

SUMMER 2018

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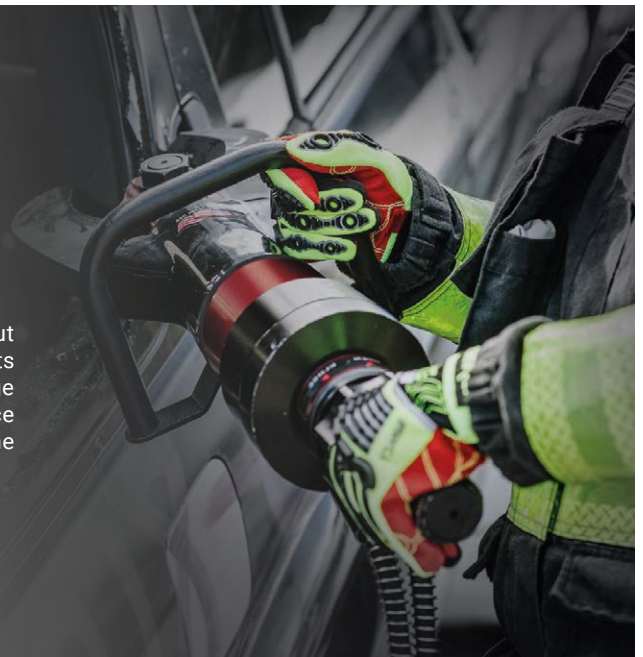


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Firefighters attending the Saddleworth Moor fire.  
 Photo: Ashley Stocks, [ashleystocksp photography.co.uk](http://ashleystocksp photography.co.uk)

Editor's Comment



# The growing challenge of wildfires

The recent huge moorland fires that began during the unrelenting heat wave in early June in the North West of England have shown just how serious a national problem wildfires are for the UK Fire & Rescue Services, and for the communities that are directly affected.

The major fire on Saddleworth Moor began on 24 June with Greater Manchester crews deployed, soon to be followed by a similar outbreak at Winter Hill, Bolton, taxing Lancashire personnel.

Then followed a growing series of similar incidents including those at Glenshane Pass, Londonderry, Northern Ireland; the Vale of Rheidol, Ceredigion, Wales; Wanstead Flats, East London; and many others during the heat wave period including those tackled by Devon & Somerset; Staffordshire; Hereford & Worcester; Derbyshire, South Yorkshire; West Yorkshire; and Dorset & Wiltshire firefighters. The geographical wildfire list goes on. The past few months have necessitated operational support by virtually all the F & RS' that form the British Fire Service, with hundreds of firefighters working in unison under physically demanding conditions up and down the country.

There is no doubt existing mutual aid arrangements and local partnerships worked well across borders, even through the sheer scale of some wildfires tied up weary crews and their pumps for days on end, and spread remaining fire cover very thinly.

But as climate change will probably make such wildfires a more common occurrence in the future, national Government needs to recognise that wildfires on the scale of recent times need a significant and protracted operational commitment. As the Scottish Government Wildfire Manual (section 8A.20) acknowledges, it would be impossible for fire and rescue services to attempt to address the risks in isolation.

### *Local partnerships in action*

Managing moorland wildfire risk is not just about putting out fires. It is also about reducing the risk of fires starting and spreading. Fire crosses property and local administrative boundaries, so co-operation between agencies and diverse interest groups such as mountain rescue groups, local councils, police forces, and government agencies is vital. This has proved invaluable during the recent months of wildfires.

The Peak District Fire Operations Group (FOG) was one of the first of these collaborative workings. It consists of six local F & RS', three water companies, amenity groups and other landowners, all working together to prevent and prepare for wildfires. There are now at least twenty such groups across the UK, spurred on by bad fire seasons in 2003, 2006 and 2011. These collaborations, championed by Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service amongst others, have changed the approach to fighting UK wildfires.

Fire groups train together and share resources. The Peak District group includes Pennine helicopters – seen on the news channels dumping water on the moorland fires in Lancashire and Greater Manchester. The Lancashire FOG uses the Bay Search and Rescue's large all-terrain vehicle – normally used to traverse Morecambe Bay's sands – to ferry people and heavy equipment across soft peat moorland. Bolton Mountain Rescue served as tactical lookouts, spotting flare-ups at the Winter Hill fire. And land managers provide all-terrain vehicles and 'fogging units' with fine sprays to wet vegetation, whilst countryside



Wildfires in Alton woodland, Staffordshire F&RS (above and top right)





rangers and landowners bring local knowledge of the terrain.

#### **Sharing the lessons**

As the rain finally arrives across the UK to give hard-pressed firefighters a break from the rigours of wildfires, it is perhaps a time to reflect upon the lessons of the last few months. Saddleworth Moor fire crews had assistance from a Wildfire Tactical Advisor, one of a new national 'flying squad' of specially trained regional officers, recently set up by the National Fire Chiefs Council Wildfire Group.

The England and Wales Wildfire Forum and its Scottish equivalent share good practice nationally and raise awareness of wildfire issues. Although unfunded, they have become the 'go-to' bodies for Government on wildfire issues. They collaborate with UK wildfire researchers to match practitioners' needs with wildfire research expertise, although many research gaps still remain. Critically, the UK does not have a suitable fire danger rating system to predict when and where wildfires will occur and their impacts.

Key fire service personnel in the UK have also gained valuable skills through international collaboration – for example, with the Pau Costa Foundation in Catalonia, and the USA's Prescribed Fire Training Exchange (TRES). They learned how to predict wildfire behaviour by 'reading the landscape'. Fire travels faster upwards on sunlit slopes and with the wind. Crews now use this knowledge in what is called indirect attack – this involves 'starving' strategic locations in the fire's path of fuel by mechanical clearing or controlled 'defensive burning'.

#### **The need for a national policy**

A more robust planning and prevention

approach to wildfire has evolved over the last twenty years, mainly thanks to these informal local and national partnerships and international training. But the UK's wildfire problem has only recently been recognised in national policy. Major fires in 2011 were a catalyst for severe wildfires to be included in the National Risk Register. The Natural Hazard Partnership now includes wildfires in its daily hazard assessments.

Local and national partnerships have proved an effective response, despite stretched financial and personnel resources, especially for the UK's F & RS' demonstrating the need for government action and support. Without these localised bottom-up initiatives, fire crews fighting the blazes on Saddleworth Moor and Winter Hill and all the other recent wildfires would have had an even more arduous task. Wildfires are more than just a fire and rescue service issue. Any change in land use or land management which affects ignition sources (people), or fuel (vegetation), can also change wildfire risk, whether deliberately or

unintentionally. Either way, planning ahead to manage wildfire risk should be firmly on the national political agenda.

As if to anticipate this important view, Member of Parliament Jonathan Reynolds, Shadow Economic Secretary to the Treasury, said ministers would: "need to look seriously at our capacity to deal with these kinds of fires in future, including military assistance that we might have lost in recent years".

