

MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

MEETING OF THE:	COMMUNITY SAFETY AND PROTECTION COMMITTEE		
DATE:	1 FEBRUARY 2022	REPORT NO:	CFO/004/22
PRESENTING OFFICER:	CFO PHIL GARRIGAN		
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	DEB APPLETON	REPORT AUTHOR:	JACKIE SUTTON
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP TEAM		
TITLE OF REPORT:	FIRE STANDARDS BOARD		

APPENDICES:	APPENDIX A:	EMERGENCY RESPONSE DRIVING STANDARD IMPLEMENTATION TOOLKIT
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Purpose of Report

1. To inform Members of the introduction of National Fire Standards
2. To describe how they are developed, consulted on and published by the Fire Standards Board supported by the National Fire Chiefs Council, through its Central Programme Office (CPO).

Recommendation

3. That Members note the new National Fire Standards and the work being undertaken within MFRS to implement and ensure compliance with the new National Fire Standards

Introduction and Background

The role of the Fire Standards Board

4. Is to oversee the identification, organisation, development and maintenance of professional Standards for fire and rescue services in England.
5. The Board is responsible for approving Standards and the approach to their development. It sets the priorities for Standards development work. It will commission work based on proposals from third parties, monitor progress with ongoing work and approve completed work.
6. It will seek to ensure that any Standards presented for approval have:
 - been developed in line with the agreed development process;
 - undergone appropriate consultation with subject matter experts and relevant stakeholders; and,
 - undergone an independent quality assurance process.

Scope of Standards

7. To help categorise the areas requiring Fire Standards and the guidance that is likely to underpin them, an Activity Framework has been developed. This enabled the Board to capture all the activities performed by fire and rescue services irrespective of their governance model, budget or location and who provides those functions (for example, services that are part of a local authority).
8. The principles of this approach are founded on the experience gained through the National Operational Guidance Programme (NOGP). The Activity Framework is intended to:
 - provide a complete road map it is clear where the NFCC and FSB are going;
 - help avoid duplication and overlap which may result in conflicting guidance if developed in isolation; and,
 - be easy to navigate for all audiences.

Standards Development

9. The National Fire Chiefs Council, through its Central Programme Office (CPO) provides administrative and policy support to the Fire Standards Board.
10. The Board and CPO work together to develop the suite of professional Standards. They will follow a commonly recognised process originating from the British Standards Institute and used in many other sectors.

In this process the Board is responsible for:

- creating and maintaining a framework of professional Standards that are applicable to, or in use within, fire and rescue services in England;
- considering the existing fire and rescue landscape through findings of existing research, the fire reform programme, operational or organisational learning from past incidents and from HMICFRS inspection outputs;
- identifying gaps within the framework and identifying priorities for new or revised professional Standards;
- working with the NFCC to plan and align Standards development work with the strategic commitments and their existing programmes;
- reviewing proposals and commissioning work;
- ensuring published Standards remain current and fit for purpose through both benefits realisation and periodic review;
- commissioning work to review and revise published Standards as and when required; and,
- building and maintaining relationships with partners across fire and rescue services, including those in the Devolved Administrations to inform the work they commission and approve.

The CPO are responsible for:

- preparing proposals for Standards development work;

- facilitating development work when commissioned;
- managing the periodic review cycles of approved Standards;
- monitoring and informing the Board where a Standard may need revision outside of agreed cycles; and,
- monitoring benefits realisation and periodic reporting to the Board.

Approved Fire Standards

11. To date the Fire Standards Board have written, consulted on and published the following Standards:

- Code of Ethics
- Community Risk Management Planning
- Emergency Response Driving
- Operational Competence
- Operational Learning
- Operational Preparedness
- Prevention
- Protection

At time of writing two further Fire Standards have been through consultation and are expected to be published soon:

- Safeguarding
- Fire Investigation

One Fire Standard is out to consultation:

- Emergency Preparedness and Resilience

12. Officers from Merseyside have been fundamental in the creation of this standard given our lead role for national resilience and our outstanding judgement when dealing with Major Incidents, as advised by HMICFRS during its most recent round of inspections.

Implementation Tools

13. Following on from feedback received from rescue services the Board has developed an Implementation Tool for each Fire Standard.

14. Each tool has been created to assist fire and rescue services in planning, delivering and reporting on their implementation of Fire Standards. They could also be used to provide useful evidence for HMICFRS inspections.

15. The tools help services to record actions needed to be take to move toward achieving the Fire Standard. When first completed, it will provide a benchmark from which progress over time can be measured.

MFRS Implementation of the National Fire Standards

16. When a new Standard is released for consultation it is added to an intranet Portal page with a link to the live consultation and deadlines for responding. The Area Manager or Senior Manager with responsibility for the Standard is advised to review and respond to the consultation. Where appropriate, the response is quality assured or sent on behalf of the Chief Fire Officer.
17. When a new Standard is published, to ensure compliance, , the Implementation Toolkit is used as a form of gap analysis to identify where MRFS are meeting the standard, or areas for improvement. An example of the Emergency Response Driving Implementation Toolkit can be found at Appendix A.
18. The Toolkit tracker is then presented, by the responsible officer, at the appropriate Strategic Board meeting to illustrate compliance, or areas for improvement with the Standard. The individual Boards should show progress in achieving the Standard. Highlights of the individual Standards will be presented annually to Strategy and Performance Board and the Authority..
19. Implementation toolkits will be kept on the Portal and reviewed regularly.

Equality and Diversity Implications

20. Equality and Diversity actions form part of the work of the National Fire Standards Board and each Standard is equally impact assessed as appropriate.
21. In addition, any equality, diversity and inclusion implications relating to work required to comply with a standard would be identified through MFRS's Equality Impact Assessment processes.

Staff Implications

22. There are no direct staffing implications contained within this report.

Legal Implications

23. The standards allow greater scrutiny and alignment across the sector mitigating the risk to the Authority when carrying out its activities and service to the community. as it its compliance of standards

Financial Implications & Value for Money

24. The National Fire Standards should provide the same or an improved level of service for the same or a reduced cost.
25. Actions required to ensure compliance that have cost implications should be maintained within existing budgets.

Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications

26. Consideration of Health and Safety, the environment and successful risk management is paramount in complying the the National Fire Standards.

Contribution to Our Vision: *To be the best Fire & Rescue Service in the UK.*

Our Purpose: *Here to serve, Here to protect, Here to keep you safe.*

27. Compliance with the National Fire Standards will assure the Authority and the people we serve on Merseyside that we are providing the best possible service.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

GLOSSARY OF TERMS
