

# Fire & Rescue Service

## Effectiveness, efficiency and people 2018/19

An inspection of Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service



# Contents

About this inspection	1
Service in numbers	2
Overview	4
<b>Effectiveness</b>	<b>7</b>
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	13
Responding to fires and other emergencies	15
Responding to national risks	18
<b>Efficiency</b>	<b>20</b>
How efficient is the service at keeping people safe and secure?	21
Summary	21
Making best use of resources	22
Making the fire and rescue service affordable now and in the future	24
<b>People</b>	<b>26</b>
How well does the service look after its people?	27
Summary	27
Promoting the right values and culture	28
Getting the right people with the right skills	29
Ensuring fairness and promoting diversity	31
Managing performance and developing leaders	32
Annex A – About the data	34
Annex B – Fire and rescue authority governance	40

# About this inspection

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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 Cumbria 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.

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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**.

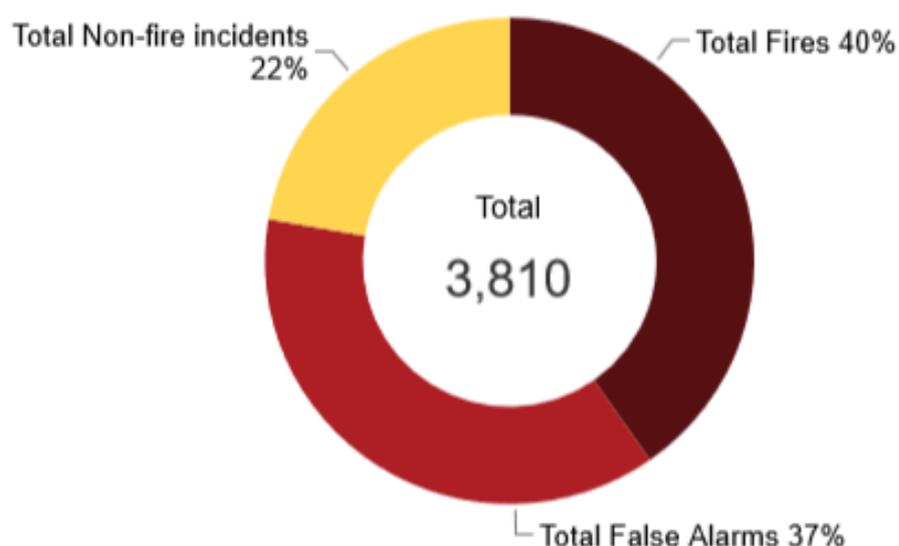
If we find serious critical failings of policy, practice or performance of the fire and rescue service, we will judge it as **inadequate**.

# Service in numbers

 <b>Public perceptions</b>	Cumbria	England
<b>Perceived effectiveness of service</b> Public perceptions survey (June/July 2018)	<b>88%</b>	<b>86%</b>

 <b>Response</b>	Cumbria	England
<b>Incidents attended per 1,000 population</b> 12 months to 31 December 2018	<b>7.6</b>	<b>10.4</b>
<b>Home fire risk checks carried out by FRS per 1,000 population</b> 12 months to 31 March 2018	<b>20.2</b>	<b>10.4</b>
<b>Fire safety audits per 100 known premises</b> 12 months to 31 March 2018	<b>14.2</b>	<b>3.0</b>

## Incidents attended in the 12 months to 31 December 2018





## Cost

Cumbria

England

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

£23.82

£22.38



## Workforce

Cumbria

England

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

1.0

0.6

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

-17%

-14%

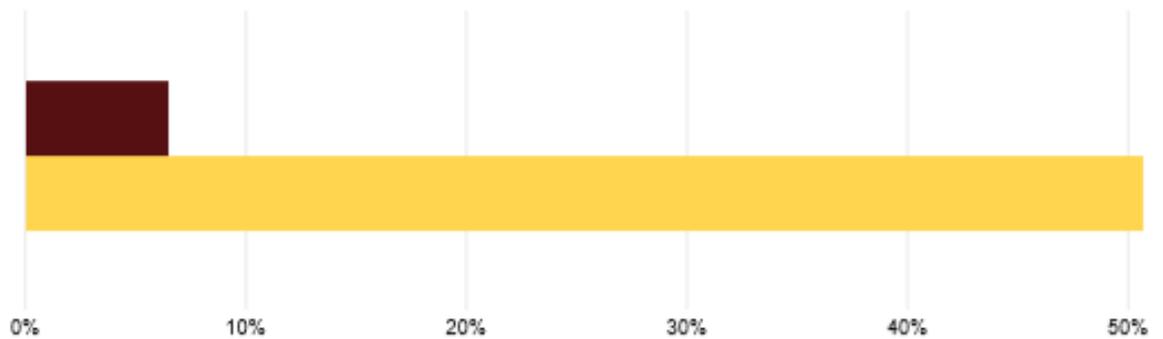
**Percentage of wholetime firefighters**  
As at 31 March 2018

38%

70%

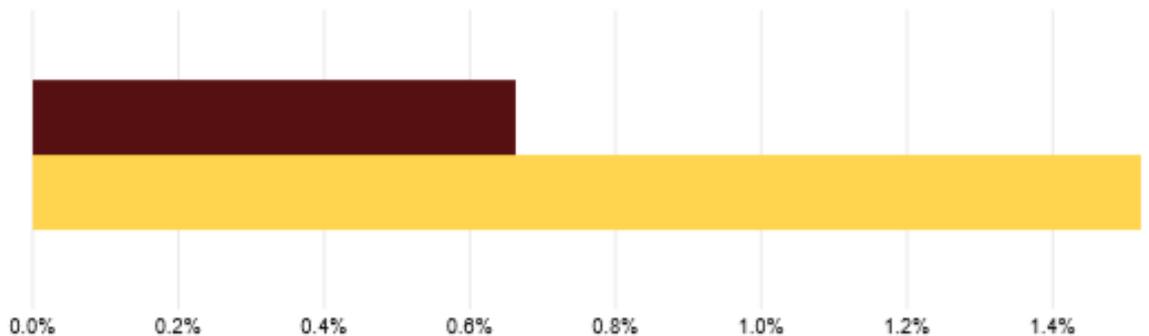
**Percentage of female firefighters as at 31 March 2018**

● 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

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



## People



**Requires improvement**

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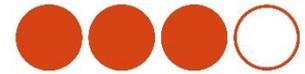
Promoting the right values and culture



Requires improvement

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Getting the right people with the right skills



Good

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Ensuring fairness and promoting diversity



Requires improvement

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Managing performance and developing leaders



Requires improvement

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## Overall summary of inspection findings

We are pleased with most aspects of the performance of Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service in keeping people safe and secure. But it needs to improve how it looks after its people, to give a consistently good service.

Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service is good at providing an effective service. It is good at:

- understanding the risk of fire and other emergencies;
- preventing fires and other risks;
- protecting the public through fire regulation;
- responding to fires and other emergencies; and
- responding to national risks.

Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service is good at providing an efficient service. We found it to be good at making the best use of resources. And it is good at making its services affordable now and in future.

Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service requires improvement to the way it looks after its people. In particular, it requires improvement at:

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

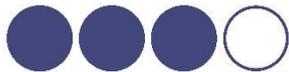
But it is good at getting the right people with the right skills.

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

# Effectiveness



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



**Good**

## Summary

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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. Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service's overall effectiveness is good.

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The service has a good understanding of local and community risk. Its [integrated risk management plan](#) (IRMP) identifies the key risks and sets out the service's strategic priorities. This is based on a wide range of data about risk, which is regularly updated.

The service is particularly strong on prevention work. It delivers a wide range of activities, and effectively targets those most at risk from fire.

The protection team is also well resourced and highly experienced. A new approach to risk-based inspection means that the service will inspect a much wider range of buildings to make sure that they meet fire regulations.

In terms of response, the service bases its provision on a thorough assessment of risk. Its allocation of resources corresponds clearly with the priorities set out in the IRMP. Fire stations are appropriately located, and staffing models support the service's objectives. It could do more, however, to share lessons learned from incidents with staff in a consistent way.

The service has a strong track record of responding to national incidents and collaborating with other services to manage major incidents.

## 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 service has a good understanding of local and community risk. It has a current IRMP, which sets out the key risks and the measures the service has put in place to manage them. It clearly communicates this information to the public.

The IRMP covers the period from 2019 to 2023. The service did some public engagement prior to publishing a draft IRMP, and then provided a variety of platforms – including by post, online and in public meetings – for members of the public to feed back their views.

The IRMP is based on a comprehensive risk-based evidence profile (RBEP), broken down to cover each community in Cumbria. The RBEP considers historic emergency demand and existing risks, and takes account of anticipated infrastructure changes. The IRMP also draws on a variety of other suitable data sources. These include health data, which it uses to profile those most at risk from fire in the home, and land registry data, which it uses to identify the highest-risk public buildings. The service has used mapping tools to find the best locations for its fire stations.

Cumbria is the second largest county in England and is predominantly rural. To provide emergency cover across what is a uniquely challenging landscape, the service has six [wholetime stations](#) and two day-crewed stations, all of which also have [on-call](#) staff (firefighters employed on a part-time basis). It has a further 30 stand-alone, on-call stations. The wholetime and day-crewed stations are located where demand is highest.

Demand is low at several on-call fire stations. For example, Patterdale only responded to nine incidents in the nine months from 1 April to 31 December 2018. Nevertheless, we are satisfied that the service has a robust business case to maintain these stations, because many of the communities they serve are isolated and frequently become cut off or difficult to access during bad weather.

## Having an effective risk management plan

The service's IRMP meets the requirements of nationally recognised guidance. It explains to the public what emergency cover the service provides and identifies evidence-based strategic priorities: [primary fires](#), road traffic collisions, water-based incidents and wildfires. These priorities are reflected in the service's decisions regarding equipment, training and the location of resources.

The IRMP also takes account of the most serious emergencies likely to take place in Cumbria, which are detailed in a community risk register. This register is maintained by the [local resilience forum](#) (LRF), which is chaired by the chief fire officer.

The plan also sets out the service's prevention activity, with the primary focus being the annual delivery of around 10,000 [safe and well visits](#) to people's homes. It explains how it audits the premises it considers to present the highest risk from fire to the public. In both prevention and protection, the service has maintained the right mix of staff to deliver an ambitious programme of activity.

## Maintaining risk information

The service has a good strategy in place to record and maintain risk information.

All fire engines in Cumbria are equipped with computers, so firefighters have access to risk information. They hold appropriate information about higher-risk premises, as well as guidance on vehicle hazards and chemical incidents. The computers work, and firefighters at the stations we visited were able to access and retrieve risk information quickly and confidently.

The service visits high-risk premises on a regular basis, so that firefighters are familiar with those near their fire station. The firefighters we spoke to have a good knowledge of the key risks in their station areas and could explain how they tailored their visits and training to match these risks. In the year to 31 March 2019, the service completed 84 percent of planned familiarisation visits within the target date.

Staff gather and share relevant risk information effectively for temporary events such as the Appleby Fair. The service also has a system by which [fire control](#) informs firefighters attending emergency incidents of risk information that may only be relevant for a brief time: for example, if a property is temporarily without a sprinkler system.

Risk information is disseminated across the service in a variety of ways, including face-to-face briefings, individual emails, e-bulletins and an e-training platform. Information is shared well between internal departments – for example, when prevention staff collect information about domestic oxygen users, they share this with operational staff.

## Preventing fires and other risks



### Good

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

#### Areas for improvement

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

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

#### Prevention strategy

The service does a broad range of prevention work. It has set ambitious targets and is achieving them. It is meeting its statutory duties and effectively targeting the people who are most at risk from fire. The staff who deliver the prevention strategy are confident that it benefits the public.

The service targets individuals and households using an appropriate range of data sources and referral pathways. We spoke to a range of organisations, including public health, adult and children's services departments within Cumbria County Council, and Cumbria Constabulary, all of which have engaged with the service to identify individuals at greater risk from fire.

The bulk of prevention activity is directed towards the ambitious target of offering a safe and well visit to every household in Cumbria that has a resident over 65. These visits include identifying and taking action to reduce fire risks, ensuring working smoke alarms are fitted, advice on social welfare, health screening/detection, health prevention and advice on slips, trips and falls.

It is commendable that in the year to 31 March 2018 the service carried out 10,070 safe and well visits, equating to 20.2 visits per 1,000 population, which is almost twice the English rate of 10.4 visits; 52.1 percent of those visited were elderly and 37.3 percent declared a disability.

To deliver these visits, the service has set and monitors minimum targets for each fire station that has full-time firefighters. It also employs safe and well technicians to work in remote rural areas. In addition, a home accident reduction team does safe and well checks while visiting individuals with mobility issues.

## **Promoting community safety**

While the service is clearly focused on fire and road safety, it is also working in partnership to deliver a range of other relevant community safety activities. As part of Cumbria County Council, it contributes to a broad range of shared objectives including tackling social isolation and supporting [vulnerable people](#) to live in their own homes.

