Response Strategy

2014/15 to 2018/19

# Foreword by Director Prevention, Protection and Response

Whilst the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire & Rescue Authority’s (The Authority) primary focus is on preventing incidents, there are times that this is not achieved, and therefore Essex County Fire and Rescue Service (ECFRS) must be prepared to serve the communities of Essex in their greatest time of need.

It is a reality that Firefighters and Officers sometimes have to work in very challenging and often dynamic operational environments. This includes, at times, exposure to dangerous and potentially unpredictable situations when attempting to save life and mitigate the impact from emergency incidents.

This Response Strategy details how ECFRS will deliver a resilient service that is able respond to positively impact on resolving an incident, with the appropriate number of competent firefighters, with the equipment required to safely and effectively mitigate the impact of an emergency to the Essex community.

The Prevention, Protection and Response Directorate supports its front facing operational delivery by having clear and concise operational policy and procedures; understanding, collating and providing of local risk information and development of adequate governance arrangements to support effective implementation of the ‘safe person’ concept.

D. Bill

# Vision, Purpose and Alignment

## Vision

Our vision is that Essex will be a safer place to live, work and travel. We will have reduced the risk to life, property and the environment in our communities and the need for our emergency response service. We will have maintained our ability to respond to all foreseeable risks in an efficient and effective way. We will have an engaged and satisfied workforce who are highly skilled and well led.

## Purpose

ECFRS’s main purpose is to protect and save life, property and the environment. The purpose of the Operational Response Strategy is to inform managers and employees of the strategic aims and objectives of the response arrangements for operational incidents, and in delivering The Authority’s Corporate Strategy (2014/15 to 2018/19) objectives.

## Strategic Priorities

To assist with its journey of becoming an excellent Fire and Rescue Service, the Authority has four strategic priorities: -

1. We will be **service led**. To ensure this we will identify the range of Services we need to provide, independently or in partnership, to help eliminate or mitigate risks in our communities.
2. We will be **community focused**. We will know who is at risk in our communities, why they are at risk and where they are at risk.
3. We will develop a **kinder culture** – We will develop an organisational structure that is open, inclusive, trusting and kind. Using our values to shape behaviours and support this.
4. We will be **financially sustainable**. We will identify ways to ensure that the overall cost of the Service is managed to accommodate future reductions in Government funding while limiting any council tax increases to thresholds set by Government or the Authority.

## Strategic Themes

The strategic priorities are supported by five strategic themes;-

1. **Prevention**  - The services we are going to provide to prevent fires and other emergencies
2. **Protection** – The services we are going to provide to protect the public when fires and other emergencies occur.
3. **(Emergency) Response –** The emergency response services we are going to provide when fires and other emergencies occur
4. **People and Leadership** – The things we are going to do to ensure we develop meaningful roles our staff can be proud of. Developing all staff so they have the right knowledge, skills and attitude to safety, and effectively perform their roles.
5. **Public value and Collaboration** – The things we are going to do to ensure the Authority provides efficient, effective, value for money services – where it makes sense – so that we have financial sustainability by 2020.

## Alignment with The Authority’s Values

The Operational Response Strategy supports the Authority vision through the alignment of operational policy, procedures and guidance, whilst ensuring that the Service values *‘professionalism, courage, honesty, one team ethos and valuing the contribution of all’* are visible in all that we strive to achieve.

# Response Strategy Objectives

The Chief Fire Officer (CFO) has delegated duty for response arrangements via the Authority’s scheme of delegation. In turn the CFO has delegated duty to the Director Prevention, Protection and Response (PP&R) who is accountable for delivery of this strategy.

## Response Objectives

The following Operational Response Objectives set out to interpret how the Corporate Objectives will be achieved in consideration of legislative requirements and National guidance. Through the Operational Policy Department and the four Groups, the PP&R Directorate is responsible for achievement of the Corporate Strategy, and more specifically providing operational response across the broad spectrum of risk within the county of Essex. Though not exclusively, this strategy establishes how the PP&R Directorate will deliver a resilient, timely, safe and effective response through achievement of the following objectives, ECFRS will; -

1. provide arrangements to safely and effectively respond to operational incidents in accordance with statutory obligations;
2. identify and assess foreseeable operational risk, then develop resilient planning processes in order respond to those risks safely and effectively;
3. ensure that the Service maintains an appropriate level of available resources based upon the level and type of risk, in order to deliver a resilient service;
4. effective delivery of demonstrable Command and Control framework;
5. Continually improve and advance operational response through learning from incidents and providing assurance on effective response arrangements.

## Operational Response Governance

The Operational Response Strategy and the delivery of its objectives have been configured into a Plan, Do, Check and Act approach and at any point within this cycle ECFRS have the developed mechanisms for auditing and reviewing the processes to ensure continual improvement and advancement.

