

An Overview of the English Fire and Rescue Service

Police and Crime Panel Workshop – 12 July 2017

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Central Trends in UK Fire and Rescue Service Reform



- 1. From national to local (de-centralisation)** – From nationally-prescribed standards and a central inspection regime, to local standards and ‘sector-led improvement’.
- 2. From response to prevention** – From managing community risk by responding quickly and effectively when things go wrong, to trying to stop things going wrong in the first place.
- 3. From public sector investment to austerity** – From Central Government investment linked to performance targets, to a programme for fixing the budget deficit by reducing public expenditure.



Key Changes to the Fire and Rescue Service Landscape

FROM

TO

Key Changes to the Fire and Rescue Service Landscape

FROM	TO
<p>Fire Services Act 1947:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Statutory responsibilities rest with fire authorities (discharged by officers via schemes of delegation)• Duty to respond to fires• National Standards of Fire Cover (property focused)• Powers to do other things• Assurance of operational performance by Her Majesty's Fire Service Inspectorate	<p>Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Statutory Responsibilities remain with fire authorities• Duty to promote fire safety• Duty to respond to incidents involving fires, road traffic collisions, CBRNE, trains, trams, aircraft and building collapse (USAR)• Powers to do other things remain• National Framework introduced:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Integrated Risk Management Planning (Prevention, Protection, Response)• National resilience• Assurance of operational performance by Audit Commission (2008); then fire authorities (2012)

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Appointments and Promotions Regulations; Statutory promotion exams; & Core Progression Courses at the Fire Service College.	National Occupational Standards, met through locally-determined arrangements

Opportunities and Challenges

1. From national to local (de-centralisation)

- ✓ Flexibility to focus on *REAL* risk in local communities (not just fire)
- ✓ Match resources and interventions to the *REAL* risk
- ? New expertise in risk analysis required
- ? Challenge from trade unions
- ? 'Postcode lottery'
- ? Benign neglect of Central Government

2. From public sector investment to austerity

- ✓ A catalyst for change across the whole public sector (collaboration)
- ? Much reduced budgets (c20% in real terms)
- ? Challenge from trade unions (sometimes in connection with national issues)

3. From response to prevention

- ✓ Safer communities...from much broader perspective
- ? Potential victims of our own success
- ? Emerging issues with staff morale

The UK Fire and Rescue Service Operating Model in 2015

- **Standards set locally by fire authorities**
- **Balanced Approach to Community Risk Management, through Integrated Risk Management Planning (IRMP):**
 - **Prevention** – A 21st Century Revolution
 - **Protection** – Risk-based audit programme of industrial and commercial buildings
 - **Emergency Response** – Locally determined standards, with networked specialist capability to provide national resilience
- **Outcomes** – Number of fires reduced by two-thirds and fire deaths and injuries halved
- **Performance Improvement and Assurance** – ‘Sector-led Improvement’ (Peer Review), and Fire Authority Statements of Assurance

Changing Political Landscape

- The Conservative Party won 2015 General Election - manifesto commitment to...

“Enable fire and police services to work more closely together and develop the role of elected and accountable police and crime commissioners.”

- ‘Consultation’ on enabling closer working between the emergency services
- Move from Department for Communities and Local Government back to the Home Office
- Introduction of new legislation
- The fire and rescue service reform programme was born...



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