



East Sussex Fire Authority

Planning for a Safer Future Consultation

East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service (ESFRS) is required to produce an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) to describe how it will keep its residents, and those who work or travel through its area, safe over the coming years. The Plan describes the main risks to East Sussex and Brighton & Hove's communities and how ESFRS is proposing to use its resources efficiently to reduce those risks.

The East Sussex Fire Authority (ESFA) is undertaking this consultation to gather the views of local residents and other stakeholders of ESFRS' proposals for the next five years. To find out more before answering the questions, **please read the accompanying consultation document**, which is available at <https://www.esfrs.org/safer-future>

ESFA has appointed Opinion Research Services (ORS), as an independent social research company, to manage the consultation and questionnaire responses, and it will faithfully report the outcomes. The views of individual members of the public will be anonymous; but where feedback is from a representative of an organisation or someone acting in their official capacity, it may be attributed. All completed questionnaires should be returned by **19th June 2020**.

This questionnaire is also available online at www.opinionresearch.co.uk/ESFRS

All questions are optional, and all information you provide will be processed by ORS in accordance with the Data Protection Act and GDPR. **Any personal information will be kept for no more than 12 months after any decisions have been finalised.** For further information, please see ORS' privacy notice at www.ors.org.uk/privacy and ESFRS' privacy notice at <https://www.esfrs.org/about-us/privacy-notice/>

If you have any queries regarding the questionnaire, you can contact ORS by telephone on 0800 3247005, and ESFRS on 0303 999 1000 and by email at consult@esfrs.org

The Operational Response Review (ORR)

The following six key proposals have emerged from ESFRS' Operational Response Review (ORR), which is the most significant piece of risk analysis work the Service has undertaken in recent years. The Review has enabled ESFRS to identify the risks across its service area, and to develop proposals that target its resources to manage these risks.*

The Service believes these proposals will ensure it can target its resources, including firefighters and fire engines, most effectively - bringing about a better balance of prevention, protection and response.

Please note that proposal 5 does not appear in the questionnaire as it relates to internal operational matters and therefore there are no resulting questions. However, information on this proposal can be found on pages **50-51 of the consultation document.*

Proposal 1: Operational Resilience Plan

Please read pages [40-41](#) of the consultation document to find out more before answering this question

ESFRS plans to improve its operational resilience by increasing the number of immediate response fire engines it has available at the start of each day from **15** to **18**.

The Service will plan for:

- **18 immediate response fire engines** - these have the biggest impact when looking at community risk, population and density, overall activity, response to critical incidents etc.
- **A further 6 fire engines for added resilience** - these will also respond to incidents, but will be allowed a longer amount of time to respond if needed. This will enable the Service to draw in additional firefighters (including on-call firefighters) to crew fire engines when required.

The data shows that this change would result in improvements to the number of people, households and incidents reached within ESFRS' attendance standards.

In order to support and assist the delivery of these new arrangements, ESFRS is proposing two new approaches:

1. A **'flexible crewing pool'**, made up of firefighters who will be posted to stations as needed to cover for staff absences, which will be resourced by further changes we are proposing to make; notably through the new duty system proposals (see proposals 2 and 7). This concept is widely used across the UK Fire and Rescue Service.
2. New salaried contracts for **on-call firefighters** to improve their availability. On-call firefighters are currently paid a small retaining fee, but most of their pay comes from attending calls. These have reduced significantly in number, which has led to problems finding enough on-call staff to keep fire engines available to respond. The new contracts would offer a guaranteed monthly salary.

1. To what extent do you agree/disagree with ESFRS increasing the number of immediate response fire engines it has available at the start of the day from 15 to 18, in addition to a further 6 fire engines?

PLEASE TICK ✓ **ONE** BOX ONLY

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Proposal 2: Changes to Day-crewed Duty Stations

Please read pages [42-44](#) of the consultation document to find out more before answering these questions

ESFRS currently has six “day-crewed” fire stations: Battle, Bexhill, Crowborough, Lewes, Newhaven, and Uckfield. On these stations, firefighters work a combination of “positive” and “standby” hours over a 24-hour period. Positive hours are worked on the fire station and standby hours are worked on-call from a location within five minutes of the station.

