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# **HM Fire Service Inspectorate**

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**Integrity, Objectivity,  
and Fairness.**



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**Preparedness of  
the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service  
for the XX Commonwealth Games**

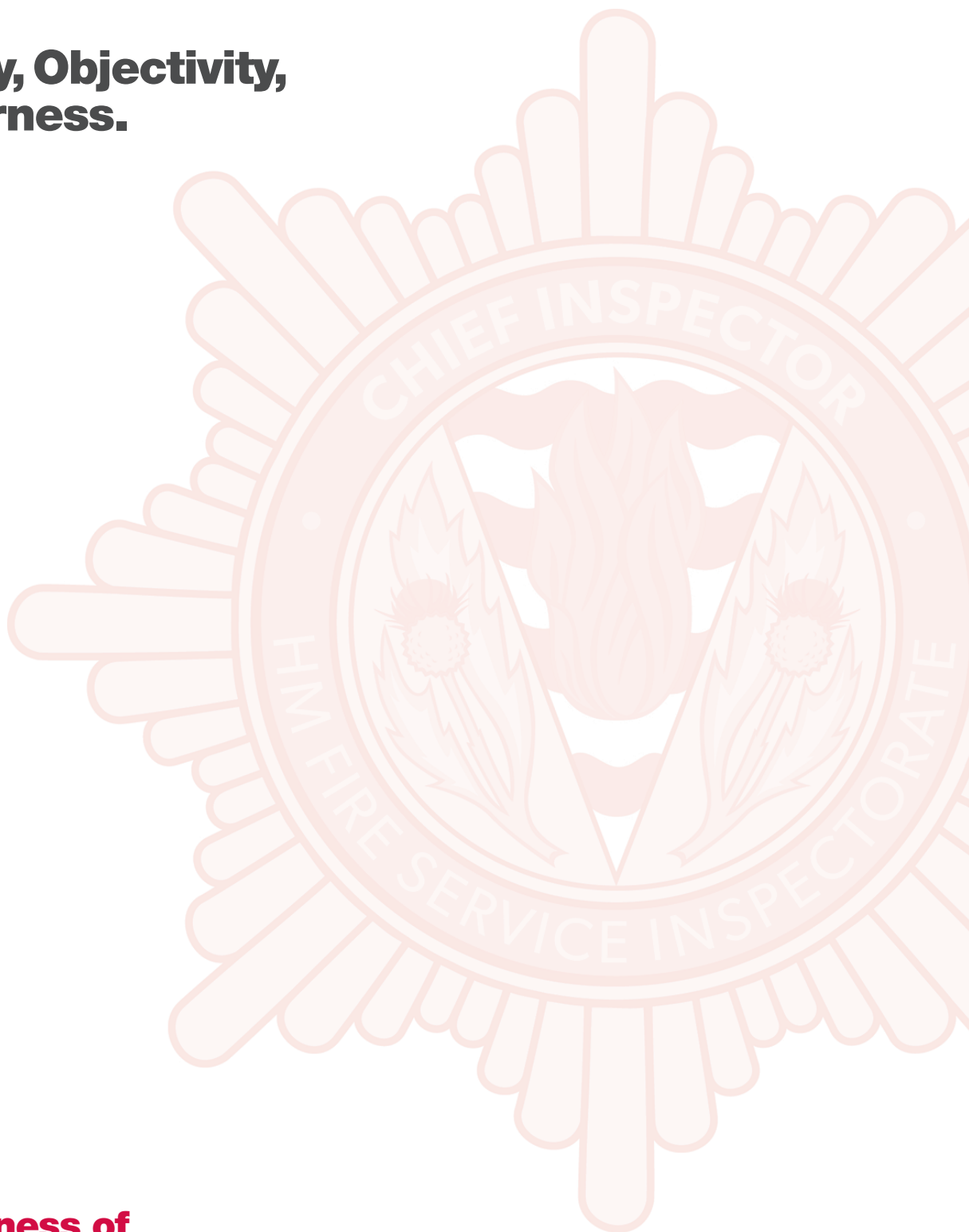


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# 1 Summary

In July 2014 the XX Commonwealth Games (referred to in this report as the Games, or CG2014) will be held in venues across the Glasgow area and in Edinburgh and near Dundee.

