



HMICFRS Improvement Plan 2021/22

Updated: Q4 2022-23





During April to May 2021, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Service (HMICFRS) inspected Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS). The Service was selected as one of the first services to be inspected in round 2. This is the third inspection of HWFRS following the first inspection in July 2018 and the Covid-19 inspection during the autumn 2020.

The inspectors from HMICFRS carried out their in-depth review of our Service, focusing on how effective and efficient we are and how well we look after our people. Their report was published in December 2021, and this is [the link to the report](#).

The inspection considered three main questions for this cycle of inspections:

Effectiveness – *the operational service provided to the public (including prevention, protection, and response);*

Efficiency - *the efficiency of the service (how well it provides value for money, allocates resources to match risk, and collaborates with other emergency services);*

People – *how well the service looks after its people (how well it promotes its values and culture, trains its staff and ensures they have the necessary skills, ensures fairness and diversity for the workforce, and develops leadership and service capability).*

The Service was found to be 'requiring improvement' when considering effectiveness, efficiency and people. The inspection report highlighted 22 Areas for Improvement (AFI) and recommended that action be taken to address them. Therefore, the Service has prepared an Improvement Plan. This Improvement Plan is owned by senior managers and is updated on a quarterly basis and published as progress is made.

This report provides an update of progress in implementing the Improvement Plan up to the end of March 2023 against the identified AFI's noted in the HMICFRS report.

HMICFRS Inspection – Improvement Plan 2021-22 Update: Q4 2022

Effectiveness – ES1	
Area for Improvement	The service should ensure that the aims and objectives of prevention, protection and response activity are clearly defined in its Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP).
HWFRS Action Proposed	
Target Date	
Publish Core Strategies for Protection, Prevention and Response linked to delivery of the CRMP, communicate across Service and develop understanding.	Complete
Business Planning cycle and process embedded across Service linked to delivery of the Community Risk Management Plan and three Core Strategies. Digital tracking process set up electronically to monitor progress.	Complete
CRMP Fire Standard to be analysed and a gap analysis produced and shared with the Strategic Leadership Board (SLB). Learning defined and mapped into clear recommendations for implementation into the new CRMP process for launch in 2025.	Complete
Develop an evidential based resource to risk assessment. Clearly identifying areas of risk, resource and people assets that can be utilised.	Complete
Key Performance Indicators (KPI) identified and agreed specifically linked to delivery of the CRMP and Core Strategy. An approach to be mapped out to identify trends and exception reporting.	Complete
Strategic lead	<i>Assistant Chief Officer / Director of Prevention</i>

Effectiveness – ES2**Area for Improvement**

The service should ensure its firefighters have good access to relevant and up-to-date temporary risk information.

HWFRS Action Proposed**Target Date**

A risk management system procurement process to be initiated.

Complete

Data cleanse of data in preparation for transfer to a new system to be commenced.

Q2 2023/24

Upon procurement of a new system, a comprehensive training and communication programme to support embedding of a new system to commence.

Q2 2023/24

Explore development of an internal and external audit process of the information held within the Service.

Q2 2023/24

Strategic lead*Assistant Director: Protection*

Effectiveness – ES3	
Area for Improvement	The service should evaluate its prevention work so that it understands what works.
HWFRS Action Proposed	
There will be a process to ensure targeting of prevention activity meets the needs of the community.	Complete
A clear reporting framework on the performance and evaluation of prevention activity will be developed.	Complete
A quality assurance process for Home Fire Safety Visits will be agreed.	Complete
Investigate a body to conduct a peer review or external assessment of delivery against the prevention Cause of Concern Action Plan.	Complete
The University of Worcester Evaluation of Safe and Well Visit Report will be reviewed and suggested improvements to delivery / recommendations mapped out into an action plan.	Complete
Working with the Corporate Communications department develop and publish a Prevention Communications Plan and introduce a process to evaluate the effectiveness of the campaigns to ensure continuous improvement.	Complete
The Service will undertake an annual process to evaluate the effectiveness of prevention activity utilising available appropriate methodologies.	Q1 2023/24
Strategic lead	<i>Assistant Chief Officer / Director of Prevention</i>

