

Item Number	Item 4 – Paper 1
Title of Paper	Fire Standards Progress Update and Chairs' Report
Decision or Information	For information and decision
Date of Meeting	12 th December 2024
Presented by	Fire Standards Team
Attachments	Appendix A: Proposed amendments to Operational Competence and Operational Preparedness Fire Standards. <i>This appendix will be shared with you separately.</i> Appendix B: Change definition and criteria

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
- consider the proposed respective changes to the Operational Preparedness and Operational Competency Fire Standards and confirm that the changes suggested meet the major level, and thus a consultation is required.

Exceptional Reviews

Following the Board's decision to not develop Fire Standards on the respective subjects of Asset Management and Finance, the Fire Standards team (FST) has conducted an initial assessment of the existing fire standards, highlighting where these subjects are sufficiently addressed and where they may need to be strengthened. The initial assessment identified that a small number of fire standards may be impacted by this work and therefore required further review with subject matter experts. The fire standards identified were:

1. Leading the Service
2. Leading and Developing People
3. Community Risk Management Planning
4. Data Management
5. Emergency Preparedness and Resilience

The NFCC Leadership Hub is actively supporting the exceptional review of the Leading the Service and the Leading and Developing People Fire Standard. Chief Fire Officers Wayne Bowcock and Rob MacDougall are supporting the work. The work is and has been done to take these reviews forward is described below.

- **Leading the Service Fire Standard**

The FST presented at the NFCC Steering Group in November 2024. The Steering Group agreed to the suggestion of holding a workshop, which is being arranged for January 2025. Any proposed amendments and recommendations will be shared with the Board after the workshop has taken place.

- **Leading and Developing People Fire Standard**

The FST presented at the NFCC HR Forum in October 2024 and invited subject matter experts (SME) to review this Fire Standard. A workshop was held on 25 November with SME's from six services being Derbyshire, Buckinghamshire, Cornwall, and Surrey. The working group agreed to a small number of amendments. These have been shared with CFO's Rob MacDougall and Wayne Bowcock for feedback. Any proposed amendments and recommendations will be shared with the Board in December.

- **Community Risk Management Planning Fire Standard**

The CRMP Fire Standard is undergoing both an exceptional and periodic review concurrently. The FST has engaged with the NFCC CRMP Lead, Nikki Richards, and held a workshop with CRMP experts at their national Community of Practice meeting on 21 November. The working group agreed to a small number of amendments. These have been shared with CFO's Rob MacDougall and Wayne Bowcock for feedback. Any proposed amendments and recommendations will be shared with the Board in December.

Periodic Reviews

- **Operational Competence and Operational Preparedness Fire Standards**

The FST has engaged with the NFCC Operational Response and Control Team who assessed the Operational Competency and Operational Preparedness Fire Standards to ensure these standards remained accurate and relevant. The proposed changes can be found in Appendix A. It is proposed that these changes fall into the major amendment criteria (See Appendix B) and therefore, if the Board agrees that the changes fit the major amendment criteria, the next step would be to undertake a consultation on this standard.

- **Operational Learning**

The NFCC has evolved and expanded its processes around operational learning to encompass learning at an organisational level. The FST has engaged with the NFCC Organisational Learning Team (OLT) and is proposing to delay the periodic review of this Fire Standard to explore whether it should be expanded to include Organisational Learning.

Further information about this can be found in Item 6 – Paper 3 – Fire Standards Board Strategy 2025-26.

Review of Chairs' Engagements

The Fire Standards Chairs accompanied by members of the Implementation team undertook four back-to back service visits during September which provided valuable intelligence about the different challenges Services face in embedding the Fire Standards. They visited the following services:

- Greater Manchester
- Warwickshire
- West Sussex
- Nottinghamshire

A key observation was the importance of the relationship an FRS had with its Fire and Rescue Authority, and the different challenges faced by services depending on their type of governance model. It was found that the relationship between the CFO and the Authority and the latter's level of interest in the service was a key indicator how much support and assurance provided. It was noted that there were wide disparities between the services visited in terms of the amount of engagement and financial support they received.

Services shared their improvement journeys, with most services remarking that they were making a conscious effort to combine their continuous improvement plans to have better oversight of work, reduce duplication of effort and avoid conflicts. The Chairs were pleased to observe that services had evolved their thinking regarding continuous improvement and were taking a more reflective and less tick box approach. Overall, the standards were seen as beneficial to achieving improvements.

The Chairs also attended the following engagements:

- Speaker at Greater London Assembly Fire Committee (Suzanne only) – 24th October 2024
- Speaker at NFCC Autumn Conference – 14th-16th October 2024
- Meeting with Richard Jolley (HMICFRS) – 5th November 2024
- Meeting with Minister Dame Diana Johnson – 2nd December 2024
- Ministerial Advisory Group (Home Office) – 4th December 2024
- Meeting with Roy Wilsher (HMICFRS) – 10th December 2024

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 the September 2024 Board Meeting:

Engagements October – December 2024	Participant Numbers	Service Numbers
Thematic Leadership Fire Standards – Regional workshop 1	7	3
Thematic Leadership Fire Standards – Regional workshop 2	7	3
Fire Standards Implementation workshops x 3	67	25
Northeast Fire Standards Peer Review	10	4
Southwest Regional Fire Standards Day	20	7

Appendix A

This appendix will be shared with you shortly and prior to the Board meeting.

Appendix B

Change definition and criteria

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