

Fire & Rescue Service

Effectiveness, efficiency and people 2018/19

An inspection of Isles of Scilly Fire and Rescue Service



Contents

About this inspection	1
Service in numbers	2
Overview	4
Effectiveness	7
How effective is the service at keeping people safe and secure?	8
Summary	8
Understanding the risk of fire and other emergencies	9
Preventing fires and other risks	11
Protecting the public through fire regulation	12
Responding to fires and other emergencies	14
Responding to national risks	16
Efficiency	17
How efficient is the service at keeping people safe and secure?	18
Summary	18
Making best use of resources	19
Making the fire and rescue service affordable now and in the future	20
People	22
How well does the service look after its people?	23
Summary	23
Promoting the right values and culture	24
Getting the right people with the right skills	26
Ensuring fairness and promoting diversity	28
Managing performance and developing leaders	29
Annex A – About the data	30
Annex B – Fire and rescue authority governance	35

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 Isles of Scilly 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

Isles Of Scilly

England

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

-

86%



Response

Isles Of Scilly

England

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

7.5

10.2

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

23.9

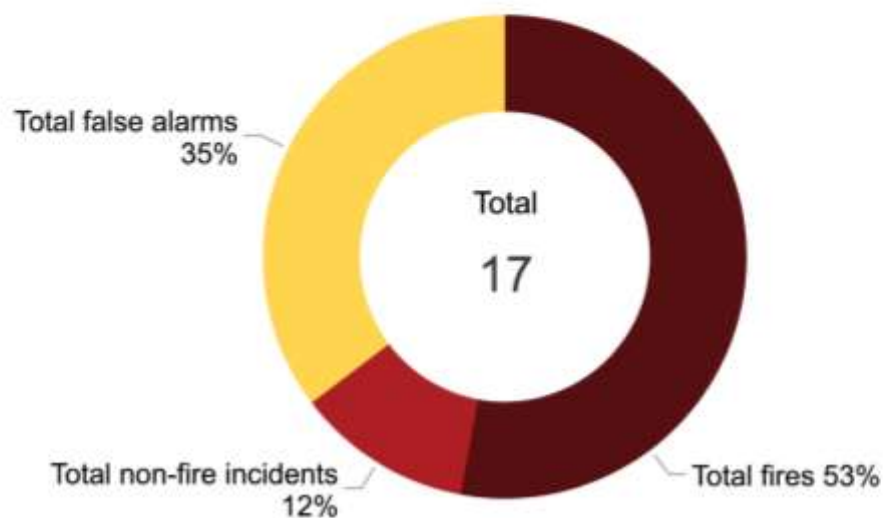
10.4

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

-

3.0

Incidents attended in the 12 months to 31 March 2018





Cost

Isles Of Scilly

England

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

-

£22.38



Workforce

Isles Of Scilly

England

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

5.8

0.6

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

-75%

-14%

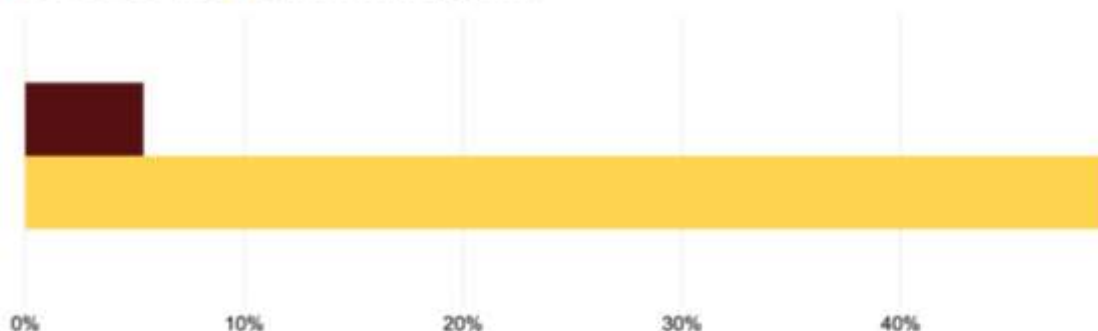
Percentage of wholetime firefighters
As at 31 March 2018

