



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
Creating Safer Communities

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham
Fire and Rescue Authority
Policy and Strategy Committee

FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES INSPECTION PROGRAMME AND FRAMEWORK CONSULTATION

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

Date: 02 February 2018

Purpose of Report:

This report updates Members on the draft approach to Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) inspection framework and consultation process.

CONTACT OFFICER

Name : Craig Parkin
Assistant Chief Fire Officer

Tel : 0115 967 0880

Email : craig.parkin@notts-fire.gov.uk

Media Enquiries Contact : Therese Easom
(0115) 967 0880 therese.easom@notts-fire.gov.uk

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Home Office announced on 19 July 2017 that Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) would be expanded to take on the role of inspectorate of fire and rescue authorities in England. HMIC has since been renamed Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS).
- 1.2 In December 2017 HMICFRS announced that three fire and rescue services (FRSs) would pilot the inspection framework, these will be Suffolk, Staffordshire and West Yorkshire.
- 1.3 These pilot inspections will then be followed by three tranches of inspection across the whole sector, Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) will be inspected in tranche two which is scheduled between August and December 2018.
- 1.4 The inspections will not include an assessment of corporate governance or the accountability structures provided by the fire and rescue authority. The inspection will focus upon the Service, although it is possible that Members may be involved during the inspection process. Assessments will include graded judgments of performance, designed to enable the public to see how each fire and rescue service's performance changes over time and in relation to the performance of other Services. The categories of graded judgment are:
 - Outstanding;
 - Good;
 - Requires improvement; and
 - Inadequate.

2. REPORT

- 2.1 On 19 December 2017 HMICFRS published a draft inspection framework for consultation (Appendix A). The feedback is to be provided in the form of responses to seven questions posed within the consultation document (Appendix B), with a deadline for response as 19 February 2018 and the questions are highlighted below:
 - What do you think of the proposed approach to FRS inspection that HMICFRS proposes to conduct in 2018/19? How could this be improved?
 - Do you agree that an integrated inspection of fire and rescue services' effectiveness and efficiency, and how they look after their people, is better than separate thematic inspections?
 - Are there any other areas of fire and rescue services' activity that should be included in the integrated inspections?

- Does the draft inspection methodology include the right questions to gather evidence for a rounded assessment of fire and rescue services? How could this be improved?
- How else could HMICFRS adapt the way in which it acquires information to take full account of the circumstances of fire and rescue services and of risks to public safety?
- What, if any, new or emerging problems for fire and rescue services should HMICFRS take into account in its inspections?
- What else should HMICFRS consider doing to make its fire and rescue service assessments as fair as they can be?

2.2 Appendix b outlines a proposed response to the questions posed as part of the consultation. If supported by Members, these will be returned to HMICFRS for inclusion in their consultation and subsequent formalisation of the inspection framework within the deadline set.

2.3 NFRS is broadly supportive of the draft inspection framework, however it has highlighted some areas where it could be expanded and have posed some questions for clarity, for example, given the Authority's responsibilities for delivering the Service and why this has not been a wider focus of the inspection framework and how this supports or indeed duplicates the requirements for assurance across the sector.

2.4 Following adoption of the inspection framework further update reports will be provided to Members to ensure the Authority is fully sighted on potential implications for responding to inspections and subsequent monitoring of actions required.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no additional financial implications arising from this report as it only serves to provide Members with a proposed response to consultation and Members will be aware that an earmarked reserve has been identified to support the Service in meeting its future inspection duties.

4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no human resource and learning and development implications arising from this report as it only serves to provide Members with a proposed response to consultation.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

There are no equalities implications arising from this report as no changes to existing, or introduction of new arrangements of the delivery of services are proposed.

6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The Police and Crime Act (2017) Chapter 4 Section 11 outlines that the English inspectors must inspect, and report on the efficiency and effectiveness of, fire and rescue authorities in England.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

It is important that any inspection programme is fit for purpose, as it likely to drive the activity and behaviour of services, and if expectations are unclear could lead to reputational damage and a loss of public confidence. It is therefore important that the Authority provides a comprehensive response to the consultation.

