

## **AFI Progress Report September 2023**

### **Areas for Improvement (AFI) from the 2021/22 HMICFRS inspection report for SYFR – Action updates as of September 2023**

**AFI: The Service should ensure its firefighters have good access to relevant and up-to-date risk information.**

Action update: This action is behind schedule. Due date revised to 29 December 2023.

Progress so far: This action is 90% complete.

We are currently awaiting a decision from the Yorkshire and the Humber Operational Resilience Group (YHORG) around the over the border risk information sharing element of this AFI.

A policy around risk review was created at the end of 2022 and this was implemented in April 2023. This requires sense checking to make sure operational crews are reviewing risk information. There is also a plan for fire control to review some of the lower risk premises, this will be actioned towards the end of the year.

Work is still progressing on the Site Specific Risk Inspection (SSRI) review.

**AFI: The Service should make sure it puts in place measures so it can catch up on the home fire safety checks (HSCs) identified and awaiting a visit that have built up during the pandemic.**

Action update: This action is on schedule. Completion date 30 November 2023.

Progress so far: This action is 75% complete.

Work is progressing towards having a 'working' number of HSCs. Discussions need to take place on what is the acceptable margin for HSC figures. The rationale for this number will be clear and evidence will be available for His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) inspection process.

As of 19 September the HSCs are currently at: 450 Outstanding, 488 Overdue (938 Total for the Service). Distribution of these is: 215 allocated to Community Safety (CS) 675 allocated to Wholetime and 48 allocated to On-Call.

There is an additional 2782 issued and allocated which are from target address lists. These will be reviewed and this number should significantly decrease when the 15 minute footprint leaflet is sent.

School visits will be reintroduced into Community Safety (CS) which could see the HSC numbers increase, but this is monitored weekly and district based working is being rolled out. The revised plan will have the following benefits:

- build relationship with crews
- enable support and guidance for crews with HSCs
- reduction in travel time for Fire Community Safety Officers meaning time can be spent more effectively.

Staffing levels in CS are affecting the completion of high risk HSCs.

The partnership team will not increase the number of partnerships going forward, this will then allow the team to maximise the effectiveness of the existing referral pathways, including a review of current training requirements.

CS briefed Middle Managers around operational staff fitting deaf alarms and where appropriate this will aid efficiency and effectiveness.

**AFI: The Service should make sure it quality assures its prevention activity, so staff carry out HSCs to an appropriate standard.**

Action update: This action is on schedule. Completion date 30 November 2023.

Progress so far: This action is 40% complete.

Some quality assurance work (QA) is taking place but staffing levels in CS are impacting on this. Some training needs to take place before robust QA and feedback can be established. Some peer QA work has taken place with West Yorkshire.

A draft QA policy has been produced as an interim plan. We are awaiting feedback on this. The initial QA of Emergency Response has now taken place and the results are to be shared and reviewed.

QA to begin on education delivery as the academic year has begun. A recording mechanism needs to be produced to allow this activity and subsequent data to be collected effectively.

Crucial Crew has been quality assured and this will be an ongoing process.

**AFI: The Service should assure itself that its risk-based audit programme (RBAP) prioritises the highest risks and includes proportionate activity to reduce risk.**

Action update: This action is on schedule. Completion date 30 November 2023.

Progress so far: This action is 80% complete.

Business Fire Safety (BFS) continue to review how the RBAP is generated to ensure highest risk premises are audited and targets are set and achieved. BFS now has a tab on ORCA that looks solely at RBAP and this is discussed monthly at Governance meetings. BFS now has Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Local Performance Indicators (LPis) approved by DCFO through Service Delivery, which will also be used to ensure appropriate targets are set and staffing is available to achieve these targets.

**AFI: The Service should make sure it has an effective QA process, so staff carry out audits to an appropriate standard.**

Action update: This action is on schedule. Completion date 30 November 2023.

Progress so far: This action is 60% complete.

Policy and Procedure documents are progressing with the Personal Effectiveness and Procedure for Auditing published. The Planning and Building Regulation has been reviewed and is awaiting publishing. These form our core business and link in to the KPIs/ LPIs. Further documents are in development or are being reviewed to ensure fit for purpose and reflect the KPIs/ LPIs.

