



Kildare County Fire and Rescue Service

Fire and Emergency Services Plan

January 2009

1. Introduction	3
2. Overview of Organisation.....	4
3. Fire Stations.....	4
3.1 Appliances and equipment	8
3.2 Equipment acquired during 2008.....	9
3.3 Planned acquisitions for 2009.....	10
4 Water supplies and Extinguishing Agents	11
5 Training	12
6 Health and Safety	12
7 Operational Procedures.....	13
8 Areas of operation.....	14
9 Community Interactions	14
9.1 Schools Programme.....	14
9.2 Fire Cadet Corp	14
Appendix A: Organisation Diagram Kildare Fire Service January 2008.....	15
Appendix B: Pre-Determined Attendance Schedule	17
Appendix C: Station Locations and Areas Covered	19
Appendix D: Attendance Times for Kildare Fire Service (1997 – 2004), (2004 – 2008) and (1997 – 2008)	21

1. Introduction

This document has been prepared to identify the provisions made by the Fire Authority of County Kildare (Kildare Fire Service) for fire and emergency operations in its functional area, in accordance with Section 26 of the Fire Services Act 1981.

“Each fire authority which maintains a fire brigade shall prepare (and, as occasion requires, revise) plans for fire and emergency operations showing the provision made by it in respect of organisation, appliances, equipment, fire stations, water supplies and extinguishing agents, training, operational procedure and such other matters as may be relevant, and for dealing with operations of an emergency nature under section 25.”

The report will identify the location and strength of fire brigades in the county, discuss supplies of water and other extinguishing agents, the level of training provided to staff and operational procedures.

Kildare Fire Service was provided with an annual budget of €4.74m for 2008 (Budget 2008, Kildare County Council), out of a total revenue budget of €135.8 million (3.5%).

Key Performance Indicators are outlined below (Source: Service Indicators in Local Authorities 2004, 2005, 2006 – Local Government Management Services Board. www.lgmsb.ie)

	2005	2006	2007	2008
Mobilisation of Fire Brigade (minutes)	5.6	5.8	5.6	5.74
First attendance within 10 minutes (%)	32.9	26.5	28.7	26.8
First attendance between 10 and 20 minutes (%)	55.5	60	59.3	57.4
First attendance after 20 minutes (%)	11.6	13.5	12.0	15.8

In 2008, Kildare Fire Service attended a total of 1908 calls. 1301 of these incidents were fires, the remainder being road traffic incidents (215), flooding incidents (96) and other rescue and miscellaneous calls. The types of fire attended were:

- Motor vehicle fires: 278 (21%)
- Chimney Fires: 251 (19%)
- Outdoor rubbish: 247 (19%)
- Other Domestic Fires: 201 (15%)
- Other fires: 324

2. Overview of Organisation

Kildare Fire Service is organised into a number of sections. At present there are 3 sections – Fire Safety/Prevention, Operations, and Emergency Planning/Special Projects. Each section is overseen by a Senior Assistant Chief Fire Officer who reports to the Chief Fire Officer.

The Emergency Planning/Special Projects section is currently working on implementing the plan for major emergencies, in coordination with other response agencies (An Garda Síochána, the Health Services Executive and the County Council). The section is also continuing to prepare pre-incident plans for high-risk premises, and in 2009 will begin work on developing a risk profile of the county.

Fire Safety and Prevention carry out inspections of premises in the county and adjudicate on Fire Safety Certificate applications for new buildings, as well as raising public awareness of fire safety in the home and at work.

The Operations section manages the 6 fire stations in the county, ensuring that they are adequately staffed, trained and equipped. The operational fire service is a retained system, with 4 full-time station officers. These station officers are employed on a 5-day basis, working at fire stations from 0830 to 1730 daily, and are rostered available for firefighting on a 24 hour basis. Retained firefighters are called when required by means of a wireless alerter system.

The present number of retained firefighters is 67, from a required establishment of 84. Recruitment of firefighters is carried out on an annual basis. The staffing levels and structure at January 2009 are shown in Appendix A.

3. Fire Stations

The county currently provides fire and emergency service cover from 6 stations throughout the county. Staff and appliances at each station are outlined below.

