



Fire Services Management Committee

Date:	Friday 15 October 2021
Title:	NFCC Update
Presented by:	Mark Hardingham, NFCC Chair
Contact:	chair@nationalfirechiefs.org.uk

1. Purpose

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

2. General Update

Fuel Shortage

2.1 NFCC have been working closely with FRS to support the FRS preparedness through the current fuel shortage and to ensure business continuity. We published a Prevention and fire safety message about the unsafe storage of fuel as a consequence of some people 'panic buying' and have collected and presented information about bunkered fuel stocks and business continuity plans from FRS. Our role has been to support FRS and liaise with Government departments.

Productivity and Efficiency Forum

2.2 The Home Office chaired the first Productivity and Efficiency Forum in September. NFCC joined LGA, HMI and Home Office colleagues to discuss and set out the initial work for the Forum and associated working group to consider. NFCC has appointed Humberside DCFO Phil Shillito as its Productivity and Efficiency lead, and a team has already been formed to work in this area with LGA and other partners.

National Resilience Strategy

2.3 Government recently issued a Call for Evidence seeking public views to inform the development of a new National Resilience Strategy that will outline an ambitious new vision for national resilience. It seeks to understand current perceptions of risk and resilience, gather evidence on where improvements could be made, and gauge the UK's appetite for change. NFCC has provided a detailed response in areas including:

- Our role in Resilience through the Civil Contingencies Act and Local Resilience Forum;

- Our National Resilience function and the broad benefits this brings across the UK both for FRS and across partner organisations at times of resilience crisis;
- The future role of the FRS – White Paper, Fit for the Future, 21st Century FRS etc. and the extent to which this includes our leadership and command role in LRF, SCG, TCG and our ability to put local and national resources into local communities at short notice to support the public and partner organisations.

3 Portfolio Update

National Operational Learning

- 3.1 The response to the NOL review is gathering pace with draft versions of the reviewed NOL ‘Good Practice Guidance’ being circulated for peer review with selected services.
- 3.2 The team have already been able to demonstrate the value of this workstream with some learning from the Netherlands. During 2007, they saw incidents where firefighters were killed and injured in rapid fire events relating to the slow burn of polystyrene and polyurethane insulating foam. This mirrors the rise in fire gas explosions reported into NOL from UK fire services over the last two years that relate to the same insulation. We can now start to assess what the Dutch fire services did to address the issue and if it is relevant in the UK.
- 3.3 16 cases were taken forward to the March NOLUG with all the recommendations accepted. These have started to be pushed out to FRS.

Implementation Support Function

- 3.4 This new function has now recruited a dedicated team who are developing methods of work and business processes to support Services in the implementation of NFCC products and Fire Standards.
- 3.5 The team will track benefits from the implementation of products to the day-to-day delivery of service. This will assist in ensuring that Services are implementing Fire Standards consistently and enable feedback from services to continuously improve new products, strategy, and planning.
- 3.6 Over the next 6 months the team will engage directly with every FRS to provide a detailed view of the NFCC and Fire Standards improvement programmes, products currently available and those being developed. This will enable FRS to identify what type of support they need and in which areas they are finding implementation to be most challenging.
- 3.7 Supporting the ‘digital first approach’ the Implementation Liaison Managers will be working closely with the NFCC’s internal, digital improvement project to provide Services with the digital infrastructure to facilitate and support users to gather the information they need through NFCC websites.

Grenfell Tower Inquiry

- 3.8 All English services participated in a recent Grenfell Tower survey, providing details of service progress against the recommendations. This report has been submitted to the Ministerial Board.

National Operational Guidance and Operations Update

- 3.9 The Fire Control team have written a further two key pieces of control room guidance;
- Control Room Command which is being finalised for submission to project board in September, and;
 - People at Risk, which is now under final review before being submitted into the peer review and national consultation process
- 3.10 FRS Learning materials published and available via UKFRS.com and FRSLearn include;
- Evacuation Alert systems
 - Lithium-Ion Batteries
 - External wall systems

People Programme

- 3.11 The people programme is on track to deliver the agreed products with only one exception around Evidence for Health and Wellbeing.

