



Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service

# Operational Self Assessment 2016

Working to protect. Acting to save.



# Hertfordshire Fire & Rescue Service

## Operational Assessment

### Self - Assessment

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## County Profile

### Geography

Hertfordshire is situated just to the north of Greater London and stands astride key routes between London and the major cities of the Midlands and the North. It borders the counties of Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Essex as well as Greater London and is one of six counties in the East of England region. It covers an area of 634 sq. miles (1,634 sq. km) and has a population of just over 1.1 million. There is one city (St Albans) and a variety of market towns, industrial towns, new towns, commuter villages and rural villages.

Over half of the County's land is Green Belt and there are significant amounts of open space between settlements, making Hertfordshire an attractive and desirable place to live and work whilst avoiding many of the disadvantages of urban life. The four largest and most populous areas in the County are Watford (85,250), Hemel Hempstead (101,455), Stevenage (101,667) and the city of St Albans (102,348). Additionally the four Lea Valley towns of Broxbourne Borough (Broxbourne, Hoddesdon, Cheshunt and Waltham Cross) have combined to form a large urban area housing approximately 95,750 people.

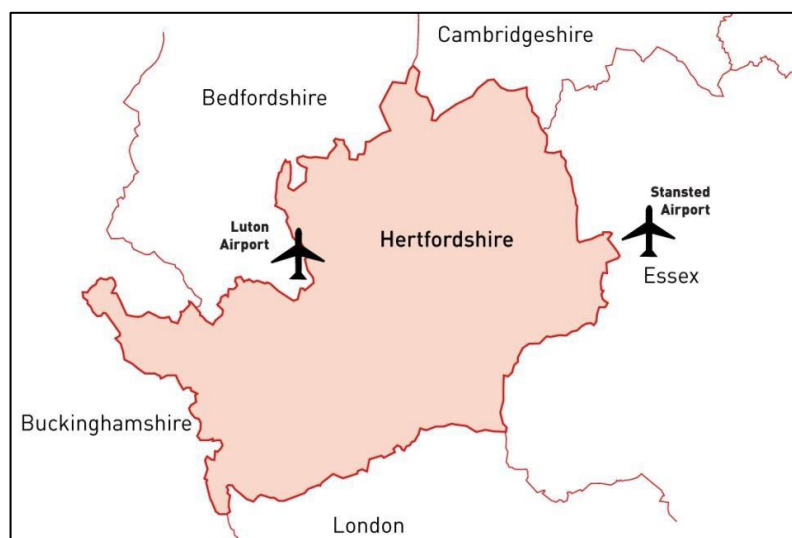


Figure 1 County map and neighbouring authorities

### Population

Between 2001 and 2011 the national population increased by 7.1%, the largest growth in England and Wales in any 10-year period since census taking began. The increase in Hertfordshire's population during this period was greater than the average at 7.9%, rising by 82,000 from 1,034,000 in 2001 to 1,116,000 in 2011. The percentage increases for Welwyn Hatfield and Watford districts were significantly greater, both at

13.3%. Hertfordshire's population is projected to increase by 276,400 (24%) by 2039, placing additional demand on all public services. Projections for Welwyn Hatfield district are particularly high with a 38.7% population increase forecast between 2011 and 2031.

## Transport

The County has a number of major road and rail links that form key arterial routes in and out of the capital to the Midlands and the North. These include the M1, A1 (M), M25, A10, A41, A5 and the West Coast, Midland and East Coast Mainlines. There are no airports in Hertfordshire but London Luton and London Stansted are both close to the County border.

Traffic levels are high with daily flow rates on motorways, trunk roads and principal (A) roads over twice the national average. The number of HGVs (heavy goods vehicles over 3.5 tonnes) is significant with motorways and trunk roads carrying three times the national average and principal (A) roads almost double national levels. Traffic flows in the County are forecast to grow by around 12.7% between 2014 and 2031. The majority of Hertfordshire's rail users are commuters to central London leading to capacity problems and overcrowding at peak hours.

## Local Services

Local services are provided through a two-tier authority system; Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) and ten District Councils.

### Hertfordshire Fire & Rescue Service District Areas



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Figure 2 County map showing District councils

## Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service

Hertfordshire Fire & Rescue Service (HFRS) has 29 fire stations strategically placed across the County which provide a swift and effective 24/7 emergency response to: extinguish fires, with the aim of protecting life and property; rescue people from road traffic collisions; and deal with other emergencies such as, wide-area flooding, chemical incidents and large animal rescues. HFRS work closely with Hertfordshire communities and businesses to reduce the risk of fires and other emergencies occurring and to help prevent crime and disorder.

HFRS also play a major role in civil protection, working in partnership with other public bodies and private sector organisations to ensure an integrated approach to dealing with large scale civil emergencies such as terrorist attacks and major rail or air accidents.

HFRS is the major component of the Community Protection Directorate (CPD) within HCC, which is also the Fire and Rescue Authority. The CPD, which was established on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011, brought together HFRS, Resilience, Trading Standards and the County Community Safety Unit.

The formation of the CPD provided the opportunity to reframe community protection work in Hertfordshire with HFRS Prevention & Protection (Enforcement) teams, Trading Standards and the County Community Safety Unit merging to form Joint Protective Services (JPS). Cross functional teams were created within JPS focussed on Hertfordshire businesses and residents, and frontline services are able to exploit the synergies between teams to deliver on key projects.

### Equality and Diversity

Equality and Diversity is not an 'add-on' to HFRS's day-to-day work, but a fundamental element of its purpose and functioning and the Service is committed to the HCC vision and priorities for equality and diversity across Hertfordshire and within its workforce as set out in the HCC Equality Strategy. A new four year draft strategy was released for consultation on the 25<sup>th</sup> July 2016 in accordance with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) of the Equality Act 2010.

### Service Delivery

HFRS senior management follows a functional structure. The Chief Fire Officer (CFO) leads the Strategic Leadership Group (SLG) which defines and communicates the allocation of responsibilities, accountability, authority and resources to ensure the effective and efficient implementation of all of the organisations functions, statutory duties, and policy. The management of service delivery is through five District Commands formed from the pairing of neighbouring District Local Authorities. HFRS staff are based largely within the communities they serve which has enabled them to establish strong, positive relationships with residents and businesses. These



relationships provide the organisation with a good understanding of their individual needs and enable it to work in partnership in order to address local problems and priorities.

The SLG actively promote and encourage all staff to contribute ideas and suggestions for new ways in which HFRS can build upon and extend its community engagement activities to ensure that its services remain appropriate, effective, efficient and fully inclusive and reflective of the diverse make up of its communities.

## Strategic Framework

HCC is part of Hertfordshire Forward, the countywide local strategic partnership which brings together all the key agencies in the county to improve the quality of life and wellbeing of Hertfordshire residents. This partnership has developed the Hertfordshire Forward Ambition which articulates how they want Hertfordshire to be and principles to work by. This is used to underpin the *HCC Corporate Plan 2013/17: Hertfordshire County of Opportunity* which lays out the key conditions that the Council will encourage to deliver their ambitions for Hertfordshire, together with the high-level priorities that will be pursued to promote those conditions and achieve the objectives set out in the Forward Ambition. HFRS contributes to the achievement of these objectives through the provision of prevention, protection and response services and partnerships with key agencies.

Other factors, in addition to the priorities set out by the County Council that influence what HFRS does include: the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004; the National Fire and Rescue Service Framework Document; the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005; the Civil Contingencies Act 2004; the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974; and the Fire and Rescue Service Equality Framework.

The Service's strategic aims and objectives, incorporated in the CPD Corporate Plan 2013-2018, and HCC Fire Authority Integrated Risk Management Plan 2014-2018 (IRMP) demonstrate how HFRS intends to meet all of these requirements. These plans cover all aspects of the organisation's work and its vision "***Through service delivery and working in partnership, we aim to save life, reduce risk, improve community safety, reduce crime, protect the environment, and support Hertfordshire's economy***" and help to focus attention on the key areas to achieve our mission "***Working to protect. Acting to save***".

## HFRS Strategic Aims

Aims		Objectives
<b>Plan &amp; Respond to Emergencies</b>	Our aim is to plan for local, regional and national emergencies and to respond quickly and effectively when they happen.	To respond quickly and effectively to emergencies
		To reduce unwanted calls
		Ensure that the best possible resources are allocated on a risk basis
		Ensure arrangements are in place for major incidents
<b>Prevent &amp; Protect</b>	Our aim is to minimise risk to those who live, work and travel in Hertfordshire. We aim to prevent emergencies from happening in the first place, and protect citizens and businesses from harm through our enforcement activities.	To reduce fires, road traffic collisions, other emergencies, deaths and injuries
		To work in partnership to make Hertfordshire safer and support health and wellbeing
		To achieve a safe and just trading environment, supporting the Hertfordshire economy and helping to reduce crime
		To target our prevention, education, enforcement and protection work
<b>Be an Excellent Organisation</b>	Our aim is to provide the best possible service to Hertfordshire by maintaining professional standards, continuously improving our services and keeping costs down.	To deliver excellent performance and value for money
		To put communities at the heart of what we do, understand their needs and deliver an accessible service
		To maintain a competent, professional workforce who learn from experiences, adapt to change and are representative of the communities we serve
		To reduce our impact on the environment

## Performance

The table below details the level of operational activity over a three year period, 20013/14 to 2015/16 and shows an eight year comparison to outline the overall trends in levels of operational activity.

Performance measure	2008/09	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	% change 2013/14 to 2015/16	% change 2008/09 to 2015/16
Total incidents	10624	8890	8230	8633	-3%	-19%
Primary Fires	1640	1339	1298	1290	-4%	-21%
Secondary Fires	1567	985	1010	1062	8%	-32%
All Deliberate Fires	1686	816	923	1039	27%	-38%
Deliberate Primary Fires	536	234	280	311	33%	-42%
Deliberate Secondary Fires	1150	582	643	728	25%	-37%
Dwelling Fires	607	588	527	512	-13%	-16%
Deaths from Fire	3	3	8	4	N/A	N/A
Injuries from Fire	91	49	56	49	Equal	-46%
False Alarms due to Automated Fire Alarm systems	3128	2719	2324	2508	-8%	-20%
Malicious False Alarms	188	72	69	69	-4%	-63%
Non-domestic Fires	330	195	179	180	-8%	-45%
Special Services	2510	2165	1926	2028	-6%	-19%

In 2015/16 there were four fire deaths. HFRS has fully investigated these fires and as a result it is channelling further energies into targeting preventative activities and even closer working with partner agencies to reduce the likelihood of fatality from fire.

HFRS undertakes extensive benchmarking activity against National Family group and County Council Fire and Rescue Authority comparators.

There are 45 Fire and Rescue Services nationally and benchmarking against this group gives an overview of performance.

Family Group Fire and Rescue Services are nationally prescribed groups with similar geographic and demographic features that ensures 'like for like' comparisons.

The comparison between County Council Fire and Rescue Services enables comparisons between organisations with similar governance and structural arrangements.

As can be seen from the Benchmark results for 2014/15 in the table overleaf, HFRS performs well across a range of performance indicators with performance in relation to Family Group and other County Council Fire and Rescue Authorities providing the best comparators.



	Measure	<sup>1</sup> Ranking 2014/15		
		National	Family Group	County Council FRAs
Incident	All Fires	5 / 45	3 / 14	2 / 14
	Primary Fires	9 / 45	4 / 14	4 / 14
	Secondary Fires	14 / 45	2 / 14	8 / 14
	All Deliberate Fires	21 / 45	4 / 14	10 / 14
	Deliberate Primary Fires	18 / 45	5 / 14	8 / 14
	Deliberate Secondary Fires	21 / 45	5 / 14	10 / 14
	Dwelling Fires	17 / 45	6 / 14	7 / 14
	False Alarms due to Automated Fire Alarm systems	14 / 45	5 / 14	5 / 14
	Malicious False Alarms	6 / 45	3 / 14	3 / 14
	Fatal Casualties	34 / 45	11 / 14	9 / 14
	Non-fatal Casualties	22 / 45	7 / 14	10 / 14
	Non-domestic fires	10 / 45	5 / 14	5 / 14
	Resource	Operational Staff	16 / 45	6 / 14
% Senior Managers to All Staff		18 / 45	7 / 14	6 / 14
Pumping Appliances		13 / 45	7 / 14	2 / 14

In addition to fire specific measures, HFRS is a major contributor in the prevention of road traffic collisions (RTC). There are many examples of local initiatives targeted at high risk groups and HFRS is working at both the Strategic and Practitioner levels of the Local Road Safety Partnerships. This work has contributed to a reduction in the number of RTC fatalities, which have reduced from 16 in 2011 to 7 in 2015.

## Budget – Value for Money

HFRS keeps budget and financial issues under close scrutiny and has a successful track record in terms of reviewing and reducing costs and reallocating finance to areas of the greatest need. As the leading member of the CPD, HFRS plays a full and active part in the HCC Integrated Planning process. There is a clear timetable involving CPD in County wide budget discussions via the HCC Strategic Management Board and Policy & Resource Officers Group. Since 2011/12 the Directorate budget has reduced by 20.73% from £44.45m to £35.24m in 2015/16.

The Directorate has continued to successfully and actively reduce risk to the communities in Hertfordshire including significant reduction of emergency calls. However this has created additional pressure on the requirement for realistic training on

<sup>1</sup> Source CIPFA Fire Statistics 2014/15, Fire Statistics Monitor 2014/15

a scale not previously necessary. Despite this and the ever expanding role of the Fire and Rescue Service in terms of its contribution to the wider community agenda, HFRS has successfully brought its budget in on target every year and become one of the most cost effective Fire and Rescue Services to operate. The Chartered Institute for Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Value for Money (VfM) statistics, based on 2014/15 budgets, show HFRS as the fourth lowest cost per head of the population of the fourteen County Council FRSs in England, with a budgeted expenditure of **£32.73** per head of the population.

Cost Rank	County Council FRSs	<sup>2</sup> Budget cost per head £
1	Suffolk	29.22
2	West Sussex	30.02
3	Norfolk	30.54
4	<b>Hertfordshire</b>	<b>32.73</b>
5	Lincolnshire	32.83
6	Northamptonshire	33.53
7	Surrey	34.32
8	Gloucestershire	34.56
9	Warwickshire	34.80
10	Cumbria	40.23
11	Oxfordshire	40.73
12	Cornwall	47.08
13	Northumberland	48.64
14	Isle of Wight	50.83
-	<b>Average of all County Council FRSs</b>	<b>37.14</b>

The 2014/15 CIPFA VfM average for English County Council FRSs was **£37.14** per head of the population, **£4.41** more than HFRS. An additional **£5.09 million** would need to be invested for the Service to reach the average, which equates to an increase of over **13%** of the total HFRS budget for 2014/15.

<sup>2</sup> CIPFA Value for Money (VfM) Toolkit 2014/15 – 2014/15 Budgeted Figures

# 1 Community Risk Management

**How well does the Authority understand the local context and identify, plan for and prioritise the risks faced by the community?**

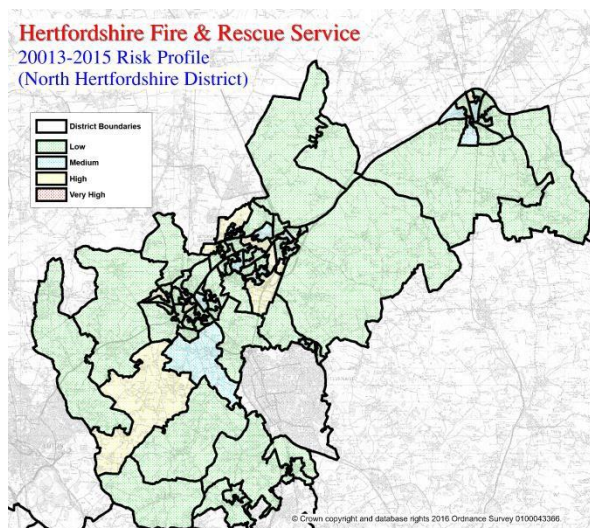
Key Area of Assessment	Descriptor of current level of performance
1.1 Does the FRA have an effective, evidence based risk strategy that reflects the diverse nature of the community, and identifies and prioritises those most at risk through its IRMP?	Advanced
1.2 Does the FRA use the outcomes of its risk analysis effectively and efficiently to plan, prepare and successfully implement and deliver prevention, protection, call management and incident support, response, health, safety, training and development activities within its IRMP?	Established
1.3 Does the FRA have a robust process for measuring and evaluating the effectiveness and improving performance of its risk analysis process?	Established

**1.1 Does the FRA have an effective, evidence based risk strategy that reflects the diverse nature of the community, and identifies and prioritises those most at risk through its IRMP?**

1.1.1. HFRS regards itself as having well developed, effective risk analysis processes which it uses to identify and prioritise those members of the community who are most at risk

## Use of Evidence

1.1.2. The CPD Corporate Plan 2013-2018 and IRMP 2014-2018 set out the key influences and legislative framework directing the Service and the organisation's strategic framework which includes the delivery of a network of services in partnership with key agencies. HFRS will begin a comprehensive review in 2016/17 of its IRMP to ensure that attendance standards, crewing arrangements, the location of fire stations and allocation of



resources reflect changes to risk profiles and the built environment. The review is designed to ensure that HFRSs structure and associated service delivery and support arrangements meet existing and future operational needs whilst also ensuring the provision of an effective, efficient, and economic service. The outcomes of the IRMP review, including stakeholder feedback, will be used to develop a revised corporate plan that articulates the activities and services that HFRS and the wider CPD are committed to deliver in order to address the needs and priorities of Hertfordshire's communities.

1.1.3. The use of various data sources including Mosaic and Exeter data combined with local intelligence and fire activity data provides a detailed profile of Hertfordshire's community. Risk profiling enables HFRS to target prevention work, and run targeted campaigns for recruiting retained firefighters and volunteers. HFRS has continually improved the collection of risk and demographic information over recent years. HFRS has a robust and resilient information management team that uses statistical information to assess risk to the community. JPS teams comprising of Trading Standards and Fire & Rescue personnel carry out joint inspections at premises which may be at risk and/or are contravening legislation. This joined up approach to inspection, together with co-location of analyst teams, where analysts from across CPD literally sit alongside each other has facilitated the sharing and pooling of intelligence.

1.1.4 HFRS is able to better target groups through community profiling, targeting the most at-risk groups and tailoring the service it provides to make them safe.

## **Community Understanding**

1.1.5 HFRS has a thorough understanding of the communities it serves and extensive demographic data is contained in the CPD Corporate Plan, IRMP and District Plans. This knowledge is used to inform frontline activity. HFRS uses a model which quantifies risk according to rolling three year incident data, mosaic types and indices of multiple deprivation, which enables it to identify high risk super output areas.

### ***Case Study - North Herts Minority Ethnic Forum 'FIREFIT' Project***

The crew at Hitchin Fire Station completed a very successful project working with groups of people both young and old at North Hertfordshire Minority Ethnic Forum (NHMEF).

Over 76 children participated in various programmes to increase their awareness about health, safety and active life styles with very positive feedback received from parents who were delighted about the project.

The programme incorporated fitness, team building and group working sessions, and was followed by a number of talks designed to deliver a positive message to the varied communities who regularly use the centre. These talks included input on fire safety in the home, dangers of cooking methods (hot oil demo), road safety, healthy eating and community awareness.

- 1.1.6 Data is mapped and analysed at Service level, and communicated through District Plans. This information is used to effectively target prevention activity at a local level.
- 1.1.7 Staff demonstrate a good understanding of the specific needs of their local community, and diversity and equalities training is embedded within the Service. This wider understanding and local engagement is evidenced by the many projects and initiatives that are undertaken by stations/districts which recognise the individual needs of the communities and seek to address both fire safety issues and wider community priorities and problems.
- 1.1.8 HFRS has identified areas, which are high risk in terms of meeting attendance times to fires and other emergencies. TSM Phoenix mapping together with Mosaic data formed part of the underpinning evidence for work leading to the closure of Bushey retained duty fire station in 2014 and implementation of the three Day Crewing Plus stations at Potters Bar, Rickmansworth and Baldock & Letchworth. HFRS now uses Cadcorp workload modeller to provide enhanced coverage and scenario information.
- 1.1.9 HFRS manages and uses a 7(2)(d)<sup>3</sup> database to record and deliver risk information to crews. The database includes CAD drawings and risk critical information for all high risk commercial and high rise buildings, drawing on intelligence from across the Directorate including fire safety. The data, which is subject to continuous review, is held on mobile data terminals (MDT) on front-line appliances, ensuring that crews have the most current building plans and risk information at the scene.

**1.2 Does the FRA use the outcomes of its risk analysis effectively and efficiently to plan, prepare and successfully implement and deliver prevention, protection, call management and incident support, response, health, safety, training and development activities within its IRMP?**

- 1.2.1. HFRS believes that it effectively examines the outcomes of risk analysis and uses these to target and implement its prevention, protection, call management, incident support, response, health, safety, training and developmental activities.

