

Fire & Rescue Service

Effectiveness, efficiency and people 2018/19

An inspection of Surrey Fire and Rescue Service



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About this inspection

This is the first time that HMICFRS has inspected fire and rescue services across England. Our focus is on the service they provide to the public, and the way they use the resources available. The inspection assesses how effectively and efficiently Surrey Fire and Rescue Service prevents, protects the public against and responds to fires and other emergencies. We also assess how well it looks after the people who work for the service.

In carrying out our inspections of all 45 fire and rescue services in England, we answer three main questions:

1. How effective is the fire and rescue service at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks?
2. How efficient is the fire and rescue service at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks?
3. How well does the fire and rescue service look after its people?

This report sets out our inspection findings. After taking all the evidence into account, we apply a graded judgment for each of the three questions.

What inspection judgments mean

Our categories of graded judgment are:

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

Good is our 'expected' graded judgment for all fire and rescue services. It is based on policy, practice or performance that meet pre-defined grading criteria, which are informed by any relevant [national operational guidance](#) or standards.

If the service exceeds what we expect for good, we will judge it as **outstanding**.

If we find shortcomings in the service, we will judge it as **requires improvement**.

If we find serious critical failings of policy, practice or performance of the fire and rescue service, we will judge it as **inadequate**.

Service in numbers



Public perceptions

Surrey

England

Perceived effectiveness of service
Public perceptions survey (June/July 2018)

84%

86%



Response

Surrey

England

Incidents attended per 1,000 population
12 months to 31 March 2018

10.0

10.2

Home fire risk checks carried out by FRS per 1,000 population
12 months to 31 March 2018

3.0

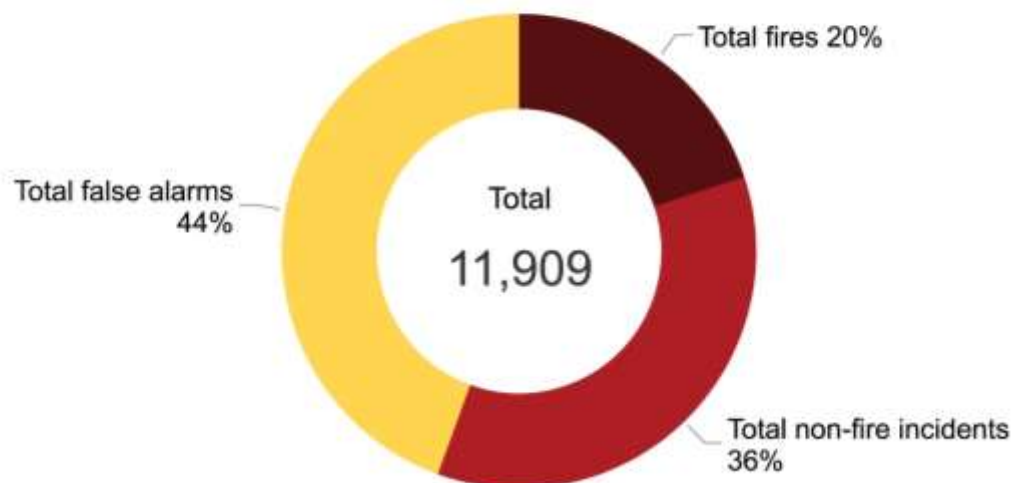
10.4

Fire safety audits per 100 known premises
12 months to 31 March 2018

5.2

3.0

Incidents attended in the 12 months to 31 March 2018





Cost

Surrey

England

Firefighter cost per person per year
12 months to 31 March 2018

£22.73

£22.38



Workforce

Surrey

England

Number of firefighters per 1,000 population
As at 31 March 2018

0.5

0.6

Five-year change in workforce
As at 31 March 2013 compared with 31 March 2018

-20%

-14%

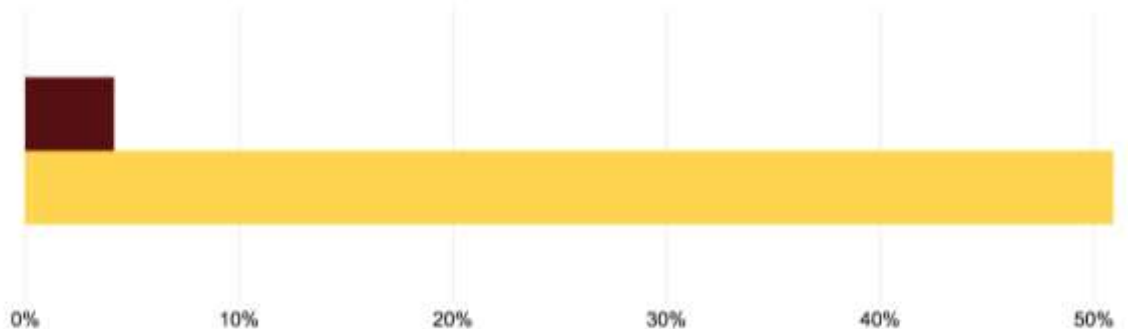
Percentage of wholetime firefighters
As at 31 March 2018

84%

70%

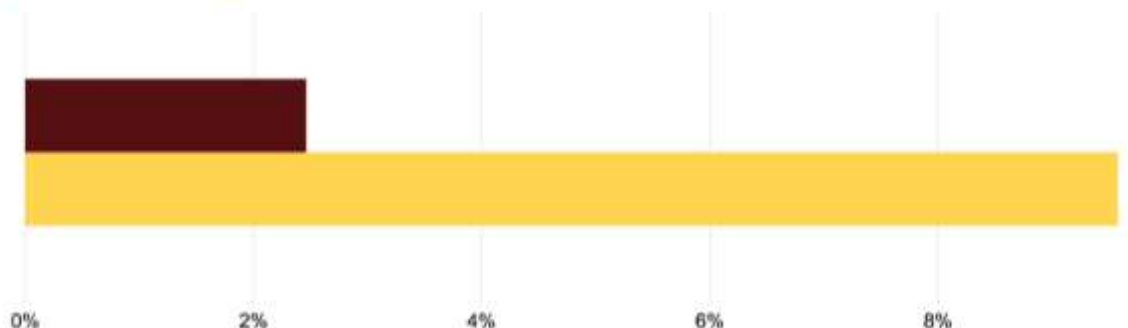
Percentage of female firefighters as at 31 March 2018

● Female firefighters ● Female residential population



Percentage of black, Asian and minority ethnic firefighters as at 31 March 2018



● BAME firefighters ● BAME residential population



Please refer to annex A for full details on data used.

Overview

	Effectiveness		Requires improvement
Understanding the risk of fire and other emergencies			Good
Preventing fires and other risks			Requires improvement
Protecting the public through fire regulation			Requires improvement
Responding to fires and other emergencies			Requires improvement
Responding to national risks			Good
	Efficiency		Inadequate
Making best use of resources			Inadequate
Making the fire and rescue service affordable now and in the future			Requires improvement

 People	 Requires improvement
Promoting the right values and culture	 Requires improvement
Getting the right people with the right skills	 Requires improvement
Ensuring fairness and promoting diversity	 Requires improvement
Managing performance and developing leaders	 Requires improvement

Overall summary of inspection findings

We have concerns about the performance of Surrey Fire and Rescue Service in keeping people safe and secure. In particular, we have serious concerns about the service's effectiveness and efficiency. In view of these findings, we have been in regular contact with the chief fire officer, as we do not underestimate how much improvement is needed.