Project	Update
Leadership	<p>The Coaching and Mentoring consultation was prepared on 1 September 2021, which will assess buy-in and inform the final draft of the procurement specification. The procurement process is planned to commence November 2021.</p> <p>Great progress is being made to collate and develop the Talent Management Framework materials with a view to completing by the end of October 2021. An external editor is being contracted to ensure the materials are consistent and authored to a high quality. A web designer will also be contracted to create an interactive infographic of the TM Framework.</p>
Supervisory Leadership Development	<p>Meetings have taken place with a number of national portal suppliers to refine the portal design and navigation, and any potential costs.</p> <p>Progress has been made in determining what the national standard could be, with the current proposal that it is based on the required skills, knowledge and behaviours of the Team Leader or Supervisor Apprenticeship (Level 3).</p> <p>Consultation on the portal and national standard ran during August and September and has been reported to the project board.</p> <p>A draft briefing paper has been written with several funding options to deliver in business as usual. The procurement process is planned to commence November 2021.</p>
Direct Entry	<p>The project is progressing well. Predominantly, our work over the last period has focussed on developing the training programmes for Station and Area Managers (FF and Incident command; Professional Leadership Development).</p>

	<p>Consultation on the SM/AM Operational and Professional Leadership development training programmes commenced on 6 September 2021 for six weeks.</p> <p>Other work undertaken includes 'early market engagement' on the national business portal for a training company potentially interested in delivering the SM/AM operational training programmes commencing in September 2023.</p>
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	<p>The development and launch of Equality of Access suite of documents has progressed with the next batch having been through consultation and published in September. There are a number of toolkits that are now being developed that will be supported by a NFCC Event to allow services access to leaders in these field to assess with CPD.</p> <p>The successful 'Lunch and Learn' events, with attendance reaching between 50 and 100, are being turned into podcasts and will be available online.</p> <p>The project is looking at the feasibility of a public perception survey to understand the barriers from some communities in accessing or joining the fire sector.</p>
Recruitment	<p>The project drafted the Firefighter job description and person specification was ready for consultation in September, however the team have experienced a slight delay in progressing this. This aligns to the Firefighter Apprenticeship Standard and enables local variation and flexibility.</p> <p>It is recognised that any new direction around the role of a firefighter set out in the future reform is likely to mean this work needs reviewing once the final outcomes are determined.</p> <p>The structure of the Recruitment Hub of good practice tools and guidance is now drafted. There has been some concern that using volunteer capacity to develop the materials may not be sufficient to deliver within the required timescales so an advert for a 6-month secondment has been developed.</p>
Working Patterns	<p>Following the project board meeting in May, additional research requirements were highlighted. The board would like the inclusion of further evidence to support the need for additional on-call funding from Government and wish to supplement the existing benchmark and case study information with contextual data, which strengthens the understanding of the on-call working landscape.</p> <p>NFCC has a research analyst to lead on this work and will also support the completion of other phase 1 project work.</p>

	The project has tested their Guidance framework during external evaluation workshops and the reported results will be provided back to the project board in Q3.
Review of National Occupational Standards	An initial assessment of the NOS has been undertaken with a view to establishing whether each NOS is fit for purpose in terms of accuracy, scope and language and what would be required to bring the standard up-to-date.
Maturity Models	<p>The Maturity Models online tool product has been approved ready for a full launch with the addition of final communication materials, such as the Maturity Model infographic, which links through to a set of self-assessment tools, accompanied by three case study videos to assist with their application.</p> <p>The project has started discussions the National Data Hub (NDH) project to understand the viability of using the NDH to capture and manage the data automatically and consistently at a future point.</p>
Evidence Base for Health and Wellbeing	<p>Progress has been slow against the agreed deliverables within this project. In addition, a key deliverable was the review and relaunch of the Oscar Kilo Blue Light Health and Wellbeing Framework. However, recent discussions with the College of Police have highlighted that the framework will become more tailored to police in the future making it less appropriate for use by FRS. The project board is meeting to discuss the route of progress on this project.</p>