0%

70%

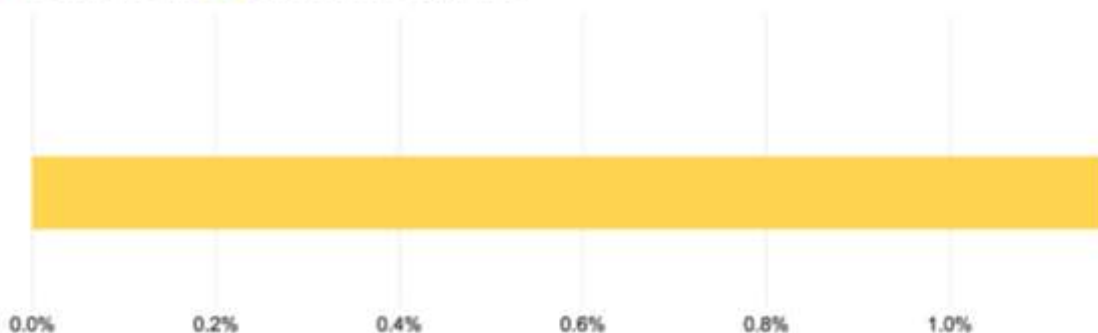
Percentage of female firefighters as at 31 March 2018

● 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	 Good
Understanding the risk of fire and other emergencies	 Good
Preventing fires and other risks	 Good
Protecting the public through fire regulation	 Requires improvement
Responding to fires and other emergencies	 Good
Responding to national risks	Not applicable
 Efficiency	 Good
Making best use of resources	 Good
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 are pleased with most aspects of the performance of Isles of Scilly Fire and Rescue Service in keeping people safe and secure. But it needs to make improvements in how it looks after its people to give a consistently good service.

The service is effective at keeping people safe from fire and emergencies, although it should improve the way it protects the public through fire regulation. Positively, it understands the risks its communities face. And it is good at preventing and responding to fires and emergencies.

It provides an efficient service by making good use of its resources. But it should make its services more affordable.

The service should 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.

We are encouraged by the positive aspects we have identified. We look forward to seeing more consistent performance over the coming year.

Effectiveness



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



Good

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. Isles of Scilly Fire and Rescue Service's overall effectiveness is good.

The service understands the risks in its community. It uses its own data and data from other organisations to learn about risk. It shares risk knowledge with the local authority. Its staff contribute to the service's strong local knowledge. Isles of Scilly Fire and Rescue Service commissions services from Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service.

The service is updating its [integrated risk management plan](#). The plan focuses on community risk and meets national standards.

There are few incidents on the Isles of Scilly. The service's paper-based risk information management system is therefore good enough. The service focuses prevention activity on those most at need, with firefighters using local knowledge along with help from other interested parties. However, the process needs to be more robust when receiving referral information.

In the 12 months to 31 March 2018, the service carried out 54 home fire safety checks. The service receives referrals from local agencies which are targeted at the most vulnerable. The service promotes its activities to the public, particularly young people. It does not evaluate its community safety activity.

The service must improve the way it uses fire regulation to protect the public. The service has recently contracted Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service to carry out its statutory protection duties. There is currently no risk-based inspection programme although work is underway to address this. The service should monitor how it implements this arrangement to make sure it complies with its statutory duties.

The service is good at responding to fires and emergencies through its control room which is shared with Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service. It can support an incident as it becomes more serious. It has an appropriate but informal system for recording staff availability. The work with Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service should improve the service's understanding of [national operational guidance](#). The service relies on its close links with the community to share news. [Safeguarding](#) training is patchy, but staff are aware of procedures. The service does debrief after incidents. But we found formally sharing learning with all staff is not part of routine practice.

Understanding the risk of fire and other emergencies



Good

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 largest and most populated island in the Isles of Scilly is St Mary's. It has an airport and the Isles' only secondary school. There are four smaller populated islands, referred to as the 'off-islands'. These are St Agnes, St Martin's, Bryher and Tresco.

The service has a one-year interim annual integrated risk management plan (IRMP) to cover 2018. It is based on 2012 data with limited updates. The service is developing a new 2019–22 IRMP with Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service.

The service aims to work with others to ensure it has the resources and funding for its main functions. The service combines its resources with the Council of the Isles of Scilly and with the airport run by the council. It shares all its facilities with the other emergency services on the islands.

The service uses data about specific islands gathered from all departments of the local authority. Data from the police, ambulance service, coastguard and RNLI supplement this. These data are not refreshed consistently.

Incident numbers for the Isles of Scilly are very low. This makes it difficult to test data against operational activity for planning purposes.

