughout the UK over many years. The current systems, procedures and practices are based on the 'Safe Person Concept' and represent good practice critical to the health and safety of fire service personnel. A key element of which is the safe and competent command of operational incidents.

The command system does not exist in isolation but forms part of comprehensive arrangements as detailed in the fire service manuals. Following discussions with the Chief and Assistant Chief Fire Officers Association Operations Committee it has been concluded that the use of insignia, identifying each Role, is an essential component in the safe and effective command of operational incidents.

With the growing need for cross border operations, particularly in the context of New Dimension, it is expected that all UK Fire and Rescue Services will follow the same Role identification system. It is important to be able to identify the senior fire and rescue service officer present, particularly for fire and rescue crews and other emergency services or agencies attending the incident.

It is considered that the present helmet markings and collar insignia provide an effective solution being easily identifiable and interpreted. In moving to a role-based system the following insignia applies only to operational Personal Protective Equipment [PPE] and is considered to be the most cost effective and appropriate method of identification.

Fire-fighter

Helmet: Plain yellow fire helmet.
Collar: No marking.

Crew Manager

Helmet: Two 12.5mm black bands with 12.5mm separation on a yellow fire helmet.
Collar: Two 12.5mm silver bars with 12.5mm separation.

Watch Manager

Helmet: One 12.5mm black band on a white helmet with a black comb.

Collar: Two large impellers.

Station manager

Helmet: One 19mm black band on a white helmet with a black comb.

Collar: Three large impellers.

Group Manager

Helmet; One 19mm black band surmounted by one 12.5mm black band with 12.5mm separation on a white helmet with a black comb.

Collar: One large impeller surrounded with a laurel wreath.

Area Manager

Helmet: Two 19mm black bands with 12.5mm separation on a white helmet with a black comb.

Collar: One large impeller surrounded with a laurel wreath with one 3mm bar below.

Brigade Manager

Helmet: One 38mm black band on a white helmet with a black comb.

Collar: The existing rank markings will be used.

Any queries appertaining to this matter should be directed to HMI Philip Powell Tel 020 7944 5694, 'e' mail: philip.powell@odpm.gsi.gov.uk