## **Target and Distribution of Resources**

- 1.2.2. HFRS and the wider Directorate articulates and manages its strategic level projects and activities through an annual Directorate Action Plan which is informed by the priorities set out within the CPD Corporate Plan. The golden thread throughout the organisation ensures that a robust planning cycle based on risk information links Assistant Chief Officer / Assistant Director Plans to district/station and department work plans and ultimately individual employee Performance Management & Development Scheme (PMDS) plans. Each plan

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<sup>3</sup> **7(2)(d) inspections** - Section 7(2)(d) of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 requires fire authorities to make arrangements for inspection of certain premises to obtain information. These inspections are known as 7(2)(d) inspections.

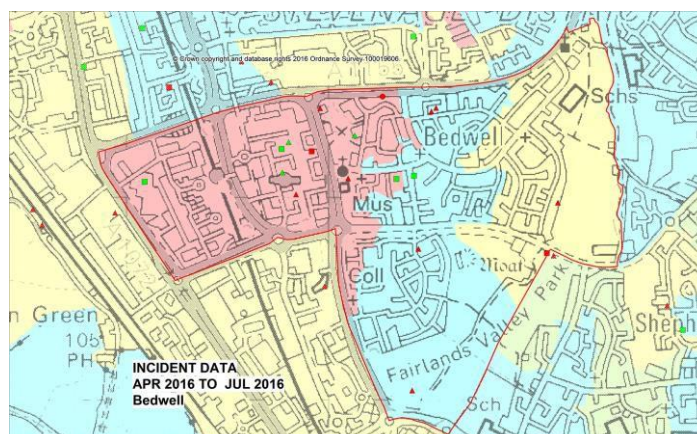
shows the contribution towards the achievement of the Service's overall objectives, ensuring there are clear lines of accountability to drive improvement forward.

- 1.2.3 In 2015, HFRS reduced the number of flexi duty officers (from 36 to 32) and Phoenix was used as a planning tool to model the change and ensure that a flexi-duty officer was able to attend an incident with the same attendance time as previously used. In addition to this HFRS has brought three 'Day Crewed Plus' fire stations online at Potters Bar, Rickmansworth and Baldock & Letchworth. The introduction of this model enables HFRS to operate with fewer firefighters without compromising attendance standards.

## Use of Risk Analysis

- 1.2.4 HFRS has an established performance culture and is continually seeking to improve in its use of performance information. District level performance is scrutinised at a strategic level, while more detailed performance and incident information is available to District and Station Commanders. Reporting of performance information to senior managers and elected Members occurs formally every quarter through the quarterly performance report.<sup>4</sup> This information is used to inform decision making in respect of resource allocation, how best to target prevention and protection activities and monitor progress including awareness campaigns.

- 1.2.5 HFRS shares its in-depth local knowledge of high risk areas with local partnerships and discusses risk data with them in order to address HFRS and wider community risk priorities. There are numerous examples of how this informed approach to partnership working has benefited the communities HFRS serves. Activities include clearing up graffiti and potential fire hazards through Environmental Action Days, addressing deliberate fires and other destructive anti-social behaviour and criminal activity, and local hot spot activity in partnership with other agencies and local businesses.



- 1.2.6 A monthly report is produced for District and Station Commanders which includes details of all of the response activity carried out by the Service. This is used to analyse trends at ward level and to inform crew activity and partnership initiatives.
- 1.2.7 The CPD continues to highlight areas of risk within the County which is enabling a multi-agency approach to the statutory functions of Prevention, Protection and

<sup>4</sup> HFRS Annual Performance Report 2014-15



Response. This gives the Directorate the ability to evidence that it can contribute to the wider outcomes of the County Council's key priorities of:

- Opportunity to Thrive.
- Opportunity to Prosper.
- Opportunity to be Healthy & Safe.
- Opportunity to Take part.

### **1.3. Does the FRA have a robust process for measuring and evaluating the effectiveness and improving performance of its risk analysis process?**

1.3.1 HFRS has assessed itself as having a robust process for evaluating the effectiveness of its risk analysis processes which enables the Service to ensure that they remain effective and are subject to continuous improvement.

## **Measure and Evaluate Risk Analysis**

1.3.2 Qualitative engagement and evaluation influences the setting of Service priorities. HFRS embarked upon a full consultation and engagement process with staff, members of the public and key agencies and stakeholders during development of the IRMP 2014-2018. This included qualitative discussion with identified risk groups, and targeted consultation with specific community groups following a full equality impact assessment process.

1.3.3 The CPD (which brings together Fire & Rescue, Trading Standards, Resilience, Community Safety and Emergency Planning), enables cross-working which has improved knowledge and the quality of the information available for risk analysis. JPS, partner organisations, and elected members, are able to use Instant Atlas, a web-based data presentation tool that allows users to monitor crime and incident data by geography and over time to determine general trends and whether there have been peaks or troughs and at what time.

1.3.4 Detailed risk analysis performance information is used to drive improvement. The Fire Risk Profiling tool which traditionally uses incident data now includes Exeter data to help identify the evolution of fire risk by super output area. When cross referenced with home fire safety visit information, mosaic types and other preventative initiatives, this allows the Service to undertake targeted evaluation of preventative work. All key performance indicators outlined within the plan have agreed targets, which are continually monitored then updated on an annual basis. These are monitored through the Scorecard 10 performance management system and reported to SLG and Members on a quarterly basis.

1.3.5 A corporate risk register is managed within the Digital Services department, bringing together risks from the CPD using the County Risk Management Information System (formerly known as JCAD). This is updated and reviewed quarterly and subject to scrutiny from SLG, the risk owner, the County cross-directorate risk champions, internal audit and elected members.

## Audit and Review

- 1.3.6 The HCC internal audit team plan their work according to the highest risk (indicated on the corporate risk register) and highest priorities for HFRS and HCC. This ensures targeted auditing work takes place on those areas that need it first. In addition HFRS internally audits the operational and safety critical elements of station administration of fire & rescue through the station audit programme. The Beacon Station award is presented to the fire station which has shown significant improvement and is delivering high levels of operational performance to their community including pro-active and preventative work.
- 1.3.7 HFRS and the CPD more widely continually strives to improve the risk and performance information produced; making sure it is accurate, appropriate and timely. The organisation is working towards more targeted and intelligent reporting in conjunction with continually improving data quality to achieve good quality business intelligence.
- 1.3.8 All CPD departments including HFRS complete a Business Impact Analysis (BIA) to identify critical functions and are supported in this process by the HCC Resilience Team. Personnel in the Resilience Team who have completed the Business Continuity Institute's Certificate exam are able to provide advice in respect of in business continuity (BC). Following on from the BIA process, all departments have a Business Continuity Plan and these are stored on the Cabinet Office secure portal, Resilience Direct. All middle managers and above have access to this portal, which provides resilience to the organisation. In addition to this, all uniformed middle managers and above receive business continuity training from the Resilience Team. The Resilience Team also provide an on-call function 24/7 to facilitate communications and advice during a BC incident. BC plans are tested annually via a live exercise and this is reinforced by an annual call cascade for the whole of HCC. In 2011, HFRS and Norfolk FRS formally established the buddy-link scheme which has provided improved business continuity arrangements for both Fire Controls. In 2016 following submission of a successful joint funding bid to the Department for Communities & Local Government (DCLG), HFRS will be the first FRS to 'go live' in the East Coast and Hertfordshire Fire Control Collaboration Project and further establish the existing buddy link to include Humberside & Lincolnshire. The Collaboration Project will be addressing common operational procedures, mobilising protocols, incident types and other back office procedures relevant to Fire Control across the four FRS.

## 2. Prevention

### How well is the authority delivering its prevention strategy?

Key Area of Assessment	Descriptor of current level of performance
2.1 Has the FRA clearly defined, planned and implemented a prevention strategy linked to its IRMP?	Advanced
2.2 Does the FRA deliver prevention activities effectively, and engage partners and stakeholders effectively in its prevention activities?	Advanced
2.3 Does the FRA have a robust process for measuring and evaluating the effectiveness and improving performance of its prevention activities?	Established

#### 2.1 Has the FRA clearly defined, planned and implemented a prevention strategy linked to its IRMP?

2.1.1 HFRS dedicated prevention functions sit within the CPD Joint Protective Services (JPS) team. As such many staff and some supporting documents have a wider Citizen Safety focus than just fire and accident prevention.

2.1.2 The Service considers that it has a highly developed and clearly defined, planned and implemented Prevention Strategy linked to the IRMP 2014-18 and CPD Corporate Plan 2013-18. The strategy is underpinned by an annual JPS Department Plan and JPS Strategic Assessment that reflects the changing and emerging agendas and monitors progress.

#### Prevention Strategy

2.1.3 The Prevention Strategy which is informed by data such as Mosaic and Exeter data as well as intelligence generated locally such as research into fire deaths and injuries, identifies the priority areas that HFRS considers it can make the biggest contribution to in terms of saving lives. The strategy sets out the direction for the delivery of community safety activities within JPS as well as providing the overarching framework for all the Directorate's prevention activities and shows how the various strands of work are brought together.

2.1.4 There are a number of other influencing documents in addition to those identified above including:

- The County Council's Corporate Plan

- The Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2013-16
- The Police and Crime Plan for Hertfordshire 2015-2020
- Hertfordshire Drug and Alcohol Strategy and Deliver Plan 2016-2019
- A Tobacco Control Plan for Hertfordshire 2016-2018
- The Hertfordshire Domestic Abuse Strategy 2016-19

2.1.5 Whilst driving down the risk from fire remains a core activity for CPD, the Directorate recognises that prevention activities form an increasingly significant part of the work undertaken by all staff. The importance of this work together with information regarding the role of Prevention activity and the wider JPS is communicated clearly and effectively within CPD via regular update slots at CPD Management development seminars, regular content in the internal Directorate publication Protect and nominations and award winners at the Directorate HEART Awards.

2.1.6 CPD produces an annual Community Safety Calendar that links to the CFOA Fire Kills calendar containing many of the initiatives, themes and activities for the coming year. In addition the calendar contains wider community safety initiatives such as Trading Standards Scams Awareness month. This calendar gives clear direction for staff across the Directorate on topical themes, linking in with national and local media campaigns.

## **Vulnerable Persons / Health and Wellbeing**

2.1.7 On 1<sup>st</sup> June 2016 HFRS launched its pilot Safe & Well programme in Hertsmere district. The programme partners the service with Public Health (who sit as a part of the County Council) focussing attention on vulnerable people within in their homes in line with the HCC Corporate Priority of residents being Healthy and Safe. The Service gathered together the following data to best identify those in the district at the most risk:

- Exeter data from NHS England to identify the locations of those 65 and over
- Health and Community Services (HCS) data relating to residents who have applied or received a care package from Adult Care Services
- HFRS data on accidental fires and injuries in the county
- Mosaic data for classification of households in the “at risk” groups
- Data from the National Trading Standards Scams Hub on local residents currently being targeted by direct mail scams who are very often older or vulnerable

2.1.8 HCC’s Community Information and Intelligence Unit (CIU) analysed the data and produced a list of 12,500 households applying a risk score to each which was used to identify those to approach for a Safe and Well visit.

2.1.9 The Safe and Well visits themselves are in the early stages but they utilise a jointly created questionnaire used to identified areas of support for a variety of services within the Community Safety and Health sphere. HFRS’s well respected, positive reputation enables firefighters and specialist safety

technicians to carry out the initial engagement with residents where other partners can at times be viewed more sceptically.

- 2.1.10 HFRS continue to offer free Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSV) to every householder within the county and awareness campaigns target “at risk” groups. The HFSV service can be accessed via a 0300 local number, the HCC web portal<sup>5</sup> and also through referral pathways between professionals
- 2.1.11 HFRS have a team of five trained home safety technicians. The team is multi-skilled and in addition to carrying out HFSVs are also specially trained to fit; arson proof letterboxes, smoke alarms for people with hearing impairments, carbon monoxide alarms, portable suppression systems and fire resistant bedding packs, throws and clothing. HFRS’s 150 community volunteers are also trained to carry out HFSVs bolstering capacity to continue to deliver more visits to those most at risk. The training includes a 90 minute classroom session followed by supervised visits and shadowing from Firefighters until the volunteers are deemed competent to perform lone visits.
- 2.1.12 The home safety technicians also undertake security checks as part of the Hertfordshire Home Safety Service (HHSS) scheme, which was previously outsourced, but is now managed by JPS. HHSS is a county-wide service which provides advice, guidance and security solutions to victims of crime, those at risk from crime, and Domestic Abuse victims as well as solutions and equipment in respect of falls prevention, to make their homes safer and more secure. The scheme offers a range of services to those:
- Over 70
  - Registered disabled
  - Repeat victims of domestic burglary
  - Victims of domestic violence
  - Vulnerable due to other factors
- 2.1.13 The scheme which is funded in part by the Police & Crime Commissioner and Herts Constabulary recognises the obvious cross overs with the groups identified at risk of fire death and those in need of care intervention. This is reflected in the decision to allocate management of the scheme to JPS which includes responsibility for training those involved to recognise risk factors to maximise opportunities.
- 2.1.14 In addition to delivering training to HCC Older People and Physically Disabled (OPPD) teams within the locality, the Prevention team offers the ‘Caring Together’ scheme which is promoted by HCC’s Learning and Organisational Development team. The training package is offered to all local authority teams as well as external partners that come in to contact with vulnerable people. The training covers a range of topics including at risk groups as well as the risk factors that, when combined contribute towards an increased risk of fire death. The Service hopes that by highlighting this to care professionals and volunteers

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/commsafe/commprotect/fire/fire/frhome4s/homecheck/>

the Prevention team can receive increased and better quality referrals regarding those at the highest risk.

## The Risk Permutations



## The Risk Behaviours





### **Case Study – Summary Report on Fire Deaths in Hertfordshire from January 2012 – June 2015**

A report was commissioned to identify the issues surrounding the 16 deaths resulting from the effects of fire that have occurred in Hertfordshire since 2012. It updates the previous work carried out by the Fire Investigation team and County Community Safety Unit (CCSU) into 44 deaths occurring between 2000 and 2012 to identify causes of each fire, the lifestyles of the deceased, prevention activities already undertaken etc. The report identifies groups more likely to be 'at risk from fire' and makes recommendations for further prevention work with those groups. In summary the 16 fatalities resulted from 15 incidents and the following risk factors were identified:

- Average age being 69 for dwelling fire fatalities
- Twice as many victims of dwelling fire deaths were male as opposed to female
- Mobility or other long-term health conditions
- High percentage (66%) were caused by smoking or smoking materials (based on 9 fire deaths in dwellings)
- 6 were known to other agencies
- Alcohol/other substance misuse

All of the above reflects national trends but fire deaths remain at a low level within Hertfordshire.

2.1.15 The Firesetting Intervention Programme for Mentally Disordered Offenders (FIP-MO) is a new programme designed to deal with and support those suffering with mental health disorders whilst in a secure residential hospital. A small cohort of trained personnel working in partnership with Cygnet Hospital deliver sessions aimed at both male and female mentally disordered fire setters. The aim of the FIP-MO is two-fold, (1) reduce the key deficits associated with patients' firesetting, and (2) to help patients to develop the skills to lead a life free from offending that is both meaningful and satisfying.

### **Case Study – Fire Retardant Bedding Packs**

Through close partnership work the Prevention team has supported a local resident with mobility issues for over five years through the provision of fire retardant bedding packs. The resident, a smoker dependent on morphine and a user of alcohol, has on numerous occasions been found in bedding with multiple cigarette burns by Social care providers. It remains the view of the Fire Investigation Team that the bedding packs provided have prevented a fire fatality. The success of this initiative has meant provision of further fire retardant equipment and bespoke detection solutions e.g. hard of hearing fire detection systems. Provision of the equipment forms a major part of the Caring Together awareness training provided to Health and Community Services (HCS), home care workers and their managers.

## Road Safety

2.1.16 Ten times more people are killed on roads than in fires in Hertfordshire and road traffic collisions (RTCs) continue to be the highest cause of premature death among 17-25 year olds. HFRS applies considerable efforts with regards to RTC reduction and this constitutes a large proportion of its prevention work. This commitment has been reaffirmed through signing up to the European Road Safety Charter<sup>6</sup> for RTC reduction and the UN decade of action.<sup>7</sup> There are many examples of local initiatives targeted at high risk groups including Learn to Live, Honest Truth and Road Awareness Training Sessions (RATS). HFRS is working at both the Strategic and Practitioner levels of the Local Road Safety Partnerships and links through to CFOA with representation on the Road Safety Executive Board.

2.1.17 Although the Hertfordshire Road Safety Partnership, which is collaboration between Police, Fire, Highways England, Public Health and the HCC Road Safety Unit, exceeded its 10 year target as detailed in the County Road Safety Strategy to reduce the number of RTCs and those killed and seriously injured (KSI), the figures are still too high. Greater emphasis is now placed on targeted activities and on groups that have not traditionally been a cause of concern (i.e. incidents involving pedestrians and motorcycles). For example, the Firebike Team delivers road safety messages to motorcyclists who despite representing less than 2% of Hertfordshire's road users, account for more than 20% of road casualties.

2.1.18 Much of HFRS's prevention work is focussed around young road users and a number of innovative and hard hitting education programmes are being rolled out to reduce the number of deaths and injuries on Hertfordshire's roads. Working closely with the Hertfordshire Road Safety Partnership including Roads Policing, road safety activities have been delivered including:

- RTC Presentations with local colleges
- RTC Events at Town Centres and Shopping Centres with Police Crash Car supporting
- Road Safety Awareness Day's for Princess Trust Courses and Tottenham Hotspur Academy

2.1.19 HFRS have recently entered into an agreement with the Driver & Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) to allow the Fire Station at Hemel Hempstead to be used as a car test centre. The DVSA is currently working with public and private sector partners to provide driving tests in areas that don't have local test centres or where existing facilities will no longer be available. The agreement will provide HFRS with direct access to the most vulnerable driving sector age group of 17 – 24 year olds. Information and safety advice<sup>8</sup> is relayed directly to all those undertaking a driving test which it is hoped will help to reduce the number of people killed and seriously injured on Hertfordshire roads.

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.erscharter.eu/>

<sup>7</sup> [http://www.who.int/roadsafety/decade\\_of\\_action/en/index.html](http://www.who.int/roadsafety/decade_of_action/en/index.html)

<sup>8</sup> <https://issuu.com/firstcar/docs/fcp2015>

### **Case Study 2.1.3 – Driving Home For Christmas**

Driving Home For Christmas is a coordinated road safety information campaign run from November into January. The campaign involves local media publicity via press release and radio as well as promotional / educational events at High Street locations and shopping centres promoting key messages such as the 'Fatal Four' key contributing factors and Tyre Safety. Each fire station and watch are required to deliver one targeted event in their local area contributing to over 60 individual events across the County over the Christmas period.

## **Youth Engagement**

- 2.1.20 HFRS recognises the importance of engaging with younger members of the community and has a dedicated youth engagement team managing the many successful initiatives that it leads and contributes towards.
- 2.1.21 HFRS became a delivery partner with the Prince's Trust in 2013, delivering the Prince's Trust Team Programme from Watford Fire Station.
- 2.1.22 The Team Programme is a fulltime 12-week self-development programme for young people aged between 16-25 years who are not in education, employment or training. Many of these young people are at risk through unhealthy, chaotic and potentially harmful lifestyles. Participants undertake a number of fun challenges that support the development of various skills including leadership, teamwork, communication and self-confidence and work towards gaining nationally recognised qualifications, in order to assist them to move into further education or employment.
- 2.1.23 The Team Programme is now delivered three times a year from three delivery points across the County; Watford, Hatfield and Cheshunt. In September 2016 a fourth area of the County will be served by a Prince's Trust Team Programme, having agreed an extension to deliver in Stevenage with one of the programmes Funding Partners.
- 2.1.24 Each of the teams have a member of staff from Hertfordshire Constabulary seconded to them for the entirety of the course, this is primarily Constables or Police Community Support Officers from Neighbourhood Policing Teams. Their role is to support delivery of the programme whilst supporting the blue light collaboration agenda. Social Work students are also regularly placed with teams. This affords the student with invaluable work experience as well as providing the team members with access to support across a range of welfare matters.

### **Case Study – Prince's Trust**

In May 2015 a young female started her journey on Cheshunt Team 5. Her background was one of physical, mental and sexual abuse, dating back from a very young age. During her childhood she had been constantly moved around, this included foster homes and hostels where the abuse continued. This had a detrimental effect on how she dealt with people and situations, which led to her spending 18 months in prison. During which time she focused on what was happening in her life and how she could change it for the better.

Within twelve months of her release she began her journey on the Prince's Trust Team Programme, where she never gave up, attempted every task and never missed a day of the programme culminating in her successfully gaining a Level One Princes Trust accredited Certification in Employment, Teamwork and Community Skills. Through the skills and confidence gained she now works for Tottenham Hotspur Youth Academy, mentoring and training young people.