The service covers a remote and geographically small area. It employs approximately 40 [on-call](#) staff. The staff are all locally based. This gives the service a thorough understanding of its risks.

When the service identifies operational deficiencies, it uses staff members' local knowledge to make changes. For example, staff worked with the Duchy of Cornwall to place water tanks strategically around the island.

On the off-islands, crews visit every domestic property once a year and do a home fire safety check. Through the checks, staff get thorough knowledge of properties. This knowledge improves the safety of the public in these hard-to-reach areas.

Isles of Scilly and Cornwall fire and rescue services have a new legal agreement. Under this agreement, Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service inspects commercial premises on the islands. This development is still in the pilot stage.

The service contributes, in a limited way, to the local authority corporate risk register.

Having an effective risk management plan

The service uses the local authority risk register data to inform its current IRMP.

The IRMP 2019–22 will support the formal legal agreement between Isles of Scilly Fire and Rescue Service and Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service.

The current IRMP focuses on community risk. There is a clear link to the service's operational activity. The plan sets out the service's overall direction and future difficulties. These include maintaining levels of emergency response and community safety while saving money. The plan also promises to introduce new ways of working. The IRMP meets the requirements of the [Fire and Rescue National Framework](#) for England.

The service works well with other organisations to better understand community risk. The deputy chief executive of the local authority, the Council of the Isles of Scilly, is also the chief fire officer (non-uniformed) and attends the Isles of Scilly's community safety partnership. These meetings identify vulnerability and community risk across all council services. The council knows about [vulnerable people](#) through GP referrals and self-referrals. The meetings ensure the council and the service both know about vulnerable people and can act as needed. This activity is tracked through regular meetings.

Maintaining risk information

The service should gather information about certain building risks to help staff plan a response to an emergency. The service has produced tactical information plans about certain premises on the islands. These are kept in fire engines and provide information about buildings including their layout and other known hazards. The administrative process of maintaining this risk information is limited.

Inspections of temporary and long-standing risks are paper-based. The findings of these inspections are not routinely communicated across the service. But we found that staff do have detailed knowledge of their local areas and risks. The size and activity levels of the service mean that, although risk information could be better maintained, this is good enough.

The service should share significant information with Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service. This would mean that both services would have consistent information during incidents. It was not clear if the control function provided by Cornwall is aware of current risk information.

The service does not use [mobile data terminals](#) on operational appliances. The service is updating the computer systems for each station. This makes it impossible to create, store and share electronic documents about risk across the entire service. Crews on each island address this through their strong local knowledge.

Preventing fires and other risks



Good

Isles of Scilly Fire and Rescue Service is good at preventing fires and other risks. But we found the following area in which it needs to improve:

Areas for improvement

- The service should ensure it targets its prevention work at people most at risk. This should include a formal referral and recording system.

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 aims to carry out 100 home fire safety checks per year across the islands, but has only done so twice since 2011/12. In the 12 months to 31 March 2018, the service did 54 home fire safety checks which represents a rate of 23.9 home fire safety checks per 1,000 population.

Airport fire service staff undertake home fire safety checks on St Mary's as part of their service level agreement with the fire service. They also receive and act upon referrals from other local authority departments. They complete these checks throughout the year, although particularly in the winter when the airport is less busy and enough staff are available.

A referral process is in place to allow agencies to signpost vulnerable persons for the fire service to provide fire safety information to. The service needs to ensure arrangements are sufficiently robust to handle this information.

Staff have information to help them with home fire safety checks but there is no formal training in this area.

Promoting community safety

The service has strong links with the community. Its staff all live locally. Staff on the off-islands are particularly proud to be serving their communities. The service promotes a wide range of community activities. We did not, however, find any evidence that the service evaluates its community safety activities.

The community activities all aim to promote community safety. The service website promotes home fire safety checks with a contact number to request a visit. The service provides equipment free of charge to reduce risk in homes. For example, smoke detectors, replacement electric blankets and electric deep fat fryers for those considered to be vulnerable. The provision of fire safety equipment is not means tested, it is given if staff feel that there is a need.

The service runs campaigns to reduce general risk and improve the health, safety and wellbeing of local people. This includes fire safety advice. The service helps with events such as dementia awareness days and runs 999 days to promote safety information.

Staff run a Duke of Edinburgh award scheme for local children, which includes fire-safety activities. The service believes the children then spread this knowledge to their families and friends. It supports the school curriculum and visits schools and nurseries.

