

# Fife Fire and Rescue Authority

## Performance Audit Report 2006

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# Executive summary

1. Fife Fire and Rescue (the FRA) is a service of Fife Council and operates in a mixed urban and rural environment. The FRA has a clear vision based on the principles outlined in the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland and tailored to suit local needs. Capacity in specific areas of its work has been enhanced through the use of council resources, partnership working and participation in the South East Scotland Collaboration Group (SECG). Performance management is underdeveloped and the FRA needs to put in place coherent and comprehensive performance management arrangements linked to its strategic objectives.
2. Fife Council's Community Safety Committee has the delegated powers to act as the fire authority, and members are generally committed and supportive. The Committee itself has a broad remit, the amount of time on the agenda devoted to fire and rescue is constrained and there is often limited opportunity for challenge and debate.
3. The FRA's Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) is informing the delivery of community safety initiatives, both independently and in partnership with others. These are having a positive impact against a range of indicators including significant reductions in hoax calls and wilful fire raising. The FRA is also starting to make good progress in the delivery of Home Fire Safety Assessments (HFSAs) targeted at areas of greatest risk. The FRA monitors and maps all community fire safety activities which enables more effective targeting of at risk households by the FRA or appropriate partner agencies.
4. The FRA can demonstrate good preparation for undertaking its responsibilities under Part 3 of the Fire Scotland Act. In particular, the FRA is making good use of its position as a service of Fife Council through developing collaborative relations with other services to ensure the audit and inspection responsibilities under Part 3 are discharged.
5. The FRA has made good progress on improving its financial management since the 2004 Accounts Commission Phase 2 Verification. The revenue budget setting and monitoring process is robust with input from FRA departments and the Senior Management Team, Fife Council management team and members.
6. Implementation of some important HR policies has been slow, partly as a result of resourcing difficulties which have now been resolved. The FRA has made good progress on implementing the Integrated Personal Development System (IPDS) to wholtime and retained personnel and in the roll-out of PDRPro. However, the development of policies and options for flexible working has been slow, despite this being part of the Heads of Agreement.



7. The FRA is clearly committed to improving internal communication but progress has been slow, and the FRA needs to do more to develop its approach to both internal and external consultation. The FRA's approach to Public Performance Reporting (PPR) provides a sound basis from which to develop the work required to comply fully with Best Value guidance.
  
8. Overall, the FRA has made reasonable progress since the 2004 Accounts Commission Phase 2 Verification. It has taken an incremental approach to IRMP, made progress on IPDS and put in place a number of operational policies to improve efficiency and effectiveness. It now needs to improve its performance management and build a culture of continuous improvement.



# Introduction

## Background

9. Fire and rescue authorities across the UK are undergoing an extensive programme of modernisation following the National Joint Council (NJC) agreement on pay and conditions in 2003. This programme of change reflects a more targeted and risk-based approach to prevention, protection and emergency response.
10. As part of the NJC agreement, the Accounts Commission undertook a verification exercise to examine whether the intended benefits of the various national changes under modernisation were being delivered locally. This was conducted in two phases during 2004 with reports on progress produced in March and October of that year<sup>1</sup>.
11. The second verification on the progress of modernisation reported that progress was being made in Scotland and that the building blocks were in place. However, the report concluded there was still a significant amount of work to be done before real change would be delivered on the ground. As a result, the Accounts Commission asked Audit Scotland to undertake a performance audit on the Scottish fire and rescue authorities during 2006 to include a review of the overall outcomes of modernisation.
12. Following the NJC agreement, new legislation was enacted in Scotland (The Fire (Scotland) Act 2005) which provides the statutory framework to enable fire and rescue authorities in Scotland to modernise their services. The 2005 Act is accompanied by a statutory Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland, finalised in September 2005, which sets out the priorities, objectives and guidance for the fire and rescue service.
13. With enabling legislation and a new statutory framework in place, the Commission agreed a project brief for a national performance audit of Scottish fire and rescue authorities in February 2006. The overall focus of the audit should be the extent to which fire and rescue authorities are achieving the objectives of modernisation, and in particular whether:
  - Integrated Risk Management Plans (IRMPs) are effectively supporting the change in emphasis from intervention to prevention; and

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<sup>1</sup> Accounts Commission (2004) Scottish Fire Services. verification of the progress of modernisation (March) and the second verification of the progress of modernisation (October)



- the progress to modernisation is reflected in the culture of the organisation.
14. During the summer of 2006, an Audit Scotland performance audit team visited all eight fire and rescue authorities in Scotland. In each authority, the audit team conducted an extensive range of interviews, reviewed relevant documents and analysed performance information. The audit team reviewed six areas of performance:
- Strategic management
  - Fire prevention and risk management
  - Financial management
  - Workforce management
  - Management of operational business
  - Communication
15. This local audit report presents our findings and conclusions against these six areas for Fife Fire and Rescue Authority. A national report summarising our findings for all Scottish fire and rescue authorities will be published in February 2007.
16. In concluding the local audit work, Audit Scotland reviewed the inspection report on Fife FRA by Her Majesty's Fire Service Inspectorate for Scotland (HMFSIS). The inspection was carried out in October 2004 with a follow-up inspection in November 2005.
17. We gratefully acknowledge the co-operation and assistance provided to the audit team by the many councillors, FRA staff and other stakeholders who assisted us in our work.

## Local context

18. Fife Fire and Rescue Authority comprises an area of 1,325 sq Km or 1.7% of the landmass of Scotland. The region has a population of 356,740, 6.9% of Scotland's population as at 2005. The region is diverse, covering towns such as Glenrothes, Kirkcaldy, Dunfermline and St Andrews as well as dispersed rural areas. The population is becoming more dispersed, with the inhabitants of larger towns moving outwards into the suburbs and rural areas.
19. While Fife's population has remained static overall in recent years, it is projected to increase by 9% by 2024. There have also been significant population movements and structural changes which are likely



to continue. The proportion of older people in Fife's population is growing, life expectancy is increasing and the birth rate is falling.

20. The 2001 census identified a minority ethnic population of 4,426 in Fife, nearly a 50% increase on the previous census and constituting 1.3% of Fife's total population. This population is dispersed across Fife.
21. There is a strong link between living in an area of deprivation and being at risk from fire. The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) is the Scottish Executive's official tool for identifying small areas of concentrations of multiple deprivations across all of Scotland. The SIMD 2006 divides Scotland up into 6,505 small geographical areas (called 'data zones'), with a median population of 769.
22. Fife has 10% of its population living in 15% of the most deprived data zones in Scotland. Over a third of households in Fife live on less than £10,000 per annum and only a quarter of Fife's households have an income above £20,000. There are increasingly high levels of economic inactivity in central Fife and the former coalfield areas. The links between social and economic deprivation and increased activities for FRAs, in terms of hoax calls and wilful fire raising, are well established. The current economic position in central Fife requires an increased focus by Fife Fire and Rescue Authority on prevention activities in these areas of deprivation and risk.

