

Equality and Inclusion

Case Study

'Have a Go Days'

CASE STUDY SPECIFICS	YOUR OBSERVATIONS
<p>Case study outline: <i>Our 'Have a Go Days' were developed to create interest in the service amongst under-represented groups; women and BME candidates.</i></p> <p>The CFO and Cabinet member for fire have publically announced their support for E&D initiatives, meeting FRSEF criteria 2.4 The strategy itself meets criteria 2.17 to 2.20</p> <p><i>We ran a pilot project in 2004 which coached potential candidates through the process. In subsequent years we ran combined courses with the local FE colleges to assist the Public Service Access Course.</i></p> <p><i>Finally we honed our course to be delivered on a single day, allowing the practical experience of undertaking the tests.</i></p>	<p>Initial attendance was low due to still trying to overcome perceived obstacles to accessing employment opportunities among those groups.</p> <p>The pilot created interest but we realised it would have to be done slightly differently as new tests were being introduced.</p> <p>Our input on the Public Service Access (PSA) course in the local FE colleges came to a natural end and we decided to run a one day course utilising the new tests from 2009 onwards.</p> <p>Each fire risk area was meant to run one day per year, this was scaled down one overall, due to costs involved.</p> <p><i>Using data on the community helps us understand its' needs and the diverse make-up of the community meeting FRSEF criteria 2.1 - 2.2.</i></p>

Evaluation

YOUR QUESTIONS	YOUR ANSWERS
<p><i>Who do you run the course for?</i></p>	<p>Under-represented groups. Women mostly and men or women from BME (black and other Ethnic Minority) groups, including white but non-British</p>
<p><i>What level of uptake has there been?</i></p>	<p>A good level of uptake among white Europeans, South Africans or Australasians, and some Black men. Otherwise it has been difficult to recruit Asian men and women or Chinese candidates.</p>
<p><i>What material benefits have been realised for the organisation?</i></p>	<p>A greater number of those candidates have passed successfully into the service. It has also raised the profile among communities which may pay off in years to come. We quickly hit our target for recruitment of under-represented groups in the years 2009-11.</p>
<p><i>Are you alone in offering this service?</i></p>	<p>Other FRS do run similar programmes and have done it for longer. Ours has been innovative and utilised the CLG suite of materials which Oxfordshire was part of the initial development.</p>

<p><i>Is there anything remarkable about your scheme?</i></p>	<p>The scheme was a part of Walk the Talk and therefore was high enough profile to attract the attention of cabinet and elected members, along with others in the community, and helped in spreading the message. The Equality Group also assisted in spreading the word and kept the scheme at a high level of commitment from all managers. <i>The Equality group involves FBU representatives at all stages and meets FRSEF criteria 2.7</i></p>
<p>ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS</p>	<p>YOUR ANSWERS</p>
<p><i>What has gone well in this scheme? List your responses.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The scheme was innovative and different at a time when most FRS were not doing any remedial work on recruitment of these groups, contrary to the body of work which recognised the obstacles to entry for people in under-represented groups. • The scheme raised the profile of the FRS as a career option among the community, for all groups • The tests were simple to administer and easily passed with some coaching, those who only just failed were allowed to return at a later date. This created trust bonds among those being tested. • Traditional viewpoints of firefighters have changed now to appreciate the need for mixed crews of different ability, skill and even ethnicity, and has created a greater understanding of other peoples individuality. • Staff enjoy running the course and interacting with candidates.
<p><i>What has not gone well in this scheme? List your responses.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although the tests were easy to administer and pass, this has had a knock-on effect of not being ready for the full training course given the timescales involved being a little too long. We are looking to streamline this so candidates do not wait too long before a course attendance. • We still find it hard to attract some members of the community. We have not tried hard enough to reach them in some cases. • The costs are quite high and put off some managers from supporting or initiating them. <p><i>To ensure fairness and remove bias, the process is risk assessed meeting FRSEF criteria 2.8</i></p>

Put it all together

YOUR RESULTS	
<p><i>Give your overall conclusion here:</i></p> <p>How does the scheme relate to any Statutory Duty?</p>	<p>Overall a good scheme worth keeping, especially as the tests change. Officers and fire crews can keep up with the changes and understand what is being asked of new entrants.</p> <p>Also it allows us all to influence in a positive way, the people coming into the service.</p> <p>Clearly, by undertaking these have-a-go-days we are giving due regard to the Statutory General Duty under the Equality Act 2012;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristics (in this case gender, race, belief, sexual orientation and age) and those who do not;• to advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristics and those who do not and;• to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the act. <p>The work also aligns to the County Councils Equality Plan 2012-17, Objective 4 - Promoting a culture of fairness in employment and service delivery.</p> <p>Furthermore, as we publish data on our WTT projects, we are also in compliance with the Specific Equality Duty (ii), to publish information demonstrating our compliance at least annually.</p> <p><i>This also meets FRSEF criteria 2.9</i></p>

Tell me more

YOUR RESULTS	
<p><i>What would you recommend for future schemes like this?</i></p>	<p>I would ask that we communicate with all sections of the community all year round, at schools, during inspections and through open days, to get people interested in taking up RDS or full employment with the Fire and Rescue Service.</p>

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