



## **Briefing Paper on the Out of Hospital Cardiac Arrest Initiative**

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) is committed to supporting the Scottish Government's Out of Hospital Cardiac Arrest (OHCA) Strategy which is designed to improve survival rates for those who experience a cardiac arrest out with a hospital environment.

OHCA is a significant healthcare challenge in Scotland. Approximately 3,500 people undergo attempted resuscitation each year after OHCA, but currently only around 1 in 20 survive to hospital discharge.

The benefits and costs of co-responding; the science around the 'chain of survival' and the importance of providing early defibrillation in OHCA cases is well-understood. The Resuscitation Council (UK) advises that for every minute of delay, the chances of successful defibrillation decrease by about 10% and recommends strongly a policy of attempting defibrillation with the minimum of delay in victims of cardiac arrest.

This context presents a unique opportunity for the SFRS to develop a closer working relationship with the Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS), bringing major benefit to those suffering OHCA and which could quickly make Scotland an area of best practice for joined up public services in this area.

The SFRS is currently working closely with a range of stakeholders, including trades unions and the Scottish Ambulance Service to develop plans for four OHCA pilots to take place in East Lothian, West Lothian, the Scottish Borders and Aberdeenshire later this year. The pilot will see SFRS resources being mobilised to OHCA where our resources can be in attendance before the SAS, in all cases however, the SAS will still be mobilised and shall respond as normal. The SFRS response will therefore augment not replace the SAS response.

The evaluation and outcomes from these pilot schemes will be monitored by our OHCA/Emergency Medical Response Strategic Steering Group to assess the effectiveness of SFRS's contribution in this area and identify the scope for wider implementation across Scotland.

Collaborative work with the Ambulance Service has identified the following Fire Stations as suitable locations for the pilot in the Scottish Borders. These are Hawick, Coldstream and Lauder. There shall be a 6-month review period during which it is anticipated that additional stations will be brought into the pilot.

Training of personnel at the identified stations will begin in 2015 with a view to the pilot going live in October 2015.

It should leave personnel suitably equipped (and confident) to manage the challenges of an OHCA incident

It should be a collaboratively designed and delivered programme, built and managed in association with the Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS).

Clinical governance for the training and subsequent operational response will be provided by Doctor Jim Ward (Medical Director) on behalf of SAS.

I am delighted that this area will participate in a pilot for a project that in my opinion can only lead to increased safety for people within the Scottish Borders.

Alasdair Perry

Local Senior Officer

19 August 2015