

FIRE STANDARDS BOARD

Title of Paper	Fire Standards Proposals
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For decision

Paper Number	Paper 2
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Date of Meeting	1 February 2019
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Presented by	Central Programme Office
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1. Summary

This paper provides the Board with a short summary of the background to the establishment of the Fire Standards Board and covers:

- the background to the Board being established and Professional Standards Body Project (PSB project) recommendations;
- current landscape (survey data) and scope of professional standards;
- proposed standards development processes; and,
- the proposed component parts of a professional standard as a prototype.

2. Recommendations

The Board is asked to note the content of:

- [Appendix A](#) - recommendations made by the PSB Project;
- [Appendix B](#) – standards survey results conducted during 2017; and
- [Appendix C](#) – the Local Resilience Forum national standards as a comparative format for the proposed professional standard component parts and structure.

3. Decisions

The Board is asked to review the paper and, if content, approve the proposed standards development process and prototype.

4. Background and Information

The requirement for professional standards within the fire and rescue services was identified as part of the Fire Reform programme launched by Government in 2016.

While some standards exist, there are gaps, inconsistent application and no national oversight. The absence of any nationally agreed set of recognised standards has led to services using a range of standards selected locally to suit their needs.

The commitment was made to create a coherent and comprehensive suite of professional standards for English fire and rescue services. Therefore, the aim of establishing and maintaining professional standards is to:

- define what 'good' looks like
- be a key component to drive continuous improvement
- allow the benchmarking of activity – something welcomed by HMICFRS
- help further professionalise the sector

4.1. Evolution of Fire Standards Board

In March 2017, the Home Office initiated the PSB Project to research and evaluate the best way in which professional standards could be delivered.

The project's conclusions were presented in a business case¹ provided to the Minister in March 2018. This included the results of a national survey providing the current standards landscape, proposals for how standards should be developed and proposed operating models.

The recommendation for a sector-led model was supported by the Minister. This approach included

- The establishment of an independently chaired Fire Standards Board;
- a comprehensive suite of professional standards; and
- the NFCC Central Programme Office (CPO) providing support and coordinating work on the development of professional standards.

4.2. Research Recommendations

A summary of the recommendations made as part of the business case and the work that has been done to date to respond to them is show in [Appendix A](#).

¹ A copy of the business case is available to Board members upon request

4.3. Current Activity

A national survey was conducted in 2017 across all fire and rescue services to help establish the current standards landscape.

It sought feedback on the standards and qualifications used across all areas of business for a fire and rescue service both organisational and individual standards. The survey results helped to clarify the current standards landscape and assisted the project team in proposing priority areas for professional standard development.

The areas explored as part of the survey and a summary of the survey results are included in [Appendix B](#).

4.4. Proposed Priorities for Professional Standards

Based on the results of the survey, the PSB Project team proposed broad areas of priority that relate to the functions that are directly applicable to fire and rescue services. They also considered the levels at which standards might apply. These included:

- Strategic deployment of fire and rescue service resources based on risk
- Prevention of fires and other emergencies
- Protection of people and property from fires and other emergencies
- Response to fire and other emergencies
- Business continuity and resilience to fires and other emergencies
- Workforce development within fire and rescue services

It is proposed such standards are likely to be applied at a number of levels, namely;

- **Organisational**
Expectations of good practice that require contributions from different parts of the organisation
- **Functional**
Expectations of particular specialisms within each organisation
- **Individual**
Expectations of individuals carrying out specific roles

Following the publication of the findings from the initial HMICFRS inspections combined with proposals made by the PSB Project, the following areas are considered to be of significant priority for standards development:

- Leadership
- Resource deployment - Integrated Risk Management Planning
- Protection
- Prevention (activities and evaluation of effectiveness)
- Response (national operational guidance)
- Business Continuity

The NFCC has work in progress currently which will inform professional standards in many of these business areas including:

- Workforce reform including:
 - Leadership (both managerial leadership and incident command leadership)
 - Apprenticeship standards
 - Career and Learning Pathways
 - On-Call
 - Inclusion, equality and diversity
 - Health and wellbeing
- Community Risk Reduction including:
 - Integrated Risk Management Plans
 - Prevention delivery activities underpinned by evaluation methodologies
 - Fire Safety Competence
 - National Operational Guidance to bring about consistency in operational response
 - Incident Command Competence following (a review of the underpinning guidance)
- Digital
 - Data
 - Enhancing digital capacity to the benefit of all services

National practitioner working groups operating below NFCC Committee level have been in place for many years. Many of these groups have developed a range of operational and non-operational guidance before arrangements of professional standards had been agreed.

Some of this work is being driven by legislation, some by learning from incidents and events. All of which are aiming to achieve effective outcomes, standardise approaches and resolve issues identified at practitioner level.

It is proposed that the CPO working with the respective NFCC committees will plan reviews of completed work and carry out quality assurance of the work as some may warrant being recognised nationally as standards.

These areas include:

1. Emergency Response Driver Training (ERDT) – linked to the Road Safety Act 2004
2. Automatic Fire Alarm connection standard
3. Pre-hospital Casualty Care (the initial medical treatment of casualties by firefighters)
4. Fire Investigation
5. Operational Risk Assessment
6. PPE Maintenance (being led by BSI)
7. Water for Firefighting (an outcome from the Hackitt Review)
8. Health & Safety Audit Standards
9. NILO Guidance
10. Operational Learning
11. Data standard
12. FireSetters (Children & Young People)
13. UKRO Extrication Standards
14. International Fire Safety Standards

Whilst some of these areas are already identified as potential standards, others require verification of whether the work is likely to result in a standard.

It is the intent of the CPO to evaluate and scope the initial work programme for standards development which will be brought to the Board for discussion at the next meeting.

5. Standards Development Process

As no professional standards are in place currently, the process below describes how new standards will be developed. However, it will also be the process used for review and revision of standards following approval and publication.

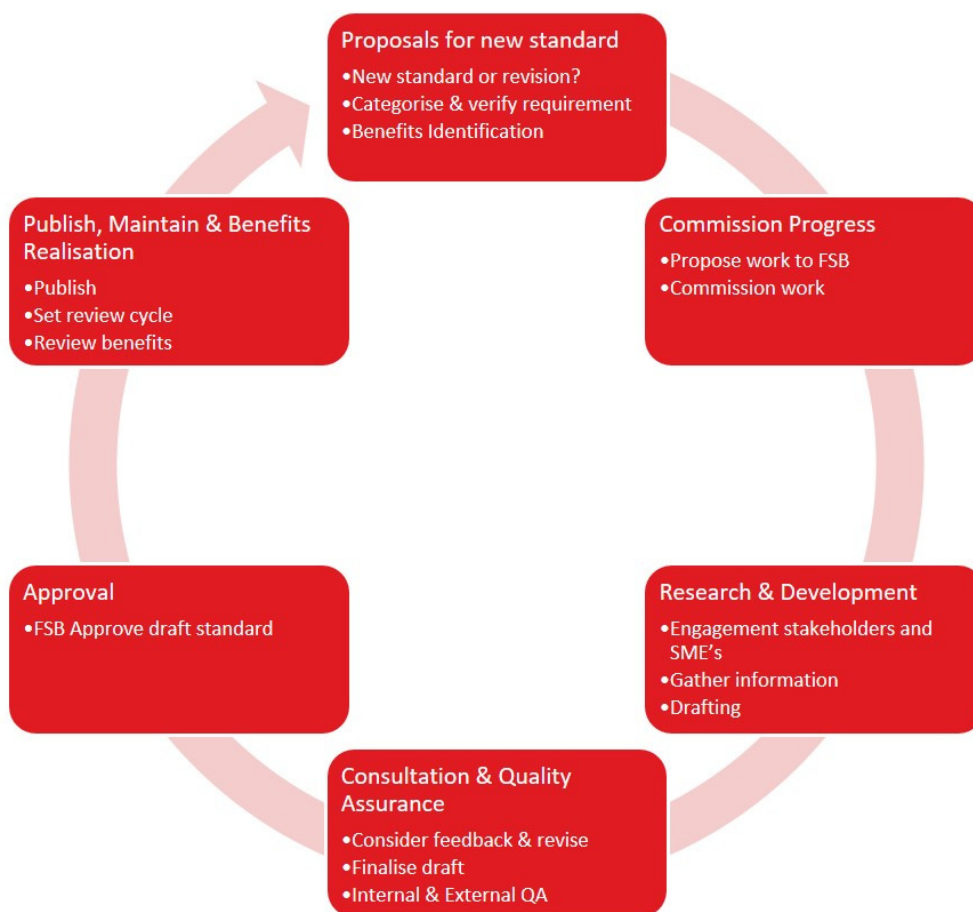
When standards are approved, a periodic review date will be set. However, should any new learning arise, either through further HMICFRS inspection findings; lessons identified from incidents and events; or other drivers of change, this may also trigger a review of approved standards.

As the inspectorate are not members of the Board, it is essential that a positive relationship is forged between the Board and HMICFRS which the Chairs will be taking forward.

Once the Board has agreed the work programme for standards development, the CPO will be responsible for coordinating the project management of standards development work.

The process the CPO will follow will be in line with the process commonly used across many sectors for this purpose and is founded on the *BSI 0:2018 - Stages of standard development, publication & maintenance*.

The figure below represents the basic stages of the process to be followed:



This process covers:

- Initial assessment, verification and benefits identification of the requirement through the NFCC Strategic Engagement Forum and sub forums
- The Board commissioning progress once content with the requirement
- The development phase to include drawing on relevant subject matter expertise (SME) from the sector or relevant stakeholders through the NFCC Committees and NFCC Strategic Engagement Forum and its sub-forums
- The consultation phase to allow all stakeholders from all services and the wider sector to contribute and provide feedback
- Finalising the draft based on feedback
- Completion of quality assurance
- Preparation of final approval for the Board
- Publishing and setting review cycle dates

This process will be applied to each piece of development work and treated as a stand-alone project. Therefore, a proposed timeline and those responsible or involved in the project will be defined for each piece of development work.

5.1. Benefits Identification and Realisation

The Benefits and Change function within the CPO will be responsible for managing the benefits of professional standards. This will include the identification of proposed benefits at the scoping stage and then monitoring implementation and measurement of benefits post-implementation.

The identified benefits will form part of supporting information about the professional standard when they are presented to Board for commissioning.

Full benefits realisation is not likely to be immediately following the publication of any professional standard, but will need to be evaluated after implementation and following a period of the standard or related product being in use.

Ongoing monitoring and reporting of benefits realisation will be provided to the Board following the publication of professional standards. This will allow the Board to consider the impact and effectiveness of a particular professional standard and, where required, provide the driver to initiate reviews where needed.

5.2. Impact of Professional Standards

As part of the research and development phase of standards development, the CPO will carry out appropriate impact assessments to ensure the needs of, and impact on, fire and rescue services irrespective of their Governance model are considered.

It will be the responsibility of the Board to ensure that it is satisfied that appropriate impact assessments have been done before approving any professional standards presented to it.

5.3. Quality Assurance Process – Board Responsibility

For each professional standard produced two levels of quality assurance will be completed prior to presentation for approval by the Board.

5.3.1. Level 1 - Clarifying that the professional standard is fit for purpose

The consultation phase of the development process is designed to ensure that the end-product is fit-for-purpose in terms of end-users and meets with the requirements of all stakeholders.

The views, expertise and advice of all stakeholders will be actively encouraged and incorporated by engagement and communication throughout the development phase. This is to ensure that subject matter expertise and stakeholder views and contributions are incorporated into the development of any end product.

Development of professional standards will be carried out in conjunction with the NFCC programmes of work to ensure alignment to the needs of the services who will have a responsibility to comply with any professional standards once approved.

The position and requirements of the Devolved Administrations will also be considered through their involvement with the NFCC Strategic Engagement Forum.

5.3.2. Level 2 - Clarifying the correct process has been followed – external quality assurance

On completion of development work there will be a quality assessment of the final products and the processes that have been followed to produce them.

This will involve commissioning an appropriately qualified external company against a detailed specification to ensure they have the appropriate skills, knowledge and credentials to perform the task.

The results of these audits will be presented to the Board alongside the proposed professional standard. This package of information will provide the assurance that the development process has been followed correctly, that relevant subject matter expertise has been considered and that all stakeholders have been engaged in the development process and the final product.

The role of the Board is to act as a collective to review the proposed professional standards to ensure that the final product has been completed following due process and that they are fit-for-purpose as well as aligned to the HMICFRS inspection framework.

5.4. Progress Reporting

Once the priorities and work programme have been defined and agreed, the Board will be responsible for monitoring progress against agreed objectives and timelines.

