



West Yorkshire
Fire & Rescue Service

**AN EMPLOYER'S GUIDE
TO ON-CALL FIREFIGHTERS**

ALEC FIGHTS FIRES,
AND TRULY INSPIRES

ORDINARY TO EXTRAORDINARY



SUPPORT YOUR STAFF AND YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Read about what's involved and the positive impact it will have on your company.

p08



EMPLOYER BENEFITS

Read about how allowing your staff to work with us enhances the reputation of your business within the local community.

p13

ALLOWING ONE OF YOUR EMPLOYEES TO RESPOND TO AN EMERGENCY WILL MAKE A REAL DIFFERENCE IN YOUR COMMUNITY

REAL LIFE CASE STUDIES

Read about the benefits for your company and your staff.

p16

WHAT'S INSIDE?

- 02 INTRODUCTION
- 04 OUR ON-CALL FIRE STATIONS
- 06 WHAT ARE ON-CALL FIREFIGHTERS?
- 08 HOW DOES IT WORK?
- 09 WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS?
- 10 WHO ARE WE LOOKING FOR?
- 12 HOW DO ON-CALL FIREFIGHTERS ALREADY HELP YOUR BUSINESS?
- 13 EMPLOYER BENEFITS
- 14 FAQ'S

CASE STUDIES

- 16 COCA-COLA EUROPEAN PARTNERS
- 17 ROSENBAUER
- 18 MICROSEARCH LABORATORIES LTD
- 19 DAVAL FURNITURE LTD
- 20 WYFRS

INTRODUCTION



DAVE WALTON,
DEPUTY CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

90%

**On-call firefighters
provide emergency cover
to over 90% of the UK.**

**"A CAREER AS AN ON-CALL
FIREFIGHTER IS REALLY FULFILLING.
PEOPLE WHO TAKE IT UP GET ALL THE
BENEFITS - LEARNING NEW SKILLS,
TEAMWORK AND THE ABILITY TO
WORK IN DIFFERENT SITUATIONS -
BUT THEY GET TO DO THEIR OTHER
JOB AS WELL!"**

"We already work with a large range of employers who support their staff to be on-call firefighters - I hope we can demonstrate to you this is a positive experience. It really makes everyone involved feel like they're giving back to the local community."



OUR ON-CALL FIRE STATIONS



FEATHERSTONE

- ☎ 01977 792211
- 📍 Andrew Street, Featherstone, WF7 5NS
- 📘 @WYFRSFeatherstone

HOLMFIRTH

- ☎ 01484 682482
- 📍 Huddersfield Road, Holmfirth, HD9 3AS
- 📘 @WYFRSHolmfirth

ILKLEY

- ☎ 01943 607970
- 📍 Little Lane, Ilkley, LS29 8JJ
- 📘 @WYFRSIlkley

MELTHAM

- ☎ 01484 850393
- 📍 Holmfirth Road, Meltham, HD9 4BX
- 📘 @WYFRSMeltham

MIRFIELD

- ☎ 01924 493399
- 📍 Huddersfield Road, Mirfield, WF14 8AE
- 📘 @WYFRSMirfield

MYTHOLMROYD

- ☎ 01422 883259
- 📍 Burnley Road, Mytholmroyd, HX7 5DL
- 📘 @WYFRSMytholmroyd

OTLEY

- ☎ 01943 462222
- 📍 Bondgate, Otley, LS21 3AB
- 📘 @WYFRSotley

SKELMANTHORPE

- ☎ 01484 863514
- 📍 Cumberworth Road, Skelmanthorpe, Huddersfield, HD8 9AP
- 📘 @WYFRSSkelmanthorpe

SILSDEN

- ☎ 01535 653371
- 📍 Elliot Street, Silsden, Keighley, BD20 0DE
- 📘 @WYFRSSilsden

SLAITHWAITE

- ☎ 01484 842618
- 📍 New Street, Slaithwaite, HD7 5AB
- 📘 @WYFRSSlaithwaite



10

We have 10 on-call fire stations across West Yorkshire.

WHAT ARE **ON-CALL** FIREFIGHTERS?

ON-CALL FIREFIGHTERS ARE PEOPLE WHO CARRY OUT THEIR DAILY LIVES JUST LIKE ANYONE ELSE - WITH THE EXCEPTION THAT WHEN AVAILABLE THEY ANSWER EMERGENCY CALLS.