2.1.25 The Local Intervention Fire Education (LiFE) scheme is designed to support young people with complex needs, particularly those who have offended, are at risk of offending or have been victims of crime. It provides an intensive work experience course within a structured uniformed team, instilling discipline, team spirit, fire safety awareness, life skills and values which will improve the life chances of the participants.

2.1.26 HFRS have developed the partner referral pathways onto the LiFE programme. Established partners include Thriving Families programme, Local Multi-Agency Safeguarding Forum, Schools, Police, Youth Offending teams and Youth Connexions. Over 110 courses have been delivered which have benefited over 1,200 young people.

2.1.27 Feedback from local firefighters, schools, alternatives to education projects, youth groups, community organisations and youth offending teams have shown huge improvements in local relationships.

2.1.28 The Fire Setter Intervention programme addresses fire setting behaviour of children and young people and is well established within HFRS. Over 1,100 cases have been dealt with and all are followed up by the Youth Engagement Officer. A number of young people involved in the fire setter program are referred onto the LiFE scheme, ensuring those individuals not only receive support for fire setting but gain new skills and qualifications.

2.1.29 The Juvenile Fire setters Intervention Scheme (JFIS) is a free, consequences-based education programme designed to stop young people, aged from 5 to 17, lighting fires. The aim of the programme is to reduce the number of deaths, injuries and the millions of pounds worth of property damage caused by juvenile fire setting. The programme is strictly confidential and voluntary (except for referrals by the Police or the court). The content and delivery of the programme

varies according to the age and maturity of the young person. Practitioners use education and behaviour modification resources to challenge and correct the negative fire-lighting behaviour. Every year JFIS receives around 60 referrals for young people.

### **Case Study – Box Cleva**

Box Cleva is an independent charity which was originally conceived and delivered by HFRS staff. It was first delivered in Borehamwood with support from local partners and agencies. The programme promotes discipline, fitness and well-being amongst young people aged 7 to 15 who have been identified as having complex needs. The trainers and coaches are all experienced, qualified and highly regarded members of the boxing fraternity and include former professional and amateur champions. To date over 1750 young people have participated in this highly acclaimed and multi award winning scheme which is credited by parents in making a real difference in terms of helping their children to improve their behaviour. The scheme, which received The Queens Award for Voluntary Service 2016, has now been rolled out to 11 locations across the County.

2.1.30 Crucial Crew is a multi-agency, community safety scheme aimed at year six pupils (ages 11-12). The scheme has been running in Hertfordshire since 1999 and is organised in each district and project managed by the Police. HFRS provide a crewed community safety 'scenario' which provides a ten minute input on fire safety in the home and the dangers of making hoax calls to the fire service. 6500 Year 6 children go through the scheme each year and additional schemes are being run.

2.1.31 HFRS is in the process of forming a partnership with Herts Careline Telecare aimed at supporting vulnerable adults to live safe and independent lives in their own homes. The Telecare team will provide firefighters with the necessary training that will enable them to provide assistance in instances of equipment activations by individuals who cannot be attended too by other responders within 60 minutes.

2.1.32 This project links with the Safe & Well objectives of using preventative measures to help keep vulnerable adults safe and independent in their own homes for as long as possible thus reducing the cost of social care on the Local Authority.

## **2.2 Does the FRA deliver prevention activities effectively, and engage partners and stakeholders effectively in its prevention activities?**

2.2.1 HFRS is totally committed to engaging with partners and stakeholders in order to deliver exceptional outcomes and continuously looks for new, innovative ways of communicating and engaging with the communities it serves.

## Engagement with Partners and Stakeholders

- 2.2.2 HFRS organise and participate in a broad range of targeted initiatives designed to prevent fires, reduce anti-social behaviour and improve life chances. These include the further development and expansion of its delivery of the Prince's Trust programme, the Duke of Edinburgh Awards Scheme and the Life scheme. HFRS is also proactive in working and engaging with communities through a wide range of other activities and initiatives including Hate Awareness, Deaf Awareness, and Road Safety when it works closely with other HCC teams, such as the Safe and Sustainable Journeys Team and partner agencies including the police, to deliver powerful road safety messages.
- 2.2.3 Stakeholder engagement ranges from small community groups to national organisations, both inside and outside of the fire arena. The Directorate are well represented on the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board, Safeguarding Children Board, Mental Health Crisis Concordat, Safeguarding Adults Review panel, the Strategic Road Safety Partnership, The Hertfordshire Tobacco Strategy Group, The Citizens Advice Managers Forum and many more.
- 2.2.4 HFRS is an active member of district Local Strategic Partnerships (LSP) and Community Safety Partnerships (CSP). HFRS is also represented at both the strategic level Responsible Authorities Groups (RAG) and the tactical level Joint Authority Groups (JAG). Continued contribution toward JAGs not only helps sustain the reduction in deliberate fires but also allows the Service to play an active role in collective problem solving on local issues which is at the very heart of each CSP.
- 2.2.5 Prevention activities are continuously reviewed to ensure they meet the needs of the local community and contribute to sustainable communities. Operation Sponge Pudding<sup>9</sup> is a partnership of Safer Neighbourhood Teams, Hertfordshire Independent Living Services and HFRS. It is a joint partnership which is designed to reach people who are potentially vulnerable and isolated in their communities. The safer neighbourhood teams have been accompanying the delivery drivers from the Community Meals teams to visit service users to ensure they are safe in their home. A follow up visit from HFRS is then arranged in order to carry out bespoke Safe & Well visits in their home.
- 2.2.6 HFRS uses the well established CPD Community Advocacy Forum to engage with local communities. The Forum provides opportunity for discussion as well as formal interaction with representatives from a variety of local faith and community groups on matters of strategy and policy. It also provides the Service with an opportunity to develop its understanding of the issues and needs affecting those groups. The Forum helps the Service and the wider CPD to meet the following commitments:
- Assess the impact of what it does on people
  - Work closer with all groups in the community

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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gZ1nnCUT2TI>



- Involve communities in the planning of services
- Improve services and increase the safety of its citizens
- Become a more diverse workforce

2.2.7 The Directorate has a dedicated community development worker who assists the Service with building stronger relationships with minority communities across Hertfordshire. This position supports the CPD Advocacy Scheme which provides the Service with an opportunity to engage on specific issues relating to particular groups. Another aspect of the role is to develop local initiatives to further enhance relationships with hard to reach groups. An example of this is the side by side project in Watford & Three Rivers District, which provides the structure for the Service to work positively to support these groups. The incumbent in this role is also the president of the Watford Gurdwara and has been extremely successful in facilitating activities across Hertfordshire with the Sikh Community.

2.2.8 The innovative Community Horse Patrol (CHiPs) scheme, which was first launched in St Albans in 2011, has been extended to cover the Three Rivers, Stevenage and North Herts districts. It now has over thirty volunteer riders patrolling the Hertfordshire countryside with over three thousand hours contributed. The scheme is delivered by uniformed volunteers from qualified livery stables who patrol potential arson hot spots reporting rubbish and fly tipping to the district council while out on daily hacks. The rubbish is then removed with 24 hours before fires can be started.

2.2.9 Members of the award winning Community Protection (CP) Volunteer Scheme continue to deliver a wide range of duties including regular arson and reassurance patrols, on horseback and on bicycles, firework and bonfire safety patrols and HFSVs. CP Volunteers also support their local crews with all types of community engagement, including youth and positive action events. The CP Volunteer team deliver an innovative scheme for vulnerable people who have experienced a traumatic event in their home such as a fire, flood or damage from severe weather. Hertfordshire's Volunteer Incident Support Team (VIST) is only the second of its kind in the country, providing a post-incident clear-up service to those in the community who are most in need.

### ***Case Study – Helping people stay warm in their homes***

HFRS in partnership with HertsHelp launched an exciting new jointly-funded initiative for vulnerable people to help them stay warm and well in the winter months.

As part of the 'Keep Warm Stay Well' scheme, HFRS and HertsHelp deliver free heated over-blankets to those in need who are struggling to stay warm in their homes.

The Community Protection Volunteers and the HFRS Home Risk Assessors are also supporting this scheme by providing an evening and weekend service.

2.2.10 HFRS has a long-standing and successful partnership with the local business Computacenter who have sponsored the Fire Investigation Dog Team for the past sixteen years. Four year old black Labrador Reqs is HFRS's third Fire

Investigation Dog and has assisted in providing valuable supporting evidence not only in Hertfordshire, but also at incidents in neighbouring counties.

2.2.11 Reqs and his predecessors have been involved in some extremely high profile incidents since their working lives began, including murder investigations and numerous arson investigations where there has been high financial loss and even threat to and loss of life. All of these incidents have been jointly investigated between HFRS and Hertfordshire Constabulary and serve to demonstrate the importance and benefits of partnership working.

2.2.12 The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that HFRS had in place with Hertfordshire Constabulary (HC) which provided a framework for Fire Investigation (FI) within the county has been reviewed and extended to clarify the working arrangements with Bedfordshire Police, Cambridgeshire Constabulary, Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service, and Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service.

### ***Case Study – Reqs Twitter Account***

Reqs the Fire Investigation Dog has one of the most popular Twitter accounts in HFRS and the Service uses it to relay important safety messages in relation to fire and road safety as well as partnership agencies messages in relation to product recalls and electrical safety. The account also re-tweets any community prevention activity being carried out by the Police and district councils. Up to the end of March 2016, Reqs Twitter account had just over 4,000 followers so including Reqs followers re-tweets, the safety messages from Reqs and other agencies accounts reaches a huge target audience.

## **2.3 Does the FRA have a robust process for measuring and evaluating the effectiveness and improving performance of its prevention activities?**

2.3.1 HFRS regards itself as having very good arrangements in place for measuring and evaluating the effectiveness of its prevention activities which it uses to improve performance and outcomes

### **Measuring and Evaluating Effectiveness**

2.3.2 In December 2014 the JPS team attained formal accreditation through the Customer Service Excellence scheme having been assessed as demonstrating “model practice”. JPS has continued to maintain the key processes which support customer focused services including practices such as regular customer insight activity. An example of this activity is the satisfaction survey carried out at HFSVs which shows a 100% satisfaction rate.

### **Case Study – Post LiFE course mentoring**

In December 2015, a child was referred to HFRS LiFE course by his school following an extended period of serious behavioural issues, poor attendance and performance. He successfully completed the course, however shortly after returning to the school he quickly became a concern to the staff and behavioural issues reappeared. The Head of year at the school contacted the Youth Engagement team to request assistance as they had temporarily excluded the boy. The school felt that the LiFE course had improved behaviour and wanted the Service to act as a mentor. The Lead LiFE course instructor visited the child at home with his parents and discussed his triggers and what coping mechanisms he could use to deal with anger. The child was set four targets to improve his behaviour which he agreed to. The instructor attended the child's school exclusion meeting and convinced the school to postpone exclusion allowing him the opportunity to work on the four targets set and to use a report card used to evidence changes in behaviour.

HFRS continued to undertake the mentoring and two weeks later visited the child at school. He appeared outwardly calmer and more engaged which was verified by the school who added that his report card was perfect with stars added! Attendance and behavioural issues had also improved dramatically. The instructor worked with the child on a further two occasions, by which point the school were happy with the improvements following the intervention.

- 2.3.3 Learn2Live 2015 was evaluated by the Herts Road Safety partnership who carried out a pre and post reflective evaluation of the programme to measure changes in risk behaviour as well as course content. A total of 322 responses were received providing a 93.5% confidence level in results obtained and overall the evaluation revealed positive results with apparent shift in willingness to engage in risky behaviour identified. The main area of improvement from the evaluation was the evaluation methodology and design having identified absence of accurate baseline data for the pre intervention period. This method of evaluation is being further developed to fully explore course efficacy moving forward.
- 2.3.4 The feedback collected from participants in the Box Clever initiative has evidenced improvements in school attendance, confidence, fitness, weight loss and increased knowledge on substance abuse and healthy living.
- 2.3.5 HFRS and the CPD more widely have continued to build upon the success of the "Volunteer Scheme". The latest annual report records nearly 200 volunteers on the scheme as of March 31<sup>st</sup> 2016 and over 65,000 hours donated since its inception in 2008. In addition to being awarded the Inspire Mark by the London 2012 Inspire Programme, the scheme is also accredited to Volunteering England's 6 point promise.
- 2.3.6 CPD recognises the contribution of volunteers by informal and formal processes. All managers are encouraged where possible to acknowledge and thank volunteers for their support. More formally the Directorate acknowledge

milestones in hours given with certificates awarded for 100, 250 and 500 hours. This is underpinned with an annual awards evening where the scheme is celebrated with awards being presented by the CFO for outstanding contributions from individuals and teams. In 2016 Miss Angela Leonora Joseph, a CPD volunteer, was awarded an MBE for services to fire safety.

### **Case Study 2.3.2 – Volunteer Scheme**

HFRS is now into the ninth year of its Community Volunteer Scheme. Hertfordshire's scheme is widely acknowledged as one of the best of its type in the country and as such regularly shares its experiences with others seeking to establish and improve their schemes.

The first volunteers joined the Service in January 2008, with a dedicated Trading Standards Volunteer Team starting in 2012. The current establishment stands at around 200 volunteers including community Horse Riders and advocates across the Service aged 18 to 75. Since the inception of the scheme there have been many positive benefits brought to the Service by having a uniformed volunteer establishment who are able to assist with community safety activity. These include some high profile initiatives which volunteers have delivered for their local districts and support to crews with all types of community engagement, including youth and positive action events. A number of specialist voluntary roles have evolved such as team leaders and LiFE project support volunteers.

The Trading Standards Volunteers support work around Doorstep Crime, Scams, Rogue Trading, test purchasing and collect community intelligence.

Volunteers recently led on the LiFE Bid project working with Greenwich University on detailed post fire incident research, and the HFRS work club at Hertford continues to support Job Seekers with their employment searches.

Volunteers support the Volunteer Incident support team (VIST) which is a 24/7 service that supports vulnerable victims of fire or flood to clear up after the incident. Since June 2016 the team have also been on call to deliver Fire Retardant bedding packs and the fitting of Fire Proof letter boxes.

As well as delivering Home Fire Safety Visits volunteers carry out regular arson and reassurance patrols on horseback and on bicycles. They assist with Crucial Crew, work experience courses and are now trained to crew reception centres on behalf of Hertfordshire Resilience in the event of a major incident.

## **Improving Performance**

2.3.7 A project management approach is used to determine the benefits of new prevention activities. New activities start with a Project Initiation Document (PID) and a business case that links to desired outcomes and includes review and monitoring protocols.

2.3.8 HFRS has enhanced its risk analysis approach through the utilisation of Exeter health data, as a result of an information sharing agreement developed in 2015 by CFOA and NHS England. This has enabled HFRS to securely access GP registration data (including year of birth, gender and address) to identify the 65s and over.

2.3.9 Through a successful multi-agency partnership between Public Health, the Community Information & Intelligence Unit, Health and Community Services and Trading Standards, using a risk stratification process HFRS has been able to profile residents deemed to be most at risk from a fire, by using the Exeter health data and overlaying information from some of its partners.

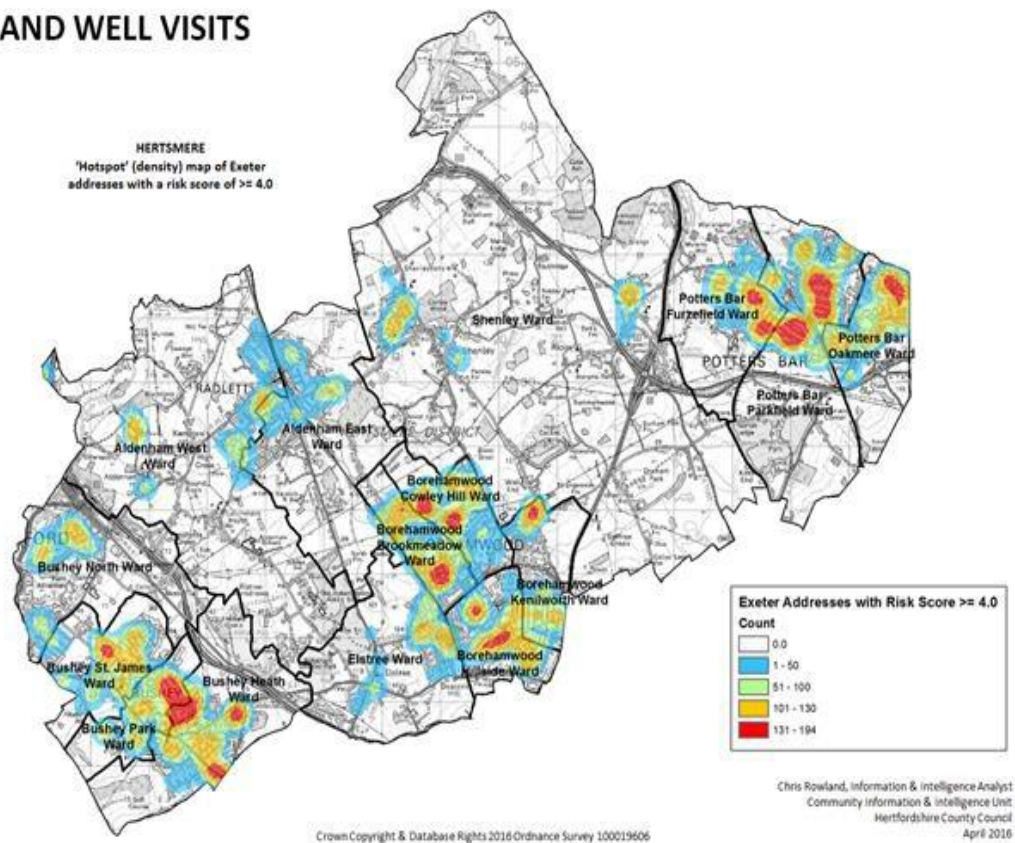
2.3.10 This new risk profiling is currently being used to proactively target and deliver the 'Safe and Well Visits' pilot and HFSVs to 'at risk' residents. The risk stratification process has attributed relative indicator weightings to the different datasets to create a risk matrix as shown below:

<b>RISK SCORING GUIDANCE</b>		
The unique address risk scores are calculated using relative indicator weightings ranging between 0 to 11.5 points and have been weighted as indicated below:		
<b>Risk</b>	<b>Weighted Score</b>	<b>Description</b>
Aged 85+	2.5 points	Points added if the address identifies a resident aged 85+ years present.
Outside of 10 minutes	2.0 points	Points added if the address is outside the 10 minute response area.
Fire injuries	1.5 points	Points added if the address has a previous fire injury recorded.
Accidental dwelling fire	1.5 points	Points added if the address has a previous dwelling fire recorded.
Health and Community Services (HCS) referral made and no service	1.75 points	Points added if the address matches existing HCS service referral data with no service being provided.
HCS referral made and service provided	1.25 points	Points added if the address matches existing HCS service provision.
Scams and Rogues	1.0 points	Point added if address matches the existing Scam and Roque Trader data.
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11.5 points</b>	

2.3.11 This information is provided to fire personnel in the form of a proactive targeting record to support tracking progress of this new approach. HFRS has also worked with the Community Intelligence Unit to produce spatial products that provide useful visualisations of the Hertsmere data, to help personnel most effectively plan their targeted approach. One example of this product is shown on the next page.



## SAFE AND WELL VISITS



## Safe and Well evaluation and work with the London School of Economics

2.3.12 Evaluation for the pilot has been considered during the project management phase of 'Safe and Well' and includes quantitative as well as qualitative approaches. This includes evaluation of training, staff knowledge and confidence levels, resident feedback on the quality of service, referral service impact and resident behavioural change.

2.3.13 HFRS is also working closely with the Personal Social Services Research Unit (PSSRU) at the London School of Economics (LSE) who are providing support to devise a deliverable evaluation framework to ensure that HFRS can collect high quality information to evaluate the effectiveness of this project. In addition, the evaluation framework is incorporating national guidance to help enable HFRS to identify what is working well locally, where improvements can be made and to share information and learn from the experience of other FRSS.

2.3.14 HFRS will use the outcomes of this project to inform the development of more cost-effective, intelligence-led approaches to evaluating the economic and social outcomes derived from community safety interventions. This should provide a clear link between the specific intervention and its impact with regard to reduction in fire deaths or injuries.



## 3. Protection

### How well is the Authority delivering its regulatory fire safety duties?

Key Area of Assessment	Descriptor of current level of performance
3.1 Has the FRA clearly defined, planned and implemented a regulatory fire safety strategy to support local businesses, linked to its IRMP?	Established
3.2 Does the FRA deliver protection activities effectively and engage partners and stakeholders effectively in its protection activities?	Advanced
3.3 Does the FRA have a robust process for measuring and evaluating the effectiveness and improving performance of its protection activities?	Established

#### 3.1 Has the FRA clearly defined, planned and implemented a regulatory fire safety strategy to support local businesses, linked to its IRMP?

