HMICFRS

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary
and Fire & Rescue Services

Fire & Rescue Service
Effectiveness, efficiency and people
2018/19

An inspection of Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service

Contents

About this inspection

This is the first time that HMICFRS has inspected fire and rescue services across England. Our focus is on the service they provide to the public, and the way they use the resources available. The inspection assesses how effectively and efficiently Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service prevents, protects the public against and responds to fires and other emergencies. We also assess how well it looks after the people who work for the service.

In carrying out our inspections of all 45 fire and rescue services in England, we answer three main questions:

1. How effective is the fire and rescue service at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks?

2. How efficient is the fire and rescue service at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks?

3. How well does the fire and rescue service look after its people?

This report sets out our inspection findings. After taking all the evidence into account, we apply a graded judgment for each of the three questions.

What inspection judgments mean

Our categories of graded judgment are:

- outstanding;
- good;
- requires improvement; and
- inadequate.

Good is our 'expected' graded judgment for all fire and rescue services. It is based on policy, practice or performance that meet pre-defined grading criteria, which are informed by any relevant national operational guidance or standards.

If the service exceeds what we expect for good, we will judge it as **outstanding**.

If we find shortcomings in the service, we will judge it as **requires improvement**.

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

Service in numbers

Public perceptions

	Greater Manchester	England
Perceived effectiveness of service Public perceptions survey (June/July 2018)	90%	86%

Response

	Greater Manchester	England
Incidents attended per 1,000 population 12 months to 30 September 2018	11.6	10.5
Home fire risk checks carried out by FRS per 1,000 population 12 months to 31 March 2018	11.9	10.4
Fire safety audits per 100 known premises 12 months to 31 March 2018	1.1	3.0

Incidents attended in the 12 months to 30 September 2018

Total non-fire incidents 17%

Total fires 41%

Total
32,382

Total false alarms 42%
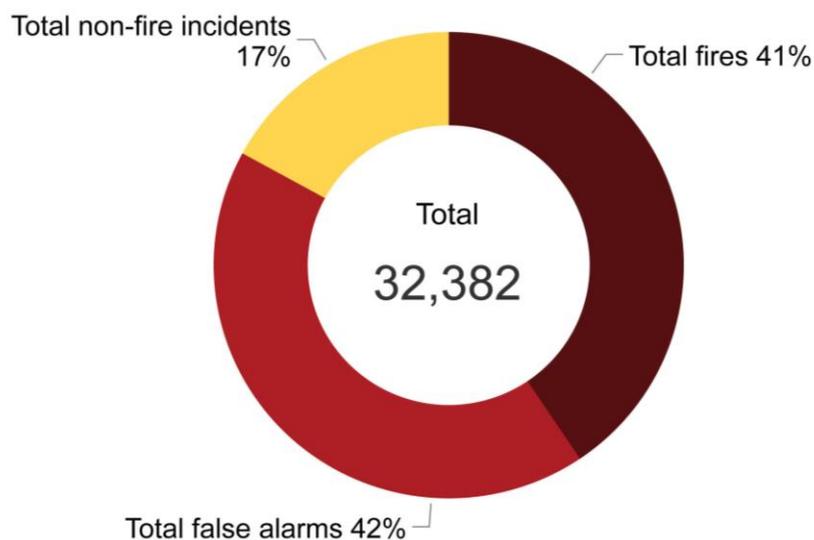
£ Cost

	Greater Manchester	England
Firefighter cost per person per year 12 months to 31 March 2018	£18.77	£22.38

Workforce

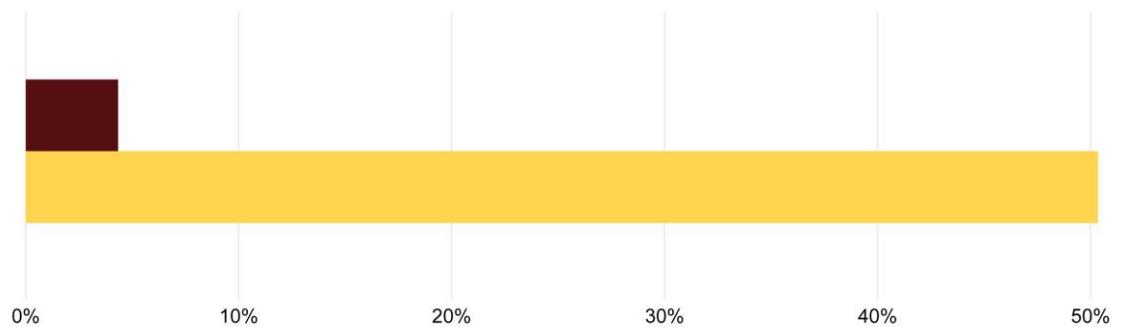|	Greater Manchester	England
Number of firefighters per 1,000 population As at 31 March 2018	0.5	0.6
Five-year change in workforce As at 31 March 2013 compared with 31 March 2018	-18%	-14%
Percentage of wholetime firefighters As at 31 March 2018	99%	70%

Percentage of female firefighters as at 31 March 2018

● Female firefighters ● Female residential population

Percentage of black, Asian and minority ethnic firefighters as at 31 March 2018

● BAME firefighters ● BAME residential population
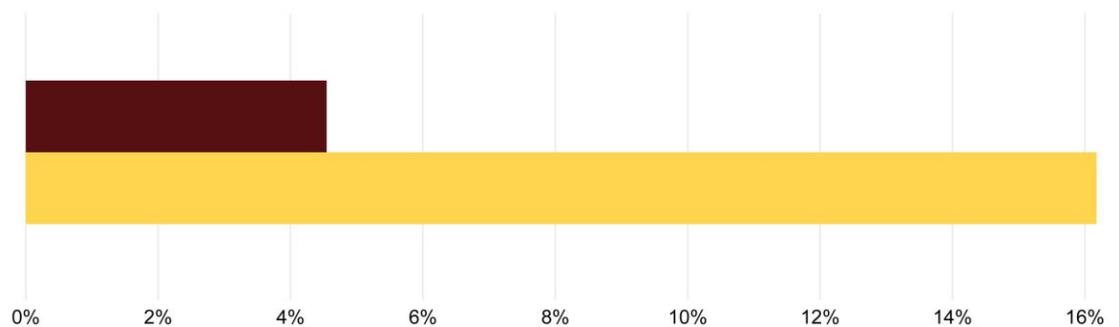
Please refer to annex A for full details on data used.

Overview

⚙️ **Effectiveness**	●●○○	**Requires improvement**
Understanding the risk of fire and other emergencies	●●●○	Good
Preventing fires and other risks	●●○○	Requires improvement
Protecting the public through fire regulation	●●○○	Requires improvement
Responding to fires and other emergencies	●●●○	Good
Responding to national risks	●●○○	Requires improvement
£ **Efficiency**	●●○○	**Requires improvement**
Making best use of resources	●●○○	Requires improvement
Making the fire and rescue service affordable now and in the future	●●●○	Good

People — Requires improvement

Category	Rating
People	●●○○ **Requires improvement**
Promoting the right values and culture	●●○○ Requires improvement
Getting the right people with the right skills	●●○○ Requires improvement
Ensuring fairness and promoting diversity	●○○○ Inadequate
Managing performance and developing leaders	●●○○ Requires improvement

Overall summary of inspection findings

We are satisfied with some aspects of the performance of Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service. But there are several areas where the service needs to make improvements.

