



Fire Services Management Committee

Date:	Friday 10 December 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 (NFCC).

2. General Update

Royal Foundation – Mental Health at Work Commitment

- 2.1 In 2019, Mind's initial Blue Light Programme activity came to an end, after 4 years of testing, delivering, and learning from a range of effective interventions. These helped to increase mental health awareness, tackle stigma, and improve support pathways in the emergency services. MIND'S latest research has shown that now, more than ever, there is an urgent need for a systematic approach toward supporting mental health.
- 2.2 MIND has developed the Mental Health at Work Commitment for Emergency Services [Mental Health at Work Commitment](#) with the support of NFCC, NPCC, AACE and the Firefighters Charity. This has been developed through the Royal Foundation [Home Page - Royal Foundation](#). The Foundation is driven by a desire to make a difference together, The Royal Foundation is the primary philanthropic and charitable vehicle for The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge. Their programmes revolve around main themes of work; conservation, early years, mental health, and emergency responders.
- 2.3 In addition to these programmes, as the country responds to COVID-19, The Royal Foundation is working to support frontline workers and ensure that those in need are able to access mental health support.
- 2.4 The Mental Health at Work Commitment includes six standards for how organisations can better support employees' mental health. The standards are supported by comprehensive guidance for senior leaders and practitioners in emergency services:

Standard 1: Prioritise mental health in the workplace by developing and delivering a systematic programme of activity

Standard 2: Ensure work design and organisational culture drive positive mental health outcomes

Standard 3: Promote an open culture around mental health

Standard 4: Increase organisational confidence and capability

Standard 5: Provide mental health tools and support

Standard 6: Increase transparency and accountability through internal and external reporting

- 2.5 NFCC signed the Commitment at the recent Royal Foundation Mental Health Symposium attended by many FRS. It will now be a matter for each FRS if they choose to do so individually, as some already have.

Manchester Arena Inquiry – Care Gap

- 2.6 NFCC was recently requested to provide a statement to the Manchester Arena Inquiry about the ‘care gap’. In the absence of a nationally agreed definition, our response regarded the care gap as *the time between an incident occurring, with casualties subsequently sustaining injuries, and the provision of medical care by first responders, typically from fire and rescue, police and ambulance services.*
- 2.7 Our response set out the requirement to respond to all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks, including terrorist incidents, irrespective of the type, nature or basis of the attack, and that such a response would include the rescue, extrication and treatment of injured casualties, thereby helping to mitigate the care gap. Our statement set out what we consider to be very clear public expectations of the FRS response. It referred to the need for firefighters to attend terrorist events; to be trained; practiced through regular exercises; equipped to meet their responsibilities; led within a clear command structure; and to work effectively with partners through a strengthened JESIP framework. The outcome of this being that the fire and rescue service deploys safely and swiftly to minimise the care gap.

HMICFRS – State of Fire and Tranche 1 inspections

- 2.8 NFCC will be carefully analysing the findings in the HMICFRS reports that are published in December. The key themes will be drawn into our Strategic Improvement Model which informs future work and support to FRS. We are planning an event in early 2022 to support FRS in their continuous improvement plans, both through the use of NFCC products and also by promoting the sharing of good practice across other FRS.

3 Portfolio Update

National Operational Learning

- 3.1 The expansion of National Operational Learning trial has now been running for eight months, initial work has demonstrated that value can be added by considering a wider pool of learning. Resource that can consider risk information from a wider range of submissions will allow the NFCC to assure the information they provide to services more effectively.
- 3.2 International Learning has considered information from Canada, America, Netherlands and now Italy. We are exploring mechanisms to build evidence related to existing trends using searches of media, including social media.

3.3 National Operational Learning coordinated a visit in support of London Fire Brigade to Milan FRS (8th – 10th November 2021). The visit followed the cladding fire at the Torre del Moro tower, which occurred on 29th August 2021. The aim of the visit was to identify potential learning from the incident, co-produced with Grenfell Next of Kin and Lancaster West Residents Association. The three key lines of enquires included:

- Fire protection arrangements
- Response to the fire
- Community engagement pre/during/post incident

Learning will be shared through presentation to Council following NOLUG review

3.4 13 cases have been submitted to the NOLUG meeting in December 2021. Lithium-Ion Battery fires continue to form a significant percentage of the learning submitted

Implementation Support Function

3.5 All fire and rescue services have now provided details of their implementation SPOCs. Initial in-person meetings have been conducted with 34 FRS's, which have resulted in over 140 subsequent follow up meetings with subject matter experts.