#### **Neil Wallington**

*Neil Wallington is a former British Chief Fire Officer, a Past International President of the Institution of Fire Engineers, and a holder of the Queen's Commendation for Brave Conduct. He is the author of many books on the work of the fire service, and acts as a consultant with extensive experience both in the UK and the Gulf on a range of projects.*

*Moorland fire near Leek, Staffordshire F&RS*





# Newark firefighters move into new state-of-the-art station

Firefighters in Newark have moved into their new state-of-the-art fire station.

The station has been designed to be much more energy efficient than the previous building which will reduce future annual running costs.

The work, which was carried out by Gelder Group, has seen the red brick buildings to the left of the station's appliance bay taken down to make way for the brand-new station and tower.

Ian Pritchard, the service's Head of Procurement and Resources and the project lead, said: "The move of crews into the station marks the end of the first phase of the Newark Fire Station Project.

"There is still work to be done, including the demolition of the old station's appliance bays and a number of outbuildings which are no longer in use – but we're really pleased to have a brand new, state-of-the-art building added to the service's estate. Phase two will see the contractors developing the parking facilities and vehicular access. This is the first time that we've had a fire station remain fully operational whilst a new station was being built on the same site. This would not have been possible without the outstanding working relationship we have had with Gelder Group throughout the course of the project."

Tony Yardley, District Manager for Newark and Sherwood said: "We were thrilled to move into the new station this month. I know that all the watches are looking forward to settling in and making use of all the new facilities that this new station has to offer. I think it shows the service's commitment to serving the community in Newark for many years to come – with the station expected to have a life span of 50 years!"

The service obtained planning permission to re-build the station towards the end of 2016 and demolition work began in May last year. Kevin Manterfield, major contracts director at Gelder Group said: "It's been a privilege to be involved in rebuilding Newark fire station and providing the necessary facilities the firefighters need to train. We hope they find their new home useful for the vital work they do."



## Dräger will be at ESS 2018

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Learn more about their protective products portfolio including Fire Helmets, Chemical Protection Suits and Portable Gas Detection; the Dräger team will be on hand to answer all of your questions and when appropriate, arrange a follow up visit. They will also be demonstrating Their Drug and Alcohol testing

equipment including the new Alcotest 5000, so please ask for further information.

They will also be demonstrating the PARAT® 5550 Escape Device, an innovative development by Dräger to assist in rescue situations. The PARAT® 5550 is a fire escape hood packaged in a flame-retardant holster. It was specially developed for fire rescue teams for use in victim rescue. The main advantage is that the Dräger PARAT® 5550 is system approved together with Dräger breathing apparatus according to EN 137:2006, Type 2.

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Remember, no two firefighting operations are the same. However, one thing always remains constant: in order to save lives, firefighters must first protect their own lives, therefore, the equipment they select has to be robust, reliable and fail-safe even in demanding conditions. They understand this and this is why they strive to protect you, every step of the way.

Dräger look forward to seeing you at ESS 2018 at their stand F80 so please call in and find out how they can help you.  
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# Pontarddulais Fire Cadets pass out parade

On 23 July, Pontarddulais Fire Cadets completed their pass out parade. The class of 2018 marked the completion of their two-year Fire Cadet scheme by conducting a drill to show case the skills they learnt in front of firefighters, family and friends.

Hosted across fourteen fire stations within Mid and West Wales, the Fire Cadet scheme aims to provide training to young people, usually between the ages of twelve and sixteen years, whilst also improving relationships between the Fire and Rescue Service and the communities they serve.

The training provided to the Fire Cadets includes operational drills, first aid, fire safety education, leadership and much more whilst also promoting self-discipline, social consciousness and community awareness.

Cadets are encouraged to make the most of their physical and mental capabilities to become more responsible, safer and caring members of their communities. Those who successfully complete the scheme also gain a BTEC qualification.

Watch Manager Anthony Mathias said, "The Pontarddulais Fire Cadets should be exceptionally proud of their achievements. Their hard work over the past two years has paid off and resulted in each one gaining a BTEC qualification.

"The manner in which they performed their drill, in front of friends and families and to such a high standard is truly amazing.

"We're very proud of them. The personal development that each Cadet has demonstrated since joining the scheme is remarkable. They are a brilliant bunch of young people.

"I would like to thank the instructors and volunteers for their commitment to the Fire Cadet Scheme as none of this would be possible without their drive, enthusiasm and dedication. They are the first crop to pass out from Pontarddulais, as the scheme was only launched here two years ago, and they have set an excellent example for future Cadets to follow."







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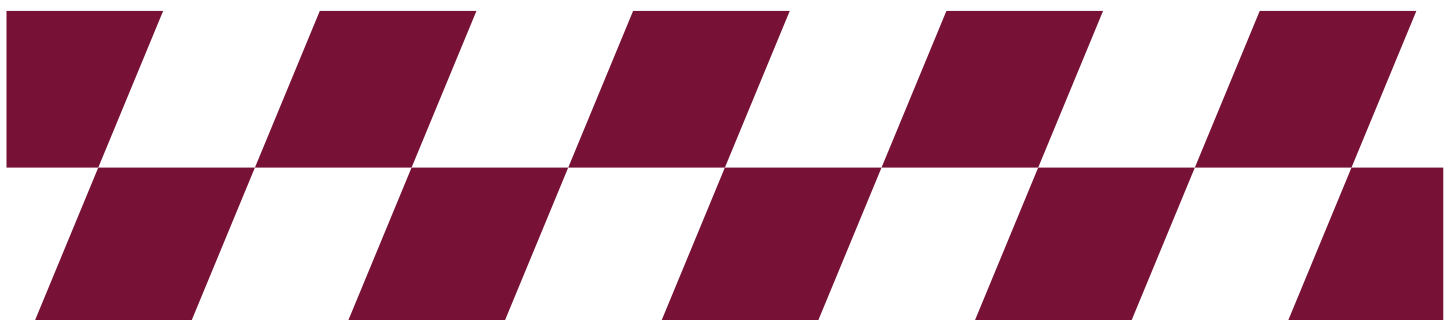
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# Unique opportunity to learn and progress your career

Four CPD-accredited seminar programmes covering mental health and wellbeing, road safety, collaboration, and learning and development will run at The Emergency Services Show this year. The two-day event takes place at the NEC, Birmingham on 19 and 20 September 2018. Entry to the seminars and exhibition, as well as parking, is free.

## Lessons Learnt

Emergency services and partner agencies will share their experiences of responding to real incidents in the Lessons Learnt seminar theatre (sponsored by UCLan PROTECT). Merseyside Fire and Rescue will present a case study on the Liverpool Echo Arena multi storey car park fire which destroyed over 1,000 cars on New Year's Eve, setting out the findings of the review undertaken by Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service. A case study on the Didcot Power Station collapse will look specifically at the value of Remotely Operated Vehicles (ROVs) after the incident and explore the wide range of uses ROVs have with the emergency services. The programme will also include a session on joint organisational learning from JESIP and an update on the European standardisation of Situational Awareness Systems to Strengthen Operations in civil protection (SAYSO). International Search and Rescue, which celebrates its 25th anniversary this year, will also be speaking.

