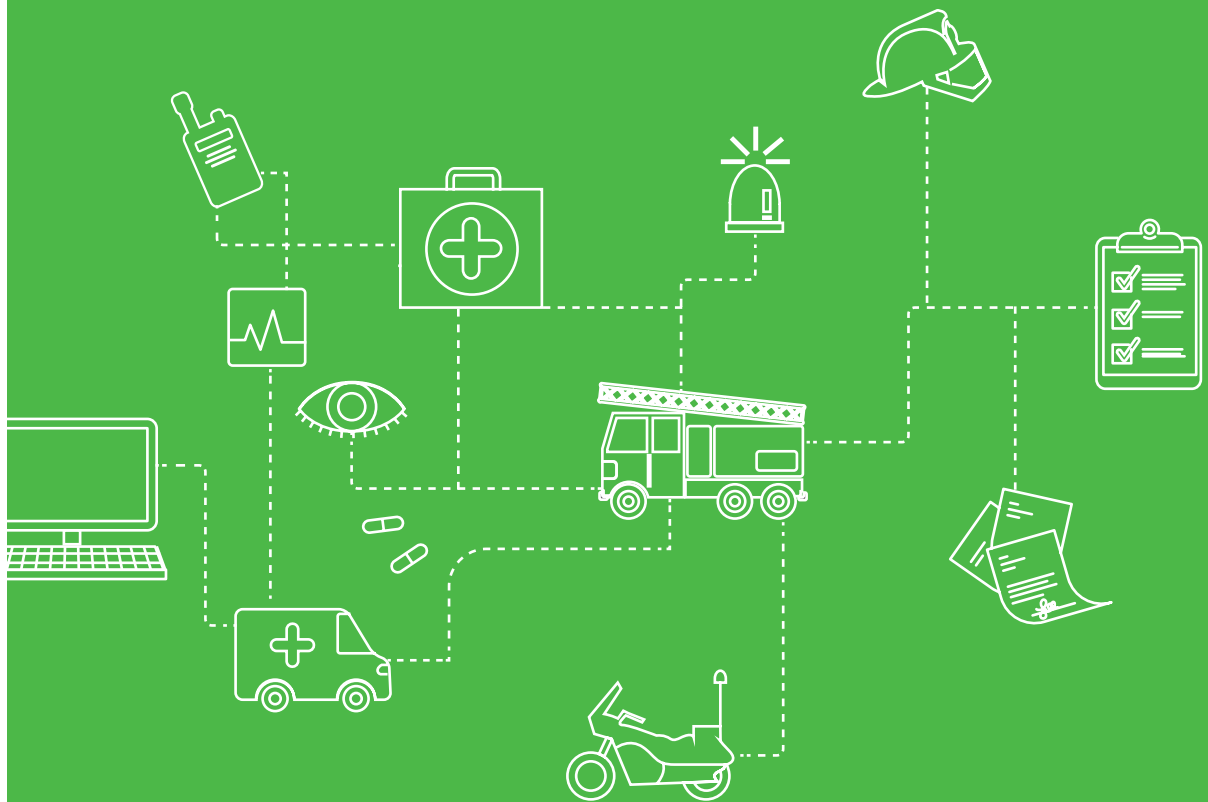


February 2020

Emergency services sector update



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Introduction

Welcome to RSM's latest Emergency Services sector briefing which provides a useful source of insight into recent developments and publications affecting the sector.

Inspections were a key topic area with Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) publishing three reports; one on effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy from the second tranche of police forces and a joint report with HM Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland (HMICS) on how effective the selection and training process is for chief officer roles. A third report by HMICFRS was also published on the 'State of fire and rescue'. We also draw attention to some of the key statistics published across the sector including police complaints, response times to fires attended and fire prevention and protection.

Along with our summary of key publications, we look at managing change in policing. This involves addressing some of the challenges faced by forces whilst effectively responding to the needs of the public and working to deliver justice and reducing crime with the limited resources available to them. We also provide information on the Police Board Assurance Framework (BAF) and our plans to launch a BAF toolkit for the police sector.

We hope you find this update a useful source of insight. As ever, if you have any queries, or have any suggestions for topics for future editions, please contact either myself, or your usual RSM contact and we will be delighted to help.