ESFRS proposes to introduce “**day-only**” crewing at these stations, whereby full-time firefighters would be on-station during the daytime Monday to Friday, with on-call firefighters providing cover during the evening and at weekends. The key difference between the existing system and the day-only system is that the latter does not require full-time staff to provide extra on-call cover during the evening and weekends. This cover is provided by existing and new on-call staff.

Two alternative options to resource this duty system have been identified:

Option A - one team of 6 staff guaranteeing the immediate availability of the fire engine for 8.5 hours of every weekday, with each firefighter working 5 days per week. This option results in a net reduction of 33 posts, providing the opportunity to reinvest staff into the “flexible crewing pool” (see Proposal 1), training and prevention and protection teams.

Option B - one team of 7 staff guaranteeing the immediate availability of the fire engine for 10.5 hours of every weekday, with each firefighter working 4 days per week. This option results in a net reduction of 27 posts, providing the opportunity (albeit reduced) to reinvest staff into the “flexible crewing pool” (see Proposal 1), training and prevention and protection teams.

2a. Do you agree/disagree with the proposal to change the crewing system from ‘day-crewed’ to ‘day-only’ at Battle, Bexhill, Crowborough, Lewes, Newhaven, and Uckfield in order to staff a ‘flexible crewing pool’ and invest in training and prevention and protection teams? PLEASE TICK ✓ **ONE BOX ONLY**

Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know <input type="checkbox"/>
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2b. Whether or not you agree with the proposal to change the crewing system from ‘day-crewed’ to ‘day-only’ at Battle, Bexhill, Crowborough, Lewes, Newhaven, and Uckfield, if the crewing change is agreed by ESFRS, which of the two options (A or B) do you prefer?

PLEASE TICK ✓ **ONE BOX ONLY**

Option A (6 staff – 8.5 hours of fire engine availability, with a reduction of 33 posts) <input type="checkbox"/>	Option B (7 staff – 10.5 hours of fire engine availability, with a reduction of 27 posts) <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know <input type="checkbox"/>
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Proposal 3: Changing the Number of Fire Stations with Two Fire Engines

Please read pages [46-47](#) of the consultation document to find out more before answering these questions

Nine of ESFRS' 24 fire stations have two fire engines, and a further three (in Seaford, Heathfield and Wadhurst) have a "maxi-cab" fire engine that have a larger cab size. The latter are also considered to be 2-fire engine stations.

Data shows that the second fire engines at day-crewed and on-call stations are not warranted: three-quarters of all calls in these fire station areas are dealt with by one fire engine.

ESFRS thus proposes to:

1. Remove the second fire engines from the following stations: Battle, Bexhill, Crowborough, Lewes, Newhaven, Rye and Uckfield. On-call staff would be used to crew the remaining fire engines in the evenings, overnight and at weekends.

2. Re-classify the three "maxi-cab" stations (Seaford, Heathfield and Wadhurst) as single fire engine stations.

The public would still have a 24/7 response from these stations but if a second fire engine were required at an incident, it would come from a different fire station. However, this often happens already, particularly during the daytime when low on-call availability means these fire engines are only available between 10-50% of the time.

3a. To what extent do you agree/disagree with the proposal to remove the second fire engines from Battle, Bexhill, Crowborough, Lewes, Newhaven, Rye and Uckfield Fire Stations?

PLEASE TICK ✓ **ONE** BOX ONLY

Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know <input type="checkbox"/>
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3b. To what extent do you agree/disagree with the proposal to re-classify the three "maxi-cab" stations of Seaford, Heathfield and Wadhurst, as single fire engine stations?

PLEASE TICK ✓ **ONE** BOX ONLY

Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know <input type="checkbox"/>
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Proposal 4: Crewing and Fire Engine Changes at Hastings

Please read pages [48-49](#) of the consultation document to find out more before answering this question

Currently, both of Hastings' fire stations (Bohemia Road and The Ridge) have one immediate response fire engine, which is available 24-hours a day.