The communication landscape for the fire and rescue service has changed so dramatically that traditional roles and responsibilities during an emergency have shifted. Emergency communications specialist Christine Townsend will explore how emergency responders who are not part of corporate communications can ensure public communication is professional, timely and effective and have a positive effect on the outcome of an incident. In a separate session on communications, Flood Protection Solutions will provide an insight into how social media can be used to aid community flood resilience efforts.

## Mental Health & Wellbeing

Following its successful introduction in 2017, the Health & Wellbeing seminar theatre will return for this year's event. Speakers will include emergency responders who have experienced mental

health challenges, and organisations who are implementing change and offering support. Jenna Flannagan, Co-Ordinator for Oscar Kilo will provide details of the Blue Light Wellbeing Framework developed by the National Police Chiefs Council Working Group. The Framework and online resources hosted by Oscar Kilo have been designed so that all emergency services can adopt the same approach in wellbeing best practice. Jenna will share Oscar Kilo's vision for the future and explain how the fire and rescue services can get involved in the culture shift. Rebecca Binstead, Strategic Relations Manager for Maritime & Coastguard Agency will introduce the wellbeing and mental health framework for UK Search and Rescue volunteers. Mind will also be sharing its expertise and explain how fire and rescue services can set up and deliver their own Blue Light Programmes offering mental health support that will last into the future.

## Collaboration Theatre

An exciting programme of seminars focused on collaboration between the emergency services is currently being developed in partnership with the Resilience Advisors Network and the Emergency Services Collaboration Working Group (ESCWG).

## Road Safety

Road Safety seminars will take place near the Extrication and Trauma Challenges hosted by West Midlands Fire Service. The programme will cover safety, electric vehicles, legislation and accident investigations among other topics.

Full details of seminar programmes – all of which will be CPD-accredited - will be published on [emergencyuk.com](http://emergencyuk.com) in the coming months. All seminar sessions are available on a first-come, first-served basis at the show and no pre-booking is required.

Around the exhibition floor many UK fire and rescue services – including Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, West Midlands Fire Service and UK ISAR - will be on hand to discuss their strategic and operational developments and exchange best practice. Organisations such as the Fire Industry Association and United Kingdom Rescue Organisation will also be sharing their expertise. The NEC is linked to Birmingham International Station and Birmingham Airport and is directly accessible from the UK motorway network. To register for free entry visit [emergencyuk.com](http://emergencyuk.com)



## New Horizons for Coverwatch

June 2018 saw the launch of Coverwatch Version 3. The core of the system has been in service since 2004 but this version is a huge step forward and puts Coverwatch into a very exciting market.

The software was originally focussed on on-call scheduling, but Coverwatch have now introduced a wealth of additional back-office services. This current version includes Whole-Time crewing, Training, HR and extensive reporting capabilities. With four out of the five developers being Certified Agile Scrum-Masters, they hold the agile mindset to development as key and are constantly and iteratively making enhancements to the code base and as a result, making the product richer.

Coverwatch have worked hard to create a product that is easy to use as well as full-featured. There are some really exciting developments in technology coming in all the time and it's vital to be able to leverage them. Their app suite is becoming a core tool in a 'mobile-first' world. The cloud also offers robustness and scalability that, up until recently, has been unavailable. Coverwatch would welcome the opportunity to talk to you about your requirements and to demo their software.

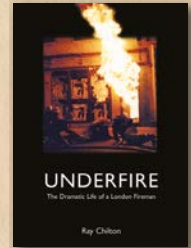
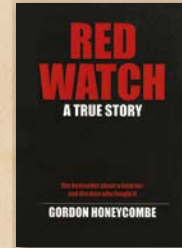
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The company's foundations in residential building and maintenance services have now expanded into national commercial and leisure retail and refurbishment contracts which continue to grow. This has been achieved by consulting with their clients, resulting in the delivery of high quality projects to specification, on time and to budget.

Hebs Group's Facilities Management Team are fully integrated with an expert in-house construction team. They are able to contribute to the lifetime management and support of a building. Introducing operating developments at an early stage increases

the longevity and cost effectiveness of premises across the UK.

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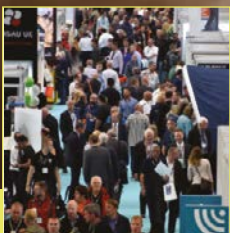
Hebs Group's continued growth and ongoing investment in staff training and technology will ensure the company's continued development will match that of their customers' requirements.

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# British Firefighter Challenge a success



*The British Firefighter Challenge 2018 took place in Bury St Edmunds on Friday 27th and Saturday 28th July, hosted by Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service*

With temperatures soaring to 37 degrees on the Friday, this was the toughest competition yet! The BFC2018 saw a record 240 Firefighters (211 male, 29 female) register for the two-day event, coming from fourteen different nations and over forty UK fire and rescue services.



### **35,000+ people Live Streamed**

With not everyone able to make the event in person, this year marked the first BFC with live streaming. Over 35,000 logged onto the website and Facebook streams which reflects the competition's growing popularity.

### **£4,000+ raised for charity**

Raising money for the Fire Fighters Charity, the competitors raised over £1,000. Over £1,000 of donations were made across the two days from the children's course, the raffle, t-shirt sales and the Fire Firefighters charity shop. And this year marked the first Barclays matched funding helping BFC raise an additional £1,000!

### **6,000-8,000 spectators**

Family, friends, work colleagues, and local residents of Bury St Edmunds flocked to see heroes battle it out to become the British Firefighter Challenge champion. Dave Budge from Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service was crowned Male Champion, with Emily Crawford from Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service crowned Female Champion.







### **An International Competition**

Fourteen different Nations registered for the BFC2018. Firefighters and Teams from Germany, Austria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Gibraltar, Malta, Portugal and as far as India competed. Home countries England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland were all present this year too.

### **UK Fire Service Awards**

Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service walked away Gold Medal winners for their best three combined times 10mins 26s, Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service Silver Medal winners with 10mins 46s and hosts Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service grabbed bronze in a time of 11mins 30s.



### **8 Firefighting Stages**

Firefighters must complete eight rigorous stages in their best time; 1) run to the third floor of the tower, 2) complete a 15kg haul aloft, 3) run to the base of the tower, 4) hammer the Corhaven forcible entry machine to its end weighing 72kg, 5) complete a 60m Angus Fire hose drag, 6) make up a 25m hose, 7) 10m equipment carry with 4x20kg containers and finish with 8) a 60m Ruth Lee casualty rescue weighing 70kg. All stages must be carried out in full structural Firefighting PPE.

### **Support**

Each year, the event cannot take place without an enormous team effort. This year with high temperatures, the Ambulance Service were pivotal to ensuring the health of all the competitors and spectators. Hosts Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service organised the historic venue in the town centre of Bury St Edmunds, and were helped with funding from the town council. SGC Security supervised safety and Breeze Events set up the music system and PA system to keep everyone informed and energised!



