

HMICFRS Improvement Plan

2023 Inspection



HEREFORD & WORCESTER
HWFR
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE



Introduction

During May to July 2023, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Service (HMICFRS) inspected Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS). HWFRS was selected as the 11th Service to be inspected in the third round of inspections.

The inspection team from HMICFRS carried out their in-depth review, focusing on how effective and efficient we are and how well we look after our people. The report, titled "Fire and Rescue Service 2023-25, Effectiveness, Efficiency and People – An inspection of Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service" was published on 29th November 2023, and this is [the link to the report](#).

The inspection measured the Service across 11 assessment areas which they hope will encourage Fire and Rescue Services to consider inspection findings as a whole. HMICFRS have also expanded their previous four-tier system of graded judgements to five.

In the report, the Inspectorate state that they are pleased with the performance of HWFRS and the improvements made since the last inspection, and they would encourage the Service to continue to make improvement in the areas they have highlighted.














The inspection report highlighted 11 Areas for Improvement (AFI) and recommend that action be taken to address them. In response, 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.

The Improvement Plan summarises the proposed actions against the AFIs noted in the inspection report.

Areas for Improvement

Summary

Assessment Area	Area for Improvement	Page
Understanding fires and other risks	 AFI-1 – The service should make sure its firefighters have good access to relevant and up-to-date risk information.	3
	 AFI-2 – The service should make sure staff carry out home fire safety visits competently.	4
Preventing fires and other risks	 AFI-3 – The service should evaluate its prevention activity, so it understands what is most effective.	5
	 AFI-4 – The service should make sure it effectively addresses the burden of unwanted fire signals.	6
Protecting the public through fire regulation	 AFI-5 – The service should make sure it has an effective system to learn from operational incidents.	7
Responding to fires and other emergencies	 AFI-6 – The service should make sure it has an effective method to share fire survival guidance information with multiple callers and that it has a dedicated communication link in place.	8
	 AFI-7 – The service should make sure it has an overarching cross-border exercise strategy. The strategy should assure the service that exercise objectives are in line with community risk management plan risks and that learning is recorded, shared and actioned.	9
Making best use of resources	 AFI-8 – The service should make sure it effectively monitors, reviews, and evaluates the benefits and outcomes of any collaboration activity.	10
Future affordability	 AFI-9 – The service needs to make sure it has adequate plans in place to close its identified budget gaps.	11
Promoting the right values and culture	 AFI-10 – The service should monitor secondary contracts to make sure staff don't work excessive hours.	12
Managing performance and developing leaders	 AFI-11 – The service should make sure it has processes in place to manage and develop talent within the organisation.	13

Areas for Improvement

Understanding fires and other emergencies – (AFI-1)

Area for improvement

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



Strategic Lead Assistant Director, Protection

Tactical Lead Group Commander Ops Policy, Assurance and Fire Control

HWFRS Action Proposed	Target Date
Fire Control project team to address and reduce the existing backlog of temporary risk information as part of the data cleanse for the introduction of the new mobilisation system	Q2 2024/25
Implement the new reporting system, including ongoing monitoring of risk information processing time from submission to going live on the system	Q2 2024/25
Develop a process for review and the updating / removal of old information	Q2 2024/25
Establish KPI(s) for the ongoing reporting of actions 2 and 3 above for continued monitoring	Q2 2024/25

Areas for Improvement

Preventing fires and other risks – (AFI-2)

Area for improvement

The service should make sure staff carry out home fire safety visits competently



Strategic Lead Assistant Director, Prevention

Tactical Lead Head of Prevention

HWFRS Action Proposed

Target Date

Undertake a review of the HFSV referral process to ensure HFSV's are being appropriately risk assessed, completed within time frames, suitably referred to the prevention team and ultimately that the referral process is being delivered effectively

Q2 2024/25

Establish a clear process to communicate with crews to ensure a robust referral pathway is in place

Q3 2024/25

Areas for Improvement

Preventing fires and other risks – (AFI-3)

Area for improvement

The service should evaluate its prevention activity, so it understands what is most effective



Strategic Lead Assistant Director, Prevention

Tactical Lead Head of Prevention

HWFRS Action Proposed	Target Date
Further embed the HFSV behaviour change evaluation process, and monitor and review to demonstrate continual improvement	Q3 2024/25
Establish a process to evaluate the effectiveness of Prevention campaigns e.g. implement a stakeholder feedback mechanism	Q3 2024/25
Develop an approach to evaluate changes in behaviour following the delivery of road safety education and intervention	Q4 2024/25