The CPO will be responsible for providing appropriate progress reporting to the Board at each meeting.

5.5. Approval

Following the completion of any standards development work, the Board will be presented with the final professional standard and any supporting information, along with the assurance reports, for review.

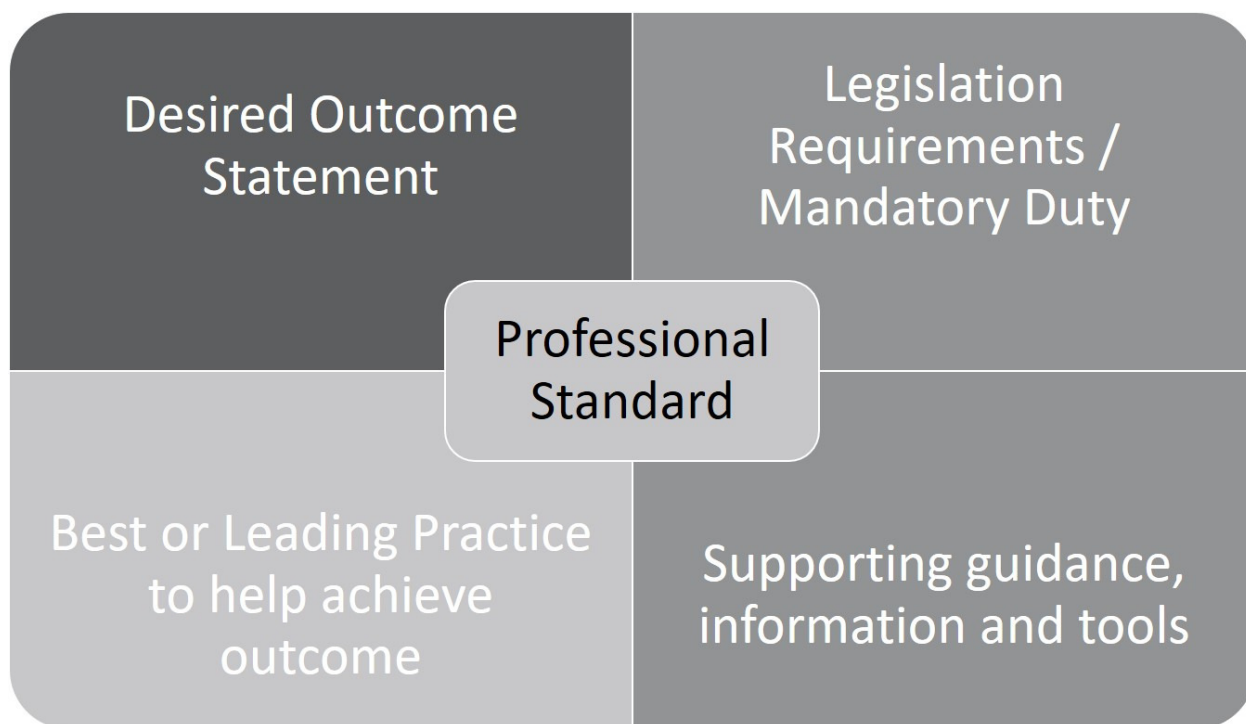
The Board will be responsible for reviewing the finalised standards, including the quality assurance, before approving them for publication.

When the Board is satisfied and assured that both the content and quality of the resultant products meet their requirements, the professional standard will be considered approved for release.

The CPO will be responsible for publishing all approved standards on an agreed digital platform, appropriately linked to any related guidance materials or information, which will allow all stakeholders access to them in a consistent and user-friendly way.

6. Proposed Professional Standards Prototype

Informed by the research of the PSB Project and having tested the concept with stakeholders, the figure below shows the proposed component parts of any professional standard.



It is proposed that the professional standards are “outcome focused” and written as clearly as possible following Plain English protocols.

This approach has worked well in other public sectors including health, education and justice. Most recently this format was used by the Cabinet Office in the formation of standards for Local Resilience Forums (an extract is attached in [Appendix C](#) as an example).

The benefit of following an already recognised format and structure is that the concept is already known and understood. This greatly aids implementation and adoption.

On this basis, a prototype of a professional standard based on the National Operational Guidance has been drafted and is shown on the following page. The content is a sample only, the content is not complete and has not been validated.

It is shown purely to allow the Board to see what a professional standard may look like if the prototype structure is agreed.

Whilst the prototype is shown in a static table, it is envisaged that all professional standards will be hosted on an online platform, potentially as part of the Fire Professional Framework which is under review.

Having the information online will allow readers to easily navigate the range of professional standards. It will ease access to associated information and relevant supporting materials, such as guidance, training information, qualifications and tools designed to help achieve the standard.

It will also make version control of the content easier with updating done in line with review cycles or as and when required.

The Board is asked to note and comment on this prototype and, if agreed, confirm that it wishes the CPO to do further development work on the prototype and use for engagement with stakeholders.

PROFESSIONAL STANDARD – OPERATIONAL RESPONSE

[Other Categorising Information Here]

Desired Outcome

A fire and rescue service that has a clear set of operational policies and procedures, linked to national guidance and good practice. The policies will be consistent with those of neighbouring services allowing cross border working.

Policies will clearly link to the JESIP principles and associated doctrine allowing for ease of interoperability in the operational context.

Legislative Requirements / Mandatory Duties

- Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 – [link to relevant section]
- Health Safety and Welfare Act
- National Framework

Best Practice

A fire and rescue service should have:

- a) A completed Strategic Gap Analysis for National Operational Guidance
- b) A clear set of operational policies and procedures which link to National Operational Guidance
- c) Have strategic risk assessments in place for all operational policies
- d) Is able to evidence where they have adopted or adapted all strategic actions described in National Operational Guidance
- e) Can evidence the decision to reject aspects of National Operational Guidance on the basis of either; it not being applicable to that fire and rescue service, or a higher level of policy already being in place
- f) A provision for updating policies following learning events within the service
- g) A provision for sharing learning, relating to National Operational Guidance, through national learning tools

Leading Practice

A fire and rescue service may:

- a) Have adopted the Service Integration Tool to allow automatic workflow for updating policies in line with National Operational Guidance Changes
- b) Have a completed Strategic Risk Assessment which reflects the Strategic Risk Assessment Good Practice Guide
- c) Established working groups with regional partners to ensure all operational policies are aligned to allow intra operability
- d) Uses the training specifications to ensure training for operational activity is consistent with national doctrine
- e) Has a learning system in place which feed into National Operational Learning and Joint Organisational Learning systems
- f) Is actively engaged with the Operational Guidance Forum

Guidance and Supporting Information

www.UKFRS.com

Health Safety and Welfare Framework for the Operational Environment

[Other relevant links to information and supporting guidance or tools.]

7. Recommendations

The Board is asked to note the content of:

- [Appendix A](#) - recommendations made by the PSB Project;
- [Appendix B](#) – standards survey results conducted during 2017; and
- [Appendix C](#) – the Local Resilience Forum national standards as a comparative format for the proposed professional standard component parts and structure.

8. Decisions

The Board is asked to review the paper and, if content, approve the proposed standards development process and prototype.

Appendix A – PSB Project Recommendations and Actions to Date

Below are the recommendations from the business case linked to the NFCC related work programmes with the current status.

Please note: not all recommendations have direct single actions.

Recommendation	Actions required	Status
1. The need for the development and improvement of standards in the fire and rescue service is agreed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish Fire Standards Board with Terms of Reference and support from the CPO • Professional Standards Framework with priorities and gap analysis • Parameters and scope of professional standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Principles agreed by the PSB Board – Independent chair & vice chair recruited – Draft Terms of Reference prepared – Draft process for standards development prepared for FSB to approve
2. Consistent leadership standards for fire and rescue services (including values and a code of ethics) are developed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NFCC People Programme to develop a leadership framework through engagement and consultation with the sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Draft leadership framework developed along with proposals for tools to support implementation – Consultation on framework complete – Leadership framework due for launch January 2019 – To be considered as a priority for recognition as a key element of professional standards by FSB in early 2019
3. Standards in how fire and rescue services should best deploy their resources to identify, assess and manage risks at strategic level in communities are developed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NFCC Community Risk Programme (CRP) to create a framework in progress that will be populated with standards and good practice • Programme scope to be developed to populate the identified framework • Develop IRMP Guidance and Toolkit including appropriate risk assessment methodologies and best practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – CRP established with Programme and Project Management Resources allocated – National research project underway to establish current good practice and identify gaps

Recommendation	Actions required	Status
4. Collate current good practice on prevention and undertake research to set appropriate standards for delivery as well as quantitative and qualitative evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver this as a part of the NFCC Community Risk Programme with the support of the Prevention Coordination Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Prevention seen as a key element of CRP with appropriate representation on the Programme Board – Analysis of research being collated with potential additional research, required to evaluate effectiveness of interventions, being scoped
5. Standards and good practice for fire protection should be reviewed as a high priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NFCC team being established to work within the MHCLG Housing Safety Programme • Specific requirements of the Fire and Rescue Service to be identified • Programme of internal work within the sector to be designed to deliver products, including standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Additional resources agreed and provided to NFCC for support of MHCLG Building Safety Programme – Team structure agreed and recruitment underway – Fire Safety Competence Framework review already in progress within the Community Risk Programme
6. NOG is adopted and implemented as a common standard for operational response, ensuring that national operational learning is considered in the development of new standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Propose NOG as standard for operational response to FSB • NFCC Operations Committee to oversee transfer of NOG to business-as-usual • Review other requirements for standards with operational context and links to NOG • Monitoring of national implementation and benefits realisation to report to FSB 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Priority for recognition as professional standard to FSB – National Operational Learning process (NOL) in place to ensure lessons learnt are acted upon to continually improve NOG – Operational effectiveness, competence and incident command guidance reviews underway – Business change resources continuing to support implementation – Benefits realisation strategy in development to measure implementation
7. Common standards for business continuity are developed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To include delivery of this within NFCC Community Risk Programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – This will be an element of the CRP and will fall out of the further scoping work that will follow the research project

Recommendation	Actions required	Status
8. The Fire Professional Framework is updated to include standards for selection, training, development and appraisal of FRS staff, apprenticeships, and supporting an increased focus on diversity in selection and progression processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To develop a revised Fire Professional Framework within the NFCC People Programme • Digital Programme to support digitally hosted content to allow ease of access for all users and streamline maintenance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Review of Fire Professional Framework underway as part of the NFCC People programme – National Occupational Standards (NOS) now being hosted within ukfrs.com with links to NOG being established
9. Option 4 - the sector-led approach for the delivery of standards is agreed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See point 1 – the FSB and support from CPO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Agreed by the PSB Project Board – March 2018
10. The governance arrangements for the Fire Standards Board are agreed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See point 1 – the FSB and support from CPO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Agreed by the PSB Project Board – March 2018
11. That the arrangements for Governance, Delivery and Maintenance and Assurance of standards are agreed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See point 1 – the FSB and support from CPO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Agreed by the PSB Project Board – March 2018
12. The initial engagement and communication plan is agreed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Communications Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Communication and engagement plan will be developed for 2nd meeting of FSB
13. That match funding of £1.65m pa provided by fire and rescue services and £1.5m from Home Office support the delivery of the first two years of a five-year programme of standards development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative funding to be coordinated by NFCC • Section 31 grant required from Home Office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Contribution from services coordinated by NFCC and provided, subject to a partnership agreement – Grant funding agreed by the PSB Project Board and given Ministerial approval - Section 31 grant approved and in place – Initial financial breakdown provided to Home Office

Recommendation	Actions required	Status
14. That the initial work plan for the implementation of the proposals in this paper are agreed and the PSB is disbanded.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmation of Board & Minister approval of the business case and proposals within to allow the above actions to be initiated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – PSB Project closed in March 2018 – CPO coordinated implementation of proposals including establishment of FSB and recruitment of the independent chair and vice chair

Appendix B – Summary of Standards Survey Results

Following the research completed by the PSB Project, it is proposed that a professional standards framework be based on the various business functions that are required to deliver a modern-day fire and rescue service.

The figures below provide an overview of the broad business functions broken down into two key

Enhancing the Profession

- Leadership & Management
- Strategic Planning & Deployment
- Community Risk
 - Prevention
 - Protection
 - Response
- Workforce
 - Recruitment, job roles and behaviours
 - Career Progression & Pathways
 - Fitness and Wellbeing

Running the Business

- Business Administration and IT
- Human Resources
- Learning, Development and Training
- Health & Safety
- Finance & Legal (inc. payroll & procurement)
- Media and Communications
- Estates, asset & fleet management

areas:

It is recognised that in services which remain a department of a county council or local authority, some business functions are, in effect, out-sourced or managed outside of the services jurisdiction for example - Human Resource, finance, legal, or IT functions.

