

Item Number	Item 4 – Paper 3
Title of Paper	Fire Standard Approval for Publication
Decision or Information	For decision
Date of Meeting	8 th March 2024
Presented by	Susannah Hancock, Luke Malton
Attachments	Appendix A – Procurement and Commercial Fire Standard

Summary

The purpose of this paper is to present the following Fire Standard for approval for consultation:

1. Procurement and Commercial

Recommendations and decisions required

The Board is asked to:

- Confirm that they are content with the content of the draft Fire Standard to release it to consultation.

Appendix A

Title of Standard	Procurement and Commercial		
Business Area/Capability	Resources		
Sponsoring NFCC Committee	Improvement		
Date of approval	[for office use]	Date of Issue	[for office use]
Reference Number	[for office use]	Review Date	[for office use]
Desired Outcome			
<p>A fire and rescue service whose leaders recognise the importance of procurement and commercial best practice ensuring that contracts and relationships with its suppliers realise value for money (VFM) and result in delivery of high-quality public goods and services that support the environment and the diversity, safety and wellbeing of its people and communities.</p> <p>The service makes strategic, ethical, and informed procurement and commercial decisions that are aligned to organisational goals ensuring fairness, transparency, and integrity throughout the lifecycle of its procurement/commercial activity.</p> <p>A service that considers procurement/commercial options robustly and thoroughly engages and consults with staff and wider markets to consider needs, and partners with others to define the optimum approach. A service that establishes competition, legally compliant, and transparent processes. That adopts robust contract management practices ensuring VFM and security of supply is delivered throughout the procurement and contract lifecycle.</p> <p>A service that embraces innovation, and contributes to continuous improvement and collaboration at local, regional, and national levels. That understands the impact that procurement/commercial activity has on people, the local economy, the environment, and that it delivers its social value and net zero targets. A service that establishes and maintains appropriate capability and capacity by ensuring teams are equipped with the technical skills, commercial expertise, and resources to keep communities safe, supporting continued professional development of its procurement and commercial people.</p>			
To achieve the Fire Standard			
<p>The service must:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. have a Procurement/Commercial Strategy (or equivalent) linked to wider FRS goals and objectives. 2. conduct all commercial and procurement activity in compliance with relevant procurement legislation and any other statute, law, government policy notes. 3. have an internal procurement policy in place which defines procurement procedures and complies with all relevant procurement legislation and is subject to regular review. 			

4. manage the risk of fraud, bribery, and corruption (inc. cyber risk/data breach) within their supply chains.
5. produce, publish, and maintain a commercial pipeline and contracts register.
6. clearly define those accountable and responsible for its procurement and commercial activity and ensure sufficient capability and capacity to deliver, including ongoing training and continued professional development.
7. make use of appropriate systems and data to enable process efficiency, robust controls and effective and compliant decision making.
8. ensure that both internal customers and potential suppliers are engaged at the earliest opportunity to help inform the procurement strategy and process.
9. prepare well drafted procurement and commercial documentation (tender documents including terms and conditions) to protect the interests of the service and Fire Authority.
10. conduct proportionate due diligence, including financial analysis on the selected supplier prior to recommending a contract award.
11. publish details of the relevant notices (where required) in accordance with internal policies/procedures and procurement regulations.
12. identify key suppliers and develop/maintain arrangements for contracts where failure presents a clear risk to organisational objectives and where business continuity planning should be defined.
13. ensure payments to suppliers and subcontractors are prompt and in line with contractual requirements.
14. ensure that organisational decisions and the measures implemented support equality, diversity, and inclusivity, are non-discriminatory and that appropriate impact assessments are undertaken.

The service should:

15. segregate expenditure into distinct categories such as markets, geography, and demographics, aligning to national and local strategies and categories.
16. maximise purchasing power by aggregating demand and using collaborative and sector led procurements.
17. consider the use of established model contract templates (e.g. [Government Standards](#)).
18. evaluate options for accessing the supply market in order to conduct efficient procurements that maximise competition between suppliers, provide value for money and deliver the intended business outcomes.
19. conduct tender evaluation processes with cross-functional teams and evaluators and ensure there are no conflicts of interest that could prejudice the process.
20. establish contract management plans that defines the roles and the responsibilities of each party.
21. Consider grant funding to support efficiency and wider social value agendas.
22. benchmark contract prices against the market and other public sector organisations to ensure prices represent value for money.
23. provide guidance, training and support to staff who are undertaking commercial activities and promote effective contract management and commercial delivery.
24. regularly review supply chains and maintain procurement/commercial risk registers.

25. capture lessons learned through the commercial lifecycle to facilitate continuous improvement. Maximise opportunities gained from supporting the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) network by sharing learning and experiences, collaborating, and contributing to the continual improvement of the service.

Expected benefits of the achieving the Fire Standard

- Continuous improvement in the quality of services to the public.
- Increased competition, VFM, and return on investment.
- A robust supply chain that provides fit for purpose goods and services.
- Collaboration and interoperability with others, improving supply chain arrangements and adhering to legislation.
- Delivers social value and sustainability, for society, economy, and the environment.
- Supports the recruitment and retention of an effective, professional, and competent procurement/commercial function.
- Demonstrates legal compliance and transparency requirements.
- Improves the provision of goods and services.

Legal Requirements or mandatory duties

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.](#)

- [The Public Contracts Regulations 2015](#)
- [Procurement Act 2023](#)
- [Public Services \(Social Value\) Act](#)
- [Modern Slavery Act](#)
- [The Local Government \(Transparency Requirements\) \(England\) Regulations](#)
- [Environment Act 2021](#)

Linked qualifications, accreditations or Fire Standards

- [Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply](#)
- [Code of Ethics](#)
- [Community Risk Management Planning](#)
- [Communication And Engagement](#)
- [Data Management](#)
- [Emergency Planning and Resilience](#)
- [Leading The Service](#)
- [Leading and Developing People](#)
- [Internal Governance and Assurance \(in draft\)](#)

Other related standards (as applicable):

- British Standards (BS)
- European Standards (EN)
- International standards (ISO)
- Government Functional Standards

Guidance and supporting information

- [Cabinet Office Model Contracts](#)
- [NFCC Procurement Hub Guidance \(website\)](#)
- [Blue Light Commercial \(Website\)](#)
- HM Treasury [Managing Public Money 2023](#)
- [NFCC Environment sustainability and climate change toolkit](#)
- [The Cabinet Office Playbooks](#)
- [Financial Management Code of Practice 2018](#)

Note: Please contact the Fire Standards team within the NFCC for any queries or support with regards to the use or completion of this template
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