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Operational Performance Assessment Action Plan - Progress to Date

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

For further information about this report please contact John Redmond, Chief Fire Officer, on 01743 260201 or Assistant Chief Fire Officer Andy Johnson on 01743 260204.

1 Purpose of Report

This report informs Members of the progress made to date on the Operational Performance Assessment (OPA) Action Plan, which was put in place following the assessment undertaken in October 2012.

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2 Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note the progress made against the seven OPA areas for improvement, as detailed in the appendix.

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3 Background

In 2012 the Service undertook a collaborative approach, with Herford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (H&WFRS) and the Local Government Association, towards the requirement for it to undertake a three-yearly OPA.

As a result of this work, the Service developed and implemented an OPA Action Plan, which aimed to improve the areas for improvement identified in the Peer Review Challenge Report. Following receipt of their respective Peer Review Reports, both fire services looked to progress the areas identified, within their respective Action Plans, in as collaborative a manner as possible. This Service's OPA Action Plan indicates where this collaborative approach has been possible.

The OPA Action Plan which was presented to the Fire Authority, at its meeting on 13 February 2013, is set out in the appendix to this report, with the progress made to date against each area for improvement.

4   Joint working with H&WFRS

Although the OPA Action Plans for SFRS and H&WFRS are not identical, there are many requirements that are consistent between the two. ACFO Johnson met with Jean Cole, who is co-ordinating H&WFRS's OPA Action Plan, in February and considered the progress made on those joint requirements. With the plans only halfway through their life, it was agreed that progress was good and that plans were in place to ensure they were progressed further.

With much of the SFRS OPA Action Plan being progressed through the Service Transformation Programme and/or the two Service's Memorandum of Understanding Programme, Members will be regularly informed about progress at their meetings throughout the coming year. To avoid duplicating this information, Members will simply receive a 'Close-Down' report, for the current OPA Action Plan, at their meeting in March 2015.

5   Working towards the next OPA

At their meeting in February, both Services agreed that there has been real benefit from their collaborative approach to OPA and they are, therefore, keen to explore a similar approach going forward. The work required to progress the next Assessment, due during the latter half of 2015, will commence in the first half of 2015. The 'Close-Down' report, mentioned in the previous section, will include details about how the next Assessment will be conducted.

6   Financial Implications

Those areas for improvement, identified in the Plan, that do have some financial implication are being progressed through other ongoing programmes (e.g. Service Transformation Programme and Memorandum of Understanding Project), with any such financial implications being addressed through those programmes. Therefore, there are no specific financial implications from the OPA Action Plan itself.

7   Legal Comment

The Service is required to undergo some form of Operational Performance Assessment on a three-year, rolling programme. The next assessment needs to be completed prior to the end of 2015.

8   Initial Impact Assessment

This report simply provides an update on progress against the OPA Action Plan. Any requirements for change, as a consequence of any of the work being undertaken to address the improvements detailed in this plan, are being addressed through the relevant programme of works (e.g. Service Transformation Programme and Memorandum of Understanding).

For this reason, although an initial impact assessment has been completed for this report, no impacts have been specifically identified as a consequence of this report.

9   Appendix

Operational Assurance Action Plan – Progress to date

10   Background Papers

Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority
13 February 2013, Report 13 – Findings and Recommendations arising from the Operational Performance Assessment 2012

Appendix to report 9 on
Operational Performance Assessment Action Plan - Progress to Date
Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority
Audit and Performance Management Committee
27 March 2014

Operational Performance Assessment Action Plan – Progress to Date

Please note that a key to abbreviations can be found at the end of the document.