An important part of planning for the Games is safety and security. The Scottish Government has established a Safety and Security Unit to provide oversight for these preparations, and overall responsibility for safety and security at CG2014 has been delegated to the Chief Constable of Police Scotland.

Among the many agencies involved in safety and security preparations for the Games is the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS). While the SFRS is not accountable for the safety and security of the Games as a whole, it has a significant part to play both in preparedness for and response to any incidents that occur during the course of the Games.

The SFRS and its predecessor in the Glasgow area, Strathclyde Fire and Rescue, have been engaged in planning for CG2014 for a number of years. These planning activities have considered a range of issues across the preparedness and response spectrum, including:

- engagement with communities and Games attendees (athletes and spectators)
- planning for increased demand for day-to-day response activities (for example from hotels full of visitors to the Games)
- planning for response specifically to Games venues (including the Athletes' Village, sports stadia and venues such as road race courses)
- planning the command structures and communications facilities required for the Games.

Our inspection of the SFRS's preparedness for the Games was not carried out with the intent of challenging the SFRS's professional judgements about how it should deal with these matters. The intent was to provide assurance that SFRS activities had been planned in a coherent way with adequate resource applied to them; and that overall the SFRS was not only able to say with a reasonable level of confidence that it was prepared for the Games, but that it would be able to demonstrate that its preparatory work had been adequate if called upon to do so.

We made it clear to the SFRS at the outset that this inspection was to be collaborative in nature, and if any issues were identified during the course of our inspection activity we would discuss these at the time they arose with a view to enabling the Service to address them. The intent of this report is not to identify shortcomings and make recommendations: rather, it serves as a record of the areas we inquired into and our impressions of the SFRS's preparation in relation to each of them.

## Key findings

- **The SFRS has undertaken appropriate preparatory activities for the Games in the following areas:**
  - **Planning and project management**
  - **Operational readiness**
  - **Prevention and Protection**
  - **Information and communications.**

This preparation has included participation in a programme of multi-agency exercises. The Service's preparation for the Games is not yet finalised but the direction of travel is good.

- **SFRS has agreed that it should be able to identify a date at which it is ready for the Games. The date identified is 12 June 2014. At the date of this report, SFRS appears to be on track to confirm its readiness for the Games by 12 June 2014. We will provide a further, brief statement at the time on SFRS readiness for the Games.**
- **The Fire and Rescue Service in Scotland has had experience of planning for and managing major public events, as well as large scale incidents such as structural collapse and mass decontamination. The Service is therefore not starting from a blank canvas, but already had key elements in place long before the Commonwealth Games project got underway.**
- **The SFRS and its predecessor Service, Strathclyde Fire and Rescue, identified the need for specific Games planning well in advance of the Games and dedicated specific resources to planning and preparing for the Games.**
- **The principal challenge for the SFRS is one of organisation and systems, not physical resources.**
- **By embedding a team in the Games headquarters at Commonwealth House, the SFRS has been able to promote information flow between relevant agencies and to establish the SFRS as a key partner in Games planning.**
- **In some instances, for example planning in relation to Control, and staffing Prevention and Preparedness teams, the SFRS is working within timescales which leave only limited room for overrun. So long as the Service continues appropriately to resource these teams, this should not adversely affect readiness for the Games.**
- **The SFRS recognises that simultaneous and/or protracted major incidents during Games time will stretch its resources in terms of flexi-duty officers and Gold Commanders. The Service should be able to resource any reasonably foreseeable incident although in extreme circumstances this may require calling on mutual aid from other UK jurisdictions.**
- **The SFRS has taken reasonable steps to obtain independent advice on its preparedness activities by arranging for the services of London Fire Brigade (LFB) as a 'critical friend'. LFB's involvement has added significant value to the CG2014 planning process.**

This inspection has been carried out by the Inspectorate exercising powers contained in section 43B(1) of the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 (the 2005 Act). As required by the Act, a copy of the report has been provided to SFRS: it is also published on our website. A briefing has been provided to Scottish Ministers on our findings.