The service should keep people safe from fire and other emergencies more effectively. It must improve how it responds to and prevents fires and other risks, and how it uses fire regulation to protect the public. Positively, it understands these risks well. It is also good at responding to national risks.

The service is inefficient at keeping people safe from fires and other risks. This is particularly so in how it uses its resources. But the service should also be more affordable.

The service needs to improve how it looks after its people. More specifically, it should do better at:

- promoting the right values and culture;
- getting the right people with the right skills;
- ensuring fairness and promoting diversity; and
- managing performance and developing leaders.

Overall, there are improvements we expect the service to make. We will be monitoring progress.



How effective is the service at keeping people safe and secure?



Requires improvement

Summary

An effective fire and rescue service will identify and assess the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue risks its community faces. It will target its fire prevention and protection activities to those who are at greatest risk from fire. It will make sure businesses comply with fire safety legislation. When the public calls for help, the fire and rescue service should respond promptly with the right skills and equipment to deal with the incident effectively. Surrey Fire and Rescue Service's overall effectiveness requires improvement.

The service understands the risk of fire and other emergencies. It uses the adult social care database to inform this understanding. The service has an effective, continuous, ten-year [integrated risk management plan](#) (IRMP). It collects and uses risk information in a good way, generally. But it could do better at prioritising the collection of site-specific risk information. Crews working across borders lack awareness of the risk information that they need.

The service requires improvement in the way it prevents fires and other risks. It shares data with other organisations to identify people particularly at risk. It visits anyone who requests a [home fire safety check](#), without prioritising them according to risk. The service runs good prevention programmes, but does not evaluate them all. It promotes community safety, collaborating with others. It draws on the Surrey Fire Volunteer Service for prevention activities.

The service must improve the way it protects the public through fire regulation. Its audit and inspection rates are in line with the average for England. But it is not clear whether the service can inspect all the high-risk properties it identifies. The service works with other organisations. But we did not see much work with local businesses to reduce unwanted fire signals. The service does not engage with businesses to any great degree to educate them about complying with fire regulations.

The service requires improvement in the way it responds to fires and other emergencies. It has reduced its workforce over time but has not adjusted its way of working accordingly. We are concerned that it does not have a plan to ensure it can go on providing services in the way it does now. The service acknowledges that it relies too much on overtime working. Commanders have mixed levels of understanding of national guidance for decision making. The service holds debriefs after incidents and is working to improve the way it collects and shares learning from these.

The service is good at responding to national risks. It holds national assets for dealing with a variety of incidents. Control room staff know how to access these, but frontline staff are less confident in using them. The service has officers trained to command during an attack by marauding armed terrorists, but it has not tested these plans with frontline and control room staff.

Understanding the risk of fire and other emergencies



Good

Surrey Fire and Rescue Service is good at understanding the risk of fire and other emergencies. But we found the following area in which it needs to improve:

Areas for improvement

- The service should ensure its firefighters have good access to relevant and up-to-date risk information. This should include site-specific and cross-border risk information.

All fire and rescue services should identify and assess all foreseeable fire and rescue-related risks. They should also prevent and mitigate these risks.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the service's performance in this area.

Understanding local and community risk

The service interacts with the public in a positive way. It produces station plans that clearly detail its priority activities over the coming year. These plans show a good understanding of local communities and of the risks they face. But it is not clear how much the service engages with the public to produce these station plans.

The service publishes information on its website, such as its response standards. This allows the public to see how it is performing. The service has well-established working arrangements with organisations such as housing associations and Age UK Surrey. It uses social media to tell the public about incidents. The service could improve the information available to the public on its website by updating the content.

The service has a good understanding of its local community and of the needs of the people it serves and the risks they face. We found that the service uses a wide range of data to produce an accurate risk profile. This comes from a range of sources and includes general demographic data and data from other agencies like the NHS. Importantly, the service has direct access to the adult social care database. It uses this database to find and support those people most in need.

The service takes part in several community boards and plays an integral part in the [local resilience forum](#). There are clear links to the community risk register in the service's IRMP. The service is a lead agency for specific community risks, such as flooding and large chemical incidents. The service benefits from these partnerships and uses information from partner bodies to target its activity towards public need. Dedicated teams provide a range of educational and prevention work in targeted areas, such as youth engagement and road safety.

Having an effective risk management plan

Each [fire and rescue authority](#) must produce an IRMP. The service should consult the public when it writes this plan. The IRMP should provide an up-to-date picture of the risks within the county. It should say how the service will manage these through its prevention, protection and response activities. The plan should cover at least a three-year time span.

The service has a ten-year IRMP. The service refreshed its IRMP in 2016 and republished it. It used risk modelling, historical data and the council's future planning assumptions, including housing and population predications. The service consulted the public through online surveys and face-to-face reference groups.

The IRMP describes the risks and difficulties that the service and the people of Surrey face. The plan links risk to the public with the service's operational activity. This includes response times, education campaigns and its approach to protection and regulation.

The service does some good work with other agencies to reduce the risk of fires and other emergencies among those most in need. The IRMP does not explain how the service will work with neighbouring fire and rescue services to reduce risk and improve outcomes.

Maintaining risk information

The service has a programme to gather risk information. It uses specialist teams and wholtime crews to visit and update site-specific risk information. The service visits new premises and carries out risk assessments to determine whether the premises pose a risk to the safety of firefighters or to the public.

Operational crews can access site-specific risk information and other risk data. The information is available on [mobile data terminals](#) in every fire engine. It includes information about accidents involving chemicals, and data on vehicle safety systems when responding to road traffic collisions.

The service updates risk information to ensure crews are aware of changes to risks. Such changes might include sprinklers not working in a building, or the presence of a [vulnerable person](#). Operators in the control room give this information to crews through the mobile data terminals.

The service's use of risk information generally is good. And staff have good access to it. But the service could improve the way it updates and prioritises site-specific risk collection work. We found examples of out-of-date risk information. There were also no set time frames for the service to update risk data submitted for change. The service told us that risk information is available to crews working ten miles over the border. However, we found that crews were not always aware of this information. This could increase the risk to them when they attend fires outside their own service area.

Preventing fires and other risks



Requires improvement

Areas for improvement

- The service should ensure it targets its prevention work at people most at risk.
- The service should evaluate its prevention work, so it understands the benefits better.
- The service should ensure staff understand how to identify vulnerability and safeguard vulnerable people.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the service's performance in this area.

Prevention strategy

The service prioritises prevention activity and aligns its plan for prevention work to risk. This is in line with statutory guidelines.

We found the service shares data with other organisations, such as adult social care and the health service. This helps it to identify those people within the community who are at risk from fires and other emergencies. But the service could do more to prioritise the most vulnerable people. This would allow it to manage better the increasing demand on its resources. For example, anyone who requests a home fire safety check from the service will receive one, regardless of how vulnerable they may or may not be.

In the 12 months to 31 March 2018, the service carried out 3,521 home fire safety checks. This represents 3.0 visits per 1,000 population and compares with the England rate of 10.4 per 1,000 population. The service should ensure it works more effectively to meet the needs of the most vulnerable in its communities.

The service runs education campaigns to improve the safety and wellbeing of its residents. These range from well-established programmes run by specialist teams to local events run by operational crews.