WHOLETEIME
FIREFIGHTER

BUSINESS OWNER

MOUNTAIN
RESCUE
VOLUNTEER

MEDICAL STUDENT

PERSONAL TRAINER



THEIR MAIN JOB ROLE CAN BE ALMOST ANYTHING - WYFRS EMPLOY ON-CALL FIREFIGHTERS WHO ARE BUILDERS, FACTORY WORKERS, STUDENTS AND PERSONAL TRAINERS, TO NAME A FEW. JUST LIKE FULL-TIME FIREFIGHTERS, THEY WORK ON THE FRONT LINE PROTECTING THEIR COMMUNITY - BUT THEY'RE NOT BASED AT STATION.

On-call firefighters provide emergency cover to over 90% of the UK. There are over 14,000 on-call firefighters in England, protecting our small towns and rural communities and they are responsible for operating 60% of all fire engines.



LIVE LOCALLY

Instead they must live and/or work within one mile, and be able to reach their station within five minutes of receiving a call.



COMMITTED

The cover they provide is usually between 50-120 hours per week (including weekends), as well as committing to attending weekly training on drill nights.



MULTI-SKILLED

They deal with a wide range of incidents, anything from property fires, road traffic collisions and chemical spills to animal rescues, flood and storm damage.



FLEXIBLE

An individual's hours of availability are agreed at the application stage to fit in with their personal and work commitments and the station's requirements.

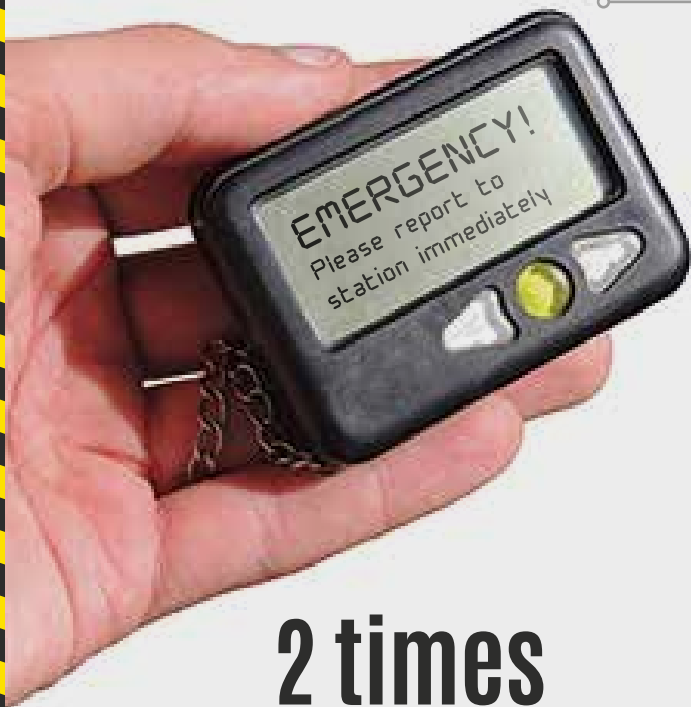


COMMUNITY FOCUSED

They also carry out fire prevention work and safety checks in the local community.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

DURING ANY AGREED HOURS ON-CALL FIREFIGHTERS WILL CARRY A PAGER WHICH ALERTS THEM TO AN EMERGENCY CALL.



On-call firefighters have to get to station within five minutes. If this is during work hours then they will be free to come back to work when the incident has reached a conclusion or their crew is relieved.

This may sound inconvenient, an employee rushing off without notice but we consider primary employers a priority, and encourage on-call firefighters to treat them so by keeping availability up-to-date with the needs of the company/business.

At some incidents an on-call firefighter may return as quickly as 20 minutes later. Often while providing availability on-call firefighters will not be called, the average time on-call crews were used in 2018 was twice a week. Another option is for on-call firefighters to complete their hours outside of their normal work time, for example overnight, or on weekends as a second job. This would mean as a primary employer you wouldn't have to release them to work with us, and they could still commit their hours.

2 times

Average number of call outs per week.

WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS?



COMMITMENT

On-call firefighters must show a commitment to the aforementioned hours (50 -120 per week). They must also attend a drill night once a week at their local station to keep them up to date with their training.



TRAINING

They must complete a training course to qualify to work with us. There are two ways to complete this. One option is a continuous 15-week long course at West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters in Birkenshaw, Bradford. Alternatively applicants can do modular training in their own time on their station with assistance from the crew.



PERSONAL SKILLS

On-call firefighters require certain personal skills. They must have courage, determination, self-motivation and above all, a desire to serve the community in which they live and/or work. They are also committed, team players, take responsibility and are good communicators.