National Standards Survey Results

The following pages are a summary of research findings that were an Appendix of the PSB Project Business Case prepared in March 2017.

It should be noted that it is not a complete picture, but it is provided to the Board as an indication of the current standards landscape. The survey data has not been fully verified or a detailed analysis carried out.

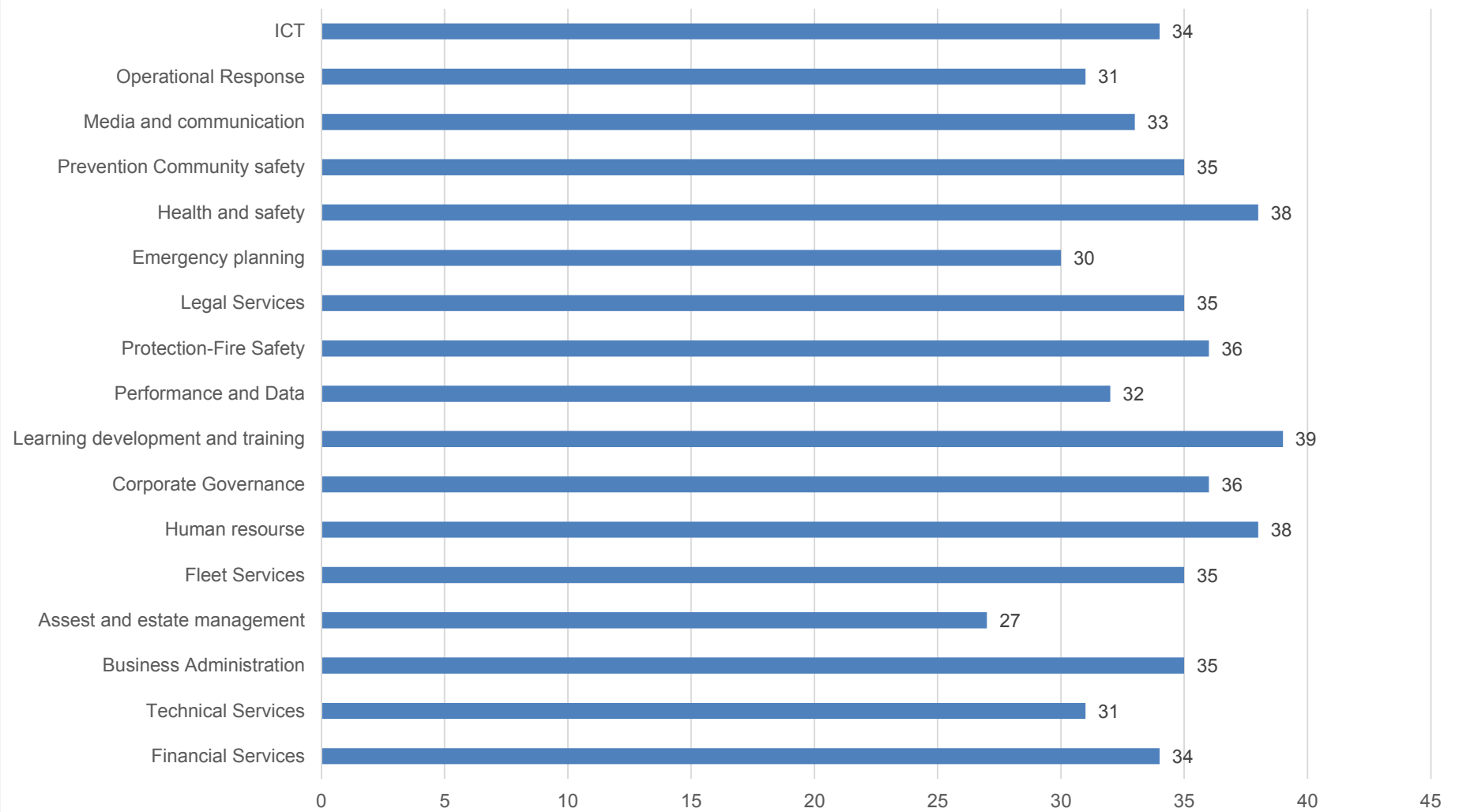
8.1. What constitutes a professional standard?

What became apparent from the initial survey responses was the interpretation of what constitutes a standard which was varied. This variation makes comparison between services and across the country difficult, it may also mean that more services than are shown in the results do align to the same “standards” as their counterparts, but when responding to the survey, they did not consider that was what was being asked.

Services cited a variety of standards ranging from very prescriptive qualifications or accreditations such as those provided by the IFE and other examinations in areas such as operational firefighting or fire protection; guidance such as NOG and incident command levels; and initiatives such as those referenced for equality and diversity including the Disability Confident Scheme (Two Ticks), the latter being optional but seen as positive to align to.

The chart on the following page shows the number of responses received. The survey was structured by business area and the results show the number of services who responded against each business area.

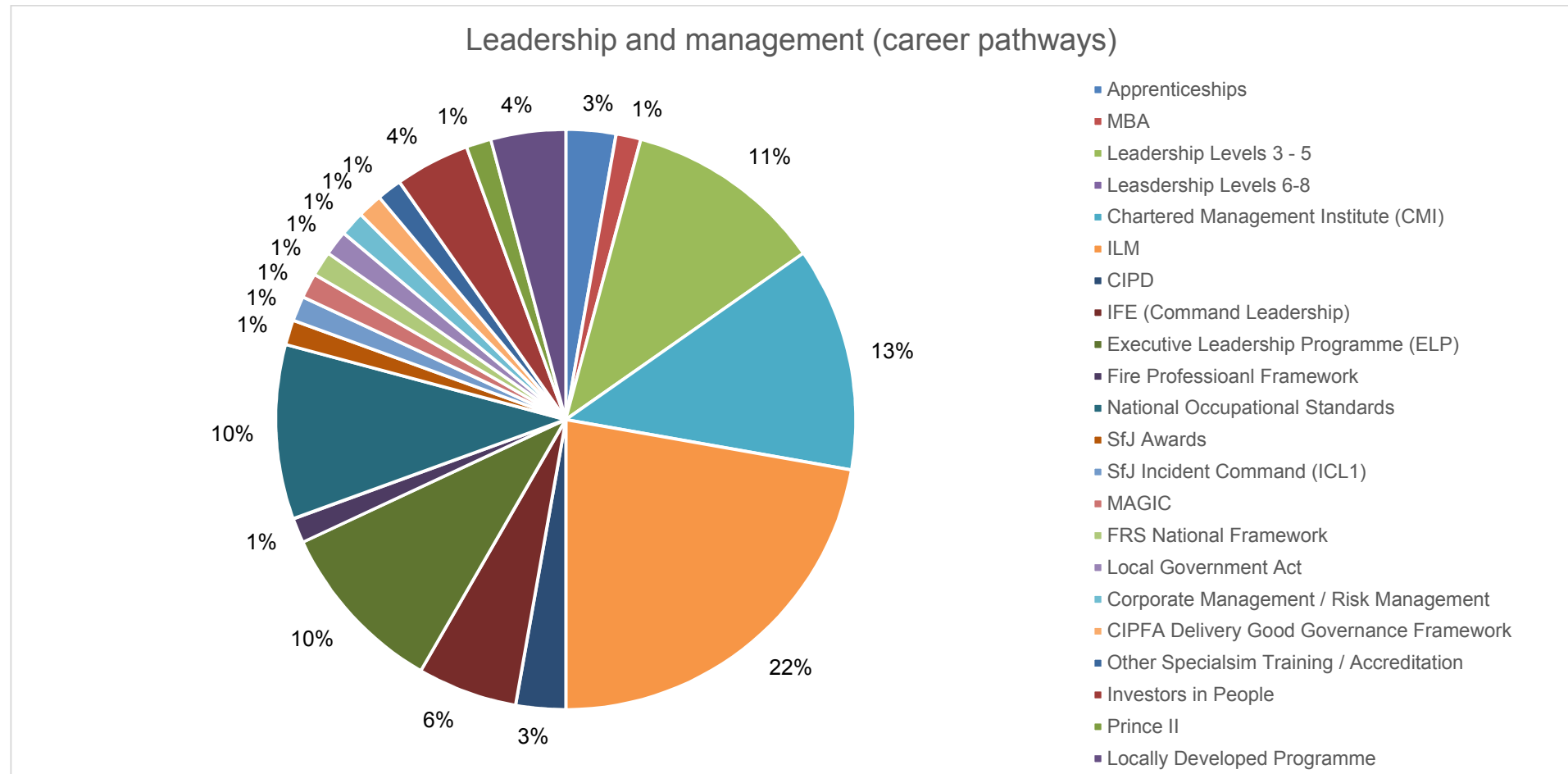
Survey Responses (Numbers of services per business area)



1. Leadership and Workforce Development

1.1. What exists already?

The chart below shows the range of approaches taken to **developing leaders within the fire and rescue service** currently.



1.2. Leadership and Management Models

In considering leadership and management of the workforce, it is essential to stress the subtle but important difference between the **incident command leadership model** and **organisational leadership model**.

Incident command leadership is very much based on hierarchy and structured tiers of command with specific duties and responsibilities at each level as outlined in the current Incident Command Guidance. This is the core of the command culture of fire and rescue and **works extremely well on the incident ground** where a single commander will issue commands to others to follow based on informed dynamic risk assessed information and many other things.

There are defined role maps based around National Occupational Standards (NOS) which provide the knowledge and understanding required at the various different operational ranks but these are closely aligned to incident command leadership rather than organisational leadership requirements.

In the past the incident command leadership model has been the basis on which services develop leaders for fire and rescue services as organisations. However, there is a growing realisation that whilst some of the skills and attributes used in the incident command model are transferable, those required for successfully leading an organisation are subtly different, less autocratic and require a level of diversity in thought processes and knowledge.

There is much evidence and common thinking about effective **organisational leadership models**. The data suggests that many services have recognised this and have aligned their local programmes to leadership models which are widely recognised and used across many sectors. The primary examples are models promoted by both the [Chartered Management Institute](#) (CMI) and [Institute of Leadership & Management](#) (ILM).

In addition, the data shows that some services make use of the Executive Leadership Programme (ELP) which is fire specific, but other services follow alternative routes to develop leadership talent and skills. Some link to the non-fire specific nationally recognised leadership levels and behaviours - some do not. Some services support their staff attaining specific qualifications or accreditations and some do not.

1.3. Apprenticeships, career progression and continued professional development (CPD)

In 2016, the Government withdrew a number of existing apprenticeship frameworks following feedback from many sectors that they were not delivering the required outcomes from apprentices. Work on new trailblazer apprenticeship standards is underway with a national strategy being developed as part of the NFCC People Programme. The operational firefighter apprenticeship standard is now approved for use and is seen by Government as a flagship apprenticeship that it expects the sector embrace and use.

There are plans to develop further apprenticeships, but this work is ongoing. This, and the opportunity for the sector to become responsible for its own National Occupational Standards, presents an opportunity for the sector.

Under the NCC People programme there is work underway to review career pathways and link them to some of the apprenticeship standards and other national guidance as training modules. This would create a more consistent approach, ensure the NOS are fit for purpose and address them if not. This would make it easier for staff to move between services with recognised skills, knowledge and experience.

