The University of Northampton

“Desperately Seeking Susan!”

A critical analysis of gender, culture and leadership in a changing environment

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Dedicated to the memory

Of

Eva Ainge

23rd September 1918 to 18th April 2008

A special woman

Who was a fantastic seamstress

And as an expectant mother had worked as a mechanic on
army trucks to support the troops during the Second World
War

A true example of ‘women can’
Abstract
The role of a firefighter has traditionally been a man’s job. Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service have been no different to many Fire and Rescue services within the United Kingdom and the rest of the world. The impetus to change has been led by legal, financial and moral argument, with support of several business cases which has led to a clear need to employ a diverse workforce. Central Government have created several targets to stretch and encourage FRS to recruit women and men from underrepresented groups. After several years of trying, the question had to be asked why are there not more women pursuing a career in Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service.

Through a critical analysis, an account has been taken of women’s experiences in non-traditional occupations. For many years women have struggled to know whether to be change agents or to fit in.

The research methodology has used a case study blend of qualitative and quantitative approaches.

The findings indicate that there are two key areas of change needed to be successful in recruiting women. Firstly, the publicity and marketing needs to reach women so that they are aware of the opportunities and recognise Northamptonshire and Fire and Rescue Service are an employer of choice.

Secondly, the current workplace culture is not a conducive environment that would encourage more women to want to join. The comments from existing staff include an air of tolerance towards women as opposed to acceptance.

If the current culture is not supportive of women then the leadership needs to lead the change. Is it the women who lead the change? Or is the male majority who should lead?
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Introduction

So, why are there not more women pursuing a career in Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS)? This dissertation seeks to answer this question by exploring the issues relating to the recruitment of women firefighters.

Background

In Northamptonshire the County Council (NCC) is responsible for appointing the Fire Authority which is a political body responsible for NFRS (HMG 2005) (Fire and Rescue Act 2004) NFRS employ 705 personnel 615 men (87%) and 90 women (13%), the operational sector establishment includes 563 men (96%) and 23 women (4%). These employees support the provision of emergency cover from twenty two fire stations and three support buildings, 24 hours a day every day of the year. Firefighters operate a variety of shift patterns from 9 hour days to 24 hour periods of call. The total establishment includes of 4.1% women firefighters is higher than the UK average which is 3.3 % ; As at 31\textsuperscript{st} March 2008 the best examples of fire and rescue services_ employing female firefighters was Gloucestershire (7.2%) NFRS is therefore not the best nor the worst fire service looking to increase women's recruitment and provides a typical example of a service trying to desperately seek Susan and at the same time employ the best candidates.

The paradox

In a drive to realign the balance of equality NFRS accepted a 'stretched' target that by 2013, 18% of new entrants to the operational sector would be women (NFRS 2009b & CLG 2009). Targets aside the aspiration is to employ the best candidates and for the employer to have a workforce which is reflective of the community it serves. These two 'conditions' provide a potential paradox for the recruiter who is looking for the best but also has to be mindful of employing a diverse\textsuperscript{1} workforce.

\footnote{See page 25 – What is diversity? for a definition}

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Research Rationale

Non Traditional Occupations
Non-traditional occupations are defined as jobs in which 25% or less of the workforce is female (The Institute for Employment Studies 2007). Not surprisingly then NFRS aspiration to recruit more women as operational firefighters can meet with a resistance from the 95.9% firemen (Baigent 2004; 2008).

There are many drivers to achieve the stretched target (NFRS 2008 & CLG 2009). Following the Stephen Lawrence inquiry (Macpherson Report) fire and rescue services’ have a clear moral duty to embrace an equality agenda. There is also a moral (McGuirk 2002) and legal duty (l&DeA 2009) placed on public services

There is an argument that as there are fewer young people predicted to be in the labour market in the future, NFRS will be competing with organisations to attract the best people. Recent statistics for the United Kingdom (ONS 2008) indicate that:

- Women outnumber men in the UK population. In 2007 there were almost three times as many women as men aged 90 or over.
- Women can expect to live longer than men in the UK. In 2006 circulatory diseases were the most common cause of death for men, while cancer was the most common cause for women

Whilst there is some merit in this constantly rehearsed argument that the workforce will shrink, there is little doubt that the fire service will continue to be oversubscribed and that the real arguments are about diversifying the workforce.

The legal reason for NFRS taking this approach is the Equality Act 2006 and the Equality Framework for Local Government (l&DeA 2009). This means that public bodies must have ‘due regard’ to the need to eliminate unlawful sex discrimination and harassment to promote equality of opportunity between men
and women and to seek out those who are disadvantaged. NFRS have attempted ‘positive action’ (The Sexual Discrimination Act 1975) without great success (CLG 2009).

**Research Question**

The guiding principle of the research is:

*Why are there not more women pursuing a career in Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service?*

Traditionally, the fire and rescue service was a response service, waiting for the emergency and then rushing to help those in distress (2002 Bain). The service is now in an ever changing environment and since 2004, (Fire and Rescue Act), there is a greater emphasis on prevention. In addition, the government has set targets to recruit a diverse workforce as well as meet new prevention related targets. To meet the new challenges of tomorrow the workforce and the environment will need to embrace these challenges and change. The opportunity to address the gender imbalance in the workforce is here now.

To change NFRS will need significant leadership and innovation to address the gender issues and female under representation. This research seeks to examine the following issues:

- To identify the main reasons women do not want to join NFRS as firefighters?
- To critically review the current culture, to see if the environment is conducive to the employment of women.
- To evaluate the leadership in the FRS and how this has supported the change.
- To suggest what leaders might do to achieve a gender diverse workforce.
A Critical Review of the Literature

There has been significant research into gender and non-traditional occupations, but not about the women joining the fire and rescue service per se. As the fire and rescue service is a male dominated career, or put another way a ‘non traditional occupation’ for women, the approach seeks to fill a gap in the research. This paper will seek to critically review both academic and practitioner research relevant to recruiting women into non-traditional occupations. The literature review will then be used to develop a research platform into the fire and rescue service and the barriers that prevent women joining.

For an organisation to move forward and to change the strategic approach requires leadership (Burke 2002). This literature review will introduce leadership, gender and culture. The paper will critically analyse how these three facets interact to influence the recruitment of a women into a fire and rescue service. The next chapters in this literature review will introduce and critique -

- Leadership,
- Gender,
- Culture,
- Non traditional occupations,
- Masculinity and femininity in leadership and management
- Fire and Rescue Service Values and behaviour models
  - The Aspire Model (2006)
  - Core Values (NFRS 2009a)
Leadership

Academic research indicates that there is no clear definition of leadership. Many authors have tried to define this subject, but to date no definitive one sentence can sum up this fundamental role. To illustrate, several definitions are discussed below:

“getting others to follow” (Mullins 2002)

Handy though believes that the search for a definition for leadership

“has proved to be another endless quest for the Holy Grail in organisation theory”. (Handy 1993).

Kotter argued that many companies lack the leadership they require “at all hierarchical levels” (Kotter 1999). Is the critical success factor leadership or management or the requirement for organisations to develop and employ a balance of both?

A new softer skill has entered the field of management, emotional intelligence (EI) “(Goleman, McKee, Boyatzis 2002). This intelligence is different from an individual’s IQ (Intelligence Quotation) which doesn’t change (Goleman et al 2002), whereas emotional intelligence (often referred to as EQ) can be taught and improved. Goleman argues:

“To have good leadership, society needs to develop the emotional intelligence of its leaders “(Goleman et al 2002)

Golemans work is not beyond critique as he flits between explanation of emotions being a biological reaction to emotional intelligence is something which can be learnt and developed. ‘EI’ is not an exact science as its success is very subjective and like beauty may be something that is held strongly in the eyes of the beholder.

There are many traits and competencies that a leader requires to be a success; Lash (2002) argues leadership needs to be “Transformational, engaging with the hearts and minds, or Transactional or aspects of both” and it may be the
real skill of leadership is deciding on which is appropriate. Alternatively some would favour a consistent long term approach to gain success,

“Effective leaders create organisational climates that foster superior performance...capacity to manage one’s own emotions and the emotions of others” (Lash 2002) and others would favour the constant change of transformational leadership as employed in Merseyside FRS which receives high acclaim from the Audit Commission (Audit Commission 2008).

Fire and rescue services understand that they need to become more effective in the future (Audit Commission 2008). Reports (HMCIFS 2001; Bain 2002; ODPM 2003; CLG 2008b; 2009; I&DeA 2009) make the fire service aware that the old methods of nurturing managers and leaders will not develop the leadership skills required for the modern service (HMIFS 2001). This is further supported with research conducted by Development Dimensions International (Mullins 2002 p285), which reported that staff lacked confidence in the abilities of their leaders and in the leadership development. The leader of today will need a different skill set from their predecessors (HMIFS 2001) if they are to achieve the new requirements in regard to modernisation (CLG 2008b) and in particular equality (CLG 2009). Those roles and the development opportunities to nurture those new skills may need to evolve. Although the expectation is manager’s time will be made up of ‘transactional leadership’ for 80% of the, while still maintaining a “transformational outlook” (Kakabadse A & K 1999 p49). The challenge for the leadership of today is that manager’s time is expected to be “fragmented” (Kakabadse 1999 A&K 1999 p 36), which may frustrate the individual and can divert the path of the organisation in achieving goals.

Fire and rescue services have often focused on the reason for their poor performance to be attributed to insufficient funding, but has this has been an excuse for ineffective leadership? Research has shown that this can be a failing of ‘not for profit’ organisations were the focus is more on the “resource efficiency than the service effectiveness” (Johnson and Scholes 2002). NFRS
have maintained a position as amongst the least expensive fire and rescue services within England and Wales for the past 20 years (best value performance indicator BVPI 150 cost per head of population) (NFRS Annual Report 2002) along with lower quartile performance in other areas of the business (NFRS - Integrated Risk Management Plan 2009).

The fire and rescue services have many regulators and authorities to satisfy. These include Audit Commission as part of Central Government’s control, the fire authority, the Public, and local area agreement boards. Johnson and Scholes (2002) acknowledge that within the ‘not for profit’ sectors there may be “multiple sources of funding” which are “linked to different objectives” and expectations with a “high incidence of public lobbying”. Therefore the requirement may be to hold the “decision making and the responsibility at the centre” (Johnsons and Scholes 2002) so that an ever increasing demand is at least coordinated. In this context it may be difficult for a local authority fire and rescue service, to ascertain where the centre is but it needs to do this if it is to attend to all the demands?
Culture

In general terms culture is the “basic assumption and beliefs that are shared by members of an organisation” (Johnson & Scholes 2002). The “taken for grantedness” or “that’s just how we do things” (Johnson & Scholes 2002) approach to activities and practice is a wider phenomenon than any one single formal organisation. These beliefs may not be written down and are more likely to be handed down from generation to generation. This may be in a work environment, family setting or a social gathering, and whilst these remain largely conservative and resistant to change they will have an influence on innovation and success.

Within society there are many differing social groups and each having values and beliefs which in the eyes of the group members are legitimate ways to behave (Hofstede 2001). An individual is influenced by many forces of influence (as shown in figure 1 below) and a range of social pressures that will influence how people fit into the teams or groups.

![Figure 1 - Cultural Frames of Reference (Johnson & Scholes 2002)](image)

This can lead to the development of sub cultures within the workplace (Mayo 1949; Baigent 2001b) which can be positive for the individual but negative for the organisation if they remain outside of the sphere of managers. The term “hero” whether alive or dead, real or imaginary will have characteristics that are
highly valued in a culture and serve as role models for behaviour (Hofstede 2001).

The organisational fields (as shown in figure 1) are to be viewed as networks of related organisations which share common assumption, values and ways of doing things.

These values and beliefs may be ‘institutionalised’ (Johnson & Scholes 2002) and be part of the policies and processes of an organisation. As actions or activities are repeated and form the ‘norm’, it will become more of a challenge to change. When witnessed by occupants of those groups, whether it be peer pressure or “blindness” (Prahalad 2004) or group think (Janis 1972) the need to change may not been seen or a greater concern that there is a ‘fear’ to raise the concern and conservative forces block the change.

“A recent event (in 2009) a contractor [on the fire station completing a tiling project] said, ‘so you’re one of those female ones then’”
(Woman A- 2009)

“When I was introduced to watch manager, I was pregnant, he didn’t shake my hand, just looked me up and down, I felt that I had to prove myself all over again.”
(Woman F - 2009)

Cultural influences may also be illustrated through a cultural web (Figure 2), (Johnson & Scholes). This figure is in contrast to figure 1 which is the influences of the individual. The ‘web’ depicts the assumptions of an organisation and builds on the cultural frames of reference.
If figure 2 (above) is the culture of the organisation and figure 1 (above) depicts the culture of the individual and the influences. Then the reality of the ‘organisation’ may not be as straightforward as the Johnson and Scholes Model would have the reader believe. The cultural influences of each individual in the organisation would ‘overlay’ each of the facets of the ‘web’ to show the diversity of influence which make a person an ‘individual’. In turn these influences would multiply as the many individuals who come together within their own ‘culture’ and ‘personality’. These influences will be influenced by peer pressure, dominance and acceptance and will in turn influence those around them (Hofstede 2001).

“Treated differently now, following working in [another department name] was ‘one of the lads’, a woman from another department someone ‘said see you lads’, It was said ‘she is a woman not one of the lads’.”
(Woman F - 2009)

“The image of being heroic, males like to be protective, the use of female and women on media coverage photographs create urban myths about the fire service.”
(Woman E - 2009)
“I thought the job was really physical and it wasn’t until I got to the fire station and saw these men with pot bellies and men who were not looking after their physical condition....”
(Woman E – 2009)

The culture may also be described in these cases as ‘mental programming’ (Hofstede 2001). A simple mistake to make here is that gender is a straightforward cultural issue. Neither the cultural web (Figure 2) nor cultural frames of reference discuss gender. Hofstede (2001) stated that ‘culture’ is not the same as ‘identity’ and therefore gender can be part of a person’s identity. It is possible and quite plausible for two or more different groups or individuals to have the same values but not share the same identity. In fact many conflicts have been based on this premise.

Luthans (1992) argues that organisations have a dominant culture, Prahalad (2004) refers to this as the “dominant logic”, and this is based upon founding principles and sub-groups. Sub cultures can undermine the dominant culture. Attempts to manage change may not run smooth where strong sub cultures exist, this may result in strategic drift.

Baigent (2001) indicates just how real this drift is in the fire service where a strongly white male and heterosexual group of firefighters conservatively hold onto a belief in ‘the way things are done around here’ and constantly frustrate and resist attempts by managers to change the service to fit with government agendas (CLG 2008b) and in particular with diversity (HMCIFS 1999; McGuirk 2002; CLG 2008a).
The “iceberg” of organisational culture

A simple analogy of an organisation is illustrated in figure 3, the potential impact of a culture on an organisation is captured with the reference to ‘sailors’ as organisational managers - “one way to recognise why people behave as they do at work is to view an organisation as an iceberg. What sinks ships isn’t always what sailors see, but what they can’t see.” (Hellreigel, Slocum and Woodman 1998)

This model has been ‘populated’ with cultural activities from fire and rescue services alongside the concepts from the original model. The model depicts an
iceberg, to illustrate the organisation. The strength of culture is shown in two distinct parts - the formal (organisational) and the informal (occupational). As with an iceberg, the size of the water is under the water line is greater than what is above. In this model, the informal is shown as distinctly more troublesome and has a greater impact on the organisation than the formal. In the illustration the suggested position of leadership is shown as ‘covert’, this is can relate to the informal leadership within an organisation and the informal leaders. Leadership which is critical to moving an organisation forward is ‘overt’.

Leadership styles, behaviours and values reflect the dominant culture of a country (Hofstede 2001). With Britain perceived to be organised along masculine lines then it is of no real surprise that this approach is an accepted organisational ‘construct’ around masculine hierarchies. The characteristic can lead to embellishment of the battlefield or boardroom events to show strength and prowess, often to play up to the followers (Collinson and Hearn 1996). In stark contrast feminine cultures believe in modest leaders (Hofstede 2001).

In 2005 fire and rescue services were encouraged to adopt new Core Values, (CFOA 2005 and NCC 2009) as part of the process of transforming the fire service.

The Core Values ....We value...

- Service to the community
- People
- Diversity
- Improvement

This was the first time that individual values had been displayed and ‘taught’ as the accepted manner in which to conduct one’s self in the fire and rescue services. Following several strategic Government sponsored reports (HMIFS 1999, 2001 and Bain 2002) the subtle change on the fire and rescue services culture was intended to be a ‘values’ centred arrangement. In contrast to figure 3 (The Iceberg Model), which has seen ‘values’ moved from the original position of covert to above the ‘water line’ and now overt. But this was a new set of values and distinct from the ‘values’ still held by many personnel below...
the water line. Although not entirely aware of just how much resistance there was to be and how hidden this resistance was it was decided to recruit and promote on the basis of candidates for employment or promotion ‘proving’ personal qualities and attributes that fitted in with the ‘core values’

The Aspire [fire and rescue services] Leadership Model (2006) (see figure 4) place Core Values (CFOA 2005) at the centre. This leadership model appears as a deliberate approach to redefine acceptable behaviours, values and beliefs to achieve a cultural shift for the fire and rescue services using a ‘singular’ cultural change approach. This has been put forward nationally by senior FRS mangers as part of the modernisation agenda for change. The weakness is that this model relies on individuals to all conform to the ‘constructs’ (Hofstede 2001) that lie beneath and to live to these values. The inference is that as the individual conforms then collectively we will conform thus develop a positive FRS culture.

**Theory is one thing, but……..**

However leadership and theory are one thing, educating a workforce whose entrepreneurial skills are highly acclaimed when it comes to firefighting and problem solving, and are prepared to use those same skills to resist managers and change, is another.
Figure 4 Based on the Aspire Leadership Model
Non Traditional Occupations – the influence of masculine and feminine culture on career choice

Construction Industry

Gale (1994) identifies that non traditional occupation organisational cultures are a real issue in preventing more women joining the construction profession. ‘Masculinity’ was identified as a cultural norm in this environment as in the fire service (Baigent 2001). The research has identified that the men in a male dominated profession use the macho image as part of their own identity. This image stereotyping is also fed by the responses of the careers service (Astin 1984) (Gale 1994), through nurture and through public perceptions (Cooper 1986).

In 1994 Gale considered the masculine image of the construction industry and how that may influence women in joining the profession. The construction Industry displays an underrepresentation of women with 6.7% full-time and 5.3% part-time (Gale 1994). As already mentioned this compares very closely to the figures reported for NFRS and other fire and rescue services in England and Wales (CLG 2009). Gale (1994) identifies that the low proportion of women in the building trade and other male dominated sectors is reflected in higher education. The number of female building undergraduates at British universities (not including polytechnics) rose from 9% in 1985/86 to 13% in 1990/91 (Gale 1994). Gale’s research used qualitative and semi structured interviews and targeted approximately 400 subjects with an age range of 15 years upwards.

Gale identifies the culture as a real issue in preventing more women joining the construction profession, ‘masculinity’ was identified as a cultural norm in this environment. Therefore to maintain that norm women have to be kept out. Fielden et al (2001) identified that although a number of women were employed in the construction industry (16%) that the majority of those roles were in secretarial, personnel related occupations as opposed to frontline construction. This is a similar finding of the fire and rescue services’ (CLG 2009). Fielden et al (2001) also established that 43% of the women employed were in part-time
positions (Equal Opportunities Commission 1997). Whilst Fielden (2001) identified that there was a need to conduct positive action in recruiting women, contractors reported that they were ‘fearful of positive action’.

Gale identified the following issues which will be critiqued (or compared and contrasted) with other industries through the literature review;

- Male Organisations tend to reproduce themselves, maintaining male values
- Male and female construction managers appear to converge in the image so as to make women invisible
- The outcome of the process of “fitting in”
- Careers teachers and careers advisers were perceived by school student, undergraduates and graduates to provide inaccurate and inadequate information on construction industry.

**North Sea Oil Rigs**

Burke et al (2008) compared the responses of men and women how were employed in the extreme environments on North Sea oil rigs and to establish how satisfied they were with the working conditions, terms and conditions of employment and the working culture. Burke et al 2008 reported that “few differences were observed”. This is an industry that is also indentified itself (Burke et al 2008) as a non traditional male occupation. Norwegian women working oil rigs occupy less than 5% of the jobs in this sector (Burke et al 2008) which compares closely to NFR 4.1% (CLG 2009).Burke et al surmised that the work and home life stressors which male and female colleagues were ‘common’ to each gender. The generalisation from this study is linked as this study was only limited to 24 women so the findings are of limited use and must be taken with a note of caution, Burke et al (2006) believed, which may be a blinkered view, that as there was an absence of gender differences in the impact on work life balance, satisfaction of conditions and similar work experiences in what was portrayed as very masculine working environment, that the women in the study were survivors and that there is ‘reason for optimism’ and ‘signs of progress’.

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Agents for change or ……

Bagilhole (2002) questioned whether women in non traditional occupations were the “agents of change” or were they changed by their working environment and culture? The two extreme points of view that Bagilhole (2002) raised are that non traditional occupations are full of feminists trying to break the male dominance or purely that those women are conforming to fulfil their own careers? By the identification in her research that few women changed; instead most women integrated masculine work traditions into their own activities. To suggest that ‘that few women changed’ (Bagihole 2002) may be a flawed view; the expectation is this indicates women’s survivor instinct or a strong desire to fit in.

Women moving into employment in non traditional occupations are faced with the choice of change or conform. How are policy makers and senior/strategic managers addressing the morality of this?

Policing

Metcalfe & Dick (2002) considered the gender differences in commitment to a career in the Police. The findings included in the research are weak as the baseline for data is a ‘Male’ view (Dickens 1998), which can be seen to be a bias, or ‘Androcentricity’ (Eichler 1989). Again the barriers to joining the police made it another non traditional occupation as the perceived male view, that the role was not suitable for women as they did not possess the ‘masculinist characteristic and qualities’ which were required. This had allowed the male majority, particularly in the USA, to resist women (Martin 1996, Martin and Juirk 1996, Brown 1997) because ‘policing is not suitable job for woman’, and bringing out the masculine argument that women’s commitment to the profession is less than men’s. What is rarely questioned is ‘is a man’s commitment appropriate to the profession appears not to have been asked. The assumption is that it is 100% and, provides a baseline to compare women’s commitment. Whilst it may be that women were committed to the force, the question left unanswered was ‘is the force as committed to the female police officers?’
Military
Although much is made of public sectors wanting to embrace diversity and equality, often cultural issues are put forward as barriers to change. Neighbour (2006) reported there was suggestions that equal opportunities should not occur, because men would be less likely to join [Army] frontline units if women were able to join them too (Alexandrou 2001 cited in Neighbour 2006). The counter to this claim was that the Army were faced with falling numbers of male applicants therefore; instead of leaving the positions vacant, the Ministry of Defence decided to offer more opportunities to women. In addition, new technology has provided alternatives to the traditional ‘masculine’ warfare.

Apprenticeships
Research into the provision of modern apprenticeship amongst post 16 year olds highlighted the traditional gender ‘norms’ being followed (Miller 2005). Miller recognised that the gender segregation issue in the selection of apprenticeships is linked to gender pay differences. The reported skills shortage in information technology is reported to continue (Miller 2005) while in contrast it is often women who have the qualifications in IT and engineering but are choosing not to use them (Desvaux, et al 2008).

