



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
Creating Safer Communities

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham
Fire and Rescue Authority

THE FIRE AND RESCUE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR ENGLAND

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

Agenda Item No:

Date: 21 September 2012

Purpose of Report:

To advise the Fire Authority of the publication of the new National Framework and its implications for Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service.

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Under Section 21 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, the Secretary of State is required to:
- Prepare a National Framework for Fire and Rescue Authorities;
 - Consult with representatives of Fire and Rescue Authorities and their employees, before making significant changes to the Framework;
 - Bring the Framework and any significant revisions to it, into effect by Statutory Instrument, subject to annulment in either of the Houses of Parliament.
- 1.2 Under Section 21(7), Fire and Rescue Authorities must have regard to the Framework when carrying out their functions.
- 1.3 On 13 December 2011, the Secretary of State issued a draft revised Framework for consultation, with an end date set as 19 March 2012. A report was submitted to the Policy and Strategy Committee on 3 February 2012 outlining the key elements of the draft Framework and the implications for Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS). A draft response was agreed and submitted on behalf of Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority.

2. REPORT

- 2.1 In July 2012, the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England was issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), attached at Appendix A to this report, following the previous period of consultation. This report outlines the key elements within the Framework and the implications for NFRS.
- 2.2 In the introduction to the Framework the Minister outlines his three key priorities for Fire and Rescue Authorities. These are:
- Identify and assess the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue related risks their areas face, make provision for prevention and protection activities and respond to incidents appropriately;
 - Work in partnership with their communities and a wide range of partners locally and nationally to deliver their service;
 - Be accountable to communities for the service they provide.
- 2.3 Each of these three expectations is elaborated upon in greater detail throughout the respective chapters of the Framework.
- 2.4 The Framework is primarily divided into three key chapters:

Chapter 1:	Safer Communities
Chapter 2:	Accountable to Communities
Chapter 3:	Assurance

Chapter 1: Safer Communities

- 2.5 The key requirements placed upon fire and rescue authorities within this chapter are extracted below.
- 2.6 Each fire and rescue authority must produce an integrated risk management plan that identifies and assesses all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks that could affect its community, including those of a cross-border, multi-authority and/or national nature. The plan must have regard to the Community Risk Registers produced by Local Resilience Forums and any other local risk analyses as appropriate.
- 2.7 Fire and rescue authorities must work with communities to identify and protect them from risk and to prevent incidents from occurring.
- 2.8 Each fire and rescue authority integrated risk management plan must:
- demonstrate how prevention, protection and response activities will best be used to mitigate the impact of risk on communities, through authorities working either individually or collectively, in a cost effective way;
 - set out its management strategy and risk based programme for enforcing the provisions of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 in accordance with the principles of better regulation set out in the Statutory Code of Compliance for Regulators, and the Enforcement Concordat.
- 2.9 Fire and rescue authorities must make provision to respond to incidents such as fires, road traffic accidents and emergencies within their area and in other areas in line with their mutual aid agreements, and reflect this in their integrated risk management plans.
- 2.10 Fire and rescue authorities must have effective business continuity arrangements in place in accordance with their duties under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and to meet the full range of service delivery risks.
- 2.11 Fire and rescue authorities must collaborate with other fire and rescue authorities to deliver interoperability.
- 2.12 Fire and rescue authorities must collaborate with other fire and rescue authorities, other emergency services, wider Category 1 and 2 responders and Local Resilience Forums to ensure interoperability.
- 2.13 Fire and rescue authorities must engage with the Fire and Rescue Strategic Resilience Board in order to support discussions and decision making in relation to national resilience.
- 2.14 Fire and rescue authorities' risk assessments must include an analysis of any gaps between their existing capability and that needed to ensure national resilience.

- 2.15 As part of their analysis, fire and rescue authorities must highlight to the Department, or the Fire and Rescue Strategic Resilience Board, any capability gaps that they believe cannot be met even when taking into account mutual aid arrangements, pooling and reconfiguration of resources and collective action.
- 2.16 Fire and rescue authorities must work collectively, through the Fire and Rescue Strategic Resilience Board, to agree with the Department whether and/or how to address any capability gaps identified through the gap analysis.
- 2.17 In order to meet the requirements of this Framework, fire and rescue authorities must work in partnership with their communities and a wide range of partners locally and nationally.

Chapter 2: Accountable to Communities

- 2.18 Each fire and rescue authority integrated risk management plan must:
- be easily accessible and publicly available;
 - reflect effective consultation throughout its development and at all review stages with the community, its workforce and representative bodies, and partners;
 - cover at least a three year time span and be reviewed and revised as often as it is necessary to ensure that fire and rescue authorities are able to deliver the requirements set out in this Framework;
 - reflect up to date risk analyses and the evaluation of service delivery outcomes.
- 2.19 The fire and rescue authority must hold their Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive to account for the delivery of the fire and rescue service.
- 2.20 Fire and rescue authorities must have arrangements in place to ensure that their decisions are open to scrutiny.
- 2.21 Fire and rescue authorities must make their communities aware of how they can access data and information on their performance.

