

Item Number	Item 3 – Paper 1
Title of Paper	HMICFRS Culture Review Action Plan – Progress Update
Decision or Information	For information and decision
Date of Meeting	9 th October 2023
Presented by	Fire Standards Team
Attachments	Appendix A – Recommendations (Extract from HMICFRS Report) Appendix B – Action Plan Progress Report Appendix C – Revised Fire Standards

Summary

In response to the recommendations directed to the Fire Standards Board in [HMICFRS' Values and Culture in Fire and Rescue Services](#), this paper summarises the actions completed for Board review and approval.

Recommendations and decisions required

The Board is asked to:

- review the action plan progress report (Appendix B);
- review and approve the revised Leadership and People Fire Standards for publication (Appendix C);
- consider and discuss the feedback received in relation to the Safeguarding Fire Standard to agree next steps; and
- agree that the progress made should be reported to HMICFRS.

Background Information

In March 2023, HMICFRS published its findings of its thematic review of culture and values within fire and rescue services in England¹. The recommendations directed towards the Board are at Appendix A.

The Fire Standards Team developed an Action Plan including the steps required to respond to the recommendations. The Board approved the Action Plan at its July meeting.

The Team, in conjunction with the NFCC, has now completed the actions listed in the Action Plan, Appendix B gives details of the work done to discharge the actions.

Fire Standards Revisions in response to the HMICFRS Culture Review

As a result of the work done, including liaison with relevant subject matter experts and through a short peer review, revisions to three Fire Standards were made in response to the HMICFRS recommendations.

The revised Fire Standards were circulated to the Board on 25th August 2023 via email with a request for any comments on the revised sections to be received before the October meeting.

Leadership and People Fire Standards

Some comments on the standards have been received close to the date Board papers were being prepared. The Chairs have reviewed the comments with the FST and agreed that many of the comments and observations on the Leadership and People Fire Standards were made on text that was not in scope for consideration for this revision.

Therefore, the proposal is for the Board to:

1. Consider approving the revisions which have been made to the Leading the Service and Leading and Developing People fire Standards in response to the HMICFRS recommendations (found in Appendix C);
2. agree for those changes to be published on the website; and
3. agree to consider other proposed revisions as part of the next review of those standards.

Safeguarding Fire Standard

Some of the comments on the Safeguarding Fire Standard are more extensive. The FST Chairs agreed in principle with some of the comments raised but confirmed that before making further changes to the text, the comments needed to be discussed with the Safeguarding subject matter experts to verify and confirm if they are appropriate.

¹ [HMICFRS - Values and culture in fire and rescue services report](#)

Some of the comments identify where wording could be adjusted to avoid any ambiguity and improve clarity. Other comments are proposing additional elements or significant changes to the wording proposed to meet the recommendations.

The changes proposed to date and highlighted in red are considered moderate changes and therefore no consultation with services is required. However, should significant changes be proposed which change the meaning or context of the standard, this may constitute a major change and therefore would require consultation with services and the time to do so, in line with the agreed FSB review processes.

The areas of the standard that have received comment have been highlighted by shaded grey text in the version shared in Appendix C. The feedback received can be described broadly as:

- challenging the wording used in some sections to improve clarity and ensure consistency.
- concerns about whether changes made sufficiently meet Recommendation 8 in relation to the ability for staff or the public to report safeguarding matters.
- concerns about the accuracy of legislation and how it has been referred to.

It is proposed that the meeting discuss the comments received and agree how to proceed and the FST will report progress back to HMICFRS.

Once the Board have approved the final revisions on all of the standards, the FST will publish the changes to the website and communicate with services and other stakeholders about the changes made.

APPENDIX A - RECOMMENDATIONS

Extract from HMICFRS Values and Culture

Recommendation 8

By 1 December 2023, the Fire Standards Board, in liaison with the National Fire Chiefs Council, should review the existing relevant standard(s) and underpinning guidance. It should:

- clearly state the requirements for background checks undertaken by services.
- clarify the minimum requirements (including levels of DBS checks) for all roles, particularly roles where staff have access to vulnerable members of the public.
- define the standards required to embed a culture across fire and rescue services that empowers all members of staff and local communities to report concerns; and
- be subject to review following any legislative change.