## 2\_Why we inspected

Her Majesty's Fire Service Inspectorate in Scotland is an independent scrutiny body that operates within the Scottish Government. We have the scrutiny powers specified in section 43B of the 2005 Act: this includes inquiring into the state and efficiency of SFRS, its compliance with Best Value, and the manner in which it is carrying out its functions.

An inquiry by the Inspectorate can be self-directed or can be subject to direction by Scottish Ministers. This Inspection was self-directed by the Chief Inspector to consider the manner in which SFRS had carried out its functions in relation to:

*the adequacy of SFRS preparation for the Commonwealth Games to be held in Glasgow in 2014.*

The Games will take place between 23 July and 3 August 2014, principally at venues across Glasgow, as well as locations near Dundee and in Edinburgh. The Athletes' Village will host 6,500 competitors and team officials, and around 1.3 million tickets have been sold to the events with correspondingly large numbers of people coming to stay, principally in the Greater Glasgow area, and attending the events venues around the city and in Edinburgh.

The scale of this event brings with it exceptional planning responsibilities for the Scottish Government in general and the SFRS in particular. The SFRS needs to have considered the impact of the Games on its day-to-day business, the additional demands that the Games will make on its service delivery capability, and contingency planning for a major emergency affecting a Games venue or massed spectators.

Our decision to carry out this inspection was based on an assessment of the risk posed in the event of SFRS service delivery failure at Games time. We considered it proportionate to undertake scrutiny of SFRS preparedness for the Games, because the gravity of the consequences of any weaknesses in SFRS service delivery are potentially significant. HM Fire Service Inspectorate can play a constructive role in providing an additional level of assurance to the Scottish Government, SFRS and the public that an adequate level of preparation has taken place.



# 3 The SFRS's planning and preparedness for the XX Commonwealth Games: our findings

## Introduction

We structured our inquiry by reference to the different areas of activity that we would expect the SFRS to have engaged in, in preparation for the Games. This has meant that our report is not limited to a discussion of the risks that the SFRS has planned for: we have also looked at the process that the SFRS has followed in the course of identifying risks and planning for them. That process of risk identification and treatment is, however, key to the SFRS's successful preparation for the Games, and we discuss this further in the relevant sections of this Chapter.

In the course of our inspection, we considered whether the SFRS's proposed treatments for specific elements of service delivery were logical and based on evidence. It was not our intention to – and by and large we did not – second-guess the Service's judgements on how best to manage the unique risks of the Commonwealth Games: the relevant expertise lies more within the Service than the Inspectorate, and operational planning of this nature is a well-understood and practised role of fire and rescue services.

What we did do was to identify those broad categories into which the Service's planning would fall, and then request assurance, through interviewing staff and key partners, reviewing documents and conducting site visits and observations of relevant exercises, that SFRS had the measure of the project as a whole and had addressed, in an evidence-based manner, the relevant considerations. While this necessarily included consideration of detailed plans and procedures, for example tactical plans for responding to incidents at specific venues, we have avoided reporting on the technical details of these preparations unless these help the reader to understand the issue being discussed.

We identified the following key areas of interest for our examination of the SFRS's preparations.

### Planning and project management

- SFRS internal project planning and management
- Strategic planning and assumptions
- SFRS risk assessments and logs

### Operational readiness

- Operational plans and Operational Risk Information
- Business continuity plans
- Training and exercising programme and resources

### Prevention and Protection

- Legislative Fire Safety Enforcement
- Premises risk assessments

### Information and communications

- Information strategy
- Communications planning

We discuss each of these areas of interest in this Chapter.