3.6 The team is currently focused on understanding local needs, challenges and barriers in order to identify best methods for implementation.

3.7 The team will be working in partnership with Surrey FRS to monitor the effectiveness and suitability of different implementation methods. This case study will help inform and shape how these methods are used across all fire and rescue services.

3.8 With the latest round of HMICFRS inspections underway, the team recognises the need to respond to outcome reports, particularly where areas of concern have been identified. The team have therefore approached the HMICFRS to identify potential processes that can enable proactive implementation support in response to inspection findings.

Grenfell Tower Inquiry

3.9 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, and have now been published on <https://fireengland.uk/>

3.10 To prepare for the next report, in March 2022, the reports provided previously will be reshared, and a request made for update over the following weeks,

National Operational Guidance and Operations Update

3.11 The Fire Control team have written a further two key pieces of control room guidance;

- Control Room Command - Published November 2021
- People at Risk, which is now under final review before being submitted into the peer review and national consultation process

3.12 FRS Learning materials under consultation or development to be made available via UKFRS.com and FRSLearn include;

- Evacuation

- Situational awareness: Building construction
- Smoke control

People Programme

3.13 The People Programme is progressing well. The programme will host an annual HR Conference on 29th November to help identify priorities and consolidate the existing outputs, to provide clarity for our planning process for the next financial year and beyond.

Project	Update
Leadership	<p>The Coaching and Mentoring portal remains on target. Consultation closed on 29th October 2021 with 22 responses received. The results identified buy-in to the national portal with services happy to register their qualified coaches/mentors to support the fire sector. The procurement process for a national portal will commence on 22nd November 2021 and run until 27th December 2021.</p> <p>The Talent Management Framework remains on target. The Talent Management Toolkit is currently out for consultation and will run until 10th December 2021. It provides an interactive toolkit that holds the key documents supporting the areas of the Talent Management process. Feedback is sought on navigating around the toolkit and the documents that sit within.</p>
Supervisory Leadership Development	<p>The project remains on target to deliver the development programme in August 2022. The model has been further refined due to external funding not being available and will provide a central portal allowing access to blended learning materials aligned to the Supervisory and Team Leader Apprenticeship Standard and tools and guidance to support FRS provide real world application of their skills. As with Coaching and Mentoring, the procurement of a national Supervisory Leadership Development portal with content and the development programmes will commence on 22nd November 2021.</p>
Direct Entry	<p>NFCC Council has now agreed the option to be delivered by the project now there is clarity around sustainable funding only available through the NFCC and HO grant funding. This will be a model direct entry programme funded by individual FRSs with central recruitment and delivery support and coordination from NFCC.</p> <p>The consultation on the SM/AM Operational and Professional Leadership development training programmes closed on 29th October 2021. Key findings included support of the training programmes, and the majority suggested including the use of the IFE within the development programme. Ten services stated that they were interested in adopting and funding a direct entrant in their service.</p>

<p>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion</p>	<p>The development and launch of Equality of Access suite of documents targeting different community groups is progressing well with seven already published and a further two recently having been through consultation. The development of EDI toolkits progresses well and will be supported by a NFCC Event to allow services access to leaders in these fields.</p> <p>The continued successful ‘Lunch and Learn’ events, with attendance reaching between up to 100 attendees, are being turned into podcasts and have been made available online.</p> <p>Equality impact assessment training continues and is now offered for all NFCC staff also. We have so far provided training for nearly 300 FRS and NFCC colleagues and are now looking how to support training next year.</p>
<p>Recruitment</p>	<p>The project is currently consulting on the Firefighter job description and person specification closing 9th December. This aligns to the Firefighter Apprenticeship Standard and aims to achieve consistency whilst enabling local variation and flexibility.</p> <p>It is recognised that any new direction around the role of a firefighter prompted by the White Paper is likely to mean this work will need reviewing once the final outcomes are determined.</p> <p>The structure for the Recruitment Hub of good practice tools and guidance has been approved by the People Programme board and the content is in development. An HR/Recruitment Practitioner has been brought into the team for a 6-month secondment to build the content which will go out for consultation early next year.</p>
<p>Working Patterns</p>	<p>The working patterns change evaluation framework and case studies are being finalised ready for publication in December. The research briefing which draws together research on various working patterns inside and outside the sector is on track to be published by March 2022 completing the full change toolkit.</p>
<p>Review of National Occupational Standards</p>	<p>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 standards up to date. The findings of this assessment were presented to Steering Group and Council and approval was given to undertake a survey of how FRSs currently use NOS and to undertake a functional analysis of the role of the Fire and Rescue Service as an organisation.</p> <p>As the scale of this work is larger than originally anticipated and was held off initially due to anticipated impacts of the White Paper, there is a risk delivery may be delayed until the Summer/Autumn 2022.</p>

