



# NORTHAMPTONSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

*Chargeable Services*

## SERVICE INFORMATION SYSTEM

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<b>Executive summary</b>	This policy gives guidance on chargeable services provided by NFRS and the costs that may be levied for them.

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

This policy relates to services that may be supplied by NFRS and the charges that may be levied for them. Charges will be levied in line with the powers set out within section 19 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and the relevant statutory instrument (2004 No.2305).

Chargeable services will fall into a number of special service categories and may involve the mobilisation of fire service personnel, appliances or equipment. These may be employed for purposes other than firefighting; this may be to save lives, however in addition to emergency response other non-emergency services can be provided when it is possible to do so without causing disruption to the operational efficiency of the Service.

## 2 SPECIAL SERVICES

Special services fall into three categories:

- Emergency special services
- Non-emergency special services
- Other chargeable services

### 2.1 Emergency special services

Assistance will be given without charge at 'lifesaving' incidents and other 'humanitarian' services. Mobilisation to this type of incident will be with the same degree of urgency as for incidents involving fire.

Examples of services in this category are:

- Road, rail or aircraft incidents
- Persons trapped in machinery
- Flooding incidents (danger to life)
- Leakages of toxic gas (e.g. ammonia, carbon monoxide)
- Spillages/loss of containment of hazardous materials where an immediate threat to life, health or injury exists (only during the emergency phase of the incident). All other spillages/loss of containment of hazardous materials will be treated as a non-emergency special service and be chargeable as set out below. Charging for attendance at incidents involving hazardous materials will be on the "Polluter Pays" principle and be in line with the relevant statutory instrument.
- Persons requiring resuscitation (e.g. drowning, gas poisoning)
- Rescues from water
- Building collapse (only during emergency phase of incident)
- Making dangerous structures safe (e.g. wall/roof) where there is a risk to public safety (a charge will be applicable if structures are dangerous due to poor maintenance)
- Providing assistance to other agencies

*Note: The above list is not exhaustive but are examples of the most common emergency special services attended.*

Where an emergency special service becomes a non-emergency special service, i.e. because the immediate threat to life, health or injury has been alleviated, Incident Commanders (ICs) should send a message to Fire Control at the earliest opportunity to confirm when the emergency phase of a special service has ceased. Where this is not possible, the time of when the emergency phase finished should be stated on the FB009, this will ensure that accurate invoices can be prepared in order to recover costs.

## 2.2 Non-emergency special services

Assistance may be given and a special service charge may be levied to any persons or authority that is responsible for receiving the non-emergency special service.

Examples of this category are:

- Lift releases (no life or fire risk)
- Effecting entry (no life or fire risk)
- Flooding incidents – non-emergency
- Spillages of hazardous materials where no threat to life or health exists
- Animal rescues
- Making dangerous structures safe (where no public safety issue exists)

*Note: The examples given above are not exhaustive and charges may be levied for services not listed.*

In addition to the direct charge for the service rendered, NFRS will charge for appliances, personnel, the recovery, cleaning or repair of equipment as a direct result of its use at a special service, this includes both emergency and non-emergency special services. This includes:

- Repair, cleaning, servicing and testing of equipment
- Compressed air cylinder recharge
- Replacement/cleaning of Gas Tight Suits (GTS)
- Replacement of equipment (e.g. salvage sheets, oversize drums)

*Note: The examples given above are not exhaustive and charges may be levied for services not listed.*

Where the Service is attending an incident of a non-emergency nature, the IC should seek advice from a Station Manager (SM) or above, via Fire Control to determine whether a charge should be levied. Where doubt exists the responsible person receiving the service should be advised that a charge may be levied for the service in line with the scale of charges as set out in [FB009\(a\)](#) (Special Service Charges) booklet and they should be given a copy of the

[FB009\(a\)](#) booklet. The responsible person should then sign a completed FB009 (Special Service Incident Form).

### 2.3 Other chargeable services

NFRS may also offer other services of a non-statutory nature that are chargeable.

