

FIRE COMMISSION - PROGRESS REPORT

Title of Paper	Fire Standards Progress Report
Decision or Information	For information
Date of Meeting	25 September 2020
Attachments	Appendix A – Fire Standards Progress Status and Timeline

Summary

This paper provides members of the Fire Commission with a summary of the progress on Fire Standards development to date.

With a number of Fire Standards now in progress and due for publication within six months, this paper aims to ensure members are aware of the Fire Standards proposed and the potential impact on fire authorities, and by default services, as they are published.

It includes clarification of the role of the Fire Standards Board (Board) and how they are supported through the NFCC Central Programme Office and the network of NFCC national subject specific lead officers. There is also a timeline for the first phase of Fire Standards development approved by the Board in June 2020.

From phase one, the intention is for seven Fire Standards to be approved by the Board and published online by March 2021. These include:

Fire Standard	NFCC Lead
Emergency Response Driving (the pilot Fire Standard)	ACO Paul Stewart (NFCC Operations Committee)
Operational Response: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operational Preparedness Operational Competence Operational Learning 	CFO Chris Lowther (NFCC Operations Committee)
Code of Ethics	CFO Becci Bryant (NFCC People Programme)
Risk Management Planning	CFO Phil Loach (NFCC Community Risk Programme)
Fire Protection	CFO Mark Hardingham (NFCC Protection and Business Safety Committee)

It is anticipated that shortly following this will be Fire Standards covering the following:

- Leadership (*subject to agreement on scope*)
- Prevention (*subject to agreement on scope*)
- Data requirements and management (*subject to agreement on scope*)

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the contents of this report for information.

Background Information

As part of the Government's Fire Reform agenda, the Board was established as a new entity in 2019 with funding support from the Home Office to develop a suite of professional Fire Standards for fire and rescue services in England.

As a reminder, the model for the Fire Standards Board was to be sector-led but with an independent Chair and Vice Chair to provide experience and diversity of thought. Membership includes the NFCC, employers (both the LGA and the APCC) and the Home Office. The LGA representative on the Board is Cllr Nick Chard.

Once approved, the Fire Standards will be the responsibility of the Fire Standards Board as outlined in their [Terms of Reference](#). The Board are striving to create a suite of Fire Standards that are easily understandable and clear, consistent in structure and are based on defining what good looks like at an organisational level.

The key part of each Fire Standard is the "desired outcome" statement. It is proposed the outcome statements will be aspirational in part, driving for continuous improvement.

It will be the responsibility of services to achieve the outcomes set out in each Fire Standard. With each Fire Standard will be information about what services must, should or may do to achieve the outcome and any useful supporting information. If there is related national guidance or tools available these will also be referenced.

All approved Fire Standards will be shared on the [Fire Standards Board website](#).

Board support

The Board commissions work to the NFCC, as the lead subject matter experts, for support with developing the Fire Standards. The NFCC CPO supports the Board with executive support and secretariat services as well as coordinating and facilitating development work. Other relevant wider stakeholders are included in the development process where appropriate.

Much of the development work is linked and aligned to that being undertaken through the various national improvement programmes and NFCC Committees. The NFCC improvement programmes are producing national guidance, tools and templates for use by services where a national approach is beneficial. Much of this supporting information will underpin the Fire Standards.