The service does not promote water safety awareness or water rescue activity. This is the responsibility of the islands' coastguard.

Road safety

There is a limited road network on the islands and slow driving speeds. The service does not see road safety prevention as a priority or commit any resource to this area.

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 its staff carry out fire safety audits competently.

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

Fire and rescue services must promote fire prevention. This means they should assess fire risk in commercial buildings. Where needed they should direct landlords and owners to comply with fire safety legislation.

The service identifies 15 premises as 'high risk'. These are non-domestic premises with a sleeping risk, for example, hotels and the boarding school. The service brings in qualified personnel to carry out inspections. Previously these were from the private sector; they now are from Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service under the recently-agreed legal agreement in relation to Isles of Scilly Fire and Rescue Service's statutory protection duties.

Cornwall planned an inspection programme to audit ten premises with a sleeping risk, and two hospitals or care homes. There is currently a very limited risk-based inspection programme. So far, Cornwall has shared what it found during these inspections with the service.

Enforcement

A fire service may consider legal action if it finds breaches of fire safety legislation in a property. Data supplied by the service during fieldwork shows that it only conducted protection audits on 2 percent of its known risk premises (excluding private single dwellings) in the 12 months to 31 March 2017. Cornwall is now conducting protection audits on behalf of the service.

In the last five years the service has not taken any enforcement action against commercial premises on the islands. Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service will be responsible for taking legal action following the delegation of protection functions.

The service's senior management believe that owners of commercial premises comply with fire safety legislation. They believe that their motivation is the investment they have made in the islands and the need to attract tourists. The service does not test this view. There is currently no risk-based inspection programme although work is underway since Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service began production of a risk-based evidence profile. The service plans to use this to inform a future risk-based inspection programme.

Operational crews undertake exercises in hotels on their respective islands when out of season. This gives them access to these premises. But fire crews have had limited or no training in fire protection, so they may not always correctly identify breaches in fire safety regulations.

Working with others

We found some examples where the service works with other organisations to reduce false alarm 999 calls from premises with fire alarms and give staff advice and training in the workplace on fire safety awareness.

However, we did not find any examples of work with local businesses to improve compliance with fire safety regulations.

Responding to fires and other emergencies



Good

Isles of Scilly Fire and Rescue Service is good at responding to fires and other emergencies. But we found the following areas in which it needs to improve:

Areas for improvement

- The service should ensure it understands what it needs to do to adopt national operational guidance, including joint and national learning. It should then put in place a plan to do so.
- The service should ensure staff know how to command fire service assets assertively, effectively and safely at incidents.
- 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

The service uses Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service's control room to mobilise its resources. The service, supported by Cornwall, is reviewing its operational policies and response capabilities. The aim is to align, where appropriate, with Cornwall's policies.

Under the agreement between the two services Cornwall sends specialist officers to the islands during large or complex incidents. This process recently proved successful during a live incident.

When Cornwall [fire control](#) mobilises to incidents on an island it is by alerting on-call members on at least two of the other islands. This ensures the right number of firefighters attend. Given the travel difficulties faced by crews, this is an effective way to support an incident should it escalate and become more serious.

In the 12 months to 31 March 2018, the service attended a total of 17 incidents. The service has a range of vehicles adapted to respond to its local risks and environment. These include, for example, tractors and purpose-built trailers. The service can use the local authority airport staff and fire engines for larger incidents. During this type of event, the airport would be closed.

The recording of staff availability is adequate. However, it would benefit from modernisation.

Response

The service has a good local understanding of the risks on the islands. It is aware that key risks are sleeping accommodation within hotels, terraced properties and agricultural properties. The service has not fully inspected these properties.

The service is not aware of national operational guidance and how this should be reflected within its policies and procedures. The work with Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service should help with this, as staff will have access to all joint operational policies as part of this collaboration.

Command

On the Isles of Scilly, the highest operational commander role is [watch](#) manager. This means that an officer from Cornwall may be called to attend any larger incident.

There has been no formal incident command training for several years. Under the new arrangements with Cornwall, there has been some command training. It appeared that there had been no formal assessment of competence that had been checked by any quality assurance processes.

We found that staff did not understand the guidance on [operational discretion](#), where firefighters step outside normal procedures under certain circumstances. And staff did not understand either the joint decision model nor national operational guidance.

