

Assurance & Performance Dept

Health & Safety Policy

Version Control	Changes Made	Author
Version 1 April 2023	New Document	H&S Manager

Introduction

This statement of policy on health and safety at work in Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service is made in accordance with section 2(3) of the Health and Safety at Work Act, 1974. It is endorsed by the employers, the Cumbria Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority and the Chief Fire Officer to show their commitment to health and safety.

HEALTH AND SAFETY STATEMENT OF INTENT

Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service aim to promote a positive Health and Safety culture where everybody plays their part. We are committed to continuous improvements in Health and Safety through performance management recognising that for Health and Safety management to be successful, all parties must be actively engaged.

In our roles as the Cumbria Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority and the Chief Fire Officer, we are committed to achieving the very highest standards of Health and Safety for all our employees, visitors' contractors and other members of the public who may be affected by the activities of the Service.

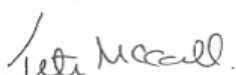
Making Cumbria a safer place for all



Our commitment is demonstrated by:

- Ensuring the Service is a positive, progressive organisation that applies excellent Health and Safety practices at all times and performance is monitored to maintain high standards.
- Supporting the practical application of Health and Safety management arrangements within Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service.
- Ensuring there are arrangements in place to prevent accidents and cases of ill-health, including systems for the assessment of risk.
- Recognition that the prevention of accidents, injuries, ill health, reputational and financial loss results in a positive contribution to the efficiency and effectiveness of the Service.
- Ensuring adequate controls are in place to ensure that risks from work activities are minimal through effective training and procedures which inform and guide individuals, equipment and personal protective equipment that is to the most appropriate standard that the Service can provide.
- Engaging with employees and consulting with representative bodies to continue a culture of transparency and joint responsibility.
- Advice will be available for occupational health, welfare, fitness, and safety management.
- Ensuring procedures and risk assessments will be in place for all activities and premises to ensure that they are secure.
- Ensuring there will be good levels of health and safety training including IOSH, NEBOSH and first aid provision for employees throughout the Service.
- The Health and Safety law poster will be in place on all premises.

Signed by:



Cumbria Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority

Chief Fire Officer

This policy is part of a system for managing health and safety within Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service. It outlines the commitment towards health and safety, the responsibilities, accountability and organisation. It summarises core arrangements with additional documents detailing subsidiary/associated policies, procedures and arrangements for carrying out our

health and safety intent. This policy will be communicated to all employees and interested parties.

This policy and the specific arrangements will take into account the diversity of the workforce and ensure that no individuals or groups with protected characteristics, as defined under the Equality Act 2010, are discriminated against as a result of the management of health and safety.

Leadership

This policy has also been endorsed by Service Leadership Team and will be implemented by Service managers and overseen by the Chief Fire Officer as Head of Service. The Cumbria Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority will secure the necessary financial and physical resources to enable the Chief Fire Officer to implement the Policy.

Management of Health & Safety

The Service will follow the principles set out by the Health & Safety Executive in their guidance document HSG65 to maintain effective and continually improving management of health and safety. The Plan, Do, Check, Act approach is adopted by the Service ensuring all the essential elements of health and safety management are in place. Health and safety management is an integral part of our normal management and not a stand-alone system. We recognise that successful management of health and safety relies on the attitudes and behaviours of our leaders, managers, supervisors and personnel, being the positive safety culture we will strive to encourage and maintain.

Employee Participation and Consultation

We aim to actively engage all employees in our safety culture and encourage everyone to play their part. We shall ensure robust mechanisms are in place for consultation and participation of workers at all levels and functions. This includes the Health, Safety and Welfare Committee (HSWC) where employees' representatives and management work together in the development, planning, implementation, performance evaluation and actions for continuous improvement of health and safety. The HSWC will be chaired by the ACO or delegated to the Head of Assurance & Performance and meet on a minimum of a quarterly basis. The Terms of Reference will be agreed by Service Leadership Team and HSWC and include the functions and nominated membership.

