

## Section 11: Operational Roles and Procedures

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### 11.1 Fire Authority Operations

Traditionally, Fire Services were formed to attend at incidents involving fires. However, the role of Fire Services has expanded considerably over the years. Section 25 of the Fire Services Acts 1981 and 2003 empowers Fire Authorities to attend emergency incidents other than those involving fires. Section 25 of the Fire Services Acts 1981 and 2003 states -

*"A Fire Authority may carry out or assist in any operations of an emergency nature, whether or not a risk of fire is involved, and a Fire Authority may accordingly make such provision for the rescue or safeguarding of persons and protection of property as it considered necessary for the purposes of that function."*

Fire Authorities (Emergency Operations) Regulations 1987 (S.I. 210 of 1997) provide for the appointment of officers by fire authorities, to have charge of and be in control of emergency operations, other than at fire emergencies, and for the vesting of charge and control where those officers are not available to exercise control. The Fire Services Acts 1981 and 2003 provides for control at fire emergencies.

KCS provides guidance on the incident types that all Fire Authorities should attend and Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service conforms to this guidance by attending the following incident types -

- Aircraft (Emergency Standby / Incident),
- Automatic Fire Alarm,
- Bog / Gorse / Forestry Fire,
- Caravan Fire,
- Chimney Fire,
- Bus / Coach Fire,
- Electrical,
- Explosion,
- Fire Dwelling House / Apartment,
- Fire Industrial / Institutional / Harbour / Explosive Store / Secure Accommodation / Multi – Residential Building / High-Rise Building / Underground Car Park / Multi-Storey Car Park / Public Assembly Building / Vacant Building,
- Flooding – Life at Risk – rescue and warning roles,

- An Garda Síochána Request for Attendance,
- Gas (Smell / Leak),
- Haybarn and Farm Fire,
- Hazardous Material Incident,
- National Ambulance Service Request for attendance,
- Outdoor Fire (Bonfire / Fence / Hedge / Grass / Tree / Rubbish / Skip / Tip head / Oil / Petrol),
- Radiation Hazard,
- Railway Incident,
- Rescue General – Persons Reported,
- River Rescue - Persons Reported,
- Road Traffic Accident – persons reported (other than Road Cleanup),
- Sewer / Trench Collapse - Person Trapped,
- Smoke issuing,
- Major Emergency,
- Marine Emergency - Ship Fire – Docked,
- Marine Emergency - Ship Fire at Sea – Coastguard requests to Dublin Fire Brigade Marine Emergency Response,
- Vehicle Fire (Motorcycle / Car / Truck / Bus / Coach / Dangerous Goods Vehicle).

Special Service - Ambulance Assist type fire calls have historically been catered for under our PDA's (Appendix M). Most fire service personnel have been trained to Emergency First Responder level. EFR is a course for fire personnel operating in a first responder role who require more than the more basic Occupational First Aid - EFR is the national standard of first-aid training for Fire Services in Ireland. There are on-going consultations between National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management board (NDFEM), CCMA and National Ambulance Service (NAS) and HSE to explore the formalisation of responses for clinical status 1 999 (*Cardiac Arrests Echo designated calls*) emergency co-response arrangements by the Fire and Rescue Service nationally.

In addition, KCS lists discretionary incident types that individual Local Authorities are required to make a local decision on whether or not to attend these incident types. Kilkenny County Council has considered this list, taken into account response capabilities of other sections of the Local Authority and other agencies, (Irish Coast Guard – IRCG; An

Garda Síochána – AGS; Health Services Executive / National Ambulance Service – HSE / NAS; Defence Forces Ordnance Corp – EOD; South-East Mountain Rescue Services – SEMR; Royal Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals – RSPCA / KSPCA) along with reviewing historical data and particular specific local hazards and has decided that Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service shall respond to the following incident types -

- Body Recovery,
- Building Collapsed – No Persons Reported,
- Confined Space Rescue (Sewers / Silos),
- Lift – Person(s) trapped,
- Rescue from heights,
- Rescue of Animals (RSPCA / KSPCA),
- River Rescue (in association with IRCG),
- Request for the provision of water by the Water Authority,
- Road Hazard (*Cleanup after Road Traffic Accidents, Tress Down, Oil or Other Substance, Flooding on road, Dangerous Building at the side of the road etc.*),\*
- Flooding - Life at Risk, \*\*
- Oil Spillage. \*\*\*

\* Note - Road Hazard incidents are normally dealt with by the Roads Section of Kilkenny County Council or the Area Office during normal working hours or by the National Roads Authority on Motorways at all times – the Fire Service will assist in these operations if requested by an Area or Road Engineer, by An Garda Síochána or the National Roads Authority. It is also intended to put arrangements in place to apportion the cost of attendance at these incidents to the appropriate Road Authority.

