



# East Sussex Fire Authority

National Framework Annual Statement of Assurance  
2022 – 2023

This statement outlines the way in which East Sussex Fire Authority and East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service has had regard to the National Framework 2018, its “Planning for a safer future” Integrated Risk Management Plan 2020 – 2025 and its strategic plans between the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> NFD May 2018 page 12, Sec 4.6(ii)

# 1. FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES ACT 2004

The core functions of the Fire Authority are set down in the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 (“the Act”) which requires the promotion of fire safety; preparation for firefighting; protecting people and property from fires; rescuing people from road traffic collisions; and dealing with other emergencies such as flooding or terrorist attack. Further details can be viewed by following the link below:

[http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/21/pdfs/ukpga\\_20040021\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/21/pdfs/ukpga_20040021_en.pdf)

## How we are assured:

- 1.1 East Sussex Combined Fire Authority is the statutory body for discharging the requirements of the FRS Act across the County of East Sussex and City of Brighton and Hove.
- 1.2 The provisions made under Sections 7, 8 and 9 are outlined in detail within our Integrated Fire Risk Management Plan 2020-2025 (IRMP) found at the following link:  
<https://www.esfrs.org/resources/assets/attachment/full/0/33809.pdf>
- 1.3 This document describes how detailed analysis of historic and present activity and future demand continually outlines the people, places and equipment required to mitigate the fire and rescue related risks in our area. This has resulted in a fit for purpose Fire and Rescue Service to the community covering all aspects of Fire Prevention, Fire Protection and emergency response.

# 2. FIRE AND RESCUE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK 2018

Section 21 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act requires a fire and rescue authority to have regard to the National Fire and Rescue Framework when carrying out its functions and it gives statutory force to the National Framework thereby requiring every FRS to produce an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP).

Following the transfer of Fire and Rescue Services from the Department for Communities and Local Government to the Home Office and the subsequent Fire Reform of 2016, the National Framework 2018 set out the following priorities of all FRSs within England:

- Make appropriate provision for fire prevention and protection activities and response to fire and rescue related incidents
- Identify and assess the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue related risks their areas face
- Collaborate with emergency services and other local and national partners to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the service they provide
- Be accountable to communities for the service they provide; and
- Develop and maintain a workforce that is professional, resilient, skilled, flexible and diverse<sup>2</sup>

Section 25 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 requires the Secretary of State to lay a report before Parliament every two years on the extent to which all fire and rescue authorities are acting in accordance with the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England. (National Framework Document or NFD).

Additionally, the NFD 2018 also required Fire and Rescue Authorities to make provision for:

- How they should work with the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) and Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS)
- Changes in guidance to reflect legislative changes allowing mayors and police and crime commissioners to exercise the functions of a FRA

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<sup>2</sup> NFD May 2018 page 5, Sec 1.7

- Supporting the development and delivery of professional standards for FRAs addressing the current lack of co-ordination of standards across England’s fire services
- A workforce section which outlines how FRAs should support and develop their workforce and;
- Changes to encourage commercial transformation by FRAs, leading to further collaboration, innovative thinking and sharing of best practice

A copy of the full Framework Document can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fire-and-rescue-national-framework-for-england--2>

## How we are assured:

- 2.1 This Annual Statement of Assurance lays out how East Sussex Fire Authority comply with the legal framework as laid out above and forms the return to the Home Office for government consideration.
- 2.2 To ensure our IRMP is fit for purpose reflecting the inherent and anticipated fire and rescue related risks, we completed an Operational Response Review (ORR) from late 2018 to March 2020.
- 2.3 Using the attendance standards agreed by the Fire Authority in 2018, this process enabled us to demonstrate that to mitigate the fire and rescue related risks requires 24 Fire Stations with 18 immediate and 6 resilience frontline fire appliances available before demand or at the start of each day. The East Sussex Fire Authority attendance standards are set as:
  - The 1st fire appliance with an “on-station” response of 10 minutes 70% of the time
  - The 1st fire appliance with an ‘on-call’ response of 15 minutes 70% of the time

The ORR main report can be viewed using the following link here:

[https://www.esfrs.org/\\_resources/assets/attachment/full/0/33792.pdf](https://www.esfrs.org/_resources/assets/attachment/full/0/33792.pdf)

- 2.4 The ORR afforded us the opportunity to complete a comprehensive local analysis of the risk for each of the 24 existing Fire Stations in our area captured in individual Station Risk Profiles. Local managers use these to tailor our risk reduction activities. This data-led analysis was carried out using over 9 years of incident data with the F-SEC and MOSAIC risk analysis tools and has been used to demonstrate how the provisions we are making mitigate the actual and anticipated fire and rescue related risks.

The 24 Station Risk Profiles can be viewed using the following link here:

<https://www.esfrs.org/safer-future/>

- 2.5 We can therefore say with confidence that our 5-year IRMP takes full cognisance of the geography, demography, transport networks and built and natural environment. It enabled us to provide suitable resources capable of dealing with all inherent and predictable fire and rescue related risks. In essence, this process enabled us to effectively plan our resource allocation against our identified risk profile. A copy of the current IRMP “Planning for a safer future” can be accessed by following this link:

[https://www.esfrs.org/\\_resources/assets/attachment/full/0/33809.pdf](https://www.esfrs.org/_resources/assets/attachment/full/0/33809.pdf)

- 2.6 IRMP Strategic and Delivery Boards provide the governance structure which oversees the implementation of the 2020 – 2025 IRMP. The Boards meet monthly and report progress by exception into the Fire Authority Scrutiny and Audit Panel on a quarterly basis.
- 2.7 Progress toward completing the “Planning for a safer future” IRMP 2020 - 2025 follows in chart 1 below.
- 2.8 Each year, East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service meets thousands of people, whether through our work to prevent emergencies, to protect buildings through fire safety work or when we respond to 999 calls.

For us, **Every Contact Counts**.

- And that's not just contact with the public, but with our own colleagues, volunteers and cadets
- Our Impact Report shines the light on how our approach has affected people's lives
- Read the Impact Report:  
[https://www.esfrs.org/\\_resources/assets/attachment/full/0/37651.pdf](https://www.esfrs.org/_resources/assets/attachment/full/0/37651.pdf)
- Read our performance report:  
[https://www.esfrs.org/\\_resources/assets/attachment/full/0/37948.pdf](https://www.esfrs.org/_resources/assets/attachment/full/0/37948.pdf)

## 2.9 Home Safety Visits

We visit people in their homes to offer advice, support and equipment including specialist smoke alarms. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic we needed to adapt from our usual face to face visits, and so until COVID restrictions were relaxed home safety visits were undertaken over the telephone. In 2021/22 2,599 were conducted over the phone by community safety staff and operational crews. When restrictions were lifted on 19 July 2021 the Service reverted to face to face visits and a further 6,778 properties were visited.

**95.1% of these home safety visits were to vulnerable people within our community 2021/22.**

## 2.10 Inspections of high-risk premises completed

This priority area was introduced in 2017/18 and deemed critically important following the Grenfell Tower fire on 14 June 2017. Once the COVID-19 restrictions were lifted the Service reverted back to face-to-face business safety audits and business safety visits. The protection inspection team completed 470 audits and the operational crews 998 business safety visits.

## 2.12 Responding to emergencies

We attend a wide range of incidents, including road traffic collisions and assisting other agencies such as the ambulance service when they are trying to reach patients.

- **In 2021/22, the total number of incidents attended was 10,548.**
- **4,798 of these were false alarms, including where apparatus has malfunctioned, malicious activation or when someone made a genuine mistake thinking there was a fire when there wasn't.**
- **1078 were assistance to other agencies such as the police or ambulance.**

## 2.13 Reducing fires in homes

Fires in the home at best cause disruption and at worst can lead to injuries and sadly loss of life. That's why reducing the number of accidental fires in dwellings is one of our priorities. In 2021/22 we had the lowest number of accidental dwelling fires ever with 433 recorded in East Sussex and Brighton and Hove.