Greater Manchester FRS requires improvement in its effectiveness at keeping people safe. It requires improvement at:

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

But we judge it to be good at understanding risk and at responding to emergencies.

The service requires improvement to the efficiency of its service, in particular at making best use of resources. But it is good at making its service affordable now and in future.

The way the service looks after its people requires improvement, in particular:

- promoting the right values and culture;
- getting the right people with the right skills; and
- managing performance and developing leaders.

And we judged the way it ensures fairness and promotes diversity to be inadequate.

Overall, we would like to see improvements in the year ahead.

Effectiveness

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

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Requires improvement

Summary

An effective fire and rescue service will identify and assess the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue risks its community faces. It will target its fire prevention and protection activities to those who are at greatest risk from fire. It will make sure businesses comply with fire safety legislation. When the public calls for help, the fire and rescue service should respond promptly with the right skills and equipment to deal with the incident effectively. Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service's overall effectiveness requires improvement.

Governance of Greater Manchester FRS was moved to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) in 2017. In April 2018, Greater Manchester FRS launched a comprehensive review of all its services, called the 'Programme for Change'. At the time of inspection, final decisions on this review were expected in spring 2019.

The service has an integrated risk management plan (IRMP) in place for 2016–20, which provides clear summaries of the key risks. The IRMP specified that the number of frontline fire engines and associated staff should be reduced, and consequently stopped recruiting new staff to replace those who left.

However, the reduction in the number of fire engines did not occur, meaning that the service didn't have enough firefighters. Consequently, the service frequently has to move staff around Greater Manchester to make sure all areas are covered. The service is now in the process of significant recruitment.

The service fulfils its legal responsibilities for fire protection. But, because it doesn't have enough fire protection staff, it hasn't been able to maintain its inspection programme. However, following the Grenfell Tower fire, the service inspected all its 495 residential high-rise buildings.

The service has a good understanding of the risks to its local community. But it needs to improve this by bringing together data about different types of risk to help it understand where they combine to make people more vulnerable.

The service has a process for collecting information about buildings and sites that pose an increased risk. Firefighters know how to access this through the computers in fire engines. However, inspections are behind schedule so this information may not be up to date. Unless a command vehicle is deployed, the service doesn't keep a full written record of the risks that firefighters encountered at an incident, and what steps they took to deal with them. The service has carried out some effective prosecutions of people who break fire safety law, but not all staff know when to do this.

The service makes prevention visits in the community. As well as fire risks, these also cover issues such as accidents, mental health and crime prevention. The service also runs seasonal campaigns to promote fire safety, for example in schools. But it doesn't do enough to make sure these activities are aimed at people and areas at the most risk.

The service is implementing an action plan for terror-related incidents, following the Lord Kerslake report into the terrorist attack at Manchester Arena. However, not all firefighters understand how they should respond to terrorist incidents, especially if they find themselves at that kind of incident unexpectedly. The service's marauding terrorist firearms capability is now largely provided by a neighbouring fire and rescue service. This arrangement is of considerable concern in respect of the safety of the public. The delay of any emergency service responding to such a crisis could very well cost lives. This matter deserves the most urgent attention and resolution.

The service has a clear policy in place for learning from incidents. Different types of debrief are used depending on how serious the incident is, and these are effective. The service works well with other agencies to help reduce the risk of fire.

Greater Manchester FRS benefits from its control room collaboration with Cheshire, Lancashire and Cumbria fire services. Cross-border mobilisations are used to achieve the fastest speed of response.

Understanding the risk of fire and other emergencies

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Good

Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service is good at understanding the risk of fire and other emergencies. But we found the following area in which it needs to improve:

> **Area for improvement**
> * The service should ensure its firefighters have good access to relevant and up-to-date risk information.

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

Greater Manchester FRS has a good understanding of the risks to its local community. It used this understanding to create its current integrated risk management plan (IRMP), which covers the years 2016–20. The IRMP includes proposals to change the fire cover arrangements and meet financial targets.

However, the IRMP was temporarily suspended after the service was moved under the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) in 2017. The service now reports to the elected Mayor of Greater Manchester (the 'metro mayor').

In April 2018 (following the change in governance), the service started a review of all its activities including areas covered by its IRMP. It called this review the 'Programme for Change' (PFC). The PFC will reorganise the service and fully integrate it into the GMCA. It explains the investment that is needed to make these changes and proposes a range of options to save money. At the time of our inspection, final decisions about the PFC were expected in spring 2019.

The service has a good process for understanding the risks the community faces. The service uses a wide range of health and population data from local authorities. This gives information on age, ethnicity, poverty, health and welfare. It also includes how the population is likely to change in future. The service uses this to understand which geographical areas and groups of people are at particularly high risk.

The service also uses information it has on buildings, and from previous incidents, to better understand risk. It uses reports on fires where someone has died to help understand fires, both the direct cause (for example, an electrical fault) and things that contributed to it (for example, living alone and having poor mobility). The service uses all this information to identify people who are at greater risk from fires. However, the

service acknowledges this could be improved by bringing together the combination of risks that make people more vulnerable.

The service engages with the public on its proposals, most recently on its annual corporate plan and its IRMP for 2016–20. The service received 158 responses to this IRMP consultation. During this consultation, the service held 'citizen forums' to engage local people face to face and discuss their needs. This kind of event allows the service to hear views from a diverse mix of people.

However, since the last IRMP consultation in 2015, the service hasn't engaged meaningfully with the public in a structured way. Local borough safety teams engage with communities, but the methods used – and the results – vary considerably.

The service continually assesses factors that could affect risk and community safety, including political, economic, societal, technological, environmental, legal and organisational issues. This enables it to consider how to adapt to the future work of the fire and rescue services. For example, the service expects that there will be 16,500 more homes in the area in 2027 than there were in 2009.

Having an effective risk management plan

Each fire and rescue service must produce an IRMP, based on its assessment of risk. The service takes account of the risks identified in the community risk register by the local resilience forum. An example of this is the multi-agency assessment of the risk of large-scale flooding. The service also shares its information with the forum.

The service's IRMP for 2016–20 provides clear summaries of the key risks. These include demographic changes, growth in housing and employment, and increases in transport. The IRMP guides the direction of the service and is in line with the requirements of the national framework.

The IRMP reduced the number of fire engines that are generally available. It recognises that this affects the service's ability to support neighbouring fire services. It also recognises that the service will rely on support from those neighbouring services.

The IRMP accurately describes the link between the service's work in prevention, protection and response. However, we found that there are currently not enough resources to do all these things to the correct standard. This will be covered in more detail later in this report.

Maintaining risk information

Firefighters need up-to-date information about buildings. This applies particularly to buildings with complex layouts or that contain hazards like dangerous chemicals. This helps firefighters respond with the right people and equipment.