Effectiveness – ES4

Area for Improvement	The service should ensure that it has an effective quality assurance process in place, so that staff carry out audits to an appropriate standard.	
HWFRS Action Proposed		Target Date
Performance appraisals with employees in the Technical Fire Safety team of the Protection Department are being booked in and a peer review of audits for the purposes of quality assurance to be scheduled aligned with these dates.		Complete
Technical Fire Safety quality assurance proforma finalised.		Complete
Agree an external peer review schedule with neighbouring Services in order to quality assure processes.		Complete
Experian data being merged with Community Fire Risk Management Information System (CFRMIS) data to ensure Protection Services applied equitably.		Complete
Conduct external peer review quality assurance process, and consider recommendations.		Q1 2023/24
Strategic lead	<i>Assistant Director: Protection</i>	

Effectiveness – ES5

Area for Improvement	The service should assure itself that its use of enforcement powers prioritises the highest risks and includes proportionate activity to reduce the risk.
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HWFRS Action Proposed	Target Date
HWFRS to ensure its risk-based inspection programme prioritises the premises at the highest risk.	Complete
Fully complete alignment to the NFCC competency framework for Fire Safety Regulators.	Q1 2023/24
Arrange specialist legal training for L4 Diploma staff (to include prosecution case studies)	Complete
Finalise prosecution support agreement with Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service and Telford and Wrekin Council legal services (We are no longer pursuing this agreement)	Complete

Strategic lead	<i>Assistant Director: Protection</i>
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Effectiveness – ES6

Area for Improvement

The service should ensure it effectively addresses the burden of false alarms.

HWFRS Action Proposed

Target Date

Commence a review of how we respond to unwanted fire signals.

Completed

Strategic lead

Assistant Director: Protection

Effectiveness – ES7	
Area for Improvement	The service should ensure its Response Strategy provides the most appropriate response for the public in line with its Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP).
HWFRS Action Proposed	
	Target Date
Response Strategy linked to the risks in the CRMP published.	Complete
Response annual and three-year Business Plan (linked to delivery of the Response Strategy) finalised.	Complete
Special appliances review report and evaluation finalised.	Complete
Commence the process to identify an external agency to provide risk data mapping.	Q4 2023/24
Review the previously used Fire Cover research methodology, ensuring it is adaptive enough to meet new and emerging risks.	Q1 2023/24
Prepare a report on the review of Water First Responders capability across the Service (Response)	Complete
Strategic lead	<i>Assistant Director: Response</i>

Effectiveness – ES8

Area for Improvement

The service should ensure it has an effective system for staff to use learning and debriefs to improve operational response and incident command.

HWFRS Action Proposed

Target Date

Compare the number and types of incidents requiring a debrief against returns for the last 12 months and identify potential themes and target areas to improve organisational learning and adoption of debriefing.

Complete

Identify replacement AIM & Debrief system options.

Complete

Review current practises and procedures for the triggering of and submitting debriefs.

Complete

Develop a communication proforma to improve organisational awareness of the Debrief process and its outcomes to improve organisational adoption.

Q1 2023/24

Develop robust sharing mechanisms to ensure learning is shared to multi agency and regional partners incorporating JOL & NOL systems.

Complete

Review current policy and identify potential options to improve on scene Active Incident Monitoring (AIM) & Debrief processes.

Complete

Implement new AIM & Debrief systems

Q1 2023/24

Implement an update monitoring process to improve on scene monitoring.

Q1 2023/24

Introduce an assurance process to assure the adoption and use of the AIM & Debrief systems and processes.

Q2 2023/24

Publish a Debrief report service wide on a quarterly basis

Q2 2023/24

Strategic lead

Assistant Director: Protection

Effectiveness – ES9

Area for Improvement	The service should ensure it understands what it needs to do to adopt national operational guidance, including joint and national learning, and put in place a plan to do so.	
HWFRS Action Proposed		Target Date
Enrol Digital Training Project Team		Complete
Integrate new Learning Management System (LMS)		Q2 2023/24
Integrate the National Operational Guidance’s Service Integration Tool (SIT) (This project has been cancelled by the National Fire Chiefs Council due to external software issues)		Complete
Develop eLearning suite referenced to National Operational Learning (NOG)		Q3 2024/25
Strategic lead	<i>Assistant Director: Protection</i>	

Effectiveness – ES10

Area for Improvement

The service should ensure it is well-prepared to form part of a multi-agency response to a terrorist incident, and its procedures for responding are understood by all staff and are well tested.

