



Fire Commission Update Report

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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).
- 1.2 Any questions or requests for further information can be sent to either NFCC Chair Mark Hardingham (chair@nationalfirechiefs.org.uk) or Chief Operating Officer Susannah Hancock (susannah.hancock@nationalfirechiefs.org.uk).

2. General Update

Minimum Service Levels (MSLs) Consultation

- 2.1 NFCC has responded to the Home Office's MSL consultation. We welcome the opportunity to work with Government, the Local Government Association (LGA), and other partners as the legislation progresses.
- 2.2 NFCC's response was clear in its call for a consistent approach that can be easily understood and implemented, both for staff and senior leadership, which allows for local adaptation and flexibility to consider local risks and needs. Further clarity is also needed on implementation.
- 2.3 Public safety at times of industrial unrest is critically important. It is also important that the introduction of MSLs does not limit or undermine the ability of fire and rescue services/employers (FRSs) to resolve workplace disputes. Chief Fire Officers (CFOs) and FRS senior leadership teams will need to work closely with their staff around the

implementation of MSLs to ensure that positive engagement is maintained, and MSLs do not lead to a deterioration in employee relations.

Coronation of King Charles III

- 2.4 NFCC Chair Mark Hardingham, along with other UK FRS leaders, attended the coronation to represent FRSs across the UK. CFO Ben Ansell (Dorset and Wiltshire FRS) led the FRS part of the Civilian Services Contingent with Assistant CFO Michelle Hickmott (Staffordshire FRS).
- 2.5 NFCC supported colleagues at London Fire Brigade (LFB), Royal Berkshire FRS, Norfolk FRS, and Scottish FRS with preparations for the day. FRSs undertook preparatory activity including prevention and community outreach, safety inspections, specialist site visits, and response to incidents. The collaboration between FRSs, police services, Transport for London, the Home Office and others was invaluable and ensured the event went ahead safely and successfully.

Ukraine FRS Convoy

- 2.6 On 3rd May 2023, a fifth convoy of fire appliances, kit, and equipment left Merseyside and then Kent FRS to support firefighters on the frontline in Ukraine. The humanitarian aid convoy was organised by NFCC and FIRE AID & International Development, with support from the wider sector and the Home Office. Items were also donated by police services coordinated through the National Police Chiefs Council.
- 2.7 The convoy is made up of 25 vehicles packed with more than 8,000 items of life-saving kit and equipment. 80 volunteers from FRSs will ensure its safe passage across Europe. Firefighters will hand over the convoy in Poland, where it will then be delivered to where it is needed most.

Fire Reform – College of Fire

- 2.8 NFCC is engaged with Home Office about aspects of fire reform related to the 2022 white paper consultation, and we await the publication of the Home Office response to the consultation. One area of particular interest and activity is the proposed College of Fire and how such a function might be established, and in what form. The suggested functions of a College of Fire are currently established in the NFCC and with the Independent Fire Standards Board, so ensuring continuity into any new arrangements would be critical to both FRSs and Fire Authorities.

3. Protection Update

Protection Uplift Grant

- 3.1 Utilisation of the Protection Uplift Grant continues to increase and a full spending analysis for Q4 2022/23 is being undertaken. The Home Office has confirmed that all 43 FRSs in England will receive the same grant in 2023/24 as last year, which will

again be paid in two halves. The NFCC Protection Reform Unit (PRU) will hold a workshop on the use of technology for FRSs in Q2 2023/24.

Fire Safety (England) Regulations (FSER)

3.2 The FSER, which provides additional stipulations to responsible persons of High-Rise Residential Buildings (HRRBs), came into force on 23rd January 2023. The draft guidance was produced to assist FRSs, and NFCC is awaiting feedback to publish a final guide. PRU is working with the Home Office to evaluate the impact of the FSER and work through the issues that FRSs are experiencing with poor plans and fault reporting.

3.3 Section 156 of the Building Safety Act

3.4 Section 156 comes into force in October 2023. It makes changes to the Regulator Reform (Fire Safety) Order and enhances the synergy between the new building safety regime and the existing regulatory regime for HRRBs.