	The invitation to tender for a functional analysis consultant is currently open.
Maturity Models	<p>The Maturity Models and Workforce Good Practice Framework online tool was launched in October along with three case study videos to assist with their application.</p> <p>The self-assessment tool can be used by FRS to assess their maturity against 10 workforce management themes and the results are reported to the NFCC to enable analysis of common improvement themes and evaluation of the success of the programme.</p>
Evidence Base for Health and Wellbeing	<p>As the project has required some rescoping due to the withdrawal of the Oscar Kilo Blue Light Wellbeing Framework, we are now working on procuring a broad piece of research that will provide the evidence base we need to understand what FRSs require to better support the wellbeing of their employees.</p> <p>We hope to be able to commission this piece in January. It is likely this will mean the original outputs will be delayed until later in the 2022/23 financial year but will be highly valuable in informing the requirement of FRS for improvements in this area.</p>

Digital and Data Programme

- 3.14 Strategic discussions have been held with the Home Office to agree how the programme funds will be allocated across Q3-Q4 following delivery of the strategic alignment to Fit for the Future and National Data Hub operating model design. The three main areas of focus are outlined below.

Project	Update
Implementation of National Data Analytics Capability (formerly known as NDH)	<p>The three key elements of the National Data Hub target operating model are people, processes, and technology. Recent discussions with strategic stakeholders highlighted that the initial NDH naming convention sounds too heavily focused on the technology required rather than the analytics capability itself. To avoid any confusion, the NDH will now be referred to as the National Data Analytics Capability.</p> <p>A project delivery team will be brought together in Q3 to commence initial implementation of a scaled-down version of the target operating model to embed a capability, further prove the concept, and deliver analytics value to the FRS community. This will scale up over time and take on additional elements of the target operating model.</p>

	The initial expectation for the supporting technology is to continue using the Tymly platform that is in use by the current national data portal. By August 2023 this will dovetail into the wider National Data Collection System project which will see the NFCC sharing a common data collection and management platform with the Home Office and HMICFRS (see below).
National Data Collection System	<p>Following review of the 'NDH' design, discussions with strategic stakeholders, including the Home Office and HMICFRS, concluded that a single data collection system between all major stakeholders would be the most efficient and cost-effective way forward to meet common requirements.</p> <p>The NFCC and the Home Office will run a joint project to scope, spec and procure a data collection and management system that meets all party requirements. Each party will have their own separate analytics capability that will have access to the common datasets.</p> <p>This work will formally kick off in December 2021 with a strategic workshop. Completion of the project is required by August 2023 when the Home Office's existing IRS system contract comes to an end.</p>
National Data Standards	An SME working group has fed into the scoping of a first draft of the data standard. The standard is expected to undergo peer reviewed in December 2021, followed by wider consultation in January 2022.

Community Risk Programme

- 3.15 The CRP will launch key products for DoR, ESV and CRMP Guidance early next year as provided in update below:

Project	Update
Definition of Risk (DoR)	The project has now delivered a risk methodology proof of concept report for domestic dwelling fires, the methodology was tested by a number of FRSS before being approved by the Programme Board to move to wider consultation. The consultation went live on Monday 8 th November and closes on Monday 6 th December. All UK FRSS have been notified of the consultation as well as the programme's wider sector stakeholders. The outcomes of the consultation may result in enhancements being made to the report, the project will then seek NFCC Steering Group approval of the report/methodology in January next year and the final product will be published in March 2022 to be utilised by UK FRSS.