### **Watford - Sat 27th & Sun 28th July 2019**

BFC's next hosts are Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service. Registration opens 1 January 2019, and places go fast. All 240 Firefighters signed up this year in just ten weeks!

Visit BFC's website for more information  
[britishfirefighterchallenge.co.uk](http://britishfirefighterchallenge.co.uk)

Or email their team  
[hello@britishfirefighterchallenge.co.uk](mailto:hello@britishfirefighterchallenge.co.uk)

**BRITISH FIREFIGHTER CHALLENGE**



# New lance technology for Scottish firefighters

Scotland's firefighters will soon be armed with the latest in high pressure lance technology to tackle fires. The Ultra High Pressure Lance systems from Swedish firm Cobra enable crews to inject a fire suppressant through the wall of a burning building to more quickly douse the flames inside. The Powerful tools are capable of blasting through solid concrete and steel.

Already used by fire and rescue services in forty-five countries, they keep crews safer as they do not have to enter the burning building to reach and extinguish the flames.

The proven technology will now form just one part of an arsenal of the latest equipment carried by forty brand new, purpose-built fire appliances.

This represents a combined £7.6 million investment by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) into the safety of the country's most diverse, rural and remote communities. The move comes as the SFRS seeks to transform to meet new and emerging risks.

Alasdair Hay, the SFRS' Chief Officer said: "This proven firefighting technology means our crews can begin firefighting within seconds of arriving by cutting straight to the heart of the fire.

"Retained and volunteer firefighters are the most amazing people, dedicated to protecting their communities and it is right and proper that we provide them with the best tools for the job.



"The current operating model makes it difficult for us to ensure the availability of resources in rural areas.

"This new technology, combined with state-of-the-art fire appliances and a more flexible crewing model will improve that availability – and create safer communities in the process."

The service recently conducted a live demonstration of the new technology at the SFRS research and development hub in Portlethen, Aberdeen for guests and staff.

This included the first look at new and bespoke appliances, built by Scottish firm Emergency One. Each can carry up to four firefighters, are agile and have been designed specifically to meet the needs of Scotland's most remote geographical areas.



Amongst their suite of capable and proven equipment is breathing apparatus from German firm Dräger and battery powered hydraulic multi-tools from Lukas.

Chief Officer Hay added: "The equipment carried by these appliances is absolutely state of the art. For example the battery powered hydraulic tools are lighter than their traditional counterparts and perform both cutting and spreading actions in one unit."

"Like everything on these appliances, it is very much pick up and go – fast, efficient and manageable and will ensure our volunteer and RDS firefighters continue to reach casualties quickly and safely."

Additionally, thirty two brand new eighteen-tonne fire engines, also built by Emergency One, will also shortly be welcomed into the SFRS fleet to protect Scotland.

Chief Officer Hay continued: "We are absolutely committed to investing in the latest technologies and techniques to ensure the continued safety of Scotland's communities."





# Specialist wet weather kit for SFRS

More than 7,000 firefighters across Scotland will soon benefit from a £1.3 million investment into new specialised kit for severe weather response.

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) is issuing new Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) suits to every firefighter across the country – from Baltasound on Shetland to Drummore in Dumfries and Galloway, and everywhere in between.

The significant investment will strengthen resilience for frontline crews to respond to weather-related emergencies, such as flooding, while protecting traditional firefighting kit from risks such as damage and contamination.

The heavy-duty PVC kits made by Safequip have already been introduced to thirteen stations in each of the West, East and

North Service Delivery Areas – including Banchory, Inverurie, Oldmeldrum, Altens, Braemar, Fochabers, Dregghorn, New Cumnock, Newton Stewart, Lockerbie, Peebles, Jedburgh and Eyemouth – and will soon be rolled out across the country.

This investment follows the devastation caused by Storm Frank in 2016, when hundreds of homes were evacuated and communities were left stranded as a result of unprecedented flooding across Scotland.

SFRS crews worked tirelessly for days following the storm, while providing enhanced resilience to ensure that fire and rescue cover was maintained during an extraordinary and extremely challenging period.

The introduction of the new PPE kit also follows a recent £5.2 million investment into more than 2,200 new Breathing Apparatus



(BA) sets – which has ensured that all crews across Scotland are now using identical BA equipment-see more on page 18.

Iain Bushell is Deputy Chief Officer for the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service. He said: “Our firefighters are fully committed to keeping Scotland’s communities safe – and it is absolutely vital that they are given the correct tools and equipment to stand on the frontline during times of emergency.

“These impressive new PPE suits will keep firefighters warm and dry, while ensuring they can continue to work in the most challenging conditions to protect Scotland’s communities.

“These new kits form part of an extensive and carefully planned strategy to enhance our arsenal of nationwide equipment, and will ensure that all firefighters can operate with greater ease across the former legacy boundaries to protect the public at times of significant emergency.

“This is yet another major step forward for our national service and I thoroughly commend all of those involved in this major project for their dedication in helping us build a safer Scotland.”





# Diesel shows off his new doggles

Scotland's hottest fire dog is going viral with the recent launch of his own Twitter account [@SFRSDog](#). The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) asset will tell followers how he works and trains to keep communities safe.

Diesel, shown here in protective 'doggles' and booties, will tell his fans about how he works to protect Scotland's communities. It is expected the Springer Spaniel will further assist the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service to reach out to followers with safety advice.

Diesel's expertise is called upon at major disasters around the world where he has used his outstanding urban search and rescue skills to locate casualties in collapsed buildings.

Deputy Chief Officer Iain Bushell said: "There is no doubt whatsoever that Diesel is the hottest looking search and rescue dog in Scotland with his doggles and his booties.

"But these pieces of equipment are absolutely vital to protect this outstanding and highly valued member of our team.

"They enable Diesel to enter some of the most hostile environments, not only reaching casualties but helping protect his firefighter colleagues as they work in risk zones.

"It is crucial that we have this capability as the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service enhances wherever possible its response to major incident and also seeks to transform to meet modern risks such as terror attack."



He added: "It is clear that Diesel is held in the very highest regard not only by ourselves but by the Scottish public – he is indeed a very good boy.

"I am therefore delighted that he is being given a platform to outline his fantastic work, key safety advice and even a picture with his beloved play ball – the only reward he ever asks in return ... although I think he'll now be looking for a follow on twitter too."

Diesel is a vital member of SFRS' Urban Search and Rescue's (USAR) National Response and is deployed anywhere across Scotland with his dedicated handler, Gary Carroll.

The pair are also part of a specialised UK International Search and Rescue (UKISAR) team which can be mobilised around the world at a moments' notice.

