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Item Number	Item 3 – Paper 1
Title of Paper	Fire Standards Progress Update and Chairs’ Report
Decision or Information	For information
Date of Meeting	9 th September 2024
Presented by	Fire Standards Team
Attachments	Appendix 1: Agreed Timeline for 2024/25 Appendix 2: Finance and Asset Management Activities Mapping Exercise Appendix 3: Correspondence between FSB Chair and Vice-Chair and Rt. Hon Dame Diana Johnson

Summary

This paper provides an update on the progress made in developing the final phase of the initial suite of Fire Standards. It also provides an update on engagements by the Fire Standards Board Chairs and the NFCC Implementation Team in support of the Fire Standards.

The Board is asked to note the contents of this paper.

Resources Fire Standards

The progress made in respect of these Standards is described below:

Internal Governance and Assurance Fire Standard

- The Board approved the publication of this Fire Standard at the previous Board meeting. The Fire Standard was published on 11 June 2024.

Procurement and Commercial Fire Standard

- Public consultation ran from 20th March to 6th May 2024. 25 responses were received.
- Consultation review sessions with subject matter experts took place in June 2024.
- Quality Assurance (QA) took place in July 2024 and the Board approved the QA report in August 2024.
- The Board approved publication of the Fire Standard in August 2024. It will be published alongside the Digital and Cyber Fire Standard on 9th September 2024.

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Digital and Cyber Fire Standard

- Consultation took place between 2nd May 2024 and 17th June 2024. 44 responses were received.
- Consultation review sessions with subject matter experts took place in July 2024.
- Quality Assurance (QA) took place in August 2024 and the Board approved the QA report in August 2024.
- The Board approved publication of the Fire Standard in August 2024. It will be published alongside the Procurement and Commercial Fire Standard on 9th September 2024.

The publication of the Digital and Cyber and Procurement and Commercial Fire Standards completes the initial suite of nineteen Fire Standards. The Fire Standards Board acknowledges and is proud of this accomplishment. It extends its thanks to all those who were involved in supporting the development and implementation of these Fire Standards.

Exceptional Reviews

- **Finance and Asset Management elements**
Two interim mapping grids have been included at Appendices 2 and 3 showing the proposed mapping exercise of finance and asset management elements against the Standards and the category and number of suspected amendments. This has indicated five Fire Standards the team intends to review for this purpose. This will be ongoing work during Q2- Q4 as part of the Fire Standards deliverables for 2024/25.
- **Leading the Service and Leading and Developing People Standards**
The NFCC Leadership Hub has been engaged and is actively supporting the exceptional review in respect of these two standards. A meeting has been arranged with NFCC Leads and Chief Fire Officers Wayne Bowcock and Rob MacDougall. The Fire Standards Team intends to engage with the NFCC's People, Culture, Leadership Coordinating Committee to gain support for this work.

Future Work

The FST proposes that following the completion of the initial suite of Fire Standards, it will continue to support Fire Standards through the following objectives. This list is not exhaustive:

- continuing review of published standards;
- embedding of the Fire Standards supported by communication;
- benefit assessment of the standards; and

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- impact and evaluation of Fire Standards

The FST will continue to develop its plan for financial year 2025/26 and will bring a more comprehensive plan to the Board meeting scheduled in December 2024.

Chairs' Meetings and Engagements

Since the last Board meeting on 10th June 2024, the Chairs have attended the following:

- Greater Manchester FRS Visit – 2nd September 2024

Future engagement planned by the Chairs' are listed below:

- Warwickshire FRS Visit – 16th September 2024
- West Sussex FRS Visit – 23rd September 2024
- Nottinghamshire FRS Visit – 30th September 2024

In planning visits to services, HMICFRS inspection outputs are considered alongside several other deciding factors. Future visits being considered are to Royal Berkshire, Bedfordshire, Lincolnshire, Norfolk and Cambridgeshire.

Government

Following the change of government in July 2024, the Chair and Vice-Chair wrote to the new Police, Fire and Crime Prevention Minister, Rt. Hon. Dame Diana Johnson (see Appendix 3). The Chairs indicated in their letter the hope that the Minister will be able to meet with them.

Implementation Team Engagement

The NFCC Implementation Team continues to support services with embedding the Fire Standards through an ongoing programme of workshops.

The Fire Standard workshops are one of the key delivery mechanisms for the Implementation team. These workshops allow the team to maintain a high profile with services and to build a network of personal contacts in different functional areas who are then able to drive the development of each Fire Standard and the underlying benefits of implementation within their respective service.

The popularity of the workshops brings additional benefits to the Fire Standards team and wider NFCC colleagues as they also provide a captive audience to learn about the benefits of specific NFCC products, build networks and support the continuous improvement of the sector.

The workshops also provide an opportunity to raise awareness of reviews, of standards, increase engagement with users and highlighting colleagues who may be interested in providing subject matter expertise and/or engaging in consultation workshops

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The following table shows the team’s engagement with services since the June 2024 Board meeting:

Engagements June – September 2024	Participant Numbers	Service Numbers
HMICFRS Fire Standards Familiarisation Training session with Inspectors	18	n/a
Fire Standards leads network (North)	4	4
Office of Police and Crime Commissioners Officers Fire Standards Training	4	4

Fire Standards Workshops – Autumn – Winter Schedule 2024-25

With the arrival of Georgina Staley, a new Fire Standards and Implementation Coordinator, to the team in September, a key activity will be the coordination of the next round of Fire Standard workshops, continuing the successful approach started in August 2023 to supporting services to familiarise, implement and embed the suite of Fire Standards.

The Implementation Team has evolved the structure of the workshops in response both to feedback and the needs of services and will continue to adapt. The next round of workshops will also consider the NFCC’s response to the HMICFRS’s Thematic Misconduct Review as well as considering other external factors, such as the Phase 2 outcomes from the Grenfell Tower Inquiry.

The indicative outline structure of each workshop is as follows:

Section	Notes
Welcome and Introduction	
Brief refresher}	An existing Fire Standard; or
Detailed overview}	A recently published Fire Standard with a facilitated open discussion of the key points within that Standard
Overview of Fire Standards inter-relationships	Confirmation of the role of Fire Standards in the wider FRS space regarding HMICFRS but also outlining pertinent details about Home Office, Authorities, external SMEs etc.
FRS implementation case studies	Opportunity for an invited service to outline recognised successful approaches
Aligned NFCC product review	Discussion with an NFCC Product Lead to showcase which underlying products can support the embedding of the Fire Standard
Workshop Evaluation	Participant spot check to evaluate workshop, specific Fire Standard and related products
Q and A	

The team encourages an SME and the appropriate NFCC lead to attend the relevant workshop to ensure a high level of expertise to support the Implementation Team and guide participants. The places at each workshop are limited to encourage discussion. The team is due to schedule an ongoing programme of workshops.

An indicative outline plan and timeline for the workshops is given below. This is subject to change in response to demand from services for specific workshops.

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		Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb
Design	Event Planning							
	Comms and Engagement							
	Workshop Design							
Delivery	Welsh FRS 2 x Leadership Thematics							
	Intro to Internal Governance & Assurance							
	Intro to Procurement and Commercial							
	Intro to Digital and Cyber							
	English Regional 2 x Leadership Thematics							
	Refresher COE							
	Refresher Comms and Engagement							
	Refresher CRMP							
	Refresher Data Management							
	Refresher Emer Prep and Resilience							
	Refresher ERD							
	Refresher Fire Control							TBC
	Refresher Fire Investigation							TBC
	Refresher Ops Competence							TBC
	Refresher Ops Learning							TBC
	Refresher Ops Preparedness							TBC
	Refresher Prevention							TBC
Refresher Protection							TBC	
Refresher Safeguarding							TBC	
Post Event	Evaluate feedback							
	Share materials							
	Update internal CRM							
	Debrief team and hub leads							

Appendix 1: Timeline for 2024/25

The Board is reminded of the proposed delivery timetable for the:

- three Fire Standards in development;
- exceptional reviews; and
- periodic reviews

Fire Standards	FY 2024-2025											
	Q1 24-25			Q2 24-25			Q3 24-25			Q4 24-25		
	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
In development												
Resources - Procurement & Commercial												
Resources - Internal Governance and Assurance												
Digital and Cyber Security												
Exceptional Review Process Related to Finance and Asset Management												
Leading the Service												
Leading and Developing People												
CRMP												
Emergency Preparedness and Resilience												
Data Management												
Periodic Reviews												
Review: Operational Competence												
Review: Operational Preparedness												
Review: Operational Learning												
Review: Emergency Response Driver												
Review: Code of Ethics												
Review: Prevention												
Review: Protection												

Exceptional Review

This shows the timeline for the agreed work to complete the exceptional reviews necessary to consider, and incorporate, where appropriate, the outstanding finance and asset management elements into the other Fire Standards identified. NFCC Leads and Hub Manager for Leadership Fire Standards have been engaged and the FST is due to meet with the CRMP lead in September. On track.

Periodic review

This shows the timeline for starting periodic reviews of published standards. The initial stage of the process will identify if a review is needed and the scale of review required (minor, moderate or major) in line with the agreed review processes. NFCC contacts for the Operational Fire Standards and NFCC Lead for ERD have been engaged. On track to commence on time.

Appendix 2: Finance and Asset Management Activities Mapping Update

Finance Activities

The map below is the revised iteration of the finance mapping exercise to be delivered during Q2- Q4 by the Fire Standards Team.

	In Scope	Leading The Service	Leading and Developing People	CRMP	Data Management	Code Of Ethics	Emergency Planning and Resilience	Internal Governance and Assurance	Procurement and Commercial
1	Strategic approach to managing finance and budgets aligned to the vision and resourcing requirements of the service to deliver value for money for the public.	Yellow	Yellow	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Green
2	Financial planning and budgeting, (medium term, capital programme and efficiency) in line with the requirements identified through its CRMP and the local risk profile.	Yellow	Grey	Red	Grey	Grey	Yellow	Grey	Grey
3	Appropriate capacity and capability to manage the finances of the services to ensure it operates efficiently and effectively.	Green	Green	Grey	Green	Grey	Yellow	Grey	Grey
4	Maximising opportunities to, or benefitting from, collaboration, shared services, or central resources.	Green	Green	Green	Green	Grey	Green	Grey	Green
5	Planning and managing reserves proportionately	Red	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey
6	Forecasting and scenario planning	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Grey	Yellow	Grey	Grey
7	Making sure staff costs including staff salary increases and pension cost are calculated, provisioned for and managed correctly and effectively.	Red	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey
8	Internal and external audits.	Yellow	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Green	Grey
9	Monitoring the financial performance of the service	Green	Grey	Grey	Yellow	Grey	Grey	Green	Grey
10	Responding to issues and enabling the service to respond to new and emerging risks.	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Grey	Green	Grey	Grey
11	Ensure senior managers with budget responsibility (but not finance professionals) have the appropriate training and support to enable them to carry out their budget management role effectively to contribute to the efficient running of the service.	Yellow	Red	Grey	Green	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey
12	Sharing positive practice and activity engaging with other services and nationally through the NFCC.	Green	Green	Red	Green	Grey	Green	Green	Green

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Asset Management Activities

The map below is the revised iteration of the asset management mapping exercise to be delivered during Q2- Q4 by the Fire Standards Team.

	In Scope	Leading The Service	Leading and Developing People	CRMP	Data Management	Code Of Ethics	Emergency Planning and Resilience	Internal Governance and Assurance	Procurement and Commercial
1	Strategic approach to ongoing maintenance of assets								
2	Monitor, manage and maintain assets with due consideration of full life costing throughout their lifecycle and disposal								
3	Report on, collect, store and maintain data about assets								
4	Maintain competency in and awareness of advances in asset management								
5	Deliver asset management activity, which meets legislative obligations								
6	Commitment to social and environmental impact of assets taking consideration of maximising efficiency, pollution control, minimising contamination and decarbonisation.								
7	Planning and consideration to ensure the correct assets are in place within the FRS estate to meet responsibilities to protect the communities it serves.								

Key:

no mention of the scope, suggested location in the Fire Standard
wording within Standard partially meets the scope, but more work would be required to strengthen meaning
scope is mentioned within the Standard so no change necessary
no action required

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After an initial assessment by the FST, the table below indicates how many amendments per Fire Standard are expected and the likely amendment category. More detail will be provided when subject matter experts have made their assessments.

	Leading The Service	Leading and Developing People	CRMP	Data Management	Emergency Preparedness and Resilience
Finance	Two major amendments	One or two moderate amendments	One major change and one or two moderate amendments	One moderate amendment	One moderate amendment
Asset	One or two moderate amendments	One moderate amendment	One major amendment	None	One moderate amendment

Key:

One or more major changes
Two or more moderate amendments
One moderate amendment

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Change definition and criteria

Scale	Definition	Governance route	Level of comms required
Minor	<p>Revisions relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grammatical errors; Typo's; Broken links; and Links to updated and related legislation or guidance. <p>These revisions <i>do not</i> change the intended meaning of the standard</p>	Fire Standards and Implementation Support Manager	No comms (comms may be required to inform user who raised issue)
Moderate	<p>Revisions relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarification of language for readability or to improve phrasing issues; Links to new legislation and guidance; <p>These revisions <i>do not</i> change the intended meaning of the standard</p>	Fire Standards Board Chairs	<p>Communications required to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SPOC's; Implementation Team; NFCC Lead; and relevant committee
Major	<p>Revisions relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New benefits; Additional activities to be undertaken by a service; <p>These revisions change the intended meaning of the standard</p>	NFCC Lead and appropriate committee; and Fire Standards Board	<p>Consultation</p> <p>Possible re-launch</p>

APPENDIX 3: Correspondence between FSB and Rt. Hon. Dame Diana Johnson

16th July 2024

The Rt Hon Dame Diana Johnson DBE MP

Minister of State

Home Office

2 Marsham Street

London

SW1P 4DF

By email: PS.CrimeandPolicingMinister@homeoffice.gov.uk

Dear Minister,

Introductory letter from the Independent Chairs of the Fire Standards Board

I am writing to offer my congratulations on your re-election and appointment as Minister of State in the Home Office with responsibility for Fire policy. The Board welcomes your appointment, particularly given your Chairing of the Home Affairs Select Committee's inquiry into workplace culture. We also appreciated the commitment in the Labour manifesto to working with partners on fire policy and standards.

We previously shared information about the Fire Standards Board with you as Chair of the Home Affairs Select Committee on 11 March 2024 in the context of the above-mentioned inquiry. A copy of our written submission is attached. We thought you might find the information summarising the Board's work contained in this letter helpful.

As you may know, the Fire Standards Board is funded by the Home Office and was conceived as part of the then Home Secretary Theresa May's 2016 Fire Reform Programme which also included the establishment of the inspectorate regime. The Fire Standards Board was tasked with developing a coherent and comprehensive set of professional standards for the Fire and Rescue Service in England. Its role is to oversee the identification, development, and maintenance of professional standards for the benefit of the profession, Fire and Rescue Services and the public. Each Standard's

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Outcome Statement tells the Service and services what good looks like. Woven into each Standard is culture and inclusion, and efficiency and effectiveness.

It started operating in 2019 and published its first standard in early 2021. As of today's date, 17 Fire Standards have been published (which can be found www.firestandards.org/) and two more are in development. It is expected that the initial suite of Standards will consist of those 19 Standards and be fully in place by the end of this summer. In addition to the Chairs, the Fire Standards Board consists of representatives from the National Fire Chiefs Council, the Local Government Association, the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners and the Home Office.

The Fire Standards address the key improvement areas identified both by the HMICFRS's inspections and as evidenced by other reviews. They respond to recommendations contained in the Grenfell Tower and Manchester Arena Inquiries and the HMICFRS's Values and Culture report.

To assist services in the implementation and achievement of each Fire Standard, the Board has worked closely with the NFCC in supporting services to recognise and understand how the Fire Standards provide a framework to improve and underpin their strategies, governance, and culture. The FSB is not a regulator, and while it is not mandatory for services to adopt the Fire Standards, the National Fire Framework, which is currently due to be revised and which we have contributed to discussions by Home Office officials, makes clear that services are expected to pay due regard to them. The responsibility for the successful implementation of the Fire Standards lies with the Fire Authorities and their Chief Fire Officers.

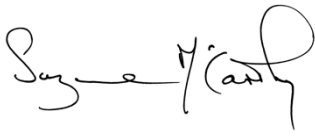
In the course of our work, we have forged excellent relations with services and other key stakeholders. We meet regularly with the HMICFRS, the Home Office, LGA and the APCC, and have engaged with the Devolved Nations. In the Inspectorate's latest State of Fire and Rescue Report 2023 the Chief Inspector recognised the important role Standards play alongside the Inspection Framework in helping England's Services achieve continuous improvement and increased professionalism. Further, while the Fire Standards do not directly apply to the Devolved Nations, we are pleased that they are keen to adopt the Fire Standards where they can, helping to align standards of service delivery to the public across the UK.

With the initial suite of Standards now almost in place, the Board is turning its attention to evaluating the published Standards to ensure they remain current and relevant. We are also working with services and fire authorities to assist in their successful implementation of the Standards and to gain insight into the benefits for services of the Standards. We are also continuing to consider any further areas where a Fire Standard may be beneficial.


Alison and I would be grateful for an opportunity to meet with you so that we can tell you more about what the Board is doing. To that end, it would be helpful if your office could contact the Fire Standards Team at fsb@nfcc.org.uk to explore when that might be possible.

Yours sincerely,

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Suzanne McCarthy



Alison Sansome

Independent Chair and Vice Chair, Fire Standards Board