## **Background: the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service's experience of planning for major events and civil contingencies**

As the SFRS was only fully established in April 2013, the Games are the first major challenge for the Service in terms of planning for a major public event. It should not, however, be overlooked that the predecessor services did have significant and in some cases recent experience of planning for such events. The Papal visit to Scotland in 2010 required significant planning by Scottish Fire and Rescue Services, including the use of dedicated 'geographically tethered' appliances; Hampden Park was an Olympic venue in 2012, necessitating cross-border planning for this international sporting event; occasions such as the Open Golf championship require contingency planning for mass public attendances, and in a different context, musical festivals such as T in the Park pose their own challenges for Fire and Rescue Services. The experience gained by the predecessor services in planning and preparing for events of this nature is notable: but the Commonwealth Games exceeds any of these in terms of the complexity of working over multiple venues, and the number of people involved both as participants and spectators.

The SFRS and its predecessor services have also been involved for many years in planning for major emergencies, and have obligations to do so under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. The UK Government's New Dimension programme was introduced following the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001. It involved procuring specialist vehicles and equipment, training 10,000 firefighters, and helping to prepare Fire and Rescue Services, including those in Scotland, to tackle terrorist and other major incidents. The equipment has already been used successfully at a number of major incidents to date including significant fires and flooding incidents across the UK.

In addition to the use of New Dimension assets at operational incidents, a significant amount of training and exercising has taken place over the years to test the SFRS and predecessor services' proficiency in managing large scale and mass casualty events. For this reason, the underlying operational requirements of responding to such incidents are well-understood, and the equipment and trained personnel required to do so are already available to SFRS. National multi-agency working was tested in late 2013 at the Clutha Vaults helicopter crash, where specialist search and rescue resources were deployed to Glasgow from across Scotland and the SFRS worked well with partner agencies to resolve the incident.

We did not, therefore, go into this inspection with any concerns about the SFRS's capacity in terms of trained staff and logistics to respond to any incident that might take place during the Games. Of course, it is possible to imagine a theoretical incident that would stretch the Service's capacity to respond using only SFRS personnel and resources, and the concept of mutual aid is well-embedded in UK Fire and Rescue Services, allowing for the provision of assistance from other jurisdictions if required. In general terms, however, our understanding of the challenge facing the SFRS in relation to readiness for the Games is that it is a challenge of organisation and systems, not a challenge of physical numbers or capacity to respond.

## **The XX Commonwealth Games: the SFRS's planning and preparation activities**

### **Planning and project management**

Preparation for the Games began long before the SFRS itself came into being. It was known by 2007 that the Games would be coming to Glasgow in 2014, and the responsible fire service at the time, Strathclyde Fire and Rescue, commenced its planning processes accordingly. An Assistant Chief Officer from Strathclyde visited Delhi, the previous Commonwealth Games host city, and formal planning for the Games began in 2012.

At the same time, Strathclyde Fire and Rescue had to plan for the use of Hampden Park as an Olympic football venue in 2012. Whilst on a different scale from CG2014, the Olympic events brought the complexities of cross-border security planning and command and control to the fore, and meant that personnel in Strathclyde acquired familiarity with these issues.

Early planning for the Games was commenced by the former Strathclyde Fire and Rescue, which prepared the Project Initiation Document and the Outline Business Case which laid down the foundations for the SFRS planning team to build on. A planning team of three Strathclyde Fire and Rescue officers was in place by 2012. In August 2013, the SFRS embedded its planning team within the Commonwealth Games Organising Committee's offices in Albion Street, Glasgow.

During our inspection we have seen a substantial amount of project documentation which demonstrates the way in which tasks have been allocated and then dealt with by the responsible teams. There have been times at which, on receipt of documentation, we have made further requests of the SFRS for clarification of the current project status, and on occasion we had the sense that the activity of the project team had outpaced the currency of the supporting documentation. Nonetheless we are satisfied that SFRS understands the importance of maintaining documentation both as a business record and a project management tool, and we have seen some good examples of planning and scheduling documentation in the course of our discussions with the Service.