Recommendation 11

By 1 December 2023, the Fire Standards Board, in liaison with the National Fire Chiefs Council, should review the existing relevant standard(s) and supporting guidance to clearly state how services should handle staff disclosures, complaints and grievances.

Recommendation 13

By 1 December 2023, the Fire Standards Board, in liaison with the National Fire Chiefs Council, should review the existing relevant standard(s) and supporting guidance to clearly state how services should handle misconduct and safeguarding-related allegations and outcomes². These should include requirements to:

- conduct and complete investigations, whether the staff member under investigation leaves.
- consider whether the incident requires immediate dismissal.
- provide training for staff who are carrying out investigations; and ensure the diversity/neutrality of the investigation panel/person.

² Confirmation received from HMICFRS that this recommendation relates to all types of misconduct cases, not just safeguarding related matters.

APPENDIX B - ACTION PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

Recommendation	Affected Fire Standards	Actions Agreed	Actions Completed
8 (Background checks)	Safeguarding And Leading the Service	Review of wording of <i>outcome</i> and <i>how to achieve</i> sections of standards following NFCC guidance completion and passage of relevant legislation.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Links to the new Safeguarding legislation on the affected Fire Standards have been updated on the website. 2. Links to the newly developed supporting guidance for services about Safeguarding, which addresses many of the aspects of the recommendations, have been added to the relevant Fire Standards on the website.
11 (Staff disclosures, complaints and grievances)	Leading and Developing People And Leading the Service	<p>Review wording of <i>outcome</i> and <i>how to achieve</i> sections of standards in relation to managing staff disclosures, complaints, and grievances.</p> <p>Clarify existing guidance available and linked to standards.</p> <p>Liaise with NFCC and going forward monitor progress of any new guidance as and when developed to ensure links to standard(s) are made.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Reviews of the wording of the affected Fire Standards have been completed following the FSB exceptional review process. The following Fire Standards have been revised (found in Appendix C) and are presented for Boards's review and approval: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Leading the Service ▪ Leading and Developing People ▪ Safeguarding (subject to recently received queries to be checked with SMEs)
13 (misconduct and safeguarding-related)	Leading and Developing People	Clarify wording of recommendation with HMICFRS in relation to the term misconduct.	Wording clarified with HMICFRS, confirmation that the recommendation applied to all types of misconduct allegations.

Recommendation	Affected Fire Standards	Actions Agreed	Actions Completed
allegations and outcomes)	And Leading the Service And Safeguarding	Review the wording of the standards to ensure they contain appropriate wording associated with responsibilities for managing disciplinary cases (both the process and the responsibility for management).	All other actions as per Recommendations 8 and 11 above.

APPENDIX C – REVISED FIRE STANDARDS

The following pages contain the revisions to the affected Fire Standards:

- Leading the Service
- Leading and Developing People
- Safeguarding

Revisions are shown in **red text**.

Title of Fire Standard (working title)	Leading the Service
Business Area/Capability	People, Culture and Leadership
Desired Outcome	
<p>A fire and rescue service where everyone works together to keep people safe, protecting life and property and delivering excellence to its community. Its community has confidence and trust in the service to prepare for and respond to emergencies. Its senior leaders set a compelling vision for their service and translate that vision into a comprehensive delivery plan, understood by all. They lead by example and create a diverse workforce with a culture which supports the health and wellbeing of their people. They empower, enable and inspire them to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) put public safety at the core of their work; b) understand and commit to delivering the vision; c) contribute to an inclusive and positive culture because they behave ethically and are motivated and engaged; d) operate with agility and foresight so that they can act on learning, new challenges, emerging risks and changing community needs; e) continually improve the service it provides both locally and nationally because of the listening and learning culture; f) communicate openly and engage effectively to build trust and to form and maintain positive relationships; and g) uphold the reputation of the service. <p>Leaders at all levels of the service are skilled, capable and understand their responsibilities and accountabilities. They are supportive and role model positive and ethical behaviours. They make sure everyone who works for and on behalf of the service, understands their role and what is expected of them. Leaders prioritise safeguarding to reduce the risk of abuse, harm and neglect in their community and service.</p> <p>Effective leadership of the service is integral to local, regional and national resilience. Leaders create an environment where their people collaborate with partners and agencies, enabling the service to prepare and respond in line with its civil contingencies duties, both cross-border and nationally.</p> <p>Leaders ensure the service is resilient and financially viable, is environmentally aware, and delivers excellence and value for money. The service has a sustainable and diverse workforce with the capacity to respond to the risks faced by its community. Leaders and their people have the resources, information and technology they need to fulfil their roles. They use accurate and appropriate data to inform thinking and decision making.</p>	