3.5 Section 156 also ensures that all fire risk assessments are recorded regardless of the size of the premises. The PRU will publish guidance to assist FRSs with Section 156 and assist the Home Office with Article 50 guidance.

Building Safety Regulator

3.6 The PRU continues to work with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), Local Authority Building Control, and the LGA in testing the new regime. We continue to respond to secondary legislation and HSE consultations to ensure FRS voices are heard.

3.7 Not all mixed-use HRRBs will be inspected under the new regime and discussions are ongoing about how this would be applied in practice to meet the aims of the regulator and improve building and resident safety.

4. Prevention Update

4.1 The NFCC Prevention Board met on 17th March 2023 and the NFCC Prevention Committee met on 17th April 2023. At their recent meetings in April and March respectively, both the Prevention Board and the Prevention Committee approved the paper outlining the transition from the Prevention Programme to the Prevention Hub. This includes governance, structures, and resourcing, and the Prevention Programme Board has transitioned into a Prevention Partnership Board to support collaborative working with our partners. The Prevention Team has produced a [video](#) that highlights the achievements of the Prevention Programme and the Children and Young People's Portfolio in 2022/23.

Safeguarding

- 4.2 The amendment to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act business case has now been introduced into Parliament with a schedule for debate taking place over 12-16 weeks. Once it has been debated and signed by the Minister(s), it will be acted on immediately.
- 4.3 As part of our short-term plan, we have drafted three pieces of guidance that have been peer-reviewed by the NFCC Safeguarding Practitioners Group and will be consulted on in May/June 2023.

Person Centred Framework

- 4.4 The online Home Fire Safety Check has 62% of FRSs fully onboarded, 17% partially onboarded, and 13% engaged. There has been an increase in the number of online home fire safety assessments completed, as the tool has received a lot of media support in relation to the cost-of-living crisis.
- 4.5 75% of English FRSs attended the Home Fire Safety Visit (HFSV) Competency Framework development workshops.

Prevention Evaluation Framework

- 4.6 The draft framework has finished formal consultation, with 61% of English FRSs providing feedback.
- 4.7 Building on this work, we will continue to develop standardised tools with FRSs starting with the HFSV, which is already in progress. This work has also been aligned with the Community Risk Programme's evaluation work.

Fire Prevention Grant to Support Fire Kills National Advertisement

- 4.8 NFCC was awarded the Home Office Fire Prevention Grant on 22nd December 2022, and the national advertising campaign ran from 1st to 28th February 2023. The reach of the campaign was over 42.7 million people in England, with over 123.1 million impressions.

Children and Young People

- 4.9 NFCC continues to support local FRSs to deliver effective prevention activities to children and young people, including early interventions, Firesetters, Princes Trust, and Fire Cadets.
- 4.10 The Fire Prevention Grant supported the further development of www.staywise.co.uk with new fire safety resources for children and those working in the community.

5. People Programme Update

Culture in the FRS

- 5.1 The sector continues to be shaken by revelations made through independent reviews of culture and the media. Responding to reports regarding culture in FRSs, NFCC has reiterated that the behaviours outlined are unacceptable and that there is no place for harassment, bullying, or discrimination in any workplace. NFCC is committed to working with all FRSs to support a sector-wide culture of inclusion and openness. NFCC's equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) sector report was [published](#) in March 2023.
- 5.2 The need for equality in FRSs was acknowledged by the previous fire inspectorate in 1999; however, measures taken to improve the situation thus far have not been sufficient. In response, NFCC has accelerated work on culture and EDI to address immediate priorities and support the development of a [Culture Action Plan](#). The draft has been published and the People Programme is seeking feedback.
- 5.3 A key part of NFCC's response to the LFB Independent Culture Review was engagement with stakeholders at NFCC's first Culture and Inclusion Conference in March 2023. The two-day conference culminated in a session identifying how the sector should work together to address gaps and find solutions to create inclusive FRSs. This output was fed into the development of the Culture Action Plan.
- 5.4 NFCC is establishing a cultural reform programme to highlight and share the good practice and learning that has been identified in some individual FRSs and other sectors. This will help embed the Core Code of Ethics (CCoE) across the UKFRS, introduce work from our Leadership and People Programmes, and ensure that the recommendations of reviews into UKFRS culture are fully addressed and integrated into UK FRSs.