Summary of Thematic Areas for Action to improve Service Delivery (arising from Operational Performance Assessment 2012)	This action supports the following SWFRA Aims:	This action is addressed via: STP, MoU, 2020, PV	Collaborative action between HWFRS & SFRS (Yes or No)	Priority	Lead Officer(s)	Comments (Summary of expected outcome / benefits)
Theme Incident Command/Management **Description** A collaborative review of Incident Command / Management arrangements leading to enhanced command resilience, competence, inter/intra-operability, debriefing, monitoring and peer audit	1a, 1b, 2a, 2b, 3a, 3b, 4a	STP MoU 2020	Yes	High	Kev Faulkner	Through collaboration, the outcome will result in seamless cross-border working, improved inter-agency command arrangements and increased officer capacity and resilience through mutual shared command/specialist officer functions.
Progress The NILO officers, from both Services, have been working well together for some time, with clear improvements to joint working between all West Mercia blue-light services, arising as a consequence. In addition, the two Services also share HAZMAT fall-back, Command Support, Accident Investigation and Fire Investigation officers, across the border as demand arises. Both Services have also recently joined the Collaborative Partnership OPAP. Once fully implemented, as part of the MoU Programme, joint incident command management will be even easier to achieve going forward.						
Theme Integrated Risk Management Planning **Description** The development of a collaborative approach to IRMP necessary to address requirements of the FRS National Framework, including the review / development of community focused Response, Protection and Prevention targets and standards	1a, 1b, 2a, 2b, 3a, 3b, 4a	STP 2020	Yes	High	Andy Johnson	Sharing knowledge, expertise and resource, the outcome will result in a common agreed approach to IRMP, seamless cross-border working, improved inter-agency command arrangements and increased officer capacity and resilience through mutual shared command / specialist officer functions.
Progress SFRS has shared the risk information process with HWFRS along with the risk assessment tool, used to assess current position against the National Framework. SFRS is partway through compiling a portfolio of risks against incident types.						

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Theme Training & Development **Description** A co-ordinated collaborative approach to training and formal accreditation / peer review (where appropriate) to enhance service delivery in Incident Command, Cross-Border / Inter-Agency working, Business Fire Safety and Health & Safety	1b, 2a, 2b, 3a, 3b, 4a	Department Business Plan	Yes	High	Andy Perry	The delivery of a collaborative training policy and joint training (where appropriate), leading to uniformity of approach and service delivery efficiencies The outcome will also include formal accreditation/peer review (where appropriate) to provide community assurance.

Progress
- Consider outside body to carry out audit. This could be included in a peer audit – Some peer audits on Core Skills have been carried out (BA, RTC and Water Safety)
- Review exercise programme with Area Command to include cross border and joint exercises in Service exercise programme and re-initiate OPMG - SMT Paper agreed for Service Exercise co-ordination group to collate and provide consistency with cross border exercises and OPMG is active.
- Review all incident command training and development within the Service - H&WFRS has now purchased XVR software and both Services have agreed to exchange incident scenarios. This will commence when H&WFRS has fully integrated XVR into their Training and Development strategy. Both Services are now looking at how the progress Levels 2, 3 and 4, following the recent changes in the National Qualifications.
- Liaise with other FRSs to ensure collaboration in liaison with the Operations Team - Operations Teams from across the region are in regular contact, including the CFOA Regional Operations Committee. The MoU Project work, looking at the introduction of the National Operation procedures, is also relevant.
- Consider Equality and Diversity assessment – H&WFRS has received SFRS templates.
- Amend EQIA processes – EQIA processes within SFRS have been updated.
- Develop e-learning packages – No progress to date. This will be progressed at an appropriate stage within the Service's ICT Improvement Programme.
- Incorporate all core skill areas into peer audit - Peer audit of breathing apparatus within both Services is ongoing. H&WFRS attended Shropshire for RTC and Water Safety peer review.

Theme Data Management **Description** The effective, efficient and secure use of data to aid resilience and reliability both at incidents and corporately The actions required will also address policy, user training and data integration (software/hardware and data sharing between agencies).	1b, 2a, 2b, 3a, 3b	STP	Yes	Medium	Sally Edwards	The outcome will enable the seamless, secure and timely transmission of data on agreed standardised resilient software/hardware. This will aid inter / intra-operability and, in particular, operational intelligence between fire and rescue services and partner agencies.

Progress
The VPN is now in place and provides a connection with HWFRS. Access to each other's operational terminal in each Control Room.

