

**AUDIT AND INSPECTION POSITION STATEMENT
HMFSI PLANNING AND PREPAREDNESS FOR COVID REVIEW REPORT ACTION PLAN**

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| Recommendation 1 | The organisation has had to adapt to the quick changing operating environment that has emerged during the Covid-19 pandemic and recognises the need to be agile and prompt in its decision making. The benefits of streamlined bureaucracy and speed of decision making has been acknowledged at many levels. Commanders and managers are keen to maintain this agility, although are cognisant of the need to maintain proper accountability and scrutiny. |
| Position statement at May 2021 | At the outset of the pandemic the Service invoked its Scottish Co-ordination and Advisory Framework (SCAF) and Influenza Pandemic Business Continuity Plan (BCP). These documents provided the framework within which decision-making structures, in respect of Covid-19, were quickly established to support the on-going effective operation of the SFRS. Initially, these structures comprised the Covid Tactical Action Group (COTAG) and SFRS Gold Group; all SFRS functions were represented on Covid Tactical Action Group (COTAG), with the Gold Group comprising members of SFRS' Strategic Leadership Team (SLT). When the situation in relation to the first wave of Covid-19 began to stabilise, the Service created a Reset and Renew subgroup of its Senior Management Board. At the time of writing, this subgroup's work has been temporarily paused, however, a Routemap to Delivering Reset and Renew has been developed and will be progressed when circumstances determine this is appropriate. Notwithstanding this pausing, a Governance and Compliance work package has been completed to support the Routemap, which is being progressed as appropriate and will assist to address this recommendation. In addition to the above, recent revisions have been made to the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Service's Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) to ensure the business it conducts remains appropriate. The executive board structure, which sits below Strategic Leadership Team (SLT), has also been revised with updated Terms of Reference developed and agreed. This new structure will promote appropriate empowerment and autonomy for those who sit on the respective boards. |
| Action 3.2.1a Action Owner : Richard Whetton | Review, and revise as necessary, the Scheme of Delegations for the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service. |
| Closing position statement at May 2023 | The SFRS Scheme of Delegation has been updated as part of the annual board governance review. The updated Scheme with summary of changes was presented and approved by the SFRS Board in April 2021. Evidence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board papers 29/04/21 - See Agenda item 12 |
| Action 3.2.1b Action Owner : John Dickie, Stuart Stevens, Paul Stewart, Liz Barnes, Mark McAteer, Iain Morris | Directors to review internal business processes within their respective areas of responsibility and update as necessary. |
| Closing position statement at May 2023 | This process is being managed via our Agile Working Framework. All recruitment processes are under review and policies will be reviewed to streamline and remove bureaucracy. A number of Directorates have also help workshops to explore relevant matters in relation to staff's work experiences during the pandemic. Workshops considered what worked and did not work in terms of support during the pandemic and the future wishes of staff as the Directorate and Service return to a more 'normal' mode of working. Strategic Planning, Performance and Communications (SPPC) held a Directorate workshop on June 22nd and over 80 team members took part. The findings will be reported at the Strategic Planning, Performance and Communications (SPPC) |

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| | <p>Directorate Management Team meeting in August, following which plans will be drawn up in line with relevant corporate directions arising from the Agile Working Framework. Details of this will be reported to both Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) and Senior Management Board (SMB).</p> <p>Evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agile Working Framework |
| Recommendation 2 | The SFRS should ensure there is clear decision making and authority to commit resources with those representing the Service. |
| Position statement at May 2021 | <p>At the outset of the pandemic clear communications were issued to Local Senior Officers (LSOs), reiterating the empowerment they have for the appropriate utilisation of SFRS resources to support local partnership working; this was not a new level of empowerment, but rather a reemphasis of the Service's existing approach. In addition to this, as part of the wider arrangements instigated in response to the pandemic, the Community Resilience Assistance Group (CRAG) was created as a subgroup of Covid Tactical Action Group (COTAG). Terms of Reference and a decision control process were created, enabling the timely escalation of requests from local areas in circumstances where Local Senior Officers (LSOs) felt it appropriate. With Covid Tactical Action Group (COTAG) and the Gold Group meeting at a frequency appropriate to how dynamic the situation was at any given time, swift escalation and decision making was supported. These arrangements also ensured appropriate national support could be provided to local partnership working. As part of delivering the Routemap to Delivering Reset and Renew an Operational Strategy work package has been developed, which includes an action to conduct a review and evaluation of the Community Resilience Action Group (CRAG) and the guidance provided to Local Senior Officers (LSOs) to assess the effectiveness of support provided directly to communities during the Covid-19 pandemic.</p> |
