

Sunrise

A new dawn in training

Training Firefighters today as tomorrow's emergency workers

“If you bully someone in training, set impossible goals, and teach facts rather than understanding, then it is likely that, as they mature as firefighters, they will fit-in with bullies at the station, challenge organisational goals, and resist IPDS and CFS.”



Baigent, D., with Hill, R., Ling, T., Skinner, D., Rolph, C and Watson, A.

Research by the Fire Service Research and Training Unit at APU, Cambridge
in strategic partnership with Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service

SUNRISE FOREWORD BY HMCIFS SIR GRAHAM MELDRUM

The role of a firefighter has changed dramatically over the past few years and will continue to do so as the modernisation agenda is developed.

This will have implications for everything associated with the service and in particular in relation to the type and delivery of basic training. The wider role of rescue work and the demands of community fire safety require skills that need to be taught in a different manner to that of firefighting. All of this will require the initial training to be delivered in a manner that meets the new agenda. People joining the Fire and Rescue Service are highly motivated and are very keen to learn the skills that will equip them to contribute to the work of the service as soon as possible.

The training centres that deliver training to new entrants must be at that forefront of the new agenda. They provide the first impression of the service and it needs to be one that reflects the service of tomorrow and sets the cultural change required in motion.

I am sure that people who are responsible for running training centres that provide new entry entrants training will read this report with great interest and examine their training methods to see if they will provide the new firefighters with the skills they require to deliver the modern service the public expects.

Sir Graham Meldrum

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Fire Services for England and Wales

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2003

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 1 PAGE

The findings suggest that trainees are keen to fit their own ambitions/goals in with those of the Fire and Rescue Service. At the same time The Fire and Rescue Service also has goals for its trainees and when these goals coincide with those of the trainers then the output can be both *efficient* and *effective*. Trainees should then leave Training Centre with a full understanding of (and signed up to) the real expectations the organisation has of them. However, some trainers' believe that they know better than their Chief Officer. Initial training can then be *efficient* in providing firefighters who are "critical incident safe." However, training will not be fully *effective* if trainees have also learnt to resist the future development of the Fire and Rescue Service through IPDS and CFS.

1. All Training Centres are different from each other, but the trainers in each form up as if they were a watch; they share joint norms, values and expectations and will work hard to implement them (sometimes working against the wishes of their Chief Officer to do this).
2. Training Centres form clusters on a scale that runs from Regimented (traditional/conservative) through Transitional to Progressive (working towards the Fire and Rescue Service's new professional ethos).
3. Trainees who arrive on the first day are willing, eager and compliant. They want to fit their own aspirations in with the organisational goals of the Fire and Rescue Service.
4. Progressive trainers will facilitate trainee's incorporation by encouraging their expectations to meet up with the goals of new professional ethos of the Fire and Rescue Service: to employ a diverse, talented and free-thinking workforce whose goals fit with the fire service's intention to reach out to prevent emergencies and to suppress them when they occur.
5. At the start of a career-long learning process, some trainees are receiving a hidden message that misdirects trainee's willingness to join in on organisational goals away from CFS towards the physical macho heroism of firefighting.
6. Regimented (traditionalist) trainers will use 'discipline' to treat trainees as if they are the type of people who need to be controlled, directed, moulded, coerced and watched over. This approach makes trainees vulnerable to trainer's aim to mould them into their own image (of the type of firefighter they believe the Fire and Rescue Service needs).
7. In outcome trainees may end up locating themselves somewhere on a continuum between two models:
 - i. Trainee's self-esteem is reduced to the point where they accept the trainer's requirements to succeed. Consequently, trainees are likely to be vulnerable to the informal agendas that the watch offer them on their arrival at the station.
 - ii. Trainees can recognise that trainers are trying to change their identity and comply because they have no alternative. However, treating trainees as if they were X people may have the opposite outcome to the trainers intention. Trainees:
 - a. develop a strategy for compliance to successfully pass through training.
 - b. build a gap between themselves and the trainers (which in due course prepares the way for a gap between firefighter and officers).
 - c. leave training centre with their own expectations of the Fire and Rescue Service alienated from the Fire and Rescue Service's actual goals.

This promotion of an "us and them" culture makes it more likely these probationers will readily fit-in with any (informal) agendas the watch may offer.

8. For IPDS and Continuing Professional Development to succeed, trainees should be encouraged to enjoy learning and to be self-motivating in this regard. Some trainees receive negative messages about any learning process that is classroom or book based.
9. Training centres built on a bedrock of regimented discipline and rote learning reduce diversity and the ability of the individual to think out of the box for the benefit of the Fire and Rescue Service.
10. Despite claims that the Fire and Rescue Service is a disciplined service, Chief Officers cannot order it to change. Hierarchical controls are not enough to deliver effective measurable change.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 3 PAGE

In many ways, the fire service stands at a crossroads. It has attracted the eye of government. The White Paper “Our Fire and Rescue Service (ODPM 2003), argues for the fire service to be more pro-active in preventing emergencies. The new emphasis is to be prevention and the focus for this will be through Community Fire Safety (CFS).

Before any of this can happen, the fire service will need to be effective in four areas. First, the workforce must be fully committed to a developing fire service. Second, firefighters will require the skills necessary to communicate the CFS message. Third, firefighters must be seen as less of a white masculine organisation and more representative of their community. Fourth, Integrated Personal Development System should be implemented as a way of achieving (and a check of) these requirements.

The project

This cultural audit of initial training set out to identify best practice in preparing trainees for the developing fire service. Visits to thirteen training centres and the Fire Service College provided data from interviews, questionnaires and observations to be analysed using Grounded Theory (Glaser and Strauss 1967). The preliminary analysis was then presented to the Sunrise Conference and the debate that took place then became part of the data for the final analysis.

We listened closely to the constant advice we were given that it is the unofficial culture on the watch that will frustrate any attempt to change the fire service.

To help with the analysis we worked on the basis that the fire service has a new professional ethos: to employ a diverse, talented and free-thinking workforce whose goals fit with the fire service’s intention to reach out to prevent emergencies and to suppress them when they occur.

Types of training centres

Trainees join the Fire and Rescue Service to become firefighters, they are prepared to listen and learn. In the terms of McGregor (1985) they are Y type people that have similar goals to the organisation and will work hard to fit-in. Initial training can therefore facilitate the trainee to develop their goals in accordance to those of the developing fire service and support its official culture.

Training centres are different from each other, but the trainers in each form up as if they were a watch; they share joint norms, values and expectations, and work hard to implement them.

To operationalise our understanding of training centres we have developed a model that moves from “regimented,” through “transitional,” to “progressive” according to if a training centre facilitates self-development and encourages trainees to join the official culture or if it imposes learning and teaches trainees to resist (official goals).

Those areas judged, as progressive would encourage trainees:

- To develop as individuals (within a team) who want to succeed.
- To join up their own expectations with the official goals of the organisation.
- To ask questions at the appropriate time.
- To take responsibility for their own actions.

They do this by employing trainers with sufficient confidence in their own abilities to do their job without resorting to a situation where “discipline is done to you.” These trainers will want to make a difference – to move away from the regimented, hierarchal system under which they were trained.

Trainers should be:

- Chosen for their interest in promoting a developing fire service.
- Properly trained.
- Able to recognise their own area of expertise.
- Fully signed up to equality and CFS agendas.
- Encouraged by their senior officers paying an interest in what they are doing.
- Provided with the necessary facilities and equipment.

Trainees in progressive training centres recognise their trainers as role models. There were no gaps building between trainee and trainer and consequently no resentment or resistance.

Those areas judged as regimented, directed and watched over trainees:

- Alternatively, the fire service can employ trainers who use discipline as an underpinning factor in the training of firefighters.
- To break down individuality and enforce group behaviour and control.
- To mould trainees into trainers (conservative) image of a good firefighter.

In these training centres, the trainers can have their own agendas for what a trainee should be and can use discipline to

- Elevate the power of trainers.
- Confuse trainees, who want to learn.
- Make trainees vulnerable.
- Require extreme respect, standards of appearance and accommodation be cleaned to military standards.

One explanation for the continuing regimented training system is that trainers believe this system provided the best firefighters. It was how they trained and it worked for them.

When trainers fail to capture the hearts and minds of trainees there can be at least three outcomes, none of which are likely to help to develop the fire service (not all if any trainees will fit directly with any one of these categories).

1. Some trainees will:
 - Expect there to be a gap between officers and firefighters.
 - Recognise that training is a “game” and work according to the rules.
 - Have joined the fire service because they enjoy the “them and us game.”

2. Some trainees will:
 - Accept that ‘Sub O’s know best’.
 - Allow themselves to be put through the “sausage machine.”
 - Learn to conform to the agendas they are given.
 - These trainees will then be vulnerable to watch culture, which may again exploit and fit probationers in with their informal cultural beliefs.

3. Some firefighters will:
 - Learn about the job in a “them and us” culture.
 - Resent what the trainer is able to make them do
 - Put up with this behaviour because they recognise that at the station things will change.
 - Look for ways to preserve their individuality.
 - Alienated from the official goals of the organisation, develop their own goals about what they want the fire service to be for them.
 - Learn to resist when all they wanted to do was comply.
 - Become X type people when around officers.

In outcome 1 and 3 above are likely to fit-in with the informal agendas of the current cohort of firefighters because they choose to. Those labelled 1 do so because they originally expected the fire service to be like this. Those labelled 3 joined to be part of the official culture but recognise that to follow their trainers’ requirements means giving up too much of their own personality, so they learnt to resist. Those labelled 2, are less interested in being individuals and will comply with whoever holds authority at the time.

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1. Introduction

The Fire and Rescue Service stands at a crossroads. It has attracted the eye of government. The “Independent Review of the Fire and Rescue Service” (Bain et al 2003) and the White Paper “Our Fire and Rescue Service (ODPM 2003), both argue for the Fire and Rescue Service to be more active in preventing emergencies. “We need to refocus the Fire and Rescue Service to concentrate on preventing fire” (ODPM 2003: 7). Ministers are clear; the Fire and Rescue Service’s new emphasis is to be prevention rather than cure and this will be delivered through Community Fire Safety (CFS). To assist in this change there will be career-long learning, based around an Integrated Profession Development System, which will “reform the closed working culture to promote diversity” (ODPM 2003: 7). The Service Improvement Team based in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will lead this change. The Audit Commission, with its brief to aid Local Government to be Effective, Efficient and Economic will bring new eyes to the inspection process.

If the Fire and Rescue Service is to develop into an organisation that will prevent emergencies, there will be an increased requirement for it to reach out to the public. Whilst firefighters may occasionally need to kick down doors to do this, the firefighter of the 21st Century will be more interested in opening doors to the community. To make this vision a reality, the Fire and Rescue Service will need to develop in three areas. First, the workforce must be fully committed to the project. Second, firefighters will require the skills necessary to communicate the CFS message. Third, the Fire and Rescue Service must cease to be a white, masculine organisation in both perception and action, and become more representative of and open to, the diverse society it serves.

This third area is essential to the success of a developing Fire and Rescue Service. A diverse workforce with new skills and a willingness to accept the new agendas of the Fire and Rescue Service is a necessary part of the process that will achieve the dynamic of change. In particular, this means the employment of more women, ethnic minorities and white men who recognise that firefighting is not the prime function of the Fire and Rescue Service. To achieve this some difficult practices associated with extreme masculinity will have to cease. Only then, will the Fire and Rescue Service be welcome in and able to reach out to, all communities.

Government, Chief Officers and representative bodies already support the notion that diversity and equality in the workforce are inherently linked to the developing role of the Fire and Rescue Service, and its ability to take the fire safety message to the community.

The Fire and Rescue Service, if it is to flourish, must be able to attract a wide range of people with different talents and skills and from different cultures and backgrounds to enter the service at all levels. This is arguably more true of the Fire and Rescue Service than many other services for a number of reasons, not least the desire for the re-engineering process taking place in relation to the role of the service as both an operational, and highly technical Fire and Rescue Service, juxtaposed with an increasingly sophisticated intervention and safety service.

(McGuirk 2002: 10-11).

However, not all roads point to Rome. Separately, many of the senior organisations in the Fire and Rescue Service may argue for a new role for the Fire and Rescue Service. Nonetheless, there is a lack of evidence that the whole Fire

and Rescue Service is actually working towards this development. Integrated Personal Development System (IPDS) has been written for a developing Fire and Rescue Service, yet its implementation has been delayed. Initial training is and will be a central lever to effect these changes, but this will only occur if Fire and Rescue Service employees allow their institution to change.

The arrival of a new wave of trainees offers the possibility of kick starting the change necessary for the Fire and Rescue Service to develop towards its new role. However, this will only happen if there are changes to the traditional practice of socialising newcomers into the existing culture. Yes, the Fire and Rescue Service must recruit a much more diverse group of new employees. Yes, they – along with the existing workforce – must be taught according to the new agenda. But change will be painfully slow if the next generation of firefighters follow past patterns and are expected to ‘fit-into’ the existing dynamics of the workplace.

1.1 The project

This research undertaken by the Fire and Rescue Service Research and Training Unit at Anglia Polytechnic University (APU) in strategic partnership with the Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service is part of the process of change. The project lasted six months. The brief was to carry out a cultural audit of initial training and to identify best practice for developing the Fire and Rescue Service. Researchers visited thirteen training centres and the Fire and Rescue Service College. Data was gathered from interviews, questionnaires and observations. The preliminary analysis was then presented to the Sunrise conference of 100 members of the Fire and Rescue Service. The debate that took place on that day then informed the final analysis.

1.2 Overview of findings

1.2.1 Two pointers

The research took as a starting assumption that the Fire and Rescue Service has a new professional ethos:

to employ diverse, talented and independent-thinking people whose goals fit with the Fire and Rescue Service’s intention to reach out to prevent emergencies and to suppress them when they occur.

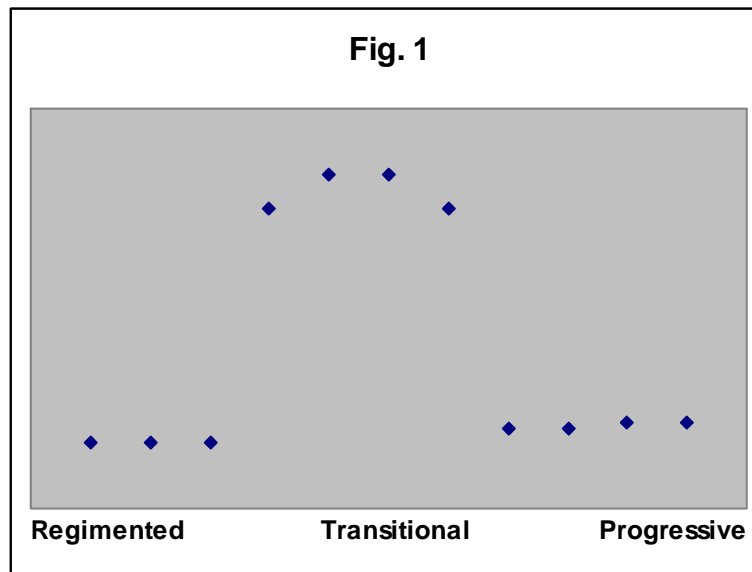
Respondent’s argument that it is the unofficial culture on the watch that frustrates any attempt to change the Fire and Rescue Service, lead to the recognition that:

if the Fire and Rescue Service is to develop, then trainees will need to recognise the negative elements of watch culture provides and be empowered to withstand them.

1.2.2 Training Centres

Every training centre reported that they were changing from the regimented approach of the past; some were integrating IPDS into the course. Similarly, each training centre suggested that they were fully signed up to equal opportunities and diversity. There was more ambiguity towards Community Fire Safety. Despite CFS being an essential element of the new Fire and Rescue Service’s role, some training centres admitted to marginalising this subject; this element of training was being left until the trainee arrived at the station. Some training centres reported a considerable involvement in CFS, but there was a difficulty in matching claims with findings.

The analysis suggests that no two training centres are alike. Each can be positioned along a scale running from regimented to progressive. More exactly, they form clusters around what we term as “regimented,” “transitional” and “progressive” approaches to training (see Chapter 12). All of the training centres have provided examples of good practice.



There are a number of areas identified as important levers for change, these were Discipline, Trainers, Lectures, Drills Teamwork, Facilities, Pre-entry Selection, the teaching of Community Fire Safety, Equal Opportunities and Diversity, and Integrated Personal Development.

1.3 There are 13 primary findings.

In summary, the findings for the Sunrise research suggest that trainees join the Fire and Rescue Service willing to fit their own ambitions/goals in with those of the organisation that they are joining. The Fire and Rescue Service too has goals for its trainees and when these goals coincide with those of the trainers then the output can be both *efficient* and *effective*. Trainees should then leave training centre with a full understanding of (and signed up to) the real expectations the organisation has of them. When the trainers’ goals do not altogether coincide with those of their Fire and Rescue Service, initial training can be *efficient* to a point where trainees are “critical incident safe.” However, training will not be *effective* if trainees’ goals do not align with those of their employers.

1. All training centres are different from each other, but the trainers in each form up as if they were a watch; they share joint norms, values and expectations and will work hard to implement them (sometimes working against the wishes of their Chief Officer to do this).
2. Training centres form clusters on a scale that runs from Regimented (traditional/conservative) through Transitional to Progressive (working towards the Fire and Rescue Service’s new professional ethos).
3. Trainees who arrive on the first day are willing, eager and compliant. They want to fit their own aspirations in with the organisational goals of the Fire and Rescue Service.
4. Progressive trainers will facilitate trainee’s incorporation by encouraging their expectations to meet up with the goals of new professional ethos of the Fire and Rescue Service: to employ a diverse, talented and free-thinking workforce whose goals fit with the fire service’s intention to reach out to prevent emergencies and to suppress them when they occur.