Keeping the public informed

The service does not appear to communicate with the public about recent incidents, for example on a website or through social media. But the firefighters are so much a part of the local community that the public is usually aware of local events.

The service relies on its close work with its partner organisations and firefighters' local knowledge to identify vulnerable people and safeguarding needs. There is no formal process for recording or sharing such knowledge. The service communicates this knowledge only to staff who are believed to need it.

Training on safeguarding is inconsistent. Most staff are aware of procedures through other jobs that they hold. There is now a computer-based training package available, but problems with IT mean that not all staff can access it.

Evaluating operational performance

The service has a process for evaluating and sharing learning from incidents using hot debriefs and post incident survey forms. But this is not part of routine practice across the service. We found that the service does not formally evaluate essential learning from incidents or share it with staff.

The service's data showed it does very few formal debriefs, however, this reflects the low number of incidents it attends. There is no training for debriefs after an incident. Staff debrief their own crews on a basic level by checking their welfare after incidents. The service shares any debrief learning through talking.

For major incidents, the service does undertake a formal debrief. Following a recent barn fire, a senior officer from Cornwall chaired a debrief for the crews. But the service did not share learning from this with all crews and staff.

Responding to national risks

Due to the nature of the islands, Isles of Scilly Fire and Rescue Service does not respond to national risks. So, we didn't inspect the service's performance in this area.

Efficiency



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



Good

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. Isles of Scilly Fire and Rescue Service's overall efficiency is good.

The service works with the local authority to manage its finances better. It recently changed its management structure. This helps it work closer with the local authority.

The service has saved money by:

- having an agreement with Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service;
- using the airport's fire service; and
- working with other emergency services.

The service improves efficiency through finding better ways of working. For example, it can use engines that Cornwall no longer needs.

It saves money by working with others, including Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service. It also works with the local authority and the airport fire service to prevent and respond to fires and other risks.

The service needs to make itself more affordable. It recently found out it must pay pensions to retired staff. So, it now needs to save £30,000 of the £490,000 budget. It plans to do this in several ways, but it hasn't evaluated these plans.

The service doesn't test business continuity plans.

It plans to improve its efficiency by investing in training equipment, but it hasn't assessed the funding or benefits of this investment.

Making best use of resources



Good

Isles of Scilly Fire and Rescue Service is good at making best use of resources.

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's current one-year interim IRMP is based on 2012 data with limited updates. The service is developing a new 2019-22 IRMP with Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service.

The service has not previously done financial planning for its capital and revenue budgets. The council and the service are aware that they need a better understanding of financial management. This might include putting in place an ICT strategy that aligns to financial and workforce plans.

The council and the service are going to work on a capital replacement plan for equipment. This will use a separate capital budget when it is set up. The plan will align with Cornwall's capital replacement plan and personal protective equipment programme. The service intends to negotiate for Cornwall's used appliances, where feasible.

Productivity and ways of working

The service, until recently, employed a station manager who also had a role in the airport fire service. It also had a uniformed chief fire officer as well as 43 on-call firefighters up to watch manager level.

This has since changed. The service now has a non-uniformed chief fire officer who is also deputy chief executive of the Council of the Isles of Scilly. The station manager post is vacant, and it is unclear whether the service will fill this post.

The agreement with Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service has resulted in savings for the service. It now pays for 25 percent of a station manager from Cornwall. The agreement also covers preparation of the IRMP, statement of assurance, capital programme and review of the organisation, fire protection audits, debriefing and operational support.

The service also uses several volunteers across all the stations. The service also has a wide-ranging service level agreement with the airport fire service to provide services. This includes [home fire safety checks](#), training, maintenance of kit and equipment, risk assessments and support to large-scale incidents.

Collaboration

The service works within the local authority and has access to the police, ambulance, coastguard and RNLI. This is through the chief fire officer in his role as the deputy chief executive of the council. Fire stations house other agencies' response vehicles.

Continuity arrangements

We were unable to find any evidence that the service tests its business continuity arrangements. Its business continuity plans are owned by the Council of the Isles of Scilly.

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



Requires improvement

Areas for improvement

- The service should assure itself that it has access to appropriate and effective budget management planning, with efficient overall financial management capability and capacity, to ensure that it includes all liabilities when calculating its spending plans.

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 is very small and as at 31 March 2018, Isles of Scilly Fire and Rescue Service employed the equivalent of 13 full time firefighters.

