

PRESS RELEASE

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RECRUITING FIREFIGHTERS IN DERBYSHIRE

More than 435 men and women from Derbyshire applied to become firefighters in the latest East Midlands recruitment campaign.

More than one-third of them (182) successfully showed that they met the necessary personal qualities and attributes in their applications, and were invited to sit the written tests.

Nearly two-thirds of those people (118) passed that test in March, and will go on to take the physical tests later this month. Those who are successful at that stage will then face one final hurdle – an interview in June.

Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service is hoping to find 40 people to fill its firefighter vacancies, and advertising began last autumn. There was a particular emphasis on trying to encourage applications from women and people from different ethnic backgrounds, in order to achieve a workforce which reflects the communities served. Their efforts paid off, as 9% of applications came from women and 10% from people from ethnic communities – indicating an improvement upon the last campaign (7.5% and 7%, respectively).

This is the second firefighter recruitment campaign to be managed across the region, encompassing Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire and Nottinghamshire. A total of 2,146 applications were received across the five counties this year, and Regional Recruitment Manager Alan Richmond believes that the benefits of organising it across all fire and rescue services can be clearly seen.

“We learned a lot from the first campaign and, as a result, we have been able to streamline events more this year,” explained Alan. “We have seen a much higher standard of application this time, which may have been because we gave clearer

instructions to candidates. Consequently, a higher percentage of applicants passed this year's initial sifting exercise – 44% rather than 27%. The written tests were held in the same central Leicester location over three days rather than taking up a whole week, saving us time and money.

“The other major benefit of organising the campaign across the whole region is that it means applicants have to apply just once. One application gives them the chance of finding a place in any of the five counties, if they are successful. This saves lots of effort on behalf of the candidates and the organisers.”

Cllr Peter Roffey, Chair of the East Midlands Regional Management Board, said he was pleased with the results so far, as they clearly showed the value of all five fire and rescue services working together. “If the selection criteria and process are the same throughout the region, then the applicants will all compete on an equal basis, regardless of where they are from or which Service they wish to join,” he said. “It also saves us money in terms of time and administration.”

Those candidates who are successful at the interview stage and are offered firefighter training posts will then take part in a 13-week training schedule later this year. They will learn their basic competencies before being assigned to a fire station at the end of this year or early in 2010.

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NOTES TO NEWS EDITORS

	<u>2009</u> campaign East Midlands	<u>2009</u> campaign Derbyshire
Applications received	2,146	437
Applicants completing the written tests	877	182
Applicants going forward to the physical tests	552	118

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