5. At the start of a career-long learning process, some trainees are receiving a hidden message that misdirects trainee's willingness to join in on organisational goals away from CFS towards the physical macho heroism of firefighting.
6. Regimented (traditionalist) trainers will use 'discipline' to treat trainees as if they are the type of people who need to be controlled, directed, moulded, coerced and watched over. This approach makes trainees vulnerable to trainer's aim to mould them into their own image (of the type of firefighter they believe the Fire and Rescue Service needs).
7. In outcome trainees may end up locating themselves somewhere on a continuum between two models:
8. Trainee's self-esteem is reduced to the point where they accept the trainer's requirements to succeed. As a consequence, trainees are likely to be vulnerable to the informal agendas that the watch offer them on their arrival at the station.
9. Trainees can recognise that trainers are trying to change their identity and comply because they have no alternative. However, treating trainees as if they were X people may have the opposite outcome to the trainers intention. Trainees:
 - a. develop a strategy for compliance to successfully pass through training.
 - b. build a gap between themselves and the trainers (which in due course prepares the way for a gap between firefighter and officers).
 - c. leave training centre with their own expectations of the Fire and Rescue Service alienated from the Fire and Rescue Service's actual goals.
10. This promotion of an "us and them" culture makes it more likely these probationers will readily fit-in with any (informal) agendas the watch may offer.
11. For IPDS and Continuing Professional Development to succeed, trainees should be encouraged to enjoy learning and to be self-motivating in this regard. Some trainees receive negative messages about any learning process that is classroom or book based.
12. Training centres built on a bedrock of regimented discipline and rote learning reduce diversity and the ability of the individual to think out of the box for the benefit of the Fire and Rescue Service.
13. Despite claims that the Fire and Rescue Service is a disciplined service, Chief Officers cannot order it to change. Hierarchical controls are not enough to deliver effective measurable change.

1.4 Recommendations

The recommendations provided at the end of sections of this report do not stand-alone; they should be read alongside and understood within the context of the whole report. At this stage and given the evidence we have received, the recommendations provided are seen as those appropriate to the service at this time. There is no suggestion that this is a full list of recommendations and most importantly they should only be used in the context of a cultural audit of the training centre and after due consideration is taken as to the effect of following them.

1.5 Cultural Auditing

At this point in time, the Fire and Rescue Service Research and Training Unit and its strategic partner Cambridge Fire and Rescue Service probably have the most up-to-date knowledge about national training. They are now able to offer this knowledge to provide cultural audits.

2. Methodology

‘Sunrise’ is a cultural audit to identify the cultural location of initial firefighter training¹.

The project lasted six months. The data gathering has been mostly qualitative involving interviews and observations. Some quantitative data from questionnaires was also gathered.

The aim of the project was to examine the workings of training centres and to analyse the messages and practices (formal and informal, open and hidden) they provide trainees.

2.1 Cultural Auditing

To provide this report the Fire and Rescue Service Research and Training Unit at APU designed a methodology for cultural auditing. This involved adapting a traditional audit process to allow a more reflexive and qualitative approach to identify cultures and practices that influenced efficiency and effectiveness.

2.1.1 Efficiency

Training centres could be judged as efficient if trainees pass the examination at the end of the course. Such a judgement would be based on observing the trainee who joins the Fire and Rescue Service, identifying the process they went through and then identifying the output (did trainees pass the examination at the end of the course). However, efficiency does not necessarily indicate effectiveness.

2.1.2 Effective

Training centres could be judged as effective if the outcome matches the Chief Officer’s objectives. For example, training centres can be efficient in providing firefighters who can operate safely on the fire ground (critical incident safe). However, if instructors have marginalised their Chief Officer’s requirement to also provide trainees with a working knowledge of CFS, the training centre will not be effective.

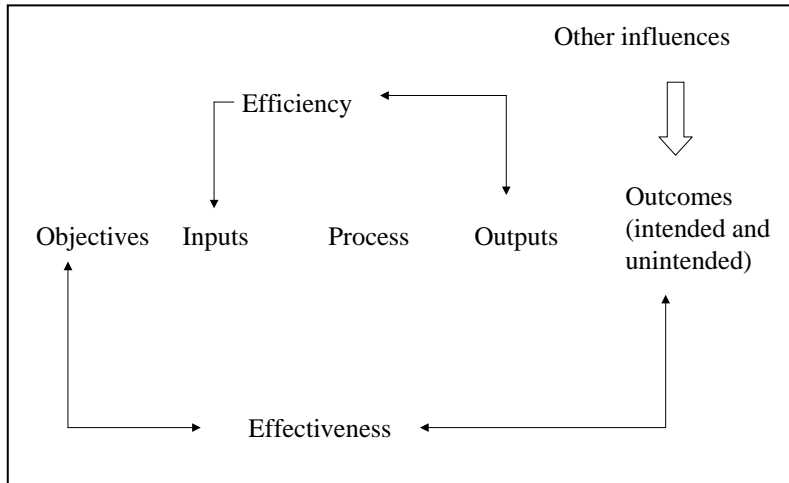
2.2 Models for a way forward

Having taken the view that an effective training centre was working to support the developing Fire and Rescue Service, it was necessary to describe a new professional ethos:

to employ diverse, talented and independent-thinking people whose goals fit with the Fire and Rescue Service’s intention to reach out to prevent emergencies and to suppress them when they occur.

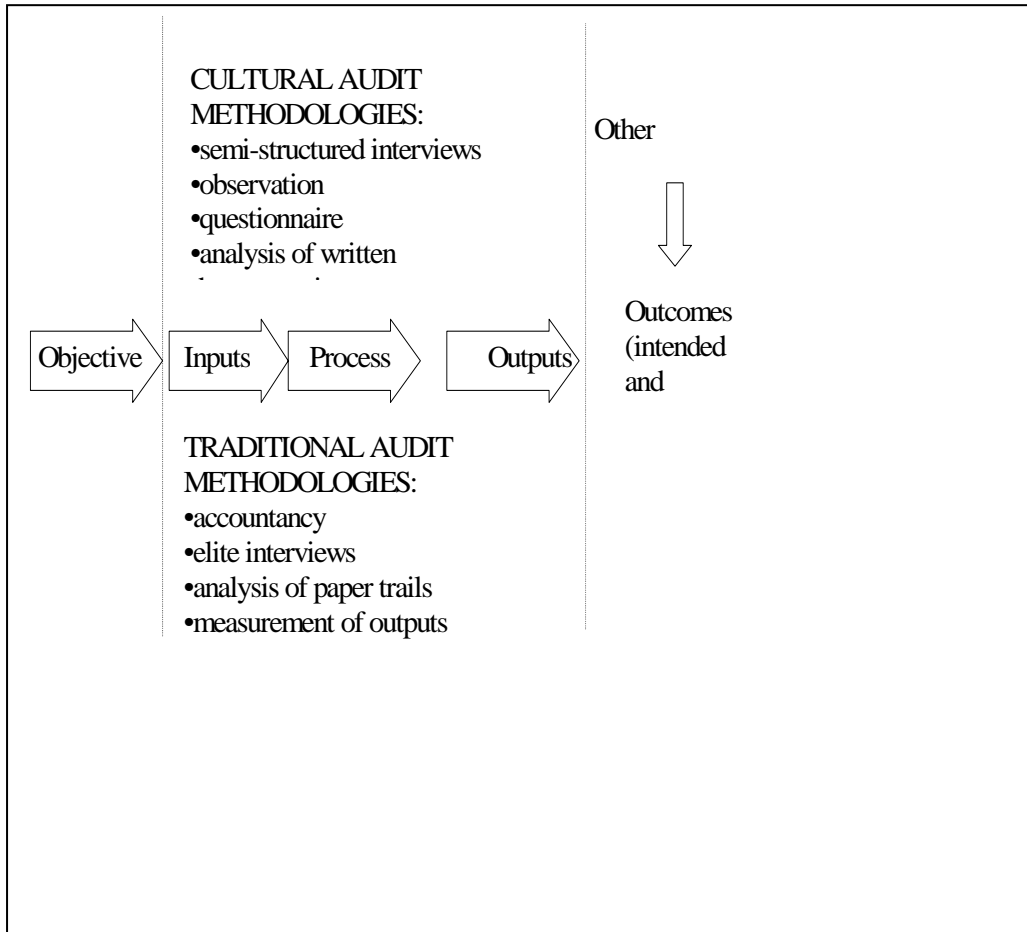
This form of words is not perfect, it needs to be developed, but from all the understandings formed during the research it serves as a guide for an effective outcome (see Fig 2).

¹ Those interested in the academic profile of this report should be aware that the analysis has been considerably influenced by the work of Bourdieu, Connell, Cockburn, Collinson, Giddens, Goffman, Handy, Hearn, Maslow McGregor, Prendergast, Seidler, Walby and Wolf.

Fig 2

It is the job of a cultural auditor to recognise whether a training centre is both efficient and effective, there is a requirement to recognise the intended and unintended influences² in training centres and reconcile these with the aims of the Chief Officer by using a range of methodologies (see Fig 3):

- semi-structured interviews.
- observation.
- questionnaire.
- analysis of written documentation.

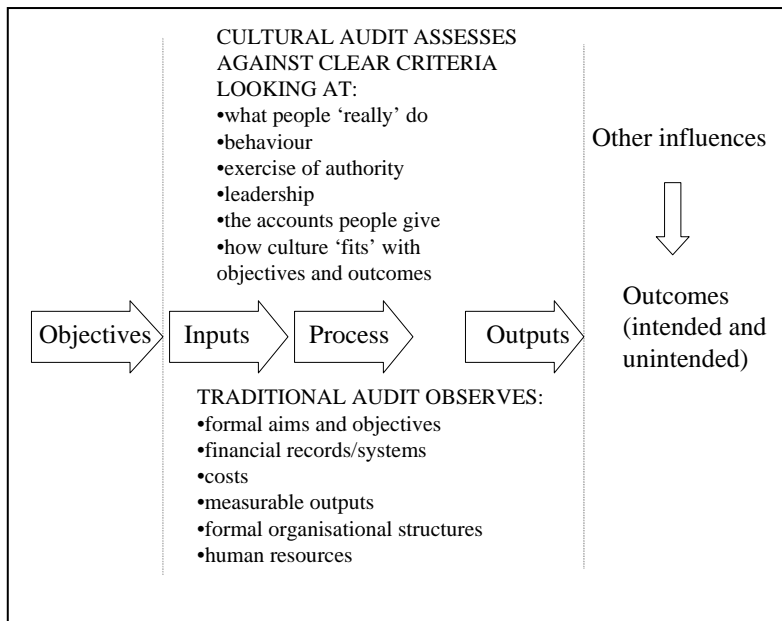
Fig 3

² Giddens (1979) suggests that there can be unintended outcomes from an action as well as intended ones. In particular the qualitative researcher and cultural auditor is looking for these.

In particular, during the research there was an interest in identifying (Fig 4):

- what people ‘really’ do
- behaviour
- exercise of authority
- leadership
- the accounts people give
- how culture ‘fits’ with objectives and outcomes

Fig 4



2.3 Grounded Theory

Grounded Theory (Glaser and Strauss 1967) is an effective way to analyse data provided during cultural audits. This qualitative approach to research uses a mix of data and theory to explain problematic behaviour in a way that, “both laymen and sociologists can readily see how its predictions and explanations fit the realities of the situation” (Glaser and Strauss 1967: 98). Explanations of how qualitative research is carried out always provide an almost textbook description and this is no different. What is hard to capture is just how messy the research process can be, because qualitative research is not straightforward or unproblematic. However, this is not an excuse for a journalistic account or for a lack of rigour. Messiness comes from the complexity of the real world (that prevents textbook practice) and not from the weakness of the methodology.

2.4 The data

‘Sunrise’ has been based on two sets of data. First, there was a pilot study, which followed five trainees through their 14 weeks of initial training (Baigent and Rolph 2003³). This was a very detailed study. Trainees were interviewed each week to gather their experience. This research generated 70-taped interviews, numerous less formal interviews and observations. The main project, involved sending a team (of up to three) to 13 training centres and the Fire and Rescue Service College (three training centres were visited twice). During this time there were numerous discussions with trainees and trainers that were not recorded but formal tape recorded interviews took place with:

- 41 senior officers from Her Majesty’s Inspectors to Assistant Divisional Officers.
- 62 trainers.

³ The report of this pilot is essential reading for a full understanding of this report.

- 23 probationers.
- 163 trainees.

In addition, data has been gathered from 76 questionnaires collected from six training centres (not all training centres could facilitate this process). Further data has also come from literature in the area and researcher's experience of the Fire and Rescue Service. Colleagues from the university have provided additional analytical support.

The report identifies seven specific aspects of the training process for consideration:

Discipline.

Trainers.

Lectures.

Drills.

Teamwork.

Facilities.

Pre-entry Selection.

It also covers three generic areas:

- Community Fire Safety (CFS).
- Integrated Personal Development System (IPDS).
- Equality and Diversity.

All formal interviews were recorded and noted. Only once did the tape recorder fail and then we relied on notes taken during the interview. At the start of the research, all tapes were fully transcribed and collated into NVIVO (a database designed for qualitative research that allows pieces of similar data to be collected together under a heading/code). Hypotheses were then developed from the coded data in a constant comparative analysis with academic theory, contextual knowledge and previous research. Grounded theory relies on the development of these hypotheses to guide the research. This is not to argue that the hypothesis is a preconceived idea that the researcher sets out to prove. Exactly the opposite. The hypothesis is there to be challenged by the data. If the challenge is successful then the hypothesis changes as a consequence. For example, an early hypothesis suggested that some training centres employed regimented discipline as a means to control the trainee. As the data came in it became clear that regimented training centres often acted against the wishes of their senior officers. Further data also suggested that trainers at regimented training centres were more likely to be untrained than in progressive training centres. The original hypothesis therefore was changed as each piece of data added to our understanding. By the end of the research the original hypothesis was amended to suggest that "the more regimented a training centre was the less training their staff received, the more likely they were to be out of step with official policy and the less likely it was that trainees would leave aligned with the official goals of the organisation."

About halfway through the research the data began to produce consistent patterns. At this stage, it became less necessary to produce full transcripts. We continued to take notes during the interviews and audio recordings were subject to a second review to ensure our notes were correct. Development of hypotheses then continued and a report back of the draft findings took place at the Sunrise Conference, which had been specifically arranged for this purpose.

2.5 Sunrise Conference

One hundred delegates attended the “Sunrise” conference. The research findings were reported back, using the words of participants to identify why and how the analysis developed. The questions and discussions that followed indicated that the Fire and Rescue Service had immediately recognised the good and bad practice reported.

2.5.1 Breakout groups

Having received a report of the findings and after questions has been taken, the conference was then broken up into groups to discuss seven topics and how they influenced the development of a training programme for the 21st Century Firefighter and then report back. The areas were:

1. Discipline
2. Drill
3. Lectures
4. Fitness
5. Accommodation
6. Equal Opportunities
7. Community Fire Safety

One group far exceeded their brief in answering their question. They almost summed up the days evidence when they suggested that initial training should provide three skills:

The Hard Things

Safe not to harm themselves. not harm anybody else – competent to the level that they are expected to be competent at that stage – sufficient intelligence to be able to continue to apply what they learned safely and competently.

The Soft Things

Self motivating – to come out with a frame of mind that prepares them for future development – they know they don’t know it all but they know they have good skills they know they have good skills that they know over time going to know it all. reasonable level of self-confidence, not cocky not too over confident but self-confidence. And also confidence in the organisation they have just joined. So that when they go on their watch and out into their brigades they know what they can expect and rely on it.

The Attitude Things

Want to be sure they come out fully aware of the firefighter role. All of it, although they cant do all of it at that stage in their career. This training has to last them for the whole of their career - community safety as well as putting out fires and rescuing people.

Produce people who are able to support and take pride in and be part of an organisation that is appropriately diverse, appropriately representative.

With the limits of the recording on the day, this appears as a true reflection of what was said and is an example of how our data and analysis, and the views of senior people around the Fire and Rescue Service are in accord.

At the end of the conference, Dr David Skinner provided his view of the day's proceedings:

1. *Striking how different training centres were from each other. Vast spectrum of examples of good and bad practices suggests that diversity can be a problem.*
2. *Is there a case for starting all over again?*
3. *How important trainers are. They come across as an undervalued overworked group of people who should be given status, support and training. Look at the possibility of recruiting trainers from other backgrounds outside of the Fire and Rescue Service.*
4. *Is training too easy? Horror stories of how tough training is play a part in the culture of the Fire and Rescue Service. At one level, it is tough and unacceptable, but is it really challenging? Do all these horror stories contribute to the mythology of the Fire and Rescue Service that it is tough. As a rite of passage, it is tough as an initiation into a fraternity. In addition, this will suit those trainees who join with the expectation they are joining a tough organisation. However, in reality is it tough enough? Is it tough intellectually? Are people's values and expectations challenged? Rather than a test of your competence to be a firefighter it is a test of your ability to get through training.*
5. *Training is only the start of a career-long learning process. However, in many training centres there is a hidden message. Trainees are getting a lot of bad habits and bad messages about what learning is about. Trainees need to learn how enjoy learning and to recognise the advantages of doing this. Trainees have to learn how to learn.*
6. *Trainees cannot be expected to be shock troops – existing culture is demonised as being at the heart of stopping change – but there are the examples of watches who have completely turned around in regard to CFS.*
7. *Many organisations would be desperate to have the loyalty you have in the Fire and Rescue Service. Nonetheless, when it is misdirected towards resistance and loyalty to your mates or your watch, this is the*
8. *result of poor training. Trainees join to be loyal to the Fire and Rescue Service and this loyalty should be directed towards a properly understood professional ethos.*

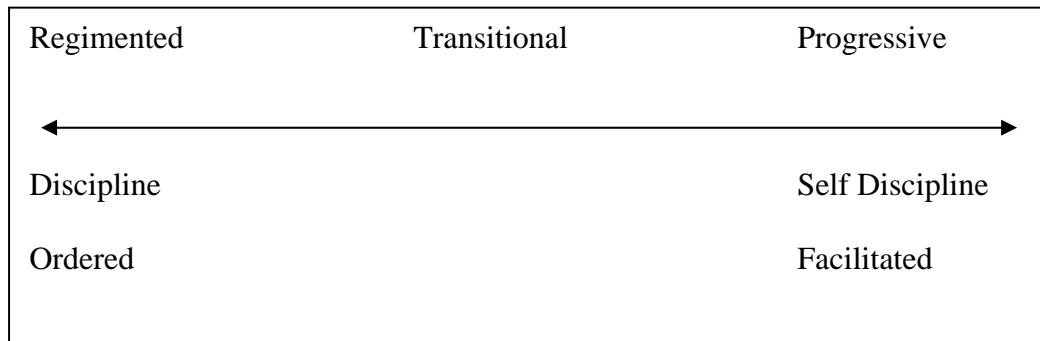
3. DISCIPLINE

“Discipline” is at the heart of this report (and the Fire and Rescue Service), it was a subject discussed in all interviews. However, when trainers talk about “discipline” they can and do imply different meanings. Trainers can be talking about a “regimented discipline” or “self-discipline.” Regimented discipline involves a hierarchal structure, which, at its extreme, works on the assumption that trainees need watching over because they are inherently lazy or resistant. Self-discipline operates on the basis that workers can be trusted to recognise what is expected of them and

that they are willing and able to achieve the goals they are set. McGregor (1985) would label these different people as X and Y respectively⁴.