 Diagram 1: Operations Response Governance

## Annual Assurance Statement

*The Director of PP&R is accountable to the Chief Fire Officer and Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire & Rescue Authority (The Authority).*

*The Fire and Rescue National Framework sets out the priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities in connection with the discharge of their functions. Every Fire and Rescue Authority must publish an annual statement of assurance of compliance with the Framework.  For PCC FRAs such as Essex, this statement is subject to scrutiny by the Police, Fire and Crime Panel and is called the ‘Fire and Rescue Statement’. The Director of PP&R will, as part of the Service’s assurance reporting processes, provide an annual statement of assurance on operational matters for inclusion in the Fire and Rescue Statement*

## Directorate Profile

The structure chart below shows how the Prevention, Protection and Response (PP&R) Directorate will undertake it responsibilities to deliver the objectives set within this strategy.



Diagram 2: Operations Directorate Structure

## The PP&R Directorate Meetings

There are two directorate management meetings. These occur on alternate weeks.

**PP&R Strategic Team Meeting -** Members from the above structure meet on a bi-weekly basis, the meeting is chaired by the Director PP&R and the main purpose of it meetings is for the oversight and delivery of the objectives set within this strategy.

The full terms of reference for this meeting can be found as appendix A.

The information from these meetings is then cascaded through department meetings within the four Groups, the Prevention Teams, the Protection Teams, the Collaboration Team and the Response Policy.

**PP&R Directorate Meeting** This meeting is planned bi-weekly. Members from the above structure meet with representatives of all Service departments and the managers of the 4 Groups. The meeting is chaired by the Director PP&R and the main purpose of it meetings is to provide the wider organisation with an update and overview of PP&R Directorate business, to highlight good practice, to identify challenges and to enhance understanding within and between departments (in respect of PP&R activity).

The agenda for this meeting can be found as appendix B.

The information from these meetings is then cascaded through department meetings within the four Groups, the Prevention Teams, the Protection Teams, the Collaboration Team and the Response Policy.

## Directorate Meeting and reporting lines from National Level to Local Level

An important component for ECFRS response and further development of its capability is further strengthened as a result of the interaction the Service has with those Committee’s and Working Groups that fit within the local to national operations structure.

A number of personnel within the Service are regular members of the Committees and Boards identified below and the information and knowledge obtained is cascaded into the PP&R Directorate Meetings before being shared more widely within the operational context and needs of the Service.



Diagram 3: Operations Response Governance

# Operational Response Objectives

## OBJECTIVE ONE

## Provide response arrangements to safely and effectively respond to operational incidents in accordance with statutory obligations

## legislation

The Fire and Rescue Services Act (2004) and the Fire and Rescue Service (Emergencies) (England) Order (2007) give Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRA) mandatory functions to respond to emergencies ranging from smaller incidents such as fires and road traffic collisions through to those of a far greater nature such as terrorist incidents which require Chemical, Biological, Radiological or Nuclear (CBRN) response.

ECFRS are also ‘category 1 responders’ under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 meaning ECFRS must assess the risk of emergencies happening (ranging from widespread flooding to terrorist attacks) and using this to inform contingency planning including business continuity management arrangements.

[The Policing and Crime Act (2017)](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/3/pdfs/ukpgaen_20170003_en.pdf) part 1, places a duty on police, fire and rescue and ambulance services to collaborate. The PP&R Directorate will keep under consideration, opportunities to collaborate with emergency service and other partners to support the effective delivery of this strategy. The PP&R Directorate is committed to the JESIP principles and will ensure they are foremost in any approach taken to multi-agency incident management.

### Fire and Rescue Services Act (FRSA) 2004

From a response perspective, the FRSA 2004 provides FRAs with clear authority to equip and respond to specific local risks and the particular needs of their communities for extinguishing fires and protecting life and property in the event of fires, rescuing and protecting people in the event of road traffic collisions and other emergencies.

In consideration of their duties under the FRSA 2004 ECFRS will; -

* secure the provision of personnel, services and equipment necessary for delivering a safe and effective response to our communities
* secure the provision of training for personnel, through the Learning and Development strategy
* make arrangements for dealing with calls for assistance and for summoning response resources
* make arrangements for obtaining information needed to support its response arrangements
* Have plans in place to seek and provide formal assistance to assist with the discharge of certain functions (Section 13/16).

The FRSA also makes provision to place obligations, which the Service has to have regard for, through the ‘Fire and Rescue National Framework’ which provides national and strategic guidance, and support to the Service.

## The FRS National Framework for England (2018)

The 2018 Framework identifies the following priorities for fire and rescue authorities;-

* make appropriate provision for fire prevention and protection activities and response to fire and rescue related incidents;
* identify and assess the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue related risks their areas face;
* collaborate with emergency services and other local and national partners to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the service they provide;
* be accountable to communities for the service they provide; and
* develop and maintain a workforce that is professional, resilient, skilled, flexible and diverse

Focusing on the response element within the [National Framework](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fire-and-rescue-national-framework-for-england--2) it sets out the priorities for FRAs. These include identifying and assessing foreseeable risk, responding to risk appropriately, gathering and availability of risk information, providing resilience and reflecting these arrangements within their Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP). The IRMP must reflect up to date risk analyses including an assessment of all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks that could affect the area of the Authority. The IRMP should also outline the required service delivery outcomes including the allocation of resources for the mitigation of risks. Fire and rescue authorities risk assessments must include an analysis of any gaps between their existing capability and that needed to ensure national resilience.