The service is considered an employer of choice, where leaders encourage and embrace diversity. It actively demonstrates its approach to inclusivity because leaders ensure the service provides equal access and opportunities for all. **Leaders and their people listen to, act on, and learn from feedback, positive or negative, whether it comes from their community, stakeholders or from within the service.**

Leaders ensure that their service undertakes assurance so that it is compliant with legislative and statutory requirements and achieves industry, professional and Fire Standards. The service proactively monitors its performance, and it is well governed because of the trusted interface between its leaders and its governing body.

To achieve this Fire Standard

A fire and rescue service **must**:

- 1) make clear the vision and strategic objectives for the service, which are available to and understood by all.
- 2) evaluate and continually improve what they do and how they do it for the benefit of the public and the service by:
 - a. looking forward, enabling it to identify emerging opportunities, challenges, risks and developments;
 - b. exploring opportunities to evolve and improve ways of working through innovative thinking and action;
 - c. coordinating their organisational development through integrating their functional improvement and change action plans to inform strategic planning; and
 - d. maximising opportunities to learn and innovate either from within or through collaboration with others.
- 3) carry out strategic planning activities so that it:
 - a. understands its local risk profile and considers and puts in place appropriate mitigations to be able to respond to:
 - i. the risks faced by, and incidents in, its local community; and
 - ii. local, regional and national scale emergencies, working as a single service or collaboratively with partners or as part of a multi-agency response.
 - b. undertakes robust workforce planning to:
 - i. understand its capabilities so that it can deploy its resources effectively;
 - ii. identify and manage potential and talent; and
 - iii. attract and maintain a competent and diverse workforce.
 - c. remains financially viable, sustainable and delivers value for money for its community;
 - d. identifies, understands and manages its corporate risks;
 - e. can understand its environmental impacts and put actions in place to reduce or mitigate them, or both;
 - f. has appropriate business continuity plans in place so that it is resilient and able to function during times of disruption;
 - g. maintains adequate technology to support the service;

- h. identifies and collects the right data to support effective and informed decision making, in a timely manner; and
 - i. supports good governance, assigning clear responsibilities, roles and accountabilities and provides assurance about its organisational performance.
- 4) have a strategic approach to communication, engagement and consultation which includes clear principles about how the organisation will communicate with its audiences, linked to the values of the service and the Code of Ethics Fire Standard.
- 5) put robust and transparent controls and processes in place so that it can effectively monitor and manage:
- a. finances,
 - b. commercial activities and procurement**
 - c. corporate risks
 - d. resources and capability;
 - e. organisational performance;
 - f. compliance with legislation and statutory responsibilities;
 - g. communication, engagement and consultation;
 - h. talent management, organisational development, and change; and
 - i. disciplinaries, grievances, complaints, staff disclosures and whistle blowing;**
- 6) have provision for accessing legal and other specialist advice to inform the day-to-day operation of the service.
- 7) have leaders at all levels that:
- a. are accountable for the success of their service in:
 - i. delivering its vision and strategic objectives;
 - ii. complying with legislation, statutory requirements and industry standards;
 - iii. aligning their service to the Fire Standards and any other relevant professional standards; and
 - iv. upholding and enhancing the high reputation of the service in all they do.
 - b. are politically aware, open to scrutiny and understand both the national and local challenges facing their service and others;
 - c. are open-minded, open to learning and actively monitor the environment they operate in to enable them to work with agility and foresight;
 - d. embody, role model and actively promote:
 - i. an environment that creates and maintains trust throughout the service;
 - ii. the leadership behaviours set out in the NFCC Leadership Framework; and
 - iii. the ethical behaviours set out in the Core Code of Ethics.
 - e. relate to others effectively and constructively because of their emotional intelligence;
 - f. demonstrate and encourage in others excellent communication skills, welcoming feedback from all;
 - g. use their effective influencing skills to develop and maintain positive and constructive relationships with:
 - i. staff representative bodies to develop and foster a positive industrial relations climate that builds trust and facilitates change; and

- ii. partners and stakeholders to deliver excellence to the community.
 - h. are technologically and data literate, who understand the importance of data and how to interpret it to support their planning and decision making
- 8) have a defined approach to organisational learning so that the service continually evaluates its own performance to improve its internal ways of working and the service it provides to the public.
 - 9) provide comprehensive, accurate and data driven reporting.