Areas for Improvement

Protecting the public through fire regulation – (AFI-4)

Area for improvement

The service should make sure it effectively addresses the burden of unwanted fire signals



Strategic Lead Assistant Director, Protection

Tactical Lead Group Commander, Protection

HWFRS Action Proposed	Target Date
Establish terms of reference and commence a review on how we communicate with businesses etc.	Q2 2024/25
Updated policy to be created and published	Q3 2024/25
Produce guidance on mobilisation and provide Fire Control training	Q3 2024/25
Establish a consistent recording and review process for unwanted fire signals	Q4 2024/25

Areas for Improvement

Responding to fires and other emergencies – (AFI-5)

Area for improvement

The service should make sure it has an effective system to learn from operational incidents



Strategic Lead Assistant Director, Protection

Tactical Lead Group Commander Ops Policy, Assurance and Fire Control

HWFRS Action Proposed	Target Date
Incorporate a review of RTC fatalities into quarterly Fire, Death and Serious Injury (FDSI) Board meetings	Complete
Automate the process of requesting debriefs that hit the submission criteria, to improve the return rate of debriefs	Complete
Implement a new Organisational Learning and action tracking system	Q1 2024/25

Areas for Improvement

Responding to major and multi-agency incidents – (AFI-6)

Area for improvement

The service should make sure it has an effective method to share fire survival guidance information with multiple callers and that it has a dedicated communication link in place



Strategic Lead Assistant Director, Protection

Tactical Lead Group Commander Ops Policy, Assurance and Fire Control

HWFRS Action Proposed	Target Date
Update and review Fire Survival Guidance / Evacuation documentation including Evacuation Commander role	Q1 2024/25
Review the existing procedures, carry out updates and test as required	Q2 2024/25
Implement training for staff based on the above	Q3 2024/25
Procure and implement an electronic information sharing system to share Fire Survival Guidance	Q4 2024/25

Areas for Improvement

Responding to fires and other emergencies – (AFI-7)

Area for improvement

The service should make sure it has an overarching cross-border exercise strategy. The strategy should assure the service that exercise objectives are in line with community risk management plan risks and that learning is recorded, shared and actioned



Strategic Lead Assistant Director, Response

Tactical Lead Group Commander, North District

HWFRS Action Proposed	Target Date
Carry out a review of the Station Exercises Policy and Exercise Planning Guidance	Q4 2023/24
Develop an overarching cross-border exercise plan to sit alongside the existing Exercise Policy and Guidance	Q4 2024/25

Areas for Improvement

Making the best use of resources – (AFI-8)

Area for improvement

The service should make sure it effectively monitors, reviews, and evaluates the benefits and outcomes of any collaboration activity



Strategic Lead Assistant Director, Prevention

Tactical Lead Group Commander, Performance & Information

HWFRS Action Proposed

Target Date

Produce guidance for HWFRS staff to use when reviewing and evaluating collaboration. This will include a definition of collaboration and an evaluation process/tool

Q2 2024/25

Review the implementation of the guidance and the evaluation processes that have taken place

Q3 2024/25

Areas for Improvement

Making the fire and rescue service affordable now and in the future – (AFI-9)

Area for improvement

The service needs to make sure it has adequate plans in place to close its identified budget gaps



Strategic Lead Director of Finance

Tactical Lead Assistant Director, Finance

HWFRS Action Proposed	Target Date
Revise the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP), providing an updated position on potential budget gaps	Q4 2023/24
Continue to monitor the budget gap and revise plans accordingly	Q2 2024/25

Areas for Improvement

Promoting the right values and culture – (AFI-10)

Area for improvement

The service should monitor secondary contracts to make sure staff don't work excessive hours



Strategic Lead Assistant Director, Prevention

Tactical Lead Head of HR & Development

HWFRS Action Proposed

Target Date

Establish a service-level assurance process for employees with secondary employment or dual contracts

Q3 2024/25

Implement a formal reporting mechanism on secondary employment and hours worked

Q4 2024/25

Areas for Improvement

Managing performance and developing leaders – (AFI-11)

Area for improvement

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



Strategic Lead Assistant Director, Prevention

Tactical Lead Head of HR & Development

HWFRS Action Proposed	Target Date
Develop a Talent Management strategy for the service	Q4 2024/25
Establish a delivery plan that is fair and equitable to enable talented individuals to develop and progress	Q4 2024/25
Develop a framework for managers which they can use to identify and develop high-performing staff (appraisal) in line with the NFCC talent management toolkit	Q1 2025/26



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