A meeting has taken place to look at MAKO as a way of recording Maintenance of Competence for BFS staff.

Alongside these documents, Power BI reports have now been published which allow managers to drill down into performance for each individual, as well as for the department. All staff have been shown these reports and understand how they are to be used. District managers have monthly meetings with individuals to discuss performance.

To support this process, KPIs and LPIs have been agreed for each aspect of work carried out by BFS.

Benchmarking documents are also being drafted which outline how each task should be completed and expectations, therefore they can be used to quality assure work of all staff.

BFS Management team have a monthly governance meeting to look at performance against both KPIs and LPIs, and BFS Manager will report to the Service Delivery Board quarterly, on performance of team, against the KPIs, for quality assurance and scrutiny.

**AFI: The Service should make sure it works with local businesses and large organisations to share information and expectations on compliance with fire safety regulations.**

Action update: This action is on schedule. Completion date 30 November 2023.

Progress so far: This action is 70% complete.

A Business Engagement Policy and Plan is to be drafted for consultation by the beginning of October 2023. This will document our business engagement activities, as well as how best to promote these to the wider organisation and community to raise awareness of fire safety. It will also document how we will target our activities and how this links to the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) and RBAP.

Six Business Safety Advisors have been recruited, to start September 2023. We will have two Business Support Administrator vacancies unfilled. This is in part due to capacity of the department to train new staff. Still waiting an outcome from workforce planning on funding for an additional Business Support Officer.

We have a Business Engagement Activity Tracker, which outlines and monitors all aspects of engagement work so there is a clear audit trail.

We have conducted a number of events and engagement. The benefit of these is that messages can be targeted to larger audiences. Events have included:

- Church warden event - 250 participants
- Chinese Community event
- Landlord event
- Care Quality Commission – when an inspector calls

We are currently working towards having Primary Authority Partnerships and attending regional business engagement meetings, but this is dependent on having the Business Support Officer post in place.

**AFI: The Service should improve the availability of its on-call crewed fire engines to respond to incidents in line with its community risk management plan.**

Action update: This action is on schedule. Completion date 01 December 2023.

Progress so far: This action is 50% complete.

Twelve new On-call recruits started on the 1st September. It is hoped a further 12 will start in March 2024.

Control are now doing daily checks with Web Portal and RMS. After further investigation, ICT are confident that both RMS and Systel are communicating effectively, unless inaccurate data is entered. This should not affect mobilisation for On-Call personnel. In addition to this work, ICT are systematically visiting each On-Call station to undertake a system reset on the alerters, to ensure all future mobilisations are standardised between new and old alerters. This year will see further investment within the alerter system, and we will look to improve our current protocols by introducing two-way communication (in place of the one-way that is currently in use), which should make the process more efficient and effective.

Introduced Wholetime to On-call detach duty in line with current policy.

Student to instructor ratio increased to 2:1 on Light Goods Vehicles (LGV) courses to increase qualified drivers. Work is ongoing to increase capacity in driving school. Training and Development Centre to progress the increase in driving instructors by two.

Emergency Response to undertake a skill set audit of LGV drivers with a view to maximising resources.

Work alongside Occupational Health Unit to standardise On-call system of undertaking LGV medical for all recruit medicals.

Planning meeting with data analysts undertaken to produce accurate data and dashboard for district stations, this will include all LPIs.

Monitor recruitment process to establish if any barriers are in place, particularly for underrepresented groups. (A barrier was identified to females on the new NFS test. Female fitness sessions were introduced which have mitigated this barrier).

Advertise for dual contractors at Dearne, Penistone and Rossington.

Advertise and implement corporate staff working the On-Call.

**AFI: The Service should ensure it understands everything it needs to do to adopt national operational guidance (NOG) and it should ensure its plans is resourced to do so.**

Action update: This AFI is 'Actioned'

Progress so far: This action is 100% complete.