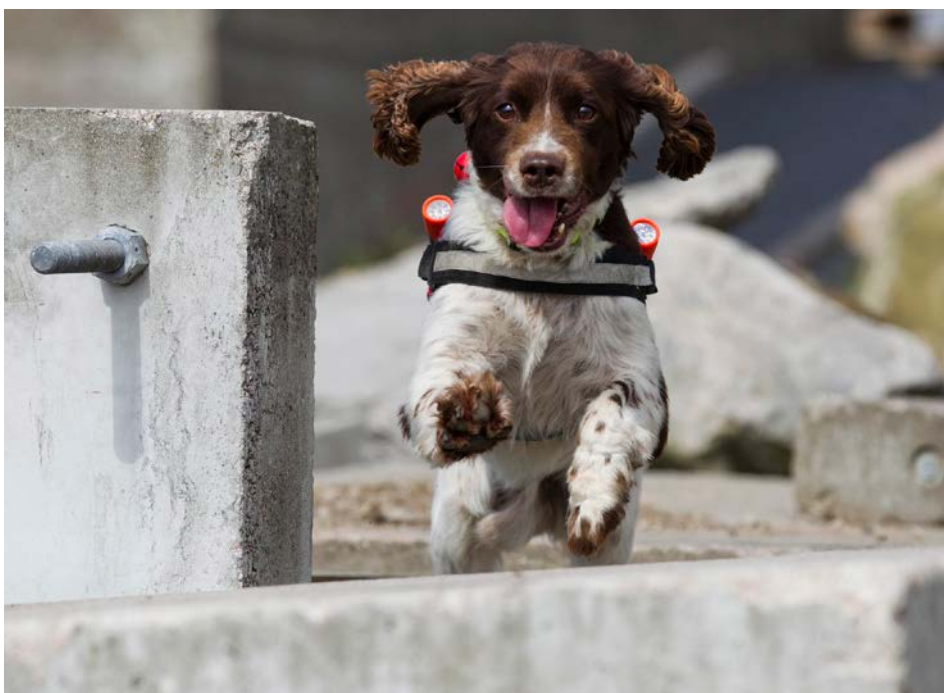
They assisted at the devastating Nepal earthquake which sadly claimed the lives of thousands of people.

It is therefore vital that Diesel, who can travel by helicopter to carry out search and rescue missions across Scotland or abroad, is kitted out with protective equipment.

The doggles help to shield his eyes from dust and debris thrown up by landing and hovering aircraft, while the special booties protect his paws from rubble and glass as he searches collapsed buildings.

K9 handler Gary is a Crew Manager based at Portlethen, Aberdeenshire. He said: "We are a single service providing an unrestricted response to emergencies occurring anywhere in Scotland, and beyond.

"Diesel and I have worked together for many years in some of the most challenging environments, and there is no doubt whatsoever that he is integral to that response.







“We have an incredible bond and he is a very special wee dog, to the point where we think he really does deserve his own dedicated online account.

“It will provide everyone with a real insight into not only how he is trained and his serious capability but also how he likes to spend some down time playing with his ball.”

Follow Diesel on twitter [@SFRSdog](https://twitter.com/SFRSdog)





# New breathing apparatus now integrated across Scotland

Firefighters across Scotland are now using the same breathing apparatus (BA) sets to enhance their response not only to fires but a range of different incidents across the whole country.

Crews from the most northerly station in Unst, Shetland now use the same equipment as firefighters 529 miles away in Drummore, Stranraer – Scotland’s most southerly fire station.

Thanks to a £5.2 million investment, this means crews can now operate across former legacy service boundaries with a greater degree of ease with no variation in their BA sets. That interoperability allows them to respond effectively, ensuring their safety and therefore the safety of Scotland’s communities.

A total of 2,200 new BA sets - from international manufacturer, Dräger - have gone operational.

The new equipment provides a working duration of around 38 minutes, has

integrated radio communications and can be better adjusted to fit each individual firefighter for their comfort and their safety. After the final BA set was delivered, Assistant Chief Officer Lewis Ramsay said: “This has been an extensive and carefully planned project to ensure consistency of the essential breathing apparatus used by our firefighters.

“This means that they can operate with

greater ease across the former boundaries, protecting them and keeping them as safe as possible as they work to assist our communities at a range of different types of incident where our crews require respiratory protection. This is yet another major step forward for our national service and I thoroughly commend all of those involved for their dedication in helping us build a safer Scotland.”



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## YOUR NEWS IN ON THE BELL AND IN ATTENDANCE MAGAZINE

We are looking for submissions of short articles, photographs and news about your stations and services. We would particularly like to hear about:

- Any important upcoming anniversaries
- Professional awards and other recognition
- Any new technology, system or PPE that’s made a difference to you
- New or ongoing initiatives
- News about working with your communities
- Exceptional individuals in your service

We can accept press releases or individually written submissions and are looking for submissions of 200-250, 400-500 or a maximum of 900 words.

Submissions should be accompanied by high resolution images. We may edit your submission for length and clarity.

Please contact the editorial team at [emmadunn@onthebell.co.uk](mailto:emmadunn@onthebell.co.uk) if you are interested in sharing your news with us.

While we try to respond to every submitter, the volume of submissions we receive means that it is not always possible to contact each writer individually.



# New £1.2M fire training facility in Orkney

Orkney communities are benefitting from a £1.2m investment which has delivered a vital firefighter training facility.

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) unveiled an on-island carbonaceous fire training unit at Kirkwall Airport Fire Station in May this year.

Delivered in partnership with Highlands & Islands Airport Ltd, the investment allows crews to train in temperatures up to 600 degrees and share expertise – and follows the introduction of similar specialist units at Stornoway and Sumburgh airports.

The impressive facility was officially opened by Chief Officer Alasdair Hay and Chair of the SFRS Board, Kirsty Darwent.

Chief Officer Hay said that the facility is the culmination of a long-term strategic plan to deliver a truly outstanding facility for our firefighters across Orkney.

“They are committed to their communities, responding at a moment’s notice to protect

at times of emergency – and we are clearly fully committed to them.”

“This significant investment will provide our firefighters with the modern resources and training required to keep standing on that front line and I commend their unwavering dedication.”

“Crucially, this training facility will also reduce the requirement for local firefighters to travel off island to undertake training – making the process far smoother for those wishing to join our fantastic service.”

The new training unit at Kirkwall – which follows last year’s £3m upgrade to Stornoway’s fire station – is the latest stage in a significant Scottish Fire and Rescue Service investment to support retained duty system firefighters (RDS) across Orkney, Shetland and Western Isles.

Annabelle Ewing MSP, Community Safety and Legal Affairs Minister, said: “The Scottish Government is fully committed to supporting the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and

other relevant partners to continue to reduce the number of fires and fire related injuries in our communities. This successful continued partnership between the SFRS and the Highlands and Islands Airport Ltd is excellent news for communities and firefighters alike. It will help to protect and improve local services by delivering modern resources and training without firefighters having to leave the island.”



# Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Service hosts multi-agency training exercise

In June, Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMFRS) utilised its state of the art training facility at Bury to test its operational preparedness. A large scale, multi-agency, multi-themed exercise was conducted to work with partners on the use of JESIP (Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles) at a major incident involving a high-rise building.

