



Bedfordshire

Fire & Rescue Authority

11 October 2023

Dear Councillor

AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE - TUESDAY, 17TH OCTOBER, 2023

I am now able to enclose, for consideration at next Tuesday, 17th October, 2023 meeting of the Audit and Standards Committee, the following reports that were unavailable when the agenda was printed.

Agenda No	Item
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10.	<u>Fire Standards Board update</u> (Pages 3 - 14)
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To consider a report

Yours sincerely

Graham Britten
Monitoring Officer

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SUBJECT: FIRE STANDARDS BOARD UPDATE

For further information on this report contact: Pete Knight
Group Manager, Strategic Support
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Background Papers: None

Appendix	Title	Protective Marking
N/A		

Implications

This table provides a short statement of the impact of the recommendations in this report or a reference to the relevant paragraphs in the report.

Will this report affect any of the following?

	Yes / No	Impact / Reference
Financial Implications	No	
Risk Management	Yes	The Fire Standards tool to be added as a corporate risk register control measure
Legal Implications	No	

Privacy and Security Implications	No	
Duty to Collaborate	No	
Health and Safety Implications	No	
Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion	Yes	People Impact Assessment completed. No negative impacts identified
Environmental Sustainability	No	
Consultation and Communication	Yes	A communication and engagement standard were released in April 23. This is currently at the service initial gap analysis stage.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to present the Committee with progress with the gap analysis and integration of Fire Standards into Business as Usual (BAU)

RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee supports the project and notes the progress made to date.

1. Summary

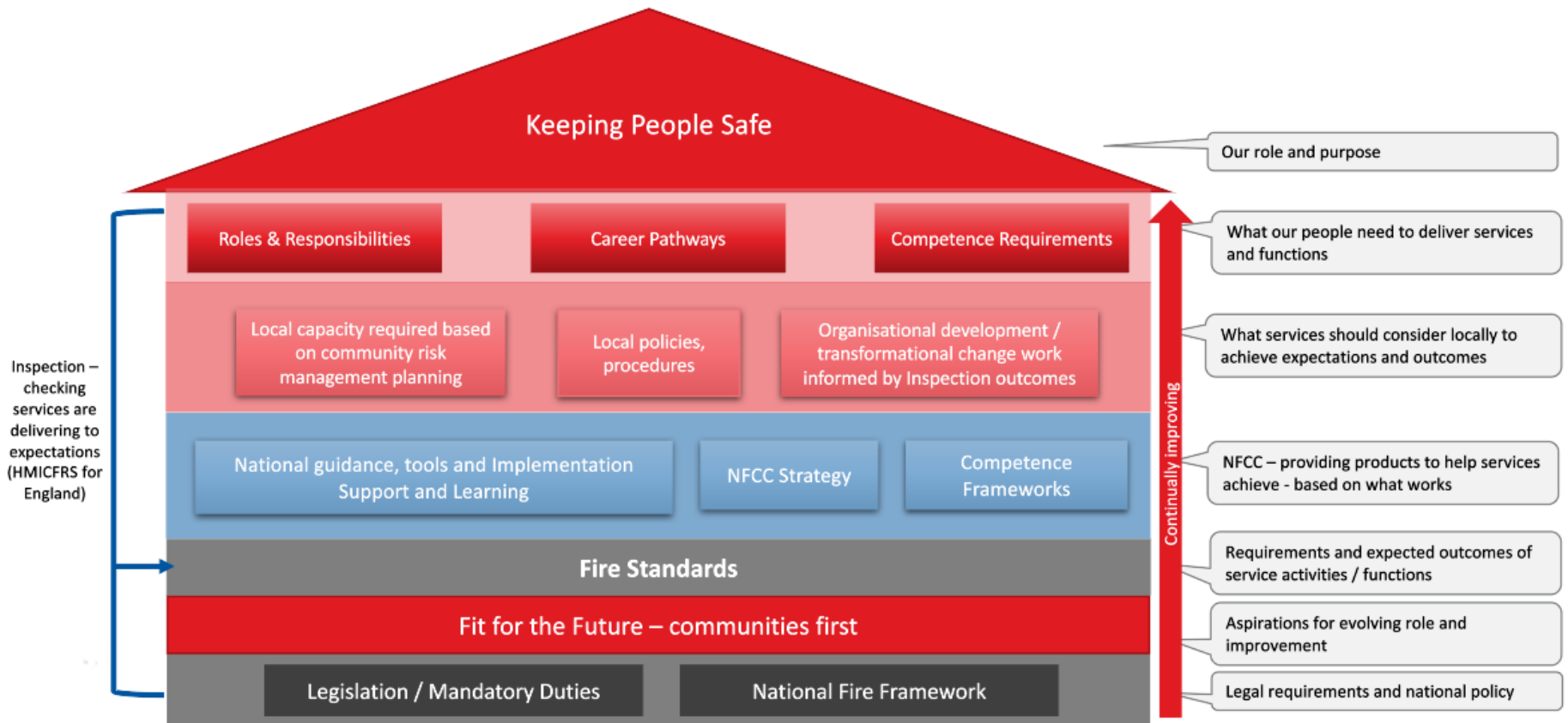
- 1.1 Clear progress is being made in understanding what action the service need to take to adopt fire standards. A governance framework is in place together with a clear approach for gap analysis and sign-off, with dedicated resources in the team to oversee its implementation.
- 1.2 Corporate Management Team (CMT) oversees the adoption of Fire Standards. The Fire and Rescue Authority's Audit and Standards Committee is the Authority's ultimate governance oversight..