We found some good prevention activities developed by the service and other agencies. One example is the One Stop Surrey scheme. The service showed how it has evaluated the effectiveness of some campaigns, such as the Safe Drive, Stay Alive programme. But it was a limited evaluation. A consistent level of evaluation could help the service to better inform its approach and target its resources more effectively.

Promoting community safety

The service works closely with other organisations to promote community safety. For example, at Camberley fire station, the service has an agreement with a housing agency to refer new residents for home fire safety checks.

Health Hubs provide integrated health and social care teams in the community. The service works with these teams to share information to support vulnerable people. It works with youth justice and educational welfare services to identify those at risk of anti-social behaviour or fire-setting. In this collaboration, the service leads on youth engagement to combat anti-social behaviour among young people. It offers vulnerable children education and positive options through the Firewise scheme.

Staff receive training to help them identify vulnerable people. In their fire engines, they can access guidance on what makes someone vulnerable. They can also speak to on-call safeguarding officers. But we found the approach to [safeguarding](#) between specialist and operational crews inconsistent. Specialist teams felt more confident than operational crews at recognising vulnerable people and accessing safeguarding services. The service should assure itself that all staff have appropriate and up-to-date safeguarding skills.

Service leaders play an active part in road safety partnerships and the serious and organised crime partnership board. The service's team of fire investigators supports the police in reducing arson and the impact of fire-setting.

The service uses the Surrey Fire Volunteer Service in its prevention activities. The volunteers help the service with education programmes. They also make home fire safety checks and install sensory alarms in people's homes. The service's use of this group to support the service's objectives and keep the community safe is a good way of working.

Road safety

The service's main road safety education programme is Safe Drive, Stay Alive. This multi-agency, interactive experience has communicated its message to thousands of young people aged over 13, according to data provided by the service. The service has a dedicated team that raises funds and co-ordinates this activity. [Wholetime staff](#) and volunteers also provide support. The University of Surrey and Road Safety Analysis have independently reviewed this activity. The review shows a positive change to the sort of risk behaviour that may have led to accidents on the roads. Locally, operational firefighters promote road safety in line with their station plans. They promote road safety at station open days and through road-user awareness days.

Protecting the public through fire regulation



Requires improvement

Areas for improvement

- The service should ensure it allocates enough resources to a prioritised and risk-based inspection programme.
- The service should ensure it addresses effectively the burden of false alarms (termed 'unwanted fire signals').
- The service should ensure its staff work with local businesses and large organisations to share information and expectations on compliance with fire safety regulations.

All fire and rescue services should assess fire risks in buildings and, where necessary, require building owners to comply with fire safety legislation. Each service decides how many assessments it does each year. But it must have a locally determined, risk-based inspection programme for enforcing the legislation.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the service's performance in this area.

Risk-based approach

The service has a risk-based programme of audits and inspections. It uses a range of data to inform this programme. But the allocated resources do not meet the demands of its risk-based inspection programme. The central protection team manages the programme. Its members are trained to a higher level, and can do more complex risk protection work. The whole-time workforce conducts low and medium-risk thematic audits. The proportion of protection audits on known premises (except for private single dwellings) has increased from 1.1 percent in the 12 months to 31 March 2014 – which was below the England rate – to 5.2 percent in the 12 months to 31 March 2018 – which is above the current England rate of 3.0 percent. This equates to audits on 1,525 of the 29,076 known premises.

The service needs to consider how it is resourcing and prioritising its risk-based inspection programme. The resourcing levels may also limit the resilience of the team to respond to future changes in demand. As at 31 March 2018, the service identified 2,216 high-risk premises. In the 12 months to 31 March 2018, 313 protection audits were conducted on high-risk premises, representing a high-risk audit rate of 14 percent. It was unclear how the service will be able to inspect the 2,216 high-risk premises that it has identified.

Enforcement

The service audits businesses to improve fire safety in premises that do not comply with legislation. In the 12 months to 31 March 2018, the number of protection inspections that the service completed, where the outcome was unsatisfactory, was 24 percent. We saw examples of the service taking joint action to increase fire safety with enforcement agencies, such as housing and environmental health. In these cases, one agency takes the lead and the others provide support. This shows a collaborative approach and makes the best use of time and resources. The service has access to independent legal advice. It prosecutes those that fail to comply with their legal duties under the fire safety order. The service has successfully secured several prosecutions over the past two years.

Working with others

We saw limited evidence of effective work with local businesses to reduce the burden of unwanted fire signals. In the 12 months to 31 March 2018, Surrey FRS attended 5,292 false alarm incidents. Of these, 72 percent were due to the apparatus, rather than good intent calls or malicious calls. This is a relatively high proportion of false alarm incidents compared to other services, and an increase compared to the 12 months to 31 March 2011, when 67 percent of 4,994 false alarm incidents attended were due to the apparatus. The service has announced that it will reduce the number of times it goes out for unwanted fire signals. But its approach is not co-ordinated and it has not engaged well enough with businesses. Doing so could help the service target those premises with the highest numbers of unwanted fire signals.

The service could do more to improve compliance with fire safety legislation through education. We found examples of good work with businesses when crews found problems. But there was little evidence of the service taking a proactive approach to educate businesses. Education may help businesses to understand and comply with fire regulation. This would reduce the burden on the service and on local businesses.

Responding to fires and other emergencies



Requires improvement

Cause of concern

Surrey FRS doesn't have a robust and sustainable system to support its operational response model.

Recommendations:

By 30 June 2019, the service should:

- put in place a response plan based on a thorough assessment of risk to the community;
- ensure it has appropriate resources (people and equipment) available to respond to risk in line with its integrated risk management plan;
- ensure it understands and actively manages the resources and capabilities available for deployment; and
- tell the people of Surrey what benefits its service provision and ways of working in the operational response model will give them.

Areas for improvement

- The service should ensure it has an effective system for staff to use learning and debriefs to improve operational response and incident command.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the service's performance in this area.

Managing assets and resources

Since 2011, the service has reduced its wholetime workforce. But it could not show us how it has adjusted its operational model to work with fewer staff. The service pays some wholetime staff overtime to bolster the numbers of available crews. But sometimes it does not have enough fire crews to keep all the fire engines available to respond to the public (including specialist assets) in accordance with its normal expectations. So, station crews will be temporarily relocated to areas of greater need.

The service describes its over-reliance on overtime as its highest risk. But we could not see how it manages the daily operational consequences of this. [Watch](#) managers leading firefighters working overtime do not have enough management information. This means they cannot always assure themselves that crews are fit to work. We told the service that we are concerned about the potential risk to firefighter and public safety. Since our inspection, we have revisited the service to check on its progress in addressing this risk.

The service uses a system called a dynamic cover tool to support its operational resource management. This real-time mapping system uses historical data to predict current risk levels within the county. The service also has a policy for what is known as degradation. This considers the impact of reduced staffing levels and resulting reduction in appliances. The policy manages the order in which stations and appliances are removed from operational use. These tools help to relieve some of the effects of the over-reliance on overtime. The policy aims to ensure that the service can provide a prioritised response to the public when needed.

Response

In the IRMP, the service told the public it will have a certain number of fire engines available. It rarely achieves this figure, but still manages to respond to all calls for service. The service supplied data to us that shows this is worse during the day, when demand is at its highest. This is an ineffective use of resources. The service needs to consider what level of resources is appropriate for the risks it identifies within Surrey. It needs to communicate this to the public.