KE11 – Newbridge



Figure 1: Newbridge Fire Station

Newbridge is the headquarters of Kildare Fire Service. It comprises a 5-bay station, headquarters offices and facilities for Fire Service staff, a workshop and training facilities.

The station is manned by 1 full-time Station Officer, 2 Sub-Station Officers, 4 Driver/Mechanics and 10 Firefighters. (17 staff total)

The fire station is equipped with 2 Class B water tenders ("frontline" vehicles, with firefighting pumps and crash rescue equipment), an Emergency Tender, a Hydraulic Platform and a water tanker.

This station is also equipped with a variety of smaller vehicles and spare appliances.

KE12 – Naas



Figure 2: Naas Fire Station

Naas is a 2-bay station. It is equipped with a class B water tender, an emergency tender and a water tanker.

At Naas, there is 1 full-time Station Officer, 2 Sub-Station Officers, 3 Driver/Mechanics and 7 Firefighters. (13 staff total)

KE13 – Athy



Figure 3: Athy Fire Station

Athy is a 2-bay station, equipped with a class B water tender and a water tanker.

It is manned by a full-time Station Officer, 2 Sub-Station Officers, 1 Driver/Mechanic and 5 Firefighters. (9 staff total)

KE14 – Maynooth



Figure 4: Maynooth Fire Station

Maynooth has a 3-bay station, with a class B water tender, an Emergency Tender and a water tanker.

In Maynooth there is 1 Sub-Station Officer, 2 Driver/Mechanics and 8 Firefighters. (11 staff total) The Station Officer based in Leixlip also covers the Maynooth Station Area.

KE15 – Monasterevin



Figure 5: Monasterevin Fire Station

Monasterevin is a 2-bay station and has a class B water tender and a water tanker.

There is an Acting Sub-Station Officer, 2 Driver Mechanics and 7 Firefighters based at Monasterevin. (10 staff total) The Station Officer in Athy currently covers the Monasterevin Station Area.

KE16 – Leixlip



Figure 6: Leixlip Fire Station

Leixlip is a 2-bay station and has a class B water tender and a hydraulic platform. During 2008, refurbishment work has been carried out on the muster bay and the conservatory.

Leixlip has 1 full time Station Officer, 1 Sub-Station Officer, 2 Driver/Mechanics and 7 Firefighters (11 staff total). The Station Officer for Leixlip also covers the Maynooth Station Area.

3.1 Appliances and equipment

3.1.1 Class B Water Tender



Figure 7: Class B Water Tender



Figure 8: Class B Water Tender

All stations in the county are provided with a Class B water tender. This is the first response appliance and because of its equipment load, it can deal with a wide variety of calls. Class B water tenders are generally equipped with a 1800-litre water tank, a fixed centrifugal pump, a portable pump, ladders, breathing apparatus and a selection of hoses and branches for firefighting. They are also equipped with rescue equipment for extrication purposes.

Generally, a crew of 6 is carried on a Class B water tender – an officer, the driver and 4 firefighters.

3.1.2 Emergency Tender



Figure 9: Emergency Tender



Figure 10: Emergency Tender

Emergency tenders are equipped with a broader selection of rescue equipment and are used in conjunction with the class B appliance at Road Traffic Accidents and at rescue calls.

3.1.3 Water Tanker



Figure 11: Water Tanker



Figure 12: Water Tanker

Water tankers are used to support fire-fighting operations where water supplies are not sufficient.

3.1.4 Hydraulic Platform



Figure 13: Hydraulic Platform



Figure 14: Hydraulic Platform

Hydraulic Platform (Aerial) appliances are kept at Newbridge and Leixlip stations and are available for use around the County and if requested, in adjoining counties. These can provide access and working platforms to a height of 22 metres.

3.1.5 Officer Vehicles

Each of the Station Officers is equipped with a four wheel drive off-road vehicle, and the rostered Senior Fire Officer has access to a similar vehicle during his/her duty period.



