



ETAP Governance Highlight Report

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

Item 6

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Introduction

This report is intended to provide information and assurance to ETAP on the actions being taken around the following:

1. HMICFRS reports and recommendations
2. ETAP reports and recommendations
3. Other External reports recommendations (as appropriate)
4. Strategic Risk Register

An overview of the above areas is provided, with a focus on those matters that have been considered to represent higher level risks to the organisation or which ETAP have requested a specific update on.

Recommendation to ETAP

- That the information within this report be noted for information / discussion.
- That any matters requiring more detailed scrutiny be raised for inclusion in the next Chief Fire Officer's report to ETAP.





1 HMICFRS Reports and Recommendations

Summary of live HMICFRS Service Inspection report action plans

Thematic inspection on the handling of misconduct

In 2023, the Home Secretary commissioned HMICFRS to carry out a thematic inspection of the way misconduct is dealt with in fire and rescue services in England. We were chosen as one of 10 fire and rescue services to be inspected. The other services included in the inspection are: Northamptonshire, Humberside, Lincolnshire, Dorset and Wiltshire, Tyne and Wear, West Midlands, Cornwall, Greater Manchester and Kent. The services have been selected to make sure evidence is gathered from a range of services, large and small, rural and urban, cover the different governance models and to avoid overlap with scheduled service inspections.

This review builds on the findings in HMICFRS's spotlight report on culture and values in the fire service published in March 2023 and other high-profile reports of unacceptable behaviour.

These thematic inspections focus on:

- the extent to which services are identifying and investigating misconduct;
- the effectiveness of misconduct processes and how consistently they are applied;
- how confident fire and rescue service staff are in misconduct processes and in raising concerns; and
- the role of fire and rescue authorities and other organisations in handling misconduct.

Staffordshire's thematic inspection took place over the period 6 November to 24 November 2023. The inspection included a mix of remote and on-site engagement and desktop reviews of a sample of complaint, grievance, discipline, and whistleblowing files; interviews; focus groups and reality testing. We were also required to submit a number of policies, procedures and other documents (including completed case files) for review as part of the inspection process.

The Service received a hot-debrief at the end of the fieldwork for the thematic inspection. The inspectors were pleased with the openness of our organisation and commented upon how everyone involved with the interviews and focus groups conducted themselves in a very



professional manner. They also stated that they could see that the Service was working hard to deal with inappropriate behaviours every time they occurred, and that the investment made in human resources was improving the experiences of those involved in cases. The full report is scheduled for publication in June 2024.

As this is a thematic inspection, HMICFRS will use the evidence gathered to inform its understanding of the handling of misconduct in general. HMICFRS will not be publishing reports on the individual services or making graded judgments as part of this review. However, the evidence gathered as part of this inspection will be considered when HMICFRS come to conduct our Round 3 full service inspection and will therefore influence the report and graded judgments we receive at that point.

Round 3 inspection – Effectiveness, efficiency and People

HMICFRS has already commenced Round 3 of its full inspection schedule and since 2018 every service has been inspected at least twice meaning there is now a benchmark against which progress can be monitored. In Round 3, therefore HMICFRS will be assessing the progress made by the service since our last inspection, and it will comment on our progress in its report.

Effectiveness – HMICFRS will continue to consider how well the Service is performing its principal functions of preventing fires from happening, making sure the public is kept safe through the regulation of fire safety and responding to emergency incidents.

Efficiency – consideration is given to the way the Service uses its resources to manage its current risks and how well it is securing an affordable way of managing its risks in the future. During Round 3, HMICFRS will place a greater focus on assessing how productive we are as a service and what productivity improvements have been made since the last inspection.

People – the Inspectorate’s assessment of how well the Service looks after its people will remain focused on leadership at all levels of the organisation. While HMICFRS will continue to look closely at training, values and culture, there will be a particular emphasis on diversity and how services are trying to overcome inequalities.

The scheduled dates for Staffordshire’s inspection are as follows:

Document request & Self-assessment - w/c 29 January 2024

Inspection fieldwork starts - w/c 26 February 2024



Summary of live HMICFRS Service Inspection report AFI action plan

Fire & Rescue Service 2021/22 Effectiveness, efficiency and people An inspection of Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service				
Overall judgment	Question judgment	Areas for Improvement	Status	Comments & progress
Effectiveness Good	Understanding the risk of fire & other emergencies? Good	1. The Service should make sure that firefighters are confidently and suitably trained in gathering risk information.	Completed & Signed Off Service Delivery Board 13 June 2023	<p>The Service has been working hard to improve its quality of systems used across the organisation for managing risk information since the last HMICFRS inspection and developments have been completed to provide training and improved understanding for personnel in the use of systems such as Web Risk Manager (WRM) and Resilience Direct for understanding cross border risks with all neighbouring services.</p> <p>Enhancements have been made to the software used to simplify the creation of new tasks, provide crews with the ability to manually enter scoring to improve the accuracy of risk profiles and with the addition of an expanded choice of risk elements which aligns to national progression and revised legislation.</p> <p>2023 has seen developments including improvements in the functionality of cross border risk management and the development of mapping and reporting functions. Full training packages have been delivered to operational staff.</p> <p>A 12 monthly review is now built into departmental planning to ensure that managed systems remain resilient, reliable, accessible, accurate, and fit for purpose moving forwards.</p>