Peer Pressure
The reasons or perceived barriers for women making career selections have been evidenced as “peer pressure, parental influence and fear of being different from their friends” (Miller 2005). Figures from the Learning Skills Council show that 86% of the post-16 women choose childcare in contrast to 99% for post-16 men who choose engineering, ICT, construction or plumbing (Miller 2005). The study was limited (which may have created a biased view) and likewise so were the choice of modern apprenticeship for women. Women were limited to one option as opposed to the men who had up to five vocational options, as identified in Miller’s survey (2005). Are the issues of men as the minority or the underrepresented group addressed with the same vigour as women? (Miller 2005) The learning skills, who as a public body have a duty to promote gender equality, published a plan which would aspire to increase the number of males
who joined hair and beauty modern apprenticeships (Miller 2005). Miller’s findings did not extend to the analysis of the success of this plan.

The work required to gain gender acceptance in the underrepresented roles is wider than the points raised above, here is an actual quote from a potential employer who said, “This is a job for big strong men. We don’t want women coming in here with their hormones. You can’t keep your nails clean if you work here, you know. We want to keep this factory all male.” “Then he took me around the factory and introduced me to all the workers, and every man he introduced me to, he made them show me their hands to show how dirty they were” [Female apprentice] (Miller 2005).

Children are encouraged to create gender roles which fit the stereotyping (Hofstede 2001, Lyton & Romney, 1991 cited in Allison et al. 2004) which is then enforced through socialisation from an early age (Hofstede 2001, Maccoby, 1990 cited in Allison et al. 2004). This is further enforced by parents, peers and teachers even though those perceptions do not have a basis in fact (Hofstede 2001, Karraker, Vo gel, & Lake, 1995; Rubin, Proven Zano, & Luria, 1974; Tiedemann, 2000 Cahill & Adams, 1997; Fagot, 1978, 1984; Witt, 1997; Hibbard & Buhrmester, 1998; Lockheed & Harris, 1982 cited in Allison et al. 2004).

**Men in the minority**

When the non traditional occupation issues have been viewed from the stance ‘as males being in the minority’, research uncovered negative or derogatory beliefs and values. Males who had chosen a career in nursing had been perceived to be gay or feminine (Allison et al. 2004). This belief had a reduced perception if there were ‘stories’ or images of the individual involved in stereotypical male activities. Males in this chosen profession evidenced assistance in their career development from senior men, via the “glass elevator” (Williams (1992 cited in Allison et al. 2004 p164).

The most concerning issue was that men who were employed in a female dominated profession had a tendency to be involved in a higher rate of
domestic violence (Meltzer, 2002 cited in Allison et al. 2004), the rationale suggested that men attempted to compensate for their perceived feminine job and emotional/intellectual inadequacies by lashing out to prove themselves (as men). Metzer’s (2002) and Allison et al (2004) research did not consider whether these men ‘fitted in’ or where ‘change agents’. The deduction is that the men’s resolve was weak and through these career choices they became emotional unbalanced. As a comparator, the emotional impact of women undertaking a non traditional role was not referred to in the literature reviewed, this is either a gap in the collective view on gender and non-traditional occupation’s research, or is a gap in the approach to the literature review.

**Strong cultural views that influence the values of gender**

The literature on non-traditional occupations raises the issue of gender and explores the barriers perceived or otherwise and to why gender bias still exists within occupations. The fire deaths of the Muslim women (Pratim Chatterjee 2008) (See Case Study 1) add to the debate in terms of not just gender but ‘culture and gender’. Research has been conducted into the roles of sales-persons and the relationships, trust and credibility between, male to male, female to female and female to male business relationships (Sojka JZ, Ashok K Gupta & Deeter-Schmelz DR 2001). In the USA the dynamics between the sales person and the buyer was deemed to have little difference due to gender (Sojka et al 2001). The study was widened to include Asian sales business relationships, although results indicated that same gender sales business relationships were deemed to be of neutral benefit to mixed gender, “Asian male buyers did not perceive that sales was an appropriate career for Pakistani women”, this was in direct contrast to how the Pakistani women perceived themselves and the role (Sojka et al 2001).

The perceptions of female colleagues and male colleagues in the sales arena have been recorded in further studies conducted in the USA (Strutton et al 1995) (Swan et al 1984). In all three of these studies the issues was not recorded as “like or dislike” (Sojka et 2001) of one another, but of perception of each other, qualitative research, found female sales persons were more
relationship orientated. With the issues of perception related to gender, there would often be a hint that there is a rationale for this perception, but not founded (Dwyer et al 1998). The strength of historical context is illustrated in the work of Ikhlas A Abdalla (1996) who conducted research into the attitudes towards women in the Arabian Gulf region. The strength of believe that women should not work is demonstrated in the workforce statistics. In the region the industry is predominately oil and gas related, which has been identified (Burke et al 2008) as a non traditional occupation on gender alone, the influence of local culture, or if a ‘masculine’ country (Hofstede 2001) has a further detrimental effect on women’s involvement. In ‘masculine countries’ (Hofstede 2001) both boys and girls learn to be ambitious, although the ambition of the girls may be directed towards the achievements of the brothers or later the husbands and sons.

In the Arabian Gulf the countries of Kuwait and Qatar have working population made up of the “native population” (Abdalla 1996) 20% and 10.5% respectively; the remainder is made up of expatriate male workforce. The contribution which women make to the working population is 14% in Qatar and 25% in Kuwait. This limited participation of women in the labour force is related to Arabian Gulf Traditions and values which predate the oil era. Bedouin values – That Family honour is dependent on women’s chastity (Abdalla 1996). Women are physically secluded, with education a relative new phenomena since 1937 in Kuwait and 1957 Qatar. Kuwait is deemed to be more liberal with women gaining employment in traditional and non-traditional roles. In Qatar, women can work in only three types of vocations; they are within, schools, hospitals and social care. (Abdalla 1996).

On the outside there is an appearance of “opulence, moderate advancement and educational achievements” (Abdalla 1996), however, it seems that Arabian Gulf women are locked in restrictive traditional roles. These traditional beliefs about women’s roles, rights and responsibilities may also be prevalent to a great degree in other Arab countries, because they all share the same culture. (Muna cited within Abdalla 1996) suggested that Arab societies (moderate and
traditional) have an inner similarity and share certain values despite the obvious differences in economic and political attainment of their members. The Arabian Gulf example has the additional factor of wealth as well as that of tradition. What is the need for women to work? The traditional gender roles of the stereotypical family values, with the woman as the home maker and the male the hunter gatherer have been allowed to continue. From the working population figures the inference is that few of the men folk form part of the working population. This was against the landscape of strong traditional cultural behaviour of men towards women, attitudes had moved forward. Individuals who endorse, non traditional 'self-concepts' hold liberal attitudes towards women, as opposed to those males who endorse the traditional views held strong conservative attitudes towards women. The study identified the feminine and masculine tendencies of attitude in both genders, women who had a masculine attitude supported the change from tradition along with men who showed feminine traits, which was in contrast to the men who demonstrated masculine tendencies in their attitude, which has strong allegiances with the traditional view of the role of women (Abdalla 1996). In a diverse society, these views of Arabian traditions will influence the views of men and women who are not part of this culture. The strong views of men from this traditional background would be expected to have a negative influence on women choosing the fire service as a career and expected influence on choosing to work at all.

**What is diversity?**

Diversity is often recounted as the aspiration for an organisation to have a workforce which is reflective of the local community (Jackson and Ruderman 1996). Winston (2006) argues that the approach of linking diversity purely to race can lead to limited success in the goal of diversity. If organisations want to be more effective and more efficient, then the term diversity is argued (Jackson and Ruderman 1996) to include “functional characteristics”. These characteristics are under the “umbrella” as the differences in knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs), values, beliefs and attitudes (VBAs) and personality, cognitive style, and behavioural style (PCBs).
Diversity is socially constructed and must be examined in a cultural-historical context (Triandis cited in Jackson and Ruderman 1996). Therefore what appears an issue for one culture may not be acknowledged as an issue by another. Triandis critiqued (Jackson and Ruderman 1996) were everyone is “black, the black-white contrast is of little consequence”, other differences are deemed more important. Triandis takes a stance on gender (Jackson and Ruderman 1996) that in cultures where the power relationship between men and women is stable; there is little visible concern about gender diversity. The cost to those societies may be felt in the terms of oppression, with a level of protest or apathy, often the greater cost is the loss of women’s talent from the working population.

**Masculinity in the Fire and Rescue Service**

Masculinity within the Fire service was the subject of a PhD study conducted by Dr Baigent in 2002. Baigent served in London Fire Brigade from 1962 to 1993. The doctorate explored the view of the fire service as an academic but with a difference. He convinced the firefighters to talk honestly to him as if he was ‘one of them’, as if he ‘fitted-in’. Although his writing was biased towards pro-feminism (Hearn 1994), the thesis on cultural audit that ensued identified how identity, masculinity and fire service informal culture were one and the same when it came to resistance to organisational change and in particular to resisting the employment of women and lesser men as firefighters.

“firefighters’ masculinity is not natural, but a result of socially learnt behaviour that firefighters adapt to enable them to do The Job.” ....”I do not accept that in the fire service The Job makes the man, more that it makes the person”. (Baigent 2001)

The work of Baigent is open to critique, in that his view is narrow and is out of date. This has been voiced by two fire and rescue equality and diversity professionals who prefer to see that Baigent’s results as historic and the service has since moved on. This critique has been put to Dr Baigent for comment, “of course they would say that” because “that is what they want for us to believe”
(Baigent 2009), in general equality managers try and discredit this work, and they perceive that the fire service culture is different now. Certainly recent research indicates that little has changed (Baigent 2008; Baigent 2009; CLG 2009). What is not known from this insight is who is right or is it degrees of change? Or are these opposing views both viewed through their own ‘biased lenses’? The indication was that the two views are very strong but ‘poles apart’. The findings of this paper will explore just how much has changed in terms of service culture.

Baigent in his work reflected back on his own childhood and how his values and beliefs regarding masculinity were formed.

“I would question if my father and his father before him, the teachers at my school, my social group and the people I worked alongside all believed masculine attributes are natural, then where was I to get the knowledge that things might be different? I know now that gender is a social construction, but I question, before I came to university, how was I going to accept women could be firefighters?” (Baigent 2001)

“Gender beliefs that separate male and female work are being broken all around us”….. “There is clear evidence that men elevate their position by making women invisible, except as wives and mothers” (Pateman and Gross 1986; Segal 1990 cited by Baigent 2001)

Baigent suggested that feminists argued that in early Greek society women’s activities in the “Aristotelian polis were hidden by men”, this male oppressive approach can also be witnessed in current cultures. Tony Blair, as Prime Minister of the time, hosted an event at Number 10 Downing Street, for Muslim Women in recognition of how a patriarchal culture can limit the passing of information to women (CLG 2006).
From the debate that ‘men can and women can’t’ complete physical occupations, what appears to have been conveniently forgotten is that “women undertook ‘men’s’ work by replacing the men who had gone to fight the war [....1939 to 1945 Second World War....]: commerce; factories and farms; to a limited extent in directly defending the country by staffing anti-aircraft guns” (Baigent 2001).

“....what gender label do we give the firefighters who are women and do their work in similar ways to men....”? (Baigent 2001)

O’Connor (2006) suggested that firefighting could be viewed as the “stereotypical battle of good against evil, a reconstruction of the knight-errant, the firefighter possessing qualities such as bravery and strength, men of honour deploying ‘legitimate male power’....” This image continues to support the rationale of masculinity, but can be viewed as quite a ridiculous muse. Except that these images are supported by the media and statues are given to firefighters at their retirement events, often show a gallant scene of ‘a male firefighter with a rescued maiden’.

Baigent (2001) and O’Connor (2006) argue that Firefighters collectively and individually believe that their particular values are common, right and natural. “....anyone who tries to challenge their view may be seen as a traitor to common values....” (O’Connor 2006)

Research has shown that fire fighters ‘question “the ability of black, female or gay firefighters to do ‘The Job’.” (O’Connor 2006). To allow ‘others’ to join the service can viewed as an attack on masculine views. (O’Connor 2006).

As the fire and rescue services seek to incorporate equal opportunities and employ a diverse workforce the leaders and managers are viewed, in accord with Baigent (2001) and O’Connor (2006) as a “threat to the masculinity” as the ‘exclusively white, working class male group’, will be forced by officers to allow ‘others’, particularly women, on them as firefighters.
However, when the ‘others’ have joined the service and have become integrated within the group, O’Connor (2006) used an example to indicate that an individual may now be accepted in to the culture, that particular person may be referred to in terms of ‘their black fire fighter’ (O’Connor 2006) implying the individual has been accepted. One may argue that this example doesn’t sound or feel like acceptance rather more tolerance and a feeling of ownership. Or a way of making someone who proves they can do their job as an honorary member rather than a representative of the ‘other’ race (or gender).

**Masculinity, is this nature or nurture?**

The term masculinity can also be linked to adrenaline rush and a sense of risk based excitement. The concept of “Edgework” (Lyng 1990) explores the type of person who is attracted to environments which are risk based. Lyng also suggested that in ‘human nature’ risk taking and the need for an adrenaline rush, sits comfortably with notions of masculinity and ‘ladettes’ (O’Connor 2006) (Lyng 1990).

Is the ‘human nature’ facet a nurture or nature condition? Or is this upheld through rituals\(^2\), or through core values\(^3\) or through external influence\(^4\)? Or is this related the hunter gatherer’ male tendencies (Abdalla 1996). Is this a taught ability or attraction? If it is nature, does this mean that men have it? Or is it through education and tradition and men had told women that women do not have it?

**Part Time Working**

Gale (1994) considered the image of the construction industry and how that may influence women in joining the profession. The construction Industry displays an underrepresentation of women with 6.7% full-time and 5.3% part-time (Gale 1994). This compares very closely to the figures reported for NFRS

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\(^2\) Cultural Web (Figure 2)  
\(^3\) Core Values (Figure 4)  
\(^4\) Cultural Frames of Reference (Figure 1)
and other fire and rescue services in England and Wales (CLG 2009). In 2006 more than two-thirds of working-age women with dependent children (68 per cent) were in employment, Women (38%) are more likely than men (4%) to work part-time, particularly if they have dependent children (ONS 2008). In NFRS, the current option for part time working as an operational firefighter is RDS\textsuperscript{5}. The role requires an individual to provide cover up to 119 hours a week or over 120 hours a week. This model has been in situ since 2002, and is based on the old contracts of full cover\textsuperscript{6}, limited cover\textsuperscript{7} and shift over\textsuperscript{8}. The question has to asked as to whether the ‘ideal worker’ has been based on a man and if any real account has been made of the gender equality of this type of working arrangement? For example, childcare issues (for a man or a woman). Has this working arrangement, which may have not been assessed for equality impact, been written through ‘male eyes’ and is it institutional sexist? The current RDS system appears to support a second job option for men easier than it supports a part time role for a woman with carer responsibilities.

\textsuperscript{5}Retained Duty System
\textsuperscript{6}24 hour cover every day of the week with expectation to attend 75% of all fire calls
\textsuperscript{7}To provide evenings and weekend cover with expectation to attend 75% of all fire calls
\textsuperscript{8}Due working shifts in primary employment, cover is provided on rest days which include weekends, weekday and evenings
Feminism and masculinity in leadership and management

The leadership aspect needs to be considered in two parts, the first what are the leadership benefits to which men and women bring to the organisation? Second, what are the leadership requirements to move the organisation forward in the recruitment and retention of a gender equitable workforce?

National culture sets the attitude

The landscape of national culture and the influence of masculinity was the subject of research conducted by Hofstede (2001). The research argued that masculinity could be defined as assertiveness and competitiveness with femininity defined as caring. As an indication of the results, as a nation Britain, Canada, Australia and USA were low in masculinity, Japan, Germany and Italy scored high in masculinity with Iran, Pakistan and India scoring in the mid range. This is research is not beyond criticisms, as the research did not consider regional influences and the concentration of focus was limited to one organisation, (IBM) (Hofstede 2001, Mullins 2002).

Masculinity, Femininity and “Androgyny”

The simple view is that women are feminine and men are masculine. Within personality traits this is not always the case. The term “Androgyny” (Appelbaum, Audet and Miller 2003) suggested a third approach which is a balance of masculine and feminine behaviours. Management and leadership situations have required individuals to use differing skills to be successful. Those situations include males who act with feminine tendencies, caring, supportive and inclusive, then by contrast women who act with masculine tendencies, which include aggression and brash behaviour. Through the influence of socialization and culture the attitudes of the workforce, has determined that the ‘ideal worker’ is based on a man (Charlesworth and Baird 2007). The gender and organisational effectiveness are closely linked, however when gender is discussed this is often viewed as to about ‘women’ as opposed to be about ‘men and women’ (Charlesworth and Baird 2007). This institutional
sexist approach can marginalise gender equity as a business goal, with negative impacts on organisational effectiveness and also silence men’s interest in better work life outcomes (Charlesworth and Baird 2007).

“....[A male worker applied for flexible working arrangements to support childcare arrangements, his manager replied]...there are people in this building who think your wife should be at home looking after the children and you should be earning to support your family.....” (Observational 2009)

The Power Flower
There are also leadership and management models which do not recognise gender. “The power flower” although sounds feminine due to the reference to flowers (Kakabadse, Kakabadse and Lee-Davies 2008), is gender neutral and relates to differing power levers, which a leader can utilise as part of the leadership portfolio.

Charisma
The charismatic leader (House 1977) (Weber 1920), gender neutral, is associated with building a vision and energising people. There are close links with transformational change. Wang, Chou and Jiang (2005) demonstrated the strong links between the charisma of the leader and the success of the projects. Wang et al (2005) contrasted the success of the project with project management process and the project manager’s charisma. The research strongly pointed to charisma as an ability to gain ‘buy in’ from the workforce and belief in the project, therefore success was delivered.

Leadership, Gender and Culture
From the literature review thus far indicates there is a distinct overlap between, gender, culture and leadership. The ‘Ainge Gender Venn’ model (figure 10) illustrates this overlap. The aspect of ‘gender’ also relates to management style of masculinity, feminine tendencies and an “androgynous leader” with a balanced mix (Appelbaum, Audet and Miller 2003). With women achieving success at management and board level, the route to success has been far from easy. With legislation in place to outlaw sexual discrimination it is
disturbing to recount the high numbers of cases still being brought forward in both public and private sector environments (Kakabadse A&K 1999, HMIFS 1999 and Bain 2002). The argument should be not to ‘give them a chance’ but to change the culture that encourages and supports everyone to achieve their potential.

The literature review indicates that the leadership within an organisation will ‘create’ the culture. If the leadership is masculine, the culture is masculine and the gender of male and female will want to fit in and therefore show masculine tendencies as the norm. In contrast, if diversity is the goal, then diversity is needed in the leadership, this will set the tone for the culture. The gender of the workforce will embrace femininity and masculinity as equal traits. The men and women will be embraced for their individuality and feel the need to ‘fit in’ to be accepted. The result is a better work environment for all.
The Journey So Far - Discussion

The bias of the male view - “Androcentricity”

Men are ‘fearful of positive action’ (Fielden et al 2001) to recruit women, although by recruiting more women could itself help to change attitudes within the [construction] industry.

The gender differences in the Police Force (Metcalfe & Dick 2002) focused on commitment to a career. The findings used a baseline ‘Male’ view (Dickens 1998), of an ‘ideal worker’ (Charlesworth and Baird 2007) which can be seen to be a bias, or ‘Androcentricity’ (Eichler 1989). The barriers to joining this profession were very similar to non traditional occupations in general, as women did not possess the ‘masculinist characteristic and qualities’ which were required. This had allowed the Police force male majority, particularly in the USA, to resist women into the Police (Martin 1996, Martin and Juirk 1996, Brown 1997) stating that ‘policing is not suitable job for woman’, and that women’s commitment to the profession is less than men.

Much is made of public sectors aspiring to embrace diversity and equality, not every profession is willing, and often cultural issues are put forward as barriers to change. Neighbour (2006) questioned why equal opportunities should not occur? The response, which would surprise most researchers, was that men would be less likely to join [Army] frontline units if women were able to join them too (Alexandrou 2001).

Expected to Fit in

Bagilhole (2002) questioned whether women in non traditional occupations were the “agents of change” or were they changed by their working environment and culture? The two extreme points of view that Bagilhole (2002) raised are non traditional occupation’s are full of feminists trying to break the male dominance or purely that those women are conforming to fulfil their own careers? Most women integrated masculine work traditions into their own activities. This situation is viewed by Prahalad (2004) as the dominant logic; the
strong cultural view of this is ‘how we do things around here’, which can be so difficult to change.

Norwegian women working on oil rigs occupy less than 5% of the jobs in this sector (Burke et al 2008) which compares closely to NFRS 4.1% (CLG 2009). The study reported responses of men and women, showed “few differences”, ‘reason for optimism’ and ‘signs of progress’. There was an absence of gender differences in the report in what was portrayed as a very masculine working environment. Was this merely case of women fitting in and not wanting to be seen as different? Was this a study which missed the male bias?

The Business Case for Change
Organisations which have a diversity programme, recruit and retain more women at all level including the boardroom have started to appreciate the financial benefits of such a strategy (Desvaux 2008) instead of reduced productivity due to increased nursing of children and more maternity leave, (Desvaux 2008) the professors at the business schools of Columbia University and the University of Maryland lend support to this point. Data on 1,500 US companies from 1992 to 2006, found that “indicative evidence that greater female representation in senior-management positions leads to, better firm quality and performance.” (Desvaux 2008).

Many countries and regions face talent shortages at all levels, and those gaps will worsen. By 2040, Europe will have a shortfall of 24 million workers aged 15 to 65; raising the proportion of women in the workplace to that of men would cut the gap to 3 million (Desvaux 2008).

By bringing in diverse groups you may always change the way things are done around here and this is another fear that men have about employing women – that women will not only spoil their image but also break their solidarity against managers and change.
Research Methodology and Methods

This section introduces the theory of the research methodology and the methods. This theory will show why these methods were deemed to be the most appropriate for the research which was undertaken. The ‘validity’, ‘reliability’ and ‘generalisable’ (Saunders, Thornhill and Lewis 2009) of the data are discussed within the sections below.

The practical application of the methods will be explained which will include the phased approach. This section will conclude with an honest critique of the limitations and short discussion.

Research Context

This research is focused on the Fire and Rescue Service, which has undergone immense change since 2002 (Bain Review and The Fire Dispute, National Framework 2002, 2006. 2009, CLG). In 2009 the CLG proposed to conduct a national campaign to support recruitment. At that time NFRS were engaged in collaborative work stream with the East Midlands region to supplement this campaign. This provided a timely opportunity to review if there were any key step changes required to address the real issues of gender equality in the fire and rescue services and to identify if there were changes that could be made to try to influence recruitment.

The initial stage of the research was to ask the simple question ‘why are women not applying for roles with the Fire Service? To do this the methodology considered how a biased and male dominated workforce may bare influence. Questions were also asked of the existing women employed and to those who had shown an interest through the application phase, but may not have been successful. To gain a wider understanding of the cultural and religious reasons for not choosing this profession, the question needed to be asked within differing communities, amongst people from religious and cultural backgrounds who are deemed to be minority in their representation.
In addition, questions were posed to researchers of previous academic and practitioner publications. This was to be able to question and clarify previous data and to consider this in the context of the data uncovered for this research.