In planning for the Games, SFRS was well aware of the role that London Fire Brigade had played in relation to the London Olympics in 2012. While it was recognised that that operation was on a larger and more complex scale than CG2014, there were nonetheless recognised to be strong similarities between the two operations, and SFRS sought the assistance of LFB as a 'critical friend' during 2013 (discussed further below). SFRS has drawn on resources such as Venue Operational Plans prepared by LFB for Olympic venues in London, to use as templates for their own planning. This is in our view a sensible use of available resources, and avoids the unnecessary replication of development work carried out by LFB in the run-up to the Olympics.

We have been advised that the SFRS has requested funding from the Scottish Government over and above its 2014-15 budget allocation, to cover additional costs specific to Games service provision. We understand that, at the time of preparing this report, those discussions are ongoing.

In order to provide ownership of Games preparedness at a senior level, the team reports to a Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) at Assistant Chief Officer level. The SRO is ultimately responsible for providing assurance to the Chief Officer and the Board that SFRS has adequately prepared for the Games.

Overall, our assessment is that SFRS (and its predecessor service, Strathclyde Fire and Rescue) has been appropriately sighted on CG2014 for a considerable period of time, and has devoted suitable levels of resource to Games-specific planning activities. The project structure appears appropriate for delivery of the multiple workstreams required for a task of this complexity.

### **Operational readiness**


Operational readiness is the principal outcome expected of SFRS's planning for the Games. This encompasses the development of pre-incident plans both for specific Games venues, and the risk conditions expected across the affected areas; the assessment and obtaining of adequate resources (personnel and apparatus) to deliver those plans as required; the training of staff who will deliver those plans, to include the staging of exercises as necessary to verify readiness and competence; and the consideration of broader business continuity issues – that is, how the Service would cope if an event such as failure of control infrastructure compromised its ability to respond to incidents.

### ***Operational plans – venues***

It is fundamental to planning for Games risks that the SFRS should have considered how it would respond to an event at the main Games venues. It is common practice for the fire and rescue service to 'pre-plan' for incidents in such a way that responding crews and officers have advance information about the premises they are going to, access points and firefighting resources such as water, special risks they will face when they get there, and some advance thinking about the number of resources that will be required and what tactics might be used to manage the incident.

We therefore expected to find that the Service had identified the main Games venues and considered the layout of the Athletes' Village, with a view to carrying out this planning. In the course of our inspection we met with the SFRS officers with responsibility for Venue Operational Plans (VOPs), and were shown both planning documents and timetables for their preparation, and draft operational plans for a number of the venues. The locations being planned for extend beyond sports venues to include the 'live sites' at which the public can view action from the Games on big screens for the duration of the event.

It was stressed to us that Venue Operational Planning was not a function that SFRS carried out in isolation. Each venue has a broader Venue Emergency Response Plan (VERP) that is contributed to by a number of different agencies: and before the SFRS could finalise its own plans it needed to know the agreed content of those VERPs and the way in which other agencies would be responding in an emergency.



Our overall impression was that SFRS staff had engaged appropriately with the other emergency management agencies and Games organisers and had undertaken a suitable level of response planning as a result. It is clear that in some cases, planning timeframes were relatively tight owing to changes being made particularly to proposed activities at ‘live sites’. The SFRS planning staff were alive to these challenges and confident that they could be met within the time and staffing levels available. The planning and meeting structure adopted by the SFRS project management team, and its location at Commonwealth House, has allowed the team to keep abreast of, and adapt to, changes in the planning of the Games that might affect the delivery of SFRS resources.

In planning for operational response to Games venues, an individual risk assessment was carried out for each venue as to whether a dedicated appliance would be required to provide ‘first strike’ response in the case of an incident. Considerations such as the size and capacity of the venue, proximity of nearby fire stations and the capacity of the road network, and the (short) additional time it would take for an appliance to clear the security cordon around a venue, were considered. It was decided that four venues would have a dedicated appliance allocated to them: the Athletes’ Village, Hampden Park, the SECC and the Barry Buddon shooting complex. Other venues would rely on the fire cover already available from surrounding fire stations. In our judgement the methodology followed to arrive at this conclusion was reasonable and the resulting decisions on appliance location are appropriate.

### ***Operational plans – specific risks***

The use to be made of the River Clyde in terms of Games time events and activities has remained a dynamic consideration throughout the period of our inspection, and as at the date of publication of this report, plans are still subject to further evolution. That said, the SFRS has recognised the Clyde as posing a particular risk, both in terms of engaging the SFRS water rescue capabilities, and in terms of the possible risk of fire, whether involving vessels moored on the river or passing along it.

Whilst the lack of a fixed plan in relation to river use has meant that early planning for an SFRS response was not possible, at the time of writing this report, the SFRS is considering the impact of the river activities on planning and how it, along with partner agencies, will provide an enhanced rescue capability on the river. The Service is also actively considering the requirements for providing appropriate resources and community safety advice to combat fires on vessels afloat. We are satisfied that the Service is sighted on this potentially important source of risk.

The Queen’s Baton Relay (QBR) will be passing through all 32 local government areas of Scotland between 14 June and the start of the Games. There are limited risks for the SFRS associated with this activity, which will primarily be the responsibility of Police Scotland in relation to emergency management. The SFRS has however carried out detailed analysis of the availability of relevant specialist equipment, should this be required at any point along the QBR route. We are satisfied from the explanation that has been given to us that a thorough and proportionate approach is being taken to identifying and providing the necessary resources, although some further work remains to finalise the possible use of air resources in the event that specialist equipment is required in a remote location.

### ***Command and control infrastructure***

Multi-agency command and control for the Games is the responsibility of Police Scotland. Police Scotland has the task of preparing a concept of Operations for Games Command and Control, and providing a Multi-Agency Coordination Centre (MACC) which acts as a standing command and control facility for safety and security provision – including incident control – at the Games.

The SFRS has an Incident Support Room at its West Service Delivery Area (SDA) Control Centre, which is activated for any major incident in which the SFRS is involved. The logistics and operating procedures of the Incident Support Room are well-practised, and the decision was taken that major incidents occurring during the Commonwealth Games would be run from the Incident Support Room to avoid the risks involved in imposing novel command structures for a one-off event.

To provide specific support for the Games, the SFRS is establishing a Games Support Room (GSR) at its West SDA Control Centre, in addition to the Incident Support Room. An SFRS Gold Commander will work from the West SDA Control Centre for the duration of the Games. An SFRS Silver Commander (with Gold training) will be located at the MACC. If a major event were to occur, the nominated SFRS Gold Commander would be primarily based at the SFRS facility, supported by the Silver Commander at the MACC.

Each Games venue has an Event Control Room (ECR) operating while the venue is active, which enables the SFRS to liaise with the Venue Management Team and other emergency responders in order to ensure an appropriate response to operational issues. An SFRS representative will be located within each ECR during Games time. There is also a 24 hour Games Operations Centre at one of the Games venues, where the SFRS has procured office facilities.

The structure for Games Command and Control is in our judgement appropriate and pays due regard to the need for inter-agency coordination, through the MACC. The decision to base the SFRS Commonwealth Games Gold at the SFRS Control Centre with a Silver in the MACC appears to us to be logically based, and we support the concept of avoiding duplication of incident control facilities by maintaining the existing Incident Support Room, complemented by a Games Support Room. Placing a dedicated SFRS officer in each ECR will facilitate coordination and information exchange between venue safety teams and SFRS responders in the event of an automatic fire alarm (AFA) activation or incident.

### ***Command and control staff***

Fundamental to the successful discharge of command and control functions is the availability of sufficient trained staff. The projected CG-specific staffing requirement for SFRS is three Gold Commanders, eight Silver (with Gold training) and about 90 ECR representatives at Bronze level, all of whom will require specialist training.