A fire and rescue service **should**:

- 10) consider its approach to organisational learning by:
 - a. continuously evaluating its performance to ensure it remains efficient, effective and compliant with legislation and standards;
 - b. identifying, capturing, evaluating and sharing learning which could benefit itself and others, engaging with national learning arrangements, where they exist;
 - c. have in place or access to mechanisms which enable feedback from the community to be captured and responded to;
 - d. have in place or access to mechanisms which enable feedback from employees to be captured and responded to; and
 - e. using identified learning to tailor and improve what it delivers to the community.
- 11) recognise when it may need support and draw on the appropriate networks, national guidance and tools to support its own organisational development.
- 12) maximise opportunities gained from supporting the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) network by sharing learning and experiences, collaborating with others and contributing to the continual improvement of the service.
- 13) engage regionally and nationally with peers, partners and stakeholders, collaborating where appropriate.

Benefits

- 1) Improved safety and wellbeing of the public, employees and volunteers
- 2) Continuously improves the quality of service provided to the public
- 3) Improved governance and leadership of the service and reduction of organisational risk
- 4) Leaders that are open to innovation and different ways of working
- 5) A positive working culture that is inclusive, has the trust and confidence of its people and community
- 6) More successful recruitment campaigns because it is an employer of choice
- 7) A sustainable and diverse workforce that is engaged, motivated, well trained and competent
- 8) Improved efficiencies, effectiveness, productivity and organisational adaptability
- 9) Successful collaborations with partners, stakeholders and representative bodies

Guidance and supporting information

- [NFCC Leadership Framework](#)
- [Fire and Rescue National framework for England](#)

- [Core Code of Ethics](#)
- [NFCC Talent Management Toolkit](#)
- [NFCC Coaching and Mentoring Toolkit](#)
- [Chartered Management Institute Professional Standards](#)
- [Learning Pathways](#)
- [Recruitment Hub](#)
- [Health and Wellbeing Hub](#)
- [NFCC EDI](#)
- [JESIP](#)
- [Managing Allegations Guidance](#)
- [Positive Disclosure Risk Assessment Guidance](#)
- [Joint DBS Eligibility Checks for Fire and Rescue Authority Roles](#)

Relevant Legislation

This Fire Standard reflects only the most appropriate legislation to this topic. We recognise that fire and rescue services must comply with a broader list of legislation to undertake their duties, which would be applicable to all standards. [View the legislation which applies to all Fire Standards.](#)

For legislation specific to this Fire Standard, please see below:

- Employment Rights Act
- The Equality Act

Linked Qualifications, Accreditations or Fire Standards

Other Fire Standards

- [Code of Ethics](#)
- [Community Risk Management Planning](#)
- [Data Management](#)
- [Emergency Preparedness and Resilience](#)
- [Emergency Response Driving](#)
- [Fire Investigation](#)
- [Operational Competence](#)
- [Operational Learning](#)
- [Operational Preparedness](#)
- [Prevention](#)
- [Protection](#)
- [Safeguarding](#)
- Leading and Developing People (once revised version published)

The Fire Standards Board are aware there are multiple pathways and qualifications appropriate for these standards. Those should be referred to in line with Core Learning Pathways.

