

Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service  
**Policy and Procedural Documents**

**Policy**

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Title	
<b>Flexible Duty Manager (FDM) Standby Locations</b>	
Author (Role)	Review Date
<b>Area Manager Response and Resilience</b>	<b>February 2035</b>
Department	Date of issue
<b>Emergency Response</b>	<b>February 2025</b>

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**Policy Statement**

Flexi Duty Managers (FDM's) must be able to attend incidents within a designated response time, meaning they are provided with a base geographical area. This response base is only required whilst the FDM is 'on duty' (24 or 24\*), this policy addresses the expectations of an officer providing their own accommodation arrangement in their cover area. In this document, it also highlights the process for applying for approval of a standby location. This policy outlines the arrangements for periods of pre-arranged cover due to officer shortages.

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**Implementation Plan**

Managers appointed to the Flexible Duty System (FDS) will be required to provide an approved location to respond to incidents from when on '24', this will be known as their 'Standby location' - this is based on a geographical area across Oxfordshire.

In order to ensure that L2 cover can be effective and provide a timely response to incidents, the Service has agreed two standby areas across the county of Oxfordshire designated as North and South. One of these areas will be assigned to a Station Manager on appointment to the Flexible Duty System.

**Decisions regarding suitability of location:**

For L2 and L3 FDM's, The Area Manager – Response & Resilience, is responsible for assessing the standby location according to the rules relating to mobilising FDMs. The aim is to have a least 2 x L2 officers in each standby area, from the group of 5.

Any requests from L2's to change standby location or concerns about suitability of future appointments to the rota must be discussed with the Area Manager Response and Resilience – these discussions must be backed up by a written summary of the issue and also the response/decision.

For L4 FDM's, The Chief Fire Officer is responsible for assessing the standby location according to the rules relating to mobilising FDM's. In the case of a decision needing to be made regarding the suitability of the standby location of a new Chief Fire Officer, the outgoing Chief Fire Officer, Deputy Chief and Assistant Chief will be able to offer professional guidance to the Chief Fire Officer's Line Manager/individual responsible for the CFO recruitment within the County Council as to the suitability of their standby location.

When a request is received for approval of a standby location, it will be assessed according to the rules relating to mobilising FDMs (two designated geographic areas are North & South – see Appendix 1 Cover Zones). Approval will not normally be refused where good access is available across the FDM's cover area. Good access will be assessed by Data Systems team using the following timings criteria:

- The 20-minute footprint\* will be used for Incident Support Officers and Level 2 Station Managers
- The 40-minute footprint\* will be used for Duty Officers – Level 3 Group Managers
- The 60-minute footprint\* will be used for Brigade Managers - Level 4 Brigade Managers. Note: this document does not cover the specific details around Principle Officer Continuous Duty responsibilities, this is covered within the Duty Systems Policy.

\*The footprint is based on the standby location to the approximate centre of their designated cover area

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A response will be provided within 14 days of receipt of an application, indicating approval or not. If not approved, a written explanation will be provided.

Managers appointed to the FDS rota on a permanent or temporary basis, who do not wish to move into another standby area, on a permanent basis are expected to provide their own accommodation in the agreed standby area. This is to be used when providing operational standby cover; if, however, other L2's are providing cover in the area for the duration of the 24-hour period (or weekend) then the L2 may not need to provide cover in this area, but must speak to the Duty Officer to confirm.

This accommodation is expected to be covered at their own expense – fire stations or fire station yards are not permitted. Such accommodation must be considered safe and secure with suitable facilities to store and prepare food, shower, rest and charge vital electronic equipment such as SanJ radios, fireground radios, laptops and mobile phones. The service will ensure that with any FDM vacancy, the area of the vacancy will be communicated within the job application advert.

As part of normal working arrangements, officers on the Level 2 rota should be mindful of providing cover within their designated cover area. However, when an L2 FDM is required to leave their cover area, for example for meetings or MMT etc, then they should ensure that there is a minimum of one L2 FDM remaining in that designated cover area to ensure an effective L2 response to incidents. It would be good practice to inform the remaining L2 FDM that you are leaving the area so that they are aware and don't plan on leaving also.

On occasions that leaving the designated cover area would result in no L2 FDM's remaining in that area, the L2 should discuss the issue with the Duty Officer – the expectation is that there will be, at all times, a minimum of 1 x L2 FDM in each area.

Officers on the L2 FDM rota are expected to be available for incidents whilst on normal management days, not just 24's or 24\*, during core business hours Monday to Friday – this will support an effective spread of officers geographically across the County. Officers on normal management days can book unavailable at their discretion due to meetings, training and workloads, but the default expectation is to be booked on and available.

## **Other Arrangements**

**Pre-arranged cover due to rota shortages** – only applicable to officers on-duty who are moved to the opposite cover area due to circumstances that are not related to operational incidents

In circumstances where this need is 'pre-arranged' and is due to shortages on the rota group<sup>1</sup>, Officers could be required to move areas and will be sent to a 'suitable' Fire Station in the area that requires cover. The Officers time will be deemed as working hours for the entirety of cover that they provide away from their original approved standby location. Therefore, officers can accept these hours as standard working time payment or accrue the time as Time Off In Lieu (TOIL).