We found that firefighters visit high-risk sites to gather information about hazards. Information on temporary risks such as concerts is also available to them. However, in the 12 months to 31 March 2018, only 64 percent of revisits were completed on time. This means that the information the fire crews have isn't always up to date.

We found that firefighters have access to information about risk through the computers that are in each fire engine. They were able to show us that they can find and use this information confidently. This helps them to deal with incidents safely.

We found that the service has effective arrangements to update staff with new and changed risk information. Managers provide information during the briefings that take place when a new shift starts. Relevant staff receive health and safety alerts by email, and record that they have read and understood it. One example we saw was a reminder to crews not to drive in closed lanes on motorways.

The fire control team can give firefighters information about particular risks to individuals. We saw examples of how hoarders and threats of arson were identified by staff, and how this information was made available for use by the crews.

Preventing fires and other risks

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Requires improvement

Areas for improvement

- The service should ensure it targets its prevention work at people most at risk, including those from hard-to-reach groups.

- The service should ensure staff understand and apply the correct process for safeguarding referrals.

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 has a community resilience strategy covering the years 2017–20, which explains how it will keep people safe from fire and other emergencies, and provide wider prevention and community safety activities. These include:

- keeping safe in the home (through safe and well visits);
- youth engagement (FireSmart, Firefly, Fire Team, Fire Cadets, The Prince's Trust);
- integrated prevention hubs; and
- volunteers.

The service told us that, as at 31 March 2018, prevention visits include ensuring working smoke alarms are fitted, and identifying and taking action to reduce potential fire risks. The service also discusses social issues, including health prevention, slips, trips and falls, mental health, substance use and crime prevention. However, even though the service started doing safe and well checks three years ago, we found some staff aren't dealing with the health and social aspects of these checks.

Community safety activity isn't targeted as effectively as it could be. The service relies on other agencies to inform them of people at high risk and requiring a safe and well visit. The service's contact centre organises safe and well visits, but it doesn't have an effective way of deciding which requests are most important. The service doesn't check whether referrals from other agencies are a priority according to its own criteria. The service doesn't evaluate the effectiveness of its partnerships with these agencies.

The service should ensure that its home fire safety checks, known in the service as safe and well visits, target those who are most at risk. In the year to 31 March 2018, the service carried out 11.9 visits per 1,000 population. Of these, 35 percent of visits were for those aged over 65, and 8 percent were for the disabled. This compares with 54 percent and 25 percent respectively in England over the same time frame.

We saw an effective process to act on high-risk referrals from the police. The service has agreed to respond to referrals about domestic violence within 24 hours. Crews provide advice to residents, and fit smoke alarms and fireproof letterboxes.

Promoting community safety

The service has developed a range of seasonal campaigns to promote fire safety – for example, the risk of fires caused by faulty Christmas decorations. Crews are provided with material to conduct these campaigns. For example, they give presentations in schools to pupils at key stages 2 and 3. We found that these campaigns aren't being targeted at areas where incidents are most likely to happen, and the use of the material is inconsistent.

The service works effectively with other local agencies to address the risks associated with fire. The prevention team works with a wide range of partners including multi-agency safeguarding hubs (MASHs), mental health teams and clinical commissioning groups. Community safety officers also give advice to faith groups.

An officer from Public Health England (PHE) works as part of the prevention team to help the service and PHE work together. Similarly, a police officer works in the fire investigation team. This provides help with training and making sure evidence is recorded properly. There has been an increase in the number of successful prosecutions since this arrangement has been in place.

There is a comprehensive safeguarding policy in place. Inspectors found staff knew how to recognise complex situations that create vulnerability, from hoarding to signs of financial abuse. There is evidence that staff across the organisation are making referrals of people who are at particular risk. However, we found that inconsistent training and monitoring had led to staff not always following the proper process.

The service runs a 'FireSmart' programme for young people who have engaged in fire-setting behaviour. Once someone is referred onto the programme, a trained adviser visits the home of the young person. They discuss the dangers of fire and provide education about the importance of fire safety.

Road safety

The service is an active and valued member of the Greater Manchester road safety partnership. The service jointly contributes to the partnership's road safety plan, running campaigns including 'Safe Drive Stay Alive'. This initiative seeks to reduce road casualties by providing information to young people approaching driving age. The scheme is organised by emergency services and the local health service. The partnership evaluates how effective these events are.

The service also uses a virtual reality simulator to teach young drivers the importance of safe driving.

The road safety partnership has identified that it needs to target older drivers, and is considering the best ways to do this.

Protecting the public through fire regulation

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Requires improvement

Areas for improvement
- The service should ensure that it has allocated sufficient resources to a prioritised and risk-based inspection programme.

- The service should ensure it addresses effectively the burden of false alarms (termed 'unwanted signals').

- The service should ensure its staff work 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

We found that the service is meeting its legal obligations in relation to fire protection. It responds to consultations, building regulation requests and complaints.

However, the service isn't able to meet the demands of its risk-based inspection programme. Because of the way it records its inspections, it couldn't confirm to us that consultations are completed within the relevant time frame.

When considering all known premises, the service carried out 1.1 fire safety audits per 100 known premises (which equates to 1,248 audits) in the year to 31 March 2018. This compares with the England rate of 3.0 over the same period.

In 2016, the service said that it would inspect 17,000 of the highest-risk premises over three years. Data supplied by the service shows that between 1 April 2016 and 31 March 2018 it carried out 5,843 high-risk audits. An additional 859 high-risk audits were conducted between 1 April 2018 and 31 December 2018. This is short of its projected target. The service's plans to address the deficit were halted because of a change in focus following the Grenfell Tower fire. Greater Manchester has 495 residential high-rise buildings. After the Grenfell Tower fire, all residential high-rise buildings across Greater Manchester were inspected.

The service recognises it doesn't have enough staff in its fire protection department. Firefighters collect and record information about fire safety in buildings they visit. The PFC lays out a plan for firefighters to increase protection activity.

Fire inspection officers are trained at the appropriate level for the work they are doing. The protection team follows the Competency Framework for Business Fire Safety Regulators and all its inspectors are accredited. The service has inspecting officers available at all times to deal with serious issues.

We found that the service makes effective use of short audits of business premises. If necessary, these can be escalated to a full audit, which may involve an inspector with a higher level of training.

We saw some good examples of fire safety inspecting officers having their work regularly audited by their line manager. The officer gets feedback straightaway, and the manager puts the information into the active monitoring system (AMS). This helps the service to identify trends.

Enforcement

The service's enforcement policy is based on principles agreed at the national level. It works with the Greater Manchester Growth Hub, which brings together different organisations to help businesses that are expanding.

Where possible, the service helps businesses deal with any fire safety concerns they have. However, when it finds major problems, the service may take stronger action. It regularly takes enforcement action against businesses that don't comply with the Fire Safety Order. Of the 1,248 fire safety audits the service carried out in the 12 months to 31 March 2018, 44.4 percent of the premises were at a satisfactory standard. The service uses the full range of enforcement options, including action plans.

Before the service initiates a prosecution, it has a case conference with its lawyers. At two recent prosecutions, the defendants pleaded guilty at trial, and the service publicised the results to increase awareness and act as a deterrent.