GMFRS crews and officers worked with colleagues from Greater Manchester Police (GMP), North West Ambulance Service Hazardous Area Response Team (HART) and the North West Counter Terrorism Unit to manage the scenario and tackle the fire, which presented a number of complex challenges that agencies had to work collaboratively to overcome.

North West Fire Control was also involved in the exercise and all partners had to use the principles to work together, ensuring information was shared properly and the incident was tackled correctly.

JESIP has produced much needed practical guidance to help improve multi-agency

responses. It set out the standard approach for multi-agency working, along with the training and awareness products for organisations to inform their staff.

Since its initial two-year programme from 2012 until 2014, JESIP has initiated the largest and most successful joint training initiative across the emergency services. GMFRS has been integrating JESIP into all their policies and procedures. The exercise was an opportunity to work on JESIP with other organisations.

Twelve pumping appliances plus special appliances from GMFRS and Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service deployed to the Bury Training and Safety Centre for the exercise, which focused on a scenario involving two large fires in the centre's state of the art high-rise facility.

The £10m complex is the largest firefighter training centre in the UK and one of the most advanced in Europe. The centre contains facilities to practice for a variety of incidents such as air crashes, residential fires, commercial incidents and fires in high-rise premises. The facility was built to help operational staff refine their skills as well as provide learning opportunities about prevention and protection for organisations, including schools and community groups.

The staff involved were not told the details of the exercise in advance to make the training as realistic as possible and to help test their operational preparedness.

Volunteers helped to enhance the exercise by acting as casualties, ensuring that the scenario was as close as possible to a real-world fire incident.

The situation involved a fire on the fifth and sixth floors of the high-rise and crews were quickly in offensive mode, utilising breathing apparatus and hose reels inside the building to deal with a multi-seated fire.

A bridgehead sector was set up on the third floor and cordons were put in place around the building. A hydraulic platform was set up as a water tower and firefighters inside worked to rapidly evacuate the building.

A multi-agency briefing was held and a M/ETHANE message was sent with NWS declaring a major incident. The incident that presented itself to all agencies was complex and quickly developed from a high-rise situation into one that involved a number of scenarios including post-fire complications.

NWAS crews needed to deal with a medical emergency involving a carbon monoxide leak and firefighters were also tested after a







“JESIP and M/ETHANE are important for us to make sure we are working with partner agencies in the most effective way possible and are communicating at all times. Our Bury facility allows us to work on a variety of real-world scenarios and is about a lot more than practicing extinguishing fires.

“This training scenario allowed us to see what we do well together but more importantly what we can improve on. It was a very complex exercise and it took a lot of planning and preparation. I want to thank everyone who helped arrange the exercise for their hard work and all who took part for their enthusiasm and professionalism.”

Crews from Hindley, Farnworth, Whitefield, Broughton, Bolton North, Eccles, Manchester Central and Hollins took part in the exercise from GMFRS as well as Bacup, Burnley, Hyndburn and Preston crews from Lancashire.

A formal multi-agency debrief will be held and the learning from the exercise will be fed back to all partners to further improve collaborative operational work in the future.

counter-terrorism element presented itself during the exercise.

While battling the fire and searching the building, explosives and other terror-related paraphernalia was discovered by crews and, by effectively working with other agencies, a tactical withdrawal was made.

Fire crews worked with GMP colleagues to share situational awareness and understanding of risk, and to protect the scene to preserve evidence for specialist Counter Terrorist investigation teams.

A major incident was subsequently declared by GMFRS and GMP and a further M/ETHANE message was sent before the organisers brought the training to its conclusion.

Station Manager Jim Bridge, who organised the exercise, said: “Collaborative working was tested during the exercise due to the complex and wide-ranging nature of the scenario. By applying JESIP, the exercise was handled in a professional and collaborative manner by all partner agencies.

“Operational leads from all organisations attended regular briefings and provided updates to ensure that all parties shared situational awareness at all times.

M/ETHANE was used promptly by North West Ambulance Service when a major incident was declared and the exact location, type of incident, hazards, access, casualties and the services present and required were conveyed quickly to all other agencies present.

“Using JESIP and M/ETHANE ensured information was shared quickly and easily between the several organisations involved in the exercise.”

The operational capabilities of GMFRS in a major incident, and the ability to work with other agencies was quickly put to the test following the exercise when large moorland fires broke out in Tameside and on Winter Hill on the border between Greater Manchester and Lancashire.

The fires took a number of weeks to tackle and required collaboration with a number of other fire services, local authorities, police, ambulance services, water companies, land owners and even the army, who were called in to assist with the fire in Tameside.

SM Bridge said: “I was extremely happy with how the exercise went. All of the objectives were realised and all of the partner agencies achieved the desired learning outcomes.

“There was a high level of coordination and cooperation between partner agencies. There was a lot of positive feedback gathered during the debrief and there were learning opportunities identified for all the agencies. We saw why exercises such as this are so important just weeks after it took place when we were faced with unprecedented moorland fires. These fires were challenging not just for GMFRS but all agencies and only by working together could we successfully get them under control.



# Avon Fire & Rescue Service unveiled new fire engine wrapping in support of Pride

Avon Fire & Rescue Service (AF&RS) marked Bristol Pride by wrapping an operational fire engine in support of the event. The rainbow-coloured engine took part in the procession on 14 July before returning to normal duty fully decorated.

In an event that annually draws around 40,000 people to the city, AF&RS showed support for the lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) community and promoted a career with the fire service through their 'Yes You Can' Campaign.

It is estimated that at least 80,000 people in the Avon area are from the LGBT community. However, only 0.92% of AF&RS staff are lesbian, gay or bisexual.

AF&RS hoped to make people aware that being a firefighter is not just about fighting fires but also being a leader within communities. Firefighters spend more and more time out in the community raising awareness, conducting home fire safety checks and communicating fire prevention and other safety messages, all of which a diverse workforce helps to deliver.

Mick Crennell, Chief Fire Officer for AF&RS, said: "We are always looking for new ways to reach members of the community we might miss in our day to day operations.

"Bristol Pride gave us the opportunity to show that the service is committed to

inclusivity and we would love for more people from the LGBT community to join and help make a difference to people's lives."

Along with the new wrapping on the engine, Temple fire station also opened its doors between 8.30am and 10am in the morning for local residents and the LGBT community who may have any questions about working for AF&RS or home fire safety concerns. Mat Pember, Green Watch Manager at Temple fire station, said: "It is always great to open our doors to members of the public and answer any questions they might have.

"We are dedicated to helping everybody in the area and this gave us the opportunity to get together and talk to anyone taking part in Pride or those who simply wanted to drop in. It was a fantastic way to show people what we can do for them and discuss safety advice."

As well supporting the LGBT community and encouraging people to consider a career in the fire service, AF&RS is also raising a serious fire safety message.

LGB people are twice as likely as their straight counterparts to abuse alcohol, seven times more likely to abuse drugs and also more likely to be regular smokers. All of these risk factors increase the likelihood of accidental fires and slips, trips and falls in the home.

Older LGB people are also more likely to live alone and less than a quarter see family

members on a regular basis, compared to more than half of heterosexual older people.