- 1.3 The most progress has been made with emergency response driving which is now signed off for full adoption. Code of Ethics, Community risk management planning, Operational competence and Operational preparedness are now at action plan stage. Prevention, Protection, Safeguarding and Fire investigation are awaiting gap analysis sign off with the respective head of sections. Work is currently underway with the gap analysis for Data management, Emergency preparedness and resilience, Operational learning, Leading the service, Leading, and developing people, Fire control and Communications engagement and consultation.
- 1.4 Our implementation of the new Fire Standards is going to be a long-term project which at the moment is not able to be measured by time. We are currently bound by the release dates by the Fire Standards Board, and have adequate resources monitoring their release, ensuring that our Service takes a full adoption of the entirety of these Standards, rather than just the essential criteria.

2. **Background**

- 2.1 The development of professional standards for Fire and Rescue Services in England is a key element of the UK government's fire reform programme. These standards provide a benchmark for what is expected of services working for their communities, and what they need to do to achieve those expectations.
- 2.2 At present there are 16 published fire standards with a further 3 to go under consultation this year. Each Fire Standard describes -
- What is required to meet the standard
 - What the benefits are of achieving the standard
 - Legal requirements
 - Linked qualifications, Accreditations or Fire Standards
 - Guidance or supporting materials

Fitting it all together.....



2.3 His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Service’s characteristics of a ‘good’ service relating to Fire Standards says: *“1.4.1 The FRS (Fire and Rescue Service) understands what action it needs to take to adopt*

fire standards and national operational guidance, including joint and national learning. The FRS is implementing a plan to achieve this.”

3 Objectives

3.1 The Fire Standards Board objectives are to:

- Improved safety, health, and wellbeing of communities
- Maintain trust in and uphold reputation of the service
- Continuously improves the quality of service provided to the public
- Consistent application enhances professionalism and improves competence - decreases organisational risk
- Enable services to collaborate effectively with others, across borders or nationally
- Generate a more positive working culture

3.2 Our main objectives in adopting fire standards are twofold:

- Adopt and localise the appropriate standards in line with our community risk management plan; and
- Ensure time taken to understand and adopt standards delivers value for money.

