

Title of Paper	Fire Standards Progress Report
Decision or Information	For information
Title and Date of Meeting	LGA Fire Commission Meeting 22 nd September 2023
Attachments	None

Summary

This paper provides members of the LGA Fire Commission with a summary of the progress on the Fire Standards.

The Fire Standards Board (FSB) last met formally on 31st July 2023. The Board has agreed to hold an Additional meeting on 11th September 2023 to further discuss the potential for a standard relating to Financial Management and Planning.

The next scheduled Board meeting is on 9th October 2023.

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- note the contents of this report for information.
- provide ongoing support to officers in enabling and empowering them to engage in the development and implementation of the Fire Standards both in production and when published; and
- encourage the monitoring of the benefits of the Fire Standards in their services.

Current Status of the Publication and Production of Fire Standards

There are now sixteen approved and published Fire Standards which are available on the [Fire Standards Board](#) website and shown in the timeline figure below.

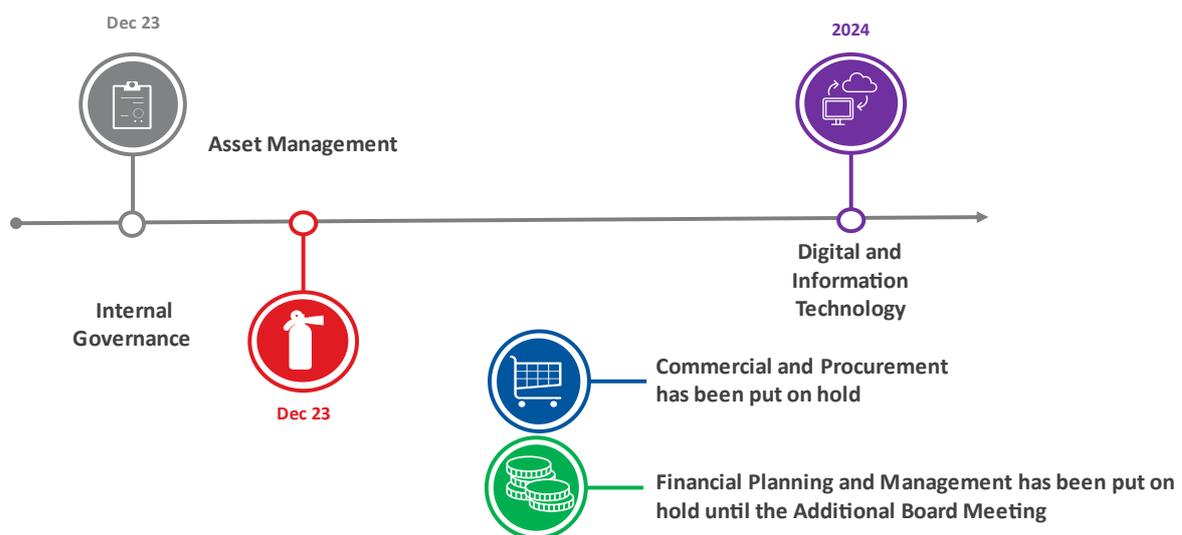


The third phase of Fire Standards development is progressing with the remaining standards underway shown on the timeline diagram below.

It is anticipated that the full suite of standards will total approximately 21.

Phase Three Fire Standards Development

Fire Standards in development - proposed publication dates



Progress with Development Work

The next areas of activity being considered for Fire Standards include:

- Commercial and Procurement (on hold due to changes within the NFCC procurement Hub)
- Financial Management and Planning (on hold pending a decision at the Additional Board Meeting)
- Asset Management
- Internal Governance

These four standards have working titles based on scoping work to date and are being developed in parallel as some of the activities are inter-linked or interdependent.

Work to date has included:

- Initiating, scoping and early development of these three standards commenced in March 2023
- Peer review took place in July 2023
- Consultation expected to start late September 2023 for Asset Management and Internal Governance

Digital and IT

- The discovery and scoping phase of this standards is anticipated to commence in Spring 2024 subject to capacity due to the outcomes of additional work related to the HMICFRS Culture Report.

Implementation support

The FSB, through the NFCC Fire Standards and Implementation Teams, will continue to support services as they work to achieve the Fire Standards. Implementation tools are provided with all published Fire Standards.

The NFCC has regional Implementation Liaison Managers to assist services with their work in achieving the standards. The FSB Chairs also visit services across the Country, speaking about the standards, the benefits from implementing them and aiding senior leadership teams.

Should a service wish to host a visit of the FSB Chairs, please inform the NFCC Fire Standards Team on fsb@nfcc.org.uk.

Impact and Benefits Realisation

The FSB is keen to understand the impact of the published Fire Standards. As part of both the development process and the consultation on each Fire Standard, we ask services about potential impacts.

With the majority of the proposed standards in place, the FSB are keen to continue engagement with services across England to understand the impact they are having and to assess what more may be required to assist services in achieving them.

They have prioritised communication and engagement activities and have a Communications and Engagement Strategy which was approved at the December Board meeting. A Communications and Engagement Plan and Schedule has been developed which articulates planned activity using a range of activities and communication channels.

Any support Fire Authority members can provide to help raise awareness of the standards within their service and ensure officers are supported locally would be appreciated.

Review of Fire Standards

The recent HMICFRS Spotlight Report on Culture and Values made several recommendations for the FSB. An Additional Board Meeting took place on the 13th June 2023. Following on from the Board Meeting, work has been carried out through peer reviews, workshops and internally within the NFCC to review and update three Fire Standards which are Leading the Service, Leading and Developing People and Safeguarding.

The Fire Standards Board will review the proposed changes before approving them for publication at its October meeting as part of its exceptional review process, before responding back to the HMICFRS.

This is in addition to the FSB's periodic review process which is linked to the publication of each Fire Standard and allows for an exceptional review if needed.

Background notes for information

The Fire Standards Board (FSB) is responsible for the identification, organisation, development and maintenance of professional standards for fire and rescue services in England.

Led by an independent Chair and Vice Chair, membership of the Board includes the NFCC, employers (both the LGA and the APCC) and the Home Office.

The LGA representative on the Board is Cllr Nick Chard.

Given the various stages of development required and the time needed for engagement with services in the early stages, as well as through formal consultation, development work and publications of the respective Fire Standards are staggered. This is primarily done to align capacity and resources in a considered way, but also to pace the rate at which standards are released to services.

Once approved, Fire Standards are shared on the [Fire Standards Board website](#).

Services should now be aware of the requirements being placed upon them through these Fire Standards. HMICFRS reference the standards in their inspections and services should be prepared to evidence their progress towards achieving them.

The FSB welcomes and appreciates the support of fire authority chairs and members.