The service informed us that it made over 400 onward referrals in the year to 31 March 2018 because of non-fire-related concerns it became aware of during safe and well visits. These included issues relating to heightened risks of falls, smoking cessation, alcohol reduction, social isolation and irregular heartbeats. However, we found that the knowledge prevention staff had of how to spot and action [safeguarding](#) issues varied across the service.

The service informed us that it had delivered over 300 'heart start' courses in the year to 31 March 2018 and it has supported a variety of national safety campaigns such as 'water safety week'. Heart start courses are aimed at people in communities where defibrillators have been fitted, and give them the skills to use this equipment with confidence if a member of the public suffers a heart attack. The service also provides training to younger people showing an unhealthy interest in fire or who have been involved in fire setting.

The service's prevention campaigns are well promoted using social media, and a central team provides publicity materials to firefighters who deliver these initiatives. However, the consistency of the non-statutory campaigns such as those on water safety varies across the service.

## **Road safety**

The service is an active member of the Cumbria Road Safety Partnership, which includes partner agencies such as the Highways Agency, Cumbria Constabulary, the North West Ambulance Service and IAM RoadSmart (formerly the Institute of Advanced Motorists). This provides it with strategic direction when planning road safety prevention activity. The partnership's main objective is to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on Cumbrian roads.

As part of the partnership's joint education, enforcement and engineering activity, the service has prioritised the education of young drivers between the ages of 18 and 25. Its firefighters deliver road awareness training courses at sixth form colleges and higher education establishments. The service informed us that it delivered 82 of these courses in the year to 31 March 2018.

While we were impressed with the range and volume of the service's fire prevention activity, it is disappointing that it has done only very limited evaluation of its impact and effectiveness.

## Protecting the public through fire regulation



### Good

Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service is good at protecting the public through fire regulation. But we found the following areas in which it needs to improve:

#### Areas for improvement

- The service should ensure it has effective arrangements for providing specialist protection advice out of hours.
- The service should ensure it works with local businesses and large organisations to share information and expectations on compliance with fire safety regulations.

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

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

#### Risk-based approach

The service has a risk-based inspection programme that meets the requirements of national guidance.

It has refreshed its risk-based inspection programme during the past year, and now plans to routinely inspect only the highest-risk premises. Previously, a selection of high, medium and low-risk premises would have been inspected every year. The service has now ranked in order of relative risk every building in Cumbria that is covered by fire safety legislation. It calculates this risk rating using a range of appropriate data drawing on social, economic and environmental factors.

The service has categorised 2,444 premises as high risk but anticipates this will fall to around 1,900 once it updates its risk-based inspection database. It plans to inspect each high-risk building every three years. Under the previous system, the service only had 44 premises categorised as high risk and had inspected all of them in the previous three years. The increase in the number of high-risk premises reflects a big increase in the number of premises on the risk database.

Based on recent performance, we are satisfied that the service has the capacity to complete this more ambitious programme. It has an appropriately trained and experienced team of ten specialist inspecting officers, and has retained this capability throughout the period of austerity. During the past year, the service has provided firefighters with some protection training, which means that they can now make fire safety visits at lower-risk premises.

In the year to 31 March 2018, the service carried out 14.2 fire safety audits per 100 known premises (which equates to 1,056 audits). This is over four times the English rate. Of these audits, 64.6 percent were satisfactory, which is relatively in line with the English rate (68.4 percent satisfactory). However, we noted that the percentage of satisfactory audits has steadily increased from a low of 50 percent in the year to 31 March 2013 to a peak of 79 percent in the year to 31 March 2016. This data supports the service's decision to subsequently refresh its risk-based inspection programme to ensure that it does not just continue re-inspecting the same premises that are managing risk satisfactorily.

During the inspection, we examined several audit files from risk-based inspections that had been completed from across the county and found them to be of a consistently high quality. The service is quality assuring these audits to make sure that they are in line with the service's policy and procedures.

The service received 436 building regulation consultations in the nine months from April to December 2018. Of these, 99.3 percent were completed within the required time frame. This level has remained constant over the past three years. We would expect the service to have a specialist available 24 hours a day to advise on protection problems – for example, entertainment venues breaking fire regulations. There are some gaps in the rota in this area, which is a matter of concern.

### **Enforcement**

The service is regularly using the full range of enforcement and prosecution powers. In the year to 31 March 2018, it issued no alteration notices, 28 enforcement notices, 7 [prohibition notices](#) and undertook 1 successful prosecution.

We found specialist fire safety staff to be confident and well trained in using their enforcement powers. The service does training and continuing professional development with fire service partners in the north-west region, which is efficient and minimises any duplication of work.

### **Working with others**

We found good evidence that the service is sharing information and working effectively with other partners to keep the public safe from the risk of fire in premises covered by fire safety legislation. For example, we saw evidence of effective joint working with police, local authority licensing, environmental health and housing to prohibit the use of an unsafe building for sleeping in Carlisle.

The service could do more to work with others in preventing false fire alarms. In the year to 31 December 2018, 37.5 percent of the incidents attended by the service were false alarms, mostly from automatic fire alarms. This is below the average English rate of 40.1 percent. The service has reduced the number of false alarms it responds to from 1,819 in the year to 31 December 2017 to 1,428 in the year to 31 December 2018. This was achieved through a robust call challenge procedure, which meant it did not respond to 65.3 percent of automatic false alarm calls received that year.

The service does not, however, prioritise engaging with premises that are repeat false alarm offenders. Similarly, it does only limited proactive engagement with local businesses and other organisations to increase fire safety awareness and encourage compliance outside its core inspection programme. It is aware of these gaps and is in the process of introducing business safety advisers, who will focus on these activities as well as supporting operational firefighters doing lower-level risk visits.

## Responding to fires and other emergencies



### Good

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

#### Areas for improvement

- The service should improve the way it evaluates and shares learning from operational performance.

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 makes sure that its response times match risk and demand using a range of working patterns. It has a broad range of fire engines, including small off-road-style vehicles, fire engines with reduced water capacity, standard fire engines and engines that also carry enhanced rescue equipment. This means that the service can vary its response depending on localised risk and terrain.

These fire engines have computers that firefighters can use to access risk information, and we found that they did so confidently. This includes information on higher-risk premises, hazardous chemical information, crash data for vehicles and operational plans.

Fire engines are staffed with a minimum of four firefighters. The service is currently trialling responding with three firefighters on a standard fire appliance at some locations and using two smaller rapid response fire engines that are staffed by three firefighters. This should help it to respond more efficiently in lower-risk areas, and to maximise the use of on-call staff in areas where it is difficult to recruit sufficient numbers.