Culture Action Plan

- 5.5 The draft Culture Action Plan details the next 18 months' action. This will address recommendations made in the 2022 white paper, 'Reforming our Fire and Rescue Service', and realise the ambitions of Fit for the Future and the NFCC Member Strategy. It also incorporates the suite of existing NFCC products for FRSs. NFCC will continue to monitor and review progress against the plan, drawing on feedback to ensure delivery against ambition.
- 5.6 Three focus group sessions took place in May 2023, during which the programme sought feedback on the Culture Action Plan. Feedback will be collated and actioned, with a view to publishing the final plan in July 2023.

Health and Wellbeing

- 5.7 The Health and Wellbeing Report was completed at the end of October 2022. The output report and key priorities document was presented to Chiefs Council in March. Council endorsed the report, and it has been [published](#).

On-Call Firefighters Project

- 5.8 Deputy CFO Steve Healey of Lancashire FRS is the NFCC Lead for on-call and will be supported by Assistant CFO Andy Cole from Dorset and Wiltshire FRS. They are scoping the required work, which is likely to involve research and data studies into the productivity, efficiency, and sustainability of the on-call duty system.

6. Leadership Programme Update

Direct Entry

- 6.1 The Direct Entry recruitment campaign successfully launched on 3rd April 2023. Seven FRSs are seeking to hire a direct entrant at Station Manager level. The participating FRSs are East Sussex, Staffordshire, Avon, Oxford, North Wales, Leicestershire, and Shropshire. In the first month, over 400 applications were received – 75% male to 25% female, which is above the national average for FRSs. The recruitment process closes on 2nd June 2023.

Supervisory Leadership Development Programme (SLDP)

- 6.2 Since September 2022, 404 learners have registered for the SLDP across 41 FRSs. The feedback from those who have completed the programme has been overwhelmingly positive. The SLDP project was formally closed in April 2023 and handed over to the NFCC Content and Implementation Function.

Middle Leadership Project

- 6.3 The project business case was approved in April 2023. The project team are conducting early market engagement regarding the development of the project and have opened discussions on a 360 toolkit with potential suppliers. Formal procurement will begin at the end of May 2023.

Strategic Continued Professional Development Masterclasses

- 6.4 There has been an excellent response to the masterclasses, and over 97% of FRSs have attended at least one session. Themes have included finance, commercial and procurement, corporate governance, and political acuity. Further masterclasses are planned on topics including sustainability and inquests and inquiries.

Coaching and Mentoring Portal

- 6.5 The portal continues to attract staff in the fire sector with an increase in all categories since January 2023. It now has 305 members, 37 qualified coaches, 48 mentors, and

26 live coaching relationships. Feedback from users continues to be positive and a progress report to the Home Office was well received. The team plan to produce evaluation reports in the coming months demonstrating the benefits of the portal. The coaching and mentoring portal project was formally closed in April 2023 and handed over to the NFCC Content and Implementation Function.

Core Code of Ethics

- 6.6 NFCC and partners, the LGA and the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners, held two workshops on the CCoE at the LGA Fire Conference in March 2023, which were well received. Following further positive feedback in the HMICFRS Report on Values and Culture on the CCoE, NFCC and partners are committed to ensuring the CCoE is fully adopted, implemented, and embedded in all FRSs. A meeting with partners is planned for May 2023 to consider the next steps.

7. Operational Response and Control Hub Update

- 7.1 NFCC has appointed a new Operational Response and Fire Control Hub lead and will shortly be advertising for supporting roles. The post holder will play a significant role in the day-to-day support of the Continuous Improvement Directorate, providing technical expertise, advising NFCC leaders, and providing managerial support to the Operations committee.

