



Fire Commission

Date:	Friday 14 October 2022
Title:	NFCC Chair Update
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1. **Purpose**

- 1.1 This report provides an update on key work within the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC).
- 1.2 Any questions or requests for further information should be directed to either Mark Hardingham chair@nationalfirechiefs.org.uk or Susannah Hancock, Chief Operating Officer susannah.hancock@nationalfirechiefs.org.uk.

2. **General Update**

Operation London Bridge

- 2.1 NFCC played a key leadership role with UK FRS and Government ensuring all FRS responded appropriately to the death of Queen Elizabeth II. NFCC Chair, Mark Hardingham, and senior FRS representation from across the UK was represented at the funeral service in Westminster Abbey. Sixteen firefighters from across the UK formed part of the funeral procession.

Fit for the Future and Home Office White Paper – Fire Reform

- 2.2 The NFCC response has been published on the NFCC website. Discussion about fire reform is continuing with Home Office and other partners and will be further informed by recent Ministerial appointments. The work between LGA, FRS Employers (England) and NFCC to develop Fit for the Future will be a key part of future fire reform discussions.

Business Continuity Planning – Industrial Action

- 2.3 The risk of industrial action by the FBU is high. The FBU have set out their likely timescale for a ballot in the coming months.
- 2.4 NFCC and the FRS National Resilience function are working closely with the FRS employers and Home Office as part of the work to provide assurance and support FRS in their business continuity plans for industrial action, as necessary. In the event of industrial action then the NFCC has a key role to play in advising Home Office and supporting FRS.

Wildfires – Role of NFCC

- 2.5 The extreme weather over the summer period has led to a well-publicised series of wildfires and the associated impacts on FRS and fire damage/losses in communities. Whilst the extreme weather has been unusual and the impact on FRS very high, all the evidence suggests these events and periods of extreme weather will become more frequent.
- 2.6 The NFCC role was in supporting FRS, advising Government (up to and including briefings to the Prime Minister) and servicing extended media requests across all the major TV, radio and written news media. Work is now underway to assess the organisational learning from the various aspects of the FRS response.

Digital, Data and Technology Programme Update

Data Conference

- 2.7 The inaugural NFCC data conference was hosted in Liverpool in June and was well attended. The team will be considering plans for future conferences and smaller events.

NFCC Data Analytics Capability (NDAC)

- 2.8 The NDAC is increasingly working across other NFCC workstreams where data is a key requirement. This includes the Community Risk Programme and phase 1 of the Domestic Dwelling Fire Definition of Risk project; the Prevention Programme Person-Centred Framework; support measuring benefits realisation of national Fire Standards and building data priorities in areas including People, Commercial, and Emerging Technologies projects.

National Fire Data Collection System (NFDCS)

- 2.9 NFDCS is a Home Office-led project to replace and enhance the Incident Recording System into a more comprehensive, flexible, and scalable data collection system. NFCC is supporting the project by mapping the fire data landscape to understand what data is collected by the FRS above that which the Home Office collects, to whom data is regularly shared with, and what local systems are used to manage it. The scope was developed collaboratively with Home Office colleagues.
- 2.10 The initial pilot with LFB and GMFRS commenced in July to assess and evolve the proposed approach.

Data Management Framework

- 2.11 Following final drafting, and now publication of, the Data Management Fire Standard the team started to define and develop the underpinning guidance and tools for the new standard. The umbrella term for this suite of products is the 'Data Management Framework'
- 2.12 Using the Fire Standard consultation feedback, the programme worked with the Data Management Fire Standard Working Group to draft a high-level scope and product list that would be required to help services implement and adhere to the new fire standard.
- 2.13 The programme advertised for SMEs who would be willing to contribute to the research and authoring of the products. 43 responses were received across 35 FRS. The SME group is reviewing the draft product list to further refine and define the final scope for integration into the project plan.