| Action 3.2.2 Action Owner : Operations | <p>No additional actions necessary as being progressed via Routemap to Delivering Reset and Renew: Operational Strategy work package.</p> <p>(This refers to the escalation for localised decision making that was predominantly covered in the Community Resilience Action Group (CRAG) process.)</p> |
| Closing position statement at May 2023 | <p>The Community Resilience Action Group (CRAG) process was set up in extraordinary times and the information and guidance ensured that decision making was pushed to point of need, in most cases this was Local Senior Officer level. On occasion requests for assistance of a more strategic level or those with service wide implications were referred up to Community Resilience Action Group (CRAG) or the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) for Gold sign off. SFRS deem this process to be suitable and sufficient.</p> <p>Evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Resilience Action Group (CRAG) Tracker/spreadsheet • All Community Resilience Action Group (CRAG) documentation • Covid Tactical Action Group (COTAG) minutes. |
| Recommendation 3 | The WFH arrangements need to be evaluated as it is too early to be assured of the longer-term consequences of this new way of working |

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| Position statement at May 2021 | SFRS reacted quickly to the escalating situation with the pandemic and put arrangement in place expediently to enable people to be at home working where they were able to do so. The approach to this has continually been refined, ensuring that personnel have the appropriate equipment and support in place for being at home working. This has included support through a dedicated Wellbeing Group, which has complemented SFRS' on-going approach to mental health and wellbeing. The Service has also recognised the challenges faced by personnel when being at home working when combined with childcare, home schooling and other caring responsibilities, and taken as flexible an approach as possible. One of the primary themes in the Routemap to Delivering Reset and Renew is 'People', and our future approach to agile working for staff is being progress through this. |
| N/A | No specific action within Action Plan |
| Closing position statement at May 2023 | N/A – No specific Action within the Plan Evidence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agile Working Framework |
| Recommendation 4 | The SFRS should ensure a training needs analysis of all areas of training is undertaken, and that a plan is developed to ensure specialist skills like water rescue and rope rescue is in place to prevent long term risk to staff and communities. |
| Position statement at May 2021 | Early in our response to Covid-19 priority was given to four categories of training, which were considered to be risk-critical. These were Trainees, Breathing Apparatus, Driving and Incident Command. This prioritisation took place to enable risk critical training to continue, while protecting the health of personnel including instructional staff by minimising contact. Although other training was able to take place following the first wave of the pandemic, at the time of writing the second wave has resulted in the prioritisation outlined above being re-established. Preparatory work continues, however, to ensure the training backlog created will be managed in a prioritised manner. |
| Action 3.2.10 Action Owner : Paul King | Develop a training needs analysis and associated recovery plan to prioritise training impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. |
| Closing position statement at May 2023 | The Training Needs Analysis request was issued on 7 December 2020 and returns were received by 15 January 2021. An impact analysis focussing on specialist skills, Incident Command and driver training was completed by March 2021. This analysis included recovery proposals. These were agreed with Service Delivery business partners and have been incorporated into the 'People' work packages within the Recovery, Reset and Renew programme as presented to the Senior Management Board on 22 April 2021. Q1 of 2023 has seen the introduction of a revised Training Needs Analysis (TNA) now issued on a quarterly basis to address and highlight skills requirements of most need and allow flexibility of course delivery. In addition, a BA/CFBT recovery plan has been implemented this quarter and is being overseen by the TCIB to manage progress. Evidence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training Needs Analysis, - Incident Command Training Report, - Driver Training Report, |

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| | <p>- Specialist Rescue Training Report.</p> <p>- Work Package 4.1 (Training).</p> |
| Recommendation 5 | The availability of staff to crew appliances along with the introduction of bubbles/clusters has meant that normal crew levels cannot always be achieved, and reduced crewing across more areas of the business have been forced upon the Service. The impact of these changes should be evaluated by the SFRS to identify potential organisational benefits and risks |