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<sup>1</sup> This will only be applied to ensure a minimum of one officer is available in each cover area.

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(All Flexible Duty Officers 'opt-out' of the Working Time Regulation<sup>2</sup> (WTR), however this only applies to the weekly working limit. All officers must comply with the 78-hour maximum working hours rule, in any seven-day period. The remainder of the Regulations still apply; the opt-out is only an agreement to work more than the 48-hour maximum. Officers must ensure to take any recurring TOIL where it has not been possible to take a minimum of 90-hours rest per week as outlined in the WTR.)

### **Standby due to Operational Incidents – *only applicable to officers on-duty***

Officers serving on the Flexible Duty Managers rota, may be instructed, in exceptional circumstances to leave their approved standby location to provide essential cover in another area. Where this happens as a result of an operational incident, the service will endeavour to ensure that Officers provide no more than a continuous cover period of six-hours and where necessary officers will have the appropriate rest periods in between. The hours provided away from their approved standby location shall be treated as part of the officers' operational duties. In these circumstances, meal expenses can be claimed as per the [claims and reimbursements policy](#).

### **Appendix 1: North / South Standby Areas**

<https://intranet.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/sites/default/files/folders/documents/fire/emergencyresponse/BaseMapofOxfordshire.pdf>

### **Consultation**

This document was subject to a 28-day workforce and FBU consultation at the point it was reviewed in January/February 2025, prior to being published.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/1998/1833/contents/made>

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Equality Impact Assessment Screening				
<b>Has any EIA consultation with stakeholders occurred as part of screening this document, e.g. staff networks? (P)</b>	Yes		No	x
If 'yes', record what consultation has been carried out here:				
<b>Have any changes been made to this document in light of EIA consultation with stakeholders? (P)</b>	Yes		No	x
If 'yes', record what changes have been made here in arriving at this version of the document here:				
<b>Does this [insert type of document] have an adverse impact on any of the nine protected characteristics? (P)</b>				
Protected Characteristic:	Neutral Impact:	Positive Impact:	Negative Impact:	
<b>Sex</b> (Men and Women)	x			
<b>Race</b> (All Racial Groups)	x			
<b>Disability</b> (Mental, Physical, and Carers of Disabled people)	x			
<b>Religion or Belief</b>	x			
<b>Sexual Orientation</b> (All diverse sexual orientations)	x			
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b> (Includes new mothers & those returning to workplace)	x			
<b>Marital Status</b> (Married and Civil Partnerships)	x			
<b>Trans People</b> (Inc. non-binary identities & all other gender identities/expressions)	x			
<b>Age</b> (People of all ages)	x			
<b>People in different family circumstances</b> (including those with caring responsibilities)	x			
<b>Different employee groups</b> (e.g. full/part-time, grades, contract status, volunteers, casual workers etc)	x			
<b>As a result of this screening, is a full Equality Impact Assessment necessary? (P)</b>	Yes		No	x
If an adverse impact has been identified but a full Equality Impact Assessment is not considered to be necessary, record a rationale here:				

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Data Protection Impact Screening				
<b>If any of the criteria below are identified, it is highly recommended that a full DPIA is undertaken (P):</b>				
Use <b>profiling or automated decision-making</b> to make significant decisions about access to a service or benefit				
Process <b>special category data or criminal offence data</b> on a large scale				
<b>Monitor a publicly accessible place</b> on a large scale				
Use <b>innovative technology</b> in a way that may be considered intrusive				
Carry out <b>profiling</b> on a large scale				
Process <b>biometric or genetic data</b>				
<b>Combine, compare or match data</b> from multiple sources				
Process personal data <b>without providing a privacy notice</b> directly to the individual				
Process personal data in a way that involves <b>tracking</b> individuals' online or offline location or behaviour				
Process <b>children's personal data</b> for profiling or automated decision-making or for marketing purposes, or offer online services directly to them				
Process personal data that could result in a risk of physical harm in the event of a security breach.				
<b>If any of the following are intended to be undertaken, a DPIA should be considered (P):</b>				
Plan any major project using personal data				
Plan to do evaluation or scoring				
Plan any systematic monitoring				
Process sensitive data or data of a highly personal nature				
Process data on a large scale				
Include data concerning vulnerable data subjects				
Plan to use innovative technological or organisational solutions.				
<b>As a result of this screening, is a full Data Protection Impact Assessment necessary? (P)</b>	Yes		No	x
<b>If one of the above criteria have been identified but a full DPIA is not considered to be necessary, record a rationale here:</b>				

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<b>Training Impact Assessment</b>	
Relevant training content already exists in acquisition training or maintenance of competence <b>(P)</b>	
Relevant training content to be added to acquisition training or maintenance of competence <b>(P)</b>	
No additional training implications as a result of the latest version of this document <b>(P)</b>	
<b>Comments:</b>	

<b>Document Review Period (max. of 10 years)</b>			
<b>10 years (✓)</b>	x	<b>Other (insert date):</b>	
<b>Rationale:</b>			