Community Risk Programme Update

Definition of Risk Project

- 2.14 The projects for RTC methodologies and Other Building Fires is on track with procurement for RTC methodology completed allowing ORH (third-party contractor) to commence work.
- 2.15 Workshops to deliver training on the Domestic Dwelling Fires Methodology have been scheduled and 40 FRS's have accepted the invites.
- 2.16 The project is now investigating options for delivery of a digital tool including utilising expertise from the Data and Digital programme.

Economic and Social Value Project

- 2.17 A meeting with Home Office representatives to address some concerns with the draft report was held and agreement on the way forward made. A final draft has now been shared with the Home Office colleagues. The project is on track to launch the report at the NFCC Autumn Conference. The Digital and Data Programme is involved in scoping a digital ESV tool.

Competencies for Risk Management Project

- 2.18 Consultation has been completed on the competency framework. A workshop with the project board has been scheduled to determine the next steps for the project in conjunction with the people programme. Launch of the framework is scheduled for Q4.

Evaluation of FRS Interventions Project

- 2.19 Procurement is complete and external experts will begin work to deliver the compendium of evaluation methodologies.

CRMP Guidance Project

- 2.20 Project is on track to deliver the Evaluation of CRMP processes, Hazard Identification, Risk Analysis and Decision-Making guidance. A full launch of CRMP Guidance will take place in February 2023.

Prevention Programme Update

Person-Centred Framework Project

- 2.21 The online Home Fire Safety Check continues to be a success with over a third of FRSs fully onboarded, and a further third partially onboarded. The ambition is for all FRSs to be onboarded by the end of March 2023. The user feedback is showing positive engagement.
- 2.22 The Person-Centred Framework Standard Data requirements have been approved by D&D programme board and were launched to Fire and Rescue Services at NFCC Data Conference. These are now being implemented with Fire and Rescue Services to support consistent data collection for Home Fire Safety Visits.
- 2.23 The Evaluation workstream of the Person-Centred Framework has been established and being chaired by the Lead for Emergency Services from Public Health. A Public Health Registrar will be joining the working group in September. They will be working with FRS to design the underpinning principles for evaluating Home Fire Safety Visits.

Mental Health and Fire Risk Project

- 2.24 An initial research findings report has been produced by our Academic Partner. To support the next stage of the report we will be running a survey with FRS practitioners to gather further information to support the gaps in the report.

Prevention and Protection NFCC conference

- 2.25 The Prevention and Protection Conference will be in November 2022. This will highlight key areas of Prevention and protection work and launch the NFCC Celebrating Prevention Awards. Nominations for the awards will be launched in mid-September.

Safeguarding

- 2.26 A Safeguarding Project Board has been established with senior representation from FRS under the different governance models, APCC, LGA and Home Office. The project board is chaired by CFO Phil Garrigan as the Project Sponsor. Donna Bentley, NFCC Safeguarding Lead will be the Vice Chair and also be chairing a new Safeguarding Regional Leads Forum. The Safeguarding Practitioners Forum will continue to support the work of the sector.
- 2.27 A business case to support a change of legislation related to FRS and safeguarding was been written, submitted and approved by the previous Fire Minister.

Prevention Evaluation Framework

- 2.28 Prevention Evaluation Sharing Sessions have continued to be delivered quarterly. The sessions have a high level of engagement from the sector. This group are forming the Subject Matter Experts for the Prevention Evaluation toolkit.

NFCC – Cost of Living

- 2.29 The NFCC Home Safety Committee has recently formed a subgroup focussing on the Cost of Living crisis and the impact that this has on fire risk. We are close to starting a campaign to address this and have incorporated case studies that can be used and shared across FRS, to support partnership engagement. This work is in partnership with the Home Office, NFCC and being chaired by practitioners from Merseyside FRS and London Fire Brigade.

National Fire Kills Campaign

- 2.30 An invitation has been sent to all FRSs for a workshop to review the national Fire Kills Campaign. The workshop will include an overview of the Fire Kills campaign, how the NFCC works to support the delivery of Fire Kills, and how we worked together in 2021/22 to deliver the national campaign. It will give the opportunity to understand the current awareness and engagement in Fire Kills locally, and the focus of future national campaigns and what support Fire and Rescue Services would like to receive from future national campaign.