Daniel Harris

National Head of Emergency Services and Local Government

Police

PEEL spotlight report

HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) has published the 'PEEL spotlight report: a workforce under pressure.' The report on the effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy of police forces (PEEL) provides an overview of the emerging themes from the second group of 2018/19 Integrated PEEL Assessment reports. These themes are based on findings from 15 police force reports. Key points from the report include:

- 1 in relation to the overall effectiveness judgement, 10 forces were graded as 'good', four as 'requiring improvement' and one as 'inadequate';
- 2 for the overall efficiency judgement, nine forces were graded as 'good', four as 'requiring improvement' and two as 'inadequate';
- 3 for the overall judgment on legitimacy, 11 forces were graded as 'good', three as 'requiring improvement' and one as 'inadequate';
- 4 HMICFRS found that forces were struggling to respond to increasing demand, with seven of the 15 forces seeing their performance in efficiency gradings decline. When forces are unable to manage their demand, it makes it much harder for them to solve crime and protect vulnerable people;
- 5 similar to the findings presented from the first group of inspections, the frontline workforce had a good understanding of vulnerability. All forces had given their frontline officers and staff some form of training to help them recognise vulnerability and hidden harm;
- 6 due to backlogs in digital forensics, HMICFRS has seen the difficulty of meeting the demands of high-volume crimes increase;
- 7 there remains a shortage of trained investigators;
- 8 while most forces understand the 'operational policing skills' that is held within their workforce, HMICFRS found examples of workforce plans that are outdated, and skills audits which were 'too simplistic';
- 9 some forces are struggling to provide their workforce the supervision that is needed to deliver their best service to the public;
- 10 despite pressures, several forces continue to put effort into preventing crime and building community relationships which in turn leads to reducing the demand for forces;
- 11 many forces do not have 'fair and effective processes' for managing the performance of their workforce. The lack of processes means that forces cannot be confident that they can fully develop their workforce. HMICFRS also saw a variation in how well 'underperformance' is being tackled by forces, thus limiting their future abilities; and
- 12 while many forces understand the demand they are likely to face in the future, very few have plans in place to deal with them.

Questions for committee's consideration

- Has the JAC received assurance on the Forces Demand Model, how this links to the workforce plan and budgets?
- Have gaps in demand vs workforce vs budget been identified to ensure that efficiency can continue to improve and are the Committee sighted on any risks in this area and controls / actions to address?
- Are effective oversight and governance arrangements in place to ensure the performance of the workforce is managed fairly and effectively?
- Have you received assurance that the force is addressing the actions agreed from the HMICFRS reviews? What are the oversight arrangements?



An inspection of the police service's arrangements for the selection and development of chief officers

HMICFRS and HM Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland (HMICS) carried out a joint inspection between January 2019 and May 2019 to determine how effectively candidates are selected and trained by police forces for chief officer roles. The report, 'Leading Lights: An inspection of the police service's arrangements for the selection and development of chief officers', found that a lack of consistency, fairness and transparency is having a detrimental effect on police forces' ability to identify and

support those with the most potential to become chief officers. Development for aspiring chief officers includes passing the Senior Police National Assessment Centre (SPNAC) followed by attending the College's Strategic Command Course (SCC). The SPNAC and the SCC are 'organised and facilitated' by the College of Policing (CoP).

Key findings include:

- despite guidance being provided to forces by the CoP on the criteria candidates should meet, it does not specify what a force should do to select individuals and there are wide variations in the processes forces use;
- not all forces understand how to apply the criteria;
- the Inspectorates noted that there needs to be a 'more coherent and stringent approach' to identifying, selecting and developing potential candidates;
- there was a similar split in opinion on assessments between chief constables and SPNAC assessors, while some viewed the assessments as 'an excellent readiness test for chief officer roles', others viewed it as unnecessary;
- similar to the SPNAC, the SCC had mixed views in its value. This related to what is taught and the way it is taught;
- there was a consistently positive view that the SCC gave students the opportunity to develop 'lifelong, supportive professional networks';
- the Inspectorates highlighted that there is a risk that time is spent making sure that all participants achieve a pass instead of being more fully developed in operational and organisational leadership skills;
- opportunities for external development and leadership training are declining. Secondments to HMICFRS, national policing bodies or external organisations were once seen as useful opportunities. However, most interviewees told the Inspectorates that time outside the force was not valued and could be a disadvantage;
- the Inspectorates described the process of applying for assistant chief constable and deputy chief constable positions at the end of the SCC as 'chaotic';
- by contrast, Scotland has a 'robust system for selecting applicants that typically includes assessment centres and psychometric tests';
- the Inspectorates found that an increasing number of officers have only ever served in one force, in which was identified as a risk as the police service needs chief officers with a range of 'skills, experience and vision to design and operate effective local, regional and national functions'; and
- in the past, there was a regulation that stated an officer was unable to be promoted to chief constable unless they had served at least two years in another force. The Inspectorates investigated options for re-establishing a mobility rule that takes account of those with caring responsibilities and concluded that such a rule should be made.

The Inspectorates have set out several recommendations to help improve the selection and development of chief officers, including:

- the CoP should commission independent reviews of the SPNAC and SCC;
- the CoP should draft new regulations, and provide comprehensive information, on the conduct and procedure for selecting which candidates will attend the SPNAC; and
- the CoP should, with the support of other relevant organisations, devise a new framework for continuous professional development (supported by a new national workforce planning function).



First wave of 20,000 police officer uplift announced

The Home Office has confirmed the recruitment targets for each police force in England and Wales for the first year of the three-year drive to recruit 20,000 new officers. £750m will be spent on recruiting up to 6,000 officers nationally by the end of 2020/21, the 'first stage in the new uplift.' The funding provided for recruitment will cover associated costs, including training and kit. John Apter, National Chair of the Police Federation of England and Wales, stated, 'investment in policing is long overdue and for the first time we now have the actual number of officers each local force will increase by in the next year. These figures have been based on the current funding formula models and while this method is not perfect, I accept it is the only solution available to deliver the numbers quickly in year one.'



Serious and organised crime

The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) has published a report on 'serious and organised crime.' The Home Office is responsible for serious and organised crime policy, strategy and funding and the National Crime Agency (NCA) 'leads and coordinates UK law enforcement's response' to serious and organised crime. It is estimated that serious and organised crime costs the economy at least £37bn a year.

Key findings include:

- 1 government has not yet achieved its objective of moving its focus away from pursuing criminals and it is not prioritising activities that might stop serious and organised crime happening in the first place;
- 2 due to not utilising data effectively, the Home Office and the NCA's ability to understand the scale of the threat from serious and organised crime is debilitated;
- 3 restraints created by the funding arrangements currently in place for law enforcement bodies make it more difficult to tackle serious and organised crime;
- 4 the Home Office is still unaware of how successful it has been at reducing serious and organised crime; and
- 5 the PAC are concerned that a lack of clarity about the roles and responsibilities of the organisations involved in tackling serious and organised crime 'hinders the effectiveness of their activities.'

The PAC has set out several recommendations for the Home Office, including:

- set out clear plans for a rise in 'effective preventative activity' and update on its progress within six months;
- provide an update, alongside the NCA, on highest priority threats from serious and organised crime; and
- agree with HM Treasury a way to provide 'greater certainty' on police funding and how it is to be administered as soon as possible or as part of the spending review.

Home Office funds innovative policing technology to prevent crime

The Home Office has pledged £5m from the £175m Police Transformation Fund for 2019 to 2020, to support the development of innovative technology that will help police forces prevent crime. The funding will be given to the West Midlands Police so they may run further tests on a data analysis system that can process large volumes of data that are currently held by the force. The National Data Analytics Solution (NDAS) has already undergone one year of testing in which it used to police data on knife and gun offences and on those who have previously committed them to identify patterns and common traits among perpetrators. Once the system has been fully tested it is hoped that NDAS will be rolled out to police forces across England and Wales who want to use it to improve their performance and protect the public.





Police Board Assurance Framework (BAF) – do you know what you think you know?

Assurance, at its simplest, equates to a level of confidence or comfort that something that needs to be done, will be done.