\*\* Flooding - Brigades respond to rescue persons trapped by flooding and houses in danger of being flooded, and to assist the Engineering Services of Kilkenny County Council in flood emergencies, if required.

1. The Kilkenny County Council non-fire out of office hours emergency contact telephone number is 0818 399 399.

2. Storms/Severe Weather

The Fire and Rescue Service responds to emergency calls for severe weather. Training on the use of chainsaws has been provided to firefighters and appropriate personal protective clothing has been issued to each trained chainsaw operator.

\*\*\* Spillages/Pollution Incidents - The Fire and Rescue Service response to calls, generally from An Garda Síochána, members of the public or the local authority road overseer, to assist in making roads safe after the spillages of oil, etc. Each first line appliance has a limited amount of oil dispersant and applicator to handle small spillages of oil/petroleum e.g. at RTC's.

KCS also details a list of incident types that are considered inappropriate for Fire Service response. Accordingly, Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service will generally not respond to the following incident types (note the agency with responsibility for these responses is shown in brackets) -

- Boat – Not Moored (IRCG),
- Bomb Alert (AGS),
- Burglar Alarm (AGS),
- Civil Disturbance (AGS),
- Incidents involving Explosives / Suspect Devices or Cylinders – unless requested by the An Garda Síochána to attend on standby in the event of a fire (AGS / EOD),
- Lock In – No Life at Risk,
- Lock Out – No Life at Risk,
- Missing Person, unless requested by the Gardai to attend for specific role (AGS / Civil Defence),
- Mountain Rescue, unless requested by the Gardai to attend in support (AGS / SEMR Voluntary Sector),
- High Line Rescue (AGS / SEMR Voluntary Sector),
- Ship – Not Moored (IRCG).

Operational Procedures on how to deal with the above incident types are provided by the NDFEM in various procedural and Guidance Documents. A number of these documents require local consideration and adoption. The following is a list of documents currently in use by Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service to provide procedures and guidance on dealing with these incidents -

- Firefighter Handbook – Fire Services Council (2001),
- Junior Officer Handbook – Fire Services Council (2001),
- Senior Officer Handbook – Fire Services Council (2001),
- National Incident Command System – DoEHLG (2007),
- Fire Service Ancillary Safety Statement Template - DoEHLG (2007),

- The Use of Breathing Apparatus in the Fire Service – DoEHLG (2007),
- Road Traffic Accident Handbook (2009),
- Guidance on the Provision and Assessment of BA Training (2010),
- Guidance for Compartment Fire Behaviour Training (2010),
- Guidance on Emergency Traffic Management (ETM) by the Fire Service at Road-based Incidents (2011),
- Standard Operating Guidance (SOGs),
- Common Specification for Fire Appliances (2011),
- Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service Brigade Orders,
- Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service Safety Statement Risk Assessments.

## 11.2 Fire Safety Roles

In accordance with KCS, the primary role of Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service in relation to Fire Safety is to reduce the number of Fire Incidents occurring in this functional area, limit damage and prevent escalation and extinguish fires where fires occur. KCS provided guidance in relation to objectives and targets for Fire Safety. Table 11.1 outlines these objectives and targets that apply at National level, and how Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service is currently performing in relation to these – note, the latest available statistics from ERCC and NDFEM is for the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018 – 1<sup>st</sup> January 2020.