The service has plans in place to deal with more than one large incident at a time and to manage the deployment of supporting resources.

Although this is a predominantly on-call, part-time service, the operational training of these staff is maintained to a high standard. It is commendable that, in the nine months from 1 April 2018 to 31 December 2018, on-call staff kept the appliances'

average monthly availability ranging between 81.2 and 86.8 percent. However, the service did inform us that the long-term trend of on-call availability is reducing.

## Response

The service has based its response strategy on a thorough assessment of risk to the community. In the year to 31 December 2018, the service attended 7.6 incidents (3,810) per 1,000 population. This compares with the England rate of 10.4 over the same period.

The service has made a commitment in its IRMP to two response standards. First, to respond to all primary building fires within ten minutes on 80 percent of occasions. In the year to 31 March 2018, the service was meeting that standard on 74 percent of occasions. Second, to respond to all other incidents within 15 minutes. In the year to 31 March 2018, the service was meeting this standard on 87 percent of occasions.

During the same period, the service's average response time to all primary fires calls was 10 minutes and 50 seconds. This is in line with the national average for remote rural services (10 minutes 32 seconds) and is an improvement of 16 seconds for the same period over the previous year.

The service is transparent with the public when standards are not met, because it publishes incident details on its website. On occasions when an on-call fire engine fails to respond to an emergency, the service reports this on its website and investigates why it has happened. It is making efforts to reduce call handling and response times by introducing enhanced software that better pinpoints the location of mobile callers from remote rural areas.

The operational policies we reviewed were in line with national guidance. For example, we found evidence of staff being encouraged to apply [operational discretion](#) when appropriate, meaning that they have the confidence to diverge from the standard response and use their initiative. On one occasion, this led to the rescue and successful resuscitation of a person who had fallen into water.

## Command

The service has suitably trained incident commanders. The training records we viewed were up to date, and commanders are subject to regular assessments. Those we spoke to have a good understanding of the incident command procedures that the service has in place. Incident commanders at all levels have undertaken nationally recognised command qualifications.

Incident commanders are familiar with decision-making models, risk-assessing and recording decisions in line with national guidance.

While visiting fire control, we found that staff had the confidence to vary the response to incidents depending on circumstances. For example, there were occasions when they sent extra resources to incidents in remote areas, in order to minimise the risk of subsequent delays.

## Keeping the public informed

The service has embraced social media and makes good use of its website to keep the public informed about incidents. It has a close working relationship with the police to issue joint safety and information messages at larger incidents. Fire stations are active on a variety of online platforms.

Control and operational staff are aware of how to report significant safeguarding issues they identify in the course of their work. They have recently been provided with credit card-sized prompt cards setting out what action to take and whom to contact. Control staff are well trained in how to give a range of fire survival advice to callers who are trapped by fire. They gave us examples of when they had successfully advised people in these circumstances.

## Evaluating operational performance

The service uses emails, [safety flashes](#), electronic training platforms and bulletins to evaluate and share lessons learned from emergency incidents. It does not have a proper structure for using these methods consistently, however, which means that staff don't always know where to look for this information.

For all incidents of significant risk, the service sends officers to carry out quality assurance. Depending on their findings, they can initiate either an action plan or a more involved debrief. We reviewed a sample of these assurance audits and found that the outcomes are not being consistently communicated to the rest of the service. Informal debriefs are carried out following almost all incidents, and supervisory managers can record the outcomes on an e-learning platform. But, while the debriefs do take place, outcomes are not recorded in sufficient detail, and there is little evidence that the service monitors trends regularly.

More structured debriefs are carried out following larger and more complex incidents but this does not always happen promptly enough. However, we did find evidence that service improvements had been made following these debriefs – for example, the introduction of search procedures around road traffic collisions.

The service had communicated lessons learned from national incidents over the 12 months prior to the inspection. However, we did not find evidence that it had shared any local learning nationally.

## Responding to national risks



### Good

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

#### Areas for improvement

- The service should ensure it is well-prepared to form part of a multi-agency response to an incident. Staff should know how to apply Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles (JESIP).
- The service should ensure its operational staff have good access to relevant and up-to-date risk information. This should include cross-border risk information.

All fire and rescue services must be able to respond effectively to multi-agency and cross-border incidents. This means working with other fire and rescue services (known as intraoperability) and emergency services (known as interoperability).

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

#### Preparedness

The service has established and tested arrangements to effectively supplement its resources during major incidents. For example, during storm Desmond in 2015/16, the service set up a strategic holding area (SHA) to accept and deploy resources from 27 other fire services. A SHA is a pre-identified location with facilities to accommodate large numbers of emergency responders with their equipment. It provides a base for them to rest and be deployed to emergency incidents.

Staff in the control room are familiar with the processes for requesting additional specialist resources through the national resilience fire control. Strategic commanders have good knowledge and experience of setting up a strategic co-ordination group as part of a multi-agency response to major incidents.

The service has a close working relationship with high-risk sites located in Cumbria. These include the Sellafield nuclear reprocessing site at Seascale and the British Aerospace Systems shipyard at Barrow-in-Furness. We saw evidence of joint training and exercising in support of plans that are in place covering these sites.

## Working with other services

In addition to receiving resources to manage major incidents in Cumbria, the service has deployed resources to aid other fire services. It has a high-volume pump and powered rescue boat, both of which have been deployed nationally. During our inspection, the service deployed assets to assist with wildfires that had broken out in Lancashire, as it did on multiple occasions during the summer of 2018.

The service has learned lessons from debriefing staff after large multi-agency incidents such as fires and floods, and has invested in additional equipment and training as a result. It does some exercises with surrounding services but faces some unique challenges in implementing joint working across large and sparsely populated rural areas. We were satisfied that the exercises it has undertaken show that it is suitably interoperable with surrounding services. It holds risk information relevant to its neighbouring fire services but the records we viewed were not always up to date.

## Working with other agencies

The LRF is chaired by the chief fire officer, and the resilience forum manager also works for the service. This has led to the service having a leading role in multi-agency preparedness arrangements. Local partners we interviewed including the Environment Agency, police and local authority, all recognised the willingness of the service to engage and contribute to LRF activities.

The service leads a robust training and exercise programme through the LRF. It is based on a thorough assessment of relevant risks and threats identified from risk registers. The service takes part in a broad range of exercises as a result, such as a recent practical exercise that focused on transporting nuclear materials through Cumbria. In the nine months from 1 April to 31 December 2018, the service completed 11 multi-agency joint training exercises.