The service was unaware that it had a responsibility to pay pensions to retired members. It discovered this on the retirement of the former chief officer and once the budget from the previous year had been reviewed revealing a deficit.

The service has begun to explore and develop plans across the service and through many areas, to make up to £30,000 of savings from its £490,000 budget, including:

- a review of staff payment schemes;
- a review of the agreement with the airport fire service with a view to creating efficiencies;
- a blue light collaboration between fire, ambulance, police and coastguard with quad service officers who have equipment based across the fire stations;
- sharing of inter-island transport for resilience (for example the fire and rescue service and the ambulance service could share boat transport); and
- purchasing a breathing apparatus training facility so that crews can train on the islands rather than going to Portreath in Cornwall.

All the above would contribute to financial savings. But we did not find any evaluation to see if these proposals were based on sound data.

Innovation

Under the agreement with Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service, the two services have aligned their appliance replacement programmes. This will allow the service to re-use the appliances and equipment no longer needed by Cornwall. The service will also benefit from cheaper prices through larger scale procurement.

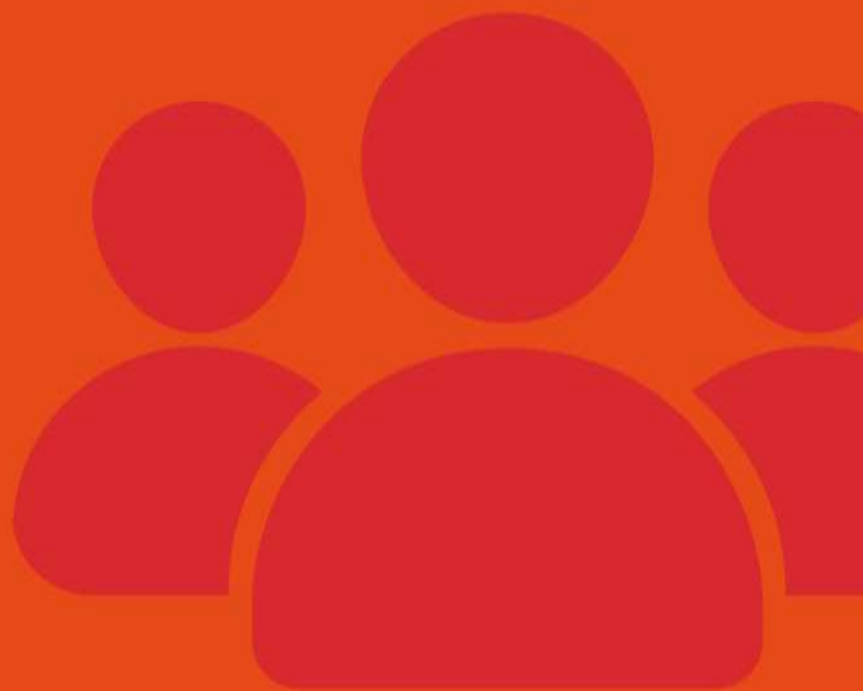
Future investment and working with others

The service is a key department within the local authority. So, it works closely with all council departments. Specifically, the fire and rescue service and the airport fire service are both managed by the deputy chief executive of the council. This allows the two services to collaborate in operational response as well as in prevention activity on St Mary's island.

Isles of Scilly Fire and Rescue Service also pays for services from Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service. This includes strategic and tactical managerial support as well as operational support. In future the service will also pay Cornwall for protection inspections, training support and a review of policies and procedures. The service is reviewing both agreements as it develops its IRMP.

The service is planning to purchase its own hot fire training containers for £10,000. It can then offer a higher level of training. But we couldn't find a business case for the funding and the benefits.

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, Isles of Scilly Fire and Rescue Service requires improvement at looking after its people.

The service needs to improve how it promotes the right values and culture. It uses the local authority's workplace health guidelines. The chief fire officer understands how these policies translate to the fire service. But crews cannot access the policies and other welfare information because of technical problems. The service is addressing this with new computers.

Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service has trained the service's staff in equality, diversity and inclusivity.

The service tests staff for physical fitness every year. But the chief fire officer was reluctant to enforce too high a standard of fitness in case he lost staff.

Staff have little confidence in the grievance process and do not know how to use it. They find it hard to raise grievances because the service is so closely tied to the community. There were no formal grievances between 1 April 2014 and 31 March 2018.

The service's culture and values are based on the local authority's code of conduct and whistle-blowing policy.

