



AGENDA ITEM: 14

NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

15th March 2010

SPECIAL APPLIANCE REVIEW

Report by Gareth W Griffiths, Senior Operations Manager

Purpose of Report

- 1 To inform Members of the progress made following the Authority's decision in 2006-07 to review the type, disposition and effectiveness of the range of Special Appliances operated by the Service.

Background

- 2 The three year plan, which resulted from the Review, has now reached the phase where a significant number of benefits are being realised. These benefits will, consequently, enhance the delivery and effectiveness of operational service to the communities, businesses and infrastructure of North Wales and provide more robust and developed safe systems of work for the Service's firefighters.

Information

- 3 As a result of the superior equipment now available on Rescue Pumps, the four Emergency Tenders, which were predominantly used for road traffic collision rescues, have been withdrawn from service. Two of these vehicles have been modified and re-introduced as Technical Rescue Units, one at Caernarfon and the other at Wrexham. The purpose of these vehicles will be to attend large goods vehicle, train and aircraft incidents where heavy duty rescue and lighting equipment may be required.

- 4 The Emergency Tender, based at Colwyn Bay, has been modified and re-introduced as a Special Rescue Unit, concentrating on Large Animal Rescue and Rope Rescue. Staff at that station have received additional training to ensure specialist skills are developed to deal with those types of incident.
- 5 The remaining Emergency Tender is to be converted into a Welfare Unit, which will be mobilised to a range of incident types and durations to ensure that operational staff have sufficient changing, toilet and washing facilities. This provision will enhance the arrangements for staff health and welfare.
- 6 During 2007-08, the Authority took the decision to increase the number of Dual Role Appliances (small firefighting vehicles which can deal with compartment fires in restricted access properties as well as off road heath and moorland fires) from the four vehicles currently in place, to a total of ten.
- 7 In 2012 one of the existing Aerial Ladder Platforms is due for replacement. Currently there are four in service located at Bangor, Llandudno, Rhyl and Wrexham. They are used as a working platform and to deliver water to large fires from high level.

Conclusion

- 8 The operational benefits realised as a result of the Special Appliance Review and subsequent investment are significant. The Review has positioned the Authority in a way in which the challenges of an increasingly changing and demanding operational environment can be met with assurance.

Recommendation

- 9 That Members note the progress made with the Special Appliance Review.