Following the People and Culture Board meeting on 13 September 2023, the NOG Implementation Closedown Report was submitted for approval. This report was formally approved by the Board, and subsequently signed by the Chair - Sue Kelsey, Director of People and Culture. The closedown report was also accepted at the Service Improvement Board on 27 September 2023.

Additionally, to ensure SYFR is progressing with the implementation of NOG, the National Fire Chief's Council (NFCC) Implementation Support Team has undertaken a piece of assurance work. The team found that a comprehensive implementation plan had been produced, with sufficient resources from relevant departments allocated to the progression of the project. They also concluded it was clear that there was a solid understanding of the aims, objectives and scope of the project as well as plans in place to mitigate many of the barriers experienced by other services previously.

**AFI: The Service should ensure it has an effective process in place to obtain operational learning so as to improve its operational response.**

Action update: This action is on schedule. Completion date 01 December 2023.

Progress so far:

This action is 20% complete.

Currently the service is completing an analysis of where we are at in terms of learning against the National Operational Learning (NOL) Good practice guide. A framework document, titled Operational Learning Framework has been drafted. This details where we are and where we need to be for operational learning.

A scoping meeting has been conducted with immediate stakeholders to ascertain the need for an Organisational Learning Committee, which has strategic governance on all learning. Strategic governance is required for organisational learning and the plan is to confirm where this sits within the organisation. Once this is done we can start to revise current internal documentation and processes to improve the learning cycle.

**AFI: The Service should arrange a programme of cross-border exercises, sharing learning from these exercises.**

Action update: This action is on schedule. Completion date is 01 December 2023.

Progress so far: This action is 70% complete.

SYFR has a programme of exercise types. Exercises are recorded via the Incident Recording System, Resilience Direct (RD planner) and at a local level

Work is progressing on better reporting of all Service wide exercises. Verbally it has been confirmed through the exercise planning group that exercises are happening, including the themes highlighted by the HMICFRS. It is hoped that by November we will have a better understanding of what exercises have been completed across all departments within the Service.

After a discussion with ACO Strelczenie we will request that each District Commander reports on their exercise completion and how it aligns to the RD planner. This data will be reported in all future Service Delivery Board meetings to improve scrutiny, productivity and support.

With regard to the Grenfell recommendations; we will be implementing 4 x training events to test FSG (on mass calls), the link between FSC and the fire ground, as well as evacuation protocols. These will be undertaken in November 2023. January will see the findings of the 4 x exercises being played out in a Service level exercise which will link into the recommendations from the enquiry.

All current and closed Grenfell AFIs will be reviewed by all internal stakeholders to satisfy the service we have embedded the findings. This will take place in October 2023.

**AFI: The Service needs to make sure that it uses its resources across prevention protection and response functions in a more joined up way to meet the priorities in its community risk management plan.**

Action update: This action is on schedule. Completion date is 01 December 2023.

Progress so far: This action is 30% complete.

The Response, Prevention, Protection and Resilience strategies were presented at the Service Delivery Board meeting on 14 September. Members were requested to review the strategies and feedback to owners, with a view to approving the suite of strategies at the next Board meeting.

Performance management data and information is now placed on ORCA for monitoring and review. Next step is to discuss and agree the performance measures.

**AFI: The Service should have effective measures in place to assure itself that its workforce is productive and their time is used as efficiently and effectively as possible to meet the priorities in its risk management plan.**

Action update: This action is on schedule. Completion date 01 December 2023.

Progress so far: This action is 50% complete.

SYFR have published a productivity and efficiency plan. The plan explains how we will deliver efficiencies and increase productivity against national targets, ensure a balanced budget and deliver value for money.

We now monitor performance and productivity using real-time information which is available at strategic, managerial and operational levels through ORCA dashboards. Performance clinics are being introduced for group and department managers to monitor performance against key measures.

Crews have “minimum expectations” targets contained within their station plans, including targets for firefighters for the completion of HSCs, business safety visits (BSV) and SSRI visits. These have been devised with crews to ensure that all time can be used productively.

Tablet computers are used to speed up administrative work and the Watch Performance System is used to monitor training activity and maintenance of competence. The Watch Performance System has been upgraded to enhance management of activities and Maintenance of Competence (MOC) of crews including Control. This went live in January 2023.