**This is a 2.5% reduction against the previous year when 444 were reported.**

53% (55% in previous year) of the accidental dwelling fires occurred in the kitchen, with cooking appliances responsible for 177 (78%) of these.

- **49% of the fires in homes we attended didn't need crews to take firefighting action**
- **21% were dealt with by what we call "small means" (e.g. bucket of water, disconnecting a fuel supply or removing an item from a heat source)**
- **portable extinguishers' or were 'Allowed to burnout' under the supervision of the crew**

## 2.14 Other fires

The number of deliberate fires fell to 664 in 2021/22 from 730 the previous year and similarly the number of industrial and commercial fires fell to 114 from 123.

## 2.15 Attendance standards

Whenever you call us in an emergency, your call comes into our Joint Fire Control, which then mobilises the nearest or most appropriate fire appliance, along with any other specialist vehicles/officers depending upon the problem.

- **Our attendance standards are as follows:**
- **The first arriving appliances at any incident from an 'On-Station response' within 10 minutes 70% of the time**
- **The first arriving appliances at any incident from an 'On-Call response' within 15 minutes 70% of the time**
- **In 2021/22 we exceeded these standards:**
- **77.5% of the first arriving appliances at any incident from an 'On-Station response' arrived within 10 minutes**
- **73% of the first arriving appliances at any incident from an 'On-Call response' arrived within 15 minutes**

# Chart 1: IRMP 2020 – 2025 workstream progress summary “Planning for a safer future” (March 2023)

Open workstreams:												
No.	Workpackage	WBS	Workstream	Scope drafted	Scope agreed	Options & proposal	Proposal approved	Consult. complete	Notice complete	Implement	Commentary	
1	Operational Resilience Plan	1.1	Operational Resilience Plan	-	-	-	C	10/04/2023	-	01/05/2023	ORP consultation due to complete by end of March with April sign off.	
		1.2	Flexible Resource Pool (FRP)	C	C	C	C	C	-	01/06/2023	2 FTE in post from Jan '23. Timeline now mirrors DCDS.	
		1.3	Enhancements to on-call (availability)	C	C	C	11/04/2023	17/04/2023	17/07/2023	16/10/2023	23/10/2023	Scope being reconsidered in light of MTFP decision - new dates proposed for options. No change to end of
		1.4	Enhancements to on-call (flexible on-call contracts - O/T policy)	-	C	-	C	C	-	-	28/02/2023	FW resource request go-live date now May '23 - sign off of O/T policy is dependent on that.
2	Day Crewed Duty System	2.7	DCDS (7FTE) @ Battle	C	C	C	C	C	30/05/2023	01/06/2023	SB on 14/3/23 to agree & sign off - then to 28/3/23/ CFO / FBU negotiation meeting	
		2.8	DCDS (9FTE) @ further 5 stations	C	C	C	C	C	30/05/2023	01/06/2023	SB on 14/3/23 to agree & sign off - then to 28/3/23/ CFO / FBU negotiation meeting	
3	Low activity P4's	3.10	Reallocate 4 no. appliances as spares	C	C	C	C	-	-	31/03/2023	Reallocations now likely Mar.'23.	
5	Specialist appliance review & shared crewing policy	5.14	Reduce Wildfire from 5 to 4	-	-	-	-	-	-	09/10/2023	Wildfire options paper due to Mar '23 Ops Committee - chassis trials ongoing - 1 (of 2) demos complete.	
		5.15	Reduce 2 Rope Rescue vehicles to 1 @ Bexhill	-	-	-	-	-	-	02/10/2023	Depends on 5.18 (Replace 2 existing TRU's with 2 no. TRU (1 with RRV cap. @ Battle)).	
		5.18	Replace 2 existing TRU's with 2 no. TRU (1 with RRV cap.)	C	C	-	-	-	-	-	02/10/2023	Vehicle ordered and being built.
		5.19	Replace Foam Tender with OSU @ Newhaven	-	C	-	-	-	-	-	C	Complete from an IRMP perspective as converted ex-maritime vehicle provides this capability.
		5.20	SWR withdrawn and replaced on TR vehicle(s)	-	C	-	-	-	C	-	23/01/2023	Depends on delivery of flood and rescue training - dates now booked in April '23.
		5.21	New HazMat vehicle @ Heathfield	-	C	-	-	-	-	-	25/09/2023	Mercedes not quoting now. Tender to be progressed.
6	Robust demand management plans	5.22	New Fire Investigation vehicle @ Eastbourne	-	C	-	-	-	-	25/09/2023	Tender now underway.	
		5.24	Shared crewing policy for Special appliances	C	C	C	C	C	-	20/02/2023	Draft policy with FBU - workshops to be held @ Eastbourne to test policy.	
7	Group crewing	6.27	Lift releases - continue to attend	C	C	-	C	-	-	C	Complete from an IRMP perspective - TNA v updated TOG ongoing as BAU.	
8	Policy development	7.29	Implement Group Crewing in the City of B&H	C	C	C	C	27/03/2023	-	08/04/2023	Consultation commenced 24/2/23.	
9	MTFP	8.30	Scope further policy change for additional savings	-	-	-	C	C	16/03/2023	16/09/2023	This reflects the finalised timeline for removal of AAA's only.	
		9.1	Tranche 1 - Removal of on call support officers	-	-	20/03/2023	-	15/05/2023	14/08/2023	21/08/2023	As per planned put together on 3/3/23	
		9.2	Tranche 2 - Removal of On Call from Lewes and Crowborough	-	-	20/03/2023	-	07/08/2023	30/10/2023	06/11/2023	As per planned put together on 3/3/24	
		9.3	East Review	-	-	17/04/2023	12/06/2023	-	-	-	As per planned put together on 3/3/25	
Complete and paused workstreams:												
No.	Workpackage	WBS	Workstream	Scope drafted	Scope agreed	Options & proposal	Proposal approved	Consult. complete	Notice complete	Implement	Commentary	
1	Operational Resilience Plan	1.5	Combined crewing policy	-	C	-	C	-	-	C	Complete.	
		1.6	Resource management team (now LCS)	-	-	-	-	-	-	C	Complete.	
3	Low activity P4's	3.9	Replace / re-categorise 3 no. P4 appliances	C	C	C	C	-	C	C	Complete	
		3.11	Reclassify 2 Maxi-Cab stations to 1 pump on-call P1's	-	-	-	-	-	-	C	Complete	
4	New P2 @ Bohemia Rd. & DCDS @ The Ridge	4.12	Introduce P2 @ Bohemia Road	-	-	C	-	-	-	-	Workstream paused pending 'East Review'.	
		4.13	24/7 shift to day crewed (28 to 9 FTE) @ The Ridge	C	C	C	C	-	-	-	Workstream paused pending 'East Review'.	
5	Specialist appliance review & shared crewing policy	5.16	Move HVP from Hove to Seaford	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	Complete	
		5.17	Withdrawn Command Pod (Hove) from service	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	C	Complete
		5.23	Replace ARP with dedicated ALP	-	-	-	-	-	-	C	C	Complete
		5.25	New P2 @ Eastbourne	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	C	Complete
6	Robust demand management plans	6.26	Fire alarms in low risk commercial - don't attend	-	-	-	-	-	-	C	Complete	
		6.28	Birds trapped in netting - continue to attend	-	-	-	-	-	-	C	Complete	

