

The 'Whole of Wales' is a combination of all three Fire & Rescues Services (FRS) in Wales: South Wales, North Wales and Mid-West Wales. Between them they cover approximately 21,000 sq.km and a population of over 3 million.

### EMERGENCY SERVICES

#### Business needs

- ▶ An online system to enable FRS to cost effectively and efficiently sift out large numbers of applicants
- ▶ A recruitment process that covered all three FRS in Wales – the first time that this has been done

#### Results

- ▶ Estimated saving of £49,000 in staffing costs
- ▶ Reduced the cost per application from £8.66 to £0.36
- ▶ Saved 203 working days in checking and shortlisting the candidates
- ▶ 300 employees, including 50 managers were involved in the design and delivery of the project



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Technology first



Leading content



Collaborative expertise

We make a measurable difference to business performance by using a technology-first assessment approach to **recruit, select and develop** great talent and agile leaders.

### PROJECT BACKGROUND

These FRS had last recruited firefighters in 2012 and were concerned about the number of applicants they would receive in their 2015 campaign. This was the first time they had run a combined campaign for all three services.

### THE SOLUTION

Gill Goss, project manager, responding to questions based on her experiences in using SIFT:

#### 1. Can you give me a brief outline of the process?

Candidates registered with us online and then completed a Job Preview Questionnaire, which ensures that they understand what the role of the Firefighter is about. After this registration, three HR Personnel checked any declared unspent criminal convictions etc., and we deselected a small number of candidates. We then invited the rest to take the online tests. All correspondence with the candidates was electronically managed by the system and the work took minutes, not hours.

#### 2. Did you find it easy to administer?

The whole process was amazingly easy. We had a team of three people working on this for a week and we processed 6,013 applications. We saved £49,000 in staffing costs because there was no manual assessing or inputting.

#### 3. Once you had completed the online assessment process, did you undertake any other shortlisting exercise using the application form? If so, did you use competencies for this?

No – the online process was the sift and it was developed around the Fire Service competencies and what is important to us.

#### 4. Did you need to employ extra people resources to assist

#### in the process?

No – and this is key for us. If we were to have used traditional methods, we would have had to draft in a large team of assessors and administrators.

#### 5. How did you safeguard against fraudulent online applications or those that may have been completed by other people?

The system is set up so that the candidate has to provide details such as NI number which prevents duplicate applications. As the tests are not ability tests (therefore there is no obvious right answer), there is no benefit getting someone else to do it for you.

#### 6. Was it easy to compile management reports on the different stages of the process using the system?

Yes – very easy. Once again, there was a significant time saving here and we could report bio data quickly and easily almost immediately.

#### 8. Would you use the system again?

Every time!



*The application stage is traditionally the biggest challenge on a campaign of this size involving large teams checking and shortlisting, but using the new sifting tool [SIFT™] we only needed a team of three people saving us 203 working days! The cost to process an application has gone from £8.66 to £0.36 when we look at the human resources involved! **We simply can't afford not to use SIFT going forwards.***

Gillian Goss, HR Manager Recruitment & Assessment



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