				<p>2. The Service needs to improve how it engages with seldom-heard people & groups in its local community to build a comprehensive profile of risk in its area</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>The new Community Engagement strategy was approved at Response Board on the 3rd October and this has now been launched. Our Community Engagement Officer recorded a video to support the launch and will be visiting Stations to raise the profile of the new strategy. An MS form has been shared in order to facilitate the recording of data.</p> <p>HR are satisfied that the Service has effective planning for the future and that community engagement will continue across the county in the future.</p> <p>The Service has recently engaged in consultation with local communities to help direct the extension to Community Risk Management Plan, and has received feedback from members of the public. During the consultation period we have monitored responses to ensure that the Service is reaching out where appropriate. Through the community engagement activity, this is now considered to be Business as usual and a paper will be presented at SDB to ratify completion of this Action.</p> <p>The Service’s approach to increasing community engagement through community networks is being led by the Assistant Chief Fire Officer and we have recruited a Community Engagement Officer. Work is ongoing with the Equality Diversity and Inclusion and Communication teams in order to improve the understanding of community groups and look at alternative ways of communication for those that do not have access to social media. It is proposed that an internal risk planning engagement group be set up in order to ensure activity is coordinated effectively.</p>
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Preventing fires & other risks Good		3. The Service should make sure it puts in place measures to catch up on the backlog of Safe and Well visits	Completed & Signed Off Service Delivery Board 26 September 2022	<p>The Service has worked hard to deal with the backlog of safe and well visits following the removal of national lockdown restrictions. During lockdown periods, Prevention staff were unable to complete all home safety visits in person, but an alternative ‘socially distanced’ method was established using telephone to ensure that those most vulnerable were still supported. In person, visits have now been re-established and visits are scheduled by crews and technicians according to priority. The total number of open referrals has been reduced from over 600 to 45.</p> <p>Safe and Well activity has returned to business as usual with the overall focus to increase engagement and to refine and improve assessment alongside the development of technology, data integration, and information sharing capabilities.</p>
Protecting the public through fire regulation Requires improvement		4. The service should assure itself that its risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP) prioritises the highest risks & includes proportionate activity to reduce risk.	On Track	<p>The new RBIP policy has now been completed, has been out for consultation and is now ready for issue. No comments were received. Planning is now underway to implement the new policy with associated systems for monitoring.</p> <p>Meetings have taken place to identify the data and processes required to support the introduction of the new policy. A number of actions were documented and are now ongoing. Information has been shared with Protection Teams and a more detailed Communications plan for the wider service is being developed. The intention is to adopt the policy early in the new year.</p>
		5. The service should make sure it has an effective quality assurance process, so that staff carry out	On Track	<p>The Protection Officer Guidance, job no: 1620 which contains the process for quality assurance was issued on 2nd November. The guidance contains aspects surrounding quality assurance of Protection activity and consultation with Protection teams has been ongoing throughout its development and as such, and in line with Service policy there was no requirement for formal consultation.</p>



		<p>audits to a consistent standard.</p>		<p>An implementation meeting was held to explore the practicalities of implementing the documented process and identify further actions. It was discovered that some minor amendments were required to the process, this and other minor actions are now underway to complete preparations. It is anticipated the new QA process will be adopted early in the new year. Reporting measures will be in place to assure the Service that the QA process is being carried out.</p> <p>The Service has undertaken a rewrite of Fire Protection Strategy and Policies which were issued late 2022, which included the policy and guidance on quality assurance.</p>
	<p>Responding to fires and other emergencies? Requires improvement</p>	<p>6. The service should make sure that it has effective systems in place to reliably understand resource availability</p>	<p>Completed & Signed Off Service Delivery Board 13 June 2023</p>	<p><i>Awaiting commitment from West Midlands Fire & Rescue Service in order to upgrade the current version of Vision to allow for automated updating from FireWatch. Vision upgrade at West Midlands FRS will not be completed until the new year.</i></p> <p><i>SFRS engagement with Infographics has been completed regarding procuring an interface to provide up to the minute staffing information.</i></p> <p>The current system in place from a technical perspective allows Fire control to review resourcing of crewing from the FireWatch system and to update Vision with availability. This already allows an understanding of the Service's availability for those mobilising appliances. The service has recently reviewed contingency arrangements should the FireWatch system be unavailable, and these have been assessed as fit for purpose.</p>