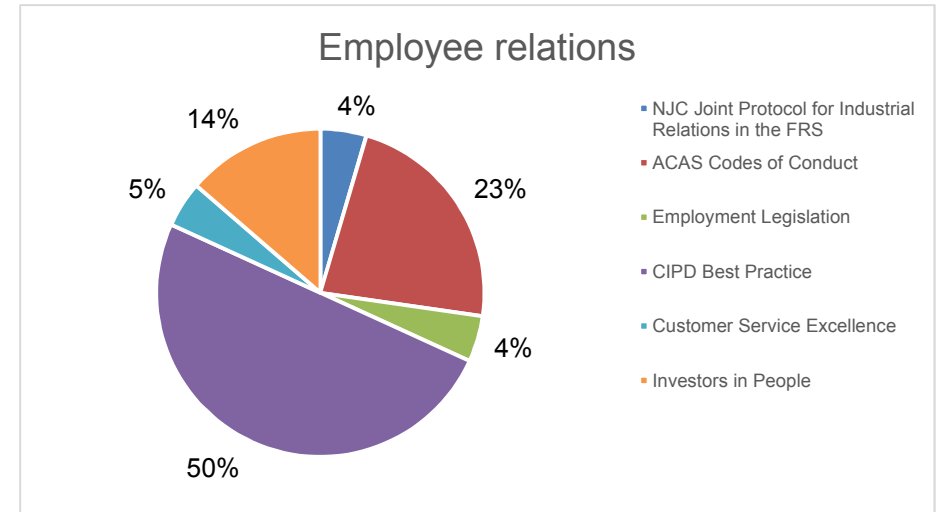
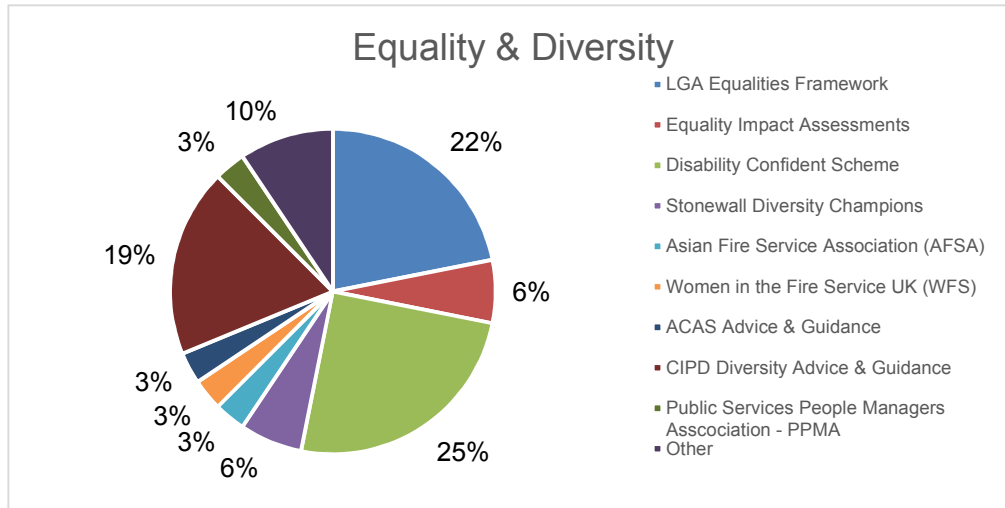
The Board could have a role in approving changes to NOS in future pending confirmation from the Department of Education.

In the survey responses, many services suggested that Continued Professional Development (CPD) was also key to developing leaders. However, it is important to draw the distinction between **self-driven CPD** (where individuals take responsibility for expanding their knowledge and skills via research, training or development programmes to support their aspirations to become leaders) and **maintenance of competence** (where individuals are measured against a defined set of skills and requirements to demonstrate a level of competence).

The latter is something that the majority of services have well developed and practiced arrangements for although there is probably room for improvement in the way that services carry out maintenance of competence.

1.4. Equality & Diversity and Employee Relations

The following charts provide an overview of the various frameworks and accreditations that fire and rescue services currently align to in relation to equality & diversity and employee relations.



The data shows that services currently align to recognised best practice and guidance produced either specifically for them (NJC Joint Protocol), produced by recognised specialist organisations or driven by national initiatives (Disability Confident Scheme and Stonewall in relation to E&D and ACAS and CIPD in relation to employee and industrial relations).

1.5. NFCC People Strategy & Programme

The issues with leadership, management and career pathways as well as with workforce diversity have been identified by the NFCC and plans to address them are part of the People Programme. However, the NFCC have made clear that qualifications and accreditations alone will not develop successful leaders. A defined leadership framework aligned to recognised leadership attributes and behaviours along with defined CPD is key in identifying talent and developing good leaders for the future.

The NFCC People Programme has completed work on a Leadership Framework identifying behaviours across all levels of management.

This seeks to address the issue of the existing Personal Qualities and Attributes (PQA's)² that many services still currently follow but that are known to have lost currency so again, there is not consistent use of them. Importantly this approach will recognise the difference between what is expected of our leaders at differing levels including their skills, knowledge, understanding and behaviours but will allow local flexibility in how services ensure their staff achieve those expectations.

There is also a number of other workforce related projects aimed at addressing the workforce reforms required including Apprenticeships, On-Call, Blended Learning and Health and Wellbeing.

1.6. Gaps & Priorities

The primary observation from the data is the **broad range of approaches taken** in the area of leadership, management and workforce development.

There is currently nothing established within the fire and rescue service nationally to support services in adopting specific organisational leadership models or providing career pathways for leaders beyond the traditional uniformed rank structure which is defined by the current role maps overseen by the National Joint Council (NJC).

A priority in the emerging leadership and any CPD framework would be to clarify the difference between maintenance of competence (more closely aligned to operational effectiveness and assurance) versus true CPD and how we record and share that.

² Details about the existing PQA's can be found [here](#)

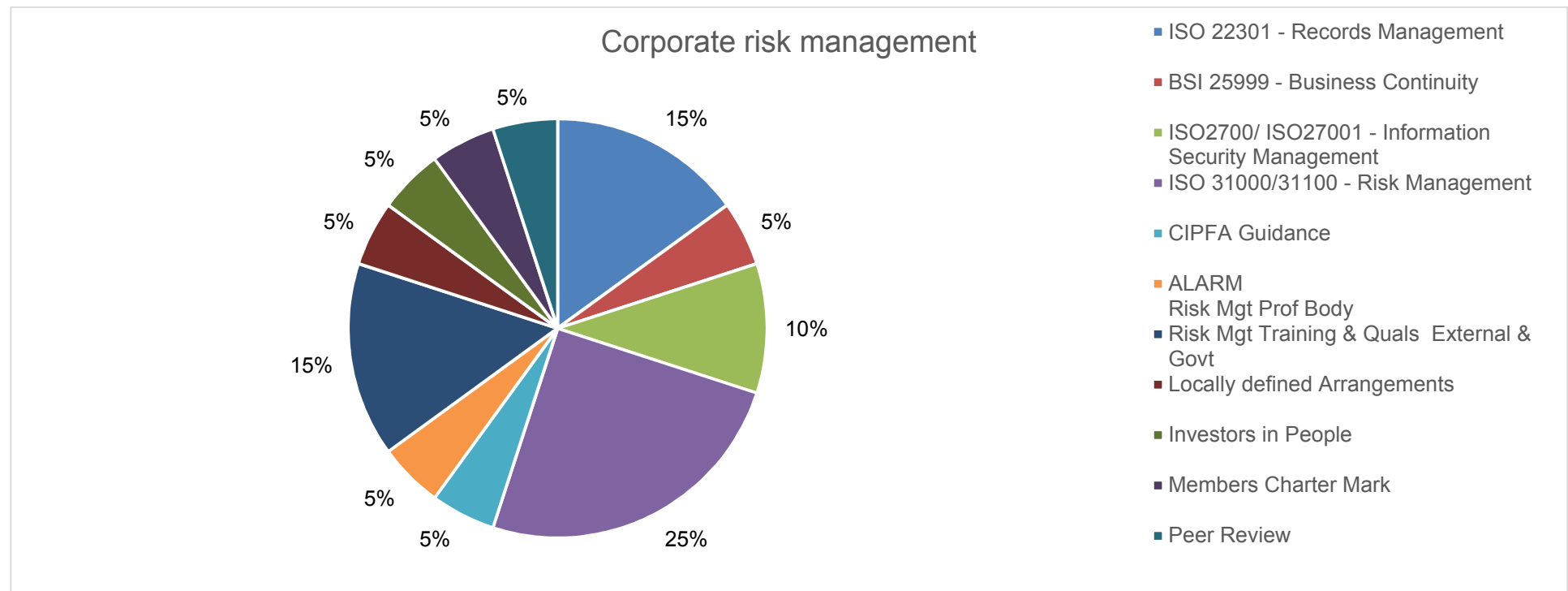
2. Strategic deployment of fire and rescue service resources based on risk

2.1. What exists already

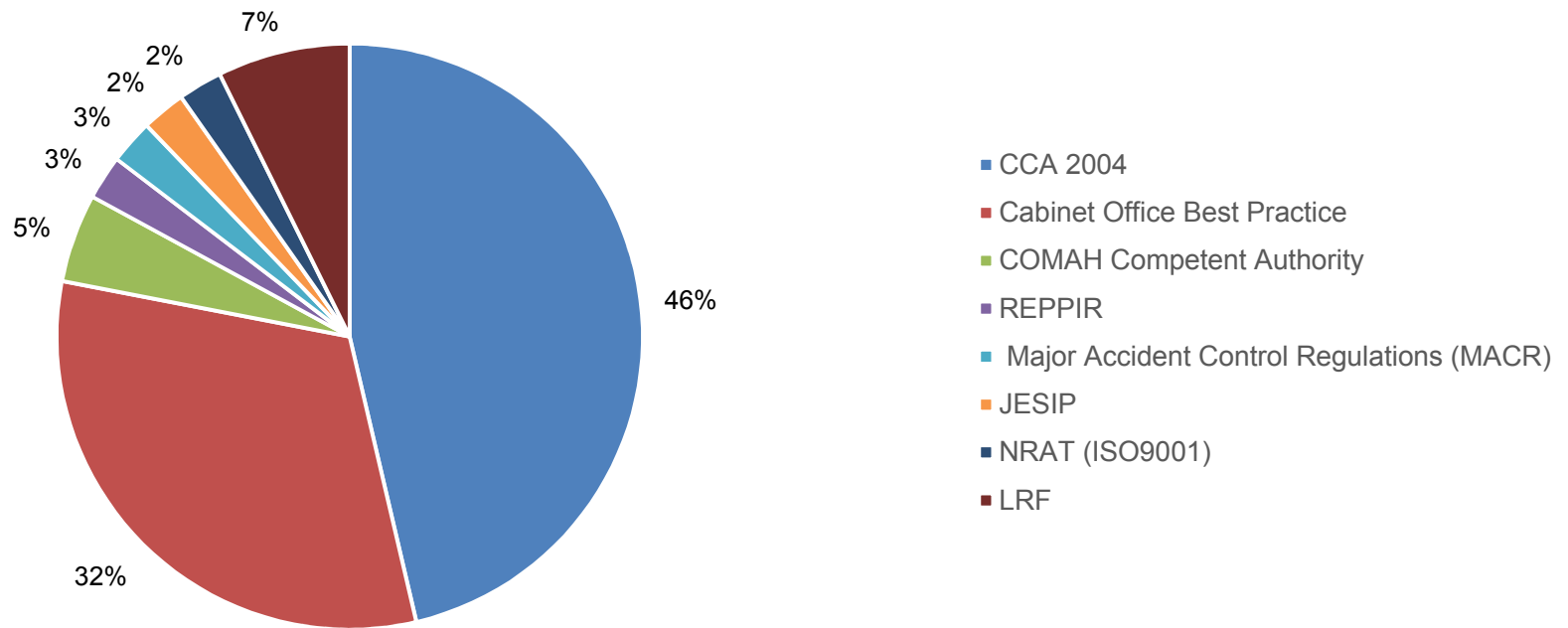
This relates to community risk assessment and ensuring services have the appropriate resources and capabilities to deploy. Areas such as strategic planning and risk management, emergency and crisis management as well as community risk are all functions that contribute to the strategic deployment of service resources.

2.2. Community risk assessment, emergency planning and management

In relation to community and corporate risk assessment, the charts below again show a broad range of standards in use or referenced.



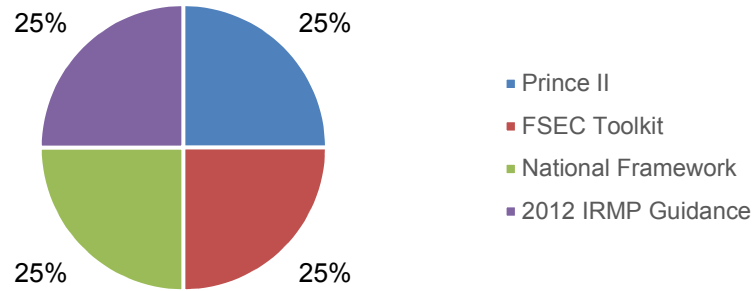
Emergency & crisis management, civil protection and community risk



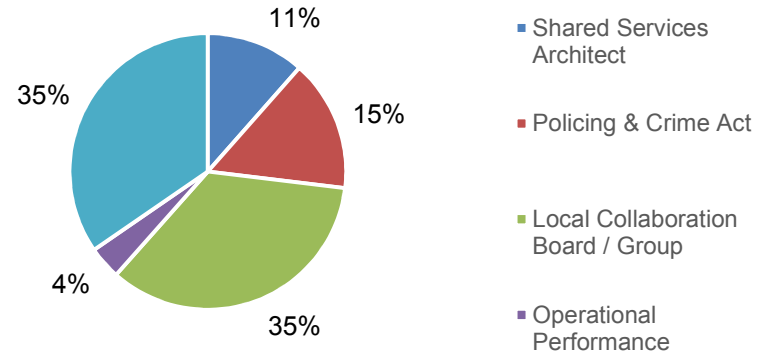
As you would expect, many services align to legislation where it exists such as the Civil Contingencies Act and supporting guidance from the Cabinet Office and the National Fire Framework. In other areas such as risk management and information management services reference a number of nationally and internationally recognised BSI or ISO standards.