The service has clear response standards within its IRMP and its performance is available on its website. The service tells the public that it will get the first fire engine to the most [critical incidents](#) within 10 minutes, and a second in 15 minutes, 80 percent of the time. The service told us it met this target 79 percent of the time in 2016/17, and 78 percent of the time in 2017/18.

During our inspection, we saw a confident approach to intelligent call handling by [fire control room](#) staff. This allows control operators to use their skills and experience to make changes to resourcing when they felt it was appropriate. Staff felt confident to make these decisions. The automated vehicle location system allows them to identify the nearest fire engine to an incident. This means they can ensure the fastest response. The control room has good systems to pass on risk information to crews. This included information about buildings, national guidance or vulnerable people in their communities.

The control room is currently operating below its expected staffing levels. This limits the resilience of the organisation and the way it can adapt and respond to changing circumstances. It means that control managers sometimes have to support operational deployments when they could be managing the control room.

Command

Staff get appropriate levels of command training. Those required to command incidents felt confident and competent in their roles. The training team trains incident commanders. The team also formally assesses how safe and effective staff are. Operational commanders showed mixed levels of understanding of national models such as [Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles](#) (JESIP) and national guidance for command decision-making. We found less understanding among frontline managers than senior managers. The service should assure itself that all operational commanders are aware of, and well-practised in, the use of command principles. The levels of command at operational incidents are proportionate and based on risk.

Keeping the public informed

The service communicates with the public through other organisations, such as the police. It also uses social media, which the control room updates. It uses them to raise awareness of safety messages, such as the risk of wildfires during hot weather. The service has one communications officer. It was not clear how the service would maintain meaningful communications outside normal working hours, or during times of high demand.

The service also runs a Telecare service from two of its retained stations. Telecare supports vulnerable people in their homes who require help because of mobility issues or a fall. This interaction with vulnerable people raises the service's awareness of those in need in its communities.

We found that prevention specialists recognised vulnerable people and make safeguarding referrals appropriately. Frontline staff are less confident. The service should assure itself that all staff maintain their skills in recognising vulnerable people within their communities.

Evaluating operational performance

The service has access to a range of performance data. Response times have increased in recent years. For example, these are the average response times to a [primary fire](#):

- In 2015/16: 8 minutes and 52 seconds.
- In 2016/17: 9 minutes and 9 seconds.

The service is looking at ways to improve response times. Work is at an early stage. For example, the service is exploring the use of the initial response vehicles crewed by two firefighters. These vehicles can deal with low-level incidents or provide an initial assessment at the early stages. The service believes that this will allow for a better use of resources and free up fire engines to deal with higher-risk calls. The service is trying two of these vehicles and will evaluate the results.

[Hot debriefs](#), which crews conduct immediately after an incident, are in wide use across the organisation. Staff can also communicate learning from incidents using an electronic debrief form. This provides a more structured format and covers areas such as health and safety, and command.

The service holds structured debriefs after large or significant incidents. A central team co-ordinates this work. The service needs to ensure it does not miss opportunities to learn and improve its operational practices. For example, we saw examples of unreturned and poorly completed incident documentation, including operational risk assessments. The service knows about this and aims to do better but it is too early to observe any improvement. We also found that formal debriefing lacked scrutiny and challenge. It didn't always lead to improvements.

Responding to national risks



Good

Surrey Fire and Rescue Service is good at responding to national risks. But we found the following area in which it needs to improve:

Areas for improvement

- The service should ensure it is well-prepared to form part of a multi-agency response to a community risk identified by the local resilience forum, including a marauding terrorist attack, and that its procedures for responding to terrorist-related incidents are understood by all staff and are well tested.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the service's performance in this area.

Preparedness

The service has dedicated [national resilience assets](#) to deal with a range of incident types. We saw that staff in the control room are clear about how to make these available. The service can draw on national and local agreements with bordering services as needed. We found operational staff were less confident with the use of their national assets. The service needs to put a robust process in place to maintain and monitor these additional skills.

The service has effective arrangements to support the control room at times of high demand. It has back-up arrangements with another fire service to take excessive calls. But this can only hold calls until local [mobilisation](#) is possible.

Working with other services

Surrey FRS has several neighbouring fire and rescue services and cross-border work is well established at incidents. We found good examples of the service working closely with East Sussex and West Sussex FRSs. But we saw less work with other neighbouring fire services (including London Fire Brigade). We also found that crews have limited risk information when working over borders. We also found limited evidence of the service sharing learning when crews work with neighbouring services.

The service needs to encourage effective working arrangements with other fire services to improve safety and the service to the public.

Working with other agencies

The service works well with its multi-agency partners. But we found better working between more senior managers than at the operational level. The service is part of the local resilience forum and has a dedicated member of staff on this team. We found a good regime of multi-agency exercising. The service participates in a programme to co-ordinate volunteers called Surrey Preparedness, which the local resilience forum started after recent flooding.

The service has no dedicated teams for incidents involving marauding terrorist firearms teams. But it does provide a command function through specially trained officers ([national inter-agency liaison officers](#)). These officers have documented procedures that are well tested. Control staff and operational staff have access to information about what to do in the event of a terrorist incident. But there was little evidence that the service tests and exercises these plans. The service should ensure that it explains to staff across the organisation what it expects of them during marauding terrorist firearms incidents. It should also test their understanding of its plans.

Efficiency



How efficient is the service at keeping people safe and secure?



Inadequate

Summary

An efficient fire and rescue service will manage its budget and spend money properly and appropriately. It will align its resources to its risk. It should try to keep costs down without compromising public safety. Future budgets should be based on robust and realistic assumptions. Surrey Fire and Rescue Service's overall efficiency is inadequate.

The service is inadequate at making the best use of resources. We are concerned that it does not use its financial and physical resources efficiently to manage risk and keep people safe. The service is working to manage its longer-term challenges but this is not resulting yet in sustainable change. It has reduced the size of its staff through people leaving and retiring but has not adjusted its ways of working accordingly. It relies on overtime working to keep fire engines available. This is not sustainable financially, and could put crew members and the public at risk. The service does not have a robust workforce plan. It relies heavily on staff working overtime. This has led to inefficient ways of working, such as managers spending too much time on planning. We saw a number of examples of the service collaborating with other organisations. But we did not see much evidence of benefits to the service.

The service must improve the way it makes its service affordable now and in future. It is making the savings required by Surrey County Council between 2010/11 and 2020/21. But it is not clear whether the service can maintain this until 2021. It uses the council's HR, IT and payroll, but does not check to see whether these provide good value. The service uses an effective tool that draws on historical risk data to map the need for cover. Frontline staff told us that the database they use for risk work is frustratingly slow and inefficient. The service needs to train staff fully in IT systems. The service is collaborating with others to save money but two such projects are delayed. A lack of investment in estate and fleet has left the service without some training facilities.

Making best use of resources



Inadequate

Cause of concern

Surrey Fire and Rescue Service doesn't use its resources efficiently to manage risk or its financial and physical resources effectively to keep people safe.

Recommendations

By 30 June 2019, the service should ensure that:

- its resourcing model meets risk demand sustainably;
- its workforce model supports its operational model to manage risk efficiently and sustainably; and
- it uses the available budget prudently to support its risk management activities.