To operationalise our understanding of training centres, scale (fig 4) from “regimented,” through “transitional,” to “progressive” was designed according to whether a training centre imposed learning or encouraged self-development.

Fig 5 Models for training centres.



The progressive model is identified as a target that training centres should aim at:

an efficient and effective training centre where trainees were individuals (within a team) who wanted to succeed and whose goals were facilitated to join with the official goals of the organisation.

Those judged as regimented used discipline as a form of control to mould trainees to the wishes of trainers; something they were *efficiently* achieving. Nonetheless, they were not *effective* because trainer’s goals did not always marry with the organisations goals. In making these judgements, there was a recognition that trainers need to use a range of management styles according to context (Couch 2003). Sometimes officers need to be authoritative, sometimes pluralist. Those training centres that adapted to circumstances were seen as progressive.

One argument frequently made to defend regimented behaviour was that “the Fire and Rescue Service is a disciplined service.” The impression given was that firefighters were being prepared for a time when they would be given orders in military fashion that must be immediately obeyed. The approach in regimented training centres supports this view but even in those training centres not seen as regimented, trainees believe that their experience of operational incidents will involve a constant flurry of orders. Seventy of the seventy-six questionnaires responded with a “Yes” to the question “Do you see the Fire and Rescue Service as a disciplined service.” The other six trainees did not answer the question.

⁴ McGregor suggests that employees fall into two categories. The X people who do not want to work and will need to be watched over in order to ensure they work and the Y people who have goals and expectations and who will be seeking to fulfil these at work. McGregor is unlikely to be suggesting that people will always fit with one category the expectations is that once identified they should be managed according to type. Accepting this involves a gross generalisation, the findings of this research are that people who join the Fire and Rescue Service fit with the Y category. But many training centres act as if they have an X category trainee who needs to be ‘forced’ to work/comply.

DISCIPLINE

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	70	92.1	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	6	7.9		
Total		76	100.0		

There was no indication from trainees of an awareness that probably the only direct order they would ever be given would be to restrain their enthusiasm at a fire.

The reality is that firefighting is a job carried out by well-trained teams who develop tried and tested protocols for getting the job done (see Baigent 2001). There is an expectation that firefighters will make decisions (for themselves) before they enter a burning building. They do this by weighing their group's protocols, their own experience and the scene in front of them to make decisions. This is now formalised as a dynamic risk assessment (DRA) but the process has existed since firefighters first fought fires. However, there is now a new approach; firefighters should make their judgements based on their own safety. Only when they determine that it is safe to do so, should firefighters "get-in" and fight the fire.

The Fire and Rescue Service still has a discipline code (similar to a "Court Marshall"). Firefighters can be "charged" with a variety of offences such as disobedience or bringing the organisation into disrepute. The current White Paper (ODPM 2003) follows the view of realists in the Fire and Rescue Service that the discipline code is outdated. Employment Law is soon expected to form a guiding principle on how people should be looked after and dealt with: a system based on the understanding that firefighters know the rules and the expectation will be that they will follow them. This view supports our analysis that there should be a move from regimented to progressive (self-discipline) systems. Trainers would contextualise the discussion so far in the following way:

Trainer: *[Trainees] Can ask questions, **welcome** it. But when risk critical, **can ask "why" but not "why me?"***

Trainer: *Don't want to send Robots out - want people with own opinion that think for themselves but recognise rank.*

Trainer: *Self-discipline rather than a reaction to discipline. People given responsibility and expected to meet that responsibility.*

In an ideal world, these quotes would form the basis for recognising how the Fire and Rescue Service should organise. We paraphrase this as:

Firefighters should be encouraged to remain as individuals who accept the Fire and Rescue Service's goals and are sufficiently self-disciplined to recognise when a job needs doing and (how to get the skills if necessary) to get on and do it.

Four training centres appear to apply a model that facilitates this type of understanding. Others were working towards this approach. Three were operating as if the trainer had a duty to install obedience in the trainee first and that self-discipline would follow (see Fig 1). Some trainers thought that trainees would achieve self-discipline when they accept trainer's rules:

Trainer: *Marching is self-discipline as nobody has to tell them to do it, once [they have] done it a few times.*

One trainer in a progressive training centre described this approach as something trainers did “because they could.” The implication being that this may be bullying. No Chief and Principle Officers would support any officer who uses discipline for its own sake just to prove they were in charge. Where trainers were able to act in this manner it was because they had the space to do so. Such an approach is unlikely to provide a firefighter for the 21st Century.

One senior officer perhaps summed up the difference between the two uses of the word discipline:

Officer: *Discipline is done to you; self-discipline is set and maintained by individuals.*

3.1 Progressive

The closer a training centre gets towards being progressive the less “discipline is done to you.” The reception area of training centres often provided a quick guide. The more CFS featured in the displays and the less symbols of an action packed organisation, the more likely the training centre was to be progressive. Progressive training centres were also calmer; meals took place in a restaurant where no table was reserved for anyone and trainees and trainers were relaxed. Not to say there was no sense of order, but discipline remained on the drill ground. Inside the building trainees and trainers spoke to each other:

Trainer: *The opportunity to be formal whilst drilling and immediately relax from firefighter to first names. . We are not expecting creases to be ironed into clothes but for clothes to be ironed and clean.*

There is considerable concern throughout the Fire and Rescue Service (particularly with trainers) that “standards are dropping.” Shifting the emphasis from trainer led control to facilitating trainee’s self-motivation is unlikely to lead to a drop in standards. It is an important step towards ensuring the Fire and Rescue Service is equipping itself to develop. Trainers set the standard but it is a visible standard with a clear purpose:

Officer: *Mode of operation is self-discipline, which will override everything else, ... guidelines rather than rules ... from 1700 0900 it is a hotel rather than a training establishment ... mature responsible outlook.*

Giving trainees responsibility clearly fits with a belief that trainees have goals that they want to achieve by being in the Fire and Rescue Service. If a trainee could not self-motivate then progressive trainers did not see it their responsibility to teach this skill. Trainers would encourage self-motivation, but if a firefighter could not work on their own trainers were not going to force them to do so. Better that the trainee realised that the goals of the organisation were not aligned with theirs at this stage and left.

During the observations and interviews in progressive training centres, it became clear that because trainees were trusted, they were positive about their trainers. Trainees saw their trainers as role models – there were no gaps developing between trainee and trainer, and consequently no resentment or resistance.

3.2 Regimented

There is no exact scoring system yet to judge how many training centres were regimented⁵. Nonetheless, it is clear that there were at least three training centres where discipline as the data suggests, was “done to you.” Trainers may

⁵ Fire and Rescue Service Research and Training Unit d.baigent@apu.ac.uk now offers this as a service.

argue that they were teaching “self-discipline,” but their philosophy and actions remained one where discipline was “done to you.”

Regimented training centres operate in the belief that trainees needed to be controlled, directed, coerced and watched over to fit-in with trainer’s view of how the Fire and Rescue Service should be. Trainees in effect needed to be remoulded⁶:

Trainer: *I just sort of, I think my way, that them lads out there you got to strip them right down to the bones. Take them off Civvie Street, come into a uniformed service and rebuild them like a set of Lego bricks. Impart the knowledge into them - impart what all the fire brigade life is about - because it is a life, it’s a brotherhood, it’s a society.*

This appears to be an extreme quote. It is difficult to recognise that this was an trainer talking in 2003. However, the sexist language, the use of military terms and the idea that a trainee needed to be “strip[ped] right down to the bones” was not challenged by other trainers who also took part in this interview. This was not just a case of a team supporting their colleague. All the evidence from this training centre (from observations and interviews with the trainers and the trainees) indicates that trainers set out to break the trainees and then to “rebuild them.” In a number of training centres, there was a similar message. Although put in different terms, there are many trainers who believe it is their job to “strip them right down to the bones” by taking control away from the trainee and reducing their individuality:

Trainer: *Daily inspection of rooms: expect high standard as living quarters; high degree of hygiene and dress code. It’s something they’ve never had to do these things before (i.e. press shirts, polish shoes iron trousers) as “nanny society.” As this maintains discipline, sets standards, draw together as a team due to night time. Someone who’s been in army shows them how to bull⁷ their shoes up.*

This approach can force trainees to conform. It can promote a vulnerability/reliance in trainees. These trainees will then be vulnerable to watch culture, which will again exploit and fit probationers in. This is the argument of Baigent (2001) but this research challenges in part that analysis. Some trainees will conform but some will conform whilst inwardly resisting. Negative patterns of behaviour that when learnt in training are likely to accord with informal cultures of resistance on the watch and will likely stay with the trainee for up to 30 years (this argument is developed later in the report).

Regimented trainers have a good idea about the type of firefighter the Fire and Rescue Service needs. One told me that his mission was:

Trainer: *To try to turn out people who I would be willing to go out there and ride on the back of fire appliances with em .. to be well trained, well groomed .. if I weren’t be prepared to work with em, I wouldn’t like to put them on anybody else.*

Noble sentiments like these may produce what the trainer would call “good firefighters.” In addition, they may do this efficiently but if they reproduce **good white male heterosexual** firefighters (or people who act like them) this is not effective.

⁶ Kurt Lewin (1997) provides a model that trainers may unwittingly follow - un-freezes of them of the status quo (ife in 'civvy' street) moves them to a new state (the way which we do things around here) and finally refreezing (making change permanent).

⁷ “Bull” is a military term refereeing to keeping equipment at a very high level of cleanliness. The most common example refers to “bulling shoes.” This means to clean them until the toe caps have a mirror finish.

Discipline for disciplines sake makes little sense in today's Fire and Rescue Service. Some of the practices we found in a number of training centres were difficult to see in any other light. Rather than learning to respect their trainers for what they knew, trainees were required to respect their trainers. Rules were applied for no apparent reason than to prove that the trainers were in charge. Trainees had to stand to one side in corridors, come to attention as trainers passed, speak only when spoken to and to address everyone by rank or as "Sir/Ma'am." We were told of some bizarre practices that can only be seen as designed to subordinate trainees:

Trainee: *As he comes to you, you don't look at him. You look at the top of his helmet. You don't look him in the eyes until he talks to you.*

As an isolated incident, this situation would be regrettable. At one training centre, this was the rule. Trainees had to stare to the front as a trainer approached them and avoid what was called "eyeballing." There were consequences if you broke the rules. Some trainers even boasted that their colleagues in progressive training centres were jealous of their authority and that eventually trainees 'enjoyed' it:

Trainer: *Very strict discipline environment. Trainees from all over country and world. Culture shock. Not shouting all the time but very sergeant major to "get them in line". Some like it, some don't like it, don't get many that don't like it.*

Some trainees appeared to get a perverse pleasure out of proving they could take the discipline as this section from Baigent and Rolph (2003: 13-14) indicates.

All five trainees expected the training centre to be disciplined. They appeared to be looking forward to:

- *a structured, orderly and **fair** lifestyle.*
- *being prepared for taking orders on the fireground.*
- *a place where they saw (their) life or death depended on them being able to follow orders.*

Trainers add weight to this potentially overdramatic picture of the Fire and Rescue Service, which calls on worst-case scenarios to indicate what it is like to be a firefighter. In real life, firefighters are encouraged to avoid life or death situation and if they were to occur their training is not to blindly follow orders.

Trainees were disappointed at the lack of discipline. But it is hard to identify what exactly trainees mean by a 'lack of discipline'. Research indicates that trainees:

- *Were regimented and shouted at.*
- *Parade each morning.*
- *Sprung to attention when an officer approached.*
- *Addressed trainers by their rank.*
- *Were not given any Fire and Rescue Service status being addressed as Mr or Miss.*
- *Gave up personality to the group.*
- *Bulled their shoes.*
- *Kept their clothing smart and tidy.*
- *Kept their rooms spotless up to the point of bullshit.*
- *Responsible for cleanliness in public areas such as showers, garages, kitchens.*
- *Had to fill out reports and write explanations for a lack of discipline.*
- *Were submitted to group blame when individuals (invariably) did not own up to 'misdemeanours'.*
- *Recognised that trainers could always find something wrong (even if this involved trainers moving a bed to find dust on the central heating pipes or reaching onto lockers).*

Tom: *First two weeks I took it quite personal whereas now its just like 'yeah whatever, just get on with it'. Before I used to be absolutely terrified of one of the trainers, he used to just look at me and I started shaking.*

- Sid: On a station you are expected to keep clean but on a station you're not there for five days [and nights].
- Bill: *We are trying to study and they come in and say this is untidy and you have to do a 250 word report, time is precious enough as it is.*
- Carole: *I got a daily today because under my bed was untidy ... they reckon it should be in the cupboard ... my cupboard is full enough already.*

Analysis/Recommendation

It is surprising that trainees did not recognise the list of things they submitted to as discipline. Few if any of these practices would be employed in training centres for bankers or mountaineers.

*It is as if the trainees saw **discipline as a ritual hardship**, which they could prove themselves as capable of overcoming: **a test they had to pass to prove they could take it – the harder it was the better they may think of themselves.***

As reported earlier Dr Skinner summed up the type of mythology that surrounds discipline during initial training at the Sunrise Conference:

Full of horror stories, which play a part in the culture of the Fire and Rescue Service. At one level, it is tough and unacceptable, but is it really challenging? Do all these horror stories contribute to the mythology of the Fire and Rescue Service that it is tough. As a rite of passage, it is tough as an initiation into a fraternity. And this will suit those trainees who join with the expectation they are joining a tough organisation. But, in reality is it tough enough? Rather than a test of your competence to be a firefighter, it is a test of your ability to get through training.

3.3 Bull

Only two training centres discouraged trainees from bulling their shoes. The closer to the regimented model the more control was exerted through extreme standards for personal appearance and cleaning (what some trainees would call “bull”). There are numerous examples:

Trainee: *All your kit has got to be to the highest standard its all got to be polished and clean and dusted down - including the kit we use on the yard everyday, fire boots and tunic and all that so we got to be in perfect condition.*

Trainee: *Whenever we go out on the drill yard as well you sort of getting in to the habit of checking each other off for your kit ... making sure you've no fluff on your tunic so your not gonna get shouted at on the yard.*

To enforce these regimented views trainers carried out inspections. These took place at the start of each day's teaching. In one training centre, there was a second inspection after lunch.

There can be no doubt that trainees spent considerable amounts of time in preparing for these inspections. Given that trainers constantly told us that “there was not enough time to fit everything in; trainees have to work out of hours to complete,” it is difficult to understand why they still insisted on standards that other training centres had discarded.

Trainer: *Regimes seemed militaristic compared to where we are at. Not a way forward to polish chrome and showers for an hour in the morning.*

When questioned as to why it was necessary to make the firefighters ‘perform’ to this standard, trainers (again) suggested that were “installing self-discipline.” In several training centres, this was followed, as if by way of explanation, by the comment “some of these trainees cannot even iron a shirt.” We never did understand what ironing a shirt had to do with being a firefighter, nor how that explained such regimented approaches.

One explanation for the continuing regimented training system is that these were not malicious acts. Trainers believed this system provided the best firefighters. They were trained in this way and it worked for them. A second explanation would be to suggest that trainers did it “because they could.”

If the Fire and Rescue Service is looking for diversity, and the promotion of individual and original thinking then it has to avoid what one Chief Officer calls the “sausage machine.” The idea that firefighters need to be moulded to fall in with (outdated) regimented ideas increase the authority of the trainers and demean the trainee as part of the process of “stripping them down.”

Most trainees expected a bit of “bull.” The fact that this image is in the public domain has the potential to stop many people from applying. Not so, for those who came from the military, who saw applying for the Fire and Rescue Service as a move to familiar surroundings. Ex-military trainees were comfortable in the training environment. They saw it as a “game:” a comment quickly picked up by those without a military background. Following one group discussion about the “game,” there was the opportunity to interview two of the trainees separately. Dick explains what happens during the game.

Dick: *Erm .. erm .. probably what, probably the same as what they actually described about it. The Subs have got a habit of picking you up and knocking you down .. and you just have to go along with it cause we, we've been knocked down so many times and, and then picked back up. And you think, you know you're good and, and then the next thing you know, um, you do a couple of pitches of ladders and it completely all bollocks and stuff like that and then he's there completely.*

Sue's experience was similar to Dick's. Sue had never heard about the ‘game’ before joining the Fire and Rescue Service. Sue learnt the expression and the rules of the game from her colleagues with a military background. Sue explains:

Sue: *Like em, if I have a down point, because I think I've done something wrong and they've said it's really crap I just say right it's just a game, right keep going. Next time your gonna win. So it's winning and loosing all the time so.*

Sue and Dick were both fortunate. The people around them had played the game before. They had also shared their experiences with their colleagues and this allowed Dick and Sue to recognise what was going on. They learnt the way the trainers were acting was not personal. It is the way things are done at that training centre. Being “knocked down so many times and, and then picked back up” is a softer way of saying rebuilding people. Trainers and the Fire and Rescue Service may disown the earlier statement by one trainer about Lego bricks. However, it may just be a very honest way of explaining the intention of the game.