		<p>7. The service should improve the availability of its fire engines to respond to incidents in line with its IRMP</p>	<p>On Track</p>	<p>No change, working through the Availability Improvement plan which pulls all these pieces work together. There are 11 areas of focus.</p> <p>Three rider policy agreed at Response Board 18th April 2023, go live from 1st June 2023. Measures will be monitored from this date.</p> <p>Station manager plans and Retained Support Officer measures now reviewed in the Response Performance Management group meetings.</p> <p>Recruitment and retention timeline project now under way. Proposals to reduce the recruitment days from 120+ to 30 days. Retention work also looking at the role of on-call fire fighter and training expectations. Whole-time personnel now supporting on-call appliance availability by being detached as per policy. A transformation trial in South Staffs of pairing stations to increase appliance availability extended for further 6 months.</p>
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		<p>8. The service should make sure that it improves the way in which it captures & shares learning from operational incidents</p>	<p>On Track</p>	<p>There are some sub sections to this AFI. Three outstanding:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Confirm what our target is for availability. This is now part of the availability improvement work, to implement a different target system. 2. Manual process in Fire control could cause delay in availability of appliances. IT now working with West Mids. to update Vision and purchase software so FireWatch can talk to Vision. 3. Improve over border risk info. We now have this. Just need to update to MDT's. <p>All learning shared with Learning & Development and Emergency Response teams and National Operational Guidance (NOG) through ops assurance meeting. Learning bulletin goes to all crews for sharing and through training leads. NFCC peer review reference NOG has taken place and feedback with two actions, governance - now complete and closing loop with crews - will now be checking flows and invite NFCC back in to review.</p> <p>A new quarterly training and action plan meeting has been formed to discuss outstanding actions from incident debriefs and to direct improvement activity. These insights are then shared with the workforce and retained as organisational learning for areas such as; operational procedure, risk assessment and equipment use.</p> <p>The process of debriefing is under review; with the intention of increasing the number of multi-agency debrief sessions to improve shared learning opportunities. A central training planner for five appliance and Over the Border operations training has also been set up to further ensure organisational learning is captured and circulated.</p>
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<p>Efficiency Requires improvement</p>	<p>Making best use of resources Requires improvement</p>	<p>9. The service should have effective measures in place to assure itself that its workforce is productive & that their time is used as efficiently & effectively as possible to meet the priorities in the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP)</p>	<p>Completed & Signed Off Service Delivery Board 5 December 2023</p>	<p>Paper presented to SDB on 5th December 2023 and action signed-off as complete following the consultation in over the summer period regarding the 11 Incident Command.</p> <p>System now in place for measuring crew productivity, working through findings as a standard update from response performance meetings which feed into Response Board.</p> <p>The Daily Work Routine Policy has now been created and was taken to Response Board in December 2022.</p> <p>FireWatch training videos covering entering activities under productivity created and uploaded to the FireWatch training portal of the intranet. Station Managers were asked to communicate the training video across the service to start to create discussion and awareness as well as to obtain feedback from staff.</p> <p>The current concern being worked on, found in the productivity work, is the reduction of admin work for our supervisory managers as it has been highlighted as a main task being carried out.</p> <p>For reporting purposes, the project decided on the use of PowerBI to provide a dashboard to enable visual reporting. A PowerBI gateway into the FireWatch system has been created for the purposes of reporting and the development of the dashboard.</p>
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	<p>Making the fire & rescue service affordable now & in the future Good</p>	<p>10. The service should assure itself that its IT systems are resilient, reliable, accurate and accessible.</p>	<p>Completed & Signed Off Service Delivery Board 13 June 2023</p>	<p>The Service has been working hard to improve its range and quality of ICT systems used across the organisation since the last HMICFRS inspection and plans to continue this during business as usual.</p> <p>Enhancements have been made to pre-planned maintenance, and improvements have been scheduled into an annual service delivery plan for ICT which will be reviewed every 12 months to ensure that managed systems remain resilient, reliable, accessible, accurate, and fit for purpose.</p> <p>Feedback is collated from users and senior stakeholders around Service requirements alongside the evolving data requirements of business areas and national requirements as well as input from internal governance boards.</p>
<p>People Requires improvement</p>	<p>Promoting the right values and culture? Requires improvement</p>	<p>11. The service should make sure all staff understand & demonstrate its values</p>	<p>On Track</p>	<p>The Service has appointed Hive as an independent survey body to measure employee opinion and understanding. Meeting held in September to scope projects with Senior Leaders, a working group was created to produce a question set and assist with direction of survey. We have also met with occupational psychologist to assist in crafting this question set.</p> <p>Initial HIVE survey has been put out to staff and has now been completed. A number of themes have been identified from this feedback and actions will be developed from this.</p> <p>We continue to embed Core Code of Ethics (CCoE) into all documentation. A review of the disciplinary and voluntary redundancy policies has now been completed and is pending board oversight. These policies are now aligned to the CCoE.</p> <p>Appraisal process is currently under review and documents to be created electronically to improve the Service's use of data and improve reporting. A consultation group has been arranged to explore current appraisal policy</p>



				and any ideas for the future.
		<p>12. The service should assure itself that senior managers are visible & demonstrate service values through their behaviours</p>	<p>Completed & Signed Off Service Delivery Board 13 June 2023</p>	<p>The following improvements have been made over the last 12 months, and improvements will continue to be made.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Service has now reviewed the direction of leadership qualifications throughout the organisation including for senior members of staff. Principal Officer's now have a schedule of visits within all areas of the brigade to ensure that senior leaders remain visible and accessible to staff. - The ongoing introduction of the Core Code of Ethics into all aspects of the Service which each of the Senior Leaders Championing an Ethic continues to provide assurance of their values and behaviours.



		<p>13. The service should monitor secondary contracts & overtime to make sure working hours are not exceeded.</p>	<p>On Track</p>	<p>A report has been developed which identifies individuals who have secondary contracts and this will be taken to the internal workforce planning board for oversight. Overtime is monitored by Finance and is communicated at strategic level via Workforce Planning Board.</p> <p>The Outside Working Policy has been identified for strategic review to consider national alignment with the working time directive and consider a mechanism to identify working practices across dual contracts and how we effectively monitor working hours to ensure the wellbeing of our employees. Once completed a communication plan will be adopted to ensure that all employees are aware of their responsibilities in relation to the outside working policy and the reasons why this is in place.</p> <p>One of the new members of the Human Resources team will assist with the review of the Outside Working Policy. This person will also seek to benchmark future policies alongside other services and the national picture.</p> <p>The Service adopts the current guidance set out in the National Joint Council Scheme of condition of service (Sixth Edition). Any pre-arranged overtime hours carried out by operational staff are self-monitored by local line managers and the Resource Manager to ensure the wellbeing of staff is maintained. We are working to review the systems and processes in order to make this easier; including developing improved monitoring and reporting of these areas at a Service-wide level.</p>
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	<p>Getting the right people with the right skills Good</p>	<p>14. The service should review its succession planning to make sure that it has effective arrangements in place to manage staff turnover while continuing to provide its core service to the public.</p>	<p>On Track</p>	<p>Succession planning is now a standing agenda item at Workforce planning board, and vacancies and skills gaps are identified and discussed during this meeting. This is also communicated to recruitment in order to set up appropriate timescales for recruitment strategy. On this basis the Service are now completing a predictive succession planning analysis as a part of normal business.</p> <p>The increased focus of the Workforce Planning Board has meant that the numerical data is getting to be both more accurate and specific to what is needed across the Service. We are beginning to see more confidence in the data being produced resulting in productive and proactive discussions regarding Positive Action for the forecasted recruitment.</p> <p>The Service's appraisal form is currently in the process of review and a new appraisal document has been produced and is currently with ICT who are developing a form that can be used by both the employee and employer encapsulating the feedback that has been received to improve this process.</p> <p>The High Potential Programme is due to be reviewed and redesigned, but is not yet one of the Service priorities. The leadership model is currently being mapped out alongside corporate inductions and the higher potential scheme by Learning and Development.</p> <p>The Service has taken part in a Direct Entry Recruitment project as a means of entering the Service. Our first candidate has been recruited and started with us in September.</p> <p>Shared Services are currently reviewing the current Recruitment Policy. A copy of the draft policy was submitted as part of the evidence for HMICFRS thematic inspection into the handling of misconduct. A People Impact</p>
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				<p>Assessment is in development then Policy will be circulated Service-wide for consultation.</p> <p>The Exit interview process is being reviewed with the intention of improving the engagement of staff leaving the organisation to assist with gathering organisational learning and to take this feedback through Workforce Planning Board for discussion and review of trends, and requirements to revise organisational policy and practice.</p>
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		<p>15. The service needs to review its reliance on overtime to consider whether there are more effective arrangements to provide its core service.</p>	<p>Completed & Signed Off Service Delivery Board 5 December 2023</p>	<p>Crewing arrangements have now been reviewed in order to improve resilience and reduce reliance on overtime. The introduction of minimum crewing of 4 to been shown to be effective in increasing resilience and the reliance on overtime.</p> <p>We now have a clear understanding of the quantity and location of where drivers are needed, which has now been matched with interest from 40 serving Firefighters who will be approached individually to arrange training needs. This will continue to be a topic raised through the Operational Assurance meeting and driver training courses will be arranged in reflection of demand.</p> <p>Annual re-certification introduction in 2023 has now been arranged and will ensure that BA training is aligned to national guidance.</p>
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	<p>Ensuring fairness and promoting diversity Requires improvement</p>	<p>16. The service should assure itself that staff are confident using its feedback mechanisms.</p>	<p>Completed & Signed Off Service Delivery Board 13 June 2023</p>	<p>This is now considered to be business as usual, Say So (independent reporting function) are continuing with visits to stations and a meeting was arranged between FBU and Say So to answer fundamental questions. FBU were satisfied with the responses.</p> <p>Since March this year Say So have made 6 visits to Staff FRS fire stations and seen 31 firefighters at Stafford, Cannock, Hanley, Newcastle and Burton (all red watches) plus white watch at Newcastle. These watches were chosen because they were missed on last year's visits. This means that every whole-time watch has now had at least one personal visit from Say So representatives.</p> <p>They are currently engaging with each business area to attend each drill night (either personally or by online video) for each of the on-call watches. This will be ongoing through most of the summer period. We will continue to engage with Staff to ensure that there is an understanding of the options available, still including speaking to Line Management, HR, Trade Union Representatives and/or Say So.</p>