Some protection staff weren't clear when they should begin a prosecution. The service is publishing a new enforcement strategy that will make responsibilities clear.

Working with others

We found that the lack of capacity in the protection teams limits their ability to carry out proactive work. The service provides advice for businesses on its website, but doesn't engage enough with local businesses to make sure they comply with fire regulations.

We found evidence that the service is using partnerships with organisations to help enforce fire safety law. For example, we saw how public sector housing partnerships are used to share information to make sure the law is followed. However, there are no formal arrangements in place for this kind of work.

The number of false alarms attended by the service increased by 14 percent between the year ending 30 September 2014 (12,075 false alarms) and the year ending 30 September 2018 (13,728 false alarms).

The service recognises the need to do more to reduce the increasing burden of false alarms on its resources. It is planning to change its policies to reduce the number of false alarms it attends. The service will consult on this change to bring it in line with the rest of England and Wales.

The service clearly demonstrated its commitment to working with other organisations following the Grenfell Tower fire. The service led a multi-agency High Rise Task Force, which jointly inspected every relevant building to make sure the residents were safe.

Responding to fires and other emergencies

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Good

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

Areas for improvement
- The service should assure itself that staff are competent in safety-critical areas such as incident command and breathing apparatus.

- The service should assure itself that changes to procedures are understood by all staff.

- The service should assure itself that risk assessments are accurately recorded and passed to oncoming crews.

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 has standard responses for certain types of incident, based on the number of staff and types of equipment needed to deal with them.

The service makes assumptions to judge if it has sufficient resources available. To plan for the largest situation the service is likely to contend with, the IRMP uses hypothetical scenarios: two incidents needing ten fire engines at the same time (one involving hazardous materials), or one incident needing 25 fire engines.

The IRMP determined that the number of fire engines should be reduced. Consequently, the service stopped recruiting new staff to replace those leaving. However, this element of the IRMP was suspended, resulting in too few firefighters. The service is now accelerating recruitment and is using overtime to ensure appropriate cover is in place.

The service moves resources around Greater Manchester to make sure enough cover is available. The service's own figures show that between 1 April 2017 and 31 March 2018 they moved staff 16,593 times to make sure there were enough to crew its fire engines. The service does this to minimise the impact on attendance times. Between April 2018 and December 2018, the overall average monthly appliance availability ranged from 92 percent to 97 percent.

The service normally has 54 fire engines available. In any 24-hour period, up to 10 of these could be dedicated to training. But, because there isn't enough operational cover, this training often isn't happening, because these resources are needed to cover the gaps. As a result, the service can't be sure that its firefighters have the right skills in critical areas, such as using breathing apparatus and working at height.

Response

The service has a process underway to ensure its working practices are in line with national guidance. The most recent area of focus was guidance for using breathing apparatus. We found that the training was inconsistent, and not all staff understood the new procedures.

In the year to 31 March 2018, the service's average response to all primary fires was 7 minutes 14 seconds.

Since 1 April 2018, the service has set a target of attending all emergency incidents within 5 minutes 45 seconds. In the period from 1 April to 31 December 2018, the service achieved an average attendance time of 5 minutes 47 seconds.

As part of the PFC, the service is looking at how it responds to emergencies, including its speed of response. The service is using information concerning previous fires and other emergencies to understand the impact of its proposed changes.

Commanders are required to review and record risk assessments and decisions made at incidents in line with national guidance. This information is used to brief other commanders and firefighters arriving at incidents. Some of the commanders we spoke to weren't aware of these requirements and didn't complete them.

The service has a process for giving firefighters safety-critical information about buildings and sites that pose an increased risk. This information is available via mobile data terminals on fire engines. Staff were competent in accessing this information.

We saw effective practice in North West Fire Control, which handles emergency calls for Lancashire, Cumbria, Greater Manchester and Cheshire fire and rescue services. When North West Fire Control receives a call about a life-critical emergency that is close to the borders of these four services, it sends the nearest fire engine to the incident, irrespective of which fire and rescue service area the incident is in.

Command

We found that the service has an established programme for developing new staff in command roles. This includes courses run by the service's incident command academy, and external courses for more senior commanders.

The service has a target to assess the skills of its commanders every two years. It is failing to meet this ambition because of a lack of capacity at its training centre. This is because of the influx of new recruits.

The service is trying to address this problem by assessing the performance of commanders at incidents and holding regular exercises. However, there isn't enough oversight by senior managers of these control measures to be confident they are bridging the gaps in training. The service has also introduced development days for supervisory commanders. However, these aren't standardised and are inconsistent.

We found that incident commanders at all levels of the organisation have a good understanding of the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles. These are designed to help incident commanders from all blue light services to work effectively together.

Keeping the public informed

The service has access to media support 24 hours a day. A media liaison officer is available to support the incident commander if needed. The service uses social media and its website effectively to communicate directly about incidents.

Evaluating operational performance

The service has a clear policy for learning from incidents. Most staff were able to describe the operational debrief process that immediately follows attendance at an incident. These are referred to as a hot debrief and are normally led by the incident commander, with staff encouraged to contribute.

After more serious incidents, there is a strategic debrief. These give firefighters and other agencies the opportunity to discuss and learn from the incident. We saw good examples of these debriefs after the wildfire incidents in July 2018. The service has an AMS which combines information from incidents, training, debriefs and staff skills. The service uses it to identify emerging themes. However, we found that frontline staff don't see the benefits of the system, so don't consistently record outcomes that could help improve the service's future response.

The service uses an operational assurance team to attend incidents and assess staff. They are only sent to certain types of incident. Feedback is given at the time and through the AMS.

The service has implemented a process to learn from significant national and international incidents. This process identifies learning and recommendations that may be relevant to the service. It was used to review a water rescue training accident in another fire service and new guidance was issued as a result.

Responding to national risks

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Requires improvement

Areas for improvement
- The service should ensure that all operational commanders have opportunities to engage in the programme of cross-border and multi-agency exercises.

- Greater Manchester FRS should have its own MTFA response that is both resilient and timely.

- The service should ensure it is properly prepared as part of a multi-agency response to terrorist incidents. This includes the provision of a timely response to ensure public safety. Response procedures must be understood by all staff and properly exercised and tested.

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

Following Lord Kerslake's report into the terrorist attack at Manchester Arena, the service created an action plan to improve its response to terror-related incidents. We found the service was implementing this action plan – for example, there is now a dedicated communications channel with the police and ambulance. We tested this during our visit and there was an immediate response. The senior leadership team are keeping track of the plan's progress.

The Home Office provides funding and training for a number of FRSs to respond to terrorist attacks and work alongside police and ambulance responders in the immediate vicinity of such a threat. The service still has national incident liaison

officers who perform command and control roles at such incidents. During the course of our inspection, Greater Manchester FRS lost most of its tactical capability to provide this response due to an industrial relations dispute. Despite attempts by the service to resolve this locally, its firefighters trained and equipped to be deployed into the risk area are now provided by Merseyside FRS. This arrangement is of considerable concern in respect of the safety of the public. The delay of any emergency service responding to such a crisis could very well cost lives. This matter deserves the most urgent attention and resolution.

