



Fire Commission

Date:	Friday 11 June 2021
Title:	NFCC Update
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1. Purpose

- 1.1 This report provides an update on key work within the National Fire Chiefs Council.

2. Appointment of NFCC Vice Chairs

- 2.1 As Members will be aware, the NFCC Chair is assisted by two Vice Chairs who support, advise and provide cover where required. Previous Chair, Roy Wilsher, was supported by Huw Jakeway and Phil Loach, who had been in the Vice Chair roles since the NFCC was first formed in 2017.
- 2.2 As part of Mark Hardingham's appointment to Chair on 1 April 2021, he selected two new Vice Chairs – Justin Johnston, Chief Fire Officer, Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service and Phil Garrigan, Chief Fire Officer, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service – and placed on record his thanks to the outgoing Vice Chairs for their significant contribution over the past four years.

3. NFCC 2021-24 Plan

- 3.1 The NFCC 2021-24 Plan has been developed and agreed and will be submitted to NFCC Council for approval at the end of May 2021.
- 3.2 The Plan reflects a significant increase in Home Office funding for the NFCC compared with previous years. It demonstrates the Council's ambitions and reflects the significant growth in its activities. The Plan has been developed assuming a consistent level of funding for 2021-24, although comes with an acceptance that the outcome of future spending reviews and the Home Office White Paper will need to be considered in due course.

4. NFCC Programme Highlights

- 4.1 The NFCC has well established programme management arrangements in place and progress against deliverables is regularly reported to Steering Group and Council. Recent highlights from each of the main programmes are included for information.

Grenfell Tower Inquiry

- 4.2 Changes for Fires in Buildings guidance were published in December 2020, including content for Fires in Buildings that Fail, and the use of personnel deployed above the fire floor with BA but not under air. The NFCC Fires in Tall Buildings Evacuation guidance document is being developed into a supporting training package.
- 4.3 During the development of the evacuation guidance paper, it became clear there was some confusion around the terminology used for the withdrawal of personnel and the evacuation of residents. This was changed and now distinguishes between the two, however it is proposed that work be undertaken to reach an agreed standard terminology to prevent confusion between commands to evacuate and to ensure standard approach to improve interoperability.
- 4.4 London Fire Brigade and National Operational Learning have been working together to produce further lessons from the incident to ensure all learning is shared, identifying further fire control and incident command lessons.

National Operational Guidance and Operations Update

- 4.5 The following National Operational Guidance (NOG) were approved by NFCC in May 2021:
- National Operational Guidance – Fire Survival Guidance for Fire Control Operators
 - NOG CC 006 – Foundation for Breathing Apparatus and Control Measures
 - NOG CC 021 – Search, Rescue and Casualty Care (Third Edition Version One – formerly Performing Rescues)
 - NOG CC 020 – Height, Structures and Confined Spaces – (Second Edition Version One – formerly Subsurface, Height, Structures and Confined Spaces)
 - NFCC FiTB Evacuation Guidance (this has been approved as an example policy for sharing)
- 4.6 In addition to the above approved guidance, the NOG programme continues to deliver on its work programme. Current document reviews include:
- Review of National Operational Guidance Water Rescue and flooding (2nd Edition)
 - Development of National Operational Guidance: Geophysical hazards (First Edition)
 - Review of National Operational Guidance: Environmental Protection (Second Edition)
- 4.7 Review of National Operational Guidance: Scenarios has begun but due to the number of documents that require review this will be completed in three phases.
- 4.8 Work is also underway to review National Operational Guidance for Marauding Terrorist Firearms Attack (2nd Edition), and the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles (JESIP) Doctrine – both of which have links to other national work including the impact of inquiry recommendations.

National Operational Learning / Organisational Learning Feasibility Study

- 4.9 National Operational Learning has continued to be hugely successful, with a number of significant successes having passed the two-year anniversary of the online tool this year.

- 4.10 The first recommendations from the NOL review are being addressed, including the addition of a 'horizon scanning' function for consideration.
- 4.11 16 learning cases were taken forward to the National Operational Learning User Group for approval in the last quarter, and this has resulted in 3 new national action notes being published.
- 4.12 A number of information notes were also published and, as per the NOL review recommendations, a newsletter will look to replace these soon.