The Framework also makes it very clear with regard to expectations in respect of collaboration, intra-operability and interoperability to ensure FRS’s are working closer with other Category 1 and 2 responders Whilst clear emphasis is also placed on Authorities not to solely focus local risk but also to be cognisant of the impact of more significant incidents that would require a greater level of response and to provide, or seek, support through mutual aid agreements with other FRAs.

The Framework directs FRS’s to have appropriate safeguarding and business continuity arrangements in place.

In consideration of the requirements of the National Framework ECFRS will; -

* Assess the risk, including new risks, to the communities of Essex via the Service’s Strategic Assessment of Risk (SAOR), also refer to section 3.2.4
* Consult with the Communities of Essex on its response standards at least every 3 years
* Secure effective business continuity arrangements in accordance to the duties required of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 through the Service BCM policy
* Ensure appropriate Safeguarding measures are in place and are understood by all directorate staff.
* Collaborate with other FRA and other Category 1 and 2 responders to ensure interoperability, where possible
* Enter into reinforcement schemes for the provision of mutual support[[1]](#footnote-1).

## The Fire and Rescue Services (Emergencies) (England) Order 2007

The FRS (Emergencies) Order requires FRSs to make arrangements for removing Chemical, Biological, Radiological and/or Nuclear (CBRN) contaminants from people and remove contaminated water to prevent or limit serious harm to the environment; rescuing people who may be trapped in incidents as collapsed buildings or structures or emergencies such as those involving a train or aircraft and protecting them from serious harm; and use of their specialist CBRN or USAR (Urban Search and Rescue) resources outside their own areas.

The requirements of the Order specify that in support of dealing with these more complex type of incidents FRAs will need to reflect the same requirements as set within the FRS Act for the provision of trained personnel, services and equipment, the means of collating information and appropriate arrangements for dealing with calls for assistance and summonsing a response.

In consideration of the requirements of the FRS Emergencies Order, ECFRS will;-

* Reflect those requirements already identified within section 3.1.1 and the FRSA
* Utilise the National Resilience Capabilities, owned by the Authority, to support large complex emergencies which occur outside of Essex.

## The Civil Contingency Act (CCA) 2004

As Category 1 responder ECFRS 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 place (including those for industrial action). ECFRS are also required to cooperate and share information with other Category 1 and 2 responders to enhance coordination and efficiency.

In consideration with the requirements of the CCA 2004, ECFRS will; -

* Attend the Essex Resilience Forum[[2]](#footnote-2);
* Engage with Cat 1 and 2 responders to jointly assess risk, plan and respond to those risks
* Support, deliver and participate in multi-agency exercises to test the above plans and response requirements for those risks
* Follow the guidance and the eight guiding principles contained within HM Government Emergency Response and Recovery , and Emergency Preparedness, and those responsibilities set with the Combined Operating Procedures for Essex (COPE) framework
* Continually review its Business Continuity arrangements for maintaining an efficient and effective level of response during periods of large staff absences, including any forms of industrial action.

### Health and Safety at Work Act (HSWA) 1974

The HSWA sets out the statutory duties of employers and employees in relation to health and safety in the workplace. The Service’s H&S Policy lays out how ECFRS has planned to discharge its responsibilities under the HSWA. The nature of the work carried out as part of an operational response is recognised to have an increased amount of risk and this was recognised by the Health and Safety Executive in their report “striking the balance”.

HSE guidance document HSG65 introduces a ‘Plan, Do, Check, Act’ approach to managing health and safety which has been adopted by the Service as part of the health and safety management system. It is designed to assist with achieving a balance between the systems and behavioural aspects of management and lends to ensuring health and safety management is an integral part of good management generally, rather than a standalone system. .

ECFRS produces an annual Statement of Intent in regards to health and safety which is signed by the Chief Fire Officer and Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner to demonstrate their commitment of clear and positive safety leadership at a strategic level. Accountability is overseen by the Service Leadership Team and the strategic management of health and safety is led by the Director of Prevention, Protection and Response who chairs the Health and safety Strategy Group which sets a positive safety culture throughout the Service and ensures the service operate in partnership with employee workplace health and safety representatives.

Diagram 4 below identifies how health and safety is reported from the local level and fits within the overall governance arrangements of ECFRS.

In consideration of the HSWA and its subsequent Regulations, the Service will; -

* Meet the principles set within ‘Striking the Balance’
* Train and develop all staff in accordance with the Service’s Learning and Development Strategy
* Ensure the provision and monitoring of suitable and sufficient training in completion of TASK.