| Position statement at May 2021 | <p>On 18 March 2020 the Gold Group took the decision to implement a minimum crewing level of four riders on all pumping appliances within wholetime community fire stations. This was followed up by a subsequent decision on 30 March 2020 to enable LSOs to determine appropriate ridership levels for retained and volunteer duty stations based upon local circumstances. SFRS implemented these changes with the view of fulfilling two principal outcomes. The first was to ensure that appliance availability, and therefore the SFRS' ability to deliver key services to communities, was maximised from an early stage in the virus' spread across the UK. Secondly, by reducing minimum crewing levels in this way, the SFRS' ability to comply with Scottish Government's social distancing guidance has been enhanced, thereby helping to safeguard our personnel. As well as maximising opportunities for social distancing on fire stations and within appliances, this approach has minimised the need for detached duties and pre-arranged overtime, both of which have reduced the risk of the virus spreading amongst our workforce. Although this approach will be fully evaluated, this has been subject to on-going review throughout the pandemic. The Gold Group has kept these decisions under regular review to correspond with the latest Scottish Government advice. In addition to this, since these decisions have been taken, SFRS' Operational Assurance Function has been actively monitoring and reviewing, through OA6 and OA13 forms, operational response to identify any operational impact of crewing with a minimum of four personnel to maintain firefighter safety. As part of delivering the Routemap to Delivering Reset and Renew an Operational Strategy work package has been developed, which includes an action to review and evaluate operational availability across all duty systems, considering adjustments and alterations to crewing and staffing levels, appliance withdrawal strategy, hierarchy of specialist appliance withdrawal etc.</p> |
| Action 3.2.11 Action Owner : Operations | <p>No additional actions necessary as being progressed via Routemap to Delivering Reset and Renew: Operational Strategy work package.</p> <p>(The ongoing use of adjusted crewing models has been monitored by the Operational Availability Group (OAG). Ensure ongoing liaison with Representative Bodies (i.e. Fire Brigades Union)).</p> |
| Closing position statement at May 2023 | <p>Due to concurrent challenges identified in relation to recruitment, resourcing and managing operational availability, this work will now extend beyond Covid-19 recovery plans and will come under the remit of the Staffing Tactical Action Group (STAG). The Staffing Tactical Action Group (STAG) has been established to provide oversight of a cross directorate approach to managing significant challenges to maintaining Service Delivery. The ability of the SFRS to operate under reduced crewing levels will be reviewed as part of the work streams of the Staffing Solutions Team Subgroup of the Staff Tactical Action Group (STAG). This action remains on track and is green.</p> <p>The SFRS maintain oversight on current challenges to operational availability through the Staffing Tactical Action Group (STAG) which ensures continual oversight and review on 5WDS appliance availability. The benefits and risks of applying</p> |

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| | <p>reduced crewing levels form part of the various reporting processes such as Staffing Tactical Action Group (STAG) updates, Operational Assurance Group papers, Key Performance Indicators (KPI) returns, appliance availability reports etc. and risks will be captured via SFRS reporting mechanisms i.e. Health & Safety reports, Operational Assurance returns and Risk Registers. Given these challenges are now influenced more by the impact of the McCloud remedy on the Firefighter Pension Scheme than Covid-19 recovery, this action will extend beyond Covid-19 recovery measures, the intent of this action is now well embedded in staffing management related activity as business as usual.</p> <p>Evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central Staffing Business Rules • Central Staffing Off-The-Run (OTR) Reports • Operations Assurance Group (OAG) Agenda • RBC Covid-19 Monitoring Spreadsheet |
| Recommendation 6 | The SFRS should look at amending the UFAS arrangements to reduce levels of demand, utilising evidence to inform any decision making |
| Position statement at May 2021 | To minimise the impact of attending calls to automatic fire alarm actuations and to prevent unnecessary contact between crews and with members of the public, interim amendments have been made to pre-determined attendances to some premises on a risk assessed basis. In addition to the above, work is on-going within the SFRS to review the Service's approach to these types of incidents. It is the intention that the proposals, which are under development at the moment including engagement with key stakeholders, will be the subject of public consultation later in 2021. Learning from the approach adopted as a result of Covid-19 will inform this work as it progresses. |