Examples of these include:

- Provision of Fire Cover at private events (e.g. events at Silverstone)
- Fire appliance hire (per hour)
- Water pump hire (per hour)
- Loan of equipment
- Hire of fire service personnel (per hour)
- Fitting of smoke detectors in commercial premises e.g. House in Multiple Occupancy (HMO) as an emergency measure (only as designated by the duty Fire Protection Officer (FPO))

Before commencing the services above, the responsible person must be made aware that a charge will be levied for these services in line with the scale of charges as set out in [FB009\(a\) \(Special Service Charges\)](#) booklet and they should be given a copy of the [FB009\(a\)](#) booklet. Form FB009 (Special Service Incident Form) must be completed in full and signed by the responsible person receiving the service before the service commences, the cost centre (budget code) to which the charge will be credited must be included. This form must be forwarded to the Service Information Team (SIT) at the Moulton Logistics Centre (MLC) as soon as possible after the service has been rendered in order that an invoice can be prepared.

NFRS may also offer other services on request at the discretion of the Service.

These may include:

- Fire safety talks to schools or community groups (over and above statutory responsibilities)
- Services to Academy Schools (i.e. not Local Authority Schools)
- Hosting/running of youth engagement activities/courses (e.g. Action Reaction Consequence (ARC), Youth Engagement Service (YES))
- Lease of the Community Outreach Vehicle (COV) to other agencies in line with the COV Service Level Agreement (SLA) and Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

Where charges are applicable for these services they must be agreed in advance with the customer according to the scale of charges [FB009\(a\) \(Special Service Charges\)](#) booklet.

NFRS may also offer services to other Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs) or private companies outside the scope of the above i.e. COBRA training. Where this is the case each request will be assessed by a Brigade Manager (BM) and

an agreement reached with the other party in relation to charging arrangements.

### **3 CHARGING/RECOVERY OF COSTS**

#### **3.1 Actions by Fire Control**

On receipt of a non-emergency special service call, fire control will determine what actions, if any, the customer can or has taken to mitigate damage or remove risk. Any action that the customer is able to take to prevent the need for FRS attendance should be determined and advice given; for example obtain the services of a builder, plumber, etc. to isolate electric or water supplies, confine a danger area or restrict access, etc.

The customer must be informed at the outset that there may be a charge for the service and that a FB009 (Special Service Incident Form) must be signed before it is carried out. Fire control should obtain as much information as possible to enable the responding officer to risk assess whether a lone attendance is possible.

#### **3.2 Action by officer**

On receipt of information from fire control, the nearest duty officer with a minimum role of SM will risk assess the reported situation to determine whether there is a need for immediate support from a fire appliance with personnel, or to attend alone to assess the necessity of committing an appliance.

Further information, if needed, may be obtained direct from the customer via telephone.

#### **3.3 Charging the customer**

Where attendance is made to a non-emergency service, the customer must have been made aware of the scale of charges and given a copy of the [FB009\(a\) \(Special Service Charges\)](#) booklet. Form FB009 (Special Service Incident Form) should be signed by a responsible person who has the authority to act on behalf of the owner/occupier.

If the situation is such that fire service intervention is necessary in the interests of public safety, then this signature may not be a pre-requisite for action.

The special service charge commences when the relevant assets are mobilised. A full hourly charge will be made for the first hour and then every part thereof (with the exception of lift releases where the charge is per half hour).

All calls to non-emergency special services require the completion of form FB009 (Special Service Incident Form); this is the responsibility of the IC. The possible exemptions on the form should be taken into account when determining whether a charge should be levied.

Under no circumstances should an IC inform the responsible person that a charge will not be levied for a service. The IC should make their recommendation on form FB009 (Special Service Incident Form) as to whether a charge should be levied or not. Where a recommendation is made not to charge, a full explanation must be included on the form in order to allow a proper judgement to be made.

Except in exceptional circumstances, which will be at the discretion of an Area Manager (AM) or above, all special service calls involving commercial undertaking will be subject to a charge as specified in [FB009\(a\) \(Special Service Charges\)](#) booklet.