Organisation, Responsibility and Accountability

Chief Fire Officer

The Chief Fire Officer has overall strategic responsibility and accountability for ensuring the implementation of an effective health and safety management system within the Service. The Chief Fire Officer will ensure that the responsibilities and authorities for relevant roles within the health and safety management system are assigned and communicated at all levels.

Assistant Chief Officer (ACO) The ACO champions health & safety and has responsibility for implementation of this Health & Safety Policy within the Service. This is delegated to the Head of Assurance and Performance.

Service Leadership Team (SLT)

Senior managers in SLT have joint responsibility for endorsing the health and safety policy and its implementation within the Service and within their areas of responsibility. SLT will regularly monitor health and safety performance and endorse improvement measures including any areas where performance does not meet expectations.

Head of Assurance & Performance (HA&P)

HA&P has responsibility for ensuring effective day to day management of the health and safety function within the Service. This includes policy development; health and safety performance measurement and effective investigation and learning from Adverse Safety Events (ASE's). In this, they will be supported by the Group Manager Assurance and Performance.

Health and Safety Manager (H&SM)

The H&SM is responsible for day-to-day management of the central health and safety function of the Service. This includes the provision of specialist health and safety advice, production of health and safety performance measurement information, development and maintenance of policy, procedures and information, monitoring of ASE investigations and actions arising.

Line Managers and Supervisors

Managers and supervisors have responsibility not only for their own health and safety but also for that of their area of responsibility, employees within their teams and others affected by our actions. We will select, train and develop managers and supervisors to ensure an adequate and appropriate level of supervision for all personnel:

- knowing what is expected from them in terms of health and safety and having an understanding of management of health and safety and particularly within the Service;
- trained in the specific hazards they may reasonably encounter and how the risks may be controlled;
- ensuring that personnel within their control understand the risks and the measures to control them;
- monitoring that controls measures are adequate and are being used and maintained;
- giving particular attention to young and inexperienced personnel;
- monitoring the effectiveness of the training personnel have received and their competence to carry out their role.

Individual Responsibility

Health and safety is everyone's responsibility and all employees and contractors, regardless of role, have a duty to ensure healthy and safe working practices are followed, not only for their personal benefit, but also for those working around them and for Service users.

Arrangements

Risk Assessment

We will ensure that suitable and sufficient assessments of risk are carried out in relation to operations, activities, and premises, and that the control measures which are identified are communicated and implemented, together with maintaining a written record of these assessments ensuring they are periodically reviewed, particularly following incidents and significant changes.

Competence

We will ensure the provision of adequate and appropriate training and development, giving the necessary knowledge, skills and understanding to all personnel; continually monitoring and confirming they are capable of safely undertaking the range of activities that it is foreseeable that they will be required to perform in their role.

We will provide recognised health and safety management training appropriate to levels of supervisors and managers within the Service.

Managers will ensure that individual training and development plans fully reflect requirement for the provision of adequate training and instruction, as necessary for health, safety, and welfare, and that these plans are periodically reviewed to ensure their effectiveness. They will ensure that a suitable site induction is provided where relevant. The induction will be site specific and highlight any risks that will be encountered by virtue of the duties, equipment and site.

Safety Information

The Service will provide personnel with comprehensive and relevant information on:

- the risks to their health and safety identified by risk assessments;
- the risks notified by any other employers or contractors sharing the workplace;
- the risks made known within the sector and by partner organisations;
- the preventive and protective measures in place to eliminate or minimise the risks;
- the safe use and operation of equipment and personal protective equipment;
- the safe systems of work to be adopted in foreseeable circumstances;
- the procedures for emergencies.

The Service will have in place effective arrangements for gathering relevant risk information including risk sites within the Service area and adjacent areas, and making it readily available to

personnel. These arrangements will include an effective audit and review system to ensure that the information remains accurate, current and relevant.