## The Fire and Rescue Authority

23. Fife Fire and Rescue Service is a service of Fife Council. The Community Safety Committee of Fife Council is the Fire and Rescue Authority and is made up of 24 councillors. The Committee has a Labour majority and is chaired by a Labour Councillor. There is a Community Safety Scrutiny Sub-Committee with nine elected members which is chaired by a Liberal Democrat Councillor.
24. The Fire and Rescue Authority's net revenue expenditure for 2005/06 was £23.9m with a capital expenditure of £1.75m. Fife Council control the monies allocated to the FRA under GAE and have consistently provided a budget to the FRA that is less than the GAE allocation.
25. As at 31 March 2006, Fife FRA had an overall staffing contingent of 553; of these 386 were wholetime firefighters and a further 104 were retained duty system firefighters, 21 were control staff and a further 42 were non-uniform staff<sup>2</sup> (7.6% of the total staff contingent). The FRA employed 63 female staff, 11.4% of the total staff contingent.

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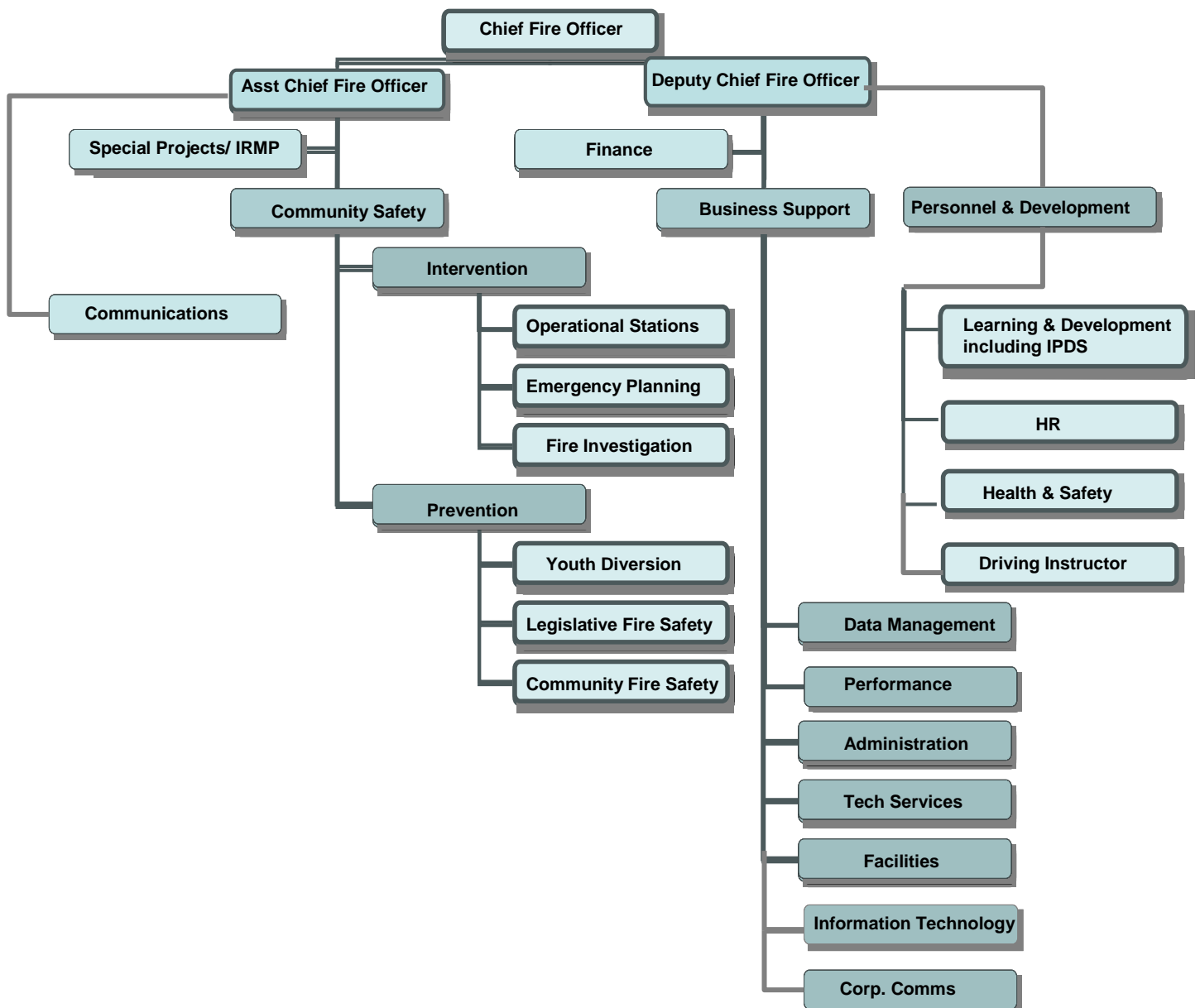
<sup>2</sup> In this report, the term non-uniformed is used to describe only those staff who are not subject to the NJC Schemes of Conditions of Service Sixth edition 2004. We have used this term in the absence of any nationally agreed description for this group of staff. Some FRAs use 'support staff' and/or 'corporate staff'.



26. The FRA has recently changed its structure to combine the Community Safety, Legislative Fire Safety and Operations departments into a single Community Safety Department. This has been done to emphasise and embed the changes from intervention to prevention in the service (Exhibit 1).

**Exhibit 1**

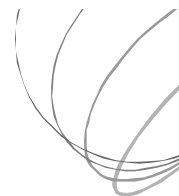
**Organisational structure of Fife Fire and Rescue Service**



Source: adapted from Fife Fire and Rescue Service

27. In 2005/06, the FRA responded to 6,586 incidents including 878 primary fires, 1,972 secondary fires and 657 special service incidents, including road traffic collisions (RTCs). Nearly half of these incidents (3,018) were false alarms, the vast majority of which were due to automatic fire alarm





activations. The number of primary fires attended by the FRA in 2005/06 marks a reduction of 11.5% from the previous year's total of 986.



# Part 1: Strategic Management

## Key findings

- The FRA has a clear strategic direction which recognises the requirements of the national framework and is designed to meet local needs. There is a clear strategic planning framework, but there is scope for better integration between the FRA's strategic and service plans.
- The remit of the Fife Community Safety Committee, acting as the Fire and Rescue Authority, is very wide. The committee deals with Police, Trading Standards, Environmental Health and other related services. As a result, time on the agenda devoted to fire and rescue issues is constrained and there is often limited opportunity for challenge and debate.
- The FRA does not have a robust approach to performance management. The use of performance information to drive continuous improvement is fragmented and is not linked to the FRA's strategic objectives.

## Strategic direction

28. The FRA has developed a mission and strategic aims that show a clear understanding of its role as set out in the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 and National Framework. The FRA has a clear and comprehensive planning framework set within the context of the Fife Community Plan and Fife Council improvement plan.
29. The FRA's mission of "Making Fife Safer" is also the core vision of the Fife Community Safety Strategy. The FRA has translated this vision into five strategic aims:
  - Prevention and risk management
  - Intervention
  - Workforce development
  - Resilience and New Dimensions
  - Continuous improvement in performance.
30. The mission and strategic aims of the FRA clearly reflect the role that a modern FRA should perform in moving from intervention to prevention and show an understanding of the broad change agenda it is facing, including considerations of equal opportunities and Best Value criteria. However, the vision is not prominent across FRA documentation, and the FRA's annual report for 2005/06 does not give prominence to the mission or strategic aims of the FRA.