Title of Fire Standard	Leading and Developing People
Business Area/Capability	People, Culture and Leadership
Desired Outcome	
<p>A fire and rescue service that through its leadership establishes, maintains, and deploys a competent and motivated workforce to deliver excellence to the public. Leaders ensure that the service has the capabilities and capacity to respond to emergencies and incidents, both locally and nationally. Leaders drive effective workforce planning and fair, transparent, and trusted people management practices.</p> <p>Leaders actively promote the safeguarding of those in its community and its employees, volunteers and stakeholders.</p> <p>Leaders explore opportunities to resource activities within the service through partnership working, collaboration and outsourcing. They do this to achieve efficiencies, increase resilience and ensure the best outcome for the community it serves. The service is seen as an employer of choice.</p> <p>Its leaders ensure it has innovative recruitment activities to promote the range of careers and opportunities available to attract, recruit and retain people from a variety of backgrounds. It draws on the different skills and experiences of its people to build an agile, professional, competent and diverse workforce, which can adapt to changing risk and add value to community outcomes. Its diverse workforce enables it to better understand how to effectively engage with its community and tailor its delivery to meet their differing needs.</p> <p>The service plans for, invests in, develops, and nurtures people at all levels, from when they join to when they leave. It values developing talent, potential and leadership from within, while also attracting it from outside. The service has a culture where learning is embraced and leaders manage their teams in a receptive way. They seek to improve and innovate how they lead and manage, taking every opportunity to listen, learn and build trust.</p> <p>Its people are motivated and engaged and collectively contribute to an inclusive and positive working environment. They understand their contribution in relation to delivering the vision and purpose of the service and they behave ethically as they do so. They are empowered to operate with agility and foresight so that the service can identify and act on new challenges, emerging risks and changing community needs.</p> <p>People know they can safely raise concerns and challenge behaviour, especially where the behaviour is not aligned to the Core Code of Ethics, its own service values or codes of conduct. The service prioritises the health, safety and wellbeing of its people, who know where they can get help and support, if needed.</p>	
To achieve this Fire Standard	

A fire and rescue service **must**:

Planning and Infrastructure

- 1) carry out robust workforce planning to:
 - a. deliver its strategic planning objectives to manage risks and respond to incidents within its community and regional and national emergencies;
 - b. develop, nurture and manage talent at all levels in line with its strategic objectives and current and future needs;
 - c. understand and build its capabilities, considering internal and external options in order to utilise its resources effectively and flexibly; and
 - d. have in place necessary succession plans and processes to maintain a sustainable, competent workforce
- 2) have in place systems, policies and processes in regard to:
 - a. employment legislation;
 - b. effective recruitment, induction, ongoing development and training of their employees and volunteers;
 - c. the monitoring and management of employee and volunteer performance and competence;
 - d. open and regular communications between leaders, employees, partners and stakeholders;
 - e. fair, transparent and inclusive people and performance management practices;
 - f. employees or volunteers exiting the organisation;
 - g. the evaluation of workforce delivery; and
 - h. positive employment relations.

Recruitment and Promotion

- 3) attract and maintain a competent and diverse workforce that can meet community and organisational needs
- 4) develop and implement a variety of entry routes into the service to attract and recruit a diverse and professional workforce to meet its identified workforce requirements
- 5) have in place:
 - a. transparent, consistent and agreed selection processes and criteria for recruitment, promotion and transfers;
 - b. standardised job descriptions and competencies;
 - c. standardised contracts and terms of employment; and
 - d. induction programmes for all those entering the service.
 - e. arrangements to complete relevant background and employability checks on each employee, applicant, or candidate.

Learning and Development

- 6) train and develop employees, including leaders, so they are competent in their respective roles.
- 7) provide continual professional development to employees, including leaders, so competency is maintained and developed.
- 8) monitor and manage employee performance and competency.
- 9) identify, encourage and nurture talent, providing career pathways for all.
- 10) nurture, develop and prepare leaders as they progress within the organisation.
- 11) identify support in an inclusive way to meet the diverse needs of individuals, including coaching and mentoring, employee assistance programs and occupational health.
- 12) have a defined approach to organisational learning so that the service continually evaluates its own performance to improve its internal ways of working and the service it provides to the public.