People Programme

- 4.13 The People Programme is progressing at pace, initiating three new projects and finalising the programme plans for 2021/22.
- 4.14 Early thinking has begun around the development of the next NFCC People Strategy, which will follow the publication of the Home Office White Paper, anticipated to have a significant consideration for the programme with the Minister's focus on Professionalism and People.

Project	Update
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NFCC Direct Entry and Supervisory Leadership Development Programmes have been initiated through the budgetary planning process. Communications on the launch of the Direct Entry Scheme project are out on the NFCC website and other platforms and will be featured in next month's Emergency Services Times. • The NFCC Coaching and Mentoring Toolkit has been launched on the ukfrs.com website. It has been created to support a national approach and culture of coaching and mentoring within the fire sector. The toolkit provides support, guidance, and templates, and will be followed by the development of a national online coaching and mentoring portal in April 2022. • The Core Code of Ethics (England) was signed off 31 March 2021 with a letter sent to Sir Tom Winsor meeting the recommendation made in the State of Fire Report 2019. This has been followed with the approval of the accompanying guidance and Code of Ethics Fire Standard (England). Whilst the Code of Ethics Fire Standard and the State of Fire Report 2019 are only applicable to English FRSs, the Core Code of Ethics can be used as guidance for FRS in devolved administrations and governments.
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further Equality Impact Assessment training sessions have been scheduled throughout 2021 following recommendations from recent HMICFRS inspections, with positive feedback received. Guidance is being developed to enable fire and rescue services to continue to develop their own EIA assessments which will be available via ukfrs.com from August.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The first of the 'Equality of Access to Employment and Services' for LGBT, Neurodiversity and Black People have been published on ukfrs.com, with future areas of focus to include Roma, Gypsy & Traveller Communities, Vulnerable Rehoused Homeless (response from COVID) and Asian People.
Recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further scoping of the objectives has been conducted and some adjusted due to interdependencies with the Review of NOS and EDI projects. The proposed research on the role of a firefighter is now intended to be undertaken within the Review of NOS project as part of a functional analysis. Some objectives that were previously on hold have now been initiated. This includes working with the Policy Panel to deliver best practice relating to recruitment and selection and reviewing current FRS processes regarding migration of on-call staff into wholetime service.
Working Patterns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Latest benchmark data for the working patterns project was well received by delegates at the On-Call Conference in March. An evaluation framework matrix is being developed and has been designed to support services who may wish to introduce changes to working patterns devising a scoring framework to make change measurable and transparent. A recent data gathering exercise with FRS has outlined several innovative practices and revised working patterns. The project team are compiling case studies of particularly innovative patterns setting out the impact they have had on services and their strengths and weaknesses. It is intended to combine the case studies and evaluation framework together as a set of tools, for FRS to use when undertaking transformational change
Review of National Occupational Standards (NOS - previously Competencies and Qualifications)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An interactive infographic has been produced to demystify this particularly complex area of work, however this project is largely awaiting the outcomes of the White Paper and so broader communications using the infographic are currently on hold. A functional analysis is being undertaken to consider various elements of what a FRS does, including the statutory duties, broader local expectations and agreements, and additional activities undertaken during the pandemic. It will provide an analysis of how these findings translate in terms of the roles required and inform a gap analysis of the NOS encompassing response, protection, and prevention activities. A working group to support the analysis will begin in late May/early June.

<p>Workforce Good Practice Framework and Maturity Models</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is currently out for consultation in the form of a series of workshops to gain feedback from fire and rescue services, in addition to a desk-based consultation for those unable to attend. • An online self-assessment tool for FRS will be developed to ensure assessments are consistently applied and provide a national understanding of workforce management maturity across all services.
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Digital and Data Programme

4.15 The Digital and Data Programme is progressing as follows:

Project	Update
<p>Fit for the Future Strategic Alignment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purpose of this project is to deliver value across UK FRS, supporting delivery of the Fit for the Future Improvement Objectives, and enabling real benefit to be seen within services and across NFCC. • This work is currently being drafted in line with the post-consultation revisions to Fit for the Future, which will allow for a digital and data theme to be threaded throughout the strategy. It is expected to be complete by the end of June 2021.
<p>National Data Hub (NDH)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The National Data Hub design phase commenced in April and is scheduled to complete late July, with the final design outputs available for discussion and review in August. • The National Data Hub design work will inform a future data collection and analytics model that may support the Home Office, HMICFRS and NFCC data requirements.
<p>National Data Standards</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The standards that have been outlined for further scoping during the NDH design phase include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data collection • Data management • Information governance • Core data model • The programme is in discussion with the Data Standards Agency (DSA) who have offered their experience, input and support in the development of these standards through the NDH design phase.
<p>Data Portal Update</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Data Portal proof of concept (PoC) has been well received by fire and rescue services who have contributed data which has been used to inform Ministerial submissions, as well as provide assurance that Home Office funding is being used to good effect.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The PoC is currently supporting data capture/insight for the Comprehensive Spending Review draft submission. • The Home Office Fire Data Board continues to discuss the replacement of the Incident Reporting System (IRS) as it is recognised that the current arrangement is limited.
Web Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The critical infrastructure works needed on the ukfrs.com site and associated NOG Service Integration Tool (SIT) ahead of their limited roll out in June are well underway and remain on schedule. • Preparations for the longer-term web platform retender continue and the portfolio is reviewing consultant options to support this process.

Community Risk Programme

4.16 The Community Risk Programme Board recently approved 2 further projects to be scoped: the Competencies Project and Evaluation of FRS Interventions Project. It is hoped both will commence this autumn, bringing the total number of live projects for the Programme to 5.

Project	Update
Definition of Risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following a strict procurement process, the project has engaged ORH to deliver phase 2 of its work. • All FRS have been provided with an update on progress and direction of the project for phase 2. They have also received products from phase 1 of the project: the national definition of risk, national conceptualization of risk (a strategic risk framework), and the glossary of risk-related terms and definitions. • Discussions are ongoing with the Home Office to acquire IRS data that will be a central component in the development of a risk methodology.
Community Risk Management Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CRMP Fire Standard will be published in June by the Fire Standards Board. The CRP team is supporting the launch of the standard. • Guidance is being developed linked to CRMP engagement, evaluation and to support the strategic framework.
Economic and Social Value of the UK FRS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project has engaged Nottingham Consulting to deliver phase 2 of its work. Over the next month the project team will finalise the data requirements needed to deliver the methodology and report.
Competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is proposed this project looks to develop a framework for risk management competencies for strategic managers and risk analysts/planners. The project has a key dependency with the

	<p>People Programme and will work closely with colleagues in that workstream.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adverts for Project Executive roles to lead this project will be published on the NFCC website this month.
Evaluation of FRS Interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This project will look at the evaluation of the effectiveness of FRS intervention activities which will support services in improving the planning and implementation of such activities. Currently, there is no national consistency for evaluating fire interventions. • Adverts for Project Executive roles to lead this project will be published on the NFCC website this month.

Prevention Programme

- 4.17 The Prevention Programme is part of the 2020-21 uplift funding from the Home Office and will support FRSs by identifying new and innovative prevention activities that are evaluated, assured and easily accessible. It has an important part to play in contributing to the NFCC’s strategic commitment to reduce community risk and vulnerability, delivering Fit for the Future and responding to findings from the recent round of HMICFRS inspections and its State of Fire report.
- 4.18 A Programme Board has been formed with representatives from FRSs, Home Office, Public Health, The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA), Devolved Nations and Central Programme Office (CPO). The Board met in March where they focussed on the programme definition document which set out the programme’s vision, success criteria, target operating model, project dossier and resource requirements. Once this is complete, a paper will be prepared for NFCC Council to endorse the programme.
- 4.19 In the meantime, work has already commenced on two projects: an over-arching Prevention Fire Standard and the Person-Centred Approach project.

5. Protection Policy and Reform Unit Update

- 5.1 NFCC established the Protection Policy and Reform Unit (PPRU) to provide the link between FRSs and Government by representing the collective views and expert technical advice of FRSs. The PPRU now incorporates the Building Safety Team. Summarised below are some updates to key areas but progress to date and information on our key messaging can be found in full [here](#).

NFCC/LABC CPD Platform and Accreditation

- 5.2 Since its formation in 2020 PPRU have provided a strategic leadership centre for protection, including establishing the provision of interactive learning materials for all FRSs protection officers, and a location to record continued professional development activity.
- 5.3 A contract is in place with Local Authority Building Control which is set to commence 21 May to provide interactive learning materials for all UK FRS Protection officers and a location to record continued professional development (CPD) activity. This platform will be utilised to upload training materials for FRS as part of the national learning and guidance work that has

now started and provide access to a back catalogue of over 100 existing LABC fire-safety related articles. There is an easy access log of hours completed which will also help services to demonstrate their commitment to CPD in line with the competency framework. This collaboration will provide a better understanding of the 'cross-over' issues faced by both parties in carrying out their regulatory functions.

- 5.4 The PPRU also worked alongside Home Office to secure agreement to utilise money ringfenced for Protection to support both the recognised prior learning and accreditation of protection staff in English FRS to assist them in complying with the recommendations of the Competency Framework for Fire Safety Regulators.

Enforcement Toolkit

- 5.5 A new Toolkit has been launched by the PPRU to support FRS to enforce the FSO in high rise residential buildings. NFCC has been engaging with services dealing with complex cases for some time and this Toolkit has been developed to support FRS to take a consistent approach to commonly encountered problems. It is not prescriptive and is not intended to override existing enforcement policies, but to support Fire Safety Regulators to develop their understanding of how the FSO can be used effectively to support the safety of residents. Although the Toolkit is primarily focussed on high rise residential buildings, the principles and recommendations may also support FRS to regulate other blocks of flats and to address the risks of external fire spread in other building types that accommodate vulnerable residents.

Future Funding

- 5.6 The PPRU has been working with Home Office to ensure that further funding is provided for FRS to spend on protection uplift activities in 2021/2022. The total grant has been agreed as £14m and will be disaggregated across services based on the number of both high rise and high-risk buildings. Protection uplift funding is intended to drive improvement in the capability and capacity of FRS to deliver their protection function to support a safer built environment, respond to new burdens arising from the Fire Safety Act, the Building Safety Bill and findings from the HMICFRS State of Fire Reports.

Building Risk Review (BRR)

- 5.7 FRS delivery of the Building Risk Review Programme continues to progress ahead of schedule, with over 9,000 building returns completed as of the May 2021 reporting deadline. This comprises approximately 65% of the total number of returns, providing a high degree of confidence in successful delivery of the Programme by the deadline at the end of 2021. A series of updates has recently been made to the Tymly online reporting system, enabling additional functionality for FRS and making the system more user-friendly. NFCC's focus now will shift to quality assuring returns provided by FRS so far and further developing work on how the data provided by FRS can be used to inform future policy decisions.

Cladding Residents Meeting

- 5.8 On the evening of 12 May Mark Hardingham and members of the NFCC PPRU met with cladding action group representatives from across the country. Representatives from the G15 housing group were also in attendance. The issues raised were as follows:

- The lack of an accurate single data set of all buildings with fire safety issues both above and below 18m and the need for this to fully understand and have a plan for the scale of the building safety issues.
- The need for regulation and ownership of the Waking Watch, fuelled by ongoing concerns over costs, effectiveness and inconsistent application of waking watch and associated guidance.
- The use of waking watches for issues beyond external wall systems (cladding) in a range of premises and the lack of scope in the Waking Watch Relief fund and Building Safety Fund to address these issues leaving swathes of leaseholders to continue to pick up the bill.
- When a common fire alarm is installed the continuing need in some buildings for evacuation management.
- The lack of resident engagement by responsible person/ managing agents.

5.9 NFCC assured them that we are working with Government officials on an almost daily basis for them to extend the waking watch relief fund to any height and regardless of the reason and that there should be a more holistic approach for making people safe which goes beyond just remediation.