| Action 3.2.12 Action Owner : Prevention and Protection | No additional actions necessary as being progressed as a dedicated Directorate-level project within the Service Delivery Directorate: Prevention and Protection Function. (AOP S01:1: Review and revise the Unwanted Fire Alarm Signal (UFAS) Strategy.) |
| Closing position statement at May 2023 | <p>The full delivery of the Unwanted Fire Alarm Signal (UFAS) changes remain linked to the implementation of the Command and Control Futures changes. The focus of the implementation group has been to identify alternative delivery model for either full or partial delivery. The group have prepared a paper of a viable option and submitted this to the Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals Review Board.</p> <p>As can be seen from the updated provided above, there is clear evidence that the recommendation has been given due regard and that revised Unwanted Fire Alarm Signal (UFAS) arrangements will be implemented. The Unwanted Fire Alarm Signal (UFAS) Project is well established and is being monitored via the Corporate Risk and Performance Report. As such, it is recommended that this action is closed off as 'business as usual' as it features on the Annual Operating Plan for 2022/23 and will be monitored accordingly.</p> |
| Recommendation 7 | The SFRS should use evidence and data to ensure resources are utilised in the most efficient and effective way. |
| Position statement at May 2021 | The Service Delivery Model Programme (SDMP), which commenced in April 2019, is a significant piece of work that is ongoing within the SFRS. Its purpose is to undertake short, medium and long-term scenario planning, which informs an analysis of risk across Scotland's communities, in order to identify where the Service, working within the confines of the resources available and in partnership, can deliver a balanced prevention, protection and response model that will contribute |

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| | to eliminating, reducing or mitigating known or predicted community risk. To support the Service during the pandemic, the SDMP team has assisted with the development of evidence-based appliance withdrawal strategies that can be deployed in the event of significant staff absences. The Service Delivery Model Programme (SDMP) is a long-term programme of work, which will be used to inform decision making on the most appropriate deployment of the Service's resources to meet contemporary risks within communities. |
| Action 3.2.13 Action Owner : Andrew Gurrity | No additional actions necessary as being progressed by the Service Delivery Model Programme, which is a major programme of work subject to full support and scrutiny within SFRS governance arrangements. |
| Closing position statement at May 2023 | Development of the Community Risk Index Model is ongoing with the current focus on incorporating additional risk from the built and natural environments. Once complete, it is anticipated this will inform verification of existing operational resources and further assessment of any required realignment to community risk and demand. Community Risk Index Model (CRIM) remains in development. As can be seen from the update provided above, there is clear evidence that the recommendation has been given due regard and that the Service Delivery Model Programme (SDMP) will allow us to use evidence and data to ensure resources are utilised in the most efficient and effective way. Service Delivery Model Programme (SDMP) is well established and is being monitored via the Change Committee. As such, it is recommended that this action is closed off as 'business as usual' and continues to be monitored accordingly. |
| Recommendation 8 | We are aware of a number of new innovative and creative ways of working including: Fire Safety enforcement visits being undertaken remotely; delivery of training and assessment within Operations Control (OC) and at fire and rescue stations reducing the need for staff to travel and delays in getting staff competent; and some low and medium Community Safety activities (HFSV) are being delivered virtually. New ways of working should be thoroughly evaluated to maximise opportunities to deliver better service. |
| Position statement at May 2021 | The SFRS has developed innovative solutions to working in a different manner as a result of Covid-19, some examples of which are highlighted above. The Routemap to Delivering Reset and Renew, which is underpinned by the primary themes of People, Operational Strategy, Workplace, Technology, Leadership, Governance & Compliance, Partnership Working, and Communications & Engagement, will fully consider all areas of these alternative ways of working, evaluate them where Her Majesty's Fire Service Inspectorate Planning and Preparedness for Covid Review: Opening Statement appropriate, and mainstream into the SFRS as part of the recovery work. At the time of writing the SFRS is currently in a response posture due to the second wave of the virus, and the reset and renew work will receive greater focus in the near future. |
| Action 3.2.14a Action Owner : Iain Macleod | Evaluate the changes in approach to Prevention and Protection activities undertaken by SFRS during the Covid-19 pandemic, and take opportunities presented to improve delivery of services in this regard. |