In discussing staffing with SFRS we explored the question of whether sufficient trained staff were going to be made available for these roles to cover the contingency of a major incident extending over multiple shifts. There is a need to consider what the requirements would be if there were simultaneous major incidents – not necessarily involving the Games. Having discussed the issue with SFRS we are satisfied that reasonable provision has been made for Gold, Silver and Bronze Commonwealth Games Commanders. In saying this we note that the SFRS can also call upon its other Commanders to fill operational roles should an incident occur in Games time – there is only a limited need for Commanders to have specific Games training, mainly in relation to the role of the MACC. So, even though only three Gold Commanders have specific Games training, SFRS resilience in terms of access to a cadre of Gold Commanders is much broader.

In our view, the SFRS has a realistic view of the challenge that multiple major incidents during Games time would pose. Although there is an upper limit on the numbers of middle management officers available during Games time, this relates to the number of such personnel employed by the SFRS overall, and does not reflect any failure in preparation for the Games. We consider that appropriate steps have been taken to maximise flexi-duty officer availability during Games time, through limiting the approval of annual leave, and calling for volunteers to work additional shifts as required (at the time of writing around 140 officers had agreed to do so).

In discussions with SFRS we agreed that it is possible to imagine a set of circumstances that would exceed the capacity of SFRS to manage solely using its own resources – although that is not a consideration unique to the Commonwealth Games. In those circumstances SFRS would look outside Scotland for assistance from other UK Fire Services, whose operational doctrine and command and control training is equivalent to that of the SFRS.

### ***Availability of Operational Risk Information to crews/command and control***

Operational Risk Information (ORI) is an important tool for responding fire crews and command officers at any incident. It was our clear expectation that work would have been done to provide ORI in relation to all CG2014 events and activities that would pose specific risks for SFRS.

Operational planning has been a key output for the SFRS CG2014 team from its inception, and at the time of our inspection, operational planning was well advanced. This included the specific VOPs for all Games venues and events such as the QBR, and also supporting tools such as 3D computer-generated ‘fly-throughs’ of Games venues. These latter tools allow for crew familiarisation with venues and table-top exercising without the need to physically attend the venue itself: the fly-throughs were seen as a valuable resource not only by SFRS managers and staff, but by partner organisations who have also been given access to them. The fly-throughs will be provided at station level to all crews who may be operating in the CG2014 venues, and will be complemented by the availability of VOPs through Mobile Data Terminals on appliances.

Planning for responding to risks at Games venues has necessarily formed a major part of SFRS preparation for CG2014. The fact that we do not discuss it at length in this report should not be seen as neglecting that importance. And it is in its way positive that a lengthy analysis is not required: we expected as part of our inspection to see that this complex planning had taken place and had resulted in materials appropriate for dissemination to planners, control staff and responding crews, and that is what we found.

### ***Operational plans – ‘business as usual’***

Planning for operations in the Commonwealth Games environment is not just about planning for the Games venues and specific events. As well as managing all the issues directly caused by Games events, the SFRS still needs to be able to carry out its day-to-day business regardless of what else may be going on.

It was apparent in discussing this issue with senior SFRS officers that the concepts of ‘business as usual’ and Games-specific response were inseparable. This is because response to a major incident would follow tried and tested protocols for major incident response already in existence; and response to minor incidents would not be a logistical challenge given the amount of resource usually available in the Greater Glasgow region and Edinburgh.

In terms of operational response outwith Games venues, the SFRS has considered the likely demands it could face. In consultation with London Fire Brigade, it was determined that the amount of work associated with increased numbers of visitors to the host city may not in fact be a noticeable imposition on the SFRS: no significant increase in incidents such as AFA activations was noted by LFB in London beyond the precincts of Games venues.

The SFRS also advised us that the usual allocation of nine pumping appliances (day) and six (night) that would in the ordinary course be attending at the Clydesmill training ground for routine training would be available to respond to calls, as training is suspended for the duration of the Games. Any increase in business caused by the influx of visitors should in our judgement be capable of being handled by the freeing up of this resource.


We asked the SFRS if in its view it could handle a response to two simultaneous 20 pump incidents in the Greater Glasgow area, in addition to maintaining Games cover. We asked that question as representing a realistic ‘bad case’ scenario: a 20 pump fire is a significant event and two simultaneously would be a rare set of circumstances. We were advised that in the SFRS’s view it could cope and in our view that is credible, given the physical and staff resources available in the Greater Glasgow area and surrounds.

