



The
Fire Service
College



Annual Report
and Accounts
2007–08





The Fire Service College

Moreton-in-Marsh

Annual Report and Accounts
2007–08

The Accounts of the Fire Service College as at 31st March 2008 presented pursuant to section 4(6) of the Government Trading Funds Act 1973 as amended by the Government Trading Act 1990 together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

21st July 2008

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Introduction



Chief Executive's Foreword

The vital role that the Fire Service College performs in supporting the Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) on a national basis has never been clearer. This has been another year of growth and change for the College, enabling us better to meet the needs of our customers; and there is growing recognition and acknowledgement that the College is delivering on change and not just talking about it.

We have made significant progress in ensuring that training is tailored to meet our customers' needs. This has been demonstrated in the range of bespoke training we now deliver; in the way our courses are now shorter and more focused, and in the way this has allowed us to make our courses more accessible and affordable.

An area of increasingly growing importance is multi-agency training – equipping those from across the emergency services and beyond to respond to major incidents in an effective joined-up way. Over the year the College has developed its multi-agency work, providing opportunities and facilities for the FRS to meet with and work with our partners responsible for public safety. The Health Protection Agency's successful multi-agency operation – *Exercise Orpheus* – demonstrated the value of such training, and also showed the suitability of the College's unique incident ground for facilitating such large scale multi-agency exercises.

The National Leadership Programme, which was developed by the Centre for Leadership, was launched in November by Parmjit Dhanda MP – Minister for the Fire and Rescue Service. The programme will help to foster effective development of FRS leadership across all levels and in all sectors within the Service. We were also pleased to welcome the Minister on a visit to the College in March, when he saw a variety of simulated training situations and responses. He was clearly impressed with the College facilities and quality of the training.

Radio 5 Live's breakfast show was broadcast from the College at the end of the financial year, and included interviews with the Minister; the Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser; a Chief Fire Officer; a union official, as well as firefighters undergoing training at the College. This further served to demonstrate the growing interest across the country in the role of firefighters, and to raise public awareness of the wide range of support provided by the FRS. I received a great deal of positive feedback from colleagues across the FRS regarding the quality and value of the broadcast.

The College places great emphasis on having good relations with the local community, and events during the summer further demonstrated their value. July brought heavy floods to large areas of England, and Moreton-in Marsh and the College surroundings were particularly badly hit. The College transformed itself into a reception centre for people stranded by the flooding. I am very proud of the positive way in which our staff, supported by their friends and relatives, responded to this emergency situation, and of the fact that we were ready to resume business for the Monday morning.

The tragic deaths of firefighters attending the fire at Atherstone-on-Stour in Warwickshire reminded us all of the dangers routinely faced by firefighters. On behalf of all the staff at the College, I offer our deepest sympathies to the families, friends and colleagues of those who so tragically died. The College's prime focus remains to support the FRS. In all that we do we will continue to work in close partnership with the FRS, supporting the work that it does at a national level to help save lives.

With a broad vision, well developed relationships with partners and customers, and with our unique facilities, expertise and specialist resources, I am confident that the College is well placed to continue to deliver an efficient, effective and economic training provision to meet the needs of a modern, first-class Fire and Rescue Service.

Gill Newton

Chief Executive, The Fire Service College
June 2008

Gill Newton retired at the end of June 2008. In her time as Chief Executive, Gill presided over some major changes at the College. Gill wishes to recognise the support, commitment and expertise provided by staff at the College, as well as the interest and commitment shown by friends of the College, be they from the local community, the FRS, or the wider public sector. Sally Sheen (Deputy Chief Executive at the College) will be covering the Chief Executive and Accounting Officer roles on an interim basis until a permanent appointment is made.

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Introduction Management Board



Gill Newton – Chief Executive

Gill has been Chief Executive of the Fire Service College since September 2004. A qualified nurse, teacher and education manager, Gill previously held posts in the NHS and the University sector. Gill joined the Senior Civil Service in 1995 as Head of Education and Workforce Planning, NHS Executive / Department of Health, later becoming Head of Training and Development for HM Prison Service. She is a member of the Association of Agency Chief Executives (ACE) Board and the Professional Skills for Government Programme Board.

Peter Evans – Director of Finance

Peter joined the Fire Service College in January 2005, bringing substantial experience of the Public Sector (central government, non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs) and executive agency) during his time with the Ministry of Defence (MoD), Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and Communities and Local Government (CLG). Peter has also spent time working in the financial services and manufacturing sectors. His College role embraces responsibility for financial management, corporate and business planning, procurement, organisational risk management and governance.

Sally Sheen – Deputy Chief Executive and Director of UKFRS, Commercial and International Training Delivery

Sally joined the Fire Service College from HM Treasury in July 2006. As well as deputising for the Chief Executive, Sally is responsible for business development, sales and marketing, course and curriculum development and all teaching and training delivered by the College. Sally is a qualified and experienced teacher, educationalist, HR and organisational development professional, with experience of leading change and delivering high performing, customer-focused services. She has previously led learning and organisational transformation within the Treasury and a range of public services, including the NHS, the Housing Corporation and Local Government.

Sue Hopgood – Director of Leadership and Organisational Development

Sue joined the Fire Service College in May 2005, and is leading on the delivery of key projects to support the FRS National Learning and Development Strategy. Sue is a senior HR professional, specialising in organisational development, including leadership, diversity, change management and improvement. She has extensive public sector experience, and has worked in the National Probation Service, Police Information Technology Organisation, the NHS, the Education Sector, and in the Office of National Statistics.



Ian Stroud – Director of Estates & Infrastructure Services

Ian has a wide-ranging remit, including provision of strategic advice and operational management for Estates, Property, Facilities Management, Health and Safety, Resources and Logistics, Leisure Centre and Incident Ground Support services. Ian joined the College in October 2004 after a long career in the private sector working for organisations including National Power, Symonds Facilities Management, Jones Lang LaSalle, Honeywell FM2 and Xansa.

Eric Galvin – Non-Executive Director

Eric spent 32 years in the civil service, and now runs his own education, skills and leadership consultancy. He is also vice chair of a large college and holds several non-executive directorships in the public and voluntary sectors.

Jonathan Vickers – Non-Executive Director

Jonathan spent 25 years in the international oil and chemicals industries, latterly as a board member of Castrol and of Burmah Chemicals. Since leaving the private sector in 2001, he has served as a non-executive board member for a range of public sector organisations linked to CLG, the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), and the NHS.

Phil Toase – Operational Adviser to the Management Board

Phil is Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive of West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service – a position he has held since 1st January 2000. Phil joined the West Yorkshire Fire Service in 1974 and was awarded a CBE for services to the Fire and Rescue Service in the Queen's Birthday Honours June 2004. He was President of the Chief Fire Officers' Association (CFOA) in 2006–07, and currently holds a number of posts including as an adviser to the National Joint Council Employers and the Local Government Association (LGA).

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Introduction

The College

The Fire Service College provides both practical and theoretical fire-related training and consultancy services for the UK Fire and Rescue Service (FRS), other UK public sector organisations, the private sector, and the wider and international market. In addition to training, the College supports learning and development in the FRS through its Organisational Development Centre.

The College became an executive agency (currently of the Department of Communities and Local Government, CLG) and trading fund on 1st April 1992, and was confirmed by statute as the central training institution for the English and Welsh FRS in 2004.

The College is based on a 550 acre site at Moreton-in-Marsh in the north of Gloucestershire. It is the central training institution for the English and Welsh FRS, though it also maintains historically strong links with the rest of the UK FRS. The Fire Service College uses spare capacity to deliver a range of products to wider markets customers, both in the UK and overseas.

The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (CLG) is responsible for the policy framework within which the College operates, and for determining the role of the College within that framework and its strategic objectives. The Secretary of State also sets the College's annual financial and performance targets.





9,192

delegates receiving training during 2007-08, delivering a total of 11,178 student weeks of study

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Management Commentary (business)



7,153 delegates from the UK FRS trained in 2007-08, up from 6,328 in 2006-07

The Fire Service College – role and remit

The core business of the Fire Service College is to deliver training in support of firefighter and public safety. The Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) is the College's key customer and is at the heart of everything the College does – serving the UK FRS, and supporting national fire and rescue priorities.

Meeting the needs of the UK Fire and Rescue Service (FRS)

The Fire Service College offers a comprehensive range of courses, designed to support firefighters in their work. The quality and effectiveness of course design and facilitation blends the skills and experience of seconded officers from all over the UK with the specialist expertise and experience of permanent and visiting teaching staff. The level of realism offered by the courses provides a learning experience which is second to none, and full use is made of the impressive range of rigs and facilities on the unique incident ground.

All the courses offered at the College are aligned to the Integrated Personal Development System (IPDS) and National Occupational Standards national framework, and great emphasis is placed on firefighter safety and standards.



The College is constantly looking to develop its courses to support modern methods of learning, and is increasingly incorporating 'e-learning' into its training. Many new courses have been developed, and others revised, so as better to meet the needs of customers and enable them to develop world class skills and modern practices. Part of the review of courses has revolved around making them more accessible. Some courses have been shortened, whilst others have been scheduled for weekends, making it easier for attendees to fit them around their busy lives. Increasing provision of blended and e-learning solutions will further improve access for all students.

Support beyond the UK Fire and Rescue Service (FRS)

Whilst the Fire Service College plays a key role in supporting the UK FRS, it has also increased its vital work with international fire and rescue services, and with the commercial and public sector, enhancing its international reputation for excellence in fire training and consultancy.

Fire and rescue services around the world face similar pressures and challenges to those faced in the UK. Operational capability is constantly under pressure to meet new demands from increasing numbers of both man-made and natural disasters, and by the need to build civil resilience and infrastructure in the face of economic development. Other countries also recognise the need for an increasing emphasis on fire prevention, particularly within developing countries, where fire and rescue services are expanding their fire risk and fire safety capability from a potentially low base.

The College has risen to the challenge by providing packages of support, which include consultancy, advice and customised training to fire and rescue services from Europe to the Middle East and South East Asia. This support is delivered at the College site in Moreton-in-Marsh, and delivered on location in the home country when required.

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Management Commentary (business)

The world of industry and commerce also faces considerable changes in the area of fire management, and the College's support is similarly growing to meet these demands. Industries involved in potentially high risk activities, whether they be in the nuclear power or oil and gas sectors for example, are constantly having to innovate and improve their fire risk management, emergency preparedness, emergency management and response capability. The College is particularly well placed to utilise its specialist knowledge and expertise to assist organisations with the development of strategy and policy, procedural frameworks and front line skills development.

A national College supporting national and local needs

The College recognises that every FRS has its own priorities and faces its own particular challenges. It is therefore vital that courses be developed flexibly in a way that responds to individual Service's needs. Nearly half of the courses delivered by the College are now commissioned by individual Services and regional collaborations, and are designed to meet their specific requirements. A number of open and bespoke courses can also be delivered, either locally or regionally.

The last year has been a great success from the perspective of UK FRS training. Trainee numbers have increased and the College's reputation with its customers has been greatly enhanced. This is because the College has listened to customer feedback – positive and negative – and acted upon it. As a result the College has become much more customer-focused and accessible. Over the last year a variety of improvements have been made to the College's training schedule and courses:

681

courses delivered in 2007-08 – 564 for UK FRSs, 57 for overseas delegates, 60 for wider markets



Case study

Making courses more flexible

The College has changed its relationship with customers from a 'one size fits all' approach to a far more focused vision, which aims at meeting the customers' needs.

The value of this new approach is shown both in the repeat business that is coming back to the College, and also in the recent increase in commerce with a number of FRSs who had reduced their use of the College in previous years. Surrey FRS and Greater Manchester FRS are two such FRSs who have returned to utilise the increasingly bespoke services of the College.

“The Course Directory is our shop window containing new and revised courses, as well as tried and tested favourites, reflecting what our customers have told us they need and want. Our new flexible design and delivery model means that we can also design and deliver to customers’ exact specification.”

Sally Sheen, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of UKFRS
Commercial and International Training Delivery.

Customer relations

The UK FRS is at the heart of everything that the College does, which is why a dedicated customer relationship team has been established, entirely focused on understanding the specific needs of each FRS and providing access to training which meets those needs. Each FRS now has a specific customer relationship manager who is able to support them at every stage of the training cycle. In an independent survey of our customers 93% of respondents said that the new customer relationship manager approach was effective.

New Course Directory

The new 2008-09 Fire Service College Course Directory was published at the end of 2007, with the contents also available to browse online. Bigger than ever before and with a strong practical, operational focus, the range of courses has been carefully designed to enable FRS staff to meet the wide-ranging and increasingly complex challenges they routinely face.

The Directory now incorporates a great deal of flexibility into course design and delivery with new e-learning packages and weekend delivery being made available. Courses are also now much shorter and more intensive, making them more accessible and affordable, with reduced time away from work. Nearly half of what the College delivers is now designed to meet specifications of individual FRSs, delivered either at the College or locally.

In the past over 90% of courses were fixed in terms of design and delivery; whereas now 50% are bespoke or delivered locally.

