

FIRE INVESTIGATION

DESIRED OUTCOME

A fire and rescue service that delivers effective, efficient and valid fire investigations into the origin, cause and development of fire to continually improve the safety of its community and its employees.

It has a competent and resilient capability to undertake fire investigations, either through direct employment or in collaboration with other services. It works with interested parties so that investigations are consistently conducted in accordance with the relevant legislation, guidance and codes of practice and conduct.

A service that effectively collates and analyses information obtained through the fire investigation process which leads to:

- a better understanding of the origin and cause of fire;
- a better understanding of how buildings and people behave in relation to fire;
- the identification of risks to inform its Community Risk Management Planning and contribute to the improvement of its prevention and protection strategies;
- improvements to firefighter safety and operational response;
- the identification and sharing of learning to continually improve local and national fire investigation practices; and
- better support justice system processes and other interested parties or agencies, where appropriate.

A service, through having achieved the appropriate accreditation when required, may support the criminal justice system by undertaking investigations of deliberately caused fires. It may do this in conjunction with police crime scene investigators, other interested parties or both.

BUSINESS AREAS

Service Delivery

CAPABILITIES

Protection



Date approved
17 Mar 2022

Date issued
31 Mar 2022

Review date
31 Mar 2025
(last review)

Reference number
FSD-PRO02

WHAT IS REQUIRED TO MEET THE FIRE STANDARD

A fire and rescue service **must**:

1. investigate the cause and origin of fires, complying with the appropriate codes of practice and conduct, where relevant to the level of fire investigation it carries out. These may be:
 1. non-complex fire scenes (Tier 1 fire investigation); and/or
 2. complex fire scenes and non-terrorist explosions (Tier 2 fire investigation)
2. report on and learn from the cause and behaviour of fires, working with others when appropriate, to:
 1. ensure its local risk profile remains current by building a comprehensive understanding of existing, emerging and future risks within its community;
 2. contribute to the continual improvement of prevention, protection and operational response activities, at both local and national level; and
 3. contribute to and support national fire safety campaigns
3. collate and analyse information gathered during fire investigation work and be able to present it to a variety of interested parties, in a timely manner
4. ensure all information gathered is quality assured
5. undertake workforce planning, including succession planning, to clarify the resources required to maintain a fire investigation capability equipped to conduct effective fire investigations and associated work
6. collaborate with other fire and rescue services and interested parties to deliver fire investigation activities in the most efficient, effective and valid way possible
7. recruit, train, develop and maintain a competent and professional fire investigation workforce by:
 1. aligning to the NFCC Fire Investigation Competency Framework;
 2. embedding the appropriate codes of practice and conduct into local policies, procedures, tailored guidance, and training materials; and
 3. recording and monitoring competence
8. provide ongoing training and sufficient support during working hours that encourages and enables its fire investigators to:
 1. maintain competence appropriate to their role;
 2. maintain compliance with appropriate legislation, codes of practice and conduct relating to fire investigation and forensic guidance;
 3. undertake role related administrative duties and reporting obligations associated with the role; and
 4. maintain continuous professional development
9. where it carries out Tier 2 fire investigations and its fire investigators prepare and present evidence for the justice systems, it:
 1. provides specialist training to fire investigation employees to enable them to effectively present their evidence in a range of court environments; and
 2. ensures fire investigation employees remain compliant with the relevant legislation and codes of practice
10. supply the appropriate equipment for fire investigators to effectively carry out their role
11. provide post-incident mental and physical health and wellbeing support to its fire investigators
12. demonstrate inclusivity by recognising the diversity of its community and providing equality of access to fire investigation services
13. demonstrate how it monitors and evaluates the effectiveness and efficiency of its fire investigation activities

14. generate a culture which embraces national and organisational learning, allowing it to identify and capture feedback from a range of sources; evaluate, share and act upon this feedback to drive innovation, continuous improvement and enhance future performance

EXPECTED BENEFITS OF ACHIEVING THE FIRE STANDARD

1. Improved community safety and wellbeing as a consequence of identifying risk and communicating product safety issues, leading to a reduction in incidents, injuries and fatalities.
2. Improved safety, mental health and wellbeing of employees.
3. Improved competency in the fire investigation workforce.
4. Improved evaluation to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of fire investigation activities.
5. Improved targeting of Prevention and Protection activities through learning derived from fire investigation.
6. Increased level of assurance to the community, police forces, justice systems and other interested parties on the outcomes of fire investigations.
7. Improved consistency in approach to fire investigation across fire and rescue services in England, contributing to improved collaboration and sharing of learning.

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.](#)

- [Policing and Crime Act](#)
- [Forensic Science Regulator Act](#)
- [Criminal Procedure Rules](#)
- [Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act](#)
- [Civil Procedure Rules](#)
- [Police and Criminal Evidence Act](#)

LINKED QUALIFICATIONS, ACCREDITATIONS OR FIRE STANDARDS

- [Community Risk Management Planning Fire Standard](#)
- [Protection Fire Standard](#)
- [Prevention Fire Standard](#)
- [Code of Ethics Fire Standard](#)
- [Introduction to Fire Investigation – Level 2](#)
- [Level 5 Award in Fire Investigation: Theory and Practice](#)
- [Level 5 Certificate in Fire Investigation](#)
- [ISO 17020 inspections: Conformity assessment — Requirements for the operation of various types of bodies performing inspection](#)

GUIDANCE AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- [Code of Practice for Investigators of Fires and Explosions for the Justice Systems in the UK](#)
- [NFCC Fire Investigation competency framework document](#)
- [Forensic Science Regulator's: codes of practice and conduct](#)