Digital and Data Programme

- 3.12 In March 2021 the Home Office approved pre-payment for the works defined and signed off by the programme board in January 2021. This included the Digital and Data Strategic Alignment to Fit for the Future and the NDH Design Phase. This has meant that the programme has been able to make use 2020/21 grant funds to pre-pay work that has now been delivered, ensuring that 100% of 2021/22 funds remain available for subsequent work that will emerge as a result of recent activities.
- 3.13 Following the newly appointed Programme Executive, Bedfordshire CFO Andy Hopkinson, the Programme's progress is as follows:

Project	Update
Fit for the Future Strategic Alignment	<p>Ensuring the programme is delivering value across UK FRS, supporting delivery of the Fit for Future Improvement Objectives, and enabling real benefit to be seen within services and across NFCC, this work concluded in July 2021. The key activities/outputs of this work were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital and data relevant objectives extracted from Fit for the Future (FFF) Improvement Objectives

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Validation of programme discovery change themes and alignment to FFF objectives • Development of Digital and Data Vision, Mission and Objectives that align to and support delivery of FFF improvement objectives • Development of digital and data outcomes and benefit statements • Development of DDP programme/project delivery objectives • Assignment of delivery objectives into logical scope for delivery <p>Internal and external engagement groups were established around this work to feed into its iterative development. Following consultation feedback, a twelfth digital and data improvement objective has been proposed via the strategic alignment work to underpin the other eleven improvement objectives.</p> <p>The defined programme delivery objectives have been grouped into logical themes for project delivery. The 25 digital and data objectives and 89 delivery objectives were grouped into seven core project themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Data Hub • Fire Standards • Digital & Data Capability Improvement • Online engagement • Value and performance analysis • Digital Learning • Data Interoperability <p>With limited funds available for this financial year, and future funding unknown, discussions with key stakeholders, including the Home Office, will take place over the summer to determine the appetite, support, and potential funding to deliver the prospective scope of change.</p>
National Data Hub (NDH)	<p>The NDH Design phase commenced in April 2021 and concluded in early August 2021. This phase consisted of three concurrent workstreams:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NDH operating model design – people, processes and structures • Information assurance – ensure robust data management and security • Accelerated delivery – test and refine the operating model while delivering real value, and build understanding of the demand that the NDH could face

	<p>The next steps would be for a delivery project team to uplift the current capabilities, moving from the current National Data Portal to a new NDH. This will likely be an evolution over the next few years.</p>
National Data Standards	<p>The standards that have been outlined for further scoping include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data collection • Data management • Information governance • Core data model <p>An outline scope was presented to the Standards Board in July 2021 with progression also dependent on discussions around priorities for funding.</p> <p>The programme has had initial discussions with the Data Standards Agency (DSA) who have offered their experience, input and support in the development of these standards.</p>
CSR Submission	<p>As part of the discussions around the Strategic Alignment and NDH work, the Home Office requested indicative costings for delivery of the proposed scope to factor into spending review submissions.</p> <p>A paper was developed that included high level indicative costs for delivery and was submitted to the Home Office at the end of June, they have now requested a scaled down report (from CSR bid), with a prioritised list including benefits. NFCC Finance Lead John Buckley has been engaged and sighted on these costs.</p>

Community Risk Programme

- 3.14 The programme has now appointed project executives for two further projects. The CRMP Competencies for Risk Managers Project will be led by Gavin Ellis, Assistant Chief Fire Officer Dorset and Wiltshire FRS and the Evaluation of FRS Interventions Project will be led by Niall McKiniry, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Humberside FRS.
- 3.15 The CRP hosted a Roundtable event on Thursday 23 September in the West Midlands. The event brought together the Programme's key stakeholders in one environment, which provided the opportunity to; build a shared understanding of the value and benefits CRP products will bring and how stakeholders can utilise them in their work, engage in discussion and debate, and identify any other links to their work. The event helped to position and influence key sector partners ahead of the launching of products.