- 3.1.1 The Service considers that it has a highly developed and clearly defined, planned and implemented Protection Strategy linked to the IRMP 2014-18 and CPD Corporate Plan 2013-18. The strategy is underpinned by the Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP), an annual JPS Department Plan and JPS Strategic Assessment that reflects the changing and emerging agendas and monitors progress.
- 3.1.2 Fire Protection (FP) officer's support the delivery of the strategy and this is reflected in their annual PMDS/PDP. Key business objectives are set out in the JPS Department Plan and these include delivery of the RBIP, progressing the Better Business for All (BBfA) agenda and work with other parts of the Directorate regarding the implementation of the outcomes from review of operational risk critical information.
- 3.1.3 The Protection Strategy (2016-2018) outlines how HFRS will deliver its fire protection responsibilities without imposing an unnecessary burden on business. The strategy provides direction on the beneficial outcomes for business, the community and the organisation whilst noting a rationale for the Service's actions. National guidance issued by CFOA and the Better Business for All agenda were used to inform a review of Service interactions with businesses and local authorities.

- 3.1.4 HFRS helps to support local businesses by reducing the level of bureaucracy, avoiding the imposition of unnecessary costs and working with the responsible person of premises to provide support and encourage economic progress. The Service works in partnership with businesses in order to drive down the occurrence of fires and improve overall safety in non-domestic premises. HFRS will continue to support relationships between business and regulators built on trust and an informed understanding of the issues associated with legislative requirements to improve and encourage self-compliance.
- 3.1.5 The Protection Strategy recognises the importance of incorporating fire safety at the building design stage to deliver maximum benefit and efficiency. All personnel have a clear understanding of the link between the RBIP and the IRMP 2014-2018. HFRS is committed to promoting the economic and compliance benefits of Primary Authority Partnerships (PAP), which increase levels of compliance and contribute to local growth and prosperity.
- 3.1.6 The RBIP includes the use of the CFOA Short Audit Process. This has been derived from engagement with business and seeks to reduce the burden on businesses as well as reducing the time that officers spend on site. New letter templates as agreed by CFOA are also in use, thereby ensuring HFRS plays its part in delivering a more consistent approach nationally with regard to FRS regulatory and enforcement responsibilities.
- 3.1.7 HFRS develops its plans in accordance with the guidance set out in the Regulators Guide and the Fire Protection Strategy for 2016-2018 which sets out how HFRS will engage with both business and stakeholders as well as best practice identified by CFOA at a regional and national level. Internally, regular meetings are held between the management team and lead officers to share information and intelligence regarding local areas of concern, along with updates on regional and national developments. The Service has embraced CFOA's 'safe enough' approach to inspection and enforcement, which is, reflected in its use of the revised CFOA letters and the short audit forms.
- 3.1.8 HFRS continues to maximise the potential of using operational crews and members of the FP team to respond promptly to all "alleged fire risks". The speed and nature of the response is based on an assessment of the risk involved and the teams' professional judgement. (AFR Policy/Protection Strategy)
- 3.1.9 Post incident inspections are carried out immediately or as soon as possible after an incident to identify failings in fire safety provisions. Where such failings are identified, a full audit of the premises is carried out and appropriate enforcement action taken. This may include the prosecution of the responsible person if the failings were serious enough to put relevant persons at risk of death or serious injury. (SIS documents)
- 3.1.10 Following an increase in the number of incidents at residential care homes throughout the UK resulting in injuries, near misses as well as fatalities HFRS took the proactive approach of writing directly to the 140 residential care homes

in Hertfordshire to remind them of the need to carry out individual fire risk assessments for any resident that smoked. They were also provided with advice on points that should be considered during the process including the need to take into account a resident's mental and physical capacity for smoking unaided, the risk to other residents, identification of physical precautions as well as management procedures such as supervision.

3.1.11 JPS use an intelligence led approach with risk analysis to best focus and target resources for the maximum impact. Activities are prioritised to target premises that pose the greatest risk to life, property, environment and the nations' heritage.

3.1.12 HFRS participated in the Cabinet Office Better Business Compliance project and was one of 5 local partnerships formed to pilot new ways of working across regulatory boundaries. This included the consideration of new ways to manage information, likely to be of shared interest to a number of local regulators. The project started in October 2014 with the objective of making joint working between national and local regulators more systematic in order to strengthen the response to illicit economic activity, including illegal working and worker exploitation, and to help regulators support businesses to improve compliance with statutory requirements. It was based on the premise that the public sector has been designed to address issues in isolation and a more systematic approach to partnership work could help regulators recognise concerns that may be of interest to others. Each partnership developed a range of ideas to improve how local and national agencies work together, ranging from simple changes such as Immigration Enforcement officers training Local Authority officers how to spot fraudulent identity documents to more complex changes around multi agency intelligence and data sharing.

3.1.13 The Service understands the importance of the local knowledge and observations provided by operational crews. Regular contact between crews and the protection team is facilitated by Station Liaison Officers (SLOs), which enables the Service to address local community priorities in a proactive and reactive manner.

### **Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP)**

3.1.14 The HFRS RBIP has been devised using statistical information on fires in non-residential premises provided by the Digital Services team combined with national data, the professional judgement of the FP management team and relevant national guidance.

3.1.15 Once it is approved by SLG the RBIP is cascaded to operational stations and FP officers to ensure that premises are audited according to the level of identified risk in line with Service policy. Training sessions have been organised with operational crews on how to inspect these types of premises and what to specifically look for. In addition Local Licensing officers have delivered training on the Licensing act to FP officers.

- 3.1.16 The Hertfordshire Enforcement Promise which can be viewed on the HCC website<sup>10</sup> provides clear information on how HFRS will work with businesses to carry out their statutory enforcement duties in line with the Regulators Code. Before an officer carries out a statutory inspection, a letter will be sent to the responsible person outlining the areas considered during the visit and a summary of the powers of enforcement officers.
- 3.1.17 This has been developed in consultation with Trading Standard (TS) colleagues in JPS to ensure consistent approach across regulatory boundaries. A guidance note has been produced and circulated to all officers.
- 3.1.18 HFRS recognises the importance of assigning clear responsibilities and ensuring that these are understood to ensure that its Fire Protection Strategy is delivered effectively. Stakeholders with responsibilities include;
- The Fire Protection Team
  - Operational crews
  - Trading Standards/intel teams (re. product safety)
  - External partners in both the public and private sector
- 3.1.19 The Fire Protection Strategy is informed by an approach to regulation, advice and enforcement, which places an emphasis on activity, which is intelligence led, proportionate to the risks and recognises the value of education and advice in delivering desired outcomes. This forms a standardised approach to business and community engagement across JPS.
- 3.1.20 JPS undertakes a holistic approach through integrated work to make Hertfordshire a safer place. The RBIP is designed to reduce the risk and impact of fires on the community by evaluating fire safety matters, providing advice on how to prevent occurrences and taking proportionate enforcement and or prosecution action when necessary to safeguard life, property, the environment and fire fighters.
- 3.1.21 The FP team is represented at the Service monthly Response and Resilience Group meetings by the Protection Group Commander (GC). This ensures a co-ordinated and joined up approach across the Service in respect of protection issues such as any enforcement action being carried out across the County along with updates on any prohibitions issued. Any more urgent risk critical information is reported directly to relevant operational crews from FP to Station Commanders (SCs), GCs, and the Assistant Chief Officer (ACO) as well as ensuring such information is shared with Control and flagged on their own systems.
- 3.1.22 FP officers acting as Station Liaison Officers (SLO) are a vital link between the FP team and operational crews ensuring that risk critical information is properly shared and understood. The role is identified in the annual RBIP memorandum. SLOs deliver comprehensive training to operational crews to enable them to assist with the RBIP audits. Each station has a dedicated SLO who will support

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<sup>10</sup> (<http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/business/tradingstandards/bus/buspledge>)

them in carrying out their audits and is available to provide additional guidance and ongoing training as required. This approach has increased the number of audits carried out and enables crews to report back to the FP team any serious concerns. This approach has not only increased the knowledge and confidence of operational crews with regard to reporting fire safety issues to the FP team but has raised their awareness of the built environment in their local areas. (See also 5.2.12).

3.1.23 HFRS also has a Post Incident Procedure in place, which promotes information exchange between operational crews and FP personnel. This has proved beneficial in reducing risk and educating business owners and landlords (see case study).

### ***Case Study – The Bell Public House***

Following a fire in a public house, one of the attending operational Watch Commanders contacted the Fire Protection (FP) team with serious concerns regarding the fire safety measures at the premises. The premises not only operated as licensed premises but offered bed and breakfast accommodation to paying guests. Two FP officers were sent out immediately to carry out a post incident inspection in line with Service Policy.

The fire had started in the chimney in the public area and spread to one of the occupied sleeping accommodation room. On further investigation it was found that the fire alarm was not working and the smoke detector in the room of origin, which the chimney breast passed through, had been covered over with cling film to prevent it operating. It was also found that the general fire precautions for the premises were below the standard expected for a sleeping accommodation. An investigation was carried out by the FP team and supported by the JPS legal team.

As a result of the information exchange arrangements in place between the FP team and operational crews, HFRS were able to take appropriate and proportionate action resulting in a successful prosecution of the responsible person who pleaded guilty to six charges. The case was sent to Crown Court for sentencing due to the severity of the offences. The defendant was ordered to pay a fine of £25,000 and costs of £6,700 and was informed by the Judge that if it was discovered that he was running a business in this manner in the future and the case was referred back to the Crown Court, he would face imprisonment.

Enforcement is an important part of HFRS's FP strategy, not only to deter other responsible persons from committing similar offences but also to ensure that staff understand the importance and benefits of joint working and recognise that collectively they are making a difference. This is achieved by publishing the details of enforcement action taken both locally and nationally and by arranging feedback sessions with local crews to close the loop.

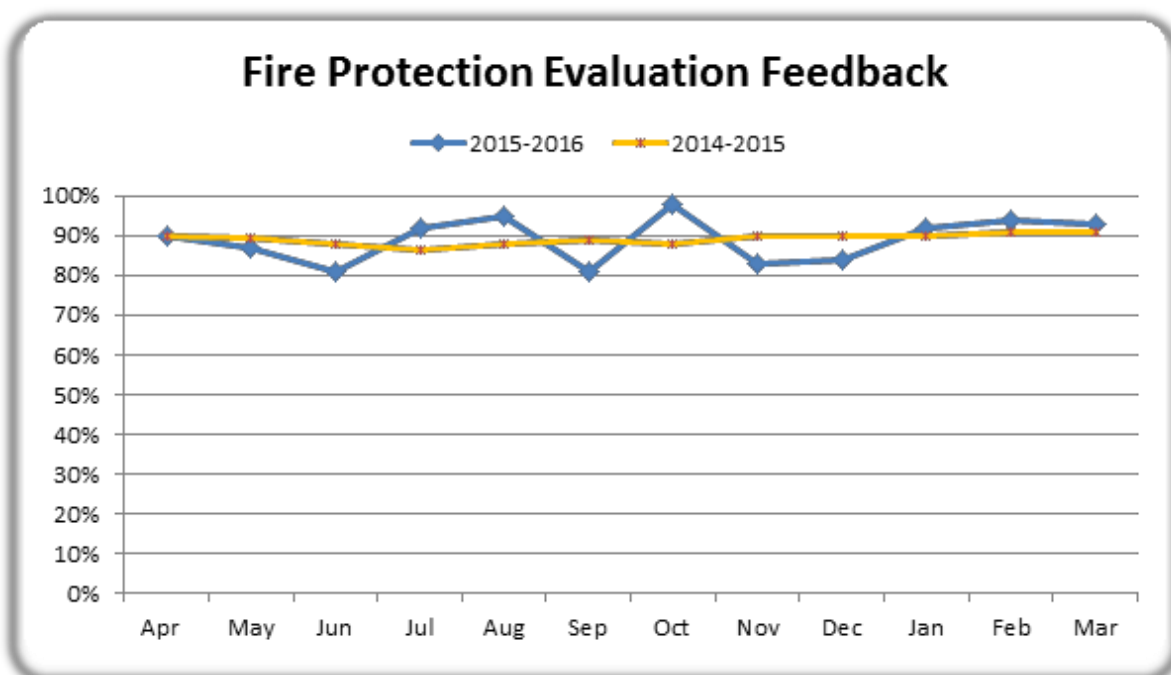
### 3.2 Does the FRA deliver protection activities effectively and engage partners and stakeholders effectively in its protection activities?

- 3.2.1 HFRS is proactive in engaging partners and stakeholders in the delivery of its fire protection activities. The FP team attend Safety Advisory Group meetings to give information and advice regarding large scale events taking place throughout the county. Officers will liaise with operational SCs to ensure that fire service access is adequate.
- 3.2.2 FP managers attend national and regional CFOA meetings and contribute to the Business Safety Groups regionally and Event Safety Group nationally to meet CFOAs seven priorities. They also contribute to the Regional Heritage Group.
- 3.2.3 The FP team take part in the CFOA Business Safety weeks to promote fire safety issues.
- 3.2.4 FP is represented on safety advisory groups for local football clubs to provide advice on Safety at Sports Grounds. There is also representation on safety groups in local NHS Trusts.
- 3.2.5 FP officers attend local events to promote fire safety. One such event was a housing fair held at the University of Hertfordshire in October 2015. Officers were able to engage with students of the University and provide them with information regarding fire safety in their accommodation (HMOs) and what to do in the event of an emergency.
- 3.2.6 Unwanted fire signals have a major impact on the Service as they divert essential resources and may result in delayed attendance at a genuine incident. These reports also cause unnecessary risk to fire and rescue service personnel and the public when responding under emergency conditions and can create complacency amongst staff working at the premises in question. Therefore, HFRS has introduced an 'Unwanted Fire Signals' policy. Any business that is identified as having an unacceptable level of Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA) activations will receive a letter from the Service to provide advice on how to reduce these unnecessary calls.
- 3.2.7 JPS were awarded the prestigious Customer Service Excellence award. The Customer Service Excellence standard tests in great depth those areas that research has indicated are a priority for customers, with particular focus on delivery, timelines, information, professionalism and staff attitude. There is also emphasis placed on developing customer insight, understanding the user's experience and robust measurement of service satisfaction.
- 3.2.8 HFRS uses post-visit surveys to evidence the high levels of satisfaction with the service provided and identify any areas where it can improve.



3.2.9 The JPS team’s participation in the Better Business for All (BBFA) initiative has provided the Service with opportunities to develop closer links with regulatory partners and an improved understanding of who does what and how. These closer working relationships enable regulatory bodies to better support businesses and have opened up communication channels between the organisations that provide for an effective referral process in cases of non-compliance.

3.2.10 The BBfA’s Regulators’ Forum, also provides a valuable opportunity for FP Manager’s to meet with managers from across the regulatory partnership to share information (i.e. RBIP proposals), updates on activities, co-ordinate any local initiatives or develop strategies to address any shared local issues or concerns.



3.2.11 A working group is currently considering premises risk information recording, which will improve how operational crews are able to obtain site specific information when dealing with incidents.

3.2.12 A fire safety checklist has been produced and provided to operational crews, JPS and HCC colleagues to enable them to report back to FP if they have concerns regarding fire safety matters when visiting premises. It is proposed that this checklist will be available for other authorities to use.

3.2.13 FP also provides input for operational crews at district development/training events.

3.2.14 At a strategic level, the Head of Protection meets regularly with other Area Commanders (ACs) to ensure, amongst other things, that FP are contributing fully to delivering organisational objectives and that work going on elsewhere in CPD takes into account the work of FP staff.

- 3.2.15 HFRS has a Primary Authority Partnership (PAP) with a Housing Association which has enabled it to influence behaviours and fire safety arrangements beyond the communal areas. This is much valued by the Housing Association which is keen to explore opportunities to further educate and inform.
- 3.2.16 FP has implemented the use of an electronic database, APP, which holds premises information on businesses throughout Hertfordshire. The database records any visits to premises by FP and TS staff and provides intelligence regarding enforcement action taken by either party. The system is also able to record prosecution details.
- 3.2.17 The FP team continues to meet its legislative duties and respond within the statutory timescales in respect of building regulations consultations with Local Authority Building Control and Approved Inspectors, the Licensing Authority and other stakeholders, to ensure that fire safety requirements are met in new, existing and altered buildings. FP officers are trained in line with the CFOA Competency Framework and carry out CPD training to keep their competencies current. The BBfA partnership has enabled the Service to establish good links with the business community, most particularly the Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and the Federation of Small Businesses – both of whom assisted with the consultation and engagement in respect of the revised Fire Protection Strategy.
- 3.2.18 JPS currently has 10 PAPs in place in respect of fire safety and have issued assured advice to two businesses. In addition, an Inspection Plan is in place with one of the partners. Officers work closely with their other partners to provide further assured advice and continue to work to ensure consistency in respect of fire safety. Further evidence of the CPD's strength in this area was provided in May 2016 when HCC was named by Regulatory Delivery as having the Primary Authority (PA) Team of the Year. In their feedback the judges recognised how well Fire and TS were working together to support PA partners, the quality of service delivered and the efforts made to promote PAP as a way of delivering opportunities for growth, efficiencies and prosperity.

### **Case Study – COSTCO Primary Authority Partnership**

The JPS team have provided regulatory advice to Costco as part of a Primary Authority Partnership (PAP) for the last three years.

Costco, have around 30 sites across the UK and were looking to add petrol forecourts to existing warehouses.

The business had been selling petrol from its USA sites but had no previous experience of storing/selling petroleum products in the UK and so required detailed advice in order to ensure compliance with UK legislation.

The American Costco model was very different to standard practices in the UK. For example, additives are mixed on site and there is no retail shop adjacent to the pumps.

One attendant is responsible for up to 16 dispensing positions, twice the number generally permitted in the UK where the attendant will also have responsibility for a retail shop.

As the planned approach was controversial, colleagues from other Petroleum Licensing Authorities were consulted as well as a national Petroleum Enforcement Group.

Following this consultation, PAP advice was issued by officers in JPS, giving the business confidence that they could continue to expand in this area. The first site where the petrol forecourt was added attracted more business to the existing attached warehouse resulting in a profit for the first time since opening.

The success of this arrangement has resulted in a number of additional petroleum sites being commissioned without any challenge from local Petroleum Licensing Authorities.

### **3.3 Does the FRA have a robust process for measuring and evaluating the effectiveness and improving performance of its protection activities?**

#### **Measures and evaluates the effectiveness of its protection work**

- 3.3.1 Evaluation of individual and team performance is undertaken by the FP management team using data obtained from the APP database which is used to allocate work to officers. Reports are run monthly to assess the level of statutory work completed as well as the total number of RBIP visits carried out and any other fire safety activities.
- 3.3.2 At the conclusion of each RBIP a review of the relevant audit results is undertaken which is used to identify an overall trend of compliance and enforcement action. This is then cross referenced to fire incident data provided by the Digital Services department to analyse the effectiveness of the RBIP and inform the development and focus of the next RBIP.
- 3.3.3 Enforcement action is monitored to ensure that it is proportionate and appropriate.
- 3.3.4 Customer survey forms are sent out to businesses that are audited by the FP team to ensure consistency and improve service delivery. To date, a high degree of customer satisfaction has been achieved -often in excess of 85% 'v. satisfied' with their experience (see chart in 3.2.10).
- 3.3.5 Following receipt of feedback from a Local Authority Licensing officer regarding inadequate engagement by HFRS with the Local Authority and a licensing applicant, a meeting was arranged to discuss how the Service could improve. As a result a training session was delivered by a Local Authority Licensing officer to the JPS team. This resulted in greater mutual understanding and appreciation of organisational requirements and improved working relationships.

## Performance

- 3.3.6 FP officers are expected to achieve the relevant level of competence as set out in the CFOA Competency Framework to enable them to carry out their fire protection duties.
- 3.3.7 Individual officer performance is measured by FP managers' sampling work product and shadowing inspections. Additionally, inspecting officers are expected to complete the Fire Safety Level 3 NVQ to demonstrate competence in protection. All evidence produced is naturally occurring work product and signed off by qualified assessors and verifiers from within the department.
- 3.3.8 FP RBIP targets are set by FP managers and work is allocated to individual inspecting officers. The formation of JPS and the centralising of FP personnel has enabled HFRS to adopt a more focused, consistent and resilient approach to the management of performance. It has also provided an opportunity to develop and make best use of a more flexible workforce enabling managers to allocate resource to where the work lies.
- 3.3.9 For response crews, performance against their RBIP target is recorded on the HFRS 'Views' performance management system. Response District and Station Commanders are responsible for ensuring this target is achieved.

