FIRE STANDARDS BOARD

LEADING THE SERVICE



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DESIRED OUTCOME

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:

- put public safety at the core of their work;
- understand and commit to delivering the vision;
- contribute to an inclusive and positive culture because they behave ethically and are motivated and engaged;
- operate with agility and foresight so that they can act on learning, new challenges, emerging risks and changing community needs;
- continually improve the service it provides both locally and nationally because of the listening and learning culture;
- communicate openly and engage effectively to build trust and to form and maintain positive relationships; and
- uphold the reputation of the service.

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.

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.

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.

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.

BUSINESS AREAS

Strategic, Cultural

CAPABILITIES

Leadership

WHAT IS REQUIRED TO MEET THE 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.

EXPECTED BENEFITS OF ACHIEVING THE FIRE STANDARD

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
    a. positive working culture that is inclusive, has the trust and confidence of its people and community
5. more successful recruitment campaigns because it is an employer of choice
    a. sustainable and diverse workforce that is engaged, motivated, well trained and competent
6. improved efficiencies, effectiveness, productivity and organisational adaptability
7. successful collaborations with partners, stakeholders and representative bodies

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.

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

- Employment Rights Act

- The Equality Act
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) (Amendment) (England and Wales) Order 2023 (legislation.gov.uk)
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (legislation.gov.uk)

LINKED QUALIFICATIONS, ACCREDITATIONS OR FIRE STANDARDS

Fire Standards:

- Code of Ethics
- Community Risk Management Planning
- Data Management
- Emergency Preparedness and Resilience
- Emergency Response Driving
- Fire Investigation
- Leading and Developing People
- Operational Learning
- Operational Competence
- Operational Preparedness
- Prevention
- Protection
- Safeguarding

Leadership programmes:

- NFCC Supervisory Leadership Development Programme
- NFCC Executive Leadership Programme

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.

GUIDANCE AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

This list is non-exhaustive, and additional sources of guidance may be available beyond those outlined below.

- 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
- NFCC Core Learning Pathways
- NFCC Recruitment Hub
- NFCC EDI
- JESIP
- Managing Allegations Guidance
- NFCC Positive Disclosure Risk Assessment Guidance
- Joint DBS Eligibility Checks for Fire and Rescue Authority Roles

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

SENIOR LEADERS

Those with strategic responsibilities. In some services this may be the Chief Fire Officer, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Area Managers and equivalent. In other services, this may also include Group Managers and other leaders. For clarification, a senior leader is whomever the Chief Fire Officer determines.

VISION

A statement, document or strategy that outlines a services objectives to deliver excellence to the public and how it will reach those objectives. This may be called something different in each service.

INCLUSIVITY

Providing a space where everyone has equal access to opportunities, resources and information and where everyone feels valued and accepted. Everyone should be able to contribute and have a voice. This may mean making reasonable adjustments to facilitate participation.

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DIVERSE

Recognising the benefits of different values, abilities, and perspectives, and celebrating people’s differences. Promoting an environment that welcomes and values diverse backgrounds, thinking, skills and experience.

DIVERSITY

Recognising the benefits of different values, abilities, and perspectives, and celebrating people’s differences. Promoting an environment that welcomes and values diverse backgrounds, thinking, skills and experience.

EQUALITY

Making sure that everyone is treated fairly and with dignity and respect. It means challenging discrimination and removing barriers, so that everyone has opportunities to achieve their desired outcomes.

EQUALITY OF ACCESS

This is the provision of equal access to services and employment for all.

ENTRY ROUTES

These are the various routes and schemes used to recruit employees. Some examples may be Direct Entry Schemes and Apprenticeships.

UPDATES TO THIS STANDARD

1 DECEMBER 2023

DESIRED OUTCOME

~~Leaders and their people take opportunities to listen and learn from their community and each other.~~

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.

TO ACHIEVE THIS FIRE STANDARD

5. put **robust and transparent** controls and processes in place so that it can effectively monitor and manage:

b. commercial activities and procurement

i. disciplinaries, grievances, complaints, staff disclosures and whistle blowing.

NEW GUIDANCE AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- Managing Allegations Guidance
- Positive Disclosure Risk Assessment Guidance
- Joint DBS Eligibility Checks for Fire and Rescue Authority Roles