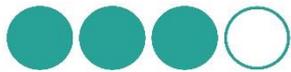
In addition to exercising, the service regularly works with partners including the military, mountain rescue, police, ambulance and other voluntary agencies. For example, during the winter of 2018, the service worked as part of a multi-agency response to the 'beast from the east' storm, which caused many communities in Cumbria to be cut off by road and from power for over a week. This incident also involved the service engaging with an independently commissioned multi-agency debrief. As a result, it is well-prepared to respond to foreseeable risks such as wide area flooding and marauding terrorist attacks.

However, the first level of incident commanders do not have a sufficient awareness of the [Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles](#), although they are well understood at a more senior level. These principles are in place to help incident commanders from the blue light services to work well together.

# Efficiency



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



**Good**

## Summary

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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. Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service's overall efficiency is good.

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The service has robust plans for meeting the objectives in its [IRMP](#). It knows the main risks to the public of Cumbria and is working to prevent them.

The prevention and protection teams are highly productive, carrying out almost twice the English rate of [home fire safety visits](#) per 1,000 population, and over four times the number of protection audits per 100 known properties in the year to 31 March 2018. The service has made good collaborative arrangements with other emergency services, which benefit its partners and the public.

The service has a strong track record of making savings, having reduced its budget by around £5m since 2010. A long period of restructuring means that it currently relies on an unacceptably high level of temporary promotions and overtime, but the new structure should bring more stability. In recognition of these challenges, and the substantial changes that have already been made, the service only needs to make very modest savings in the council's current mid-term financial plan.

The service has been innovative in introducing new staffing models, including a new shift pattern, although at the time of inspection this was the subject of an industrial dispute. It has ambitious plans to increase productivity by using technology.

## Making best use of resources



### Good

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

In the year to 31 March 2018, the service had a revenue budget of around £16m. Since the start of austerity in 2010, this has reduced year on year by around £5m.

The service is achieving the objectives set out in its IRMP within the budget assigned in the council's medium-term financial plan. The main risks to the public of Cumbria are [primary fires](#), road traffic collisions, flooding and wildfires. These correspond clearly to departmental targets, which include, for example, over 10,000 annual [safe and well visits](#) to tackle primary fires, over 80 annual road awareness events aimed at young drivers, and close working with communities and the environment agencies to develop community flood plans.

Stations also have strategic objectives, and these are communicated to firefighters using a 'plan on a page' format that is centrally populated with minimum targets. These plans are monitored quarterly by the three district commands, and the senior leadership team is made aware when targets are not being met. The service is also making effective use of electronic dashboards, which help hold staff accountable.

The service has made significant savings over the past decade, which support larger savings required by the council. As a result, a range of services that were delivered in-house are now provided by the council, including occupational health and human resource support. Sometimes, delays in the services that are now provided centrally have an impact on the quality of the fire service. For example, if firefighters have to wait to see occupational health staff, this can increase the time it takes for them to return to work. Cumbria County Council has recognised this and, as a result, has set the service a very modest savings target of £120,000 over the remainder of the current medium-term financial plan. This will be met through reduced employer pension costs, which are included within existing budget projections.

#### Productivity and ways of working

The service is focused on productivity and is challenging traditional ways of working. It compares well with the English rate for prevention and protection activity. In the year to 31 March 2018, it carried out almost twice the English rate of home fire safety visits per 1,000 population. It also carried out over four times the number of protection audits per 100 known properties. However, the service is reliant on inefficient paper-based systems to support most of its prevention and protection activities.

The service is safely staffing standard fire engines with four firefighters, whereas many English fire services use five. It is also trialling staffing specific standard fire engines with three.

The service uses flexible working patterns to make the best of its workforce's time, and to provide fire cover across a large geographical area that presents some unique challenges. Examples of these include:

- having firefighters working a flexible location system at a standard rate of pay;
- using extra capacity in the protection and operational support department to deploy specialist staff to response duties if required;
- offering part-time staff opportunities to fill short-term vacancies; and
- deploying managers over more than one location to minimise the number of supervisory managers required.

The service does not have effective systems in place to make sure that those working flexibly are taking enough rest time between shifts.

### **Collaboration**

The service is upholding its legislative duty to collaborate with other blue light partners. It has set up oversight and working arrangements to make sure that collaborations are supported by a business case and robustly evaluated.

We spoke to a range of partners, including the police, ambulance service and the office of the police and crime commissioner, who told us that the service regularly suggests new ways of joint working.

Some examples of the collaborative activities the service is taking part in are:

- joint incident command units used by police and ambulance;
- a memorandum of understanding to support the police with searches for highly [vulnerable](#) missing persons;
- a trial of joint emergency service officers who can simultaneously act as police community support officers and [on-call](#) firefighters;
- participation in daily task and co-ordination briefings with police; and
- co-location of ambulances at fire stations and allowing ambulance staff to use stations for welfare needs.

The service does make sure that its collaborations benefit its partners and the public. However, the collaborations it has entered into are not always providing better value for money for its partners than for the service itself. The service may wish to consider this in establishing any future partnerships.

### **Continuity arrangements**

The service has a range of business continuity plans to mitigate the impact of unexpected events, including loss of staff, premises, supporting infrastructure and service control. These plans are tested on a regular basis, sometimes using no-notice exercises.

Joint continuity arrangements are also in place, and tested, with businesses responsible for nuclear installations and military defence bases in the county.

These plans have been developed using an easy-to-follow template and staff are familiar with the actions they would be expected to take.

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



### Good

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 has a track record of making savings and its IRMP details how it spends public money. As part of the county council, its financial arrangements are made alongside the council's medium-term financial planning arrangements. Most back office functions are provided by the council.

In the year to 31 March 2018, the service had a revenue budget of around £16m. This has reduced by around £5m since financial restraint on public services was introduced in 2010. Most savings have been made by reducing staff numbers. The workforce has been shrunk by 17.1 percent between 2012/13 and 2017/18. Over the same time period, back office staff have reduced by 66.7 percent. [Wholetime firefighters](#) have reduced by 8.3 percent to 199 (full-time equivalent) and on-call firefighters have reduced by 10.4 percent to 320 (full-time equivalent).

In the year ending 31 December 2018, the service attended 3,810 incidents. This is a 17 percent reduction compared with the year to 31 December 2012.

In the year to 31 March 2018, the firefighter cost per head of population was £23.82. This compares with the England rate of £22.38. However, it should be noted that the service serves a relatively small population spread over a very large land mass.

The service has mainly absorbed staff reductions by reducing the number of firefighters on a standard fire engine from five to four, management reductions and changes to staffing models.

