

Fire and Rescue Services A special issue



SIX COLOURFUL STAMPS honouring the brave men and women of Britain's fire and rescue services go on sale at Post Office branches and philatelic outlets and at Royal Mail Tallents House on 1 September. The stamps, which were designed by Rose Design of London, feature action photographs of firemen undertaking a range of rescue duties: 1st class Firefighting; 54p Chemical Fire; 56p Emergency Rescue; 62p Flood Rescue; 81p Search and Rescue; and 90p Fire Safety.

The stamps are printed in gravure by De La Rue, size 37 × 35mm. The issue marks the 300th anniversary of the first purpose-built fire station in the UK, at Chester. Details of a medal cover will be published shortly.

FIRST DAY FACILITIES Orders for serviced first day covers must reach Tallents House (address given below) by the date of issue. Collectors may send stamped covers on the day of issue to: Royal Mail Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB (for Tallents House postmark), or to one of Royal Mail's Special Handstamp Centres (Hose, Melton Mowbray) marking the outer envelope 'FD0923' (Tallents House), or 'FD0924' (Hose). Covers can be posted or handed in at main Post Office branches for the Hose postmark. A non-pictorial Hose postmark is also available from Special Handstamp Centres, request 'FD0924 NP'.

For details of sponsored handstamps and addresses of the Handstamp Centres see the *British Postmark Bulletin* – available on subscription from Tallents House (£12.25 UK/Europe; £24.95 elsewhere). For a sample copy write to: The Editor, British Postmark Bulletin, Royal Mail, 35-50 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1HQ.

to mark the 300th anniversary of fire stations

Fire and Rescue services on stamps This is the second issue to be dedicated to the fire service. Four stamps, designed by David Gentleman, were issued in 1976 to celebrate the bicentenary of the Fire Prevention (Metropolis) Act and featured fire appliances of 1766, 1830, 1863, and 1904. Other sets relating to a rescue theme include 1963 Lifeboat Conference, 1972 Anniversaries – Coastguard, 1985 Safety at Sea (lifeboat), 1987 St John Ambulance service, and 2008 Rescue at Sea (lifeboats) ●

Fire and Rescue Services prices	
Set of stamps	£ 3.82
Presentation pack	£ 4.35
FDC envelope	£ 0.30
Serviced FDC (UK customers)	£ 4.86
Serviced FDC (overseas)	£ 4.23
Stamp cards set	£ 2.34
Medal cover	£14.95

**FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
A DAY IN THE LIFE**

The number of people applying to join the ranks of the UK's Fire and Rescue Services remains as high as ever, but what makes them put pen to paper? Is it the image of the gung-ho hero thundering down the road with lights flashing and sirens blazing? Possibly, but most apply because they want to do a job that's worthwhile and highly valued by the community. The heroes and heroines involved in this kind of work carry a heavy responsibility, and are more than prepared to deal with the harsh realities of life as a firefighter. Here's a typical shift at one of Britain's provincial fire stations – but, just like firefighting, it's subject to change at any minute...

08.50
ARRIVAL
This is an important time for the incoming watch as it prepares for handover. It's also when the two Watch Commanders exchange information.

08.58
'ON THE LINE'
The buzzer sounds and the new watch, along with its equipment, prepares to line up for parade and roll call.

09.00
NIGHT INTO DAY
This time the buzzer sounds twice, signalling the start of the day watch and the moment when the outgoing watch finally removes its equipment from the station's tenders or pump-cars.

The Watch Commander takes the roll call, which is given in a watch usually consisting of 12 or 13 people.

Each of the two crews is allocated its roles for the watch: those on the breathing apparatus team test and load their equipment, while the drivers check over their appliances.

The role of Duty Person is also announced, and he or she will be expected to answer the phone, help the cook in the kitchen and make the teas – talking of which...

09.10
TEA AND TOAST
The time may vary, but tradition dictates that at some point it's all off to the mess room for a quick bit of 'T' and 'T'. This is also when the Watch Commander brings the crews up to date on the day's tasks and drills, as well as sharing any handover information from the night shift.

09.30
DRILL
Duties can mean one watch, but agree it's a bit of firefighting and theoretical.

It's that time, familiar with it, procedures are being revisited. Donning breather, their way through chamber, or donning bunsen with thermal...

11.20
TESTING TIME

13.00
PORTION CONTROL
Firefighters need plenty of energy to do their job, but when it comes to calories they are the ones doing the counting. This is because lunch, dinner and all other food is very much under the control of each watch, which, at the start of each four-day tour appoints a Mess Manager who buys in supplies for their two days and two nights at the station.

Despite the disruptive nature of their work, firefighters still need to plan their meals on a healthy, but practical, level with the foremost consideration being: can it be reheated?

14.00
OUT AND ABOUT
When you see firefighters at a local school, peering down at a hydrant or visiting a hospital or large factory, they are carrying out CFS or Community Fire Safety work. This can see crews installing fire smoke alarms during a home visit, reminding schoolchildren of the importance of fire safety, or carrying out operational risk assessments in places where large numbers of people are employed.

15.45
LAST BREAK
There's just time for a quick cup of tea before the watch prepares the station for the 0 p.m. handover.

17.00
SPICK AND SPAN
One of the golden rules is that you

Royal Mail First Day Cover

FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE





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