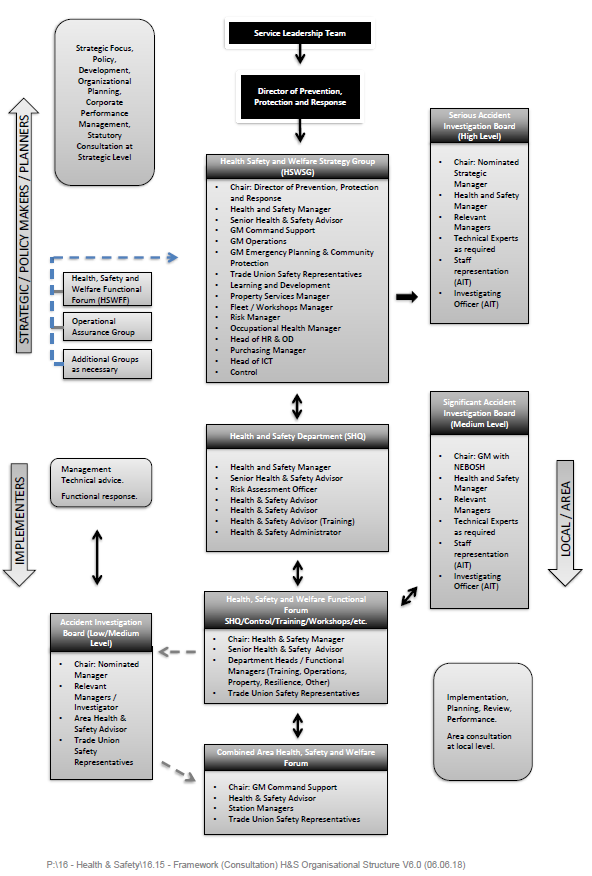


Diagram 4: Health and Safety Reporting lines

## Objective Two

## identify and assess foreseeable operational risk, then develop resilient planning processes in order respond to those risks safely and effectively;

## Response Risk Appetite statement

Incident safety is a critical and defining aspect of operational command responsibility. To discharge this competently means knowing the principles and legislation surrounding risk assessment. It also means developing a sound understanding of the factors influencing safety at an incident. There is a balance between firefighter safety and carrying out the role of the fire and rescue service.

The firefighter safety maxim describes this balance:

* At every operational incident, the greater the potential benefit from our actions, the greater the risk we will accept
* Activities that present a high risk to our safety shall be limited to those that have the potential to save life, or to prevent rapid and significant escalation of the incident

## Exercising operational discretion and professional judgment.

Operational discretion is important. It can save lives by allowing incident commanders to apply guidance flexibly. There may be circumstances where strict following of guidance and procedures stands in the way of achieving a rescue. In these cases an incident commander should consider exercising their judgement to apply guidance or procedure flexibly. This informed and considered judgement is Operational Discretion. There may also be occasions when an incident commander considers taking actions or decisions that are not prescribed in any policy or guidance. This may be due to the extraordinary nature of the incident where the benefit of acting outweighs the inherent risk of that action. This is Professional Judgement.

## Foreseeable Risk

The term foreseeable risk is defined, for the purposes of ECFRS operational planning, as being; -

* A risk identified within the Service’s Strategic Assessment of Risk (SAOR)
* A risk identified within the Service’s Provision of Risk Information System (PORIS)
* A risk identified on a national response scale under the National Coordination and Advisory Framework.
* A risk identified in the course of delivering prevention and protection activities

## Service Risk Management Planning

ECFRS has a layered approach to risk management, further details of which can be found in the Service’s Risk Policy, Strategy and Guidance documents.

In the pursuit of providing effectiveness and efficiency, the Service is willing to accept some closely monitored medium risks. This includes the development of community safety and communication initiatives, which by nature require a degree of creativity and innovation.

The Service will tolerate only unlikely negative exposure in the pursuit of objectives as reputational damage may hinder our ability to deliver prevention and protection activities.

Strategic risks rated greater than 6 will be escalated to the Authority. The appetite of the Service Leadership Team (SLT) will be “Open”.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Risk Appetite Scale** | **Descriptions** |
| Averse | Avoidance of risk and uncertainty is primary objective, no desire to take part in any activity which might put the Service at risk. |
| Minimalist | Ultra-safe methods of business delivery are the primary concern. Potential rewards will be small with low level inherent risk involved in activities. |
| Cautious | Safe business delivery options with low level inherent risk and small but meaningful reward. |
| Open | Willing to consider all potential options for business delivery which are likely to bring the highest rewards. These are likely to have a high level of inherent risk associated. |
| Hungry | We choose to innovate and lead change, we seek solutions that offer the highest possible rewards regardless of the associated high level of risk. |

## Strategic Assessment of Risk

The Strategic Assessment of Risk (SAOR) is an integral part of the Service IRMP process, it identifies emerging risks and emerging opportunities, thus providing the opportunity for ECFRS departments to consider gaps in existing provision and opportunity for new provision. This informs business planning which drives our desire to reduce risk to the Essex Communities. The SAOR is reviewed annually and encapsulates a number of National and local documents in order to assess, in a wider context than just the Fire Service, the challenges and consequent level of risk that the communities in Essex are potentially exposed to. The documents referred to include but are not limited to; -

* The National Risk Assessment and the National Risk Register[[3]](#footnote-3)
* ERF’s Community Risk Register
* ECFRS Corporate Risk Register

The SAOR process assesses the likely risks to which ECFRS may have to respond and identifies operational gaps, and thus drives decision making, which need to be addressed in order to reduce the risks to an acceptable level.

## Operational Risk Information

ECFRS provides accurate, timely and relevant risk information to its incident commanders, via the Mobile Data Terminals (MDT’s), on the incident ground, in support of their risk critical decision making and implementation of safe systems of work. This is provided through the Provision of Risk Information System (PORIS), which is a National process that grades risks and ensures that information retained and available to crews is of a level of detail which is appropriate to ensure that crews can develop effective and safe systems of work.

The management of operational risk information must also take into account the existing and future needs for intra-operability, interoperability, collaboration and mutual aid between neighbouring FRSs and other Category 1 responders.

All PORIS 4 and 5 risk premises are regularly reviewed. The risk information includes “initial action” for crews and officers, environmental protection plans and specialist response plans. To ensure greater interoperability, Tactical Fire Plans incorporate emergency response plans from other Cat 1 responders.

ECFRS Emergency Planning department is the link to stakeholders and partners for this aspect. <http://servicenet/Operational_Information/Operational_Risk_Information/Tactical_Fire_Plan_Allocation/#TFP|2273|2121> refers.

TFP’s for petrochemical risk sites incorporate the utilisation of equipment from ECFRS COMAH (not cat 1 or 2) partners. The Essex County Petrochemical mutual aid agreement formalises this utilisation.

## Operational Standard Operating Procedures

ECFRS is fully aligned within the National Operational Guidance Programme (NOGP). This provides, along with national guidance, operational and technical guidance. This work has identified in excess of 100 operational scenarios which have been risk assessed, Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) produced and training packages provided. This is significant in delivering common ways of working, not just locally but also across borders and with resilience and other emergency service partners on a national level.

Within this programme there are requirements for regularly reviewing national guidance and case studies of health and safety events that have occurred nationally are developed which allows ECFRS to share and learn lessons from the experiences of other Services. This is covered in more detail within section 3.6.

## Objective Three

## ensure that the Service maintains an appropriate level of available resources based upon the level and type of risk, in order to deliver a resilient service

To consider how the locations of fire stations affects the overall response arrangements across the County of Essex, ECFRS use the SAOR process, the IRMP process and various operational modelling tools to examine the effectiveness of current fire station locations and to consider the type of appliance and specialist response required to attend identified risks, in line with Service performance standards. These processes enable ECFRS to review current response standards and introduce new standards and/or make changes as appropriate.

The utilisation of incident and response data from recent years has supported optimisation and simulation modelling. The optimisation model finds the best locations for fire stations and fire appliances, while the simulation model tests those locations by replicating different types of incidents occurring and fire appliances being mobilised to attend in line with ECFRS mobilising policies over a long period of time. Annual validation of these statistics assists with the development of a resource profile which is used for future planning and advancement to ensure delivery of efficient and effective response arrangements.

This modelling takes into account the location and capacity of different stations, the incidents attended, the resources required to meet demand at different times of the day and the time taken to get to incidents.

## Core Operational Principles

For resource planning purposes ECFRS has adopted six core operational principles, these are used to highlight essential operational resources which then form an integral part of ECFRS response strategy, these are; -

* Response – The location of our response resources will reflect risks identified in the SAOR/IRMP process and also maximise the Service’s ability to deliver against defined response standards.
* Availability – maintain availability of the most utilised appliances and resources
* Resilience – identify and maintain availability of key strategic appliances and locations
* Risk (people) – allocate resources on the basis of risk as identified under the Service’s Community Safety Strategy
* Risk (Place) – allocate resources to areas identified as higher risk via PORIS
* Efficiency – maintain resources which provide value for money for the Essex Communities

On a day-to-day basis the Service’s Key Station policy dictates appliance location at times when resources are limited. Service GIAN plan and BCP provide guidance to take when resources are severely limited (such as industrial action) or where ECFRS faces a significant disruptive challenge (such a prolonged loss of access to a fire station)

## Response Standards

Aside from its core operational principles and in line with its main purpose, to protect and save life, property and the environment, ECFRS aims to respond to incidents in order to, from the time of first receiving the call, minimise to impact of that incident to the Essex Community. ECFRS current response standards are; -

* To attend 90% of all operational incidents within 15 minutes
* To attend all potentially life threatening calls in an average of 10 minutes or less

ECFRS will consult on its response standards with the Essex Communities via its IRMP process a minimum of every 3 years. Under its performance management framework ECFRS will report against its response standards to the Audit, Governance and Review every three months.

In order to achieve the Service’s Operational Response Standards, resources and the consequent resilience required for them come in four main forms; Property, Appliances, Equipment and Operational Personnel.

## Property

Property Services are the custodians of property standards for the Authority ensuring that the property portfolio is appropriate and fit for purpose. A team representing different areas of the Service acts as an informed client on behalf of the four Groups and station personnel to ensure that the working environment is best tailored to their needs and the needs of ECFRS. Property requirements are raised through the Command Property Forum and ratified through the Asset Management Sub Committee in the first instance. Property projects are agreed through Property, the CFO and the PFCC by value. The current Property Strategy ensures that buildings are kept up to standard and allows for local development subject to an appropriate approval process. Site locations are reviewed every (5years?) and condition assessed annually. Every operational property is scored for condition and effectiveness every year. The ECFRS Carbon Footprint is utilised as the key performance indicator for the energy effectiveness of the portfolio and is reported annually.

## Appliances and Equipment

Appliances and equipment are an important aspect towards providing a safe and effective response, therefore ensuring that the appropriate type and design of appliances and equipment is identified, sourced and maintained to achieve its maximum effectiveness at all times. The Service’s approach to its purchase, maintenance and replacement of appliances and equipment is evidenced through the Essex County Fire and Rescue Service Vehicle and Equipment Asset Management Strategy.

The PP&R directorate will provide Operational User Requirements to identify operational needs of equipment and resources. On-going support will then be provided and monitored via service level agreement timeframes allowing safe and effective delivery of service and support activities.  
  
This is a primary function of AM Response (Policy) who will identify operational needs, or review existing arrangements on the following occasions; -

* When equipment is due for replacement
* When an operational need is identified via SAOR, risk assessment or H&S event
* Proactive identification of new technology to support more effective operational response

Introduction of new appliances, equipment or working practices will be fully compliant with the Service’s Project and Programme management framework. The PP&R directorate will ensure that all activity identified as a project will be supported by the appropriate documentation and adhere to appropriate governance requirements

This framework is supported through best practice methodologies and the use of PRINCE2 (Projects in Controlled Environments) and MSP (Managing Successful Programmes).

## People

Personnel availability and movement is managed via the Service’s Electronic Rota Book (ERB), this links to the Services mobilisation system and considers the skills and attributes of Service personnel. The Service strives to use resources to best effect, when not attending operational calls, the daily activities of station based personnel should be based centred on training; prevention and protection initiatives; and collation and development of understanding of local risk.

The availability of appliances is supported by the use of pre-arranged out-duty, additional shift working and mixed crewing policies. These polices enable the flexible use of personnel when pre-planning appliance availability. To address changes to availability on the day the Service use dynamic out duties.

The management of the Service’s Officer Flexi Rota rests with AM Response (Policy), who will ensure availability of officers to support the Service’s Realistic Worse Case Planning Scenario, including the need for specialist skills.

Personnel will be managed in accordance with the Service’s people management policies.

## Training and Development

ECFRS personnel will be trained and developed in accordance with the Services Learning and Development Strategy.

## Operational Resilience

ECFRS have well established Business Continuity arrangements for the continuous delivery of its operational response requirements. The resilience arrangements for maintaining an efficient and effective level of response during periods of large staff absences, including any forms of industrial action, has been used on many occasions and its success proved.

## Objective Four

## Effective delivery of demonstrable Command and Control framework

## Incident Command

As identified earlier ECFRS is required to plan and prepare for incidents from a small waste fire to National Flooding which can impact upon the Service’s response for a number of weeks. No matter what the size of an incident an effective incident command structure from the outset of every operational incident is an operational imperative and ECFRS Incident Command Policy has adopted the operational principles set within the National Incident Command Structure.

ECFRS recognises that the controlling mind of each state or stage of response is the Incident Commander or representative of the Service with delegated organisational authority. The commander will always identify themselves as such and the following tiered approach identifies the imperative roles of each.

### Strategic / Gold (Strategic Co-ordination Group)

* Role: To establish operational policy and ensure organisational objectives are reflected within the response environment
* Focus on balancing operational imperative and political desire
* Guardian of organisational reputation and service mission and values
* Enables multi-agency objectives through establishing FRS operational imperatives and tolerances
* Support the consideration of policy / option / interagency conflict and responsible for communicating / establishing where departure from broad policy is required to support the achievement of wider community objectives.

### Tactical / Silver (Tactical Co-ordination Group) (Service Environment)

* Role: To support discrete response incidents whilst maintaining the strategic objectives of wider service imperatives
* Ensure logistical support and tolerances are established, communicated and understood by all operational and strategic commanders.

### Operational / Bronze (Incident Environment)

* Role: To command operational interventions within an effective Command and Control framework
* Responsible for the achievement of incident objectives, working within the tactical tolerances enabled by the silver function within the strategic aims of ECFRS
* Ensure sufficient resources are available and directed towards the stated objectives of discrete response interventions
* The Incident Commander is the sole and responsible commander of the operational intervention. . The Incident Commander does not have to be the highest ranking officer on the incident ground. It should be noted that the highest ranking officer on the incident ground holds *organisational accountability* regardless of their role.

Every operational incident is risk assessed by the Incident Commander, in the first instance, this is evidenced verbally via radio, as incidents progress, or become more complex in nature, a more detailed record of the risk assessment carried out is required, therefore an Analytical Risk Assessment is completed.

## Interoperability

ECFRS Incident Command policy and planning are compliant with National guidance; this includes the joint Decision Model identified from the Joint Emergency Service Interoperability Programme (JESIP) which provides a common and consistent model across blue light Services, including neighbouring FRS and allows operational and tactical commanders to make effective decisions together.

******

Diagram 5: Joint Decision Making Model

Interoperability is an important factor of the Essex Resilience Forum and its partners are committed to ensure interoperability. ECFRS will develop and engage in multi-agency exercises to test their planning. ECFRS has identified its responsibility via the ERF [Combined Operational Procedures for Essex (COPE)](http://www.essexprepared.co.uk/upload/documents/3.1_.1_COPE_Document_v2_.1_Sep_2017___599565cfbd04b.pdf) framework.

