



Operational Assurance Team – Debrief Report

Location & Address: Rankins Hall Farm, Stambridge Road, Stambridge, Rochford, Essex, SS4 2BF

Incident Type: Fire – Fire – Primary

Incident Number: 220613 – 24/12/2023

Overview

ECFRS were initially called to a skip alight at 12:07 hours in Stambridge on the 24th of December 2023. Initially Control mobilised 1 pumping appliance as per the National Incident Type List (NITL) offer, a 2nd appliance was added to this as the initial appliance was riding breathing apparatus (BA) deficient.

On arrival the initial Incident Commander (IC) made pumps 3 at 12:17 hours and subsequently made pumps 6, water bowsers (WBO) 1 and aerial ladder platforms (ALP) 1 at 12:20 hours. In addition to this priority message the IC also informed Control that this incident involved a large building alight.

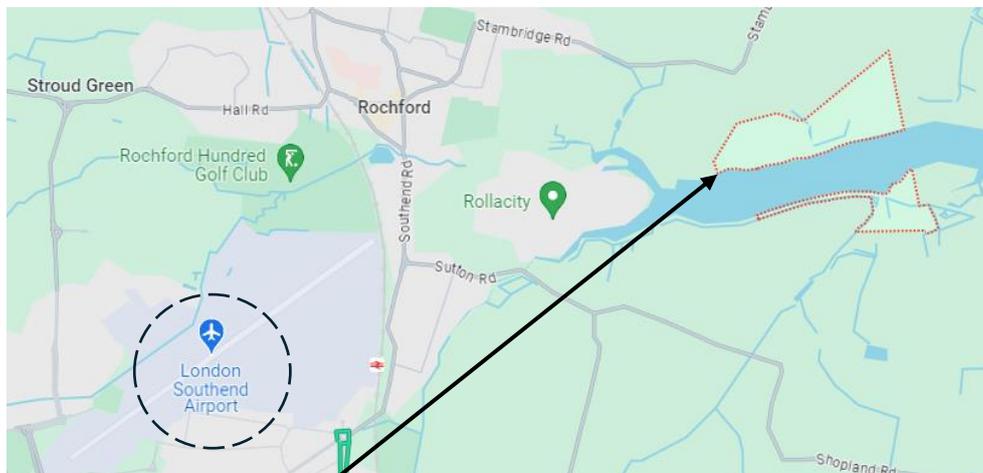


Image 1. Rankins Hall Farm and London Southend Airport

ECFRS Response

The first informative message from this incident informed Control that a large industrial site measuring 100m x 50m containing multiple units was 100% alight. Further to this Control was informed that 1 unit contained chemicals and 1 cylinders.

The initial tactical plan employed by the attending Level 1 IC saw crews work to protect and salvage items from unaffected units and secure water supplies for the incident. Due to the rapid escalation of the fire a further priority message was sent to make pumps 10 at 12:21 hours.

London Southend Airport was also informed that a large smoke plume was being produced from the scene and that this may affect its flight paths and operations. Further to this the Services Communications team was also informed to publish a warn and inform message on the Services media platforms for public awareness ([Large building fire | Essex County Fire and Rescue Service \(essex-fire.gov.uk\)](https://www.essex-fire.gov.uk)).



Image 2. Rankins Hall Farm

At 13:10 hours Control was informed that the Services Executive Officer (EO) who was in attendance as the Monitoring Officer assumed the role of Incident Commander. Further to this it was also confirmed that the Salvation Army was requested to support crew welfare and that an ECFRS drone had been deployed.

An initial Joint Emergency Service Interoperability Programme (JESIP) meeting was held at 14:16 hours where all information was shared with Essex Police. In order to extinguish the fire and protect surrounding risks 2 ALPs and multiple firefighting jets were deployed. An immediate relief was requested at 14:49 hours, to include 4 pumping appliances with lightweight portable pumps (LPP) and a Station Manager to fulfil the role of Incident Commander.

Following this ECFRS crews remained in attendance with decreasing reliefs and site inspections until the 27th of December. Following the conclusion of firefighting operations a Tier 2 Fire Investigation was performed.

Fire Investigation Findings

The Tier 2 investigation concluded that the fire was accidental and originated in a skip. The potential causes of the fire were noted as a chemical reaction, a malfunctioning/damaged battery or third-party interaction with the skip, potentially the introduction of waste from a log burner.

It has been further documented in the Incident Recording System (IRS) that asbestos, liquid petroleum gas and compressed methane was involved in the incident.

Debrief Format

Debrief requests were sent to the attending appliances, specials and officers, with a total of 5 returns being provided. The submitted responses came from a Command Support Officer, an Incident Commander, an appliance Officer in Charge, a Hazardous Materials Advisor (HMA) and a Level 2 Officer.

The purpose of the debrief was to

- Identify and confirm good practice.
- Identify team and individual training and development needs.
- Promote continued learning across the Service, whilst developing the experience of teams and individuals.
- Confirm if current policies and practices are effective and fit for purpose and to capture recommendations.

Examples of good practice reported through feedback – positive working

- The attending agencies worked well together, with each having an understanding of what was needed from them to resolve the incident.
- On arrival at make pumps 10 it was reported that the Incident Command Unit was established, which led to effective communications occurring between both personnel and implemented sectors.
- The drone being deployed provided timely information to the IC and the attending HMA.
- The EA were effective in understanding the volume and risks posed by the runoff of firefighting water and its potential impact.

Barriers/challenges reported through feedback

- The drone's flying time was reduced due to the presence of strong wind conditions, as a result of this more battery power was required to maintain the drone in a "hold" global positioning system position.
- Issues were present with the charging of the drone's batteries due to an issue with the ICU, this was overcome by using the Urban Search and Rescue teams charging system.

Recommendations/Considerations following the debrief

- None reported.

This report has been saved and recommendations passed forward to the Operational Assurance Group and Control managers for review.

Any outcomes will be updated through the Operational Assurance Group.