HWFRS Action Proposed

Target Date

Develop presentation covering responsibilities of FRS' and specifically non-specialist responders when attending potential Marauding Terrorist Attacks (MTA) incidents. To include overview of statutory responsibilities This has been delayed due to the impact of the Commonwealth Games on regional NILO working.	Complete
Review of Pre-Determined Attendances (PDA's) for MTAs and other like incidents	Complete
National Inter-Agency Liaison Officer (NILO) Cadre to deliver presentation to all operational staff including Fire Control and Officer Groups	Complete
As part of Regional Group establish exercising programme with other Fire & Rescue Services' and responding agencies (Police/Ambulance)	Complete
Test knowledge and understanding through District exercising and assurance programme	Q2 2023/24

Strategic lead

Assistant Director: Response

Efficiency- EY1	
Area for Improvement	The service needs to show a clear rationale for the resources allocated between prevention, protection, and response activities. This should reflect, and be consistent with, the risk and priorities set out in its CRMP.
HWFRS Action Proposed	
	Target Date
Identify good/outstanding practice and conduct a gap analysis	Complete
Identify how we currently allocate resources to Prevention, Protection and Response	Complete
Apply the outcomes as part of the upcoming Risk Review Project	Q1 2023/24
Identify organisational leads/key stakeholders for workforce resources across the three core strategies.	Complete
Conduct a supply analysis to understand current workforce headcount, skills and budget.	Complete
Conduct a demand analysis to project resources needed (headcount, skills, budget).	Complete
Strategic lead	<i>Finance Director and Assistant Chief Officer / Director of Prevention</i>

Efficiency- EY2	
Area for Improvement	The service should ensure there is a testing programme for its business continuity plans, particularly in high-risk areas of service.
HWFRS Action Proposed	
	Target Date
Testing of fall-back arrangements for Fire Control involving all watches.	Complete
Incorporate business continuity questions into the station assurance process for 2022/23.	Complete
Develop an exercise program for station and department fall-back plans.	Complete
Strategic lead	<i>Assistant Director: Protection</i>

Efficiency- EY3	
Area for Improvement	The service should ensure it effectively monitors, reviews and evaluates the benefits and outcomes of any future collaboration.
HWFRS Action Proposed	
	Target Date
Work with National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) implementation officer to investigate what national good practice looks like. Ongoing.	Complete
Review and define collaboration with other Fire & Rescue Services' and other emergency services	Q1 2023/24
Evaluate benefits of Fire Control Project – to procure a system	Complete
Establish a process within areas of business planning to ensure collaboration is a key factor in planning and projects	Q1 2023/24
Establish an evaluation process/tool for reviewing the effectiveness of collaboration on business planning, programmes and projects.	Q1 2023/24
Strategic lead	<i>Assistant Director: Prevention</i>

Efficiency- EY4	
Area for Improvement	The service should ensure that its fleet and estate strategies are regularly reviewed and evaluated to maximise potential efficiencies.
HWFRS Action Proposed	
	Target Date
Provide draft / re-format existing Fleet Strategy to new format, and seek approval of SLB / P&R to publish.	Q1 2023/24
Provide updated draft / re-format of existing Property Strategy dated 2018-23, and seek approval of SLB / P&R to publish	Q1 2023/24
Strategic lead	<i>Assistant Director: Assets</i>

People – P1**Area for Improvement**

The service should assure itself that senior managers are visible and demonstrate service values through their behaviours.

HWFRS Action Proposed**Target Date**

Strategic Leadership Board visits for the year have been programmed with every watch and department

Complete

The Service will commission an external organisation to undertake a review of internal communications and provide recommendations for improvement.

Complete

Whole leadership meetings scheduled for the year every quarter.

