



SCOTTISH
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

SUMMARY FIRE INVESTIGATION REPORT

To: (Enter Name, Role and Locus of officer originating request for advice)

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Cc: (Enter Name, Role and Locus of officer completing IRS, if different from above)

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Incident Details:

Incident No:	2768
Date/Time of Call:	22/04/18 @ 1339hrs
Address:	Old Blythewood House, Port Elphinstone, Inverurie
Advice Requested:	<p>Sunday 22 April 2018</p> <p>At 1339hrs SFRS received the first of multiple emergency calls reporting a fire at The Old Blythewood House, School Road, Port Elphinstone, Inverurie. Operations Control (Control) mobilised two rescue appliances from Inverurie Fire Station. These were Inverurie with Watch Manager (WM) in charge and Inverurie with Crew Manager (CM) in charge. Inverurie booked in attendance at 1348hrs followed by 2nd Inverurie pump at 1353hrs. CM assumed the role of Incident Commander (IC).</p> <p>At 1351hrs the IC sent a message to Control requesting a level 1D response (two additional rescue appliances), followed by a further request for a height vehicle at 1153hrs.</p> <p>At 1401hrs WM assumed the role of IC and sent a message to Control stating that the RVP for the oncoming appliances was at the rear of the building.</p> <p>At 1402hrs the IC sent a message to control requesting a level 3 response (five additional rescue appliances).</p> <p>At 1406hrs the IC sent a message to Control stating that this was a disused sheltered housing accommodation, consisting of two floors, measuring approximately 60 metres by 30 metres. The fire was located in the south end of the building and it was heavily smoke logged. Two BA and two hose reel jets were in use.</p>

FIO Submitting:

Cc: Station Manager (FI Coordinator) for file

Name and Role:	WM Coutts	(Signature)
Date of report:	23/5/18	

**FI SUMMARY REPORT OLD BLYTHEWOOD
HOUSE (R)**

	<p>At 1421hrs Fire Investigation were informed of the incident and gathered preliminary incident information.</p> <p>Area Manager (AM) booked in attendance at 1417hrs and assumed the role of incident commander at 1437hrs.</p> <p>At 1437hrs the IC sent a message to Control stating that this was a derelict care home consisting of two floors, measuring approximately 60 metres by 40 metres. There was a fully developed fire on the first and second floor (later confirmed as ground and first floor) and the incident had now been sectorised with the ARA (analytical risk assessment) in progress.</p> <p>At 1440hrs the IC sent a message to Control requesting a water carrier due to poor water pressure from hydrants.</p> <p>At 1526hrs the IC sent a message to Control stating that stage two BA procedures were now in operation and that firefighters were creating fire breaks in sector three and four to prevent fire spread. The roof in the main building was fully involved in fire had collapsed.</p> <p>At 1623hrs the IC sent a message to Control stating that a tactical withdrawal was taking place.</p> <p>At 1658hrs the IC sent a message to Control stating that Fire Investigation would be required to attend the following morning.</p> <p>Monday 23 April 2018</p> <p>Firefighting continued throughout the day and night until the last appliance left the scene at 0100hrs on 23/4/18. At 0002hrs the IC sent a stop message to Control.</p>
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Advice Given:	<p>At approximately 1000hrs, WM Coutts and WM arrived at the incident to carry out a joint fire investigation with Police Scotland and SPA.</p> <p>The building was a former residential care home owned by Aberdeenshire Council. The site was accessed via a private road from Elphinstone Road and had been unoccupied for a number of years. The original part of the building consisted of two storeys and various extensions had been added on both side elevations and the</p>
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	<p>rear elevation. The extensions were a combination of one and two storeys high. Overall the building measured approximately 60 metres by 40 metres. The electricity and gas had been isolated prior to the fire. All doors and windows had been boarded up.</p> <p>The area mainly involved in fire was the original part of the building. This part of the building was of traditional construction using granite block. It had a pitched, timber trussed roof with slate covering. The internal floors and stairs were timber and the walls and ceilings were lath and plaster.</p> <p>The building had recently undergone an intrusive survey by a demolition company. This involved making access holes in all floors, walls and doors.</p> <p>The original part of the building was severely damaged by fire, heat and smoke. The roof and the first floor had collapsed into the ground floor. This part of the building was too dangerous to enter and an excavation could not be carried out.</p> <p>When fire crews arrived they reported that a board had been removed from a rear window and that the fire appeared to be within the ground floor, left hand side room. The fire damage observed on the external wall and inside the building was consistent with this being the room of origin.</p> <p>When other areas of the building were examined, multiple small fires were identified. The majority of these fires involved paper towels and were all in different parts of the building. Discharged portable fire extinguishers were observed close by the fires.</p> <p>There was no evidence of smoking materials identified within the building.</p> <p>Having taken account of all the above information, I conclude that this fire was most likely started in the ground floor, left hand room and was deliberate. However, due to the severe structural damage caused by the fire and being unable to excavate the area of fire origin, it was not possible to determine the item first ignited.</p> <p>The Incident Commander was asked to reflect these findings when completing the Incident Recording System (IRS).</p>
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