Figure 15: Station Officer vehicle



Figure 16: Senior Officer vehicle

3.2 Equipment acquired during 2008

During 2008, Kildare Fire Service purchased a warning trailer for use at Road Traffic Incidents. This has been located at Naas Fire Station, and can be towed by a van or off-road vehicle to provide early warning to oncoming traffic that there is an incident on the road ahead.



As part of a joint project with the Road Safety Officer in Kildare County Council, a mobile library vehicle has been converted into a fire and road safety roadshow vehicle, for use at public events to promote fire and road safety. This vehicle has audio-visual presentation facilities as well as meeting space and could potentially be used at the scene of a large-scale incident as a coordination facility.

Also purchased was a 3000-litre diesel bowser trailer for use at extended duration incidents.

3.3 Planned acquisitions for 2009

Following a tender advertisement in 2008, a contract has been awarded for 2 new Class B fire tenders. Delivery of these is expected in early summer 2009. Their arrival will allow older appliances to be taken off the front line.

Kildare Fire Service has received tenders for a new Emergency Tender and will proceed with the contract, expecting to have delivery by the end of 2009. It is also expected to have delivery of a replacement Hydraulic Platform by the end of 2009 for Newbridge station.

Also expected in early 2009 is the installation of a Vehicle Mounted Data System (VMDS) in front-line appliances and officers' vehicles. This on-board computer system will provide information technology facilities to firefighting personnel en-route to and at incidents.

Reference packages contained on the VMDS include Chemdata (a reference guide to dealing with hazardous substances) and Autodata (based on manufacturers' information, this package provides valuable information to

personnel about features and hazards that might be encountered in vehicles involved in a collision).

There will also be guidelines and aides-memoire accessible on the system, including Standard Operational Guidelines and Dynamic Risk Assessments. Information gathered as part of pre-incident planning at high risk premises, which includes building layouts, hazard identification and risk cards, will also be uploaded onto the system for reference.

The system has an integrated GPS and satellite navigation system, as well as an on-board printer. It is expected that the VMDS will improve the health and safety of firefighters and enhance their effectiveness.

4 Water supplies and Extinguishing Agents

Water is the most commonly used extinguishing agent. Kildare County Council supplies water to the county, predominantly in towns and villages via a network of reservoirs and distribution mains with hydrant access for firefighting. In some rural areas, water is supplied by means of a Group Water Scheme.

Static water supplies, in the form of tanks and ponds may also be used. These may be required as a condition of planning permission or the fire safety certificate for particular buildings. The firefighting water supply requirement is 1150 litres per minute (lpm) for housing developments, increasing to 2250 lpm for commercial and industrial developments.

In a situation where the water supply is inadequate for firefighting, the five water tankers stationed around the county are available to respond to calls – the tankers also attend certain incidents as required by the Pre-Determined Attendance.

In extreme circumstances, water may also be available from nearby watercourses, and pumping relays may be used.

Occasionally other extinguishing agents are required. Foam is used at fires for example where petrol or oil are involved. Stocks of foam are kept on the fire appliances for smaller incidents, with backup stocks located at Newbridge. Large incidents may require the use of larger quantities of foam, and arrangements are in place for the transportation of supplies from other parts of the county, from other counties and from suppliers in Dublin if required.

5 Training

A continuous programme of training is in place. Investment in staff training is considered vital to the provision of a safe, professional and effective service. All new firefighters are required to undergo a 2-week recruit training course (to a national syllabus issued by the Fire Services Council) and a 2-week breathing apparatus training course (also to a Fire Services Council syllabus). Breathing apparatus training is augmented with Compartment (Hot) Fire Behaviour training, which familiarises personnel with the behaviour of fires in enclosed spaces. Officer training is provided to officers at both Senior and Junior level.

Personnel are also provided with driver training, Road Traffic Collision training, first responder medical training and other specialised training, with particular reference to health and safety requirements. Water-awareness and water safety first responder training is also carried out.

Further training is also carried out at weekly drill sessions held at each station. Approximately €300,000 is spent annually on training by Kildare Fire Service.