## 3. PREVENTION

*“A fire and rescue authority must make provision for the purpose of promoting fire safety in its area. In making provision a fire and rescue authority must in particular, to the extent that it considers it reasonable to do so, make arrangements for;*

- a) *The provision of information, publicity and encouragement in respect of the steps to be taken to prevent fires and death or injury by fire;*
- b) *The giving of advice, on request, about*
  - i. *How to prevent fires and restrict their spread in buildings and other property;*
  - ii. *The means of escape from buildings and other property in case of fire.”<sup>3</sup>*

### How we are assured:

- 3.1 ESFRS has developed and delivered a comprehensive strategic assessment of risk which is reviewed annually (AAR). This is an exceptionally detailed risk profile enabling the Service to target its resources more effectively. We consulted with partners including Local Authorities including Public Health and Highways, NHS Trusts including ambulance, Sussex Police, Sussex Safer Roads Partnership, the RNLI, RLSS and District & Borough Councils. Over 100 data sets were considered, including indices of multiple deprivation, infrastructure data, emergency planning and benchmarking data, health inequality, excess winter deaths, road and water casualties along with 9 years' worth of incident data which equated to 100,291 incident records enabling us to draw together a comprehensive risk profile. The strategic assessment of risk drills down to station level and station profiles have been created for 24 stations. The AAR is based on previous year's performance and combined with the station profiles and allocates a percentage weighting against each of the five themes of fire / home safety, road, water and business safety. Groups are then required to allocate their resources and deliver their initiatives against the local risk profile.
- 3.2 Community safety activities focus on a range of **thematic plans**, drawn up in conjunction with the station profiles. These comprehensive action plans detail the activities that will be delivered across the Service area to reduce the risk associated with the following topics. Our **Initiatives Library** contains physical, documentary and communications resources targeting each area of community risk has been designed to support the delivery of prevention activities by operational crews. Development and maintenance of the thematic plans and initiatives library resources are the responsibility of the Group based Partnership & Engagement Business Partners.
- 3.3 ESFRS use thematic plans within the Prevention section to reduce risk. We have used a strict risk-based approach within Government guidelines to deliver our prevention products:
  - a) **Home/Fire:** Safety in the home, delivered to 10,000 homes of vulnerable residents a year as well as within community settings and across the wider environment, including the reduction of malicious and deliberate fire related incidents
  - b) **Road safety:** Giving particular attention to the number of people killed or seriously injured. We educate the community about the principles of the fatal five using presentations such as “Safe drive, stay alive”, an interactive presentation that aims at offering young people the means to make sensible decisions about driving or riding, being a passenger or a pedestrian. We developed an online version of SDSA during the pandemic and continue to offer this as well as in-person presentations to maximise our reach. We use Virtual Reality headsets to provide a wider range of road and other safety messages.
  - c) **Water safety and drowning prevention:** These activities centre around our “Water savvy, water safe” known as “WS<sup>2</sup>” water safety educational programme, an interactive water safety presentation aimed at all age groups to reduce the risks posed by water by promoting sensible decision-making.
  - d) The **Children & Young People** thematic action plan is further sub-divided:
    - **Wellbeing:** Educational interventions with children and young people, initiatives include Safety in Action and Firewise

<sup>3</sup> Fire and Rescue Services Act Section 6



- **Watch scheme:** A programme of activity based within fire stations for young people on the cusp of exclusion from schools or involved in anti-social behaviour
  - **Safety in Action:** Our award winning practical based interactive sessions that encourage Year 6 children to recognise hazards and take action to keep themselves and others safe.
  - **Fire Cadet schemes:** For young adults between 13 – 17 at Uckfield, Eastbourne & Bexhill Fire Stations, helping develop self-worth, self-belief, safety, life skills and team-building activities
- e) **Safeguarding:** Ensuring that our statutory obligations are met. Safeguarding referrals include areas such as hoarding
- f) **Volunteers:** We now have over 44 volunteers who have maintained contact through lockdown helping us to keep high levels of safety and low risk of fire in the home through community engagement programmes such as our Befriending Service.
- g) **Partnership & Engagement:** We engage with a wide range of statutory, non-statutory and voluntary organisations to offer fire safety advice and awareness training, to secure referrals for Home Safety Visits for vulnerable clients and work collaboratively to reduce all risk within communities and promote their services, including areas such as fuel poverty, risks associated with the cost of living crisis, exploitation and hoarding for the settled and traveller communities as well as refugees and asylum seekers.

3.4 We continue to work with partners to improve people's access to health and support services and tailor these activities toward the most vulnerable within our communities

3.5 ESFRS has been commissioned by East Sussex Public Health to deliver the Child Safety Equipment and Advice service to reduce child accident and fire risk within homes through the fitting of child safety equipment such as safety gates, fire guards, bathmats, carbon monoxide alarms and cupboard locks. The service has links with a wide cross-section of statutory agencies, third sector organisations and services to ensure we are fully integrated within our community.

3.6 The development of ESFRS's prevention strands is the responsibility of the three Partnership & Engagement business partners who support operational crews to utilise the initiative library resources, provide HSV training and develop new partnership opportunities to secure HSV referrals and reduce risk across the Service area.

Our cadre of volunteers is supported by two Community Volunteer coordinators. Our key community volunteering priorities are:

- To ensure volunteering is an integral part of ESFRS and that volunteer activities contribute to ESFRS reaching more members of the community and making East Sussex and Brighton & Hove a safer place.
- To ensure volunteering is a worthwhile, rewarding activity for our volunteers and that volunteers are involved in the decision-making process.
- To be inclusive and open, enabling as many people as possible to access our volunteering opportunities.
- To work in partnership with other organisations who also have a community safety ethos.
- To be creative and imaginative in our approach to volunteering, to best serve the needs of promoting community safety.

To ensure we have the necessary systems and resources in place to best support our community volunteers and the communities we serve.

3.7 Youth engagement necessarily stalled in 2021-22 due to the C19 pandemic, however specialist, station-based and voluntary staff re-organised activities such as the Fire Cadet Scheme and mentoring late 2021 – early 2022. We visit all schools in higher-risk areas and Elected Home Educated children to offer our 2022 iESE SILVER AWARD education programme. We have recently enhanced our provision to young people by developing a Youth Engagement Officer role.

Our 2017 iESE GOLD AWARD winning Safety in Action programme is a collaborative approach providing the opportunity for young people aged 10 to 11 years to experience risky scenarios in a safe environment.

- 3.8 It is fully recognised that a great number of those individuals that are at greatest risk to fire, road and water risk are because of poor mental or physical health.
- 3.9 We continue to develop our 2021 iESE Fire Service of the Year and GOLD AWARD winning General Practitioner (GP) Referral Scheme which enables GP practices to send ESFRS details of patients whom they consider at high risk of an unelected hospital admission. Our Information Sharing Agreement allows contact details of patients to be shared without consent for a Home Safety Visit to be offered. In addition to identifying potential fire risks these visits provide an opportunity for staff to identify risks within the home environment that might cause or contribute accidents, identify the potential to fall and to identify those who are frail and would benefit from an early intervention by health professionals. The scheme is enhanced through a feedback loop to GP Practices following the HSV.
- 3.10 An agreed communications and campaign calendar delivers safety messages across a variety of channels. Examples of local campaigns include:
- Our Save Safely campaign targeted Mosaic Groups identified as most vulnerable to cost-of-living increases and who are in higher risk groups for fires in the home
  - We re-ran our Be Your Own Hero Accidental Dwelling Fire (ADF) survey in order to create a series of materials to be used on social media, in newsletters and other publications
  - We have signed up new partners to Project Pictogram aimed at tackling the Fatal Four on the roads
  - We have promoted biker safety by developing new messages around the themes identified in Tales of the Road and promoting Biker Down

## 4. PROTECTION

Fire and Rescue Authorities have a duty to enforce fire safety in all premises covered by the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (FSO) and the Fire Safety Act 2022. This includes a large range of premises, such as:<sup>4</sup>

- The common parts, shared structures and external walls and balconies of shared domestic premises such as flats, maisonettes and houses in multiple occupation (HMOs)
- Premises used as a workplace
- Premises used by the self-employed (including family run businesses)
- Premises used by the voluntary sector
- Places of worship

The only type of premises not covered by this legislation are single private dwellings which are covered by the Housing Act 2004 and enforced by the Local Authority.

### How we are assured:

- 4.1 During the last year, we implemented our new Risk Reduction Process (RRP). This includes the delivery of our new Risk-Based Inspection Programme (RBIP), which is designed to help us continuously identify our highest risks and allocate suitable trained resources to then reduce that risk. The RRP will continue to develop its effectiveness because of updates to our Customer Relationship Management (CRM) operating system from a new external property database. We will continue to focus on the societal, commercial, domestic, Firefighter, heritage and environment risks within the community and utilise a range of proactive approaches including business engagement, partnership working, fire safety checks by crews, audit and enforcement activities by fire safety staff, to reduce risk and improve safety.
- 4.2 We communicate our inspection plans to our partners annually and consider their plans to ensure that we work effectively and collaboratively in a way that avoids multiple visits to the same premises by different enforcement agencies.
- 4.3 Fire Safety audits are always carried out by a qualified Fire Safety Officer to establish compliance with the requirements of the Order. The Service always aims to help businesses comply with fire safety legislation, however, at times it will enforce the law by implementing a formal procedure and will on occasion prosecute. This is always a last resort and the Service will continue to endeavour to avoid this course of action by working with Responsible Persons (RPs) including business owners/managers via a range of key interventions:
  - Fire Safety staff and operational crews offering proactive support to businesses to assist in complying with legislation, this includes the delivery of seminars and meetings with housing groups and resident associations, managing agents and Right to Manage companies.
  - Collaborating with our partners by supporting intelligence led inspections and multiagency operations targeting immigration and modern slavery to ensure the most vulnerable in our community are protected from exploitation.
  - Supporting economic growth and resilience of our local business communities by raising awareness of fire risk and engaging with responsible persons through a variety of initiatives including the development of Primary Authority Partnerships and the delivery of Fire Safety engagement events.
  - Developing Safer Living and Safer Care initiatives in partnership with the Care Quality Commission, to support the elderly and vulnerable to obtain safe and secure homes within a caring environment. This is achieved through both inspection of premises and engagement with duty holders promoting the person-centred approach to risk, the installation of sprinklers and promotion of new technology such as social alarms
  - Information provided digitally to support businesses and;
  - Actively supporting the National Fire Chief Council's calendar of events.

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<sup>4</sup> Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

- 4.4 The Fire Safety functions are delivered through a sustainable and adaptive structure that enables effective provision at all times of day. Services are delivered by professional staff and operational crews supported through a competency framework informed by best practice and responsive to the requirements of the National Framework.
- 4.5 We have developed a new Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with housing partners to enable us to effectively educate and support both our Local Authority Housing partners and Housing Organisations. With the overlap with the Housing Act 2004, it is vital that this joint working is effective, especially with the legislative changes post Grenfell that has resulted in High Rise Residential Blocks being a central part of our RRP.
- 4.6 The Service continues to promote Primary Authority Partnerships through the Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Act (RES Act) and continues to highlight the benefits of active Primary Authority Partnerships in East Sussex to improve Fire Safety compliance and support business growth. We have many partnerships confirmed, and more being developed by our PAP Manager. We are part of the Business Advice and Support Partnership (BAASP) which is a partnership of Regulatory Services across the South East covering Trading Standards, Fire Safety, Environmental Health and Licensing. BAASP shares knowledge, resources and expertise to provide the best support and advice for local businesses as part of the wider Primary Authority landscape.

<http://www.esfrs.org/business-safety/primary-authority-scheme/>

- 4.7 The service continues to support the Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety through the NFCC and implement the recommendations of Government's Building Safety Program. This includes the introduction of the Fire Safety Act 2022, the Building Safety Act 2022 and sub-Regulations, as well as the incoming Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2023. We continue to engage with partners and the community to educate and inform them about their responsibilities under this new legislation including publicity and communications campaigns. We have also responded to and continue to respond to the changes in how we enforce and support this legislation.

[Fire Safety Act 2021 and Fire Safety \(England\) Regulations 2022 ; East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service \(esfrs.org\)](http://www.esfrs.org/business-safety/fire-safety-act-2021-and-fire-safety-england-regulations-2022/)

- 4.8 We continue to promote the findings from our fire investigations so that risk assessments better identify sources of ignition and the benefits of active and passive protection. More details can be found on the following link:

<https://www.heads-up.biz/>

- 4.9 The Service continues to actively promote sprinklers and other new building safety initiatives such as secure information boxes, way finding signage, evacuation systems and simple measures to assist firefighters such as floor signage and plans. More detail on sprinklers can be found by following the link below:

<http://www.esfrs.org/business-safety/sprinklers/>

- 4.10 We recognise that in exceptional cases; where supported by evidence and it being in the public interest, there is a need to use an appropriate sanction where fire safety standards have not been maintained by a responsible person. Not only has ESFRS developed tools to ensure a consistent and appropriate use of prosecution and Simple Caution as sanctions, we have also developed the use of Informal Cautions, which the NFCC are looking to adopt nationally.

<http://www.esfrs.org/business-safety/business-safety-enforcement/>

- 4.11 The service is a statutory consultee under a range of legislation and the Fire Safety teams will continue to ensure they respond to consultations in a positive and timely manner as detailed in the Service response charter.

- 4.12 Our Fire Safety support team will continue to build on the Fire Safety engagement and initiatives library to enable local teams to deliver proactive and reactive business engagement activities increasing knowledge and understanding of fire safety in the business community. Typically, this involves identifying opportunities to engage and explain the requirements of the Order and other legislation at face-to-face events, with supporting material available on our internet site. Through the Business Rates funded initiative, the Service continues to provide the “Safer Business Training” scheme to further support this work.

<https://www.esfrs.org/business-safety/introduction-to-business-fire-safety-course/>

- 4.13 Our Protection Department has a comprehensive assurance process in place. All fire safety checks carried out by crews as checked by qualified fire safety officers. 5% of all fire safety activity is also quality assured. We also inform and encourage the community to feedback on our performance at every interaction by handing out feedback cards and providing survey links in all our email correspondence. The performance of the department is reported regularly through to SLT and the FA.

## 4.13 Grenfell Tower Improvement Plan

- 4.14 This year saw the further refinement of the ESFRS Improvement Plan following the publication of the 46 recommendations from phase 1 of the Grenfell Tower public inquiry. This included investment into a professional project management team reporting monthly through the GT Delivery Board and bi-monthly to the GT Strategic Board.
- 4.15 It has been of key importance to the Fire Authority and Service to pay particular attention to Sir Martin Moore-Bick's recommendations at granular level. This is because there are some specific actions identified for specific bodies and responsible persons i.e. London Fire Brigade, Metropolitan Police etc. However, the team have reported that there have been limited parts of the phase 1 report which are not directly attributable for East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service to discharge or attributable indirectly where the service has a moral obligation to influence and lead on. The oversight afforded by this governance model has provided excellent levels of assurance to the Fire Authority which continue to deliver the prioritised actions.
- 4.16 Steady improvement in the delivery of the priorities over the last 12 months September to September is shown across charts 2 and 3. These charts report both a refining of the number of deliverables (actions) and the percentage completion rates particularly in those which have presented a significant risk to the community, Firefighters and Corporate body
- 4.17 Data from the Building Risk Review has been transposed to our Site-Specific Risk Information immediately available on our mobile data terminals (MDT's) fitted to every frontline appliance. This multi-tiered improvement included investing in the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) database and replacement of our MDT's and along with the training delivered to all end users has been able to discharge many actions across several formal recommendations.
- 4.18 East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service now has the 4<sup>th</sup> highest number of premises considered high rise. This is the largest outside of a metropolitan area and these continue to grow in number across the main conurbations of Brighton and Hove, Eastbourne and Hastings.
- 4.19 We also now know our area has over 6000 mid-rise premises, many of which will not be provided with the additional measures expected in purpose-built high-rise buildings. Any contact, including following incidents and exercises is used as an opportunity to update our intelligence recorded on the CRM SSRI database.
- 4.20 Fire Survival Guidance and Evacuation concluded in July 2022 after face-to-face instruction for every workgroup and incident commander.
- 4.21 In addition to the 4 Smoke Hoods fitted to every standard frontline fire engine, high-reach Aerial Ladder Platform and Command Support Unit, we have invested in the provision of both Smoke Curtains to protect the means of escape stairwell and non-Intrinsically Safe Thermal Imaging Cameras (TIC's) for external thermal scanning when we attend a fire in a tall building. Every standard frontline appliance will now carry 1 each of these following the conclusion of our intensive face-to-face training regime.
- 4.22 This robust regime consists of 4 modules. The first 3 to concluding 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022 involve the use and deployment of the Smoke Curtains, the content of our new "Fires in Tall Buildings" (FiTB) Policy including external thermal scanning, application of a new tactical decision tool and how these should be amalgamated during 4 scenario-based tactical decision-making exercises. Module 4 will span across the delivery of these modules and will aim to conclude before 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023. Module 4 consists of 6 service-wide exercises at known tall buildings. Cross-border support will be imperative including external observers monitoring the performance of our teams against policy and training. A report of the debriefed outcomes will be presented to the GT Strategic Board in March 2023 to confirm compliance levels and thereby levels of operational assurance in this high-risk activity. This will conclude all very high and high rated priorities from our GT1 improvement plan.

4.23 Looking forward into 2023-24 business year, we aim to embed the ESFRS FiTB policy across W and Surrey Fire and Rescue Services as part of a planned collaboration with operational policie national guidance, assisting with borderless mobilising and efficiency through the Joint Fire Cont

4.24 We also aim to further improve our specific capability in dealing with fires in tall buildings using a collaborative approach to purchasing equipment such as lightweight, larger diameter hose and in tactical ventilation.

Chart 2: Action plan status summary September 2021

Priority	No. of actions	Complete (1)	On track	At risk	Off track	Not started	No action identified	% complete
Very High	88	17	10	1	0	22	38	5%
High	98	5	10	10	3	33	37	20%

Chart 3: Action plan status summary September 2022

Priority	No. of actions	Complete (1)	On track (2)	At risk (3)	Off track (4)	Not started (5)	No update	% complete	Monthly change
V. High	62	53	5	4	0	0	0	85 %	+ 1%
High	86	77	9	0	0	0	0	90 %	+ 20%
Medium	198	37	23	4	0	1	133	19%	-
Low	7	0	0	0	0	2	5	0 %	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>353</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>47 %</b>	<b>+ 5%</b>

Chart 4: Action plan status summary March 2023

Priority	No. of actions	Complete (1)	On track (2)	At risk (3)	Off track (4)	Not started (5)	No update	% complete	Monthly change
V. High	62	59	3	0	0	0	0	95 %	+ 5%
High	86	84	2	0	0	0	0	98 %	+1 %
Medium	203	53	21	4	0	0	125	26%	+ 1%
Low	7	0	0	0	0	2	5	0 %	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>55 %</b>	<b>+ 2%</b>

## 5. EMERGENCY RESPONSE

*“A fire and rescue authority must make provision for extinguishing fires, road traffic collisions and other emergencies by recruiting and training staff, providing services and equipment necessary efficiently to meet all normal requirements; make arrangements for dealing with calls and for summoning personnel; make arrangements for obtaining information and prevent or limit damage to property resulting from action taken”<sup>5</sup>.*

### How we are assured:

5.1 The data from the ORR enables us to understand that our IRMP 2020 – 2025 accurately reflects the fire and rescue related risks now and for the foreseeable future.

5.2 The ability for ESFRS to effectively and efficiently discharge its statutory duties under Sections 7 and 8 of the FRS Act relies on the Service investing in a fleet of 33 frontline fire engines. These state-of-the-art vehicles are equipped with a range of tools including Breathing Apparatus with telemetry to enable the best level of supervision for our Firefighters who crew them, Compressed Air Foam generating equipment (CAFS), battery operated rescue equipment, thermal imaging cameras, gas monitoring equipment etc.

5.3 **Operational Planning and Policy team**

The role of our central Planning and Policy team is to plan for the highest levels of operational preparedness to enable our crews to respond effectively to all the fire and rescue related risks identified in our IRMP. Using the thematic plan which is closely aligned to the IRMP and the 24 station risk profiles, the team work closely with our crews, Joint Fire Control staff, our Engineering and Health and Safety teams and representative bodies so we are assured that they have the best appliances, equipment and resources to deal with all foreseeable incidents.

5.4 **OP&P reported in July 2022 that of the 180-emergency response facing Policy documents maintained by ESFRS, they are 94.9% compliant with the 1923 strategic actions of the total number of National Operational Guidance (27).**

**Of the 72 (3.7%) partially compliant and 27 (1.4%) areas of non-compliant strategic actions, OP&P assess the requirement to comply with those when each Policy document is reviewed. This is reported at Operations Committee every 8 weeks.**

5.5 OP&P work with their colleagues in West Sussex, Surrey and Kent Fire and Rescue Services on a range of key areas of collaboration that the “4F” Strategic Leaders have committed to:

- Operational response policy (Aligned with all National Operational Guidance)
- Aligned Incident Command procedures and vehicles
- Aligned Fire Investigation procedures
- Aligned Breathing Apparatus procedures and equipment

5.6 **Fire Standards**

Following the publication of 12 Fire Standards by the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) throughout 2021-22, OP&P have completed four gap analyses for Operational Preparedness, Operational Learning, Fire Investigation and Emergency Planning and Resilience.

Along with colleagues from Training Centre, Protection, Prevention and Communications departments, progress on the action points surfaced from the 12 separate gap analyses are reported to our Assurance, Performance and Governance Group. (See Charts 4 and 5 as examples)

<https://www.firestandards.org/>

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<sup>5</sup> Fire and Rescue Services Act Section 7 & 8



# Chart 4



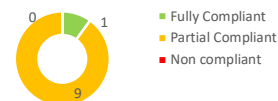
**NFCC**  
National Fire  
Chiefs Council

## OPERATIONAL PREPAREDNESS FIRE STANDARD IMPLEMENTATION TOOL

Please fill in the contact details below:

Fire and Rescue Service	East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service
Contact Name	Matt Elder
Contact Email Address	<a href="mailto:matthew.elder@esfrs.org">matthew.elder@esfrs.org</a>
Contact Phone Number	07931 374983