Safe Premises

We will have systems in place to ensure:

- our buildings and the equipment within are maintained, kept safe and in good repair;
- dangerous defects are immediately controlled, and all defects are corrected in a timely manner;
- fire risk assessments are carried out, appropriate fire safety measures are put in place and maintained; fire safety information, instruction and training are provided and ensuring people know how to escape in the event of a fire; providing personal evacuation plans and equipment for those needing assistance.
- provision of adequate heating, lighting and ventilation; security; safe passage around the premises; sufficient workspace, workstations, seating, hygiene and welfare facilities; maintenance of cleanliness and waste disposal.
- any potential hazards within the premises are controlled in line with statutory requirements, including asbestos, electricity, gas, legionella, falls from height, glazing, Radon, fuels, noise, food safety, lifts, automatic doors; periodic testing of portable electrical appliances; safe outdoor spaces including tree management.
- Building Managers are nominated to coordinate health and safety within premises
- workplace safety inspections and audits are carried out;
- the risks from contractors working on the premises are adequately managed and controlled;
- any construction projects will be managed, as necessary, in compliance with the Construction (Design & Management) Regulations

Safe Equipment

We will have systems in place to ensure we provide suitable work equipment which is:

- selected to effectively achieve the desired function with the minimum of risk to personnel and others, including noise, vibration and other hazards;
- safe for its intended use and the environment where it may be used;
- maintained, tested and inspected to ensure correct installation and continuing safe condition;
- only used by people having the correct information, instruction and training;
- provided with necessary protective devices and controls;
- meets any specific applicable safety regulations such as for lifting equipment and pressure systems.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

When, as a result of a risk assessment, PPE is the last resort to protect personnel from harm then the Service will provide PPE to reduce the remaining risk. PPE will be selected that is certified and appropriate to the risk and suits the worker – considering the size, fit, weight, compatibility with other PPE and the physical characteristics of the user. We will provide appropriate storage for PPE and effective maintenance, cleaning and replacement regimes. Personnel will be provided with sufficient information, instruction and training on the PPE and the hazards that it is protecting from. Personnel must comply with instructions for the correct use and storage of PPE, and report any faults identified. The Service will monitor use of PPE and review its continuing effectiveness.

Safe Workplace Transport and Occupational Road Risk

We will take into account and minimise the risks presented to our personnel and others in the use of vehicles on Service sites, public roads and off road. We will consider the risks presented by the vehicles, their construction, maintenance and use, and the drivers' fitness, competence and training. We will comply with all relevant transport legislation including ensuring drivers permitted to drive Service vehicles have valid driving licences. Personnel must all drive within the law and in accordance with Service Instructions and their training.

Crews and vehicle users must report any defective vehicles and notify others when vehicles are unsafe to use. Drivers are expected to carry out pre-use checks on vehicles to ensure they are safe to drive. Drivers must also consider their own condition and fatigue to ensure they are fit to drive. All vehicle accidents, incidents and near misses must be reported and will be investigated to minimise the risk of recurrence.

Service drivers responding to emergency incidents are permitted to take advantage of the relaxation of certain traffic regulations in accordance with the law and their training and in proportion to risk presented by the incident. The Service will provide appropriate training and assessment of emergency response drivers. The Service will ensure that an appropriate vehicle maintenance scheme is maintained to ensure the continuing safety of Service vehicles. The driver has overall responsibility for the safety of the vehicle and its load, but Incident Commanders have oversight of the safety of the vehicle particularly when responding to emergencies. The crew will also play their part in maintaining vehicle safety eg acting as bankspersons during low speed manoeuvres.

Noise

We will assess and identify measures to eliminate or reduce risks from exposure to noise so that we can protect the hearing of personnel. Where necessary, we will introduce noise control measures which may include the use of hearing protection. We will provide information, training and health surveillance and ensure hearing protection is used where necessary. Personnel must comply with noise control measures including the use of hearing protection when indicated. Noise emission minimisation will be considered in the procurement of new equipment and vehicles.

Harmful Substances

We will assess and control the risks presented to personnel by the presence of harmful substances in the operational and non-operational workplaces. We will comply with the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations and other relevant legislation concerning other hazards we may encounter such as asbestos, ionising radiation, explosives, flammable materials, bio-hazards, etc. We will identify the hazards in the workplace, decide who may be exposed, what harm may be caused and how the risk should be controlled. We will provide information, instruction and training and, where necessary, health surveillance eg Asbestos. Personnel must comply with the control measures identified which may include the use of PPE.

