

CASE STUDY

Delivering improved training at a reduced cost in partnership with the London Fire Brigade

The Challenge

In 2008 The London Fire Brigade (LFB) decided to look at innovative ways of delivering its training following industry and sector-specific reports which highlighted the need to future-proof their existing training infrastructure.

As a result of successful community safety work, which has led to a reduction in the number of 'real' operational fires, they also wanted to increase firefighters' exposure to core skills such as Carbonaceous Fire Behaviour whilst at the same time maintaining front line services.

At a time when the entire public sector was looking carefully at what it spends, a training partnership was considered to be the best route forward.

There were a number of objectives to be achieved by the partnership:

- Future cost avoidance and cost certainty
- Efficient resource utilisation
- Operational efficiency
- Revenue generation
- Increased training at evenings and weekends
- Catering to individual as well as organisational needs
- Reducing delegate travel time to attend training

- Delivering a blended training solution using technology and modern techniques to complement the use of traditional classroom training and practical training sessions

The Solution

MANAGE TRAINING

Babcock provides a **fully managed service** to the LFB, taking on responsibility for the full training programme from training needs analysis through to design and development of courses, planning and scheduling of the training, equipment and asset management and facilities management.

Our managed training service delivers improvements through:

- **Comprehensive course reviews:** improvements to the efficiency of all courses through a thorough review of each programme to identify better and more efficient ways of delivering the courses including utilising blended solutions, agreeing these changes with the LFB and ensuring that all required training outcomes continue to be met. The course review is approached from a holistic perspective: it is not just about the course and its content, but also who it is applicable to, the content, the frequency, the firefighter release pattern, required to attend etc. This way we drive efficiency through the fire brigade and not just on a singular training course.

Babcock has created the most innovative and fit for purpose Leadership and Management Programme that I have ever come across.

Commissioner Ron Dobson CBE QFSM FIFireE | London Fire Brigade

- **Structured Trainer Competency Framework:** reducing the number of instructor competency sets to increase flexibility. Investment in personal development programmes for each trainer to facilitate standard training practices and packages.
- **Enhanced scheduling and resourcing:** Babcock has developed a bespoke planning and scheduling system which ensures that the LFB has the right people and equipment in the right place and at the right time. Using sophisticated scheduling systems integrated with the LFB systems and a new Learning Management System, we will integrate training with frontline operations to deliver efficiencies throughout the programme.

DESIGN & DELIVERY OF TRAINING

Babcock delivers a portfolio of over 250 training courses to circa 5,000 operational staff and 800 support staff totalling over 97,000 delegate days per year.

Babcock maintains and updates the portfolio of courses ensuring that they remain up-to-date, relevant and reflect best practice. As part of the comprehensive course review, we are also updating the courses to incorporate a blended solution to make the training more efficient. In all cases we work closely with the LFB to ensure that changes to courses are carried out quickly and efficiently and adhere to relevant legislation.

By applying our knowledge and expertise we have been able to reduce the time spent learning at training venues for the Firefighter Development Programme from 17 weeks to 11 weeks. We have achieved this through the introduction of e-learning modules, online digital libraries (an electronic book of all course notes rather than multiple large folders of printed information), online assessments and post training workshops to support workplace development.

We have also designed and developed a new multi-agency Executive Leadership Programme for potential chief officers of the future, drawing together specialist sector knowledge with leadership development best practice. Developed with the purpose of improving interoperability, upon completion of the programme, which has been accredited by the Institute of Leadership & Management at Level 7, leaders have the knowledge and skills to enhance the strategic direction and overall leadership of the LFB.

PROVIDE AND MANAGE INFRASTRUCTURE

Babcock provides and manages training infrastructure on behalf of LFB.

The property solution has seen a £14m investment in two brand new Dedicated Training Facilities (DTFs) which are home to fully carbonaceous real fire training as well as centres of excellence in Urban Search and Rescue, including Confined Space Training and Incident Command.

LFB's Regional Training Facilities (RTFs) have seen a circa £2m investment in upgrades and refurbishments to update and improve these training environments and provide local centres for firefighters to receive some of their training, thereby minimising travel time.

The Outcome

Babcock is delivering a comprehensive training service covering the management of training, design and development of training and the provision and management of infrastructure that will meet and exceed the LFB objectives over the next 25 years. In addition to providing a first class training service, Babcock is delivering a cost saving to LFB of circa £66m over 25 years on their training budget, inclusive of our spend on new facilities.

Further added value has been achieved for the LFB through:

- Releasing over 165 firefighters previously delivering training back to operations as part of the transition process
- In the first year of operation Babcock delivered more training per annum than had ever been achieved by the LFB
- Investment in trainers to ensure that they are formally accredited and are multi-skilled
- Development and delivery of a Learning Management System, providing online course materials, firefighter CPD tracker and an intelligent planning and scheduling tool
- Improved Health and Safety statistics within training with a considerable drop in the number of RIDDOR incidents
- Introduction of thorough course reviews to ensure that the learning outcomes and course designs fully reflect LFB's needs and current best practice; blended learning and other tools (e.g. social media) are being employed
- Increased course accreditations and significantly enhanced methods of assessment so that the benefits of training can be more accurately measured
- Improved flexibility in the training programme so that it is more in line with operational requirements. Babcock schedules training intelligently, taking LFB workforce management and rostering systems into account so that firefighters are trained at appropriate times and the critical firefighting capability within London is maintained at all times
- Design, development, build and operation of state-of-the-art training facilities to provide better and more realistic training for London's firefighters
- Provision of multi-level performance reporting and analysis

Contact

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