31. There is scope for better integration between service planning and strategic objectives, as the links between the FRA's strategic aims and objectives and its Service Improvement Plan, IRMP and departmental action plans are not always clear. The FRA has yet to develop station and watch plans.
32. The FRA's planning framework identifies how strategic aims are cascaded down to strategic objectives, departmental objectives and action plans and supported by performance monitoring and information processes. The planning cycle is clearly laid out as part of Fife Council's overall planning cycle. The FRA holds two managers' away days a year, as part of the service planning cycle. However, while senior managers demonstrate a clear understanding of and commitment to the FRA's strategic direction, this is less evident among departmental and operational staff.
33. Fife Council has adopted the EFQM Business Excellence Model as its approach to organisational development and quality management, and the fire and rescue service is participating in the roll out of this initiative. The service has been implementing the action plan developed following the initial assessment undertaken in 2003. However the review of the action plan has been delayed as a result of a lack of available assessors within the Council. The FRA is now employing an officer for 12 months to take EFQM forward, but the speed of progress is dependent on the further assessors being trained by the Council.

## Leadership and governance

34. The FRA has clear governance arrangements and operates under the Fife Council scheme of delegation. This covers both a generic scheme of delegation as well as specific powers delegated to the Chief Fire Officer (CFO)<sup>3</sup>.
35. Fife Fire and Rescue is a service within Fife Council. The Fife Community Safety Committee (CSC) acts as the Fire and Rescue Authority. The remit of this Committee is very wide, dealing with a range of subjects including Police, Trading Standards, and Environmental Health as well as fire and rescue issues. As a result, the amount of time on the agenda devoted to fire is constrained and there is often limited opportunity for challenge and debate. Typically, less than a third of the agenda items relate to fire (usually placed at the end of the agenda) and there are often over 30 items for a two-hour meeting. While the FRA considers that the wide range of services covered by the CSC promotes partnership working, this arrangement limits the time available to members to fulfil their duty in relation to the delivery of effective service reform and Best Value within the fire and rescue service.

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<sup>3</sup> Fife Council Scheme of Delegation —effective from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2004.



36. The Community Safety Scrutiny Sub-Committee has been established to replace the Community Safety Scrutiny Group. These were established to improve the scrutiny of Council services and to assist main committees in holding officers to account. The Sub-Committee has met monthly since March 2006. However, neither the Scrutiny Group nor the Scrutiny Sub-Committee has focused its agenda on the FRA. No specific issues in the Sub-Committee's future work programme have been identified specific to the FRA. The Sub-Committee has to date only considered fire and rescue issues in terms of a review of financial reports from both fire and rescue and the police in September 2006.
37. Given the limited time available on the CSC agenda for fire issues, it is of particular importance that members are fully aware of their responsibilities towards the fire and rescue service. The FRA delivers two development day workshops per annum to inform and educate members on a wide range of fire and rescue issues. These are offered to all members, but only half have attended such training.
38. The FRA has not undertaken a training needs analysis to identify any development needs of members to ensure they are properly prepared to fulfil their duties as members of a fire and rescue authority. Addressing training needs, as well as recognising the skills that members bring to their roles, is important in promoting effective engagement of members and realising their full potential for the benefit of the FRA.
39. The FRA and CSC have also not considered appointing lead members with distinct responsibilities on specific fire and rescue issues within the Committee and Scrutiny Sub-Committee, for example, in IRMP, performance management or diversity and equality. This approach has been effective in other FRAs in building understanding and involvement among elected members. The FRA may wish to address these issues in preparing for and following local government elections in May 2007.
40. However, there is a positive relationship between the Convenor and CFO and they meet on a regular basis. Members are active locally, attending community safety and other fire and rescue events.
41. The CFO is a Head of Service within Fife Council and sits on the Fife Heads of Service Forum. There is a regular programme of meetings between the CFO and the Chief Executive of Fife Council, scheduled on a bi-monthly basis.

## Performance management

42. The FRA's use of performance information to drive continuous improvement is fragmented and unsystematic resulting in an undeveloped approach to performance management. The FRA's strategic and service objectives are not underpinned by relevant performance information to enable progress to be assessed.



43. The Service Management Team currently receives a quarterly planning and performance review update. This identifies IRMP actions which are not progressing as planned, with explanations as to the reason, and includes information on numbers of incidents and performance against Statutory Performance Indicators. However the performance information presented is unstructured and not linked to service objectives. It is therefore difficult for senior management or members of the CSC to assess the performance of the organisation as a whole.
44. The FRA has so far made little use of the new suite of local performance indicators (LPIs) agreed by CFOA(S) for implementation from April 2006. These are intended to allow fire and rescue authorities in Scotland to benchmark their performance against each other, and cover areas such as fire prevention, the diversity of the workforce and attacks on firefighters.
45. Once a structured approach to performance management is agreed, the FRA will need to consider the procurement of software to enable the service to realise the full potential of the new approach.
46. The lack of robust performance management arrangements may limit the impact of Fife Council's Contribution Management initiative (which links personal performance and development to team, service and corporate objectives) currently being rolled out to all services, including fire and rescue. The FRA will need to develop a more systematic and rigorous approach to service planning and performance management if the full potential of Contribution Management is to be realised.
47. The approach to corporate risk management taken by the FRA is that adopted by Fife Council as a whole. Currently, the links between the contents of the FRA's risk register with the Service Improvement Plan and IRMP, especially in the areas of Prevention and Risk Management in Resilience and New Dimensions, are not clear. The FRA has made good progress recently on finalising its business continuity plan.



# Part 2: Fire prevention and risk management

## Key findings

- Fife FRA's IRMP clearly shows a shift in emphasis from intervention to prevention, and the first year has generated some tangible benefits including resource efficiencies and redeployment of staff.
- Community safety initiatives are having a positive impact across a range of indicators and the FRA is making progress on the delivery of Home Fire Safety Assessments. The FRA has developed a Community Fire Safety database which enables effective targeting of vulnerable households and tracks the impact of community safety activities.
- The FRA is clearly committed to partnership working; however there is a need to develop a strategic approach to partnership working to ensure resources are being used to best effect.
- The FRA has taken a robust and risk based approach to prioritising the additional responsibilities arising from Part 3 of the Fire Scotland Act. The FRA is making good use of Service Level Agreements with other services of the Council to ensure that the full range of inspections required under the Act can be delivered.

## Integrated Risk Management Planning (IRMP)

48. Fife FRA's strategic IRMP clearly shows the intention of the FRA to shift from intervention to prevention. However, the IRMP action plans lack SMART objectives and targets so it is difficult for the FRA to track and assess the overall progress and impact of the IRMP to date.
49. Exhibit 2 illustrates the key themes and objectives for Prevention and Risk Management in the IRMP's Action Plan for 2006/07.