9. COLLABORATION IMPLICATIONS

There are no collaboration implications arising from this report, however, discussions with Police colleagues continue in relation to their experience of HMIC inspections and how we can learn from that in preparation for future inspections of NFRS.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 10.1 Note the content of the report and support the response to consultation made by the Chief Fire Officer on behalf of Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority.
- 10.2 Are provided future update reports on the progress being made in readiness for HMICFRS inspections.

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

None.

John Buckley
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER



Proposed fire and rescue services inspection programme and framework 2018/19

For consultation

December 2017

© HMICFRS 2017

ISBN: 978-1-78655-600-4

www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmicfrs

Contents

Foreword	3
Consultation introduction	4
Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services	5
Introduction	6
Types of inspection HMICFRS will conduct in 2018/19	6
An overview of HMICFRS’ proposed inspection programme for fire and rescue services 2018/19	8
Fire and rescue inspection programme	8
National thematic inspections	10
HMICFRS’ inspection framework	11
Inspection framework for fire and rescue services.....	11
Fire and rescue service authorities’ priorities.....	12
Professional standards body	12
Methodology, monitoring, assurance and analysis	13
Advisory and reference groups	13
HMICFRS’ monitoring process	13
Follow-up from previous inspections.....	13
Consultation questions	14
How to respond to this consultation	15

Foreword

In July 2017, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary's (HMIC) remit was extended to include inspections of fire and rescue services in England. It is now called Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS).

This is the first inspection programme and framework for fire and rescue service inspections. We will assess and report on the efficiency and effectiveness of the 45 fire and rescue services in England. This includes how well fire and rescue services prevent, protect against and respond to fires and other emergencies and how well they look after the people who work for the service. This consultation document seeks responses to seven questions about how the inspection of fire and rescue services should be carried out. We will use the consultation responses to develop a programme and framework, and methodology for our inspections.

We have given prominence to the following principal themes: how effective each fire and rescue service is at preventing and responding to incidents; whether the service provides value for money; whether the service understands where future risks lie; and the ability of the service to train staff, embrace diversity, and develop a positive working culture. As part of our inspection reports, we will provide graded judgments, which will help the public to see how well their fire and rescue service is performing.

The inspection programme will be developed with the fire and rescue service by recruiting experts from the sector to carry out the inspections, and by taking advice from senior service representatives who are members of the external reference group. The inspection programme will be designed to promote improvement in all aspects of the work undertaken by fire and rescue services.

This public consultation will be open from 19 December 2017 to 19 February 2018. I hope that you will offer your considered views, to help us design an inspection programme that leads to continued improvements across fire and rescue services.

(Sgd.) Thomas P Winsor

**Sir Thomas Winsor WS
HM Chief Inspector of Fire & Rescue Services**

Consultation introduction

This document provides details of HMICFRS' proposed fire and rescue services inspection programme for 2018/19, and asks for your views on whether the right areas of fire and rescue services activity are covered. In particular, we are seeking your responses to the following questions:

1. What do you think of the proposed approach to FRS inspection that HMICFRS proposes to conduct in 2018/19? How could this be improved?
2. Do you agree that an integrated inspection of fire and rescue services' effectiveness and efficiency, and how they look after their people, is better than separate thematic inspections?
3. Are there any other areas of fire and rescue services' activity that should be included in the integrated inspections?
4. Does the draft inspection methodology (annex A) include the right questions to gather evidence for a rounded assessment of fire and rescue services? How could this be improved?
5. How else could HMICFRS adapt the way in which it acquires information to take full account of the circumstances of fire and rescue services and of risks to public safety?
6. What, if any, new or emerging problems for fire and rescue services should HMICFRS take into account in its inspections?
7. What else should HMICFRS consider doing to make its fire and rescue service assessments as fair as they can be?

These questions are repeated in the body of this document. At the end of the document there is an explanation of how you can let us have your views.

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) independently assesses and reports on the effectiveness and efficiency of police forces and fire and rescue services – in the public interest.