**Research design**

The recognition was given to the need for a clear research strategy (Saunders Lewis and Thornhill 2009) and the method will be based on a ‘case study’ approach (McQueen and Knussen 2002) using different methods so as to validate the findings (Gillham 2000). The approach will also utilise quantitative, qualitative and observation methods of data collection.

Androcentricity (Eichler 1989) in very basic terms is to view the world through male eyes and bias and Travers (2001) implied that feminism has much in common with “Marxism as a political movement” and that the reasons why women are exploited are “natural and normal because men control the media and educational system” (Travers 2001). This can indicate that men view women as subordinates. From such a position of male control, women are portrayed as having positive qualities such as nurture, cooperative working, ability to express their emotions, in contrast, “men are naturally aggressive, individualistic and coldly rationalistic” (Travers 2001). It just so happens that in the world of work men’s attributes above are given more kudos – this despite the argument that these differences are socially constructed (Connell 1995; 2002).

In the creation of this design and to validate the methodology, this research was cognisant of “feminist epistemology” (Travers 2001), that a theory exists that to liberate women from ‘false consciousness’ would occur if society was organised differently and the desire to expose those institutions that “accept the economic dominance of men” was fulfilled (Travers 2001).

The design has taken into account the very strong views between genders and the attempt to support a non biased data collection approach. The feminists prefer a qualitative approach (Travers 2001); therefore to support the non biased approach both qualitative and quantitative methods were used.
A further step to assist in neutrality, Celia Kitzinger (Seale, Giapieto, Gubrium and Silverman 2004) further discussed the feminist approach. Throughout recent social research there has been a relationship between the ‘voice’ and the ‘experience’. This has historically led to examples of bias within research results to favour quantitative male approaches above the qualitative approaches preferred by women. To help provide a more valid outcome, the interpretation of the data is to be a confirmed with the interviewee (the experience) to ensure the case study results are accurate (the voice) prior to further analysis. Placing a strong emphasis on “reflexivity” (Travers 2001, Marshall and Rossman 2006) should minimise the gender biased towards a neutral and balance stance. To further manage this issue, in designing the research framework, the questionnaires were piloted using a ‘dual perspective’ (Eichler 1989) to limit the gender bias by using women and men respondents.

The design took account of the need for reliability and validity of the findings. The reliability would be threatened by subject or participant error, which may be caused by enthusiasm to please the researcher and say what they believe the researcher wants to hear and not what occurred. The observer bias or error will be reduced through a series of methods, including triangulation.

**Original research or old methods and questions researched on new subjects?**

This research may be deemed original (Blaxter, Hughes and Tight 2001) in the fire and rescue service setting of Northamptonshire. The literature review and sector knowledge strongly suggest that this level of research has not been completed before.

**Ethics and anonymity**

There has been no need to use a covert approach to gaining data (Baigent 2001, Pierce 1995), and the participants were all made aware of what the research was for and how it may be utilised. Kruegar and Casey (2009) perceived that to help “understand culture, role or behaviour”, the moderator
should not be from the same group, that way the participants will explain more and ask more “amplification and examples” (Kruegar and Casey 2009).

The approach complied with the University ‘Code of Ethics’ for research. Individuals involved in the research will have their anonymity maintained and documents have been protected via a coding process (Saunders et al 2009).

**Methods for data collection**
Recognition was given to the varied data collections methods which could be used, on their own in a pure sense or in combination. The concept of having a point to prove (deductive) or to attempt the research with a clear open mind (inductive) have shaped the data collection methods, both have been adopted. The mixed methods approach and the mixed methods research (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2009) have been utilised for this research in the form of a recognised model, the case study.

**Case Study**
This method investigates an individual, group or community to answer specific questions and seeks a range of different kinds of evidence (Yin 2003). This evidence is the case setting, and which information has to be abstracted and collated to get the best possible answers to the research questions. “No one kind or source of evidence is likely to be sufficient or sufficiently valid on its own” (Gillham 2000).

Gillham (2000) argued that you don’t start out with ‘priori’ theoretical notions whether derived from the literature or not – because until you get in there and get hold of your data you won’t know what makes sense.

“inductive theorizing – hypothesis seeking” (Gillham 2001)

In human behaviour generalisation from one group of people to others or one institution to another is often suspect, because there are too many elements that are specific to that group or institution. The naturalistic researcher study literature and work out whether existing findings and theories are adequate. In
contrast the experimental investigator tests and challenges the existing to yield new data to test the existing theory. The major distinction is the greater concern of the naturalistic, case study research with subjectivity: to seek out the qualitative element: how people understand themselves, their values ("axiology" – Saunders Lewis and Thornhill 2009) or their setting – what lies behind the views, the underlying reason’s - in people’s feelings or perceptions or experiences of what is going on ("ontology"- Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2009). This can be ‘key’ to understand what needs to be done to change things.

All of this indicates that the "naturalistic researcher is not a detached scientist" (Gillham 2000) but a participant researcher an observer, who tries to acknowledge their role in what they discover through the inductive ethnographic strategy (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2009). This research would not follow a pure naturalistic approach, but a more pragmatic practitioner-researcher (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2009). Gillham argued that a research investigation is not neutral; it has its own dynamic and there will be effects on the individuals and the organisation, because there is someone there asking questions. It is important to recognise this is part of doing good research, ignoring it is bad ‘science’. To recognise one’s own subjectivity is an important step towards objectivity – if such a state can ever exist.

Qualitative interviews

Qualitative interviews are a useful method for accessing individual’s attitudes and values (Bridget Byrne – Seale 2004).

The qualitative methods allow the researcher hopefully “to get under the skin of the organisation or group to understand what really happens” (Gillham 2000).

The literature review has identified that (Bent Flyvbjerg p420-434 -Seale et al 2004) that there are many misunderstandings with case studies. Support is given to the art of generalisation on the basis of an individual case; therefore the case study can contribute to social scientific development. The validity of generalization on the outcome or results of a case study research is increased
by strategic selection of the case. The strategy for the selection of samples and cases suggests that the most appropriate approach is the ‘information-oriented selection’ which aims to maximise the information from small samples and singles cases, with cases selected on the basis of expectations about their information content. Bent Flyvbjerg (Seale et al 2004)

When conducting qualitative semi-structured interviews, it’s essential to build rapport, (Akroyd and Hughes 1992:108 – Seale et al 2004) without bias is deemed an ‘essential’ practice. On the contrary to the ‘bad’ practice (Oakley, 1981; Douglas, 1985 – Seale 2004) were the interviewee is treated as a research object. The favoured approach is of non-neutral interviewing, learning about ourselves as we learn about others (Fontana and Frey 1994:373-4, Seale 2004).

The interview script will include a short introduction to the research and ethics. This is acknowledged as a potentially influential factor to how the pending questions may be answered by those interviewed. There is also a possibility that those interviewed will have their own agenda to which they use this exercise as a ‘voice’ (Celia Kitzinger cited in Seale et al 2004). To establish the credibility and validity to this data, ‘triangulation’ method will be used (see triangulation below). Data will be compared with and discussed from several sources, to develop confidence in the findings. If there are discrepancies in the data, this does not mean it is wrong, merely more complex than first thought (Gillham 2000).

**Quantitative methods**
The quantitative method is the collection of data in a numerical form. This approach will cover a wide audience or a ‘macro’ view of the subject. The most recognised method is a questionnaire. The questionnaire is used to capture “*descriptive or explanatory*” (Saunders et al 2009) research. The design of questions took into account the feedback from the pilot (see below) and used a variety of different question types. The questionnaire mainly asked “*list questions*” and “*rating questions*” which made use of the “*likert-style*” rating with
a final “open question” to capture respondents views (Saunders et al 2009). This approach will seek to identify and explore variables. In addition to the questionnaire there are recognised approaches to its use, “self-administered” or “interview- administered” (Saunders et al 2009). For this study a “self-administered” approach was taken to try and limit the bias which may be created by the researcher being present. To support the respondents a mixture of postal, internet/email and delivery/collection methods were used (Saunders et al 2009).

**Focus Groups**

Focus groups are a contemporary rather than traditional method of conducting research. As focus groups (Bloor, Frankland, Thomas and Robson 2001) are “superior” to other methods, including ethnographic, for the study of group norms and group understandings due to the convenience or accessibility. There is a concern that strong opinions and strong personalities can adversely affect the discussion and the variance of opinion which is shared in a group setting. This may curtail “deviant experiences” (Bloor et al 2001) and this is expected to silence the less confident personalities present. However given that the dynamics in groups is seen as the main predictor of if women are to be accepted then the focus groups with all the provisos may well provide a more real answer than the critiques suggest because the researcher is seeing ‘the way things are done around here’ in action.

**Methods for data analysis**

Yin suggests that ‘Pattern matching’ (Yin 1994), is one of the most desirable strategies to use. If the patterns coincide, the results may help a case study strengthen its internal validity.

If the data agrees this will add weight to the opinion, if it doesn’t then it doesn’t necessarily mean it’s wrong but maybe more complicated than first thought.

It is a basic limitation of human cognition that we feel impelled to understand and to make sense of what we have experienced Gillham (2000). That new knowledge is mainly interpreted in terms of what we know, until our own
knowledge framework undergoes a radical reorganisation. In research this is sometimes known as a paradigm shift, a complete change in the way we understand or theorise what we are studying. This may lead to asking deep philosophical questions about ‘how do we know certain things are true?’

The qualitative data was transcribed and summarised to enable a “sampling strategy” (Marshall and Rossman 2006) to be used. “Maximum variation”, “homogenous”, “extreme” and “typical” were among the typology of the strategies used (Marshall and Rossman 2006). The quantitative data was inputted on to a excel template created for this function. The results were extrapolated into bar charts to enable analysis.

**Triangulation**

To conduct the analysis, different data will be used to triangulate, compare and contrast. By using different kinds of evidence, documents records interviews detached observation ‘fly on the wall’ and participant observation. As an employee of NFRS, this enabled the researcher to conduct an ‘observation’ approach through academic ‘lenses’ to absorb and analyse the data. The researcher would argue that this has greater value than “being a participant observer,” or “a temporary member” as by being a permanent member of the case study setting would provide a greater opportunity to get to “the informal reality” (Gillham 2000).

**Procedure**

The first stage was to review the literature on gender, non-traditional occupations to ascertain the current view points on women in employment. Further research was considered on pay equality in developed countries and comparator data was reviewed. The concept of masculinity in culture was explored as this became a repeating issue. A review of FRS related literature was undertaken and triangulated to the previous gender and culture related findings of the literature review. A picture began to unfold of how women in non-traditional occupations were viewed and the barriers, myths and legends associated with succeeding in a male dominated environment. From this stance
this research aimed to test a series of views (deductive) and to approach the challenge with an open mind to explore new ground and rationale for the view points (inductive).

Consideration was given to access to information and to willing subjects, both male and female, who may wish to be interviewed. The first approach was to develop a series of thematic questions and to conduct focus groups with ‘representatives’ from the community. This became a time sapping challenge (see limitations). The altered approach was to conduct a series of semi-structured interviews with ex and current staff. This formed a useful qualitative data in itself and was developed to form the basis of the quantitative questionnaire. Several key gatekeepers were identified for access to underrepresented groups. For example colleagues in the Police provided access to a Muslim women’s group, a deputy head teacher provided access to young people and a colleague at Emergency Planning provided access to a county wide faith forum. The questionnaire aided access to a series of focus groups. The information gained in each collection method and different group could be triangulated.

The data from the different collection methods were summarised in differing formats and to aid pattern matching, triangulation and interpretation.

In summary the procedure was as follows-

- Literature review

Research has been conducted in both primary and secondary formats.

- The secondary has been collated from CLG national questionnaires, NFRS Cultural Audit 2006 and Cultural Audit of Retained Duty Stations within NFRS (Baigent and O'Connor 2010)

The primary data set has been gathered in qualitative and quantitative methods, with collection from inside and outside the organisation, with semi structured interviews, focus groups, observations and questionnaires.
The groups from which data sets have been collated include:

- Previous and Existing Female NFRS personnel (n=8)
- Women who have undertaken the selection process put were unsuccessful (n=3)
- Women who had attended a recruitment awareness event but did not apply (n=13)
- Both men and women who had applied to join the Police Force (n=20)
- Female Police officers – with less than 6 months service (n=6)
- Men and women in the community (these were targeted via a selection of methods) (n=84)
- Men and Women from a Sikh Temple in Northampton (n=6)

**Pilot, process tests and limitations**

As with all research, the journey is not always straightforward and may find results that were not the expected. A little honesty of worked well and want did not. The original concept was in the first instance to establish focus groups and then develop the use the answers to create the appropriate questions for semi structured interviews. This found to be too challenging due to time and trying to establish willing contacts to gain access to or create focus groups. There was a need to change tack. A series of individual semi structured interviews were conducted, with questions developed from the literature review and examination of previous questionnaires in the area of gender. These questions were then tested in a questionnaire format with a women’s rugby team. Several pilot questions and formats were tested prior to the final draft. The inspiration in the design format of the questionnaire came from A & N Korac-Kakabadse (2008). The pilot of the questionnaires with women’s rugby team proved to be very successful. The feedback on the design, that it was too long, the questions needed explanations [e.g. what is positive action?] were all taken into account. With this additional insight the finished version of the questionnaire gained a return rate of 53.5%.
An area which was unsuccessful in this research was virtual focus groups and the use of social networking sites. The development of the internet and the social networks including ‘facebook’, ‘beboo’ and ‘twitter’ may provide a further avenue for academic research. Several of these networks were piloted but due to the availability of time they proved to harvest limited meaningful results. Although these branded networks are not mentioned by name (Bloor et al 2001) recognition is given to the creation of ‘virtual focus groups’ to aid data collection academic research in the mapping of behaviour and behaviour change.

The research was limited in time to 12 months with a University submission date of May 2010. The researcher was limited to available time limited by fulltime employment, limited resources and budget. The academic limitations will include the availability of data, access to willing subjects to share their experiences and the limited amount of research already conducted in this arena. As the end of the study draws closer, recognition is given to the gift of hindsight. With what is now known, the starting place would have been different.
Findings

A Radical Take on Recruitment

This section was inspired by [www.i-women.org](http://www.i-women.org) (2009). In simple terms, recruitment of women into the FRS can be viewed on four levels. The first level is simply, vacancies are advertised in local press or at the fire station. The critique is that this approach is expected to only gain interest from those who had considered a career in this sector and were awaiting a vacancy. This is often limited to the friends and relatives of existing firefighters. The second level is to target locations where women may come into contact with the campaign, for example women only gyms. This approach is likely to see the same type of applicants as level one with the addition of a few women. Those women may apply to join and a few may pass the entry tests. The retention rate is expected to be questionable, as the work environment may not be conducive to mixed gender.

Level three, consists of early involvement to persuade people to consider fire service careers, followed by community engagement once the application date is announced. The shift in perspective is a crucial one: instead of letting people who already want to be firefighters know that the FRS is recruiting, recruitment now involves educating traditionally excluded groups about the job and encouraging them to consider firefighting as a career. Empirical data indicate that a wider range of candidates are successful, in contrast those employed in a level 1 or 2 scenario are less successful. The downside is often resistance from existing firefighters. The retention rate is still open to question.

Level four consists of systematic efforts to make the FRS a place where the potential new recruits would want to work. To review and revise policies; training on communications skills, conflict resolution, and diversity issues; implementation of programs such as ‘peer’ mediation. Empirical data indicates that a wider range of candidates, including women and people from traditional underrepresented groups, are much more likely not only to stay but to succeed.
The structure of the findings follows the logic of the 4 levels of a ‘radical take on recruitment’. The first part of the findings “On joining....” will capture and considers the views of existing men and women on joining, behaviours experiences within the service, which can be seen to make up the culture of the FRS.

The second part of the findings, “Fire and Rescue is it a worthwhile career? will explore the views of the public on a career with NFRS.

The third part of the findings will consider the leadership at both local and national level, as to how the change in recruitment practices are being developed to encourage women to join and what is being undertaken to support retention.

This journey will explore gender, culture and leadership.

**Recruitment of women in the United States compared to England**

Recruitment of women into firefighting across the United States has seen a degree of success, a survey of the workforce composition has shown an increase in women from 1.9% (6140 career firefighters – fulltime) (i-women.org 1999) to 3.7% (Hulett, Bendick, Thomas and Moccio 2008). This is a similar picture in England (2.1 % in 2003 to 3.3 % in 2008 - CLG 2009). The rates at which people leave the FRS (national average of 3.4% (CLG 2009) indicate that NFRS (2.2% women- 2008) are above the national average at retention .The number of women who left across all FRS roles including support staff and fire control was higher than operational sector (8.9%) in NFRS but lower compared to the same job roles in comparison of the national average (21% - CLG 2009).

In 2009, NFRS conducted a recruitment campaign\textsuperscript{9} for wholetime firefighters\textsuperscript{10} and 358 people applied to join, of which 35 were women (10%) and 20 were

\textsuperscript{9} Recruitment campaign was conducted within the East Midlands region - Derbyshire, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire.

\textsuperscript{10} Wholetime firefighter – is the term use to describe a full time firefighter role, based on an average 42 hour week.
BME\textsuperscript{11} (6\%). Representation in the county of Northamptonshire is 50\% and 12\% respectively.

On the ‘first sift’ of the application process 25 women were unsuccessful, which equates to 71\% of the total 35 applications received from women. This compares to 70\% for men (220 of 313 applications). By the end of the ‘second sift’ only two women remained in the process, the remainder had failed, with the greater failure rate attributed to the ‘job related tests’\textsuperscript{12} in which 80\% of the women candidates failed, compared to 16\% of the men.

In summary women had a 6\% success rate, BME candidates had a 10\% success rate compared to men who enjoyed a 25\% success rate. On this premise 173 women would need to attend the positive awareness events, in order to produce 83 applicants, to achieve 5 successful women.

**Culture - On Joining the Fire and Rescue Service**

**New recruits’ linked to existing staff in the Fire and Rescue Service**

In 2006 CLG commissioned a study (CLG 2008) to try and understand the view of current and ex firefighters on a range of issues, which included joining the FRS, and fire-fighter’s behaviours, views on gender and diversity. This section considers the survey results of this national study and compares the findings with qualitative research undertaken for this paper. Through this checking back process, the patterns or similarities are contrasted with views gathered in other FRS compared to local views. This will assist NFRS in understanding if as a service the culture or views are ‘generalised’ to FRS or specific to NFRS as an organisation.

In a national study almost three-fifths (58\%) reported that when they joined either a family member or friend was in the Service. The data showed that almost one-quarter of all respondents (23\%) had a relative who was a member of the Service and more than two-fifths (42\%) had a friend in the Service. More

\textsuperscript{11} BME – Black Minority Ethnic.

\textsuperscript{12} The ‘job related tests’ include ladder climb, ladder lift, enclosed space, equipment carry, casualty drag and equipment assembly to simulate work related activities.

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than three-fifths of those with up to four years’ service (62%) and between five and nine years’ service (66%) had a family member or friend in the Service before they joined (CLG 2008).

As a comparator to the national view, a recruit course of NFRS new firefighters were asked a similar question, out 12 candidates 7 (58%) stated that they knew of someone in NFRS prior to joining (2009). Anecdotally, there are several family links to NFRS with history of generations of men (brothers, cousins, fathers and sons), having served on wholetime and part time stations. There are very few examples of sisters; here is one to provide a flavour of attitudes, followed by varied accounts of support for women.

“I worked with my sister at [station name] in 2000, she couldn’t get fulltime childcare so her contract was terminated. She changed her hours then split with her boyfriend, as I recall it was pretty instant, she notified the brigade that her hours had changed they [NFRS] terminated her contract......”
Woman age withheld (NFRS)

“75% believe it is easier for women and ethnic minorities to gain employment with NFRS compared to white, non disabled males.”
(NFRS Cultural Audit 2006/07).

“Whilst going through the application process for crew manager, (l) was asked a question during the interview that could only be answered if I was male. When I asked if they wanted me to pretend to be male, they “ummed” and “ahhed” about whether I should pretend to be male. Did they think that no females would make it through to the interview stage?”
Woman aged 31 years (CLG 2008)

“I had to leave a job I loved. I wasn’t welcome, I was as fit if not fitter than my colleagues, I had a good attendance and worked hard – I believe [my] FRS has an element of managers who do not want women in the Service. The experience has left me very disillusioned and quite ill.”
Gender and age withheld (CLG 2008)
“My dad is old fashioned, he served in the Army and had a cousin who was in the fire service.....My biology teacher suggested that I would be good working with people and suggested the fire service. I joined the RDS at first, for 2 years prior to joining I went along to the drill night every Monday. I would listen to the stories of the jobs they had. One crew member’s girlfriend was going through training school that also helped”

Woman aged 30 (NFRS)

“I visited a fire station [name of FRS] and I met a woman firefighter. I explained that I worked for the ambulance service and that I was fit and strong. I said to her ‘don’t bullshit me, what’s the job really like? If I left the ambulance service am I making a mistake?’ She said ‘you’re the sort of person we want’”

Woman aged 44 (NFRS)

“My ex husband works for a police force and was unhappy that I wanted to join the fire service. On the subject of attending training school for 13 weeks he said to me, “I’d rather say my wife was inside than at a fire [training] school!”

Woman, age withheld (NFRS)

The first comment in this section showed that in a national survey that 58% (CLG 2008) of those people who have joined FRS have family or friends in already in the service. This is a significant number of candidates who receive unofficial coaching and ‘positive action’ towards an assisted application process. Observational evidence from attendance at a women’s only job related test ‘fun day’ challenge, a male firefighter commented on, “why do we need to do this type of event?, it’s unfair that we are giving these women an insight into the service prior to an application, it should just be if they are good enough they will get in”. These comments were the views of a relatively young supervisory manager who had responsibility for the delivery of training courses. He was asked if he had any assistance prior to joining. His father and his grandfather
had both served in NFRS and he had spent many hours on a fire station as he grew up, but to him this was different.

This concept of assistance and influence from friends and family was tested among a police focus group. The experience was to be very similar, among the women only group of new recruits, 66% had family or friend connections with the Police force prior to joining. The supplementary to this was that the influence of the national or local campaigns on recruitment did not influence their decision to join the police force. The campaigns merely provided a prompt to when the recruitment process was due to start.

From this short analysis, men may view the passing of knowledge to family and friends as support to tradition and following in a father’s footsteps, in contrast to support women or underrepresented groups provides an unfair advantage and is viewed as discrimination against the white male.

**Culture - Working as a firefighter**

The previous section discussed family and friends support, in this section the term ‘family’ is introduced by the respondents in a different context. This is explored in terms of values.

“Old dinosaurs are not accepting of women”

Woman, age withheld (NFRS)

“The fire service is still culturally antiquated! They talk the talk about diversity but do not walk the walk…I have been a female firefighter for over 22 years and daily I am reminded that I am not a valued employee, but an unwelcome guest.”

Woman aged 46 years (CLG 2008)

“male firefighters tolerate females”

*Gender and age withheld (NFRS)*
“In my earlier years, it was the most engaging of occupations. As a service, we were unique with time honoured traditions with emphasis on training and teamwork and we had the respect of the general public. In nearly thirty years of service, I have not seen any evidence of bullying, racism or any other “ism”. A strong family type bond develops on the watch and the faith and loyalty of each member including watch commanders ensures the sustained happy working environment that was integral to an efficient team.”

