



We make our
communities safer

2019 HMICFRS Inspection



In June 2019, we welcomed the HMICFRS inspection team for the new style of national inspections of Fire and Rescue Services that have been taking place across England.

This sets out:

- Key findings from the inspection team
- Our response to the report
- How we will address areas for improvement
- How the report fits into our overall strategic direction and plans

How HMICFRS grades work:

There are four grades:

- outstanding
- good
- requires improvement
- inadequate



Good is the 'expected' graded judgment for all fire and rescue services.

It is based on policy, practice or performance that meet pre-defined grading criteria, which are informed by any relevant national operational guidance or standards.



Effectiveness

- Understanding the risk of fire and other emergencies
- Preventing fires and other risks
- Protecting the public through fire regulation
- Responding to fires and other emergencies
- Responding to national risks

Requires improvement

- Requires improvement
- Requires improvement
- Requires improvement
- Good
- Good

Efficiency

- Making best use of resources
- Making the fire and rescue service affordable now and in the future

Good

- Good
- Good

People

- Promoting the right values and culture
- Getting the right people with the right skills
- Ensuring fairness and promoting diversity
- Managing performance and developing leaders

Requires improvement

- Requires improvement
- Requires improvement
- Requires improvement
- Requires improvement



The report says:

“The Service should ensure its firefighters have good access to relevant and up-to-date risk information”

“The service should ensure that risk information is shared consistently across the service”

“The service acknowledges it needs to improve the quality of risk information. It is taking steps to do this.”

“We are pleased to see the service using extensive data to improve its risk modelling approach.”

Requires
improvement

It also says we have:

- ✓ A good understanding of our local risks
- ✓ Effectively consulted on our IRMP and response standards
- ✓ Talked to and worked with communities that are hard to reach
- ✓ Given good consideration to emerging and future risk
- ✓ Given greater detail of prevention, protection and response activity through several operational strategies and plans

We are continuing this work with the **Operational Response Review**, which is a comprehensive review of risk and our resources.



The report says:

“The service should ensure it carries out home safety visits in a timely manner”

“The service should evaluate its prevention work, so it understands the benefits better”



It also says:

- ✓ We work well with partners to reduce fires and other risks
- ✓ Our information sharing agreements with GP surgeries helps us identify vulnerable patients who would benefit from HSVs
- ✓ Our Firewise programme targets children who show fire setting behaviour
- ✓ Our Be Your Own Hero campaign is a good example of targeted safety messaging
- ✓ We have a comprehensive safeguarding policy in place
- ✓ Biker Down educates bikers about what to do if they see or come across an accident



We regularly evaluate our activities and make improvements but will need to do more to strengthen this.



The report says:

“The service should ensure that its risk-based inspection programme targets its highest risk premises”

“The service should ensure it addresses effectively the burden of fire false alarms (termed ‘unwanted signals’)”

“The service should ensure it has effective arrangements for providing specialist protection advice out of hours”

Our view is that risk in a premise is not a static thing – it will alter with a change of use, occupancy or even time of year.

In 2018, the volume of additional work post Grenfell increased the number of inspections, particularly high rise buildings.

A fire safety issues resource is available 24/7.

Our Operational Response Review and Integrated Risk Management plan are also considering a number of these topics.

Requires
improvement



The report says:

- ✓ We recognise the need to improve data systems and are investing accordingly
- ✓ We have staff in development who are dedicated to protection
- ✓ The overall number of audits in the year to 31 March 2018 has increased to 499
- ✓ Inspectors welcome the work that we're doing to upskill operational crews so that they can carry out business safety inspections
- ✓ We use a full range of enforcement options
- ✓ We work well with other enforcement agencies in relation to fire safety
- ✓ We promote business safety information
- ✓ We have introduced primary authority schemes

Safer Business Training

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We offer free training to help you reduce your risk of fire

Email: saferbusiness@esfrs.org or visit our website: www.esfrs.org to find out more

East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service

The poster features a large orange handshake icon, a row of four white icons (flame, padlock, pound sign, smiley face), and the East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service logo in the bottom left corner.



The report says:

“The service should improve the availability of its on-call fire engines to respond to incidents”

“The service should ensure firefighters have good access to relevant and up-to-date risk information”

We are pleased that the work in this area has been recognised with the Good grade.

We are already carrying out work on improving the recruitment and retention of on-call firefighters.

Our Operational Response Review will play an important part in understanding what resources we need going forwards.

As already mentioned, we are improving our risk information process. This is a priority.

Good





It also says:

- ✓ We have identified a minimum of 13 strategically located stations that we aim to always have available and figures show we are effectively achieving this aim
- ✓ Our average response time to primary fires is 8 minutes 22 seconds – the fastest service in the significantly rural service category
- ✓ Incident Commanders felt prepared and trained to deal with a range of incidents
- ✓ Control operators were confident in adjusting resource if required, based on incident type and risk
- ✓ We communicate incident information well to the public (and) use social media and our website to promote safety messages
- ✓ We have good processes in place to evaluate and improve operational practice





The report says:

“The service should ensure firefighters have good access to relevant and up-to-date risk information including cross border risks”

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

Good

It also said:

- ✓ Control operators and incident commanders were clear about how to ask for, and mobilise national assets
- ✓ The service carries out exercises with neighbouring services at high risk sites
- ✓ Commanders had received Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles (JESIP) training

We have highlighted that the training and confidentiality around the procedures for MTA mean that we do not offer training to non-specialist and non-responding staff. However we do offer IOR training which ensures that staff are aware of the response requirements. Control operators and officers know how to mobilise this specialist resource.



The report says:

“The services needs to ensure that it allocates its resources appropriately and prioritises activities which address the risks identified in its integrated risk management plan.”

Our Operational response review will play a key part in achieving this.

Good

It also says:

- ✓ We maintain good availability of fire engines to respond to emergencies
- ✓ We have realistic and robust financial plans in place
- ✓ We have financial contingencies in place
- ✓ We use risk assessments and maps to inform our resourcing
- ✓ We have acknowledged that it needs to improve how we manage performance and have invested in new business information and IT systems
- ✓ We have good business continuity plans in place

What else we're doing...

- ✓ We are working to improve recruitment and retention of on-call firefighters
- ✓ Replacing paper-based systems
- ✓ Reviewing the appraisal system
- ✓ Improving communication around the progress and outcome of our change programmes
- ✓ Placing a real emphasis on providing individuals and teams the intelligence we need to direct resources more effectively



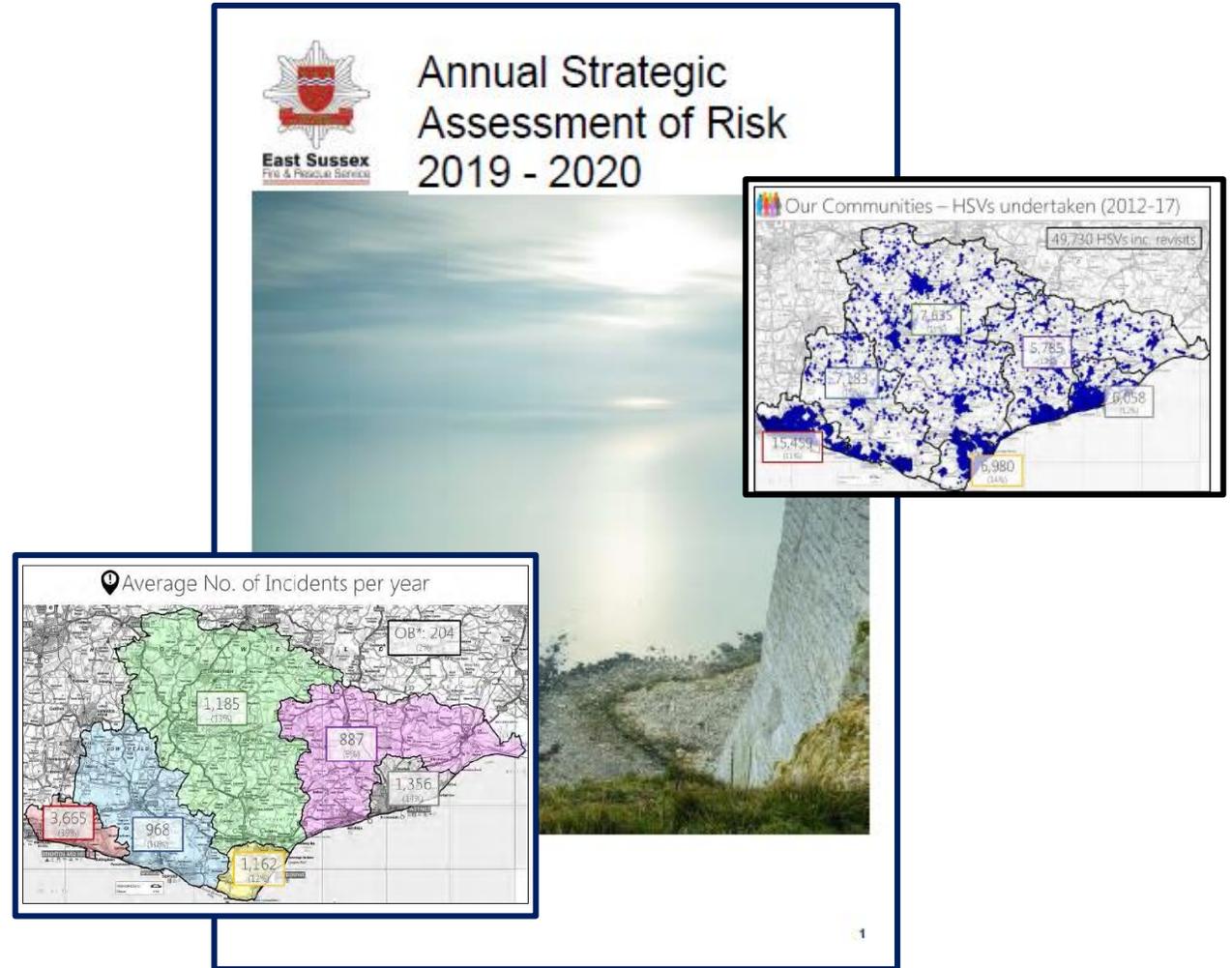
Our Operational Risk Review

This is a comprehensive review of risk and our resources and will be presented to the Fire Authority in February ahead of a public consultation.

It looks at everything which makes up our response provision including type and location of appliances, attendance standards and crewing models.

Data being reviewed includes incident data, demographics and local risk profiles.

We are aiming to achieve a more efficient and effective response model.





The report says:

“The service has a good record of achieving savings.”

“The service continues to review non-pay costs to make sure it is improving value for money.”

What we're doing....

- ✓ We have developed our approach to income generation through the primary authority scheme and investment in grant-finding
- ✓ Proactively seeking to find additional alternative income
- ✓ We agreed additional investment in a range of initiatives including wellbeing, asbestos medicals and e-recruitment
- ✓ Managed a range of pressures
- ✓ Pursued our efficiency strategy for example through agreement to a shared service for Estates & Facilities Management with Sussex Police
- ✓ Are identifying options for further efficiencies, including re-investment, through the Operational Response Review
- ✓ Working nationally to secure a sustainable finance settlement

Good



Promoting the right values and culture

The report says:

“The service should ensure its values and behaviours are understood and demonstrated by all staff.”

“The service should have appropriate means to monitor the working hours of its staff.”

Our staff should always treat each other with respect and in a way that you would expect to see in any modern workplace.

We have committed to delivering a Leadership and Behavioural Framework, to be launched in the spring. Our work on professional standards will support this.

This will help us ensure that you all understand our expectations of our colleagues when it comes to values and behaviours.

We have very few reports made of bullying and harassment in the Service and if people feel that is the case then we will tackle it.

The policy which covers the monitoring of working time for those staff on dual contracts is now in place.

Requires
improvement





Getting the right people with the right skills

The report says:

“The service should develop a workforce plan that takes full account of the necessary skills and capabilities it needs to carry out its integrated risk management plan.”

It also says:

- ✓ Operational staff are well trained and showed good knowledge in a range of skills
- ✓ The training department has a plan in place to make sure that staff have access to the training they need to be competent in their roles
- ✓ We acknowledged that we still have work to do in identifying critical roles and succession planning

The development of all our staff is important to us.

Our draft workforce plan will be reviewed once the findings from the Operational Response Review have been accepted by the Fire Authority.

This aims to ensure that we have the right people in the right roles at the right time is crucial to our success.

We now have more than 20 apprenticeships underway.

We have also seen a number of internal promotions, secondments and transfers in support staff.

Requires improvement



The report says:

“The service should ensure that it takes timely action in response to feedback or concerns from its staff.”

The report also says:

Most (but not all) staff we spoke to are aware of the procedures that are in place to report issues

The service actively supports community events such as Brighton and Hove Pride.... and promotes female role models in recruitment campaigns

What we're doing

- ✓ We are planning a Communications Review in early 2020 to improve communications with staff
- ✓ Our Have a Go days at on call stations are attracting a more diverse group from local communities
- ✓ Fresh training for equality and inclusion is due to be rolled out in 2020

Requires
improvement



The report says:

“The service should ensure it has mechanisms in place to manage and develop talent within the organisation”

- ✓ We acknowledge that our appraisal process needs to improve....we are taking positive steps to redesign this
- ✓ We are developing a talent management framework
- ✓ We have a fair promotion and selection process, based on an appropriate test of individual potential

We believe we have processes in place to develop high potential staff and our new Workforce Plan enhances this.

This includes the most recent rounds of promotion.

We have a strong track record of supporting internal and external secondments.

We nominate staff for the National Fire Chiefs Council’s Executive Leadership Programme and a number of our senior leaders have completed this.

Requires
improvement



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communities safer

In conclusion....

The report is a snapshot of what we do and we have already made improvements since June.

Performance continues to improve in key areas which help secure a first class and affordable service to the public.

Everyone has the responsibility to improve the service culture and really bring our values to life.

We have great staff and volunteers who make a difference to our communities on a daily basis.

Got a question?

Get in touch – we'd be happy to help.

In an emergency dial 999

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