The service should improve how it ensures fairness and promotes diversity, although it is taking steps to improve the diversity of its workforce.

It acts on staff feedback in some areas, but not others. The service is less diverse than the population it serves, however, it is being more proactive in promoting diversity.

The service must improve how it gets the right people with the right skills. Once recruited, firefighters complete a training programme. But the service has no training planner. It uses [retained](#) firefighter development folders but does not update or review them.

The service does not understand its responsibility to maintain core firefighting functions. We saw outdated guidance in use. The service does not state which procedures it follows.

The service will share Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service's system for recording competencies. It has also taken on a tactical advisor, and now has a prioritised plan to improve its training. We hope to see that this results in safety-critical improvements by March 2019.

The service must improve the way it manages performance and develops leaders. Its firefighters have very high levels of community responsibility, so, the service assumes they can assure their own training. It pays Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service for a part-time station manager, who, among other things, analyses skills gaps and provides training.

Promoting the right values and culture



Requires improvement

Areas for improvement

- The service should ensure staff have access to electronic systems that hold up-to date policies, procedures and values statements.

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 Council of the Isles of Scilly has given the service its healthy workplace statement, eye-care policy and stress policy. The stress policy sets out the expectations of all levels of employees, and of the overall leaders of the organisation.

The healthy workplace statement refers to physical and mental wellbeing. It also notes:

“The Council will develop and run a range of health promotion initiatives designed to raise awareness of health and lifestyle issues affecting both physical and mental health and wellbeing.

“Budget resource is limited, meaning activities must offer clear outcomes and good value for money. Health and Wellbeing professionals from the Active Scilly and Learning and Library teams will have primary responsibility for leading these programmes, but line managers and employees will be encouraged to support and participate.”

The statement refers to roles and responsibilities at all levels, as does the procedure for managing mental health in the workplace.

The chief fire officer showed us how the council policies translate to the service. But the crews cannot access the information on the Council of the Isles of Scilly intranet due to technical problems with the internet. During our inspection we saw that the service was installing new computers. It aims to give station-based personnel access to council information. We did not see any other examples of council information being given to the service’s staff.

Policies exist for staff, but council managers did not think the service’s staff would view them, due to ICT problems. The new computers coming to fire stations should resolve this.

Staff could not tell us what post-incident welfare provision the council and the service offered. And they did not know how to access the information. A member of staff is trained in critical debriefing. The service does not regularly access or test this information due to the limited number of calls that it attends.

We found a mixed response from staff about counselling, wellbeing at work and mental health provision. Some, but not all, staff could tell us how they would refer themselves or colleagues to these services.

The service had given some staff mental health awareness training within the last five years. But this did not appear to be consistent across the entire service and it was not up to date. Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service HR has trained crew and watch managers at the service in equality, diversity and inclusivity.

The service has referral schemes for occupational health and uses an external company to provide a confidential phone service for counselling. Staff also have access to Cornwall Council’s occupational health provision and we saw how people are shown how to access a psychological therapy service for counselling.

The service assesses the physical fitness of staff. It reported that it uses the shuttle run bleep test for operational staff. This is a speed and distance test which gets progressively harder. The aim is to get to as high a level as you can. The service states that the test is done every year; however, data indicates that no staff were tested in the 12 months to 31 March 2018.

Health and safety

We found inconsistent evidence of the fitness standard for staff medical checks. The chief fire officer feared that enforcing too high a standard would mean that he would lose staff.

The service has processes to support staff through welfare arrangements. But we found evidence that staff do not know about them because they cannot access computer systems.

Staff are not confident in the grievance procedure. They do not feel that the service will deal appropriately with grievances. We could not find evidence that the service would use a mediation process to deal with grievances.

Culture and values

The service uses a council-wide code of conduct for local government employees as well as a council-wide whistle blowing policy.

The service's structure is such that the next rank after watch manager is an operational level officer. The next level of management is the chief fire officer, which is the most senior manager within the service. There is no middle manager in between. This means that problems and issues are taken directly to the chief fire officer, which affects the chief's ability to operate at the right level for his job.

The service's values are not well known, and staff could not say what they were.

Getting the right people with the right skills



Requires improvement

Areas for improvement

- The service should ensure staff are appropriately trained in safety-critical skills, such as breathing apparatus and incident command.
- The service should ensure it has a system to record and monitor operational staff competence which is accurate and accessible.