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		<p>17. To identify and tackle barriers to equality of opportunity & make its workforce more representative, the service should make sure diversity & inclusion are a priority & become important values of the service</p>	<p>Completed & Signed Off Service Delivery Board 13 June 2023</p>	<p>ED&I Training is being rolled out to every member of the Service and is on track to be completed by the end of the summer 2023.</p> <p>A Positive Action Coordinator has been appointed and the role has been extended for a further twelve months and is working towards inclusion in every aspect of their role, this is in conjunction with the Work Force Planning Board which has been designed to forecast recruitment needs in order to work on inclusion ahead of/and in conjunction with advertising campaigns.</p> <p>There is further work to be done and this is a long term goal which is now considered to be business as usual.</p>
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		<p>18. The service should review how effective its policy on bullying, harassment & discrimination is in reducing unacceptable behaviour towards its staff.</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>The 'Dignity at Work, Anti-Harassment and Anti-Bullying' Policy has now been revised and updated following consultation with rep bodies and staff. This went live as of 13th November. Communications and station visits have been completed around this, with a further Comms. campaign over the festive period.</p> <p>A paper will be taken to SDB to ratify the decision to close this action.</p> <p>'Say-So' independent reporting tool has seen an increase in reported issues which HR are activity investigating and resolving. HR have also improved their tracking system for internal Disciplinary / Grievance cases in order to identify themes and trends, which will enable the early identification of issues within the Service and allow proactive intervention. HR Officers have now been assigned to Service Delivery groups and are proactively building relationships across their geographical areas.</p> <p>Additional investigation training has been supplied to middle managers in order to improve the consistency of approach and courses will continue to be offered. We now have a new HR Business partner who was appointed in September 2023 who can provide specific training support from their experience with disciplinary and grievance cases.</p> <p>An external investigation has begun into some allegations that have recently been received on historical issues. The intention is to use the report produced to learn how our own approach can be improved. The first phase of this external report has been provided, and this has been reviewed, but it is clear that further investigation is needed, so the second phase of this is currently being negotiated and outlined through discussion.</p>
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				<p>Constant monitoring of current cases has also been introduced to look for patterns / themes of behaviour across the Service. Regular meetings with Unison / FBU have also been included to keep a closer track on behavioural trends.</p>
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		<p>19. The service should make sure HR policy is consistently applied in the management of employment cases.</p>	<p>On Track</p>	<p>The Service has updated its Disciplinary and also the Grievance policy; and in addition the improvement of tracking cases ensures that there is a consistent approach and better oversight. Also, there has been a weekly meeting introduced within HR to discuss cases and ensure cases are heard at the correct level. Every 6 weeks there are discussion held with representative bodies to provide transparency towards the process.</p> <p>Investigation training has been provided to all HR staff, this has been led by an external employment law expert. All these elements are embedded and will improve the consistency and management of employment cases. Ongoing training considered business as usual, and in collaboration with Staffordshire Police.</p> <p>Another area of importance is to ensure that all managers have actively participated in relevant training in investigation, disciplinary issues, bullying and Harassment amongst other training modules offered to align to HR Staffs FARS policy/ procedure and to ensure consistency at a local level.</p> <p>Investigation reports will be reviewed by HR leads and feedback around quality of investigation will be provided through an ongoing process to ensure consistency and accuracy.</p>
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	<p>Managing performance & developing leaders Good</p>	<p>20. The service should aim to diversify the pool of future and current leaders</p>	<p>On Track</p>	<p>The whole-time recruitment campaign has now been completed, with a total of over 800 applicants applying for the 16 positions available. The process of interviewing is currently underway.</p> <p>The Positive Action Coordinator and Fitness Assessor are working together to create a support program designed to encourage people from diverse backgrounds to apply and be supported through the recruitment process and beyond. Positive Engagement is now underway to encourage underrepresented groups to apply to the Service. Diversity is being developed at a grass roots level, with positive engagement within whole-time recruitment and the direct entry scheme so that we can plan to have a greater and more diverse group to develop into leaders of the future.</p> <p>The Service has recently completed a review of all operational promotion processes and associated guidance. Through completing this activity it has been determined that an independent assessor is now to be involved on the promotion panel and briefings are to be completed with the candidates prior to selection process to explain the approach and the expectations of the interview and ultimately the role within the Service in line with the core code of ethics. This is now considered business as usual and the recruitment teams have adopted this approach for the future.</p> <p>There is an intention to review the Promotion Process Guidance for the Service. The Shared Services recruitment lead has already assisted in the restructure of the senior management profile for the organisation. The guidance requires review in 2023 and the development of this action will be done through discussion at the Workforce Planning Board.</p>
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All Fire and Rescue Service and national publications can be accessed:
<http://www.justiceinspectores.gov.uk/hmicfrs/publications/>



