

# BOARD PAPER

<b>Item Number</b>	Item 3
<b>Title of Paper</b>	Paper 1 - Impact of Covid-19
<b>Decision or Information</b>	For information
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> April 2020
<b>Presented by</b>	NFCC CPO
<b>Attachments</b>	None

## Summary

This paper seeks to inform the Board of the potential impact on progress with Fire Standards work in light of the current UK response to the Covid-19 pandemic and the lockdown measures currently in force.

## Recommendations

The Board is asked to:

- Note the content of the report and discuss implications that may impact on decisions being requested in the other agenda items.

## Background Information

At the time of Board papers preparation, the UK currently has a range of restrictive measures in place because of the outbreak of the Covid-19 virus.

The NFCC CPO team (CPO) have been instructed to work from home, as have many staff working in London Fire Brigade where the CPO team are hosted. Although the team is continuing to work remotely, this inevitably places some limitations on the activities that can be progressed, but they will do all they can to continue as usual.

However, there are some impacts which the Board need to be aware of as they consider the other papers at this meeting and the decisions being asked of them.

These impacts include:

## Resourcing

- Currently the majority of the team are fit and well however, there may be an impact if one or more become ill and cannot work or have to self-isolate for extended periods.

- Work to recruit new team members is likely to be paused because of the social distancing restrictions which will result in a delay in additional resources to support Fire Standards work being in place when planned.
- Drawing even short-term secondment resources from fire and rescue services is limited as each service is under pressure itself and resourcing will be focused on local delivery.

The CPO will work with LFB HR team to ensure as much progress as possible is made with recruitment plans and as soon as it is feasible, we will begin recruitment activity.

Work can be progressed in many areas by the existing programme and project managers in the areas where phase one Fire Standards are planned (see item 4 - paper 2 for more details on the Fire Standards delivery plan).

### **Communication, engagement and consultation**

- Much of the Fire Standards development work requires input and engagement with staff in services at all levels, access to those staff as they focus on local priorities may be a challenge and therefore scoping and drafting tasks may be delayed.
- Any consultation efforts may be hampered by reduced staff numbers across all services, responding to a consultation on national policy may not be deemed a priority and therefore we risk a lack of robust and meaningful involvement.
- Wider stakeholders, especially those in commercial sectors and Government are likely to be under considerable pressure in response to the Covid-19 pandemic and will have limited capacity which could be released to support Fire Standards work.

These are the immediate impacts but there may be others that will emerge over the coming weeks. Much will depend on the length of time social distancing restrictions remain in force which is currently unknown.

The team will do all it can to continue work as planned. Should there be any significant developments that impact work further, then the Board will be informed via email.