However, data shows that Bohemia Road has a significantly higher risk profile than The Ridge. For example, the Bohemia Road station has the second highest number of critical incidents across the ESFRS area, and has had the most life-risk fire incidents over the last 9 years. Moreover, The Ridge fire engine attends more incidents in Bohemia Road than it does in its own area.

In light of this, the proposal aims to improve fire cover across both station areas and build more resilience in Hastings by:

1. Introducing a day-crewed system at The Ridge, whereby a fire engine would be immediately available during the day, and on-call during the evening and overnight.
2. Introducing a second 24/7 fire engine at Bohemia Road.

4. To what extent do you agree/disagree that ESFRS should introduce a day-crewed system at The Ridge and a second 24/7 fire engine at Bohemia Road?

PLEASE TICK ✓ **ONE** BOX ONLY

Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know <input type="checkbox"/>
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PLEASE CONTINUE THE QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE →

Proposal 6: Demand Management

Please read [52-54](#) of the consultation document to find out more before answering these questions

ESFRS is aiming to manage demand for its services in three areas to reduce the impact on its other work. These proposed changes will release capacity into prevention, protection and training.

Automatic Fire Alarms (AFAs)

ESFRS attends, on average, 9,200 incidents each year. Automatic Fire Alarms (AFAs) account for 34% of all these calls – and 96% of the calls initially categorised as AFAs turn out to be false alarms.

ESFRS proposes to **no longer automatically attend calls to AFAs in low-risk commercial premises.**

5a. To what extent do you agree/disagree that ESFRS should no longer automatically attend calls to AFAs in low-risk commercial premises? PLEASE TICK ✓ **ONE BOX ONLY**

Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know <input type="checkbox"/>
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Lift releases

ESFRS is regularly called to release people from lifts that have malfunctioned. The Service wants to engage with building owners to ensure they are improving lift maintenance and have other arrangements in place to release people. It may also consider a delay in responding to some incidents where people are not vulnerable/in distress to give building owners time to resolve the issue.

5b. To what extent do you agree/disagree that ESFRS should consider delaying its response to release people from lifts to give building owners (who are responsible for broken lifts) time to resolve the issue in the first instance? PLEASE TICK ✓ **ONE BOX ONLY**

Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know <input type="checkbox"/>
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Trapped birds

ESFRS works alongside animal charities to reduce the number of calls it gets about birds trapped in netting, though it still attends a small number of calls. These calls tie-up resources and restrict ESFRS' ability to attend incidents involving risk to human life, and it is often necessary to use specialist equipment, making this service disproportionately expensive. Therefore, the Service is proposing that it should **no longer attend calls to birds trapped in netting.**

5c. To what extent do you agree/disagree that ESFRS should no longer attend calls to birds trapped in netting? PLEASE TICK ✓ **ONE BOX ONLY**

Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know <input type="checkbox"/>
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Proposal 7: Changes to 4-Watch Duty System

Please read pages [55-57](#) of the consultation document to find out more before answering these questions

This proposal is about changing the way ESFRS' stations at **Bohemia Road (Hastings), Eastbourne, Hove, Preston Circus (Brighton) and Roedean (Brighton)** provide a 24/7 on-station response, through contractual and crewing arrangements of the firefighters who work at these stations.

The current full-time duty system requires a firefighter to work 2 day shifts, followed by 2 night shifts, followed by 4 days off. Although it has been in place for many years, there are now alternatives for delivering services in a more efficient way, without detriment to response levels.

Two options for change have been identified.

Option A: a "Flexible Rostering Duty System" at all 5 fire stations

One team of firefighters plan their shifts between them a minimum of 6 weeks in advance, to ensure the fire engine(s) at their stations are always available. This system would:

- Improve the release of firefighters for training without affecting fire engine availability
- Reduce overtime and staff employed on fixed-term contracts
- Give the firefighters more flexibility and introduce a more family-friendly work pattern
- Result in a net reduction of 5 posts, which could be used for prevention, protection, training or resourcing the flexible crewing pool.

Option B: a "Group Crewing Duty System" at Preston Circus, Hove and Roedean (the 3 City stations)

"Group crewing" means that resources are used flexibly within a "group" of stations. Crews would continue to use the existing shift pattern (2 day shifts, 2 night shifts, 4 days off) – and depending on sickness or other absence levels, one or more stations would support the others in the "group".

This option would result in a net reduction of 4 posts, which could be used for prevention, protection, training, resourcing the flexible crewing pool or taken as savings.

Both options allow the Service to maintain its 24/7 immediate response and attendance standards.

6a. Do you agree/disagree with the proposal to change crewing arrangements at the following ESFRS fire stations: Bohemia Road (Hastings), Eastbourne, Hove, Preston Circus (Brighton) and Roedean (Brighton)?

PLEASE TICK ✓ **ONE** BOX ONLY

Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know <input type="checkbox"/>
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6b. Whether or not you agree with the proposal to change the crewing arrangements at the 5 ESFRS fire stations listed above, if the crewing arrangements are changed, which of the two options (A or B) do you prefer?

PLEASE TICK ✓ **ONE** BOX ONLY

Option A "Flexible Rostering Duty System" at all 5 fire stations <input type="checkbox"/>	Option B "Group Crewing Duty System" at Preston Circus, Hove and Roedean only (the 3 City stations) <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know <input type="checkbox"/>
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Building and Home Inspections

Please read page [32](#) of the consultation document to find out more before answering this question

One of the key areas of focus for ESFRS is to ensure buildings are safe and that fires are prevented. By reviewing its response models ESFRS will release resources to do more of this prevention and protection work, and to have capacity for more inspections and visits.

7. To what extent do you agree/disagree that more building and home inspections and visits would be a positive way to reduce risk and offer more public assurance about fire safety?

PLEASE TICK ✓ **ONE** BOX ONLY

Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know <input type="checkbox"/>
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ESFRS' Finances in the Future

Please read pages [62-63](#) of the consultation document to find out more before answering these questions

The average household in East Sussex and the City of Brighton & Hove currently pays £95.53 per year for their fire service — that is just £1.84 per week for a Band D property.

ESFRS' revenue budget for 2020/21 is £39.7m and is funded from a government grant (8%), business rates (22%) and council tax (70%). Over 75% of our spending is on employees, and the vast majority of this is on our firefighters.

Due to significant uncertainty about ESFRS' funding beyond 2020/21 (due to the Government planning to review how much it spends on public services) ESFRS have modelled a range of scenarios. These scenarios suggest that we may need to make new savings of between £0.7m and £3.5m by 2024/25 (in addition to savings of £9.8m made since 2010/11 and already planned for the period to 2024/25), in order to balance our budget.

ESFRS will also make further savings through its **Efficiency Strategy**, which will focus on a range of areas including:

- Improving the way ESFRS procures goods and services
- Using investment in IT and estate to reduce running costs.
- Reviewing all ESFRS' support services.
- Working in collaboration with other emergency services and public sector bodies where that can make its services more effective and efficient.
- Looking for new sources of funding, including different ways of delivering services, for example through a charity.

However, since 2010/11, ESFRS has also become much more dependent on the income it receives from council tax, and we have increased the amount we charge households by just under the maximum amount allowed by Government in each of the last four years (between 1.94% – 2.94%).

Considering the uncertainty about funding beyond 2020/2021, ESFRS has identified two possible options to increase its funding through council tax:

Option A: a small increase in council tax of up to a 3% (depending on what the Government allows) for 2021/22), which would mean that the amount the average householder pays would increase by up to £2.87 per year or just under 6 pence per week for a band D property. The Authority would still have to make savings, but this would help ESFRS to protect and improve the service it provides.

Option B: a larger increase in council tax (more than a 3% increase) for 2021/22, whereby each 1% increase would mean that the amount the average household pays would rise by 96 pence per year (or under 2 pence per week) for a band D property. This would help the Authority to reduce the amount of savings it needs to make and continue to invest in making communities safer.