Year-End Update

- 7.2 In 2022/23 the NFCC Content team published: two new fire control guidance documents; six fire control training specifications; a National Operational Guidance (NOG) document review; 53 changes based on National Operational Learning (NOL) feedback and legislative change; and four national training packages covering major incidents, emerging risks, and technical knowledge areas.
- 7.3 Three further fire control documents, one guidance review, and fourteen change requests are in the final stages of approval before publication in Q1 of 2023/24.
- 7.4 The new and revised guidance produced this year covers a range of subjects including:
- Lessons identified by the Manchester Arena Inquiry, new guidance for terrorist attacks, survival guidance for members of the public at risk, and advice for the public on basic first aid.
 - Recommended changes to how FRSs handle casualties during road traffic collisions and revised guidance regarding water survivability.
 - Incidents involving psychological trauma and suicide.

Ongoing Work

- 7.5 The Major Incidents guidance consultation has recently closed. Changes will align with Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles (JESIP) doctrine updates and will move the sector closer to addressing lessons learned over the past five years.
- 7.6 A Working Group has been established to review fireground radios guidance.
- 7.7 Workplans for guidance reviews in 2023/24 are yet to be confirmed but are likely to include hazardous materials and wildfires.

Grenfell Tower Inquiry Survey

- 7.8 The Grenfell Tower Inquiry Recommendations Survey was issued to every FRS in February 2023 for completion in April. The final report is due for submission to the Home Office in May. It is intended that a final report will be issued to the Home Office in preparation for the anniversary of the fire in June.

Multi-Agency Incident Transfer (MAIT) Connect Project

- 7.9 Following extensive work by the two project working groups (ICT User Group and Control User Group), the MAIT Connect Project released the invitation to tender notice to the market on 16th April 2023. The final draft of the full suite of procurement documents was reviewed by an independent legal team before release to the market.
- 7.10 The timeline for the ongoing procurement process has now been set. It is hoped that this will lead to the award of a contract in late Q2 of 2023. The project manager is now working with NFCC colleagues and Home Office stakeholders to scope the governance structures that will be necessary to support the MAIT contract once awarded.

Fire Control Guidance Project

- 7.11 Two key pieces of guidance related to the outcome of the Manchester Arena Inquiry (Multi-Agency for Fire Control and Terrorist Attack Survival Guidance), have now finished consultation. Pending agreement at NFCC Steering Group, the guidance will be published in Q2 of 2023/24.

Learning Update

- 7.12 NOL has now received over 500 submissions since the launch of the online tool four and a half years ago. This has resulted in 41 action notes.
- 7.13 In the year 2022/23, NOL received 105 cases and the NOL User Group (NOLUG) processed 99 cases, which includes: 37 cases with wider organisational impacts; 21 cases with multi-agency impacts; and six international incidents.

- 7.14 Deputy Assistant CFO Stewart Nicholson (Scottish FRS) has overseen significant improvements to the NOL process since he was appointed NOLUG Chair.
- 7.15 The NOL team will shortly publish a centralised database of Prevention of Future Deaths Reports which will be updated quarterly highlighting relevant learning for FRSs. The NOL team has also reviewed over 180 historic incidents against NOG for consideration by NOLUG.
- 7.16 The project to establish organisational learning in NFCC is progressing and teams have been restructured to adapt the NOL model for use in other areas. The aim is to work with ten trial FRSs in the first two quarters of 2023/24.
- 7.17 The Academic Collaboration, Evaluation, and Research Group (ACER) group, chaired by Dr Rowena Hill from Nottingham Trent University has now held two meetings and agreed on areas for focus. They are currently drafting bids for further funding from the Economic and Social Research Council to establish a fire research centre.
- 7.18 A form for submission of academic work to help NFCC identify and share ongoing and completed research has been launched on the [NFCC website](#).