We ask the questions which we believe the public wishes to have answered, and publish our findings, conclusions and recommendations in an accessible form, using our expertise to interpret the evidence. We provide authoritative information to allow the public to compare the performance of their police force or fire and rescue service against others, and to determine whether performance has improved or deteriorated over time. Our recommendations are designed to bring about improvements in the service provided to the public.

Introduction

This document provides details of HMICFRS' proposed inspection programme and framework for fire and rescue services for 2018/19.

Types of inspection HMICFRS will conduct in 2018/19

HMICFRS may conduct several different types of inspection each year. To provide context for the proposed fire and rescue services' inspection framework for 2018/19, each type of inspection is summarised here.

Fire and rescue services inspection programme

The fire and rescue services inspection programme enables HMICFRS to draw together evidence from inspections of all 45 fire and rescue services in England. This rounded assessment of all fire and rescue services will cover the effectiveness and efficiency of each service and how it looks after its people. This will include an assessment of:

- the operational service provided to the public (including prevention, protection, resilience, and response);
- the efficiency of the service (how well it provides value for money, allocates resources to match risk, and collaborates with the police and ambulance services); and
- the organisational effectiveness of the service (how well it promotes its values and culture, trains its staff and ensures they have the necessary skills, ensures fairness and diversity for the workforce and develops leadership and service capability).

The resulting assessments will include graded judgments of performance.

HMICFRS' assessments are designed to enable the public to see how each fire and rescue service's performance changes over time and in relation to the performance of other services.

The fire and rescue services inspections will not include an assessment of corporate governance or the accountability structures provided by the fire and rescue authority, police, fire and crime commissioner, locally elected mayors and, in London, the Mayor's Office.

Inspecting governance arrangements

The fire and rescue service inspections will focus on the service provided to the public rather than on the accountability structures that govern fire and rescue services. During inspections, HMICFRS inspectors will meet representatives from fire and rescue authorities, police, fire and crime commissioners, locally elected mayors and, in London, the Mayor's Office.

If during an inspection we identify evidence that the decisions and activities of those within the fire and rescue authority, police, fire and crime commissioner, locally elected mayors and, in London, the Mayor's Office inhibit the efficiency and effectiveness of the chief fire officer, we may carry out a separate corporate governance inspection.

Statutory requirements

This inspection programme and framework requires the approval of the Home Secretary before the inspectors act in accordance with it¹.

The Home Secretary may, at any time, require HMICFRS to carry out an inspection of a fire and rescue authority in England, all fire and rescue authorities in England, or all fire and rescue authorities in England of a particular type².

Such a requirement may limit the inspection to a particular matter³. HMICFRS may also carry out an inspection of a fire and rescue authority in England even though that inspection has not been set out in an inspection programme and has not been required by the Home Secretary⁴. Before doing so, the chief inspector must consult the Home Secretary⁵.

Consultation questions

1. What do you think of the proposed approach to FRS inspection that HMICFRS proposes to conduct in 2018/19? How could this be improved?
2. Do you agree that an integrated inspection of fire and rescue services' effectiveness and efficiency, and how they look after their people, is better than separate thematic inspections?

¹ Section 28A(2), Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004

² Section 28A(3), Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004. Available at: www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/21/contents

³ Section 28A(4), Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004

⁴ Section 28A(5), Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004

⁵ Section 28A(6), Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004

An overview of HMICFRS' proposed inspection programme for fire and rescue services 2018/19

Fire and rescue inspection programme

In May 2016, the Home Secretary established a wide-ranging reform programme for the fire and rescue services in England. This included a proposal to establish a rigorous and independent inspection regime for fire and rescue authorities.

In July 2017, the Home Office confirmed that HMIC would take on the role of inspecting fire and rescue services in England, and of assessing and reporting on the effectiveness and efficiency of each service. To reflect these new responsibilities, HMIC's name changed to HMICFRS.

The Policing and Crime Act 2017, which amended the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, contains provisions to strengthen existing powers to inspect fire and rescue authorities⁶.

HMICFRS will inspect the fire and rescue services that carry out the principal functions of a fire and rescue authority: fire safety, firefighting, road traffic accidents and other emergencies⁷. We will inspect all 45 fire and rescue services in England, in three sets of 15 services, beginning in summer 2018. We will consult the fire and rescue sector on the criteria for judgment. Each inspection will result in a rounded assessment and graded judgments for each fire and rescue service. We will publish a report of our findings.

The principal questions which the fire and rescue services inspection programme is designed to answer are set out below, along with the corresponding inspection focus. The detailed draft FRS inspection methodology is provided at annex A. We ask for your views on the proposed methodology.

⁶ Section 11, Policing and Crime Act 2017

⁷ Sections 6-9, Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004

Principal question

Inspection focus

How effective is the fire and rescue service at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks?

How well the fire and rescue service understands its current and future risks, works to prevent fires and other risks, protects the public through the regulation of fire safety, responds to fires and other emergencies, and responds to national risks.

How efficient is the fire and rescue service at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks?

How well the fire and rescue service uses its resources to manage risk, and secures an affordable way of providing its service, now and in the future.

How well does the fire and rescue service look after its people?

How well the fire and rescue service promotes its values and culture, trains its staff and ensures that they have the necessary skills, ensures fairness and diversity for its workforce, and develops leaders.

Our assessment of effectiveness will consider how well the fire and rescue service is performing its principal functions in relation to fire safety, fire-fighting and road traffic collisions. The inspection will give prominence to the principal themes of how effective each service is at preventing, protecting against and responding to incidents; whether the service provides value for money; and whether the service understands its current demands and where future risks lie.

Our assessment of efficiency will consider whether the way in which each fire and rescue service operates represents value for money, and how well it is matching resources to the risks faced by the public.

Our assessment of how each fire and rescue service looks after its people will consider leadership at all levels in the organisation, including training, diversity, values and culture.

This will be the first full assessment of all 45 fire and rescue services for some years. At the end of each set of inspections, HMICFRS intends to publish a report of its assessment of each fire and rescue service inspected in that set, as well as a summary of themes emerging from the inspections. HM Chief Inspector of Fire & Rescue Services for England is required to report each year on the carrying out of inspections, including an assessment of the efficiency and effectiveness of the fire and rescue authorities in England⁸.

⁸ Section 28B, Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004

National thematic inspections

National thematic inspections are in-depth examinations of specific fire and rescue service matters, which will usually be identified through HMICFRS' monitoring processes or as a result of a commission from the Home Secretary. These inspections will identify areas of strong and weak practice in specific fire and rescue services, but will result also in recommendations that are relevant to the fire and rescue service as a whole. The Home Office can commission thematic inspections on individual issues if needed. HMICFRS is not funded to carry out thematic inspections.

Consultation questions

3. Are there any other areas of fire and rescue services' activity that should be included in the integrated inspections?
4. Does the draft inspection methodology (annex A) include the right questions to gather evidence for a rounded assessment of fire and rescue services? How could this be improved?

HMICFRS' inspection framework

Inspection framework for fire and rescue services

We will gather information to inform our assessments using a range of methods that include: analysis of documents and data; reviews of operational incidents; surveys of the public, and of fire and rescue services staff; interviews; focus groups; and observations of fire and rescue practice.

Following the first round of full inspections, HMICFRS intends to move to a risk-based inspection programme, which will be developed and consulted on separately. This allows inspection activity and resources to take account of known risks to public safety and to reflect the assessed performance of each fire and rescue service.

Graded judgments

Fire and rescue services will be assessed and given graded judgments for the three principal questions in the inspection methodology (efficiency, effectiveness and people). We may give a single overall judgment for each service. We will test this during the pilot inspections and make a final decision as to our approach when the pilots have concluded. The categories of graded judgment are:

- outstanding;
- good;
- requires improvement; and
- inadequate.

Judgment is made against how efficient and effective fire and rescue services are, and how well they look after their people.

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

If the policy, practice or performance exceeds what is expected for good, then consideration will be given to a graded judgment of outstanding.

If there are shortcomings in the policy, practice or performance of the fire and rescue service, then consideration will be given to a graded judgment of requires improvement. If there are serious critical failings of policy, practice or performance of the fire and rescue service, then consideration will be given to a graded judgment of inadequate.

Fire and rescue service authorities' priorities

Fire and rescue authorities must have regard to the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England in carrying out their functions⁹. The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England¹⁰ states that 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.

HMICFRS inspectors will consider the content of the fire and rescue authority's integrated risk management plan and how this translates into the operational practice of the fire and rescue service. The plan will be used as a source of information about the assessment of risk and vulnerability in respect of each service, the factors which affect considerations of public safety, and how each fire and rescue service will use prevention, protection and response activities to mitigate the risk to communities.

Professional standards body

Part of the Home Office reform programme for fire and rescue services is the formation of a professional standards body. It is currently in development. HMICFRS will take account of all existing and new professional standards for fire and rescue services, including national operational guidance.

Consultation questions

5. How else could HMICFRS adapt the way in which it acquires information to take full account of the circumstances of fire and rescue services and of risks to public safety?
6. What, if any, new or emerging problems for fire and rescue services should HMICFRS take into account in its inspections?
7. What else should HMICFRS consider doing to make its fire and rescue service assessments as fair as they can be?

⁹ Section 21(7), Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004

¹⁰ The Framework is prepared by the Home Secretary. It must set out priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities in connection with the discharge of their functions; it may contain guidance to fire and rescue authorities in connection with the discharge of any of their functions; and it may contain any other matter relating to fire and rescue authorities or their functions as the Home Secretary considers appropriate. (Section 21, Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004) Available at: www.gov.uk/government/collections/fire-and-rescue-national-framework-for-england

Methodology, monitoring, assurance and analysis

Advisory and reference groups

This inspection programme is being developed with fire and rescue services. It has been designed to promote improvements across fire and rescue services.

HMICFRS has established a fire and rescue service external reference group. Its members include those who have specific skills and experience in the areas that will be inspected such as representatives from fire and rescue services, the National Fire Chiefs Council, the Home Office, the Local Government Association and police, fire and crime commissioners. We are using their knowledge and advice to establish a sound methodology for inspections.

The HMICFRS Fire Technical Advisory Group considers how to develop appropriate methods of data collection and analysis to support the inspection methodology. The members of the Fire Technical Advisory Group include representatives of the National Fire Chiefs Council co-ordinating committees, the Home Office, representative bodies, fire and rescue services and others. It will also include representatives from the professional standards body, when it has been established.

HMICFRS' monitoring process

HM inspectors of fire and rescue services (HMIs) will regularly monitor all services in order to promote improvements. If an HMI identifies a cause of concern about practice in a particular fire and rescue service, it will be raised with the relevant chief fire officer/chief executive/commissioner and the fire authority/police fire and crime commissioner, so that they can take action.

Follow-up from previous inspections

HMICFRS conducts a number of follow-up activities throughout the year. They range from formal revisits to offering support to services in responding to our findings. Also, we track the progress that services have made against our recommendations.

Consultation questions

1. What do you think of the proposed approach to FRS inspection that HMICFRS proposes to conduct in 2018/19? How could this be improved?
2. Do you agree that an integrated inspection of fire and rescue services' effectiveness and efficiency, and how they look after their people, is better than separate thematic inspections?
3. Are there any other areas of fire and rescue services' activity that should be included in the integrated inspections?
4. Does the draft inspection methodology (annex A) include the right questions to gather evidence for a rounded assessment of fire and rescue services? How could this be improved?
5. How else could HMICFRS adapt the way in which it acquires information to take full account of the circumstances of fire and rescue services and of risks to public safety?
6. What, if any, new or emerging problems for fire and rescue services should HMICFRS take into account in its inspections?
7. What else should HMICFRS consider doing to make its fire and rescue service assessments as fair as they can be?

How to respond to this consultation

Please submit your answers to these questions, together with any other comments, by email to: HMICFRSfireinspectionprogramme@hmic.gsi.gov.uk, no later than 1700 on 19 February 2018.

If you prefer, you can post responses to the Chief Operating Officer, HMICFRS, 6th floor, Globe House, 89 Eccleston Square, London SW1V 1PN.

If you have a complaint or comment about HMICFRS' approach to consultation, you can email this to: HMICFRSfireinspectionprogramme@hmic.gsi.gov.uk

How consultation responses will be reviewed

HM Chief Inspector of Fire & Rescue Services will consider respondents' views and, if he determines it appropriate to do so, change the proposed inspection programme and framework before putting it to the Home Secretary for approval. In accordance with section 28A(2), Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, HM Chief Inspector of Fire & Rescue Services must obtain the approval of the Secretary of State for an inspection programme or inspection framework before the inspectors act in accordance with it.

The final document, which will be appropriately revised to reflect the results of the consultation, will be made available on HMICFRS' website at: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/about-us/what-we-do/inspection-programmes/

You should note that HMICFRS may publish consultation responses, or summaries of them, except where they have been provided in confidence. Please indicate in your response if you do not wish it to be published.

Annex A - HMICFRS Fire and rescue service inspection methodology

How effective and efficient are the Fire and Rescue Service (FRS)?		
Core	Diagnostic	Sub-diagnostic
1. How effective is the FRS at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks?	1.1 How well does the FRS understand the risk of fire and other emergencies?	1.1.1 How well does the FRS engage with the local community to build up a comprehensive risk profile?
		1.1.2 To what extent does the FRS use information from other sources (e.g. health and social care data, population and demographic data) to build the risk profile?
		1.1.3 How well does the FRS define the level of community risk, including those communities most at risk, hard to reach, hidden (e.g. unscrupulous landlords, overcrowded dwellings) or affecting the most vulnerable people?
		1.1.4 To what extent does the FRS undertake regular liaison with relevant bodies to ensure a common understanding of risk, including fire standards and requirements?
		1.1.5 To what extent are the results of preventative or protective activity used to ensure a common understanding of risk?
		1.1.6 How well does the FRS identify and assess current, emerging or future changes in the risk of fire and other risks?
	1.2 How effective is the FRS at preventing fires and other risks?	1.2.1 To what extent is preventative activity, such as the Home Fire Safety Check programme, focused on those most at risk?
		1.2.2 How well does the FRS raise awareness and campaign to prevent fires and promote community safety?
		1.2.3 What progress has the FRS, with partners, achieved in preventing fires and keeping people safe?
		1.2.4 How well does the FRS work with partner organisations to promote road safety and reduce the numbers killed and seriously injured on the roads?
		1.2.5 How well does the FRS work with partners to tackle fire setting behaviour and support the prosecution of arsonists?
	1.3 How effective is the FRS at protecting the public through the regulation of fire safety?	1.3.1 To what extent is enforcement and inspection based on risk?
		1.3.2 To what extent is a systematic, consistent and robust Fire Safety Audit undertaken by FRS staff?
		1.3.3 How well is information on risk communicated throughout the FRS?
		1.3.4 How well does the FRS take enforcement action against those who fail to comply with fire safety regulations?
1.3.5 How well does the FRS work with other enforcement agencies to share information on risk and take joint enforcement action (e.g. local authority licensing, building control and trading standards officers)?		
1.3.6 To what extent is the FRS working in partnership to reduce the burden of unwanted fire signals?		
1.3.7 To what extent does the FRS engage with local business or large organisations to share information and expectations on compliance with fire safety regulations?		
1.4 How effective is the FRS at responding to fires and other emergencies?	1.4.1 To what extent does the FRS provide a proportionate response to incidents on the basis of risk and vulnerability?	
	1.4.2 How well does the FRS communicate information about risk and vulnerability?	
	1.4.3 How well does the FRS command fire service assets at incidents?	
	1.4.4 How well does the FRS identify vulnerability and safeguard vulnerable people at incidents?	
	1.4.5 How well does the FRS communicate information about incidents to the public?	
	1.4.6 To what extent are consistent, rigorous and open systems in place to evaluate operational performance and make operational improvements?	
	1.4.7 How well does the FRS exchange learning with other FRSs, including learning from national incidents?	
1.5 How effective is the FRS at responding to national risks?	1.5.1 To what extent has the FRS established arrangements to be able to supplement resources in the event of extraordinary need, such as a flood, or a major incident?	
	1.5.2 How well has the FRS established site specific response plans for high risk premises?	
	1.5.3 To what extent has the FRS demonstrated it is interoperable with other FRSs to ensure an effective and efficient cross-border response?	
	1.5.4 To what extent does joint training and joint exercising help the FRS to plan for and test arrangements for dealing with major multi-agency incidents?	
	1.5.5 How well prepared is the FRS to form part of a multi-agency response to a community risk identified by the local resilience forum, including a marauding terrorist attack?	
2. How efficient is the FRS at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks?	2.1 How well does the FRS use resources to manage risk?	2.1.1 To what extent do FRS plans address the risks identified in the IRMP (integrated risk management plan)?
		2.1.2 To what extent are the FRS plans built on sound planning assumptions, subject to informed challenge and meet financial requirements?
		2.1.3 How well does the FRS allocate resources to preventative, protective and response activity?
		2.1.4 To what extent has the FRS considered national requirements?
		2.1.5 How well does the FRS ensure that the workforce's time is productive, making use of a flexible workforce and flexible working patterns?
		2.1.6 To what extent is the FRS actively exploring all opportunities for collaboration within and beyond the fire sector?
		2.1.7 How well does the FRS ensure there are mechanisms in place for monitoring, evaluation and review of collaborations (including benefits realisation and outcomes)?
		2.1.8 To what extent are business continuity arrangements in place and how often are these tested?
	2.2 How well is the FRS securing an affordable way of managing the risk of fire and other risks now and in the future?	2.2.1 To what extent does the FRS understand and is taking action to mitigate the main/ significant financial risks?
		2.2.2 To what extent does the FRS have a track record for achieving savings and closing any residual future budget gaps?
		2.2.3 To what extent can the FRS demonstrate sound financial management of principal non-pay costs (inc fleet and equipment) through benchmarking, contract renegotiation, and joint procurement?
		2.2.4 How well do FRS plans make the best use of the opportunities, and respond to the risks, presented by changes in technology?
		2.2.5 To what extent does the FRS estate/fleet strategy, and changes to estate/fleet, support current and future service provision?
		2.2.6 To what extent is the FRS continuing to make savings to invest for future innovation?
3. How well does the FRS look after its people?	3.1 How well does the FRS promote its values and culture?	3.1.1 How well does the FRS understand the wellbeing needs of its workforce?
		3.1.2 How well does the FRS take early action to improve the wellbeing of the workforce?
		3.1.3 How well do leaders demonstrate they model and maintain the values the FRS expects of them?
		3.1.4 To what extent is a culture of promoting health, safety and wellbeing evident at all levels in the FRS?
		3.1.5 To what extent has the FRS established a culture of learning and improvement?
	3.2 How well trained and skilled are FRS staff?	3.2.1 How well does the FRS understand the skills and capabilities of its workforce (including the use of technology)?
3.2.2 How well does the FRS ensure it has the right workforce mix of skills and capabilities?		
3.2.3 To what extent does the FRS have the capacity and capability it needs to both achieve change and operational performance?		
3.3 How well does the FRS ensure fairness and diversity?	3.3.1 How well do leaders seek feedback and challenge from all parts of the workforce?	
	3.3.2 How well does the FRS identify and resolve workforce concerns?	
	3.3.3 How well does the FRS identify and address potential disproportionality in recruitment, retention and progression for fire-fighters and staff with protected characteristics?	
3.4 How does the FRS develop leadership and capability?	3.4.1 How well does the FRS manage and develop the individual performance of its fire-fighters and staff?	
	3.4.2 How fairly does the FRS identify high potential members of the workforce to become senior leaders?	
	3.4.3 How fairly does the FRS select for leadership roles at all levels?	

RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION

1. What do you think of the proposed approach to FRS inspection that HMICFRS proposes to conduct 2018/19? How could this improved?

NFRS is broadly supportive of the proposed approach to FRS inspections however, have some areas where expansion of the remit should be considered.

The remit of the inspection should be expanded to assess the contribution to more wider issues such as public health and social outcomes such as health and wellbeing rather than just fire related responsibilities and activities.

The collaboration remit should be expanded from just police and ambulance (blue light services) to include collaborations with other fire, local authorities and 3rd sector.

The context in which Services operate should be considered when assessing organisational effectiveness. Services are restricted by both the grey book terms and conditions and the strength of the trade unions. That combined with a low turnover staff constrains the impact that the Service can have on efficiency.

The need for inclusion of inspecting governance arrangements is positive and HMICFRS needs to understand that the Combined Fire Authority set policy and are intrinsic to setting priorities for the Service. This is an area that should be reviewed to ensure true synergy in the breadth of assurance arrangements that apply to Services on behalf of the Authority.

2. Do you agree that an integrated inspection of fire and rescue services' effectiveness and efficiency, and how they look after their people, is better than separate thematic inspections?

The proposal to look at the organisation as a whole is a better approach than to approach it as thematic inspections. If the piece meal approach is taken, there is concern that the full picture will not been seen and the local context in which FRS's operate may be misunderstood. This could lead to knee jerking to areas of need that in the full view of the service are not a priority.

3. Are there any other areas of fire and rescue services' activity that should be included in the integrated inspections?

The broader role that FRS's provide their communities is not represented. FRS's have many other statutory functions it has to provide that are non-fire related, for example, Freedom of Information requests, commitment to green technology, reducing carbon emissions and the social return on other activities such as; princes trust, domestic violence interventions, places of sanctuary and safe and well.

4. Does the draft inspection methodology include the right questions to gather evidence for a rounded assessment of fire and rescue services? How could this be improved?

At this development stage, it is difficult to comment. It is difficult to know how HMICFRS are going to measure these questions. How are they going to benchmark against others to determine to a score, particularly in the first round of inspections? Especially to ensure comparability across the country, they are subjective. What does good look like, who is setting the benchmark? Are services going to get the measures in advance, do we all collect it and is it in a comparable format? Common nominators and denominators? Are we comparing like for like and does it go back to our identification of risk and our subsequent prioritisation as a Service?

It is hard to see the relationship between all the products that fire sector are being provided with; National Framework, Statement of Assurance, Peer Challenge and internal and external audits on financial and governance matters. Will an inspection report negate the need for a statement of assurance? Surely the purpose is the same? In terms of value for money assessment, how will this be calculated and applied and how does it link to the annual VFM audit we received from our external auditors? What if they say we provide value for money and the inspectors say we don't? Will HMICFRS use financial/procurement experts to determine VFM aspects when making an objective determination? As the inspection does not seek to assess governance arrangements how will the CFA respond to assessments of value for money?

5. How else could HMICFRS adapt the way in which it acquires information to take full account of the circumstances of fire and rescue services and of risks to public safety?

The professional standards body, is far from being agreed and implemented within the sector. What standards will be used in the interim to form these judgements?

The HMICFRS should extend the partners it liaises with to gather its evidence. It should include such partners as; Health, local authorities and other engaged partners. This will help triangulate the impact of FRS's engagement with the communities beyond fire responsibilities.

6. What, if any, new or emerging problems for fire and rescue services should HMICFRS take into account in its inspections?

There are common problems facing the FRS sector; ageing workforce, society demographics affecting the recruitment and retention of RDS personnel and the willingness of communities in volunteerism and sense of public duty, and the growing social health needs.

7. What else should HMICFRS consider doing to make its fire and rescue service assessments as fair as they can be?

The inspections should be balanced and consider the local context and issues. The inspections should focus on measuring what is important and makes a difference to communities and not just what is available and easy to obtain. It should focus on outcomes and not outputs, it should be judged on the impact it has on the risks identified by individual Services through their IRMP process.

HMICFRS should provide time for FRS's to align data gathering to ensure that judgements are made fairly and that they are comparing like with like. Will Services be compared to similar services in terms of size and risk profiles, like the family group's/core cities? If not, how will objectivity and equity be assured?

General Issues

The framework document interchanges the word assessments and inspections, which is it and be consistent about how it will be referred.

When it moves to a risk based inspection programme, what factors will determine the risk? Will it be risk of failure, inspections scores or risk to our communities?