3.4 Breathing Apparatus (BA) provides an interesting example

An interesting example of how much trainers plan to control trainees was provided by their experience of BA. Most training centres had a separate BA training fortnight in the middle of the course. This generally involves handing the trainees over to another department. For trainees this can be the first time that they meet other trainers. BA trainers have a single job to do and that is to train people in BA. Trainees for their part identify BA as the best part of their training. For a number of reasons, which include the close proximity between trainees and trainers, because BA trainers having no other agendas or even because BA trainers also work with operational personnel (who clearly would not accept regimented discipline), BA is a more relaxed environment. This is not to say BA training is not thorough. There is no room for carelessness in BA, and yet there is no bull in this arena.

Ironically, two weeks away from their trainers restores trainees' self-confidence. Some training centres did not see this as a challenge. Trainees' self-confidence is put to good use by encouraging their self-development during situation drills. However, in at least two training centres trainers saw self-confidence almost as prejudicial to discipline. There was a set procedure to put trainees in their place. Trainers deliberately looked for mistakes and handed out punishment essays to (re)stamp their authority.

Trainees too know what is happening:

Trainee: [Trainers like to] *drop us down a peg or two. Like to think they're more strict than BA trainers as they're more relaxed.*

This example provides a considerable insight into how training may be improved. The "game" being played between trainers is more like a dance.

Trainee: *We were saying those first two weeks that it was like you know it was a culture shock and that but now the sixth week we're all finding little short cuts and little cheats ...*

As the research progressed, the more it became obvious that trainers in regimented training centres were failing to capture trainees' hearts and minds. Some trainees complied through fear and others recognised ways of resisting. In the longer term, this can have severe consequences for the Fire and Rescue Service. At some stage during the course, some trainees start to resent what their trainers are trying to do to them. They also start to recognise the difference between learning the job and acting as the trainers want them to. Trainees put up with this behaviour because they recognise that at the station things will change:

Trainee: *Er the bit I've been told .. er .. I've got friends on station now and they've .. they've basically said to me "there's a training school way, which is what we're doing now and there's a station way .. the way you do things there."*

Trainees who are aware that training is a game are potentially being taught how to give an image that they are adopting the organisations goals. By about week seven, trainees start to resent their trainers for making them jump through so many hoops. Nevertheless, by now trainees are receiving news from outside that life is not like that on a station. The Y type trainee, who is subjected to regimented discipline, is probably starting to look elsewhere for where they will align their goals and their expectations of the Fire and Rescue Service.

3.5 Retained

Some of the trainees had been retained firefighters (some had served a considerable amount of time before taking up a fulltime career). These firefighters recognise when an trainer gives a false impression to trainees; they did not challenge the trainers; they knew it was different on the station.

3.6 No time for themselves

Some training centres never left trainees with anytime to themselves. For all their waking hours and for some that they should have been asleep, trainees were forced into continual cycle of cleaning and revision. Teaching self-discipline was the key word. The idea that discipline extended to how tidy you kept your room was another concept that we found difficulty equating with the skills needed to become a firefighter. In some training centres, especially where trainees were required to be residential (rather than having accommodation as a facility), they were used as free cleaners. Sometimes the standards that were set could only be seen as extreme:

Trainee: *I expected to be worked pretty hard, but to be honest I didn't expect the things like er having a cross in your duvet cover and pillow case that sort of thing erm like, I expected the physical*

side to be military, but not the sort of keeping your room totally dust free and all that I can understand where it comes from, but it .. I didn't expect it to be honest.

At this training centre, trainees lined up outside their rooms each morning waiting to be inspected. As the trainer entered the corridor, a trainee called everyone to attention. Trainees, their shoes shined, uniforms immaculate, waited as the trainer inspected their rooms.

This training centre was not alone. Typically, of those centres we found to be regimented, there was to be no dust, no personal effects visible, and windows were to be clean; everything was to be immaculate. Trainees told us that when trainers were looking to make an example they moved beds to find dust on central heating pipes. Stories also circulated about trainers coming into a room with dust already on their fingers. A wet sink was enough to get a trainee a punishment essay or "lines/sides" as trainees called them. Trainees could also be kept late on a Friday.

3.7 Teaching Resistance/ Turning Y to X

It was interesting to identify trainers and trainees perceptions of what was going on. One trainer suggested that:

Trainer: *Initially they hate us. Then get to three or four weeks .. it's a game. Sooner learn how to play it, sooner get along.*

The implication is that once the trainees complied with the trainer's tests, then their life would be easier. Nevertheless, in outcome this was not about compliance or respect. Some trainees learnt how to send an image of compliance. Nevertheless, their acquiescence could involve a considerable resistance. For example, trainers' requirements that trainees learnt self-discipline by ironing their duvet cover and pillowcase in a certain manner (mentioned above), brought about an opposite outcome. It did not teach respect, it taught deceit.

Interviewer: *Do you have to iron your duvet everyday then?*

Sid: *Well no, no what we do is we don't sleep on it. We take it off well. We do in our dorm, we're not going to sleep in the duvet - take it off.*

Interviewer: *Take it off?*

Sid: *It'll be silly [I am] not ironing it everyday, so you just take, you don't actually sleep in it.*

Interviewer: *So you take the duvet cover off and sleep in the duvet with no cover on it?*

Sid: *I've never slept in the duvet cover.*

There is no evidence to suggest that trainers knew that this was happening. However, it would come as no surprise if they did, even if trainers also told the trainees how to get around the instruction. The game in the Fire and Rescue Service can take some unexpected turns.

There were three training centres where standards of cleanliness/tidiness were a main pillar of support for regimented practices. At least 50% of the training centres worked on the basis that they could teach self-discipline through control, but in reality they were actually teaching discipline per se.

Apart from any difficulties about trainers moulding trainees in their own image, there is also the question of the time it takes to keep such 'high' standards. Trainees at residential training centres were often up at 0600 preparing

themselves and their rooms for the day ahead (and working until 2330). For trainees on non-residential courses it could mean getting into work early:

Trainee: *Most difficult thing was we all had to turn up an hour before training started to get the cleaning done to standard we could best do. But knew that 6 or 7 times out of 10 it would not be to the standard of the trainers. Because sometimes we felt the standard could not have been reached, definitely at the start of the course but went away a bit towards the end.*

Initial training is physically hard work. Trainees need to get as much sleep as they can get.

3.8 Levers for change from the BA example

Those training centres where the “game” is played most are amongst those erring towards the regimented. The game is first choreographed by the trainers, and as unequal partners trainees give up some of their free will and identity as trainers took control, security and autonomy away from them. But trainees can soon learn the steps and from then the dance continues in (dis)harmony. Attempts by trainers to mould trainees as firefighters (in their own image), may work for some, but is unlikely to produce the individuals Chief Officers want. It is not therefore effective. It can also lead to the type of resentment that comes from this trainee:

Trainee: *I wouldn't mind if there were no double standards. Right if someone's there .. an officers there and he's clean and tidy and whatever and he's kept himself .. you know .. and he's telling me to bull mine, I don't mind. But if there's someone there, with you know water marks .. you know, your looking scruffy, dandruff all over his top.*

Such behaviour certainly formed the trainees up into a team, but for what purpose?

The examples above indicate that trainees can recognise the process they are going through. Those with a military background expect to play the game. For many, particularly the type of people who are looking for something more than a military style job, the change is difficult. New outlooks are formed during the time it takes to adapt to a regimented training centre. Sometimes the trainer will mould trainees into their own image of a good firefighter. Another outcome is to perpetuate the ‘us and them’ approach. The third is that trainees learn how to comply with the trainers but are not signing up to what they are being taught. The simple example of the unused duvet covers indicates that trainees will comply with an unnecessary process because they recognise the trainer has the power to make them. Trainers set these standards (because they can) in the belief that they are teaching self-discipline. Through processes like this, the Fire and Rescue Service replicates itself. Some trainees comply with officers and this can make them vulnerable when they arrive at the station. Some trainees for their part are resisting by showing the trainer a Goffmanesque image⁸ they wish to see (Lemert and Branaman 1997).

Rather than providing trainees with an opportunity to accommodate their goals with those of the Fire and Rescue Service trainers could be setting in place a situation that prepares firefighters for a career long resistance. Some trainees because they are vulnerable; some because they are like the watch that they join, they have learnt how to play the game. They are “good firefighters.” Their willingness to sign up to the organisations goals has been alienated to a point where they support the “us and them” approach that firefighters use to resist Fire and Rescue Service development. As trainees, they are taking the first tentative steps that will allow them in the future to present the

⁸ Much of Goffman's work (Lemert and Branaman 1997), suggests that interactions between people can be performances where people act as both audience and actor depending on whether they are receiving or giving a message. In this way people can understand if their message has been heard by the response of their audience. Conversations then become a series of message sending and confirmation. In a straightforward conversation this allows people to (better) understand each other. At other times, people can try to deliberately deceive (particularly by providing the image the person you are talking to wants you to provide) in the messages that they send.

right image when an officer comes to visit. Ironically, most officers (like the trainers) are aware that this is happening (see Baigent 2001). Training firefighters in this way will not provide a firefighter for the 21st century. It will reinforce a process where management is confrontational; about managing resistance not change.

Everything could be so different. This senior officer wanted to effect change:

Officer: *We're not in to this whole ball game of .. um .. breaking people down and then building them back up again in, in the mould and the type that we want out on station. That's not what the Fire and Rescue Service is about. But you'll still find training centres, I have no doubt that when you go round them that were, that are that era. But that's not what were after doing, where it's about. Cos the thing about the move to IPDS is that you can actually. It wont be about making men like me. It'll be about "can you do all those things that are needed in that job." "Yes you can do them all to the standards that are set" and therefore you can do the job. And then it's up to the individual to get the competencies.*

This officer was responsible for a progressive training centre. Trainees worked a formal nine-hour day and then stood down; they were allowed to go home or stay. After hours, everyone was relaxed. Particularly interesting this officer understood that effective training was not about "making men like me."

3.9 Recommendations

1. The guiding principle is that it is the trainers job is to encourage trainees to adopt the services goals, not to enforce them.
2. Self-discipline and the encouragement of trainees as individuals who know what to question and how to act appropriately should be a key aim of initial training.
3. All discipline should be transparent and in accordance with practices set by the Chief Officer.
4. Discipline for disciplines sake (or to enhance trainers' status) should cease.
5. No informal punishments.
6. No shouting except when risk critical.
7. Uniforms should be clean and tidy according to health and safety requirements (no bull).
8. Trainees down time is their own.

4. TRAINERS

Trainers are the first people with whom trainees spend any time with in the Fire and Rescue Service. They are, in affect, the models against which the trainee will judge themselves at the start of their career. Like teachers, everyone remembers their trainer. Every trainer we met was dedicated to their role and most worked longer hours than required; their commitment is not questioned.

4.1 Selection

In some Fire and Rescue Services, the work of a trainer was respected and sought after. These training centres mainly employed substantive ranks. Trainers at the transitional/progressive training centres we visited frequently told us that they became an trainer to put things right. They hope to learn from their (bad) experiences in training, return and make a difference:

Trainer: *A move from rigid and structured training environment to one where, personal responsibility and clearly identified targets was the basis for everything we did.*

Some training centres had difficulty in getting trainers and people had to be (almost) ordered into training. To make the work more attractive there are a variety of incentives:

- Bonuses of up to 20% were paid

- An opportunity to achieve a temporary promotion of two ranks.
- The nine-day fortnight
- It was a necessary qualification for more senior rank.

Although not an absolute arbitrator, the progressive training centres were those that moved substantive ranks sideways into training, trained them before they started their work and where training was ongoing. It may also be possible that trainers who were trained in an outside organisation, such as a Further or Higher Education establishment, were the more progressive.

4.2 Training the trainers

Senior officers have an expectation that trainers are trained for their work. Often this does not happen:

Princ.Officer: *Because we don't expect them from day one "your now a trainer go and instruct." So they're put on courses in the early stages until they feel confident they can take over the role. Observe and watch experienced trainer first on practical as more risk critical, earlier for lectures. Trainers might tell me that that's not happening but that's my expectation.*

Repeatedly, we heard similar arguments from senior officers. There was an expectation that trainers were being trained. But often they were not and in this officers case an acceptance that they were not. The reality was this:

Trainer1: *I think majority of, of staff have to draw from their own experience because trainings totally inadequate virtually nonexistent. Yeh.*

Interviewer: *So you've received no training for the role that you've got?*

Trainer1: *None whatsoever no.*

Interviewer: *Nothing?*

Trainer 1: *No none at all.*

Trainer 2: *Nothing at all.*

Trainer 3: *Maybe one day.*

Trainer 2: *Taken off, taken off operational fire station on maybe the Friday and start here as an trainer on the Monday.*

The training centre manager was very clear when we questioned him about this. There was supposed to be time allocated for trainers training. But:

Manager: *They'll carry out an induction whilst they're actually working. Err, at the moment they're actually thrown in at the deep end more than anything. Erm, they have to be, er assessors, D32, 33 or the new, er, standard now. They must achieve that within the first few months of attending.*

These quotes speak for themselves. The (knowing) view of the principal officer is corroborated by the trainers and their manager.

When trainers are not trained they can only learn from those who are in post:

Officer: *It's been difficult for the trainers to get away from that militaristic background. Again it's just usually passed on. They come in and then they see what the other trainers do and they just take it on board that that is what is required. We now discourage that completely .. er, it's constantly monitored.*

In this training centre we found that very little was changing. This same officer saw change as a move away from direct punishments:

Officer: *The trainer said right give me ten push ups .. now that is not acceptable, and as I say, "you can't do that anymore." And they'll say, "well what can I do?" And I say, "well you encourage them, give them extra tuition if it's necessary." There's other ways round it, rather than punishing them.*

Interviewer: *And is that happily accepted by the trainers?*

Officer: *Erm, no. They are still sort of in the old fashioned way that .. the way they were put through a training course. So they were verbally abused, punished, and whatever. So they think, "well I received it so why shouldn't they receive it" And sometimes on individual items it's a battle to get them to change their way of thinking. But at the end of the day, erm I usually win.*

Trainers that learn on the job will replicate the existing culture. If that culture is regimented (traditionalist), then trainers will resist change. The idea that "Sub O knows best" is common and leads to trainers following their own beliefs rather than their Chief Officers. All senior officers interviewed argued for a move away from regimented training. Similarly, to the principal officer above, many of them must/should be aware that their ideas are not being followed.

Trainers were doing their best, some in difficult circumstances, especially in regards to a lack of up-to-date equipment and facilities. Largely, the training needs and changes we point to are not of trainers making. No trainer holds senior rank and they have little contact with those who make the decisions. Those who are deliberately flouting the system only do so because they believe they are right. The system that allows this to happen is wrong.

4.3 Recommendations

1. Trainers are an undervalued resource; the importance of their role should be recognised.
2. Trainer's work is role (not rank) orientated.
3. Only those who have successfully been trained for their role should be chosen as trainers.
4. Trainers training should be ongoing. Part of this should include taking a Further or Higher Education award.
5. All trainers should be fully committed to the organisations official goals.
6. CFS, Equal Opportunities/Diversity and IPDS should run as golden threads throughout the course.
7. Trainers should recognise the difference between teamwork and bonding and help trainees to balance the recognised difficulties in this area.
8. Weekly meetings between trainees and the head of training should take place.
9. The idea of "Sub O knows best" must be overcome if training centres are to provide the outcome that Chief Officers require.

5 LECTURES

5.1 Volume

There is much to learn in the training environment and according to trainers too little time to cover the syllabus. Early in the course, trainees are given their notes. These comprise of two A4 folders full of information. Given the pressures of training, it is unlikely that anyone could possibly learn everything. IPDS provides for ongoing training so it is possible to visit the syllabus to concentrate on the basic essentials and leave some areas for future training. Some training centres are looking at this idea as a way of shortening the course. We support the idea of concentrating

on essential items but are fearful that this increases the emphasis on the physical side of the Fire and Rescue Service. We would argue that anytime saved should be used learning and developing CFS.

5.2 Messages during lectures

Most trainees join the Fire and Rescue Service with a belief that their job is to be action packed and that they will carry out some CFS. Training currently perpetuates this view by elevating the physical side of “The Job.” This reinforces trainees’ belief that CFS is an additional task rather than emphasising its growing importance. Reprioritising the training syllabus towards CFS is one essential change needed to provide firefighters for a developing Fire and Rescue Service.

5.3 Learning to learn

Trainees are dependent upon lectures to initially learn about new subjects. Learning should then be contextualised by a practical input. Lectures therefore have an important role to play in the development of a firefighter. Teaching should be accessible and provide a sufficient reflexivity to enable trainees to achieve in-depth learning. Lecturers have to be experts in their field if trainees are to get the best available opportunity to acquire and retain the information they need for their future career.

Trainees react well to the trainers who knew about their subject and how to communicate it effectively:

Trainee: *[Trainers] ask you a lot of stuff and you’d get involved in a bit more of a discussion and people would get involved more. .. So you seem to, you think and you remember more .. especially when your teaching people stuff you can .. know how to talk to people and make you feel at ease with them. Then I find it a lot easier [to learn].*

If the trainees feel at ease and are comfortable then they are more likely to learn efficiently and effectively. Interactive learning also makes the workload less arduous. Trainers with further education qualifications that were taken in academic institutions had a clear understanding of learning styles and diverse teaching methods. In particular, they were more likely to achieve a relaxed atmosphere in the classroom:

Trainee: *It was just a pleasant learning environment, you’re treated like adults.*

Treating the trainees like adults would also encourage independent learning:

Trainer: *We don’t like to hold the trainee’s hands as they go through, they’ve got to become independent learners.*

Independent learning is at the heart of IPDS. All phases of development rely on firefighters knowing how to learn for themselves. It is the trainer’s job to encourage this type of leaning. Trainers who provide a well-rounded, comprehensive training, aimed at enabling firefighters to fulfil their future role, will be an important lever for creating the dynamic of change.

Not every training centre was providing an interactive learning environment.

Trainee: *I mean one or two of them would literally just sit there and read straight from a booklet and you’d literally be copying off. You don’t learn anything that way .. or I didn’t anyway. You’d have to work hard to actually get into it.*

Delivering lectures in rote fashion encourages surface learning and disengagement from the topic. Trainers that did this also emphasised parts of the delivery as “important.” Trainees soon learnt that this was part of the game; a pointer to a part of their notes that should be highlighted and revised later for the examination.