The service is part of the North West Fire Control and there are arrangements in place to make sure it can have ready access to national assets, such as high-volume pumps and swift water rescue teams. It also has in place a voluntary recall to duty process to support the staffing of its specialist capabilities whereby staff are available to respond even if they are not scheduled to work.

Working with other services

The service has effective mutual aid arrangements in place with its neighbours. It regularly sends and receives help from neighbouring services. Notably, it did this during the moorland wildfire incidents in July 2018.

It also has a programme of multi-agency cross-border exercising and training. Incident commanders at various levels of seniority can become involved in these exercises. But the service doesn't monitor to ensure that all commanders take this valuable opportunity. Risk information from neighbouring services is available to crews attending cross-border incidents.

Working with other agencies

The service takes an active part in regular exercises at the county's high-risk sites which are registered under the Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) Regulations. Partners from neighbouring fire and rescue services and other agencies are invited to attend. We saw evidence of multi-agency and cross-border working at a national flooding exercise run by the local resilience forum.

We found that not all firefighters fully understood how they should respond to terrorist incidents. Many staff believed the national dispute between employers and the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) – which has resulted in the loss of the service's MTFA capability – meant they weren't to attend terrorist-related incidents. Consequently, many staff don't know what is expected of them at this type of incident. The service needs to ensure that its procedures for responding are understood by all staff, and are properly exercised and tested.

Efficiency

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

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Requires improvement

Summary

An efficient fire and rescue service will manage its budget and spend money properly and appropriately. It will align its resources to its risk. It should try to keep costs down without compromising public safety. Future budgets should be based on robust and realistic assumptions. Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service's overall efficiency requires improvement.

Although the service has an IRMP in place, the current operational response model does not reflect this plan. As a result, this has led to staff shortages and the service using overtime to cover significant amounts of its work. It is recruiting large numbers of new staff to ease this reliance on overtime from April 2019.

The service has a good track record of making savings, although the savings identified in its IRMP have not been realised. However, the service is using its reserves to cover shortfalls in funding. This isn't sustainable. Once the programme for change (PFC) review is agreed, it should be able to make savings and stop relying on reserves. If there are further delays in agreeing the PFC, this may cause the service financial difficulties.

False alarms are a major drain on resources. The service has made some changes by sending only one fire engine initially. However, it needs to do more to reduce this burden.

Staff performance isn't being managed to meet the demands of the service. Although individuals and teams are set performance targets, their performance against them isn't being prioritised or monitored.

The service recognises that some of its buildings are underused, and has invested in shared facilities at several locations. The service should do more to evaluate its collaborations to determine whether their expected outcomes have been realised.

Making best use of resources

Requires improvement

Areas for improvement

- The service needs to ensure that it allocates its resources appropriately and prioritises activities which address the risks identified in its integrated risk management plan (IRMP).

- The service should have effective measures to ensure that staff are productive, and using their time efficiently to meet the priorities in the IRMP

- The service should ensure there is effective monitoring, review and evaluation of the benefits and outcomes of any collaboration.

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

How plans support objectives

The service is using a combination of reserves (£3.5m) and underspend (£2m) to bridge the £5.5m gap in funding for 2019–20. This gap was caused by cost pressures arising from increased pay and pensions, and after temporarily suspending the changes proposed in the IRMP. The service has provided data showing that it expects to have £29m in reserves at the end of March 2019. If it doesn't implement the changes in the PFC, reserves are expected to fall to £20m by the end of March 2020 and £5m the year after. The service is clear that this isn't a sustainable position and is working to implement the savings in the PFC.

Although the service has an IRMP in place, it is not currently resourcing to the levels identified in this plan for protection, prevention and response.

As stated earlier, the PFC is a fundamental review of the service. It includes a plan for how the service should operate, and outlines options for how it can save money. It also outlines the investment that is needed to deliver change. At the time of our inspection, final decisions about the PFC were expected in March 2019. The chief fire officer is responsible for the programme at board level within the combined authority.

The service is making financial plans for the years 2020–22. The proposed budget includes the expected increases in pay, prices and pensions. The plan considers the effect of different levels of council tax funding and inflation in order to estimate different levels of savings that might be needed.

The service has previously been able to make savings, and it has identified possible savings in the short to medium term. These include a general review of budgets (both pay and non-pay) and a range of changes to the way the service provides operational

fire cover. The service has planned savings of £2m, which have been included in the budget for 2019/20. Savings relating to the PFC haven't been included as, at the time of the inspection, these hadn't been agreed.

As we highlighted earlier, the service is using overtime to cover the staffing shortfall caused by changes to how shifts are organised. Between 1 April 2018 and 31 December 2018, the service spent nearly £4m for this purpose. The service expects the reliance on overtime to reduce once it has recruited more firefighters. Currently, the overtime is being funded from reserves and underspend, which is not a sustainable position.

Productivity and ways of working

As previously highlighted, the service doesn't have the resources it needs to carry out its risk-based inspection programme. The way that staff are currently organised means that substantial amounts of overtime are needed to meet the required level of fire cover.

The impact of attending false alarms is known to the service. In the year ending 30 September 2018, false alarm incidents accounted for 42 percent of all incidents attended. The service has changed its procedures, so it now only sends a single fire engine if there is an automatic alarm signal. Even so, false alarms are a major drain on resources. The service plans to implement a new policy for false alarms in summer 2019, subject to approval.

There is little evidence that staff performance is managed in ways that help meet the demands of the service. Targets are set, but they aren't co-ordinated with the service's goals, they aren't challenging and they don't make sure that staff are completing high-priority activity. For example, firefighters are supposed to make at least one fire prevention visit a day per fire engine. We found that, once this has been achieved, crews rarely make further visits even if they have time.

The PFC is ambitious and wide-reaching. It outlines a range of possible savings and the investment required to deliver the change the service needs. Many of the service's financial and organisational plans rely on the PFC being implemented successfully and in a timely manner. The service recognises the importance of successful change management and is planning to increase the size of the PFC team. There is a dedicated programme and business change team to support delivery of the PFC, reporting to the combined authority via the chief fire officer.

Collaboration

The service has a number of shared fire stations. For example, it shares a fire station with police and ambulance at Irlam. It has invested in a new purpose-built community fire and ambulance station at Wigan. It has adapted Philips Park and Whitefield stations and now shares them with the North West Ambulance Service. These joint stations haven't yet been evaluated to see if the expected benefits are being realised.

The service has shared its fire control function with Cheshire, Cumbria and Lancashire fire and rescue services since 2014. This has been formally evaluated and saves the service £500,000 a year compared with having a dedicated control function.

Continuity arrangements

The service has continuity plans in place for critical areas such as IT and fire control. These describe what will take place if something happens that directly affects the staff or stations, like power cuts or extreme weather that makes it hard for staff to get to work. The plans clearly define roles and responsibilities for managers and staff if there are IT system failures or staff shortages, and give clear guidance for cyberattacks and other threats. The plans are regularly reviewed and audited.

The service is able to mobilise fire engines from a back-up fire control location. Both staff and equipment are tested regularly.

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

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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 good track record of making savings. It provided data showing that, of the £15m savings planned for 2016–20, £8m was saved up to the point where the savings plan was put on hold in 2018/19.

The savings laid out in the IRMP 2016–20 (now on hold) are well documented. It has detailed plans for savings, defines accountability and sets appropriate timescales.

The service has specialist staff to manage its procurement. This team also handles procurement for other organisations across the GMCA. The service provided information that showed a saving of £395,000 in 2017/18. This was achieved by carefully checking procurement requests, searching for the best prices and working with other organisations to save money by buying in bulk. For example, when purchasing software licences, the team looked carefully at the requirements of the users and was able to save £55,000 while still meeting their needs.

The service has also used benchmarking data to reduce costs and renegotiate contracts.

In the year to 31 March 2018, the firefighter cost per head of population was £18.77. This compares with the England rate of £22.38 over the same time period. However, many factors influence this cost, for example the ratio of wholetime to retained staff which is in part influenced by how rural or urban the service is.

Innovation

The service has a three-year plan for its IT development. This strategy is fully costed and prioritised. The aim is to create a more mobile and flexible workforce.

The service has previously set aside money for innovation. This funded schemes under categories such as digital, green and partnerships. Staff could submit ideas supported by a business case. This has been replaced by an innovation fund of £3m controlled by the mayor, although staff weren't clear how they could access these funds.

The service is working with a company to develop a product that can count people in and out of high-rise buildings. It does this using domestic electronic devices that connect to the internet. This will provide real-time information about how many people are in a building, which will help in the event of a fire. They are currently examining whether it is possible to 'tag' a firefighter to track where they are in the building. The service has also made use of drone technology to support incident commanders in their decision making. This was used at incidents at Christie Hospital and the moorland fires in 2018.

Future investment and working with others

The service's reserves have recently been used to cover gaps in its budget and maintain fire cover rather than to support efficiency. The service plans to use its reserves to make the investment outlined in the PFC. However, if agreement on the PFC is delayed, the service may have to borrow money, which will be more expensive than using its reserves.

The service has completed a survey of the buildings it owns and has developed a financial plan to deliver improvements. This work is now underway.

The PFC includes an 'income and assets strategy', which identifies opportunities for the service to generate income. For example, the service is looking at opening the Bury Training and Safety Centre to other fire and rescue services.

In the wake of the Manchester Arena bombing and the recommendations of the Kerslake Report, the service is working with a developer on a secure messaging system. This will allow first responders to communicate securely in real time.

People
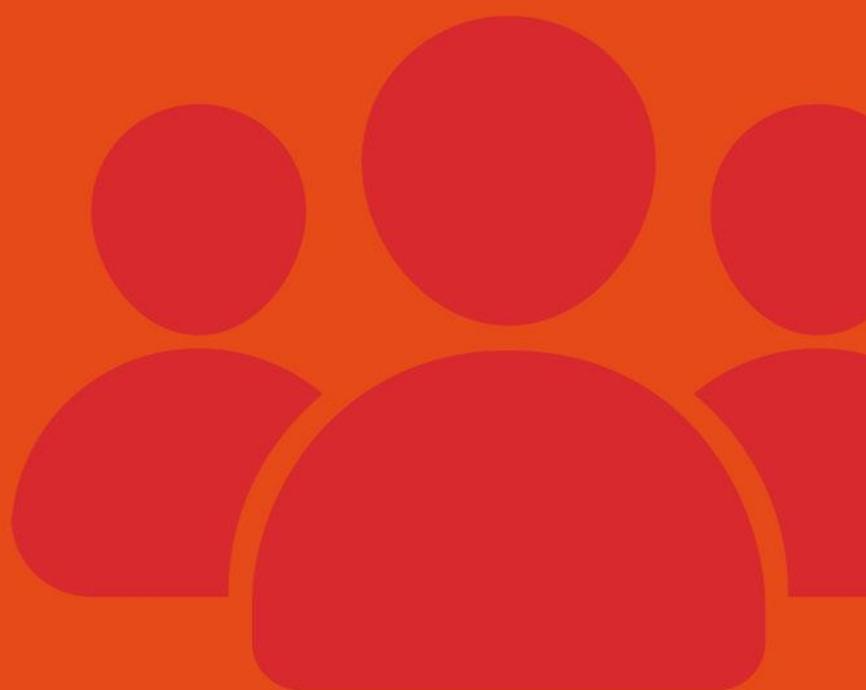
How well does the service look after its people?

Requires improvement

Summary

A fire and rescue service that looks after its people should be able to provide an effective service to its community. It should offer a range of services to make its communities safer. This will include developing and maintaining a workforce that is professional, resilient, skilled, flexible and diverse. The service's leaders should be positive role models, and this should be reflected in the behaviour of the workforce. Overall, Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service requires improvement at looking after its people.

The service has good systems for monitoring health and safety, and works with unions on this. It has improved support it provides for the wellbeing of its staff. Staff understand how to access support, and are positive about the support that is available. A new programme has been introduced to support staff after traumatic incidents.

The service's professional trainers are very busy training the high number of new firefighters, so they don't have capacity to provide other types of training. To address this, firefighters are receiving training within their teams, although this isn't being done consistently. Records of training are kept on two different systems, and managers aren't using these to make sure their teams have the right skills.

Frontline staff have little understanding of the service's values. Some staff reported feeling bullied or discriminated against. Frontline staff believe senior and middle managers are out of touch with them. The service is aware that it needs to improve on this front.

The service doesn't do enough to engage its staff. The personal performance review (PPR) system isn't working consistently and staff don't see it as useful. A new process is being piloted. Formal grievances are dealt with by senior managers, who sometimes lack experience with the process. Records of informal grievances aren't kept, so the service doesn't know if they are being handled appropriately.

Since 2016, the service has had success in recruiting staff from under-represented groups. In 2018, it temporarily suspended activity in its recruitment strategy due to the demands of increased recruitment.

Promoting the right values and culture

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Requires improvement

> **Area for improvement**
> - The service should assure itself that managers visibly act as role models and staff at all levels demonstrate commitment to service values through their behaviours.

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

Workforce wellbeing

We found evidence that the service has made positive changes to the wellbeing support it provides its staff over the last few years. Most staff understood how to access support through the service, or through confidential support lines. Staff described an organisation that was taking positive steps to change views on mental health.

The service has implemented trauma risk management (TRiM). This is used after traumatic incidents, and involves creating 'wellness action plans'. The service has 34 people who are trained to provide support and debrief crews following traumatic incidents. The service plans to increase this number, and is developing targets and time frames for this.

During our inspection, staff told us that they had positive experiences of the current wellbeing support. This includes access to physiotherapy, and to counselling to support their mental health.

Health and safety

The service has effective systems in place to monitor health and safety. It has good relationships with staff representative bodies. A health and safety representative from the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) works in the health and safety office one day a week. There is a joint health and safety committee with staff from the service and the FBU, and the service meets with officials from Unison and Unite regularly.

New staff receive health and safety training as part of their induction. After that, they receive regular training via e-learning. However, there is a gap in formal training for managers. Most middle managers receive training in managing health and safety, but few supervisory managers do. The service relies on professional advice from the health and safety manager.

The wellbeing needs of staff are considered when allocating overtime. Making sure that staff have had enough rest between shifts is managed by the emergency response hub.

Culture and values

The service has a set of behavioural values which are used in recruitment and promotion. However, we found very little understanding of them by frontline firefighters.

As part of our inspection, we carried out a survey of FRS staff to get their views of their service. Of the 197 respondents to our staff survey, 30 percent reported feeling bullied or harassed and 25 percent reported feeling discriminated against at work in the previous 12 months. There are limitations to the staff survey which should be considered alongside the findings. We explain these in Annex A. Disappointingly, some people we spoke to seemed to find the poor treatment of staff by other colleagues amusing.

The service has a relatively new senior management team. The chief fire officer was appointed four months before our inspection, and several other senior managers are temporary appointments.

The leadership team doesn't proactively visit stations to speak to staff. The leadership team temporarily suspended visiting stations while the mayor and deputy mayor undertook their own visits. However, being visible on stations would allow them to display the values of the organisation. Staff also described a lack of visible leadership from their middle managers. The service should make sure it uses its full management team to demonstrate and communicate the organisation's values.

The service is aware of the problems it faces with the culture of its workforce. It is working with staff to refresh its values.

Getting the right people with the right skills

Requires improvement

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Cause of concern

Greater Manchester FRS doesn't have enough controls in place to monitor the competence of its staff. This is because it has suspended its centralised assessment of incident command and breathing apparatus training.

Recommendation

- The service should ensure that managers have quick access to and proper oversight of all records relating to staff training and skills.

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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 carries out a thorough analysis of the training needed by its staff. All areas of the service feed into this, and it is used to set future priorities and distribute resources. It identifies organisational gaps caused by changes to the law and by commitments in the IRMP, such as changes to the ways fire engines are crewed. It is fully costed, and identifies gaps in the skills of the response, prevention and protection teams. This helps with succession and financial planning.

However, the service's centralised assessment and training capability has been suspended to train the influx of new recruits, and the service isn't mitigating this effectively. Firefighters are receiving important training from within their team rather than from central professional trainers. We found that some managers didn't understand the need for assessment, and some didn't have the skills to provide it. As a result, many staff aren't being assessed in the proper use of breathing apparatus. The service doesn't oversee these control measures sufficiently to keep its staff safe.

The service has a career management board which helps it to understand key information about its staff, for example how many people are nearing retirement. It keeps track of when staff leave – both anticipated and unplanned – to make sure it can cover workforce gaps, and has effective succession plans in place.

Learning and improvement

The service records electronically how its staff maintain their skills. A separate system is used to record when staff attend courses. We found that not all managers understand the information provided to them and how to use it. There is limited evidence that managers use this information to make sure their staff have the required skills.

Because the service is recruiting firefighters more quickly, there are now more new and inexperienced firefighters arriving on stations. At the request of the service, the accrediting body for firefighter apprenticeships have carried out an audit. This found gaps in the support being provided by mentors on stations and the amount of administrative work expected from apprentices.

Of the 197 respondents to our staff survey, only 55 percent agreed that they had received enough training to enable them to do what is asked of them.

There is a comprehensive system to record and manage complaints. Each complaint is logged, including all relevant correspondence, and is assigned an investigating officer. All the complaints we reviewed were handled within the service's timescales. There are a number of avenues for raising a complaint (including through the mayor), and these are publicised to staff.

The service has an established programme of annual station inspections. This aims to make sure that local equipment, administration and working practices are at an acceptable standard. Managers told us they value the insights and assurance these can provide. However, this programme is behind schedule for 2018/19. From a total of 40 stations, only 10 audits had been completed. A further nine were planned at the time of our inspection, and it wasn't clear whether the service would be able to audit every station by the end of the year.

Ensuring fairness and promoting diversity

Inadequate

Area for improvement
- The service should put in place mechanisms to effectively engage all staff.

Cause of concern

Greater Manchester FRS has no strategy, visible leadership and limited training on equality, diversity and inclusion. This is affecting watch culture and undermining positives steps to attract new entrants from diverse backgrounds.

Recommendations

By 31 December 2019, the service should:

- put in place a programme to ensure that inclusion, fairness, equalities and professional development are priorities for the service;

- ensure that the chief officer team leads the programme, actively promoting the values of the organisation; and

- ensure that everyone knows how they contribute to the values.

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

Seeking and acting on staff feedback

The service doesn't do enough to actively engage its staff. It last carried out a staff survey in 2013. Although the combined authority undertook a survey in 2018, most staff we spoke to didn't respond, and the results hadn't been published at the time of inspection.

Of the 197 respondents to our staff survey, only 58 percent felt that there were opportunities to feed their views upwards in the service. Some 56 percent felt that their ideas wouldn't be listened to and 54 percent felt that they weren't able to challenge ideas without any detriment to how they would be treated afterwards.

The service engages with employee groups, which has brought about a deeper understanding of the workplace culture. However, the service recognises that it still needs to act on the feedback from these employee groups.

Due to the low number of formal grievances received each year, managers have little experience of the process and have received no training in how to carry it out. In the year ending 31 March 2018, there were 16 formal grievances recorded. There is no system to record informal grievances, making it impossible to identify trends or problems.

The service has a management teleconference that is chaired by a principal officer. This allows information to be passed quickly between senior management and borough management teams. Staff who are on duty are encouraged to listen in to the meeting, but in practice they don't often contribute.

Staff told us that they don't have much contact with managers above station manager level. When they do see other middle managers, it is for a top-down briefing, and they have little opportunity to raise any issues.

Diversity

The service has historically taken focused positive action that has had some success in recruiting from under-represented groups. This was temporarily suspended in 2018 to enable the service to meet its recruitment target. We found that some staff didn't understand the value of positive action, and (wrongly) felt that standards were being lowered to allow women and minority groups into the service. We also found behaviour that isn't in line with the service's values – in particular, gender-exclusive language was used.

The service is not representative of its community. As at 31 March 2018, 4.5 percent of firefighters were from a black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) background. This compares with a BAME residential population of 16.2 percent. Over the same time period, 4.3 percent of firefighters were female. As at 31 March 2018, the service had 1,711 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff. Most firefighters in Greater Manchester are wholetime firefighters. As at 31 March 2018, 99 percent of FTE firefighters were wholetime.

We found that there is no current strategy for equality, diversity and inclusion. The service runs an inclusivity steering group chaired by a principal officer, but there is no evidence of this influencing the wider service.

We saw a core of passionate and dedicated staff carrying out diversity and inclusion work. However, this work isn't seen as a priority across the service, resourced sufficiently or consistently led by all senior leaders.

The facilities for women, such as toilets and showers, aren't fit for purpose at some stations. There is evidence that this is making it difficult to post women to those stations. At the time of our inspection, the service was starting to implement improvements, and planned for this to continue through spring 2019.

Managing performance and developing leaders

Requires improvement

> **Areas for improvement**
>
> - The service should put in place a talent management process to identify, develop and support high-potential staff and aspiring leaders.
>
> - The service should ensure it has an effective system in place to manage staff development, performance and productivity.

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

Managing performance

The service told us that the completion of personal performance reviews (PPRs) by staff is low. The evidence we found supported this. Despite some good examples of their use, most staff don't see PPRs as effective or necessary for providing feedback or monitoring performance. Operational staff don't need PPRs to access mandatory training, and they aren't linked to continuing professional development payments.

We found that targets set for staff in their PPRs didn't support the service's broader goals, and weren't regularly reviewed. The service should make sure that appraisals are clearly linked to performance targets and the service's aims.

The service is aware of this and is piloting a new process. At the time of inspection, this process was expected to be implemented by April 2019. The new process has more emphasis on individual and work-related activities. Staff we spoke to who were already using the new process were positive about it.

The performance of individual staff members isn't effectively managed because many managers don't understand the process and don't know the criteria for effective performance. Staff in the central training team had a good understanding of performance management.

Developing leaders

The service's promotion process is available on the intranet. Staff expressed confidence in the process and understood what to expect at each stage. We found that this was applied fairly. Human resources professionals carry out dip sampling to make sure the process is consistently applied and interviewers given training on unconscious bias. Staff are given feedback after the promotion process to identify their development needs. However, there is a lack of ongoing structured development for supervisory managers once they have been promoted.

The service doesn't have a process to attract and develop staff with high potential to become senior leaders of the future. The service recognises that it needs to improve this. It is considering several ways that it can develop a talent management framework. This aims to be responsive to the service's future needs.

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

Where we collected data directly from fire and rescue services (FRS), 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 the FRS Technical Advisory Group, which brings together representatives from FRSs and the Home Office to support the inspection's design and development, including data collection. We gave services several opportunities to validate the data they gave us and to ensure the accuracy of the evidence presented. For instance:

- We asked all services to check the data they submitted to us via an online application.
- We asked all services to check the final data used in the report and correct any errors identified.

We set out the source of Service in numbers data below.

Methodology

Population

For all uses of population as a denominator in our calculations, unless otherwise noted, we use ONS mid-2017 population estimates. This is the most recent data available at the time of inspection.

BMG survey of public perception of the fire and rescue service

We commissioned BMG to survey attitudes towards fire and rescue services in June and July 2018. This consisted of 17,976 surveys across 44 local fire and rescue service areas. This survey didn't include the Isles of Scilly, due to its small population. Most interviews were conducted online, with online research panels.

However, a minority of the interviews (757) were conducted via face-to-face interviews with trained interviewers in respondents' homes. A small number of respondents were also interviewed online via postal invitations to the survey.

These face-to-face interviews were specifically targeted at groups traditionally under-represented on online panels, and so ensure that survey respondents are as representative as possible of the total adult population of England. The sampling method used isn't a statistical random sample. The sample size was small, varying between 400 and 446 individuals in each service area. So any results provided are only an indication of satisfaction rather than an absolute.

Survey findings are available on BMG's website.

Staff survey

We conducted a staff survey open to all members of FRS workforces across England. We received 2,905 responses between 1 October 2018 and 15 February 2019 from across 16 FRSs during this period in Tranche 2.

The staff survey is 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 8 percent to 31 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 multiple times. It is also possible that the survey 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.

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 public perceptions survey:

How confident are you, if at all, that the fire and rescue service in your local area provides an effective service overall?

The figure provided is a sum of respondents who stated they were either 'very confident' or 'fairly confident'. Respondents could have also stated 'not very confident', 'not at all confident' or 'don't know'. The percentage of 'don't know' responses varied between services (ranging from 5 percent to 14 percent).

Due to its small residential population, we didn't include the Isles of Scilly in the survey.

Incidents attended per 1,000 population

We took this data from the Home Office fire statistics, 'Incidents attended by fire and rescue services in England, by incident type and fire and rescue authority' for the period from 1 October 2017 to 31 September 2018.

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 FRSs to upload to the IRS. Totals are constantly being amended (by relatively small numbers).

- We took data for Service in numbers from the February 2019 incident publication. So figures may not directly match more recent publications due to data updates.

- Before 2017/18, Hampshire FRS did not record medical co-responding incidents in the IRS. It is currently undertaking a project to upload this data for 2017/18 and 2018/19. This was not completed in time for publication on 14 February 2019.

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's figure is based on the number of checks it carried out and doesn't include checks carried out by partners.

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

- Dorset FRS and Wiltshire FRS merged to form Dorset & Wiltshire FRS on 1 April 2016. All data for Dorset and Wiltshire 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 FRAs 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 FRSs.

Fire safety audits per 100 known premises

Fire protection refers to FRSs' statutory role in ensuring public safety in the wider built environment. It involves auditing and, where necessary, enforcing regulatory compliance, primarily but not exclusively in respect of the provisions of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (FSO). The number of safety audits in Service in numbers refers to the number of audits FRSs carried out in known premises. According to the Home Office definition, "premises known to FRAs are the FRA's knowledge, as far as possible, of all relevant premises; for the enforcing authority to establish a risk profile for premises in its area. These refer to all premises except single private dwellings".

We took this from the Home Office fire statistics, 'Fire safety audits carried out by fire and rescue services, by fire and rescue authority' for the period from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018.

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

- Berkshire FRS didn't provide figures for premises known between 2014/15 and 2017/18.

- Dorset FRS and Wiltshire FRS merged to form Dorset & Wiltshire FRS on 1 April 2016. All data for Dorset and Wiltshire before 1 April 2016 is excluded from this report.

- Several FRAs report 'Premises known to FRAs' as estimates based on historical data.

Firefighter cost per person per year

We took the data 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 / retained.

Number of firefighters per 1,000 population, five-year change in workforce and percentage of wholetime firefighters

We took this data from the Home Office fire statistics, 'Total staff numbers (full-time equivalent) by role and by fire and rescue authority' as at 31 March 2018.

Table 1102a: Total staff numbers (FTE) by role and fire authority – Wholetime Firefighters and table 1102b: Total staff numbers (FTE) by role and fire authority – Retained Duty System are used to produce the total number of firefighters.

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

- We calculate these figures using full-time equivalent (FTE) numbers. FTE is a metric that describes a workload unit. One FTE is equivalent to one full-time worker. But one FTE may also be made up of two or more part-time workers whose calculated hours equal that of a full-time worker. This differs from headcount, which is the actual number of the working population regardless if employees work full or part-time.
- Some totals may not aggregate due to rounding.
- Dorset FRS and Wiltshire FRS merged to form Dorset & Wiltshire FRS on 1 April 2016. All data for Dorset and Wiltshire before 1 April 2016 is excluded from this report.

Percentage of female firefighters and black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) firefighters

We took this data from the Home Office fire statistics, 'Staff headcount by gender, fire and rescue authority and role' and 'Staff headcount by ethnicity, fire and rescue authority and role' as at 31 March 2018.

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

- We calculate BAME residential population data from ONS 2011 census data.
- We calculate female residential population data from ONS mid-2017 population estimates.
- 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 & Wiltshire FRS on 1 April 2016. All data for Dorset and Wiltshire before 1 April 2016 is excluded from this report.

Annex B – Fire and rescue authority governance

These are the different models of fire and rescue authority (FRA) governance in England. Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service is a Mayoral Combined Authority.

Metropolitan FRA

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