For those functions that support corporate and strategic planning, the charts below demonstrate there are fewer standards or national guidance referenced, especially in relation to preparation of Integrated Risk Management Planning (IRMP) or equivalents used in Devolved Administrations.

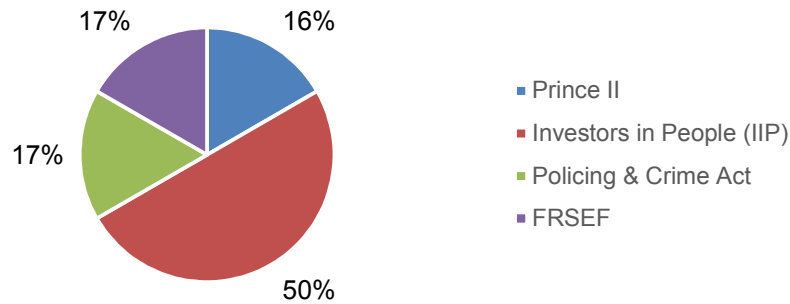
IRMP



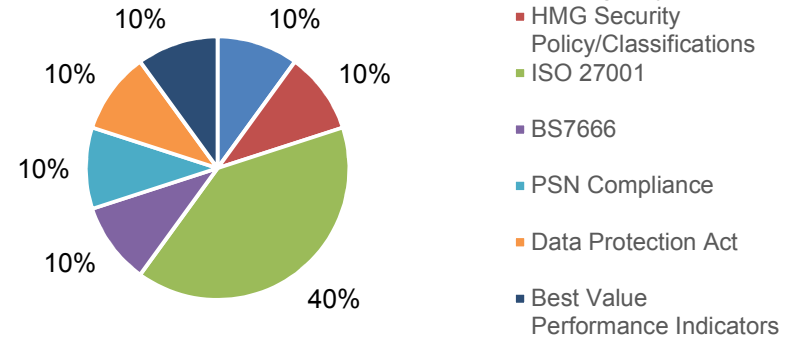
Collaboration



Strategic planning & organisational change



Information management & business intelligence



2.3. NFCC Community Risk Programme

The work underway through the NFCC Community Risk programme aims to complete research into current IRMP practices. The results of that research will shape next steps but the intention is to develop guidance based on best practice in relation to community risk assessment and the formulation of plans³ to address them (in England the Integrated Risk Management Plan or IRMP, equivalents are used in the Devolved Administrations).

Through this work we envisage we will be able to generate a professional standard specific to fire and rescue services around successful IRMP practices.

2.4. Gaps and Priorities

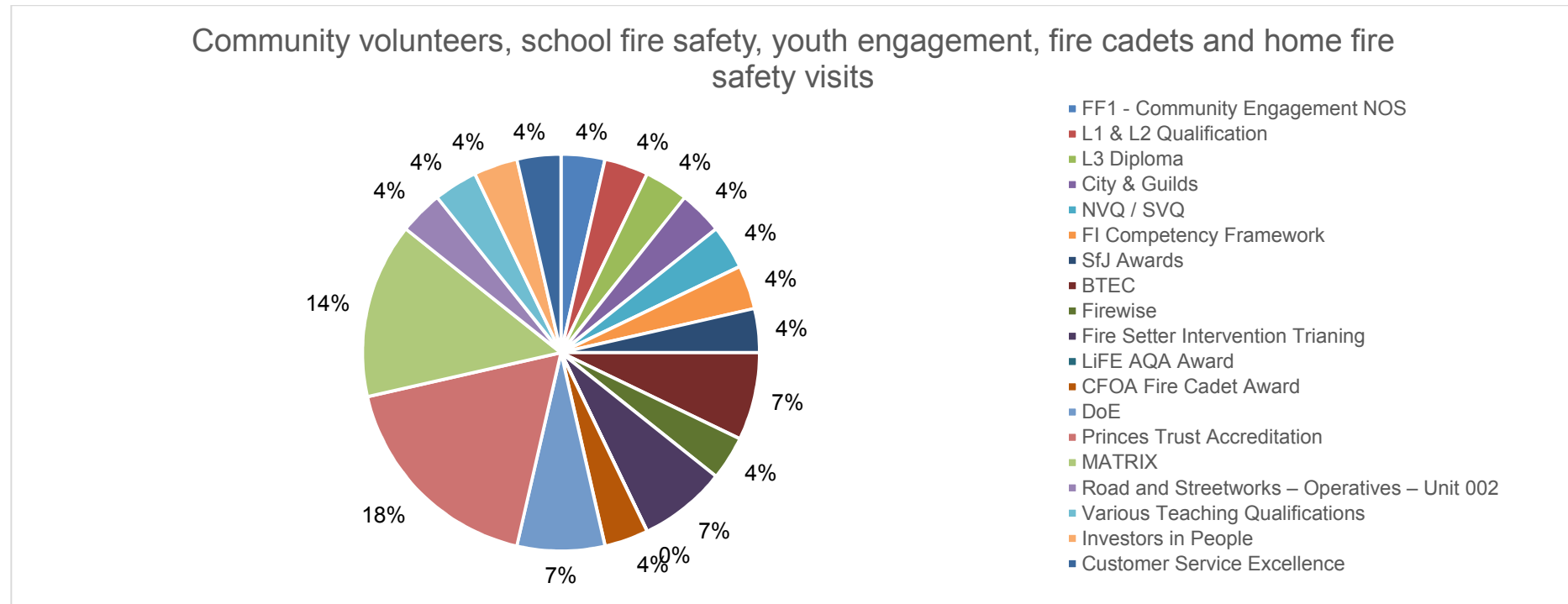
There is clear evidence that providing some guidance and minimal expectations for services as they prepare their IRMP's or equivalents would help reduce the variations in approaches taken, clarify core definitions and allow improved comparability across the country. However, it will be important these guidelines are flexible enough to allow for varying local needs and budgets.

³ Integrated Risk Management Plans (IRMPs) in England or their equivalents used in the Devolved Administrations

3. Prevention of fires and other emergencies

3.1. What exists already?

The charts in this section cover the functions that contribute to the prevention activities across all fire and rescue services. Primarily this is focused on community engagement from the provision of home fire safety visits and work with vulnerable communities through to fire cadets, children and young people and work on road safety.

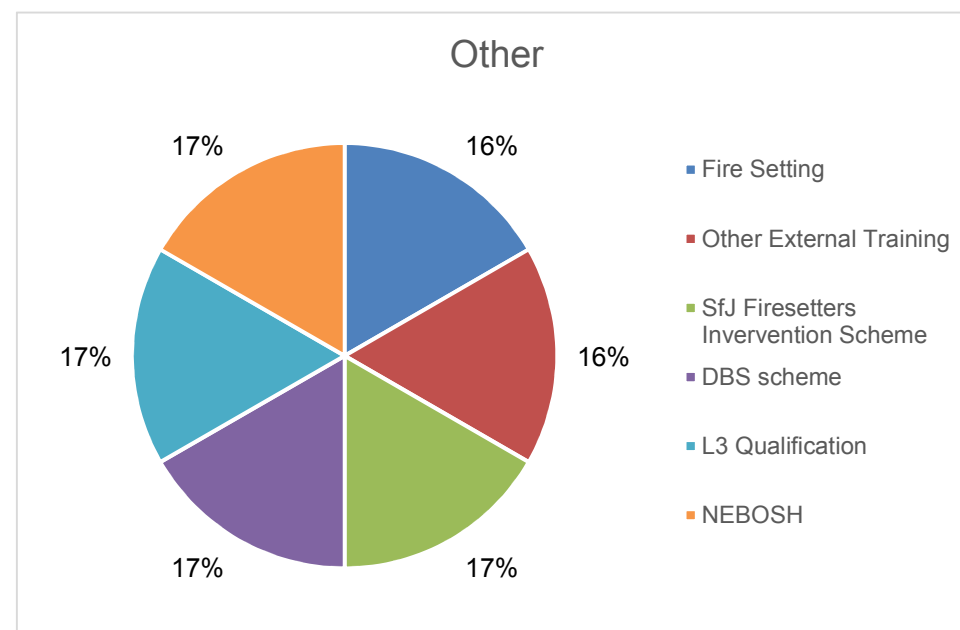
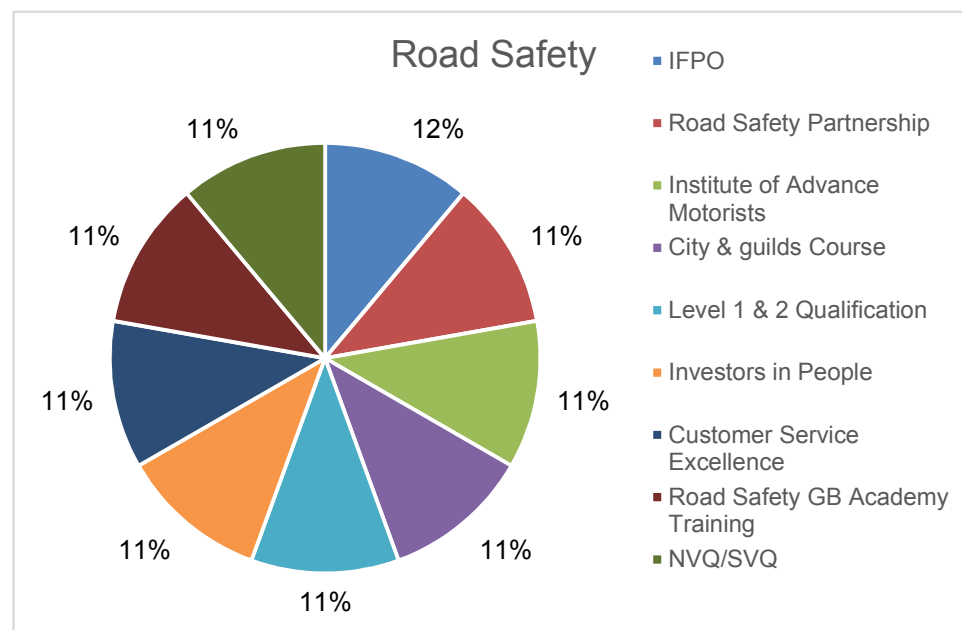


The range of community engagement related standards and accreditations is currently quite broad. This inconsistency makes assurance of the effectiveness of each one and comparison between them, difficult. Before definitive decisions may be taken on professional standards for community engagement activity further, more detailed research would be required.

There were no specific returns in relation to standards for home fire safety visits which indicates all services have developed a locally led approach potentially building again on local need and collaboration with other agencies and on the duty placed on services some years ago to ensure all homes had a working smoke detector.

3.2. Road Safety & Other Prevention Activity

With regards to prevention activities relating to road safety and other areas such as tackling arson, Princes Trust accredited programmes and other youth engagement awards, there is evidence from the survey data of a more defined range of legislation, standards, guidance and qualifications referenced. Again, differing governance models will impact on what is delivered locally with provision for such things as safeguarding training primarily provided through local authorities.



3.3. Safeguarding

There is strong evidence that all services have a provision for providing appropriate safeguarding training in line with both legislative requirements and standards. In addition, there appears to be alignment to safeguarding policies and procedures and many services are members of local authority safeguarding boards.