46 outreach courses delivered locally



Flexible courses

In the past year the College has developed a radically different design and delivery model. The College now offers a range of solutions to suit the customer, including:

- an open programme of courses (listed in the Course Directory)
- bespoke courses (designed to meet the specific demands of individual FRSs)
- local delivery
- self-delivery using FSC resources
- joint delivery
- electronic delivery

“We have always enjoyed a productive relationship with the Fire Service College. The uniqueness of the site and the flexible approach engendered in recent years has allowed us to advance our operational training considerably.”

Gary Dobson,
London Assistant Commissioner
for Training and Development

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Management Commentary (business)



Case study

Incident Command

Incident Command training is now offered to all levels, from crew manager to brigade manager. As elsewhere in the College, the provision of bespoke training is being greatly expanded, particularly 'outreach' training, which takes place at the host FRS site. This offers improved flexibility and assists FRSs by enhancing their operational assurance with a much greater through-put, in shorter timescales, and at a time and place convenient to their organisational needs. Plans are well in hand to produce a suite of e-learning modules as part of the new *FireLearn* system to support the acquisition of the underpinning knowledge that Crew and Watch Managers require to safely and effectively respond to and resolve emergency incidents. The first two modules are almost completed, with roll-out of nine modules by Autumn 2009.

Following the introduction of e-learning last year, the provision for this type of training has increased during 2007–08, and the College will continue to expand this area. The introduction of *FireLearn* – an e-learning system – will further enhance the way in which the College is able to support FRSs organisationally, and FRS learners individually.

Length and timing of courses

The College has revised course content to ensure that courses are much shorter, and hence more accessible and affordable to the FRS. Training at weekends is becoming increasingly popular and many retained firefighters find this option particularly useful.

The average time that delegates spend at the College has been reduced by 46% as a result of shorter, more intensive courses, broken up into modules.

730

delegates attended 21 courses
at weekends during 2007-08

1 week:

Average course duration in 2007-08 compared with 1.9 weeks in 2002-03

Course cost and quality

The College recognises the importance of meeting customer needs – responding to their specific requirements and delivering what they want at an affordable price. Clearly the nature of College operations brings associated costs around health and safety and maintenance, and quality of provision, and these costs need to be covered by course income. As a result, the College is increasingly looking at a combination of more flexible and shorter courses, designed to meet specific customer needs, and which mean that the College is able to keep course costs as low as possible. A number of FRS customers have signed longer contracts, bringing them the benefits of security of knowing they can get the training they need at the time and place they want, and also giving them the added incentive of a small saving. Long-term contracts give the College a secure and steady income stream, allowing it to plan for the future, and to look to improve the range of courses and facilities offered to its customers.

Developments in key courses

Civil resilience

The Fire Service College delivers world-class training programmes to meet the needs of the Government's Civil Resilience programme. These programmes provide a structured approach to the acquisition of skills, utilising specialist training rigs to apply those skills in training exercises under highly realistic conditions.

Since July 2003:

- 599 courses have been run as part of the overall Civil Resilience programme

“The USAR training facilities at the Fire Service College are amongst the finest in the world and represent significant government investment”

Sir Ken Knight, Chief Fire & Rescue Adviser

- the FSC has taught over 7,000 delegates on these courses
- 80% of delegates said that incident ground training exercises were very helpful in enhancing learning
- a major part of this programme is the College's Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) training, utilising the College's world-class USAR facilities and the comprehensive skills and experience of its dedicated teaching staff.

The College now runs a range of bespoke USAR training programmes to support both national and international USAR communities.

Key plans for the future include:

- working in partnership with CLG, to design and deliver phase two of a national programme of resilience training for the next three years
- providing more opportunities for joint exercises
- looking at ways to improve cost effectiveness through innovative design and flexible delivery methods
- providing bespoke USAR training to fit the FRS and national requirements, including flexibility in course duration and timing
- developing more multi-agency training to provide realistic training scenarios for all agencies to meet the needs of a multi-agency environment.

1234 Management Commentary (business)



“Organising the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group conference, on behalf of the Department for International Development (DFID), I needed committed partners who shared in my vision of the event and understood how it could help develop the ideals of international co-operation in the field of urban search and rescue. The Fire Service College not only shared in the vision, but were prepared to commit time and resources to help make it happen.”

Dave Dickson, USAR Technical Advisor & UK Fire Services Search and Rescue Team

Civil resilience training is not just about urban search and rescue. With climate change being such a topical issue, New Dimension equipment (such as high volume pumping gear) is likely to come to the fore as we deal with the challenges presented by global warming. The skills developed in training at the College have been put to the test over the last year in real world events – in particular during the summer floods in the UK.

Gold Command Course

This new course constitutes the final stage in the progression of formal operational command and leadership training. The course was based on a requirement that emerged from the New Dimension programme's command and control workstream. Consequently, it has been both well subscribed and well received. The course offers a much needed learning opportunity for any principal or senior officer, whose role involves the command of incidents of a large or catastrophic scale, involving multiple agencies and a wide range of resources. The inputs are provided by a range of specialists in their fields, and visiting lecturers include the most senior and experienced officers from the FRS, the police, military, civil service and beyond. This course fulfils the obligation of the FRS to develop its own operational commanders, who can then progress to benefit from other multi-agency training opportunities and exercises within their local resilience forums and elsewhere.

The course features an extended exercise using the new Hydra-Minerva system which forms part of the College's Simulation Suite. This system, which is offered under a licence agreement with the Metropolitan Police, plays a key role in simulating the dilemmas and decision making in critical incident command up to and including Gold Command.

Introduction to the Fire and Rescue Service for Managers

This new programme was launched in response to direct entrants coming into the service at various levels, but with widely differing knowledge and experience of the service. The course is vital in bringing attendees up to speed quickly, and supports diversity issues, as well as operational competence.



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Management Commentary (business)



Case study

Extending skills training to new audiences:

Over the last 12 months the College has been developing its new multi-agency approach, to extend the skills and abilities of colleagues working beyond the existing fire and rescue service environment. New Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) paramedics and hazardous area response teams from a variety of other agencies have been trained to ensure that not only can they provide first class medical assistance when working alongside firefighters, but they can also maintain their own safety in these often dangerous environments. Training has included confined space operations, the use of ropes in spot manoeuvres, working in collapsed buildings and critical medical support. Department of Health personnel were amongst the first to experience this multi-agency training.

Multi-agency training

Multi-agency training is growing in importance, with politicians focusing on national resilience and operational effectiveness in responding to major incidents. Over the last year the College has hosted a number of extremely successful multi-agency pilot courses and exercises, which also highlighted the suitability of the facilities at the College as a venue for such high profile, major events.

The Environment Agency has used the College to train newly recruited Environmental Officers, recognising not only the benefit of the practical training facilities on site, but also the advantage of working closely with firefighters to manage environmental issues during incidents.

FRS personnel who have been selected to operate New Dimension Detection, Identification and Monitoring (DIM) equipment can now benefit from the College's new Hazardous Detection, Identification and Monitoring scenario module. This course has been developed in partnership with CLG and the FRS, and includes both theoretical and practical exercises. Since the two prototype courses were piloted in March 2007, a further six courses have been run, all receiving positive feedback.

Elements of the DIM course involve working with senior Police and Ambulance Officers, and there is potential for increased multi-agency participation with a number of other agencies already voicing their interest.



Case study

Multi-agency training: During the year the College facilitated a pilot course for the development of Yorkshire Ambulance Trust senior paramedics with the Department of Health. Both parties came together to create the course structure, which culminated in an assessment day, with several medical dilemmas presented on the collapsed training rig. The expertise of the USAR tutors was invaluable in interpreting the training needs presented by the Department of Health. The climax of the course was observed by a visiting delegation from the Department of Health and the Yorkshire Ambulance Trust, who were impressed both with the performance of their team and by the facilities provided by the College.



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Management Commentary (business)



Case study

Exercise Orpheus:

The Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) multiple rescue incident was set in a collapsed building which had been subject to a notional gas explosion, whilst the Hazardous Area Response Team (HART) incident was based on a transport scenario, with a notional chemical release element. Over 600 participants were involved in staging the two exercises on a single day. The emergency services brought specialist teams and equipment from all over the UK, with the Fire Service alone drawing resources from 14 different FRSs. Volunteers from the Casualties Union and Amputees in Action role-played the victims of the two incidents.

Exercise Orpheus

5th March 2008 saw the Fire Service College act as the setting for *Exercise Orpheus* – the first event run by the Health Protection Agency (HPA) for the FRS, Ambulance Service and the Police, working together in two simultaneous rescue scenarios.

There were many facets to this event, which were the result of many months of careful planning with the HPA and the multi-agencies co-ordinating team. Dealing with such a logistical challenge involved almost every aspect of the College's facilities and organisational structure, co-ordinated in every respect by a dedicated project team of College personnel.

Behind the scenes, activities ranged from the setting up and safety-management of complex live training venues, multiple briefing venues for participants and plasma screen viewing area for VIPs. Over 400 people were accommodated on site the night before the exercise, and on the day of the event a bus service was operated for the 600 people participating.

Experiences gained by the College from that event have been invaluable. Whilst it was always clear that the College has the facilities to stage such an exercise, this event proved that it also has the expertise and the robust organisational structure to support such operations.



Hazardous Materials and Environmental Protection (HMEP) Course

Hazardous materials incidents are increasingly complex and challenging, whether they are of an environmental, chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear nature. The Fire Service College has responded by substantially revising the content and delivery of its Hazardous Materials programmes, and completely replacing its HMEP course with an updated course from April 2008. Building on the experience of its specialist hazardous materials tutors and chemists, the updated course provides the skills and knowledge to undertake the vital, and increasingly complex, operational 'Hazmat Officer' role, within a more flexible and economical delivery:

- e-learning
- distance learning
- telephone based College-supported study (which takes place within the individual's FRS)
- followed by a core residential module at the College

This provides realistic opportunities for delegates to demonstrate the application of skills using the College's unique facilities, whilst mentored by experts, and also minimises time spent away from work and home.

On successful completion, delegates will be able to access a closed user group providing long-term support, advice and guidance and a forum for the exchange of information, ideas and views.

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Management Commentary (business)



Case study

International Training

The College's longest standing overseas customer is the Nederlands Instituut Fysieke Veiligheid (NIFV) which has recently extended its contract for a further five years. The agreement demonstrates NIFV's faith in the College's flexible approach to their training needs, and will result in around 1,000 student weeks per annum. The Netherlands is redefining its existing geographical boundaries for police, fire and ambulance services to form new safety regions. To prepare for the change representatives from across the three services held a major exercise at the College. Dutch mayors, and both council and government officials also participated, observing a number of staged incidents. Such an event highlights the opportunities for carrying out similar UKFRS multi-agency exercises at the College.

International, commercial and public sector training

International business continues to be an important area for the College, with existing customers returning for increased student weeks, and new customers using the College's resources for the first time.

Spain, particularly Barcelona and Madrid, continues to increase its training requirement, although progress is slower than desirable because of trades union issues throughout that country. It is hoped that these will soon be resolved, and steady growth is forecast. This will be enhanced by a further requirement from Seville that is currently under discussion. The College's relationship with ITURRI – the fire appliance manufacturer – will enhance the business opportunities around Seville and throughout Spain, eventually extending to South America.

The Middle East market continues to grow, with Kuwait and Abu Dhabi engaged in personnel development from Trainee FireFighter to Instructor. The huge investment made by both countries displays both an understanding of the value of College training, and the protection such training affords the national economy.

Further afield, the College has bid for consultancy work in Hong Kong, and is re-opening discussions with Thailand's airport authority.

The College is now able to offer career path training for international students, by offering a suite of progression courses. The International Operational Command and Management Course is seen as a pre-requisite for the International Divisional Command Course and the International Brigade Command Course. All three courses have been well supported over the past year.



Case study

International Consultancy

Consultancy work overseas also continues to expand, with major contracts signed for the design of fire training facilities in Iran (Tehran and Hammedan), and for extensive emergency response audits in Kuwait and Bahrain. The business forecasts suggest that the Middle East market will continue to grow, with positive enquiries received from Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Dubai, and a proposal for the continuation of a major training requirement for the Kuwait oil sector.

Organisational Development Centre (ODC) summary

Centre for Leadership – important new developments

Established in April 2006, the main purpose of the FRS Centre for Leadership (CfL) is to support the development of leadership skills and capacity for FRS professional managers and elected members, and to support performance improvement.

The CfL Project Board has been promoting the importance of elected member development: the Local Government Association (LGA) worked with the CfL Project Board at the College (building on the Improvement and Development Agency for local government's (IDeA's) Leadership Academy at Warwick Business School), to develop an Elected Member Workshop, to be delivered at the Fire Service College. The first workshop was held on 31st March 2008. Elected members from Fire and Rescue Authorities across the country attended the course, and had the opportunity to learn about key issues affecting the FRS, hear from experienced speakers such as the Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser, and share valuable insights and experiences.

The workshop was fully booked up almost immediately, and with such high demand the College expects to run more courses in the future.