The lack of training for trainers is again reflected in these comments:

Trainer: *Actually standing up in front of a classroom of forty eight sometimes on a recruits course and giving a lecture on a particular subject that you possibly haven't got any in depth knowledge about - apart from your own time where you've gone and looked at some books the night before - and then expected to give a lecture on erm physics and chemistry. You know, it's some people .. I mean personally .. I haven't touched that since I was at school.*

Teaching by rote is perhaps the only way this trainer can survive.

Trainees were also clear about their part in the game:

Trainee 1: *Because you don't understand what half of it means as long as you can [interrupted]*

Trainee 2: *Just memorise it.*

Trainee 1: *Relay it back on paper parrot fashion you've passed the exam.*

If trainees are just memorising selected information and repeat it, then they are unlikely to retain or understand what they have 'learnt'. In a worse case scenario, trainees were required to copy all their training notes (two large type written folders) to a handwritten book. Trainees could spend up to three hours each night of the week doing this. Some would argue (as in the case of excessive tidiness and marching) that this was teaching self-discipline.

In all but one training centre, trainees are required to stand when a trainer enters; they almost sit at attention and standards of dress are fixed. This type of environment does not encourage the interactive learning required by IPDS. To encourage individual thinking and for trainees to have the confidence to ask questions, the barriers erected in a disciplined classroom environment should be taken down. For this to happen, trainers will need the knowledge to be able to clarify and reinforce learning and understanding in the answers that they give. Working from Brigade issue notes is a good guide but the trainer's knowledge must extend further. Trainers also have to recognise that on occasions some of the trainees could have more knowledge in a particular area than they do. In one training centre, there was an interesting exchange between a trainee (ex teacher) and a trainer over a point of fact. The researcher knew the trainee was right but the trainer would not give ground. Finally, the trainee was instructed that this is what their Fire and Rescue Service said and therefore it was right.

5.4 Educational standard

There was a view amongst trainers that trainees lack the ability to learn independently or interactively. The questionnaire survey of 76 trainees (see Appendix 1)⁹, indicates that:

- 1 had an MA.
- 18.4% (14) had a degree or HND.
- 46.6% (43) of the trainees had a BTEC National or A level qualifications.
- 80.3% (61) had GCSE,
- 85.3% of these had 5 or more GCSE passes.
- 17.1% (13) had no academic qualifications.

Therefore, the bulk of trainees had achieved education levels that took them far beyond rote learning. Surface learning was a step backward for these trainers. Learning parrot fashion for these trainees would be a turn off and send the wrong message about the need for intellectual skills. One trainee puts this view into context:

⁹ The initial analysis suggests that the further North, the higher the level of trainee's qualification.

Mike: *We'll always see it as operational; I think people would like to say community fire safety.*

Trainees who think this way may have received efficient (traditionalist) training, but they are not being primed as effective levers for change in a developing Fire and Rescue Service.

5.5 Recommendations

1. Trainees should be taught how to learn; they also need to enjoy the process. These are prime aims if IPDS is to succeed.
2. Rote delivery straight from the notes is unacceptable.
3. Lectures should only be given by those trained for the role (with expertise in the subject area).
4. Lectures should be interactive and seek to consolidate (deep) learning.
5. Presentation and delivery skills should be part of the syllabus.
6. All lectures should be contextualised so that trainees put into practice what they learn.
7. The classroom environment should be relaxed.
8. Mode of dress should be appropriate to the learning environment (relaxed).
9. Examination questions should not be hinted at during lectures nor given to the trainees prior to examinations.
10. Examination of trainees knowledge should be tested appropriately (not by require trainees to remember parrot fashion lists of short answers).

6. DRILL

Interactive learning processes can extend beyond the classroom. At one training centre, trainees were briefed in a group before starting a drill. Questions were encouraged and trainees were not afraid to ask for an instruction to be explained again; this overcomes the difficulty that some trainees had of understanding what they were being asked to do. This is more realistic and potentially more productive way of instructing trainees than standing them in a line and shouting instructions. It is also possible to use the time when trainees are waiting for the other crew to finish their drill:

Trainer: *Don't stand rigid in yard, relax, if no danger then take kit off if [trainees] desire. Also, "downtime" waiting for their go; get to talk to each other, to spare Trainer, optimising time, planning, thinking what do differently. Looks like people in disarray of dress chatting, but we have got, keeping cool, talking what about to do, maximising training opportunities. Not look nice but achieving a lot more.*

The idea that something does "not look nice" was a constant concern amongst trainers. There was frequent reference to the possibility that regimented approaches were kept simply because a senior officer may not approve of the change. We were not convinced (see Dear Chief Officer Newsletter 8/1997 on relaxed dress at incidents). Senior officers are far more likely to be looking for trainees who accept this trainer's view:

Trainer: *Discipline, move around the training centre in a group, but should not march. Keeping the conversation level and the noise level down. Don't stand up. Show common sense in doorways.*

6.1 Debriefing

After the drill it may also be possible for trainers to resist the impulse to carry out a formal debrief. There could be considerable benefit if the trainees were given the opportunity to self-critique in a thorough, comprehensive and non-

threatening manner (guided by the trainer). That is how firefighters debrief on the watch in their 'post mortems' after incidents (Baigent 2001). As with most of this report, the analysis comes from the data:

Trainee: *Constructively at the end of sessions for your own opinions on things and you know how did you do that .. you debrief your own exercise. And you think, oh I'm playing a part in this rather than just getting verbal thrown at you all the time .. take this in .. take this in.*

Self-evaluation is a step towards self-learning and the added possibility of remembering. It also allows a Y person to participate in developing their understanding of the goals of the organisation.

Learning to ask the right question is an increasingly important part of a firefighter's job as was suggested earlier:

Trainer: *Can ask questions, **welcome** it. But when risk critical, **can** ask "why" but not "why me?"*

Trainer: *Don't want to send Robots out - want people with **own opinion** that **think for themselves** but **recognise rank**.*

The idea that trainees can be guided rather than instructed may be difficult for some trainers to accept. But, the more active a trainee becomes in their own learning the less likely it is that the gap between trainers and trainees develops into a game. An increasingly independent firefighter, who knows when to question and how to take responsibility for their own development will be an asset to the Fire and Rescue Service. Trainees are then more likely to conjoin their goals with those of the official culture (rather than the unofficial one).

6.2 Shouting

Shouting at trainees does not promote trainee's confidence; it is disorienting and undermines the individual. It can also lead to trainees becoming frightened of making mistakes and this can increase rather than reduce mistakes. It should not be a norm to create the following stress:

Trevor: *Well coming from civvie street as well, and not being acquainted to, the kind of discipline side of things .. set procedures and stuff, erm, understanding it. And I struggled on the drill yard for at least two weeks. You know just being shouted at for not doing things right .. and I concluded to myself .. when I looked back on that .. is that I was, I was so obsessed with not doing anything wrong .. if you know what I mean .. and I was getting myself so worked up about it and when I was going out on that yard, it was showing. I was so nervous on ladders and ...*

Tom: *First two weeks I took it quite personal whereas now its just like 'yeah whatever, just get on with it'. Before I used to be absolutely terrified of one of the trainers, he used to just look at me and I started shaking.*

Sarah: *Could not believe what I was letting myself in for. OK now as got used to it.*

Trevor, Tom and Sarah are fitting-in with their trainers' requirements. They are playing the game. In doing so, they are changing; being moulded by their experiences, but not exactly as the trainer may wish. They are learning how to comply, but not necessarily to obey. Each of these trainees has the potential to develop in different ways, some will become compliant but the more free spirited amongst them will soon learn to play the game and to provide the image that the trainers want to see. The more sophisticated amongst the trainees will do this because they know that soon this requirement will change – or will it?

Trainee: *Know it'll be a lot different on station. Know it's not forever.*

Are these trainees learning the very skills that firefighters use at the station to resist change?

As the trainee develops there may be good reason to create pressurised working conditions. Trainers should fully understand why, where and when this is appropriate.

Officer: *There's got to be an acceptance of discipline at incidents and incident management. Treated in that way that you know they will obey orders because of safety aspects, but when you expand that to everything they do, it's not the approach to take on the programme.*

This manager was attempting to get his trainers to move towards a progressive form of training. He knew that individuals that join the Fire and Rescue Service recognise that they will have to adapt to fall in line with new work patterns. This happens in all jobs and the following example was taken from one of those training centres we saw as transitional:

Trainee: *New to it, first week attitude shocked everybody, way have to stand to attention and drill. After week get into it and understand there is a need for it and why, as putting life in someone's hands and need to be able to rely on the fact that you will do something when asked. So totally different job so needed it. Not brutal but different to anything else. Ex-military say it's nothing compared to what they experienced in the army. About after a week then adapted.*

We have chosen to reproduce this quote - not because there is an abundance of data to suggest that women make better trainers - more to make the point that a different approach could bring about change.

Probationer: *She was she taught erm, she made you know she'd make, I wouldn't say make you do stuff, but sort of drive you that little bit more. You know what I mean. Get behind you that little bit more than the others would. She'd be a bit more vocal than the rest of them, they'd sort of let you do it and then tell you what you did wrong. But she'd sort of - as you're going along - she'd encourage you. And she'd be quite vocal and and very good. If you'd done well, she'd tell you you'd done well. You know what I mean. So I always found it and the way she delivered stuff. She delivered lectures really well compared to. Some of the others really struggled in lectures, but she delivered them well.*

6.3 Hose-days

All firefighters have to learn how to run out hose. The best example we saw of hose familiarisation started with a mechanical handling lecture warning about the danger of back injuries from picking up and using equipment in the wrong fashion. The next day the lecture was contextualised through a practical drill running out hose:

Trainer: *Teach the technique of holding the hose in your hands and using the wrists, you can run out the whole length on to your feet, it's not about sheer strength*

This is a perfect example of how lectures and drills can be linked.

Most training centres have a "hose-day." This generally occurred in the first week when trainees were required to run out hose for extended periods. For many trainees it was the first time that they had worn their uniforms. Weighed down by unfamiliar uniforms, trainees competed against each other (including previously retained firefighters) in a test of their abilities to complete the event. In some brigades, hose-day was legendary. Baigent and Rolph (2003) provide a considerable description of this process. A trainee indicates what happens on a hose day:

Chris: *Thursday was like the initiation test to see if you are going to be part of .. accepted or not. You just run out hoses for fucking hours .. that's why I am aching so much today because yesterday this hose run. We all did so well and like as we run out there because like .. the other courses that are there are told they are not allowed to associate with us until we have done Hose Thursday because its like make or break kind of time.*

Some trainees were physically sick with exhaustion/fear of not completing. Others sustained injuries because of unfamiliar equipment and some literally ran themselves into the ground. What was appropriate in earlier times is no longer right according to this principal officer:

P.Officer: *When in training centre embedded idea by running them ragged and drilling them hard to shape together as a team against Trainer. And objective was to complete the course and to do so together, so weakest member get through at same time with strongest member. But if so, it should be a test against visible outcomes and not a rite of passage in which the inexperienced compete against the experienced.*

The idea that a trainee can prove they have what it takes to be a firefighter so early in the course may be dated. There may be a need for a similar test towards the end of the course when trainees have the experience to take part in a proper test. However, in the first week, often the first time some trainees have put on their full Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), to put them through such an arduous task can easily be misconstrued as another thing trainers do because they can.

6.4 Uniform

The research team were constantly being told that PPE was unsuitable for individuals who were not a standard size and shape. As a result, trainees are being made to wear ill-fitting kit, particularly, tunics, leggings, gloves and shirts. Officers are aware that this is a health and safety hazard; it can also spotlight individuals as a problem. This report will not repeat the debate where only one argument is right – trainees should be provided with kit that fits them and is compliant with health and safety legislation.

6.5 Recommendations

1. Safety critical aspects must always be paramount.
2. Trainers should adapt the educational approaches used in lecturers as a method for briefing before drills.
3. De-briefing should be by self-critique in a safe environment.
4. Reluctant trainees should be encouraged.
5. Over-confident trainees should be told to stand back and let others make decisions.
6. Relaxed dress policy whilst watching and preparing for drills should be the norm.
7. Correct fitting uniforms should be supplied.

7 FITNESS

We hold no particular expertise about fitness. One of the team has some Fire and Rescue Service qualifications (and experience) in this area, but his was not an expert view and we thought it better to take advice. APU has academics who specialise in fitness and we met with one of them to advise us in technical areas. We do have the sociological expertise, however, to look at how fitness was being used.

7.1 Differing standards

One training centre organised the first two weeks on a gradual introduction to the Fire and Rescue Service based around a fitness programme. Here, dedicated fitness trainers develop fitness plans for all trainees. These included exercise, diet and well living. The process was neither brutal nor (enforced) moulding. At the other end of the scale some trainers (who also had the responsibility for fitness) seemed to push trainees into competitive stress exercises:

Trainer: *We do what we call erm, a fitness assessment which er, assists us to determine the fittest recruit by the end of the course. They're not um, sort of put on any monitoring if they don't come up to standard .. we've just got a system. And you get points depending on how, how*

well you've done... and again it brings them, it's a bit of a motivator as well cause everybody's egging every, everybody else on to do better than they did last time.

Our adviser at APU suggested this form of training might not be productive. It had the potential to force trainees to work at their peak too often and it is at this point injuries occur. Sociologically this competitive approach to fitness training was like hose-day. Another one of those occasions when trainers prove that they could make trainees work hard just because they could. "Egging" each other in similar fashion to how hose day is often organised, places a considerable stress on trainees. It also causes injuries as trainees attempt to meet expectations. Better perhaps to concentrate on conveying the techniques for personal development. Giving trainees the knowledge and techniques to be self-motivating with the skill to monitor their own fitness, is potentially better than informally (re)testing trainees on commitment and strength.

Trainers who argue for fitness programmes suggest that trainees' fitness levels would deteriorate if they were cancelled. Training centres that had minimal or no fitness training suggested that their drills are so comprehensive that any extra fitness provision would unnecessarily fatigue trainees.

Trainees too have differing opinions as one group explains:

Trainee: *It is tough but you get through it don't you?*

Trainee: *The fitness assessment every week.*

Trainee: *Oh you get through the first week and then you collapse don't you.*

Trainee: *Yeh, the first week.*

Trainee: *The first weeks the hardest.*

Trainee: *Like your doing hose running all afternoon.*

Trainee: *They just want to know really touch wood if your gonna just give over at any point or.*

Trainee: *It's character building isn't it?*

Trainee: *I think it was good that.*

Trainee: *Soul destroying.*

Trainee: *Character building.*

Trainee: *Character building.*

Trainee: *Yeh the hose running wasn't about doing so many in so many minutes it was about keeping going under, under the pressure. Yeh, that's what it was all about.*

Trainee: *See what your made of basically.*

In some of those training centres where the trainers trained alongside the trainees, it was possible that trainers were using fitness training as a means to maintain their own fitness.

7.2 APU's adviser

Because he was not actually involved in the research, the judgements of our colleague at APU are only based on our discussions with him. Given this understanding, his views do form the basis for discussion. It was his view that trainees who passed an initial fitness assessment appropriate for firefighting should develop their physical abilities through drilling with their equipment. He did recognise that some trainees may need a development plan in one area and that this should be provided on an individual basis. APU's Sports Science Department has the facilities to

actually carry out a research project to determine appropriate levels of fitness; this would not be an expensive process.

7.3 Recommendations

1. Fitness has to be appropriate to role and requirement.
2. Appropriate qualifications should be required and maintained for trainers.
3. Diet and well living lectures should be given.
4. Individual fitness programmes should be designed individually for trainees after a full fitness assessment is carried out on each trainee.
5. Fitness programmes should be constructed to address any weaknesses the trainee has with their own fitness levels (there should be no comparison with others).

8. TEAMWORK

Both trainers and trainees constantly emphasise the importance of teamwork. This is obviously an important aspect to the Fire and Rescue Service and is understandable. The close proximity, camaraderie and potential danger in their work makes it almost inevitable that firefighters will cooperate. It is positive when that cooperation is balanced to draw out the best from individuals.

Trainer: *Teamwork isn't about making everyone the same .. using others strengths.*

8.1 Balance

It is the trainer's job to achieve that balance. To develop the individuals in the team so that the more self-assured recognise they have a requirement to listen to those who are reluctant to put forward a point of view. Sometimes trainees' eagerness can lead to the marginalisation of those who are less assertive. Women told us that when they make a suggestion "few of the blokes like that .. look at us like we're stupid .. they don't sort of wanna listen to us". It is probably that a less assertive man may be treated the same way by his colleagues. Those who constantly lead on the drill ground can take up a similar position around the locker room and dormitories; they can become peer group leaders who create group norms and then police them (see Baigent and Rolph 2003). This is a complicated area and some trainers have difficulty in recognising the boundaries of their job, in particular their ideas about when teamwork is necessary and when it developed into bonding for its own sake sometimes blurred:

Trainer: *On the last course the, the personnel on there were very fragmented, even when they'd been on the team building day. And we try and bring them together as teams .. everybody went in their own individual direction .. and it made it very difficult. So what we started to do was encourage them to get together at night and get into study groups and things like that.*

8.2 Enforced bonding

The conversations around this quote indicate that when trainees act as individuals they worry the trainers. Despite the Fire and Rescue Service wishing to encourage diversity, a 'Sub O knows best' approach led to action being taken to push the group together during stand down time. Trainees would feel obliged to follow the trainer's suggestions.

There are three arguments here:

1. Trainees feel a pressure to comply that borders on unnecessary control of trainees 'free time.'
2. Although done for the best possible motives, studying in groups from lists of expected questions can 'dumb-down' rather than enhance learning (see Baigent and Rolph 2003). If groups were choosing to sit around discussing the days learning this is a good way to learn, but even then it should be an individual preference.

3. In such an environment, any time that a trainee wants to act as an individual they can be identified as acting against the group: a situation that could draw sanction from a number of areas (see Baigent and Rolph 2003).

