

## HMICFRS Fire and Rescue Services (FRS) Inspection 2020/21

### Self-assessment template guidance

Every FRS will be asked to complete a self-assessment as part of the inspection process.

The self-assessment poses a number of general questions to give chief officers an opportunity to provide the HMI and the inspection team an insight into the FRS. The self-assessment should also provide some general information about service priorities and current challenges. The assessment should be no longer than 1,500 words in total and cover the high-level strategic issues facing your FRS.

We recommend that each FRS uses the self-assessment as the basis for its presentation at the strategic briefing. We may make a subsequent request to address further specific questions in advance of the strategic briefing.

How to complete the self-assessment:

- Please answer every question.
- Please do not exceed the word limit set out in the template.
- Please do not embed any documents; documents to support the self-assessment should have been provided as part of the document request.
- There is no expectation that the FRS should grade themselves against the judgment criteria.
- We anticipate that FRS's will share their assessment with their FRA.

Please return the self-assessment to [HMICFRSInspectionsAdmin@hmicfrs.gov.uk](mailto:HMICFRSInspectionsAdmin@hmicfrs.gov.uk) as part of the document return.

What to include in the self-assessment narrative answer:

- A good self-assessment will highlight the challenges and future plans of the FRS to address any gaps in its provision or performance.
- A good self-assessment will identify areas of strengths as well as areas for improvement and set out the actions being taken to address them.
- A good self-assessment is realistic and sets out the FRS's position using evidence and data to support the assessment.

## HMICFRS Fire and Rescue Services Pilot Inspections 2020/21 – Self-assessment template

- Please do not embed any documents
- Please do not exceed the word count limits (1,500 words)
- Please refer to the guidance document

<b>General FRS self-assessment</b>	
<p>Please set out a general FRS self-assessment covering the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What key changes have there been for your FRS since the last inspection – e.g. governance, funding, staffing?</li> <li>• What action has the FRS taken in response to any causes of concern or areas for improvement identified during the last inspection?</li> <li>• What are the FRS’s priorities for the coming year?</li> <li>• What action is the FRS taking in response to any of the recommendations from the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 1 report?</li> <li>• Please include any other information that you feel would be useful to the inspectors to provide context for the operation of the FRS and its current performance.</li> </ul>	
<b>Question</b>	<b>FRS Assessment</b>
<p><b>What key changes have there been for your FRS since the last inspection – e.g. governance, funding, staffing?</b></p>	<p>We have an unequivocal ambition to modernise MFRS to reflect the needs of our communities. Including action to move from a burning platform to burning ambition, to secure a positive cultural shift – creating a Service which looks up and out, not in and down.</p> <p>As a result, we have introduced significant changes within our IRMP Supplement for 2019/21 reflecting foreseeable/emergent risk, demand and vulnerability, making the Service more resilient and responsive to the challenges it faces.</p>

Using our budget in an innovatively different way (essentially, using reserves, pension deficit payment and underspend to pay off debt to free up revenue) we have reinvested in the frontline, modernised our duty systems and ways of working and set balanced budgets for 2019/20-2020/21:

Allowing the Service to increase appliances from 26-30 (from 24-27 daytime plus 3 whole-time retained) (from 18-21 at night, plus 9 WTR).

The new Hybrid duty system (1<sup>st</sup> in the country), protects night-time cover at Wallasey and Liverpool City; assuring retained availability, cognisant of working time regulations.

Increasing from 620 to 642 firefighters. All contracts made up of whole-time and retained duties, incorporating flood, terrorist response and EMR, making these requirements contractual and unambiguous (the only Service in the UK doing this).

Maintaining 5 riders at key locations but moving to 4 at non key locations – reflective of Critical Attendance Standard scenarios.

Flexible use of resources makes the Service more resilient and better equipped to manage emerging/increasing risk - shipping/weather related incidents and terrorism. We have relocated the DIM vehicle and provided enhanced MTA training to Liverpool City.

We have also:

Increased our MTFA capability - now providing a team of 24, capable of responding across the region and more broadly.