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## Exhibit 2

### Fife FRA's Service Objectives – Prevention and Risk Management

#### Key Themes:

- Reduce death and injury by raising fire safety awareness in the home
- Reduce the incidence of fire
- Reducing number of road traffic collisions
- Engaging with young people
- Engaging with the business community and other partners

#### How we intend to achieve this:

- Target vulnerable groups through data analysis
- Carry out Home Fire Safety Risk Assessments and the fitment of Smoke Detectors
- Undertake “hot strikes” following fires in the home
- Raise awareness of the dangers of fire through education
- In partnership, drive down the number of road traffic collisions on Fife's roads through education
- Target fire setting in association with Safer Neighbourhoods
- Interact with youths through DiversFIRE project

*Source: Fife Fire and Rescue Service IRMP Action Plan 2006/07*

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50. The FRA has made effective use of FSEC data and has been able to target prevention activities to drive a decrease in incident activity in key areas such as malicious calls, secondary fires and secondary mobilisation of appliances. The FRA also uses the geographical information system (GIS) software MapInfo alongside FSEC data to undertake more predictive analysis. MapInfo is a powerful tool for capturing and depicting a wide range of incident and risk data in a digestible map or bar chart format. This information can be provided on a range of scales from a map of the whole of Fife down to a particular street in a housing estate. Detailed aerial photographs as an optional ‘underlay’ to the data bring the information to life and make it easier to grasp the link between the data and geography of an area.
51. There is clear evidence that FSEC data has been used to assist the transition from intervention to prevention. Specifically, this has been achieved by improved targeting of resources, an increase in smoke alarm ownership, better information sharing with Housing Services and an increase in Home Fire Safety Assessments. Census data is also used to target higher risk groups including the elderly and those in rented accommodation. Recently FSEC information has been used effectively to inform proposals on the future of the fire station at Dunfermline.



52. FSEC data also informed the review of duty systems which resulted in an increased number of workable hours for operational crews. These additional hours are being used for community safety initiatives at a local level.

## Implementation of IRMP

53. The FRA's first IRMP generated a number of tangible benefits including:
- The introduction of a call management policy leading to a reduction in malicious hoax calls of 45% between 2003/04 and 2005/06.
  - A reduction in incidents of wilful fire raising by 33.8% between 2004/05 and 2005/06
  - A review and new policy on responses to automatic fire alarms resulting in a reduction in Pre-Determined Attendance across almost all premises in Fife, generating resource efficiencies for redeployment in the FRA.
  - A comprehensive review of the provision and use of the two Aerial Ladder Platforms used by the FRA which enabled the redeployment of eight fire fighters.
  - The merger of three departments, Community Safety, Legislative Fire Safety and Operations, into one Community Safety Department to assist in embedding the shift in emphasis from intervention to prevention within the service.
  - The rollout of Home Fire Safety Assessments to over 5,000 homes across the Fife region.
54. The FRA delivered 1,893 Home Fire Safety Assessments (HFSA), targeting areas of higher risk households, in 2005/06 which represents 1.2% of households in Fife. However, this is down from 2003/04 when 3,143 HFSA's were undertaken (2% of total households). The FRA should reconsider its approach to increase the rate of HFSA's undertaken. The FRA has recently set HFSA targets for each wholetime station which should assist in increasing coverage. The FRA should also consider making more effective use of retained crews in undertaking these assessments and installing smoke detectors.
55. The FRA is building a sound understanding of the safety risks faced by the communities it serves and this has led to the introduction of a range of initiatives, including the bonfire initiative Operation Phoenix, the Singing Kettle fire safety DVD and 'Safe Drive Stay Alive' promoting safer driving to young people.
56. Operation Phoenix, an initiative targeted at bonfire incidents in 2004, resulted in a significant reduction in incidents. There were no incidents of misuse of fireworks within Kirkcaldy High School for the first time in 16 years, a reduction to zero of illegal bonfires during the school October holiday (from 17 in





the previous year) and a reduction in the number of attacks on fire fighters. The initiative is being continued as an annual multi-agency activity.

57. The Safe Drive Stay Alive initiative, which started in 2002, targets 16—24 year-olds as inexperienced drivers are at greater risk of involvement in RTCs than more experienced drivers. The initiative is delivered as a road show to every fifth year pupil in Fife and has been attended by 3,500 pupils each year. The road show costs approximately £14,000 and is fully funded through private sector sponsorship.
58. However, road traffic collisions (RTCs) have increased from 193 in 2004/05 to 210 in 2005/06, an increase of 9%, indicating a limited impact of current road safety initiatives, and a need for the FRA to continue its risk prevention work in this area.
59. The FRA has been successful in attracting additional funding for community fire safety work, in particular from other Council departments and through the community planning partnership. However, such funds are short-term solutions to the longer-term agenda of sustaining the increased emphasis on community fire safety work. The FRA needs to consider how funding for community safety activity can be sustained in the medium and longer term.
60. In October 2006, Part 3 of the Fire Scotland Act brought in new responsibilities for FRAs in terms of fire risk inspection and enforcing compliance. The new legislation puts a statutory responsibility on property owners or managers for ensuring the safety of people in their workplaces or other non-domestic premises (such as residential care homes or houses of multiple occupations) in the event of a fire. Fire and rescue authorities are responsible for enforcing the new legislation and ensuring owners are adequately fulfilling their statutory responsibilities. This has implications both in knowing which premises within their area are subject to the new legislation and in establishing a new inspection framework.
61. Fife FRA has taken a robust and risk based approach to prioritisation of the additional responsibilities for audit and inspection arising from the new legislation. The business plan prepared by the FRA for implementation of Part 3 of the Fire Scotland Act identifies that the full range of inspections will only be possible within existing budgets through the development of Service Level Agreements with other departments of the Council - Planning, Housing and Social Work - which are now being set up. This is a clear example of the FRA using the advantages of being part of a larger organisation.

## Partnership working

62. The FRA is committed to working in partnership and is engaged in a wide range of partnerships, both at strategic and local levels. The FRA participates in the Fife Community Safety Partnership which is part of Fife's Community Planning structure and, in particular, the Community Fire Safety Task Group.



The FRA has recently put in place a more systematic approach to assessing the potential and actual benefits of community safety partnership working, in particular in relation to new partnerships. However, it has yet to develop a partnership register, and there is no overall strategic approach or formal policy on partnership working. The FRA is therefore unable to demonstrate the extent to which partnership activities are contributing to and supporting the delivery of its strategic objectives.

63. The FRA undertakes targeted partnership initiatives such as DiversiFIRE, which aims to reduce secondary fire-setting and malicious false alarm calls by young people through raising awareness about fire safety. The FRA contributes to the Fife Community Safety Partnership's "Safer Neighbourhoods" project targeting anti-social behaviour in collaboration with teams from the Police, Housing and Racial Incidents services. Fife Constabulary and Fife FRA also work closely together on a number of initiatives, including the Safer Fifer initiative and 'Safe Drive, Stay Alive'.
64. The FRA has also participated in a range of joint work led by other council departments. For example, 'Fife Cares', is a multi agency initiative to reach elderly residents with safety advice. Feedback from local communities suggests this initiative is working effectively.
65. The FRA has developed a Community Fire Safety database to map and monitor both the FRA's community fire safety activities and those undertaken by other services (for example, social work) against the geographical information systems. The database records who have received HFSA's and enable the targeting of at risk households by any of the appropriate partnership agencies. The database is an innovative approach which also has the potential to provide more effective performance management of partnership activities.