2 ETAP Thematic Reports and Recommendations

Summary of live ETAP Thematic action plans

ETAP Review Title	Recommendations	Comments
No Current outstanding action plans to report		

3 Other External Reports and Recommendations

Please note that where LFB are referred to SFRS have adopted this recommendation as if it were assigned to the Service. The report itself highlighted 45 recommendations which were both aimed at Fire and Rescue Services and the Owners/Managers of High Rise Residential Buildings. Following further scrutiny of the report by the service, a total of 97 recommendations were identified. Of the 97 actions, 82 have been completed, 8 have been incorporated into other actions and 9 actions remain “in progress”. Recommendations that are highlighted were not directly aimed at FRS’s however the Service has taken some action with regard to these recommendations.



HMICFRS Values and Culture in Fire and Rescue Services Progress

Overview

(Only actions relevant to Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service Displayed)

1	By 1 October 2023, chief fire officers should make sure their services provide a confidential way for staff to raise concerns and that staff are aware of whistleblowing processes.	Completed and Signed Off
3	By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should review the support available for those who have raised concerns and take any action needed to make sure these provisions are suitable.	Completed and Signed Off
4	By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should assure themselves that updates on how concerns are being handled are shared with those who have raised them. The updates should be given in an accessible way that encourages trust and confidence in the service response. Consideration should be given to creating a professional standards function to handle conduct concerns in service (or from an external service) to have oversight of cases, to make sure they are conducted in a fair and transparent way and to act as a point of contact for all staff involved.	Off Track but in progress.
5	By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should make sure they provide accessible information for all staff and members of the public on how they can raise concerns and access confidential support (including through external agencies). Chief fire officers should also make sure accessible information is provided on how concerns and allegations will be investigated in a way that ensures confidentiality and is independent of the alleged perpetrator.	Completed and Signed Off
9	By 1 January 2024, chief fire officers should: - immediately review their current background checks arrangements, and make sure that suitable and sufficient background checks are in place to safeguard their staff and communities they serve; and - make sure that appropriate DBS check requests have been submitted for all existing, new staff, and volunteers, according to their roles as identified by the Fire Standards Board.	Completed and Awaiting Sign Off
12	By 1 March 2024, chief fire officers should provide assurances to HMICFRS that they have implemented the standard on staff disclosure, complaint and grievance handling.	On track
14	By 1 March 2024, chief fire officers should provide assurances to HMICFRS that they have implemented the standard on misconduct allegations and outcomes handling.	On Track
17	With immediate effect, chief fire officers should notify HMICFRS of any allegations that have the potential to constitute staff gross misconduct that:- involve allegations of a criminal nature that have the potential to	Completed and Signed Off



	affect public confidence in FRSs;- are of a serious nature; or- relate to assistant chief fire officers or those at equivalent or higher grades.	
18	By 1 August 2023, chief fire officers should provide assurances to HMICFRS that all parties are supported in relation to ongoing investigations.	Completed and Awaiting Sign Off
20	By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should have plans in place to ensure they meet the "Fire Standards Board's leading the service standard" [https://www.firestandards.org/standards/approved/leading-the-service-fsc-led01b/] and its "leading and developing people standard" [https://www.firestandards.org/standards/approved/leading-developing-people-fsc-led01a/].	Off Track but in Progress
21	By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should make sure there is a full, 360-degree feedback process in place for all senior leaders and managers (assistant chief fire officer equivalent and above) in service.	Off Track but in Progress
22	By 1 September 2023, chief fire officers should make sure there is a full, 360-degree feedback process in place for all other leaders and managers in service. The process should include gathering feedback from a wide range of sources including colleagues and direct reports.	Off Track but in Progress
23	By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should seek regular feedback from staff about values, culture, fairness and diversity, with due regard to the leading and developing people standard [https://www.firestandards.org/standards/approved/leading-developing-people-fsc-led01a/]. They should show how they act on this feedback.	Completed and Awaiting Sign Off
24	By 1 October 2023, chief fire officers should put plans in place to monitor, including through the gathering and analysis of staff feedback, watch and team cultures and provide prompt remedial action for any issues they identify.	Completed and Awaiting Sign Off
27	By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should make sure their equality impact assessments are fit for purpose and, as a minimum, meet the requirements of the National Fire Chiefs Council equality impact assessment toolkit.	Completed and Awaiting Sign Off
28	By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should review how they gather and use equality and diversity data to improve their understanding of their staff demographics, including applying and meeting the requirements of the National Fire Chiefs Council equality, diversity and inclusion data toolkit [https://www.ukfrs.com/equality-diversity-and-inclusion-data-toolkit/].	Completed and Awaiting Sign Off
32	By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should, as a priority, specify in succession plans how they intend to improve diversity across all levels of the service. This should include offering increased direct-entry opportunities.	Completed and Awaiting Sign Off



