BOARD PAPER

Item Number	Item 5 – Paper 1
Title of Paper	**Fire Standards Progress Update and Chairs' Report**
Decision or Information	For information and decision
Date of Meeting	5 March 2025
Presented by	Fire Standards Team
Attachments	Appendix A: Representative Bodies Engagement Process

Summary

This paper provides an update on the progress made in reviewing and maintaining the suite of Fire Standards. It also gives an update on the engagements undertaken by the Fire Standards Board Chairs and the NFCC Implementation Team.

The Board is asked to:

- note the contents of this paper; and
- note the Representative Bodies Engagement Process found in Appendix A

Exceptional and Periodic Reviews

- **Organisational Learning (New Fire Standard)**
  Following approval from the Board to expand the Operational Learning Fire Standard to Organisational Learning, the FST has conducted workshops with subject matter experts from across the sector and from within the NFCC Organisational Learning team.

  Following the workshops, the draft was shared with a number of experts outside of the working group as part of a peer review. As per the Board's decision to engage with representative bodies at an early stage of development, the draft was also shared with the agreed representative bodies as outlined in the Communications and Engagement section of this paper. Through doing so, we received positive and helpful feedback from the Fire Leaders Association.

  The working group is scheduled to review the feedback on 3 March, after which a draft will be shared with the Board for approval to proceed to consultation

- **Code of Ethics Fire Standard (Periodic Review)**
  Following approval from the Board consultation was opened on the reviewed Code of Ethics Fire Standard in December 2025.

  The working group has since reviewed feedback and a post-consultation report and revised Code of Ethics Fire Standard are presented for approval in Paper 3

- **Protection Fire Standard (Periodic Review)**
  With support of the Protection Hub, the Protection Fire Standard underwent a review with practitioners via two workshops in May and June 2025, which were followed up by a further workshop with the NFCC Strategic Protection Forum in July to clarify the technical content of the Fire Standard.

  Consultation on the standard closed in November 2025 and the amended Protection Fire Standard and accompanying post-consultation report was agreed by the NFCC Protection Committee in January 2026, approved by the Board in February 2026 and subsequently re-published on 26 February 2026.

- **Safeguarding (Periodic Review)**
  The FST, with the support of the NFCC Prevention Hub, has been in contact with the NFCC Safeguarding Lead, Donna Bentley, to discuss the review of the Safeguarding Fire Standard. A small group has reviewed the Standard and no changes have been proposed. The outcome of this review has been shared with a broader group of safeguarding practitioners in February 2026, all of whom agreed with the proposal.

  Further detail is provided in Paper 3, which also seeks the Board's approval to maintain the current Safeguarding Fire Standard without change.

- **Emergency Preparedness and Resilience Fire Standard (Periodic Review)**
  Work on this standard was delayed due to work on the subject of the handling of misconduct within fire standards. An initial workshop took place in December 2025 with an additional workshop held in February 2026. There were challenges in securing experienced leads for this review owing to commitments within their own services. At the December workshop there was some challenge to the purpose of the Fire Standard and its role in the wider suite, especially considering the recently reviewed Operational Preparedness Fire Standard. The working group has revised the Standard to address these issues.

  The FST was able to consider the data which supported the need for the standard originally and the subsequent independent consultant quality assurance report in order to provide a full audit trail demonstrating the initial purpose of this standard and its role in ensuring that an FRS considers business continuity, emergency planning and external partnerships. The purpose of this standard is also to provide assurance that an FRS is able to respond to

incidents and events on a national scale. Following this additional auditing work, the working group was reassured and able to provide additional support to the review.

The FST has completed its review and is now working with the working group to finalise revisions before submitting them to the Operational Preparedness, Response and Resilience (OPRR) Committee for agreement, prior to sharing with the Board.

It is expected that the review will complete in May 2026.

- **Data Management Fire Standard (Periodic Review)**
  With support from the NFCC Digital, Data and Technology Hub, the Data Management Fire Standard underwent review with practitioners in October and November 2025.

  The proposed amendments to the standard were agreed by NFCC Data Lead, Sally Wilson, and the NFCC Data Board in early January 2026. The Board approved the proposed amendments to the standard and it was published on 26 February 2026.

- **Leading the Service and Leading and Developing People Fire Standards (Exceptional Review)**
  Following agreement at the December 2025 Board meeting, the proposed amendments to the Leading the Service and Leading and Developing People Fire Standards were opened for consultation for eight weeks between December and February 2026.

  A group of subject matter experts are expected to meet in March 2026 to consider the feedback. More information will be brought to the Board in due course.

Communications and Engagement

Engagement with Representative Bodies

Following the December 2025 Board meeting, the Fire Standards Board wrote to the following representative bodies to suggest closer engagement with their organisations in support of the development and review of Fire Standards:

- Fire Brigades Union
- Fire and Rescue Services Association
- Fire Leaders Association
- Fire Officers Association
- GMB Union
- Unison

The engagement process can be found in Appendix A which describes when and how the Board will engage with representative bodies.

In accordance with the process the FST has initiated engagement twice:

- To seek views on the proposed amendments to the Leading and Developing People, Leading the Service and Code of Ethics Fire Standards at consultation stage; and
- To seek views of the early draft of the Organisational learning Fire Standard at Peer Review stage (see Periodic and Exceptional Review section of this paper for more information)

The Fire and Rescue Services Association responded positively to the consultations on the Code of Ethics, Leading the Service and Leading and Developing People Fire Standards.

The Fire Leaders Association provided helpful and positive feedback to the peer review draft of the Organisational Learning Fire Standard.

Review of Chairs' Engagements

The Chairs attended the following engagements:

- College of Fire Task and Finish Group – 11 December 2025
- Meeting with HMI Roy Wilsher – 23 December 2025
- HMICFRS External Reference Group Meeting – 24 February 2026
- College of Fire and Rescue Service Task and Finish Group – 25 February 2026

Implementation Support Team Engagement

The NFCC Implementation Team continues to support services with embedding the Fire Standards through an ongoing programme of workshops. The following table shows the team's engagement with services since December 2025:

Engagements December 2025 - February 2026	Participant Numbers	Service Numbers
Fire Standard enquiries and engagements	140	42
Thematic Leadership Fire Standards – Regional workshop x 2 • Code of Ethics • Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion	16	6
Fire Standards Implementation workshops x 8: • Procurement and Commercial • Data Management • CRMP • Fire Control • Protection • Communications and Engagement • Operational Preparedness and Operational Competence • Internal Governance and Assurance	124	36

APPENDIX A

Representative Body Engagement Process

Purpose

This paper describes how the Fire Standards Board will engage with Representative Bodies when reviewing an existing or developing a new fire standard

Existing Fire Standard Review

When a Fire Standard is due for its periodic review, the Fire Standards Team will contact representative bodies about the current standard and whether they believe any changes to the standard should be considered by the working group.

The working group, made up of subject matter experts from across the sector, will be provided with feedback from the representative bodies for consideration and will be asked to complete the review, based on the existing FST process.

After the review has been completed and the documented governance steps have been followed, the Fire Standards Team will contact the representative bodies to advise what changes, if any have been made to the standard. This communication will take place even if no changes have been made. If the Board determine a consultation on the changes to the standard is appropriate, the bodies will be made aware and will be invited to provide further feedback through the consultation process.

The Fire Standards Team will respond to those representative bodies who provide consultation responses explaining the reasons for the Board's acceptance or rejection of their comments.

New Fire Standard

At the beginning of consideration of a new subject for a Fire Standard, the Fire Standards Team will contact representative bodies about the topic in question. They will seek their views on the need for such a standard and its possible content to support sector improvement in that area. Any feedback provided by the representative bodies will be considered within the working groups development of a draft standard.

Following that initial development of the proposed fire standard, the representative bodies will be invited to provide written feedback on the draft through a peer review process. This feedback will be reviewed in advance of the draft being considered by the Board and before it takes any decision on formal consultation. The representative bodies will also be made aware when the Board agrees to a consultation which will provide them with a further opportunity to provide input if they wish to do so.

The Fire Standards Team will respond directly to those representative bodies who provide consultation responses explaining the reasons for the Board's acceptance or rejection of their comments