## National Co-ordination

On rare occasions where significant incidents or events occur the scale and complexity of the emergency may require a greater level of operational resources. This can often be to the degree where the level and type of resources exceeds that available within the local FRS. Therefore through the National Coordination and Advisory Framework (NCAF) further assistance can be sourced. NCAF is the mechanism that provides the coordination of nationally available assets, capabilities and resources whether it be an incident developing, or with the potential to develop, from local to national in scale and the provision of advice between the affected Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) and government emergency structures.

ECFRS supports the NCAF and maintains a number of National Resources and Officers trained and assessed to National Standards. These include; -

* CBRN(E) Gold, Silver commanders and tactical advisors
* National Interagency Liaison Officers (NILO)
* Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) (modules 1-5)
* UK International Search and Rescue (ISAR) teams
* Detection, Identification and Monitoring vehicle and trained Officer’s
* High Volume Pump (HVP) Flood Response Teams
* Tactical Advisors

In consideration of the requirements set within the NCAF ECFRS will; -

* Provide National Resilience Capabilities to support national mutual aid arrangements
* ECFRS will maintain and update its availability of the National Resilience Resources with the FRS National Co-ordination Centre (FRS NCC)
* Any requests from ECFRS for the additional National Resilience Capabilities will be made via Essex fire Control.

## Objective Five

## continually improve and advance operational response through learning from incidents and providing assurance on effective response arrangements Internal learning

ECFRS have in place systems for monitoring and measuring health, safety and welfare performance against predetermined plans and standards, which includes the recording of Health & Safety (H&S) events and proactive processes such as risk assessment, H&S inspections and H&S investigations. These are all recorded via the Service OSHENS system.

Whilst an operational incident is developing the Service has a Monitoring Officer procedure whereby an officer is allocated to an incident to support the incident commander and evaluate safe systems of work adopted against organisational procedure.

Following resolution of an incident, the Service has a debrief process in place. This allows a practical analysis of the effectiveness of the Service policies and procedures, and operational performance against Service objectives.

## Operational Assurance

As part of ECFRS Audit and Review arrangements the Operational Assurance Group (OAG) will consider the information obtained from the above processes. It will then be the responsible of the OAG to determine the effectiveness of the Operational Response systems and processes, by measuring actual performance against defined policies and standards and where necessary it identifies areas for improvement through recommendations.

Through a structured process the Operational Assurance Team will also focus their reviews on key issues in two ways. Firstly, by following an annual station audit plan, which details the planned audits and secondly, by undertaking additional reviews for specific areas of the organisation due to an emergent risk (Thematic reviews).

Operational assurance is also monitored at incidents by direct observation of Monitoring Officers who are mobilised outside the incident command structure to verify that safe systems of work are in place and that incidents are being managed effectively in line with Service policies and procedures.

## National Learning

**National Debriefs**

ECFRS has adopted a process for capturing information that is being promulgated nationally. Identification and learning opportunities from incidents that have occurred within other FRS areas provides an opportunity for ECFRS to analyse and compare internal policies and procedures against those lessons identified by others and seek opportunities where improvements could/may be made.

**National updates**

*NFCC Operations Bulletin*

The NFCC Operations Bulletin is an internet notice board that provides a simple, timely and effective way for FRSs and has been designed to confidentially share information on risk-critical experiences and observations with others, with the overall aim of improving safe and effective operations.

## *NFCC Risk-critical operations events*

Operations Bulletin information can reflect any risk-critical situation encountered in FRS operations activities. This can range from actual high risk events or “near misses” to the sharing of experiences that have the potential to generate significant risk to fire fighters encountering similar situations.

***Home Office FRS Bulletins***

FRS Bulletins, replacement of the FRS Circulars, are distributed by the Home Office and the aim of the bulletins is to provide a streamlined, efficient and focused means of communications with the FRS sector.

There bulletins are set in two different formats which are:

* Fire and Rescue Service Monthly Bulletin
* Fire and Rescue Service RED/Immediate Bulletin.

## *Rule 43 letters*

The Coroners Rules 1984 as amended by The Coroners (Amendment) Rules 2008, places a statutory duty for organisations to respond to coroner reports (a person who receives a report must send the coroner a written response). The rule requires that a written response be provided within 56 days of the report being sent, although it is possible to apply for an extension.

The amended rule clarifies that a Coroner may report the circumstances of a death to a person who the Coroner believes will have the power to take action in relation to future deaths. This will enable Coroners to report issues that may be peripheral to the current case but nevertheless prevent future deaths.

Coroners may choose to write to organisation or individual, therefore they could send the Rule 43 letter direct to a Fire and Rescue Authority or a Chief Fire Officer. There may also be instances where a letter is sent to a third party involved in an incident for example a local authority.

A rule 43 letter is essentially to convey "lessons learned" arising out of an inquest, and is merely advisory, although if the recipient of a rule 43 letter intends to take no action, he/she must explain why to the coroner.

To support maximum opportunities for learning from other FRS operations/events, ECFRS will;-

* Be represented at all national level debriefs;
* Collate and analyse operational debrief reports and investigation findings;
* Collate and analyse operational information being shared within the FRS sector;
* Assess and identify any gaps that may/could be present within ECFRS operational policy and procedures.

**Appendix A**

**PP&R Strategic Team Meeting**

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**AIMS**

* To agree clear direction with regard to individual roles, responsibilities and objectives, and to identify where certain objectives may overlap.
* To discuss and collectively prioritise objectives and to ensure the implementation of agreed strategic plans.
* To provide an opportunity for exchanging views on common key issues
* To consider emerging issues and risks which may have an impact as well as to consider opportunities for improvement;
* To agree Ways of Working arrangements
* To identify areas where Performance can be improved;
* To identify issues of common concern and to escalate where appropriate to the Service Leadership Team (SLT) and/or Change Board/PFCC;
* To improve communications between the team and to increase awareness of other areas and potential issues/risks.
* To support and build strong and trusted team relationship
* To agree a clear management reporting structure
* To identify training and development requirements within the team.

**ATTENDEES:**

The meeting comprises of:

* Dave Bill (Chair – Director of Prevention, Protection & Response)
* Matt Furber - Assistant Director Prevention Protection & Response, Service Improvement
* Julian Ashley - Assistant Director Prevention Protection & Response, Service Collaboration
* Moira Bruin - Assistant Director Prevention, Protection and Response, Service Policy
* Neil Fenwick – T/Area Manager, Prevention Protection and Response Service Delivery
* Danny Bruin – T/Area Manager, Professional Assurance and Health & Safety
* Rebecca Twin – Executive Support

**FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS**

The frequency of meetings will be on a bi-weekly basis; further meetings may be called by the Chair if there is an urgent matter for discussion.

**DURATION OF MEETINGS**

The duration of meetings will normally be scheduled to be 3 hours.

**MEETING PROCEDURES AND PROCESS**

1. The note taker will schedule all meetings and send diary appointments.
2. A minimum of three members must be present for the meeting to be deemed quorate.
3. The Chair may call other colleagues into this meeting from time to time to discuss specific matters.
4. Executive Support will facilitate these meetings and will produce an action sheet which will be distributed to all meeting attendees.
5. The action sheet and any relevant papers will be distributed electronically and hard copies will only be provided on request.
6. Any supporting Papers should be submitted to the note taker at least three clear working days prior to the meeting.

**STANDARD AGENDA FOR MEETINGS**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Item | Lead Officer | Frequency |
| 1. | Apologies | Chair/Executive Support | Every meeting |
| 2. | Action Points | Chair/Executive Support | Every meeting |
| 3. | Priority Objectives | Chair |  |
| 4. | Items for discussion | All | Every meeting |
| 5. | AOB |  | Every Meeting |
| 6. | Date of Next Meeting | Chair/Executive Support | Every Meeting |

**LOCATION OF MEETINGS**

To be chaired by Director of Prevention, Protection and Response and meetings will be held at Service Headquarters, all attendees are asked to physically attend the meetings.

**REVIEW/EVALUATION**

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually.

**Appendix B**

**PP&R Directorate Meeting**

**Agenda**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. | APOLOGIES |
|  | The following have provided apologies: Danny Bruin, Nigel Dilley, Moira Bruin, |
|  |  |
| 2. | ACTION POINTS |
|  |  |
| 3. | SLT/STRATEGIC UPDATE |
|  |  |
| 4. | CULTURE/EQUALITY |
|  |  |
| 5. | COMMS AND MEDIA UPDATE |
|  |  |
| 6. | RISK INFORMATION – TFP COMPLETION   1. *Exercise Update* |
|  |  |
| 7. | HEALTH & SAFETY |
|  | *a) Notable H&S events from the last week*  *b) Updates on serious accident investigations*  *c) H&S trends*  *d) TASK Review (provide a monthly update – first meeting of each month)* |
|  |  |
| 8. | NOTABLE ISSUES FROM LAST WEEK |
|  | *a) Control*  *b) Safeguarding*  *c) Operational Incidents*  *d) Fire Investigations*  *e) National Correspondence*  *f) Individual contributions/topical issues e.g. Promo process* |
|  |  |
| 9. | PEFORMANCE EXCEPTIONS |
|  | *a) Good practice/actions to address if performance is under target etc.*  *b) Incidents 17 v 18* |
|  |  |
| 10. | TRAINING UPDATE  Exceptions only - BA V&D |
|  |  |
| 11. | OPERATIONS POLICY |
| 12. | SAFER COMMUNITIES UPDATE |
| 13. | EQUIPMENT AND FLEET UPDATE |
| 14. | HR UPDATE |
| 15. | RD1’s |
| 16. | BUSINESS PLANNING |
| 17. | WEEK AHEAD – SIGNIFICANT EVENTS |
| 18. | ANY OTHER BUSINESS |

1. ECFRS remain a signatory to the National Mutual Aid Protocol for Serious Incidents, whilst more local mutual aid arrangements have been made with bordering FRSs and more specific agreements have been established for dealing with petrochemical incidents. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. More information on the ERF can be found at: <http://microsites.essex.gov.uk/microsites/essex_resilience/index.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The National Risk Register (NRR) provides information on the types of civil emergencies people in the UK could face over the next 5 year period, the risks cover 3 broad categories: natural events, major accidents and malicious attacks. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)