Dealing with Emergencies and First Aid

We will have agreed plans in place for emergencies in the workplace with actions and responsibilities, both for our sites and the operational environment. We will ensure personnel are trained and competent in emergency procedures.

Consideration of the operational environment and the need to provide first aid to casualties at incidents has resulted in the Service training operational personnel as Immediate Emergency Care Advanced Practitioners. This satisfies the need for First aid provision at our premises. First aid equipment is provided in our premises.

Occupational Health Provision

We will endeavour to ensure employees' physical and mental health is not adversely affected by their work and that they are medically fit to carry out their work safely. To achieve this, we will provide a comprehensive Occupational Health Service who will provide expert Occupational Health advice and assistance and meet the needs of the Service.

Occupational health (OH) maintains the wellbeing of employees. OH professionals provide independent expert advice on staff unable to work due to long-term or short-term intermittent health problems, and organisation-wide steps to reduce sickness absence. Following sickness and declarations of ill health they will support personnel and their management in achieving the best recovery, if possible, and a successful return to work.

They will initially and periodically assess personnel to ensure they meet and continue to meet the medical and physical standards applicable to their role. OH will provide statutory health surveillance as required. OH will also be proactive at improving the general health and wellbeing of employees.

OH will advise on compliance under the Equality Act 2010 (including disability, pregnancy, and age discrimination) and temporary or permanent changes to the work or workplace 'reasonable adjustments' when supporting employees both in and returning to work.

Display Screen Equipment (DSE)

We will protect employees from the health risks of working with DSE, such as PCs, laptops, tablets and smartphones. The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations apply to workers who use DSE daily, for continuous periods of an hour or more, 'DSE users'. The

regulations do not apply to workers who use DSE infrequently or only use it for a short time. We will ensure:

- workstation assessments are completed;
- risks are reduced, including making sure workers take breaks from DSE work;
- the provision of eye tests on request;
- the provision of training and information.

Manual Handling

In recognition that injuries while undertaking manual handling in the workplace and within the Fire Service are common we will take all reasonably practicable measures to reduce the risk of such injuries. In the first instance we will avoid manual handling tasks if possible. If not, we will assess tasks and put in place measures to prevent and avoid injury. We will consider the use of lifting equipment and train personnel in the assessment of tasks and in safe lifting techniques.

Work at Height

The Service recognises that work at height is a necessary, high-risk part of our work and will take all reasonably practicable measures to ensure accidents and injuries do not occur. In the first instance we will avoid working at height if possible. If not, we will assess tasks and put in place measures to prevent falls and avoid injury. Where the risk cannot be eliminated the fall distance and consequences will be minimised. We will make sure work at height is properly planned, supervised and carried out by competent people with the skills, knowledge and experience to do the job. We will select appropriate equipment to undertake the work safely.

Lone working

We will manage the health and safety of those working alone without direct supervision and nobody to immediately help them, as we recognise that they are at greater risk. We will specifically assess the risk considering the risk of violence, stress and mental wellbeing, mental suitability to work alone and factors in the workplace such as rurality or isolation. We will put measures in place to control the risks including training, regular supervisory contact, buddy systems, limits on tasks, emergency procedures, location information and monitoring devices.

Safety Monitoring, Feedback and Auditing

To ensure the management of health and safety is succeeding and improving, the Service will employ a range of proactive and reactive performance monitoring techniques.

Ensuring all Adverse Safety Events (ASE's) are reported is an important reactive measure of safety performance and an opportunity to prevent further occurrences in the future. The HSE requires that certain more serious events are reported under the RIDDOR Regulations and has issued guidance on the investigation of all adverse safety events (HSG 245). The Service will maintain a comprehensive ASE Investigation System and will ensure that lessons are learned from ASE's to improve safety. The frequency and type of ASE's are monitored over time to identify trends and indicate performance improvements or otherwise. Personnel are encouraged to fulfil the requirement to report all accidents, injuries, near misses and causes for concern.