Complete

The Service will commission a service wide inclusion training programme to further embed understanding of inclusion as a core element linked to values.

Complete

The Service will carry out a full staff survey and review the feedback received and implement changes as required.

Complete

The Service will fully implement the FRS Core Code of Ethics (CCoE).

Complete

The Service will develop a more regular method of surveying staff opinion and gathering feedback.

Complete

Strategic lead

Assistant Chief Officer / Director of Prevention

People – P2**Area for Improvement**

The service should monitor secondary contracts to make sure working hours are not exceeded.

HWFRS Action Proposed		Target Date
Review Appraisal template to include discussion prompt on secondary contracts and/or additional roles within the Service.		Complete
Establish a process to monitor compliance with the Secondary Employment policy.		Q1 2023/24
Establish a method to monitor total working hours of those with secondary contracts and/or additional roles, to highlight when working hours are excessive.		Q1 2023/24
Strategic lead	<i>Assistant Chief Officer / Director of Prevention</i>	

People – P3

Area for Improvement	The service should make sure it has a robust system in place to update and review its operational incident (analytical) risk assessments.
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HWFRS Action Proposed	Target Date
Review current guidance for the completion of Analytical Risk Assessments (ARA).	Complete
Review training levels and provided training to crews to carry out ARA and the associated reviews.	Q1 2023/24
Develop and introduce an assurance process to assure the completion of ARA's.	Q2 2023/24

Strategic lead	<i>Assistant Director: Protection</i>
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People – P4**Area for Improvement**

The service should ensure itself that records for risk critical competencies, such as breathing apparatus, driving fire engines and incident command are accurate and up to date.

HWFRS Action Proposed**Target Date**

Complete audit of assurance processes.

Q1 2023/24

Review fire control training to ensure recording of training is up to date.

Q1 2023/24

Integrate a new learning management system to improve recording and monitoring of skills.

Q2 2023/24

Strategic lead

Assistant Director: Protection

People – P5**Area for Improvement**

The service should ensure its workforce plan takes full account of the necessary skills and capabilities to carry out the Community Risk Management Plan.

HWFRS Action Proposed**Target Date**

Develop and publish a Workforce Planning Policy.

Complete

Review and evaluate workforce planning process to strengthen links with business planning cycle.

Q1 2023/24

Develop Workforce Planning Toolkit for managers to support workforce planning at a departmental level.

Q2 2023/24

Strategic lead

Assistant Chief Officer / Director of Prevention

People – P6

Area for Improvement	The service should make sure it has appropriate ways to engage with and seek feedback from all staff, including those from under-represented groups.	
HWFRS Action Proposed		
Identify and review current methods of engagement with staff (Refer to P1 actions).		Complete
Ensure staff survey collates equality data to inform which groups are engaging and identify the best methods to do this in the future.		Complete
Strategic lead	<i>Assistant Chief Officer / Director of Prevention</i>	

People – P7**Area for Improvement**

The service should improve all staff understanding and application of the appraisal review process.

HWFRS Action Proposed	Target Date
Review current appraisal process (link with Training).	Complete
Establish completion rate reporting mechanism to monitor appraisal completion rates.	Complete
Implement identified amendments to appraisals process.	Complete
Publish refreshed appraisal toolkit for managers.	Complete
Develop appraisal training for managers.	Complete

Strategic lead*Assistant Chief Officer / Director of Prevention*

People – P8**Area for Improvement**

The service should make sure it has mechanisms in place to manage and develop talent within the organisation.

HWFRS Action Proposed**Target Date**

Establish clear links to appraisal process (career conversations) – links to P7.

Complete

Develop a talent management strategy.

Q2 2023/24

Develop a framework for managers to use to identify and develop high-performing staff (appraisal) in line with NFCC talent management toolkit.

Q2 2023/24

Review Promotion process.

Complete

Develop and implement temporary promotion toolkit for managers.

Q1 2023/24

Complete interim review of Aspiring Executive Leaders programme.

Complete

Scope out “Aspiring Leaders” programme for Middle Managers.

Complete

Strategic lead*Assistant Chief Officer / Director of Prevention*