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Management Commentary (business)

National Leadership Programme

Based on extensive research, and developed in close consultation with the FRS, the LGA, and the Chief Fire Officers' Association (CFOA), the CfL has developed the National Leadership Programme (NLP). This programme was launched on 6th November 2007 by Parmjit Dhanda MP – Minister for the Fire and Rescue Service – at a prestigious gathering of Chairs of Fire Authorities, Chief Fire Officers, Chief Executives and other senior officials from across the country. The programme will help to foster effective development of FRS leadership across all levels and in all sectors within the service. Building on the success of the Learning and Development Strategy, the programme has been designed to ensure high quality results and greater consistency in the crucial field of leadership across the Service.

The NLP represents a new approach to developing all leaders in the FRS. Components, including the Executive Leadership Programme, a coaching skills programme, an 'Aspire' leadership toolkit, and 'Principal Officers Development Opportunities', represent a new programme providing a learning menu for senior officers.



89

people from 29 FRSs have taken part in the Aspire Coaching Courses run by the ODC

The Executive Leadership Programme (ELP) is the flagship initiative within the NLP, and has been designed to develop the future top leaders of the FRS – Chief Fire Officers and Chief Executives. Warwick Business School and the National School of Government have been contracted to deliver the ELP following a competitive tendering exercise. Two cohorts of 23 people are on the ELP, five are women and several are non-uniform. This is a step change for the service and demonstrates a commitment from the current top FRS leaders to develop a more diverse pool of future leaders.

“They say learning is enhanced when you are out of your ‘comfort zone’ – well, my learning has certainly been enhanced with the ELP”

Stuart Smith, Director of Safer Communities (ACFO) – Staffordshire FRS.

“The ELP is developing my self awareness, challenging my understanding of effective leadership and taking me outside of my ‘comfort zone’ as I develop myself for the future.”

Mark Rayner, Head of Training & Development (Area Manager), Hampshire FRS

Approximately 124,000:

Hits that the IPDS website received in April, up from around 97,000 in December (a 25% increase). Approximately 5,000 individual documents were downloaded from the site in April, up from around 3,500 in December (a 43% increase)

The Aspire Coaching initiative has been established to support the development of a coaching culture in the UKFRS, and thus build capacity and improve performance. Coaching skills development is available aligned to the Institute of Leadership & Management Level 3 & 5 standards, with opportunities to obtain formal qualifications. It is also possible to train as a Coach Skills trainer, enabling each individual FRS to cascade coaching skills within their organisation.

Quality Assurance Framework and Toolkit

There has been considerable interest following November's launch of the Quality Assurance Framework and Toolkit, and a number of regionally based practical workshops have been organised. These workshops demonstrate, through practically based scenarios, the usefulness and flexibility of the Framework and Toolkit. This free and easily accessible service is a direct product of research undertaken with a number of fire services, and also of the feedback that the College has received from the UKFRS. There has been collaboration throughout the development period to ensure that the Framework and Toolkit meet the needs of Learning and Development managers, line managers, and individuals.



Integrated Personal Development System (IPDS)

The IPDS team have been developing a Code of Practice and accompanying User Guide, which will take students through the whole IPDS process in an interactive and user-friendly way. Whilst the Code of Practice is important, the key to how successful it will be lies in how users will actually operate it. In addition, the team has led the roll-out and implementation of the new National Firefighter Selection Tests, and further provided support to the FRS on the implementation of the assessment and development centre processes and procedures.

The **majority** of Chief Fire Officers are supporting the ELP by acting as mentors on the programme

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Management Commentary (business)



Learning and Development Managers Forum

This forum, introduced by CFOA, working in partnership with the ODC at the College, was developed to fill an identified gap. It provides the opportunity for Learning and Development managers nationally to network, share good practice, and hear from innovative speakers. The Forum has been a great success story, and now forms part of the wider communications plan for FRS HR and Learning and Development managers.

Developments through the year

Atherstone-on-Stour disaster

Everyone at the College offers their deepest sympathies to the families, friends and colleagues of the four firefighters who tragically died in the fire at Atherstone-on-Stour in Warwickshire. This disaster only goes to highlight the dangers faced by firefighters. Rescuers were able to put into practice many of the skills developed at the College. The College was able to respond quickly to the incident by deploying its 'snake eye' camera equipment, placing instructors on standby to help as and when needed, and providing food and shelter for the rescue crews. Modern construction methods present ever changing challenges to the FRS, and it is important that the training provided by the College reflects this environment.

Networking Women in the Fire Service (NWFS) Annual Conference

The College recognises the importance of equality and diversity in the UK FRS, and supported diversity by directly hosting and contributing sponsorship for the Networking Women in the Fire Service Annual Conference. This Conference took place over the weekend of 13th – 17th July 2007 and was open to all women working in the FRS. The event was extremely well attended, and combined practical and seminar workshops with social events, to bring delegates together, give them the opportunity to share knowledge and experience and develop their skills. These activities were facilitated by instructors from across the FRS and from the College.



“A fantastic event ... content, organisation and, above all, unique atmosphere (friendly, positive, non-hierarchical). I can't find sufficient superlatives to describe it!”

Conference delegate

The College is delighted that three of its staff - Rachel Jones, Andy Young, and Sue Evans - all received a Silver Award 'in recognition of their outstanding efforts over the years in support of NWFS, especially in the organisation of the NWFS Annual Conference'.

“The 2007 NWFS Conference was another great success, due to the great partnership between the FSC and NWFS.”

Rachel Jones

Centre of Excellence

In October, CLG published a consultation document putting forward proposals for the establishment of a Centre of Excellence (CoE) for the FRS in England. The consultation invited views on whether there should be a CoE, the role it should have, and the way it should be funded and organised. The Fire Service College played a key role throughout the year, in liaison with CLG, the LGA, and CFOA, in project managing the CoE process, and bringing it to the table for stakeholder comments. CLG's response to the consultation document was published on 6th May 2008.

Radio 5 Live Broadcast

The end of the financial year saw Radio 5 Live broadcast their breakfast show live from the Fire Service College on 4th April 2008. Presenters Nicky Campbell and Lesley Ashmall arrived at lunchtime the day before the broadcast, to watch and report on a variety of training courses. The broadcast was live from Connections, the College restaurant, between 6am and 9am. It included interviews with Parmjit Dhanda MP – Minister for the Fire and Rescue Service, Sir Ken Knight – Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser, Paul Hayden – Chief Fire Officer of Hereford & Worcester FRS, John McGhee representing the Fire Brigades Union, and Gill Newton - Chief Executive of the College.

“It was an opportunity to develop media and public understanding of what the Fire and Rescue Service does, the skills needed in the Service, how those skills are gained, and the growing importance of the Fire and Rescue Service in terms of its wider resilience role and responsiveness to terrorism. It also represented an opportunity for the Fire Service College to secure some timely press coverage about its role and facilities, and to show how the College is responding to the changing needs of the modern Fire and Rescue Service. It was a great success and I have received lots of positive feedback.”

Gill Newton, Chief Executive,
The Fire Service College

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Management Commentary (business)

Governance and organisational structure

College operations are overseen by a College Management Board consisting of five executive directors and two non-executive Directors. The Head of Human Resources, the Chief Information Officer, and the Head of Policy and Corporate Support also attend each meeting. In addition, the College was pleased to welcome the appointment of Chief Fire Officer Phil Toase, previous CFOA president, as operational adviser to the Board.

The Management Board is supported by valuable work conducted by the Audit Committee, the Capital Expenditure Board, the Health and Safety Committee and the College Executive Group. The role of the Executive Group is currently being enhanced to deliver greater staff engagement and focus on operational advice to the Management Board.

Like the rest of the public sector, the College endeavours to offer value for money – focusing on priorities and ensuring it delivers as effectively, efficiently and economically as possible. A key part of achieving this was a review of administrative systems and processes as part of the annual business planning round. This review has led to a reduced staffing establishment for 2008-09 with the aim of delivering a leaner organisation with reduced overheads. This work will help ensure that future prices charged to customers remain competitive. This is a clear demonstration of the College's modernisation agenda, developing a leaner structure for a new way of doing business. Redefined management information systems to support decision-making will be developed, and a review of underpinning systems and processes undertaken to support this.

Employees

The College does not discriminate on the grounds of age, sex, ethnic origin, religious or philosophical belief, sexual orientation, trade union membership or disability.

The College has a policy of employee involvement by making information available to employees on a regular basis and encouraging their participation in events and projects which are related to the College's progress and success.

Details of pension schemes open to College staff are provided in the Remuneration Report.

The College maintains its status as an Investor in People, and has placed great emphasis on staff development and communication throughout the year. A mini staff survey during the year specifically focused on weaknesses which had been thrown up by an earlier full staff survey. There was an excellent response rate, with approximately 80% of staff completing the survey. It showed improvements across the board, particularly in performance feedback, and open and honest communications with staff, with dramatic improvements in visibility of senior management and morale. However, senior management is clear that more needs to be done, and will be striving for further improvements during 2008-09.

"I fully support the work that Gill and her team have done in enhancing the College's customer focus, moving to flexible delivery models and repositioning the Fire Service College to meet current and future needs. I am committed to playing my part in supporting the College and hope that Fire and Rescue Authorities will continue their support of the Fire Service College."

Phil Toase, Chief Fire Officer,
West Yorkshire FRS

Case study

Focus on staff development

The College welcomed its first woman operational secondee in December 2007. Nicola Lown, from Gloucestershire FRS, joined the Incident Command team as a tutor, and is contributing to this highly-valued growth area of training.

“I’ve been very pleased with the welcome that I and my other new colleagues have received, and am proud to be part of a great team delivering high quality training. I would certainly recommend the College to other Fire and Rescue colleagues thinking of a secondment during their career.”

Nicola Lown, Incident Command tutor



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Management Commentary (business)

Communications

FireLearn

The College has been developing *FireLearn* – an electronic e-learning system which will transform the way that the College is able to support FRSs organisationally, and FRS learners individually. The e-learning *FireLearn* system went live in April 2008, giving learners the ability to go online to manage their own learning and development. It will allow the College to further extend customer care to learners beyond the gates of the site, and thus support them on a life-long learning journey, rather than just when they physically attend courses.

In putting together *FireLearn*, the College has embraced technology for modern learning, reflecting current trends in society and industry. The system will give students the flexibility to learn in an environment that best suits them (be that at home, in the workplace, or elsewhere). It will allow students to conduct self-assessments and monitor their own progression, as well as comparing notes with colleagues. In addition, it will enable the College to make available the most up-to-date teaching material simultaneously to the widest audience.

FireLearn is a component of the Learning and Development Strategy (LDS). Just as for other LDS projects, there has been considerable stakeholder engagement in developing *FireLearn* (eg what it should look like, and how it should be deployed). It meets the needs of FRSs, and allows the College to respond more flexibly to their requirements. This is in line with the requirement set out in CLG's National Framework Document for increased flexible learning which is more family friendly.

The procurement process behind *FireLearn* represents a relatively new Office of Government Commerce (OGC) process, which is to be rolled out across Government. *FireLearn* was the first example of this new procurement process involving CLG, and the College worked closely with CLG colleagues to update their procurement practice and advice accordingly.

“*FireLearn* will significantly enhance the experience of learners with the Fire Service College, providing them with greater flexibility as they manage their own development – fitting in with family friendly policies within the FRS.”

Gill Newton,
Chief Executive, The Fire Service College



Case study

FireLearn

The Hazardous Materials team have been the first to utilise the *FireLearn* system. As we go to press with this Report, the very first Hazardous Materials Environmental Protection (HMEP) course is well underway. This course is designed to enable senior officers to respond to incidents in the capacity of a specialist adviser.

After two and a half years in development, *FireLearn* has provided students with the facility to prepare for their residential HMEP course module with eight weeks pre-course learning and online assessment, providing an unprecedented level of training.

The redesigned HMEP course is more reflective of brigade level activities; having completed and passed the pre-course assessment work, students spend their initial residential week working on various risk assessments, as part of a structured, methodological foundation programme, before moving on to demonstrate

how this learning can be applied in different situations, utilising a completely blended learning strategy. One-to-one tutorial support is available throughout the course.

Students work in small syndicated groups, on increasingly high level scenarios, culminating in a two-stage assessment: IT-based data retrieval, followed by the application of a further scenario-based appraisal.

The tutors report that their students have been extremely keen to get the most out of the HMEP 2008 course, which was completely redeveloped and trialled over six months prior to its roll-out via the *FireLearn* facility.

Students who have completed the course are also given access to the practitioners' website, containing the latest news and advice for their continued professional development.

The course is open to both national and international delegates, and future plans include the creation of higher level special risk modules, which will allow even greater tailoring of the course to student needs.

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Management Commentary (business)

Fire Gateway

Fire Gateway is a website which provides the public with access to a wide range of information and advice, and enables them to make online submissions - such as workplace fire safety self-assessments and requests for home fire safety visits - direct to their local FRS. The Fire Gateway is hosted and managed by the College and also offers a secure FRS-wide intranet, allowing FRSs to share knowledge including doctrine. In January 2008, the College won a prestigious e-Government national award for Fire Gateway – in the category of ‘Building a fairer society with e-Government, improving lives on a large or national scale’.