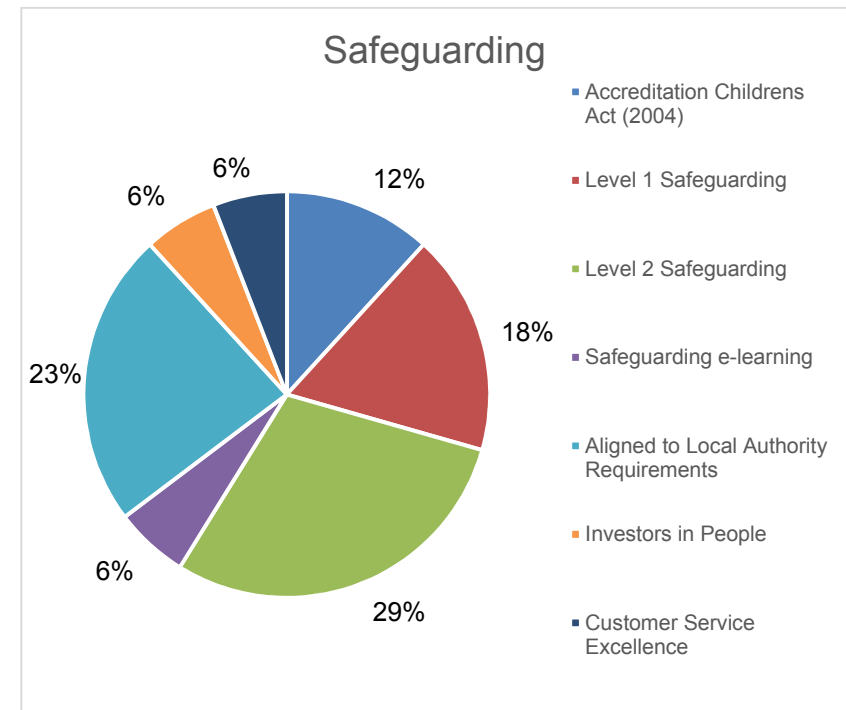
There is evidence of services following locally developed policies and training in line with the relevant legal frameworks and duties on public sector bodies. This activity frequently appears to be linked to partner organisations or local authorities showing existing collaborations or partnership working.

An example of this includes the provision of the DBS scheme. There is evidence of alignment to some broader accreditations such as Investors in People and Customer Service Excellence however, there is no supporting evidence at this time to gauge the value and effectiveness of organisations gaining these accreditations.

There is work in progress through the NFCC Children & Young People Programme related to Safeguarding.

3.4. Gaps & Priorities

It has already been identified that services could do more to evaluate their activities to ensure they are delivering the intended benefits, this applies in Prevention and Protection areas.



4. Protection of people and property from fires and other emergencies

4.1. What exists already?

The charts in this section focus on inspection and enforcement of the Fire Safety Order, fire investigation (investigation of an incident scene in conjunction with police investigators and forensics officers) and other fire safety activities. It is important to note that there are findings following the Grenfell Towers incident that may impact on this aspect of fire and rescue services policies and ways of working. Following the Hackitt review the NFCC is already leading work to respond to the reviews findings.

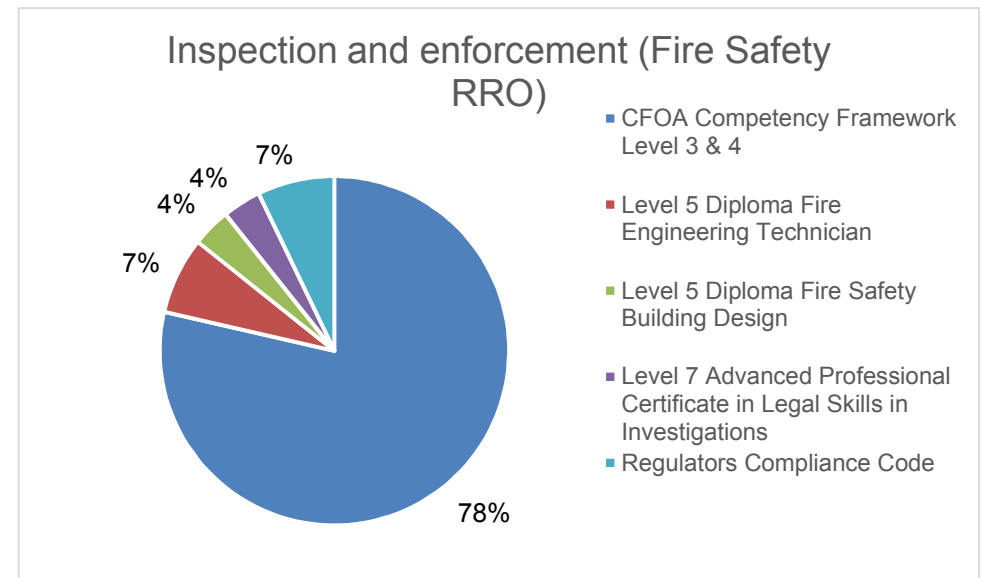
In the area of fire protection or fire safety, there is evidence of a range of qualifications and training aligned to the fire safety and fire investigation NOS.

4.2. Inspection and Enforcement (Fire Safety)

This area has seen some central coordination of guidance, most recently the release of the [CFOA Competency Framework for Business Fire Safety Regulators](#). This has brought together all relevant information and expectations including skills, knowledge and understanding for those with roles involved in the enforcement of the Fire Safety RRO.

There is strong evidence as is evidenced in the chart to the right, that this centrally produced guidance and competency framework is well supported and used by services.

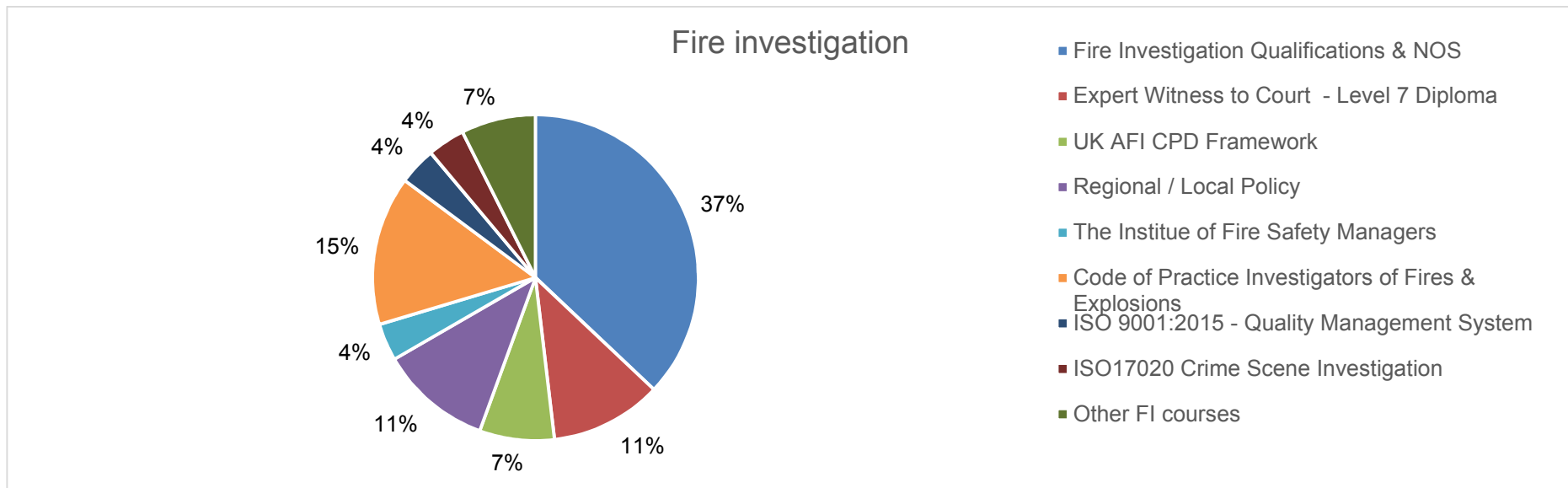
There is evidence of services providing staff the opportunity to expand their knowledge in other areas such as legal training as well a number of other courses or specialisms



4.3. Fire Investigation

Again, there are well established qualifications linked to NOS for fire investigation as shown in the chart below. Recently the CFOA Competency Framework for Fire Scene Investigators has been launched which was jointly endorsed by CFOA, the Institution of Fire Engineers (IFE) and the United Kingdom Association of Fire Investigators (UK AFI). It links to a UK AFI Code of Practice. However, it has not been available for services to embed for the same length of time as the Competency Framework for Fire Safety.

The charts show firstly the organisational standards and guidance aligned to in this area but also the standards, qualifications or accreditations for individuals from practitioner through to strategic levels of staff.

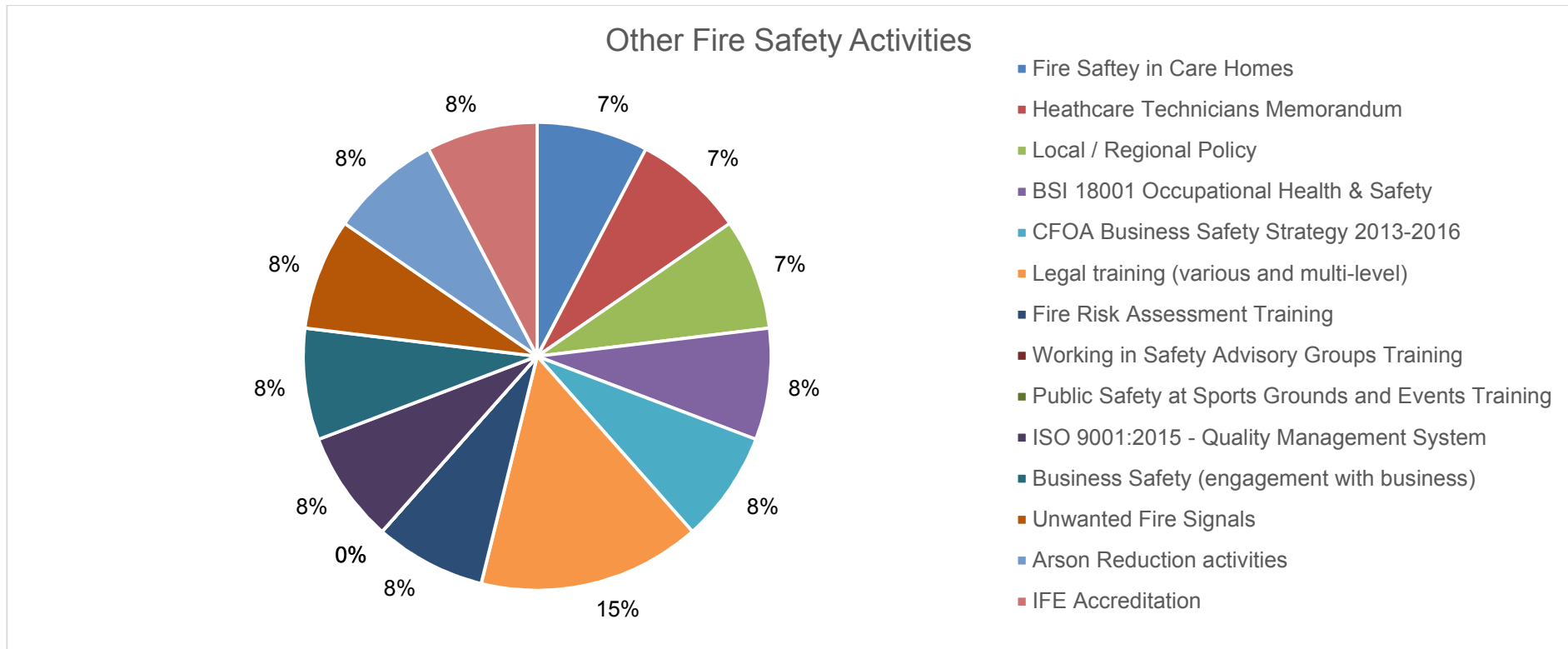


Fire Safety Qualifications and Accreditations



4.4. Other Fire Safety Activity

The chart below shows the broad range of other fire safety related areas that fire and rescue services are involved with linked to their duty to enforce the fire safety order. This includes care homes, public arenas and sports facilities as well as issues with unwanted fire signals from business premises and working with businesses to better comply with fire safety legislation.



In the area of Fire Protection particularly, it is evident that where there is guidance or a framework developed through the sector and nationally recognised, the majority of services will follow that guidance or are working towards it.

4.5. Gaps and priorities

Following the fire at Grenfell Tower in June 2017, recommendations from the Hackitt review and the findings from the full inquiry when it finishes, a requirement to change some working practices in fire protection is predictable. From Hackitt Review, fire safety competence and training are key areas that have been highlighted for review.

Whilst the fire protection area appears to be well provisioned with NOS and qualifications, it would appear there is likely to be requirements for standards that:

- Support the enforcement of the fire safety order.
- Improve the quality of fire investigation.
- Provide a qualifications and competency structure for enforcement officers.