	The project is now looking at extending the methodology to 'other building fires' and is developing a timeframe for applying the methodology to other incident types.
Community Risk Management Planning (CRMP) Guidance	<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 has recently completed UK FRS consultation, titled Equality / Person Impact Assessments. Review by the programme board is now underway.</p> <p>Engagement has now commenced 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 (ESV)	The project has delivered a first draft economic and social value report, following board review and feedback the report is currently being revised and will be available for consultation by the end of the year. Academic evaluation of the work has been commissioned and in progress, and the procurement for a Phase 3 software development of an economic and social value tool has begun.
Competencies for Risk Managers	Project manager and project board are in place, procurement of external resource is underway.
Evaluation of FRS Interventions	A project manager and project executive have been appointed and recruitment of a project board is now underway. A joint working agreement has been made with the Prevention Programme to avoid duplication of work and to capitalise on Prevention Programme expertise.

Prevention Programme

- 3.16 The third Prevention Programme board meeting was held on 24th September 2021. The NFCC Prevention and Protection Conference provided the opportunity to update key stakeholders on the development of the programme.

Project	Update
Safeguarding Fire Standard	<p>The Prevention Programme are working closely with the Fire Standards and Strategy Support Team to develop an over-arching Safeguarding Fire Standard. This has been developed, through consultation and post consultation workshops.</p> <p>The NFCC Safeguarding Guidance for Children, Young People and Adults (including Self-Assessment Toolkit) has been published within the Prevention area on UKFRS.com</p>

<p>Person-Centred Approach Project</p>	<p>The NFCC has launched the online Home Fire Safety Check (HFSC) which has been developed between the NFCC, Safelincs and FireKills. It was successfully piloted with five FRSs and was launched on 2nd September 2021. This product comes at no cost to Fire and Rescue Services. The onboarding for the online HFSC is an eight-week process and has a number of FRSs at different stages of the onboarding process.</p> <p>The project team have been running a series of regional workshops to discuss with FRSs how we can work together to further implement the PCF focusing of the promotion of the online HFSC, data collection, risk stratification, and evaluation. The NFCC Implementation Support Team have also attended these sessions. The workshops will be completed by the first week of December 2021 and will be evaluated.</p> <p>The project team are working with Kent FRS to develop an eLearning package as part of a foundation stage training to support the workforce with their understanding of the PCF.</p>
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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.

Legislative Update

- 4.2 The Building Safety Bill has now completed its Committee Stage and will soon move into the Report Stage, after which it will return to the House of Commons for its Third Reading. The Bill seeks to establish a new Building Safety Regulator (BSR) within the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) to oversee the new building safety regime. The BSR is anticipated to rely on FRS, Local Authority Building Control (LABC) and Environmental Health officers to deliver the regime for higher-risk buildings through multi-disciplinary teams.
- 4.3 Many aspects of the new regime are still undergoing policy development through the Joint Regulators Group (JRG), and these measures will be implemented through secondary legislation. However, concerns have recently been expressed by some JRG members from NFCC, LABC and the Local Government Association that the HSE need to increase their engagement with Local Authorities and Fire and Rescue Authorities to ensure decisions are being made in a joined up and collaborative manner.
- 4.4 The Fire Safety Act had been expected to commence in October 2021, however, this has now been delayed. This delay will hopefully give time for more tools to be finalised to aid commencement, such as the Building Prioritisation Tool to help owners of multiple buildings to prioritise their portfolios for new fire risk assessments and other reviews where necessary.
- 4.5 Regulations are also currently being drafted to implement some of the recommendations from Phase One of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry. The regulations will be brought in via Article 24 of the Fire Safety Order and will provide the definition of a high rise residential building and outline the requirements that will be placed on responsible persons. These requirements primarily relate to the provision of secure information boxes, recording and

notifying the local FRS about the design and composition of the external wall system, and regular checks of lifts, fire doors and essential firefighting equipment.