Alex Kohnert, Inclusion and Diversity Manager for AF&RS, added: "Research shows that more of the LGBT community aren't supported by their families and can often end up living alone.

"This can mean they are more at risk at home and that is something we want to help prevent. By attending such a massive event, along with promoting our 'Yes You Can' campaign, we helped to raise awareness around home fire safety and promote a positive message."

A second wrapped fire engine attended Bath Carnival on 21 July and staff from the Service took part in the parade at Weston Pride on 28 July. AF&RS will continue to wrap vehicles in the future to raise awareness around community safety.

You can support the fire engines and crew by tweeting with #PoweredByPride.

For more information on recruitment with AF&RS, such as what steps to progress, and to receive updates on future recruitment, please visit [yesyoucan.careers](http://yesyoucan.careers)





# Avon Fire & Rescue team up with HM Coastguard for mud rescue training

Avon Fire & Rescue Service (AF&RS) teamed up with HM Coastguard and beach wardens for mud rescue training in preparation for the school summer holidays.

Weston-super-Mare receives around 100,000 visitors a day during summer, most of which are tourists and unsure about safety issues along the seafront.

Due to these high numbers, in 2017 AF&RS were called to twenty-nine separate incidents on the beachfront.

To help combat this, crews from Weston-super-Mare fire station practised hovercraft drills, using an inflatable work platform, and undertook mud rescue training with HM Coastguard and beach wardens.

In July, crews were called to the seafront when thirty school children from Birmingham waded too far out into the mudflats.

While they were thankfully able to self-rescue with the assistance of beach wardens, it demonstrated just how quickly a situation can turn if people are unaware of the dangers.

Anna James, Blue Watch Manager at Weston-super-Mare fire station, said: "We are often called to the beachfront with the Coastguard as people don't fully appreciate the dangers of the mud.

"In the hot weather, especially if alcohol is involved, people will often try to travel out

too far or get caught out by the changing tide. We work and train closely with the Coastguard and beach wardens to put us in the best position to act quickly and effectively."

Gareth Davis, Senior Coastal Operations officer for HM Coastguard, added: "The summer holidays is always a particularly busy time for us.

"We get people from all over the country, some who have never been to a beach before and they can be unclear on the risks, especially those associated with walking out onto the mudflats that are prevalent in this area. Our advice is to never wander out onto the mud in the first place, always know where your children are and in case you find yourself in difficulties out on the mud, make sure you know how to react."

Top tips while using the beach:

- Collect a child safety wristband from the Visitor Information Centre or Sovereign Shopping Centre
- Check for hazards such as tides or currents
- Consider what could be hidden under the water, such as mud
- Always read the signs
- Only swim with friends or family
- Don't wade out too far into unknown areas

What to do if you find yourself in danger:

- Stay Calm
- Avoid too much movement
- Try and spread your weight
- Shout loudly to attract attention
- Discourage untrained persons from trying to rescue you
- Dial 999



## New PPE provider

2018 begins a new chapter to the long established ninety-five year-old Yaffy Protective Clothing. The company are a major force within the blue light industry and will focus on expanding their renowned product and service reputation into the Fire market sector.

Yaffy is the technical arm and PPE division of apparel giant MWUK Ltd. The group is made up with Dimensions, Alexandra Workwear and Yaffy Protective Clothing. Combined, the group produce a turnover of in excess of £150m per year and through their National distribution and warehousing network delivered last year over 18 million customer orders.

The group offers a wide range of garments that include Structural fire fighting PPE,

Category III PPE, Waterproof and High conspicuity clothing, Workwear and Corporate Uniform; in fact it is fair to say that everywhere you look in the UK you will find a MWUK Ltd garment.

This year will see the launch of Yaffy innovations in advanced technical products "Yaffy ATP", and service "Yaffy Assist".

### Yaffy ATP

Yaffy ATP is technical PPE that has been forged from a wealth of expertise by highly skilled personnel from the dedicated research and development team at Yaffy. They have produced PPE that provides top level performance, innovative design and fit for purpose professional wear.

### Yaffy Assist

Yaffy Assist is a variety of service options that provide solutions to fit every situation and budget. This includes managed service with or without lease product, electronic wardrobe ordering systems via dedicated web based portal, stock holding, care and maintenance of PPE, conformity checks and condition coding.

The whole package of Yaffy Assist and Yaffy ATP offers first class service, design, and specifically developed product that provide cost reducing benefits.

For further information on Yaffy Assist and ATP please call **0141 641 7369** or email [alexmcallister@yaffy.co.uk](mailto:alexmcallister@yaffy.co.uk)

# Warwickshire firefighters get a new look and it's a little different ...

New personal protective equipment (PPE) is being provided to Warwickshire firefighters via a nationally agreed contract. This is the result of three years of intensive development and trials with Bristol Uniforms and several fire and rescue authorities. The new PPE provides firefighters with a lighter, closer fitting tunic and leggings, that will give firefighters greater movement and flexibility over the current PPE.

To combat the extreme heat we are experiencing, a new tunic will also be provided to all firefighters in Warwickshire. The new tunic is a distinctive orange coloured (high visibility) garment which will be used at road traffic collisions (RTCs) and at some fires in the open to improve the safety and welfare of firefighters. New RTC gloves are also being provided in addition to the fire resistant leather glove, which gives firefighters greater dexterity when operating new, more powerful battery powered cutting equipment.

The new PPE features improvements based on feedback from Warwickshire firefighters.

The new helmet, in particular, features some impressive changes over previous models. It is lightweight and includes an integrated torch, allowing firefighters to operate effectively in situations with low light.

The introduction of the new kit for Warwickshire firefighters follows similar roll-outs at fire and rescue services across the region; including Hereford and Worcester Fire Service, with Warwickshire being the latest to benefit.

Andy Thompson, Station Commander with Warwickshire Fire and Rescue's Technical Team, said: "The new RTC tunic will strengthen resilience for front-line crews when attending road traffic collisions and includes some significant improvements which will help keep our firefighters safe.

"All personnel have now been fitted out and have received their new kit. Crews will start using it to attend incidents during August. The upgrade forms part of our ongoing commitment to enhance our equipment and ensures that our firefighters can

operate with greater ease to protect the communities of Warwickshire."

Talking about the new kit, Warwickshire County Council's Portfolio Holder for Fire & Community Safety, Cllr Andy Crump, said: "I'm delighted to see that Warwickshire firefighters have access to this impressive new PPE and pleased to see our Technical Team doing a fantastic job ensuring our crews are ahead of the game when it comes to personal protective equipment. I am sure that Warwickshire residents will soon get used to the look of the new kit, which will become as iconic for Warwickshire as the current gold one."



## Proud to be working with Fire and Rescue Services across the UK



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# Rugby Mayor visits WFRS to celebrate launch of new Large Animal Rescue Unit

Cllr Tom Mahoney, the new Mayor of Rugby, recently visited Rugby Fire Station to present crews with a 'Simple Thank You' certificate and launch Warwickshire Fire and Rescue's brand new Large Animal Rescue unit.