Performance Management and Culture

- 13) have **robust and transparent** performance management processes in place to effectively manage and learn from:
 - a. **appraisals,**
 - b. **grievances, complaints, and disciplinary procedures**
 - c. **competence achievement and maintenance.**
- 14) embed the principles of inclusivity, belonging and equality of access within all formal and informal people processes
- 15) ensure all those who work for and on behalf of the service embody and actively promote the behaviours set out in the Core Code of Ethics, ensuring the principles are embedded into its decision-making processes, local policies, and procedures
- 16) have leaders that:
 - a. role model behaviours set out in the NFCC Leadership Framework and other professional behavioural frameworks;
 - b. challenge and act upon inappropriate behaviour;
 - c. consistently use a communication style that is inclusive and meets the needs of their differing audiences;
 - d. are able to adapt their leadership style; are authentic and recognise and value the differences in people and circumstances in order to build trust;
 - e. invest in their own development, and that of others, to keep up with changing horizons and priorities;
 - f. recognise the impact of change and support employees through the change process, managing those people to achieve the required outcome;
 - g. demonstrate high levels of emotional intelligence, particularly self-awareness;
 - h. value contributions made by their people; and
 - i. empower employees to operate flexibly within their role, to make decisions and deliver objectives in their own leadership styles.
- 17) have in place or access to mechanisms which enable feedback from employees to be captured, **actioned**, and responded to

18) review continuous improvement processes to ensure objectives are being achieved.

Support and communications

19) have in place:

- a. health and wellbeing policies and support which are inclusive, actively and widely promoted and embedded;
- b. health and safety policies and processes to ensure a safe working environment, in line with relevant legislation;
- c. provide clear support and advice for employees in relation to employment, leaving the service and welfare matters;
- d. employee engagement policies and procedures, providing a clear and transparent route in highlighting organisational concerns, improvements and ideas in an open and inclusive environment. Leaders will then act appropriately and proportionately with the items raised and share any learning, changes or actions back into the service; and
- e. a recognition scheme that motivates, engages and encourages positive behaviours amongst employees.

A fire and rescue service **should**:

20) deliver training and provide peer support through working collaboratively with others, where appropriate.

21) utilise centrally developed tools to support local workforce management and development.

22) contribute to NFCC networks and support national campaigns and initiatives, where appropriate and where resources are available.

Benefits

1. Improved safety and wellbeing of the public, employees, and volunteers
2. Continuously improves the quality of service provided to the public
3. A positive working culture which is inclusive, has the trust and confidence of its people and community
4. Improved retention and more successful recruitment campaigns because it is an employer of choice
5. A sustainable and diverse workforce that is engaged, motivated, well trained and competent

Guidance and supporting information

- [NFCC Leadership Framework](#)
- [Core Code of Ethics](#)
- [NFCC Talent Management Toolkit](#)
- [NFCC Coaching and Mentoring Toolkit](#)
- [NFCC Core Learning Pathways](#)
- [ACAS guidance](#)
- [NFCC Maturity Models](#)
- [NFCC Recruitment Hub](#)
- [Managing Allegations Guidance](#)

- [Positive Disclosure Risk Assessment Guidance](#)
- [Joint DBS Eligibility Checks for Fire and Rescue Authority Roles](#)

- NFCC Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Hub:
 - [NFCC Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan](#)
 - [NFCC Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Toolkits](#)
 - [NFCC Equality of Access](#)
 - [NFCC Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Data Toolkit](#)
 - [NFCC Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit](#)
- NFCC Model Policies:
 - [Talent Management](#)
 - [NFCC People Policy Panel Workforce Planning](#)
 - [NFCC Personal Performance Policy](#)
 - [NFCC Recruitment Policy](#)
 - [NFCC People Policy Wellbeing](#)
 - [NFCC People Policy Absence Management](#)

The Fire Standards Board are aware there are multiple frameworks from other professional bodies which may also be relevant to this standard.

Relevant Legislation

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Linked Qualifications, Accreditations or Fire Standards

Other Fire Standards:

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- [Data Management](#)
- [Emergency Preparedness and Resilience](#)
- [Emergency Response Driving](#)
- [Fire Investigation](#)
- [Operational Competence](#)
- [Operational Learning](#)
- [Operational Preparedness](#)
- [Prevention](#)

- [Protection](#)
- [Safeguarding](#)
- Leading the Service (once revised version published)
- [NFCC Apprenticeship Toolkit](#)
- [NFCC Supervisory Leadership Development Programme](#)
- Middle Manager Leadership - Coming soon
- Executive Leadership Programme – currently under review
- National Occupational Standards – currently under review

