Incident Summary

Inc No. 12 - 00717
Roof Fire in Chemical Lab

York University
York
YO10 5DD

Date – 02/02/2012

1.0 Introduction

On the 2nd February 2012 at 12:48pm North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service (NYFRS) received a 999 call to the University of York. The call stated that there was smoke issuing from the roof of B Block, one of the chemical laboratories on Alcuin Way. The University of York initiated their emergency procedures, B Block was evacuated and the on site staff were on hand to liaise with NYFRS incident commanders.

2.0 Incident

Upon arrival an established fire was found within the roof of the chemical lab. Ladders were pitched to the roof and crews with breathing apparatus and hose reels were committed to fight the fire. At 13:07 an assistance message requesting 6 further fire engines and the police was made to Service Control. Control also mobilised the nearest Hazardous Materials (HazMat) Officer to the incident and mobilised a HazMat Support Officer into Control.

A number of other agencies were informed of the incident including the environment agency, City of York emergency planning department, Yorkshire Water and local television and media services. This was due to the interest being generated by the public using social media, subsequently pictures and videos have emerged on social media websites.

Although the incident occurred within the chemical labs, there was no contact with any hazardous chemicals within the labs. There was some concern throughout the incident that chemicals could become involved and firefighting tactics took account of that. In the end the only hazardous material involvement was from the asbestos which was contained within the roof void, and which was disturbed by both the fire and subsequent firefighting actions.

The incident was brought under control via a combination of firefighting actions from the Aerial Ladder Platform using its height to apply water from above and firefighters accessing the roof void internally in breathing apparatus using hose reel jets.