## 4. Preparedness

**How well is the authority meeting its responsibilities for planning and preparing for incidents that could have a significant local or national impact on communities?**

Key Area of Assessment	Descriptor of current level of performance
4.1 Does the FRA have clearly defined and effective arrangements for preparedness linked to its IRMP?	<b>Advanced</b>
4.2 Does the FRA engage partners and stakeholders effectively in its arrangements for planning and preparing for operational incidents that could have significant impact on their communities?	<b>Advanced</b>
4.3 Does the FRA have effective arrangements in place to support incidents of national significance?	<b>Advanced</b>

### 4.1 Does the FRA have clearly defined and effective arrangements for preparedness linked to its IRMP?

- 4.1.1 HFRS has clearly defined and effective arrangements in place for preparedness, which are clearly linked to its 2014/18 IRMP.
- 4.1.2 HFRS is a key member of the HCC Local Resilience Forum (LRF), known as Hertfordshire Resilience, which is a multi-agency partnership consisting of the emergency services and all other organisations and agencies involved with emergency response in Hertfordshire. The CFO chairs the executive LRF and the Resilience team from CPD provide the secretariat function.
- 4.1.3 HFRS ensures that the process of revision and updating of all operational procedures and service orders involves collaboration with all appropriate internal/external departments and partner agencies. Allocation of documents and policies for revision is managed centrally by a document officer and is devolved to District Commanders (DCs) and appropriate department leads. This process is also used to update National Operational Guidance and associated Generic Risk Assessments. HFRS has completed a review of all current procedures to include the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme (JESIP) principles to promote joint ways of working.
- 4.1.4 HFRS is fully imbedded within the Hertfordshire LRF and as such, works closely with other Cat 1 and 2 responders. The LRF manager is part of the CPD

Resilience Team, which is led by an HFRS officer, who also chairs one of the LRF tier groups (People and Communities). This close collaborative working arrangement ensures that risks in the National Risk Register are assessed at local level and used to inform the development, monitoring and updating of the Community Risk Register (CRR). The CRR is used to prioritise the exercising and revision of operational plans with partner agencies and the subsequent debriefs used to inform future plans and policies.

- 4.1.5 HFRS has tried and tested plans and response arrangements for ensuring continuity of service. Each department has carried out a Business Impact Analysis (BIA) to identify critical functions. This BIA is then used to inform departmental Business Continuity Plans (BCP's). These BCP's are stored on the Cabinet Office portal, Resilience Direct with access for all Station Commanders and above. This process gives an additional layer of organisational resilience on top of the BCP's stored at individual districts and departments. These plans are reviewed annually with oversight via the HCC Resilience Board and Community Protection Resilience Group. There have been 2 exercises of the HFRS business continuity arrangements in the past year, once via a call cascade exercise and once via a live 'denial of access' exercise at a fire station. HFRS is also represented on the CFOA Business Continuity Group thereby enabling the Service to ensure that it is able to share good practice and learn from other FRS's business continuity experiences.

### ***Case Study - Business Continuity Exercise at Baldock Fire Station***

Exercise "No Entry" was held on 7<sup>th</sup> of January 2016 at Baldock Fire Station. The station and players received no prior warning to the exercise and the station was operating on a business as usual basis, when the station received a call from Fire Control with the first exercise insert. The call informed them of the need for an immediate evacuation of the station. The aim of the exercise was to exercise the Baldock Fire Station Business Continuity Plan (BCP) in terms of the content and operation in case of denial of access of the station and also to test the capacity of the station to ensure fire cover is maintained. In addition, the exercise aimed to further practice and develop CPD's preparedness.

In the exercise scenario, an unknown van had been observed parked beside the station and once reported to the police, it was discovered that the van was potentially connected to terrorist activity.

The station demonstrated a well thought through response to ensure it was able to maintain operational cover despite not having access to the station. The business continuity plan was immediately referred to and a number of considerations were looked at:

- How will the Service cope with the unavailability of the station?
- How will critical services be maintained?
- How would the Service communicate with staff and what messages would it give them (e.g. retained crew, contractors)?
- Could people continue to work for the rest of the day despite the station being closed?



All appropriate staff were notified in a timely manner, including the Watch Officer, Station Commander, District Commander and the Area Commander. Staff were contacted and advised of the alternative working arrangements. The Station Commander went through the motions of contacting retained staff and volunteers (this was not actually carried through in accordance with the exercise rules of play). The station worked closely with Fire Control when considering temporary accommodation arrangements for the crew and the appliance. The station showed impressive foresight when they immediately started considering the extent of the disruption and planning for longer term alternative accommodation.

The exercise was also followed by feedback from relevant Station and Group Commanders, exercise observers and Fire Control. All feedback was very positive. The main finding was that there was an issue regarding access to the business continuity plan through Livelink. This has now been resolved by making use of ResilienceDirect.

#### 4.2 Does the FRA engage partners and stakeholders effectively in its arrangements for planning and preparing for operational incidents that could have a significant impact on their communities?

- 4.2.1 As a key member of Hertfordshire Resilience, HFRS engages effectively with other emergency services and category 1 and 2 responder organisations as defined in the Civil Contingencies Act. The CFO chairs the Executive Group, ACO Ops Vice-chairs the Management Group and Chairs the Response and Planning Group with the Group Commander-Resilience also Chairing the People and Resources Group within the Hertfordshire Local Resilience Forum structure. As a member of the wider CPD HFRS operates in collaboration with colleagues within the Resilience Team and HCC on a daily basis.
- 4.2.2 HFRS is one of over 80 organisations represented at each of the 3 managerial levels of Hertfordshire Resilience. This close collaboration ensures that HFRS has the opportunity to work with a variety of key partner organisations at strategic, tactical and operational levels on a regular basis. Each command level is tested via the LRF at least once a year. As an integral part of HCC HFRS contributes and participates in a number of exercises to assist in the assurance of emergency arrangements within the LRF structure. A uniformed fire officer leads the HCC resilience team and each member of the resilience team is responsible for assisting individual directorates of the county council with their resilience arrangements.

### **Case Study - Water Rescue Response**

HFRS has a well-established relationship with the water assets from the Police and EEAS HART and two MOU's with external organisations, Hertfordshire Boat Rescue and Hertfordshire Canoe Lifeguards. These partners are fully engaged in all aspects of the Service's Water Rescue training.

They attend the quarterly Water Incident Liaison Officers (WILO) meetings to update the group on their current capabilities and limitations. They also use this group as an opportunity to inform personnel on their future training plan.

All partner organisations have a yearly training plan with HFRS that involves them taking part in various practical exercises with local Water Responder Stations and with the Service's Water Rescue Team based at Hatfield. In addition they have a direct link into the Training and Development Centre and are able to support their organised training if required.

Partner organisations are also encouraged to take an active part in LRF Table Top exercises, which are designed to test response to local and national incidents.

To date the Service has organised several awareness days which all partner agencies can attend and use as an opportunity to 'show and tell' their equipment. These events are well received by all that attend the next one is planned to take place in 2016.

### **4.3 Does the FRA have effective arrangements in place to support incidents of national significance?**

- 4.3.1 HFRS has a single point of contact (SPOC) in relation to all of its National Resilience (NR) assets. This ensures that key information is cascaded through the organisation at the appropriate command/management levels and locations. The SPOC is the HFRS Resilience Officer who is also responsible for managing the HFRS budget for these assets. All managers at NR hosting stations have access to NR tools e.g. the CFOA NR website. This ensures that they can share information on deployments and exercises, as well as keeping up to date with current NR protocols.
- 4.3.2 Requests for NR assets will be received via the host Fire Control or the Fire and Rescue Service National Coordination Centre (FRSNCC), in all cases the call and deployment will be verified by HFRS Fire Control via the FRSNCC. A Principal Officer will be notified to give approval for an out of County mobilisation.
- 4.3.3 Once the mobilisation of a Hertfordshire NR asset is confirmed a text message will be sent (via the text-anywhere system) to all applicable asset operators detailing the destination and duration of a possible deployment, asking for a response; usually within 90mins; confirming whether they are available or unavailable, to ascertain crewing levels.

- 4.3.4 A Flexi Duty Officer (FDO) will be appointed to oversee crewing arrangements for the applicable asset; the appointed FDO will then notify Fire Control that a crew is either available or not available for deployment. Fire Control will liaise with FRSNCC as to availability and inform a principal HFRS officer who will make the final decision for deployment out of county.
- 4.3.5 A Welfare Officer (FDO) will be appointed to accompany the NR asset personnel to provide support and welfare throughout the duration of the deployment. The selected Welfare Officer will be provided with any current or relevant information required for deployment and also requested to attend Service Headquarters and liaise with a member of SLG in order to obtain contingency funds prior to deployment to the Strategic Holding Area (SHA). They will also provide the link with HFRS and NR assets whilst deployed.
- 4.3.6 Available NR personnel will be informed and requested to muster at a pre-determined location, they will then be deployed to the agreed RVP with the accompanying Welfare Officer
- 4.3.7 HFRS currently has a number of assets available for national deployment including High Volume Pump (HVP), Enhanced Logistic Support (ELS), Marauding Terrorist Firearms Attack (MFTA) and Water Rescue. In addition HFRS also host a HVP Tactical Advisor (TacAd) who would provide tactical advice at incident or to support Silver and Gold Commanders.
- 4.3.8 The CFO is the Lead of the National Strategic Advisory Team (NSAT). Nominated NSAT officers may be involved in providing strategic support and professional advice to members of government, the FRS Strategic Commander/SCG colleagues and the Chief Fire and Rescue Advisor.
- 4.3.9 HFRS's ELS vehicle and teams have been deployed regularly over recent years to provide, organise and manage the SHAs in support of major emergencies across the country involving NR deployments. The ELS team have effectively managed the NR capabilities, vehicles and teams on behalf of the affected FRS and in liaison with the FRSNCC.
- 4.3.10 HFRS has a designated SHA and this is registered as a NR asset. There is a clear procedure and process to facilitate the SHA and to ensure resilience, this process is available via Resilience Direct. HFRS also has arrangements in place to ensure that it can effectively host cross-border FRS's via a strategic support group that has purchasing authorisation to help facilitate the protracted running of the SHA. The SHA at Longfield was recently tested in a live exercise at the site involving cross-border ELS crews and assets.

### ***Case Study – Enhanced Logistics Support (ELS) and Strategic Holding Area (SHA) Exercise***

An ELS and SHA exercise was undertaken at the HFRS Training and Development Centre Longfield on the 6<sup>th</sup> October 2015. The exercise was designed to test the setup of a SHA under the management of an ELS team, to confirm that the SHA Liaison Officer understood his role and responsibilities and to test Fire Control's knowledge and understanding of the NCAF Electronic Support System Reporting Tool. The exercise was led by HFRS, with NR capabilities, support vehicles and personnel from both Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire FRS's participating.

The exercise involved Hertfordshire's Fire Control initiating a SHA set up, using the NCAF Electronic Support System and liaising with the Fire & Rescue Service National Coordination Centre (FRSNCC). An HFRS SHA Liaison Officer and support team provided a robust strategy for managing NR capabilities and support vehicles prior to the arrival of the ELS (using guidance documents and checklists). Once the ELS were stood up, the SHA Liaison Officer assisted the ELS with the provision of welfare and logistical support.

A number of learning outcomes were identified including the need to purchase high visibility surcoats and directional signage; and guidance documents relating to the SHA and its management were added to 'Resilience Direct'.

## 5. Response

### How well is the Authority delivering its response activities?

Key Area of Assessment	Descriptor of current level of performance
5.1 Has the FRA clearly defined, planned and implemented a response strategy linked to its IRMP?	Advanced
5.2 Does the FRA deliver a safe and effective response and engage partners and stakeholders effectively in its response activities?	Advanced
5.3 Does the FRA have a robust process for measuring and evaluating the effectiveness and improving performance of its response activities?	Advanced
5.4 How well is the Authority delivering its call management and incident support activities?	Advanced

#### 5.1 Has the FRA clearly defined, planned and implemented a response strategy linked to its IRMP?

5.1.1 HFRS has a high quality, well-developed response strategy that has been clearly defined, planned and implemented based on the community risk profile and the IRMP 2014-2018.

#### Emergency Response Standards and Arrangements

5.1.2 Emergency response arrangements are in place to ensure HFRS's statutory duties and the requirements as detailed in the IRMP are met; the response standards and arrangements are documented and published in the IRMP. In 2015-16 HFRS exceeded the countywide attendance standards to primary fires for both the first appliance (+0.6%) and second appliance (+3.5%). However the third appliance (required for "persons reported" incidents) did not meet the attendance standard by -1.3% (3 incidents). The first appliance to RTCs met the required attendance standard on 88.7% of occasions; this is 13.7% above target, the attendance standard by the first appliance to HAZMATS was met 100% of the time.

- 5.1.3 Response arrangements reflect the changes in key legislation and guidance. The guidance contained in the Fire Service Manual on Incident Command (published December 2015), was incorporated into all Incident Command training. All relevant staff have now received Incident Command System (ICS) training and a refresher programme exists.
- 5.1.4 In 2016 HFRS reviewed and republished the 'Hertfordshire Operations Strategy' which was designed to provide a summary overview of the existing arrangements and policies in HFRS. These policies are reviewed on a regular basis and are subject to change according to changes in risk identified.
- 5.1.5 HFRS carried out a review in 2014 of fire cover within Hertfordshire, the document, "The IRMP 2014-18" reviewed and looked at the following:
- Identified existing activity
  - Emergency response
  - Prevention and Protection
  - Identified potential risks
  - Emergency call profiling
  - Major incident planning
  - Local, Regional and National Resilience
  - Emergency cover options

The document including full details of the review can be viewed via the HCC website.

## **Flexible Response Standards**

- 5.1.6 HFRS has effective reinforcement scheme arrangements in the form of Section 13 and 16 agreements in place with neighbouring FRSs which can be activated in the event of a major fire or other emergency.
- 5.1.7 HFRS has also trained a number of officers to the National ILO standard and have placed these officers on the National ILO cadre list. Through mutual agreement this capability is provided to Cambridgeshire FRS as part of the 13 & 16 Agreement.
- 5.1.8 Through 13 & 16 Agreements HFRS can also provide Fire Investigators, Hydrocarbon Dog and handler, Water Rescue and Rope Rescue Teams to Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Buckinghamshire and London Fire and Rescue Services if required and requested in accordance with these agreements
- 5.1.9 HFRS has implemented revised flexible response options for day/night cover using TSM Phoenix as a mapping tool to compute response standards for the Day Crewing Plus stations at Potters Bar, Rickmansworth and Baldock & Letchworth.



### **Case Study – Day Crewing Plus (DCP)**

Over recent years there has been significant change within HFRS, in the way it is organised, the number and nature of emergencies attended, and the variety of services that it provides. In addition HFRS is required to manage the financial challenges facing all public sector organisations.

After extensive consultation with staff as part of Project Engage. DCP was identified as a viable alternative crewing system that would allow HFRS to maintain operational cover and response times while releasing financial and other capacity within the Service. Through fact based analysis and professional judgement Potters Bar, Rickmansworth and Baldock & Letchworth were identified as stations with levels of risk and activity, particularly between midnight and 7am that suited the DCP system. DCP stations work with 14 operational personnel working a 24 hour shift. This consists of 12 positive hours and 12 stand by hours. During the positive hours personnel carry out their normal station duties. During standby hours crews will respond from purpose built on site accommodation. Personnel working the system receive a pay enhancement of 24%.

Through self-rostering, the system allows staff flexibility to choose when they want to work, as long as the appliance has sufficient numbers of staff and they work the number of hours required.

DCP provides for five riders on a pump but will utilise 14 rather than 28 staff, making a saving of up to £300,000 per annum for each pump that operates the system. This has assisted the Directorate to achieve some of the financial savings it has been required to make. In addition, DCP crewing arrangements provide staff with more time for training and community safety activities.

Following successful project and delivery plans Potters Bar Fire Station transferred to the DCP system during September 2012, Rickmansworth in April 2013 and Baldock & Letchworth in April 2015.

## **Best use of Resources**

5.1.10 HFRS regularly participates in multi-agency exercises on a local, national and regional level. These exercises are used to validate and improve FRA, partner and LRF response plans and to improve multi-agency working.

5.1.11 The specialist response vehicles within HFRS including the Aerial Ladder Platform, Rescue Support Unit, Decontamination & Environment Protection Unit and Water Response Unit are resourced on stations by deploying alternate crewing arrangements, ensuring an efficient and effective use of personnel.

5.1.12 HFRS has excellent technical rescue arrangements. All personnel are trained in working at height, and trained in line with National guidance for water rescue to DEFRA Module 1, eight stations to Module 2, one station to Module 3&4, and 12 Officers to Module 5. Crews at two stations are also trained in line rescue.

- 5.1.13 During 2012 a review into the location of the Rescue Support Unit (RSU) was completed which resulted in it being relocated to St Albans Fire Station. Following the relocation a review of the appliance and equipment was completed during 2014-15.
- 5.1.14 HFRS has established a dedicated Water Response Unit to support both local operational and National Resilience requirements.
- 5.1.15 The Command Support Unit (CSU) provides a local resource and is also a National Resilience resource as part of Enhanced Logistics Support.
- 5.1.16 HFRS operates effective and efficient arrangements to ensure the management and supervision at operational incidents, based upon national published guidance.
- 5.1.17 On an annual basis all Incident Commanders are required to undertake an Incident Command Assessment, which measures competency and command capabilities in respect of technical knowledge and practical skills. All candidates are required to pass the assessment in order to continue in their current incident command role. If a candidate fails the assessment a development plan is provided to address any shortfall and to aid achievement of incident command competency.
- 5.1.18 To assure the maintenance of skills, competence of staff and to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of operational delivery, HFRS conducts an annual Station Audit & Inspection process. The process audits operational preparedness at all operational stations and Fire Control, it ensures operational competency, technical knowledge, risk critical recording and administration processes are being completed to and achieving the required high standard.

### **Case Study – Rescue Support Unit (RSU) Replacement**

In 2014 the existing Rescue Support Unit (RSU) vehicle was due for replacement, as a result of the up skilling of front line appliances; the RSU only had marginal improvement in capability over a normal pumping appliance in HFRS. Therefore a working group was set up consisting of operational crews from St Albans Fire Station to look at specialist appliances currently being utilised by other FRS across the country. One of the key drivers for the group was to consider that the vehicle and equipment requirements needed to be placed between current front line appliances and Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) in terms of capability. The group were therefore asked to consider and identify the needs of the organisation in terms of vehicle, equipment and skills.

The group based all their findings on providing a vehicle with the specialist skills for the majority of rescue situations and skills and equipment for the larger incident (LGV, small scale rail, etc.) or the initial stages of the larger incidents (Large rail, building collapse, etc.).

Following development of ideas, procurement of vehicle and equipment, the ongoing design of stowage and delivery of additional training, the new RSU went on the run during 2015.

The new vehicle, equipment and upskilled firefighters have already proved invaluable at the attendance of RTCs and technical rescues across the county. The RSU has provided an improved resource for dealing with risks within Hertfordshire and bridged the gap between local and national specialist rescue provision.

## **Development, Improvement and Delivery of Response Strategy**

5.1.19 HFRS has established arrangements to provide appropriate resources including adequate equipment and PPE.

5.1.20 Examples of improvement and development of HFRS response include:

- Consultation and engagement with staff to identify and explore innovative ideas and new equipment for future RTC provision. As a result of this new sets of battery powered hydraulic cutting equipment are supplied with new appliances in line with the vehicle replacement programme.
- The vehicle replacement programme has been refined to review vehicle life expectancy whilst still ensuring reliability. The programme, which covers the period until 2031, incorporates regular reviews to take account of changing requirements and technological advances.
- Provision of higher capacity (300 bar) Breathing Apparatus (BA) Cylinders, dedicated Sabre-Com communications equipment on every pump and a plan to replace BA sets in 2016.
- Establishment and maintenance of a MTFA capability to provide a local, regional and national capability.

- 5.1.21 Hertfordshire and Norfolk Fire Controls currently have a “Buddy” arrangement to provide resilience. Resilience arrangements will be further improved when the East Coast and Hertfordshire Fire Control project incorporating Lincolnshire, Humberside, Hertfordshire, and Norfolk is completed during November 2016.
- 5.1.22 The GARTAN Rota system was introduced in 2015 as a management tool, to forecast, monitor; and review the availability of whole-time personnel and improve operational cover.
- 5.1.23 Retained Duty System (RDS) management and availability will be further improved during 2016 with the introduction of GARTAN RDS
- 5.1.24 HFRS provides a number of reports and software tools (VIEWS) to assist managers in respect of performance management. The system provides managers with accurate information to effectively manage a range of measures including RDS attendance, RDS availability, sickness absence and competency levels.
- 5.1.25 A Strategic Operational Training Board (SOTB) meets formally on a pre-determined and regular basis to review information and data appertaining to operational learning. The information is analysed to identify improvements in current response delivery and actions are discharged to relevant departments to facilitate this improvement.