**AFI: The Service needs to make sure that its fleet strategy is regularly reviewed and evaluated to maximise potential efficiencies.**

Action update: This action is on schedule. Completion date 30 November 2023.

Progress so far: This action is 75% complete.

A first draft of the Joint Fleet Strategy for 2024 to 2029 has been completed and has been sent to the Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) for review and comments before progressing further through the appropriate governance channels.

**AFI: The Service should make sure staff have access to services to support both their mental and physical health via an effective occupational health (OH) service.**

Action update: This action is on schedule. Completion date revised to 31 March 2024.

Progress so far: This action is 40% complete.

A policy matrix has been developed for Occupational Health (OH) and Wellbeing policies and a plan is in place to review these going forward with some policies already being completed and going through consultation at Joint Consultative Forum.

A recent OH internal audit highlighted some required changes to systems including the logging and tracking of referrals and the use of Octopus for clinical notes. These have been discussed with ICT and changes are to be implemented in the coming months.

Discussions on improvements to Officers Critical Incident Wellbeing Support and how this can be factored in to Systel are ongoing and in the meantime reminders are being sent in relation to the manual system in place. Attendance at critical incidents is now recorded in OH so that we are aware of individuals with high exposure rates and are then able to ensure they are offered further support/ signposting should they require it.

OH statistics are now being presented at both the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee and the People and Culture Board, with improvements ongoing in this area.

The Fitness Advisor is now undertaking the Sports Therapy side of his role with a dedicated therapy room now available at Training and Development Centre (TDC). This will look to reduce external physiotherapy costs and reduce the waiting time for treatment which in turn should facilitate an earlier return to work for those absent or on modified duties.

After significant issues recruiting, the Senior Occupational Health Nurse (SOHN) position has now been filled and the individual started on 15/05/23. This role is integral to the progression of the OH department and will provide clinical day-to-day management and support to the OH team.

There have been significant capacity issues due to long term sickness within the OH Team and the resignation of the administrator which has hindered some progress. A new administrator has now started and all established roles within the team are now permanently filled.

**AFI: The Service should make sure that it has effective absence/ attendance procedures in place.**

Action update: This action is on schedule. Completion date 30 November 2023.

Progress so far: This action is 70% complete.

Standardised absence metrics are now presented at District meetings by the People Partner that provide a breakdown of shifts lost to sickness and number of absences per station per month. The statistics also include a comparison of how each District compares with the other three.

The number of Return to Works (RTWs) with outstanding actions and where the responsibility lies with is reported at the District meetings by the People Partners. The presentation of these figures has resulted in a significant decrease in the number of RTWs that are awaiting processing and stuck in the process. As a result of this, cases are now progressing to completion much more quickly which has seen an increase in absence management meetings taking place and notices of improvement in relation to absence issued. Case conferences are continuing with the aim of facilitating an earlier return to work where possible.

There has been a significant improvement in the turnaround of OH reports which allows the process to be followed in a timely manner.



**AFI: The Service should ensure its workforce plan addresses any gaps in capability which affect the availability of fire engines.**

Action update: This action is behind schedule. Revised completion date 04 December 2023.

Progress so far: This action is 50% complete.

**Drivers:**

Driver data now created and detailed pathway data is nearing fruition to indicate the status of individuals on their Driver pathway journey. Accurate reporting is now available to highlight gaps and focus investment and training where most urgent in order to deliver improved availability. (On Call have already had refocus and priority provided by TDC).

**Supervisory Level Staff (OICs) & other management levels:**

Changes to the 2023 Supervisory Promotion Boards have resulted in some positive outcomes in relation to promotion applications and numbers with further, linked changes proposed for 2024 including external applications at all levels. Reconsideration is also being given to changes to the Transfers In Process, Migration routes from On Call and pushing for both informal/current system expedited development and fast track options. Fast track options to be proposed to management July 2023 with a view to clarify key objectives and scope.