The pressure of enforced teamworking pushing everyone together (all the time) can affect the trainee's welfare as this group argue:

Trainee: *Just some, some nights you just don't get space to yourself sometimes I think cause they expect you to be so heavy with this team this, this all work together yer but sometimes you just.*

Trainee: *It's good to have five minutes to yourself every now and again.*

Trainee: *Yeh.*

Trainee: *You just cant live out of each others .. we're all individuals as well.*

Another trainee took their own course of action to avoid the group.

Trainer: *We found one trainee up the drill tower as he went up there just to get some peace and quiet.*

8.3 Closed environments

Training centres, particularly residential ones, can be closed environments. Trainees often have difficulty reconciling the trainer's wishes with their own needs. This is another area where resentment may build up though misunderstanding. When a trainer makes a suggestion, trainees can hear them literally. Trainers should be wary about encouraging the team dynamic to such an extent that bonding takes place for its own sake. This can occur when an overemphasis is placed on the "Fire and Rescue Service as a family" and that "teamwork is life and death." There are examples of the bonding effect working against trainees who are happy to work together at drill yet would prefer their own space at other times (see Baigent and Rolph 2003). Forcing people to live together is at home in the military, but being a member of the team in the Fire and Rescue Service is not a way of life. The progressive trainer recognises this.

One trainer heard our argument:

Trainer: *I'm conscious of it you know there's gotta be a little bit kept .. you gotta keep a lid on it cause it can go too far like you say. If one of these recruits on this, this squad out there now doesn't, let bond with him at all but they can .. pass everything .. then they will be of just as good fire fighter as .. the others. And they would pass out the training centre. You know there is no bonding test to pass. It's a nicety and it's not a, an essential. It's a nicety and it helps them to get through their course as well.*

Once the need for balance is recognised, trainers should encourage teamwork but ensure there is no gap between what they say and what the trainees hear. It is a matter of balance:

Trainer: *They arrive as 20 individuals but they need to be a team to be effective. But they can remain individual. And everybody has different needs and different wants and lifestyles. And that should be respected within the group. But that should not interfere with the team goal.*

Trainer: *So people can be themselves you know .. we're not trying to create robots we're trying to create individual people who can perform their role.*

Progressive trainers will understand how to achieve the balance that encourages diversity. Trainees should learn to recognise how the necessary teamworking at drill can become intrusive if it overflows to other situations.

This subject is at the heart of influencing change in the Fire and Rescue Service. Fire and Rescue Service culture gets the blame for the Fire and Rescue Service's difficulties. What is missed in this argument is the recognition that the way individuals are subsumed into the team (culture) is not a reified process, but one that is encouraged, if not learnt, during training.

The outcome of an over-socialisation into team bonding can mean that when a trainee separates from their team in the training centre and goes as a probationer to the station, they make every effort to bond with the watch. The watch for their part will make every effort to fit the trainee into their group. This is positive in respect to operating as an operational team. However, if the watch culture also includes negative agendas, then trainees are likely to accept these to prove they are like everyone else. One difficult area reported almost universally is that when the new probationer arrives at the station they are told, "forget what you have learnt during training." This of course does not apply to everything they learnt as a trainee, but there can be a view on stations that trainees are not prepared for their future role. Torn between what they have learnt in training and their new family, the trainee will inevitably follow the watch. This process is further aided if the trainee has learnt to play the game (against their trainers) (and can become more pronounced if a trainee is ill-equipped for the work they will be required to undertake). The probationer has little difficulty in recognising that such a game also exists at the station, where informal watch culture formalises the gap between officers and firefighters (Baigent 2001; HMCIFS 2001).

9. FACILITIES

The Fire and Rescue Service has had little room for privacy. The mainly white male working class workforce (amongst fulltime firefighters) has always seen communal living as key to their success at firefighting. Whilst firefighting has been at the heart of Fire and Rescue Service culture, there was little interest in providing separate facilities for women, people with religious requirements and those who want time alone. Now that attempts are being made to employ a more diverse workforce, the requirement for communal living should reduce. The new faces in and of the Fire and Rescue Service should also become a lever for change towards a developing Fire and Rescue Service.

There is still no national standard for accommodation. It was not the remit of this research to carry out a root and branch survey in this area, but some comments are provided. Space and resources are in short supply. In some areas, there is a willingness to make changes to accommodate individuals. There is also considerable resistance to making this adjustment. There are many who conventionally believe that change is unnecessary and that any resources should always be pumped into new equipment for firefighting and improving facilities for the majority (and pay).

9.1 We are all different, we all have areas of difference

Individual trainees have different comfort zones regarding privacy. Some women have no difficulty undressing amongst their colleagues, others would leave the Fire and Rescue Service (or not even apply) rather than do this. The same is true for men. Changing facilities are therefore problematic. One approach is to provide a minimum dress code. This allows all trainees to change together but relies very much on the integrity of trainees. If a trainee were to break that code, it is unlikely that anyone would complain. But this does not stop the offence that occurs when one person exposes themselves to others. Research indicates that firefighters put up with considerable harassment before they make it public.

A number of training centres have separate undressing areas for men and women. This provides privacy, but frequently women's facilities are provided far away from where they are needed. For example, men can go from a

BA chamber directly into a dirty changing area and shower. Women often need to move to another building. This situation isolates women and spotlights difference. In some training centres, women's facilities were temporary: a male area changed to female by cellotaping a label on the door.

Some training centres have unisex shower rooms and toilets. You only have to look at the cleanliness of female and male toilets to recognise why women can be unhappy with this. When a lone woman works with so many men, it is also easy to recognise that such arrangements can also make them feel vulnerable.

Most of the difficulties surrounding undressing relate to a matter of personal choice. In one Fire and Rescue Service, on their first day, all the trainees were issued with their kit. Custom and practice suggested that trainees undressed in the same room. One of the trainees was a woman. Claire did not have a problem with this; she thought, "it was a laugh." When the trainer was questioned on how appropriate this was his reply was "if she had a problem with this we would have provided a separate room." Too frequently, this is how difficulties like this are treated. It is left for the individual to complain. Trainees are vulnerable; they do not like to stand out and they are unlikely to protest. In the military, this matter is taken out of individuals hands. There are always separate changing facilities. In the Fire and Rescue Service, the emphasis on being together can create false pressures. In one example of how women do not want to be isolated, we were told of one woman who had her own locker room, but asked to go into the male locker room with a modesty screen. She also showered with them in a swimming costume!

Often missed in the debate (about undressing) is the possibility that some men do not want to undress and shower with their male colleagues.

9.2 Residential

Individuals have their own argument for or against residential training. The same can be said for the argument about dormitories or separate rooms. It was not our job to take a vote on this but to recognise effective rather than efficient practice.

It is acknowledged that trainees from other Fire and Rescue Services can live a considerable distance from the training centre. In this case, progressive training centres should provide single accommodation as a convenience. Firefighters should have the right to chose to stay after 1700 and not be responsible for any cleaning.

However, residential training centres could also be barracks. The arguments that dormitories replicate life on the station are not accepted. At a station, firefighters are given the opportunity to rest at night and they have the next day off to recover. Trainees need their sleep. This should not be curtailed by listening to other people snoring, deliberately being disturbed by their colleagues or concerns over security (Baigent and Rolph 2003).

There is also a difficulty in recognising why some trainees were supervised for 24 hours a day and to work for 86 hours a week (particularly given the working time regulations). Apart from lectures and required revision some trainees had to clean the building, staff the switchboards overnight and in one training centre did a security patrol around the grounds (equipped with hard hat and a torch). Trainees often had to get special permission to go home for the evening to deal with family difficulties. Such applications were not encouraged. Whilst there was sympathy for trainers who complained about working long hours, it was difficult to equate their complaint with their requirement that trainees work longer hours than they did.

One member of the team, without the experience of having been in the service, found it particularly bizarre that when trainees were released from drill, lectures or at the end of the day that the Fire and Rescue Service still wanted to keep control over them. As she said, “you are either working or not, it is as simple as that.” Without her view, we may not have recognised this point.

To return to an earlier analysis, each training centre was different. Wherever a training centre came in the scale between regimented and progressive, trainers acted as if they were a watch, they each operated according to their own norms and values. Accommodation provides an example. One training centre gave trainees a room key at the start of the course and left trainees with their privacy. In other training centres, trainers inspected the rooms on a daily basis for particles of dust and to see if the sink has been dried. Were it not for these differences between training centres it may have been difficult to comment on how the Fire and Rescue Service could accommodate and train for its development.

9.3 Family friendly

Initial training can place a strain on families and partnerships. From 10 to 16 weeks the trainee is fully occupied with the Fire and Rescue Service. When they do go home there is studying to do and a preoccupation with their new career. Non-residential trainees with a family complained that they were unable to study and residential trainees complained they missed their family. Creating a work life balance in these circumstances is difficult. Trainees are excited about their new job and families want to be supportive. However, it was possible to detect that trainees marginalised their family during the training. For a short period, this may be just acceptable but there is also the possibility that this is a preparation for the future when The Job takes preference – not so much by an anti-social duty system, but because becoming a firefighter can involve a lot more than just going to work. We were frequently being told that the Fire and Rescue Service is a family, but to what extent watch culture marginalises (or acts paternally towards) the family at home we are unsure.

Some training centres actually invite families to the training centre before the course starts. It may be good practice to extend this to include an awareness of how the trainee is likely to be influenced by the Fire and Rescue Service family and to create a support group amongst partners.

There are few ways a residential course can be family friendly. Single parents will not be encouraged by such arrangements. If this sector of the community is to be encouraged then consideration should be given to childcare arrangements. Individuals may also find the close proximity of the living arrangements oppressive. Potentially people may not apply to join the Fire and Rescue Service if they are told they must live in a mixed sex dormitory or cannot go home at night. It may well be that these type of people have much to offer in helping the Fire and Rescue Service to develop. Those training centres that provide optional accommodation as “a hotel rather than a training establishment from 1700-0900” are the most progressive.

9.4 Recommendations

1. All undressing, washing, toileting and showering areas should be private.
2. All facilities at a training centre, except the trainer’s offices, should be open to everyone.
3. Individual’s difficulties associated with being a carer should be considered and addressed.
4. Trainees should each have their own individual study bedroom with a study desk and ensuite.
5. Trainers should only enter trainees’ accommodation with their permission.
6. In training centres with a residential facility it should be a matter of choice if this is used or not.

10. Pre-entry SELECTION

Whilst training is one lever for change, selecting the right person is another. There is currently a project to develop new pre-entry selection standards. However, the subject has been raised during this research and it is therefore appropriate to comment. Most frequently, the reference has been to fitness, only occasionally did anyone raise the issue of a trainee's ability to present themselves to an audience or have concerns about academic ability. From this situation alone, it is possible to make judgements about what areas trainers see as important and to identify their lack of understanding of developing agendas for the Fire and Rescue Service.

10.1 Physical ability

The image of the Fire and Rescue Service is masculine, dirty and dangerous. This influences the choice people make when they decide that they want to become a firefighter. For many the physical nature of the work is why they join. Some want to prove themselves capable, others believe becoming a firefighter makes them an important member of the community, others wish to contribute by using their physical skills to help people. All trainees believe the work is going to be challenging and that no two days are alike. To an extent the Fire and Rescue Service provides all these opportunities and many training centres are instrumental in reinforcing this belief. However, there is little recognition of the intellectual skills firefighters need. The Fire and Rescue Service is increasingly becoming a job where technical and interpersonal skills are critical. Applicants whose main aim is for a physical job are not the best candidates for the 21st Century Emergency Worker. Those who traditionally do not join the Fire and Rescue Service, may fear they do not have the physical skills or the imagery the Fire and Rescue Service still portrays and some may have difficulty in persuading family and friends that this is a job worthy of their talents.

Trainers who elevate physical skills above intellectual skills are part of the problem standing in the way of change. Any attempt to lower physical standards at the selection stage brings out cries of lowering standards. Again, this may be a case of where trainers believe that they know best, because the managers who discussed fitness during breakout at the 'Sunrise' conference believed firefighters needed "to be fit but not super-fit." This argument is reflected in the two brigades that have changed the bleep test requirement to a level that is less prejudicial to women. They argue that scientific evidence supports this. Our scientific adviser (given the limited evidence we provided) believed this could be true. The argument is that women who achieve 8.4 are equal in this area of fitness to men who achieve 9.6).

There can be no doubt that since women have joined the Fire and Rescue Service, strength has become more of an issue. Trainers frequently stereotyped women's lack of upper body strength and they never raised this issue about a man, any man. This generalisation can result in women being expected to fail and trainers may be increasingly vigilant for any signs of weakness. During a midterm interview, Kathy was told:

Trainer: *When you first arrived the trainers thought you were a little bit small, and probably a little bit weak and got completely the wrong attitude for the job. The last seven weeks you have done nothing but prove us all wrong.*

Kathy saw these comments as a positive outcome. At an interview five weeks earlier, Kathy had explained her concerns about trainers requiring her to prove herself, when men were not.

The idea that women have to prove they can do something that a similar man is expected to be able to do is powerful amongst men – and in the Fire and Rescue Service. Women have to pass this extra test; men do not. Di explains:

Di: *Its expectations I think .. they expect less of you. ... They don't want you to prove them wrong.*

When women recognise this is happening it places extra pressure on them. As in the case of the man who considered he was being spotlighted by being shouted at, women too can suffer from an over anxiety to perform well. In women's case, this is one of many spotlights that can reduce their confidence to a point where they begin to believe that they are not good enough (or not wanted). This message travels outside the Fire and Rescue Service.

There was no evidence that any woman failed her training because she was too weak. Therefore, the conclusion is that physical standards for entry were sufficient to allow trainees to do the job, even if on occasions this meant that some trainees had to develop their strength in training.

One equality advisor explained that women would not encourage their friends to join because they would not want them to see how they are treated. The same may apply to black and ethnic minority firefighters

The majority of the black focus group participants emphasised that racism in the Fire and Rescue Service needs to be tackled before they would consider promoting the Fire and Rescue Service as a career to their family and friends.
Singh (2003: 61).

10.2 Presentational and academic skills

The ability to pass on knowledge to prevent emergencies will be a priority in the developing Fire and Rescue Service. IPDS already recognises this and is comprehensively planning for the evolving role and interpersonal skills required by firefighters. Applicants for the Fire and Rescue Service should be tested for their ability to present on CFS. Currently some interviews and application forms stress the subject of CFS (and Equal Opportunities) but successful applicants are aware of this emphasis and may not exactly be answering these questions honestly.

Some training centres suggested that firefighters with dyslexia are joining because there is no test of their ability to write. We make no comment on the subject of dyslexia. Firefighters will also have to understand more technical and legal matters. It may be appropriate to consider setting an examination level for applicants to attain. The Public Service BTEC National could be a benchmark. The Fire and Rescue Service could also become more active in ensuring this qualification reflects its new agendas to be more involved in prevention than suppression. Not all applicants should or would have this qualification and a similar level would be A level. There is evidence that a considerable number of applicants already hold academic qualifications. The Public Service Degree at APU reflects new agendas in the Fire and Rescue Service.

In making the suggestion of an academic level for acceptance, we are aware that some groups in the community are identified as not getting best value out of the education system. Therefore, they may be considered to be unduly disadvantaged by a process that requires educational qualifications at the outset. Set against this argument is the possibility that some groups may consider the Fire and Rescue Service is only a manual job and not professional enough for their members to be encouraged to apply. In any judgement on this matter, it is necessary to be aware that the firefighter of tomorrow must have a range of abilities. These include the ability to continue training throughout their service, to do so independently and to work within the community. Continuing Professional Development (CPD) through IPDS is not an option. It will be a requirement. Tomorrow's firefighter will be a professional and need to continually demonstrate their competence.

Attention is also drawn to time taken by the recruitment process. At one time, it was considered that people who wanted to be firefighters should be prepared to prove this by waiting around for the time it took to process applications. If the Fire and Rescue Service is to change, it may need to look beyond those who have wanted to be

firefighters since they were children and try to attract people who have other options. Such people are unlikely to put their life on hold for the 18 months some trainees waited for a job offer.

We were told, “attraction is still blood, guts and glory.” This fits with the imagery the Fire and Rescue Service still portrays to the public. Those in the Fire and Rescue Service already know that most of their time is not spent at incidents; even then, that not everyone is always involved in this ‘sexy’ image of the Fire and Rescue Service. However, the majority of the population still look at firefighters as special people. It may be that many who would make good firefighters do not think their physical abilities are good enough. If the Fire and Rescue Service wishes to change its image, it may do well to target people who fall into this group.

10.3 Recommendations

1. The Fire and Rescue Service has an increasing requirement for its personnel to have technical and interpersonal skills; standards for pre-entry selection should represent this requirement.
2. Consideration should be given to setting a minimum academic standard for entry.
3. Standards of physical fitness should be appropriate for role.
4. The image of the Fire and Rescue Service as a macho pursuit should be discouraged.
5. The Fire and Rescue Service should be advertised as an organisation that recruits at all levels and offers a structure where officers can start as firefighters.

11. COMMUNITY FIRE SAFETY (CFS)

If the Fire and Rescue Service wishes to move forward and effectively deliver the community safety message, it must first persuade firefighters that it is their job and recruit people who already recognise this. Once this has been done, firefighters will then require training in the interpersonal skills necessary to deliver the CFS message. One way of pump-priming both these requirements is to ensure that trainees learn how to reach out to the community and accept the new role of the Fire and Rescue Service.

11.1 Differing approaches

There are a number of models adopted by training centres to teach CFS. Some are extensive, trainees are given lectures on CFS, interpersonal skills and then sent out into the community to fit fire alarms and talk to the public. Trainees can also prepare presentations that are judged on merit. These are progressive methods compared with the training centres where trainees are given a two-hour lecture and the subject is then left until the probationer arrives at the station.

Trainees had mixed feelings about the CFS delivery they received. Despite some only getting two hours no trainee complained that they were not getting sufficient preparation for this area. Some trainees found CFS boring. This does not bode well for a service whose main emphasis is to turn the culture around to work towards prevention rather than cure.

From interviews with trainees it is clear they were aware when they applied that part of their job was to deliver CFS (50% gave it as one reason for joining – 50% did not). All trainees joined the Fire and Rescue Service because they wanted to help the public. Although trainees thought that the best way they could help the public was to become good firefighters, given the correct emphasis during their training, these firefighters could soon become ambassadors for CFS.