Areas for improvement

- The service should assure itself that it makes the most of collaboration opportunities and that they improve its capacity, capability, service to the public and are value for money.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the service's performance in this area.

How plans support objectives

The service lists nine proposals in its IRMP to manage its longer-term challenges and keep Surrey communities safe. It monitors these proposals regularly through the IRMP action plan. We could not find evidence that they are bringing about the sustainable changes that the service needs to make to meet its budgetary requirements.

The service must look closely at areas like workforce planning, collaboration and operational deployment.

The service decided to reduce the number of its wholetime operational staff seven years ago. It has achieved staff reductions through people leaving and retiring rather than through voluntary or compulsory redundancy. But it has not refreshed its assumptions for its operational response modelling in line with the changing profile of the workforce. The service relies on paying staff overtime to maintain appliance availability. This is an inefficient use of resources. The service needs to assure itself that it has enough staff for the level of risk its community faces in the

long term. It should not rely on short-term measures such as overtime payments. Until the service solves this for the long term, it needs more robust management to ensure crews are safe to work.

The service must consider the level of resources it needs to meet the risks in Surrey and manage its resources accordingly. The service has taken some steps towards this. For example, the service closed two fire stations and opened a new one, ensuring the same level of cover in both areas. But this project has not yet released the expected £900,000 in savings because of problems with property access.

Productivity and ways of working

As at 31 March 2018, of 558 full-time equivalent firefighter posts, 469 are wholetime firefighters and 89 are [retained duty system](#) firefighters. This is a reduction from the 641 full-time equivalent wholetime firefighters and the 103 full-time equivalent retained firefighters as at 31 March 2011.

Despite the service's decision to reduce the workforce, it does not have a robust workforce plan. The service's crewing model is based on four operational staff for each wholetime fire engine. In 2017, to increase the availability of crews, the service agreed to remove the limit on the amount of overtime that staff can work. The service now relies on firefighters working overtime to maintain its operational response. The service could not show that it had enough controls to manage the welfare of its staff working overtime. Owing to this decision, there are inefficiencies throughout the wholetime workforce. This includes managers spending excessive time planning moves and visits and the rescheduling of planned training. The service recognises this problem and is trying to increase its wholetime workforce through recruitment and transfers.

The service uses its wholetime workforce to do prevention and protection activities. We found that the service could improve the links it makes between station plans and local risks. Adopting a more tailored approach to station plans could ensure a better match between activities and risk, and improve staff productivity.

Collaboration

The service recognises its duty to collaborate and has a long history of attempted collaboration. But there is little evidence to show this has increased capacity or improved service.

Transformation funding for emergency medical response has improved the service to the public and diversified the skills of the operational workforce. But this project is on hold. The service has recently collaborated with Surrey Police on the provision of occupational health. Both organisations now hope to offer a wider range of support to staff. The service has yet to fully understand the benefits of this.

Closer work with East Sussex and West Sussex fire and rescue services is starting to show some promise. The services are aligning their in-house processes to increase collaborative opportunities. One example of this is joint recruitment, although this has not done much to increase capacity, capability or savings.

Continuity arrangements

The service's business continuity arrangements are externally audited each year. The service tests its control centre and its IT systems. Both have features to limit the risk in the event of a catastrophic failure. These include security accreditation of IT systems and [fall-back](#) arrangements for fire control.

Making the fire and rescue service affordable now and in the future



Requires improvement

Areas for improvement

- The service needs to ensure how it uses technology to improve its efficiency and effectiveness. It should ensure that efficient processes and appropriate training are in place for staff who use IT systems in their work.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the service's performance in this area.

Improving value for money

The service told us that between 2010/11 and 2020/21, Surrey County Council required it to save £10.7m. The service has managed its savings to date through a programme of workforce reduction and restructure, income generation and station relocation. It has set out the savings plans in its IRMP and in its medium-term financial plan (MTFP). However, the service does not have future savings plans that meet the demands of the MTFP.

The main savings to date have come from reductions in wholetime firefighters (full-time equivalent) of approximately a quarter (641 as at 31 March 2011 to 469 as at 31 March 2018) since 2011. The fire cover reconfiguration project, which involved the closure of two fire stations and the opening of a newly located station, has experienced delays. The project has not realised its predicted savings in time.

The service has ways to generate income through a trading arm of the county council. Data provided by the service stated the income generated in 2017/18 was £531,000. It comes from areas such as contingency and training provision. The council supports the service's savings plan.

The service does not have its own [reserves](#). Financial contingency is provided from a reserve held by the Surrey County Council. Surrey County Council provides support functions, including HR, IT and payroll. The service showed us the costs of these functions. But the service does not scrutinise or review these costs to ensure that they provide good value for money.

Innovation

The service is innovative in how it manages its resources as incidents happen. An example of this is its dynamic cover tool. This database has five years of historical data. It feeds a live mapping system that shows where fire engines are, and where it predicts risk. Fire control uses this tool to manage resources according to risk in real time. The service knows it could do more with this to develop the concept of borderless mobilising. This could increase efficiencies with its neighbouring fire and rescue services.

The service also uses a range of IT-based systems to support operational activity, but they aren't always efficient. An example is the database that the service uses for its prevention, protection and operational risk work. Frontline staff told us that this system is often slow and is not easy to use. It also creates inefficiencies by duplicating work, which staff find frustrating. The service also needs to ensure that it fully trains staff in the IT systems.

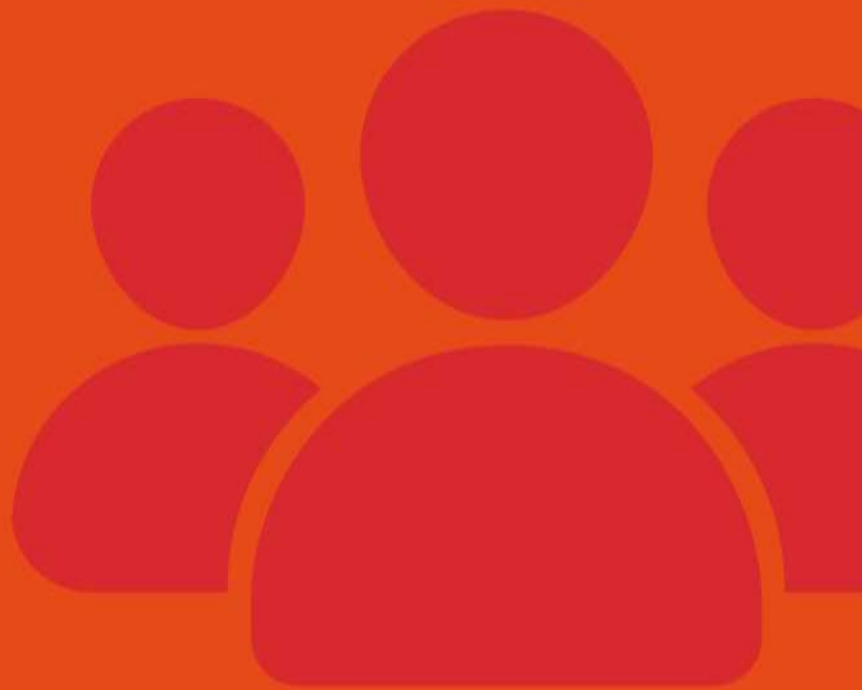
Future investment and working with others

The service has exploited opportunities for external funding. These include a £377,000 grant to provide emergency medical response with South East Coast Ambulance Service. The trial has now stopped. The service awaits the outcomes of negotiations at national level between the employers and the representative bodies. The service believes the ongoing benefits to the public would include better trained firefighters with access to more medical equipment.

In May 2015, the service received £5.95m in funding for its integrated transport function project. This is a collaboration between Surrey and Sussex fire and police. The aim is to increase capacity and reduce the cost of the transport function across these organisations. The project is happening more slowly than planned. It has not yet produced real financial benefits.

The service has not invested well in its estate and fleet. The service's hot fire house is unusable for realistic breathing apparatus training. But it has alternative arrangements in place. The service is using fire engines for longer than was planned instead of renewing them. Although the service is purchasing new fire engines, it is unclear how it is collaborating to reduce the costs.

People



How well does the service look after its people?



Requires improvement

Summary

A fire and rescue service that looks after its people should be able to provide an effective service to its community. It should offer a range of services to make its communities safer. This will include developing and maintaining a workforce that is professional, resilient, skilled, flexible and diverse. The service's leaders should be positive role models, and this should be reflected in the behaviour of the workforce. Overall, Surrey Fire and Rescue Service requires improvement at looking after its people.

The service requires improvement in promoting the right values and culture. It has the facilities to support staff wellbeing. But it needs to assure itself that managers know how to support staff as needed. Staff understand their role in keeping each other safe. They consider the processes for raising safety concerns effective. A staff survey conducted by the service in 2017 told it that leaders need to do more to model service values. The service is working on this. It launched a new set of values and behaviour in 2017 and involved staff in this. But staff do not show great awareness of the new values in their use of language at work. The service needs to assure itself that staff adopt the new values and forms of behaviour. Staff are proud of their work but find the increasing workloads hard to bear.

The service requires improvement at getting the right people with the right skills. Its 2017 people strategy describes its future workforce needs and possible performance difficulties. But it is not clear how this strategy relates to the savings planned in the service's medium-term financial plan. The service relies heavily on overtime. But it does not have enough controls to manage staff working hours. It recently removed overtime limits. This could have an impact on staff welfare. The service has a system for recording staff training. Only managers can access it. The competency recording system can make it difficult for managers to check whether standby moves and staff working overtime on a watch need training. The service's dedicated training team maintains core competencies and manages staff development. The learning opportunities are good for frontline staff, but

less so for support and control staff. The service offers some courses via an e-learning system. Not all learners complete the assigned activities when they are told to. The service should monitor e-learning completion rates.

The service requires improvement at ensuring fairness and promoting diversity. It surveys staff each year, but the response rates are falling. We asked staff about this and they told us that the service did not explain, or act on, the outcomes of previous surveys. Staff know how to use the service's grievance policy. But we found that many grievances get resolved locally with little or no documentation. This is not the service's policy. The service engages with the largest union, but not with all the other representative bodies. Engagement with all unions should give the workforce a voice and help the service to achieve the level of engagement it aspires to.

The service recognises that the diversity of its workforce does not reflect that of the community it serves. It has an inclusion strategy and intends to improve this. It could do more to engage people from underrepresented groups in its workforce.

The service requires improvement at managing performance and developing leaders. Staff use the service's appraisal process to access development opportunities. But we couldn't see how the service uses the process to manage performance. We could see no evidence that the service has trained managers in the appraisal process. This may result in missed opportunities to manage underperformance or nurture talent. The service has processes for promotion, but needs to explain these better to staff. Frontline staff have a formalised development process, but this is not so much the case for support staff. The service acknowledges that it has no formal process for managing talent.

Promoting the right values and culture



Requires improvement

Areas for improvement

- The service should ensure its values and behaviours are understood and demonstrated at all levels of the organisation.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the service's performance in this area.

Workforce wellbeing

The service has facilities to support the wellbeing of its staff. They include an occupational health services department, which has recently merged with that of Surrey Police. The service should ensure it tells staff about the potential benefits of this merger.

Staff recognise the benefit of specially trained service personnel who provide critical debriefs following traumatic incidents. This year, staff will receive Mind's Blue Light training, which supports the mental health of emergency service staff. Managers have a crucial role in supporting staff welfare. The service needs to assure itself that managers have the skills to do this.

Health and safety

The service has a positive health and safety culture. Staff are well trained and understand their role in keeping each other safe. There is a well-established service-wide framework. It includes health and safety representatives and committees that deal with health and safety issues. Staff can raise and address any concerns about health and safety. Staff think this is effective. An example of this is the ongoing work to reduce the health impacts of exhaust fumes at fire stations.

Culture and values

The last service staff survey in 2017 highlighted that senior leaders need to do more to model service values. The service has plans to improve this. For example, the service engaged a management development company to help senior leaders to develop a more inclusive leadership style.

The service has an initiative called Brew with the boss, which is a more informal way for senior managers to meet staff. The service has yet to assess the effectiveness of this initiative.

In 2017, after talking with the workforce, the service launched a new set of values and behaviour. They include professionalism, leadership, fairness and respect, honesty and integrity, responsibility and openness. We didn't find much awareness of these among staff. We observed consistent use of non-inclusive language in the workplace. The service needs to assure itself that these values and behaviours help to shape and develop an inclusive culture.

The service communicates with staff through email newsletters, face-to-face briefings and with Yammer (a Facebook-type platform). We found that use of Yammer was inconsistent across the workforce. The service needs to assure itself that staff receive key messages across its communication channels.

Staff we spoke to were proud to serve their communities and wanted to do their best. But people across the service told us that increased workloads and too few staff were making this increasingly difficult.

Senior leaders should ensure the new value and behaviour statements create a culture that helps the staff to achieve the service's vision. The culture should also support staff in putting the public at the heart of everything they do.

Getting the right people with the right skills



Requires improvement

Areas for improvement

- The service should ensure it has clear and robust processes to manage staff overtime.
- The service should ensure staff and managers use its competence recording system and e-learning platform effectively.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the service's performance in this area.

Workforce planning

The service describes its workforce difficulties in its IRMP. In 2017, it published a people strategy that details future workforce needs and the performance difficulties it faces.

The service's medium-term financial plan (MTFP) highlights the savings it needs to make. For example, it needs to reduce staff across the middle-management level of the workforce. It is not clear how the people strategy is linked to the MTFP. This means the service may not have the funding available to achieve the aspirations set out in the people strategy. Nor was it clear how the service will maintain service levels while reducing middle-manager numbers.

We found that the service relies on staff working overtime. There is a need for a properly managed system to support how the service responds to fires and other emergencies. The service must make sure it uses all its resources in the most efficient way. We found that the service doesn't have enough controls to manage the working hours of wholetime staff. The service has a reduced workforce, no clear policy on managing overtime and has recently removed overtime limits. It needs to monitor overtime closely. We found managers' approach to overtime to be inconsistent and retrospective. It could have an impact on the welfare of staff.

A system is in place to manage shortfalls in crewing numbers, but this is localised. The service suffers from a shortage of firefighters to crew fire engines. Day-to-day crewing decisions lie with the senior duty manager, who uses the dynamic cover tool and a degradation policy. This policy considers the impact of reduced staffing levels and resulting reduction in appliances. The senior duty manager decides which stations are temporarily closed and which fire engines are unavailable during that time. This provides some consistency and control in managing operational resources.