Project	Update
Definition of Risk	<p>This project is still on track to deliver a final (pre-consultation) product by November. Some of the key challenges faced in the last quarter which may have impacted interim delivery timelines are listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial access to national IRS data • Access to Ordnance Survey Data

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defining a baseline for ‘consequence’ which is proving more challenging than that for ‘likelihood’ • Determining how Dwellings will be categorised • Access to granular health data <p>Solutions are being progressed in each of these areas.</p>
Community Risk Management Planning	<p>This project has now drafted and consulted with UK FRS, NFCC Programmes and Project Managers on three pieces of CRMP guidance: Data and Business Intelligence, Defining Scope, Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement.</p> <p>A fourth piece of guidance is currently out for UK FRS consultation, titled Equality / Person Impact Assessments.</p> <p>Engagement is now commencing with formal stakeholders, starting with the Defining Scope Guidance. Once this has been analysed and any changes made the completed guidance will then go to CRP Programme Board for approval.</p>
Economic and Social Value of the UK FRS	<p>The project has now delivered two live webinar sessions with fire service CRP points of contact, where the Economic and Social Value (ESV) of the UK FRS presented their initial findings and progress to date.</p>
Competencies for Risk Managers	<p>A project manager has been assigned and the project infrastructure is being developed and an initial Project Board has been recruited, which will meet in September to start scoping project outputs and deliverables.</p>
Evaluation of FRS Interventions	<p>The programme team are looking to recruit a project manager.</p>

Prevention Programme

- 3.16 The Programme Board has membership with individuals from FRS, Home Office, Public Health, The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA), Devolved Nations and Central Programme Office (CPO).
- 3.17 The programme board meeting approved the Prevention Programme Strategy which sets out the programmes vision, success criteria, target operating model, project dossier and resource requirements. The Prevention Programme Strategy was launched on 2 September at the NFCC Prevention and Protection Conference.

Project	Update
Prevention Fire Standard	An over-arching Prevention Fire Standard has been finalised, approved, and launched by the Fire Standard Board.

<p>Person-Centred Approach Project</p>	<p>This project is taking forward the recommendations from the approved final version of the Person-Centred Framework (PCF) which was approved by NFCC Council on 30 September 2020.</p> <p>The PCF has now been published on UKFRS.com within a new Prevention area. The NFCC has been working with Safelincs and the Home Office Fire Kills Campaign to develop an online Home Fire Safety Check, which was made available to all FRS in England on 2 September 2021, coinciding with the NFCC Protection and Prevention Conference. This product comes at no cost to FRS and has been successfully piloted with five FRS.</p> <p>As part of the next stage of supporting the roll out of the Person-Centred Framework, colleagues from the NFCC will be running a series of regional workshops in Autumn 2021 for FRS to discuss how we can work together further to implement the PCF.</p>
---	--