A	B	C	D
National Objective / Target	National Target*	National Average*	Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service Current Performance
Fire Fatality Rate	6 / 1,000,000 Population (by 2017)	8.4 / 1,000,000 population	7.5 / 1,000,000 Population (from 1/1/2017 – 1/1/2020) ##
Domestic Dwelling Fire Rate	80 Fires / 100,000 Population (by 2017)	99 / 100,000 Population	89 (from 1/1/2018 – 1/1/2020) #
Chimney Fire Rate	75 Fires / 100,000 Population (by 2015)	123 / 100,000 Population	72 (from 1/1/2017 – 1/1/2020)#
Tertiary Fires	350 Incidents / 100,000 Population (by 2019)	454 / 100,000 Population	312 (from 1/1/2018 – 1/1/2020)#
Special Service Rate**	132 Incidents / 100,000 Population (by 2019)**	132 / 100,000 Population	362 (from 1/1/2018 – 1/1/2020) #
Overall Fire Rate	600 Fires / 100,000 Population (by 2019)	680 / 100,000 Population	306 (from 1/1/2018 – 1/1/2020) #
Overall Incident Rate	1000 Incidents / 100,000 Population (by 2019)	1070 / 100,000 Population	784 (from 1/1/2018 – 1/1/2020)#

\*Statistics from the NDFEM Risk Based Approach – National Analysis - Phase One report (2008-2010) (latest statistics available from the NDFEM).

\*\* This target is calculated to bring in line with the national average.

# ERCC statistics 2018-2020.

## KKFRS calculated statistics from Annual Returns to DoHPLG and INFO Graphics.

**Table 11.1 Safety Objectives, Targets and Current Performance**

Three additional targets have been set as follows -

- 5% Reduction in Tertiary Fires over 5 Years,
- 15% Decrease in Special Service Incidents over 5 Years,\*\*
- 10% Decrease in Chimney Fires over 5 Years.

The following table highlights the required improvement in relation to these targets with Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service -

<b>Target</b>	<b>Current Number of Incidents within Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service</b>	<b>Target Number of Incidents within Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service</b>
5% Reduction in <b>Tertiary Fires</b> over 5 Years	312 (from 1/1/2018 – 1/1/2020)#	296 (by end of 2026)
15% Decrease in <b>Special Service Incidents</b> over 5 Years	362 (from 1/1/2018 – 1/1/2020) #	308 ## (by end of 2026)
10% Decrease in <b>Chimney Fires</b> over 5 Years	72 (from 1/1/2018 – 1/1/2020) #	65 (by end of 2026)

\*Statistics from the NDFEM Risk Based Approach – National Analysis - Phase One report (2008-2010) (latest statistics available from the NDFEM).

# ERCC statistics 2018-2020.

## This target is subject to outcomes from National agreements of co-responding arrangements between NDFEM, CCMA, HSE / NAS and staff interests.

**Table 11.2 Targets for Specific Reductions**

### **11.2.1 Special Services\*\***

Special Service Incidents per 100K populations is high for all of our seven fire brigades i.e. (362 per 100,000), whereas the national average is 132 per 100,000.

The schedule of Special Service incidents types are as follows –

1. Ambulance assist,
2. Animal Rescue,
3. Hazardous material incidents,
4. Electrical,
5. Explosion,
6. Flooding / Water leak,
7. Garda Assist,
8. Gas leak,
9. Lift person trapped,
10. Lock out,
11. Make scene safe,
12. Marine emergency,
13. Oil spillage,
14. Other,
15. River rescue,
16. Standby aircraft emergency,
17. Trees down.

Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service attend most of these incident types at the specific request of Kilkenny County Council.

### **11.2.2. Tertiary Fires**

Tertiary fire rates 312 per 100K population is below the national average rate of 640 per 100K population – Tertiary fire call are outdoor rubbish fires, bin rubbish skip fires, vehicle fires. Outdoor rubbish fires and bin rubbish skip fires are preventable incidents where are known to occur in recurrent areas and are preventable. Tertiary fire rates will be reviewed.

### 11.2.3 Brigade Overall Incident Rates

Annual Incident rate per 100K population is high for two of our fire brigades – namely -

11.2.3.1 Urlingford – rate of 1,448 per 100,000 population – where the national average rate is 1,283. The overall incident rate for Urlingford Fire Brigade turnout area is above the national average for the following reasons -

1. Due to its strategic location on the National Primary Road Network, M8 (Junction 4) and N8.
2. The R693 from Urlingford to Kilkenny City is one of the principal northern arterial routes.
3. Kilkenny County Councils policy that the Fire and Rescue Service is a Special Service Resource on a 24/7/365 basis.

This brigade overall incident rates will be reviewed.