FIRE COMMISSION - PROGRESS REPORT

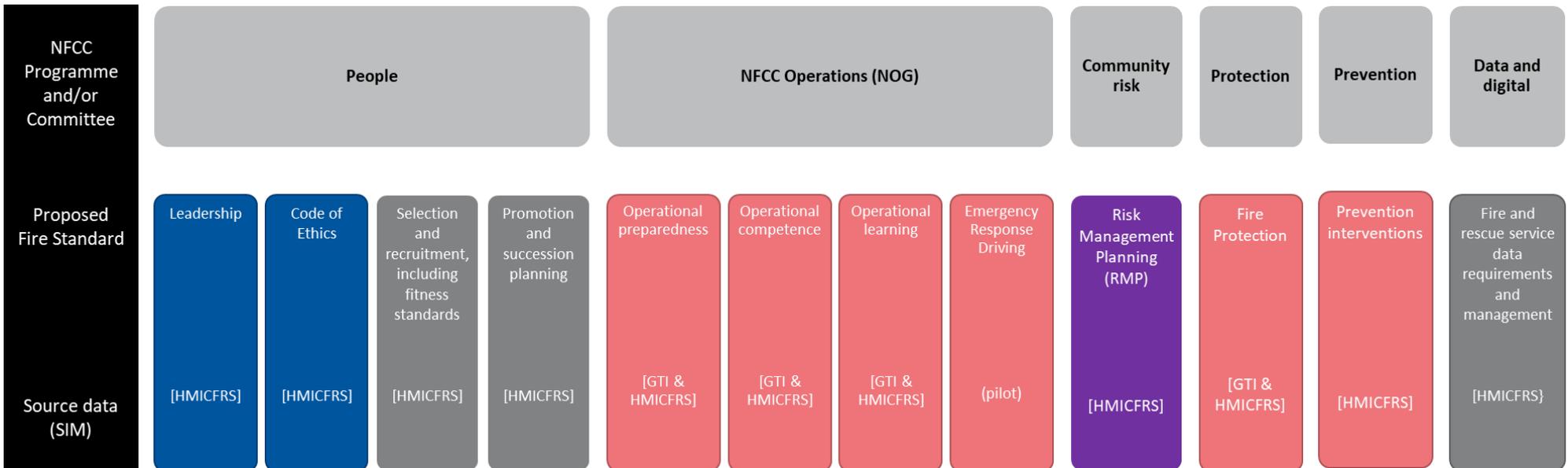
Phase One Fire Standards

The first phase of Fire Standards was agreed by the Board and is shown in the figure below. The order for Fire Standards development has been based on the national priorities for improvement identified through the SIM, taking into consideration where work was already in progress to support a Fire Standard.

This figure shows:

- the responsible NFCC Programme or Committee
- the proposed Fire Standard title and;
- the source of evidence providing the rationale for the requirement for a Fire Standard drawn from the NFCC Strategic Improvement Model (SIM).

A table showing progress against each Fire Standard and a timeline is shown in **Appendix A**.



FIRE COMMISSION - PROGRESS REPORT

Implementation

As part of the Fire Standards development process, the impact on services is being considered. Whilst many services may already be achieving the Fire Standards at the time they are published, other services may need time to fully align and achieve them, which is accepted by the Board.

To help with implementation of both Fire Standards and other national products developed through the NFCC, the NFCC CPO is planning to establish an implementation team to increase levels of engagement with services and provide implementation support.

Work to support services with achievement of the Operational Response (NOG) Fire Standards is in the planning stage. The aspiration is to connect services to share experiences in how successful implementation has been achieved with those services who are further behind with implementation.

The Board and HMICFRS

Dialogue is already underway between the Board and the HMICFRS as they prepare for the next round of inspections to plan for how the Fire Standards will be integrated into the HMICFRS inspection frameworks and judgement criteria.

How well Fire Standards are contributing to sector improvement will be based on feedback from the HMICFRS through their inspection findings.

All Fire Standards will be periodically reviewed but should there be the need, dynamic reviews will be initiated if the Board become aware that the Fire Standard is not achieving the benefits and improvements it was proposed to do.

Communications and Engagement

Direct communication and engagement with authorities regarding Fire Standards has been constricted and limited by COVID-19 and its impact on services.

The Board are conscious that they have not had the opportunity to engage with service leaders and senior managers in the ways traditionally available through conferences and workshops. Earlier in the summer a newsletter providing a summary of progress and introducing the first phase of Fire Standards was produced and is [available online](#).

As a number of consultations are due for release in the coming months, to aid communications with services, the Board have proposed that each service nominate a strategic manager as a single point of contact for the Board. This is especially key as a number of Fire Standards will progress to consultation over the Autumn and the Board are keen to ensure all services take the opportunity to engage in that process.

The Board would welcome and appreciate the support of fire authority chairs and members in ensuring their services engage in the Fire Standards consultations as they are published and support activities to achieve those Fire Standards once approved.

APPENDIX A – FIRE STANDARDS PROGRESS REPORT

Activity Area for Fire Standard	Stage 1 (Scoping)	Stage 2 (Development to post-consultation draft)	Stage 3 (Final governance check, QA and sign off)	Summary of progress to date	Next steps
Pilot Fire Standard – Emergency Response Driving	Complete	In progress	Dec 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awaiting outcomes of discussions with DfT regarding legislation and impact on services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review underpinning guidance in light of outcomes of NFCC / Home Office / DfT discussions
Operational preparedness	In progress	In progress	Dec 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Being led by the NFCC Operations Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation due to complete early September
Operational competence	In progress	In progress	Dec 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft Fire Standards completed Peer review completed during June 2020 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Results collated, analysed and findings report produced during September
Operational learning	In progress	In progress	Dec 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation started in mid-July 2020 Implication impacts identified Work to establish an implementation working group to support services - initiated July 2020 Development of implementation handbook planned 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-present to Board to gain approval for stage 3

Activity Area for Fire Standard	Stage 1 (Scoping)	Stage 2 (Development to post-consultation draft)	Stage 3 (Final governance check, QA and sign off)	Summary of progress to date	Next steps
Code of Ethics	In progress	In progress	Dec 2020/ Jan2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being led by NFCC People Programme (Leadership Project) • Draft Fire Standard being revised following feedback from Board • Re-defined to be a national Code of Ethics • Work to develop the draft Code of Ethics is underway which will allow completion of the draft Fire Standard • Peer review continued during July and August 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify implementation impacts and decision on supporting guidelines required • Consultation of both Fire Standards and Code of Ethics planned to start Sep 2020 for 6 weeks • Consultation responses to be collated analysed and findings report produced during November 2020 • Potential for post-consultation draft and supporting Code of Ethics to be re-presented to Board Dec 2020
Risk Management Planning	In progress	By Nov	By Jan 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being led by the NFCC Community Risk Programme (CRP) • Scoping work initiated in May 2020 • Drafting of the Fire Standard in progress now in peer review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete peer review and revise draft if required • Consultation planned start by early Oct 2020 • Consultation responses to be collated analysed and findings report produced by end of November 2020

Activity Area for Fire Standard	Stage 1 (Scoping)	Stage 2 (Development to post-consultation draft)	Stage 3 (Final governance check, QA and sign off)	Summary of progress to date	Next steps
Leadership	In progress	In progress	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Being led by NFCC People Programme (Leadership Project) Scoping work in progress NFCC Leadership Project proposals in draft and workshop to engage with services planned 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If agreed by the Board, a Commissioning Brief to be drafted clarifying and confirming the Board's requirements Timeline for development reviewed by the Project Team Drafting of the Fire Standard followed by peer review then consultation
Fire Protection (<i>roles and competence</i>)	To be scoped	By Nov	By Apr 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Being led by the NFCC Protection Hub Delays to scoping work as Protection Hub brings resources online (recruitment) Proposals to review scope (see Item 3 – Paper 1 for details) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider need for Commissioning Brief from the Board Start Scoping work with NFCC Protection Hub Sep 2020 Timeline for development reviewed and agreed
Prevention interventions	To be scoped	By Nov	By Apr 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be led by the NFCC Prevention Programme Scoping work yet to be initiated – programme being established Sep 2020 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider need for Commissioning Brief from the Board Identify any existing related work and activities that may underpin and support this/these Fire Standard(s)

Activity Area for Fire Standard	Stage 1 (Scoping)	Stage 2 (Development to post-consultation draft)	Stage 3 (Final governance check, QA and sign off)	Summary of progress to date	Next steps
Selection and recruitment, including fitness standards	To be scoped	TBC	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be led by the NFCC People Programme Dependent on conclusions of Leadership Fire Standard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and consider specific requirements of this Fire Standard(s) as part of scoping work on the Leadership Fire Standard
Promotion and succession planning	To be scoped	TBC	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be led by the NFCC People Programme Dependent on conclusions of Leadership Fire Standard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and consider specific requirements of this Fire Standard(s) as part of scoping work on the Leadership Fire Standard
Fire and rescue service data requirements and management	To be scoped	TBC	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be led by the NFCC Digital and Data Programme Scoping to be initiated Sep 2020 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme to review and consider specific requirements of this Fire Standard



****STAGE 4 TIMESCALES TBD****

Key	Meetings/Milestones
Stage 1	Scoping
Stage 2	Post consultation draft
Stage 3	Governance, QA, Sign Off
Stage 4	Impact and Evaluation