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Theme Data Management **Description** Improvements in the quality of our data from CFRMIS, IRS and the Command and Control System, and the ability to 'join up' that information to provide a holistic approach to all aspects of the Service.	1b, 2a, 2b, 3a, 3b	STP	No	Medium	Sally Edwards	Accurate and timely information that is available and accessible from all areas of the organisation and can be used to target the Service's resources at those most in need in the community

Progress

- Incorporate new Generic (i.e. national) and Service Risk Assessment information in new and existing policies when initiating and reviewing - ongoing with introduction of new GRAs as they are published nationally. Exchange of Risk Assessments is continuing between the two Services.
- Monitoring of training to be undertaken of courses given to Crew Managers and above to confirm suitability - H&WFRS are planning to attend SFRS H&S course for peer review. SFRS attended H&WFRS IOSH Course to peer review.
- Review training provision and requirements - review of documentation and syllabus completed.
- Creation and identification of job requirements for non-operational staff incorporating skills matrix for validation and IDR – being considered within the development work for ResourceLink.
- Continue with the production of Risk Assessments in deficient areas as resources permit –the creation and review of risk assessments is ongoing. Key outstanding area is PUWER assessments, with work ongoing on this.
- Setup E-mail network for exchange of information of Health and Safety events – completed with sharing ongoing between all regional services.

Theme Policy Alignment **Description** A co-ordinated collaborative approach to generic service issues, such as Health and Safety, Equality & Diversity (process and assessments), Risk Assessments, Personal Development Records and Brigade Orders (Protection)	2a, 2b, 3a, 3b	Department Business Plan	Yes	Low	Bob Cooper and Andy Perry	As an outcome of partnership working and critical friend challenge, both Services will adopt recognised best practice and common operating procedures in a variety of policy areas, where economies of scale and service improvements are identified

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A&PM 27.3.14

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Theme Fire Control **Description** Utilising the agreed 'Memorandum of Understanding' arrangements, secure an efficient, effective, robust and resilient command and control infrastructure for the West Mercia area	1a, 1b, 2a, 2b, 3a, 3b, 4a, 4b	STP MoU	Yes	Low	John Harrison	Working in partnership through the agreed 'MoU' project, both Services will share a single, resilient command and control infrastructure operated from two locations. The outcome will enable seamless despatch and management of resources anywhere within the West Mercia area.

Progress

The two independent SEED Command and Control systems, operated from Shrewsbury and Worcester, have now been extended via a secure and resilient Virtual Private Network link. This has enabled full visibility and operation of either system from either site in the event of fall-back. Evaluation of the resilience benefits and financial savings from the Virtual Private Network solution demonstrates compliance with the original benefits projected and will ensure completion within the stated MoU programme timescales of December 2014.

The functionality of this solution has been supported by extensive upgrades to the telephony and ICCS arrangements on both sites, enabling seamless transfer of calls via each control room for a range of pre-set scenarios.

Work has begun to investigate the most appropriate ways of sharing or extending the communications control interface ports already owned by Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority. This will provide the capability (equivalent to SAN H) for both Fire and Rescue Authorities to communicate by voice and data using the Airwave network. Common operating procedures and ways of working are being developed, which will enable each Fire and Rescue Authority to take calls and mobilise the other's resources seamlessly at any time. The Fire and Rescue Authorities will have immediate and enhanced fully operational fall-back arrangements as a result of this programme of work.
In addition to the above, work has started with Cleveland Fire Brigade to establish additional remote fall-back arrangements as part of a separate tripartite agreement.
Initially for both Shropshire and Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authorities (and later through the inclusion of Cleveland) the deployment of a resilient link between each other's Command and Control system, along with common operating procedures offers improved resilience and broader operational and back office benefits. This will support enhanced interoperability with partner agencies within the West Mercia local resilience forum, improving firefighter safety and providing greater resilience at large or multiple incidents.

The programme is on track to complete by the end of 2014 and realise joint savings of £3.382 million by the end of 2020-21.

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Abbreviations

2020	SFRS IRMP Programme		NILO	National Interagency Liaison Officer
BA	Breathing Apparatus		OPAP	Operational Policies and Procedures
CFOA	Chief Fire Officers Association		OPMG	Operational Performance Management Group
CFRMIS	Community Fire Risk Management Information System		PV	Public Value
EQIA	Equality Impact Assessment		PUWER	Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations
FRS	Fire and Rescue Service		RTC	Road Traffic Collision
GRA	Generic Risk Assessment		SFRS	Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service
HAZMAT	Hazardous Materials		SMT	Service Management Team
HWFRS	Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service		STP	Service Transformation Programme
ICCS	Integrated Communications Control System		SWFRA	Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority
IDR	Individual Development Record		VPN	Virtual Private Network
IOSH	Institute of Occupational Safety and Health			
IRMP	Integrated Risk Management Plan			
IRS	Incident Reporting System			
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding			