



Essex County
Fire & Rescue Service

Joining as a Retained Firefighter

WHAT TO EXPECT AND WHAT WILL BE REQUIRED OF YOU

To be eligible you must live or work in a location that allows you to be at the part time fire station in time for the appliance to be able to respond within 5 minutes.

You may be able to provide full 24-hour cover (whole rate), or reduced rate cover during the daytime or evenings/nights and weekends. Even if you can provide cover during only part of the week or on an irregular pattern, the Fire Service would still be interested to talk to you.

Part time firefighters have to reach certain fitness standards before enrolment, and so you are urged to contact the Physical Training Instructors on 01376 513545 for a pre assessment and advice on how you can meet the standard required (further details on pages 6 & 7).

Retained Firefighters receive full training and are required to attend their station's weekly training night as well as pre-arranged training courses at Service training establishments. You may be asked to help maintain the equipment attached to the station and assist with administration work on occasions.

Before being offered a job, you will have to undertake a series of selection tests. The tests involved include: written tests; physical tests; formal interview and, following on from this, a full medical examination, including an eye test.

To see a list of our Retained Fire Stations, please visit our website www.essex-fire.gov.uk and take a look at the download document entitled Retained Training Nights which is attached to the advert for 'Retained Firefighters throughout Essex'. If you would like to find out more about becoming a Retained Firefighter and live or work near one of our Retained Stations, please visit the station on a training night and ask to speak to the Officer in Charge.

1. GENERAL ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

A CANDIDATE MUST:

- Be aged 18 or over at the commencement of training. You may apply to be a Retained Firefighter if you are aged between 17 years 6 months and 18 years old, as long as you are 18 years old once you commence training.
- Be of good character.
- Undertake job specific colour vision checks to establish whether they confuse blue and green or black and maroon.
- Contact lenses – the use of modern soft contact lenses is now considered safe. Rigid (gas permeable) contact lenses are not suitable.
- Have good hearing and ears free from disease or damage.
- Satisfactorily pass a medical examination carried out by the Fire & Rescue Service Occupational Physician.
- Satisfactorily complete a selection of tests including a physical strength test to determine their aptitude for employment as a Retained Firefighter.
- Submit a Passsport, Birth Certificate or other satisfactory proof of age and eligibility to work in the UK.
- Appointment to the Service will be dependent on meeting the requirements above, passing the selection process and satisfactory medical results and references.
- A person who has completed a term of service in any of HM Armed Forces must produce satisfactory discharge papers.

A CANDIDATE MAY NOT:-

- Be currently employed as a Police Officer.

VOSA Regulations

Applicants whose primary employment involves driving in-scope vehicles as defined under the VOSA Rules are required to inform their employer that they are making an application to become a Retained Firefighter. Please see further details on page 7.

EYESIGHT STANDARD

The eyesight standards are as follows:-

- Uncorrected distance vision no worse than 6/18 in the better eye, and 6/24 in the worse eye.
- Corrected distance acuity should be at least 6/9 with both eyes open and reach 6/12 in the worse eye
- Near vision – should be able to read N12 at 30 cm with both eyes open unaided.
- Have normal binocular field of vision.

Would you please check with your optometrist that your eyesight meets the above standard – we regret you will not be eligible to enrol as a Retained Firefighter if your eyesight does not meet this standard.

REFRACTIVE EYE SURGERY

- Essex Fire & Rescue Service will consider applicants for fire fighting who have undergone Refractive Surgery.
- The applicant will need to provide the following information to the Service Occupational Health Service.
- The date of surgery: (Applicants will not be considered until they are 12 months post surgery).
- Evidence that all medication relating to the surgery has stopped.
- Details of the pre-operative refractive error.
- A report following slit lamp examination confirming that the eye has returned to normal and that there is no loss of transparency over the pupil area.
- A report following refraction, topographic examination and pachymetry to confirm that there is no keratectasia. Details of post operative corneal thickness and any post operative complications should be supplied.
- Evidence of satisfactory visual performance using a technique sensitive to the presence of scattered light and aberrations, e.g. using a low contrast log MAR chart.
- The costs for provision of this information will rest with the applicant.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Medical examination

The applicant should be informed of the requirement to attend and satisfactorily pass a medical examination carried out by Essex County Fire & Rescue Service's Occupational Health Physician.

This medical will be carried out as soon as possible after having satisfactorily completed the physical and academic assessments and interview.

At the medical, the applicant will be given a general medical examination, which will include:

- Lung function test
- Eyesight test
- Blood pressure
- Hearing
- ECG
- Drugs and alcohol test

The candidate will be informed of the date of the medical and a medical questionnaire sent to the candidate for completion prior to attendance at Occupational Health. This questionnaire should be handed in to Occupational Health on arrival.

Medical examinations are carried out at Occupational Health, Kelvedon Park, Witham.

Details of the location, parking information etc will be given prior to attendance.

No expenses can be claimed for attendance.

References

Applicants will be required to specify two persons to provide a written reference. One of these referees must be your most recent employer, school or college.

Enrolment is conditional to having received satisfactory references.

2. RESPONSE CRITERIA

Candidates must be able to reach the station and be in a position to turn out on the appliance, fully rigged in fire gear, within five minutes of their alerter sounding.

This time is applicable for responding from home, work or from any other location during their stated period of availability, as laid out in their contract of employment.

3. AVAILABILITY CRITERIA

There are several types of availability criteria in use at present – whole rate and reduced rate.

Whole rate

The ability to respond to 100% of all station calls, with the requirement to attend 75% of those calls. There is a Service requirement to provide a minimum of 120 hours availability per week.

Reduced rate

The ability to respond to 75% of all station calls, with the requirement to attend 75% of those calls (ie 56% of the station total). There is a Service requirement to provide 90 hours availability per week.

Below are examples of cover you could provide:-

1. Reduced rate (day cover)

To provide cover during the normal daytime working hours each weekday (ie not including weekends).

2. Reduced rate (nights and weekends)

To provide cover during evenings/nights and at weekends.

3. Reduced rate (alternate)

To provide cover on a predetermined rotational shift basis, based on the above criteria, dependent on the person's shift patterns and times and the needs of the station.

4. EMPLOYER NOTIFICATION

It is important that the applicant's employer is informed of their intention to join the Service and their approval sought.

The purpose of this is to make the employer aware that the applicant is joining the Service, and to have the implications of the impact this will have on the employer explained.

Applicants should be advised that one of the application references has to be the present or past employer; consequently, the employer will subsequently be made aware of the application in any event.

Some of the issues that need to be mentioned are:

The employer should be informed of the positive elements of the application – these being that retained firefighters offer:

- increased knowledge of fire and fire safety matters;
- specialist qualifications, ie first aid, BA, etc;
- good publicity for the company;
- a good standard of physical fitness;
- the ability to work together well in team environments;
- the ability to communicate fast and accurately;
- the ability to take decisions under stress, to follow instructions and to be reliable.

It is important, however, that the employer is also made aware of the following issues:

- The possibility of the applicant being late for work due to being delayed on a call.
- The training course implications (currently at least three weeks in the first two years).
- The estimated number of calls that the applicant may be called on to attend during working hours.
- The uncertainty of individual call duration.

VOSA Regulations

If your primary employment involves driving in-scope vehicles as defined under the VOSA Rules on Drivers Hours and Tachographs, you should ensure that you take into account the required rest periods in deciding the availability you can provide as a Retained Fire Fighter. You should also inform your employer that you are intending to make an application to become a Retained Fire Fighter. Full information relating to these regulations can be found at:

<http://www.vosa.gov.uk/vosacorp/repository/GV262%20Jan%202008.pdf>

5. PHYSICAL AND ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS

The following physical tests are supervised by qualified Service Physical Training Instructors (PTIs). The tests are non-progressive, ie the candidate will be given the opportunity to complete all the physical tests, even if they fail one of the elements. The continuation will, however, be at the discretion of the PTI. Candidates who fail one of the elements and wish to reapply will be required to retake all the physical tests, ie bleep test, hose running and strength tests and to achieve a satisfactory pass mark in all elements.

It is recommended that you start to improve on your present level of fitness in preparation for these tests. The Service Physical Training Instructor (PTI) is available on 01376 521769 to assist with any questions relating to these tests or for further guidance on fitness training – candidates are urged to make contact.

Bleep Test (for measuring stamina)

This is tested by using the National Coaching Foundation multi-stage shuttle run (bleep) test. The candidate is required to shuttle run between two lines set at 20 metres apart, keeping in time to audio beeps on a CD. At set intervals (levels) the time between the beeps is reduced, therefore giving the candidate less time to cover the same distance. To be successful the candidate must achieve level 8.6.

Provision can be made for the candidate to attend Service Training Centre at an earlier date to the test proper, to be pre-assessed on their level of performance on this test. This pre-test is designed to give the candidate some guidance on their present level and to give the opportunity for the Service's PTIs to give some positive individual advice on scope for improvement if they should fail to achieve the level required. This information will also enable the Service to programme the candidate in on an assessment date that is more conducive to the candidate attending and passing at the required level.

Simulated Ladder Lift

This is a strength test carried out on a specially designed piece of equipment which simulates the actions and effort required to replace a 13.5m ladder back on to the fire appliance. The candidate, dressed in full fire gear, will be required to raise the bar with 15kg applied (this is approx 25% the weight of the actual ladder) above their head to full arm extension and then lower the weight under control, this is repeated 4 times. This is preceded by a full demonstration and practice warm-up with a lighter weight (5kg).

Simulated Ladder Extension

This is to simulate extending the sections of a ladder. It is carried out on a high pulley station of the multi-gym. The candidate sits on a bench directly under the pulley and, using a close underhand grip, pulls the bar down towards the chest, under strict control and through a full range of movement. This is repeated 10 times using a weight of 41 kg.

Hose Running

This test is carried out in full fire gear. The instructor will demonstrate the required technique and fully explain the test. All candidates will then be required to run out and make up five lengths of 25m x

70mm hose. This first session is for practice only. The candidate will not be assessed on this stage. The instructors will offer help and guidance to ensure correct technique and safety. During the second session, the candidates will again be required to run out and make up five lengths of hose. However, this will be completed against the clock, and marks awarded for time and technique. The pass mark is 13 out of 20. The breakdown of available marks is 15 against time and 5 against technique. A candidate who completes the five runs within 9 minutes will achieve the full 15 time marks. A time of up to 11 minutes will achieve ten time marks. A pass is still possible provided no more than two technique marks are lost. A time of over 11 minutes is a fail.

JOB-RELATED SAFETY TESTS

In addition to the previous physical tests, the following two tests are designed to assess the applicant's reactions to:

- (a) working at heights (acrophobia); and
- (b) working in confined spaces (claustrophobia).

Acrophobia Test

This test is carried out utilising a standard 135 ladder. The ladder is pitched to the third floor of a training tower and secured. The candidate is dressed in full firefighting gear and wears a safety harness. The candidate is given instructions and a demonstration of the test.

The candidate is required to ascend the ladder until their shoulders are level with the third floor, take a leg lock and is asked to lean back, releasing their hands. The candidate will then be asked to look down and around, and then enter the tower. After completing this, the candidate exits from the building and descends the ladder.

Claustrophobia Test

The candidate is dressed in full firefighting gear and rigged in a breathing apparatus set. The candidate will then be asked to undertake a course through a breathing apparatus chamber, following a guideline under the supervision of an instructor. Smoke is not used for this test, however, the test is carried out in total darkness.

Equipment Assembly

This aims to test the ability to comprehend and follow instructions. The candidate will be required to assemble and disassemble an item of fire service equipment in accordance with a set of instructions.

WRITTEN & NUMERIC ASSESSMENTS

These assessments consist of two separate tests:

- (a) Verbal Reasoning
- (b) Numerical Computation

Verbal Reasoning

This test will last for ten minutes. In this test you have to use your judgement to draw conclusions from the information given. Often there is no certain answer – you need to say what is most likely, from the information given and your own common sense.

An example of this is:

All the houses in Winscombe were built this century or shortly before, but Ferrydale, 20 miles to the North East, has many old houses. Milton is 15 miles North of Ferrydale with buildings of much the same type. Westwood is a small village South East of Winscombe, with several eighteenth century cottages.

- 1 Which is the furthest South?
(A) Winscombe (B) Ferrydale (C) Milton (D) Westwood
- 2 Which is the least likely to have an eighteenth century house?
(A) Winscombe (B) Ferrydale (C) Milton (D) Westwood

The correct answers are 1 (D) Westwood; 2 (A) Winscombe

Mathematical Ability Test

This test is in 2 parts, Part 1 is for 2 minutes, Part 2 4 minutes. This test asks you to use the 4 rules of arithmetic: + - x ÷

The test is in 2 parts, both of which ask you to do multiple calculations, e.g. $5 \times 4 + 3$

In Part 1 you are given a sum and a choice of a possible answers e.g.

- 1) $18 \div 6 + 2$ (A) 6 (B) 5 (C) 4 (D) 3
- 2) $8 \times 4 \div 2$ (A) 12 (B) 20 (C) 21 (D) 16

The correct answers are 1) (B) 2) (D)

In Part 2 you are given an answer and a choice of possible sums e.g.

- 3) 10 (A) $5 \times 3 - 5$ (B) $15 \times 2 \div 4$ (C) $27 \div 3 + 2$
- 4) 26 (A) $72 \div 3 \times 2$ (B) $108 \div 4 - 2$ (C) $36 \times 2 - 46$

The correct answers are 3) (A) 4) (C)

INTERVIEW

The interview will take place following successful completion of all assessment tests. The interview will be conducted by a uniformed senior officer and a member of the Human Resources team. The candidate will be asked questions to assess their knowledge of the following points:

- (i) How the expected level of commitment will affect their lifestyle and current employment.
- (ii) The importance of team working.
- (iii) The role of the firefighter in the local community.
- (iv) Their understanding of Equal Opportunities and Equality and Fairness at Work.
- (v) Their reasons for wishing to join the Service.
- (vi) Relevant practical experience.
- (vii) Their overall communicative skills.

Satisfactory performance at the interview and previous assessments will result in the candidate being offered a position in the Service, pending satisfactory references being received and satisfying the relevant medical requirements.

Shortly after the interview the candidate will be advised of the following:

- (i) The date for their medical, with directions to Occupational Health, Kelvedon Park, Witham and a pro forma medical questionnaire that must be completed and taken to the medical examination.
- (ii) The date for attendance at the 2 week training course, at Service Training Centre, Witham.

6. GENERAL INFORMATION

Obligations

The following definition of the obligations of a Retained Firefighter has been extracted from the Conditions of Service.

“A retained member shall have an obligation to attend:-

- i) at the station to which he or she is attached for training and maintenance duties for an average of two hours each week, or such less time as the Officer-in-Charge of the station, subject to any orders of the Chief Fire Officer, considers necessary;
- ii) promptly at the said station in response to a call at any time;
- iii) at any fire or other occurrence, or at any other station for reserve or standby duties in accordance with the orders he or she receives.”

Retainer Fees

Subject to a member’s satisfactory performance of the duties covered by his or her contractual obligations, a retained member shall be paid an annual retainer fee.

A member employed on reduced rate will be paid the annual retainer fee of a whole rate member less 25%.

Retainer fees are reviewed as and when the National Pay Scales are reviewed (currently during the first week of November each year). Current rates are indicated on page 22.

Turnout Fees

A member shall be entitled to a turnout fee if, whether in response to a call or otherwise, the appliance leaves the station in consequence of a fire or other consequence necessitating immediate attention, and that member is a member of that appliance’s crew. This fee is also payable if the appliance is required to stand by at another station.

A second turnout fee shall be payable in circumstances where a member, before returning to the station to book off, is redirected to another incident which is entirely separate and unconnected with the first.

This provision shall not apply in cases where an appliance is directed to another part of the incident ground arising out of an extension of the same incident. This would be applicable, for instance, in the case of large grass/field fires or flooding incidents, etc.

The current rates for turnout fees are indicated in the attached Appendices.

ATTENDANCE FEES

A member shall be entitled to an attendance fee if, as a result of his/her obligations, they attend the station in response to a call but are not required to ride as a crew member on that occasion.

A member so responding is required to remain on the station until the stop message is received or until 20 minutes after the time of call, whichever is the earlier.

TRAINING NIGHT ATTENDANCE FEES

A member shall be entitled to be paid a training attendance fee for attending the station for training purposes, in accordance with the obligation as detailed in the Conditions of Service, Section VII, paragraph 2(i).

Where a member is unable to report for the training session by reason of sickness, he/she will be entitled to receive the appropriate fee subject to the production of a doctor's certificate. The maximum entitlement in any one-year is four such payments.

Where a member is unable to report for the training session by reason of annual leave, he/she shall be entitled to receive the appropriate fee. The maximum entitlement is four such payments in one calendar year, except that members with five years' service or more at the commencement of the year shall be entitled to receive a maximum of five such payments.

PAYMENTS FOR EXTRA WORK

Members are required, as part of their obligations, to carry out maintenance and cleaning duties at the station as determined by the Officer-in-Charge. Members are paid an hourly rate for these duties, applicable to the prearranged attendance payment as detailed on the attached pay scale sheet.

EXTRA PAYMENTS FOR REMAINING ON DUTY

Where a member has become entitled to a turnout fee and remains on duty for more than one hour, he or she shall be entitled to extra payments in respect of each hour's duty after the first.

The same criteria are applicable to attendance fees.

These extra payments shall be at the appropriate hourly rate applicable to the prearranged attendance payment as detailed on the current pay scale sheet.

For the purposes of the above calculation of hourly pay, a period of time less than a complete hour, but which exceeds 15 minutes, shall be reckoned as a complete hour.

ANNUAL LEAVE ENTITLEMENT

A member is entitled to four weeks paid leave. After five years' service , the entitlement increases to five weeks.

Leave may be taken as individual days, with the proviso that any blocks of leave of seven days or more will be notified to the Officer-in-Charge at least 21 days in advance.

The maximum number of training nights that are permitted to be taken as leave remains as four or five (dependent on the number of weeks leave the member is entitled to).

A leave day is defined as the 24-hour period from 0900 to 0859 hours.

PROBATIONARY PERIOD AND PROBATIONARY ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE

Currently, a member will be required to serve a probationary period, with the requirement for the member to have:

- (a) satisfactorily completed a programme of technical written assessments, at regular intervals, based on a probationary training programme;
- (b) achieved a satisfactory standard of performance in specified practical matters;
- (c) been assessed by a senior officer at intervals of ten months and 18 months and demonstrated a satisfactory standard of general performance;
- (d) achieved a satisfactory standard of competence in breathing apparatus.

STATION AVAILABILITY ROSTERING

Applicants should be given an explanation of the personnel availability system currently being used on the station.

PENSION SCHEME

Retained Firefighters automatically become a member of the New Firefighter's Pension Scheme (NFPS) which was introduced for regular and retained firefighters employed since 6 April 2006. Responsibility for policy on the pension schemes rests with Communities and Local Government – www.communities.gov.uk/fire/working/firefighterpensions

UNIFORM ISSUE

On receipt of satisfactory references and medical clearance, the applicant will be enrolled into the Service and contacted regarding attending SHQ to collect their uniform entitlement.

This is automatically generated by Stores, with no input required at station level.

NOTE: Only one set of fire gear will be provided at this time; the second set will be forwarded direct to the station in time for the recruit to attend the initial training course.

TRAINING COURSES

As a Retained Firefighter, you will be committing yourself to a number of training courses that must be completed within 2 years of joining the service. These courses include:

Pre 10 Day Retained Trainee Course Learning Programme –

(reading/study carried out at local Fire Station) – includes Service Induction/Organisation; Health & Safety Introduction; Human Resources Introduction; Safe Systems of Work; Fire Service Words of Command

Manual Handling Course – approx 2 hours

The above elements will be completed before attending the Phase One 10 Day Basic Retained Duty System Course and evidence produced to the Service Training Centre trainers prior to starting the course.

Phase One 10 Day Basic Retained Duty Service (RDS) Course – 2 weeks, Mon – Fri

Breathing Apparatus Initial Course – 2 weeks, Mon – Fri

Phase One & Two Flashover Training – 5 days

After completion of the Phase One 10 Day Basic RDS Course additional training includes: **Working at Height** (a 3 hour course normally commencing at 18.00hrs) and **Breaking In/Entry Training** (a 1 hour training session normally commencing at 19.00hrs).

FITNESS INFORMATION

General Exercise Guidance

The role of a firefighter can at times be physically demanding. Therefore the entry selection tests are designed to reflect and assess the physical tasks the firefighters are required to perform.

Firefighters are required to be aerobically fit, have good all-round body strength and local muscular endurance. Good exercise training advice is highly specific to the individual. It should be understood, therefore, that the advice provided here can only be general; prospective applicants that require further information are advised to seek individual advice, specific to their needs, from a qualified fitness professional.

The Service Physical Training Instructor (PTI) is available on 01376 521769 to assist with any questions relating to these tests or for further guidance on fitness or training.

Safety Points

If you are in any doubt about your health or physical ability to exercise, consult your doctor before you commence physical activity. This is especially important if you are pregnant (or think you may be pregnant) or have not exercised for the last six-months or had a recent illness or injury.

Always warm up before commencing any exercise. Wear the correct clothing and footwear; do not train if you are unwell or injured.

Preparing for Exercise

Performing a warm up prepares the body for the activity about to be undertaken. The length of time needed to warm up correctly depends on many factors; however, you should allow at least 10 minutes for this very important activity. In order to reduce the risk of injury in the warm up period, a number of steps should be followed:

Be Specific: Make sure your warm up session is geared towards the activity that you intend to perform. Cardiovascular workouts, for example running, you should start with a brisk walk leading into a light jog. For weight training workouts it is important to warm up the joints and muscles that are involved in the resistance exercise. This will increase blood flow to the muscles which will be utilised during the exercise and activate the nervous system prior to any additional stress being placed on them.

Start Slowly: At the start of your workout your muscles will be relatively cold. Start exercising slowly and build up the intensity throughout the warm up period. This will increase your muscle temperature steadily and keep the risk from injury to a minimum.

Keep Warm: If you are exercising in a cold environment, wear additional clothing during the warm up period and try not to stand still for too long.

Stretching: For many years it was thought that stretching immediately prior to exercise would prevent injuries. However, there is new research with practical application that

suggests that this may not prevent muscle or tendon injury. Any form of flexibility or stretching activity should be performed following a warm up period or an exercise session.

How to Improve Physical Fitness

Improving your physical fitness will require some self discipline and efficient use of your spare time as an effective exercise routine needs to be completed on a regular basis.

In order to improve your physical fitness you will need to alter the frequency, intensity, and duration of your exercise above your current level. Your training should be gradual of your exercise above your current level. Your training should be gradual and progressive. You should start small and build up the intensity. This will produce a training effect by placing greater demands on your body. In general, the less exercise you perform the lower the training effect, and the more exercise you perform the greater the training effect. Whilst certain exercise are more specific to firefighting tasks, the need for maintaining muscular strength, endurance, and flexibility of the major muscle groups, through a well-rounded training program, which includes aerobic, resistance and flexibility exercises is recommended. Although age in itself is not a limiting factor to exercise training, a more gradual approach in applying the prescription at older ages seems prudent.

Aerobic Training

Depending on your current aerobic fitness standard, you will need to follow guidelines to improve your aerobic fitness.

Frequency of Training: 3 to 5 days per week.

Intensity of training: 55 to 90 percent of your Predicted Maximum Heart Rate (PMHR)

Heart rate monitors are a useful tool to help ensure that you train at the right intensity. If you have access to a heart rate monitor you can calculate your desired training intensity by using the following equation:

Heart rate percentage of 55-90 percent of your Predicted Maximum Heart Rate (PMHR) is calculated by: $220 \text{ minus your age equals your Predicted Maximum Heart Rate}$.

Predicted Maximum Heart Rate X 0.7 for 710 percent, and 0.8 for 80 percent etc = heart rate percent-age

or

Level 10-17 on your Rating of Perceived Effort (RPE) scale.

Level 6 – 20 percent effort – rest

Level 7 – 30 percent effort – very, very light

Level 8 – 40 percent effort

Level 9 – 50 percent effort – very light – gentle walking

Level 10 – 55 percent effort

Level 11 – 60 percent effort – fairly light

Level 12 – 65 percent effort

Level 13 – 70 percent effort – moderately hard – steady pace

Level 14 – 75 percent effort

Level 15 – 80 percent effort – hard

Level 16 – 85 percent effort

Level 17 – 90 percent effort – very hard

Level 18 – 95 percent effort

Level 19 – 100 percent effort – very, very hard

Level 20 – Exhaustion

Duration of training: 20 to 60 min of continuous or intermittent aerobic activity minimum of 10 minute bouts accumulated throughout the day. Duration is dependent on the intensity of the activity; thus, lower intensity activity should be conducted over a longer period of time 30 minutes or more, and, conversely, individuals training at higher levels of intensity should train at least 20 minutes or longer.

Type of activity: any activity that uses large muscle groups, which can be maintained continuously, and is rhythmical and aerobic in nature, eg walking-hiking, running-jogging, cycling-bicycling, cross-country skiing, aerobic dance/group exercise, rope skipping, rowing, stair climbing, swimming, skating, and various endurance game activities or some combination thereof.

Specificity: To maximise the efficiency of your training you should focus on exercises that are similar to those in the test. These include running jogging, stepping, stair climbing and other weight bearing activities.

NOTE: It is advisable to include at least some running, as the fitness assessment uses the shuttle run test.

SAFETY POINTS

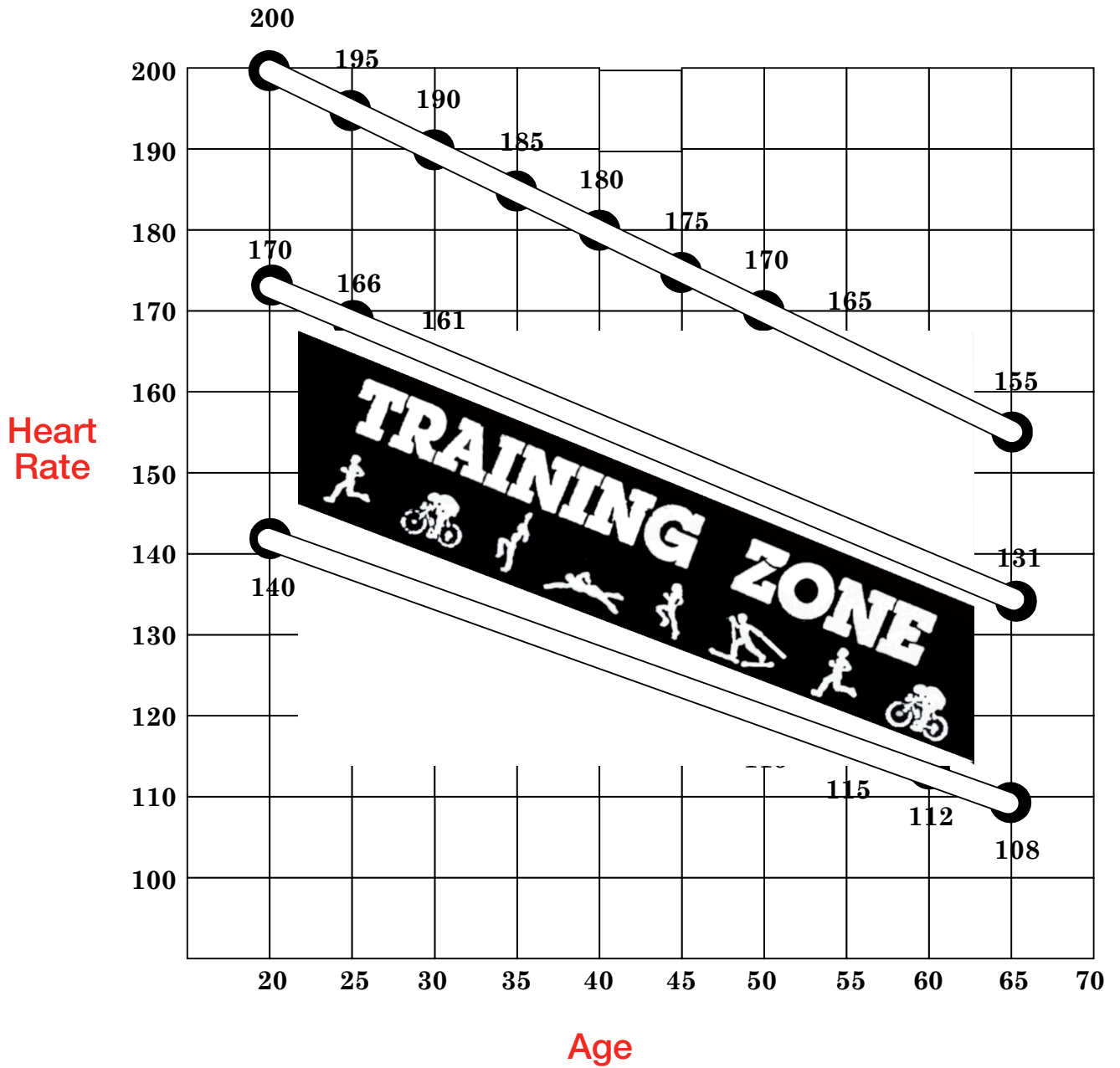
If you are in any doubt about your health or physical ability to exercise, consult your doctor before you commence a training programme.

Always warm up before commencing any exercise. Wear the correct clothing and footwear, do not train if you are unwell or injured. Training should be progressive – start small and build up, seek further advice if you are unsure.

Excess body fat has a detrimental effect on aerobic fitness

“WATCH YOUR WEIGHT!”

TRAINING HEART RATE TARGET



HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR STRENGTH

In order to improve your strength, you will need to exercise against a resistance. This resistance can be your body weight, for example, press-ups, or you can use free weights or multi-gym type equipment. As with all training, the exercises must be completed on a regular basis and be progressive, ie the exercise should be made harder as the body adapts over time. You will need to allow for at least 3 x 30 minute sessions per week, preferably with a day's rest in between each session. (Aerobic exercise can be continued.)

SETS AND REPS

Strength training schedules are usually designed so that the performer completes a number of repetitions of an exercise; for example 10 press-ups. This is called a set. Sets are separated by a brief rest and then another set of 10 repetitions is performed, for example:

Set 1	Rest
10 press-ups	30 seconds

Set 2	Rest
10 press-ups	30 seconds

Set 3	Rest
10 press-ups	30 seconds

To make this exercise harder, you can increase the number of repetitions and/or increase the weight resistance. The principles behind weight training are complex and the permutations are numerous. For the purposes of improving your strength to meet the entry requirements for the Fire Service, you should aim to complete up to a maximum of 20 repetitions per set. Once this has become easier, you should increase the weight and reduce the repetitions and then build up again.

A maximum of 3 sets of each exercise should be adequate.

EXERCISES

The Fire Service entry assessment tests all major muscle groups, so a wide variety of exercises should be performed. Particular emphasis should be given to the shoulders and the muscles at the rear of the upper arm, as these areas seem to cause candidates the most problems. For this reason, the press-up

is a particularly good exercise to include in your schedule. These can also be performed in the inclined or declined position (ie hands on a stool or bench; feet on a stool or bench). This will throw the emphasis to a lesser or greater extent on the areas being worked. Other good exercises which require little or no equipment are: step-ups, press-ups, squat thrusts, sit-ups, squat jumps, seated dips, floor running, jump burpees, dorsal raises and pull-ups (see diagrams on the following pages).

If you have access to free weights or a multi-gym, you should include the following exercises in your schedule: bench press, shoulder press, arm (biceps) curls, leg extensions and squats.

SAFETY POINTS

If you are in any doubt about your health or physical ability to exercise, **consult your doctor** before you commence a training programme.

Always warm up before commencing any exercise. Wear the correct clothing and footwear, do not train if you are unwell or injured. Training should be progressive – start small and build up, seek further advice if you are unsure.

Do not try to lift too much too soon.

FIREFIGHTING ROLES – PAY RATES FROM 1ST JULY 2009 (RETAINED DUTY SYSTEM)

Extract from CIRCULAR NJC/06/09 (Appendix B)

	(1) £ per annum	(2) £ per annum	(3) £ per hour	(4) £ per occasion
Firefighter				
Trainee	2,116	1,058	9.66	3.70
Development	2,204	1,103	10.06	3.70
Competent	2,821	1,410	12.88	3.70
Crew Manager				
Development	2,998	1,499	13.69	3.70
Competent	3,127	1,563	14.28	3.70
Watch Manager				
Development	3,193	1,598	14.58	3.70
Competent A	3,284	1,642	14.99	3.70
Competent B	3,496	1,749	15.96	3.70
Station Manager				
Development	3,637	1,818	16.60	3.70
Competent A	3,745	1,872	17.10	3.70
Competent B	4,012	2,005	18.31	3.70
Group Manager				
Development	4,189	2,094	19.12	3.70
Competent A	4,313	2,158	19.70	3.70
Competent B	4,643	2,322	21.20	3.70
Area Manager				
Development	4,917	2,459	22.45	3.70
Competent A	5,065	2,532	23.12	3.70
Competent B	5,394	2,697	24.63	3.70

Column 1 shows the full annual retainer
 Column 2 shows the retainer for employees on the day crewing duty system
 Column 3 shows the hourly rate for work undertaken
 Column 4 shows the disturbance payment per call-out

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

Policy Statement

ECFRS is committed to the development of a working culture in which fair treatment for all is the norm by promoting equal opportunities and valuing diversity. The Service is striving to achieve a diverse workforce that reflects the community it serves, to ensure it provides the most effective service and achieves equality for everyone who lives and/or works as a Service user

We believe in achieving high standards of professional conduct and will ensure that no service user, employee or prospective employee is discriminated against, whether directly or indirectly on the grounds of gender, marital/partnership status, race, ethnic or national origin, nationality, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender reassignment status, religion or belief, pregnancy and/or maternity leave, Trade Union membership, HIV status or any other condition or requirement which cannot be shown to be justifiable.

Objectives

The Service will uphold its policy to:

- Promote a working environment in which all practices and procedures relating to recruitment, selection, training, promotion, transfers and all opportunities within employment are free from unfair discrimination and are based solely upon work based, objective criteria.
- Ensure that the Service recognises the talents and resources that all employees as individuals bring to the organisation.
- Fulfil its social and legal responsibilities to its employees. The Service will take measures to eliminate any form of unfair discrimination.
- Recognise that equality and diversity issues need to be addressed strategically, and are integral to all its practices and procedures. This can only be achieved through regular reviews of all practices and procedures by individuals who understand the principle of managing diversity. This cannot be a stand-alone policy.
- Ensure that employees are offered support through Trade Union and professional association representatives, the HR Department, Occupational Health or the Service's confidential counselling service.

Our Responsibilities

The Service and the Fire Authority are responsible for:

- Creating and maintaining an environment in which discrimination, harassment and victimisation are regarded as unacceptable.
- The Fire Authority and the Chief Fire Officer have overall responsibility for the management of diversity within the organisation.
- ECFRS, through its managers, have a responsibility to ensure that the policy is applied consistently, effectively and fairly.
- Specific responsibilities fall upon managers, supervisors and individuals involved in recruitment and people management, in the communication and implementation of policies.

As individuals, employees all have a responsibility to:

- Co-operate with the implementation of the policy and related action plans.
- Not discriminate against, harass or victimise an individual or individuals, for making a complaint or providing information on discrimination.
- Inform management if we suspect that discrimination is taking place in employment decisions. Where individuals feel unable to approach their line manager, they should approach a colleague in Human Resources or a Trade Union representative.
- Avoid indirectly supporting unfair behaviour, by ignoring what is happening around us.

All Service policies and procedures will be written from an equality standpoint and examined to ensure that they do not contain barriers to equality. All employment policies written by Human Resources are agreed with both management and the Trade Union representatives and are regularly reviewed.

Equality Impact Assessments will be completed for all new and existing policies which are under review; depending on the nature and impact of the policy, this may involve completing an initial, partial or full assessment. Further information is contained in the SIS Note Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) Policy.

Agencies, contractors and suppliers are expected to carry out their duties with due regard to this policy. Tendering companies will be asked to provide their record of and commitment to equality of opportunity and this information will be considered when awarding contracts.

CORE VALUES

We value...

Respect, Openness, Accountability and Involvement

Why we are here

To save and protect lives, property and the environment

Where we are going

A time when...

...our people feel inspired to deliver and be part of the best fire and rescue service

...we work with other people to do more than we have ever done to make Essex safe

How we do it...

Service-led and values-driven