WHO ARE WE LOOKING FOR?



AS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES EMPLOYER WYFRS DO NOT DISCRIMINATE

We are looking for a workforce which is representative of the local diverse community. Individuals of all ages (18 or over on commencement of employment) who are physically fit, motivated and able to commit some of their time are encouraged to apply.

However the individual must be able to pass a standard fitness test and be a committed, responsible and community minded person.

A full UK driving license is normally required on completion of application.

MUST BE ABLE MEET A FEW REQUIREMENTS...



OVER 18 YEARS

PHYSICALLY FIT

ABLE TO COMMIT

COMMUNITY MINDED

MOTIVATED

HOW DO ON-CALL FIREFIGHTERS ALREADY HELP YOUR BUSINESS?

Des O'Connor MD of Microsearch Laboratories Ltd said:
"The factory next door exploded last year, I got called down from home and had the horror of thinking that's everyone's livelihood gone! But the firefighters were here, and the whole thing was contained within minutes. A firefighter came up to me and said 'I'm going to be a bit late today because of all this'. I didn't know who he was, he was covered in soot and had his uniform on, but he was one of my employees! So if I hadn't allowed my staff to work as on-call firefighters he wouldn't have been there. It was a good feeling."

**"ALLOWING ONE OF YOUR
EMPLOYEES TO RESPOND MAY
MAKE THE DIFFERENCE"**





EMPLOYER BENEFITS

- Firefighters are trained in a range of skills, such as trauma response, manual handling, health and safety elements and in some circumstances nationally recognised educational/vocational qualifications and an LGV license.
- Staff who work with us will also improve key personal skills such as how to work well in a team, quick-thinking, communicating accurately, using initiative and taking responsibility, all of which are business relevant. Being an on-call firefighter also requires commitment and self-discipline.
- Staff who are encouraged to pursue passions like this report feeling more loyalty to their employer for trusting them, and it makes them a more motivated and committed employee. Employees able to fulfil their ambitions and potential are usually happier and more productive in the workplace.
- WYFRS offer our on-call firefighters use of Occupational Health support, so if they have any health worries they can be addressed quickly, potentially reducing days off due to sickness.
- As an employer you can feel proud you have played a vital role in making the community safer. Allowing your staff to work with us also enhances the reputation of your business within the local community thanks to the public-spirited gesture.
- We regularly feature employers who help WYFRS, which will promote your generous and caring nature to the public. This includes your logo and details being featured on our website as a supporter of our work. This can set you apart from your competitors in the eyes of your customers.



FAQ'S

Q WHAT IF MY EMPLOYEE GETS HURT WHILE AT AN INCIDENT?

Injuries on incidents are extremely rare due to the high level of training on-call firefighters receive. However we have an Occupational Health department and The Fire Fighter's Charity to assist them with their recovery should an injury happen.

Q WHAT IF MY EMPLOYEE IS OUT A LONG TIME AND UNABLE TO WORK DUE TO TIREDNESS?

Firefighters no longer stay at incidents for a long time due to the lack of concentration this can cause. They would normally be relieved after four hours at prolonged incidents - but even this type of incident is an exceptional occurrence.

Q OUR EMPLOYEES ARE OFTEN ON CALL WITH US FOR BUSINESS - HOW COULD THIS WORK?

They would not be on call with WYFRS if they were on call with you. The primary employer always has priority.

Q WHO CAN I CONTACT TO FIND OUT MORE FROM/WHERE DO I GET SUPPORT AS AN EMPLOYER?

West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service recognises that on occasions, employers may wish to contact us for information, support or reassurance regarding on-call firefighters.

In the first instance please contact the Watch Manager at your local on-call station. They will be your main point of contact and can help support you through the early days of appointing an employee, as well as providing ongoing support and assistance. Contact details for the 10 on-call fire stations across West Yorkshire can be found on Page 05.

Alternatively please contact Human Resources department on:

☎ 01274 473794

✉ on-call.recruitment@westyorksfire.gov.uk

We will endeavour to assist in any way we can, however, due to the nature of our work in emergency response, we must ask all emergency calls use 999.

Q DO I HAVE TO RELEASE STAFF FOR THEM TO BE ON-CALL FIREFIGHTERS?

No, staff can also work as on-call firefighters outside their time spent working for you. They could be on call overnight, on weekends or in evenings.

Q WHAT WILL IT COST ME?

