

For Publication

Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority  
Audit and Standards Committee  
17 October 2023

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**SUBJECT: FIRE STANDARDS BOARD UPDATE**

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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**

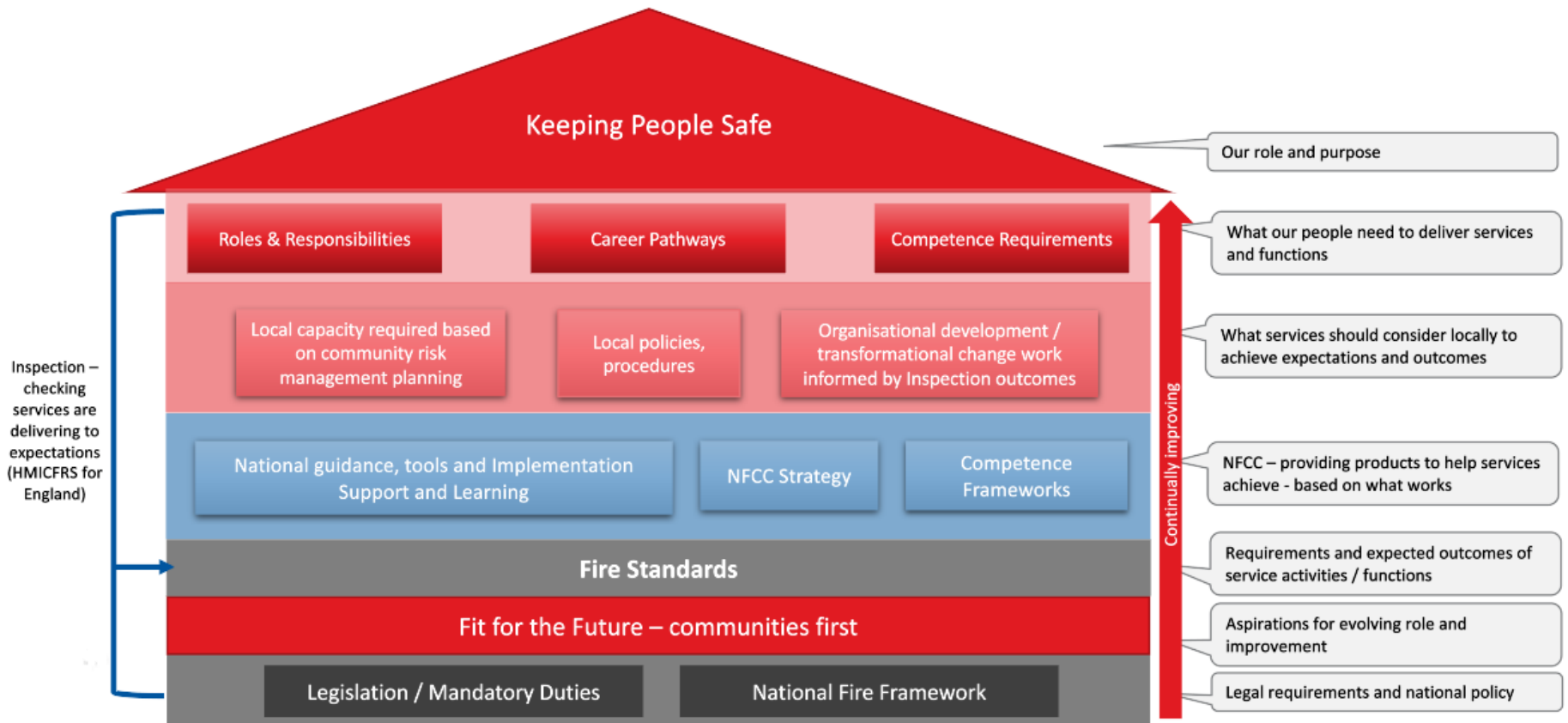
- 1.1 Clear progress is being made in understanding what action the service need to take to adopt fire standards. A governance framework is in place together with a clear approach for gap analysis and sign-off, with dedicated resources in the team to oversee its implementation.
- 1.2 Corporate Management 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:

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

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

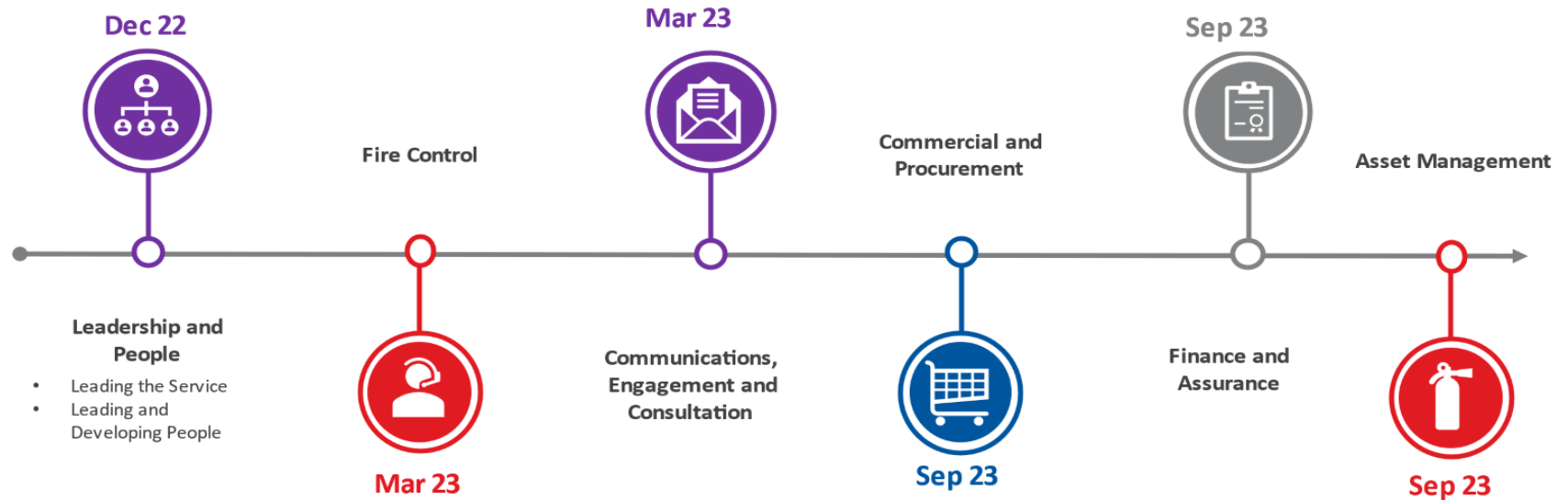


## **7 Forward plan and estimated timescale to project completion**

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



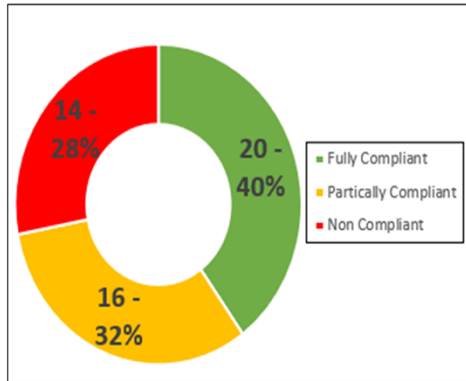
## 9. Recommendation

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

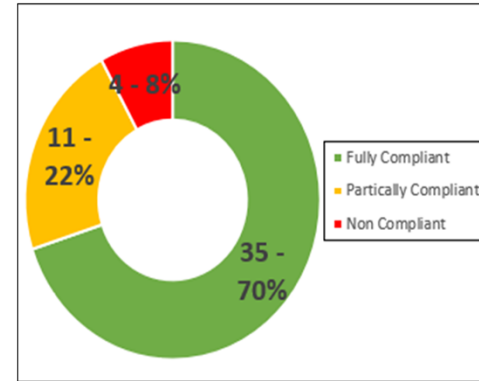


40 Actions fully compliant

16 Partially compliant

14 Non-compliant

#### Current Criteria Compliance

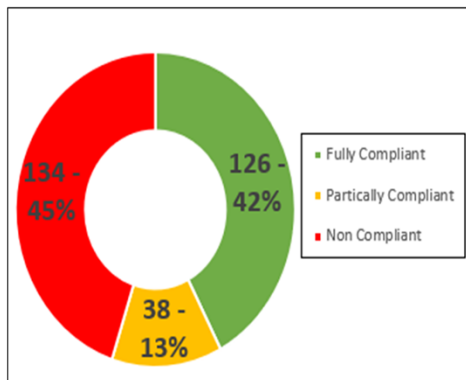


35 Actions fully compliant

11 Partially compliant

4 Non-compliant

#### Initial Criteria Actions Compliance

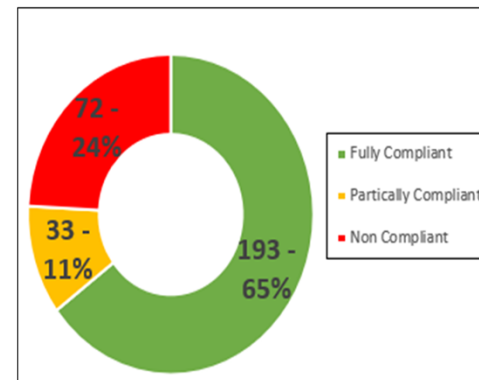


126 Actions fully compliant

38 Partially compliant

134 Non-compliant

#### Current Criteria Actions Compliance



193 Actions fully compliant

33 Partially compliant

72 Non-compliant