Simultaneous Evacuation Guidance Review

- 4.6 Following [Government announcements on the proportionality of fire safety measures in low and mid-rise residential buildings in July 2021](#), a review of the Simultaneous Evacuation Guidance was launched. This is the fourth review of the guidance since the guide was launched in 2017, and it is being coordinated by the PPRU on behalf of a group of industry experts.
- 4.7 A consultation on the revised guidance, smoke control addendum, and equality impact assessment was undertaken in October and over 400 comments were received. Workshops were then hosted with stakeholder groups to discuss key themes, including with representatives from leaseholder groups, responsible persons, and the wider fire and housing sector.
- 4.8 Feedback and written comments are now in the process of being collated with the aim to hold a comments resolution workshop with the convening group in December. It is hoped the revised guidance will then be published in early 2022.

Building Risk Review (BRR) Programme

- 4.9 FRSs are now in the final stages of submitting returns to the BRR Programme before the deadline on 31st December 2021. As of the November reporting deadline, just over 14,000 completed returns had been submitted. This totals 95% of buildings on the Programme and all outstanding records are on track for completion by the deadline. 20 FRSs have now completed their local programmes and focus is increasingly moving to quality assurance.
- 4.10 In September 2021, the PPRU launched a new monthly quality assurance process which has helped to flag records for further review by FRSs. There has been substantial Ministerial attention on the BRR, especially around audit outcomes and information on external wall systems. Work is now underway to provide more information on enforcement action taken and the PPRU wrote to FRSs in August to provide more tools to collect information on external wall systems from Responsible Persons. However, feedback does indicate that some Responsible Persons have pushed back on requests for information due to the Fire Safety Act having not yet commenced.
- 4.11 So far FRSs have identified almost 2,000 additional buildings in scope of the BRR that did not appear on the original lists from MHCLG (now DLUHC) and a further 3,500 records from the original list have been cleansed. This work helps to demonstrate the additional value that FRSs have been able to bring to the BRR Programme beyond visits and audits, and means that by the end of the Programme we will have created the most accurate data set available on high rise residential buildings in England.

NFCC/LABC Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)

- 4.12 Following the launch of the new VLE for FRS Protection staff in partnership with LABC in May 2021, the PPRU have been working to refine the system based on user feedback. Content developed by the PPRU continues to be uploaded to provide opportunities for continual professional development.

- 4.13 In the PPRU's fortnightly communication updates to FRSs, there are also now regular VLE spotlights highlighting learning packages that may be of particular interest to users. The PPRU are eager to direct FRS staff to packages included under the original LABC catalogue that users also have access to.

Protection Uplift Grant Reporting

- 4.14 FRSs continue to report quarterly grant expenditure, deliverables, and audit statistics for the Protection Uplift. This information is collected and collated by the PPRU on behalf of the Home Office. It is hoped that, by collecting this information in line with the grant conditions, the PPRU can demonstrate the value of continued investment in Protection departments to Government.
- 4.15 From the end of quarter 3 of the current financial year, Protection Uplift reporting will be amended to also include reporting of residential buildings known to FRSs which currently have interim measures. This could include a temporary move to a simultaneous evacuation strategy, implementation of a waking watch, or evacuation management for example. It is hoped that by attaching this reporting to grant reporting, that its collection will be predicated on continued dedicated funding from the Home Office.

Higher Risk Occupancies Preliminary Guidance

- 4.16 In October, the PPRU published guidance on 'higher risk' occupancies for FRSs to take into account when considering enforcement action in these premises, and how they may be considered among the relative priorities of Risk Based Inspection Programmes and other Protection activity. This is in a response to Recommendation 1 from HMICFRS, which states that high risk premises should be defined and expectations set for how frequently they should be audited.
- 4.17 The guidance has been published as a 'Preliminary Guidance Technical Note' and is available through the VLE whilst the various projects within the NFCC Community Risk Programme progress. It will be subsumed into further work to update the current national guidance on Risk Based Inspection Programmes and Protection activities in due course.

Care Homes Staffing and Evacuation Bulletin

- 4.18 On 11th November 2021, regulations that were introduced through an amendment to the Health and Social Care Act 2008 came into effect requiring anyone working inside a care home to be double vaccinated against Covid-19. Whilst there are exemptions for emergency services staff undertaking their statutory duties, the regulations may add to existing staffing pressures facing the care home sector, which may impact on their abilities to implement emergency plans in case of a fire.
- 4.19 As a result, the PPRU are in the process of developing guidance to assist FRSs in considering the implications for evacuation strategies and operational response.