



Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service

HMICFRS Improvement Plan 2018/19

Updated: September 2021



In March 2018, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Service (HMICFRS) announced their intention to inspect all 45 fire and rescue services in England over the next 18 months. The Service was selected as one of the first 14 services to be inspected.

Over summer 2018, 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 2018, and this is [the link to the report](#).

Report findings

The inspection considered three main questions:

- How **effective** is the fire and rescue service at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks?
- How **efficient** is the fire and rescue service at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks?
- How well does the fire and rescue service look after its **people**?

The Service was found to be 'good' within the effectiveness area but 'requiring improvement' when considering efficiency and people. The inspection report highlighted a number of areas for improvement and recommended that action be taken to address them. Therefore, the Service has prepared an Improvement Plan which not only focuses on the areas for improvement highlighted in the inspection report. The Improvement Plan is owned by senior managers and is regularly updated and published as progress is made.

The last update was presented to the Fire Authority on 17 June 2021 and the [Improvement Plan](#) was published on the Service website.

This report provides an update of progress in implementing the Improvement Plan up to September 2021 against the identified Areas for Improvement noted in the HMICFRS report. Greyed out sections in the Improvement Plan note actions completed or embedded in the Service's ongoing processes.

Effectiveness – ES1.4

Area for Improvement	The Service should ensure staff understands how to identify vulnerability and safeguard vulnerable people.		
Summary Finding	The Service has extended its home fire safety checks to include questions about vulnerable people. Further training is needed to give staff more confidence in this process.		
HWFRS Action Proposed	Progress To Date	Work since last update	Target Date
a. All staff to complete the Safeguarding e-learning package.	All staff have access to the online E-learning package, due be completed by end September 2019. At the end of Q4, 524 staff (77%) have now completed this training whilst 160 (23%) staff are still required to complete the package and update their CTR record. Outstanding training for staff is now reviewed as part of the Operational Assurance Report and emails have been sent to Managers identifying the relevant personnel, districts to chase those outstanding.	Prevention has updated the safeguarding e-learning package and the revised version will be published in September. The department will continue to monitor completion rates and report accordingly.	On going
b. Human Resources staff should be trained in safer recruiting.	Four recruitment officers have completed principles of safer recruitment training.		Complete
c. Safeguarding training included in L1 Command training.	In the Level 1 incident command assessments, additional questions have been added to confirm understanding of safeguarding.		Complete
d. Continue to work with Operational Crews and how they can report concerns to Prevention.	Community Risk staff have now visited all Wholetime watches and district teams prior to the roll out of the new safe and well check. 24 visits have been completed and covered Vulnerability, safeguarding and signposting.		Complete
e. Station Skills audits checking all staff are trained to the appropriate level.	As part of the 2020-21 Station Assurance Audit, questions regarding safeguarding are now included and will be reviewed on completion of this process.		Complete
f. Additional training for Managers.	Domestic Abuse training was delivered in September 2019 via Training & Development Centre. 55 staff from across the Service completed this training. An additional 3 sessions were booked for March 2020 for Level 1 Commanders. New Exploitation and Vulnerability training is in the process of being rolled out Service wide. This training is undertaken by West Mercia Police and available as part of the compulsory learning package for staff.	Further domestic abuse training advertised. New Exploitation and Vulnerability training is in the process of being rolled out Service wide. This training is undertaken by West Mercia Police and available as part of the compulsory learning package for staff.	Complete
	Statutory safeguarding training for middle managers and the service lead has commenced. Basic Adults safeguarding training took place on 10th Dec 20. Mop up session booked for 25th Jan 21. Children's Safeguarding training booked for 11th Jan 21. Recognising, Responding and Report Adult Safeguarding training booked for 1st Feb		Complete
Strategic lead	<i>Assistant Director: Prevention</i>		

Effectiveness – ES1.10

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.		
Summary Finding	The service is good at responding to fires and other emergencies. It has good equipment and training. It is flexible in how it responds to incidents and follows national guidance. However, it should use hot debriefs more often.		
HWFRS Action Proposed	Progress To Date	Work since last update	Target Date
Review policy and make necessary amendments.	The Incident and Exercise Debrief SPI is up to date and current with the last review date 1 September 2019. Following this review only minor amendments were required, notably a revision to reflect the new electronic system and to highlight 'hot debriefing' protocols as recommended by HMICFRS. Ops policy have created a handbook file that includes hot, electronic and formal debrief overviews.		Complete
Incident Command department to cover debriefs on initial course, during the bi-annual health checks and on the technical knowledge packages.	A supplementary debrief question has been added to the list of questions asked following conclusion of an Incident Commander Health check. Incident Command Training Lead has confirmed that he covers all debriefs on the initial incident courses. This will be noted in the course master file. Incident Command Training Lead has confirmed that hot debriefs have been added to Incident Command packages and questions.		Complete
Appropriate debrief carried out' question included in AIM form.	This question is included within the AIM form. Monitoring has identified further information is required in the notes section of the debrief. This is currently being addressed with all monitoring Officers		Complete
Questions on hot debriefs is included in the Practical Skills Audit 20/21 to report on the understanding of Junior Officer's responsibilities for hot debriefs.	This has been requested as part of the Practical Skills Audit for the 2020/21. This process starts in April.		Complete
IRS update. Additional question to be added into Incident Reporting System.	When the new IRS is introduced an additional question asking whether a hot debrief has taken place will be added. This will allow the Service to monitor the number of hot debriefs being carried out. Bulletin item now drafted to raise the awareness of debriefs, including individual responsibilities. This will be circulated following completion of the above work on the IRS.	IRS configuration tool has been purchased and will allow questions to be added to incident reports. This will go live after the training in November, with bulletin item and comms prepared.	Complete
Debriefs to be included in all future promotion workbooks for CC's and WC's.	Actioned		Complete
Strategic lead	<i>Head of Operations</i>		