Gender and age withheld (CLG 2008)

“It’s the best job I have ever had. It’s rewarding, challenging and enjoyable all in one package. I am proud to wear the uniform..... The service I work in is friendly [and] team orientated. In fact, it has a family culture which I believe is a value that supports the serving personnel and is a positive attribute, not negative.”

Gender withheld; aged 33 years

The references to ‘family’ were made during the national survey, and based on probability it is unlikely that all these references were made by personnel from Northamptonshire. In 2010 Fitting-in.com undertook a cultural audit of three fire stations within Northamptonshire. Personnel from One RDS made several references to a ‘family’ culture (Baigent and O’Connor 2010).

“We are bound together”
“We are from the same village”
“People rely on each other”
“Everyone has a business and we go to those people for favours”
“Always people to ask for help if you need a hand or a tool”

(Baigent and O’Connor 2010)

The term family suggests warmth, belonging, trust and caring. The negative side of this is that there is a tradition and a level of belonging which implies that an individual has to give up a level of their own identity and individualism. Baigent and O’Connor (2010) suggested that if an individual gained trust, then that intense relationship meant that an individual would ‘owe’ and that a level of

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13 Retained duty system (RDS) station or Part time firefighters account for more than 60% of the fire cover for Northamptonshire and this is a similar model to the rest of the England and Wales. RDS FF are contracted to provide cover on average for 120 hours a week (evenings and weekends).

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honour would exist. The core values\textsuperscript{14} (CFOA 2006) (NFRS 2009), organisation policies and procedures did not support this ‘family’. The ‘family’ had traditional recruited like minded staff and prepared them for the selection; even though the process has changed the existing personnel have been very creative and entrepreneurial to ensure that they may still influence the selection process.

\textit{“The interview is not about your ability to do the job, it’s about pretending to have the personal qualities and attributes. As long as you can tell a good story you can get into the job” (NFRS personnel) (Baigent and O’Connor 2010)}

The \textit{family} honour and tradition is very strong and can be mixed up with views on good management practice, for example, the will to resolve the issue at station level and not to escalate. However, the negative view of \textit{family} control is that inappropriate issues are kept at station level to appease the \textit{family} (station personnel), as they try and control the situation via pseudo \textit{parental influence}. If an individual does have the confidence to escalate to the next level of management, via service policy, they may be deemed to have broken the honour or the stations set of values, not the same as the core values . The \textit{family} are likely to react against the individual to bring them into line. It is at these times examples of negative nicknames and banter can be found. The bulk of research in this area concerns women who join the fire service and here the data points to an escalating level of alienation through banter and name calling until the women either leave or move to another station (Baigent 1996; 2001a; 2008; CLG 2008c). There is research (Baigent 2009) that suggests how men (who the watch recognise as different) can be subject to similar treatment to ‘others’ who are not wanted.

The ‘\textit{family}’ values and behaviour are more ‘a kin’ to keep with a tradition and a homogenous culture, than the values and behaviours of a diverse organisation which embrace and celebrate differences in a positive manner.

\textsuperscript{14} (see Figure 4 and Appendix E)

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Gender - Behaviours and attitudes towards women
Since 1982, women have been able to join FRS in England and Wales. After 28 years the increase of women in the service is only 4% of the operational sector within NFRS. The first woman firefighter employed by NFRS was Cindy Phillips (approximately 1984) she worked for Royal Mail and first joined the RDS and later joined wholetime. She served in many roles in her career, gained promotion to Sub Officer (now titled ‘watch manager’), became a mother and returned to work each time. She was awarded an MBE for service to FRS; sadly her career was cut short due to illness.

From this short résumé it may be viewed that NFRS are a progressive service which embraced change. This section considers attitudes and behaviours towards women as held by NFRS and other FRS personnel.

- 32% believe under representation of women in the service should not be addressed
- 31% support work to address underrepresentation of women
- 74% of employees believe it is easier to join NFRS if you are a woman
- 9% did not want to work with a woman
- 13% did not want to work with a person who was known to be gay, lesbian or bisexual or transgender
- 9% did not want to work with a person with a disability

(NFRS Cultural Audit 2006/07).

Verbatim comments from this research and from national studies are shown below which aim to show attitudes towards women in FRS.

“....at an incident, ....a lift rescue..., the Sub Officer detailed 3 guys to carry out the rescue, as the women won’t be strong enough, me and my sister said can’t we help?...3 male firefighters conducted the rescue and not the crew of 5, me and my sister were left on the pump!”

Woman, age and FRS withheld
“I love my job but the people (and I mean from the top down) have made it extremely difficult over the years. Diversity within the Service is a joke! Senior managers play lip service to it! The isolation and behaviour towards me has affected my family life and my complete lack of faith in people.”

Woman aged 35 years (CLG 2008)

“..I think the wives and girlfriends are jealous of the career I have and have a fear of taking their partner….rumours that I had affairs with 7 firefighters in one year….”

Woman, age withheld (NFRS)

“…people can’t accept that we may be work colleagues, female and female is ok, male and male is ok…. male and females together and rumours start, those rumours affect families of the male firefighters…”

Woman aged 44 (NFRS)

“I wanted to be a fire officer and was good enough to achieve it. I think I could have been a fantastic advert for minority group achievement. Instead, I have nothing good to say about 95 per cent of operational members of staff. There are those who are prepared to discriminate against you, there are those who are prepared to sit and watch others do [it] and there are a handful of decent individuals who are prepared to stand up against the rest and say ‘what you are doing is wrong’ – THESE are the brave ones. They deserve medals!”

Woman aged 33 years who has since left the Service (CLG 2008)

“…the issues for the men were the wives and girlfriends who were uncomfortable with females on the fire station, sleeping in the dormitory. I don’t know what they thought I was going to do”

Woman, age withheld (NFRS)

“Men use the women’s toilets at the station; they put their Loaded or FHM magazines in there…. “My image of the fire service is male orientated, testosterone driven and not great on E&D!”

Woman aged 37 (NFRS)

“…males using the female’s loo, urine on the seat, walking in on me…my office door sign had my name on it, that was removed and placed on the toilet door…comments like, don’t be getting pregnant now….”

Woman aged 26 - since left the service (NFRS)
In 2002, the appointments and promotions regulations for FRS were repealed and this allowed FRS to create new promotion frameworks. Previously, the only way to become a chief fire officer was to join as a firefighter. Through many reports (Bain 2002, HMIFS 2000) findings indicated that the manager of tomorrow would need a different skill set from the traditional FRS manager. Graduate entry, high potential, fast track and direct entry schemes have been conceived and introduced into some FRS to select and promote experienced senior managers from non fire service sectors into FRS senior positions.

Change is often difficult for some staff in an organisation to accept and that 62% of NFRS personnel stated they would not want someone with a non fire service background as line manager provides a strong sense of negativity towards this level of selection (Cultural audit 2006/07). If that person is a female and a direct entry is that a double jeopardy situation? The negativity can manifest itself in many ways, as stated earlier, rumours, name calling and banter a part of that inappropriate behaviour.

“Rumours...lots of rumours....a senior director asked the CFO if he was having an affair with me.....there were posters at offices saying that I was having an affair with the CFO.......the rumours were not just limited to [name of service], but even from within the [name of committee] Group [members from all public services]......”

Gender, age and FRS withheld

“I was called to speak with a principal officer regarding a rumour, that I had been linked romantically with a male firefighter on one of my stations. This was completely and utterly untrue. I then discovered that managers in my team knew of this rumour but hadn’t told me including one of my mentors....With this and other rumours, led me to a total mistrust of the majority of those around me.”

Woman, age and FRS withheld, since left the service
“I joined the service as a direct entry [selection and promotion process] there was a level of anxiety within CFOA [Chief Fire Officers Association], there were female senior officers and managers who did not know what to make of the multi-tier entry scheme......even the HR manager challenged the process.....there are many routes or models to senior management and senior women in the fire service.....those who worked their way up and those who are senior managers but not operational, even amongst this group of senior women I am not accepted by all....”

Gender, age and FRS withheld

“....a firefighter this year....[2009]....said to me, no offence, but I wouldn’t be happy, I mean filled with confidence if you two females turned up [at an incident] on the ET....[emergency tender]....”

Gender and age withheld (NFRS)

“....when I joined I was surprised by the negative reaction I received from existing staff, to them I had joined the uniform...the ‘dark side’ and they felt I had let them down....”

Gender and age withheld (NFRS)

“The other day [at an incident] we [referred to two women] had the cutters [hydraulic rescue tool] taken off us, the other crew [all men] said they had competence to maintain, what about my competence? We practice then don’t get the chance in the real life situation”

Woman, age withheld (NFRS)

In data collected from CLG in a national survey (2008) more than one-half of respondents (53%) reported that they had directly experienced at least one of the unacceptable behaviours in the previous 12 months, with 16 per cent experiencing four or more of these behaviours. Again, women, those with a disability and lesbian, gay and bisexual staff were most likely to have experienced these behaviours at work. A senior manager’s response to this level of data has been that this doesn’t “happen in this service”, “this is a national view”, “our culture has moved on since our last audit” (Observational findings 2009 and 2010). Yet in contrast to this view, there are behavioural

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15 These include: unwelcome comments about appearance; gestures; physical contact; verbal assaults; bullying or harassment; pornographic or sexually explicit material; age, gender, religious, disability or racial discrimination; physical or sexual assaults; unwelcome attempts to establish a sexual relationship; better treatment in return for a sexual relationship.

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examples which have occurred in NFRS, which may be isolated, but have similarities or may be viewed as more serious than those depicted in the national study (2008).

“what he did to me was against the law...the union and the brigade wanted me to accept it was just some silly crush he had on me......I was made to feel like the guilty one......I just wanted it to stop.......”

Woman, age withheld (NFRS)

The views from the national findings were that the women, who experienced these behaviours, were most likely to be poorly treated by firefighters on their watch. In contrast the perpetrators against the men, who experienced these behaviours, were most likely the managers and senior colleagues. For wholetime staff, managers were typically committing the behaviours; while for retained duty personnel it was other firefighters at their station who were committing the behaviours. For the managers and senior managers, it was their managers that were most likely to be committing the behaviours. From the research in this paper, the women who have experienced these behaviours have reported that the perpetrators have been managers and watch based personnel. Those at station level who responded have had negative experience from both peers and more senior figures, those at manager level have experienced the behaviours from those at their own level, above and below, in and outside of the organisation. The working relationship between men and men or women and women is deemed to be trusted and acceptable to the culture. The disruption to trust, loyalty and respect appears when men and women work together (Sojka et al 2001). Is because the job is a masculine role therefore women can’t do it? Or is it about relationship skills on how the two genders interact with one another?

From the examples of behaviours experienced, these appear typical of the hostile environment created by the masculine culture, which is desperate to maintain the tradition and ‘fight’ against change. This behaviour is contrary to
the ‘core values’ and the behaviours which are assessed with the management construct in selection assessments, yet it continues. The ‘informal’ leadership within the group dynamics, which sits below the water line of the covert culture, has a significant influence on ‘how things are done around here’.

**Gender - Uniform**
FRS personnel are provided with two significantly different types of uniform. The uniform most associated with FRS will be the personnel protective equipment of fire helmet, tunic, leggings, boots, gloves and flash hood. In addition, personnel are issued with ‘station wear’ or work wear uniform. There is no national uniform, and individual FRS will have sourced and selected the design, colours and suppliers (which confirms with appropriate legislation) to meet local requirements.

“I transferred from (another Metropolitan) Brigade two years ago after serving 20 years. I have been in (my current Service) now for two years and I didn’t realise how behind (they) were with regards to women firefighters. They have only had female firefighters for eight years. Facilities are very poor, I can’t get workwear uniform easily and undress uniform is like gold dust (women’s fit). Attitudes to women firefighters are very bad and the general feeling is that they cannot “do the job” this attitude is usually directed to both sexes if they are shorter than “normal”

   Woman aged 40 years (CLG 2008)

“Correct uniform needs to be provided for women. I have to wear men’s work trousers as we have no women’s Men’s gloves, which often do not fit. Men’s hi-vis jackets which I have to role my sleeves up.”

   Woman aged 29 years (CLG 2008)

“My Fire and Rescue Service only pays ‘lip service’ to providing female working rig. I have been a firefighter for 14 years and I still don’t have a pair of trousers that fit comfortably!!”

   Woman aged 33 years (CLG 2008)
“Desperately Seeking Susan!”
A critical analysis of gender, culture and leadership in a changing environment

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MBA
May 17th 2010
Prior to 1984, when only men were permitted to join the FRS, the height restrictions were 5 foot 6 inches to 6 foot 6 inches. Uniform was designed based on this size range. With the introduction of women and the removal of height restrictions uniform requirements have changed. The cost for bespoke uniform items and the ability of manufacturers to produce a fit for purpose item has proved to have been difficult for some FRS. In a challenge to these findings, is there a lack of strategic intent in FRS or does the workforce have an unrealistic expectation? To explore that discussion, consider an individual who has a size 3 foot and were expected to wear a size 10 protective boot, would it be acceptable to be told to wear extra socks? If you are woman and you were expected to wear a shirt and trousers would you expect to be given man’s fit shirts and trousers? If you received these instructions or those items of clothes would you feel valued and have a genuine belief that the FRS wanted to employ women? The responses above indicated the degree of negativity felt by those women. These actions do not show a degree of commitment to diversity and are strong indicators of a ‘below the water line’ cultural view towards the employment of women, which differs from the perceived strategic intent.

In analysis of all the views posed, it is concerning to note the undertone of hostility and lack of support for women in the FRS. The responses in words, actions or limited policies indicate an institutional lack of real thought to women and the differing needs of this gender in a workplace setting. There appears to be a reluctance to change. At this time it is difficult to say whether this is intentional or ignorance. The institutional mindset may still be that an ‘ideal worker’ is white male and all changes from this viewpoint are measured against this sector norm.
Fire and Rescue, is it a worthwhile career?

An indication of what are ‘our public’ have said, both men and women

The greatest attraction to the fire and rescue service is considered to be ‘Variety in the working day’ with men (75%) and women (67%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What would attract you to employment?</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Variety in the working day</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caring professions serving the community &amp; helping people</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excitement and adrenaline rush</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job security</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pension and benefits customer service</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities to travel</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical/outdoor activities</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child care provision</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job satisfaction</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part time hours</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School term time only</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities to gain higher education achievements</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As a long term career</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To be able to work with a diverse workforce</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 - The respondents view - ‘what would attract you to employment?’

The ‘caring’ side of the role is closely valued by both genders in this survey, with ‘excitement and adrenaline’ as a significant feature among the men. This links to the ‘edgework’ (O’Connor16) (Lyng 1990) which suggested that professions which may be deemed to be ‘dangerous’ and excite the workers is a masculine trait.

Men favoured job security (men 70%: women 41%), Pensions (men 55%: women 25%) and a long term career (men 60%: women 34%).

Are these answers given with the back drop of society and environmental nurture, that a woman’s career is viewed as of secondary importance to that of a man? Due to the expectance of child bearing and care responsibilities in the family environment?

The traditional role of a woman in the family environment has showed that a woman will put her care responsibilities for her family needs ahead of her own

16 (O’Connor - undated paper)
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needs. With job satisfaction a lower option for women compared to men (52%-67% respectively), yet part time hours, school term work hours are up to four times more important to a woman.

The opportunities for higher education, if viewed in isolation, would suggest that men are more interested in developing. The men who were surveyed responded with details of formal qualifications to indicate that 95% had GCSE or above, 60% had gained A level or above, 33% degree (or equivalent) and 13% had achieved a Masters degree. The women’s success included 97% with GCSE or above, 66% with A level or above, 24% with a degree (or equivalent or above) and 5% with a Masters degree. The national survey of existing firefighters indicated that women who joined the fire service were ‘more likely’ (CLG 2008) to hold higher qualifications then men. What must be remembered is that not all of those people surveyed wanted to join, the reference to personnel development is not FRS specific.

![Chart 1](image)

Chart 1 – The respondents view - Do you think working for NFRS is a worthwhile career choice?

From Chart 1 above both men (40%) and women (25%) strongly agree that this FRS is a worthwhile career. The ‘spike’ in the male view is significantly higher than that of the women.

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Comparable jobs to FRS?

From those people surveyed the *perceived* comparable jobs were the police (89% women and 95% men) and the ambulance service (91% women and 65% men). In contrast, the opinion of a police focus group stated that, “No jobs are like the Police force.” The suggested comparable would be “Social working, maybe, helping people”, with recognition that “[there is a] diverse array of jobs, interviewing specialists, firearms, dog handlers”, and therefore “....to truly and liken this job to another is very difficult”. The marketing of the fire service was criticised as, “The Fire service only shows the firefighting, what else do the service do? I am sure that there is more; you [the Fire Service] need to show the variety of roles”.

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What is off putting about FRS?

![Chart 3](chart3.png)

The aspects of NFRS which are deemed to be ‘off putting’ to women was the belief that the *job* was dangerous (58%) and men (35%). The unsociable hours (45% women) and working night shifts (30% women) were more of an issue to women than to men (10%). The perception of physical perception was a concern for both men (30%) and women (41%). This view is in contrast to the comments collected at an International Women’s day event (13th March 2010) at which a 100% of the women surveyed said that they were strong enough to become firefighters. However, the reason for such a high percentage of optimistic answers may have been attributed to the manner in which the questions were asked or that the questions were asked by women rugby players who had all undertaken the ‘job related tests’ for the fire service and portray a very confident ‘can do’ image.

The women from the Rugby Team who took part in ‘job related tests’ (November 2009) event were all first time ‘candidates’ and the success rate...
was very high (93%). Below are a selection of the feedback comments, shown verbatim.

“....is that it?....”

“I expected it to be much harder than that!”

“this is the best fun I have had on a Saturday in a long while, I am sure if more women knew what was involved in the selection process, then more women would put themselves forward to have a go”.

Men (Chart 3) perceived that the public image (10%) and the pay and pensions (15%) created a degree of doubt to a greater extent than women (8% and 6% respectively).

How much do competent firefighters earn?

![Chart 4 - The respondents view – ‘How much do competent firefighters earn per year?’](chart)

Of those surveyed who provided a response to this question, 19% of the overall responses were within the correct salary bracket, with women (22%) favouring the higher salary compared to men (10%). The actual salary figure is £28.199 (from July 2009, FBU 2010).
The influence of family and friends on career choices
As young people choose careers, family and friends may act as key influencers to those choices and options.

Chart 5 - The respondents view – ‘Would you encourage family or friends to join NFRS?’
From Chart 5 indicates that 55% of the men and 49% of the women would encourage, with the strongest indication amongst the men with 25% who ‘strongly agree’. 31% of the women were undecided which may be influenced by their own limited knowledge of what the role is a fully about.

Chart 6 – The respondents view - Family and friends would encourage me (the respondent) to consider NFRS as a career
In contrast (Chart 6) men believed they were more than twice as likely to be encouraged to join NFRS (40%) by family and friends compared to women (18%). The possible reason for the high numbers of men’s and women’s view to ‘disagree’ could be linked to a high proportion of those surveyed who are in careers, therefore, they may have viewed these questions change as one in which as they have selected and settled in a career they would not expect to or

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be encouraged to change. The surveyed women indicated 41% (aggregated across the ‘strongly disagree’, to ‘just disagree’ responses) did not expect to be **encouraged** to undertake this career choice compared to 50% of the men. With 34% of the women indicated ‘a’ level (aggregated across the responses ‘just agree to strongly agree’) of expectation to be supported to a varied degree, compared with of the men 45%. 20% of the women were unsure or undecided, compared to 5% of the men.

**What is the role of NFRS?**

![Chart 7](chart7.png)

**Chart 7 – the respondents view on the role of Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service**

The men and women were asked to comment on the role of NFRS (chart 7). The responses indicate that the emergency roles, for example firefighting, and rescue which often receive a high level of media coverage, are the most well known. In contrast, 50% men and 55% women thought NFRS would protect the environment. The enforcement of legislation to ensure compliance with fire regulations was viewed by 55% of the men and 35% of the women as a role of NFRS. The surprise was that 65% of men and 31% of women perceived that NFRS has a role to raise money for charity.
The expectation to this interesting statistics is that FRS throughout the United Kingdom are involved with charity work and that the fire service is linked to its ‘own’ charity, which was called the fire service benevolent fund and is has been rebranded to the fire fighters charity. The charity’s activities are usually conducted in peoples own time although often supported by the FRS management, through sponsored transport.

The percentage of operational sector men and women in NFRS

The respondents were asked for their views on the percentage of women employed as operational firefighters in NFRS (see Chart 8 below).

![Chart 8](https://example.com/chart8)

**Charts 8 – A chart to show the perception of the respondents on the current percentage of firefighters in NFRS who are women**

In the survey, 75% (men) and 73% (women) of the respondents over estimated the percentage of women employed as firefighters. The actual figure as at November 2009 is 4%, which equates to 23 women. The number of people who guessed correct was 6%.
Chart 9 – A bar chart to indicate if the ratio of men to women in NFRS would ‘put off’ potential recruits from applying

In Chart 9, (above) the respondents were asked for their views on the ratio of ‘men to women’ and if this would put them off from applying for a job. One third of women and one fifth of the men were influenced by the previous question to suggest that they were put off by the ratio of low numbers of women. The suggested outcome from this chart can also be read that men prefer a low ratio of women in the FRS.

Positive action

Chart 10- A bar chart to show the responses to - “Do you think NFRS should positively seek to recruit new personnel from underrepresented groups of people into the Fire and Rescue Service?”

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17 To assist the respondents a definition of positive action was provided.

* Positive action is a legal term used under the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, the Race relations Act 1976, Employment Equality Regulations for Religion and Belief and Sexual Orientation., The Disability Discrimination Act. The term positive action refers to a variety of measures designed to counteract the effects of past discrimination and to help eliminate stereotyping. This allows employers to support underrepresented groups prior to the application stage. The support enables the individuals to start the application process on an equal level.

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In chart 10, the women’s view (65% aggregated across ‘just agree to strongly agree’) of those surveyed indicates they are advocates for positive action initiatives to encourage and support underrepresentation in NFRS. This compared to a supportive 45% view of the men. Only 5% of the women disagreed with positive action compared to 15% of the men.

The support for positive action is not always shared by those women who are now employed by FRS. Below are comments collected on the subject.

“[The FRS] remains intimidating and unapproachable for minorities and women in general.”

Gender and age withheld (CLG 2008)

“Recruitment campaigns such as Networking Women I think are unnecessary. If women want to do the job, then they will join regardless, the same as ethnic Minorities.”

Man aged 32 years (CLG 2008)

“People from all walks of life can apply to join. The fact is that most Asians see US as lower class so why would they join.”

Gender unknown; aged 52 years (CLG 2008)

In Northamptonshire there are three women who actively support positive action events. The remainder have been asked but are reluctant to come forward. One individual said that they are teased by male watch members for their involvement and because they are on first name terms with senior managers who are involved in the organisation of positive action events. In contrast, NFRS have a positive action/women recruitment advocate who is a man and based in an operational role on a fire station.
Who is most and least likely to join NFRS?