There are no direct costs to supporting an employee to be an on-call firefighter. However, there may be some indirect costs to your business. For example, if you have to fill gaps while your employee responds to an emergency call out or attends training, but we hope the benefits outweigh any inconvenience.

Q**HOW LONG DOES A CALL OUT/SHOUT LAST?**


Timings vary for each incident, but every fire engine contains a mobile phone, and our on-call firefighters are encouraged to use this to estimate a return time for their employer as soon as they can.

Q**HOW DO I FIND OUT MORE?**

For more information and to see other employer's benefits on employing on-call firefighters please visit:

 [joinwyfirefighters.com](https://www.joinwyfirefighters.com)

Alternatively, please contact our Human Resources department on:

 01274 473794

 on-call.recruitment@westyorkshire.gov.uk

Q**DO THE BENEFITS OUTWEIGH THE INCONVENIENCE?**

Businesses have found the benefits offered by enabling their employees to be on-call firefighters have far outweighed any inconvenience caused by them responding to an emergency.

We provide on-call firefighters with training and development which includes transferable skills the individuals can bring back to your business. These can include personal skills (teamwork, leadership, communication and self-discipline) and emergency skills (fire safety, first aid, trauma care and health and safety). These skills can directly benefit you, the employer and help create a more motivated and productive employee.

Q**WHAT IF SOMETHING OCCURS AND IT'S NOT POSSIBLE TO RELEASE STAFF ON A CERTAIN DAY?**

Employees are only available for duty when they book on-call as available. If they say they are available they will be expected to respond to a call. This is why it is essential to agree when you have capacity to release staff before they log as available. Your needs as the primary employer will always be the priority.

Q**WHEN DO FIREFIGHTERS DO THEIR TRAINING?**

On-call firefighters have two options to carry out their initial training, as detailed on page 09 of this booklet.

We provide rigorous training to all our firefighters to keep them, their colleagues and the public safe. Some on-call firefighters may need to take time off from their main employment for training. We aim to minimise the impact of this by providing basic training at the station during drill nights and on weekends. The Watch Manager and/or Station Manager can provide details specific to your local on-call station.

Q**IF MY EMPLOYEE DRIVES A PASSENGER VEHICLE/VEHICLE OVER 3.5 TONNES, CAN THEY STILL APPLY?**

Applicants whose primary employment involves the driving of 'In Scope' vehicles may be considered for employment as on-call firefighters; however this must be clearly stated on the completed application form. West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service as a secondary employer has a duty to ensure staff comply with the rest and break requirements of current EU rules.

CASE STUDY



COCA-COLA EUROPEAN PARTNERS

Shift Supervisor Steven Tattersall said:

"I think being an on-call firefighter helps with personal development. Alec (an on-call firefighter at Featherstone Fire Station) is a first aider here, from skills he obtained and uses within the fire service. We also have an annual refresher on fire hydrant use, and an emergency team that we want to get him into."

All employees at Coca-Cola European Partners have their main roles, but we always encourage them to expand their skills - working as an on-call firefighter has made Alec more confident. He has requested extra training to help his development and always tries to venture above and beyond. That confidence could carry him into a leadership role in the future.

Alec talks a lot about what he does in the fire service - he's a really switched on guy. Him working for the fire service, has only been positive. In fact we want to encourage more people within the company to consider volunteering for a cause they're passionate about- we want to put a piece in our internal magazine to promote it."

"WE WANT TO ENCOURAGE MORE PEOPLE WITHIN THE COMPANY TO VOLUNTEER FOR A CAUSE THEY'RE PASSIONATE ABOUT"

ROSENBAUER

Operations Manager Nina Robertshaw said:

"Greig (an on-call firefighter at Meltham Fire Station) is a great guy to have around, helpful, dedicated, willing to do anything to get the job done. It's a big benefit to the business him being an on-call firefighter. His knowledge of the industry and of the products we sell is brilliant. He's got forklift truck training and goods vehicle skills that he learnt through being an on-call firefighter too.

"We've had no negative effects at all from Greig working as an on-call firefighter. He'd always make sure it's of no detriment to his work here, and he's great at communicating with us. Equally as employers we are flexible with him if he needs it. If another member of staff wanted to be an on-call firefighter it would certainly be something we would be open to, because it has worked so well with Greig. It's the communication that makes it work. The experience for us has been really positive - I'd urge employers to look at it and not be scared of it. There can be a fear they'll be out all the time or there will be a negative impact, but that's not the case for us.

"A really important thing to us, is despite being part of a global group we are a local business and are keen to invest and contribute to the local area as much as possible. We have staff that live within five miles of the office so it's an opportunity to give something back. It's an area that's close to our heart - it gives us our workforce and we want to look after them."



