

PRESS RELEASE

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RECRUITING FIREFIGHTERS ACROSS THE EAST MIDLANDS

A regional firefighter recruitment campaign is paying dividends in the East Midlands, with 552 men and women having successfully completed three of the five stages in the selection process.

The standard of applications is also higher this year, and 41% of those people who completed and returned their application form, made it through to the written tests – compared with just 27% in 2007.

This is the second time that the five fire and rescue services in the East Midlands (Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire and Nottinghamshire) have taken a regional approach to their recruitment programme – saving time, effort and resources for candidates and each of the organisations.

Men and women who want to be firefighters now have to go through just one application process, rather than the previous system where they had to apply individually to each fire and rescue service. And the organisers have been able to simplify the administration by sharing the workload across the region and holding test days in just one location.

The first firefighter recruitment campaign to be managed across the region was held in 2007, overseen by the East Midlands Regional Management Board. A number of improvements have been made to strengthen the process since then, and Regional Recruitment Manager Alan Richmond, believes that the benefits of organising it across all five fire and rescue services, have been clearly seen this year.

“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. 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.”

A total of 2,146 applications were received from men and women in Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire and Nottinghamshire. That number was reduced to 877 after the applications had been sifted. The written tests have just been completed, and 552 people passed those and will be going forward to take the physical tests. Those who are successful at that stage will then face the final hurdle – an interview.

The five FRS' are hoping to fill 87 vacancies between them, 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 10% of applications came from women and 6% from people from ethnic communities – showing an improvement upon the 2007 campaign (8% and 5.5%, respectively).

“I am pleased with the results so far in our second regional campaign and we can clearly see the value of all five fire and rescue services working together,” said Cllr Peter Roffey, Chair of the East Midlands Regional Management Board. “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. It also saves us money in terms of time and administration.”

The physical tests will be held in April and the process concludes with interviews in June. The successful candidates will then begin an initial 13-week training schedule in the autumn to learn their basic competencies, before being assigned to a fire station in late 2009 or early 2010.

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NOTES TO NEWS EDITORS

	East Midlands campaign 2007	East Midlands campaign 2009
Applications received	2,500	2,146
Applicants completing the written tests	677	877
Applicants invited to take part in the physical tests	426	552
Applicants interviewed	356	
Successful applicants	85	

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