Chapter 3: Assurance

- 2.22 Fire and rescue authorities must provide assurance on financial, governance and operational matters and show how they have had due regard to the expectations set out in their integrated risk management plan and the requirements included in this Framework. To provide assurance, fire and rescue authorities must publish an annual statement of assurance.
- 2.23 In addition to the assurance arrangements detailed above, fire and rescue authorities must work collectively, and with the Fire and Rescue Strategic Resilience Board, to provide assurance to Government, that:

- risks are assessed, plans are in place and any gaps between existing capability and that needed to ensure national resilience are identified;
- existing specialist national resilience capabilities are fit-for-purpose and resilient;
- any new capabilities that fire and rescue authorities are commissioned to deliver by Government are procured, maintained and managed in the most cost-effective manner that delivers value for money whilst ensuring capabilities are fit-for-purpose and resilient.

2.24 The Framework does provide a little more detail on how the government interprets and expects these conditions to be met, and it is clear that further guidance will be forthcoming.

2.25 As the Service is due to embark on the construction of its next IRMP (the current plan concludes its scheduled life in 2013), NFRS will take full opportunity to assess the detail and impact of this Framework in its planning and consultation process. This will ensure that the Fire Authority meets the expectations of government, but also reflect the expectations of local communities.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 Although there are no specific financial implications arising from the issue of the Framework, its compliance will impact on the financial arrangements of the Service.

3.2 The process for assessing this impact will be via the IRMP and other planning processes, which will determine the budget requirements of the Service in future years.

4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The recruitment, retention and development of staff will be a part of the Service meeting its statutory obligations moving forward, as well as meeting the assurance that DCLG requires.

4.2 This will be developed as part of the planning process to be undertaken.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

The Framework does not place any specific obligations on fire and rescue authorities in relation to equalities, but does remind everyone of the specific and general duties set out in the Equality Act 2010 and the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011.

6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

The Framework reminds fire and rescue authorities of their duties under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, which is to exercise their functions in a way that prevents crime and disorder in their area.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The key risks to the Fire Authority arising out of the issue of the Framework are that of non-compliance. The government does possess powers of intervention where it does consider serious risks to performance that would have impact on the Service or the reputation of the sector. These are set out within the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004.
- 7.2 These risks will be mitigated by the Service developing its plans in line with the expectations of the Framework.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The National Framework for England is issued under Section 21 of the Fire & Rescue Services Act 2004. Under this Section, Fire and Rescue authorities must have regard to the Framework when carrying out their functions.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 9.1 Note the issue of the new National Framework.
- 9.2 Acknowledge the key points as identified in this report.
- 9.3 Task the Chief Fire Officer with meeting the Framework's expectations and incorporating this within the future plans for the Authority.

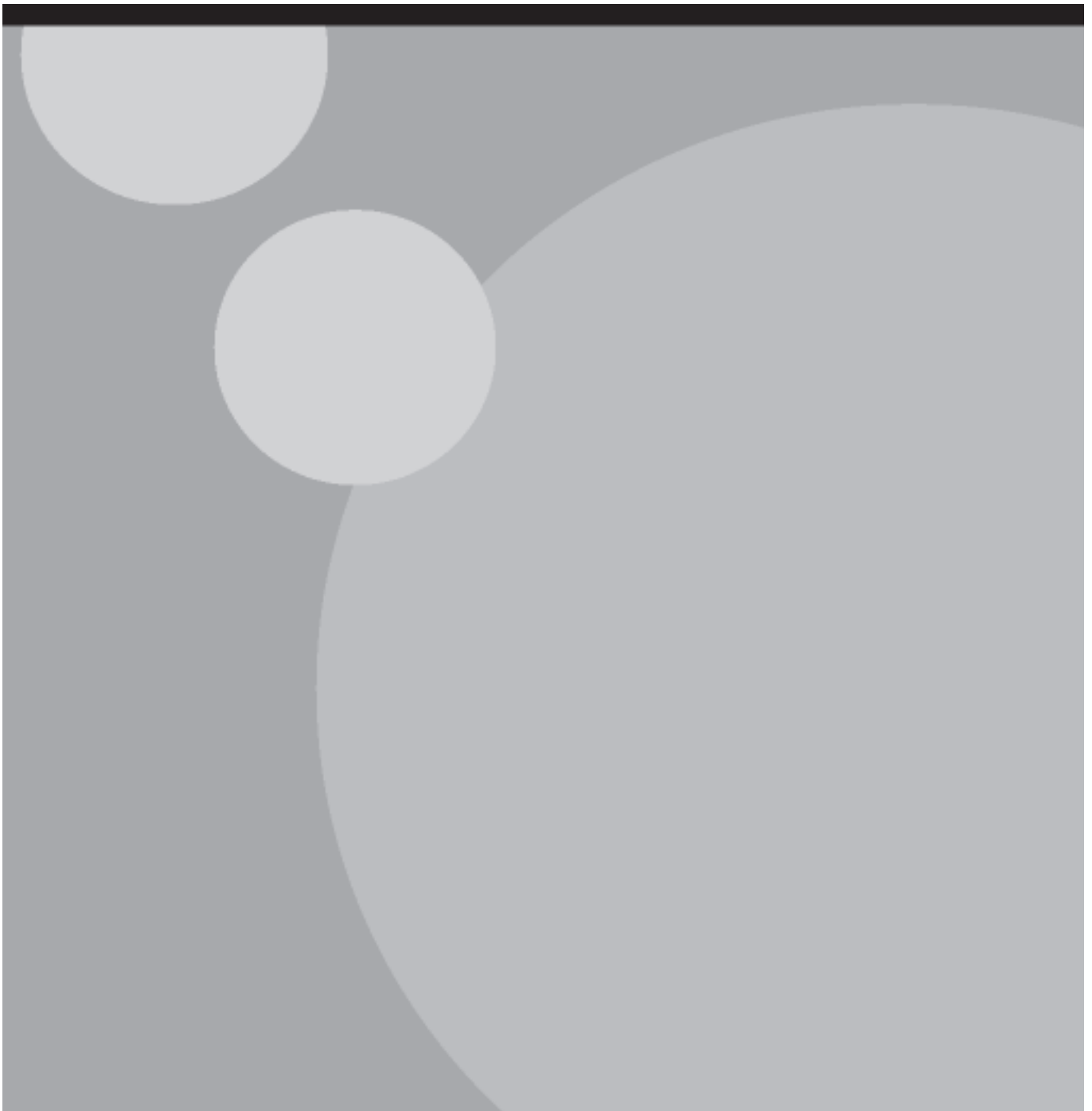
10. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION (OTHER THAN PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS)