5. Response to fire and other emergencies

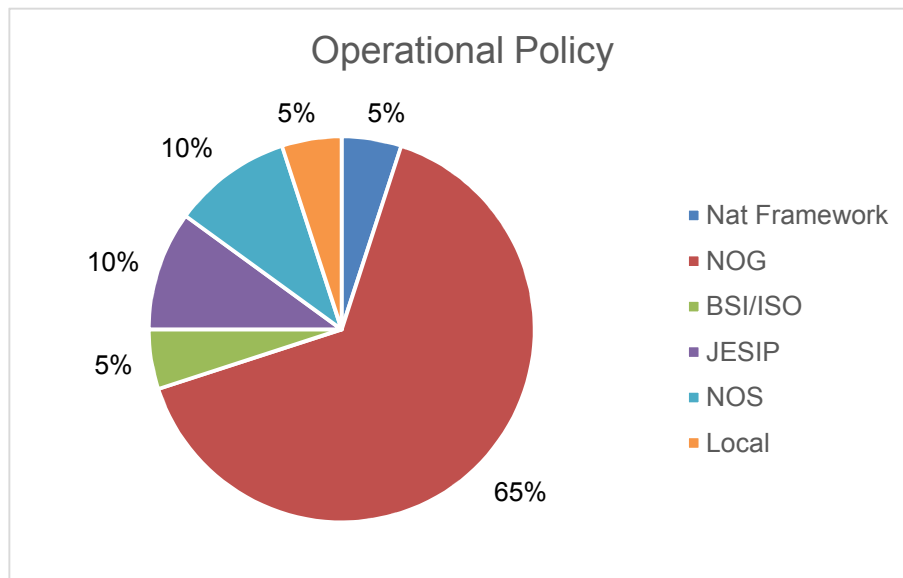
5.1. What exists already?

5.1.1. Operational Policy & Effectiveness

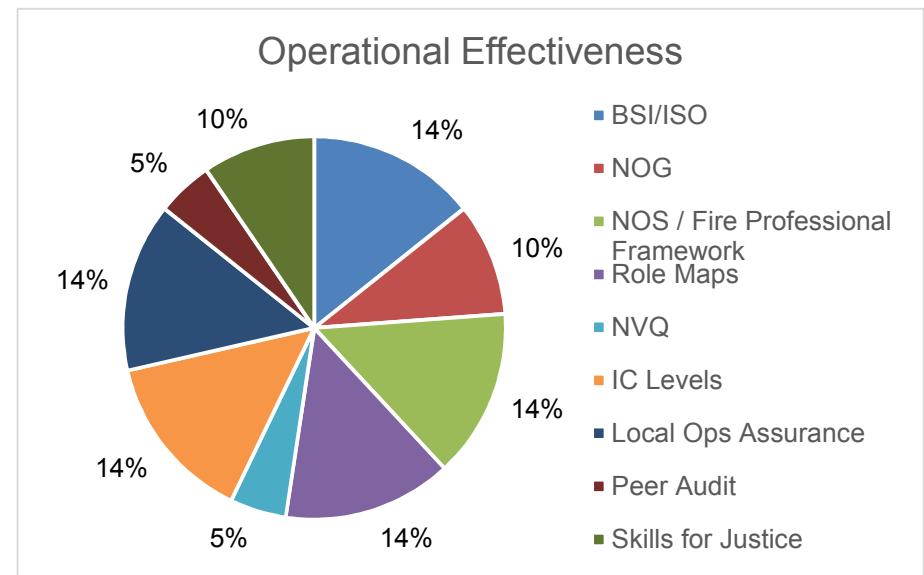
Whilst there is still some variety in the standards applied in the operational response areas, there is evidence of larger numbers of services following nationally recognised standards such as the National Operational Guidance (NOG) and the Fire Professional Framework which incorporates the role maps and NOS.

This is further evidence that where recognised national standards exist, services will follow them or work towards following them bringing about a more consistent picture and reducing duplication of developing multiple local alternatives.

The charts below show the responses in relation to operational policy (explaining what to do), operational effectiveness (checking how effective what we do is) and operational and overall assurance (the methods by which we check our effectiveness and provide assurance of competency).

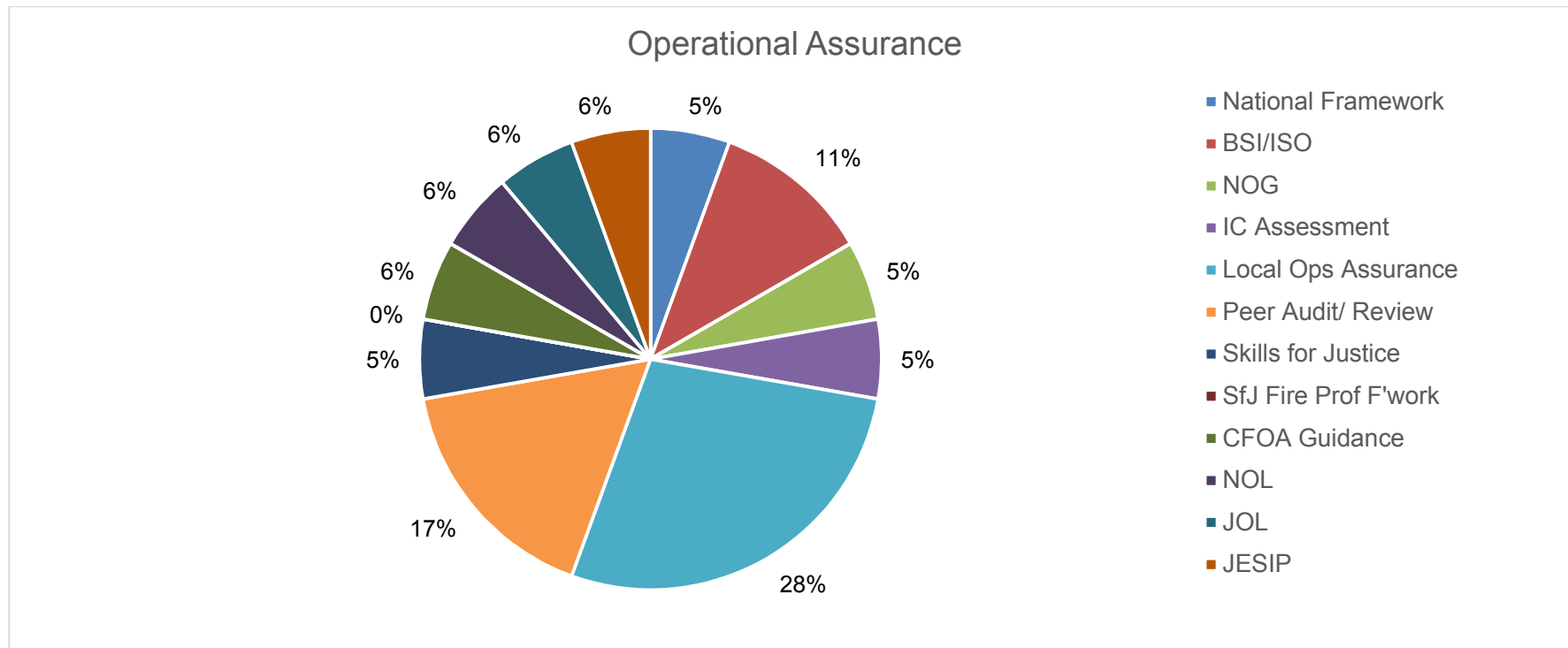


5.2.

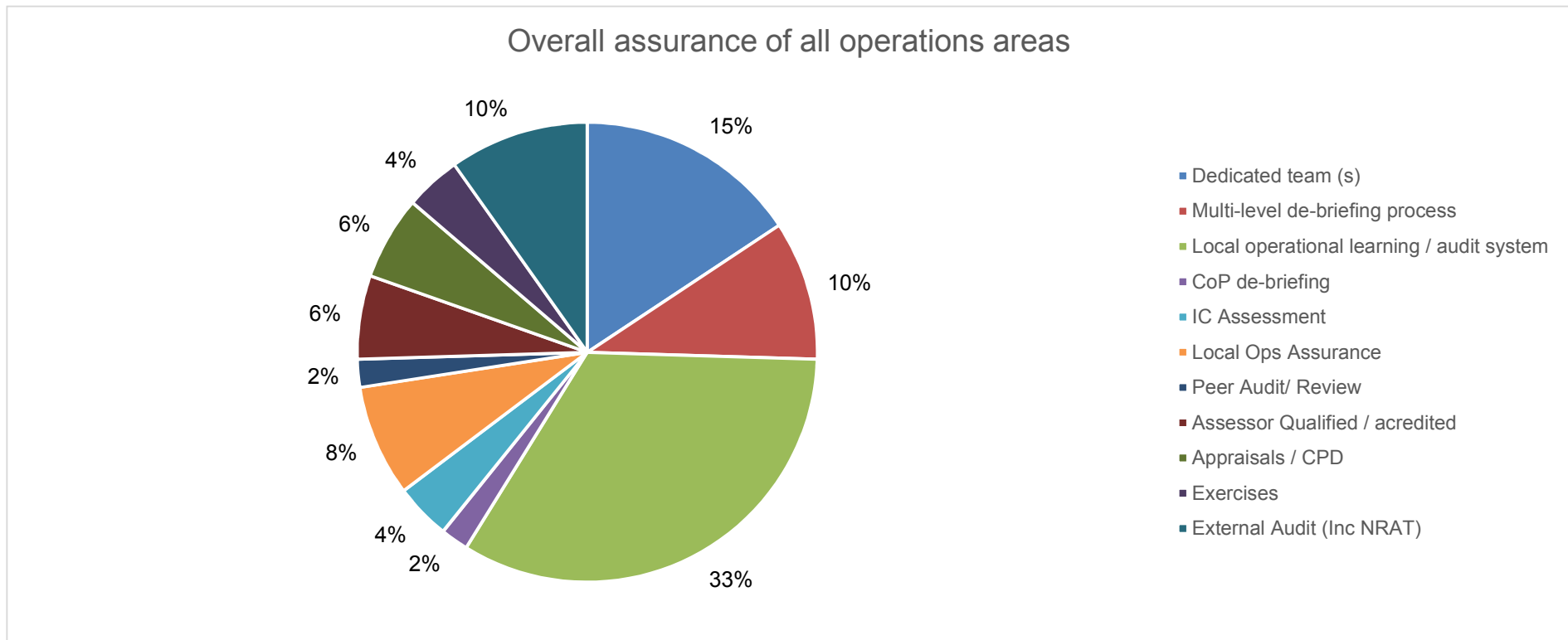


Operational Assurance

The chart below shows the range of standards and or polices, frameworks of guidance that services believe they currently assure against. With the introduction of the inspection arrangements and the inspection framework combined with the establishment of professional standards, this picture will be much clearer in future.



This chart shows the methods by which services are currently assessing their own operational competence.



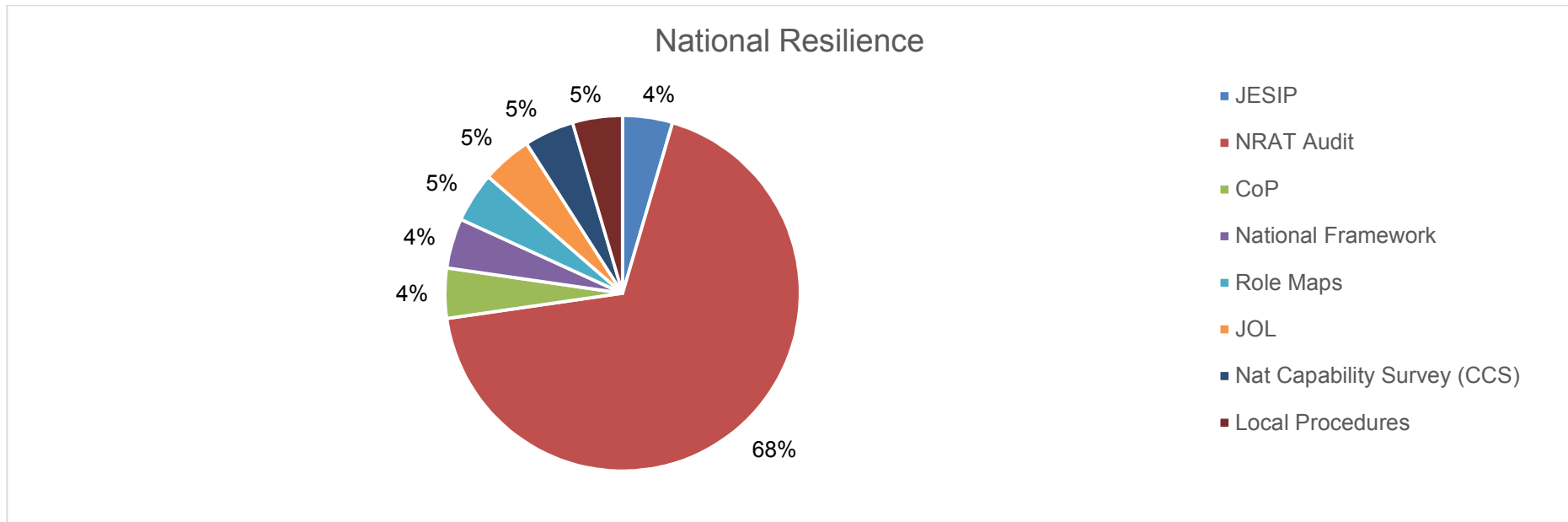
5.3. Gaps and Priorities

Whilst it is evident progress with embedding use of NOG is well underway, efforts to ensure this continues should continue. In addition, the NOG should be maintained to ensure it remains current and evolves based on learning coming from the sector and HMICFRS inspection findings.