Overall Compliance with Standard



Criteria	Description	Priority			Impact			Compliance			
		Low	Medium	High	Low	Medium	High	Fully Compliant	Partially Compliant	Non Compliant	Chart
1	Undertake all appropriate risk assessments, as required under legislation, to prepare for an operational response	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	2	0	
2	Review existing cover models, resources, equipment and training against all appropriate risk assessments	0	1	4	1	0	4	0	5	0	
3	Carry out capabilities-based planning to support emergency preparedness and response from a national to a local level	0	3	5	0	5	3	4	4	0	
4	Determine their responsibilities for operational response and be fully prepared to deliver them	0	0	4	0	0	4	2	2	0	
5	Have a health and safety policy for the operational environment that clearly outlines the responsible parties and their obligations	0	0	9	0	0	9	8	1	0	
6	Undertake a review of how the organisation is structured and functions, to confirm its ability to support operational preparedness; if there are any gaps identified there should be a clear plan for making appropriate changes	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	
7	Develop and embed operational policies, procedures and tailored guidance based on the National Operational Guidance, unless by evidenced exception its content is not relevant to the service	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	
8	Deliver the strategic actions provided in the suite of National Operational Guidance, unless by evidenced exception a strategic action is not relevant to the service; the strategic gap analysis tool may be used to support this process	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	
9	Train its operational and fire control personnel to use the hazard and control measure approach provided in the National Operational Guidance, applying risk assessment, decision-making and risk management skills	0	0	3	0	0	3	0	3	0	
10	Align relevant policies, procedures and tailored guidance in preparation for working with other fire and rescue services or responder agencies	0	0	5	0	1	4	3	2	0	
<b>Total</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>0</b>	

# Chart 5



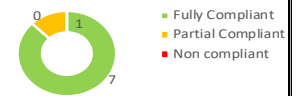
**NFCC**  
National Fire  
Chiefs Council

## OPERATIONAL LEARNING FIRE STANDARD

Please fill in the contact details below:

Fire and Rescue Service	ESFRS
Contact Name	Derek Hamilton
Contact Email Address	<a href="mailto:derek.hamilton@esfrs.org">derek.hamilton@esfrs.org</a>
Contact Phone Number	07866 101078

Overall Compliance with Standard



Criteria	Description	Priority			Impact			Compliance			
		Low	Medium	High	Low	Medium	High	Fully Compliant	Partially Compliant	Non Compliant	Chart
1	Comply with legislative duties to monitor, maintain and improve the health, safety, and wellbeing of its employees	0	6	3	0	1	8	5	4	0	
2	Recognise learning as a strategic level responsibility to embed learning into its management structures and processes and by appointing a responsible person for operational learning who: a. is responsible for ensuring that actions to support learning are implemented b. manages information received from the wider sector and determines what further action should be taken c. determines what information their service shares with the fire and rescue service or the wider sector, if appropriate d. makes clear how their service will engage with national level learning arrangements through an identified single point of contact	0	2	2	0	2	2	4	0	0	
3	Have a process in place to act on National Operational Learning Action Notes and Information Notes	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	
4	Have processes in place for capturing learning: a. at incidents b. post-incident c. as a result of training exercises undertaken both internally and multi-agency / cross border d. as a result of near miss or accident investigations that may be relevant to operational response e. from any other sources	0	1	4	0	1	4	3	2	0	
5	Evaluate learning to identify, assess and implement improvements	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	
6	Evidence that learning is evaluated and that improvements have been adopted and embedded	0	1	1	0	0	2	2	0	0	
7	Be able to demonstrate established mechanisms for sharing learning via any combination of the following: a. internally b. with neighbouring services and other responder agencies c. using the National Operational Learning system d. using the JESIP Joint Organisational Learning system	0	3	1	0	3	1	3	0	0	
8	Apply three fundamental approaches to managing operational learning: a. use National Operational Guidance as the common framework to identify the areas of operational activity where change may be required b. use a consistent approach to analyse and objectively compare what has happened against the control measures contained in National Operational Guidance which provide good practice c. maintain an open reporting culture, even when details of learning are sensitive; concentrating as National Operational Learning does, on the 'how' and 'why' of the learning and not the "who"	0	2	1	0	3	0	3	0	0	
9	Reference the NFCC National Operational Learning: Good practice guide for fire and rescue services in policies, procedures, tailored guidance and training	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	
<b>Total</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	

## 5.7 **Joint Fire Control**

Following a robust business case that considered our requirements to be financially accountable and the wider duty to collaborate, East Sussex Fire Authority committed to a Joint Fire Control run by Surrey Fire and Rescue Service. On November 17<sup>th</sup> 2021, ESFRS closed its control room and transitioned seamlessly to the state-of-the-art Joint Fire Control centre.

To ensure good governance and scrutiny, this arrangement was formalised in an agreement signed under Section 16 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act. The Section 16 agreement introduced a range of key performance indicators that are overseen at strategic, tactical and operational governance boards with representation from all 3 Services.

## 5.8 **Fire and Rescue Stations**

ESFRS responds to an extremely wide range of emergency incidents with its fleet operating from 24 fire stations across East Sussex and the City of Brighton and Hove. Stations are crewed by operational staff who work different shift patterns depending upon local risk:

- **Wholetime:** firefighters operate a 4-Watch system on stations 24 hours per day, over 2 shifts
- **Day Crewing:** during the daytime the station is crewed by wholetime firefighters who also live near to the station to provide emergency cover overnight
- **On-Call:** firefighters live or work in the local community near to the station and respond to emergency calls via alerters

## 5.9 **Operational Resilience Plan and Flexible Resource Pool**

A critical part of our IRMP 2020 – 2025 is the “Operational Resilience Plan” that focussed on improvements to our current response model of 15 immediately available frontline fire appliances. Its aim is to provide 18 immediately available and 6 resilience frontline appliances at the start of each day before demand. Development of this new Policy has many dependencies including the Dynamic Cover Tool which shows real-time Officer and Fire Appliance availability, Crewing policy changes following a move toward more efficient duty systems and introduction of the Flexible Resource Pool of 8 Crew Managers. This helps us to better align our resources to risk whilst reducing costs. Because of these interdependencies, delicate navigation through these issues necessarily extended implementation, rolling the delivery timeline into 2023.

## 5.10 **Operational Risk**

Section 7(2)(d) of the Fire and Rescue Services Act requires fire authorities to make arrangements for inspection of certain premises to obtain information for Firefighter and community safety.

5.11 As described in Section 4 above, we use the 7(2)(d) visits together with any relevant data collection methods to assist in dealing with an incident, informing command decision making and enhancing public and Firefighter safety, linking with improvements from the Grenfell Tower phase 1 action plan.

## 5.12 **Incident Debriefing and Organisational Learning**

Operational Assurance has been embedded into revised Service policy to organisational learning. The OP&P team review National Operational Learning (NOL) amongst 23 other information sources such as Fire Investigation reports, incident debriefs, Coroners reports etc. to ensure currency with national learning and share any learning within the Service via Core Brief or Health and Safety Bulletins if of a critically important nature and via “Assurance in Action” to spread awareness of key learning points to our response workforce.

**Assurance in Action has been lauded as an example of good practice during the 2022 HMICFRS inspection.**

5.13 As with SSRI and RBIP, the Operational Learning and Intelligence (OL&I) processes sit in the CRM database as the central repository of actions that can be received from 24 specific sources. The OL&I section have started to populate CRM with these prompts after analysis, and any actions such as reviewing of risk assessments, policies etc. are sent to the relevant managers to task and finish.

**This is reported to Operations Committee as a performance measure every 8 weeks.**

**5.14 Internal Audits and Assessments**

East Sussex County Council's Internal Audit provides our internal audit service, independently assessing the effectiveness of our governance, risk management and internal control arrangements. Internal Audit supports the role of the Scrutiny & Audit Panel. An annual internal audit plan is agreed by the Scrutiny & Audit Panel following consultation between the Senior Leadership Team and Internal Audit about the risk priorities and the results of this work is then reported back to the Panel. Individual reports on our systems are evaluated by internal audit and include recommendations to enhance controls, and then action plans are developed to address and implement audit recommendations.