People Programme Update

Enabling Development of Competence (EDC)

- 2.31 This was previously named the Review of National Operational Standards (NOS) project but has recently been changed to EDC to better reflect the scope of the work as it now stands, which is to:

- Complete the functional analysis of FRS functions (Incident Command, Fire Investigation, Home Fire Safety Visits (Person Centred Framework), Control)
- Deliver four draft competence frameworks (Incident Command, Fire Investigation, Prevention, Control)
- Deliver a review of NOS report including a gap analysis.
- Carry out a sector wide survey of competence frameworks in use or in development.

Health and Wellbeing

- 2.32 The Health and Wellbeing project is run in partnership with colleagues at Nottingham Trent University and the Fire Fighters Charity. The project is progressing well with the Health and Wellbeing survey due to close mid-September to be followed up by focus group sessions. The results of the research will form the basis of a Health and Wellbeing Strategy report.

Embedding EDI (Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion)

- 2.33 The project is progressing with a business case having been agreed and project plans in place to achieve the set deliverables of delivery of annual EDI report, including the mechanism for future reporting.

Recruitment

- 2.34 The Recruitment project has been developing a procurement exercise for research support to be delivered in the next financial year looking at the National Firefighter Selection Tests (NFST). The approach is being refined using intelligence gathered through prior information requests to the market and a supplier workshop day at South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service, due to take place in November. The invitation to tender is planned for release to the marketplace in January 2023 with responses due by the end of March, to be followed by appointment and mobilisation in April.

On-Call Firefighters

- 2.35 Alongside progressing work against present deliverables, the People Programme has begun the initial stages of a scoping exercise for a future On-Call project that will draw down on some of the excellent past On-call and working patterns projects.

Leadership Programme Update

Direct Entry

- 2.36 The project contract was awarded to Reed to manage the attraction, recruitment and selection process for direct entrants.
- 2.37 Between 12 and 8 FRS (early adopters group) currently intend to recruit at least one direct entrant at either Station Manager or Area Manager. The training and operational development work packages were approved in August 2022. The project intends to commence the recruitment campaign in early 2023.

Supervisory Leadership Development Programme

- 2.38 The learner's development programme, comprising of the four modules aligned to the NFCC Leadership Framework and the Core Code is developed, and built on the NFCC/CMI portal: NFCC ManageDirect.

- 2.39 The high quality of the partnership with CMI is reflected in the submission from CMI for an industry award 'Collaboration of the Year' at the Federation of Awarding Bodies.
- 2.40 The project launched in September 2022.
- Middle Managers Development Programme
- 2.41 Following advertisement, a Project Executive has been appointed and project will commence scoping to build on the strengths of the SLDP delivery model.
- Coaching and Mentoring
- 2.42 The portal was launched in May 2022 with positive feedback received from the sector. Three Q&A workshops took place in July 2022 with 26 FRS staff attending.
- Talent Management Toolkit
- 2.43 The toolkit was launched in May 2022 with positive feedback received from the sector. Three Q&A workshops took place in July 2022 with 34 FRS staff attending.
- Strategic CPD
- 2.44 The scope of work in 2022/23 has been redefined to deliver four workshops before March 2023.
- 2.45 Workshops include Finance, Procurement (both confirmed), Political Acuity and Corporate Governance (leads to be confirmed).
- Core Code of Ethics
- 2.46 Following the successful workshops in November 2021, three further workshops were delivered in July 2022 by the NFCC/LGA/APCC partners to see how FRSs were progressing with embedding the core code.
- Protection, Policy and Reform Unit (PPRU) Update**
- Protection Uplift Grant
- 2.47 Following the Government announcement that a further £12m would be provided to English FRSs in 2022/23 to continue improving capacity and competency in protection, all 43 FRSs have produced a comprehensive spending plan designed by the PPRU. The plans have been reviewed and scrutinised and a summary shared with the Home Office. Barring any queries, the first 50% payment is expected to reach services in September 2022.
- 2.48 Collation and analysis is nearing completion for quarter 1 (April – June) returns. Early indications suggest spending was in the region of £2.5m, down slightly from the previous quarter (£2.9m).
- 2.49 In June a new dashboard, designed by PPRU, was presented to the Minister's Protection Board to demonstrate the financial spending, benefits and outputs, governance and assurance process and risks and issues associated with the grant and NFCCs stewardship over it.
- Government Consultations
- 2.50 PPRU have recently submitted a response to the Emergency Evacuation Information Sharing (EEIS) consultation.