8a. Would you be willing to pay more in council tax for your local fire and rescue service next year (2021/22)? PLEASE TICK ✓ **ONE BOX ONLY**

Yes → Please go to 8b <input type="checkbox"/>	No → Please go to 9a <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know <input type="checkbox"/>
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8b. If you would be willing to pay more council tax for your local fire and rescue service next year (2021/22), what level of increase would you accept? PLEASE TICK ✓ **ONE BOX ONLY**

Option A Up to a 3% increase depending on what the Government allows <input type="checkbox"/>	Option B More than a 3% increase <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know <input type="checkbox"/>
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9a. To what extent do you agree or disagree that East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service offers value for money? PLEASE TICK ✓ **ONE BOX ONLY**

Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know <input type="checkbox"/>
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9b. In what ways do you think that ESFRS could make savings and be more efficient in the future?

PLEASE WRITE THE BOX BELOW

ESFRS' Purpose and Commitments

Please read page 9 of the consultation document to find out more before answering this question

ESFRS has a strong purpose and clear commitments to help make East Sussex safer by:

- **Delivering high performing services** by using its resources to achieve the best level of safety for people and business.
- **Engaging with its communities** by using its trusted reputation to deliver educational initiatives and campaigns.
- **Having a safe and valued workforce** by ensuring the people of East Sussex are safe and are provided with the right equipment, training and skills.
- **Making effective use of its resources** by ensuring all its resources are managed effectively, improving its productivity and seeking new sources of income and funding.

10. To what extent do you agree/disagree that the purpose and commitments of ESFRS are appropriate?

PLEASE TICK ✓ ONE BOX ONLY

Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know <input type="checkbox"/>
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Hearing About the Consultation

11. How did you hear about this consultation?

PLEASE TICK ✓ ALL BOXES THAT APPLY

Leaflet from ESFRS	<input type="checkbox"/>		Email	<input type="checkbox"/>
Letter from ESFRS	<input type="checkbox"/>		Social media	<input type="checkbox"/>
Questionnaire from ESFRS	<input type="checkbox"/>		Papers	<input type="checkbox"/>
Information from a local Councillor	<input type="checkbox"/>		ESFRS Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
ESFRS website	<input type="checkbox"/>		Other - Please specify below	<input type="checkbox"/>
Radio	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="text"/>	

Further Comments

12. If you have any further comments you would like to make about any of the proposals in the consultation, please write below.

As public bodies, ESFRS have a duty to take into account the impact of their decisions on human rights, under the Human Rights Act 1998, and also on people with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 (age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, and sexual orientation).

13. Are there any positive or negative impacts from ESFRS that you believe should be taken into account?

If so, are you able to provide any supporting evidence and suggest any ways to reduce or remove any potential negative impact and increase any positive impact?

PLEASE ANSWER IN THE BOX BELOW AND CONTINUE ON A SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

INFORMATION ABOUT YOU

If you are responding *on behalf of* an ORGANISATION:

Which organisation do you represent?

Please give ESFRS the name of the organisation and any specific group or department.

Please also tell ESFRS who the organisation represents, what area the organisation covers and how you gathered the views of members.

PLEASE ANSWER IN THE BOX BELOW AND CONTINUE ON A SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

If you are providing your own PERSONAL RESPONSE, please answer the questions below:

ESFRS have a duty to promote equality and want to make sure all parts of the community are included in this consultation, but these questions are optional. All consultation responses will be taken fully into account when making decisions, regardless of whether you provide your details.

What is your full postcode?

This will help ESFRS understand views in different areas

<input type="text"/>						
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PLEASE TICK ✓ ONLY ONE BOX FOR EACH QUESTION

What was your age on your last birthday?

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Under 25 | <input type="checkbox"/> 55 to 64 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 25 to 34 | <input type="checkbox"/> 65 to 74 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 35 to 44 | <input type="checkbox"/> 75 to 84 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 45 to 54 | <input type="checkbox"/> 85 or over |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say | |

What is your ethnic group?

- White British
- Mixed or multiple ethnic groups
- Asian or Asian British
- Black, African, Caribbean or Black British
- Any other ethnic group
- Prefer not to say

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Non-binary
- Transgender
- Prefer not to say

Do you work for East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

Other

Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

Please return the questionnaire by June 19th 2020 to:
Opinion Research Services · FREEPOST SS1018 · PO Box 530 · Swansea · SA1 1ZL