33	By 1 August 2023, chief fire officers should develop plans to promote progression paths for existing staff in non-operational roles and put plans in place to reduce any inequalities of opportunity.	Off Track but in Progress
34	With immediate effect, chief fire officers should review their implementation of the Core Code of Ethics [https://www.firestandards.org/standards/approved/code-of-ethics-fsc-eth01/] and make sure it is being applied across their services.	Completed and Awaiting Sign Off



Summary of other reports

Report Title
<p>Manchester Arena Inquiry</p> <p>Manchester Arena public inquiry into the attack on Manchester Arena 22nd May 2017</p> <p>The Manchester Arena Inquiry Volume 2 Emergency Response, was published November 2022. There are 149 recommendations covering all the Emergency Services involved and the Local Resilience Forums. It is important to note that Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Service (SFRS) has taken the opportunity to include other recommendations from other services and multi-agency related recommendations to expand on the opportunity to learn and improve our procedures.</p> <p>SFRS has developed an action plan including 35 actions, with an additional 17 actions from our shared Fire Control, which West Midlands Fire Service will be taking the lead with our involvement and scrutiny. Of the 35 actions, 17 are complete with 18 in progress. Out of the 17 Fire Control actions, 2 have been completed with 15 ongoing (of which 9 are 75% complete).</p> <p>The main themes include the following areas:</p> <p>Sharing of major incident plans</p> <p>A multi-agency group has been set up to move this work forward, SFRS has rewritten our major incident plan and will be shared through resilience direct, so all related partners can view. Training with each multi-agency plans will be scheduled at the Fire Operational forum during April 2024.</p> <p>Record keeping</p> <p>The scope of this work includes providing the training and tools to enable officers to keep relevant records of decisions. New larger books have been introduced to support the use of note taking, bespoke training to all officers including the use of trigger notes to support contemporaneous note taking.</p> <p>Sharing of plans</p> <p>Each organisation has a set of site-specific tactical plans. A wider discussion has started following the Staffordshire Resilience Forum workshop, reference multi-agency tactical plans. SFRS will work with partners and the Civil Contingency Unit (CCU) to understand how this can be achieved. We currently have multi-agency plans for sites covered by the control of major accident hazards (COMAH) and sites such as waste sites, however we intend to expand these plans.</p> <p>Joint Emergency Service Interoperability Programme (JESIP)</p> <p>This area covers joint training and awareness of partners working together, to ensure shared situational awareness and shared communications. Currently the three blue light partners have relaunched joint training for all incident commanders and dates will continue to be programmed throughout 2024 and onwards. A good example of exercising was a recent multi-agency training event, incorporating all levels, operational, tactical and strategic. Testing our response to a major incident, learning was collated and shared and a further exercise will be planned for 2024 to assure all partners of the learning gathered.</p>
<p>Manchester Arena part 2 report</p> <p>There are 25 actions for SFRS in total. 15 have been completed with 10 actions outstanding. The main areas being worked on now, is a refresh of our Major Incident plan and the completion of our Standard operating procedures linked to the National operational guidance introduction</p>



There are 8 actions in total for Fire Control, who are working through these currently and reporting back on progress into the joint tactical performance mtg

4 Strategic Risk Register

Our strategic risks are reviewed on a quarterly basis ensuring that the level of risk exposure is monitored regularly against a rapidly changing environment. It includes those risks that could have significant impact on the Services' ability to deliver services and objectives.

The review took place on 20th November 2023, Chaired by Rob Barber. In a change to usual practice the risks were not updated prior to the meeting but discussed in depth as part of the Strategic Risk review. The Strategic Risk Board was well attended this quarter.

As at 20th November there were eight strategic risks. Following review of the risk register;

- One new risk was included on the risk register **Damage to public trust and confidence impacting upon the service's reputation**
- No risks were removed or archived
- No risks decreased or increased in rating
- Controls were discussed for all risks and the action plans have been updated

The summary of risks currently on the Strategic Risk register is shown in **Table 1**.

Table 1.