- 2.51 This followed the consultation on Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) and involved comprehensive engagement with FRS and partners to ensure our response met the needs of all aspects of FRS responsibility across Protection, Prevention and Response.
- 2.52 PPRU play a significant role in the production of new guidance produced by the Home Office for the Fire Safety Order. Three short guides on keeping various premises from fire have been drafted and consulted on and also a guide to the duties of a responsible person.
- 2.53 On 20th July, DLUHC released two new consultations covering:
- [the new safety regime for occupied higher-risk buildings](#); and
 - [implementing the new building control regime for higher-risk buildings and wider changes to the building regulations for all buildings](#).

2.54 The PPRU will be developing responses on behalf of NFCC and FRSs.

Fire Safety Act

2.55 To prepare FRS for changes to the Fire Safety Order, PPRU delivered a substantive communications plan for 'Fire Day' on 18th May 2022, to ensure that FRS and other stakeholders received information and advice about the Fire Safety Act, and Fire Safety (England) Regulations.

2.56 The Fire Safety (England) Regulations lay down mandatory reporting of key information to FRS to meet the objectives of the Grenfell Tower Recommendations, however there is no requirement to send this information in any standard format which could put unnecessary burden on FRS. PPRU are working with a number of FRS to design templates for Responsible Persons (RPs) to provide this information in a consistent format.

Medium-Rise Residential Buildings

2.57 PPRU has been using existing interim measures data to help with stratification of these buildings. This significant piece of work in assisting DLUHC in prioritising those buildings under 18m that need remediating is now awaiting the outcome of recent Ministerial changes.

Simultaneous Evacuation Guidance

2.58 A review of the 3rd edition of the Simultaneous Evacuation Guidance (SEG) began in quarter 3 (October – December). Workshops were held with stakeholders and over 400 comments were received.

2.59 NFCC PPRU and partners published the revised 4th edition of the SEG on 18th August 2022, along with supporting communications, FAQs, and an Equality Impact Assessment.

Building Safety Act & Building Safety Regulator

2.60 DLUHC, via the Home Office, are providing £26m to FRS over the next three years to meet the new burdens from the Building Safety Regulator (BSR). PPRU are coordinating the funding allocation and reporting.

2.61 Workshops have been held with each region to outline proposed regional working models for the new Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDTs) under the Building Safety Regulator (BSR).

2.62 Following a thorough tender process, PPRU have now appointed Reed Consulting to lead on national recruitment and retention for fire safety staff to meet the new burdens under the BSR, which is estimated at around an additional 111 people.

Service Delivery

- 2.63 The Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) for Fire Safety regulators has seen a further increase in the number of registered accounts and completed courses between April – June 2022, although CPD hours logged over the quarter decreased slightly.
- 2.64 Six training packages have been designed, created and launched on the VLE by the PPRU since the start of this reporting year.
- 2.65 The comment resolution process is continuing on the review of the Competency Framework for Fire Safety Regulators.
- 2.66 The Business Fire Safety Awareness Tool (BFSAT) created in partnership with West Sussex FRS with funding secured through the Regulators Pioneer Fund, has now been launched on the NFCC website. Work has been completed to establish a SPOC in each FRS so that they can action any requests from Responsible Persons for additional support.