8. Data, Digital and Technology (DDaT) Update

- 8.1 NFCC has established a DDaT Committee, which will consolidate leadership and expertise to determine priorities and oversee the development and delivery of national DDaT ambitions. NFCC is winding down the Digital and Data Programme (DDP) and establishing a permanent DDaT function, providing strategic leadership and delivery for the committee's priorities. Recruitment for strategic leadership roles and board chairs has commenced.
- 8.2 NFCC's Digital and Data Strategy is being updated to align with Fit for the Future and current priorities. TechUK, the UK's technology trade association, kindly hosted members of the DDaT Committee and TechUK members to help shape the strategy at an early stage and ensure it works in partnership with industry.
- 8.3 It is anticipated that an initial draft strategy will be shared with Chiefs Council in June 2023. Further engagement will be done with CFOs and committee chairs over the coming months to further understand and define priorities.

National Fire Data Collection System (NFDCS)

- 8.4 NFDCS is a Home Office-led project to transform the existing Incident Recording System (IRS) into a more comprehensive, flexible, and scalable system. The aim is for a supplier to be in place by June 2023 to deliver an initial solution by summer 2024. The initial solution will prioritise the scope of the current IRS datasets with subsequent expansion into other areas, including prevention, protection, and workforce data.

- 8.5 The DDaT team previously supported a mapping exercise to understand the additional data FRSs collect above that which is captured by the IRS. The analysis was presented to the Home Office in February and will inform a series of dataset review workshops that the Home Office will run with FRSs in the coming months. These workshops will provide FRSs with an opportunity to advocate for additional incident datasets to be captured within the new system.

Data Management Framework (DMF)

- 8.6 Following the publication of the Data Management Fire Standard, the DDaT team has defined and developed the underpinning guidance and tools for the new standard. The DMF is undergoing peer review until 15th May and full consultation is expected to launch in June 2023. The final publication is anticipated by October 2023.

Data Analytics

- 8.7 As part of the One NFCC Programme, NFCC data capability has been restructured and its disparate components brought together. This aligns with the recommendations from the National Data Analytics Capability design developed by the DDP, and the supporting processes will feed into the new target operating model for this function. The newly structured function is in place for the start of 2023/24 as the Analysis and Insight Team.

Data Conference

- 8.8 In April 2023, DDaT Committee Chair Andy Hopkinson hosted a hugely successful NFCC Data Conference in Liverpool attended by more than 100 strategic leaders and those in professional data roles. The 'data-driven future' two-day event welcomed engaging, inspiring, and thought-provoking speakers from a broad range of private and public organisations highlighting how data is being used across the fire and rescue sector, and our everyday lives, to shape how leaders make transformational strategic decisions.

- 8.9 Senior representatives from the Home Office and HMICFRS hosted a session on how data is driving transformation and reform in FRSs. Other speakers included representatives from the Metropolitan Police, Palantir Technology, BT, Trigon Fire Safety, Nottingham Trent University, and two excellent sessions from ACER group chair, Dr Rowena Hill.

Digital, Technology, and Cyber

- 8.10 Work on the five-point framework for digital, technology, and cyber remains a key focus. The framework comprises strategy; standards; governance and structure; cyber; and promote, engage, motivate, and collaborate.
- 8.11 The Home Office has secured three years of funding to improve cyber resilience in FRSs in England. The Home Office has partnered with IBM to conduct detailed

research into compliance with the Cyber Assessment Framework which will inform how the next two years of funding are targeted and the role NFCC will play in supporting improvement.

- 8.12 The DDaT hub will collaborate with the Fire Standards Board to commence production of digital and technology standard(s) in September 2023. Supporting guidance and tools will be identified as the standard(s) develop.

9. Community Risk Management Programme (CRMP) Update

Guidance Project

- 9.1 The project has delivered significant guidance to support the CRMP Framework that reflects the Fire Standard. The remaining guidance: hazard identification, risk analysis, and decision making are all on track for publication in summer 2023.

Definition of Risk Project

- 9.2 The project is currently finalising methodologies for road traffic collisions and other building fires. Following publication, workshops will be held to assist FRSs in implementing the methodologies.

Evaluation of FRS Interventions Project

- 9.3 The Evaluation Methodologies Compendium is nearing completion and will be published in the summer of 2023.

Competencies for Risk Management Project

- 9.4 The [Competency Framework for Risk Management Planning](#) has been published.