4. Governance

4.1 Group Commander Peter Knight is the single point of contact (SPOC) for all Fire Standard Board (FSB) matters moving forward. This will include leading the acceptance and internal actioning of any new or updated Fire Standards. To date the service has begun working towards 16 Fire Standards with another 3 new Fire Standards are scheduled for release in the later part of 2023.

4.2 When FSB release a standard, BFRS (Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service) Fire Standard Implementation Team updates the FSB tracking document to include the new standard. The initial gap analysis is then assigned to a suitable subject matter expert (SME) and respective functional head.

4.3 Each subject matter expert will utilise implementation tools provided by the Fire Standards Board to complete a gap analysis identifying the required actions for the service to meet compliance against the standard. This process is supported by both the Fire Standard Implementation Team and the appropriate Head of Section.

- 4.4 Once complete, the initial gap analysis is reviewed by all parties then signed off by the assigned head of section. This forms the service action plan to enable full adoption of the Fire Standard. The action plan is progressed to completion, led by the head of section and SME with full support provided by the service Fire Standard Implementation Team.
- 4.5 Upon completion of the action plan, the Head of Section presents the completed action plan to the Fire Standards Implementation Team lead who confirms and updates the Fire Standard tracker.
- 4.6 The Fire Standards Implementation Team presents the completed action plan at the next available CMT meeting for approval and sign off. Sign off is recorded in the meeting minutes and FS Tracker updated. Ongoing management of this process and the Fire Standard review cycle will be handed to Operational Assurance department and service's Fire Standard SPOC.
- 4.7 Following a recent Chief Executives Forum, BFRS have agreed to create and host an Eastern region Fire Standards forum to assist services with the implementation of Fire Standards. The group will consist of Fire Standard leads from the 6 Fire and Rescue Services in the Eastern Region. The main objectives of the forum will be to improve shared situational awareness across the region on Fire Standards, identifying opportunities for collaboration around gap analysis and implementation and to avoid duplication. The first meeting of the Eastern region Fire Standards forum was held on the 23rd of February 2023.
- 4.8 Functional leads for each of the 16 current fire standards are:

Standard	BFRS Functional Lead	Launched
Code of Ethics	Head of Training and Asset Management	18 th May 2021
CRMP	Assistant Chief Officer	18 th May 2021
Data Management	Head of ICT & Programmes	2 nd August 2022
Emergency Preparedness and Resilience	Deputy Assistant Chief Fire Officer	31 st May 2022
Emergency Response Driving	Head of Training and Asset Management	16 th February 2021
Fire Investigation	Head of Prevention & Protection	31 st March 2022

Operational Competence	Head of Training and Asset Management	16 th February 2021
Operational Learning	Head of Training and Asset Management	16 th February 2021
Operational Preparedness	Head of Response	16 th February 2021
Prevention	Head of Prevention & Protection	30 th July 2021
Protection	Head of Prevention & Protection	3 rd September 2021
Safeguarding	Head of Prevention & Protection	31 st January 2022
Leading the Service	Head of Training and Asset Management	21 st December 2022
Leading and Developing People	Head of Training and Asset Management	21 st December 2022
Fire Control	Head of Response	31 st March 2023
Communications, Engagement and Consultation	Interim Head of Comms and Public Affairs	31 st March 2023

5. Progress made to date

- 5.1 A guide and training for Subject Matter Experts and Progress tracking dashboard has been developed and implemented. The Strategic Support Fire team have received training and the HSSA attended a good practice workshop in November 2022 hosted by the NFCC at Dorset and Wiltshire FRS.
- 5.2 How the Service will understand, localise, and adopt all Fire Standards has been integrated into all functional strategies for 2023-27 in line with our Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP).
- 5.3 Each gap analysis is now considered in turn:

Emergency Response Driving	Complete and signed off.
Code of Ethics	Action plan is now complete, this is awaiting final sign off from CMT

Community Risk Management Planning	Gap Analysis is Signed off, this is now in the action plan stage
Operational Competence	Gap Analysis is Signed off, this is now in the action plan stage
Operational Preparedness	Gap Analysis is Signed off, this is now in the action plan stage
Prevention	Gap Analysis is completed, awaiting sign off from Head of Section
Protection	Gap Analysis is completed, awaiting sign off from Head of Section
Safeguarding	Gap Analysis is completed, awaiting sign off from Head of Section
Fire Investigation	Gap Analysis is completed, awaiting sign off from Head of Section
Leading the Service	Gap analysis stage
Leading and Developing People	Gap analysis stage
Fire Control	Gap analysis stage
Comms, Engagement and Consultation	Gap analysis stage
Data Management	Gap analysis stage
Emergency Preparedness and Resilience	Gap analysis stage
Operational Learning	Gap analysis stage

6. Regional Approach

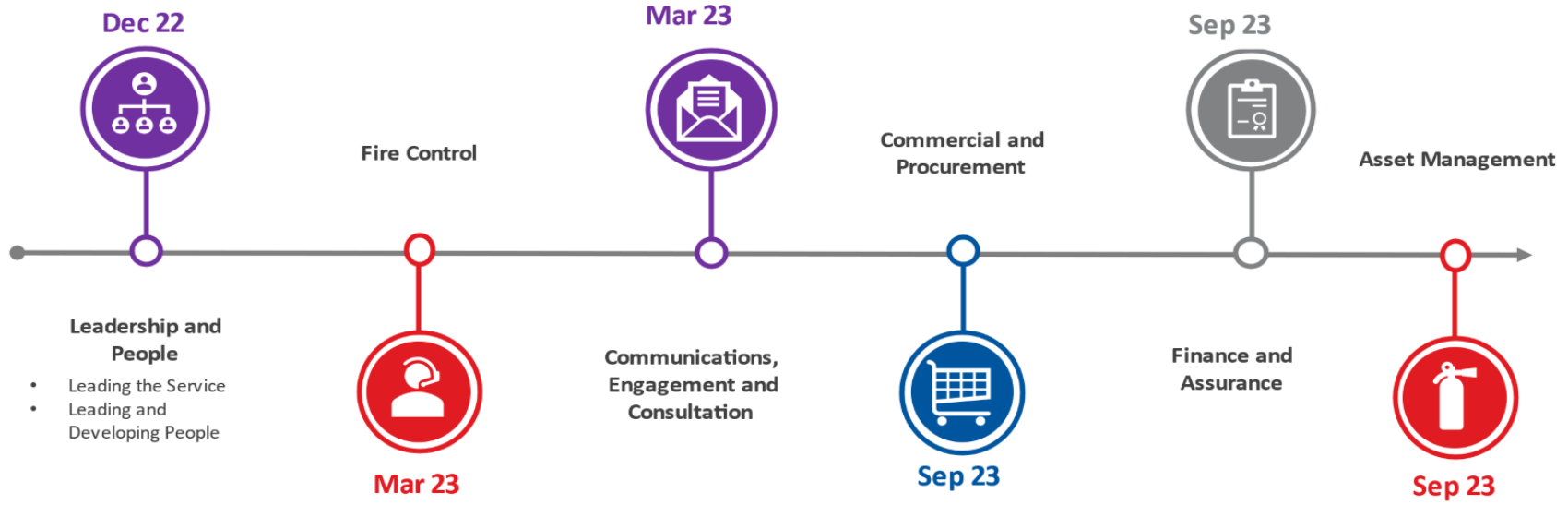
- 6.1 Due to the common issues many FRS are facing around Fire Standard implementation, at the recent Regional CFO (Chief Fire Officer) meeting, National Fire Standard Implementation was discussed, and it was subsequently agreed that BFRS would facilitate a regional forum to assist with services implementation of the National Fire Standards.
- 6.2 Advantages of a regional approach include avoiding duplication, sharing gap analysis, comparing approaches to RAG ratings, and discussing opportunities for collaboration. Each CFO provided contact details for Fire Standard service leads and as a result we contacted Norfolk, Suffolk, Herts, Essex, and Cambs. This allows services to collaborate whilst undertaking gap analysis / action plans and provides a shared situational awareness.

7 Forward plan and estimated timescale to project completion

7.1 Our timescales are as follows:

- Provide updates as required to CMT and the FRA (Fire and Rescue Authority) Audit and Standards Committee on the progress made to date, including visibility of completed action plans;
- Complete all currently issued gap analysis by 31 December 2023;
- Identify common strengths, weaknesses, and conduct risk assessment of gaps line with CRMP priorities;
- Integrate known actions into functional plans in 2024-25;
- Include the overall implementation tool as a corporate risk register control measure;
- Continue to communicate and engage SMEs (Subject Matter Expert) and stakeholders in the process;

Fire Standards in development - Proposed Publication Dates



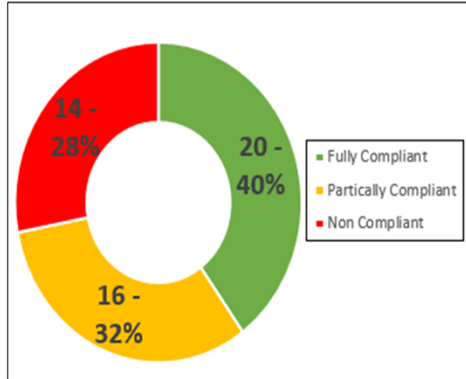
9. Recommendation

9.1 That the Committee supports the project and notes the progress made to date.

Appendix

1. Active fire Standards implementation Data

Initial Criteria Compliance

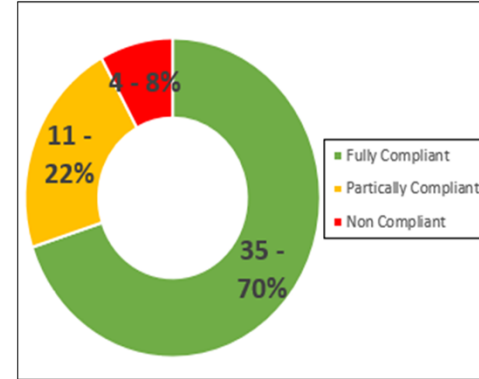


40 Actions fully compliant

16 Partially compliant

14 Non-compliant

Current Criteria Compliance

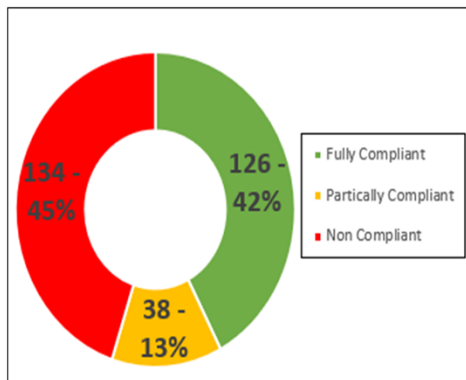


35 Actions fully compliant

11 Partially compliant

4 Non-compliant

Initial Criteria Actions Compliance

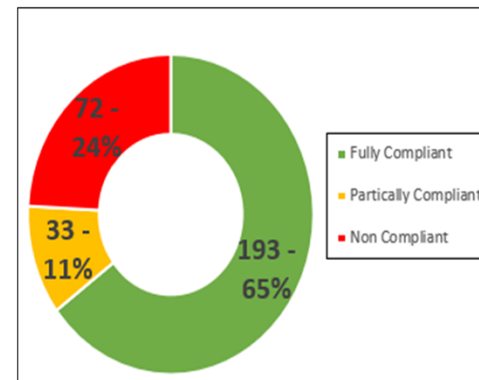


126 Actions fully compliant

38 Partially compliant

134 Non-compliant

Current Criteria Actions Compliance



193 Actions fully compliant

33 Partially compliant

72 Non-compliant

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