Risk ID	Risk Title	Initial Risk	Net Risk	Target RAG	Direction of Travel
SRLOS001-01	Loss of Key Staff	16	12	6	→
SRFIN010-01	Failure to maintain public confidence in the Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Safety Plan due to funding pressures	16	12	8	→
SRCYB008-01	Cyber-attack restricting system availability	16	9	6	→
SRSFG005-01	Safeguarding	8	8	6	→
SRWELL001-01	Wellbeing, inclusion and culture	12	12	6	→
SRENV004-01	Failure to implement the services environmental strategy and reduce our carbon footprint	12	8	6	→
SRDPO009-01	Data Protection Awareness and Operating Level	12	8	4	→
SRPERF003/10-01	Shared Service Performance	9	9	4	→
SRPUBCONF003-10	Damage to public trust and confidence impacting upon the service's reputation	9	6	4	

4.1 The Risk Environment – Significant or Potentially significant risks

Loss of Key Staff

This is currently one of the Service's highest risks. It has remained as a red risk throughout this year. The group had a discussion and it was felt that the risk register needed to reflect that the Service's inability to recruit to key roles is impacting service delivery, in particular the corporate services such as ICT. This is a fluid risk and events such as industrial action, winter illnesses etc. will always have an impact on the rating of the risk. The group felt that this risk could not be reduced down at this time until issues with staff and recruitment have been resolved or at least eased.

Failure to maintain public confidence in the Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Safety Plan due to funding pressures

Financial risks for 2023/24 have continued. The Service is forecasting to operate within its financial plan for 2023/2024. Financial pressures have been a key risk during planning for 2023/24 in respect of both revenue and capital, and in relation to the delivery of efficiencies. This risk will continue to be monitored closely. No change to the risk scoring at this time.

Wellbeing, Inclusion and Culture

The HIVE survey has just closed and also the HMICFRS are currently undertaking a thematic review. It was concluded that this risk will be reviewed after the HIVE survey report.

Cyber-attack restricting system availability

The risk owner Richard Evanson updated the group on the current threat level. The group decided that at this time it could not be taken down. Richard Evanson will be undertaking a full risk review in order to acknowledge the risks with the move to Office 365.

Shared Service Performance

This risk was a new to the Strategic Risk register last quarter. Michelle Hickmott is the risk owner and she has confirmed that some pathways have been put in place however she did not feel at this time that the risk could be taken down until improvements has been seen.

4.2 Strategic Risk Summary

The previous risk register version 80 was agreed. The minutes from the last Strategic Risk meeting were approved and the actions and risk action plans were reviewed.

4.3 New Risks

One new risk has been identified during the strategic risk meeting.

Damage to public trust and confidence impacting upon the service's reputation. This risk encompasses damage to the service reputation and the confidence of our stakeholders due to adverse audit results, staff conduct etc.

4.4 Highest Risks

The greatest individual Strategic risks are:

- Loss of people
- Failure to maintain public confidence in the Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Safety Plan due to funding pressures
- Wellbeing, inclusion and culture

No risks have increased this quarter.

4.5 Risks reduced but remaining on the Strategic Risk Register

- No risks have decreased this quarter.

4.8 Emerging Risks and Horizon Scanning

The emergence of new technologies in particular Artificial Intelligence (AI) was discussed in depth at the meeting and we agreed that we certainly need to look at this more closely. The group felt that this is an opportunity risk and we should start to look at scoping a risk out about how we not only utilise and manage AI but also recognising that we should not take the opportunity to use it within the Service for appropriate purposes.

Workforce was discussed at length and the changing employment market which resulted in the Loss of People risk being updated.

5. Related Risk and Assurance Information

5.1 The Strategic Risk word document elaborates in greater detail the risk, current controls And progress against any outstanding actions in place.

5.2 The Strategic Risk Dashboard gives an overview of the status of the Service's strategic Risk profile.

5.3 The Executive Team will update the Strategic Risk Manager with any significant changes To any of the strategic risks prior to the next quarterly meeting. They will also inform The Strategic Risk Manager if a new strategic risk is identified prior to the next meeting. This allows the Strategic Risk Register to be a "live" document.

5.4 New risk management software has been agreed and is currently in the testing phase and will be available for Risk Owners to update in the new year. I will provide training for those who will require it. It will enable accurate risk performance report along with analysis of controls and interconnectivity of risks across departments.

6. Risk Matrix –

6.1 The Strategic Risk board has agreed the change the risk matrix to a 5x 5 scoring method this is in line with the Staffordshire Commissioners Office and the Police. A new matrix has been developed and will be live by quarter 1 2024.

7. Risk Appetite

7.1 The board agreed the new Risk Appetite Statement (RAS). Traditionally the Service has based Corporate Risk analysis around tolerance however the board felt that we should adopt more of defined approach when making risk decisions. This is supported by the new risk matrix and allows the board and risk owners to evaluate risk appetite that has both quantitative and qualitative criteria.

8. Risk Software

8.1 Risk management software has been agreed and is in build stage. JCAD Core will provide up to date reporting on our risk environment including on mitigations and controls.

9. Risk Audit

9.1 RSM have undertaken an audit on our risk management processes and we have achieved a Substantial assurance rating with two medium recommendations.