None.

Frank Swann
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER



Fire and rescue national framework for England





Fire and rescue national framework for England

July 2012
Department for Communities and Local Government

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Ministerial foreword

We are rightly proud of our fire and rescue authorities. The professionalism, courage, and commitment of our firefighters in ensuring that our communities are safer places, less exposed to the destruction and devastation caused by fire exemplifies all that we rightly value in a public service

In addition to their historic role of putting out fires and coming to our rescue in other emergencies, fire and rescue authorities also work on fire prevention:

- organising home fire safety visits for older people and vulnerable
- supporting regulatory compliance in the business community and helping minimise the impact of fire on the economy.

The fact that fire deaths in the home have halved since the 1980s, and that since 2007 the number of accidental fire deaths in the home has stabilised at around 210 per year, is a significant testament to the commitment to prevention shown by fire and rescue authorities.

There are new challenges. Fire and rescue authorities need to be able to deal with the continuing threat of terrorism, the impact of climate change, and the impacts of an ageing population, against the need to cut the national deficit.

It is against this background that we launch this revised National Framework. One of the key principles of which is to acknowledge the proficiency and experience of fire and rescue authorities; and to allow them the freedom and flexibility to deliver the services for which they are respected and renowned without being hampered by Whitehall bureaucracy and red tape.

The National Framework will continue to provide an overall strategic direction to fire and rescue authorities, but will not seek to tell them how they should serve their communities. They are free to operate in a way that enables the most efficient delivery of their services. This may include working collaboratively with other fire and rescue authorities, or with other organisations, to improve public safety and cost effectiveness. Ultimately, it is to local communities, not Government, that fire and rescue authorities are accountable.

I am grateful for the contributions of all those who took the time to respond to the consultation on the National Framework.



Bob Neill MP
Minister for the Fire and Rescue Service

Introduction

1. The Government has a responsibility to ensure that the public is adequately protected. For fires and other emergencies it does this by providing significant financial resources, giving authorities the power to raise additional local funding, and maintaining a statutory framework within which local fire and rescue authorities operate.¹
2. This document – the Fire and Rescue National Framework - sets out the Government’s priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities in England¹. The Framework sets out high level expectations. It does not prescribe operational matters. These are best determined locally by fire and rescue authorities, working in partnership with their communities; local citizens, businesses, civil society organisations and others. The Framework builds on existing notable practice shown by fire and rescue authorities across the full range of their functions.
3. **The priorities in this Framework are for fire and rescue authorities to:**
 - **identify and assess the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue related risks their areas face, make provision for prevention and protection activities and respond to incidents appropriately**
 - **work in partnership with their communities and a wide range of partners locally and nationally to deliver their service**
 - **be accountable to communities for the service they provide**
4. Fire and rescue authorities need to assess all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks that could affect their communities (from local fires to terrorist attacks) and put in place arrangements to mitigate these risks, either through adjusting existing provision, more effective collaboration and partnership working, or building new capability. They need to deliver effective and proportionate prevention and protection activities and be ready to respond to incidents within their areas and across the country to keep communities safe.
5. Fire and rescue authorities need to plan for and occasionally respond to incidents of such scale and/or complexity that local resources may be insufficient even when taking into account mutual aid agreements, pooling and reconfiguration of resources and collective action. This Framework sets clear roles and responsibilities to manage such risks.