The Fire and Rescue Service should be aiming to improve delivery of CFS in both quantitative and qualitative terms. The subject should start in week one and gradually develop in each week until the trainee is persuaded of the importance of CFS and has some insight into how to deliver it. Those trainees who do not accept this message should not leave the training centre.

Those training centres that emphasise the gathering of physical skills and marginalise CFS are in danger of giving the trainee the impression that their main job is suppression. Trainer's lack of respect for CFS can encourage resistance to CFS.

11.2 Recommendations

1. Community Fire Safety should be a golden thread running right through initial training
2. Trainees should be tested to a national standard for their ability to present the community safety message.
3. No trainee should leave training centre with a training need in this area.

12. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

There are two areas of interest to the cultural auditor when visiting a training centre. One is to identify if the institution operates in an equal and fair way. The other is to identify how equality is taught. From the institutional point of view, some training centres lacked the facilities to treat everyone 'equally'. Women were often disadvantaged in comparison with their male colleagues because they had ill-fitting PPE, and their facilities were temporary, not always in the right place and sometimes verged on being so inadequate that women could feel vulnerable. These points have already been discussed. There is also a generalised belief amongst trainers that women lack upper body strength (see earlier comments). This perception spotlights women, can create insecurity and leave them with the impression that they are being victimised. Behaviour that marginalises women in this way is identified as institutional sexism (HMCIFS 1999).

12.1 Overcoming institutional processes

Good equality training will help to overcome institutional processes. Nonetheless, this can only occur if first those given the responsibility of teaching the subject understand and agree with the message they are delivering. Trainers are therefore key players in the Fire and Rescue Service's attempt to promote equality. It is their influence that facilitates trainee's knowledge. Some trainers were whole-heartedly behind the Fire and Rescue Services attempt to diversify its workforce. It showed in the way they acted and the words they used:

Trainer: *I think that all, all, certainly most of us, it's not like a "Oh we should really do this," we're actually quite certain. I'm really passion, passionate about it and its .. and having Tom here as an officer .. he's exactly the same.*

The trainers at this training centre were clear about their motive. They wanted to provide a safe fair and equal environment for the trainees. Their understanding of equality agendas was convincing and they gave them their wholehearted support. An officer in another Fire and Rescue Service expands their argument:

Officer: *Representing the community that we serve so we are seen to be a reflection of the community. So we're not exclusive, we're inclusive. And hopefully it means that we're trying to get away from the quasi-militaristic and hierarchical image that a lot of people had of us, and try and make us out to be a more family friendly dynamic different type of job. Trying to get rid of the stereotypes basically. And try and encourage people who wouldn't previously have considered it to be a job for them. To say "actually it is a job you can do and it is a job you could do. We'll give you some help, help you get the applications, help you go through," so*

we do actually represent our community. Cos it will actually make us better as an organisation and we'll better be able to serve our public.

Trainers in progressive training centres see their job as actively promoting equality. They were not in the business of ticking boxes to cover equality training.

12.2 Understanding the message

One of the first questions we asked any trainer was about their view of equality. Some of the answers showed a depth of understanding and commitment as above. Many of the answers were disappointing. They ranged around a form of words that said, “we treat everyone the same” and “as long as they can do the job.” Given that contributors were always aware a focus of the research was to audit for equality and diversity, we were surprised at the lack of sophistication in these answers. Singh (2003: 19) has a similar view.

It became clear to the author that the terminology used in the area of equality and diversity was poorly understood; in particular, terms such as diversity, equal opportunities, positive action and affirmative action were poorly understood. Officers and junior ranks in the service also did not understand the reasons why this was an important area of work for the service and the reasons why management needs to address the issue of under-representation in the Fire and Rescue Service.

There was only one officer who spoke out against equality and he was unequivocal. He complained about the emphasis on equality and its failure to provide them with the “best people” and was being thrust on them by officers “who had forgotten what it was like on a station.”

There were also some progressive answers:

Trainer: *General ethos for equal ops has changed from how used to be and more training/learning environment not forced culture, more relaxed and coax the best out of people. Have to get people thinking about own attitudes and thoughts and therefore more productive than just legislation as need to address attitudes and how individual responsibility for attitude and therefore part in legislation.*

Trainer: *Can't treat everyone the same as they have different circumstances, what they mean by the same is they should all be treated with dignity and respect. Need to find out root of problem if is one as could explain behaviour, so it's a balance between treating all with dignity and respect and being aware of individual circumstances.*

12.3 Equality Officers

We were able to speak to some dedicated equal opportunities officers. They were of the opinion that the Fire and Rescue Service has a long way to go to achieve equality. They spoke of “lip service” and “ticking boxes without challenging people’s prejudices and understanding where prejudices came from.” One telling answer was that “firefighters don’t point daughters towards fire fighting as they know what life’s like on a station.” The questionnaire we used does not particularly support the view that firefighters encourage their sons to join either. Only 8% of trainees had family in the Fire and Rescue Service, but they were all male¹⁰.

One answer that referred to why it was difficult to get women firefighters to get their friends to join was they “wouldn’t want friends to see how been treated.” This may also apply to parents and their children.

¹⁰ These findings were in conflict with Singh (2003). In a far larger survey, he found that 17% of firefighters had family members in the service and for women this increased to 28%. One explanation of this difference may be found in that his survey was of firefighters on stations and this survey was of those in training centres. This could suggest that joining the Fire and Rescue Service may now be a fairer process that takes less account of who you know and more account of results on the day.

Equal opportunities officers were able to point out at least one reason why trainers lacked an understanding of the real concept of equal opportunities. It appeared that they left this to the expert:

EO officer: [I am the] *only one who delivers it. None of training trainers have been on equal opportunities course.*

Earlier arguments suggest that trainers should only deliver lectures where they had expert knowledge; all trainers should be experts in this area. As more than one senior officer told us in a variety of way, “Equality, like CFS, is a Golden Thread that should run right through the course.”

Male trainees spoke as though they had no difficulty with the idea that women were becoming firefighters, but again their approach was traditional:

Trainee 1: *I believe that if women can do the job then fair enough let them in. Same as anybody, if they can do the job.*

Trainee 2: *As long as they are good enough for the job and their heart is in it.*

Trainee 3: *People say “you women or blacks shouldn’t be here,” but as long as you are physically capable of doing the job it shouldn’t matter.*

These trainees had certainly been given some insight to equality. That they immediately placed the emphasis on physical skills speaks volumes as to how trainees viewed their future role and the type of equal opportunities training they received.

In one training centre we found that in every room there was an equality statement. It was called the “Ground Rules” and laid down how people were expected to treat each other. There was no ambiguity and no room for misunderstanding.

There is little evidence of any individual being directly discriminated against during the main part of the research. However, there is some evidence that trainers are traditionalist about the type of Fire and Rescue Service they belong to and the type of firefighter they wish to produce. They operate along the lines of “Sub O knows best” suggesting that “if they are good enough then there is no problem.” There is some difficulty here because trainers often believe that their job is partly about teaching firefighters the syllabus and partly about trying to produce firefighters in their own image. In this way, trainers’ actions could be institutionally traditionalist and as a result, the potential exists for them to discriminate against anyone who is recognised as ‘different’, because they try to fit everyone into the mould. Much of what has gone before indicates that trainers think they know what is best for the Fire and Rescue Service and do their utmost to implement their thoughts. Trying to change this approach is perhaps the biggest problem facing the Fire and Rescue Service in every area.

12.4 Modes of address

In their efforts to reduce militarism, all training centres were trying to avoid the term “recruits.” Some training centres preferred to use the term “trainees” whilst others referred to “students.” In the same way that there are still some who resist the term “firefighter” and defer to “fireman” some trainers were prepared to accept the new language whilst others resisted. It is equally importantly, as one trainer explains, that “it is not what you say but how you say it that counts.” This is true and observation is the only way to identify how language is used and the way people respond is the best way to judge if a form of language is oppressive.

In seven training centres the trainers address the trainees as “Mr” and “Miss”; their argument is that this sets the title ‘firefighter’ as a challenge an accolade that the trainees must prove they are worth. Other training centres did not see the need for this incentive and to varying degrees and at different times they used the term firefighter followed by the surname and first names. The rule for trainers varied; they were either called “Sir” or by their rank. Contextually it was important to notice that in those training centres judged to be regimented, the term “Sir” was accompanied by a requirement for the trainee to come to attention – even when just passing in the corridor. “Sir” is not just a name it is a way of showing who is in charge – we wonder why that is necessary.

Using the term “Mr” and “Miss” points to the difference between firefighters and those they refer to as “civilians.” In a service keen to loose militaristic language, this one term is a ubiquitous reminder that the Fire and Rescue Service sets itself apart. A process repeated at stations where ‘real’ firefighters set themselves apart from the ‘civvies/others’ (the Mr, Miss and Mrs who cannot do The[ir] Job). Ironically, many of those trainees who trainers ‘demoted’ to civilians were actually retained firefighters.

The theory that those who apply labels do so because they have the power to do so is the basis of the argument about racist terms. The same argument applies to nicknames. In a similar fashion, those who defer to “firemen” 15 years after the term firefighter was adopted are showing they have the power to spotlight female firefighters. Calling trainees “Mr, Miss, Mrs” and requiring that they call you “Sir” is very similar.

12.5 Mentoring

We were not aware of any training centre providing an out of service structured mentoring service for the trainees. Some did use a telephone help-line that trainees could ring if they had a personal problem. In a more formal way, some training centres operate a weekly interview/review between a trainer and the trainee. This is a step in the right direction and can serve as an early warning system of potential difficulties. However, there is evidence to support a view that trainers may not be the best person to carry out mentoring with trainees.

One Fire and Rescue Service has carried out an approachability questionnaire – 15% were comfortable approaching officers, 75% said sometimes or never. A trainee and a trainer provide some qualitative evidence to explain why this may be:

Trainee: *I got sat down with the station officer well I did anyway I got sat down with the station officer and erm sub officer. Basically they read, read through a sheet giving you a verbal warning .. er which you've got to sign. Erm (.) I'd never done it in me life, so I didn't know what I were expecting. And that's it, you just, just sign the sheet give it them back.*

Trainer: *This ties in with that the only official sort of training I've had since I've been here I've been here just over thirteen month now was a mentoring course with an outside body came in and we all took a two day mentoring course and that was the brigade, the brigade management's view of sort of progressing us on to a different level if you like you give another sting to a bow but what they didn't realise or what they didn't foresee was is that, that mentoring role, and that role of squad trainer, or discipline towing the line and showing them the standards that they have to set conflict totally and you can't discipline somebody for not, erm, passing an exam or having dirty shoes or whatever one minute and then be his mentor and sit down and have a cosy chat with them the next*

The experience reported in Baigent and Rolph (2003) should be considered. This provided a weekly interview between the trainee and someone from outside the service. According to those involved, it worked well. There is

evidence that it help to avoid some problems and to put fears into perspective. Trainees concerns are not unique. In a sympathetic arrangement, it would be easy to allay most trainees' worries.

12.6 Recommendations

1. All trainers should be fully trained and signed up to the principles of equal opportunities/diversity and fairness at work.
2. The principles of equal opportunities/diversity and fairness at work should be a golden thread running throughout initial training.
3. Trainees and trainers should address each other by first names.
4. All trainees should have a mentor.
5. All trainees should be given assertiveness training within the first two weeks and during the last two weeks of initial training.
6. No trainee should leave training centre with a training need in this area.

13 REGIMENTED, TRANSITIONAL AND PROGRESSIVE

The following models are the models this report has produced to identify the location of training centres on the scale that moves from Regimented to Transitional to Progressive.

13.1 REGIMENTED MODEL

13.1.1 Accommodation

Trainers and trainees have separate locker rooms, shower, toilets, eating arrangements and car parking.

13.1.2 Address

At these training centres trainee firefighters are referred to as "recruits" – individually they are referred to as Mr. Mrs. or Miss. Trainers are referred to by their rank or as "Sir/Ma'am."

13.1.3 Passing

'Recruits' are required to come to attention when a Trainer approaches and to acknowledge them by addressing them as "Sir/Ma'am."¹¹

13.1.4 Talking to

If a recruit wants to ask a question they must come to attention and address the trainer as "Sir/Ma'am."

13.1.5 Drill ground

'Recruits' are expected to stand to attention or at ease throughout their time on the drill ground; this includes the time when they are watching their colleagues carry out drills. Conversations are either discouraged or banned.

13.1.6 Lecture room

When Trainer enters the lecture room, all recruits are required to stand, say "Ma'am/Sir" and remain standing until waved down. The course leader will report that everyone is present.

¹¹ 'Recruits' are so 'conditioned' to doing this that they did the same with our research team, causing us considerable embarrassment.

13.1.7 Dismissed

When “dismissed” recruits must continue to observe all the formalities (above).

13.1.8 Movement

Recruits must move formally to their next location by either marching or doubling.

13.1.9 Inspected

Inspections take place twice a day. Shoes and fire boots are buffed and uniform is expected to be spotless, with sharp creases.

13.1.10 Cleaning

Accommodation is treated as a barracks. Standards of cleanliness and tidiness are extreme recognised by the recruits as a form of control: the “game” (see below).

13.1.11 Typical a regimented model will require:

- a. Recruits to stand to attention when coming into contact with uniformed or non-uniformed personnel. This rule also applies after they have been dismissed and in their own time.
- b. Daily inspections of accommodation.
- c. Communal areas are expected to be cleaned to a military standard. All trainees are held responsible for sub standard cleaning and punishments are metered out to the whole group. Inspections can increase as a result.
- d. Standards for rooms include the sink being clean and dry, windows being polished and rooms dusted. Trainers will move beds to check that skirting boards have been cleaned. Duvets and pillow cases have to be ironed so as to form a central cross (result being that students do not sleep on duvet or pillow cases but on the raw duvet and pillow).
- e. Trainees will stand to attention outside their rooms each morning waiting for the inspecting trainer.
- f. Inspections at start of morning and afternoon programme. Recruits are required to buff their shoes, shine fire boots and have immaculate dust free uniforms (this includes PPE).
- g. During the inspection and at other times recruits are expected to show respect for their superior’s rank by not looking them in the eye; “eyeballing” as this is called, will result in a recruit being shouted at.
- h. When standards are not met, punishments will be given. These punishments will normally take the form of an essay on a subject relevant to the recruit’s course.
- i. Areas of a training centre can for no logical reason be out of bounds to trainees. For example, recruits are unable to cross in front of the main building and have to pass round the other three sides to arrive at their destination.

Trainers will carry out purges to remind the ‘recruits’ of their place in the hierarchy. Trainees report that they believe trainers deliberately look for a way of handing out punishments. Incidents have been reported where trainers are believed to enter recruits room with dust on their fingers in order to find something wrong. Recruits learn to treat this as a “game” where they see themselves as in opposition to the trainers. Trainers recognise this ‘game’; indeed, trainers sponsor and encourage it to (allegedly) encourage team building. This is so, but it creates a team amongst the trainees in opposition to, rather than working with, the trainers. This ‘games’ outcome has the potential to build a barrier that marks the trainers status in relation to the recruit. Trainers who establish this ‘game’ refer to it in

laughing terms whilst the recruits relative subordination in this situation means they likely to be the recipients of bullying. Recruits can be confused, even grateful, when a trainer treats them as an individual – but such treatment is not predictable and a trainer who has talked casually to a recruit may equally set out later, to prove this was not going to be the norm, more like a privileged moment only exercised by the Trainer.

13.2 Transitional

13.2.1 Accommodation

Trainers and trainees have separate locker rooms, showers, toilets and car parking. Eating arrangements are shared.

13.2.2 Address

At these training centres trainee firefighters will be referred to as “trainees” – individually they will be referred to as “firefighter” and as the course develops first names may be used in informal settings and during lectures. Trainers are referred to by their rank and senior officers as “Sir/Ma’am.”

13.2.3 Passing

Trainees have to show respect for uniformed and non-uniformed personnel by standing aside and acknowledging them.

13.2.4 Talking to

Trainees will only come to attention or address trainers by rank when they are speaking directly to the trainer.

13.2.5 Drill ground

Trainees have to stand to attention/at ease on the drill ground and are trainers will stand in front to give instructions for the drill to be carried out. During the drill, those that are watching can be allowed to talk to the person next to them about relevant Fire and Rescue Service matters. The ability to relax dress will apply in accordance to the Dear Chief Officer letter.

13.2.6 Lecture room

When trainers enter the lecture room, the course leader will stand and report that everyone is present.

13.2.7 Movement

Formal movement of trainees is required when leaving the drill ground and this can involve orderly movement or jogging as required by the Trainer.

13.2.8 Dismissed

Once dismissed trainees will be expected to continue to show formal respect for trainers/officers at all times.

13.2.9 Inspected

Trainees will be inspected at the start of the day and bulling of shoes is not a formal requirement - but trainers do not discourage it. PPE, including fire boots, are only inspected for serviceability and cleanliness.

13.2.10 Cleaning

Trainees are responsible for ensuring some communal areas, which may include toilets and washrooms are clean and tidy. Room inspections are carried out periodically to ascertain that they too are clean and tidy. Standards are not regimented. Untidy areas have to be revisited by those responsible for them.

13.2 11 Typically, a transitional model will provide:

- a. Trainees are to acknowledge uniformed or non-uniformed personnel but do not have to come to attention. This rule applies after they have been dismissed and in their own time.
- b. There are room inspections but these are irregular and trainees are pre-warned. Standards are transparent and clear to achieve a clean and tidy environment. Any areas found to be untidy are revisited by the individual who is responsible for them.
- c. Trainees are not held responsible for others mistakes and cleaning is not extended nor becomes more frequent as a result.
- d. Continual disregard for the rules becomes a matter of report.
- e. Inspections take place at the start of the day to ensure PPE is clean and serviceable for health and safety reasons only.
- f. Bulling of shoes is neither required nor discouraged.
- g. When standards are not met this is pointed out to the trainees concerned, along with an explanation of why they are set standards and suggestions (as in 'learning plan') are made as to how they may be achieved.
- h. Trainees are allowed full access to most of the training centre at all times.
- i. Trainees are required to move around the centre in a smart and orderly fashion.

If standards of response to trainers slip, trainees are reminded of the requirements for self-discipline. In the case of persistent offenders, this becomes a matter of report.

13.3 Progressive model

13.3.1 Accommodation

Trainers and trainees share locker rooms, shower, toilets, car parking and eating arrangements.

13.3.2 Address

At these training centres trainee firefighters will be referred to as "students" – individually they will be referred to by their first names and trainers and senior officers will be equally addressed by their first names."

13.2.3 Passing

Students in this environment will acknowledge people as they pass them in the corridor by using their first names.

13.3.4 Talking to

Students will talk to their trainers and officers informally; both parties will respect the others position in the hierarchy.

13.3.5 Drill ground

The drill ground remains formal and it is unlikely that first names will be used. Trainers will shout commands during the drill. However, instruction will be given to crews in similar fashion to how coaches approach team briefings.

Whilst waiting to drill students will be expected to observe when necessary but will also discuss amongst themselves (and with spare trainers when available) items relevant to the course in a 'huddle' (obviously at a safe distance). The ability to 'hang loose' will apply in accordance to the Dear Chief Officer letter. Once the area is made safe at the end of a drill and students are dismissed, they are able to move off the drill ground as they please as long as it is in a safe manner.

13.3.6 Lecture room

When a Trainer enters the room students will stop talking and be attentive.

13.3.7 Movement

Students will move around the training centre in similar fashion to trainers and senior officers.

13.3.8 Dismissed

Once dismissed students will show 'common courtesy' to all personnel on site. Out of working hours, it is discouraged for trainers to come into contact with students unless as part of a pre-arranged meeting.

13.3.9 Inspected

Trainers and students will become increasingly aware of the standards required and there will be no formal inspections. Trainers will be expected to remind students when their standards slip. Bulling of shoes is actively discouraged. PPE, including fire boots, will only be inspected for health and safety appropriate serviceability and cleanliness; responsibility for this will progressively pass to the student. When standards are not met, trainers report this to students in an informal situation with an explanation of why standards need to be maintained (i.e. for health and safety reasons). Written and agreed action plans for improvement when required. Continual disregard for agreed action plans becomes a matter of report.

13.3.10 Cleaning

Students are not responsible for cleaning any part of the training centre. They are expected to leave rooms tidy.

13.3.11 Typically, a progressive model will provide:

- a. Students are to extend "common courtesy" to personnel on site during working hours.
- b. With the possible exception of the drill ground, first names are expected to be used between students and trainers/officers.
- c. Out of hour's contact between students and trainers is discouraged.
- b. Students do not clean any part of the training centre.
- c. Rooms are expected to be left in a tidy condition for the ease of the cleaners.
- d. Trainers ensure students are dressed appropriately for the activity that they are engaged in. Standards of dress are monitored for health and safety reasons only.
- e. Trainers actively discourage the bulling of shoes and any emphasis on appearance.
- f. Agreed and written action plans are used for improvement
- g. Continual disregard for the rules becomes a matter of report.
- h. Trainees have full access to all public areas of the training centre.
- i. Out of hours, trainees are expected to behave in accordance with the principals of dignity at work.

14. CONCLUSION

The Fire and Rescue Service is a hierarchal organisation that makes a considerable effort to bond its firefighters into teams. Some of the practices trainers use to fit trainees into the team have been identified as difficult if the Fire and Rescue Service wants people who can work together but also think out of the box. This is particularly noticeable in training centres where “discipline is done to you.” Trainees do bond, but many do so almost as a form of resistance. Trainees work together to get it right against a trainer who seems always to be looking to find fault. Trainees have a name for this *us and them* approach to training, they call it “the game.”

At those regimented training centres where the game was most noticeable, trainers depersonalise, almost degrade trainees to fit them into the desired mould. It is unlikely that trainees are permanently remodelled in such a short time. Nonetheless, given the intensity of training, which in some cases is 24 hours a day, the outcome can be to disorientate trainees. Earlier arguments (Baigent 2001; Baigent and Rolph 2003) suggest that:

1. Trainees join the Fire and Rescue Service with an urgent desire to become firefighters.
2. Trainers create a vulnerability in the trainee to mould them into good firefighters.
3. Having learnt to fit-in in at the training centre, trainees are then vulnerable to informal hierarchies on the watch.
4. Informal hierarchies perpetuate:
 - a masculine white heterosexual working class Fire and Rescue Service.
 - the idea that becoming a good firefighter is key to success.
 - Resistance to change, particularly to CFS.
5. Officers find difficulty in managing change because of the conflict between the informal watch goals and their own.

One problem with argument (3) is that generalises as if all trainees are the same. This argument also works on the premise that all training centres are similar. Sunrise research extends that argument to suggest that training centres are different.

Amongst the 13 training centres visited, it became clear that there were three models, regimented, transitional and progressive. However, each training centre was similar in that the trainers behaved like a watch. Trainers formed a culture that established joint goals that organised the way they delivered training. Trainers, similarly to firefighters on watches, defended their joint goals; sometimes these goals operated within the Fire and Rescue Service’s formal agendas, sometimes they ran in parallel supporting some formal agendas and marginalising others.

Sunrise research also extends the argument that training centres create a reliance in trainees, that makes them vulnerable to peer group pressure at the station. It is likely that some trainees will fit with this model, but others may not. This research has recognised that some trainees realise that trainers are trying to mould them. These trainees then appear to enter into the spirit of the game trainers play but only comply whilst under the trainer’s gaze. The *them and us* culture adopted in regimented training centres can then truly turn into a game as trainees comply with but resist adopting the trainers’ goals¹². In such a situation, it is possible that trainees are alienated from the official

¹² Hochschild, A. (1983) identifies that people can “surface act” to make it appear that they are adopting new agendas and that some of these people will be socialised into this behaviour as the surface acting becomes a norm.

goals of the organisation and are primed for a time in the future when they will establish their own goals in opposition to the official ones. When these trainees arrive on a watch, then they do not need to be coerced into unofficial agendas they readily adopt them.

Such an argument points to two possible extreme situations, one of vulnerability and the other of resistance. This is unlikely; the probability is that trainees/firefighters will locate themselves between the two extremes. At times trainees will comply, at other times they will resist. Such an argument extends earlier suggestions to allow for a greater degree of individuality in trainees than one that simply suggests they are all persuaded to fit in. The regimented training centre may appear to churn out sausages, but trainees react against that process by resisting enculturation into the formal goals of the organisation that they join.

Perhaps more importantly this research has also recognised that training is not only regimented it can also be progressive. Examples have shown that training can be organised so that trainees fulfil their own goals at the same time as they are incorporated into the goals of a developing Fire and Rescue Service. Trainers who recognise that trainees are (Y) individuals are more likely to be seen as role models to follow.

The recognition that some firefighter sign up to official goals and others preserve their identity by starting to resist came about because of the different approaches exhibited by trainers and the outcomes these caused. Were it not for this difference good and bad practice would have been more difficult to recognise. Even when we did identify difficult practice, trainers were not seen as doing this maliciously. Trainers operate to the cultural norm in their training centre and those who stray into negative territory do so because they believe their way is best for the Fire and Rescue Service. We saw no direct acts of bullying, but sometimes it appeared that as an accumulation of requirements some training centres were dangerously close to this. It was for example very difficult to identify why trainees have to stand rigidly at attention to address a trainer. Equally as difficult to understand, were the requirements for extreme cleanliness in trainees' room and for fluff-free PPE. Making this even more noticeable was the alternative model. Some training centres have no requirement for trainees to clean their own rooms, even less to keep them sparkling and PPE was only inspected for serviceability.

From the differences between training centres, we have made judgements. The modelling of regimented, transitional and progressive training centres was not an arbitrary decision. We have listened and observed as the Fire and Rescue Service trains. Our judgements are based on the belief that the 21st Century firefighter will be someone who has the ability to be a team player one minute and an individual the next. Firefighters, who in an emergency can kick down doors, but who will mostly aim at opening doors to reach out to the community. Regimented training centres were seen as good at providing the first model, but worked against the second. Progressive training centres were more likely to achieve both outcomes.

We would offer as a basis for further discussion the following points. This list can never be complete. The main consideration should be that principal managers should first set strategy; second, that strategy needs to be accepted and believed by the training establishment; third, it should be applied transparently; lastly, regular audits should be held to ensure the process fits the Chief Officer's required outcome.

14.1 Recommendations

14.1.1 Strategy

1. There should be a national standard for initial training. When this research started there was an IPDS (draft) standard for phase one training (dated 4-3-02). This has now been withdrawn. Individual Fire and Rescue Services can now decide how much or little to include in initial training. Allowing choice at this important stage, to the extent that one fire and rescue service may continue with a 16-week residential course whilst another opts for a two-week course, will work against a national standard for trainees. Shorter courses will also place a greater reliance on developing new trainees at the station. Given the accepted problems associated with fitting-in with existing cultures such a move does not bode well for the prospect of preparing trainees for the developing Fire and Rescue Service.
2. Initial training should not concentrate on the physical skills and marginalise the cognitive 'intellectual' skills. When this happens, it sends out the wrong message to trainees about the work they will be doing in the developing Fire and Rescue Service.
3. There should be a straight line between the trainers delivering training and the strategists. Middle managers should not act as a buffer between the two groups.
4. Training strategy and training should be audited for efficiency and effectiveness paying particular attention to cultural influence that determine process (and in turn outcome).

14.1.2 Discipline

1. The guiding principle is that it is the trainer's job to encourage trainees to adopt the services goals, not to enforce them.
2. All discipline should be transparent and in accordance with practices set by the Chief Officer.
3. No informal punishments.
4. No shouting except when risk critical.
5. Uniforms should be clean and tidy according to health and safety requirements (no bull).
6. Trainees down time is their own.

14.1.3 Trainers

1. Trainers are an undervalued resource, the importance of their role should be recognised.
2. Trainer's work is role not rank orientated and should be given only to those who have successfully completed a training course for this role.
3. Trainers training should be ongoing. Part of this should include taking a Further or Higher Education award.
4. Only those who are fully committed to the organisations goals should become trainers.
5. CFS, Equal Opportunities/Diversity and IPDS should run as golden threads throughout the course.
6. Trainers should recognise the difference between teamwork and bonding and help trainees to balance the recognised difficulties in this area.
7. Weekly meetings between trainees and trainers should take place.
8. The idea of "Sub O knows best" must be overcome if training centres are to provide the outcome that Chief Officers require.

14.1.4 Lectures

1. Trainees should be taught how to learn. They also need to enjoy the process. These are prime aims if IPDS is to succeed.
2. Rote delivery straight from the notes should be unacceptable.
3. Lectures should only be given by those with expertise in the subject area.
4. Lectures should be interactive and seek to achieve deep learning.
5. Presentation and delivery skills should be part of the syllabus.
6. All lectures should be contextualised to the extent that trainees put into practice what they learn.
7. Mode of dress should be appropriate to the learning environment.
8. Examination questions should not be given to the trainees prior to examinations.
9. Consideration should be given to appropriate methods of examining trainees (that do not require them to remember lists of short answers).

14.1.5 Drills

1. Safety critical aspects must always be paramount.
2. Trainers should adapt the educational approaches used in lecturers as a method for briefing before drills.
3. De-briefing should be by self-critique in a safe environment.
4. Reluctant trainees should be encouraged to the extent that over-confident trainees are told to stand back and let others make decisions.
5. Relaxed dress policy should be the accepted norm.

14.1.6 Fitness

1. Has to be appropriate to role and requirement.
2. Should only follow professionally drawn up plans by appropriate people.
3. Appropriate qualifications should be required and maintained for trainers.
4. Diet and well living lectures should be given.
5. Individual fitness programmes should be designed personally for trainees after a full fitness assessment is carried out on each trainee.
6. Fitness programmes should however be constructed to address any weaknesses the trainee has with their own fitness levels, and should not be compared to those of others.

14.1.7 Trainees

1. Trainees are Y people who want to fulfil their goals in the Fire and Rescue Service – it is up to the Fire and Rescue Service how they use this resource.
2. Trainees should learn about the importance of CFS and equality agendas from day one.
3. Trainees should be aware that all rules must be transparent.
4. Assertiveness training should be given to all trainees around weeks two and ten.
5. Trainees should be encouraged to ask questions.
6. Trainees should select mentors who are not trainers to offer advice and help with welfare issues.
7. Trainees should be given advice on the positive outcomes of teamwork and the negative outcome when this develops into bonding for its own sake.
8. Trainees are not a resource to keep the building clean and tidy, nor to fill gaps in the labour force.
9. Trainees should work a 42-hour week.

14.1.8 Accommodation/facilities.

1. Trainees should each have their own individual study bedroom with a study desk and ensuite.
2. Trainers should only enter accommodation with the permission of the trainee.
3. In training centres with a residential facility it should be a matter of choice if this is used or not.
4. Individuals difficulties associated with being a carer should be considered and addressed.
5. All undressing, washing, toileting and showering areas should be private.
6. All facilities at a training centre, except the trainer's offices, should be open to everyone.

Final word.

If new employees are correctly selected and trained for the developing fire and rescue service, and if IPDS lays out a career development plan that is professionally administered, then future employees can help to promote cultural change. The alternative is to continue as before.

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APPENDIX 1

Case Processing Summary(a)						
	Cases					
	Included		Excluded		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
GCE	61	80.3%	15	19.7%	76	100.0%
BTEC	14	18.4%	62	81.6%	76	100.0%
ALEVEL	29	38.2%	47	61.8%	76	100.0%
HND	6	7.9%	70	92.1%	76	100.0%
DEGREE	8	10.5%	68	89.5%	76	100.0%
MA	1	1.3%	75	98.7%	76	100.0%
NONE	13	17.1%	63	82.9%	76	100.0%

Statistics						
	GCE	BTEC	HND	DEGREE	MA	NONE
Valid	61	14	6	8	1	13

Educational Qualifications of Trainees

	GCE	BTEC	ALEVEL	HND	DEGREE	MA	NONE
	8	.	2	.	.	.	.
	8	1	.	.	.	.	.
	.	.	.	.	.	.	1
	1	.	.	.	.	.	.
	9	1	.	.	1	.	.
	9	.	2	.	.	.	.
	5	.	.	.	.	.	.
	.	.	.	.	.	.	1
	.	1	.	.	.	.	.
	10	.	3	.	1	.	.
	3	1	.	.	.	.	.
	.	.	.	.	.	.	1
	.	.	.	.	.	.	1
	9	.	2	.	.	.	.
	5	.	.	.	.	.	.
	11	.	3	.	.	1	.
	3	.	.	.	.	.	.
	2	.	.	.	.	.	.
	.	.	.	.	.	.	1
	13	.	1	.	.	.	.
	8	.	2	.	.	.	.
	9	.	4	.	.	.	.
	7	.	.	.	.	.	.
	5	.	2	.	.	.	.
	5	.	1	.	.	.	.
	9	.	.	.	.	.	.
	5	.	.	.	.	.	.
	.	1	.	.	.	.	.
	.	.	.	.	.	.	1
	6	.	.	.	.	.	.
	9	.	4	.	1	.	.

	5	.	2	.	.	.	.
	10	.	3	.	.	.	.
	10	.	3	.	1	.	.
	11	.	3	.	.	.	.
	8	.	.	.	.	.	.
	.	.	.	.	.	.	1
	9	1	.	.	.	.	.
	7	1	.	1	.	.	.
	10	1	.	.	.	.	.
	5	.	.	.	.	.	.
	10	.	4	1	.	.	.
	7	.	.	2	.	.	.
	8	.	2	.	1	.	.
	.	1	.	.	.	.	.
	5	.	.	.	.	.	.
	6	.	2	1	.	.	.
	8	1	.	.	.	.	.
	10	.	2	.	1	.	.
	.	.	.	.	.	.	1
	.	.	.	.	.	.	1
	7	.	2	.	.	.	.
	6	1	.	.	.	.	.
	11	.	1	.	.	.	.
	5	.	2	.	1	.	.
	10	.	3	.	.	.	.
	3	.	.	.	.	.	.
	5	.	.	.	.	.	.
	10	.	.	.	.	.	.
	6	.	.	1	.	.	.
	7	1	.	.	.	.	.
	5	1	.	.	.	.	.
	5	.	.	.	.	.	.
	.	.	.	.	.	.	1
	8	.	.	.	.	.	.
	10	.	3	.	1	.	.
	7	1	.	.	.	.	.
	8	.	2	.	.	.	.
	9	.	2	.	.	.	.
	8	.	3	.	.	.	.
	7	.	2	1	.	.	.
	10	.	.	.	.	.	.
	3	.	.	.	.	.	.
	.	.	.	.	.	.	1
	.	.	.	.	.	.	1
	9	.	2	.	.	.	1
Number	61	14	29	6	8	1	13
Mean	7.33	1.00	2.38	1.17	1.00	1.00	1.00
Median	8.00	1.00	2.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00

GCE		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	1	1.3	1.6	1.6
	2	1	1.3	1.6	3.3
	3	4	5.3	6.6	9.8
	5	12	15.8	19.7	29.5
	6	4	5.3	6.6	36.1
	7	7	9.2	11.5	47.5
	8	9	11.8	14.8	62.3
	9	9	11.8	14.8	77.0
	10	10	13.2	16.4	93.4
	11	3	3.9	4.9	98.4
	13	1	1.3	1.6	100.0
Total		61	80.3	100.0	
Missing System		15	19.7		
Total		76	100.0		

BTEC		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	14	18.4	100.0	100.0
Missing System		62	81.6		
Total		76	100.0		

HND		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	5	6.6	83.3	83.3
	2	1	1.3	16.7	100.0
	Total	6	7.9	100.0	
Missing System		70	92.1		
Total		76	100.0		

DEGREE		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	8	10.5	100.0	100.0
Missing System		68	89.5		
Total		76	100.0		

MA		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	1	1.3	100.0	100.0

Missing System	75	98.7		
Total	76	100.0		

<i>NONE</i>		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	13	17.1	100.0	100.0
Missing System		63	82.9		
Total		76	100.0		