| Closing position statement at May 2023 | The Prevention & Protection team has continually monitored the new processes implemented during the Covid-19 period. Using a quantitative approach, they are able to confirm that staff are using the systems and information being shared. Further in-depth evaluation will be undertaken as part of the Routemap to Delivering Reset and Renew: Partnership Working work package and will report through this work stream. Evidence: |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire Safety Enforcement (FSE) – Remote Audit Procedure • Community Safety Engagement (CSE) – Online HFSV Checker • Community Safety Engagement (CSE) – Make the Call • Community Safety Engagement (CSE) – HFSV Questionnaire |
| <p>Action 3.2.14b Action Owner : Paul King</p> | <p>Evaluate the changes in approach to training undertaken by SFRS during the Covid-19 pandemic, and take opportunities presented to make improvements in this regard.</p> |
| <p>Closing position statement at May 2023</p> | <p>A number of changes initially introduced to ensure training continuity through the pandemic have been evaluated and have been taken forward to shape options for ongoing training delivery models. As this has been effective, all courses have been reviewed to consider capacity for instructor delivery with a blend of online learning and practical delivery. Incident Command refresher courses and assessments continue to be delivered online following a significant benefit in meeting training requirements.</p> <p>Evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wherever possible, technical input is remotely delivered via Teams to reduce the duration of physical attendance on Training courses. • Creation of "mobile friendly" e-learning modules. • Remote delivery and remote assessment of Incident Command Courses level 2-4. • Local delivery of phased assessments. • Remote delivery of IOSH courses. |
| <p>Recommendation 9</p> | <p>The SFRS should ensure that the more rural parts of the country are not deprived of investment as these are areas that will assist the organisation increase performance.</p> |
| <p>Position statement at May 2021</p> | <p>Throughout the pandemic the SFRS has demonstrated that it has provided continued support to all parts of Scotland, including rural areas. This support has extended to additional activities that personnel have undertaken on a voluntary basis to assist their communities. These additional activities have either been agreed through partnership working locally, or supported through the Community Resilience Action Group (CRAG)/Covid Tactical Action Group (COTAG)/Gold Group escalation process. Initial analysis has shown that SFRS has staff residing in the majority of intermediate data zones within Scotland, demonstrating the investment the Service is making across the country. This support is set to continue, with the recruitment of the final tranche of Rural Full Time Posts – Retain and Volunteer Duty System (RVDS) Support Watch Commanders - recently completed. Moving forward the Service Delivery Model Programme (SDMP) will support the appropriate investment in rural areas by the SFRS.</p> |
| <p>Action 3.2.15 Action Owner : Andrew Girrity</p> | <p>No additional actions necessary as being progressed by the Service Delivery Model Programme, which is a major programme of work subject to full support and scrutiny within SFRS governance arrangements.</p> |
| <p>Closing position statement at May 2023</p> | <p>Development of the Community Risk Index Model is ongoing with the current focus on incorporating additional risk from the built and natural environments. Once complete, it is anticipated this will inform verification of existing operational resources and further assessment of any required realignment to community risk and demand. Community Risk Index Model (CRIM) remains in development.</p> <p>There is clear evidence that the recommendation has been given due regard and that the Service Delivery Model</p> |

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| | Programme (SDMP) will allow us to use evidence and data to ensure resources are utilised in the most efficient and effective way. Service Delivery Model Programme (SDMP) is well established and is being monitored via the Change Committee. As such, it is recommended that this action is closed off as 'business as usual' and continues to be monitored accordingly. |
| Recommendation 10 | The SFRS may wish to consider future plans being designed as frameworks providing guidance on outcomes or consequence management. |
| Position statement at May 2021 | As outlined under recommendation one above, at the outset of the pandemic the Service invoked its SCAF and Influenza Pandemic BCP. While these documents undoubtedly provided a framework for SFRS to work within during the early days of the pandemic, there was still a significant amount of work necessary to develop additional bespoke guidance for personnel, both to keep them safe and support the delivery of services to communities. As part of delivering the Routemap to Delivering Reset and Renew an Operational Strategy work package has been developed, which includes an action to review and evaluate SFRS operational preparedness, response and delivery arrangements during the Covid-19 pandemic. This will identify any considerations, lessons learned and recommendations for improvement. |
| Action 3.2.16 Action Owner : Operations / Strategic Planning Performance and Communications | No additional actions necessary as being progressed via Routemap to Delivering Reset and Renew: Operational Strategy work package. (This recommendation focuses on the Service's agility and flexibility around planning. Consideration should be given to more generic plans.) |