These changes have led to an unacceptably high level of temporary promotions and an increased use of overtime to fill staffing gaps. Uncertainty has been compounded by a rapid turnover of chief officers taking the service in different directions. The current chief officer, who has been in post for two years, is the longest serving over this time.

However, we are satisfied that the new structure proposed for the service will provide stability to staff as well as making sure fire engines are available when they are needed. Once the new structure is in place, it will reduce the number of temporary promotions and current high level of overtime spending.

In recognition of these challenges and substantial changes that have already been made, the council has asked the service to achieve only very modest savings in the current mid-term financial plan.

## **Innovation**

The service is innovative and open to new ways of working. It has a fleet of fire engines of varied sizes, capability and cost, and this has allowed it to reduce maintenance and capital replacement costs. It has been innovative in sharing some of its fleet with council partners – for example, it has all-terrain vehicles that it uses as wildfire units during the summer and snow ploughs during the winter.

It has also introduced innovative and different staffing models. For example, at Penrith, it employs firefighters to carry out other support and administrative roles. It is in the process of introducing revised shift patterns at full-time stations that will reduce the duration of night shifts. This will mean that firefighters will require less rest time, freeing up capacity and increasing productivity. At the time of inspection, this change was the subject of an ongoing industrial dispute.

This year, the service's emergency reserve equipment will be moved to Kendal on a trial basis. This should mean that the equipment is available 24 hours a day, as firefighters are working the new shift pattern. This should provide a more efficient distribution of essential equipment across the service.

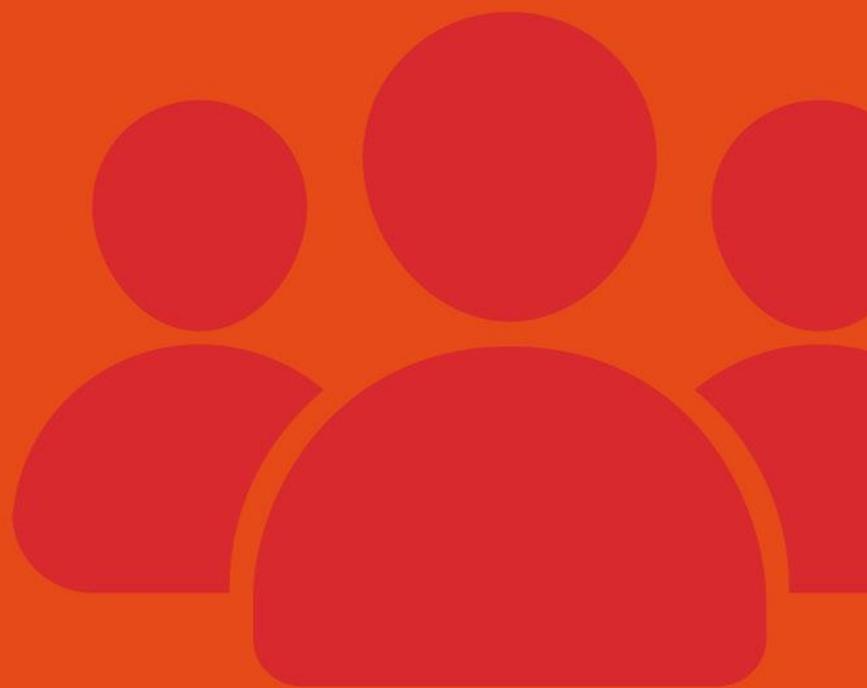
## **Future investment and working with others**

The service is working well with others and exploring opportunities that will provide improvements for the public in the future. It is using central government grant funding to build a blue light hub with police and ambulance colleagues on the Furness Peninsula, which will lead to closer collaborative working. The service has also commissioned detailed feasibility studies into providing similar facilities at Kendal and Whitehaven.

The service estimates that it has saved approximately £200,000 per year by sharing [fire control](#) with Greater Manchester, Lancashire and Cheshire fire services. This has provided it with a level of resilience that it would not be efficient for it to maintain alone. It has raised revenue through providing training and assurance for the industrial fire teams that operate within the Sellafield nuclear reprocessing plant. The service is also looking at future potential commercial opportunities.

The service is making effective use of technology to allow on-call staff to clock on and off duty using mobile phones. It also has plans to introduce mobile tablets at full-time stations that will replace the time-consuming paper-based systems currently used to deliver prevention and protection activities.

# People



# How well does the service look after its people?



## Requires improvement

### Summary

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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, Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service requires improvement at looking after its people.

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The service takes the wellbeing needs of its workforce seriously. Staff know how to access wellbeing services, including mental health support. The service makes sure that its workplaces are as safe as possible in both routine and emergency conditions.

Despite a secondary employment policy aimed at making sure that staff are well rested, there is a lack of oversight of working hours, particularly for staff who have dual contracts. The service should take action to rectify this. It could also do more to communicate its values to its workforce, because many people do not know what the service's values are or understand why they are important. There is a lack of trust between frontline staff and senior management, with many telling us that the management does not listen or respond adequately to their concerns.

Individual appraisals are not done regularly enough, despite the implementation of a new system. Some staff told us that they did not aspire to progress to management positions because the pathways to career progression were difficult to understand. The service needs to do more to identify, develop and support those with high potential to be senior leaders of the future.

The service is good at maintaining its workforce's skills and capabilities. It provides regular training in core skills. It also has a strong track record of employing highly skilled external applicants and not always just promoting from within. However, it needs to improve its planning in order to avoid skills gaps in the future.

We found a lack of understanding about equality issues among staff, and the use of careless and discriminatory language that is not appropriate in an inclusive workplace. The service recognises at the most senior levels that it needs to do more in this area.

## Promoting the right values and culture



Requires improvement

### Areas for improvement

- The service should have effective means to monitor the working hours of its staff.
- The service should make sure its values and behaviours are understood and demonstrated by all staff.

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

### Workforce wellbeing

The service takes the wellbeing needs of its workforce seriously and has a broad range of supporting measures in place. Staff know how to access wellbeing provisions through a web portal or the county council's occupational health department. The service has trained mental health first-aiders to spot early signs and symptoms of stress and psychological harm. It supports staff to stay physically fit and provides voluntary health screening. Staff with physical injuries have access to medical support including physiotherapy, and the service provides a wellbeing debrief for staff following traumatic incidents.

Staff spoke positively about the wellbeing support, but also gave examples of the occupational health department being slow to respond to referrals.

As part of our inspection, we carried out a survey of staff to get their views of their service (please see Annex A for more details). Of the 104 respondents to our staff survey, 45 percent reported feeling bullied or harassed and 35 percent feeling discriminated against at work in the past 12 months, and the majority did not report the incidents. Of those who did report the incidents, they tended to have done so informally. Respondents who did report indicated that they felt that action which will make a difference was not taken, or that it was too early to tell. However, staff did not raise bullying or harassment as a significant issue during the inspection.