The service does not keep an accurate record of staff with secondary employment. It has a policy that says it should collect this information. But we didn't find any evidence to show how the service manages this to create a clear workforce picture. This could limit effective planning and the safe deployment of staff.

Learning and improvement

The service recognises the benefits of a well-trained workforce. It has a dedicated training team that supports core competencies and staff development. One example of this is the level of fire protection training given to staff. Another is the accreditation for managers through nationally recognised health and safety bodies. The service brings in external companies to supplement skills training, for example, in training in higher levels of incident command for operational managers. The service also sends its staff to external providers for training in skills that it cannot deliver in-house. Examples include emergency planning and management training.

The service's managers use a recording system for staff training called Fire Watch. Only managers can access this system. We found little evidence to show how the service reviews records on the system to ensure they are accurate. The service uses an e-learning system. But there is little quality assurance to ensure e-learning packages have been completed and understood. Operational managers can access the training records of staff working overtime or standing by on their watch. However, we found managers were not always aware of how to do this, which limits their ability to plan appropriate training for staff to cover shifts through standby or overtime.

The service's training team assesses core skills for operational staff at set frequencies. The service maintains these skills at a station level through local training. We found that staff cannot always book risk-critical training courses because of their limited availability or course cancellations. This was evident in risk-critical breathing apparatus and hot fire training. When this happens, the line manager assesses and records the individual's skill. A senior manager then signs it off until the individual can attend a course. The learning and development team monitors this centrally.

While there is a good system for learning in place for operational staff, this was less evident with support and control staff. The service supports the learning of its staff with an e-learning system, which uses videos and online questions and answers to support staff competencies. E-learning content ranges from operational knowledge to safeguarding. Staff can access it from any computer. We found use of the e-learning system to be inconsistent. Not all learners completed the activities assigned to them within the given timeframes. The service should clearly explain the e-learning part of its learning and development offer. It should then ensure it has a robust system to monitor completion rates.

Ensuring fairness and promoting diversity



Requires improvement

Areas for improvement

- The service should assure itself that it has effective grievance procedures which include clearly documented actions and outcomes.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the service's performance in this area.

Seeking and acting on staff feedback

The service seeks the views of its staff through an annual survey. The service informed us that over the last two years the response rate has fallen from 43 percent in 2016 to 40 percent in 2017 despite the service's aspiration for a 100-percent return rate. Staff told us that the service did not share the outcomes of previous surveys with them. Staff also did not recognise any changes made because of their feedback. The service should do more to increase the engagement of staff with the survey. It must also ensure that it acts on outcomes and tells staff about this.

There is a grievance policy that staff know how to access. But we found little evidence to show that the service follows the policy. Staff described resolving grievances informally at a local level with limited or no documentation to explain resolutions. This is contrary to organisational policy. The service must do more to document what it does when staff raise a grievance and what the result is.

The service engages well with the largest staff representative body. Well-established lines of communication allow the representative body to raise concerns on behalf of their members. This group also forms part of the workforce reform team and is a co-designer of new service initiatives. The Fire Brigades Union writes a chapter of the IRMP. Engagement with other representative bodies is less well established. The service needs to ensure that its whole workforce has a voice and representation in any change. The service's people strategy says the service aspires to have an engaged workforce. Giving the entire workforce a voice should help the service achieve this aspiration.

Diversity

The service workforce does not reflect the diversity of the communities it serves. As at 31 March 2018, only 4.2 percent (25) of firefighters were female and 2.5 percent (13) were from a black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) background (the BAME residential population is 9.6 percent). The service recognises this and has produced an inclusion strategy setting out how it intends to improve. It acknowledges this is still at an early stage.

In 2018, the service launched its first recruitment campaign for wholetime firefighters in seven years. The service has worked closely with the Surrey police force to locate and overcome the barriers preventing the recruitment of a more diverse workforce, although positive outcomes from this are yet to become apparent.

The service could do more to engage and consult with people from under-represented groups already in the organisation. We found no use of engagement groups or staff networks in developing service strategies to increase diversity and inclusion.

Managing performance and developing leaders



Requires improvement

Areas for improvement

- The service should put in place an open and fair process to identify, develop and support high-potential staff and aspiring leaders.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the service's performance in this area.

Managing performance

All staff complete an annual appraisal process annually which is reviewed every six months. This is a county council system, completed electronically by the line manager. It covers work-related goals and personal objectives. Staff told us appraisals were a good place to access development opportunities, for example technical or management courses. It was less clear how the service uses the appraisal process to support and manage staff. And we couldn't see how it linked to any performance management targets.

Staff felt the benefits and value of the appraisal system relied on the skills of the manager completing it. Some described it as serving a valuable purpose. Others felt it was a tick box exercise, done inconsistently. Staff see the process as a means to support development rather than manage performance.

There was little evidence to show how the service had trained its managers to do appraisals. We didn't learn what the service hoped to achieve from them. Managers explained this was particularly important with the introduction of a new appraisal system in 2017. This could limit the value the service gets from its appraisals. The service may be missing opportunities to record underperformance or nurture talent in the workforce.

Developing leaders

The service has processes to promote its staff. These include formalised assessment centres. But it needs to ensure that it effectively communicates the pathways for these. We found that operational staff could access development through the appraisal process, which led to formalised development programmes. This was less evident for support staff.

The service does not have a process to manage staff with high potential. It acknowledges the importance of this within the people strategy. Currently, the service leaves identification of talent to individuals or to their line managers.

Annex A – About the data

Data in this report is from a range of sources, including:

- Home Office;
- Office for National Statistics (ONS);
- Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA);
- our inspection fieldwork; and
- data we collected directly from all 45 fire and rescue services in England.

Where we use published Home Office data, we use the period to 31 March. We selected this period to be consistent across data sets. Some data sets are published annually, others quarterly. [The most recent data tables are available online.](#)

We use different data periods to represent trends more accurately.

Where we collected data directly from fire and rescue services (FRSs), we took reasonable steps to agree the design of the data collection with services and with other interested parties such as the Home Office. We gave services several opportunities to validate the data they gave us, to ensure the accuracy of the evidence presented. For instance:

- We checked and queried data that services submitted if notably different from other services or internally inconsistent.
- We asked all services to check the final data used in the report and correct any errors identified. Data that services submitted to the Home Office in relation to prevention, protection and workforce figures was published in November 2018. This data was updated after reports had been checked by services, so we haven't validated it further.

We set out the source of Service in numbers data below.

Methodology

Population

For all uses of population as a denominator in our calculations, unless otherwise noted, we use [ONS mid-2017 population estimates](#). This is the most recent data available at the time of inspection.

BMG survey of public perception of the fire and rescue service

We commissioned BMG to survey attitudes towards fire and rescue services in June and July 2018. This consisted of 17,976 interviews across 44 local fire and rescue service areas. This survey didn't include the Isles of Scilly, due to its small population. Most interviews were conducted online, with online research panels.

However, a minority of the interviews (757) were conducted via face-to-face interviews with trained interviewers in respondents' homes. A small number of respondents were also interviewed online via postal invitations to the survey. These face-to-face interviews were specifically targeted at groups traditionally under-represented on online panels, and so ensure that survey respondents are as representative as possible of the total adult population of England. The sampling method used isn't a statistical random sample. The sample size was small, varying between 400 and 446 individuals in each service area. So any results provided are only an indication of satisfaction rather than an absolute.

[Survey findings are available on BMG's website.](#)

Service in numbers

A dash in this graphic indicates that a service couldn't give data to us or the Home Office.

Perceived effectiveness of service

We took this data from the following question of the public perceptions survey:

How confident are you, if at all, that the fire and rescue service in your local area provides an effective service overall?

The figure provided is a sum of respondents who stated they were either 'very confident' or 'fairly confident'. Respondents could have also stated 'not very confident', 'not at all confident' or 'don't know'. The percentage of 'don't know' responses varied between services (ranging from 5 percent to 14 percent).

Due to its small residential population, we didn't include the Isles of Scilly in the survey.

Incidents attended per 1,000 population

We took this data from the Home Office fire statistics, '[Incidents attended by fire and rescue services in England, by incident type and fire and rescue authority](#)' for the period from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018.

Please consider the following points when interpreting outcomes from this data.

- There are six worksheets in this file. The 'FIRE0102' worksheet shows the number of incidents attended by type of incident and fire and rescue authority (FRA) for each financial year. The 'FIRE0102 Quarterly' worksheet shows the number of incidents attended by type of incident and FRA for each quarter. The worksheets 'Data fires', 'Data fire false alarms' and 'Data non-fire incidents' provide the raw data for the two main data tables. The 'Figure 3.3' worksheet provides the data for the corresponding chart in the statistical commentary.
- Fire data, covering all incidents that FRSs attend, is collected by the Incident Recording System (IRS). For several reasons some records take longer than others for FRSs to upload to the IRS. So totals are constantly being amended (by relatively small numbers).
- We took data for Service in numbers from the August 2018 incident publication. So figures may not directly match more recent publications due to data updates.

Home fire risk checks per 1,000 population

We took this data from the Home Office fire statistics, '[Home fire risk checks carried out by fire and rescue authorities and partners, by fire and rescue authority](#)' for the period from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018.

Each FRS's figure is based on the number of checks it carried out and doesn't include checks carried out by partners.

Please consider the following points when interpreting outcomes from this data.

- Dorset FRS and Wiltshire FRS merged to form Dorset and Wiltshire FRS on 1 April 2016. All data for Dorset and Wiltshire before 1 April 2016 is excluded from this report.
- The England total hours figures for 'Number of Fire Risk Checks carried out by FRS' include imputed figures to ensure a robust national figure. These imputed figures are: '2016/17 – Staffordshire'.
- Figures for 'Fire Risk Checks carried out by Elderly (65+)', 'Fire Risk Checks carried out by Disabled' and 'Number of Fire Risk Checks carried out by Partners' don't include imputed figures because a lot of FRAs can't supply these figures.

Home fire risk checks may also be referred to as Home Fire Safety Checks by FRSs.

Fire safety audits per 100 known premises

Fire protection refers to FRSs' statutory role in ensuring public safety in the wider built environment. It involves auditing and, where necessary, enforcing regulatory compliance, primarily but not exclusively in respect of the provisions of the [Regulatory Reform \(Fire Safety\) Order 2005 \(FSO\)](#). The number of safety audits in Service in numbers refers to the number of audits FRSs carried out in known premises.

According to the Home Office definition, “premises known to FRAs are the FRA’s knowledge, as far as possible, of all relevant premises; for the enforcing authority to establish a risk profile for premises in its area. These refer to all premises except single private dwellings”.

We took this from the Home Office fire statistics, '[Fire safety audits carried out by fire and rescue services, by fire and rescue authority](#)' for the period from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018.

Please consider the following points when interpreting outcomes from this data.

- Berkshire FRS didn't provide figures for premises known between 2014/15 and 2017/18.
- Dorset FRS and Wiltshire FRS merged to form Dorset and Wiltshire FRS on 1 April 2016. All data for Dorset and Wiltshire before 1 April 2016 is excluded from this report.
- Several FRAs report 'Premises known to FRAs' as estimates based on historical data.

Firefighter cost per person per year

We took the data to calculate firefighter cost per person per year from the annual financial data returns that individual FRSs complete and submit to CIPFA, and [ONS mid-2017 population estimates](#).

You should consider this data alongside the proportion of firefighters who are wholetime and on-call / retained.

Number of firefighters per 1,000 population, five-year change in workforce and percentage of wholetime firefighters

We took this data from the Home Office fire statistics, '[Total staff numbers \(full-time equivalent\) by role and by fire and rescue authority](#)' as at 31 March 2018.

Table 1102a: Total staff numbers (FTE) by role and fire authority – Wholetime Firefighters and table 1102b: Total staff numbers (FTE) by role and fire authority – Retained Duty System are used to produce the total number of firefighters.

Please consider the following points when interpreting outcomes from this data.

- We calculate these figures using full-time equivalent (FTE) numbers. FTE is a metric that describes a workload unit. One FTE is equivalent to one full-time worker. But one FTE may also be made up of two or more part-time workers whose calculated hours equal that of a full-time worker. This differs from headcount, which is the actual number of the working population regardless if employees work full or part-time.
- Some totals may not aggregate due to rounding.
- Dorset FRS and Wiltshire FRS merged to form Dorset and Wiltshire FRS on 1 April 2016. All data for Dorset and Wiltshire before 1 April 2016 is excluded from this report.

Percentage of female firefighters and black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) firefighters

We took this data from the Home Office fire statistics, '[Staff headcount by gender, fire and rescue authority and role](#)' and '[Staff headcount by ethnicity, fire and rescue authority and role](#)' as at 31 March 2018.

Please consider the following points when interpreting outcomes from this data.

- We calculate BAME residential population data from ONS 2011 census data.
- We calculate female residential population data from ONS mid-2017 population estimates.
- Dorset FRS and Wiltshire FRS merged to form Dorset and Wiltshire FRS on 1 April 2016. All data for Dorset and Wiltshire before 1 April 2016 is excluded from this report.

Annex B – Fire and rescue authority governance

These are the different models of fire and rescue authority (FRA) governance in England. Surrey Fire and Rescue Service is a unitary authority.

Metropolitan FRA

The FRA covers a metropolitan (large urban) area. Each is governed by locally elected councillors appointed from the constituent councils in that area.

Combined FRA

The FRA covers more than one local authority area. Each is governed by locally elected councillors appointed from the constituent councils in that area.

County FRA

Some county councils are defined as FRAs, with responsibility for fire and rescue service provision in their area.

Unitary authorities

These combine the usually separate council powers and functions for non-metropolitan counties and non-metropolitan districts. In such counties, a separate fire authority runs the fire services. This is made up of councillors from the county council and unitary councils.

London

Day-to-day control of London's fire and rescue service is the responsibility of the London fire commissioner, accountable to the Mayor. A Greater London Authority committee and the Deputy Mayor for Fire scrutinise the commissioner's work. The Mayor may arrange for the Deputy Mayor to exercise his fire and rescue functions.

Mayoral Combined Authority

Only in Greater Manchester. The Combined Authority is responsible for fire and rescue functions but with those functions exercised by the elected Mayor. A fire and rescue committee supports the Mayor in exercising non-strategic fire and rescue functions. This committee is made up of members from the constituent councils.

Police, fire and crime commissioner FRA

The police, fire and rescue commissioner is solely responsible for the service provision of fire & rescue and police functions.

Isles of Scilly

The Council of the Isles of Scilly is the FRA for the Isles of Scilly.