The certificate recognises everything the crews do to help keep Warwickshire safe, not just dealing with fires, including rescuing trapped motorists, inspecting premises for fire safety and providing fire safety advice to Warwickshire residents. The mayor also congratulated crews on the work they undertake to rescue those who get into difficulty in Warwickshire's waterways.

Rugby's new Large Animal Rescue unit is a new purpose-built vehicle designed to rescue animals from the water, vehicle collisions and other incidents. The equipment features lifting and cutting gear, as well as boards to support animals on unstable grounds. It replaces old equipment and means that crews are able to use a single vehicle, rather than two to three, in order to carry out animal rescue operations. In terms



of features, the vehicle can accommodate a crew of four and has off-road driving capabilities. It also contains compartments to allow rescue equipment to be transported safely and a low centre of gravity to prevent the vehicle from rolling over.

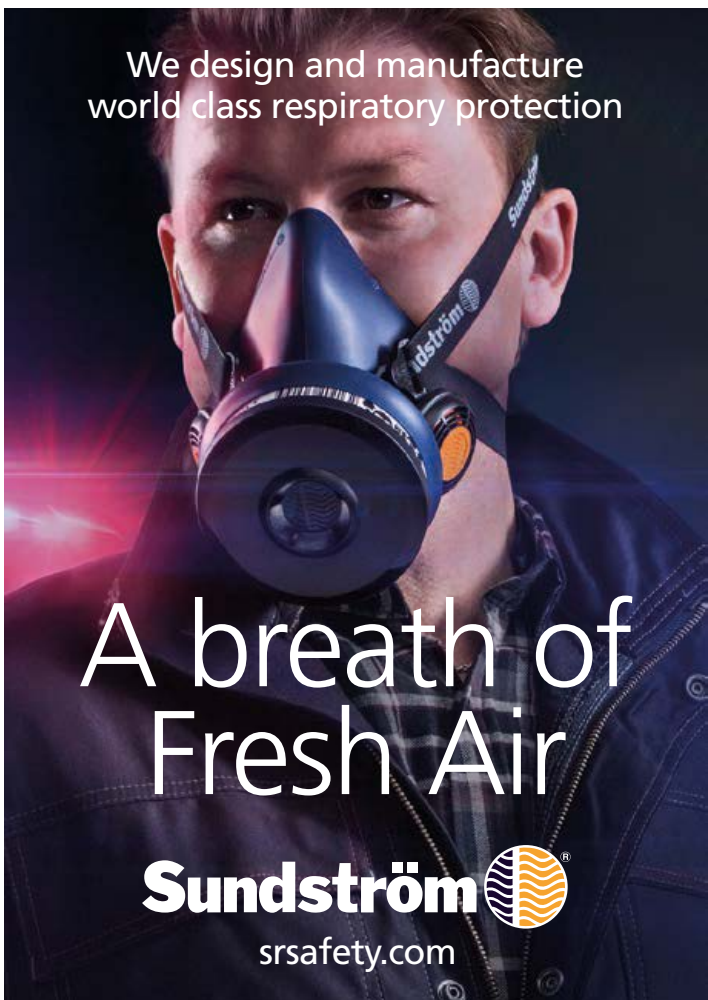
The Rugby Mayor described the Rugby fire service as a 'credit to our community'. Cllr Howard Roberts, Portfolio Holder for Fire and Community Safety said: "We were delighted to welcome Cllr Tom Mahoney, the new Mayor of Rugby to the station and are very grateful for the recognition received.



"The mayor took a keen interest in learning about the work we do and was given a in-depth look at the Large Animal Rescue unit which will enable crews to carry out animal rescue operations more effectively. This means we are able to continue our vital work in making Warwickshire's communities safer."

For more information about WFRS visit: [warwickshire.gov.uk/fireandrescue](http://warwickshire.gov.uk/fireandrescue)

We design and manufacture world class respiratory protection



## A breath of Fresh Air

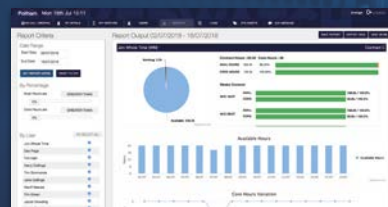
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# A breath of fresh air

The fire services have long had a reputation as the 'masters of respiratory equipment'. Whether it is full SCBA, or negative pressure half masks, their expertise to safely optimise usage of this equipment in emergency environments is unrivalled. Sundstrom are proud to both supply and help brigades to maximise on correct usage and maintenance of negative and powered respiratory equipment.

Sundstrom are a fourth-generation family company founded 92 years ago by Ivan Sundstrom, a mining engineer who recognised the dangers of respirable diseases which were a major cause of industrial health issues. Over the years they have become synonymous with innovation, safety, quality and comfort. Their respirators are used around the globe and they pride themselves on providing the advice and aftercare that is so crucial to ensuring the equipment is fit and suitable for purpose.

The SR100 half mask has become the mask of choice in many brigades for environments where contaminations are an issue but SCBA is excessive. From usage at Road Traffic Accidents, to protect against a

variety of hazardous substances, to many recent wildfires such as Saddleshaw Moor, Essex, East London, Yorkshire and the West Country, Sundstrom units are helping to provide safe and comfortable protection.

Steve D'Arcy is the UK Technical Expert responsible for ensuring the correct supply and usage of Sundstrom products within the fire service. When asked why the SR 100 half mask is so widely used in the Fire Service, Mr D'Arcy responded:

"It is all about listening to what the service requires. The range of environments that brigades find themselves needing respiratory equipment in, is far more diverse than other areas of industry. It is crucial that respirators are fit for the environment they are being used in and that firefighters know both their limitations and advantages. We work closely at all levels within the fire service to ensure the correct equipment is always available and that firefighters are happy, informed and safe."

Sundstrom UK are proud of the work they have undertaken with UK Brigades and are more than happy to work with, trial and

give advice on appropriate usage. Reusable masks undoubtedly give higher levels of face fit performance than disposable masks, and offer substantial cost savings to Brigades. In times when both safety and economic pressures placed on brave and dedicated emergency services are high, Sundstrom would be pleased to work with you.



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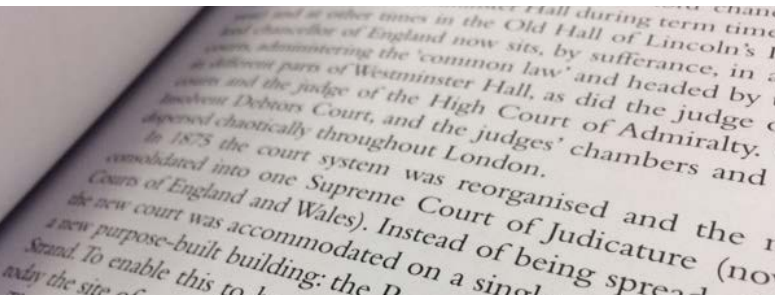
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