Efficiency- EY1.4

Area for Improvement	The Service should assure itself that its workforce is productive.		
Summary Finding	Progress made in the Service’s prevention work is likely to increase workloads in other areas. We found that specialist prevention officers already have a lot of work to do. This is a risk. The Service should review the situation and consider how to deal with this problem.		
HWFRS Action Proposed	Progress To Date	Work since last update	Target Date
Implementation of Community Risk Plans 2020/2021: Accidental Dwelling Fires Deliberate Fires Health and Well Being Road Traffic Collisions.	These plans are currently in draft. A Strategic CRMP Workshop took place in January 2019 where a common definition of risk was agreed with Shropshire FRS. The updated plans are drafted and awaiting SMB sign off. Progress against the plans will be reviewed on a quarterly basis once they have gone live. CRMP is now live as of 1 st April 2021.	SMB have approved and published the 3 core strategies; Protection, Prevention and Response. They are also available on the HWFRS external website. http://www.hwfire.org.uk/your-right-to-know/our-publications/	Complete July 21
We want to clear the backlog we have for the specialist prevention officers and allocate sufficient resources to prevention.	As a result of the SMB paper (December 2018) additional budget has been allocated in 2019/2020 to fund additional posts in Community Risk.		Complete
	Two Community Risk Technicians have been appointed and are now in position taking the total number of technicians within the Service to 4.		Complete
	To support the MORSE initiative, an additional Watch Commander and Technician have joined the department. These positions are funded through the PCC budget allocation.		Complete
	Prevention strategy is in draft providing clarity on how we will deliver prevention services across the counties and prioritise resources.	The Protection, Prevention and Response strategies have all been published	Complete
Periodic review of progress against back log for Technicians	A quarterly report is being developed to review the number of outstanding jobs for the Community Risk Technicians.	This report is now being produced on a quarterly basis and will assist in monitoring workloads now that all technicians have been appointed. It also includes a review of the number of faulty alarms being attended by crews and those attended by crews.	Complete
Strategic lead	Head of Prevention and HRD		

People – P1.8			
Area for Improvement	The Service should put in place an open and fair process to identify, develop and support high-potential staff and aspiring leaders.		
Summary Finding	The Service should improve how it manages performance and develops leaders.		
HWFRS Action Proposed	Progress To Date	Work since last update	Target Date
Ensure specific development actions are being captured as part of the review of the appraisal process/policy.	A bulletin item was published reminding staff that appraisals need to be carried out and the process through which courses can be requested.		Complete
	Appraisals completion has been affected by COVID-19. A bulletin item was published to update staff and an email sent to managers communicating flexibility around completion dates and update them regarding CPD payments. Appraisals recommenced at the end of lockdown 1.	Reminders continue to be published in the Bulletin on completing appraisals. Overall completion rates are being monitored quarterly. A refreshed appraisal process linked to the new core strategies to be launched April 2022 as part of the People Strategy.	Programmed for launch April 2022.
Building on the success of the Crew Commanders promotion process create toolkit for promotion/recruitment events.	Toolkit templates for each stage of the promotion process available in HR to support Service Delivery e.g. advert template, candidate guidance, shortlisting matrix, etc. Updates on progress through each promotion process have been provided through regular bulletin items.		Completed
Review promotion policy and recruitment policy to support implementation.	The promotion policy has been approved and is now live.		Completed
	The recruitment policy has been approved by SMB and is now live.		Completed
Implement the NFCC Leadership Framework and the leadership behaviours as assessment criteria for promotion processes.	The NFCC Leadership Framework was used in all the promotional processes during 2020 and 2021 and is now embedded in the Service.		Completed
Look into providing coaching and mentoring courses to managers.	Three places on an initial coaching course were offered to ODCG members in collaboration with Shropshire FRS. Feedback has been provided to inform future options within HWFRS.		Completed
	Virtual training sessions, Coaching Skills for Managers, were held for staff who will coach and mentor the newly appointed Watch Commander 'A's. So far 90 members of staff from throughout the organisation have attended over 10 sessions. The Service is tied into the NFCC coaching and mentoring work stream and when they publish their guides later in the year this will form our coaching plan going forward. Further Coaching skills for managers training taking place in Autumn 2021.		On going
Continue to have a regular workforce planning meeting.	Workforce Planning Meetings scheduled every 6 weeks and include succession planning. Terms of reference have been approved and communicated to staff via the Service Bulletin (28/08/20).		Completed
Strategic lead	Assistant Director: Prevention		