Robust workforce planning arrangements; three recruit courses run yearly, reflecting retirement profiles. We have introduced secondary contracts and re-engaged staff on a flexible basis – resulting in high levels of appliance availability whilst maintaining

specialist skills. MFRS is an employer provider of the firefighter apprenticeship, making effective use of the Apprenticeship Levy.

Achieved efficiencies for the HO by using the NR training grant more efficiently, maximised the impact of the NRAT team; broadening their role to complement the work of the NFCC Protection Board and High Rise working group.

Developed a new NR application; now in use across the country.

Reviewed the disposition of specialist assets (which will inform our future IRMP), immediately taking action to staff the HVP on a permanent basis following feedback from debriefs and the Knowsley Industrial Estate SIR.

Re-introduced the CM role following feedback from staff groups - to support development and maintain appliance availability.

Introduced a Community Impact Fund to further engage crews in station planning; making a clear link between their work and the impact they can have – shared place-based leadership.

Our officers are embedded in the new multi-agency Violence Reduction Partnership, securing funding for our Early Intervention programmes whilst developing Merseyside's problem profile. The VRP takes a public health approach to preventing serious violence. Arson/deliberate fire setting is embedded within the problem profile, securing a multi-agency response.

<p><b>What action has the FRS taken in response to any causes of concern or areas for improvement identified during the last inspection?</b></p>	<p>We have:</p> <p>Restructured our Protection Department, raising Protection priorities and highlighting its importance/status in the Service – allocating an Area Manager, and 5 Watch Managers to re-invigorate and re-engineer our approach.</p> <p>Established a Building Safety Group with LAs in response to Grenfell, pre-empting changes to fire safety/building legislation, utilising combined enforcement approach to building remediation where necessary.</p> <p>Prior to Fieldwork we will have updated our MDT's and introduced tough-pads for frontline appliances, working with partners to share cross-border risk information using Resilience Direct. MFRS Officers chair the RD National Fire Group.</p> <p>Refocused on command assessment to ensure command competence is up to date and our command is assured.</p> <p>Introduced Strategic Command Peer Assurance with Cheshire FRS.</p> <p>Operational Discretion is captured in the Incident Command policy. The Operational Assurance Team included OD as a key audit theme during the period Sept-Dec 2019, embedding the correct use and recording (via Vision Incident Log and IC's day book). Audits confirm a good level of understanding/knowledge.</p> <p>Low level debrief is undertaken as a 'Hot Debrief' following an incident. The Operational Response Functional Plan 2020-21 captures hot debriefs via the introduction of tough-pads on appliances. Pending their introduction, an interim solution uses 'instant reporting' on the OSHENS system.</p>
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Developed a comprehensive operational TNA linked to foreseeable local/national risk assessment and are developing an asset management plan for People, to enhance our workforce/succession planning.

Progressed our application development, working with other FRS to develop collaborative approaches – reducing paper based systems. We have introduced 16 new electronic processes since 2018.

We have:

Maximised our engagement with staff through structured purposeful engagement – introduced station readiness concept.

Refreshed our Gateway process to reinforce leadership behaviours - removing barriers for progression whilst supporting accelerated progression.

Made 80+ temporary roles permanent.

Established staff networks (BAME, Gender, LGBGTQI), with strategic leaders sponsoring a protected characteristic. Network Chairs are now members of the Strategic ED&I Board.

Implemented face to face ED&I Essentials training to half our staff. We are on target to complete the whole Service in line with our 2-year training plan.

Implemented coaching-based inclusive leadership training (SMs initially).

Engaged with staff to effect change and challenge negative and undermining behaviours through PO talks, WM/CM forums, station visits.

Engaged with staff to refresh our 'Ground Rules' (250 responses).