6 Health and Safety

The biggest challenge facing any Fire Services at present and in the future is the health, safety and welfare of all its employees. The nature of the work and the environments that the Fire Service operates in is such that predicting the situations Fire Service personnel will attend is almost impossible. In reality every incident that the Fire Service responds to will be different and catering for every eventuality cannot be achieved, therefore preparing the employees to safely deal with each incident in the best possible manner is very difficult but vital.

The 2005 Health, Safety and Welfare at Work Act clearly define the duties and the responsibilities that exist for every employer. The Fire Service is no different to any other employer and therefore is obliged to ensure that these responsibilities are carried out despite the fact that they are required on a regular basis to work in very hazardous situations.

In the past two years a number of very serious accidents in various Irish Fire Services has highlighted the importance of examining the levels of Health & Safety in each service. The Health and Safety Authority (HSA) has conducted a number of investigations into these accidents and has brought legal proceedings against some Fire Services. These investigations and the resulting decisions have highlighted a serious deficiency in all Fire Services in terms of their Health and Safety provisions.

In particular regulation 80 of the 2005 Act defines the parameters of responsibility that apply to the directors and officers that are in charge of the workplace. The Health and Safety Authority has actively pursued individuals in senior positions in Fire Services where serious accidents have occurred on the grounds of negligence and in some cases arrests have been made and the decision to prosecute is with the Director of Public Prosecutions.

In light of the recent serious accidents each Fire Service must now re-examine how it manages all aspects of Health and Safety and what is its approach to dealing with any hazards and risks. It is now very clear that the Fire Service is required in the same way as all other employers are, to provide the levels of safety provisions that are laid down in the 2005 Act.

In Kildare Fire Service the approach taken has been to appoint a Senior Officer who is competent in the area of Health and Safety as an advisor to the Chief Fire Officer and to instigate an entirely new programme for Health and Safety for the Fire Service. To date this has included a new Ancillary Safety Statement, a new set of standard operational guidelines, a new incident/accident reporting system, new safety representatives and safety management committee, new training courses and a review of training needs, the purchase of new safety equipment and a number of other new safety initiatives.

7 Operational Procedures

Emergency calls for Kildare Fire Service are received and co-ordinated by a 24-hour Control centre in Newbridge Fire Station. Emergency calls are routed to the Control centre by Eircom operators. The Control centre operator mobilises the required resources according to the location and type of the incident, and a pre-determined attendance procedure (see Appendix B).

A pager alerter system is used to alert firefighters (and has been since 1972), and radio communications are used to control appliances once mobilised. The present enhanced alerter system was installed in summer 2006 following a tender process, and it is fully compliant with the requirements of the Eastern Regional Communications Centre (ERCC – formerly CAMP).

5 Senior Fire Officers are on an availability roster, and each is available on-call on a 24-hour basis. At least 1 full-time Station Officer is available at all times, allowing other Station Officers to attend courses and avail of annual leave.

8 Areas of operation

Kildare County Council is the fire authority for the county of Kildare, and the urban districts of Naas and Athy. Agreements under Section 10 of the Fire Services Act have been made in relation to fire cover at border areas with Laois, Carlow, Offaly, Wicklow and Dublin, as well as the Defence Forces at the Curragh Camp. These areas are identified at the control centre in order that the correct station can be mobilised.

The stations and station areas covered by Kildare Fire Service are shown on the attached map (Appendix C). Approximate attendance times are indicated on the map in (Appendix D) showing the areas where first attendance at scene is from 0-10 minutes, from 10-20 minutes and greater than 20 minutes. (The average mobilisation time for the county in 2008 was 5.74 minutes).

9 Community Interactions

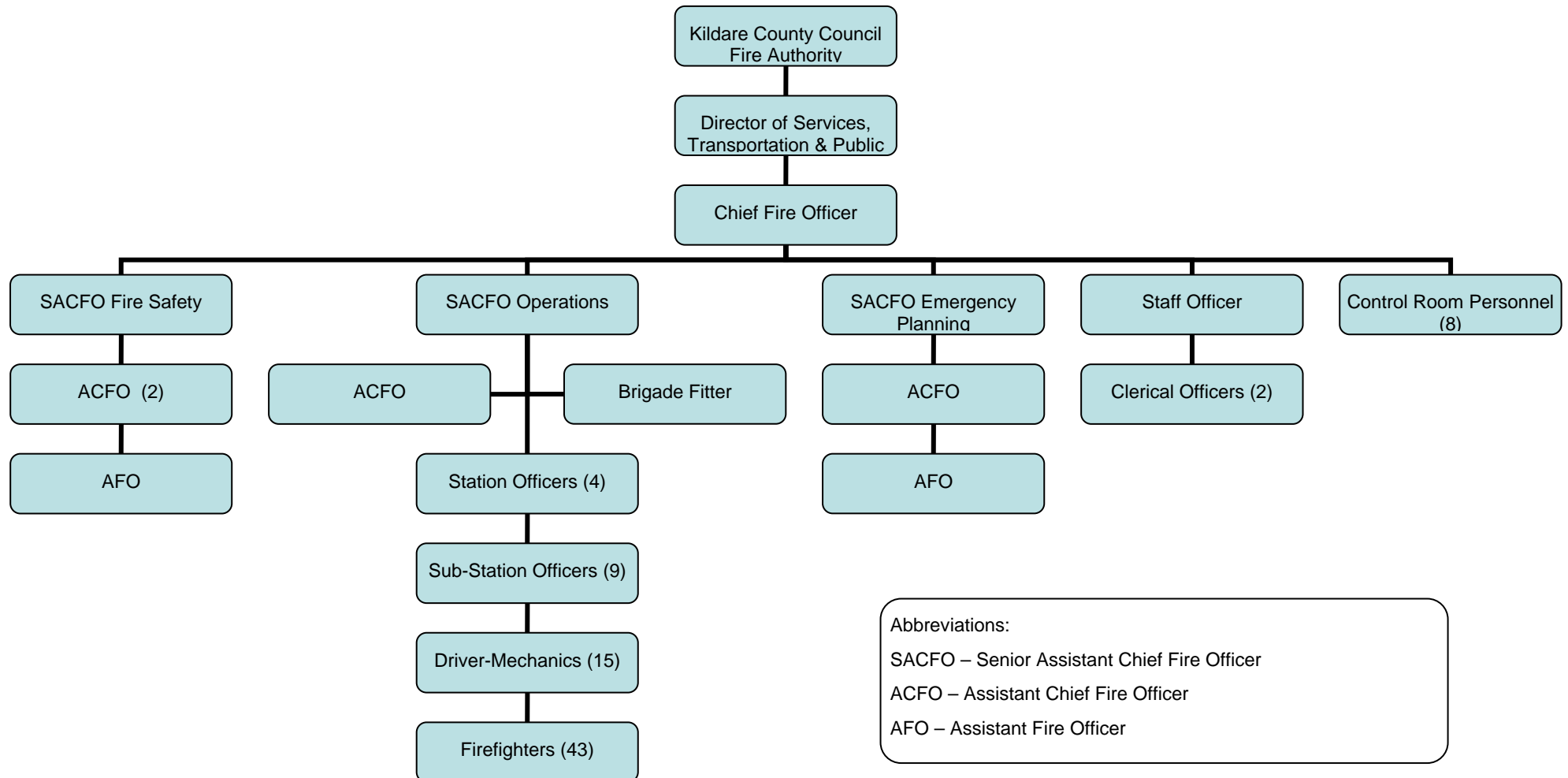
9.1 Schools Programme

Members of the firefighting crews from all stations are involved in a programme to highlight fire safety to all 3rd class primary school children in the county. This project was initiated in the 2007/2008 school year and is already well underway for the 2008/2009 school year.

9.2 Fire Cadet Corp

It is proposed to start the first Fire Cadet Corp in the county based in Athy towards the end of 2009. This project will involve recruiting 12 – 14 students aged between 13 and 16 who will receive training similar to that provided to recruit Firefighters. Cadet leaders taken from firefighting crews will be appointed as trainers and the cadets will experience aspects of the work and training undertaken by the Fire Service, without attending real incidents. This project is being supported by the local schools in Athy, by local business and the local community as well as the Community and Enterprise section of Kildare County Council.

**Appendix A: Organisation Diagram Kildare Fire
Service January 2008**

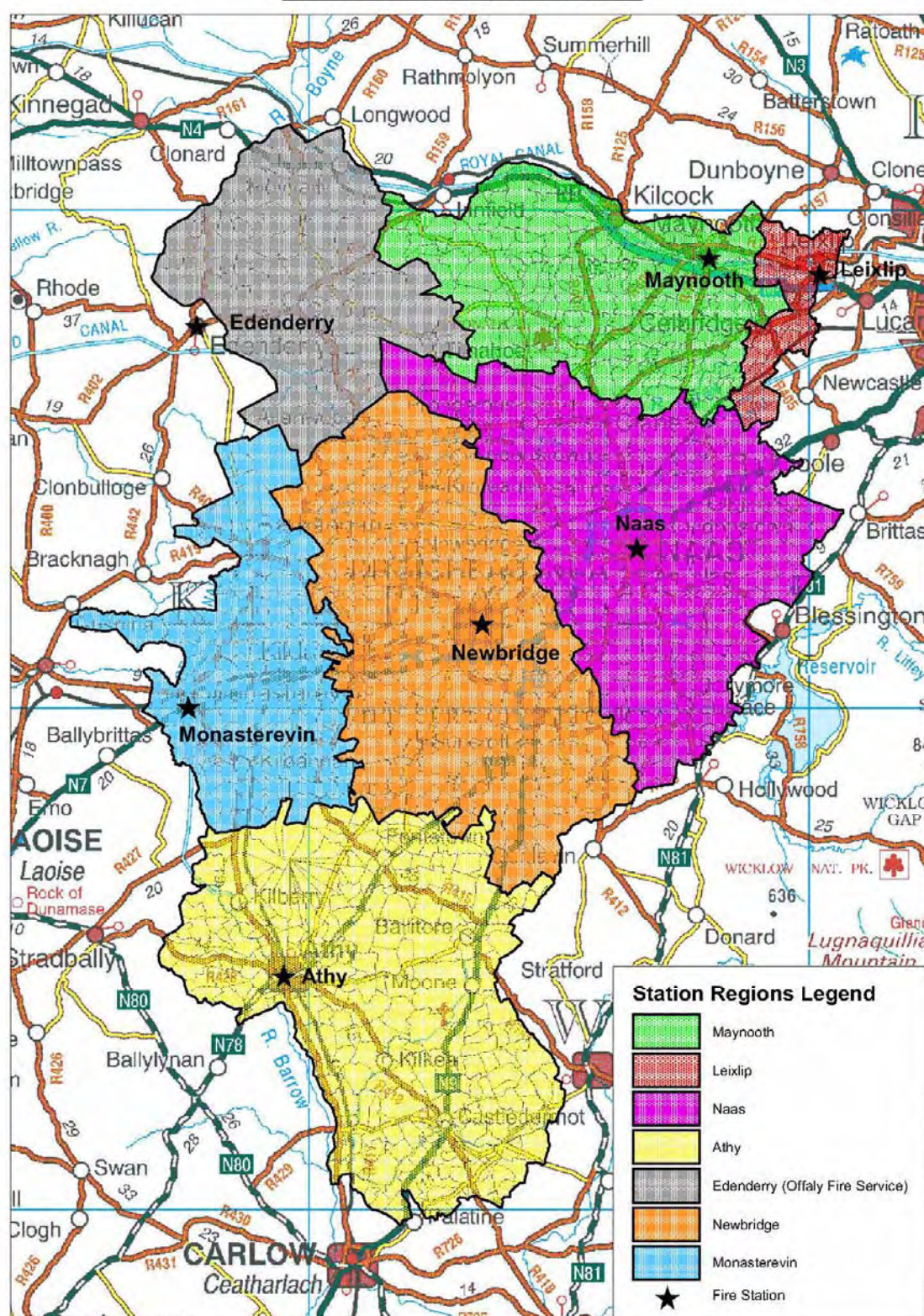


Appendix B: Pre-Determined Attendance Schedule