All those that have overall responsibility for the achievement of objectives should seek assurance – they should want to know that the major risks, both positive and negative, are being effectively managed ie that existing controls are reliable and that actions taken in response to risks are being suitably progressed to achieve their desired outcome.

Though this seems simple enough, the reality is, however, often very different. Some of the common pitfalls we find, in all sectors, leading to mis-placed assurance are:

- Mis-alignment of objectives and major risks.
This may be due to:
 1. lack of clarity in objectives and therefore difficulty is encountered determining the major risks; or
 2. that the major risks identified have not been sufficiently considered in the context of the objectives and so the two are divorced.
- Poorly articulated major risks. The implications are just not understood and therefore it is not possible to understand how or if they are under control or what further action is required.
- Lack of planning around assurance provision ie why, what, when and by whom.

By far the most significant assurance challenge (or difficulty) is the creation and application of the assurance framework itself, or as we at RSM often refer to it, the "Board Assurance Framework" or BAF. In this context we refer to Board in the generic term for the applicable governing body of the organisation. We emphasise this level of sponsorship due to the fact that the assurance framework should be focussed on the key objectives, priorities or goals, as set by those responsible for governance at the organisation (ie the Police and Crime Commissioner / Police and Fire Commissioner / Chief Constable / Chief Fire Officer / Fire Authority).

The BAF creation and application is difficult because it is unfamiliar, especially in the police setting, however the benefits are significant, providing a governance tool that brings together all relevant information and evidence over the management of major risks associated with the police and crime plan objectives in a planned and rigorous fashion. We often find assurance is piecemeal, inconsistent or not focussed on the right risks.

The BAF provides a complete picture of the risk and control environment and strengthens accountability for those responsible for managing risks far more so than a standard risk register. Whilst the BAF enhances the focus on risk and control, it is built on evidence rather than assumption, helping address the age old conundrum of those responsible for oversight and governance being "do we know what we think we know?"

We have found that the use of a well-constructed BAF significantly improves the ability of the Audit/ Risk/ Assurance Committees to effectively fulfil their responsibilities – the BAF driving the agenda and improving assurance focus. This we feel is of particular importance to a PCC who will want to demonstrate to the electorate that they have made best use of public resources in the achievement of their police and crime plan objectives.

In a previous article we explored the design, development and application of a collaboration assurance framework and RSM are excited to announce that we will soon be releasing a Board Assurance Toolkit for the police sector. This draws on RSM's wider sector BAF experiences and will provide practical advice, tips and templates that can be used to help in the development of a BAF at your organisation.

If you would like to know more about the above or discuss this topic further, including collaboration assurance, then please contact:
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Managing change in policing

In Sir Tom Windsor's State of Policing report* published in June 2019 four key themes were highlighted.

- Forces overall were performing well.
- The wider criminal justice system is dysfunctional with vulnerable people being let down.
- Police funding and expectations are being mismatched with a widening gap between the public's needs and the police services capacity to meet them.
- There is a need to reform regional, national and local arrangements to enable efficiency and effectiveness.

Addressing these challenges poses a real question in how to do this whilst continuing to react to the public's needs, working to deliver justice and reducing crime with depleted resources.

RSM have seen at strategic level in many public service organisations a focus on operational needs to enable efficient delivery of the service to the public. We have met extremely competent strategic leaders with great operational insight but who have had little exposure (prior to their senior role) of managing large change programmes. Without organisations investing in their senior leaders' ability to lead and manage change, there is a danger that change will become reactionary rather than planned.

Reactionary change vs planned change

Reactionary change is normally forced by a situation, it's generally not well planned and is required immediately. If organisations can anticipate challenges and move to a planned and proactive change approach there will be an opportunity to bring fundamental or systematic change with a greater positive impact.

Why should the police increase their focus on change?

Change and transformation in the police sector is often delivered through programmes and projects. The Association for Project Management** reported one in eight projects failed to meet their budget and only one in five projects were successful (conditions for project success).

Failed projects are expensive, time consuming and impact negatively on morale. Ensuring projects are completed on time and within budget is a real skill.