¹ For information - notes are included in the Endnotes section

6. The Government retains strategic responsibility for national resilience. In meeting this responsibility, it relies on the leadership role of fire and rescue authorities and recognises that national resilience is best built on the basis of local professional expertise and understanding of risk.
7. Fire and rescue authorities need to have strong partnership arrangements in place so that they are able to deliver a service that meets their statutory duties and the requirements set out in this Framework.
8. In demonstrating their accountability to communities for the service they provide, fire and rescue authorities need to:
 - be transparent and accountable to their communities for their decisions and actions, and to provide the opportunity for communities to help to plan their local service through effective consultation and involvement
 - have scrutiny arrangements in place that reflect the high standard communities expect for an important public safety service
 - provide assurance to their communities and to Government, on financial, governance and operational matters and on national resilience capability
9. Fire and rescue authorities function within a long-established statutory and policy framework with which they are familiar. It is not the role of this Framework to repeat all the duties placed on fire and rescue authorities in connection with the discharge of their functions, or more generally as a public service provider and employer.

Chapter 1

Safer communities

- 1.1 Fire and rescue authorities need to identify and assess all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks their communities may face. To keep their communities safe, authorities need to deliver effective and proportionate prevention and protection activities and to plan for and respond to incidents within their areas and in other areas as reflected in their integrated risk management plans². Resilience is secured through a combination of the activities of fire and rescue authorities, other emergency services and Government.
- 1.2 Each fire and rescue authority's integrated risk management plan provides an opportunity to demonstrate how it will discharge its responsibilities in a way that is open and transparent to its community and others with an interest.

Identify and assess

- 1.3 **Each fire and rescue authority must produce an integrated risk management plan that identifies and assesses all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks that could affect its community, including those of a cross-border, multi-authority and/or national nature. The plan must have regard to the Community Risk Registers produced by Local Resilience Forums and any other local risk analyses as appropriate³.**
- 1.4 The Government will monitor the risks that the United Kingdom could face through the National Risk Assessment process, led by the Cabinet Office, and through other relevant risk assessment and horizon-scanning processes⁴. The Government provides guidance to Local Resilience Forums on how to interpret the likelihood and impact of these risks for their local area. This guidance informs the production of Community Risk Registers by Local Resilience Forums. This ensures there is a fully integrated risk assessment process between the Government and all local responders, including fire and rescue authorities, through Local Resilience Forums.
- 1.5 Fire and rescue authorities need to consider Community Risk Registers and any other local risk analyses to ensure that all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks are identified and included in their integrated risk management plan.
- 1.6 The Government will also define the consequences of those risks included in the National Risk Assessment and set a benchmark of generic capability needed to ensure the United Kingdom can both respond to and recover

from a range of potential emergencies. The Government does this through the National Resilience Planning Assumptions, led by the Cabinet Office⁵.

- 1.7 Fire and rescue authorities should have regard to the National Risk Register, the National Risk Assessment and the National Resilience Planning Assumptions when producing their integrated risk management plans⁶.

Prevent and protect

- 1.8 Fire prevention and protection activity has long played a key role in significantly reducing the incidence of fire and associated deaths and injuries, both in domestic and commercial premises. Through their role and partnership arrangements, fire and rescue authorities are ideally placed to make a wide and valuable contribution in support of a safer society. Importantly, this work serves to create strong links with communities, enabling fire and rescue authorities to work with individuals; create partnerships with local agencies; and support businesses to comply with fire safety regulations. It also allows fire and rescue authorities to better focus and target their resources on areas where the risk from fire is greatest.

- 1.9 **Fire and rescue authorities must work with communities to identify and protect them from risk and to prevent incidents from occurring.**

- 1.10 **Each fire and rescue authority integrated risk management plan must:**
- **demonstrate how prevention, protection and response activities will best be used to mitigate the impact of risk on communities, through authorities working either individually or collectively, in a cost effective way**
 - **set out its management strategy and risk based programme for enforcing the provisions of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 in accordance with the principles of better regulation set out in the Statutory Code of Compliance for Regulators, and the Enforcement Concordat**

Respond

- 1.11 **Fire and rescue authorities must make provision to respond to incidents such as fires, road traffic accidents and emergencies within their area and in other areas in line with their mutual aid agreements, and reflect this in their integrated risk management plans⁷.**

- 1.12 Fire and rescue authorities are required to enter into reinforcement schemes, or mutual aid agreements, with other fire and rescue authorities

for securing mutual assistance, so far as practicable. These are important tools for fire and rescue authorities to be prepared to respond to incidents.

- 1.13 It is for fire and rescue authorities to consider and identify areas where collaborative working could improve service delivery, achieve efficiencies and ensure an effective response to incidents.
- 1.14 **Fire and rescue authorities must have effective business continuity arrangements in place in accordance with their duties under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and to meet the full range of service delivery risks.** Business continuity plans should not be developed on the basis of Armed Forces assistance being available.⁸
- 1.15 **Fire and rescue authorities must collaborate with other fire and rescue authorities to deliver intraoperability.**
- 1.16 Intraoperability between fire and rescue authorities includes, but is not limited to:
- compatible communications systems, control rooms and equipment
 - common command and compatible control and co-ordination arrangements
 - effective information, intelligence and data sharing
 - compatible operational procedures, and guidance with common terminology
 - compatible training and exercising (both individually and collectively)
 - cross border working with other English fire and rescue authorities and those in the devolved administrations
- 1.17 **Fire and rescue authorities must collaborate with other fire and rescue authorities, other emergency services, wider Category 1 and 2 responders and Local Resilience Forums to ensure interoperability⁹.**
- 1.18 Interoperability between fire and rescue authorities and other responders includes, but is not limited to:
- compatible communications systems, control rooms and equipment, as appropriate
 - compatible command, control and co-ordination arrangements
 - effective inter-agency working and liaison and, where appropriate, information, intelligence and data sharing
 - shared understanding of respective roles and responsibilities, operational procedures, guidance and terminology

- robust multi-agency plans for managing risks identified in the National Risk Assessment and Community Risk Registers
- multi-agency training and exercising
- cross border working with other responders in England and the devolved administrations

1.19 The Government works at a national level, and with the devolved administrations, to improve the ability of the emergency services to work together during emergencies¹⁰.

1.20 In addition, during emergencies, the Department for Communities and Local Government will work with other government departments, fire partner organisations and the devolved administrations to co-ordinate the deployment arrangements for specialist fire and rescue assets as set out in the National Co-ordination and Advisory Framework¹¹.

Resilience

1.21 In delivering the requirements set out above, fire and rescue authorities need to have the necessary capability in place to manage the majority of risks that may face their areas, either individually or collectively through collaborative arrangements with other fire and rescue authorities and responders.

1.22 *For the purposes of this document, national resilience in the context of fire and rescue authorities is defined as the capacity and capability of fire and rescue authorities to work together and with other Category 1 and 2 responders to deliver a sustained, effective response to major incidents, emergencies and disruptive challenges, such as (but not limited to) those identified in the National Risk Assessment. It refers to risks that need to be planned for on a strategic, national basis because their impacts and consequences would be of such scale and/or complexity that local resources would be insufficient, even when taking into account mutual aid arrangements, pooling and reconfiguration of resources and collective action.*

1.23 To enhance resilience to such risks, the Government has already committed significant financial resources to build specialist capability, for example:

- additional, specialist urban search and rescue capability
- high volume pumps; mass decontamination equipment
- detection, identification and monitoring equipment for chemical, biological and nuclear incidents
- additional command and control capability

- 1.24 The Government continues to fund these existing national resilience capabilities.
- 1.25 In order to ensure continued resilience, fire and rescue authorities and the Government need to work in partnership to agree whether and/or how potential gaps in capability may be met.

Collective engagement

- 1.26 **Fire and rescue authorities must engage with the Fire and Rescue Strategic Resilience Board in order to support discussions and decision making in relation to national resilience¹².**
- 1.27 The Government has established the Fire and Rescue Strategic Resilience Board to provide a forum for fire and rescue authorities to collectively engage on national resilience issues. The Board is chaired by the Department and includes fire and rescue authorities, fire and rescue professionals, the Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser, other government departments, the devolved administrations, and other relevant partners. The Local Government Association and the Chief Fire Officers' Association provide vice chairs for the Board. The Board meets quarterly.
- 1.28 The purpose of the Board is to take a strategic view of fire and rescue capability in relation to national resilience. The Board considers whether and/or how to address any potential capability gaps, providing advice to ministers as and when required. The Board also considers strategic intraoperability and interoperability issues.

Gap analysis

- 1.29 **Fire and rescue authorities' risk assessments must include an analysis of any gaps between their existing capability and that needed to ensure national resilience (as defined above).**
- 1.30 Fire and rescue authorities are required to assess the risk of emergencies occurring and use this to inform contingency planning. To do this effectively, fire and rescue authorities are expected to assess their existing capability and identify any gaps as part of the integrated risk management planning process. This gap analysis needs to be conducted by fire and rescue authorities individually and collectively to obtain an overall picture of their ability to meet the full range of risks in their areas.
- 1.31 **As part of their analysis, fire and rescue authorities must highlight to the Department, or the Fire and Rescue Strategic Resilience Board, any capability gaps that they believe cannot be met even when taking into account mutual aid arrangements, pooling and reconfiguration of resources and collective action.**

- 1.32 The Department, in liaison with other government departments and the devolved administrations, will support fire and rescue authorities in considering and defining the gap between existing capability and the capability required to ensure national resilience.

Capability building

- 1.33 **Fire and rescue authorities must work collectively, through the Fire and Rescue Strategic Resilience Board, to agree with the Department whether and/or how to address any capability gaps identified through the gap analysis.**
- 1.34 The Fire and Rescue Strategic Resilience Board will consider any capability gaps identified through the gap analysis. As a result of this consideration, the Board may determine that some gaps do not need to be met, or can be met through reconfiguration of existing capability or through adopting innovative solutions. The Board may also determine that the gap is not sufficiently well defined and requires further analysis, or that a capability is redundant and no longer required.
- 1.35 Where the Board agrees that there is a national resilience capability gap that needs to be filled, capability building will take into account the full range of options available and will be subject to the principles of proportionality. If necessary, and where appropriate, this will involve funding new national resilience capabilities, in line with the new burdens doctrine¹³.
- 1.36 Where the Government commissions fire and rescue authorities to deliver an agreed new capability, fire and rescue authorities will need to work together collectively to procure, maintain and manage the new capability.
- 1.37 Final decisions on whether new capability is required will be for ministers to take, informed by recommendations made by the Fire and Rescue Strategic Resilience Board.

Working in partnership

- 1.38 **In order to meet the requirements of this Framework, fire and rescue authorities must work in partnership with their communities and a wide range of partners locally and nationally.**
- 1.39 Strong partnership arrangements by fire and rescue authorities with communities and local groups will deliver better prevention and protection activities, while close collaboration with other Category 1 and 2 responders is essential to enable an effective response to incidents.

Chapter 2

Accountable to communities

- 2.1 Fire and rescue authorities are accountable to their communities for their actions and decision making. They need to have transparent processes in place to deliver this and engage with their communities to provide them with the opportunity to influence their local service. Local accountability is a vital check on the services provided by fire and rescue authorities.

Communities planning their local fire and rescue service

- 2.2 The integrated risk management planning process is an opportunity for fire and rescue authorities to have an ongoing conversation with communities and to inform them through the provision of up-to-date, accessible data on risk. Through this transparent approach, communities can better influence local planning and how their authority meets risks both within their area and as part of mutual aid agreements.

- 2.3 **Each fire and rescue authority integrated risk management plan must:**

- **be easily accessible and publicly available**
- **reflect effective consultation throughout its development and at all review stages with the community, its workforce and representative bodies, and partners**
- **cover at least a three year time span and be reviewed and revised as often as it is necessary to ensure that fire and rescue authorities are able to deliver the requirements set out in this Framework**
- **reflect up to date risk analyses and the evaluation of service delivery outcomes**

Scrutiny arrangements transparent to communities

- 2.4 **The fire and rescue authority must hold their Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive to account for the delivery of the fire and rescue service.**
- 2.5 **Fire and rescue authorities must have arrangements in place to ensure that their decisions are open to scrutiny.**
- 2.6 Opening up decision making to challenge enhances local governance and accountability. Fire and rescue authorities need to satisfy themselves that

they have arrangements in place to provide the level of scrutiny their communities expect.

Transparent data enables communities to hold service providers to account

- 2.7 To hold fire and rescue authorities to account, communities need to be able to access information in a way that enables them to compare the performance of their fire and rescue authority with others. Both the Government and fire and rescue authorities need to have an open approach towards data and information to provide transparency for communities.
- 2.8 **Fire and rescue authorities must make their communities aware of how they can access data and information on their performance.**
- 2.9 Meeting this requirement includes, but is not limited to:
- meeting the current code of recommended practice for local authorities on data transparency
 - publishing pay policy statements (a duty under sections 38 and 39 of the Localism Act 2011)
 - raising awareness of sources of comparable data and how to access these e.g. linking to other government department websites and data returns to the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy
 - linking to tools and best practice guidance provided by organisations such as the Local Government Association and the Chief Fire Officers' Association
 - acting in accordance with the Freedom Of Information Act and publication schemes set by the Information Commissioner
 - publishing any action plans arising from peer reviews and self assessments
 - publishing any other locally held data that fire and rescue authorities feel will aid transparency to their communities
- 2.10 The Government is committed to publishing all the data it holds within the bounds of data protection and security, for example by publishing statistics on the internet and by making large data files available.

Chapter 3

Assurance

- 3.1 Given the public safety functions provided by fire and rescue authorities and the nature of the risks, robust mechanisms should be in place to provide independent assurance to communities and to the Government. Chapter 2 details important measures that will ensure that fire and rescue authorities provide local scrutiny arrangements and access to a range of information to help communities influence, and be assured of the robustness of, local delivery arrangements. This chapter details mechanisms that are in addition to these accountability, scrutiny and transparency requirements; they are designed to supplement, not duplicate, the wider accountability regimes that cover the whole of local government.

Assurance

- 3.2 **Fire and rescue authorities must provide assurance on financial, governance and operational matters and show how they have had due regard to the expectations set out in their integrated risk management plan and the requirements included in this Framework. To provide assurance, fire and rescue authorities must publish an annual statement of assurance.**
- 3.3 The Government will be providing light touch guidance on the nature of the assurance statements. Each fire and rescue authority is expected to sign off their statement, ensuring that it has been subject to the authority's scrutiny arrangements. The guidance will make suggestions on the contents of the statement with communities and the Government in mind. It is likely that the contents of these assurance statements already exist in the information held or published by fire and rescue authorities, for example as part of their annual report or service plan.

National resilience assurance

- 3.4 **In addition to the assurance arrangements detailed above, fire and rescue authorities must work collectively, and with the Fire and Rescue Strategic Resilience Board, to provide assurance to Government, that:**
- **risks are assessed, plans are in place and any gaps between existing capability and that needed to ensure national resilience are identified**
 - **existing specialist national resilience capabilities are fit-for-purpose and resilient**

- **any new capabilities that fire and rescue authorities are commissioned to deliver by Government are procured, maintained and managed in the most cost-effective manner that delivers value for money whilst ensuring capabilities are fit-for-purpose and resilient**

3.5 The Government will work with fire and rescue authorities to ensure that appropriate assurance mechanisms are in place, which are transparent and robust, with an appropriate degree of independence.

Chapter 4

Context, timescale, scope

Legislation

- 4.1 Section 21 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 provides the statutory basis for the Framework and requires:
- the Secretary of State to prepare a National Framework for fire and rescue authorities
 - the Secretary of State to consult with representatives of fire and rescue authorities and their employees before making significant changes to the Framework
 - the Secretary of State to bring the Framework, and any significant revisions to it, into effect by a statutory instrument subject to annulment in either of the Houses of Parliament
 - fire and rescue authorities to have regard to the Framework in carrying out their functions
- 4.2 The role of the Framework is not to repeat all the duties placed on fire and rescue authorities in connection with the discharge of their functions or, more generally as a public service provider and employer. These are day to day functions of which authorities are aware, for example, fire and rescue authorities need to be aware of the importance of complying with the requirements of the general and specific duties set out in the Equality Act 2010 and the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 in all of their functions, both as an employer and service provider, and the various health and safety legislation and regulations.
- 4.3 The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and the Fire and Rescue Service (Emergencies)(England) Order 2007 provide fire and rescue authorities with mandatory functions in relation to fire and road traffic accidents and in connection with key types of emergencies (specifically chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear emergencies and urban search and rescue emergencies).
- 4.4 In addition, as Category 1 responders under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, fire and rescue authorities are subject to the full set of civil protection duties, including assessing the risk of emergencies occurring (ranging from widespread flooding to terrorist attacks) and using this to inform contingency planning, and ensuring that emergency plans and business continuity management arrangements are in place¹⁴.
- 4.5 Also, the Civil Contingencies Act, and Regulations made under that Act, requires fire and rescue authorities to cooperate with other Category 1 and

2 responders to enhance coordination and efficiency. Category 1 responders are also encouraged to cooperate outside the Local Resilience Forum framework¹⁵.

- 4.6 Fire and rescue authorities have a duty to exercise their functions in a way that prevents crime and disorder in their area¹⁶.

Support and intervention

- 4.7 The expectation of the Government is that fire and rescue authorities, and their political and professional leadership, have proactive processes in place that provide support and lead improvement. In this context, improvement is delivered through peer led responses and effective partnership working.
- 4.8 The Local Government Association, as part of their challenge and intelligence role, works collaboratively with fire and rescue authorities and other government departments to identify at an early stage where serious risks to performance are developing. It will act with them to mitigate the escalation of those risks which would have a negative impact on the reputation of the sector or could lead to serious service failure.
- 4.9 The Government intends to use its intervention powers only as a last resort, for example, where the risk of failure is deemed so serious as to require immediate and directive action to resolve¹⁷. Any use of intervention powers will be in accordance with the intervention protocol as set out in section 23 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004.
- 4.10 Ministers may also ask the Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser, as a designated Her Majesty's Inspector under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, to lead an investigation into instances of serious concern regarding operational performance. Ministers may also seek additional and separate assurance from the Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser, or other advisers, in respect of specific issues.
- 4.11 The Secretary of State has the power by order to confer on a fire and rescue authority functions relating to emergencies¹⁸. Also, in the event of a particular fire or emergency, the Secretary of State has the power to direct a fire and rescue authority to act¹⁹. These may include actions outside of the authority's area.

Timescales

- 4.12 This Framework has an open ended duration. The Secretary of State continues to be responsible for keeping the terms of the Framework under review under section 21(3) of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and is required to prepare a biennial report to Parliament on the extent to which fire and rescue authorities are acting in accordance with the Framework,

under section 25. From time to time, we will discuss with partners whether changes need to be made to the Framework document.

Scope

- 4.13 The Framework covers England only. It does not apply to Northern Ireland, Scotland or Wales where responsibility for their fire and rescue services is devolved.

Endnotes

This section contains notes that are numbered throughout the text.

Introduction

1. Chapter 4 sets out the legislative context for the Framework along with timescales and scope.

Chapter 1- Safer communities

2. The requirement for fire and rescue authorities to produce an integrated risk management plan is set out throughout this document, reflecting its role in making communities safer in a way which is transparent and accountable to communities. See the annex for the complete requirement.
3. The Civil Contingencies Act 2004, and Regulations made under that Act, requires emergency responders in England and Wales to co-operate in maintaining a public Community Risk Register. These are approved and published by Local Resilience Forums which include representatives from local emergency responders as well as public, private and voluntary organisations. Further information is available at:

<http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/content/risk-assessment>

4. The National Risk Assessment is agreed by ministers on an annual basis and sets out the collectively agreed assessment of the types of malicious and non-malicious disruptive events that would cause significant harm and disruption to the United Kingdom. Fire and rescue authorities can access the National Risk Assessment via their local police force. The public facing version of the National Risk Assessment is the National Risk Register, available at:

<http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/resource-library/national-risk-register>

5. The National Resilience Planning Assumptions distil the information in the National Risk Assessment into twenty common consequences that should be planned for in order to be prepared for the risks in the National Risk Assessment. For each of these consequences, the National Resilience Planning Assumptions set an upper limit of the level of capability required in each instance. The National Resilience Planning Assumptions do not define the capability requirements of individual responders, for example, fire and rescue authorities.
6. The National Risk Register is the public facing version of the National Risk Assessment and is available at:

<http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/resource-library/national-risk-register>

Fire and rescue authorities can access the National Risk Assessment and the National Resilience Planning Assumptions via their local police force.

7. Section 13 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 requires fire and rescue authorities to enter into reinforcement schemes with other fire and rescue authorities, so far as practicable, for securing mutual assistance. Section 16 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 enables fire and rescue authorities to enter into arrangements for the discharge of their functions by others. The National Mutual Aid Protocol for Serious Incidents sets out the terms under which fire and rescue authorities may expect to request or provide assistance to each other in the event of a serious incident. The Protocol is available at:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/fire/pdf/151879.pdf>

8. The Civil Contingencies Act requires fire and rescue authorities to put in place business continuity management arrangements for emergencies. For a fire and rescue authority, an emergency includes a period of industrial action. Further information is available at:

<http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/content/civil-contingencies-act>

9. Under the Civil Contingencies Act, and Regulations made under that Act, all category 1 and 2 responders have a duty to co-operate. The statutory guidance which supports Part 1 of the Act, Emergency Preparedness, includes chapters on co-operation and information sharing. In addition to this, police forces across England and Wales are expected to have in place a number of collective capabilities to protect the public, including “consistency” and “connectivity” arrangements to ensure interoperability between police forces and other partners. These expectations are set out in the shadow Strategic Policing Requirement. Further information is available at:

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/police/police-crime-commissioners/questions/strategic-policing-requirement/>

10. The Government has committed to improving the ability of the emergency services to work together during emergencies in both the Strategic Defence and Security Review and the counter-terrorism strategy, CONTEST. These documents are available at:

<http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/resource-library/strategic-defence-and-security-review-securing-britain-age-uncertainty> and
<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/counter-terrorism/uk-counter-terrorism-strat/>

In 2012, a national interoperability programme was established, with the aim of delivering a better joint response to any major incident in the areas of doctrine, training, people and organisation. The programme is led by the emergency services with the Home Secretary’s oversight.

11. The National Coordination and Advisory Framework is a structure for offering assistance during incidents which have national significance or require national coordination. Further information is available at:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/fire/opguidancencaf>

12. The terms of reference and membership of the Fire and Rescue Strategic Resilience Board are available from the Department on request.

13. A new burden is defined as any policy or initiative which increases the cost of providing local authority services. The doctrine seeks to keep the pressure on council tax down. It covers all types of local authority that either raise council tax or set a precept. This includes parishes, police and fire and rescue authorities. The new burdens doctrine only applies where Government requires or exhorts authorities to do something new or additional. Action to ensure that they adequately fulfil a role for which they are already funded is not a new burden. Further information is available at:
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/newburdens2011>

Chapter 4 – Context, timescale, scope

14. The full set of civil protection duties are to:
- assess the risk of emergencies occurring and use this to inform contingency planning
 - put in place emergency plans
 - put in place business continuity management arrangements
 - put in place arrangements to make information available to the public about civil protection matters and maintain arrangements to warn, inform and advise the public in the event of an emergency
 - share information with other local responders to enhance coordination
 - cooperate with other local responders to enhance coordination and efficiency

Further information on the Civil Contingencies Act is available at:

<http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/content/civil-contingencies-act>

15. Each local resilience area is based on a police force area. The principal mechanism for multi-agency co-operation between Category 1 responders is the Local Resilience Forum. The Local Resilience Forum is not a statutory body, but it is a statutory process.
16. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.
17. Section 22 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004.
18. Section 9 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004.
19. Section 10 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004.

Annex

Complete integrated risk management plan requirement

For completeness, each integrated risk management plan requirement is repeated below.

Integrated risk management planning plays a key role in identifying, assessing and mitigating fire and rescue related risks.

Paragraph 1.3

Each fire and rescue authority must produce an integrated risk management plan that identifies and assesses all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks that could affect its community, including those of a cross-border, multi-authority and/or national nature. The plan must have regard to the community risk registers produced by Local Resilience Forums and any other local risk analyses as appropriate.

Paragraph 1.10

Each fire and rescue authority integrated risk management plan must:

- **demonstrate how prevention, protection and response activities will best be used to mitigate the impact of risk on communities, through authorities working either individually or collectively, in a cost effective way**
- **set out its management strategy and risk based programme for enforcing the provisions of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 in accordance with the principles of better regulation set out in the Statutory Code of Compliance for Regulators, and the Enforcement Concordat**

Paragraph 1.11

Fire and rescue authorities must make provision to respond to incidents such as fires, road traffic accidents and emergencies within their area and in other areas in line with their mutual aid agreements and reflect this in their integrated risk management plans.

Paragraph 2.3

Each fire and rescue authority integrated risk management plan must:

- **be easily accessible and publicly available**
- **reflect effective consultation throughout its development and at all review stages with the community, its workforce and representative bodies, and partners**
- **cover at least a three year time span and be reviewed and revised as often as it is necessary to ensure that fire and rescue authorities are able to deliver the requirements set out in this Framework**
- **reflect up to date risk analyses and the evaluation of service delivery outcomes**

Paragraph 3.2

Fire and rescue authorities must provide assurance on financial, governance and operational matters and show how they have had due regard to the expectations set out in their integrated risk management plan and the requirements included in this Framework. To provide assurance, fire and rescue authorities must publish an annual statement of assurance.

The Government does not plan to issue additional integrated risk management plan related guidance. The Department values the multi-partner Integrated Risk Management Plan Steering Group, put in place to take this work forward.