Calls to domestic premises will be charged at the discretion of an AM or above.

If the incident results from an apparent act of negligence by a commercial undertaking a charge will be levied (e.g. persons stuck in lift, etc.).

If the service involves the abstraction of water either from a mains supply or 'open water' the caller must obtain written permission from the relevant water/river authority. The following information is then required:

- **Name** of person requesting the service
- **Address of person** requesting the service
- **Address of service** where it is to be carried out
- **Address of account** where the invoice will be sent
- **Details of service**; what is the FRS being asked to do?
- **Contact point**; normally a telephone number at which the above person can be contacted

NFRS is not a water undertaking authority, and all equipment and containers are designed for fire service use only. No warranty is given that, where water is supplied, the water is fit for human or animal consumption.

All non-emergency special services are undertaken subject to emergency commitments and responsibilities of NFRS. If this service is terminated or interrupted due to an emergency call or other responsibilities confirmed by NFRS at any time, a claim for compensation or refund cannot be made.

Please see appendix A for a flowchart outlining the procedure for special service invoicing to be employed on receipt of a call through to the management of the invoice.

### 3.4 Form FB009 (Special Service Incident Form)

This form should be used on all occasions when a non-emergency special service is attended by FRS personnel. These forms should be kept on all operational appliances and vehicles. Regardless of whether a charge is applicable, it is important that the FB009 (Special Service Incident Form) is completed in full and as thoroughly as possible, including full details of the service given and appliances and equipment used and over what timescales.

Where an IC has made a recommendation as to whether to charge for a service or not, this must be based on an objective assessment of the facts and service provided, and not on opinion. Where a recommendation is made that a charge should not be made, this must be accompanied by a full explanation as to why the IC feels a charge should not be levied. IC's should note that the charge will be levied on the responsible person/company and not necessarily the person(s) involved in the incident (i.e. lift rescues; in this circumstance it will be the company on whose premises the lift is installed that are liable for the charge and not the persons released).

However the IC should be aware that where the service is requested by a tenant in a private property, and where that tenant signs the FB009 form, the charge will be levied on that person. The Service is not able to charge a third party i.e. a landlord, in this instance unless the landlord has given permission and has signed the FB009 form. An example of this would be where a tenant has requested us to attend to gain entry, affect release from a room or remove roof tiles etc.

### 3.5 [FB009\(a\) \(Special Service Charges\)](#) booklet

This booklet lays down the total cost charged for chargeable services undertaken by NFRS. The booklet is not exhaustive and discretion will be made by an AM or BM as to whether a charge will be incurred.

## 4 FIRE SERVICES ACT SECTION 13/16 ARRANGEMENTS

NFRS will enter into mutual assistance arrangements with other authorities in accordance with section 13 and 16 of the Fire Services Act. Where appropriate and in line with the section 13/16 agreements, as signed by the responsible person for each authority, NFRS may charge for resources and assistance supplied under these arrangements.

## 5 ADMINISTRATION CHARGES

NFRS regularly receive requests for copies of fire reports and fire investigation reports. The SIT will action all requests and levy a charge as appropriate, in line with the scale of charges as published in the [FB009\(a\) \(Special Service Charges\)](#) booklet.

Any queries should be directed to the Service Information Manager (SIM), the contact details are available on our internet page:

<http://www3.northamptonshire.gov.uk/councilservices/northamptonshire-fire-and-rescue-service/contact-us/Pages/default.aspx>

## 6 MEASURING AND REVIEW

The procedures and practices contained in this policy will be subject to constant review, but a structured review process will also exist.

The Operations Department will monitor this policy during the two year period before the structured review to make sure that it complies with current legislation/practice.

All employees can carry out active and reactive monitoring of this policy and procedure and practices by using the debrief system to feedback any shortfalls in the procedures.

This feedback will form part of the continuous review of operational policy.



**FLOWCHART OUTLINING SPECIAL SERVICE PROCEDURE**