Title of Standard	Safeguarding
Business Area/Capability	Service Delivery
Desired Outcome	
<p>A fire and rescue service that actively promotes the safeguarding of those in its community and its employees and volunteers. It works proactively to reduce the risk of abuse, harm, and neglect.</p> <p>One that is compliant with safeguarding legislation, understanding, and effectively fulfilling its obligations and responsibilities to its Local Safeguarding Adults Boards and Local Safeguarding Children’s Board or Partnership.</p> <p>An organisation whose culture has safeguarding principles and processes fully embedded, including early identification and intervention enabling the mitigation of risk at the earliest opportunity.</p> <p>A service whose employees undergo regular thorough background checks. They are trained to understand and be able to apply safeguarding policies and processes. They are suitably supported and empowered to be able to respond adequately to safeguarding incidents as appropriate to their roles and responsibilities.</p> <p>A service that collaborates appropriately with others to ensure a coordinated approach to safeguarding.</p>	
To achieve the Fire Standard	
<p>A fire and rescue service must:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) have a responsible person within the service at the highest strategic level (where reasonable), that demonstrates the services commitment to the importance of safeguarding and is responsible for ensuring: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. the service is and remains compliant with legislation and follows relevant guidance; b. the service’s Designated Safeguarding Leads or Head of Safeguarding, where applicable, are appropriately qualified and suitably trained in accordance with legislation and the requirement of Local Safeguarding Adults and Children’s Boards; 2) only use accredited persons to provide safeguarding training. 3) educate, train and support employees and volunteers relevant to their role, in the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk of harm. 4) align local training to its Community Risk Management Plan and the NFCC’s Safeguarding Guidance for Children, Young People and Adults. 5) implement appropriate and proportionate processes to adhere to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (exceptions) in order to minimise the risk of recruiting people who may be unsuitable to work with those who are at risk of harm. 6) work effectively with others (including cross-border working) to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk of harm; 	

- 7) have agreed systems, standards and protocols to maintain effective and efficient information sharing, ensuring data is made available to all those who need it, in accordance with national and local guidelines
- 8) demonstrate inclusivity by recognising the diversity of its community and providing equality of access.

A fire and rescue service **should**:

- 9) Use the suite of NFCC safeguarding guidance including self-assessment and risk assessments, and other guidance relevant to mitigating the risk of harm/greater harm.
- 10) contribute to the continual improvement of safeguarding adults and children at risk of harm by communicating, sharing learning and experiences with the NFCC network of fire and rescue service safeguarding leads through, but not limited to:
 - a. engaging with NFCC forums;
 - b. supporting the NFCC Safeguarding Workstream through national and regional structures; and
 - c. considering appropriate representation at relevant national events and conferences.

Expected benefits of the achieving the Fire Standard

1. Improved safeguarding outcomes for communities, employees and volunteers through raised awareness of safeguarding, evidenced by:
 - a. measurable safeguarding referrals that encompass both early identification and threshold assessments before referral to Local Authorities
 - b. an increase in the number of employees and volunteers trained in safeguarding at the appropriate level.
 - c. Employees and volunteers having undergone relevant periodic background checks.
2. Fire and rescue services become trusted and reliable partners on safeguarding to Local Authorities, statutory agencies, and universal services.
3. Increased numbers of at-risk community members, employees and volunteers living and working safely because safeguarding risks are identified and responded to sooner.
4. Standardised approach to Safeguarding will help to maximise the efficiency of cross border, collaborative, and shared learning opportunities.

Legal requirements or mandatory duties

- The Care Act
- The Children’s Act
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act
- Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill
- Policing and Crime Act
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act

Linked qualifications, accreditations or Fire Standards

- [Prevention Fire Standard](#)
- [Code of Ethics Fire Standard](#)

- [Protection Fire Standard](#)
- [Community Risk Management Planning Fire Standard](#)
- [Operational Competence Fire Standard](#)
- [Operational Learning Fire Standard](#)
- [Operational Preparedness Fire Standard](#)
- NFCC CPD accredited safeguarding 'train the trainer' course **Level 3 and 4**
- **Level 1 Safeguarding E-Learning**
- **Leading and Developing People Fire Standard**
- **Leading the Service Fire Standard**

Guidance and supporting information

- [NFCC Safeguarding Guidance for Children, Young People and Adults \(including the Self-Assessment Toolkit\)](#)
- NFCC Person Centred Framework
- **Managing Allegations Guidance**
- **Positive Disclosure Risk Assessment Guidance**
- **Joint DBS Eligibility Checks for Fire and Rescue Authority Roles**
- **Safeguarding Competency Training Framework**