There is scope to explore standards and guidance in the area of operational effectiveness to ensure there is consistency with regards to assurance of operational competency.

5.4. National Resilience

A number of services have national resilience assets and staff that must be trained appropriately to mobilise that capability. The national resilience arrangements are coordinated by a national team based out of Merseyside FRS. They provide the assurance of the training services deliver and ensure the relevant services remain in line with national resilience standards laid out in the National Resilience Capability Framework (NCAF).



From the data shown above, it is clearly apparent that services remain in line with the expectations laid out in the NCAF with assurance provided through the National Resilience Assurance Team (NRAT).

Appendix C – Local Resilience Forum Standards

The following page features an extract from the Cabinet Office - Local Resilience Standards published in 2018.

This provides the Board with comparative format for the proposed professional standard component parts and structure.



STRATEGIC CO-ORDINATION CENTRE (SCC): PREPARATION AND OPERATION

NATIONAL RESILIENCE STANDARD # 10

Desired Outcome
A Strategic Co-ordination Centre (SCC) that can support and sustain the effective operation of a Strategic Co-ordinating Group (SCG), through timely activation and the provision of required capabilities at an appropriate level of capacity, and with due regard to security and resilience considerations.
Summary of legal duties (mandatory requirements)
The Civil Contingencies Act (CCA) requires the establishment, preparation and effective organisation and functioning of an SCG and an SCC to support the activities within it. <i>Emergency Preparedness</i> (Chapter 1) outlines the requirements of the Act within the context of Integrated Emergency Management (IEM). <i>Emergency Response and Recovery</i> outlines principles for responding to emergencies (Chapter 4), and which provides guidance on resilient telecommunications for staff of responder agencies involved in emergency response and recovery preparations (Chapter 6).
How to achieve good practice in this area
<p>The Local Resilience Forum (LRF) should have:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) A clearly described and commonly understood process for activating an SCC at any time. b) Clearly defined and commonly understood arrangements for access, the monitoring of attendance and briefing for multi-agency partners attending the SCC. c) The facilities and capabilities required to enable multi agency working within the SCC. This should include the ability to set up a specific teams or cells (e.g. Multi-Agency Information Cell, Scientific and Technical Advisory Cell, logistics, media and recovery) and the provision of welfare facilities for sustained operations. d) Validated arrangements for IT and communications equipment access, including any systems that may be required for multi-agency partners attending the SCC. This should include the provision of secure communications for CT/CBRN and other sensitive incidents. e) Scalable capacity within the SCC to meet foreseeable and reasonable multi-agency and Government Liaison Team requirements, and facilities for multiple Category 2 responders as required. f) Established and validated procedural and technical links between the SCC and Tactical Coordinating Groups. g) Established and validated procedural and technical links between the SCC and other Command, Control and Coordination (C3) facilities, including those within central government. h) Arrangements to ensure communications interoperability between multi-agency partners, in addition to the emergency services, and other C3 levels and facilities as appropriate. i) Suitable means to support the establishment, maintenance and display of a Common Operating Picture and supporting information feeds that is accessible to all multi-agency participants at the SCC. j) The ability to convene in a fall-back location with comparable capabilities to the primary SCC. k) Validated arrangements to provide alternatives to physical attendance for some or all of those required to participate in meetings at the SCC. l) Validated measures to ensure the continuity and resilience of the SCC against reasonably foreseeable risks as identified in the CRR. m) Appropriate security procedures that balance the requirements of a multi-agency facility requiring short-notice activation with the likely sensitivities of meetings taking place there, noting potential media interest or presence on site. n) Designated a sufficiently sized, separate and equipped area to enable SECRET working if appropriate. o) A suitable, inclusive and accessible programme for multi-agency familiarisation, training and rehearsal to operate in the SCC. p) Robust arrangements for the validation of the arrangements and capabilities identified above.

STRATEGIC CO-ORDINATION CENTRE (SCC): PREPARATION AND OPERATION

NATIONAL RESILIENCE STANDARD # 10

How to achieve leading practice in this area

No indicators of leading practice have been identified in respect of this capability at the present time. This section will be updated to reflect developing practice in future versions.

Guidance and supporting documentation

Statutory and overarching multi-agency guidance and reference from Government

- [Emergency Preparedness](#) (Cabinet Office, 2011-12)
- [Emergency Response and Recovery](#) (Cabinet Office, 2013)
- [CONOPs](#) (Cabinet Office, 2013)
- [JESIP Joint Doctrine: the interoperability framework](#) (Edition 2, 2016)
- [Preparing Scotland](#) (ScoRDS, 2016)

Thematic multi-agency guidance from Government

- [A checklist for activating and operating an effective strategic co-ordinating group \(SCG\)](#) (DCLG, 2017)
- [Aide Memoire for Strategic and Recovery Co-ordinating Group Chairs participating in ministerial meetings](#) (DCLG, 2016)

Single-agency guidance from Government and professional authorities

- [College of Policing Authorised Professional Practice \(APP\) – Civil Emergencies](#) (2016)
- [UK Fire and Rescue National Operational Guidance](#) (2018)
- [NARU Command and Control Guidance](#) (2015)

Relevant competence statements from the [National Occupational Standards for Civil Contingencies](#)

- CC AA1 Work in co-operation with other organisations
- CC AA2 Share information with other organisations
- CC AA3 Manage information to support civil protection decision making
- CC AC1 Develop, maintain and evaluate emergency plans and arrangements
- CC AD1 Develop, maintain and evaluate business continuity plans and arrangements
- CC AE1 Create exercises to practice or validate emergency or business continuity arrangements
- CC AE2 Direct and facilitate exercises to practice or validate emergency or business continuity arrangements
- CC AG1 Respond to emergencies at the strategic (gold) level

Relevant British (BSI), European (CEN) and International (ISO) Standards

- [BS11200:2015 Crisis Management: Guidance and Good Practice, British Standards Institution](#)

Supporting guidance and statements of good practice from professional authorities

- [Office for Nuclear Regulation, LC-11 Emergency Arrangements](#) (2017)

Other recommended points of reference

- Version 2 of the standard will include links to local examples of good and leading practice on *ResilienceDirect*.



STRATEGIC CO-ORDINATING GROUP (SCG): PREPARATION AND ACTIVATION

NATIONAL RESILIENCE STANDARD # 11

Desired Outcome

A Strategic Co-ordinating Group (SCG) that comes together in a timely and efficient manner to: define multi-agency strategy; make informed decisions in good time; coordinate multi-agency activities; communicate and interoperate with other agencies at local and national levels; and monitor and change strategy, communications and activity as the situation evolves.

Summary of legal duties (mandatory requirements)

The Civil Contingencies Act (CCA) establishes the legislative framework, including the requirement to respond and co-operate within a multi-agency environment. *Emergency Response and Recovery* provides guidance to enable LRFs to develop a shared understanding of the multi-agency framework for emergency response and recovery at the local level, notably: Chapter 2 which outlines the principles of effective response and recovery; Chapter 3 which outlines the agencies involved in responding to and recovering from emergencies; and Chapter 4 which describes the single agency and multi-agency management tiers and the interaction between individual agencies.

How to achieve good practice in this area

A Local Resilience Forum (LRF) should have:

- a) Local multi-agency plans that clearly define the purpose, function and locations of the SCG, the Strategic Coordination Centre (SCC) and any alternative or fall-back locations.
- b) Ensured that SCG members (and their deputies) have been identified, appropriately trained, exercised and prepared for their role at a strategic level in emergency response coordination, ensuring these competences are up to date and relevant.
- c) A clearly defined and commonly understood process for notifying, activating and standing down an SCG, acknowledging the expectation that any responder organisation, including Category 2 responders, can activate an SCG.
- d) Clear and agreed expectations of an appropriately high level of decision-making authority from all representatives of organisations attending SCG meetings, recognising Category 2 responders may provide strategic liaison officers.
- e) A clearly defined and commonly understood structure and process, including escalation arrangements, for co-ordination between an SCG and a Tactical Co-ordinating Group (TCG).
- f) A clear understanding of other organisations' roles including the role of the Government Liaison Officer (GLO) and wider Government Liaison Team (GLT), and the interface with Central Government and Devolved Administration crisis response arrangements.
- g) Practical arrangements that enable the SCG to communicate and interact with Central Government or Devolved Administrations as required, including the role of the GLO in this interaction.
- h) Adopted the JESIP interoperability principles and ways of working at the strategic level.
- i) Arrangements to attain and maintain shared situational awareness (utilising JESIP principles) through the establishment of a Common Operating Picture, including the use of Resilience Direct as one of the tools for achieving this.
- j) An appropriate framework for strategic deliberation and decision making in a crisis, including appropriately trained secretariat, loggist, decision-support and specialist advisory capabilities.
- k) Clearly defined and robust arrangements for recording and logging discussions and decision making.
- l) Clearly defined and commonly understood arrangements that enable financial oversight and control during an incident.
- m) Clear expectations of Category 1 and 2 responders, as appropriate, to resource an SCG 24 hours per day during an emergency, including effective handover procedures for shift changes and flexible arrangements for those agencies who cover a wide area to engage remotely.
- n) Appropriate arrangements to provide alternatives to physical meetings for some or all members of the SCG using teleconferencing or video conferencing facilities.
- o) A comprehensive and locally contextualised communications strategy that addresses the wide range of media outlets including social media.

STRATEGIC CO-ORDINATING GROUP (SCG): PREPARATION AND ACTIVATION

NATIONAL RESILIENCE STANDARD # 11

- p) A clearly defined and commonly understood plan that enables the SCG to communicate to the public with a single voice during an incident.
- q) An appropriately inclusive programme for multi-agency training and rehearsal, and robust arrangements for the validation of arrangements.
- r) Clearly defined arrangements for debriefing SCG members following incidents and/or exercises to enable learning and continuous improvement.
- s) Clearly defined arrangements to learn from local and national incidents in order to improve local strategic co-ordination arrangements, including the adoption of JOL online as a tool to achieve this.

How to achieve leading practice in this area

An LRF may consider adoption of some or all of the following:

- a) Clearly defining arrangements for requesting mutual aid from other LRFs, the voluntary sector, the military and through the Government Liaison Officer and/or Team (GLO/GLT).
- b) Clearly defining arrangements for alerting neighbouring LRFs who may be impacted by an emergency and escalation as necessary to establish a Response Coordination Group.
- c) Clearly defining arrangements for sharing information and co-operating in response and recovery with other LRFs or SCGs, both neighbouring and non-neighbouring, who may be impacted by an emergency.

Guidance and supporting documentation

Statutory and overarching multi-agency guidance and reference from Government

- [Emergency Preparedness](#) (Cabinet Office, 2011-12)
- [Emergency Response and Recovery](#) (Cabinet Office, 2013)
- [CONOPs](#) (Cabinet Office, 2013)
- [JESIP Joint Doctrine: the interoperability framework](#) (Edition 2, 2016)
- [Preparing Scotland](#) (ScoRDS, 2016)

Thematic multi-agency guidance from Government

- [Expectations and Indicators of good practice for category 1 & 2 responders](#) (Cabinet Office, 2013)
- [The role of Local Resilience Forums: a reference document](#) (Cabinet Office, 2013)
- [A checklist for activating and operating an effective strategic co-ordinating group \(SCG\)](#) (DCLG, 2017)
- [Aide Memoire for Strategic & Recovery Co-ordinating Group Chairs participating in ministerial meetings](#) (DCLG, 2016)

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- [UK Fire and Rescue National Operational Guidance](#) (2018)
- [NARU Command and Control Guidance](#) (2015)

Relevant competence statements from the [National Occupational Standards for Civil Contingencies](#)

- CC AA1 Work in co-operation with other organisations
- CC AA2 Share information with other organisations
- CC AA3 Manage information to support civil protection decision making
- CC AE3 Conduct debriefing after an emergency, exercise or other activity
- CC AF2 Warn, inform and advise the community in the event of emergencies
- CC AG1 Respond to emergencies at the strategic (gold) level

Relevant British (BSI), European (CEN) and International (ISO) Standards

- [BS11200:2015 Crisis Management: Guidance and Good Practice, British Standards Institution](#)

Other recommended points of reference

- Version 2 of the standard will include links to local examples of good and leading practice on *ResilienceDirect*.