Fit for the Future 2022

- 2.67 The revision of Fit for the Future (2022) has been finalised and approved via the governance routes of the three partner organisations (NFCC, LGA and National Employers (England)) following engagement sessions and stakeholder feedback.
- 2.68 Work is ongoing to finalise the evidence base that underpins the aspirations and commitments for change set out in the revision.
- 2.69 Both Fit for the Future 2022 and the evidence base will be made available online for ease of access for those that will then need to act on the commitments it contains.
- 2.70 With the change of Fire Minister, recent priorities for FRS dealing with the heatwave and potential of industrial action, it has been agreed the timing of the planned joint launch event due for September will change. Instead, smaller scale stakeholder specific engagement sessions are being planned for the Autumn.
- 2.71 Fit for the Future 2022 has been referenced by the latest HMICFRS report for services in England as responding to its recommendation about defining the future role of the FRS and firefighters.
- 2.72 It is still intended that Fit for the Future 2022 and the evidence base that underpins it should form the basis of a longer-term funding bid for FRS based on agreement with Government about the future role of the FRS.

Organisational Learning and Academic Collaboration, Evaluation and Research Group

- 2.73 Work is underway with the nominated Chair of ACER (Dr Rowena Hill) to plan first ACER meeting in October / November. Academic Membership list being established along with a draft Terms of Reference.
- 2.74 Research into existing learning arrangements has been completed and the project will initially look at how the existing systems, and those supporting them, may be better aligned as well as assessing the broader requirements for Organisational Learning (OL).
- 2.75 The various sources of learning that will be drawn from the recent heatwave and spate of wildfires across the country will be used as a test case by the OL Project.

- 2.76 Considerations about how to engage wider stakeholders with an interest in research is being considered to avoid the group itself being diluted or diverted from its core purpose.

999 Control Room Guidance

- 2.77 The Fire Control Room Project supported the development of Operation Willow Beck, which was launched in Q1 22/23. Operation Willow Beck is designed to mitigate increased emergency call volumes during spike conditions, such as flooding or wildfires. Operation Willow Beck was instigated nine times during the wildfires in late July and August.
- 2.78 Early evidence from one service, indicates Operation Willow Beck resulted in a 65% reduction in call volumes over a three-hour period, allowing delays to call handling to be mitigated. Evidence from BT also suggests that the process significantly improved call handling for 999 operators.
- 2.79 There are suggestions that three services experienced difficulties instigating Operation Willow Beck. The reasons for this are still unclear but the National Operational Learning Team and the Mobilising Officers Group are planning a national debrief to identify learning.
- 2.80 The Multi-Agency Information Transfer (MAIT) project is on track to release communications regarding costings and timelines for release in September.

National Operational Learning

- 2.81 National Operational Learning released the third edition of the Good Practice Guide in July.
- 2.82 So far this year submissions have been made by 22 different FRS, as well as submissions by Joint Organisational Learning, the NFCC PPRU team and a submission made jointly by the Home Office and Mobilising Officers Group
- 2.83 To reduce the amount of communication, information notes have been consolidated into newsletters which have been well received. Two newsletters have been released so far, focusing on trends identified by NOL, Electric vehicles and Electricity

Grenfell Tower Inquiry – Recommendations

- 2.84 All FRS have submitted responses to the Grenfell Tower Inquiry survey relating to progress made against the Phase 1 recommendations. The results will inform progress reports back to FRS and Home Office. Initial analysis shows an improvement on completion timelines.

FRS Apprenticeships

- 2.85 Both the Fire Safety Inspector and the Emergency Services Contact Handler are currently under review and have been submitted to the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IFATE) route panel for initial signoff. It is anticipated that the updated versions will be available from the end October once full sign off has been given by Minister for Education.
- 2.86 September sees the start of a further two apprenticeship reviews for the Business Fire Safety Advisor and the Community Safety Advisor. It is expected these will be available to use from June 2023.

Emergency Response Driver Training

- 2.87 To meet changes in legislation, the NFCC is establishing a national Emergency Response Driver Training Hub to support FRS. The Content Coordination team will be responsible for the day-to-day management of the hub developing the systems and processes required to support it.
- 2.88 The team will manage the associated national register which will cover both FRS and Commercial Partners who deliver training in this area. It is intended that there will be a charge to FRS's and commercial partners to cover the ongoing management of this function. A full cost model is being developed.