CASE STUDY

CASE STUDY

MICROSEARCH LABORATORIES LTD

Des O'Connor MD and founder said:

"We have two on-call firefighters working here, I was approached around four years ago by a previous member of staff who wanted to become an on-call firefighter so we supported him through his training. We let him do it because we have positive policies here to support our staff - for example we encourage our employees to further their education while working with us, so if they need a day off for learning that's fine. As a board we like to support the local community as we're the biggest employer in the area with over 90% of our 300 staff living in Mytholmroyd.

"We're in a position to let on-call firefighters respond from work if needed, I don't see any reason not to. We'd welcome more interest if others wanted to serve the community in this way. All our colleagues support Daniel and Ross (on-call firefighters at Mytholmroyd Fire Station) and support them if they are called out and pitch in with work, we're one big team. It does take a particular type of individual to want to serve the community. It's a big responsibility to be on call. Daniel and Ross love what they do, they have careers here, but they get extra motivation and benefits from being an on-call firefighter too."

"WE'RE IN A POSITION TO LET ON-CALL FIREFIGHTERS RESPOND FROM WORK IF NEEDED"





DAVAL FURNITURE LTD

Simon Bodsworth MD of the Slaithwaite business encourages two of his employees to work as on-call firefighters. He said:

"We're delighted to have two members of staff here at Daval who work as on-call firefighters at Slaithwaite Fire Station, Ross a machine operative and Dean who is a kitchen and bedroom designer. As and when required they go out to emergency calls in the local area. It doesn't have a great deal of impact on us - they get called out on average around once a week. As long as you have an understanding between staff and employers and WYFRS it's a really positive thing to encourage them to do.

"It gives back to the community - 80% of our employees here are from the Colne Valley so it's a positive thing to let them keep the local area safe. The other positive is for the employee themselves - not everyone is motivated by money so this is a great way of getting employees to feel more fulfilled. The employee then gives you tenfold back in terms of their skills and commitment. Another plus is we have a factory full of valuable materials so it's good to have someone aware of all the risks working here. I'd tell any employers considering it to look at the bigger picture! An employer is there not just to make money but to also give back the community and help our employees on their journey too. It makes good business sense!"

CASE STUDY

"WE'RE DELIGHTED TO HAVE TWO MEMBERS OF STAFF HERE AT DAVAL WHO WORK AS ON-CALL FIREFIGHTERS"

CASE STUDY

WYFRS

West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service also enable staff to work as on-call firefighters in addition to their primary roles. Our Fire Control centre has benefited in recent years from having staff who are also on-call firefighters.

Fire Control Manager Julie Jowett says:

"We have three members of staff who work as on-call firefighters and with us in Fire Control and we've had several others in the past. - They really add a further dimension to the work we do here. The focus for us is to provide as much support as we possibly can to our operational colleagues attending emergency incidents. We are about more than just answering calls; we are evolving into the first line of incident command. This is improved by the input these staff members can provide and has helped towards Fire Control being further integrated into incident command training."

"Their operational knowledge about equipment in use at emergency incidents has been able to provide us with a better understanding of fire behaviour and how and why our operational colleagues make certain decisions. Also the system we use to get crews to incidents is connected to each fire station and these staff members are competent with using both ends. This has been really helpful when we have been trying to understand how the station - based equipment links with how we operate in Fire Control."

"It's also made them motivated within their work here as they can challenge themselves in ways they might not normally do through their full-time job alone. Their on-call work also gives them training in things like health and safety and manual handling which is handy in our office environment here."



"In Fire Control we are trained to give Fire Survival Guidance when required, to anyone in our community. There have been several occasions when the operational knowledge of these staff members has proved extra helpful in the advice they can provide to a person trapped. This has enhanced the training we can deliver and has further developed our skills."

"OUR COLLEAGUES HERE GIVE BACK TO THE COMMUNITY TWICE THROUGH BOTH OF THEIR ROLES WITHIN WYFRS"

YOUR COMPANY CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN YOUR COMMUNITY

WE ARE WAITING TO
HEAR FROM YOU



CONTACT US

Do you have a member of staff who would like to become an on-call firefighter?

Or would you like to advertise the opportunities to become an on-call firefighter to your workforce?

Get in touch:

☎ 01274 473794

✉ on-call.recruitment@westyorksfire.gov.uk

🌐 joinWYfirefighters.com



West Yorkshire
Fire & Rescue Service

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