Confidential Fire Service Document

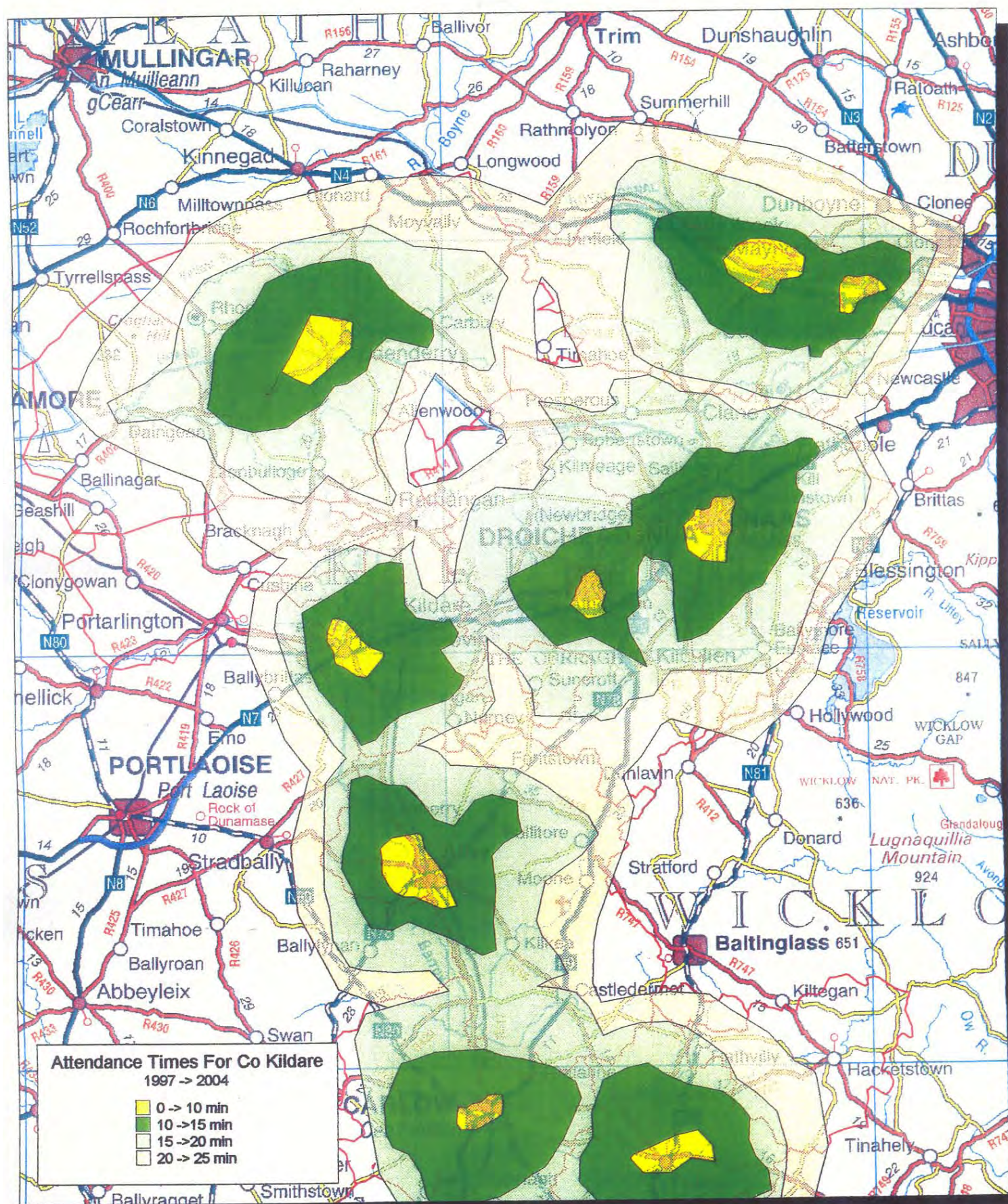
Appendix C: Station Locations and Areas Covered

Station Regions Kildare

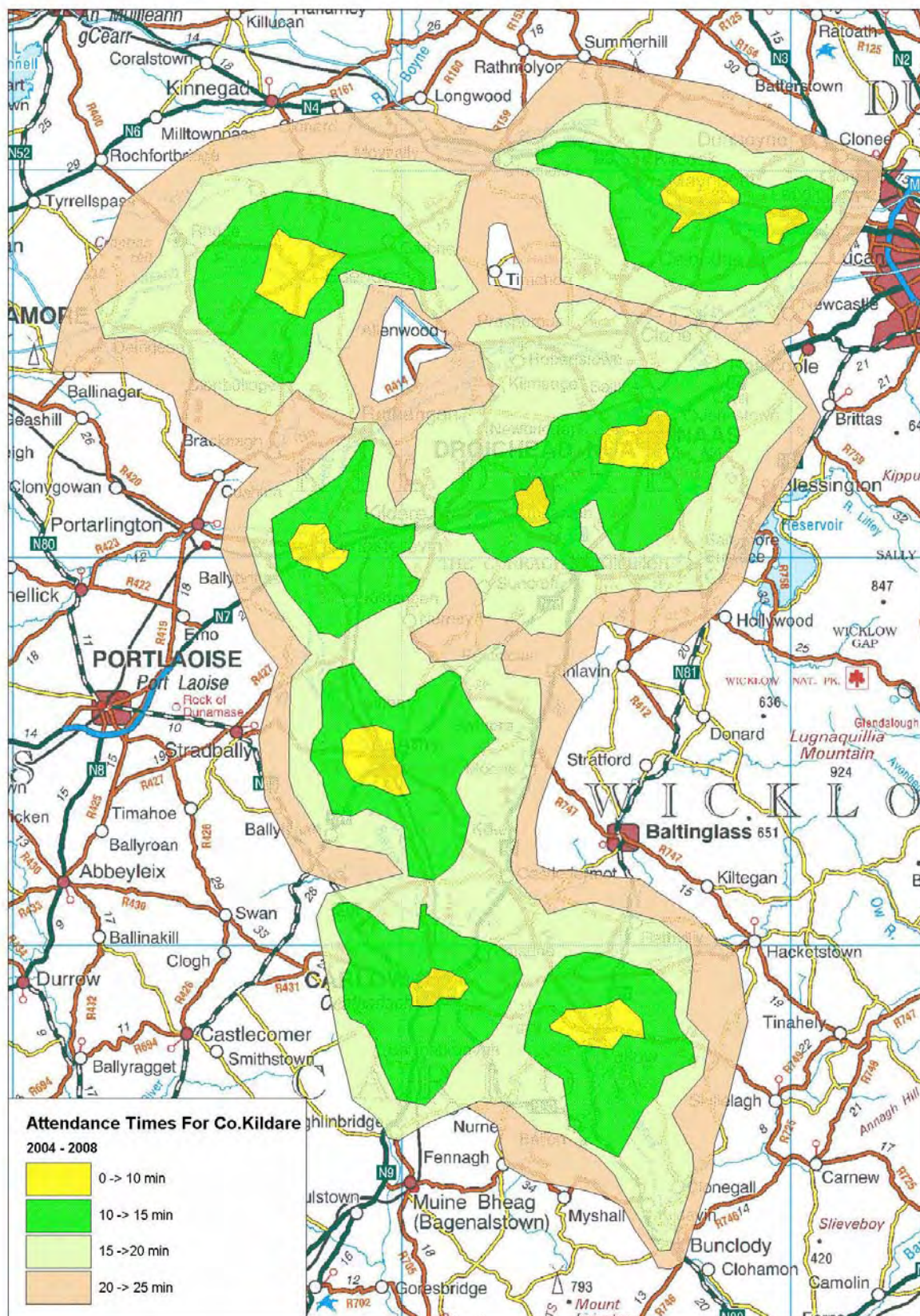


**Appendix D: Attendance Times for Kildare Fire Service
(1997 – 2004), (2004 – 2008) and (1997 – 2008)**

Attendance Times for Co Kildare 1997 -> 2004



Attendance Times For Co.Kildare 2004 - 2008



Attendance Times For Co.Kildare 1997 - 2008