| Closing position statement at May 2023 | Covid-19 Risk Rating Framework now completed and Covid-19 and the SFRS Workplace Guidance Handbook available to managers and staff to support agile working, whether for returning to the workplace or homeworking arrangements to simplify this information. These principles have also been discussed at Operations Functional Management Team 09/02/2022 and are to be considered when composing future plans. Evidence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed Operational Strategy Framework document. • Strategic Planning, Performance and Communications (SPPC) work packages. |
| Recommendation 11 | COVID-19 has identified that some additional challenges have appeared in areas where the SFRS delivery areas are not aligned with the Local Authority or NHS health boards. These challenges need to be fully understood to ensure there is no negative impacts. |
| Position statement at May 2021 | The SFRS comprises three Service Delivery Areas (SDAs) covering the East, North and West of Scotland, which correspond with Regional Resilience Partnership and Police Scotland boundaries. These SDAs are further sub-divided into 16 Local Senior Officer (LSO) areas, which cover all 32 local authority areas across Scotland. Although some Local Senior Officers (LSOs) are responsible for the delivery of SFRS' services across more than one local authority area, each local authority area has a single Local Senior Officer (LSO) who covers it; Local Senior Officer (LSO) responsibilities are therefore coterminous with local authority areas, and therefore also Community Planning Partnerships. While it is true that Local Resilience Partnerships (LRP) and NHS territorial health board boundaries are not coterminous with these structures, arrangements are in place to support partnership working across these structures. SFRS is also in the process of realigning Local Senior Officer (LSO) structures in the north-east of Scotland so they better align with LRP and territorial |

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| | health board arrangements. As part of delivering the Routemap to Delivering Reset and Renew a Partnership Working work package has been developed, which includes actions to investigate and review SFRS partnership working throughout the pandemic and identify opportunities to enhance existing and develop new partnerships to help deliver SFRS and wider Scottish Government priorities. |
| Action 3.3.4 Action Owner : Gordon Pryde | No additional actions necessary as being progressed via Routemap to Delivering Reset and Renew: Partnership Working work package. |
| Closing position statement at May 2023 | The partnership report is complete with no further stakeholder feedback received. Elements for the report have been used to meet the needed of outstanding actions for the service delivery continuous improvement forum and elements of this is being used as evidence to enable as reduction of current risks within the Service Delivery Risk Register. |
| Recommendation 12 | Partners and the SFRS should ensure that plans are developed to re-instate joint training without delay, when circumstances permit. |
| Position statement at May 2021 | As outlined under recommendation four above, priority has been given to the continuation of some categories of training by SFRS during the pandemic. The SFRS is committed to joint training with partners, either through the Scottish Multi-Agency Resilience Training and Exercise Unit (SMARTEU), or other arrangements. These arrangements will be reinstated as part of the Service's reset and renew work at an appropriate time. |
| Action 3.3.5 Action Owner : Paul King | In conjunction with relevant partners, including the Scottish Multi-Agency Resilience Training and Exercise Unit, develop a recovery plan to prioritise joint partnership training impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. |
| Closing position statement at May 2023 | SFRS has continued to be represented at the Emergency Services Training Collaboration Group by both the Training and Operations Functions where the resumption of collaborative training opportunities forms part of the agenda. Evidence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESTCG Agenda • Exercise Cervantes April 2021 • Exercise Vepsish July 2021 • Resumption of Joint On Scene Commander's (JOSIC) Course Late summer 2021 |
| Recommendation 13 | It was evident that the 'tripartite' agreements between the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC), Fire Brigades Union and Local Government Association were not utilised. Many staff had little awareness of the agreements, nor did we find evidence that the SFRS were influencing or was an active participant in those discussions. The National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) were active in reporting the impact of Covid-19 on the fire sector, the areas reported on include; levels of demand, infection rates and absenteeism etc. The SFRS appear not to have been participative which may have assisted monitoring and anticipating the impact of Covid-19. |
| Position statement at May 2021 | As outlined above under recommendation two, to support partnership working Local Senior Officer's (LSO's) existing empowerment was re-emphasised during the very early stages of the pandemic. This empowerment enabled Local Senior Officers (LSOs) to work with partners locally to assist with requests for support where appropriate, based on local need and circumstance. Quick and effective escalation routes were made available through Covid Tactical Action Group (COTAG) and the Gold Group in the event that national support and/or decision making was required. This process was also |