5.15 The results of these internal audit reviews and the Head of Internal Audit's Annual Opinion are reported to the Scrutiny and Audit Panel.

**5.16 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS)**

We review our operational preparedness, policies and procedures as part of our business-as-usual activities in OP&P and the Service welcomed HMICFRS's Inspection team through June and July 2022. Following the formal publication of the inspection report in early 2023, we are encouraged with its outcome recognising how well we are providing operational effectiveness, protection and cultural norms through the use of our valued resources.

5.17 The Service uses the outcomes of the HMICFRS inspections to ensure our service wide improvement agenda continues to make progress, measured at the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and Operations Committee as appropriate. Of the 11 main areas of inquiry across the 3 pillars of Efficiency, Effectiveness and People, SLT's improvement plan will rightly focus on promoting our values and taking earlier action in monitoring working hours. These areas were identified as requiring improvement under the "People" pillar.

**5.18 Station Audits**

All 24 Stations have been audited in accordance with our Policy during February 2023 following a full delivery period throughout 2022. Following the conclusion of each inspection, outcomes are discussed with line managers at the time and then accessibly recorded on our computer network for the relevant managers and teams to maintain and improve.

5.19 In late 2021-22, the Station audit process was revised to cut down the quantity of duplication where compliance is recorded elsewhere and on more frequent basis than once every year. The new process focuses specifically on operational preparedness and Firefighter safety, themed on aspects of improvement identified from our Operational learning CRM database over the last 12-18 months. This year we will audit:

- Risk information gathering processes noting CRM developments
- Practical demonstration of working at height equipment
- Knowledge test of Operational procedures
- Health and Safety including thematic sampling

5.20 The audit team always give verbal feedback during the station audit followed by a report which is sent to the Group and Station Manager. The outcomes report and trend analysis was presented to Operations Committee in March 2023.

**5.21 Operations Committee**

The ACFO chairs an Operations Committee that considers corporate operational assurance, operational readiness, performance, policy, practice and training. This committee ensures that the Service is managing the oversight and delivery of all its responsibilities in respect of emergency response operations and has the necessary systems and policies to ensure adoption of good practice and compliance with statutory responsibilities. The Operations Committee reviews operational performance including the outcomes of national, regional and local incident debriefs along with the outcomes from the ESFRS station audit and inspection programme.

## 6. OTHER EMERGENCIES

The requires ESFRS to make arrangements for dealing with emergencies other than fires and road traffic collisions which may require some functions to be discharged outside the authority's area.<sup>6</sup> The duties require authorities, where provision of resources has been made by central government, to respond to incidents, both within and outside the authority area, involving Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear hazards, Urban Search and Rescue and serious or wide-area flooding.<sup>7</sup>

The Order made under Section 9, complements the National Mutual Assistance Protocol, to which we are a signatory. This requires fire authorities to make a reasonable response to requests for assistance in relation to any large-scale emergency outside of their area.

### How we are assured:

- 6.1 ESFRS maintain two specialist assets to enable us to deal with both local and national incidents of the type described above.
- 6.2 We house a Mass Decontamination Unit (MDU) at Eastbourne Fire Station that is crewed and supported if required by staff from surrounding stations to manage the decontamination of Firefighters and large numbers of people if necessary. ESFRS also house a High-Volume Pump set (HVP) now based at Seaford Fire Station as an efficiency improvement following the IRMP 2020 – 2025.
- 6.3 **The Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles (JESIP)**  
ESFRS and blue-light partners have delivered joint command training to commanders from all three emergency services to improve the way we work together. The concept is embedded into our risk assessments and guidance and we aim to test and exercise jointly in realistic environments, following the relaxing of Covid 19 restrictions.

**Our 2022 JESIP audit identifies this as a key area of concern and following the analysis of the Manchester Arena Inquiry publication, a report outlining the need for improvements and proposals for implementation is being presented at the Operations Committee in January 2023.**

- 6.4 We have signed a range of Memorandums of Understanding with partner agencies with the overriding premise of enhancing each other's resilience. The list of MoU's can be evidenced on our intranet page using the following link:

[https://esfrsorg.sharepoint.com/sites/ESFRSIntranet/SitePages/Memorandums-of-Understanding-\(MOUs\).aspx](https://esfrsorg.sharepoint.com/sites/ESFRSIntranet/SitePages/Memorandums-of-Understanding-(MOUs).aspx)

**A new Service Level Agreement between the 4 South-East FRS's and SECamb has been drafted and is due for sign-off in early 2023 replacing the extant MoU. This document introduces more contractually binding arrangements for the specific range of activities separated out in 6 specifically detailed appendices such as gaining entry, support to other agencies and medical care.**

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<sup>6</sup> Fire and Rescue Services (Emergencies) Order 2007

<sup>7</sup> Fire and Rescue Services Act Section 9

## 7. MUTUAL AID

Fire and Rescue authorities are required to enter into reinforcement schemes with other fire and rescue authorities, for securing mutual assistance. Section 16 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act enables fire and rescue authorities to enter into arrangements for the discharge of their functions by others.<sup>8</sup>

### How we are assured

- 7.1 ESFRS have a Section 16 agreement in place for Surrey Fire and Rescue Service to discharge our duties for handling emergency calls. We also have a collaboration agreement with Surrey Fire and Rescue Service and West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service along with a confidentiality agreement for suppliers.
- 7.2 ESFRS have also entered into a series of key Memorandum's of Understanding (MoU's) and a Service Level Agreement with selected partners where there are mutual benefits to both organisations in the interests of efficiency and effectiveness. These include:

South-East Coast Ambulance Service	SLA with 6 appendices: Due to sign appendices A, D, E and F (Not intending to sign appendices B or C which cover Immediate Emergency Care and Co-responding)
Environment Agency	Hazardous Area Response Team interoperability
	Co-operation for Flood response
	Pollution Incident Prevention and Mitigation
UK Power Networks	Preventing Waste and Industry site fires
	Specific working protocols in order that incidents requiring firefighting and/or response (incidents) are dealt with in a systematic and effective manner
Sussex and Surrey Police	Drone operations
	Fire and Arson Investigation
	Explosives – Information sharing
Police/ SECAmb/ WSFRS	Inter-Agency Liaison Officers – Information and intelligence sharing
Kent and Medway Fire Authority	Large Animal Rescues
HM Maritime and Coastguard Agency	Interoperability & training
Coroners Society of England and Wales	Constructive co-operation
Operation Florian	Transfer of appliances and equipment
Multiple agencies	Work-related death protocols

<sup>8</sup> Fire and Rescue Services Act Sections 13 & 16; Civil Contingencies Act 2004; Policing and Crime Act 2017

## 8. HEALTH & SAFETY ASSURANCE

The Health, Safety & Wellbeing team continue to give advice to all employees on matters of health and safety, as well as advising managers on legal compliance, policy formulation, training and safety performance monitoring activities.

The effective management of health and safety, leading to fewer accidents involving injury and time taken off work, is beneficial to staff and an investment which helps ESFRS achieve the high standards which the people of East Sussex and Brighton & Hove have come to expect. We are fully committed to achieving the government targets for health and safety laid out in the document "Revitalising Health and Safety".

### How we are assured

- 8.1 Each employee is given information, instruction and training as is necessary to enable the safe performance of their work activities. Adequate facilities and arrangements have been developed and are well embedded in Policy and training to enable employees and their representatives to raise issues of health and safety at work since it is via an effective partnership that successful health and safety management can best be achieved.
- 8.2 ESFRS is reviewing its current H&S management system to fully align this with HSG65 to ensure minimum statutory compliance and to make the system more user-friendly. The Health, Safety & Wellbeing Policy records all clearly defined management responsibilities and the arrangements in place to assess and manages the risks arising from its activities. The Service has a robust consultation process to ensure it consults its employees on matters affecting H&S and provides suitable and sufficient training and information to its employees. There is a positive health and safety culture, achieved through transparent policies and data sharing with its staff and Trade Unions, recognised in the Health, Safety & Wellbeing Committee and very active Workplace Safety Representative meetings, with local Workplace Safety Reps volunteering to participate in project working groups e.g. contaminants, manual handling.
- 8.3 We are planning to develop and implement an electronic H&S system which will support processes for all aspects of H&S delivery and compliance.
- 8.4 As part of the H&S Management System there is a programme of audits and inspections. The audits are based on the NFCC Inter Fire and Rescue Service Health and Safety Audit Tool, based on HSG65 and its performance indicators. There is also an annual programme of station audits, run jointly alongside the Operations, Planning and Policy Department and inspections inform the annual review of H&S Policy and performance. The audit and performance data is reported to the Health, Safety & Wellbeing Committee, Workplace Safety Representatives Committee and the Operations Committee for scrutiny.
- 8.5 During the Coronavirus pandemic, the Health and Safety team were central to advising the COVID Working Group, with the development and maintenance of its organisational and individual workplace risk assessments all in line with Government guidance. The success of these can be measured by the limited impact to the availability of our crews and vehicles ready for immediate emergency deployment and our day-to-day prevention, protection and operational preparedness activities.
- 8.6 ESFRS has an Occupational Health team that works collaboratively with Surrey and Sussex Police Service and Surrey Fire & Rescue Service to support the health and wellbeing of staff. ESFRS also has a Trauma Risk Management (TRiM) process that continues to develop as managers and staff understand the benefits. The ACFO is currently the National Fire Chief Councils Mental Health Lead and there are two active mental health campaigns accessed via our Health, Safety and Wellbeing intranet webpages; "Healthy Mind" and "Healthy Body". The Service has a network of 20 trained peer supporters who have all undertaken the MIND Wellbeing Champion Training Package, with 4 of those Wellbeing Champion also having completed training as Mental Health First Aiders. Further Mental Health First Aid training is due to be rolled out in April 2023.

## 9. CIVIL CONTINGENCIES ACT 2004

Under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 fire and rescue authorities, through local and regional resilience forums where appropriate, must work in co-operation with other emergency services and agencies to ensure an effective response to a full range of emergencies from localised incidents to catastrophic emergencies.

East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service are a category 1 responder under the Civil Contingences Act 2004. We are required to formulate business continuity plans that ensure the continuation of our priority activities in the event of an emergency (an event or situation that threatens serious damage to human welfare in a place in the UK, the environment of a place in the UK or war or terrorism which threatens serious damage to the security of the UK). We are also required to consider these risks in planning what resources we need to prevent their occurrence, protect life, premises and the environment from the effects and respond to them in the event they occur.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/preparation-and-planning-for-emergencies-responsibilities-of-responder-agencies-and-others>

### How we are assured

- 9.1 A cross-service Assurance, Performance and Governance Group (APGG) oversees the Service's responsibilities in relation to business continuity and this is chaired by The Deputy Chief Fire Officer. All Service departments maintain their business continuity plans that are available on our intranet and each department Manager has responsibility for ensuring their staff are aware of the potential impacts and activities in the event that any identified hazard emerges.
- 9.2 We have agreed levels of operational service that ensure our defined prioritised activities can be delivered so far as is reasonably practicable. These are:
- Delivering community & statutory fire safety (Preventing emergencies as our primary priority);
  - Responding to 999 emergencies (and learning from them to prevent re-occurrence);
  - Supporting national resilience (in other Counties at larger, more protracted incidents) and;
  - All support functions that enable the above

Further details on how we plan for emergencies can be found here:

<https://www.esfrs.org/about-us/publication-of-information/strategies-plans-and-performance-information/planning-for-emergencies/>

- 9.3 The Sussex Resilience Forum (SRF) is a multi-agency partnership made up of representatives from local public services, including the blue-light emergency services, local authorities, the NHS, the Environment Agency and other partners. These risks can affect the economy, cause disruption and impact on the day to day lives of our community and therefore understanding these risks within the County and the City provides a clearly defined baseline for us to develop our provision of service to the community we serve.
- 9.4 ESFRS is an active leading partner of the Sussex Resilience Forum (SRF) and as such continues to horizon scan all risks linked to the national risk register. The SRF maintain specific risk plans relating to the UK's exit from the European Union. ESFRS consider the risk to heritage sites, the environment and the continuing risk from terrorism within its IRMP. The National Risk Assessment is given careful consideration by the SRF and the Service to monitor any new risks identified through these processes.
- 9.5 ESFRS consider the wider risk assessments included within the SRF's Community Risk Register (CRR) in our IRMP to ensure that proposed changes to our service delivery complement, as far as possible, the strategies of other local responders and central government agencies. We make significant contributions to the preparation, planning and response to a wide range of events that are considered as part of the CRR.



- 9.6 We also plan for, and occasionally respond to, incidents of such scale and/or complexity that local resources may be insufficient even when taking into account mutual aid agreements. ESFRS's allocation includes a MDU at Eastbourne Fire Station and following the ORR, the HVP has been relocated to Seaford Fire Station improving service/national availability.
- 9.7 ESFRS will take all reasonable steps to ensure that in the event of a service interruption, agreed mission critical services will be maintained and normal services restored, as soon as reasonably possible. To ensure that this happens, it is Service policy to have in place robust business continuity recovery plans that are regularly reviewed and tested, and key staff appropriately trained to manage these procedures.
- 9.8 For a short-term disruption, Directorate Heads will lead on recovery arrangements as detailed within the various Business Continuity Plans in place. For long term/corporate level disruptions, a formal Emergency Management Team (EMT) will be stood up to manage the recovery; this will be overseen by a Strategic level manager. ESFRS plan biannual Emergency Management Team exercises to test the latest major loss of staff plans - the lessons learned will be incorporated into a final revision of the business continuity plan.
- 9.9 The ESFRS Business Continuity Management process aligns to the requirements of the ISO 22301 Standard. All Directorate and Departmental continuity plans have been reviewed and remain current, published on our intranet under the Operational Support and Resilience directorate webpage.

## 10. LOCALISM ACT 2011

The Localism Act takes as its starting point the existing statutory powers of fire and rescue authorities and then gives the Fire Authority the power to do:

- Anything they consider appropriate for the purposes of carrying out their functions
- Anything they consider appropriate for purposes incidental to carrying out their functions
- Anything they consider appropriate for purposes indirectly incidental to carrying out their functions

It also added three new sections to the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, which allows Fire and Rescue Authorities to place a charging policy in support of its strategy to deal with unwanted fire signals received from automatic fire detection systems. The charging power allows us a level of discretion in that we may decide not to charge at all, as is the case now, or we may charge different amounts to different groups of recipients when we respond to specific categories of calls.

### How we are assured:

- 10.1 ESFRS maintains a Memorandum of Understanding with Kent & Medway Fire Authority which sees the Service undertaking large animal rescues on behalf of Kent across a large area of Kent and for which the Service is able to charge.
- 10.2 Under section 38(1) of the Act we are required to prepare a Pay Policy Statement. The Authority is responsible for ensuring that that the pay policy statement sets out the issues relating to the pay of the workforce and in particular the senior officers and the lowest paid employees. This ensures that there is the appropriate accountability and transparency of the salaries of our senior staff. The purpose of the statement is to provide greater transparency on how taxpayers' money is used in relation to the pay and rewards for public sector staff.

For more information please use the following link:

<https://www.esfrs.org/about-us/publication-of-information/>