Chart 1 – A graph to show the respondents ‘perception’ of which ethnic group would be the least likely to join NFRS

From chart 1, women have provided an indication of which underrepresented groups they least expect to join NFRS which follows the same pattern as the ‘opinion’ of the men. These responses are based on personal views. In an attempt to understand more about why there would be less interest from an Indian population, a series of semi structured interviews and a focus group was held at a Sikh Temple in Northampton.

“This is the first time that I can remember in the 33 years that I have been coming to the temple that the fire service have been along to talk”

(Indian Woman aged 41 to 50)

“The Police are regularly providing talks and if look at the notice board the police information is on display, but there is nothing about the fire service”

(Indian Woman aged 65)

“As a religion, we have never oppressed women, they are seen in our religion as equals…..so there is no reason why women would not be encouraged to join or want to join”
“I didn’t realise until you said today of all the other jobs within the fire service, finance, IT and HR....the other jobs which women can do if they don’t want to be firefighters”

“...the training opportunities you spoke about are great; this is really encouraging for young people thinking about a career”

“you need to talk about this more....this is a real selling point for the fire service”

(Sikh male focus group – age range 41 to 65 years)

From chart 12 (above) it is visible that the actual ethnic grouping of the current establishment is a reverse pattern with similarity of peaks and troughs to what is predicted from the ‘least likely’ groups to join response articulated in chart 12. The challenge is to understand why this view? Is this because respondents are aware of demographic and cultural variety which make up for NFRS personnel, maybe through media coverage, or is that the view based on the demographics of the county? The NFRS establishment figures include white Irish, white other, within the grouping labelled other, which is different to the Office of National Statistics (ONS 2009) sourced data in chart 14, this may explain the comparator difference in this demographic grouping ‘other’ when establishment is compared to county population. Although the numbers are low there is a
similar pattern to the establishment of NFRS and the population figures of Northamptonshire.

To note that the figures indicate that people with Indian, black African and black Caribbean backgrounds form a higher proportion of the underrepresented group population of the county and this is echoed, but to a lesser degree, but to a similar pattern within the establishment figures for NFRS. The gender breakdown is not shown in these tables, as the figures from ONS show an approximate 48% to 52% ratio of male and female, this is not easily replicated into working population. Although, it is clear that with only 90 women employed within NFRS, of which 78 have indicated that they are white British, the further 12 women are white other, white Irish, Asian, mixed other, with a further eight women who have chosen not to declare, it is clear that NFRS are not reflective of the local population in either gender or ethnic background.
Marketing of recruitment campaigns

Chart 15 - A Graph to show the ‘perceived’ best place to advertise NFRS recruitment campaigns

The graph in chart 15 (above) indicates a summary (the questionnaire asked arrange of 25 questions, the summary shows 15 response areas which the men and women differed in their opinion) of the respondent’s views on where they perceived the best place would be to market and advertise recruitment opportunities. The areas in which both men and women agreed or held similar views included the internet (men 70% and women 73%), the job centre (men 65% and women 63%), the local fire station (men 50% and women 45%), the internet was very popular (men 70% and women 73%), sponsorship of local sporting clubs (men 25% and women 28%) and at leisure centres (men 40% and women 52%).

The graph (chart 15) indicated that women are more likely to be influenced by billboard marketing, recruitment magazines and professional journals for
recruitment than men. An area in which the NFRS may have not considered advertisements before would be at hair and beauty salons. Although the figures are low (women 11%, men 0%) the results indicate that this is a very gender specific piece of marketing. The perception from the respondents (men 75% and women 56%) was that fire service awareness (events held on a fire station, which explain the job and application process) were very successful way to advertise recruitment. The reason for higher percentage of men who supported this type of event may be due to the those respondents, would or have attended these events, already knew what career direction they wished to take, which may have been enforced by society norms (Lytton & Romney 1991 and Maccoby 1990 cited in Allison et al 2004) and in contrast the women had not considered the fire service as a career and the awareness events as a first stage had less appeal as a first level introduction to the FRS.

**Analysis**

From the secondary and primary research thus far, there is strong support for the FRS as worthwhile career. Although, respondents had little or limited understanding of what the role was about or how much they receive as salary for undertaking this career. There were interesting views from both from men and women on what was off-putting ‘*with the fear of the unknown*’, ‘*dangerous work*’, ‘*perception of strength*’ and ‘*unsociable hours*’ creating a negative view of a FRS career. To date there is no religious reason why women could not join, therefore if the career choice is to be taken up in earnest amongst women; the indication is that key to the success is education and improved awareness.
Case Study 1 – Japanese Fire Service Recruitment Drive

In Japan a recent recruitment campaign (February 2009 and February 2010) caused controversy the Fire and Disaster Management Agency have favoured to enlist actresses (Megumi 2009 and Mari Hoshino 2010) as the face to promote recruitment of women in the Fire Service.

The recruitment campaign was devised following the decline on the total number of firefighters in Japan (women total 17000). The aim of the drive was to boost the recruitment of women to 100,000.

Yasu expressed “People usually think of men when they think of firefighters, but I want everyone to know that there are a lot of female firefighters out there as well. The job sounds like it’s too physically demanding, but women can do it too. If I wasn’t a celebrity, I’d like to join. I’m thinking about it.” (Megumi Yasu 2009). The suggestion that firefighter numbers needed to be reach 100,000 created a curiosity, which when explored further, was identified to relate to the role of the volunteer fire service (Laitinen 2002) (2005 The Case of Sendai City). Although in factual terms these responses found on a web based forum linked to this article may appear anecdotal, the strong message from the forum was that actors in a recruitment campaign don’t make good role models, with strong requests for real firefighters to act as the face of the campaign.

Case Study 2 – Indian Fire Service Recruitment

Indian Express News reported in 2nd August 2005 that a Muslim woman had died in a blaze, as locals had refused to allow the male firefighters entry to the property to conduct the rescue. This incident occurred in Colootola, Kolkata. This prompted the West Bengal Fire Department to propose a change in recruitment which would allow women to join the brigade. “We have a problem with women of Muslim community who do not want to be rescued by male fire-fighters even when they are on the verge of death. This has prompted me to think of raising a women force,” said Pratim Chatterjee, Minister for Fire Services.

In 2008 the Fire Minister published a plan outline the aspiration to recruit 50 Women, “for the first time the state Government [....of India....] is going on a recruitment spree to employ women as firefighters” (Pratim Chatterjee 2008 Cited in India Express)

In India (Khushboo Sandhu 2009) the Indian Express newspaper reported in August 2009 that after two years of discussion the Municipal Corporation Chandigarh, North India, had reached agreement which will allow women to join the fire service. The report identified that there are 47 “Firemen” vacancies and this change will be a first for the Municipal Corporation. Chairman of the MC Fire and Emergency Services Committee Arshad Khan said, “For two years discussions were being held on recruiting women in the Fire department, but nothing materialised. During the meeting of the committee held yesterday [....5th August 2009....], the decision (to recruit women) was taken.” (Khushboo Sandhu 2009).

Women can be inducted in the Army, Navy and the BSF. The Fire department should also be opened for them," Khan added.

Women firefighters already exist in a number of states [....In India....]. The procedure to recruit would be same as men: there would be a written exam followed by a physical fitness test. The web pages for this Municipal Corporation have been reviewed and there is no visible indication that women can apply for these jobs. The application form (Chandigarh Administration 2009) requests that potential recruits are aged between 18 and 30 with a preference to “demobilised soldiers or other able bodied persons who are quite fit to undergo rigorous duties of a Fire Brigade Personnel” (Chandigarh Administration 2009). However, there are no minimum qualifications required, which is in stark contrast to administration roles within the same Municipal Corporation. For example Municipal Corporation has eight other posts to recruit to (14/09/09) of which all eight posts required the qualification of a bachelor’s degree as a minimum requirement. These posts varied from tax inspector to office clerk (see Appendix J and K).

References
Pratim Chatterjee (2005) cited in Indian Express News
Death of a Muslim woman www.islamwomen.org
Leadership
In 1999 West Midlands Fire Service approached the Home Office for assistance to tackle recruitment underrepresentation. The resulting study (FRDG 4/2000) included two other FRS, with a series of recommendations which were published to all FRS in England and Wales. This included core values and collaborative recruitment, which have been key features of FRS work. The requirement to define the ‘case for diversity’ was a recommendation although the study skirted round the need to change the culture. The expectation was clear for “senior management” (FRDG 4/2000) to show commitment to initiatives, to raise the awareness of FRS and to tackle “covert and subconscious aspects of prejudice” (FRDG 4/2000). The leaders of today believe that the low numbers of women in the FRS is due to several factors.

“Men and women are different. In my opinion a woman doesn’t set out for a 30 year career....The public image of a firefighter is probably a 6ft strapping male firefighter. I don't think you will ever make it significantly attractive to women, women are different....A man will seek a career or a trade and fit his life around this....A woman will look to fit her career around her family.”
(Leader A)

“If you ask the public to draw a firefighter, how many would draw a woman?”
(Leader A)

“I accept that the behaviour within the service is not fully where it needs to be...”
(Leader A)

“The workplace- is it conducive to and appealing to a diverse workforce? By the workplace I mean both the physical set up of a fire station and the prevailing culture in that workplace....”
(Leader B)
“There still seem to be: beds, communal eating, cooks, dartboards and even bars on some fire stations. There still don’t seem to be enough female toilet/shower/sanitary facilities, breastfeeding facilities, prayer facilities on stations….Whilst this is still the physical working environment, it will continue to attract traditional applicants and potentially put off more diverse applicants, especially when linked to the culture which this physical set up continues to sustain....”

(Leader B)

From these comments the Leadership have recognised that there is a need to change. That the existing culture, facilities and how the FRS are perceived by the public needs to move forward to improve the attraction rate of women into the FRS. The Aspire Model (2006) was created to identify the behaviours required of the new FRS leader. What is unsure, are these behaviours another example of overt policies which are not followed. Does the covert culture operate even at this senior level?

There are many in the middle manager level “who just don’t get it” (Woodfield 2009), and at this level their “behaviour needs to be challenged and they need to challenge others appropriately” (Woodfield 2009).

“CFO’s tend to be on board....[it’s] below the CFO who aren’t necessarily bought into women in the FRS” (Woodfield 2009). The surprise from Dr. Woodfield’s study (2009) was that some women “might be guilty of pulling up the ladder behind them” (Woodfield 2009).

To create a work environment which would attract and retain women require leadership. The change in environment will not just benefit women but would be expected to support and contribute to a more harmonious environment for all staff. A workplace were all felt valued or an equal level. The by product of this may will contribute to firefighter safety. The masculine tendencies may be suppressed in favour of risk and evidence based fire ground tactics.
Fire fighter safety – are there links to masculinity?
Sadly there have been too many firefighter deaths in recent years, and only this month (April 2010) two Hampshire colleagues made the ultimate sacrifice while tackling a blaze in Southampton. The section is not to taint the memories of the fallen and it may be too emotive, but to *controversially* ask is there a link between a masculine culture and the increase in firefighter deaths to thirteen from 2003 to 2007 (FBU 2008) to the present day?

In Australian FRS, women can be viewed as a “safe pair of hands” in a dangerous situation. The scenario of bush or forest fires teams are dropped into an isolated area with nothing more than the tools they carry. In these circumstances, bravado, heroism and trying to prove your masculinity can be dangerous bedfellows (Desmond 2007). Teams often self-select their leader; it was argued that a team of men would defer to a woman firefighter as the leader as she was less likely to put them at risk (Baigent 2009).
Summary

➢ If more women knew about the service they would apply to join
➢ If more women knew about the service from Muslim and Sikh communities they would be interested in joining.
➢ That there is a minority amongst Indian elders who recall the Indian caste system and this still has some influence on the career choice of young people.
➢ That some women have uniform which doesn’t fit.
➢ The male workforce is not supportive of positive action. This activity, in the male eye, is unnecessary help and is viewed as positive discrimination.
➢ There are NFRS policies and procedures which do not support women in the work place. E.g. Maternity, child care, wearing of makeup.
➢ There exists a culture within NFRS which is not supportive of women, whether those women joined via direct entry or via the traditional process.
➢ 58% of new recruits into NFRS have links with existing personnel. With the existing workforce made up 96% male, this doesn’t bode well for support to women applicants.
➢ There are behaviours replicated in NFRS which also have occurred in other FRS which are either discriminatory according to the law, or viewed as at the very least as less favourable treatment towards women. The male view is that this is often just banter.
➢ NFRS doesn’t have a history of scheduled attendance at recruitment fairs.
➢ NFRS have traditional held recruitment related events as and when vacancies arise.
➢ NFRS does not have a sustained programme of positive action or recruitment awareness events.
➢ NFRS do not have a programme for attendance at recruitment awareness events.
➢ NFRS does not have a dedicated resource to support recruitment, recruitment outreach, and positive action. The responsibility is shared across several roles.
Gender, Leadership and Culture – A Discussion

So why are the numbers of operational sector women firefighters so low (4.%)? Is it because women do not want to join? Or can the low interest be attributed to other issues? From the research, both primary and secondary, there is confirmation that there are no religious reasons why women should not be firefighters. There is anecdotal evidence to suggest that within cultural communities, views exist, which are opposed to or less supportive towards women as firefighters. There is an indication that amongst Muslim communities, the men have acted as gatekeepers to information, not just about the fire service (CLG 2006a). This is understood to be a cultural issue to control women’s involvement in a host of topics. Women respondents from the Muslim and Sikh communities indicated they would consider applying if only they knew more about the FRS.

Respondents posed questions about the facilities on fire stations and if appropriate locations had been set aside for prayer and eating. These questions identify the need to develop the facilities on NFRS premises before recruitment and not after. This concept is contrary to the view of NFRS manager who said “that it doesn’t matter if we don’t have the facilities yet, as the women don’t know that before they join” (NFRS 2009 observation). This comment was probably said without malice however, the cultural reality (covert example of the culture at work) is that the workforce and the working population may recognise this as a lack of intent to change.

The national CLG publicity and marketing on FRS career choices (‘Extra Ordinary Careers Ordinary People’, ‘On Call’, ‘High Potential Leadership campaign’, CLG 2010) shows the Governments leadership to support the recruitment of the best candidates and to tackle underrepresentation within FRS. These campaigns were launched in late 2009 and early 2010 and it is too early to identify the success of these campaigns. Will the central government emphasis change with a change of Government? The shadow Fire Minister (LGA conference March 2010 – Observational) indicated that if Conservatives
gained power (May 6th General election 2010), then the equality and diversity recruitment targets would be scrapped. The confusing message at Chief Officer Level ripples across the service, the need to positively recruit may cease. This message creates concern, that the rationale for employing a diverse workforce is not fully understood. NFRS should continue the quest, if not more of challenge without political support, as the goal is not to recruit enough women but for improved service delivery.

The CLG appear to have missed the impact of the findings of the 2008 CLG survey of ex and existing FRS personnel on potential recruitment. As discussed earlier, this CLG survey identified that 58% of the new recruits had links with existing FRS personnel. When tested in a NFRS and a Northamptonshire Police environment the figures were very similar. Therefore, the suggestion is that if FRS ignores this dynamic, at their peril (Singh 2002). The existing FRS personnel are the recruitment ambassadors; they mix with the community and will informally speak of the FRS and about ‘the job’. Subject to how positive the individual feels about the service will have a direct influence to what is recounted to the public and potentially who it is recounted to. If the workforce is white male, then through social interaction, the recounting of ‘the job’ and how good or bad it is will be shared amongst the white male social network. As the workforce becomes more diverse and accustomed to work in a diverse community the probability is that these informal discussions will reach a wider audience. However, if the white male majority wish to maintain the homogenous workforce, then the stories may well be embellished to increase the fear and the reaction of ‘I couldn’t do your job’ or ‘you have to be really strong and brave to be a firefighter’, then these myths will continue to grow and continue to put off potential recruits from joining.

The current workforce has also portrayed a culture of “tolerance towards women as opposed to acceptance” (NFRS 2009). There are further examples of behaviour which is not conducive towards the support of women in the workplace. These events add to the believe that the existing workforce do not to want to encourage their daughters, niece’s, cousins, mothers to join.
There are numerous examples of uniform which does not fit women (observational 2009); there are examples of policies which do not recognise the diversity of women, whether it is child care needs, maternity, make up, menopause the list goes on. Many of these policies which are in place in NFRS appear, from the respondent’s view, to have been written through ‘male eyes’ and not gender impact assessed, is this an example of institutional sexism?

So why in the past has the NFRS not committed resources to this level of recruitment, marketing, and development of a strategy to address the under representation of women (Ellis 2001)? What was also conspicuous by its absence was respondent’s reference to the County Council in either critique positive action or the NCC culture.

To make the necessary changes, will require a holistic review of recruitment practices, a review of polices, facilities and a structured approach to prepare the workforce for working with diversity. This holistic approach will both assist the recruitment and the retention of women.

As discussed with the ‘Ainge Gender Wenn’ (Figure 10), if the leadership is masculine then the study indicates that the mental programming of those leaders will have a strong, maybe subconscious, allegiance to the traditional role of a woman in society.

In 2009, NFRS did make a further step forward, to set objectives to create a positive action strategy and a positive action toolkit. This impetus was led at national level\textsuperscript{18} (Parmjit Dhanda 2007) (Sadiq Khan 2008) and has been echoed at Regional\textsuperscript{19} level. The leadership of NFRS at both formal and an informal level will need to drive forward this commitment, to show in a valid and convincing manner, that NFRS are serious about diversity and about recruiting women. This commitment will need to be invigorated through more than just the

\textsuperscript{18} National level, CLG Set E&D Targets – In 2009 CLG provided NFRS with £35k capital grant to support recruitment initiatives
\textsuperscript{19} Regional level, Regional Management Board, People’s Board – Equality and Diversity task and Finish Group objective, to establish a Positive Action Toolkit for the East Midlands

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recruitment strategy, but the fleet, equipment, uniform and property strategies. This change will also need to be portrayed in a way which does not alienate the current workforce, as their support is vital. The existing workforce, which although may be predominately white male, have intellect, integrity and a ‘can do’ attitude. The research has shown examples of behaviour which is clearly unacceptable; this must be challenged now and in the future be eradicated to help develop a positive work environment. This will in turn assist the recruitment of women.

The research has indicated that FRS personnel have been and are treating work colleagues in a negative way because of their gender. This is not the behaviour expected of a modern FRS in today’s society. This behaviour will have a negative impact on the recruitment of women. The role of leadership is to change the culture, to improve the working environment and to support a diverse workforce. This will in turn make the workplace a safer and more productive environment for everyone.

The findings were samples of behaviours, it’s difficult to quantify how many NFRS personnel demonstrate negative behaviour and on what frequency. The optimistic view of the researcher is that the majority of personnel are professional, decent respectful members of NFRS.

If we are to make a difference then we all need to play a part. From firefighters to senior managers, we must believe and make a positive contribution to change the culture to be a better place work. As we look around, we may be trying to establish how we are going to change and who is going to lead it?

In the words of Barack Obama ... “Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we’ve been waiting for. We are the change that we seek.” (2008)
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Appendix A1 – Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service Vision/Core Values

The Fire and Rescue Service are in the midst of a challenging reform and change agenda and, whilst there is no shortage of opinion or direction on what needs to be done, it is important that we consider and agree how it will be done, just as our individual values determine our own behaviour. The acceptance and adoption of organisational values should improve the quality of our service to the public and the way we work together.

A set of nationally agreed values have been established by the Chief Fire Officers’ Association, the Fire Brigades’ Union, the Retained Firefighters Union, UNISON and a number of Fire Services, to provide a central focus on the standards and principles we consider most important within our organisation.

When asked, people in the Fire Service felt that honesty / integrity, trust / teamwork and service / respect were still important and relevant in today’s service. Our values have been born from these feelings.

“If our mission statement is about what we do, then our values are about the way in which we do it.”

We value … our people

Why is this important?

Clearly the people that work for the Service are our greatest asset. Money helps, but it’s the people that deliver the Service and, for us to be a healthy, forward-thinking organisation, we need to value our people. Therefore, we value each other by practising and promoting:

- Fairness and respect
- Recognition of merit
- Honesty, integrity and mutual trust
- Personal development
- Co-operative and inclusive working
We value ... service to the community.....Why is this important?

We are here to serve the public, keeping them as safe as we can through preventing and protecting them from hazards and, when that goes wrong, responding to emergencies. Therefore, we value service to the community by:

- Working with all groups to reduce risks
- Treating everyone fairly and with respect
- Being accountable to those we serve
- Striving for excellence in all we do

We value ... diversity.....Why is this important?

The community we serve is increasingly multi-cultural. To serve the community well, we need to work in different ways to meet different needs. To improve our understanding and way of working, the people within the Service need to reflect the people we serve outside of it. Therefore, we value diversity in the Service and community by:

- Treating everyone with dignity and respect
- Providing varying solutions for different needs and expectations
- Promoting equality of opportunity in employment and progression within the Service
- Challenging prejudice and discrimination

We value ... improvement

Why is this important?

Making Northamptonshire a safer place, means responding to new challenges and threats. To respond effectively, we need to be adaptable in the way that we work and deploy our resources. Therefore, we value improvement at all levels of the Service by:

- Taking responsibility for our performance
- Being open-minded
- Responding positively to feedback
- Learning from others
- Consulting others

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## Appendix A2 – Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service by gender, ethnicity and ‘job sector’ 2009 (as at 26/10/09)

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<th>08 Asian - Indian</th>
<th>09 Asian - Pakistani</th>
<th>10 Asian - Bangladeshi</th>
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| 100           |        |         |                    |                 |                 |                     |                   |               |               |                 |                   |                   | 583 |
Appendix B - Summary of transcripts with ex and existing NFRS personnel
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<th>Thematic Question</th>
<th>Firefighters</th>
<th>Fire Control</th>
<th>Support Staff</th>
<th>Direct Entry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Profile**      | Age 44 White British, Female, Veterinary nurse, paramedic in ambulance service, joined FRS in 2000,  
|                  | Age 30 White British Female, Joined in 2002 | Aged 20, white British female. | Aged 37, white British, female | Aged 26, white British, female, worked in the Fire service as Equality and Diversity Manager. Degree |
| **On Joining**   | I have wanted to join the Fire Service from attending RTC’s, I saw the FRS and their roles, the casualty lifting in the ambulance service was becoming an issue, the stretchers weighed 5 stone on their own, concerned I would injury myself, this was prior to manual handling assessments and the addition of ambulance tail lifts.  
|                  | When at training school I was after perfection, 98% is not good enough for me; my then | I have wanted to be a firefighter since I was a kid; I was about 5 years old. I saw a firefighter at school, I was told I was too short and a girl. The school visit, fire engine, we squirted water,  
|                  | A short girl at that, stupid aspiration, this was a defining moment really, I was a high flyer at school. | A short girl at that, stupid aspiration, this was a defining moment really, I was a high flyer at school. | Always wanted to join the Police, the images of Juliet Bravo, Dempsey and Makepeace. | Joined Fire and Rescue Service via the multi-tier direct entry route. The role was born out of need, skills and the talent required. I was aware of the attitude to direct entry |
|                  | I don’t recall the firefighters being male or female, I recall | I don’t recall the firefighters being male or female, I recall | My father had contacts in the Police, Used to talk about grisly photo’s. I did a 2 week work experience with the Police. The TV images of London’s Burning no real images of women firefighters. TV is so powerful. | The previous Chief and Deputy were very supportive to new role, when CFO retired this situation changed. |
|                  | | | | I had the benefits of strong |
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| Husband was not supportive during my weekends which I used as study leave. At training school (year 2000) there were 3 women FF’s out of 38 blokes. Training school was non residential for me, my parents lived close to training school was a chance to see me every week for 18 weeks I was never going to sit behind a desk job, my parents worried about me regarding this job. Joined RDS first, Essex Braintree. Went along to the station for 2 years prior to joining every Monday, listen to the jobs they had, 18 shouts in one day due to flooding. All male station at the time, but one crew member’s girlfriend was going through training school. |
| ‘welephant’ attending my school and I remember a Woman in Uniform. I wanted to join an emergency service since I was about 16 or 17. Fire control, wanted a worthwhile job, meaty job, saw it in the paper, had heard Police Control were recruiting on the local radio, I didn’t want to work for the police £1k less a year, the frustration of not being able to deliver a service ‘with quality’, heard about complaints about the Police service control, I had not heard of complaints about the Fire Service until I started working for NFRS. |
| I had no previous ambition to join the Fire Service; I read the advert and thought I had the skills. I had worked for the Home office so knew a little about the Fire service. My image of the fire service is male orientated, testosterone driven, not great on E&D. I saw role models in the police when I was growing up, but not in the Fire service. When I took the job, I thought my role would be more back office than working with operational crews. In 2000 at 18 years old RDS at (name of station) lived locally, had to ‘fit in’ I was used by the Service for radio and media using me to make it look as if we regional network, …..working with women’s groups again very supportive. |
| I had no previous ambition to join the Fire Service; I read the advert and thought I had the skills. I had worked for the Home office so knew a little about the Fire service. My image of the fire service is male orientated, testosterone driven, not great on E&D. I saw role models in the police when I was growing up, but not in the Fire service. When I took the job, I thought my role would be more back office than working with operational crews. In 2000 at 18 years old RDS at (name of station) lived locally, had to ‘fit in’ I was used by the Service for radio and media using me to make it look as if we regional network, …..working with women's groups again very supportive. When I joined my induction was with several new managers, this was a three day event. Those other officers had in excess of 15 years fire and rescue experience and had joined as firefighters, I realise now that the induction I required was much than that I had not any line management experience previously The manager was also in the process of raising a grievance as a result of the recent manager selection process, therefore one might imagine not highly motivated to support my informal induction. |

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**MBA**  
**May 17th 2010**
I visited a Bedfordshire Fire station, I met a woman FF explained worked for ambulance service, I was fit and strong, I said to her “Don’t bullshit me what’s the job like, If left the ambulance service to join FRS am I making a mistake?” She said “you’re the sort of person we want”. Grass is not always greener.

Feel more feminine in Ambulance Service, allowed to wear makeup, jewellery compared to FRS. I was 34 when I joined FRS told can’t wear makeup, for years it has been part of who I am and then told I can’t, when I was leaving the house in the morning I didn’t feel ‘me’. Some of the blokes on this watch If they were told they could put gel in their hair, well if we told him not to wear that hair

join as a firefighter, fire control was a good job, better than my current, after 2 days confirmed in my own mind that I wanted to become a firefighter, not a primary reason for joining fire control

have women in the service. I had worked in catering and waitressing at the local pubs in the village, so I knew a lot of the local people, through local contacts I found about the RDS and thought I could that.

Never been a girlie girl…there was a ‘Tom Boy’ on course [training school] with me
Never felt that there was room in the FRS for a girlie girl, with fake tan and make up, I can be myself and the FBU have helped me.

In the early days on station (or was this at training school?) someone used a photo of a swimwear model and put a picture of my head on it, I just thought it was funny.

Informal network with women in

Timescales upon what I needed to have developed by when were unclear. I understand from and appreciate that this was with sympathy to being able to maintain my role. However, in my academic studies and professional work I am a person who likes to work by setting goals and importantly timescales and on achieving them celebrating them. In short there were little of these elements associated with the programme for some considerable time, although this did improve over time.
product he would be lost.

I was hauled in the office for wearing nail varnish

The 'Hi-Ab' operation [a small crane attached to the emergency tender], when I do it, its smooth compared to the men, their like a bull in a china shop

Too many girls in one place they bitch, the men snap you out of the hormonal

Different people have different skills, not a sex [gender] thing

I am more calm in my approach to things

Women have ability to talk to a young person and to older people, [men] are not all great communicators

the service, not initially, never interested, because women want to fit-in.
Men are not good at talking to a wider audience.

Men who go into nursing or caring [jobs] are usually good communicators compared to a 'man's man', macho with strangers they are not good communicators, an image they need to keep up when talking to older people or psychiatric patients, the macho comes across and you can see they are uncomfortable talking to these people.

FRS seem to get macho men compared with [Ambulance] I'm aware of paramedics who are more caring. The FRS image is busting into the fire to rescue [people].

Where does the image come from?
From?
The public
The forces
The statutes [presented to retired FRS personnel] are men carrying a damsel in distress

| Friends and Family Support | Dad old fashioned, I have 2 sisters one who is married with children. My ex husband works for a Police Force and was unhappy that I wanted to join the FRS and on the subject of attending training school for 13 weeks said to me "I'd rather say my wife was inside than at fire school". The relationship broke down shortly after this. Father in the Army, Biology teacher said I would be good FRS was never an encouraged choice, from or by family and teachers, friends, groups of friends. I was academically very good, expected to go to university, maybe a doctor or a lawyer, to follow a proper career. But I didn't want to become a graduate with debt working in McDonalds! My ex partner was supportive; my family think it's a phase I am going through. My mum still thinks firefighters as in the London's Burning image, lots of | There was a rumour that I knew the deputy Chief or my Father did, but these were all untrue |
Since joining have any of your friends or family joined?

Would you recommend the FRS as career choice for family and friends?

| working with people and suggested the Fire Service. My Dad’s cousin is in the FRS. | fires, BA jobs every minute of everyday...My dad is still disappointed I am not going to Uni’. Sister’s both planned to become architects, but didn’t, one to Uni part time, she graduated at 28. My sister thinks it’s marvellous [wanting to join FRS and working in Fire Control] My Uni’ sister, tells everyone, brilliant contrast to her own life. My other sister is not interested My wider family & friends, grandfather thinks’ it’s a man’s job; women should be exposed to those types of environments. I knew a fire officer who encouraged me. Also a friend who I took along to the positive action day is in the Police and |
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training and learning styles</th>
<th>Her dad</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes, absolutely genuinely proud to work within fire and rescue service</th>
<th>I have a daughter, I would not want her to join the Fire service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Was the initial training a positive or negative experience?</td>
<td>A positive experience</td>
<td>Yes, I have family and friends who interested in joining.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>In your opinion was your learning style understood and training delivered to reflect this style?</td>
<td>Front loaded, take in what they are saying then learn it again later</td>
<td>My brother worked in workshops in October 2007</td>
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<tr>
<td>Training was not great, 4 started when I joined; I genuinely believe that if the training had been better all 4 would still be there now. All 4 female, training was so light hearted, not a good training environment, One instructor provided all of the first 4 weeks.</td>
<td>Basic training, to be able to</td>
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<tr>
<td>I have completed two parts to the safe to command process, the written and the TDX (tactical decision making exercise). I have completed these exams and the ITOP and ADC on my own without support. I have asked for help from my watch manager still nothing done. Help from [two names training department].</td>
<td></td>
<td>I have completed two parts to the safe to command process, the written and the TDX (tactical decision making exercise). I have completed these exams and the ITOP and ADC on my own without support. I have asked for help from my watch manager still nothing done. Help from [two names training department].</td>
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<td>The development programme was not developed; the service had just bought into the principle.[multi-tier entry]</td>
<td>Due to lack or ready content or structure there was little formal communication from the service about the programme’s structure or progress to other important stakeholder, perhaps the most important being all other</td>
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Mark Ainge 08254330
MBA
May 17th 2010
At training school I was not taught about tools, not shown what each tool was, how it worked I need to work with lists, a picture to remember. The first time I picked up a tool on a job and ‘faffed about, and a man said oh come here’ll do it; he never showed me; I’d never been shown how to use that tool.

I didn’t know the names of tools, not taught at Training school, I spent time going around DIY stores to learn the names of tools.

I remember thinking a Phillips screwdriver was just a reliable make not a specific type.

I am so ‘hands on’, as an army cadet I could strip my gun down and put it back together blindfolded.

mobilise after this input. No account of different learning styles, giggly, non balanced training environment.

I have been temporarily promoted to crew manager; I have been given epaulettes but no role markings to my helmet. I attended a positive action event and given a ‘rollicking’ over the phone, I was fuming, not given guidance on when I should wear the role markings. Is this poor management or poor management of women?

personnel – particularly operational. This resulted in communication coming from me a developee and receiving feedback direct. Personally this led me not want to talk about the programme to others and receive similar feedback again and again. Not particularly motivating, inspiring, pretty demoralising, upsetting and not enjoyable to hear.

The exercise took place and afterwards feedback was given to me upon my performance. I entered into the assessment with the positive mindset that this would be a useful exercise for me to understand any progress made and therefore welcomed the opportunity for feedback. Although some positive and useful comments were made I explained to the person
[Everyone has differing] speeds of learning, doesn’t mean they are stupid, need to have the patience with people.

Bravado...with men on the ladder drill, they were not sure of the words, they [men] needed to say the words of command, someone said it’s not rocket science; obviously it was because he didn’t know them!

Does the bravado hide the inadequacies? Fear, [they, the men] can’t show they are frightened, [the men] can’t take criticisms, they are quite rubbish at that

Fear ....if they see injuries....not allowed to show fear...they just get louder!
Confidence to say it [fear or scared] , confidence is a fragile

coordinating that I found comments on my performance, particularly BA [breathing apparatus], insensitive and unfair noting my ‘training’ input so far had been me reading certain paragraphs in the Technical Bulletin 97 as per module instruction. On reflection I relate the situation to a pilot being given a book to read and then being expected to fly the plane!
I have low confidence to ask questions in the classroom ...I don't like being laughed at.....
Change Agent or ‘Fitting In’

Do you feel accepted as a person for who you are or as an ‘honorary'/surrogate male/ as ‘one of the lads’?

Fitting in individual character was here (name of fire station) 5 years resentment as the boys want to talk about, watch they say [to me or in front of me] they slag off females on another station, yes you have to fit in to be honest.

Younger people just joined want to impress because they want to do the job. Negative can crush ambition, desperate to fit in if they are allowed.

How men react to women? Not all very few FF’s knew how to work with or never worked with women. One junior officer said to me as he retired after 32 years, before I joined his watch he had never worked with a woman.

Nights, sleeping arrangements, I try to fit in, but don’t, I am rough round the edges. Not great at conforming, if I don’t think it’s right I say so.

I try and change.

Blue watch all male plus me
Green watch 4 females and one male

Now the watches are more balanced, 3 males and 2 males, or 2 males and 3 females or 2 and 2.

I was treated as an individual

Others, non watch personnel would ask if I wanted to talk about shoes, suggesting I was missing out on female company.

I am accepted to a degree, It

The image of being heroic, males like to be protective, the use of female and women on media coverage photographs create urban myths about the fire service.

I thought the job was really physical and it wasn’t until I got to the fire station and saw these men with pot bellies and men who were not looking after their physical condition.

Women have a lot to offer, sometimes talking to men firefighters can be intimidating for women.

You need a balance of men and women on the fire trucks, this must be helpful in the event of a nasty accident or house fire.

The fire service stays the same.

I needed to demonstrate my professionalism when coming into fire, not just leadership. To show I was serious about my professionalism, serious about fires, to engage with firefighters, not just leadership. The meetings were ‘jargonistic’, about technical equipment, fire behaviour and technical stuff.

My colleagues were not prepared to engage in debate with me on finance, equality and diversity or strategy. Soon after I joined this would have been the first time that the service had experienced an external audit (with another Direct entry candidate) he is ex-army, he is very critical of fire and rescue, stated it was very random in
## Change Agent or ‘Fitting In’

Historically, 2 men had slept in the female dormitory (prior to females joining the watch).

The issues for the men were the wives and girlfriends who were uncomfortable with females on the fire station, sleeping in the dormitory. I don’t know what they thought I was going to do.

Toilets and shower facilities on Ambulance stations are shared facilities not a problem.

A Sub Officer, as they were back then (back in the 1990’s) told a new recruit FF that she was not able to wear frilly underwear just plan black, did he ever tell the blokes what underwear they must wear? I don’t think so.

Bedfordshire FRS were much for such a long time

All male or majority male is my preference, why, I find women hard to get on with, men take women at face value, men are less judgemental. Men as managers are fairer more consistent and calmer in their approach in my experience. My previous experience I have worked with 2 female and 2 male team leaders. It was if the females had a point to prove. The males were more relaxed and got on with their job. I find men as managers more professional, at the council more female managers.

A firefighter said to me ‘I’ve been a hero, I rescued…’

The watch managers don’t see themselves as part of the management team.

I observed a firefighter not supporting the presentation on a community safety event; he was very negative towards the initiative. I was surprised that the middle manager didn’t say anything to challenge the inappropriate behaviour. When I spoke to the middle manager, he said he didn’t support the initiative either.

When I joined I was surprised by the negative reaction I received from existing staff, I had joined the uniform ‘the dark side’ and they felt I had let them down.

There were complaints about the direct entry process, some of those made by existing senior managers within fire.

Rumours, lots of rumours, a senior director asked the CFO if he was having an affair with me.

There were posters at offices saying that I was having an affair with the CFO.

Even the HR manager challenged the process.

The rumours were not just...
Behaviours

- More accepting of females; joining NFRS was like going back in time.
- Four on a watch [4 females out of 10] male and female crew mate is perfect, there are times when you need a female or male approach
- My ex husband was ex forces, in the police firearms very macho. Stories of woman undertaking the Police entry tests, the bleep test, She caught her own sick in her mouth so to not show weakness and kept going,
- Intimated by women not strong enough
- A FF this year said to me, ‘no offence, but I wouldn’t be happy.

Women are more emotional and men are more logical

Do you believe you have unique skills? If so what they are? Do you perceive these are different skills compared to a most males?

No, empathy, lots of men are rubbish at empathy

As part of my induction, I spent a night shift on [name of station]. The Watch manager assumed that I wanted the bed nearest to the female toilets or I wanted the bed out of the dormitory, were the rest of the watch slept and into the conference room!

When I had applied to join the whole time and my application was in, someone came in from the training dept and said to Fire

What are your views on an all female watch?

I couldn’t cope with having to deal with males firefighters saying it’s the pink and fluffy watch and if you had an RTC who would hold the cutters. So it would be fine but the men couldn’t cope with this.

Treated differently now, following working in (another department name) was ‘one of the lads’, a woman from another department someone ‘said see you lads’, It was said ‘she is a woman not one of the lads’.

I always have to prove myself, people expect me to fail.

No support from my watch limited to NFRS, the Whitehall Group (members from all public services)

There was a level of anxiety within CFOA, there were female senior officers and managers who did not know what to make of the multi-tier entry scheme [which NFRS had created]

There are currently several routes or models to senior management and senior women in the fire service.

The chief executive, with no fire and rescue role, the senior manager who have joined as a firefighter and worked their way up through the career progression ladder, and there are those who are senior managers who are not operational. Even amongst this
I mean filled with confidence if 2 females turned up [at an incident] on the ET [Emergency Tender].

We need good managers to allow me to do the job, because some FF’s don’t think I can do the job, so they take the kit from me at incidents or don’t allocate the cutting tasks to me at RTC’s [Road Traffic Collisions], I’ll ask if I need help.

In Beds [Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service], one night we attended a House Fire person’s reported [a fire in a domestic house in which at the time of receipt of the 999 call the service know people are trapped inside the property and need to be rescued], two female FF’s rescued the person from the job, on the pump was only one male, Control, oh, that [ladies name] and the other girl [meaning me] have applied, what happened to confidentiality!

I wonder if I was a man if I would have been showed the ladder lift and the dummy drag...

manager

When I was introduced to watch manager, I was pregnant, he didn’t shake my hand, just looked me up and down, I felt that I had to prove myself all over again.

When made crew manager (October 2008), the WM had not told anyone I was acting up, the SM had told me that I had passed (names of courses and ADC). I attended the station and kept my coat on all night as I dared not show my new crew manager epaulettes, my WM did not acknowledge my acting up, I was undertaking managerial duties but the WM didn’t show how to the tasks. As courses came up He [watch manager] would select who attended, I was not selected. I was

group of senior women, I am not accepted by all.

I recall being called to speak with a principal officer regarding a rumour, that I had been linked romantically with a male firefighter on one of my stations. Completely and utterly untrue. I then discovered that managers in my team knew of this rumour but hadn’t told me, including one of my mentors. With this and other rumours, led me to a total mistrust of majority of those around me. This episode reinforced my behaviour of head down, get on with the job and may have to some appeared cold.

For some 6 months into the programme I had no clear purpose at an incident, subsequently I quite literally
Behaviours

<p>| the driver, the JO [junior officer/incident commander] were male and three female firefighters in the back [back of the appliance allocated roles as breathing apparatus entry control and two breathing apparatus wearers]. |
| 'Old dinosaurs' are not accepting of women. |
| Not felt I had to fit in, good at making friends, can be quiet and pink and pretty but if I need to I can be strong open my mouth and say something |
| The other day we had the cutters taken off us, the other crew said they had competence to maintain, what about my competence, we practice then don’t get the chance in the real life situation, |
| completing one of my first fire reports and he [watch manager] made me feel stupid in front of other people. |
| How does this behaviour make you feel? |
| Not getting support, 'fighting' with the watch manager to get anything done, he doesn't talk with other crew manager's, some of this is not gender related it's because he is a 'Wally'. |
| I worked with my sister at (station name) in 2000; she couldn't get full time childcare so her contract was terminated. She changed hours then split went to incidents and watched the scene of devastation, mentors were new too and knew little about their role. I was conscious that becoming operational will involve seeing unsightly things. In short I’ve discovered I don’t cope well, I suffer enormous apprehension about how I will react to situations and subsequently do not enjoy this part of the job. |
| Fitting in – I was either going to be bubbly and upbeat, but isolate myself or to try and mould myself and become the person I didn’t want to be! |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behaviours</th>
<th>As I have paramedic skills always asked to do the casualty care, what about the male FF’s need to practice casualty care, what would they do if I wasn’t there?</th>
<th>with boyfriend, as I recall it was pretty instant, She notified the Brigade that her hours had changed and they [NFRS] terminated her contract.</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Our boss doesn’t like conflict</td>
<td>At an incident, a lift rescue, the Sub O detailed 3 guys to carry out rescue, as the women won’t be strong enough, me and my sister said can’t we help? So 3 male FF’s conducted the rescue and not the crew of five!</td>
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<td>Male FF’s tolerate females I like to be liked, easier to conform, to be accepted, and want to be ‘one of the lads’. They look after me, [I can be] squeamish</td>
<td>RTC …drills….women are more caring…I am smaller than most men so I can get into the car easier [when crumpled up at an RTC]. I am good at calming people down, women are picked to conduct the casualty care, good at the interaction with the patient.</td>
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<td>I don’t like to be called ‘Love’; being accepted by your peers is a human thing.</td>
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[Mark Ainge 08254330 MBA May 17th 2010]
Behaviours

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<th>Image of FF’s is macho is part of the issue</th>
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<td>Rumours that I had affairs with 7 FF’s in one year</td>
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<td>People can’t accept that we may be work colleagues, female and male together is ok, male and females together is ok, male and females together and rumours start, those rumours affect families of the male firefighters.</td>
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<td>Told I couldn’t wear makeup, mascara, eye makeup, hair products, hair to be tied up for safety reasons</td>
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<td>The police are allowed to wear makeup</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yes they look like females</td>
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<td>On a night out with the watch...</td>
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Behaviours

| Uniform, Maternity and Child care | [a reference to wearing makeup and feminine clothes] you get remarks like "oh so you are a woman". Army women, nursing and Police ‘allowed’ to be women; I don’t think this stops them from doing their job. Positive impact. Were not all the same. Hair plaited kept back, jewellery in hospitals limited to wedding rings, hygiene issues to manage infection control. A recent event (in 2009) a contractor [on the fire station completing a tiling project] said, ‘so you’re one of those female ones then’ | Do you have child care needs? Have these been supported by NFRS? | I returned to work after each of my three children. With my first (child’s name) in 2004, I took | Uniform, sizing, different styles and no guidance of how to wear what, no guidance on hair and |
**Uniform, Maternity and Childcare**

| Uniform, Maternity and Childcare | are likely to get an influx of women of child bearing age, and policies need to be better. The Ambulance [Service] offer a 'bank system' to cover short fall of staff. What about a Crèche and funding childcare, to cover cross over times for shift patterns, with both partners working with the NFRS how are we expected [as parents] to manage [child care]. Better Child Care will benefit all [not just the female firefighters]. I have been trying since Christmas [from December 2008 to October 2009] to try and find out the childcare options. One of the options will be not to have kids or leave the service. | Currently no, not explained, not asked either... **Uniform** Currently no socks are issued, I am provided with a tights allowance, £40 a year, safety shoes for working in Fire control, I am a size 3, the steel toe cap is the same size as if the shoe was a size 8, and I can't bend my foot! Shirts are men's with buttons on the other side! I have compared the shirts as I was given a man's shirt by mistake, no visible difference. Our smart shoes are sourced from Clark's website in the sale, not all styles are available. | maternity leave and I lost three months earning as I was taken 'off the run'. I was then told to sort out my own maternity trousers. The Brigade said go to the Marks [Spencer's] in Northampton. Do they not realise that this is a round trip of over 20 miles, why should I go and have to find my trousers. This approach was the same as when I joined and they [NFRS Stores] sent me socks as part of initial kit issue. They were too big! So I complained, said that I only have small feet. I was told that I could go and buy my own and charge the Brigade, I was 18 and I didn't own black socks, black stockings but not socks. With one of my children I worked until the birth, although I had to ask for the risk assessments to be completed. how to present myself. |
| Risk assessments of role, pregnancy, told come off the run, that's not what I want. The shift pattern is a real plus for me, so concerned about the review [duty system review]. If you honestly want to target women, look at the policies and the flexibility of working through women’s eyes. At training school [woman’s name] She was a single parent with an 8 year old child, while away at training school for (16 weeks) [women’s name] she needed to support own child care needs, FRS said if don’t go to Training school you will be dismissed, she was allowed to take time off. | Sweatshirts are unisex, skirts are hilarious! One size but a multitude of lengths, believed to be very cheap quality, even the same style and size have different hem lengths. What about subsidised crèche, with night time facilities? I don’t like the idea of leaving my children with my parents over night. When I returned I was still breast feeding, there was no provision for that. I then had to sort out my own claims for loss of earnings against the grey book [conditions of service]. On my return to work the Brigade were not sure of what to do with me. I remember the station officer made me cry, because of how he spoke to me, I guess I was quite hormonal, I cried in front of the crew. I failed my return to work assessment. I fell pregnant again [2005]. The Brigade still didn’t know what to do with me. I was booked in to attend a [training course] theory; I was told I could attend the practical as a safety officer. | (Uniform) |

Mark Ainge 08254330  
MBA  
May 17th 2010
Both male and females have dependents, not just children, therefore support should not be just for child care.

The policies need to be open and transparent so that people know what they are entitled to, because people don’t know, people are being underhand just to get the time off they need.

I wouldn’t say [training school] was easy, males were picked on, I used to say a poem in my head to get through it

I didn’t get picked on at training school no preferential treatment either, I proved myself, hose running I was one of five who didn’t faint!

At training school I was called Mrs [family name], which really

(observer). When I got there, I was told there was no point me being there, the officer on the day balled at me and made me cry, I was sent home.

[Name of a female Firefighter from another fire station in NFRS]. Her risk assessment stated] BA [breathing apparatus] station based training, that the risk was too great to be BAECO [breathing apparatus entry control officer – which is safety officer type role managing the deployment of firefighters into a risk area] as the ladder might fall on her!

The uniform, it takes away my identity as a woman, makes me feel 10 pounds heavier. The shirts are masculine; they do up on the wrong side. The shirts are baggy, the men’s epaulettes are too big and look silly, and
wound me up, FF [family name] would have been better
A woman has hips...chest...which is different to men, but the uniform doesn't fit well with a woman's shape. The trousers... look like clown trousers.

Shoes, I'm a size 3, the SRT (swift water rescue technician dry suits – with integral boots) too big for me,

I'm a size 6; the SRT dry suit which fits me has size 10 boots!

The GTS (Gas Tight suits worn at hazardous material incidents have an integral boot, which is sized); I'm a size 3 the GTS are a size 10!

Skin tight gloves, I need a medium, Stores only provide

women have small shoulders. When I joined the socks they [NFRS Stores] gave were like too big. I felt we are making do.
### Sexual Harassment

**Have you ever experienced any in the workplace?**

Yes...I have.....what he did to me was against the law..... The Union and the Brigade wanted me to accept it as just some silly crush he had on me. ...I was made to feel like the guilty one.....I just wanted it to stop......

**Pornographic materials?**

No, just lad’s mags like ZOO, NUTS, but they are in the toilet [female] when we return [from rota leave].

---

I have not experienced sexual harassment personally

Men use the women’s toilets at the station; they put their Loaded or FHM magazines in the toilets.

All very ‘cave man’.

On my first posting to the station, I experienced small issues, which on their own are not significant but if I had kept a journal I would have seen how much of an issue it was. I could have done something about it. With the Station manager on station the issues have been sorted out. I was made to feel unwelcome.

Males using the females loo, urine on the seat, walking in on me. My office door signs with my name on being stuck to the toilet door, comments like don’t be getting pregnant now....
Yes, and baby lotion, toilet tissue at [station name] when I was on standby [in 2009].

The blokes on the station try to say that HEAT or CLOSER (other women’s lifestyle magazines) are offensive to them; get real, they may show the chest of a man on a beach it’s hardly offensive.

At training school there were 3 women and 35 men, all instructors were male.... she was German and female and the instructors gave her a real hard time

[training school] it was made up of 11 men and me [one female]

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<tr>
<th>Recruitment and Retention</th>
<th>Do you think that the current practices promote/support a</th>
<th>When I attended the firefighter recruitment tests, I felt quite</th>
<th>A facilities audit, menopause, the ageing workforce are</th>
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<td>a change in the culture to promote women?</td>
<td>When I attended the firefighter recruitment tests, I felt quite</td>
<td>A facilities audit, menopause, the ageing workforce are</td>
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<td>I got a bashing for using one of the watch watches tea bags; I was busy trying to support a meeting and took a tea bag for a colleague’s cup of Tea. Would they want their girlfriends or wives to be spoken to in that way or be treated as they have treated me?” I think not. Yes, I am able to manage it. Sexist jokes on station, In front of firefighters from other stations it’s like my crew are saying this is ‘my women firefighter’, like I am the token woman...’she’s our female firefighter’....While at training school they... the men tried to get my attention....flirty...trying to impress.....</td>
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When I joined the service in [year] I enjoyed having a fresh
**gender diverse workforce?**

No

**In your opinion, the culture supports gender diversity in the workplace?**

No, like it to be, most people tolerate as opposed to welcome you

If I was a white male, posters are rammed down their throat

**Is firefighting a man’s job?**

No, a monkey could squirt water at a fire, firefighters, with the correct training anyone could do this job

**Do you perceive you have received specialist treatment**

intimated, the guy who demonstrated the tests was a massive guy, didn’t fill us with confidence. He didn’t demonstrate the technique, he did the lift (ladder lift) with pure strength. There were no women involved in the tests apart from on the reception (at the Fire station).

When me and (another female) walked in it felt like they were rolling their eyes at us.

When NFRS ran positive actions days, I couldn’t get to any of the days, all during the week, I was working for NFRS, I didn’t want to my manager that I wanted to become a firefighter, as I didn’t want my manager to think less of me as a control operator. To begin with it was an embarrassment factor that I

**Do you perceive you have policies in place? No, we need to know how we are going to deal with it.**

I sent out a FINDs message [an email message to all fire and rescue services] 2 months ago for brigade’s policies on menopause, I have got very little back.

Improve facilities on the fire ground, provide welfare packs for women. To dispel myths of what the firefighter role is. There are women in the village who believe that they couldn’t do the job, there are myths that you have to be mega strong, 10 foot tall, lots of people are single parents who could do this job, how would we support their child care needs?

pair of eyes upon the service’s varied situations. I passionately worked with some of the most senior individuals within the service. Their positive outlook on the future, drive for achieving results, I observed them making changes when change was necessary and this really inspired me. My role [year and title] involved me working at a level which no longer interacted with what I deemed to be those inspirational leaders. About a year into my job I found myself bowing down to the regular negative comments made about the service by peers, the way we work etc. I rarely defended the modernised service anymore when comments were made and when it got to the stage that I actually began to volunteer negative, cynical thought; I recognised this was no longer
| because of your gender? Promotion opportunities, is the current system fair and equal, transparent for both genders? Don’t know I have only done the ITOP | wanted to do it, I am small and I am a girl. To improve things, NFRS could offer more dates, I believe only 4 dates were made available, not just offered as I want to become a firefighter but because they and I want an insight Female employees, with female firefighters present, have lunch, make a day of it I didn’t get a chance to practice before the selection tests I failed the “ladder lift”, to lift 25kg above my head, unofficially I practiced the ladder lift before but that was only because I know people in the service I tried lifting the 135m ladder on my own from the ground I have concerns about the process No assistance was given to me for the written exam or the | What are your views on positive action? We need to do this ‘big’, I mean properly, not just [name of equality and diversity officer] on her own. The community safety talks we do could include a bit on recruitment and talking about the fire and rescue service as a career to children from a young age. |
application; I have failed the PQA’s when applying to two other brigades. Since then I have passed through to the job related tests for [FRS] but I failed the beep test. [Not part of the national selection tests]. Males and females from within Fire control gained advice from Station managers and watch managers and recently joined firefighters

More female staff in public eye Ladies open days all year round, not just when recruiting, practice drills, health and safety, talk about what the crews do, child care, maternity rights, career in the FRS Presentation and plays in schools, no women in plays! Involve women in the literature and presentation I went to an all girl school, we
never had a visit from NFRS, when the fire alarm sounded two fire engines turned up, the girls surrounded the crew.

More Positive actions days and better advertising, advertise in gyms, fitness, all female yoga studio’s, consider most gyms have that have female facilities.

Parish magazines, Press coverage, local newspapers, national magazines.

Marie Claire, Cosmopolitan, Glamour, run stories, ‘role of firefighter’, case studies of women in active careers.

Concerns that pushing positive action too far may create a situation, girie girl, make up, vanity, pink uniform? Hair not tied back, impact on safety.

Awareness sessions are interesting, we had a look at the
Physical tests, couldn’t do the ladder because it was raining, had a look at the rat run and the national firefighter’s questionnaire. A male presented some of the session; it would have nice to speak to a female. There were a lot of women at the positive action day, it was full, I would have liked to have another go prior to the tests, may be in smaller groups. I knew people at the awareness day so didn’t feel intimidated. Women only day encourages more women to attend.

The regional recruitment information which I received said that I would get three attempts at the ladder lift. At the actual assessment, there were no female assessors, all male, when I attempted the ladder lift, the man in front of me
had a go, asked if he was happy with what he did, did he want another go, I had one go and failed not given another attempt.

The whole day was very nerve racking, lots of waiting around

When I was training for the physical tests, I bought ‘Men’s Health’ magazine for guidance on nutrition and training advice

The first time I saw the advert for firefighters was in the paper, phoned for application, no positive action in 2007.
Appendix C - Questions to guide and support the semi structured interviews

“Desperately Seeking Susan”

Questions for Women in the FRS

Mark Ainge – University Of Northampton July 2009

1. a profile (age, ethnicity, education qualifications, role, previous employment)
2. reason for joining
3. access to recruitment
4. the recruitment and training process
5. expectations and outcomes
6. acceptance into service
7. facilities
8. equality training
9. reaction to fire service culture
10. support from senior managers and FBU
11. treatment at work
12. views on promotion
13. views on how to recruit women
14. views on modernisation
15. views on shift system
16. Joining
17. Thoughts on joining the FRS at young age?
18. Earliest thoughts?
19. As a child how did you perceive the FRS?
20. When did you decide to join?
21. Why?
22. Support from family and friends?
23. Perceptions of family and friends?
24. Did you have family and friends within the NFRS prior to joining?
25. Since joining have any of your friends or family joined?
26. Would you recommend the FRS as career choice for family and friends?
27. Are you a ‘change agent’ or someone who ‘fits in’?
28. Do you feel accepted as a person for who you are or as an ‘honorary/surrogate male/ as ‘one of the lads’?
29. Would you prefer to work on a fire station with more or all women or all male colleagues? If so why?
30. Do you believe you have unique skills/ If so what are they. Do you perceive these are different skills compared to a most males?
31. Do you have child care needs? Have these been supported by NFRS?
32. Training
33. During your training, were you trained with all women, all men or mixed?
34. Was the initial training a positive or negative experience?
35. In your opinion was your learning style understood and and training delivered to reflect this style?
36. What training do you believe NFRS have provided to male colleagues to enable them to ‘cope/understand working with women? How they need to adjust? What is expected of males?
37. Cultural issues and Retention
38. Do you think that the current practices promote/support a gender diverse workforce?
39. In your opinion, the culture supports gender diversity in the workplace?
40. Thoughts on part time working?
41. Is firefighting a man’s job?
42. Have you witnessed a biased view on what female requirements are? (ie a male view?)
43. Do you perceive you have received specialist treatment because of your gender?
44. Promotion opportunities, is the current system fair and equal, transparent for both genders? Is the current system fair to women? any biased?
45. Current facilities on station?
46. Uniform?
47. Policies and procedures?
48. Child care?
49. Family friendly conditions of service and working practices, shift patterns?
50. Sexual harassment
51. Have you ever experienced any in the workplace?
52. Pornographic materials? Do you believe the current E&D training is sufficient? Changing facilities? Did you feel the Sexual harassment was your fault?
53. Recruitment and Positive action
54. How does the FRS go about recruiting more women?
55. In your opinion, why does NFRS need to employ more women? As firefighters/operational sector? Support role?
56. What qualities do you believe a person needs to become a firefighter?
57. Do you believe females are strong enough and brave enough to become firefighters?
Appendix D - Summary of focus group at Northamptonshire Police

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Mark Ainge 08254330
MBA
May 17th 2010
What attracted you to the Police (Force) Service?
Age when first considered the career?...Recruitment Campaigns or word of mouth?...All Served 8 Months in the Police...Friends in the Police...Married to Police Officer for 24 years, the children have now grown up, I have managed a Health club, Textile company. I knew there was a good women's forum in a supporting role....I have wanted to join since I was a little girl. Dad was a police Officer, he tried to put me off, but the stories and the job stuck in my head. I looked up to him....I am a single parent; the Police have been really supportive. My dad is a retired inspector. I was always wanted to join. The 19 weeks training put me off, but now I can complete the training Monday to Friday....I wanted to be more ‘interesting’. My friend was a special constable, so I applied, did that for a year and a half. My boyfriend was very supportive, and my tutor was inspirational.....I joined on a whim! I was study psychology and criminology at ‘Uni’ and just applied because I thought it would be an interesting job. I didn’t know much about it, and when I started on my first day I was surprised by what the training would cover.

What other jobs do you consider comparable with the Police (Force) Service?
Non – No jobs are like the Police force.....Social working, maybe, helping people....Diverse array of jobs, interviewing specialists, firearms, dog handlers....To truly and liken this job to another is very difficult....The Fire service only shows the firefighting, what else do the service do? I am sure that there is more, you[ the Fire Service] need to show the variety of roles.....The ‘Could you do this campaign?’ This made me think of the different roles....so many challenges, I wanted to prove myself, I can do that, I can do that...There are so many roles for women, in firearms they even have smaller hand guns for women.

Did you consider the fire service as a career? Why? Why not?
With the Fire Service you only think there is one role, with the police there is so much choice and show the variety of the roles available....Basic policing doesn’t interest me, but once I have completed the training there are other opportunities, fire arms, CID....The entry tests for the fire service are so difficult.....I was interested in joining the Fire Service, but I didn’t like the breathing apparatus, crawling through the rat run, I am not claustrophobic but I didn’t like that....The heat, wearing all that kit, which is so heavy, you have to be so strong

Would you encourage your family or friends to consider the Police as a career? If not why?
No....Tell them how it is ....Dangerous job, potential to get hurt....Not a job, it’s a lifestyle....Telling them about the job, you need to find out for yourself....Don’t want them to see what I’ve seen....You need life experiences....The police is a life experience....It takes all sorts, I was a special constable first, stressful during training, by being a special, you can experience the job on your terms....Older person, it’s a career change, when I was younger told to find another job....There are Police staff who are scared of the frontline....I didn’t know before I joined about all of the support roles....There is so much variety with the support roles, control room

Would your family or friends encourage you to consider the Police as a career? If not why?
They were concerned....But because it was what I want I had support....My family hated it, they said, my mum who doesn’t count said I was extremely selfish, she thought it was an awful idea, my sister thought I might die....My daughter’s Dad supported me initially, but now curses the job because of the shifts....I have no children or family near, I can imagine how difficult it must be to manage this job with kids as well, I can’t get myself sorted out.....My friends are officers, first they were asking how many years do you think you can give the service, they said I was mad, now they are on board and have said we need people with your life experience and it’s good to have you in the force, I think they were just challenging me

Was there anything which was off-putting about joining the Police?
Stereotyping of the job, some police officers are like that....I want to make a difference to change that stereotyping....Shifts....Having rest days cancelled....The shift pattern, Northants

Mark Ainge 08254330
MBA
May 17th 2010
are atrocious, all the forces around us have better shift patterns. We do 7 days on and 3 days off, then 7 days on then 4 days off....The shifts are mixture of 8, 9, 10 hour shifts....Shifts affect retention....We need more flexibility to choose shifts, young ‘lads’ prefer ‘lates’ [late shifts] because that’s when there is likely to be action. Some prefer earlys.....I would just do the early shifts

**Did you consider the culture of the police service to be a barrier?**
Masculinity?....There could be.....There is ‘ladness’ behaviour but I am not bothered....There is banter, not negative, helps you get through the difficult times....No not seen anything negative....How people treat you outside of the job....Friends still open with you, some don’t know how to act around you....Neighbours don’t know if they should say things to you or not

**Which ethnic group do you consider most likely/least likely to join the Police?**
Most Likely – white British....Least likely- Muslim....We attend the Hindu temple in Wellingborough and met the priest and an elder from the local community. They said that the local community are much more comfortable to talk with the Police. This has improved from 20 years ago. The Hindu community are more aware of the Police in a positive way, now more female Hindu are considering the Police as a career

**What are your views on positive action?**
(I needed to explain the term)
Access to information is a good thing....Introducing the idea....Treating them equally....If you want to join....My own grandparents have lived their whole life in a village, they use the village shop but that’s it. Everything they do is within the village. If you didn’t advertise in that village they would never see the information and they wouldn’t know....Information on leaflets....Door to door leaflet drops....Posters....Add information on to the bottom leaflets....Or on the back, saying that you are interested to hear from underrepresented groups and women

**Have you any further advice for Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service to assist the recruitment of women into the Service?**
More information....Duke of Edinburgh attachment....Youth Groups....15-16 year olds....Open days....Posters and leaflets....Through doors....‘Have a go days’....Do you present at schools, Air cadets, and school associations? Graduate fairs....More community engagement
Appendix E - Summary focus group at a Sikh Temple

Thematic Question – Fire Service is it a worthwhile career?

Indian Lady over 60 – “said Mark, thank you for telling me all about the fire service, but I am too old to join now.....I am 65, I am too old now, I would have thought about it when if I was younger....”

“I teach Punjabi, I don’t think you need to translate all your information, we should all speak English. That’s what I tell everyone, Punjabi is useful to know and to speak, but we are in England so we should not expect this information to be translated. This costs your fire service and other agencies lots of money and it’s a waste”

“My son is India, he has a career, so would not want to change to the fire service now, he has a PhD”...

“My daughter, is also in India She too has a career, it’s too late for her to change [....career....] now”

“My Grandchildren are too young to join”

“You want to visit the Sunday school; they would really enjoy listening to talks on the fire service, anything that gets them out of have to learn Punjabi!”

“They are a good age then to start to understand about the fire service”

“The community Centre next door, have you been along?” ....“Much younger people come along most nights there is something going on”

(In Indian Woman 41 to 50) “This is the first time that I can remember in the 33 years that I have been coming to the temple that the fire service have been along to talk”

“The Police are regularly providing talks and if you look at the notice board the police information is on display, but there is nothing about the Fire Service....”

(Discussion with Three Indian Men - two over 60 years old and one 41 to 50 years old)

“it’s really good what you are trying to do, to encourage young people to think about the fire service as a career”

“The turban is an issue for young men”

“Individuals who are extremists, I don’t mean in a negative way but want to follow their religion and wear a turban is always going to be difficult or even a barrier for them to join the fire service because of the fire helmet.”

Mark Ainge 08254330
MBA
May 17th 2010
“You can’t wear a turban and a fire helmet”

“When I was working, I worked for BT as an engineer; I worked on the high poles and needed to climb. BT gave me the inner parts of a hard hat which I used to put under my turban, that was fine, but you can’t do that with a fire helmet”

“There are other options, you see that man other there…. [points to another Sikh man wearing a small headscarf or handkerchief]..... for a Sikh it’s fine, we can wear a handkerchief and then you could probably wear the fire helmet over the top”

“While Sikh men can’t wear or don’t think that they can wear their turban, they won’t join”

“If you can get the turban and fire helmet issue sorted out …that will be a good one to put on to your CV!”

**Thematic Question - women joining the fire service**

“As a religion, we have never oppressed women, they are seen in our religion as equals”

“so there is no reason why women would not be encouraged to join or want to join”

“I didn’t realise until you said today of all the other jobs within the fire service, finance, IT and HR”

“I was surprised at the other jobs in the fire service that women can do if they don’t want to be firefighters”

“It’s really good that the fire service provide so much training for its workforce, this is usually the first thing that is cut”

“the training opportunities you spoke about are great, this is really encouraging for young people thinking about a career”

“The new skills that you can learn in the fire service, like health and safety and first aid are really good....

"you need to talk about this more”... “this is a real selling point for the fire service”
Appendix F - Summary of transcripts from semi structured interviews with FRS leaders

Thematic Question
In your opinion why are the numbers of women firefighters low – 4% of the operational workforce?

Leader A
Men and women are different. In my opinion a woman doesn't set out for a 30 year career. I am from a family of seven and I have 3 sisters. The expectation was that my sisters would have a career before they had children, then raise their family and may return to work for a second career. My wife, the expectation on her was the same, and in fact that is what she has done. Now that the children have grown up, She has embarked on a second career. This [FRS] career is not attractive to women or to some BME groups. We have done a far bit, for example removed the height restrictions, previously restrictions prevented about 95% of women from applying, only the top few percent were within the permitted height limits for the fire service. The publicity around a fire service career for women has been negative, Tania Clayton [Hereford and Worcester FRS, sex discrimination case which saw a £100k plus settlement], from this and other events including in London have shown the fire service in a poor light. The fictional stuff for example London’s Burning depict that the fire service is anti women. We need to do more with regards to positive publicity. Trousers, we need to get that right, so that women may have trousers that fit. Shoes which need to be padded out with paper to fit is totally unacceptable. The public image of a firefighter is probably a 6ft strapping male firefighter. I don’t think you will ever make it significantly attractive to women, women are different. A man will seek a career or a trade and fit his life around this. A woman will look to fit her career around her family. [Q – Is this nature or nurture?] Yes it could be nurture. I understand the need for fast tracking, although it has received a degree of negative feedback, certainly compared to the traditional approach. If you ask the public to draw a firefighter, how many would draw a woman? I accept that the behaviour within the service is not fully where it needs to be...

Leader B
The workplace- is it conducive to and appealing to a diverse workforce? By the workplace I mean both the physical set up of a fire station and the prevailing culture in that workplace. There still seem to be: beds, communal eating, cooks, dartboards and even bars on some fire stations. There still don't seem to be enough female toilet/shower/sanitary facilities, breastfeeding facilities, prayer facilities on stations. Whilst this is still the physical working environment, it will continue to attract traditional applicants and potentially put off more diverse applicants, especially when linked to the culture which this physical setup continues to sustain. More importantly for me, the role of the modern firefighter really isn't understood and many myths still abound. Anecdotally, I was on the service stand at [county] Show yesterday. Whilst our predominant focus was community safety, I took the opportunity to speak to the public about firefighter careers. "Too dangerous " and "I'm frightened of fire" were the two most common reasons for the service being discounted as a career option by many- they were surprised when I said the most frightening thing they were regularly likely to face was a school hall full of children on a community safety assembly! We desperately need a high profile national recruitment campaign that explodes myths and properly articulates the role, our modern values, the facilities our staff should expect etc

Leader C
The culture. To try and eliminate these issues, we removed the beds and developed unachievable targets. By following this approach we removed the opportunity for conflict in the workplace as the FF’s were never on station. And the issues of dormitories and dignity at work were reduced as the dormitories had gone.

Mark Ainge 08254330
MBA
May 17th 2010
Appendix G - Summary of Qualitative Results – Women’s Rugby Team

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Mark Ainge 08254330
MBA
May 17th 2010
Thematic Questions

What employment attracts you the most and why?
Job satisfaction, promotion prospects, salary, rewarding career, difference everyday

How do you view working in the public service?
Too political, its hard pay is not good, good job satisfaction, worthwhile job, held in high esteem by the public. Undervalued, challenging lack of funds.

What is your view of the FRS?
They do a great job...male dominated...high commendation....valuable emergency service....sexy men in uniform... underpaid....need to be strong..brave....unfriendly hours..teamwork..putting lives on the line...

The FRS has a role, what do you think that role is?
Protect the community, road traffic accidents...firefighting....public safety

What do you think the job of the firefighter is?
Risking their lives to save others as a team....protect the community....put out fires assist in road traffic accidents and assist other services.....to be fit to be presentable to be professional....promote fire safety.

What other jobs do you consider comparable with the Fire Service?
Police, ambulance and paramedics, Army, Nurses, NHS doctors, Armed forces

Would you consider the FRS as a career? Why or why not?
No...Happy in current job...No don’t want to work shifts. Yes but not as a FF.
Maybe, I want to be an officer. The recruitment process puts me off. I don’t think I am fit enough.

Would you encourage your family and friends to consider the FRS?
Yes, if they wanted...yes naturally I’d consider my male friends however; I am aware the role also suits female. Don’t Know.

Would your family or friends encourage you to consider the FRS?
Probably not, they would be scared, not the norm for a female, stereotypical probably not as it is dangerous....unlikely as I have a career planned...No scared of fire...yes they have tried...No shifts and rest.

Is there anything which is off putting about joining the FRS?
Yes...Scared of fire...I have asthma...fear...Sense of danger...the recruitment process...very ‘male’ orientated atmosphere.
What is attractive about joining the FRS?
Working as a team...promotion prospects...helping others...pension...job security...every day is different...camaraderie...feeling proud.

Do you consider the culture of the service to be a barrier?
Yes, inherently white males. No. I’d like the culture, very much a team player. No (but I do have a thick skin).

Which ethnic group do you consider most likely/least likely to join the FRS?
Asian, Jewish, Muslim, Asian women, eastern block, people that wear head garments. Most likely - white male.

When did FRS last recruit?
No idea. Don’t know.

Did you see the adverts?
No. Yes on the NCC website.

Did you hear about it about from any other source?
A friend applied. Friends who work in the service. Our partnership Rugby team and NFRS. No.

What is your view on positive action?
I think it is right, it can be a great help to underrepresented groups. I think if my house was on fire I would want a fire service that could put the fire out, regardless of the crew‘s background.

Have you any further advice for NFRS on the recruitment of women?
Schools education programmes, local press media. Advertise in better locations and let ladies visit the service to talk to FF’s. Continue to have involvement in sports clubs, sponsorship with sports and leisure events with the county.
Appendix H – An example of the Quantitative Questionnaire used for the research
Research into Fire and Rescue Service Recruitment 2009/10

This questionnaire seeks to understand individual’s views and perceptions of Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) as a career choice. NFRS seek to employ the best candidates regardless of background. Through this research study NFRS aim to improve the understanding of why people may choose not to apply to join NFRS. This study is to be conducted through the University of Northampton Business School as part of a Masters degree and will assist the development of future recruitment campaigns.

The questionnaire is divided into 20 questions and should take approximately 10 minutes complete. Your responses will be treated in the strictest of confidence and data will only be presented in an aggregated form. When you have completed the questionnaire, please return it to Mark Ainge at NFRS Service HQ, Moulton Way, Moulton Park, Northampton NN3 6XJ, to xxxx by hand (or Completed electronic versions save as initials or time & date to mainge@northantsfire.org.uk)

Thank you for your co-operation.

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<td>Living with Partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widowed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1.4. Ethnic Background</th>
<th>1.5. Religion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>Christian based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Caribbean</td>
<td>Islamic based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black African</td>
<td>Buddhist based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Other</td>
<td>Hindu based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>Hebrew based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistani</td>
<td>Agnostic/atheist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladeshi</td>
<td>Other please specify</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>(Please write details of ‘other’ here)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Asian</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Group, please specify</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Please write details of ‘other’ here)
2. What is your current employment status? (Please tick all the 'O' boxes which apply)

- Full time education O1
- Part time education O2
- Unemployed O3
- Full time carer O4
- Part time carer O5
- Voluntary work O6
- Part time employment O7
  (please indicate the average weekly hours worked)
- Full time employment O8
  (please indicate the average weekly hours worked)
- Two or more jobs O9

3. How would you define your work? (Please tick all the 'O' boxes which apply)

- Private sector O1
- Public Sector O2
- Voluntary Sector O3
- Manual work O1
- Semi skilled manual work O2
- Retail O3
- Caring/nursing O4
- Teaching O5
- Administration O6
- Professional driver (e.g. taxi, lorry, delivery) O7
- Leisure Industry O8
- Supervisory management O9
- Middle management O10
- Senior or Director Level Management O11

4. What is your Highest Education Qualification?

(Please write your answer here)
5. What would attract you to employment?

(Please tick all the 'O' boxes which apply)

Variety in the working day O1
Caring professions serving the community & helping people O2
Learning new skills O3
Educating/teaching people O4
Excitement and adrenaline rush O5
Job security O6
High salaries O7
High status in the community O8
Pension and benefits customer service O9
Opportunities to travel O10
Teamwork O11
Working using own initiative O12
Practical/outdoor activities O13
Child care provision O14
Job satisfaction O15
Part time hours O16
School term time only O17
An option for career breaks O18
Opportunities to gain higher education achievements O19
As a short term career O20
As a long term career O21
To be able to work with a diverse workforce O22
Working alone O23
Indoors O24
Community/Social status O25
Working for family or friends business O26
Guidance notes - Below are a series of statements – please read and record your views by circling a number on the scale. For example if you strongly agree with the statement, circle 7 to show as

6. I would consider working in the public service.

*(please circle the number below which reflects your view)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
<th>strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*If strongly disagree or agree, please write your reasons below*

7. Do you think working for NFRS is a worthwhile career choice?

*(please circle the number below which reflects your view)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
<th>strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*If strongly disagree or agree, please write your reasons below*

8. I would encourage my family or friends to consider NFRS as a career.

*(please circle the number below which reflects your view)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
<th>strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. I would be encouraged by my family or friends to consider NFRS as a career for myself.

*(please circle the number below which reflects your view)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
<th>strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10. NFRS and nationally fire and rescue services have a role, what do you think that role includes?

(Please tick all the ‘O’ boxes which apply)

- To fight fires
- Protect the public
- Rescue from fires
- Rescue from road/rail and air crashes
- Rescue animals
- Protect the environment
- Promote road safety
- Promote community safety
- Attend major disasters
- Attend /rescue from flooding incidents
- To decontaminate the public from hazardous materials
- Promote race relations
- Enforce legislation
- Charity work to raise money
- Work in partnership with the Police
- Work in partnership with local authorities
- Work in partnership with the private sector

11. What other jobs do you consider comparable with NFRS?

(Please tick all the ‘O’ boxes which apply)

- Police
- Ambulance
- Roadside assistance (e.g. RAC AA)
- Local government (County & District Council)
- Management (private & public sector)
- Teachers and lecturers (schools & colleges)
- Accountants
- Administration
- Armed forces
- Prison Service
12. Is there anything which is off-putting about joining NFRS?

(Please tick all the ‘O’ boxes which apply)

- Unsociable hours/working hours
- Believe it is dangerous work
- Pay and pension
- Uniform
- Team working
- The public image of fire and rescue service
- Structured career path
- Working night shifts
- Fear of the unknown?
- Perception of physical strength required

13. What do you think the salary is for a qualified (competent) Firefighter working 42 hours a week? (Please tick the ‘O’ box to indicate your answer)

- Under £15,000
- £15,001 to £20,000
- £20,001 to £25,000
- £25,001 to £30,000

14. a) The fire and rescue service has traditionally been a male occupation, since 1982 that changed, now both men and women can be firefighters.

What percentage of firefighters in Northamptonshire do you think are female?

(Please tick the ‘O’ box to indicate your answer)

- 0%  
- 1%  
- 2%  
- 3%  
- 4%  
- 5%  
- 6%  
- 7%  
- 8%  
- 9%  
- 10%  
- 11%  
- 12%  
- 13%  
- 14%  
- 15%  
- 16%  
- 17%  
- 18%  
- 19%  
- 20%  
- 21%  
- 22%  
- 23%
14 b) Having answered question “14a)” above, would the ratio of male to female firefighters put your off joining NFRS?

(please circle the number below which reflects your view)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
<th>strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15. Which ethnic and religious group do you consider most likely & least likely to join the NFRS? (Please tick all the ‘O’ boxes which apply)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Background</th>
<th>Most likely</th>
<th>least likely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>O1</td>
<td>O11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Caribbean</td>
<td>O2</td>
<td>O12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black African</td>
<td>O3</td>
<td>O13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Other</td>
<td>O4</td>
<td>O14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>O5</td>
<td>O15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistani</td>
<td>O6</td>
<td>O16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladeshi</td>
<td>O7</td>
<td>O17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>O8</td>
<td>O18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Asian</td>
<td>O9</td>
<td>O19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Group,</td>
<td>O10</td>
<td>O20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>please specify</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Most likely</th>
<th>least likely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christian based</td>
<td>O1</td>
<td>O11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islamic based</td>
<td>O2</td>
<td>O12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buddhist based</td>
<td>O3</td>
<td>O13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindu based</td>
<td>O4</td>
<td>O14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hebrew based</td>
<td>O5</td>
<td>O15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agnostic/atheist</td>
<td>O6</td>
<td>O16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other please specify</td>
<td>O7</td>
<td>O17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Please write details of ‘other’ here)

16. When did the Fire and Rescue Service last recruit in Northamptonshire?

(Please tick the ‘O’ box to indicate your answer)

| Always recruiting | O1          |
| 2009              | O2          |
| 2008              | O3          |
| 2007              | O4          |
| 2006              | O5          |
| Never recruit     | O6          |
17. Where, in your opinion, is the best place to advertise NFRS recruitment campaigns? *(Please tick all the ‘O’ boxes which apply)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>O</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bus shelters</td>
<td>01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Billboards</td>
<td>02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job centre</td>
<td>03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment magazine</td>
<td>04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional journals</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General interest magazines</td>
<td>06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local press</td>
<td>07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hairdressers</td>
<td>09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The local Fire Station</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The internet</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct mail shots to homes in the county</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prayer and religious meeting places</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public buildings</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The local library</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Schools and colleges</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Career fairs</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Graduate fairs</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure centres</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsorship of local events</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsorship of local sporting clubs</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance at Local events</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word of mouth</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire and Rescue awareness days</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local sport events</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other - Please specify</strong></td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Please write your ‘other’ and your suggestions here)
18. NFRS aspires to attract the best candidates to jobs as firefighters and managers. Do you think NFRS should positively seek to recruit new personnel from underrepresented groups of people into the Fire and Rescue Service?

(Please circle the number below which reflects your view)

strongly disagree                           strongly agree

1  2  3  4  5  6  7

* Positive action is a legal term used under the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, the Race Relations Act 1976, Employment Equality Regulations for Religion and Belief and Sexual Orientation, The Disability Discrimination Act. The term positive action refers to a variety of measures designed to counteract the effects of past discrimination and to help eliminate stereotyping. This allows employers to support underrepresented groups prior to the application stage. The support enables the individuals to start the application process on an equal level.

19. In your opinion which workforce would provide the best service and skills?

(Please tick ONE ‘O’ box to reflect your opinion)

A workforce made up of one gender and one ethnic background, experienced and well trained to serve the community.                  O1

A diverse workforce – which reflects the community, to which it serves, experienced and well trained to serve the community.       O2
20. Have you any further advice for Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service to assist the recruitment of women into the Service?

(Please write your advice here)
Would you like the opportunity to influence Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service on recruitment issues?

If you would be interested in taking part in a focus group to discuss recruitment please tick this ‘O’ and complete your contact details below.

Career Opportunities

If you would like to find out more about the career opportunities and the work of the NFRS please tick this ‘O’ provide an email address or contact details below. Please complete in block capitals

Name
Address
Postcode
Telephone number
Email address

Thank You for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

Ethics and confidentiality
Your answers will be of great assistance to NFRS and please be assured of the confidentiality of your responses; your answers will not be linked to your name in the subsequent report. The research methodology complies with The University of Northampton ‘Code of Ethics’ for research.
Appendix I – Summary of the quantitative findings

Question 1.1. The age profile of the respondents

The number of respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Groups of respondents</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 to 16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 to 21</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 to 30</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 to 40</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 to 50</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51 to 60</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 60</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 1.2. The gender profile of respondents as a percentage of respondents

Gender Profile of respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender Profile of respondents</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.2 Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The actual number of respondents

Mark Ainge 08254330
MBA
May 17th 2010
"Desperately Seeking Susan!"
A critical analysis of gender, culture and leadership in a changing environment

Question 1.3. The declared marital status of the respondents

Question 1.4. The declared ethnicity of the respondents
Question 1.5. The declared religious or faith beliefs of the respondents

[Bar chart showing the percentage of men and women who declared religious or faith beliefs in categories such as Christian-based, Islamic-based, Buddhist-based, Hindu-based, Hebrew-based, Apostolic/Atheist, and Other please specify.]
Question 2. What is your current employment status?

Men

Women
Question 3a. How would you define your work?
Question 3b. Comparator data on part time and full time jobs - as declared by the respondents

![Bar chart showing the average hours worked in a week for part-time and full-time jobs, comparing men and women.]

Question 4. What is your highest education qualification?

![Bar chart showing the percentage of men and women with different education qualifications.]

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MBA
May 17th 2010
Question 5. What would attract you to employment?

Variety in the working day - Men 70%, Women 60%
Helping people - Men 80%, Women 70%
Excitement and adrenaline rush - Men 60%, Women 50%
Pension and benefits - Men 40%, Women 30%
Job security - Men 70%, Women 60%
Opportunities to travel - Men 60%, Women 50%
Practical/outdoor activities - Men 70%, Women 60%
Child care provision - Men 40%, Women 30%
Job satisfaction - Men 60%, Women 50%
Part-time hours / flexible work - Men 40%, Women 30%
School term-time only - Men 20%, Women 10%
As a long-term career opportunity - Men 50%, Women 40%
Opportunities to gain higher education - Men 30%, Women 20%
To be able to work with a diverse workforce - Men 50%, Women 40%

Mark Ainge 08254330
MBA
May 17th 2010
Question 6. Profile of respondents views on working in the public sector

Question 7. A profile of the views on working in Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service

Mark Ainge 08254330
MBA
May 17th 2010
Question 8. Respondents views on encouraging family and friends to join NFRS

Question 9. Respondents views on whether Family or friends would provide encouragement to consider NFRS as a career
Questions 10. Respondents views on the role of the NFRS

To fight fires
Protect the public
Rescue from fires
Rescue from road/rail and air crashes
Rescue animals
Protect the environment
Promote community safety
Attend major disasters
Attend/rescue from flooding incidents
Promote road safety
To decontaminate the public from hazardous materials
Promote race relations
Enforce legislation
Charity work to raise money
Work in partnership with the Police
Work in partnership with local authorities
Work in partnership with the private sector

Men
Women
Question 11. Respondents view on what were comparable jobs to FRS
Question 12. Respondents view on what is off putting about joining NFRS
“Desperately Seeking Susan!”
A critical analysis of gender, culture and leadership in a changing environment

Question 13. Respondents view on FF pay
per annum (actual pay £28k)

Question 14a. What percentage of firefighters in Northamptonshire do you think are female?

Mark Ainge 08254330
MBA
May 17th 2010
Question 15a. Which ethnic group are most likely to join NFRS?

Question 15b. Which ethnic group is least likely to join NFRS?
Question 15c. Which religious group is most likely to join NFRS?

![Diagram showing percentage of men and women from different religious backgrounds expressing interest in joining NFRS.]

Question 15d. Which religious group is least likely to join NFRS?

![Diagram showing percentage of men and women from different religious backgrounds expressing interest in joining NFRS.]

Question 16. When did NFRS last recruit?

![Diagram showing percentage of men and women who joined NFRS in different years.]

Mark Ainge 08254330
MBA
May 17th 2010
Question 17. Where is the best place to advertise NFRS recruitment campaigns?
Question 18. Respondents view on positive action

![Bar chart showing respondents' views on positive action.]

Question 19. Respondents view on a diverse workforce

![Bar chart showing respondents' views on a diverse workforce.]

Mark Ainge 08254330
MBA
May 17th 2010
Question 20. Have you any further advice for NFRS to assist the recruitment of women?

**Men’s view**
The more you get the more will apply. How about women leaving the armed forces who are used to a physical life?

**Women’s view**
Would not consider the service, too many cut backs, very dangerous role, need to be very fit. Approach sports groups. Perhaps attending events that specialise in women giving then tester days to prove it is possible to achieve. Women are equal and should be treated the same as men. Other than that if the women want to be in the service that much they wouldn’t let anything get in their way. **Don’t keep the service a secret.** Give information out to show how it can fit in with family life. Family friends shifts and consider working parents. **Being a Muslim woman myself, it would be better if there could be some sort of reasonable understanding that men and women shouldn’t freely mix.** Maybe have men and women separate areas, when eating and learning, this doesn’t mean separate rooms, just separate sides. Also places to **pray and wash for prayer.** Assure women and men that there will be equal opportunities as well as inform younger people about NFRS. **Consider what a husband with children would think of his wife out fighting fires!** To make woman more ware that there are places available to them. Maybe allow female firefighters to go around schools to help raise awareness (14-16 female)

Make it sound more appealing (female u14 white).Get people who are good in a team (female u 14 white).Come to school to give presentations. Advertise and promote more in schools. Have open days where women can come along to the fire station. Information e.g. TV program which shows the role of firemen and women including behind the scenes, ideally a TV series – like London’s burning. Get the issue on to the pilot of a soap opera, use current female officers as role models.
Appendix J – Fire and Rescue vacancies- Municipal Corporation, Chandigarh
(FIRE & EMERGENCY SERVICES)

Applications are invited for the following posts in the Municipal Corporation, Chandigarh.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Post</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Pay Scale (Rs.)</th>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Firemen</td>
<td>Total 47</td>
<td>Rs. 5910-20200 + Rs. 1900 GRADE PAY (Pre-revised pay scale of Rs. 3120-5160)</td>
<td>Minimum matric should preferably be demobilised soldiers or other able bodied persons who are quite fit to undergo rigorous duties of a Fire Brigade Personnel.</td>
<td>18-30 years (on 01.01.09)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total 47</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Driver</td>
<td>Total 9</td>
<td>Rs. 5910-20200 + Rs. 2400 GRADE PAY (Pre-revised Pay scale of Rs. 4020-6200)</td>
<td>Middle standard minimum holding driving licence of driving Heavy Vehicles of not less than 5 years prior to the date of recruitment in Fire &amp; Emergency Services. He must have experience of carrying out running repairs to vehicle and other Fire Services appliances</td>
<td>18-30 years (on 01.01.09)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Watch Room Duty Operator Total 3</td>
<td>02 01 -- --</td>
<td>Rs. 5910-20200 + Rs. 1900 GRADE PAY (Pre-revised pay scale of Rs. 3120-5160)</td>
<td>Matric or above.</td>
<td>18-30 years (on 01.01.09)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE :- Written Test for the above categories will be held. However written test of Firemen and Drivers will be conducted subject to their qualifying the physical fitness standard test.

**Physical standard required for the posts of Firemen and Driver :-**
- a) Height 5'-5" (b) Chest 33-1/2" unexpanded with 1-1/2" expansion, c) Eye sight 6/6 without glasses.

**Physical fitness standard for the posts of Firemen and Drivers.**
- a) Running distance of 100 yards with a weight of 60 Kgs. Stone in one minute, b) Lifting the hook ladder to a vertical position by 3rd and 6 round, c) Climbing a rope or a vertical pipe to a height of 8-10 feet from the ground.

Age relaxation :- The relaxation for Ex-servicemen and Scheduled Caste candidates will be allowed in accordance with the order issued by the Government of India/Chandigarh Administration from time to time. Applications on prescribed proforma as per specimen given below alongwith a self addressed envelope, two passport size photographs, attested copies of certificates of Educational Qualification/Experience/sports category and application fee. In shape of bank draft of Rs. 100/- (Rs. 50/- in case of SC & OBC candidates) drawn in favour of Commissioner, Municipal Corporation, Chandigarh should reach in the office of Chief Fire Officer, Fire Station, Sector 17, Chandigarh by 26.9.2009. Applications received after due date will not be entertained. No TA/DA is admissible.

Mark Ainge 08254330
MBA
May 17th 2010
Appendix K – General vacancies Municipal Corporation, Chandigarh.

(Establishment Branch) Appointments

Applications are invited for selection of the following posts in the Municipal Corporation, Chandigarh purely on contract basis for a period of six months or till such time their services are required, whichever is earlier. The interested candidates may send their applications alongwith demand draft of Rs. 500/- in favour of Commissioner, MCC , payable at Chandigarh and the copies of eligibility documents, services documents, retirement papers and testimonials upto 7th September 2009. The performa of application may be downloaded from our website mcchandigarh.nic.in. The eligible applicants will be called for an interview on 14th September 2009 at 9.30A.M onwards. The detail is given below:-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Name of posts</th>
<th>Number of posts</th>
<th>Eligibility/ Qualification</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Consolidated emolument</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Superintendent Grade-II</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Only retired Govt. officials from Punjab, Haryana and U.T., Chandigarh not below the rank of Superintendent Grade-II and Bachelors degree &amp; proficiency in operation of computer (word processing and Spread sheets ).</td>
<td>Below 60 years</td>
<td>Last pay drawn (-) pension(+) D.A or the monthly emoluments as fixed by the Chandigarh Administration whichever is less.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Sr. Asstt.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Only retired Govt. officials from Punjab, Haryana and U.T., Chandigarh not below the rank of Senior Assistant having a minimum experience of 5 years and Bachelors degree &amp; proficiency in operation of computer (word processing and Spread sheets ).</td>
<td>Below 60 years</td>
<td>Last pay drawn (-) pension(+) D.A or the monthly emoluments as fixed by the Chandigarh Administration whichever is less.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Tax Inspector</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Only retired Govt. officials from Punjab, Haryana and U.T., Chandigarh not below the rank of Tax Inspector having a minimum experience of 5 years and Bachelors degree</td>
<td>Below 60 years</td>
<td>Last pay drawn (-) pension(+) D.A or the monthly emoluments as fixed by the Chandigarh Administration whichever is less.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Tax Collector</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Only retired Govt. officials from Punjab, Haryana and U.T., Chandigarh not below the rank of Tax Collector having a minimum experience of 5 years and Bachelors degree.</td>
<td>Below 60 years</td>
<td>Last pay drawn (-) pension(+) D.A or the monthly emoluments as fixed by the Chandigarh Administration whichever is less.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position</td>
<td>Required qualifications</td>
<td>Experience</td>
<td>Salary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Steno-Typist</td>
<td>Bachelors degree and proficiency in operation of computer (word processing and Spread sheets) and a Speed of 80 words per minute in Stenography (English) and speed of 20 w.p.m. in transcripting the same.</td>
<td>Below 35 Years</td>
<td>Rs. 10000/- p.m.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Clerk</td>
<td>Bachelors degree and proficiency in operation of computer (word processing and Spread sheets) and a Speed of 30 words per minute in English Typewriting.</td>
<td>Below 35 Years</td>
<td>Rs. 9500/- p.m.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Data Entry Operator      | i. Bachelors degree from a recognized university and Data Entry Course or equivalent course from a recognized institution.  
                                   ii. Should possess a speed of not less than 8000 key depressions per hour for data entry work.  
                                   Desirable: 1 year experience as Data Entry Operator.  | Below 35 Years | Rs. 9500/- p.m.  |
| Accountant               | i. B.Com or M.A. in Economics of a recognized University.  
                                   ii. Intermediate of CA/ICWA/CS/ will be preferred.  | Below 35 Years | Rs. 19800/- p.m. |
Appendix L- Safety sign attached to a Training tower – subliminal message?

A sign which was attached to a fire station training tower (the photo was taken in March 2010). Note the words “QUALIFIED FIREMAN”. The fire station currently has two women firefighters stationed there and some 15 years ago was the workplace for a woman supervisory manager.