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 operational service is completely on-call. So, it is very difficult for Isles of Scilly Fire and Rescue Service to give leaders opportunities to develop through promotion.

Learning and improvement

The service did not have a clear understanding of maintenance of competence or how to record this.

Some aspects of training are out of date. Staff could not tell us the last time they conducted breathing apparatus training and development. They thought it was around 2014. The service is still using old guidance about working in confined spaces with breathing apparatus. This was replaced nationally a few years ago and it has since been replaced with a new guidance document that includes new standards and procedures. The service can't be sure that staff are working in as safe a way as they should be.

Newly recruited firefighters do complete a structured development training programme to achieve their 'Approval to Ride' qualification. But there is no evidence of an effective training planner. A good training planner would ensure that all operational staff get regular training to keep up the skills and competencies the service needs.

The service does not properly understand the need to maintain core firefighting functions. Crews are not well enough trained in incident command, first aid or trauma management.

Firefighter development is based on retained firefighter development folders. The service shows limited understanding of where the development elements are derived from or how they are measured against national standards. There is no process to update or review these folders.

Staff use significantly out of date guidance books. The service does not state clearly which operation procedures it follows, and it does not indicate where staff can find guidance.

The service lacks formalised recording systems to monitor staff competence against the national role maps. The service showed us that it does have a plan to address this. It will be sharing Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service's maintenance of competence electronic recording system, which is still being rolled out.

In February 2018, as part of the agreement with Cornwall, the service established a tactical advisor role. This officer reviewed the state of operational and training delivery and recording. Within four months the service had written and implemented a progressive short-to-medium-term operational training improvement action plan. The action plan uses a red, amber, green risk rating system to prioritise activity. It suggests that the service can make all safety-critical improvements by March 2019.

Ensuring fairness and promoting diversity



Requires improvement

Areas for improvement

- The service should identify and tackle barriers to equality of opportunity, and improve fairness and diversity in the whole organisation, by training all staff in the organisational core values and training supervisors in how to manage fairness and diversity.

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 acts on staff feedback in some areas. An example is a request from staff for the introduction of staff medical checks, which are supported by the local authority policies on attendance management. We also found examples where staff felt that their requests and concerns were not listened to. For instance, a request for new batteries for operational equipment was not acted upon.

We found that the service does not survey staff to gather feedback.

Diversity

As at 31 March 2018, two firefighters in Isles of Scilly Fire and Rescue Service were female. This represents 5.4 percent of firefighters in the service. The service is running a campaign to recruit new on-call firefighters. It could not show us any activities aimed at recruiting women or people from under-represented groups in the community.

As at 31 March 2018, no firefighters in Isles of Scilly Fire and Rescue Service were from black, Asian or minority ethnic (BAME) backgrounds; however, 1.2 percent of the residential population of the Isles of Scilly are from BAME backgrounds.

We found that most staff were not aware of the grievance procedure and did not know how to raise a complaint.

The communities on each island are close knit. This means that firefighters know other members of the community on first-name terms, which is good in many ways. But it makes it difficult for some staff to raise grievances about inappropriate behaviour and outdated practices on stations.

Managing performance and developing leaders



Requires improvement

Areas for improvement

- The service should ensure it has an effective system in place to manage staff development, performance and productivity.

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

Managing performance

We found that new joiners receive development programmes or folders. All training is self-assessed and relies on a high level of community responsibility and commitment along with dedication to do the best they can do, however, we found a lack of structured assessment and quality assurance.

There is no appreciation of the national occupational standards or incident command scenarios, such as operational discretion. This is because current policy is not adhered to or followed strictly.

In February and March 2018, the service gave crew and watch managers some line management training. This training centred on people management and policy awareness. Those who attended gave positive feedback. There has also been incident command training over a weekend on St Mary's attended by 30 firefighters, including those from the off-islands.

Developing leaders

Under the agreement with Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service, the service pays for 25 percent of a station manager, who provides support to the Isles of Scilly. Examples of what the station manager does include a skills gap analysis of a crew's competence, and support in training activity.

Uniformed positions are restricted to firefighter through to watch manager. Recruitment is done as and when vacancies arise. In the 12 months to 31 March 2018, two staff members (including firefighters) left service. This represents 5.4 percent of the total workforce.

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

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.

DECEMBER 2018 | ©HMICFRS 2018 | ISBN:978-1-78655-751-3

www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs