

Lothian Firefighters to get new training facilities

Planning approval has been granted to Lothian and Borders Fire and Rescue Service (LBFRS) to allow for the build of new fire training facilities at Newcraighall fire station.

The additional facilities will include an Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) area, rope rescue and RTC training area to prepare firefighters to deal with rescues across a wide range of eventualities from a natural disaster to a terrorist attack.

The hard standing training area will be developed next to the existing fire station at Newcraighall. Instructors will be able to simulate the type of conditions firefighters could face in the event of a serious incident.

LBFRS is required to have a minimum of 60 staff trained in USAR techniques, with the specialist-trained firefighters potentially needed to respond to both local and national incidents.

The new training area will allow fire crews to practise a range of search and rescue skills including accessing casualties trapped in collapsed buildings, using thermal imaging cameras, heavy rig for breaking large holes in concrete structures and shoring techniques. Firefighters will also receive training on rope rescue techniques and response to road traffic collisions.

Personnel from other areas of Scotland may also be trained there under proposals for a single national fire service.

Development of the new facility, which is expected to cost around £450,000, is hoped to be underway in the near future.

A spokeswoman for Lothian and Borders Fire and Rescue Service said: -“We are pleased that our application for planning permission has been granted. This will allow us to progress the build of vital fire training facilities.

“The training area will allow us to deliver in-house courses and could potentially provide training for personnel from outside our Service area as we move towards a single fire and rescue service.

“The new build will create a site for realistic training scenarios which will ensure our personnel continue to be trained to the highest standard to provide an emergency response to the public.”