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| | supported by very frequent engagement with representative bodies in Scotland, which facilitated additional activities being undertaken by SFRS personnel. These arrangements continue to work effectively. At the time of writing the SFRS is continuing to support partners, including training personnel to drive ambulances for the Scottish Ambulance Service. This again is being facilitated through partnership working with representative bodies in Scotland. As part of delivering the Routemap to Delivering Reset and Renew an Operational Strategy work package has been developed, which includes an action to conduct a review and evaluation of the Community Resilience Action Group (CRAG) and the guidance provided to Local Senior Officers (LSOs) to assess the effectiveness of support provided directly to communities during the Covid-19 pandemic. Due to differing governance arrangements, SFRS has not been providing data to the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) for onward dissemination to the Home Office. Rather, on-going close working with Scottish Government and other partners has included data sharing where appropriate. |
| N/A | No specific action within Action Plan |
| Closing position statement at May 2023 | The Community Resilience Action Group (CRAG) process was set up in extraordinary times and the information and guidance ensured that decision making was pushed to point of need, in most cases this was Local Senior Officer level. On occasion requests for assistance of a more strategic level or those with service wide implications were referred up to CRAG or the Strategic Leadership Team for Gold sign off. SFRS deem this process to be suitable and sufficient. Evidence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Resilience Action Group (CRAG) Tracker/spreadsheet • All Community Resilience Action Group (CRAG) documentation • Covid Tactical Action Group (COTAG) minutes. |
| Recommendation 14 | The SFRS should work with partners to seek how the Community Asset Register (CAR) assets can be accessed and deployed and if a national, regional or more local alignment may maximise their usage |
| Position statement at May 2021 | The Community Asset Register (CAR) is a register of community assets operated by volunteers within the wider community that can be made available to assist SFRS and partners to resolve emergency incidents. Community volunteers are individuals or groups situated within close proximity to an incident. They may possess a specialised set of skills, vehicles or equipment which are not available to SFRS or partners or could enhance existing capabilities. These skills may be utilised for the purposes of assisting SFRS and partners to effectively carry out operational activity. The Community Asset Register (CAR) has remained available for use throughout the pandemic. Its availability for new capabilities to be added and its general use has also been promoted amongst partners. |
| Action 3.3.11 Action Owner : Report available via HMFSI Command and Control: Aspects of IC System Update Report | No additional actions necessary as being progressed via the His Majesty's Fire Services Inspectorate (HMFSI) Command and Control: Aspects of Incident Command (IC) System Action Plan. 5.2.5 Command and Control Action Plan: Establish a Working Group which will reinvigorate the strategic focus on the Community Asset Register (CAR). |
| Closing position statement at May 2023 | A full review has now been carried out of the Scottish Coordination and Advisory Framework GIN with wider partners fully considered and amendments implemented to ensure enhanced and fully integrated partnership working. |

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| Recommendation 15 | The SFRS should work with partners to identify interoperability issues and work together to remove potential barriers. |
| Position statement at May 2021 | SFRS is committed to working in partnership with all relevant agencies. Protocols vary with different partners depending upon the nature of SFRS' joint working with them, covering national and local arrangements. SFRS is always keen to enhance these arrangements for the benefit of joint working, and the outcomes that can be positively impacted. As part of delivering the Routemap to Delivering Reset and Renew a Partnership Working work package has been developed, which includes actions to investigate and review SFRS partnership working throughout the pandemic and identify opportunities to enhance existing and develop new partnerships to help deliver SFRS and wider Scottish Government priorities. |
| Action 3.3.13 Action Owner : Gordon Pryde | No additional actions necessary as being progressed via Routemap to Delivering Reset and Renew: Partnership Working work package. |
| Closing position statement at May 2023 | The partnership report is complete with no further stakeholder feedback received. Elements for the report have been used to meet the needed of outstanding actions for the service delivery continuous improvement forum and elements of this is being used as evidence to enable as reduction of current risks within the Service Delivery Risk Register. |