# Part 3: Financial management

## Key Findings

- The FRA has made good progress on improving its financial management since the 2004 Accounts Commission Phase 2 Verification. The revenue budget setting and monitoring process is robust, with input from FRA departments, the FRA management team, Fife Council management team and members. The budget setting process clearly identifies items resulting from IRMP actions.
- The FRA has not been funded to GAE for several years; however the Council plans to close the gap by 2008/09. Funding below GAE has not caused the FRA any significant difficulty in implementing the modernisation process to date. The Council fully funds pay awards, offset by transitional funding being retained centrally, and the FRA manages modernisation issues through efficiency savings.
- Planning and monitoring of capital spending is sound with a five year capital plan in place. Capital planning follows the themes in the FRA's IRMP, as well as Council Improvement Plan, and the Community Plan.

## Financial position

66. The FRA's net expenditure in 2005/06 was £23.9 million, equating to £67.40 per head of population. This is slightly above the Scottish average of £59.45 per head of population.
67. Approximately 8.1% (£2.0 million) of the FRA's expenditure is funded from income generated during the year. This includes fire fighters' pension contributions, transfer values, secondment to the Scottish Fire College, and miscellaneous income in relation to the supply of services such as commercial training and the provision of chargeable services. Trading accounts are maintained for chargeable services. The FRA has also accessed funds from other Council services and the Community Safety Partnership for one-off and continuing programmes.
68. The FRA has not been funded to GAE for several years. However the Council plans to close the gap, so that by 2008/09 the FRA will be funded closer to the GAE level. Following the 2004 Accounts Commission Phase 2 Verification report the Community Safety Committee considered the Business Plan 2004-05 to 2007-08 and decided that the FRA would be exempt from any council-wide imposed budget reduction (the Collective Challenge), and that any efficiency savings generated by the Service should be retained for reinvestment. The Council fully funds pay awards, offset by transitional funding being retained centrally, and the FRA manages modernisation issues through efficiency savings that it implements. This arrangement still recognises that the IRMP is the responsibility of the Fire and Rescue Authority and flexibility would need to be maintained if the FRA could not absorb the costs of



modernisation. Funding below GAE has not caused the FRA any significant difficulty in implementing the modernisation process to date.

69. In the last three financial years the FRA has under spent its budget. In 2005/06 the under spend of £810,000 was due primarily to the difficulty in forecasting the financial impact of retirals and transfers (£517,000) and staffing vacancies and secondments (£292,000). In 2004/05 the FRA contributed £80,000 of its under spend to the Council's Change Fund, reducing their carry forward figure by this amount. The total under spend in 2005/06 of £292,000 after commitments for the pension fund, has been restricted by £46,000 allowing a carry forward figure of £246,000. The £46,000 will remain in the General Fund.
70. The Council participates in the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) and the Firefighters' Pension Scheme, in respect of pension schemes for employees within the fire and rescue service. The underlying assets and liabilities for retirement benefits covered by the LGPS are not readily distinguishable for the FRA from those of other Council employees. By contrast, pension liabilities for the Firefighters' Scheme are identifiable for each FRA; this was £154 million for Fife as at March 2006.

## Financial pressures

71. The financial pressures faced by the FRA have to be viewed in the context of those facing the Council as a whole. While the FRA is currently exempted from the Council's Collective Challenge to identify budget savings, this situation may change in future as budget pressures on the Council as a whole increase. The FRA has contained the currently known cost pressures in their allocated budget.
72. Transitional funding of £2.810 million has been allocated to Fife Council during the period from 2004/05 to 2007/08. This has been retained centrally by the Council, and the Council will manage absorption of transitional funding within its overall budget management process. This funding mechanism is advantageous to the FRA as it gives some protection from any allocation volatility.

## Budget setting and monitoring

73. As a service of Fife Council the FRA's funding arrangements are governed by the Council's budget setting process. The Council process involves all services in identifying areas where additional funding is required and areas for potential savings. Service needs and scope for efficiency savings are assessed through a series of officer and member meetings, culminating in a balanced budget being presented for Council discussion and ultimate approval.
74. The revenue budget setting process is robust, with input from the FRA departments, the FRA management team (SMT), Fife Council management team (FMT) and members. Zero based



budgeting is not used; however allocation of resources, identification of cost pressures and potential savings are linked to the Service Plan. To balance the budget in 2006/07 priority has been given to prevention and risk management to improve safety in communities. The cost pressures and potential savings considered during budget setting include items that can be directly identified as resulting from IRMP actions. Cost implications of further IRMP reviews will be incorporated into the budget setting process as they are identified. Option appraisals contain financial considerations.

75. There are clearly identified lines of accountability for financial matters. The CFO is accountable to Fife Council for financial affairs. He has delegated overall management of the finance function to the Deputy Chief Fire Officer, and the Area Manger (Business Support) is responsible for retaining the corporate overview of revenue and capital expenditure. The FRA receives support in financial matters from the Local Services Accounting Team of the Council's Finance and Asset Management Service. The accountant is heavily involved in the budget setting and monitoring process with the SMT and budget holders.
76. Good arrangements are in place to devolve financial management. Staged devolved financial management arrangements were introduced in 2003/04 and continue to be extended, with plans to take this to station level for 2006/07. Training has taken place and more is planned for the devolved budget holders. All budget holders will be involved in the next round of planning and budget setting. At the time of the audit visit there were still a number of training sessions to be held and it is important that these take place as planned.
77. Sound revenue budget monitoring arrangements are in place both at FRA and Council levels. At FRA level, monitoring information is provided every four weeks to all budget holders. Financial monitoring information is also presented to the Community Safety Committee twice per year and to the Scrutiny Sub-Committee on a quarterly basis. Appropriate action to manage the budget is taken at each stage of the monitoring process.

## Procurement

78. The FRA uses a number of approaches to get best value from its purchasing. It participates both in schemes negotiated by Fife Council, when this is advantageous, and uses nationally negotiated contracts through the South East Scotland Collaboration Group, in conjunction with the Fire and Rescue Authorities of Central Scotland, Dumfries and Galloway, and Lothian and Borders.

## Capital Planning and Asset Management

79. Capital financial planning and asset management is undertaken using the Council's processes which are sound. Capital expenditure for the period 2003/04 to 2005/06 totals £4.3 million (£1.252 million in



2003/04; £1.256 million in 2004/05; and £1.79 million in 2005/06). The net book value of the FRA's assets at 31 March 2006 was £13 million.

80. A five year capital plan is in place. Written bids are prepared for all proposed capital projects. These are linked specifically to the Service Plan and contain information about the revenue implications of the project. Bids are summarised and compared to the expected budget that will be allocated before they are considered for inclusion and prioritised within the five year programme. Discussion takes place at the SMT in a similar way to the revenue budget setting.
81. The FRA has identified strengthening of IT as a priority in the current programme. Following agreement at SMT the capital projects are fed into the Council's plan for consideration by the FMT and ultimately the Council. Capital planning for the Council and the FRA follows the themes in the Council Improvement Plan, which are, in turn, linked to the Community Plan.
82. Monitoring of capital spending is sound. Capital monitoring is discussed regularly at the SMT and FMT and is reported twice yearly to the Community Safety Committee. During 2004/05 there was significant slippage in the capital programme due primarily to the late notification from the Scottish Executive of top-slice funding for the upgrading of the HQ building which required the project to be adapted.



# Part 4: Workforce Management

## Key Findings

- The FRA has only recently developed an overall strategy to managing its workforce, and how this links into other plans, including the Service Improvement Plan, is not clear. Implementation of the strategy has been slow, solely due to staffing issues which have now been resolved, but progress on delivery is now improving.
- The FRA has made good progress in the implementation of IPDS and has completed the roll out of rank to role. There are good training opportunities for operational staff in the FRA, and non-uniformed staff benefit from access to Council training facilities.
- The FRA has been slow in developing policies and options for flexible working for operational staff, despite this being part of the Heads of Agreement. However, non-uniformed staff benefit from access to the range of flexible working options available as part of Fife Council's policies.
- The approach to diversity and equality within the FRA lacks a clear structure and strategic approach. Equality and diversity has yet to be mainstreamed into service delivery, although there has been progress on training.

## Workforce planning

83. The FRA has only recently established an HR strategy which has yet to be fully embedded within the service. The strategy is not clearly linked to the FRA's Service Improvement Plan or the IRMP action plan, and requires comprehensive monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to ensure that it is effective. This will be challenging for the FRA given that performance management is underdeveloped throughout the service.
84. The FRA has had a period of instability within the HR team, which has now been resolved with the appointment of a professional HR manager in the summer 2006. This is starting to have a positive impact in taking forward HR issues for the FRA.
85. The FRA also has access to HR support from Fife Council's core HR team and is reliant on the Council's HR policies in many areas such as implementation of the Single Status Agreement, personal development planning through the Council's Contribution Management scheme, equalities and diversity, and discipline and grievance procedures. In many instances, such as discipline and the piloting of grievance procedures, the use of Council procedures has been beneficial. In other instances, such as in equalities and diversity, the reliance on the progress of the Council has resulted in the FRA falling behind the progress of other Fire and Rescue Authorities in Scotland.



86. A worsening of sickness absence figures prompted the FRA to review its approach to attendance management. The percentage of rider shifts lost to sickness rose from 6.2% in 2003/04 (against a Scottish average of 7%) to 9.4% in 2004/05 (Scottish average of 7.4%), the highest percentage in Scotland for that year. However, the percentage of rider shifts lost then reduced to 6.7% in 2005/06 (against a Scottish average of 6.4%). The FRA has recently introduced a new absence management policy, closely aligned to that of Fife Council's absence policy, which places responsibility for absence management onto station and crew managers. Introduction of the new policy is being supported by extensive training, and the impact will be monitored through the use specific performance measures such as the number of early intervention referrals to Occupational Health.

## Support and development of staff

87. Overall, the FRA lacks a structured approach to the support and development of staff. This is now being addressed in the recently approved HR strategy and in the appointment of a professional HR manager. As these are recent developments, their impact to date has been limited.
88. The FRA's Service Improvement Plan (SIP) states that "The Service will work to ensure that all staff are provided with the training and development required to effectively carry out their role in the organisation". While there are only two objectives for employee development: to undertake training needs analysis for support staff and to investigate opportunities for staff to undertake MBA studies within SIP, there are a number of objectives embedded within Learning and Development departmental plans.
89. The FRA continues to make good progress in the rollout of IPDS following the prescribed national approach. It has taken a proactive approach to IPDS implementation including working with other Scottish FRAs. IPDS was incorporated into the Learning and Development teams as part of an organisational restructure in early 2006.
90. The FRA has also made good progress on the roll out of the Fire Fighter Development Programme and the use of PDRPro. PDRPro is now used by both wholetime and retained fire fighters, with wholetime fire fighters using the system for both role evaluation and personal development planning. The introduction of the Fire Fighter Development Programme for retained fire fighters is also making progress but with limited delivery to date. A structured approach to the programme is to be put in place in the second quarter of 2007.
91. The provision of learning and development for control room staff is limited. While the FRA is waiting for confirmation of developments at the national level regarding control rooms, there is scope for a more proactive approach to supporting the development of both staff and service delivery.





92. The FRA took a measured approach to the transition of rank to role and this has been successfully completed across wholetime, retained and control room staff, with only three appeals.
93. The FRA is included within the implementation of Fife Council's personal development planning approach, Contribution Management. Contribution Management provides a mechanism to link together corporate priorities and Service plans with individual work objectives, performance reviews and development opportunities. This is currently being implemented at third tier management levels from the Chief Fire Officer through to Station Managers.
94. Contribution Management is a major Council-wide initiative that intends to make transparent the links between Service objectives and individual employee performance. CFOA(S) is considering adopting this approach in the development of a national appraisal system. As this scheme is currently being implemented, it is too early to assess the impact on performance.

## Flexible working arrangements

95. The implementation of flexible working in Fife FRA has been very limited to date despite it being a requirement of the national pay agreement. There are no flexible working options for uniformed staff, only a 'light duties' option. A review of flexible working options for operational staff is currently underway with a report to SMT in September 2006. However, there was an expectation in the local 2004 Accounts Commission Phase 2 Verification report that this would be completed in time to inform the 2005/06 budget setting.
96. Non-uniformed staff have access to a number of different flexible working options supported through Fife Council policies, including redeployment to other services of the Council. Monitoring of non-uniformed staff working a flexible arrangement is done through a three monthly review.
97. The FRA's training staff, however, have moved to a more flexible shift pattern which better matches operational working patterns, including those of retained staff who require training opportunities on weekends or in half day slots. This has been a beneficial move in terms of training provision, especially for retained fire fighters, as well as resulting in cost savings by reducing the requirements for training staff to work overtime.
98. The FRA has established an overtime policy to provide a framework for proper control and compensation for overtime working, underpinned by clear principles to avoid pre-arranged overtime except to maintain emergency cover and where all other options have been considered.



## Equality and Diversity

99. The FRA does not have a structured and coordinated approach to equality and diversity and does not have effective processes in place for ethnic monitoring of the workforce. While all new policies undergo an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA), there is, as yet, no programme in place for the assessment of existing policies. However, the FRA has made progress on the provision of training in equalities and diversity and in positive action recruitment initiatives.
100. The FRA workforce is not reflective of the communities it serves. By March 2006, the FRA had no members of minority ethnic communities in its workforce, yet 1.3% of the population of Fife are from minority ethnic communities. In addition, women accounted for only 11.55% of all staff (down from 13.3% for 2004/05). The vast majority of women employed by the FRA are control or non-uniformed staff. Women account for just 4.45% of operational fire fighters.
101. The recently recruited HR Manager will take the lead on a range of issues including equality and diversity. The details of these issues are included in the new HR strategy which also outlines the statutory requirements which must be fulfilled and identifies key actions that the FRA would like to achieve.
102. In addition, individual initiatives to take forward the equality and diversity agenda have taken place. 96% of all personnel have attended equality and diversity training run by Fife Council as well as cultural awareness training with Fife Police. A positive action recruitment day was undertaken in March 2006 which attracted 72 attendees of which 45 were women and 13 were from minority ethnic communities. An earlier general recruitment day attracted 471 attendees of which 25 were women and ten were from minority ethnic communities. More work is required to monitor the effectiveness of these events in terms of the profile of applicants.
103. The FRA is an active member of the Fife Interfaith Forum and currently performs the secretariat role. The FRA has also undertaken targeted community fire safety activity with the travelling community to deliver Home Fire Safety Assessments in caravans including fitting smoke detectors.



# Part 5: Management of operational business

## Key Findings

- The FRA is committed to a high quality intervention service and this is reflected in the IRMP action plan objectives. The FRA is shifting its resources from intervention to fire prevention.
- The FRA has implemented some policies to improve efficiency in the use of operational resources, but this needs to be sustained, and opportunities for further efficiencies identified. In particular, there is scope for improved efficiency in reducing the number of AFAs.
- The FRA recognises the benefits of collaborative working and is committed to a number of different ventures with other FRAs.

## Operational Management

104. The FRA is committed to maintaining high quality intervention services while also clearly shifting resources from intervention to prevention activities. The service aims for intervention as stated in the IRMP action plan are:

- Use statistical data to re-direct and deploy resources to community areas requiring our attendance
- Formulate tactical information plans through gathering risk information within our premises and our communities
- Respond to emergency incidents efficiently, effectively and timeously
- Operational resources are readily available within our communities
- Encourage communities to access our fire stations for prevention and education advice.

105. The FRA is working hard to ensure efficiency in its intervention work. For example, changes in response to AFAs has generated 6,000 staff hours for other core duties in addition to a saving of £35,000 from the retained staff costs per annum. The FRA attended 2,293 AFAs in 2005/06, a reduction of 1.3% from the previous year but 12% higher than the figure for 2003/04. As AFAs represent 34.8% of all incidents responded to in 2005/06, the FRA has further work to do to reduce the absolute number of AFA incidents.

106. A review of the crewing of fire engines based on attaining IRMP objectives has led to the removal of three uniformed posts and a further ten posts have been redeployed to other duties.



107. The outcome of the Aerial Ladder Platform (ALP) review will result in the re-deployment of eight operational staff into the FRA's Community Safety Department. This equates to a reinvestment in the FRA of £249,904. This will be achieved through alternative crewing arrangements for the ALP in Dunfermline.
108. Since the national standards of fire cover were removed the FRA has continued to monitor operational response times and report on them publicly. This is reported in 2005/06 as the average response times for two types of incidents - fires and emergency special services (including RTCs). This is the first year response times have been reported in this format and so response times for previous years are not available for comparison.
109. The FRA has a clearly stated commitment to Best Value in terms of accountability, transparency and continuous improvement. Partnership working in particular, is singled out as a mechanism for assisting the FRA in seeking to attain Best Value. The FRA also has an ongoing programme of reviews on specific areas in its operations, support and community safety activities. Previous reviews, such as the review of the ALP, have resulted in tangible benefits of efficiency and effectiveness for the FRA. A review of facilities management for 2006/07 will be conducted in collaboration with the Council's support service.
110. The FRA's approach to Health and Safety (H&S) is to maintain consistency with other Scottish FRA's through CFOA and as a result the H&S provision is effective but not particularly advanced. The FRA has reduced injury rates slightly from a peak of 1,379 per 10,000 employees in 2003/04 to 1,214 per 10,000 employees in 2005/06. This represents a reduction of 11.98%.
111. The number of attacks on fire fighters is a continuing concern for the FRA. While there was a significant decrease in attacks from 17 in 2003/04 to 3 in 2004/05, the number of attacks then increased again to 32 in 2005/06. A more robust reporting regime may partly account for this increase. The FRA recognises this is a significant problem and is putting plans in place to address this.

## Collaborative Working

112. The FRA is involved in a range of collaborations with other FRA's. The CFO leads on the Workforce Portfolio for CFOA Scotland with the Deputy Chief Fire Officer leading on the Learning and Development Business Stream within that Portfolio.
113. The FRA works through the South-East Scotland Collaboration Group (SECG) of four FRA's — Central, Dumfries and Galloway, Lothian and Borders and Fife. The SECG is in the early stages of developing policies and procedures which each FRA can share and which should be more cost-effective than each FRA working separately, bringing benefits to individual FRA's and the service as a whole. The FRA acknowledges the need to keep its time-investment in the SECG under review.



Working groups have now been established to review and examine the arrangements in the following areas, which are all areas where the FRA would benefit from increased capacity:

- Driver training provision
- Health and Safety audit and support arrangements
- Specialist personnel/HR support
- Specialist training delivery
- Staff development
- Procurement

114. The FRA has some concerns about overall cost-benefit of some areas of collaboration. For example, the collaboration on occupational health provision with Central and Lothian and Borders FRAs has recently been reviewed to ensure it provides value for Fife FRA, and a new Service Level Agreement has been approved by the Senior Management Team. The FRA also had concerns about some aspects of the recent recruitment collaboration with Central, Lothian and Borders and Dumfries and Galloway FRAs. While the collaboration led to an increased quality of applicants, it entailed a considerable amount of additional work. However, the FRA is continuing the collaboration for the next round of recruitment as it will have increased recruitment needs and should therefore prove more cost-effective.

115. The FRA has Memoranda of Understanding with both the Coastguard and Police for areas of mutual operations, such as cliff rescues and fire investigation.

116. The FRA's success with the "Safe Drive, Stay Alive" initiative has been shared with a number of other FRA's. These other FRA's, with the assistance of private sector partners, are considering delivering this initiative within their respective areas.



# Part 6: Communication

## Key Findings

- The FRA has identified communications as poor across the organisation. In addition, staff are not effectively engaged in setting the strategic direction of the FRA. A new communications strategy is being prepared and interim measures to improve communications are being implemented.
- The FRA is committed to communicating with external stakeholders, but more work is required to ensure that this is effective and adds value. The Public Performance Reporting by the FRA is comprehensive but requires further work to meet fully the Best Value criteria.
- The FRA has, until recently, placed limited strategic emphasis on Information Technology (IT) in improving service delivery. The FRA is now undertaking a significant effort to renew its IT and ensure it is capable of meeting its strategic needs, and is integrated with existing Fife Council systems. However, this will take time to be implemented and embedded in the FRA.

## Internal communication

117. Currently internal communications in the FRA are uncoordinated and fragmented. Communication methods tend to be conventional rather than innovative and internal staff consultation is minimal. In recognition of this, the FRA undertook a review of internal communications and is in the process of developing a strategy to address identified shortcomings; however, this does not include consideration of staff consultation.
118. To improve communications in the short term, a new approach has been implemented based on team briefings, and the FRA has appointed a staff member with specific responsibility for corporate communications. A newsletter, *Ignite*, was also launched in June 2006. The FRA consulted operational staff on what to include, enhancing the attractiveness of the newsletter. FRA staff also have access to FISH (Fife Council's web site) as well as notice boards and specific bulletins, such as on H&S issues. These are all recent developments and are yet to be embedded in the FRA. There is also an existing annual programme of station visits by senior managers.
119. Staff within the FRA have not been widely or systematically involved in the development of corporate objectives including the IRMP. The objectives of the FRA have been developed by senior management and then communicated to staff, who, as a result, do not feel involved in the development of the direction of the FRA.



## External communication

120. The FRA's approach to communicating and engaging with external stakeholders is under developed. While there have been improvements in how the FRA presents itself to the public, its approach to consultation is conventional and it has made limited use of wider expertise within the Council.
121. The FRA has had limited success in explaining the vision of IRMP to the public of Fife. Public response to the formal consultation on IRMP was mixed. The CFO held a number of public meetings but some were cancelled due to lack of attendance.
122. The appointment of a communications and media specialist should assist in raising the profile of the FRA with the local media and communities. The FRA is also represented on the group responsible for the content of Fife Council's two newsletters, *Voice for Us* and *Fife Life*. However, it is too early to assess whether the FRA is attracting more positive local press coverage and profile.
123. Section 13 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 2003, imposes a duty on local authorities, police and fire services to make arrangements for reporting to the public on the outcomes of their performance, known as public performance reporting (PPR). The FRA's annual report is the primary vehicle for communicating directly to the public. This contains a large amount of contextual information and comprehensive data on activity levels such as the number and type of incidents. The report gives a clear indication of how performance trends are moving using a basic traffic lights system, making it easy for the reader to understand overall performance trends (although no performance indicators are ranked amber).
124. However, relatively limited information is presented on the overall performance of services against strategic objectives and the FRA's approach to PPR takes only limited account of equalities or access considerations.
125. There is scope for the FRA to reconsider whether the contents of documents intended to inform the public on service performance are easy to understand, concise and have regard to Section 13 of the 2003 Act in relation to financial and performance information. Overall, the FRA's approach to PPR provides a sound basis from which to develop the work required to comply fully with Best Value statutory guidance.

## Information Technology

126. The FRA has, until recently, placed limited strategic emphasis on Information Technology (IT) in improving service delivery, although it has some effective individual functions. The challenge is now for the FRA to bring the different systems together into a coherent framework. The FRA is undertaking



a significant effort to renew its IT and ensure it is integrated with existing Fife Council systems but this will take time to be implemented and embedded.

127. The FRA's commitment to delivering its new IT strategy is reflected in the capital programme and staff from the Council's IT Service have been seconded to the FRA to develop and integrate the IT systems. A council-wide geographical information system has recently been implemented that includes the FRA's MapInfo data.

128. Staff IT skills have been underdeveloped until recently. However, wholetime staff have now received training in using email, the internet and the intranet. The lack of IT hardware is an issue as, for example, only one or two terminals at wholetime stations can make it difficult for everyone to access the PDRPro software. However, all FRA staff do have their own email addresses.

129. Other ongoing work on IT to support service delivery and modernisation include:

- Implementation of an Electronic Document Records Management system
- Development of the Fire Safety Database
- Development of Retained Availability Database
- Pilot use of Tablet computers in fire safety.





# Part 7: Improvement agenda

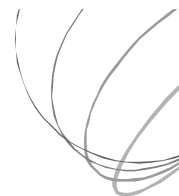
130. Scottish fire and rescue authorities are undergoing a period of significant change, underpinned by new legislation and accompanying statutory guidance. Locally, elected members and FRA officers must focus on delivering more targeted and risk-based services, which should be driven by a desire to achieve the highest possible standards.
131. Continuous improvement in public services and local governance lies at the heart of the statutory Best Value and community planning policy framework. This requires a culture where areas in need of improvement are identified and openly discussed, and in which service performance is constructively challenged.
132. The improvement agenda below sets out a number of actions identified through the audit and is intended to assist the FRA focus on the areas where it should direct its initial efforts. These areas for improvement are designed to build on the momentum for change that already exists within the FRA and will provide the basis for review and monitoring by Audit Scotland in the autumn of 2007.

## Strategic management

- Improve the links between strategic planning and departmental and service plans (para 31).
- Consider how fire and rescue issues can be given greater prominence within the Community Safety Committee Agenda (para 35).
- Consider developing a training needs analysis to help members discharge their functions better and explore the potential of lead members or Committee champions (paras 38).
- Establish a comprehensive and robust approach to performance management to enable progress against service plans and operational performance to be managed and monitored effectively (para 42).
- Improve the links between the risk register and the Service Improvement Plan (para 47).

## Fire prevention and risk management

- Consider making more effective use of retained crews in undertaking HFSA's (para 54).
- Consider how funding for community safety activity can be sustained in the longer term (para 59).
- Develop a partnership register and formal policy on partnership working to ensure partnership activities are contributing to the delivery of strategic objectives (para 62).



## Financial management

- Ensure that training for devolved budgeted holders is completed and that additional support is available as required (para 76).

## Workforce management

- Ensure there are clear links between the HR strategy and the Service Improvement Plan (para 83).
- Ensure the rapid implementation of flexible working opportunities (para 95).
- Continue efforts to build a workforce which reflects the diversity of the communities the FRA serves and evaluate targeted recruitment events (para 102).

## Management of operational business

- Prioritise efforts to reduce the total number of AFAs (para 105).
- Ensure the continued implementation of Best Value reviews (para 109).
- Develop and implement plans aimed at reducing the number of attacks on firefighters (para 111)
- Continue to ensure that collaborative working delivers clear advantages for Fife FRA and/ or to the wider fire and rescue service (para 114).

## Communication

- Ensure that the communications strategy is delivered and rigorously evaluated (para 117).
- Develop and implement mechanisms to actively engage staff from across the organisation in establishing the strategic direction of the FRA (para 119).
- Review the approach to external consultation to develop more effective means of engaging and informing local communities on relevant fire and rescue issues (paras 120-121).
- Build on the existing approach to PPR to deliver clearer and more accessible reports on FRA performance related to IRMP and its strategic objectives (para 125).
- Ensure the IT strategy and action plan are delivered to support ongoing service improvements (para 126).



# Appendices

## Glossary

AFA	Automatic Fire Alarm
CSC	Fife Council Community Safety Committee
CFOA	Chief Fire Officers Association
CFS	Community Fire Safety
CIPFA	Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy
EIA	Equality Impact Assessment
FRA	Fire and Rescue Authority
FSEC	Fire Service Emergency Cover —software issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government to help FRAs carry out the risk mapping required for IRMP
GAE	Grant Aided Expenditure
HFSA	Home Fire Safety Assessment
HMFSIS	Her Majesty's Fire Service Inspectorate for Scotland
IPDS	Integrated Personal Development System
IRMP	Integrated Risk Management Planning
PPR	Public Performance Reporting