11.2.3.2 Freshford - rate of 1,388 per 100,000 population – where the national average rate is 1,283. The overall incident rate for Freshford Fire Brigade turnout area is above the national average for the following reasons:

1. Freshford fire brigade is the 2<sup>nd</sup> Fire Brigade to be called into support Kilkenny City fire brigade for numerous pre-determined incident types.
2. The R693 from Urlingford to Kilkenny City is one of the principal northern arterial routes.
3. Kilkenny County Councils policy that the Fire and Rescue Service is a Special Service Resource on a 24/7/365 basis.

This brigade overall incident rates will be reviewed.

There is a high number of Special Service Incidents in County Kilkenny compared to the National average and particularly the National Target, as seen in Table 11.1 above.

However, the overall fire rate and the overall incident rate in County Kilkenny are below the National Target as per KCS. Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service attend special service incident types at the specific request of Kilkenny County Council. Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service may consider to commence invoicing other sections of Kilkenny County Council (Area offices) for services rendered (Appendix K for Current Fire Charges). The incident rate of Special Services may need to be reviewed.

It is intended that Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service would work with other sections in Kilkenny County Council, in particular the Housing Section and the Community and



Enterprise Section, to develop initiatives to work with the general public and Community Groups to reduce the number of unwanted fire calls in the City and County of Kilkenny. The incident rate of Tertiary Fires may need to be reviewed.

In addition, under Section 22(4) of the Fire services Acts 1981 and 2003 Pre-Incident Planning (PIP) is carried out by Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service on premises / facilities that are deemed to be a specific risk. Pre-Incident Plans (PIP) are prepared in advance of an incident and contain an overview of the facility and tabulated information about the risk summarising the critical aspects of a building from a fire service response.

The use of Mobile Data Terminals in our stations and fire appliances for Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service shall be continued to be utilised for safe incident management. These Mobile Data Terminals have information such as Pre-Incident Planning, GPS Maps, Fire Hydrants locations, Motorway Emergency access routes, Railway access routes, Hazardous Materials Data, MSDS, Data in relation to various premises and cars etc.

These terminals assist in the management and viewing of the collated pre-incident planning forms / data / drawings. It is intended to continue to develop / review seven (7no) Pre-Incident Plans per annum, giving a total of thirty-five (35no) by the end of 2026.

**Objectives for the Period of this Plan:**

**Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service will attend all its core incident types, in line with the principles of Keeping Communities Safe (KCS). It will also attend all discretionary incident types as outlined by Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service. Road hazard incidents are normally dealt with by the Roads Section of Kilkenny County Council or the Area Office during normal working hours or by the National Road Authority on Motorways at all times – the Fire Service will assist in these operations if requested by an Area or Road Engineer, by An Garda Síochána or the National Roads Authority. It is also intended to put arrangements in place to apportion the cost of attendance at these incidents to the appropriate Road Authority.**

**Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service will generally not attend incidents that are listed in KCS as being inappropriate to attend.**

**Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service will continue to work in accordance with Operational Guidance Documents that have been prepared by the National**

**Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management (NDFEM).** It is intended to continue to develop seven (7no) Pre-Incident Plans (PIP) per annum, giving a total of thirty-five (35no) additional plans by the end of 2026.

There is a high number of special service incidents in County Kilkenny compared to the national average. Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service attend special services incident types at the specific request of Kilkenny County Council. Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service may consider to commence invoicing other sections of Kilkenny County Council (Area offices, Housing Section) for services rendered. These incident rates may need to be reviewed.

It is intended that Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service would work with other sections in Kilkenny County Council, in particular the Housing Section and the Community and Enterprise Section, to develop initiatives to work with the general public and Community Groups to reduce the number of Chimney Fires in the City and County of Kilkenny.

In addition, Pre-Incident Planning (PIP) is carried out by Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service on premises / facilities that are deemed to be a specific risk. Pre-Incident Plans are prepared in advance of an incident and contain an overview of the facility and tabulated information about the risk summarising the critical aspects of a building from a Fire Service response.

The use of Mobile Electronic Tablets / Wi-Fi enabling for station and fire appliances for Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service is to be maintained. These tablets have dynamic information such as GPS Maps, Fire Hydrants locations, Motorway Emergency access routes, Railway access routes, Hazardous Materials Data, MSDS, Data in relation to various premises and new car technology, etc.

These tablets will assist in the management and viewing of the collated pre-incident planning forms / data / drawings.