



SCOTTISH
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Working together for a safer Scotland

APPENDIX 7

Report to: **Falkirk Council Scrutiny Committee**

SUBJECT: BONFIRE/FIREWORK PERIOD 2014 WITHIN FALKIRK COUNCIL AREA

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report provides members of the Falkirk Council Scrutiny Committee with an overview of the preventative and operational response activities conducted by Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) resources within the Falkirk Council area during the Bonfire/Firework period from the 31st of October to the 6th of November 2014.
- 1.2 SFRS adopts a partnership approach to dealing with the Bonfire/Firework period. As per previous years, pre planning for the Bonfire/Firework period was focussed by a Police led operation named 'Operation Alamo'. Operation Alamo is a partnership operation which had two specific objectives:
- Unauthorised and unsafe bonfires are identified and removed before being lit
 - To reduce fire related and other types of anti-social behaviour.

The Operation Alamo partnership comprised of Police Scotland, Falkirk Council Emergency Planning, Falkirk area Estates & Trading Standards and SFRS.

2. PREVENTATIVE ACTIVITIES

- 2.1 A number of preventative activities were devised and delivered in order to raise awareness of the potential dangers presented by fireworks and bonfires and reduce anti-social behaviour.

The following activities were delivered within the Falkirk Council area:

Targeted Schools Programme

- Targeted educational inputs were offered/delivered to all S1 Secondary School pupils and Primary 6 Pupils from targeted schools. The programme focussed on deliberate fire setting and fire related anti-social behaviour;
- All primary schools were provided with interactive educational resources through GLOW;
- Delivery of educational inputs to schools within areas known to be problematic, identified through the analytical data;
- Supply of awareness raising leaflets & posters to all schools.

Community engagement activities

- Supporting local diversionary activities;
- Addressing ASB issues through Weekly Tasking Group;
- Contribution towards multi-agency press release;
- Provision of safety advice through twitter @scotfire_FlkWL;
- Safety advice at SFRS website www.firescotland.gov.uk ;
- Provision of safety posters & leaflets to all Community Planning Partners;
- National TV and radio campaign.

3. OPERATIONAL RESPONSE ACTIVITY

3.1 The following tables provide a comparison of operational response activity over the 7 days of the Bonfire/Firework period;

31st Oct – 6th Nov

Year	2012	2013	2014
Dangerous Bonfires*	49	29	31

3.2 The following tables provide a comparison of operational response activity over the 24 hour period of the 5th November:

5th November

Year	2012	2013	2014
Dangerous Bonfires*	35	27	31
Bonfires Allowed to Burn	7	7	1
Total Incidents	64	45	49

**Dangerous Bonfire: A Bonfire, which is not under adult supervision and has the potential to cause damage to other surrounding property or injury if there is no intervention.*

- 3.2 Over the 7-day period from 31st October to 6th November 2014, the number of dangerous bonfires dealt with by operational crews increased by 7% (4 incidents), when compared to 2013.
- 3.3 On 5 November 2014 the number of dangerous bonfire incidents dealt with by operational crews increased by 8% (2 incidents), when compared to 2013.
- 3.4 The weather on 5 November 2014 was very clear and dry and, as such, could not be considered a contributory factor in the number of bonfire related incidents.

4. VIOLENCE TO CREWS

- 4.1 There was 1 reported incident involving violence to crews during the period 31st October to 6th November 2014, which occurred on 5 November. The incident involved verbal abuse and no fire fighters received any physical injuries. During the same period in 2013, there were 4 reported incidents of violence to crews which were both physical and verbal.

5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 Operational activity over the period 31st October to 6th November 2014 was similar in comparison to last year and remains below the activity levels recorded in 2012. This is very positive when we consider that the weather during the 2104 period was considerably better than previous years.
- 5.2 It was pleasing to note the reduction in numbers and severity of violence to crew's incidents.
- 5.3 The continued partnership working through Operation Alamo and the preventive programmes undertaken by SFRS and partners appears to have had a positive impact on public awareness and their approach to the Bonfire/Firework period.

6. RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 Falkirk Council Scrutiny Committee is invited to:
- Consider and make any comment in relation to this report.

Gary Laing
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