

Fire and Rescue Strategic Resilience Board

Draft Terms of Reference

Context

The draft Fire and Rescue National Framework emphasises the importance of national resilience. The Government has a responsibility to ensure that the public is adequately protected, and it retains strategic responsibility for national resilience. In meeting this responsibility, it relies on the leadership role of fire and rescue authorities and recognises that national resilience is best built on the basis of local professional expertise and understanding of risk.

The Government, fire and rescue authorities and fire and rescue professionals need to work in partnership in order to ensure continued national resilience. To help achieve this, the Fire and Rescue Strategic Resilience Board has been established. The Fire and Rescue Strategic Resilience Board will provide a forum for fire and rescue authorities and fire professionals to collectively engage with the Government in order to support discussions and decision making in relation to national resilience.

Purpose

The purpose of the Fire and Rescue Strategic Resilience Board is to take a strategic view of fire and rescue capability in relation to national resilience, and to provide advice to ministers as and when required.

Specifically, the Board will:

- consider national resilience risks and priorities and current fire and rescue capability in relation to those risks, based on fire and rescue authorities' risk assessments, gap analyses and other relevant processes¹;
- review fire and rescue capability following annual publication of the National Risk Assessment, the National Resilience Planning Assumptions and the CFOA National Resilience Annual Assurance Report, and in the light of other information or advice received;

¹ Including but not limited to: the National Risk Assessment, the National Resilience Planning Assumptions, National Resilience Board advice, information from other Government Departments, local risk assessments and local planning assumptions.

Item 1

Appendix A

- agree whether any new and/or emerging national resilience risks have an impact on fire and rescue capability, or whether fire and rescue capability could assist in the mitigation of that risk;
- identify any capability gaps and/or any redundant capability;
- agree whether any capability gaps can be filled through reconfiguration of existing capability or innovative solutions, and determine whether and/or how to fill any remaining capability gaps;
- provide advice to ministers on fire and rescue national resilience capability and, where necessary, consider costed options for how new capability can be built, taking into account the likelihood/impact of the risk and funding pressures;
- provide a route for government to commission and fund new capability from fire and rescue authorities, if required and where agreed by ministers;
- provide a mechanism through which fire and rescue authorities provide strategic assurance to government that agreed capabilities are in place and fit-for-purpose; and
- in all strands of work, consider strategic intraoperability and interoperability issues, including issues identified through cross-government work.

Accountability

The Board will provide advice to the Fire and Rescue Minister. Final decisions will be for ministers to take.

Delivery Arrangements

If ministers require and agree to commission and fund new capability from fire and rescue authorities, it is anticipated that the Chief Fire Officers' Association (CFOA), utilising the Fire and Rescue National Resilience Board and other functions, will oversee delivery of the capability and provide assurance that it is in place and fit-for-purpose.

The Fire and Rescue National Resilience Board (NRB) is chaired by the CFOA. The NRB supports fire and rescue services and contractors in managing, maintaining and developing fire and rescue national resilience capabilities and assets. The Board provides assurance to the Department for Communities and Local Government that national resilience assets are in place and fit-for-purpose.

CFOA is well positioned to manage delivery of new capabilities and to provide a route through which the detail of the risks and capability gaps identified at

Item 1

Appendix A

the local level can be considered collectively and brought to the attention of the Fire and Rescue Strategic Resilience Board, if necessary.

Chair and Secretariat

The Fire and Rescue Strategic Resilience Board is chaired by the Director of Fire, Resilience and Emergencies in the Department for Communities and Local Government.

Members of the Board will nominate a vice chair.

The Secretariat is provided by the Department for Communities and Local Government.

Membership

Membership of the Fire and Rescue Strategic Resilience Board is drawn from the following organisations:

Organisation
Department for Communities and Local Government (x 2)
Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser
Local Government Association (x 2 members of the Fire Services Management Committee)
Chief Fire Officers' Association (x 2)
Cabinet Office
Home Office
Department of Health
Welsh Government
Scottish Government
Northern Ireland Government
Chair of the National Resilience Board
By invitation
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Department for Transport
Department for Energy and Climate Change
Others, as required

Item 1

Appendix A

The table above indicates those organisations which have permanent membership on the Board, and those which will be invited to attend according to the agenda. All correspondence, including agendas and minutes, will be sent to all permanent and invited members. The list of invited members may vary.

Wider Resilience Structures

Via the Secretariat, linkages will be maintained with wider resilience structures that are in place across government, particularly in relation to interoperability. The majority of members are also represented on various resilience groups that exist in government as well as in the Local Government Association and the Chief Fire Officers' Association.

These linkages will ensure that the Fire and Rescue Strategic Resilience Board operates as part of the wider resilience structures.

Security

The Board may view sensitive documents. Members will need to have security clearance of at least BPSS (Baseline Personal Security Standard). This is the minimum requirement for those with access to government assets and involves standard pre-employment security controls that are undertaken by most organisations.² Members will need to have regard to the government guidance on dealing with sensitive documents.

Should members not already have BPSS level security clearance, they should notify the Secretariat.

It is anticipated that, as far as is possible, the documents circulated between Board members will be unrestricted. On occasion, it may only be possible to circulate restricted documents. It would be helpful if each Board member had access to secure email. Members who do not have access to secure email will be sent any restricted documents in hard copy.

Meetings of the Board

Members commit to the following:

- Meeting in person quarterly or as the Board itself determines.

² The BPSS comprises verification of identity, nationality and immigration status, employment history (past three years) and criminal record. Further information is available at <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/resource-library/security-policy-framework>

Item 1

Appendix A

- Fully engaging in meetings and correspondence, either in person or virtually, as appropriate.
- Adhering to government guidelines with regard to security of sensitive documents and information.

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