Funded by CLG, Fire Gateway was developed with the help of Greater Manchester FRS, CFOA and the LGA.

“The award is a fitting reward for the vision and commitment of the team responsible for establishing the Fire Gateway. It is a successful government IT project, a successful partnership, and an important asset for the Fire and Rescue Service in helping to save lives.”

Parmjit Dhanda MP,
Minister for the Fire and Rescue Service



Case study

Fire Gateway

Since the Fire Gateway website was launched, over four million web-pages have been viewed by users and more than 25,000 people have obtained online advice or requested support from their local FRS, across a wide range of fire safety activities.

Personal Data

As a government agency, the College is required to report protected data related incidents in the management commentary of its annual report and accounts.

Incidents, the disclosure of which would in itself create an unacceptable risk of harm, may be excluded in accordance with the exemptions contained in the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or may be subject to the limitations of other UK information legislation.

The College has reported no protected personal data related incident to the Information Commissioner's Office in 2007–08; has no other protected personal data related incidents in 2007–08 to report, and has had no protected personal data related incidents to report since 2004.

The College policies and procedures for managing protected personal data were reviewed in 2008 as part of a CLG departmental exercise.

HOTLINE – Editions 14 –17

Hotline – the College newsletter - entered its 4th year with issue 14 and continues its theme of communicating Fire Service College news and events to its readers. Hotline continues to welcome and encourage input and feedback from its readers, and is delighted to have been able to include articles and quotes from contributors from many UK FRSs during the past year. This reflects the two-way communication that was anticipated when it was first introduced back in 2004.

Feedback on the content of Hotline has been increasingly positive. Its success has been mirrored by an increased uptake of copies by various UK FRSs, to enable each station within their Service to receive a copy.

Environmental/social/ community issues

Community relations are particularly important to the Fire Service College, which is one of the largest employers in the North Cotswolds. The close links between the College and the local community really came to the fore at the time of the summer floods, when the College was pleased to be able to offer support and shelter for the wider local community.

Focus on flooding

It was a case of 'all hands to the pumps' as staff at the College played a significant role in coming to the aid of hundreds of people affected by the floods on 20th and 21st July in the North Cotswolds. The College responded quickly and effectively to such an unforeseen event, demonstrating its capability to react to emergencies. At the request of Gloucestershire FRS, three of the College's fire appliances, which are used for training students, were called into action to support the rescue efforts of the emergency services. Crewed by 20 staff and secondees, College appliances rescued about 100 people from their homes and stranded vehicles in the area around Moreton. Firefighters working at the College helped with a series of rescues from the local town, using vehicles, a boat and even a tractor.

Eileen Randell was taken to safety by Phil Langdale and his colleagues when they rescued her and her husband Bob after their home was deluged with water.

Case study

HOTLINE – College newsletter available online

All editions of Hotline, dating back to the first issue are available on the Fire Service College website:

www.fireservicecollege.ac.uk

This has helped to increase global circulation, and the College continues to receive international interest in Hotline articles.

“They couldn't do enough for us. They remained calm, kind and reassuring as they rescued us, using our mobility scooters and then a tractor. When we arrived at the College we were extremely well looked after. My husband and I are diabetic, but they made sure we had suitable meals and everyone who looked after us remained so cheerful – even the following day, after they'd had a sleepless night.”

Eileen Randell, rescued flood victim



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Management Commentary (business)



Case study

Responding to local needs

At the height of the summer flooding, the College was able to provide overnight shelter for more than 320 members of the public, many of them elderly and infirm, who had been left homeless or were unable to complete their journeys. They were accommodated in the FSC's residential blocks over the course of the weekend, and provided with dry clothes, beds, hot food and drinks.



There was an impressive response from College staff, many of whom had, themselves, been left stranded at work, or who had been flooded out of their own homes. Many staff worked through the night to ensure that the flood victims were looked after.

The College demonstrated successful planning and contingency arrangements, and was able to help the local community (as well as staff), yet still managed to deliver training when Monday morning arrived, without a hitch.

Gill Newton praised the efforts of everyone connected with the College who joined in the rescue and shelter operation. Her praise was echoed by the District Council.

“Staff at the College responded immediately and professionally, and set up an emergency rest centre. The local community is extremely grateful for all the help that was provided by staff and volunteers at the College, many of whom had to work very long hours until the emergency ended. This was an excellent example of teamwork in the face of crisis!”

Les Haines,
Principal Community Safety Officer for Cotswold District Council and one of the Council's Emergency Response Team

“I am proud of the efforts made by College staff in assisting the rescue and accommodation of local people and stranded motorists. Many of these people had a very traumatic experience and I am glad that we were able to provide them with some respite and support at their time of great need!”

Gill Newton,
Chief Executive, Fire Service College

Visits

On 6th October the College was pleased to welcome the new Commissioner for London – Ron Dobson – and councillors from the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority, to view first-hand delegates taking part in the London 36-hour urban search and rescue exercise – designed specifically for London FRS. The group was given a number of presentations, and was able to witness crews training on the USAR facilities – seeing for themselves the success of the training being undertaken, enhancing the resilience nationally and for London. This course proved to be a great success and is now being made more widely available.

Members of various Fire and Rescue Authorities from around the country have also visited the College during the year.



College Open Day

The College hosted an Open Day on 8th September as part of the national Heritage Open Days initiative. Entry to the event was free, and the day was well supported, not just from those who live locally; 2,240 people passed through the gates during the course of the Open Day.

There was also a good deal of support from the FRS, including demonstrations of Urban Search and Rescue from Hereford & Worcester; rescue dog handling courtesy of Greater Manchester; and a kitchen fire demonstration from Bedfordshire. Gloucestershire FRS produced a collection of specialist vehicles, including their Incident Command Unit. Other attractions on the day included tours of the incident ground, a fire hose target game for children, and a children’s art competition to win a golden ticket for a VIP family tour of the College and a look behind the scenes. The golden ticket winners included Bethan Morse (age 11).

Also on show were the United Kingdom Fire Service Memorial Chapel and the College’s newly-established Heritage Centre, where College Archivist Mick Kernan was on hand to guide visitors around the collection.

“Our aim was to offer something for everyone. We gave visitors the chance to dress as a firefighter, operate a fire hose and ride on a fire appliance. It was an opportunity for our neighbours from in and around Moreton and visitors from farther afield to learn a good deal more about what we do here at the College. We wanted to make it an all-round entertaining experience for everyone.”

Gill Newton, Chief Executive,
The Fire Service College

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Management Commentary (business)

Woodlands Nursery

The College has an on-site nursery, providing facilities for the children of staff and local residents. During the year it was subject to an Ofsted inspection and achieved a 'satisfactory' rating, meaning that it provides sound provision and meets national standards.

Children are "welcomed into a brightly decorated, friendly, warm environment."

Ofsted

The nursery was also included in the local authority's 'Scores on the Doors' list of eating establishments. It was awarded 4 stars out of 5 and a 'very good' rating following an inspection of nursery food preparation and choices by the Environmental Health Officer for the Cotswolds. The scheme is based on the Food Standard Agency's risk rating system.

In January, the College launched a childcare voucher scheme for staff, whereby an element of their income is converted into vouchers, and is not subject to tax or National Insurance. The scheme is open to all civil servants employed by the College, and they can use the vouchers for any Ofsted registered provider of child care.

Leisure Centre

The College Leisure Centre provides a valuable facility for staff and the community alike. A special membership event was run throughout December and January, when 950 new members were signed up from the local area. The College also hosted the North Cotswolds Primary Schools Cross Country Running Championships, with twenty schools represented by a total of 300 children taking part. Ten children went on to represent the North Cotswolds in the annual County Championships.

Opportunities & challenges

Opportunities

With the advent of the Fire Safety Regulatory Reform Order in 2005 (which put the onus on businesses to review fire risk assessment), many UK organisations, in both the public and the private sector, have recognised the need to invest in professional assistance to comply with the regulations, and make fire risk management work for them and their organisation. To respond to this new demand, the College has developed support packages that include (all, or a mix of) fire risk consultancy, fire risk assessment programmes, on-site and customised training and a series of seminar programmes. Focused on supporting local government, education and the private care sector, the College's package of services has proved to be both innovative and effective.

Leisure Centre visits
by the local community:

22,000

visits in the past year i.e.

440

visits per week

A modernised FRS places much greater emphasis on organisational development as a concept and system, and many FRSs now have an organisational development manager. The Pathway Group (made up of representatives from CLG, the Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser's Unit, the LGA and CFOA) secured agreement from key stakeholders that FRSs should subscribe to the Organisational Development Centre (ODC) for products and services. The College's newly refreshed and integrated approach to organisational development has a focus on customer-facing issues, and is designed to meet the evolving needs of the Service. A small, more focused team will provide advice and guidance on a range of organisational development approaches, non-operational products and services that support the learner journey, as well as wider organisational development issues.

Challenges

The move towards Comprehensive Area Assessments will particularly impact on the ODC in the coming year. The challenge will be for the ODC team to demonstrate that their products will improve service delivery and systems in a way that will be relevant to Comprehensive Area Assessments.

Public spending pressures meant that the College was unable to press ahead with construction of a planned new en suite accommodation block. This creates challenges for the College in future years, with en suite residential accommodation now being a potentially limiting factor in terms of the volume and timing of training that can be delivered. College management will be considering alternative approaches with colleagues from CLG over the coming months.

The College spent £250,000 on incident ground maintenance, so as to ensure that health and safety procedures remained at the highest level.

Looking to the future

Customer partnership

During the past year, the College has put a lot of effort into engaging with each FRS to meet their individual needs, largely through the efforts of the customer relationship team. The success of this approach has been reflected in an independent survey of College customers, where 93% of respondents said that the customer relationship manager approach was effective.

The CFOA HR Policy Committee and the CFOA Operational Policy Committee have endorsed the establishment of a Strategic Stakeholder Board which will enable the College to work in partnership with its customers to ensure that the College is able to meet the longer term strategic requirements of the FRS.

Course and Curriculum Development

The College's flexible design and delivery approach has dramatically changed the way in which the College does business, and it is a change which customers have welcomed. The College is looking to build upon this by developing a blended learning approach to new course design; building in a blend of e-learning, classroom learning and practical incident ground training where appropriate. The College will also be reviewing its approach to qualifications and assessment in partnership with its customers.

Administrative and Corporate Services

The College continues to invest in its staff and is planning improvements in both HR systems and processes. An interim HR Director was appointed to help drive this forward, and to ensure that the College has a flexible and responsive workforce. Updated College telephony and IT systems have been identified as a priority for resourcing to move the College forward and allow it to conduct its business more effectively.

Management Commentary (performance)



CLG executive agency

The Fire Service College is an executive agency and trading fund of CLG. CLG's document *'Delivering our Priorities'* (published November 2007) sets out the overall context for the College's work. It establishes Departmental Strategic Objectives (DSOs) and Public Service Agreements (PSAs) for the three year period of the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR07); as well as governance arrangements, and more detailed priorities at Group level.

Of CLG's six DSOs, one is of particular relevance to the FRS:

DSO 6: To ensure safer communities by providing the framework for the Fire and Rescue Service and other agencies to prevent and respond to emergencies

Another of CLG's DSOs is linked to the New Dimensions aspect of training which takes place at the College; as well as to the developing equality and diversity agenda:

DSO 4: To develop communities that are cohesive, active and resilient to extremism (with the link being through fire and rescue authorities meeting local needs)

The CLG Board manages the Department's business through five sub-committees, with fire falling within the **Contingencies Planning Committee**.

A series of new Key Programme Boards report to the delivery sub-committees: The Programme Board most relevant to the Fire Service College is the **Fire and Rescue Service and Resilience Programme Board**. The Chief Executive of the Fire Service College is a member of this Programme Board, which oversees DSO 6 (see above), and provides strategic direction for the development and delivery of the Department's policies in respect of fire and resilience, as well as supporting the achievement of objectives.

The Programme Board manages the fire, rescue and resilience work of the **Cohesion and Resilience Group**. This Group is responsible (amongst other things) for improving the FRS, developing national and regional resilience capacity to respond to new threats and challenges, and building the Department's capacity to lead on future recovery challenges, such as flooding. Two key success factors are identified for the Group for 2008:

- to successfully implement the mission-critical Fire and Resilience programme
- to continue to drive modernisation of the FRS.

Performance measurement

Performance measurement over the year has focused on the achievement of four strategic objectives, together with a series of more detailed key performance indicators (KPIs).

Strategic objectives

- progression towards a sustainable financial performance through effective and economic operational delivery, the realisation of efficiency plans and the identification of additional revenue opportunities and alternative funding sources
- ensuring the further advancement and delivery of proposals for a Centre of Excellence with the Fire and Resilience Directorate (FRD), LGA and CFOA partners directed by a CLG-chaired Steering Group
- establishment of the Organisational Development Centre (ODC) as an acknowledged national resource for the UK FRS, championing best practice in cultural change, leadership, quality assurance, equality and diversity, and workforce development – as envisioned by the National Fire and Rescue Service Learning and Development Strategy
- maintaining and enhancing levels of training demand in both the core programme and bespoke products through high quality delivery, effective customer relationship, focused and diverse courses, the exploitation of new technologies, market niches and other opportunities, targeted marketing and flexible product design.

Key Performance indicators

HM Treasury set the College two specific financial targets for the year:

- to ensure that revenue consists principally of receipts for goods and services provided over the year, with revenue being sufficient to meet outgoings
- to achieve an average return of at least 4% greater than costs, and for this to be paid as a dividend to HM Treasury through the parent Department, CLG.

The following KPIs were agreed with CLG for the year, and College performance against each KPI is set out in the following table:

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Management Commentary (performance)

KPI	College performance
<p>KPI 1 - Delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To achieve an increase of 5% in FRS student day training delivered compared with 2006–07. To achieve an increase of 10% in wider market income compared with 2006–07. 	<p>Achieved. Total days increased from 47,207 in 2006–07 to 50,302 in 2007–08 i.e. by 6.6%.</p> <p>Achieved. Income increased from a forecast outturn of £4m in 2006–07 (the figure used to determine this KPI) to £4.475m in 2007–08 i.e. by 11.9%.</p>
<p>KPI 2 – Efficiency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure that funded operations are managed so that revenue from receipts is not less than sufficient, taking one year with another, to meet outgoings. To achieve a 10% improvement in the ratio of FRS core training costs to receipts, compared with 2006–07. 	<p>Not achieved. Revenue from receipts was £22.809m compared to outgoings of £23.734m. A deficit of £700,000 was agreed with CLG to enable delivery of the LDS programme. The eventual deficit of £925,000 exceeded that figure by £225,000 i.e. unplanned deficit of less than 1% of turnover.</p> <p>Not achieved. The ratio for 2007–08 was 0.61 compared to 0.66 in 2006–07. A reduction of 9.2% was delivered but in-year slippage, particularly in the New Dimension programme, left the College carrying excess short term delivery cost.</p>
<p>KPI 3 – Quality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To achieve a 10% improvement in FRS customer satisfaction levels with the training product during 2007–08, measured by reference to student feedback monitoring, compared with 2006–07. 	<p>Achieved. In 2007–08 98.9% of students assessed their training experience as satisfactory or better, compared with 98% in 2006–07. The College had targeted a 10% reduction in those customers who did not assess the training experience as satisfactory, good or excellent in post course evaluation (i.e. a satisfaction target of 98.2%). Actual outturn showed a reduction of almost 50%. It is also worth noting that there was a growth of more than 20% in delegates assessing the experience as 'Excellent'.</p>

KPI	College performance
<p>KPI 4 – Asset utilisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To achieve a 5% improvement in the ratio of 'bed nights available' to 'bed nights achieved' compared with 2006–07 levels. To achieve a 5% improvement in incident ground usage compared with 2006–07 levels. To identify and secure capital development funding of up to £2m in the year by means of site rationalisation. 	<p>Not achieved. The ratio for 2007–08 was 50% compared to 52% in 2006–07. Cancellation of a number of first quarter training courses under the New Dimension programme meant that average utilisation rates were reduced in year by 3.8%.</p> <p>Achieved. Defined periods of use increased from 49,590 periods in 2006–07 to 54,749 periods in 2007–08 i.e. an increase of 10.4%.</p> <p>Not pursued. Deferral of this objective was agreed with the CLG sponsor team during the year in recognition of the need for a wider ranging site rationalisation strategy.</p>

College performance against all the targets has been monitored through the year, through the dedicated sponsorship team located in the Fire and Resilience Directorate (FRD) within CLG. In particular, performance has been reviewed through:

- regular reporting by the Chief Executive to the Fire Service College Advisory Board (which meets three times per year)
- the submission of bi-monthly management board reports to the sponsorship team in FRD
- regular liaison meetings with the sponsorship team.

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Accounts 2007–08 Financial Report



Financial Results and appropriations

The deficit on ordinary activities for the year was £925,000 representing a return on the average net assets employed of –1.69% (2006–07 deficit £756,000 representing a return on the average net assets employed of –1.18%). Of this deficit £794,000 relates to the operation of the OD Centre (2006–07 equivalent £628,000) which is slightly higher than planning assumptions. The remaining deficit of £131,000 (2006–07 £128,000) relates to operating activity.

The College's parent department, the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG), has indicated its continuing support for the College to operate as a trading fund for the 2008–09 financial year and has confirmed an ongoing role for the College at the present site beyond that time.

The sponsor department within CLG has agreed to waive the College dividend payment for the year in the light of the deficit incurred and with regard to the need for the College to retain adequate cash balances for working capital purposes. The College had substantial net current assets at the year end, and it is anticipated that it will continue to remain solvent for the next twelve months.

Public dividend capital

Part of the capital of the fund as at 1st April 1992 amounting to £16,721,000 was deemed to be treated as Public Dividend Capital (note 14).

Fixed assets

In accordance with the provisions of FRS 15, the College has, where appropriate, divided assets into major components and has depreciated each component over its individual useful economic life.

Financial and accounting arrangements

The Secretary of State is the authorised lender to the fund. The Fire Service College Trading Fund Order 1992 imposes a limit of £15,000,000 (excluding the originating loan) on the sums that may be issued to the fund by way of a loan.

The financial objectives of the Fire Service College are detailed in a Treasury Minute dated 15th January 2004.

Auditor details

The College is audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General, though the practical delivery of the financial audit is subcontracted to PKF (UK) LLP. The auditor is appointed by statute and reports to Parliament. The scope of the audit is set out in the Certificate and Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General to the Houses of Parliament, published as part of this Annual Report.

No other services have been provided to the College by the auditor or by their appointed subcontractor during the financial year. The audit fee for the statutory audit undertaken by the Comptroller and Auditor General was £53,000 for the 2007–08 financial year.

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Audit Information

The Accounting Officer and Directors of the Fire Service College confirm that:

- There is no relevant audit information of which the auditors are unaware
- All necessary steps have been taken to ensure that the auditors are made aware of relevant audit information

Payments to suppliers

The Agency observes the principles of the Better Payment Practice Code on prompt payments. Its policy is to pay all bills not in dispute within 30 days of receipt of a valid invoice or within the agreed contractual terms if otherwise specified. The Director of Finance monitors bill paying performance and advises the Chief Executive. In 2007–08 99% (2006–07, 99%) of invoices were paid within 30 days of receipt.

Future Look/challenges and opportunities

The College is working with customers and stakeholders to ensure the continuing development of a sustainable operational model through the pursuit of the following four strategic objectives:

- Continue to progress towards a sustainable financial model through the realisation of new and wider revenue opportunities, the further development of a cost effective operational delivery system and the identification of additional efficiencies in corporate services and support functions
- Continue to exceed the expectations of the UKFRS customer; thereby establishing the College as the provider of choice for Incident Management and Fireground based training. Recognise the wider business needs of our core customer by developing collaborative Multi-Agency training opportunities for Emergency Response services
- Further embed the Organisational Development Centre (ODC) as an acknowledged national resource for the UKFRS ensuring that outputs are aligned to, and remain consistent with, the development of proposals for a future Fire Service Centre of Excellence organisation
- Work in partnership with CLG sponsors (FRS Development Division) to improve working relationships, to address the recommendations of the Mouchel Parkman and Shareholder Executive reviews* and to jointly create a Fire Service College and infrastructure befitting the expectations of our stakeholders

*These reviews were commissioned by CLG to consider options for capital investment at the Moreton site.

Summary of 5 year results

Year ending	31 March 2008 £000s	31 March 2007 £000s	31 March 2006 £000s	31 March 2005 £000s	31 March 2004 £000s
<i>Income Sources</i>					
Training	12,901	13,786	13,476	14,158	11,885
IPDS/NADC Development	805	861	1,633	2,556	1,387
Other Income	8,908	7,948	7,271	6,897	5,842
Total Income	22,614	22,595	22,380	23,611	19,114
<i>Operating Costs</i>					
Staff Costs	11,115	11,078	10,756	11,255	9,879
Depreciation	3,225	2,752	2,712	2,436	2,313
Other Costs	9,199	9,521	10,068	10,294	8,641
Total Operating Costs	23,539	23,351	23,536	23,985	20,833
Deficit on Ordinary Activities	(925)	(756)	(1,156)	(374)	(1,719)
Subsidies & compensation	–	–	–	–	961
Exceptional Income	–	–	–	–	200
Exceptional Expenditure	–	–	(700)	–	–
Deficit	(925)	(756)	(1,856)	(374)	(558)
<i>Costs as a percentage of income</i>					
Staff Costs	49%	49%	48%	48%	52%
Depreciation	14%	12%	12%	10%	12%
Other Costs	41%	42%	45%	44%	45%
Total	104%	103%	105%	102%	109%
Fixed Assets	67,743	64,589	60,134	58,093	47,364
Investment in fixed assets	2,304	2,713	2,008	11,426	4,587
(Decrease)/Increase in cash	(1,431)	(848)	(889)	(845)	198
Staff Numbers*	266	273	309	313	292
Average Staff Cost	42	41	35	36	34

* These figures are based on average Full Time Equivalents employed during the year – see note 4



Sally Sheen
Chief Executive
July 2008

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Statement of Trading Fund's and Accounting Officer's Responsibilities

Under Section 4(6) of the Government Trading Funds Act 1973 HM Treasury has directed the Fire Service College to prepare a statement of accounts for each financial year in the form and on the basis set out in the Accounts Direction applicable to all Trading Funds issued by HM Treasury. The accounts are prepared on an accruals basis and must give a true and fair view of the College's state of affairs at the year end and of its income and expenditure, recognised gains and losses and cash flows for the financial year.

In preparing the accounts, the Accounting Officer is required to comply with the requirements of the *Government Financial Reporting Manual* and in particular to:

- observe the accounts direction issued by the Treasury, including the relevant accounting and disclosure requirements, and apply suitable accounting policies on a consistent basis
- make judgements and estimates on a reasonable basis
- state whether applicable accounting standards as set out in the *Government Financial Reporting Manual* have been followed, and to disclose and explain any material departures in the financial statements
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis.

The Secretary of State appoints the Chief Executive for the College in accordance with the Framework Document.

The Treasury have subsequently appointed the Chief Executive as the Accounting Officer for the Fire Service College. Her relevant responsibilities as Trading Fund Accounting Officer, including the responsibility for the propriety and regularity of the public finances for which she is answerable, for the keeping of proper records and for safeguarding the College's assets, are set out in "Managing Public Money" issued by HM Treasury.

The responsibilities for the operation of the trading fund are contained in the Framework Document and in the "Guide to the establishment and operation of Trading Funds" published by HM Treasury in May 2004. Chapter 13 of the latter document deals specifically with accountability.

THE CERTIFICATE AND REPORT OF THE COMPTROLLER AND AUDITOR GENERAL TO THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT

I certify that I have audited the financial statements of The Fire Service College for the year ended 31st March 2008 under the Government Trading Funds Act 1973. These comprise the Income and Expenditure Account, the Balance Sheet, the Cash flow Statement, the Statement of Total Recognised Gains and Losses and the related notes.

These financial statements have been prepared under the accounting policies set out within them. I have also audited the information in the Remuneration Report that is described in that report as having been audited.

Respective responsibilities of the Chief Executive and auditor

The Fire Service College Chief Executive as Accounting Officer is responsible for preparing the Annual Report, which includes the Remuneration Report and the financial statements in accordance with the Government Trading Funds Act 1973 and HM Treasury directions made thereunder and for ensuring the regularity of financial transactions. These responsibilities are set out in the Statement of Trading Fund's and Accounting Officer's responsibilities.

My responsibility is to audit the financial statements and the part of the remuneration report to be audited in accordance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements, and with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland).

I report to you my opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view and whether the financial statements and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited have been properly prepared in accordance with the Government Trading Funds Act 1973 and HM Treasury directions made thereunder. I report to you whether, in my opinion, the information, which comprises the Chief Executive's Foreword, the Management Commentary, the Financial Review and the unaudited part of the Remuneration Report, included in the Annual Report, is not consistent with the financial statements. I also report to you whether, in all material respects, the expenditure and income have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

In addition, I report to you if the College has not kept proper accounting records, if I have not received all the information and explanations I require for my audit, or if information specified by HM Treasury regarding remuneration and other transactions is not disclosed.

I review whether the Statement on Internal Control reflects the Fire Service College's compliance with HM Treasury's guidance, and I report if it does not. I am not required to consider whether the statements covers all risks and controls, or form an opinion on the effectiveness of the College's corporate governance procedures or its risk and control procedures.

I read the other information contained in the Annual Report and consider whether it is consistent with the audited financial statements. This other information comprises the Chief Executive's Foreword, the Management Commentary, the Financial Review and the unaudited part of the Remuneration Report. I consider the implications for my report if I become aware of any apparent misstatements or material inconsistencies with the financial statements. My responsibilities do not extend to any other information.

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Basis of audit opinions

I conducted my audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) issued by the Auditing Practices Board. My audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts, disclosures and regularity of financial transactions included in the financial statements and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgments made by the College and Chief Executive in the preparation of the financial statements, and of whether the accounting policies are most appropriate to the College's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

I planned and performed my audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which I considered necessary in order to provide me with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error and that in all material respects the expenditure and income have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them. In forming my opinion I also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the financial statements and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited.

Opinions

In my opinion:

- the financial statements give a true and fair view, in accordance with the Government Trading Funds Act 1973 and directions made thereunder by HM Treasury, of the state of The Fire Service College's affairs as at 31st March 2008 and of its loss for the year then ended;
- the financial statements and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited have been properly prepared in accordance with the Government Trading Funds Act 1973 and HM Treasury directions made thereunder; and
- information, which comprises the Chief Executive's Foreword, the Management Commentary, the Financial Review and the unaudited part of the Remuneration Report, included within the Annual Report, is consistent with the financial statements.

Opinion on Regularity

In my opinion, in all material aspects, the expenditure and income have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

Report

I have no observations to make on these financial statements.

T J Burr
Comptroller and Auditor General
National Audit Office
151 Buckingham Palace Road
Victoria
London
SW1W 9SS

Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31st March 2008

	Note	Year Ended 31 March 2008 £000s	Year Ended 31 March 2007 £000s
Turnover	2	22,614	22,595
Cost of sales		(10,431)	(10,765)
Gross surplus		12,183	11,830
Administrative expenses		(12,915)	(12,401)
Operating deficit	3a	(732)	(571)
Interest receivable	5	195	205
Interest payable	6	(388)	(390)
Deficit on ordinary activities after interest	15	(925)	(756)

All operations are classed as continuing; there were no acquisitions or disposals during the year.

Relevant accounting policies and explanatory notes forming part of the accounts appear on pages 52 to 67 of this Financial Report.

Statement of Total Recognised Gains and Losses Year Ended 31st March 2008

	Note	Year Ended 31 March 2008 £000s	Year Ended 31 March 2007 £000s
Deficit for the financial year	15	(925)	(756)
Unrealised gain on revaluation of fixed assets	15	5,105	6,054
Unrealised loss on backlog depreciation	7	(1,483)	(1,560)
Total recognised gains and losses relating to the year		2,697	3,738

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Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2008

	Note	31 March 2008 £000s	31 March 2008 £000s	31 March 2007 £000s	31 March 2007 £000s
Fixed Assets					
Tangible assets	7	67,137		64,589	
Intangible Assets	7	606		–	
	7		67,743		64,589
Current Assets					
Stocks	8	93		131	
Debtors	9	6,306		5,399	
Cash at bank and in hand	10	2,143		3,574	
		8,542		9,104	
Creditors : Amounts falling due within one year	11	7,412		6,260	
			1,130		2,844
Net Current Assets					
Total Assets Less Current Liabilities			68,873		67,433
Creditors : Amounts falling due after more than one year	12		18,540		19,866
Provisions for liabilities and charges	13		110		15
			50,223		47,552
Taxpayers Equity					
Public dividend capital	14		16,721		16,721
Revaluation reserve	15		28,722		26,067
Donated assets reserve	15		–		7
Income and expenditure account	15		4,780		4,757
			50,223		47,552



Sally Sheen
Chief Executive
July 2008

Cash Flow Statement Year Ended 31st March 2008

	Note	31 March 2008 £000s	31 March 2008 £000s	31 March 2007 £000s	31 March 2007 £000s
Net cash inflow from operating activities	20a		1,446		2,078
Returns on investment and servicing of finance:					
Interest received		195		205	
Interest paid		(388)		(390)	
Net cash outflow from returns on investment and servicing of finance			(193)		(185)
Capital expenditure and financial investment:					
Purchase of tangible and intangible fixed assets		(2,304)		(2,713)	
Net cash outflow from capital expenditure and financial investment			(2,304)		(2,713)
Financing:					
Payments on account		(350)		–	
Repayment of short and long term government loans		(30)		(28)	
Net cash outflow from financing			(380)		(28)
Decrease in cash in the year	20b		(1,431)		(848)

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Accounts 2007–08

Notes to the Accounts

I. Accounting Policies

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the 2007–08 Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) issued by HM Treasury. The accounting policies contained in the FReM follow UK generally accepted accounting practice for companies (UK GAAP) to the extent that it is meaningful and appropriate to the public sector.

Where the FReM permits a choice of accounting policy, the accounting policy which has been judged to be most appropriate to the particular circumstances of the College for the purpose of giving a true and fair view has been selected. The College's accounting policies have been applied consistently in dealing with items considered material in relation to the accounts.

a. Accounting convention

The accounts are prepared under the historical cost convention, modified to include the revaluation of certain assets in a form approved by the Treasury in accordance with section 4(6) of the Government Trading Funds Act 1973.

Without limiting the information given, the accounts meet the accounting and disclosure requirements of the Companies Act 1985 and accounting standards issued or adopted by the Accounting Standards Board.

b. Tangible fixed assets

Assets valued on the basis of depreciated replacement cost are professionally revalued on a regular basis. The policy has previously been to undertake these valuations on a rolling five year basis. Valuations will now take place every five years, with interim valuations in year three if there is reason to believe that the replacement cost of an asset will have substantially changed. Indexation adjustments will be applied in the intervening years.

Land is valued on the basis of purchasing a notional replacement site in the same locality, equally suitable for the existing use. Staff houses and an office letting property on site are valued at open market value. All other freehold buildings, site infrastructure and fireground facilities are valued at the depreciated replacement cost of their major component parts.

Vehicles, fixtures and fittings, computer equipment and software are included at current cost.

Depreciation is provided on all tangible fixed assets, other than freehold land and staff housing, at rates estimated to write off the valuation of each asset evenly over its expected useful economic life. These rates are as follows:

Freehold buildings and dwellings	1 to 70 years
Fireground facilities	1 to 58 years
Site infrastructure	5 to 46 years
Vehicles	5 to 10 years
Fixtures and fittings	1 to 10 years
Computer equipment	3 to 5 years

c. Intangible Assets

Material product development costs with a reasonable expectation of commercial exploitation are capitalised as Intangible Assets. Amortisation is charged through the income and expenditure account over the expected period of commercial value (currently 3 to 5 years).

d. Stocks

Stocks are stated at the lower of cost and net realisable value.

e. Pension costs

Civil Servants – the expected cost of providing pensions is charged to the income and expenditure account so as to spread the cost over the service lives of the employees in the scheme, in such a way that the pension cost is a substantially level percentage of the current and expected future pensionable payroll.

Seconded Officers – the expected cost of the College's contribution to seconded officers' pension arrangements is charged to the income and expenditure account so as to spread the cost over the period of secondment.

f. Research and development

Research and minor development expenditure is written off in the year in which it is incurred.

g. Insurance

The College insures its trading activities by the purchase of policies for professional indemnity insurance, pre-school health and injury insurance for the workplace nursery, and travel insurance. Apart from these, the College effects no external insurance, exercising instead Crown indemnity. The cost of repairs, claims for damages and the book value of assets destroyed are charged to the income and expenditure account as they occur.

In the event of a material loss occurring, the Fire Service College will consult the Secretary of State about the action to be taken.

h. Going concern

The College has incurred a deficit for the year but is budgeting to break-even in the year to 31st March 2009. The College had substantial net current assets at the year end, and it is anticipated that the College will continue to remain solvent for the next twelve months. The business plan for the year provides for development of market opportunities and new business lines involving both public and private sectors which will underpin trading in surplus for 2009–10 and beyond. Accordingly, the College's accounts have been prepared on the going concern basis.

i. Operating leases

Rentals under operating leases are charged to the income and expenditure account as incurred.

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Accounts 2007–08**Notes to the Accounts****j. Capital grants**

Capital grants are included in deferred income and are amortised over the life of the assets funded by the grants.

k. Foreign exchange

Assets and liabilities denominated in foreign currencies are translated at the rate of exchange ruling at the balance sheet date. Transactions in foreign currencies are recorded at the rate ruling at the date of the transaction. All differences are taken to the income and expenditure account.

2. Turnover

Turnover is shown net of Value Added Tax and comprises income from course attendances, use of College facilities and sundry services. It represents the value of services provided from the ordinary activities of the business during the year:

2a. Analysis of turnover by customer type is stated below:

	Year Ended 31 March 2008 £000s	Year Ended 31 March 2007 £000s
UK Fire and Rescue Services	10,332	10,132
CLG	4,170	5,004
Other public sector	3,758	2,596
Public Sector Income	18,260	17,732
UK private sector	1,364	1,237
Overseas customers	2,900	3,521
Individuals	90	105
Other Income	4,354	4,863
Total Turnover	22,614	22,595

2b. Analysis of turnover and results by class of business:

This information is produced for fees and charges purposes and does not constitute segmental reporting under Statement of Standard Accounting Practice 25.

	Year Ended 31 March 2008 Income £000s	Year Ended 31 March 2008 Direct costs £000s	Year Ended 31 March 2008 Attributed costs £000s	Year Ended 31 March 2008 Surplus/ (Deficit) £000s	Year Ended 31 March 2007 Income £000s	Year Ended 31 March 2007 Direct costs £000s	Year Ended 31 March 2007 Attributed costs £000s	Year Ended 31 March 2007 Surplus/ (Deficit) £000s
Training & facilities	15,587	14,433	3,278	(2,124)	16,493	14,242	4,035	(1,784)
IPDS & NADC	802	772	211	(181)	861	948	258	(345)
LDS	1,839	2,163	650	(974)	1,472	1,375	384	(287)
Other income	4,386	1,426	413	2,547	3,769	1,670	254	1,845
Total Turnover	22,614	18,794	4,552	(732)	22,595	18,235	4,931	(571)

Segmental analysis of net assets has not been disclosed as net assets are not allocated by class of business.

The financial objective for the Fire Service College is given at Note 23.

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Accounts 2007–08**Notes to the Accounts****3. Operating deficit**

The operating deficit is stated after charging/(crediting) the following:

	Year Ended 31 March 2008 £000s	Year Ended 31 March 2007 £000s
Rental income	(241)	(237)
Charges for operating leases – plant and equipment	55	46
Depreciation	3,225	2,752
Amortisation of capital grant	(1,078)	(808)
External audit fee	53	52
Travel, subsistence and hospitality	439	337
Board members' remuneration	543	618
Other staff costs	9,990	10,460

4. Staff**4a. Staff Costs**

	Year Ended 31 March 2008 £000s	Year Ended 31 March 2007 £000s
Employee costs during the year:		
Wages and salaries	5,538	5,996
Social security costs	421	417
Superannuation costs	1,077	1,062
Seconded staff	2,568	2,685
Agency staff and visiting lecturers	1,511	918
Staff costs for the year	11,115	11,078
Less: Capitalised staff costs	582	–
Staff costs chargeable to Income and Expenditure	10,533	11,078

4b. Staff Numbers

	Year Ended 31 March 2008 Average FTE	Year Ended 31 March 2008 Average Actual no. Employed	Year Ended 31 March 2007 Average FTE	Year Ended 31 March 2007 Average Actual no. Employed
Senior management staff	6	8	6	8
Teaching staff	85	89	82	91
Non-teaching direct, safety and support staff	78	81	80	84
Administration staff	97	101	105	106
	266	279	273	289
Civil Service staff	198	205	205	212
Agency staff and visiting lecturers	16	19	18	20
Seconded staff	52	53	50	55
Non-Executive Directors	0	2	0	2

5. Interest receivable

	Year Ended 31 March 2008 £000s	Year Ended 31 March 2007 £000s
Bank interest	195	205

6. Interest payable

	Year Ended 31 March 2008 £000s	Year Ended 31 March 2007 £000s
Long term loans	388	390

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Accounts 2007–08

Notes to the Accounts

7. Fixed assets

	Freehold Land & Buildings £000s	Dwellings £000s	Site Infra- structure £000s	Fireground Facilities £000s	Computer Equipment 000s	Vehicles £000s	Fixtures & Fittings £000s	Intangible Assets (Product) Develop- ment £000s	Total £000s
Cost or Valuation At 1st April 2007	49,957	5,980	7,730	13,176	2,391	1,883	2,596	–	83,713
Additions	13	–	1,468	12	451	5	111	697	2,757
Revaluation	4,143	–	357	492	46	67	–	–	5,105
At 31st March 2008	54,113	5,980	9,555	13,680	2,888	1,955	2,707	697	91,575
At open market value	7,185	5,900	–	–	–	–	–	–	13,085
At replacement cost	46,928	80	9,555	13,680	2,888	1,955	2,707	697	78,490
	54,113	5,980	9,555	13,680	2,888	1,955	2,707	697	91,575
Accumulated Depreciation At 1st April 2007	9,833	26	2,037	3,681	1,368	719	1,460	–	19,124
Depreciation charge for the year	1,627	4	347	413	279	223	241	91	3,225
Revaluation	1,182	3	80	178	21	5	14	–	1,483
At 31st March 2008	12,642	33	2,464	4,272	1,668	947	1,715	91	23,832
Net Book Value at 31st March 2008	41,471	5,947	7,091	9,408	1,220	1,008	992	606	67,743
Net Book Value at 31st March 2007	40,124	5,954	5,693	9,495	1,023	1,164	1,136	–	64,589

Land is valued on the basis of purchasing a notional replacement site in the same locality, equally suitable for the existing use. All buildings, structures and site infrastructure are valued on a depreciated replacement cost basis with the exception of staff houses and an office letting property on site which are valued at open market value. The basis of valuation is in accordance with the appraisal and valuation manual produced by the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS). Powis Hughes, an independent firm of chartered surveyors, revalued 100% of the assets valued at open market value for existing use as at 31st March 2005. The remainder of the assets were revalued using appropriate indices. All assets valued on the basis of indexed depreciated replacement cost were subject to full revaluation at 31st March 2001 or at 31st March 2002.

Assets with a cost of £2,804,000 have been fully depreciated but remain substantially in use. These sums have been retained in the total asset costs and accumulated depreciation disclosed above.

8. Stocks

	Year Ended 31 March 2008 £000s	Year Ended 31 March 2007 £000s
Consumables	93	104
Goods for resale	–	27
	93	131

9. Debtors

	Year Ended 31 March 2008 £000s	Year Ended 31 March 2007 £000s
Trade debtors due within one year	5,553	4,042
Other debtors	3	–
Prepayments and accrued income	750	1,357
	6,306	5,399

Included within debtors falling due within one year are the following intra-governmental balances:

Central Government	1,750	1,170
Local Authorities	1,244	1,004
Public Corporations and Trading funds	5	6
	2,999	2,180

10. Cash at bank and in hand

The College's policy on the management of liquid resources is to maintain liquid resources in interest-bearing commercial bank accounts, or on money market deposits, in accounts which are repayable on demand or at short notice.

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Accounts 2007–08

Notes to the Accounts

11. Creditors – amounts falling due within one year

	31 March 2008 £000s	31 March 2007 £000s
Government loans	31	29
Trade creditors	2,701	831
Accruals	2,238	3,304
Deferred income	2,442	2,096
	7,412	6,260

Included within creditors falling due within one year are the following intra-governmental balances:

Central Government	2,337	2,166
Local Authorities	3,645	3,474
Public Corporations and Trading funds	5	6
	5,987	5,646

12: Creditors falling due after more than one year

	31 March 2008 £000s	31 March 2007 £000s
Deferred Income	13,587	14,898
Accruals due after one year	354	337
Government loans repayable within 1-2 years	70	65
Government loans repayable within 2-5 years	127	118
Government loans repayable after 5 years	4,402	4,448
	18,540	19,866

All loans are unsecured and repayable in instalments of £209,000 (including interest) paid twice every year.

All loans bear rates of interest which are fixed for the full period of the loan. The weighted average period of loans is 43 years and the weighted average interest rate is 8.35% (2006–07 – 8.34%).

Included within creditors falling due after more than one year are the following intra-governmental balances:

	31 March 2008 £000s	31 March 2007 £000s
Central Government	16,040	17,456
Local Authorities	310	337
	16,350	17,793

13. Provisions for liabilities and charges

	Personal Injury Claims £000s
Total balance at 1st April 2007	15
Increase in provision	106
Utilised in year	(11)
Balance at 31st March 2008	110

The provision for personal injury is based on claims initiated against the College. The amount of the provision represents an assessment of the cost to the College based on legal advice. The transfer of economic benefits is expected to take place more than one year after the balance sheet date.

14. Public dividend capital

Issued pursuant to Government Trading Funds Act 1973

	£000s
Balance at 1st April 2007 and at 31st March 2008	16,721

No dividend has been declared in view of the retained deficit for the year.

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Accounts 2007–08

Notes to the Accounts

15. Reserves

	Income & Expenditure Account £000s	Revaluation Reserve £000s	Donated Assets Reserve £000s
At 1st April 2007	4,757	26,067	7
Deficit for year	(925)	–	–
Revaluation of fixed assets	–	5,105	–
Backlog depreciation	–	(1,502)	(7)
Realised depreciation	948	(948)	–
At 31st March 2008	4,780	28,722	–

16. Lease obligations

The College is committed to make the following payments in the next financial year in respect of operating leases expiring within:

	31 March 2008 £000s	31 March 2007 £000s
One year	3	–
Two to five years	16	59
	19	59

17. Capital commitments

No contractual capital commitments existed at the end of either 2006–07 or 2007–08.

18. Contingent liabilities

The total estimate of the contingent liabilities relating to personal injury and employment claims is £40,000 based on previous years' claims experience.

19. Pension schemes

The employees of the Fire Service College are Civil Servants to whom the conditions of the Superannuation Acts 1965 and 1972 and subsequent amendments apply. The Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS) is an unfunded multi-employer defined benefit scheme, in which the employer's share of the underlying assets and liabilities is not identified. A full actuarial valuation was carried out at 31st March 2007. Details can be found in the resource accounts of the Cabinet Office: Civil Superannuation (www.civilservice-pensions.gov.uk).

For 2007–08, employers' contributions of £1,077,000 were payable to the PCSPS (2006–07 £1,062,000) at one of four rates in the range 17.1% to 25.5% of pensionable pay, based on salary bands. Rates will remain the same for the next two years, subject to the revalorisation of the salary bands. Employer contributions are to be reviewed every four years following a full scheme valuation by the scheme actuary. The contribution rates reflect benefits as they are accrued, not when the costs are actually incurred, and reflect past experience of the scheme.

The seconded officers are members of the Firemen's Pension Scheme 1992. This is a multi-employer unfunded defined benefit scheme and is administered as separate local schemes by the Fire Authorities. The overall cost of funding the scheme was assessed by Government actuaries in 1991 as 37.5% of earnings, of which the seconded officer contributes 11% of earnings. Based on transfer values paid in the years ended 31st March 2007 and 2008, the College has assessed the cost of funding based on the introduction of full cost recovery at £770,000 which was charged to the income and expenditure account (2006–07 £783,000) for payment to local authorities at the end of secondments.

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20. Cash flow statement

20a. Reconciliation of operating deficit to cash inflow from operating activities

	31 March 2008 £000s	31 March 2007 £000s
Operating deficit	(732)	(571)
Depreciation	3,225	2,752
Capital grants amortised in year	(1,078)	(808)
Movement in deferred income	(340)	(46)
Downward revaluation taken to I&E	(18)	–
Write off of Donated Assets Reserve	(7)	–
Increase/(decrease) in provisions in the year	95	(92)
Decrease in stock	38	66
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(434)	1,070
Increase/(decrease) in creditors due within one year	681	(54)
Increase/(decrease) in creditors due after more than one year	16	(239)
Net cash inflow from operating activities	1,446	2,078

20b. Reconciliation of net cash flow to movement in net debt

	31 March 2008 £000s	31 March 2007 £000s
Decrease in cash in the period	(1,431)	(848)
Decrease in borrowings	30	28
	(1,401)	(820)
Net debt at start of year	(1,086)	(266)
Net debt at end of year	(2,487)	(1,086)

20c. Analysis of changes in net funds

	At 31 March 2007 £000s	Cash Flows £000s	Other Non-Cash Movements £000s	At 31 March 2008 £000s
Cash at bank and in hand	3,574	(1,431)	–	2,143
Debt due within one year	(29)	30	(32)	(31)
Debt due after one year	(4,631)	–	32	(4,599)
Total	(1,086)	(1,401)	–	(2,487)

21. Reconciliation of movement in government funds

	31 March 2008 £000s	31 March 2007 £000s
Deficit for the current year	(925)	(756)
Revaluation of fixed assets	5,105	6,054
Movement of backlog depreciation	(1,509)	(1,560)
	2,671	3,738
Government funds brought forward	47,552	43,814
Government funds carried forward	50,223	47,552

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Accounts 2007–08

Notes to the Accounts

22. Analysis of change in financing

	Long Term Loans		
	Repayable Within One Year £000s	Repayable After One Year £000s	Total £000s
At 1st April 2007	29	4,631	4,660
Movement from long term to short term loan	32	(32)	–
Loans repaid	(30)	–	(30)
At 31st March 2008	31	4,599	4,630

23. Trading fund objectives

The Secretary of State has determined financial objectives for the Fire Service College Trading Fund. These were confirmed by Treasury Minute dated 15th January 2004.

The financial objective for the Fire Service College is to achieve a return of a minimum of 4% averaged over the period 1st April 2004 to 31st March 2009, in the form of a surplus on ordinary activities before interest and dividends expressed as a percentage of average capital employed.

The operating deficit of £732,000 represents a return on the average net assets employed of -1.34% (2006–07 -1.09%). The cumulative return on average net assets for the period 1st April 2004 to 31st March 2008 is -6.26%.

24. Related party transactions

As stated in the management commentary, the Fire Service College is an Executive Agency, with Trading Fund status. Responsibility for the College rests with CLG. In the normal course of its business, the College provides fire-related training to both the public and private sectors. During the year, the Fire Service College has had a significant number of material transactions with UK Fire Services and with Government Departments including the Scottish Executive, CLG, and the Central Police Training and Development Authority.

None of the Management Board members, key management staff or other related parties has undertaken any material transactions with the Fire Service College during the year.

No directors of the College have recorded in the Register of Interests during the year shareholdings in companies with which the College had business dealings.

25. Financial instruments

	Book value £000s	Fair value £000s
Financial assets		
Cash at bank and in hand	2,143	2,143
Financial liabilities		
Long term loans from the Secretary of State	4,599	8,133

The total instalments of capital and interest remaining to be paid to extinguish financial liabilities over the contracted term of the loans amount to £18,157,474.

These figures exclude short term debtors and creditors.

26. Financial risks

Liquidity risk

The Fire Service College is not exposed to liquidity risk as long as its annual surplus and/or cash balances are sufficient to cover the loan instalments of £417,000. The levels of capital expenditure are managed so as to be met from available cash balances.

The Fire Service College is reliant on the liquidity of CLG to meet a major insurable loss.

Interest rate risk

The interest bearing loans represent 9.2% of Total Taxpayers' Equity. The interest rate is fixed. Deposits earning interest at a variable rate against bank base rate represented 4.3% of Total Taxpayers' Equity.

Foreign currency risk

The Fire Service College has an immaterial exposure to liabilities or expenditure denominated in foreign currencies.

27. Post balance sheet events

Gill Newton, Chief Executive and Accounting Officer for the College announced on 30th May 2008 her intention to retire from post with effect from 30th June 2008. Sally Sheen (formerly Deputy Chief Executive) has been appointed Chief Executive and Accounting Officer on an interim basis with effect from 1st July 2008.

The Fire Service College's report and accounts are laid before the Houses of Parliament by the Comptroller and Auditor General. FRS 21 'Events After the Balance Sheet Date' requires the Fire Service College to disclose the date on which the accounts are authorised for issue. This is the date on which the approved report and accounts are despatched by the Comptroller and Auditor General to the Houses of Parliament.

The authorised date for issue is 21st July 2008.

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Annex A

The Fire Service College – Remuneration Report 2007–08

Remuneration Policy

Senior Civil Service

The remuneration of senior civil servants is set by the Prime Minister following independent advice from the Review Body on Senior Salaries. In reaching its recommendations, the Review Body has regard to the following considerations:

- the need to recruit, retain and motivate suitably able and qualified people to exercise their different responsibilities
- regional/local variations in labour markets and their effects on the recruitment and retention of staff
- Government policies for improving the public services, including the requirement on departments to meet the output targets for the delivery of departmental services
- the funds available to departments as set out in the Government's departmental expenditure limits
- Government's inflation target.

The Review Body takes account of the evidence it receives about wider economic considerations and the affordability of its recommendations.

Further information about the work of the Review Body can be found at www.ome.uk.com.

Other College staff

The remuneration of other Civil Service grades employed by the Fire Service College is set, under delegated authority from CLG, by College management. The principal drivers underpinning existing remuneration levels and the annual pay award negotiations with the staff side are entirely consistent with those set out above for senior civil servants, i.e. the need to recruit, retain and motivate suitably able and qualified people to exercise their different responsibilities. Specific regard is also given to local market conditions.

Seconded Officers

The College also makes significant use of seconded Fire Service officers to maintain high standards of relevance and currency in tuition levels. Remuneration rates for these staff are set through nationally negotiated FRS settlements.

Service Contracts

Civil service appointments, both for senior civil servants and more junior grades, are made in accordance with the Civil Service Commissioners' Recruitment Code, which requires appointment to be on merit on the basis of fair and open competition but also includes the circumstances when appointments may otherwise be made.

The officials covered by this report hold appointments, which are open-ended until they reach the normal retiring age of 60. Early termination, other than for misconduct, would result in the individual receiving compensation as set out in the Civil Service Compensation Scheme.

Further information about the work of the Civil Service Commissioners can be found at: www.civilservicecommissioners.gov.uk.

Seconded officers operate under individual contracts, normally of three years duration but with the scope for variation, on loan from the employing FRS. These contracts set out any variances to substantive terms and conditions that are deemed necessary to facilitate College operations.

Salary and pension entitlements

The following sections provide details of the remuneration and pension interests of the Management Board, both of which have been subjected to audit.

Remuneration

	2007–08 Salary £000s	2006–07 Salary £000s
Ms G Newton	110-115	100-110
(Including bonus of)	8	6
Mr P Evans	60-65	55-60
Mr I Stroud	60-65	55-60
Mr M Mason (until 11/11/07)	30-35	55-60
Ms S Hopgood	60-65	60-65
(Including bonus of)	3	–
Ms S Sheen	85-90	50-55
(Including bonus of)	9	–
Mr J Vickers*	10-15	10-15
Mr E Galvin*	10-15	10-15

*Mr Vickers and Mr Galvin served as Non-Executive Directors during the year.

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Annex A**The Fire Service College –
Remuneration Report 2007–08**

Salary

'Salary' includes gross salary, performance pay or bonuses, overtime, reserved rights to London weighting or London allowances, recruitment and retention allowances, private office allowances and any other allowance to the extent that it is subject to UK taxation.

This report is based on payments made by the Agency and thus recorded in these accounts.

Benefits in kind

No benefits in kind were received by any member of the Management Board.

Civil Service Pensions

Pension benefits are provided through the Civil Service pension arrangements. From 30th July 2007, civil servants may be in one of four defined benefit schemes; either a 'final salary' scheme (classic, premium or classic plus); or a 'whole career' scheme (nuvos). These statutory arrangements are unfunded with the cost of benefits met by monies voted by Parliament each year. Pensions payable under classic, premium, classic plus and nuvos are increased annually in line with changes in the Retail Prices Index (RPI). Members joining from October 2002 may opt for either the appropriate defined benefit arrangement or a good quality 'money purchase' stakeholder pension with a significant employer contribution (partnership pension account).

Employee contributions are set at the rate of 1.5% of pensionable earnings for classic and 3.5% for premium, classic plus and nuvos. Benefits in classic accrue at the rate of 1/80th of final pensionable earnings for each year of service. In addition, a lump sum equivalent to three years' pension is payable on retirement. For premium, benefits accrue at the rate of 1/60th of final pensionable earnings for each year of service. Unlike classic, there is no automatic lump sum. Classic plus is essentially a hybrid with benefits in respect of service before 1st October 2002 calculated broadly as per classic and benefits for service from October 2002 calculated as in premium. In nuvos a member builds up a pension based on his pensionable earnings during their period of scheme membership. At the end of the scheme year (31st March) the member's earned pension account is credited with 2.3% of their pensionable earnings in that scheme year and the accrued pension is uprated in line with RPI. In all cases members may opt to give up (commute) pension for lump sum up to the limits set by the Finance Act 2004.

The partnership pension account is a stakeholder pension arrangement. The employer makes a basic contribution of between 3% and 12.5% (depending on the age of the member) into a stakeholder pension product chosen by the employee from a panel of three providers. The employee does not have to contribute but where they do make contributions, the employer will match these up to a limit of 3% of pensionable salary (in addition to the employer's basic contribution). Employers also contribute a further 0.8% of pensionable salary to cover the cost of centrally provided risk benefit cover (death in service and ill health retirement).

The accrued pension quoted is the pension the member is entitled to receive when they reach pension age, or immediately on ceasing to be an active member of the scheme if they are already at or over pension age. Pension age is 60 for members of classic, premium and classic plus and 65 for members of nuvos.

Further details about the Civil Service pension arrangements can be found at the website:

www.civilservice-pensions.gov.uk

Cash Equivalent Transfer Values

A Cash Equivalent Transfer Value (CETV) is the actuarially assessed capitalised value of the pension scheme benefits accrued by a member at a particular point in time. The benefits valued are the member's accrued benefits and any contingent spouse's pension payable from the scheme. A CETV is a payment made by a pension scheme or arrangement to secure pension benefits in another pension scheme or arrangement when the member leaves a scheme and chooses to transfer the benefits accrued in their former scheme. The pension figures shown relate to the benefits that the individual has accrued as a consequence of their total membership of the pension scheme, not just their service in a senior capacity to which disclosure applies. The figures include the value of any pension benefit in another scheme or arrangement which the individual has transferred to the Civil Service pension arrangements. They also include any additional pension benefit accrued to the member as a result of their purchasing additional pension benefits at their own cost. CETVs are calculated within the guidelines and framework prescribed by the Institute and Faculty of Actuaries.

Real increase in CETV

This reflects the increase in CETV effectively funded by the employer. It does not include the increase in accrued pension due to inflation, contributions paid by the employee (including the value of any benefits transferred from another pension scheme or arrangement) and uses common market valuation factors for the start and end of the period.

Pension Benefits

	Accrued pension at age 60 as at 31/3/08 and related lump sum £000s	Real increase in pension and related lump sum at age 60 £000s	CETV at 31/3/08 £000s	CETV at 31/3/07 £000s	Real increase in CETV Funded by employer £000s	Employee contributions and transfers in Nearest £100
Ms G Newton	45-50 plus lump sum of 135-140	0-2.5 plus lump sum of 2.5-5	1,010	845	28	16
Ms S Sheen	5-10	0-2.5	84	50	23	27
Mr P Evans	15-20 plus lump sum of 45-50	0-2.5 plus lump sum of 2.5-5	259	208	15	9
Mr I Stroud	15-20	0-2.5	288	233	13	90
Mr M Mason	25-30	0-2.5	490	473	9	12
Ms S Hopgood	10-15 plus lump sum of 30-35	0-2.5 plus lump sum of 2.5-5	203	158	15	74



Sally Sheen
Chief Executive
July 2008

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Annex B**The Fire Service College – Statement on Internal Control for the Financial Year 2007–08**

Scope of Responsibility

As Accounting Officer, I have responsibility for maintaining a sound system of internal control that supports the achievement of CLG policies, aims and objectives, as set by the Department's Ministers, whilst safeguarding the public funds and trading fund assets for which I am personally responsible in accordance with the responsibilities assigned to me in Managing Public Money.

The conditions under which I discharge all these responsibilities are specified in the Agency Framework Document, which establishes both my direct accountability to Ministers for the Agency's operation and performance as well as the limits of delegation that the Departmental Accounting Officer affords me as Trading Fund Accounting Officer.

I hold regular meetings with the College sponsors and ensure that they are kept well informed of developments, issues and possible risks. The Business Plan is agreed by the Minister and it is this document that is used to identify organisational risk. Communication with CLG has been strengthened in the period through the establishment of regular and formalised bi-lateral meetings with the FRD sponsor division, designed to complement the existing programme of FSC Advisory Board meetings which are held three times each year.

The Purpose of the System of Internal Control

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives. It can, therefore, only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness.

The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise risks to the achievement of College policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically. The system of internal control has been in place in the Fire Service College from the start of the financial year and up to the date of this statement.

Capacity to Handle Risk

Leadership is given to the risk management process through ongoing review as a regular feature of Board and Audit Committee meetings, by incorporation into business planning processes, and by the policy of cascading responsibility for risk management throughout the College to those people best positioned to manage risk effectively. Support is provided by two Risk and Governance Officers. Formal mechanisms monitored by the organisational risk and governance officers ensure that these responsibilities and processes are effectively communicated.

Risk and Control Framework

The College has adopted an approach to risk appetite based on identification of the likelihood and potential impact of risks to the achievement of the College's objectives as determined by a risk scoring process. In this way the College seeks to ensure that the control response is proportionate to the risk identified.

The College has established the following structures and processes to maintain and review the system of internal control:

- A Management Board consisting of five executive directors and two non-executive directors. An Operational Adviser, the Head of Human Resources, the Chief Information Officer, and the Head of Policy and Corporate Support also attend each meeting. The Board meets formally six times each year to consider planning, performance and the strategic direction of the Agency. Two non-executive directors (NEDs) are appointed to the Management Board. The NEDs also have a separate programme of bi-lateral meetings with the Chief Executive. An external expert member appointed to the Audit Committee receives Board minutes and also has bi-lateral meetings with the Chief Executive
- An Audit Committee which meets four times a year. The Audit Committee comprises the two Management Board NEDs and a third external member to align with Treasury guidance and to complement the existing skill base. The Chief Executive and the Director of Finance attend each meeting. The Audit Committee is chaired by a NED and provides verbal reports to the Management Board. The Management Board receives copies of the Audit Committee minutes. This helps to ensure that audit and governance issues are considered at the highest level within the College. The Chair of the Audit Committee also provides a written annual report to the Chief Executive. Committee members also meet with the external auditors and the Director of Finance for a detailed review of the annual report and accounts. The Committee Terms of Reference have been revised during the year in line with new Treasury Guidance and have been endorsed by the Management Board
- A College Executive Group, consisting of senior managers, which receives and considers departmental risk registers on a regular basis. The Group has also arranged additional activity to improve senior management understanding of IPR and Public Sector Information responsibilities. A presentation on European Procurement regulations was also provided by the Head of CLG Procurement
- A College Management Forum, latterly renamed the Middle Managers Network Forum, consisting of middle managers, which meets periodically and provides the opportunity for middle managers to comment on departmental risk and other appropriate issues
- A Health and Safety Committee chaired by the Chief Executive providing regular review of operational challenges, analysis of H&S assessments and oversight of mitigations
- A Capital Expenditure Board, chaired by the Director of Business Planning, Finance & Procurement, which scrutinises all significant capital expenditure proposals and monitors approved projects
- A Wider Market Board, chaired by the Head of Business Development that oversees the development and implementation of material new delivery contracts or initiatives. (This Board did not meet in 2007–08)
- A rolling three-year audit programme, informed by the risk registers is agreed by the Management Board and the Audit Committee. Internal Audit Services of CLG administer the programme
- Regular stewardship reporting by Directors to the Management Board outlining progress towards business plan targets and the steps being taken to manage and control risk in their areas of responsibility
- A risk management policy which is reviewed and agreed by the Management Board on an annual basis
- Maintenance of an organisational strategic risk register and divisional level operational risk registers
- Communication of College risk management policies to appropriate staff and agreement of risk management responsibilities
- A risk prioritisation methodology which assesses the likelihood and the potential impact of risk crystallisation before and after management intervention measures.

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Annex B**The Fire Service College – Statement on Internal Control for the Financial Year 2007–08**

- Maintenance of a sources of assurance register of internal and external verification processes. This register has been reviewed and developed further in year under the guidance of the Audit Committee
- A formal process to ensure completion of actions recommended in internal and external audit reports. The register of outstanding actions is reviewed at each Audit Committee meeting
- A Chief Information Officer has been appointed with responsibility for all data handling and security matters. An extensive review of this area of risk was undertaken in year with support from CLG
- A Business Continuity Planning exercise was undertaken in year with the outcomes reported to the Audit Committee
- College anti-fraud and whistleblowing policies were in operation throughout the year

Risk management is integrated and aligned with the Business Plan and through that process with the College Personal Performance Management system to support delivery of organisational objectives and key targets.

The Management Board reviews the strategic risk register at each meeting and also considers high impacting operational risks on a referral basis. The Audit Committee also reviews the strategic risk register at each meeting and is responsible for advising the Chief Executive of the adequacy of risk management arrangements as part of the wider internal control framework. The Audit Committee is also informed of any red operational risks.

Review of Effectiveness

As Accounting Officer, I have responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control. My review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control is informed by the executive managers within the College who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the control framework, by the work of the internal audit function and also by the opinion of external auditors as recorded in their management letter and other reports. I have been advised on the implications of the result of my review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control by my Management Board and Audit Committee and by the Head of Internal Audit. Processes are in place which identify and address weaknesses in control, and improve systems on an on-going basis.

The College uses CLG's Internal Audit Service, which is required to operate to Government Internal Audit standards. They submit regular reports, which include the Head of Internal Audit's independent opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the College's systems of Risk Management, Control and Governance together with recommendations for improvement. For 2007–08 the opinion of the Head of Internal Audit is that:

Risk Management

We give a substantial assurance. The College maintains a sound risk management framework which reflects best practice and accords with Treasury guidelines. The risk regime is subject to regular review and continuous improvement.

Control

The overall control environment has been enhanced by the introduction of comprehensive and coherent anti-fraud and whistleblowing policies. We give a limited assurance as to the overall sufficiency of internal control during 2007–08. There was a need for control enhancement in specific areas, particularly in the management of information assets. There were no “Significant Control Issues” as defined by paragraph A.4.15.5 of Managing Public Money.

Governance

We give a substantial assurance. Governance at the College is based on the College Management Board and Audit Committee. Both are soundly constituted, operate effectively and have terms of reference which are subject to regular review.

No significant control issues have arisen during the course of the financial year and up to the date of this statement.

Based on the operation of the control environment outlined above, and supported by the opinion of the Audit Committee and the Head of Internal Audit Services, I am content that the College has operated with a satisfactory system of internal control and risk management for the financial year 2007–08.



Sally Sheen
Chief Executive
July 2008

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