## **5.2 Does the FRA deliver a safe and effective response and engage partners and stakeholders effectively in its response activities?**

- 5.2.1 HFRS has excellent arrangements in place, which enables it to engage effectively with partners and stakeholders in order to develop, maintain and improve its response activities.
- 5.2.2 Regular three-way strategic level meetings are held with Hertfordshire Police and East of England Ambulance Service colleagues to discuss and improve operational issues, and to develop operational strategies (co-responding, forced entry etc.) across all three emergency services. These meetings are further supplemented at a tactical level via respective managers.
- 5.2.3 Additional meetings are also conducted with partners and stakeholders (Highways Agency, Red Cross, Environment Agency, Prison Service and Volunteer Groups) to develop relationships and improve operational coordination and collaborative delivery.
- 5.2.4 The design, development and delivery of response policy and activities is achieved by the establishment of task and finish groups (BA and Incident Command) and also existing governance structures (Operational Forum) to

complete required actions and tasks. The membership of these groups are cross department and involve all levels of the organisation

- 5.2.5 HFRS ensures that the process of revision and updating of operational procedures and service orders involves collaboration with all appropriate internal departments as well as partner agencies. Allocation of documents for revision is managed centrally and devolved to DCs and appropriate department leads.
- 5.2.6 HFRS has introduced a specialist team to deal with a MTFA. Recognised on the National Threat register, a marauding terrorist attack poses significant and unique difficulties for the emergency services. HFRS formed part of the national working group in developing procedures and protocols for dealing with such a threat. This new capability has provided HFRS with another opportunity to develop effective interoperability between blue light services in exercising, and the development and revision of policy.

## **Working with Partners and Other Agencies**

- 5.2.7 HFRS plays a leading role in the County's LRF, which develops civil resilience capacity and capability by planning for unexpected and sudden impact incidents.
- 5.2.8 HFRS are also fully involved and active in the groups supporting the LRF and the formation of emergency response plans, procedures and policies to both geographical and prevailing risks within Hertfordshire.
- 5.2.9 HFRS has delivered the JESIP programme to all staff, which involved engagement with partners and stakeholders to establish effective arrangements for planning and dealing with operational incidents. Arrangements have been developed for HFRS in collaboration with the Emergency Services Joint Operating Principles Working Group. These arrangements are cognisant of the National Coordination and Advisory Framework (England) and act as a critical system for HFRS to provide consistent and integrated local and national mutual assistance deployments in response to a MTFA: Operation PLATO.
- 5.2.10 To test these arrangements for operational readiness, HFRS has a yearly training plan which incorporates multi-agency training and exercising. The plan incorporates the following:
- Trauma
  - Firearms
  - Command
  - Fire Control / 3 way communication
  - Local exercise's
  - Major exercise

### **Case Study – Exercise Huddle**

Exercise Huddle, which was designed to test a multi-agency response to a terrorist firearms threat, was held at the Hatfield Galleria Shopping Centre on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> April 2014. The exercise brought together fire, ambulance, police, counter terrorism personnel and LRF partners from across Hertfordshire to test the following:

- Interoperability between the 3 blue light emergency services
- The 3 way communication between Fire, Police and Ambulance Control rooms
- Mutual assistance arrangements from other FRSs
- The Forward Control Point Fire Commanders knowledge of Joint Operating Procedures, including Limits of Exploitation and Zones
- The Joint Dynamic Risk Assessment process
- The Joint Command Facility (JCF)
- Joint casualty management between Fire Service personnel and East of England Ambulance Service including treat and leave and casualty evacuation.
- The fire Service response to a fire within the warm zone
- Building design and weaknesses and also
- Implementation of organisational Business Continuity Plans.

Over 100 blue light responders took part in the HFRS led exercise, in which HFRS staff supported Health colleagues in casualty treatment and management of the 300 casualties involved. Other components of the exercise included testing arrangements in respect of scene preservation and collaboration with the Counter Terrorism Information Unit to ensure evidence preservation and continuity.

A number of valuable learning outcomes were identified and these were fed back into the review process via the LRF. Continual monitoring and review ensures that the capability develops and changes to meet current threat levels.

5.2.11 HFRS has in place 16 separate Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with various partners including the recently established Fire Investigation MoU for FRSs and Police Forces in Hertfordshire Cambridgeshire and Bedfordshire.

#### **Case Study - MoU Detailing the Investigation of Fire**

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) provides a framework for fire investigation (FI) within the counties of Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire; it details the working arrangements between Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire Constabulary and Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service. The MoU has been in place for several years between HFRS and Hertfordshire Constabulary but has recently been reviewed and updated to now include all of the above named Services.

The purpose of the MoU is to ensure effective working arrangements are in place using the necessary resources from both services in order to investigate all fires of mutual interest, these being:



- a) All fires involving fatalities;
- b) All fires involving serious injury;
- c) All deliberately started fires involving injury;
- d) All deliberately started fires involving property;
- e) All deliberately started fires involving incidents that appear to have been committed against someone because of their disability, gender-identity, race, religion or belief, or sexual orientation.
- f) All deliberately started fires that appear to form a series or part thereof.
- i) All deliberately started fires that appear to form a series or part thereof.

The MoU encompasses an agreement for all organisations to work closely to carry out a joint plan and investigation to identify the cause and origin of fires. Of the deliberate fires investigated through the implementation of the MoU, the successful partnership working has led to numerous criminal convictions incorporating the skills of both HFRS fire investigators and Hertfordshire Constabulary personnel.

Whilst not covered specifically in the MoU, joint training sessions on relevant subject matter, including fire investigation and forensic awareness, are undertaken by both services to ensure vital skills and knowledge are maintained.

5.2.12 Both the ACO and AC Response and Resilience attend and participate in the CFOA Eastern Region Operational Groups. Information and issues identified by these regional groups, which involve all six East of England FRSs, are fed into the CFOA National Operations Committee.

5.2.13 Operational crews undertake a specific, Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP). This was introduced in 2010 and has been developed over recent years to incorporate changing commercial risk. The main driver for this was to allow operational personnel to visit identified premises with a view to carrying out fire safety inspections. Training was given, and has since been enhanced, by Fire Safety Liaison Officers who have been allocated a reference to support stations with the programme. This initiative has been well received by Ops personnel and promoted better working relationships between the Ops crews and the Protection Department. All Fire Protection premises files have now been digitalised and will be accessible via a web portal from every fire station within the county. This will streamline the RBIP process and ensure operational crews have current information available immediately.

5.2.14 HFRS has a team of trained Inter-Agency Liaison Officers (ILO) working alongside police, military, medical and other colleagues to deal with a range of operational incidents. HFRS has strong links with the Hertfordshire Constabulary at a number of levels including an excellent working relationship with Scenes of Crime Officers (SOCO) and County Coroner in relation to fire investigation.

5.2.15 HFRS has an established team of Water Incident Liaison Officers (WILO). This group is responsible for reviewing and designing service policy, training requirements and provision and engagement with other partners and voluntary organisations with a water rescue capability.

5.2.16 During 2012 Herts Police identified a potential risk of protestors attaching themselves to railings and specifically high level motorway gantries and prominent visible awnings. Through joint consultation and design a MoU was established identifying the requirements of both services for Protestor Removal. Joint training and liaison has continued since 2012 to maintain this joint capability.

5.2.17 Regular multi-agency exercises are completed through the LRF, Training and Development Centre and Districts in order to forge and improve management links and improve interoperability (JESIP) between the three emergency services.

5.2.18 Districts are encouraged to ensure cross border working and collaboration between FRSs is maintained and developed to ensure continuous improvement in respect of operational response.

### ***Case Study - Cross Border Training with London Fire Brigade***

HFRS shares a border with five different FRSs, which makes cross border training and exercising a key strategic priority in order to ensure a coherent, appropriate and coordinated operational response. To support this strategic priority, a series of exercises and training scenarios were organised between fire stations in South West Hertfordshire and fire stations in North West London.

To facilitate the cross border training, fire crews from the identified London stations attended Longfield Training and Development Centre in Stevenage to receive theoretical and practical operational input on HFRS policies and procedures.

The input also included familiarisation with cross border protocols to ensure the intra-operability of response, communication and equipment.

The key areas considered were joint approaches to RTCs, MFTA incidents wide area flooding and multi-pump fires akin to those encountered during the London riots in 2011.

A number of learning outcomes were recorded and opportunities for further cross border training identified.

Ensuring a co-ordinated operational response across the London border remains a strategic priority with policies and procedures being reviewed and monitored on a regular basis. This review process ensures both HFRS and London Fire Brigade are able to take a dynamic approach to the ever changing cross border risk profile.

### **5.3 Does the FRA have a robust process for measuring and evaluating the effectiveness and improving performance of its response activities?**

- 5.3.1 HFRS has a clear and comprehensive debrief and review process for operational incidents and training exercises. This process can involve multi agencies and is embedded within the organisation to ensure learning outcomes are addressed effectively.
- 5.3.2 Information from response debriefs, exercises and post incident reviews are used effectively to inform policies and practices across the organisation. The Strategic Operations and Training Board (SOTB) is responsible for ensuring that all of this data is analysed and acted on and instruction issued to the relevant department for action.

### **Measuring & Evaluating**

- 5.3.3 HFRS has a clearly defined procedure in place to review operational performance. The Operational Performance Audit (OPERA) process enables the capture of comprehensive operational performance data and identifies organisational learning at a variety of operational incidents.
- 5.3.4 HFRS recognises the need for continual improvement. Operational performance data, including that provided through OPERA is routinely assessed in order to ensure appropriate actions are taken to strengthen the effectiveness of operational response. This recognition and commitment to continuous improvement led to the Strategic Operations and Training Board (SOTB) being established in 2011. The Board meets quarterly and regularly analyses the following to identify strategic training needs and requirements.
- OPERA returns
  - Operational and exercise debrief reports
  - H&S accident data
  - Vehicle accident data
  - Vehicle and equipment defects
  - Training provision
  - Analytical Risk Assessments
- 5.3.5 If/when an issue relating to joint organisation learning is identified through the Debrief, OPERA or SOTB process, the designated SPOC (GC Training) will be tasked to complete the Joint Organisational Learning (JOL) process to ensure it is captured from a national perspective. Likewise national operational learning obtained and cascaded through the JOL process is managed via SOTB.
- 5.3.6 When information is received regarding national operational learning (Balmoral Bar) a gap analysis is undertaken against existing HFRS policies, procedures, training and equipment. The finding of this analysis is then presented to SOTB for decision and action

5.3.7 A number of staff are involved in the planning, design and delivery of the National Operational Guidance National Operational Learning (NOL) project. Involvement in this project will further reinforce and improve HFRS's internal operational learning processes leading to safer and more effective operational delivery.

### **Case Study – Strategic Operations and Training Board**

In 2013, and as a result of information taken from measuring and evaluating reporting tools utilised by HFRS a potential issue with the current model of fire ground radios issued to all of its appliances and officers was identified.

These reporting tools were:

- OPERA returns
- Operational and exercise debrief reporting
- Vehicle and equipment defects

The Strategic Operations and Training Board (SOTB) identified this data which highlighted significant concerns in relation to the suitability and reliability of the current issue of fireground radios.

SOTB brought this matter to the attention of Service Support Team who in turn, raised the matter at SLG.

SLG tasked Service Support to undertake a feasibility study to determine whether the current fireground radios could be re-calibrated in order to resolve the reception and transmission issues to a satisfactory level and prevent undue expenditure unless it was deemed necessary.

Subsequent feedback from this feasibility study advised SLG that it was recommended that a replacement fireground radio programme was found to provide the most cost effective solution to the identified problem.

In determining this decision, the Service Support study considered the following:

- Cost effectiveness
- Reliability
- Network coverage
- Future proofing
- Feedback from other UKFRS users

SLG accepted the findings of the feasibility study and commissioned the Appliances & Equipment Planning Board to proceed with the provision of replacement fire ground radios.

Following recognised formal in-house policies and procedures, the identification and provision of replacement 'fit for purpose' digital fireground radios was successfully accomplished and the replacement fireground radios were distributed to all operational vehicles and officers within HFRS.

## **Performance Improvements**

5.3.8 HFRS implemented the RAPPEL 3 RDS system in November 2011 to continue to improve the standard of operational response. RAPPEL is a dynamic retained fire fighter availability system that forecasts accurate information to both Control

and the retained firefighters serving their community. In addition, district monitoring and managing of the RDS ensures the performance availability and % commitment are managed according to their contract.

- 5.3.9 HFRS has further enhanced the functionality of the Mobile Data Terminals by adding software called "Gateway". The Gateway has enabled full data mobilising using the Tough-books. As well as providing full data mobilising and incident support, the Gateway also allows a more efficient transmission of messages and guarantees accuracy.
- 5.3.10 HFRS's Inspection and Audit process is used in the inspections of all operational stations and Fire Control. It is utilised to provide an annual audit to ensure operational competency, technical knowledge, risk critical recording and administration processes are being completed to and achieving the required high standard. The audit and inspection programme also has a scheme for Beacon Station status, which recognises stations that have achieved excellence through a range of measures.
- 5.3.11 HFRS provides and maintains a Personal Development Recording System (PDRS). The PDRS software is designed to record an individual's skills, competencies and knowledge in line with the National Occupational Standards (NOS) appropriate to their role. This provides personnel with information that will enable them to identify future training and development needs.
- 5.3.12 The NOS have been broken down into a series of practical 'activities' and risk critical information, knowledge and understanding that underpin an individual's ability to competently undertake their role.
- 5.3.13 To enable RDS personnel to effectively manage their time and meet the requirements of the PDRS, the HFRS Training department and RDS Support Officers worked together to produce a RDS training planner. The RDS training programme is designed to ensure that RDS personnel can demonstrate competence in a range of skills outlined on the PDRS recording system.
- 5.3.14 VIEWS is a strategic software system that enables all operational commanders to provide up to date performance management evidence. VIEWS requires monthly commentary across a suit of indicators ensuring ownership and accountability for all local commanders.
- 5.3.15 Digital Services provides a number of reports to assist managers in performance management on a regular basis (monthly and quarterly). This provides managers with accurate information to effectively manage a range of HR objectives (including RDS attendance, RDS availability, sickness absence and competency levels). Additional reports are also produced to manage operational response including attendance and response standards, AFA calls and 7.2.d) completion.

5.3.16 All operational personnel have access to up to date training packages and multimedia presentations regarding equipment and polices to support operational delivery via Fireweb. In addition information relating to operational risks is also provided on Fireweb for Retained stations to access and improve operational knowledge.

5.3.17 Information flows between operational staff and the FP team have allowed for improved prevention activities. The introduction of a Post Incident procedure (CFS R018) has formalised arrangements for passing information between departments when fire safety issues are identified. Combined with enhanced fire safety knowledge flowing from the RBIP training, operational crews are regularly referring premises to the FP team for further investigation. Following an incident in 2014 and subsequent post fire inspection which was instigated as a result of a referral made by the attending crew, HFRS secured a successful prosecution against a Hotel in Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire.

## 5.4 How well is the Authority delivering its call management and incident support activities?

### Call Management and Incident Support

5.4.1 HFRS has high quality, advanced call management and incident support arrangements in place.

5.4.2 Robust call handling processes and policies enable HFRS to screen all calls effectively and ensure that resources are used efficiently. Established call challenge policies and procedures are in place to reduce unnecessary attendances and this approach is key in enabling HFRS to respond to emergencies. The total numbers of calls received by Fire Control for 2015-16 was 21,762.

#### **Of the above 21,762 calls**

2,425 Calls to Fire Incidents

4,191 To False Alarms

2,893 Calls to Special Service incidents of which 866 were not attended following call challenge

3,707 Calls to AFAs of which 1202 were not attended following call challenge

222 Hoax calls - of which 152 were not attended following call challenge

580 Calls to assist other Fire Services

5.4.3 The Service's Hoax Call policy has continued to drive down the number of incoming calls and subsequent mobilisations to hoax calls. HFRS utilises the technology within the mobilising system to map hoax call hotspots and then targets prevention activity in that area. HFRS also works with network providers to bar persistent offenders.

5.4.4 During 2015/16 Fire Control staff conducted an audit of Revised Incident Types to ensure a consistent approach. This allows information to be shared across the



Service about the types of incidents it is being called to and to identify which incident types are being successfully challenged.

### ***Case Study – East Herts and Broxbourne Hoax Callers***

During 2013 the local Station Commander was reviewing station calls when he noticed two unusual specific hoax calls which both turned out to be deliberate false alarms. Later on that year further deliberate hoax calls were received in the same location one of which led to a delay in attendance to a RTC persons trapped on the M25.

Following conversations with the local Borough Council and Hertfordshire Police it was suggested that there might be a possibility of CCTV footage, from the cameras around the location where the hoax calls were being made from. Footage was obtained of an individual driving to the phone box and making the hoax call. The quality of the video was such that the individual could not be identified or the car registration identified.

Fire Control looked through the incident logs and found a further two deliberate false alarms called in from the same phone box, the fire calls were listened to and were quite clearly all from the same person. Further investigation by Fire Control personnel identified a total of 25 calls from the same person across the East Herts and Broxbourne area over a four year period. It was apparent that this person wasn't trying to access the local fire station but his motive was to instigate a large emergency services attendance.

A concerted effort of raising the awareness of this problem with all the operational personnel within the District began, working closely with Fire Control all of the phone box telephone numbers used were given 'flags' on the mobilising system so that a Control Operator answering a call would be notified of the possibility of the hoax caller using that phone box. Additionally, it was agreed that if possible a further mobilisation of appliances or officers to the phone box to identify the caller would be made.

During December the hoax caller called again on a flagged phone. The Fire Control Operator who answered the call recognised his voice and kept the caller on the phone for as long as possible. In the meantime requests were made to the CCTC control room to ask for the cameras to be moved and zoomed into the phone box, CCTV Control reported that they had taken clear images of the hoax caller and the registration numbers of the vehicle he was driving, and that they would be passed to the Police. Using the vehicle registration number the Police traced the car to a registered business and later on that week a 32 year old male was arrested. He appeared at Magistrates Court and was given a one year community order and ordered to pay £85 costs.

- 5.4.5 Fire Control staff are key to the successful implementation of the Service AFA Policy and will not mobilise to those premises which fall in to the specified criteria. Calls are referred back to the Alarm Receiving Centres. The mobilising system is used to identify all Alarm Calls attended. These are analysed on a monthly basis and put into a report, which is forwarded to Service colleagues to address any areas of concern.

- 5.4.6 HFRS make excellent use of technology. The Vision mobilising system is used for all operational call handling and incident management arrangements. This is a premise based mobilising system that features Enhanced Information Services for Emergency Calls (EISEC) and a property based gazetteer, providing site specific information on turnout and to the incident ground. Embedded within the system are a series of action plans for pre-planned occurrences or contingencies.
- 5.4.7 Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs) on all appliances provide full data mobilising and enables Fire Control Staff to send additional incident information. The MDTs also provide premise risk data, operational procedures, crash recovery and Chemdata to operational personnel at all times.
- 5.4.8 HFRS Control Operators have access to the Highways Agency motorway cameras to assist in mobilising to motorway incidents. Control staff can also access the Met Office Hazard Manager Service to ensure accurate forecasting can be made for spate conditions or large-scale incidents. Automatic Vehicle Location System (AVLS) is also present on all operational vehicles which enables the nearest available resource to be mobilised.
- 5.4.9 The mobilising system allows HFRS to determine efficient and effective use of resources with regard to Pre-Determined Attendances (PDAs) and is therefore driving the call management strategy for HFRS.
- 5.4.10 Every incident type has an a “action plan” attached to it within the mobilising system along with specific forms associated with some incident types to support the Control Operator in handling and despatching to the emergency call if required and then to further support the incident with further actions.
- 5.4.11 A suite of documents, ‘Fire Control Ways of Working’ are in place in addition to the HFRS Service Information System for each of Fire Control’s areas of responsibility. These policies have been designed and are constantly reviewed to ensure that they clarify what Fire Control’s role is and focus on call handling and incident support. Each policy has a training package associated with it and an assessment tool that is completed to ensure that all staff have been trained supported and understand what is required of them.
- 5.4.12 HFRS have entered into a collaborative partnership with Norfolk, Lincolnshire and Humberside FRS’s. This solution operates on a virtual network, which will be data centric and creates a shared integrated mobilising system. This offers the opportunity of enhanced buddy and resilience arrangements, which are supported by common ways of working to facilitate future mobilising and incident support. The system will enable any of the four FRS’s to receive 999 calls for and mobilise and support those incidents in any of the FRS’s areas. The HFRS “Fire Control Ways of Working” are in the process of being revised to incorporate the agreed joint operating procedures for the collaboration.