### Health and safety

The service has a positive health and safety culture and robust systems in place to make its workplaces safe in both routine and emergency conditions. 85.6 percent of respondents to our staff survey agreed that they were encouraged to report all accidents, [near misses](#) or dangerous occurrences. 75 percent were satisfied that their personal safety and welfare were treated seriously at work.

The service has a secondary employment policy aimed at making sure that staff are well rested and safe to work, but in practice there is a lack of oversight of staff working hours, particularly for staff who have dual contracts and work different duty systems within the service. The service should take action to rectify this.

### **Culture and values**

Staff we spoke to had only a limited knowledge of the service's values. They did not consider them central to how they conduct themselves on a day-to-day basis.

The service has recently refreshed its appraisal system to include a review of staff performance, values and behaviours. We found most staff had limited interest in appraisals that lack meaningful objectives. These issues have been addressed in the new system.

We were told by staff at various levels that there was no shared culture between frontline staff and middle managers or between middle managers and the senior leadership team. Staff also told us that communication with management was one-way, and that they did not feel listened to. They felt that information was communicated inconsistently, and that middle managers were reluctant to challenge the senior leadership team.

In total, 47.1 percent of respondents to our staff survey said they did not feel that there were opportunities to feed their views upwards in the service. 65.3 percent were not confident their ideas or suggestions would be listened to. Furthermore, 62.5 percent did not feel able to challenge ideas without suffering consequences.

We were encouraged to note that the chief officer had put in place a variety of measures to improve communications. He is working hard to promote a common ownership of his change agenda. Many of the concerns we were told about related to the ongoing industrial dispute over changes to shift patterns.

### **Getting the right people with the right skills**



#### **Good**

Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service is good at getting the right people with the right skills. But we found the following areas in which it needs to improve:

#### **Areas for improvement**

- The service should improve workforce planning to mitigate future skills gaps.
- The service should address the high number of staff in temporary promotion positions.

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

## Workforce planning

The service has a good understanding of its current workforce skills and capabilities. It has appropriately skilled staff working in the right roles. It is making effective use of electronic platforms to manage [on-call](#) availability, and retaining staff whose skills are in demand in other sectors. It also has a strong track record of employing highly skilled external applicants and not always just promoting from within.

However, it needs to improve its planning to mitigate future skills gaps. We identified several key roles in which the post-holder is due to retire soon, but no suitably skilled internal candidates have been trained to succeed them. The service also has a high number of staff in temporary posts because of ongoing restructuring. There are clear reasons for the temporary promotions, but the situation still causes uncertainty for individual members of staff. As at 31 December 2018, there were 15 members of staff on temporary promotion. This number increased to 38 staff members as at 31 March 2019.

The service has a robust performance management regime in place for each department. It is meeting most targets set through the [IRMP](#) for prevention, protection and response and, where this is not the case, the senior leadership team has improvement plans in place.

## Learning and improvement

The service prioritises risk-critical training. At the stations we visited, risk-critical skills records were up to date. Local training plans cover general skills and take account of local risks. Staff maintain their core competencies such as in incident command and breathing apparatus through regular training. Additional skills, such as having all full-time firefighters trained to carry out rescues from water, align with IRMP priorities.

In the areas of prevention and protection, the service's staff are equally well trained. Prevention and protection teams are well established, and their experience allows them to respond to complex public demands quickly.

The chief officer has put systems in place to ensure that all staff are contributing to organisational learning. He has also introduced a variety of new mechanisms to encourage staff feedback. Many members of staff told us that, while they welcomed these changes, the historical culture of telling but not listening remains.

The service did, however, provide evidence of occasions on which it had listened to feedback from staff and in response to incidents. For example, it has improved incident command training by investing in virtual reality software, taking it out to staff in remote locations and sending staff to other services that have enhanced facilities. It has listened to staff concerns around fitness testing and provided facilities to maintain or improve fitness alongside different ways of testing. It has invested in better flood and wildfire personal protective equipment, including individual issue dry suits if required.

Staff in specialist roles such as health and safety and fire protection have been supported to take appropriate advanced qualifications such as fire safety engineering degrees. Managers at a middle and senior level are given good access to higher education to support their continuing professional development and all senior leadership team members have attained or are working towards nationally recognised strategic command qualifications.

## Ensuring fairness and promoting diversity



### Requires improvement

#### Areas for improvement

- To identify and tackle barriers to equality of opportunity, and make its workforce more representative, the service should ensure diversity and inclusion are well-understood and become important values of the service, led by chief officers.

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

Staff told us that senior leadership teams had historically not welcomed challenge or feedback from staff. In interviews during the inspection, staff told us that things were slowly beginning to improve. Senior leaders will have to continue to work hard to improve the trust staff have in them. They are aware of this and are introducing a range of measures, including reshaping the senior leadership team and making senior leaders more visible and accountable.

The chief officer has introduced staff surveys, informal meetings with staff, structured senior leadership team visits to all workplaces, and mechanisms for staff to make direct contact with the chief. Senior leadership team meetings are now more open, and improvements are communicated to staff using a variety of platforms. These changes are recent and not all staff have fully bought into them.

Staff told us that middle managers often put barriers in place that block or slow down the implementation of suggested improvements. Although senior leaders told us they want to push decision making further down the organisation, many staff feel that decisions that could be made at their level are deferred upwards to a small leadership group.

We carried out a desktop review of formal grievances that had been lodged by staff in the 12 months prior to our inspection. We found that they had been managed fairly and in line with the policy. The service has been willing to correct its mistakes and has communicated this openly to staff.

## Diversity

The service's workforce does not reflect the communities it serves. Although it compares well with the sector average, as at 31 March 2018, only 6.5 percent of firefighters were female, and only 0.7 percent were from a black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) background. Some 1.5 percent of Cumbria's population are reported to be from BAME backgrounds.

The service has set up an equality and diversity group, but this is not effectively gathering feedback from members of staff from under-represented groups, or acting on their concerns. During our visits to stations, we found lack of understanding about equality issues, and the use of careless and discriminatory language that is not appropriate in an inclusive workplace. The service recognises at the most senior levels that it needs to do more in this area.

We were encouraged to note that, according to service-provided data, the recruitment drive prior to our inspection led to 20 percent of the job offers being made to women.

## Managing performance and developing leaders



### Requires improvement

#### Areas for improvement

- The service should develop a system to identify and develop high potential members of staff.