4. Protection Policy and Reform Unit (PPRU) Update

- 4.1 This section provides a high-level overview of key pieces of work currently being undertaken by the PPRU
 - Protection Uplift Grant Reporting**
- 4.2 In May 2021, Government confirmed an additional £14m of funding for English FRS as part of the Protection Uplift Grant to further increase capability and capacity of Protection functions beyond the additionality gained through the original £10m allocated in 2020.
- 4.3 With the release of the additional £14m, Government asked NFCC to take responsibility for monitoring and reporting of the grant funding. To govern this effectively, the PPRU asked all English FRS to produce an initial plan to explain how they intended to spend the 2021/22 grant. This included any money remaining from the previous year's grant and, if applicable, any remaining funds from the Building Risk Review Grant, which collectively totalled just under £24m. To support production of these plans, the PPRU and Home Office ran individual workshops with many FRS.
- 4.4 Work is continuing to encourage Government to make Protection Uplift funding a more permanent stream to allow longer term planning and more effective use of the money.
 - Building Safety Programme**
- 4.5 On 5 July 2021, the Building Safety Bill was introduced to Parliament and had its Second Reading on 21 July. The Bill seeks to implement a series of reforms for the planning, construction and regulation of high-rise residential buildings following the Grenfell Tower fire in 2017, including the establishment of a new Building Safety Regulator. The Bill will now be reviewed by the Public Bill Committee, which is inviting written evidence from those with relevant expertise and experience. The PPRU will be submitting comments on behalf of NFCC and have also been invited to give oral evidence.
- 4.6 Planning Gateway One of the new regulatory regimes commenced on 1 August. NFCC wrote to all FRS making them aware of the changes and potential asks on FRS resources

as a result in late July. Although FRS will not be statutory consultees at Planning Gateway One, the HSE, in its role as the shadow Building Safety Regulator, may consult with FRS on complex cases. It is anticipated that the burden on FRS from the new Gateway will be relatively low and require no additional training, however, this detail is not finalised and the PPRU will continue to work with the HSE to understand the key expectations. The PPRU will also act as an intermediary liaising between the HSE and FRS in order monitor the volume of work for FRS and provide support where needed.

- 4.7 Government have recently made a series of announcements on building safety in medium and lower-rise residential buildings where they outlined new advice regarding the proportionality of fire safety in blocks of flats. The announcement was accompanied by the release of a statement from a new panel of experts, which detailed a series of recommendations to improve proportionality.
- 4.8 As a result of these announcements, particularly Government's stated intent to withdraw the Expert Panel's Consolidated Advice Note, the PPRU is currently undertaking an expedited review of the Simultaneous Evacuation Guidance to ensure alignment across other relevant and available industry guidance.
- 4.9 The PPRU has continued to draft and submit responses to key Government consultations, the most notable in the last quarter being on Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) and Building Bulletin 100 (BB100).

Building Risk Review

- 4.10 In the last quarter, over 3,600 completed returns have been submitted for the Building Risk Review (BRR) Programme. More than 4,100 fire safety audits have now been reported as part of the programme, with FRS making positive interventions in 65% of cases, and full returns have been supplied for 85% of buildings currently on the Programme.

Service Delivery and Improvement

- 4.11 In May, NFCC launched a new learning portal for FRS Protection staff in partnership with Local Authority Building Control (LABC) to provide a central location for fire safety regulators and fire engineers to access training materials online. The platform will be utilised to upload training materials for FRS as part of the national learning and guidance work that has now started and provides access to a back catalogue of over 100 existing LABC fire safety related articles. The portal will also help FRS to demonstrate their commitment to continuing professional development in line with the recommendations in the Competency Framework for Fire Safety Regulators.
- 4.12 In June, the NFCC Protection and Business Safety Committee signed off on the Institution of Fire Engineers (IFE) as the preferred third-party validator for FRS Fire Safety Inspectors, and the PPRU has contacted FRS in the devolved administrations to identify their third-party validation requirements so that this can be factored into the delivery programme.
- 4.13 Following the publication of the Fire Safety Engineering Apprenticeship, the potential delivery timeline, and the confirmation of the funding band as band 30 with an upper limit of £27,000, the NFCC/Cornwall FRS End Point Assessment Partnership will be undertaking the end point assessment for this apprenticeship standard in due course in conjunction with the Institution of Fire Engineers. Birmingham City University and the University of Central Lancashire will be delivering this apprenticeship programme in September 2021.