## Contingency Arrangements

5.4.13 The current 'Buddy' arrangement that HFRS has in place with Norfolk FRS ensures that one Fire Control supports the other when assistance is required and is utilised in the following circumstances;

- When one Control is dealing with a large volume of calls i.e. Grass or Flooding, or a large or major incident
- In the event of an evacuation of one Control
- To provide assistance in a scenario when staffing may be affected e.g. due to a pandemic situation
- To provide a more resilient and efficient service to the public – systems interlink and callers need not know that their call is being handled by another county.

5.4.14 The current Vision mobilising system has three servers for fall-back and if these fail, Fire Control staff can mobilise through a back-up system called CRASH and alert retained personnel via a tertiary bearer. These are trained on regularly so that all staff are competent in their use. If there is a requirement to evacuate the main Fire Control based at Longfield, HFRS has a Secondary Control at Welwyn Garden City Fire Station. The mobilising system at Secondary Control operates on the same Vision mobilising system in use at the main Control. The provision of a Secondary Control will remain in place until the collaborative partnership with the 4 FRSs has been successfully implemented.

5.4.15 HFRS also has a "Recall to Duty" process in place for recalling additional Control staff if and when circumstances dictate so as to ensure that the required level of service is maintained.

## Performance of Call Handling and Incident Support

5.4.16 Emergency call handling quality assurance is carried out monthly by Fire Control staff. This process is in place to provide an assurance to the Service and to Norfolk FRS our buddy partner, in terms of quality of Emergency Call Reception. Additionally, the process supports the Service's Performance Management Strategies promoting continuous improvement in emergency call handling, procedures and individual personal performance.

5.4.17 Call management and incident performance information is effectively evaluated at every level to drive improvement. This data is also shared with personnel and with partners. Each watch in Fire Control has a Watch Agreement which identifies the standards that they should be aiming to achieve. This information is available to the SC and other areas of the Service and is linked to the District Action Plan.

5.4.18 Where possible, emergency calls handled by Fire Control Operators are listened in to at the time of call by a supervisor on the watch. This has been incorporated into work activities from the 'Rule 43' recommendation following the Lakanal House incident in July 2009 and the Shirley Towers incident in April 2010. This practice ensures that information received at the time of call is relayed to crews

whilst on route to and/or at the incident ground but in addition to this supports the Fire Control Operator and also ensures that the Watch Managers are fully informed so that they can undertake professional decision making.

- 5.4.19 HFRS have worked with the other three FRS's within the collaboration and other collaborations to identify best practice and this has significantly influenced the Ways of Working. This has required a new approach that does not just identify four separate working procedures in one document but provides one efficient way of working that is best for the collaboration.
- 5.4.20 An annual programme of "core" training is in place for Control personnel to ensure that all core areas are met and all personnel remain competent. To date this has achieved a competency rate of 97%. Each month each Watch trains on the core areas and also have the flexibility to add other areas that the Watch Managers identify as individual needs.
- 5.4.21 This training programme allows Control to train and be assessed against all incident types. These core areas are technically assessed using an online tool and each quarter the SC undertakes a practical exercise to ensure that each Watch can practically deliver these core areas and all incident types. To enhance this further, each year an operational assessment is undertaken by the ACO Ops and AC Response and Resilience to assess that Fire Control are performing to the required standard.
- 5.4.22 To further enhance the quality of training for all personnel within the collaboration a review and evaluation of the way core training is delivered will be completed to identify any improvements that could be made. One FRS within the collaboration will be able to support another so that dedicated training sessions can take place
- 5.4.23 HFRS Fire Control assisted the national team in developing the Control Room JESIP work stream with Police and Health colleagues and assisted the region in delivering this fundamental training and understanding. All HFRS Fire Control supervisors have attended the course, which is further enhanced by on-going training and Watch training activities.
- 5.4.24 Debriefs for all 6 pump + incidents or incidents of specific interest are held to ensure that all aspects of the incident have been dealt with correctly and to identify any areas of under-performance and/or good performance. This enables the Service to support staff development needs and refine systems/procedures as/if required.
- 5.4.25 Each Fire Control Watch Officer acts as the nominated Fire Control liaison officer for a HFRS District. This allows for constructive feedback between operational crews and Fire Control and the sharing of information with regards to call handling and incident support.

## 6. Health and Safety

**How well is the authority ensuring its responsibilities for health, safety and welfare are met?**

Key Area of Assessment	Descriptor of current level of performance
6.1 Does the FRA have clearly defined and effective arrangements to take account of its Health, Safety and Welfare responsibilities?	<b>Established</b>
6.2 Do effective management structures and arrangements exist within the FRA to support the development and implementation of Health, Safety and Welfare activities?	<b>Advanced</b>
6.3 Does the FRA have a robust process for measuring and evaluating the effectiveness and improving performance of its Health, Safety and Welfare activities?	<b>Advanced</b>

**6.1 Does the FRA have clearly defined and effective arrangements to take account of its Health, Safety and Welfare responsibilities?**

6.1.1 HFRS believes that it has very good, well established arrangements in place for managing its Health, Safety and Welfare (HSW) responsibilities. The H&S Department comprises a dedicated team of two members of staff. The H&S Manager has been a Chartered Member of the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health for 11 years and a new Health and Safety Officer who joined the Service in June 2014 is currently completing her NEBOSH Diploma qualification. Together they provide high quality support, advice and guidance on all matters of health, safety, and care to all levels of the organisation.

### Policy Framework

6.1.2 There is a clear and explicit commitment to continue to develop a positive health and safety culture in the Health, Safety, Welfare and Care policy and one of HFRS's strategic aims is to "ensure a safe and competent workforce". This policy was reviewed following publication of the national CFOA Health, Safety and Welfare Framework for the operational environment guidance, published in June 2013 (see 6.2) compliments the HCC Health and Safety policy statement.

6.1.3 The management of Health, Safety and Welfare in HFRS is based on the HSE guidance HS (G) 65 Successful H&S Management model and is fully integrated with day to day business arrangements. This overarching policy framework is underpinned by clearly defined, high quality HSW policies and procedures. Policies and procedures are managed and communicated to all personnel via the

Service Information System (SIS) which provides details of the safe systems of work to be adopted both operationally and strategically.

- 6.1.4 HFRS has maintained good working relationships with the Health and Safety Executive and other Fire and Rescue Authorities.

### ***Case Study – Colour Vision Deficiency***

ACO Service Support who chairs the CFOA Regional H&S meetings and sits on the CFOA H&S National Committee proposed a review of the current recruitment standards relating to colour vision deficiency to explore the potential for removing them as they were deemed to be a barrier to entry.

HFRS appointed officers who identified all the activities within a fire service workplace which may present difficulties for a person with a colour vision deficiency, excluding aspects of a firefighters' role which are covered by separate legislation such as driving which has specific requirements relating to eyesight.

Consultation has taken place with the Eastern Regional Fire Services and West Yorkshire FRS colleagues seeking their input and agreement or challenge to the risk assessment of the activities. No additional safety issues were highlighted.

The ACO will produce a report and proposal for CFOA National H&S Committee to consider making alterations to the Red Book regarding colour vision deficiency.

- 6.1.5 HSW policies are revised and monitored by the H&S Department on a proactive basis, in accordance with a well-managed review programme, in light of any changes to legislation or guidance to ensure they are current and appropriate. HCC policies and guidance are referenced where they exist and apply to Fire Service employees and new policies and procedures are developed and implemented as required.

- 6.1.6 The ACO responsible for H&S at SLG level chairs the Regional H&S Practitioners Group and promotes the development of both national, regional and local policies and operational procedures. (See also Colour Vision Deficiency).

## **Consultation and Communication**

- 6.1.7 Policy development is prioritised based on risk profiling and risk assessment and is subject to staff and stakeholder consultation. HFRS has well established protocols for consulting with employees and these are detailed, along with information on the role of safety representatives, in the 'Consultation with employees and their representatives on H&S policy. A good working relationship exists with the Trade Union Safety representatives.

- 6.1.8 Stations and departments are encouraged to establish their own safety committees and health and safety features as a standing item on management team meetings. Items of concern are discussed at senior management team



meetings and matters of policy are raised by the Health and Safety Coordinating Group (HASCOG) via the SLG.

- 6.1.9 The HASCOG meets quarterly and membership is outlined in the SIS H&S Committees Structure. Membership also includes representation for JPS (i.e. Trading Standards, Community Safety and Resilience Teams). Members are fully involved in issues raised at the meetings which provide the opportunity to discuss accident and incident data, and are committed to the continuous improvement of the H&S culture in HFRS.
- 6.1.10 The H&S Manager, the Equalities Adviser and the Occupational Health Manager work closely together when necessary ensuring a consistent and inclusive approach to policy development or guidance, for example considering the impact of the CFOA guidance on firefighter fitness standards. Case work is discussed on an ad hoc basis.
- 6.1.11 Regular meetings, chaired by the ACO, are held with the Service Support Team and comprise Area Commanders, the H&S Manager, the Occupational Health Manager, the Equalities Adviser, the Buildings Manager, the Head of Training & Development and the Head of Technical Services to ensure work planning information is shared and strategic and operational matters are discussed.
- 6.1.12 The H&S Manager meets with each of the five District Management Teams on a six monthly basis to promote the work of the H&S department and discuss outcomes of investigations or other areas of concern or good practice.
- 6.1.13 The H&S Manager and H&S Officer meet with the Service Buildings Manager on a monthly basis to ensure that any premises related health and safety matters are addressed or highlighted and to discuss buildings and contractor issues.
- 6.1.14 The H&S Department has a good overview of operational incidents locally, regionally and nationally and all operational risks requiring the development of safe systems of work/safe operating procedures as part of Operational SISs are identified and promulgated through Safety Update Bulletins, Hazard Information Bulletins or Operational Bulletins, all of which are published on the intranet.
- 6.1.15 The Department keeps up to date with health and safety legislative developments via regular reference to professional health and safety publications, the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA), and through the H&S Manager's membership of the Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) and the International Institute of Risk and Safety Managers (IIRSM) in addition to the CFOA and HSE's websites.
- 6.1.16 Relevant information is disseminated to the Service in the appropriate format including:
- Monthly Safety Event Feedback which features within the H&S section of the monthly Service publication 'Protect'.

- Safety Update Bulletins (12 published since 2012) which provide general information and safety guidance relating to mainly operational equipment.
- Hazard Information Bulletins provide details of ‘Significant Safety Events’ or warnings – mainly relating to operational incidents, near misses, identification of hazards or accidents which have occurred in other brigades, internally or from intelligence shared by partner organisations. Only significant hazards or risks are promulgated in this way.
- Monthly data summaries of safety events reported to the H&S department and published as ‘Commentary’ on the Views Performance Management System.
- Health and safety data is published six monthly and an annual Service performance report is produced as part of the Departmental H&S Plan contained in the Service Support Plan.

6.1.17 The H&S Department works closely with peers at regional and county level (HCC) sharing policies and procedures as well as participating in working groups to develop regional or corporate policies.

6.1.18 During 2012 a regional agreement was drawn up to participate in peer health and safety auditing using the RoSPA (Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents) Quality Safety Auditing system. Four Fire & Rescue Service Chiefs in the Region (Essex, Hertfordshire, Norfolk and Suffolk) agreed to participate in this programme and a number of health and safety practitioners from those Services were trained by RoSPA in the QSA. (See Case Study).

6.1.19 The H&S Manager passed the QSA qualification and has led and supported three audits of neighbouring regional FRSS, and also undertook a full audit of Hertfordshire in February 2013. There is already an established protocol to provide mutual support for major accident investigations.

### **Case Study – RoSPA Quality Safety Auditing**

During 2012 the CFOA Eastern Regional Health and Safety Practitioners requested their Chief's to sign up to mutual agreement to participate in regional peer auditing using the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents Quality Safety Auditing system (RoSPA QSA).

Four Services agreed to take part and RoSPA trained the health and safety practitioners from Hertfordshire, Suffolk, Norfolk and Essex who studied and passed the qualification.

The H&S Manager of HFRS undertook a full audit of the Service in order to complete her qualification and presented the report to SLG in February 2013. Subsequently Essex and Norfolk peers audited HFRS in November 2013, confirming the findings of the 'self' audit.

The HFRS H&S Manager subsequently led an audit of Norfolk FRS in June 2014 and supported an audit of Suffolk FRS in November 2014.

Essex FRS may be audited by the team during 2016/17 but the Eastern Regional group are considering adopting a new approach, based on the RoSPA system, developed by Surrey FRS which is bespoke to the Fire & Rescue Services and endorsed by CFOA.

The RoSPA QSA peer auditing has proved a very successful activity for the Services involved, providing useful benchmarking, learning and peer support.

## **6.2 Do effective management structures and arrangements exist within the FRA to support the development and implementation of Health, Safety and Welfare activities?**

6.2.1 HFRS regards itself as having an excellent structure in place for managing health and safety and welfare within the organisation.

### **Structure and Responsibilities**

6.2.2 The CFO and SLG lead the health, safety and welfare agenda and are committed to their statutory responsibilities as detailed in the Health, Safety Welfare and Care Policy. SLG define and communicate the allocation of responsibilities, accountability, authority and resources to ensure the implementation of policy, while a dedicated H&S Department provides support, advice and guidance on all matters of health, safety, welfare and care to all levels of the organisation. A senior officer (ACO) is responsible for co-ordinating, monitoring and implementing HSW arrangements and is the chair of HASCOG. The Services H&S and Occupational Health Managers both report directly to the ACO Service Support ensuring excellent visibility of HSW matters at the highest level.

6.2.3 The Occupational Health Unit (OHU), based at the Longfield site in Stevenage, comprises access to psychological support; rehabilitation services and fitness advice as well as a dedicated health and welfare practitioner in the form of the Occupational Health Manager and a contracted physician. Together they provide impartial, objective health advice to all fire and rescue employees. The department's principle objectives are:

- to monitor the health of personnel throughout their employment;
- promote a healthy working environment by providing a range of services for all employees;
- support the physical and mental wellbeing of employees.

#### **Case study – Occupational Health Unit**

Health promotion is a high priority for the Occupational Health Unit (OHU) and HFRS is committed to providing, developing and maintaining a physically fit and safe workforce. All Wholetime, RDS and other uniformed personnel are required to undertake a Physical Fitness Assessment (PFA) twice a year. Personnel failing to reach the required standard are referred to the OHU and the Service Fitness Adviser. In comparison to other Fire & Rescue Services' arrangements this is a positive and proactive approach to managing fitness for duty and ensuring the benefits of health and well-being of the workforce. The Service actively supports physical training on station whilst some Services have stepped away from this. Non-uniformed support staff are encouraged to take part in fitness activities on a purely voluntary basis. Regular medicals are undertaken on operational personnel on a programmed basis and in compliance with the Control of Asbestos Regulations requirement for medicals and for non-uniformed staff on request. Regular occupational and personal health themes feature on the Health, Safety, Welfare and Care Noticeboards located on every HFRS site, and include subjects such as Asbestos Awareness; Slips, Trips & Falls; Firefighter Cancers; .

6.2.4 All HFRS managers and supervisors are fully aware of their responsibilities for carrying out risk assessments, keeping staff informed of all health and safety risks and hazards, and undertaking investigations where safety events occur. HFRS assesses all safety events and allocates event investigation appropriate to the scale of the event. The Service H&S Policy explains the requirements and guidance for carrying out investigations.

6.2.5 The H&S Department provides model risk assessments for a number of activities regularly carried out and aims to improve access to these by publishing them on Compass so they are readily accessible to use as examples.

### **Planning and Informing**

6.2.6 The H&S annual action plan forms part of the Service Support Plan for 2016/17 and is proactive and responsive to changes in Service priorities ensuring the outcomes and learning points of operational incidents, investigations and national events are addressed.

6.2.7 Data from all accidents, near misses and hazards reported to the department is used to monitor each case individually; ensuring the appropriate level of investigation is assigned to each one. Trends are identified and strategic or policy matters raised by the H&S Manager with the ACO responsible for H&S and discussed at HASCOG or taken to the Strategic Operations and Training Board (SOTB) if there are relevant training implications. Action plans are drawn up to address the issues arising from events.

## **Competency**

6.2.8 A high level of HSW training is available to HFRS staff to ensure they are competent in discharging their HSW responsibilities. HFRS aims to ensure that all supervisory level managers are trained to Institution of Occupational Safety & Health (IOSH) Managing Safely qualification level while middle managers are trained to NEBOSH Certificate level. A range of professional / operational and general courses are also provided including internal HFRS courses and external courses such as roper rescue, water rescue, emergency casualty care as well as asbestos awareness training, food safety and ladder maintenance.

6.2.9 SLG and Hertfordshire Fire Brigades Union (FBU) consider that health and safety should be an integral part of the work undertaken by operational firefighters to ensure that every employee works efficiently, effectively and safely. To support this a Joint Statement has been developed with the Trade Unions (TU) relating to health and safety training and will be published by the Service.

6.2.10 In order to improve and encourage access to the IOSH Managing Safely course an on-line e-learning version has been made available to RDS managers.

6.2.11 Since the on-line version became available in 2013, 23 people have taken up this course and all have successfully passed.

6.2.12 The quality of safety event investigations has greatly improved since the H&S Department have undertaken to thoroughly review every investigation and challenge the outcomes where improvements could be made with the investigator. Encouragement, support and guidance are proactively given by the H&S Manager and H&S Officer and this led to the request for accident investigation training.

6.2.13 In February and April 2016 eight Station Commanders attended an Accident Investigation training course and are now competent to investigate any safety events, which may have legal implications for the Service, require a change to our internal policies and/or impact on training requirements. With their operational background this team will provide peer support to Station, Watch and Crew Commanders undertaking investigations into injuries, near misses or hazard reports when requested by the H&S Department.

6.2.14 The Accident Investigation Team will also provide assistance in promoting and introducing the RIVO system.

### **Case Study – RIVO**

HFRS is committed to developing a more robust system for recording safety events. At present forms are completed, emailed to the H&S Department and the H&S Officer records the information onto a spreadsheet. Although this has operated successfully for many years many FRS are purchasing and running electronic systems.

RIVO Safeguard, an electronic incident recording and reporting system, has been purchased by the Service to provide a database for all safety events. It will be used to manage the work flow process for reporting all safety events (accidents, near misses, personal injuries, hazards etc.) and will provide a process for allocating and tracking investigations. This will ensure consistent management, and audit trail and result in a reduction of risk by allowing the H&S Department to monitor the outcomes of all accident and incident investigations to closure.

Work progresses with the project developers and the system is expected to be rolled out across the Service during late 2016.

### **6.3 Does the FRA have a robust process for measuring and evaluating the effectiveness and improving performance of its Health, Safety and Welfare activities?**

6.3.1 HFRS considers that it has a robust process in place for measuring and evaluating its health, safety and welfare activities which enables strengths and areas for improvement to be identified and shared with relevant stakeholders.

#### **Performance Information**

6.3.2 The H&S Department collates all accident, near-miss and other risk data such as vehicle accidents and reports this to HASCOG, the Strategic H&S Committee. This data is also published in the “Views” performance management system on a monthly basis and quarterly commentary is added by the H&S Manager. HASCOG minutes are published on the internal intranet (Compass) and distributed to all stations in hard copy for the HSW Noticeboard. Detailed performance is reported to SLG in an annual health and safety performance report and a six-monthly status report in October.

#### **Audit, Review and Evaluation**

6.3.3 HFRS has comprehensive procedures for evaluating and investigating safety events through accident investigation, near miss and hazard reporting and disseminates the information nationally when appropriate. Local hazard information and safety events are also shared within the CFOA Eastern Region by access to a repository on the CFOA website.

### **Case Study - Internal Shared Audit - Hertfordshire County Council (HCC)**

Internal Audit provides HCC with an independent and objective opinion on the organisation's governance arrangements, encompassing internal control and risk management, by completing an annual risk-based audit plan. An audit of HFRS H&S formed part of the approved 2015-16 HCC Annual Audit Plan.

As agreed with the ACO Service Support in March 2016, an internal audit was undertaken by the HCC Shared Internal Audit department. The audit sought to provide assurances on the design and operation of the key controls relating to H&S throughout the service and compliance with HSE and HCC requirements designed to protect its staff.

The audit of HFRS H&S covered the following areas:-

- Risk Assessment
- Data Management
- Reporting
- Training

The final report confirmed that there is "Substantial Assurance" that there are effective controls in operation for those elements of the risk management processes covered by the review' but recommended an opportunity to develop easier access to in-service model risk assessments and more effective and proactive systems are put in place to manage the IOSH and NEBOSH training, including managing refreshers.

6.3.4 An annual H&S Audit is carried out at each Station, including Training & Development and Service Headquarters every October. This is designed to identify local hazards and risks and ensures a programme is put in place to address them before an accident occurs. It is carried out by the Station Commander or Department Head and the site TU Safety Representative is invited to participate.

6.3.5 Senior Officers also carry out annual Station Audits and Inspections and audit various health and safety measures (policies and procedures including risk assessment records; hazard bulletins 'received, read and understood'; near miss reporting and numbers of operational injuries). Any issues or trends identified are brought to the attention of the District Management teams by the Senior Officers.