	<p>Completed the NFCC Safeguarding Self-Assessment and are acting on our findings – we have established a Safeguarding Committee and training has been completed.</p> <p>We are delivering Unconscious Bias training to c60 staff, specifically recruiters, assessors and key decision makers.</p>
<p><b>What are the FRS’s priorities for the coming year?</b></p>	<p>To deliver the remainder of our IRMP and IRMP Supplement actions including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completion and opening of New Station in St Helens (merger of two others)</li> <li>• Implementation of the Hybrid duty system at St Helens.</li> <li>• Further strengthening the Protection team.</li> <li>• Exploring the use of technological solutions to enhance our response (e.g. 999Eye, Response Halo and a drone capability).</li> <li>• Introducing EMR based on increased capacity due to reinvestment in service. Including the roll out of GoodSam as a precursor to implementation.</li> </ul> <p>Stakeholder consultation on our planning principles and proposals for our 2021-2024 IRMP.</p> <p>Creating a MTFP which includes flexible options that allow us to develop our vision; reflective of the uncertain financial situation beyond 2021/22.</p> <p>Exploring capital opportunities to improve our training provision at a new location, whilst seeking alternatives for stations that are nearing the end of life.</p> <p>Upgrading our CAD/MIS, providing improved systems for our Control staff.</p> <p>Continuing our work/influence at a national level in relation to ESMCP.</p>

Continuing with our effective use of positive action to recruit a workforce reflective of our community.

Implementing an enhanced Home Safety Strategy which responds to poverty factors particularly the risk associated with reducing smoke alarm ownership in our most deprived areas.

Maintaining focus on High Demand Wards – targeted campaigns with partners focussed on RTC/Arson/ASB reduction and water safety.

To evaluate our impact, we have a partnership with Liverpool John Moores University who will objectively review our key strategies.

Developing a new inclusive 'Leadership Message' that takes account of the aspirations of the whole organisation. Reviewing our Mission, redefining our behaviours and values to reflect our shared purpose and vision.

Taking a 'positive action' approach to improve progression for under-represented groups – the revised Gateway. developing our peer mentoring and our *All Fired Up Mentoring Programme*.

Delivering our fourth staff engagement survey.

Exploring new ways to understand the level and impact of negative undermining behaviour on the organisation - including the introduction of pulse surveys and confidential reporting for B&H.

Hosting the AFSA Conference in December to support the EDI agenda.

Embedding Suicide Awareness across the Service – internally and externally to enhance our wellbeing provisions.



<p><b>What action is the FRS taking in response to the recommendations from the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 1 report?</b></p>	<p>We have put in place a dedicated lead officer at GM level to project manage a cross-directorate response to the GTI recommendations as well as identifying and addressing other emergent risk within the built environment. Who has;</p> <p>Developed a gap-analysis tool to measure current position against what the Service is aiming to achieve and track progress</p> <p>The cross-functional working group has;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changed the PDA to High Rise</li> <li>• Reviewed and updated the SOP</li> <li>• Introduced Sunday 6 – Training of ops crews</li> <li>• Updated Learnpro package – shared learning approach</li> <li>• Improved operational crew training in understanding risk, evacuation strategies, passive and active fire protection features, and SSRI information</li> <li>• Procured smoke hood for appliances, with additional equipment evaluation underway</li> <li>• Secured access to a vacant high rise block for two years to train crews and test procedures– we have linked this to HO activity to ensure the opportunity is maximised</li> <li>• Championed the use of SIRAH (SSRI app) to create a single source of premises risk information</li> <li>• Established Building Safety Group with LA partners, pre-empting changes to fire safety/building legislation, utilising combined enforcement approach to building remediation where necessary</li> <li>• Utilised Lead Authority status on behalf of the NFCC to support the National Stay Put Policy Review Group in the collation of data collated from incidents in medium and high rise buildings.</li> </ul> <p>Made recommendations to aerial appliance strategy - suggesting alternatives to provide options at high rise incidents.</p>
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**Please include any other information that you feel would be useful to the inspectors to provide context for the operation of the FRS and its current performance.**

Our plans remain flexible in order to deal with the potential for reductions in budget of between £1.5m and £8m by 2024/25 due to pension changes etc.

We will look to facilitate capital investment in the service's infrastructure in order to provide assets that are fit for the future and improve our efficiency and effectiveness.

Expanding blue light collaboration to maximise the impact of the NW FRS's whilst removing duplication – sharing learning and resources.

Merseyside governance remains open to change with elections of a new City Region Mayor and a New Police Crime Commissioner imminent.

Merseyside remains the most deprived area in the country – with high levels of organised criminal gangs' operating across borders.