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

### Managing performance

The service has robust performance management systems in place to monitor how teams are working. However, this does not extend to individual members of staff. At the time of our inspection, the service was in the process of introducing a new appraisal system, but this wasn't yet fully in place.

Most of the staff we spoke to had not had an appraisal for some time, and in some cases for many years. Staff who had taken part in appraisals did not find them useful and had not been set any meaningful performance objectives as a result. Line managers did not understand the importance of appraisals and treated them largely as tick box exercises.

Most of the on-call firefighters we spoke to told us that, if they had an appraisal, it was as part of a group. While they found this useful for resolving any tension in the team, it did not allow managers to discuss individual staff performance, welfare needs or career aspirations. On-call staff could have an individual appraisal but they had to

request it themselves. Similarly, support staff told us that appraisals were considered optional and many staff had not had one for some time.

The service's lack of attention to individual performance management is particularly disappointing when considered alongside the fact that many staff informed us that they did not aspire to progress to management positions because the pathways to career progression were difficult to understand.

### **Developing leaders**

The service has made good progress in developing middle and senior managers, but it has not invested in leadership and management training for more junior or aspiring managers. It has recently introduced management training at this level through the county council, but it is too early for us to assess whether this is beneficial.

The service does not have a means by which to identify, develop and support staff with high potential to be senior leaders of the future.

We carried out a desktop review of recent promotions processes and found them to be transparent and fair. The service maintains good records to support and record its decision making. It is willing to appoint external candidates when they perform better than those who have applied internally. And, although on some occasions temporary vacancies are not given to the highest scoring candidate, we were satisfied that this was for legitimate business reasons such as geography or skills match.

# 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 public perception survey;
- our inspection fieldwork; and
- data we collected directly from all 45 fire and rescue services (FRSs) in England.

Where we collected data directly from 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. This was primarily through our Technical Advisory Group, which brings together representatives from the fire sector and the Home Office to support the inspection's design and development, including data collection.

We give services several opportunities to validate the data we collect to make sure the evidence presented is accurate. For instance, we asked all services to:

- check the data they submitted to us via an online application;
  - check the final data used in each service report; and
  - correct any errors they identified.
- We set out the source of Service in Numbers data below.

## Methodology

### Use of data in the reports and to form judgments

The data we cite in this report and use to form our judgments is the information that was available at the time of inspection. Due to the nature of data collection, there are often gaps between the timeframe the data covers, when it was collected, and when it becomes available to use.

If more recent data became available after inspection, showing a different trend or context, we have referred to this in the report. However, it was not used to form our judgments.

In a small number of cases, data available at the time of the inspection was later found to be incorrect. For example, a service might have identified an error in its original data return. When this is the case, we have corrected the data and used the more reliable data in the report.

## Population

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

### 2018 survey of public perception of the fire and rescue service

We commissioned BMG to survey attitudes towards FRSs in June and July 2018. This consisted of 17,976 surveys across 44 local FRS 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 face-to-face 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 in each service area was small, varying between 400 and 446 individuals. So any results provided are only an indication of satisfaction rather than an absolute.

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

### Staff survey

We conducted a staff survey open to all members of FRS workforces across England. We received 3,083 responses between 8 March and 9 August 2019 from across the 15 Tranche 3 services.

We view the staff survey as an important tool in understanding the views of staff who we may not have spoken to, for a variety of reasons, during fieldwork.

However, you should consider several points when interpreting the findings from the staff survey.

The results are not representative of the opinions and attitudes of a service's whole workforce. The survey was self-selecting, and the response rate ranged from 7 percent to 40 percent of a service's workforce. So any findings should be considered alongside the service's overall response rate, which is cited in the report.

To protect respondents' anonymity and allow completion on shared devices, it was not possible to limit responses to one per person. So it is possible that a single person could have completed the survey more than once.

Each service was provided with a unique access code to try to make sure that only those currently working in a service could complete the survey. However, it is possible that the survey and access code could have been shared and completed by people other than its intended respondents.

We have provided percentages when presenting the staff survey findings throughout the report. When a service has a low number of responses (less than 100), these figures should be treated with additional caution. Percentages may sum to more than 100 percent due to rounding.

Due to the limitations set out above, the results from the staff survey should only be used to provide an indicative measure of service performance.

## 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 2018 survey of public perceptions of the FRS:

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 January 2018 to 31 December 2019.

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

- There are seven 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 worksheet 'Data' provides the raw data for the two main data tables (from 2009/10). The 'Incidents chart - front page', 'Chart 1' and 'Chart 2' worksheets provide the data for the corresponding charts in the statistical commentary. The 'FRS geographical categories' worksheet shows how FRAs are categorised.
- 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 services to upload to the IRS. Totals are constantly being amended (by relatively small numbers).
- We took data for Service in Numbers from the August 2019 incident publication. So, figures may not directly match more recent publications due to data updates.

## Home fire safety checks per 1,000 population

We took this data from the Home Office fire statistics, [‘Home Fire Safety Checks carried out by fire and rescue services and partners, by fire and rescue authority’](#) for the period from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018.

Each FRS figure is based on the number of checks it carried out. It 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 FRSs before 1 April 2016 is excluded from this report.
- 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 services can’t supply these figures.
- The checks included in a home fire safety check can vary between services. You should consider this when making direct comparisons between services.
- Home fire safety checks may also be referred to as home fire risk checks or safe and well visits by services.
- After inspection, East Sussex FRS resubmitted data on its total number of home fire safety checks and the number of checks targeted at the elderly and disabled in the year to 31 March 2018. The latest data changes the percentage of checks that were targeted at the elderly (from 54.1 percent to 54.9 percent) and disabled (from 24.7 percent to 25.4 percent) in England. However, as noted above, in all reports we have used the original figures that were available at the time of inspection.

## 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 services carried out in known premises. According to the Home Office’s 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 FRSs 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 used 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.

### **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 FRSs 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. This figure is calculated by dividing the BAME residential population by the total population.
- We calculate female residential population data from ONS mid-2017 population estimates.
- The percentage of BAME firefighters does not include those who opted not to disclose their ethnic origin. There are large variations between services in the number of firefighters who did not state their ethnic origin.

- Dorset FRS and Wiltshire FRS merged to form Dorset and Wiltshire FRS on 1 April 2016. All data for Dorset and Wiltshire FRSs 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. Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service is a unitary authority.

## **Metropolitan FRA**

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

## **Combined FRA**

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

## **County FRA**

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

## **Unitary authorities**

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

## **London**

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

## **Mayoral Combined Authority**

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

## **Police, fire and crime commissioner FRA**

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

## **Isles of Scilly**

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

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