Senior leaders must ensure a dual focus, business as usual and change and growth. Business as usual or running the organisation includes operations, services and functions which are performance managed through KPIs. Change and growth focuses on change initiatives, projects and programmes and using outcomes / benefit based key performance indicators. It is a real skill to balance these two areas with the demands currently placed on public sector service organisations.

* <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/wp-content/uploads/state-of-policing-2018-part-1.pdf>

** https://www.apm.org.uk/sites/default/files/conditions%20for%20project%20success_web_final_0.pdf

Questions for the strategic leaders to ask programme and project leads when authorising the start of any project /programme

- 1 How does this initiative contribute to strategic objectives?
If it doesn't, why are we doing it?
- 2 What is the governance / oversight arrangements?
Who is the sponsor?
- 3 Where has this been done elsewhere? What happened there?
Can we learn anything?
- 4 How likely are we to be successful? Are all the benefits realistic
and realisable?
- 5 How are the project and benefits being tracked (Gateway reviews,
KPIs, benefits realisation)?
- 6 What and when are the key decision points in the project where
strategic leaders will decide whether it will continue?
- 7 What is the cost of the project?
- 8 What is the earliest and latest completion time for the
project (tolerances)?
- 9 What are the risks? What is the likelihood, impact and how are
they being managed?
- 10 What is the impact if the project is cancelled, deferred,
slowed down or accelerated?
- 11 Are the right members of staff with appropriate skills on
the project team?

If your organisation is considering or is in the process of going through a transformational journey and you would like any further discussions on any of the above areas please contact Ellie Acton
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Fire

Analysis on fires attended by fire and rescue services

The Home Office has published the latest statistics on response times to fires attended by fire and rescue services (FRSs) in England between April 2018 and March 2019.

Key statistics include:

- 1 FRSs attended 576,040 incidents, an increase of two per cent from 2017/18;
- 2 of the 576,040 incidents, 32 per cent accounted for fires, an increase of three per cent on the previous year. 40 per cent accounted for fire-false alarms and 28 per cent accounted for non-fire incidents;
- 3 of the fires attended, 106,283 were secondary fires, 73,214 were primary fires and 29,570 were dwelling fires;
- 4 there has been a 29 per cent increase in non-fire incidents since 2014/15; and
- 5 fires where a smoke alarm was not present accounted for 25 per cent (7,446) of all dwelling fires and 28 per cent (55) of all dwelling fire-related fatalities.

Fire prevention and protection statistics

The Home Office has published statistics on fire prevention and protection in England between April 2018 and March 2019.

Key statistics include:

- 1 FRSs completed 594,766 Home Fire Safety Checks (HFSCs) compared to 600,324 in 2016/17 and 672,019 in 2013/14;
- 2 of the 594,766 HFSCs completed in 2017/18, 347,748 were targeted towards the elderly and 170,257 were targeted towards the disabled;
- 3 FRSs carried out 49,327 fire safety audits in 2018/19 compared to 49,423 in 2017/18 and 67,266 in 2013/14;
- 4 67 per cent of fire safety audits (33,265) were rated satisfactory. There were 16,062 unsatisfactory fire safety audits;
- 5 the premises type with the greatest proportion of satisfactory audits was further education (79 per cent) while houses converted to flats (57 per cent), licensed premises (59 per cent) and hotels (59 per cent) were the premises with the lowest proportion of satisfactory audits; and
- 6 90 per cent of households say they possess a working smoke alarm.



State of fire and rescue

The 'State of fire and rescue' report follows on from the three tranches of the first independent inspection into FRSs for 12 years. The first 14 FRSs inspection reports were published in December 2018, the next 16 reports in June 2019, and the final release, published in December 2019, includes inspection reports for 15 FRSs. All 45 FRSs inspection outcomes are now published.

The first 'State of fire and rescue' annual assessment draws on all inspections, focusing on three key areas: the 'effectiveness' of FRSs and how 'efficient' FRSs are at keeping people safe from fire and other risks, and how well do FRSs look after its 'people' including how well they train, manage and support their staff. As part of its inspection, HMICFRS gave each FRS a graded judgement on each of these areas.

Key findings include:

- 1 regarding overall effectiveness, **29 FRSs** were graded as 'good' and **16** as 'requires improvement';
- 2 on overall efficiency, **26 FRSs** were graded as 'good', **18** as 'requires improvement' and **one** as 'inadequate';
- 3 regarding people, **18 FRSs** were graded as 'good', **25** as 'requires improvement' and **two** as 'inadequate';
- 4 there are '**noticeable differences**' in the way services effectively respond to incidents;
- 5 it is **mandatory** for all FRSs to produce an 'integrated risk management plan' (IRMP), providing an explanation to the public on the way its 'prevention, protection and response activity will reduce the risk from fire and other emergencies.' However, some FRSs have not used this process to explain how the risk assessments reinforce the different response standards to the public. This means that there is no clarity on what emergency responses the public can expect;
- 6 majority of services do not have enough 'on-call firefighters', which shows that recruitment and retention remains a concern;
- 7 many services are now operating in line with 'national operational guidance.' The guidance supports services to utilise a 'common approach to commanding incidents, recognising hazards and putting control measures in place.' However, the degree to which services have implemented this guidance varies. HMICFRS believes that services need to address this to help them to improve collaborative working;
- 8 most services are good at assisting other fire services, however, not enough joint exercises are undertaken to ensure equipment and ways of working are aligned;
- 9 the sector needs to improve how it complies with building fire safety regulations;
- 10 there is an inconsistent approach to the number of fire safety audits services carry out;
- 11 despite increases in fire false alarms, not all FRSs are adhering to the National Fire Chiefs Council's best practice guidance;
- 12 many services were found to be under-resourcing their prevention and protection teams. While some services are able to do the prevention and protection work they could afford, there were some forces, despite being able to afford it, not making this a priority;
- 13 many services had managed to make savings over the past five years;
- 14 there is a positive attitude towards collaboration with other emergency services, however, over half of services were not 'consistently or effectively evaluating, reviewing or monitoring collaboration activities to assess whether they were beneficial and cost-effective';
- 15 FRS leaders need to be aware of their true costs to allow them to efficiently and effectively manage budgets, use resources and delve into opportunities to reduce costs;



16

the use of technology varies considerably. Some services are investing in technology to improve their effectiveness and efficiency, but for some, there has been slow progress towards making the most of opportunities technology presents;

17

almost half of services inspected are using IT systems that are broken, dated or unreliable, and some rely on using inefficient paper-based systems. In some services, the lack of investment in IT is leading to reduced levels of productivity;

18

despite some services achieving 'outstanding' in the area of culture, some need to do more to address 'toxic' environments involving bullying and harassment, and improve the diversity of the workforce;

19

in many services, wellbeing of staff is prioritised and promoted by senior leaders;

20

services need to monitor staff working hours more closely;

21

staff are generally well trained and equipped to deliver the best possible response to the public. Yet some services do not have the facilities to deliver quality training, and so services are unable to guarantee that their training is effective; and

22

services need to effectively utilise their 'performance management processes more to promote cultural change.'



Sources of further information

HMICFRS

['PEEL spotlight report'](#)

<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/publications/peel-spotlight-report-group-2-2018-19/>

HMICFRS

['An inspection of the police service's arrangements for the selection and development of chief officers'](#)

<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/wp-content/uploads/leading-lights-inspection-police-arrangements-selection-development-chief-officers.pdf>

Home Office

['First wave of 20,000 police officer uplift announced'](#)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/home-office-announces-first-wave-of-20000-police-officer-uplift>

Public Accounts Committee

['Serious and organised crime'](#)

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmpubacc/2049/2049.pdf>

Home Office

['Home Office funds innovative policing technology to prevent crime'](#)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/home-office-funds-innovative-policing-technology-to-prevent-crime>

HMICFRS

['State of fire and rescue'](#)

<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/wp-content/uploads/state-of-fire-and-rescue-2019.pdf>

Home Office

['Analysis on fires attended by fire and rescue services'](#)

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/831136/detailed-analysis-fires-attended-fire-rescue-england-1819-hosb1919.pdf

Home Office

['Fire prevention and protection statistics'](#)

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/836909/fire-prevention-protection-1819-hosb2319.pdf

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