6.3.6 HCC Shared Audit undertook an internal audit of the H&S Department and the management of health and safety in the Service during March and April 2016.

6.3.7 As previously stated two RoSPA Quality Safety Audits were undertaken internally and by peers from the Eastern CFOA regional health and safety in February and November 2013.

6.3.8 Since 2014 the Deputy CFO (previously ACO responsible for H&S) undertakes regular safety tours of stations and fire service sites with the H&S Manager. Currently these tours are programmed in but the intention is to make



unannounced tours in the future. These provide an opportunity to check the status of the outcomes of the annual H&S Audit, review the outcome of the site's FRA and any outstanding recommendations made by the H&S Officer during programmed visits. The H&S Manager summarises the visits and reminds Station Commanders to ensure that actions are completed. This is an excellent example of senior management leading health and safety at work in line with the HSE guidance (INDG 417). It demonstrates commitment and support for managing health and safety proactively in the Service.

## 7. Training and Development

**How well is the Authority ensuring its responsibilities for training, development and assessment of its staff are met?**

Key Area of Assessment	Descriptor of current level of performance
7.1 Does the FRA have clearly defined and effective policies to take account of its responsibilities in terms of training, development and assessment of competence?	Established
7.2 Do effective management structures and arrangements exist within the FRA to support the development and implementation of training, development and assessment activities?	Advanced
7.3 Does the FRA have a robust process for measuring and evaluating the effectiveness and improving the performance of its training and development activities?	Established

**7.1 Does the FRA have clearly defined and effective policies to take account of its responsibilities in terms of training, development and assessment of competence?**

7.1.1 HFRS believes that it has good training, development and assessment policies, which support and enable the successful delivery of organisational objectives.

### Training and Development Strategy and Policies

7.1.2 The strategic intent of the organisation, as it pertains to the training and development of its staff, is clearly stated in the CPD Corporate Plan 2013-2018 under the aim of '*Being an excellent organisation*' and the specific underpinning objective of '*Maintaining a competent, professional workforce who learn from experience, adapt to change and are representative of the communities we serve*'. By recognising these strategic priorities and in striving to provide a response capability, which is effective, efficient and rapid, HFRS works to ensure that personnel are properly trained, equipped and have sufficient technical knowledge and understanding to carry out their roles competently.

7.1.3 The HFRS and wider CPD planning framework has created a 'golden thread', linking objectives and actions set out in overarching strategic plans to the plans for stations, teams and individual members of staff. All members of staff have an annual performance agreement and development plan enabling each person to

identify his or her skill set requirements and outline areas where support, training or development is required to maintain or improve their skills.

7.1.4 All HFRS Training and Delivery policies are held on the Service Information System (SIS) as 'Service Orders' supported by Training and Development Centre (TDC) procedures and guidance notes held on the bespoke Fireweb system, which is currently undergoing a review and upgrade. The organisation plans to develop a designated section of the SIS where all training related policies will be held.

7.1.5 Operational Commanders within HFRS are subject to an annual re-assessment of their incident command skills to ensure that they are assertive, effective and safe on the incident ground. Similarly all operational personnel are subject to an annual re-assessment of their ability to safely and effectively operate in Breathing Apparatus (BA).

## **Review of Training Provision**

7.1.6 HFRS undertook a comprehensive thematic review of training in 2014, set against three guiding principles:

- Creation and maintenance of a safe and competent workforce
- Provision of quality training and support systems
- Delivery within appropriate cost restraints

The outcomes of the review were implemented in 2015 and continue to be monitored and refined as appropriate. Key elements of the process included the creation of an Annual Training Plan (ATP) aligned to Service requirements in terms of providing training for a response capability in mitigation of foreseeable risks and a restructure of TDC to facilitate its delivery.

## **Risk Information and Effective Collaboration**

7.1.7 HFRS is fully aware of the responsibilities placed upon it in relation to legislative requirements, particularly in regard to health and safety. The Service has a dedicated Research and Development department who work with TDC colleagues to analyse the outcomes and impact of the National Operational Guidance Group (NOG), Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme (JESIP) and the National Risk Register (NRR) translating their findings into SIS procedures and appropriate training programmes.

### **Case Study - Incident Command System NOG and Training**

The HFRS Incident Command department worked to introduce the National Operational Guidance (NOG) - *Foundation of Incident Command* as of January 2016. Which was initially achieved by the development of a presentation based on the outcomes of a gap analysis between the old 3rd edition Incident Command Manual and current NOG.

All Flexi Duty Officers (FDO) received the presentation, delivered by Incident Command Instructors, where the new NOG and resultant SIS were explained in detail. The presentation, which is stored on the Internal fire web, was then cascaded to all operational crews by the FDO Cadre. Once delivered, confirmation of understanding for all operational personnel was added to the IPDS system to be signed off.

The Incident Command department have adapted ICS training delivery to include the changes to the NOG, with the new Firefighter Safety Maxim and Decision Control Process acting as the corner stone of our input.

The department delivers a number of different training courses including a BTEC accredited ICL1 for new incident commanders which is a week long course consisting of a mixture of theoretical input backed up by practical application underpinned by a final practical / technical assessment. We have an on-going process to give all HFRS Incident Commanders input and assessment on an annual basis.

The main objective of the incident command department is to ensure that the Service develop and maintain **assertive, effective & safe Incident Commanders**

- 7.1.8 HFRS works and trains alongside its blue light partners on a regular basis. HFRS BA Instructors provide training for members of the Police CBRN Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT), which includes both the initial input, and annual re-assessment of Police BA operators. In addition HFRS train Police Officers in Safe Working at Height procedures for their Protestor Removal Team and Water Awareness and Rescue for their Water Response team. HFRS BA Instructors have also provided training for members of the East of England Ambulance Service Hazardous Area Response Team (HART)
- 7.1.9 The Service regularly conducts joint training exercises with Commanders representing our partners in JESIP principals and response to a MTFA, to enable seamless Incident Command
- 7.1.10 TDC regularly stages a range of exercises designed to test multi-agency emergency response arrangements at tactical and strategic level.

### **Case Study - LRF MAGIC Lite training**

HFRS regularly participates in exercises and training organised by the LRF and takes a pro-active approach to support the continuous development of key personnel. The LRF has an annual objective to provide an opportunity for trained incident commanders to practice their roles so that they can demonstrate their competence working in a multi-agency response environment.

Having identified the strategic command level as its priority the LRF ran its first MAGIC Lite training course in July 2015. Attended by 21 of the county's multi-agency strategic commanders the intensive one day course was facilitated by the National College of Policing, NARU and Fire Service College.

The course was aimed at developing delegates' confidence, understanding and ability to perform the role of Gold Commander by planning, implementing and reviewing a multi-agency strategy to ensure the timely resolution of a major incident.

As well as being a nationally recognised training course, the safe learning environment which it created presented HFRS with an ideal opportunity to undertake some succession planning and further develop the skills of three of its potential Strategic Commanders.

By participating in the course all three were able to see first-hand the importance of relationship building when working at a strategic level and see how understanding other agencies roles and priorities, getting good advice and sharing information are all key to undertaking the HFRS Gold Commander role as part of a wider multi-agency SCG.

7.1.11 HFRS collaborates with Bedfordshire FRS in a reciprocal training arrangement. Hertfordshire provide basic LGV training for Herts and Beds drivers in exchange for Bedfordshire FRS training and assessing HFRS FDOs in emergency blue light response driving.

## **7.2 Do effective management structures and arrangements exist within the FRA to support the development and implementation of training, development and assessment activities?**

7.2.1 HFRS has assessed itself as having an effective and clearly defined structure to support and maintain training, development and assessment activities.

### **Management Structures**

7.2.2 HFRS have implemented processes, which ensure that a clear path of responsibility exists for the implementation of Service training, development and assessment. The ACO Support Services and the Area Commander (AC) (Training and Development) both members of SLG, ensure that the prioritisation and coordination of training and development activities support HFRS and CPD personnel in regard to the wider delivery of the IRMP and CPD Corporate Plan.

- 7.2.3 Following implementation of the Thematic Review of Training, the management and delivery structure at TDC was revised to reflect the Service's primary risks and training needs. The new structure has a Group Commander (B) as the 'Head of Service' supported by a Station Commander (B) acting as the lead for Operational Training; which contains five dedicated operational training departments each with an establishment consisting of a Watch Commander B (acting as the department lead) supported by a Watch Commander A and a Crew Commander, focussing on issues relating to BA, Incident Command, Rescue and Firecraft alongside a Driving School, with three non-uniform professional driving Instructors.
- 7.2.4 The new structure also incorporates a 'Competence and Development' department staffed by 'green book' colleagues. This department is responsible for role related competency recording and learning & development.
- 7.2.5 The Strategic Operations and Training Board (SOTB) chaired by the ACO Service Support provides a strategic forum to audit the overall 'operational' performance of the organisation and take agreed reaction where appropriate. This involves organisational performance measurement, primarily via the review of Data Analysis Reports (DAR) on risk critical issues to detect any trends and emerging issues in order to determine appropriate interventions or mitigation.
- 7.2.6 This allows a determination to be made regarding the appropriateness and effectiveness of training provided for the organisation, drawing a direct link between the training provided and the intended outcome of improving operational effectiveness. This may lead to alterations or changes in training course composition, training course delivery and, policies or equipment provision. Furthermore, research may be commissioned into specific areas of concern to further inform training and operational strategy.
- 7.2.7 The SOTB is the commissioning body through which colleagues identify issues or additional requirements which may require training input. All training courses must be approved by the SOTB. Each course will have a limited life and must be reviewed by the Board at the end of its approval period to determine whether it should continue, cease or be adjusted to meet a changing need. Approval of any course will be based upon it meeting the required outcomes identified at the commissioning stage.

## **Training Resources**

- 7.2.8 HFRS is proactive in identifying and addressing staff training requirements. Training needs are identified in a number of ways including operational monitoring, accident investigations, assessment centre/exercise feedback, local and national guidance and directives, legislation and PMDS reviews. TDC are responsible for producing the Annual Training Programme (ATP) to meet the training and development needs of the Service and wider Directorate.

7.2.9 The Service has developed a modular Wholetime Duty System (WDS) Phase 1 Training Programme, delivered at our TDC over a 16 week timeframe, *dependant on the number of Trainees per course.*

7.2.10 HFRS has implemented and are continuing to refine a comprehensive Retained Duty System (RDS) Phase 1 Training Programme, currently delivered over a 20 week period, which ensures that RDS candidates leave TDC appropriately trained in all risk critical modules, before they are required to attend incidents.

7.2.11 The Service has also developed an RDS to WDS conversion course. This again consists of a modular approach with an evening commitment to attain a technical certificate over a 17 week guided learning and assessment period. This is then followed by a five week practical course designed to further develop and enhance trainees' skills in respect of the operational modules.

### **Case Study - Wholetime Firefighter Recruitment Process**

In 2015 HFRS re-designed its recruitment process for Wholetime Firefighters. The key drivers for this were the need to reduce recruitment costs and minimise the amount of managerial time dedicated to the process, without compromising the quality of candidates coming through the system.

Stage 1 of the process consisted of four 'open sessions' at locations throughout the county; these were hosted by a mix of Flexi-Duty Officers and HR Staff. Attendees received information on the physical, behavioural and presentation standards expected by the organisation and were encouraged to ask questions about the role and the process they were applying for to help them with their preparation.

Stage 2 was the introduction of a speed interviewing event, the methodology behind this was relatively straightforward; each candidate took part in a five minute interview, consisting of 2 questions: '*What does the Fire and Rescue Service do*' and '*Why do you want to be a Firefighter*' ?

Answers provided by the candidates were recorded and graded against an agreed marking criteria. Candidate responses distinguished those who really hadn't thought about or carried out any research into the role, to those who demonstrated a real passion and drive to become a Firefighter and serve their community.

Stages 1 & 2 proved to be a very effective sifting mechanism because a number of candidates who attended the open sessions chose not to apply and only those candidates who were successful at Stage 2 were invited to apply online (thus saving significant HR and managerial time).

Stages 3 & 4 were a combination of the standard educational and physical tests based on the national entry requirements. It was noted that as candidates moved through the latter stages of the selection process, the majority achieved better results than had ever been recorded before in the educational, practical and fitness tests. This improvement was attributed to the information candidates received at stages 1 & 2 of the process,



which allowed them to be fully prepared.

Stage 5 consisted of a formal interview, a total of 47 candidates were successful at this stage, resulting in 24 candidates being offered a place on a recruit course in June 2015, with an additional 23 candidates being held on a waiting list for a future course in 2016.

7.2.12 Following successful completion of Phase I, all HFRS Firefighters enter onto a Phase II Development Programme, undertaken within the environment of an operational Fire Station. Phase II requires them to demonstrate the competent application of their new skills in the workplace. This is evidenced by the completion of a portfolio of evidence leading to attainment of an '*NVQ Level 3 in Firefighting Operations in the Community*' for WDS staff and a comparable '*Record of Competence*' for RDS Firefighters.

7.2.13 The NVQ process is firmly embedded within the Service and a robust network of Assessors and Internal Quality Assurers exists across the organisation, supporting candidates as they progress through the assessment process. HFRS is an Approved NVQ Assessment Centre with direct claim status. Once an individual has demonstrated competence in their role they are required to maintain their skills and underpinning knowledge through regular training and demonstration of skills both operationally and during simulations, this will be assessed by their line manager and recorded in the Service's electronic Integrated Personal Development System (IPDS)

7.2.14 Following successful attendance on a promotional Assessment Centre the cadre of Supervisory Managers, *Crew and Watch Commanders* are required to complete an NVQ Level 3 in Watch Management within an 18 month time period to ensure their competence in role.

7.2.15 HFRS employ an IT based 'Record of Competence' approach to ensure that Flexible Duty Officers are competent in role. This system acts as a formal record of progress from development through to full competency in the roles of Station Commander, Group Commander and Area Commander, based upon the Fire and Rescue Service National Occupational Standards (NOS) and relevant Role Map.

### **Case Study – Career Pathways**

In 2015 the Service reviewed the support offered to personnel seeking promotion. Initially concentrating on operational roles, research was undertaken to identify the professional skills development required for career progression. This information informed the development of the 'Career Pathway', which consists of a number of distinct elements;

'Is it for me', this element covers the information required to support staff in making the decision to apply for promotion. It consists of short infomercials, which describe the differences between roles and cover frequently asked questions.

'Let's go for it' offers pre Assessment Centre support in presentation skills, interview skills, operational incident command and career conversations, ensuring staff can show their best during the assessment process.

'Assess potential' is where skills are assessed against Personal Qualities and Attributes and operational command.

Personnel successful at the Assessment Centre stage, move into a succession pool, where they complete activities and projects designed to support continuous professional development until they are posted into their new promoted post.

The Service is developing a Managers Toolkit, designed to help managers identify high potential individuals with the potential to be future leaders. The toolkit provides managers with the necessary skills and guidance to enable them to support these individuals and covers areas including having career conversations, coaching and mentoring, leadership and recording development evidence.

The 'Career Pathway' is being developed to support any personnel working in CPD who have ambitions to progress into a Supervisory, Middle or Strategic Manager Role.

7.2.16 HFRS utilises the national IPDS, which requires operational personnel, once competent in role, to regularly demonstrate the maintenance of competence through ongoing workplace assessment. The maintenance of competence together with the demonstration of core values and adherence to the Service's equality and diversity objectives are linked to Continuous Professional Development (CPD) payments.

7.2.17 All staff have access to an extensive countywide training and development programme, which can be delivered in a classroom environment or via the HCC e-learning package called iLearn which staff can use at a time and location that suits them. This is particularly useful for operational Firefighters who are employed under a wide range of duty systems and work patterns.

7.2.18 HFRS uses the HCC PMDS to:

- Ensure all employees understand their role and the contribution required of them
- Promote a performance culture and improve the performance of all employees
- Ensure a motivated and engaged workforce
- Identify and meet any individual learning and development needs related to role
- Recognise and acknowledge individual contribution and achievement

7.2.19 HFRS recognises the vital importance of providing realistic training scenarios in order to give firefighters the opportunity to maintain and enhance their skills so that they are able to work in an effective and safe manner.

### **Case Study - Live Fire Training [Exercise Academia]**

Having recognised the good practice demonstrated by Hampshire FRS, HFRS conducted a Live Fire Training event in July 2015 at a derelict Public House in East Herts and Broxbourne District, following on from an identified training requirement which came about as a consequence of the lack of operational incidents Firefighters were attending involving a 'developing' or 'fully involved' fire.

HFRS carry out Fire Behaviour Training at its Training and Development Centre on a three year rolling programme for all operational crew's however it was recognised that this cannot replicate a 'real life' scenario, so the programme began after sourcing a suitable venue and Exercise Academia phase 1 was launched.

Following on from a comprehensive risk assessment of the venue and surrounding area in conjunction with the H&S Department and Trade Unions, the first phase of live fire training began; utilising galvanised steel bins burning hay to create a smoke filled environment and 'real fire' for crews to deal with. After four successful sessions, the programme was moved on in September 2015 (Exercise Academia phase 2) to involve the burning of wooden furniture within the compartment to enable a real fire environment. This escalation of the programme was welcomed by crews, some of which had never experienced a fire of similar size and development and led to very positive feedback for the programme throughout the service.

As a result of the positive feedback, the position of 'Live Fire Project Coordinator' was introduced within the service at the beginning of 2016 to move the Project forwards with the intention that the facilitation of live fire training by FRS District staff would be considered "business as usual" by 2017.

To date HFRS have run 6 successful sessions in a derelict residential care home within Dacorum and St Albans, District with several other venues identified for future use.

### **7.3 Does the FRA have a robust process for measuring and evaluating the effectiveness and improving the performance of its training and development activities?**

- 7.3.1 HFRS currently utilises the Sophtlogic 'Pharos 9' IPDS to record training activities. The system automatically highlights to the individual/Line Manager, via a RAG rating, when competence has not been demonstrated within the requisite time period enabling managers to address this in a timely manner, ensuring that personnel remain competent in all areas relevant to their particular role.
- 7.3.2 On request the IPDS system is able to provide information to satisfy any national or local Government information requirement. It also provides the Service with a range of statistics and performance indicator data. The system monitors the

receipt of risk critical information including urgent Health and Safety Bulletins following a received, read and understood format.

- 7.3.3 The system provides valuable information to assist individuals and line managers in the production of individual and Watch/Team training plans. As the system is dynamic, the information enables managers to keep up to date with the changing needs of their teams.
- 7.3.4 Quality of practical and technical competence is also assessed through a programme of station audits and assessments by Station Commanders. Where staff fall below the required standard, they are provided with written feedback on areas for development and then reassessed after a defined period.
- 7.3.5 HFRS training courses are subject to robust quality assurance processes. The SOTB are responsible for reviewing all Course Initiation Documentation (CID) and ensuring that proposed courses have clearly defined aims and objectives. All courses are reviewed by SOTB on a maximum three yearly basis, with risk critical courses reviewed annually.
- 7.3.6 Course evaluation questionnaires are completed at the end of every course and this information is fed back to the TDC for development purposes. TDC Instructors also observe training delivery to ensure consistency in approach, adherence to procedures, and identification of best practice and provision of quality feedback.
- 7.3.7 Officials from the three main Representative Bodies in Hertfordshire (FBU, FOA and Unison) are included on SOTB`s standing membership and invited to all meetings.
- 7.3.8 HFRS are active members of the CFOA and engage in the membership forums to ensure that it remains aware of current thinking in terms of training delivery. HFRS also assess learning products developed by other FRSs to determine whether adopting them would benefit its staff and improve performance.

***Case Study - Incident Command Training; Atherstone.***

To facilitate the 2015/2016 programme of Incident Command reassessments, the ICS Department at TDC designed and delivered a presentation based on the Atherstone-on-Stour factory fire incident.

Having considered the official report, produced by Warwickshire FRS and the FBU, HFRS ICS Instructors identified a number of learning points which they delivered, via presentation, in a chronological order from pre-incident issues regarding the construction of the building, its internal layout and rural remoteness to initial incident command decisions and the choice of operational tactics employed.

The presentation incorporated pauses inviting 'moments of reflection' when students were invited to share their thoughts on the situation 'at that point' and include pertinent personal experiences, before re-starting and building towards the conclusion of the incident.

This approach will be used again for the 2016/2017 programme and the ICS Department are currently looking at preparing a presentation based on the Scottish FRS Lessons Identified Report on the 2009 Balmoral Bar Firefighter fatality.

7.3.9 The CPD is also heavily involved with the Cross Sector Leadership Exchange (CSLE) supporting the attendance of managers and in 2016 facilitating 'Leading into the Future' and 'Leading without Boundaries' courses at the TDC. Members of SLG are actively engaged with CSLE Directors as well as strategic leads from the Police and NHS in designing some of the input for the 'Leading without Boundaries' course.