**Training Frameworks and Plans:**

Departmental Training Frameworks and Plans continue to be developed and finalised via the Training Liaison Group and Workforce Development Committee. Further work will be undertaken around the officer attribute frameworks in summer 2023 (notwithstanding the future work of the Specialisms Review Programme).

**ICT Systems Recording:**

Mako has progressed further and is ongoing development in relation the clarity, accessibility and accuracy of competence data and information in a dashboard and reportable format.

**Role Profiles:**

Discussion around role profiles is ongoing and will be required in order to feed into further MOC and Development Programme work as part of the Leadership Programme projects.

**Competence Frameworks:**

New or reviewed Competence Frameworks for all roles (non operational) will be considered later in 2023 due to capacity.

**AFI: The Service should address the high number of staff in temporary promotion positions.**

Action update: This action is on schedule. Completion date 31 December 2023.

Progress so far: This action is 40% complete.

Work is ongoing and Passport developments will look to encourage even higher numbers to apply for promotional processes with the Station Manager Pilot process having encouraged a strong number of applications for 2023.

Work is ongoing on reporting to provide a live picture of reasons for each Temporary Promotion (whilst many are Establishment Vacancies, others are also caused by the knock on impact of Supernumerary posts or other factors). Promotion policy changes under consideration currently for 2024. The revised policy is seeking to remove further barriers and streamline and improve development opportunities. Improvements have been seen from the 2023 process alterations, which will be reviewed and adapted to feed into the new policy.

Consideration being given to process for Transfers In to inform 2023 process, migration routes at managerial levels and external promotion barriers.

**AFI: The Service should identify and overcome barriers to equal opportunity, so that its workforce better represents its community.**

Action update: Revised completion date 29 December 2023.

Progress so far: This action is 75% complete.

Achievements this period –

- Animation created by corporate communications about Allyship.
- Further updates to the Positive Action Toolkit and draft Positive Action guidance in development.
- New provider for the one-day Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) training course selected. Looking to roll out training late September 2023.
- New provider for E-learning content now agreed with a timetable for the content - Inclusion Essentials for everyone and Inclusive Leadership for Managers.
- Review of how to log EDI related activity ongoing.
- Draft Annual EDI Report and Workforce Diversity Profiles submitted. Annual EDI Report includes LPI on completion rate for all EDI training.
- Draft EDI Strategy in progress.

Planned work for next period –

- Carry out consultation on draft Workforce Diversity Profile & Annual Report.
- Develop work around attendance at careers events and carry out analysis on resources needed for careers and other positive action activities. Will link to the update of the Positive Action Handbook, requirements around sustainability and a future paper on Positive Action.
- Further updates to internet – awaiting input from staff groups
- Campaign materials designed and presented at People & Culture Board. Further work to be carried out to produce supporting videos / case studies.
- Further analysis required on completion rates for EDI LearnPro to review completion rate for the new content only.

**AFI: The Service should make sure that it has effective grievance procedures. It should identify and implement ways to improve staff confidence in the grievance process.**

Action update: This action is on schedule. Completion date 30 November 2023.

Progress so far: This action is 75% complete.

People Relations People Partners work closely with managers when dealing with grievances to provide support, guidance and a level of governance. A 2-part survey has been introduced that will be sent to everyone who has raised a grievance. The first part is completed after the initial meeting has taken place and asks the employee about their experience when raising the grievance and focuses on the level of support the individual feels they received. The second part is sent after the process has concluded and asks for their view on the process as a whole. The survey may be completed anonymously although it is hoped that individuals will provide their details so follow-up contact can be made if the experience was not a positive one. Casework debrief forms continue to be sent to managers who have dealt with grievance cases and returned to People Relations Manager to progress any areas for development in the process.

**AFI: The Service should put in place an open and fair process to identify, develop and support high-potential staff and aspiring leaders.**

Action update: This action is on schedule. Revised completion date 31 January 2024.

Progress so far: This action is 50% complete.

Meeting held with SYFR Senior Leadership Team around Fast Track/High Potential scheme options. Initial decisions made in principle on direction of travel. Executive Leadership Programme access extended out again to Group Manager and above and corporate equivalent roles.