### ***Business continuity***

In the course of our inspection we explored the SFRS’s business continuity planning required to ensure, for example, that the control function could be delivered following a failure of the West SDA facility. We also enquired about the Service’s plans in the event of spare conditions testing the West SDA Control Room’s ability to handle the volume of calls being made to the Service.

Explanations were given to us of the SFRS’s contingency plans should there be a complete failure of, or requirement to evacuate, the West SDA Control facility. These plans are in existence as part of SFRS’s broader contingency planning and are not Games-specific, albeit





consideration has been given to how the Games-specific aspects of control (for example, the GSR) can be replicated in such circumstances. The plans appeared to us to be properly thought through, and the Service intends to exercise the operation of these business continuity measures in advance of the Games to ensure their functionality.

As is the case with other SFRS Control Rooms, arrangements are already in place in the West SDA Control Room for calls to be diverted elsewhere should the sheer volume of calls become too much for that Control Room to handle. As with the fallback plans for failure or evacuation of the Control Room, these plans are not Games-specific, and the SFRS is not intending to introduce any novel arrangements for Games time. Given that spate conditions may occur at any time, this is not in our view an unreasonable approach to this issue.

### ***Training***

It is essential that well-planned and resourced training for staff in key roles takes place and accordingly we expected the SFRS to prepare for this task. The SFRS created a Training Needs Analysis (TNA) which identified key personnel and provided for them to be prepared for the operational and technical challenges presented by the Games.

The TNA identified the skills, knowledge and understanding required of individuals in specific roles in a Games-related environment and highlighted potential skills gaps. This has been used as the basis for a training programme which meets the Games-specific needs of the Service.

A Group Manager based at the SFRS training facility at Clydesmill has been appointed to lead the training programme, with the full-time assistance of a Watch Manager, and back-up from support staff as required. We discussed the training programme with the Group Manager, and it was explained to us how a combination of targeted 'business as usual' training, together with specific training such as Venue familiarisation, and collapsed temporary structure training for Urban Search and Rescue teams, is being combined to meet these needs.

The approach adopted by the SFRS is fundamentally that operations at an incident connected with the Games will not differ at a task level from operations at any other time. For that reason, a primary focus is to make sure that all relevant staff are up-to-date with core training and skills maintenance, rather than to deliver a raft of Games-specific training to staff.

Having said that, there are a number of Games-specific issues relating to venues, together with particular matters that have been identified as requiring attention, for example emergency service vehicle driving in crowds. Using the training scheduler which has been developed by the staff at Clydesmill Training Centre, a schedule has been put together which will see the relevant training complete by June 2014. Time has been scheduled for on-shift Games-specific training to be delivered to crews working at stations that would be likely to respond to an incident connected with the Games, and on-line resources will also be provided through the SFRS's Learning Content Management System online training platform.

Training also has to be provided for the command staff who will be working at Bronze, Silver and Gold levels in connection with the Games. Training packages for these staff members are being created by the SFRS and again will be delivered by June 2014 – as discussed above, the fundamental knowledge skills and abilities associated with these command levels are already in

existence among SFRS staff, so the training required is to do with specific Games-time structures and communications pathways rather than being fundamental command and control training.

No single service will deal with this type of incident in isolation, so it is vital that frontline responders and commanders from each organisation work effectively within recognised and agreed command and control frameworks to deliver an effective integrated response. The SFRS is fully involved with the multi-agency exercise programme aligned to the Games Security Directorate, with any significant outcomes being appropriately fed back to the planners for incorporating into policy and procedures. This programme of multi-agency exercise is set to continue up to the commencement of the Games.


### **Prevention and Protection**

The initial Concept of Operations for the Games prepared by the former Strathclyde Fire and Rescue identified that there will be a requirement for a co-ordinated approach to the assessment of premises for the purposes of ensuring compliance with legislative fire safety standards in the lead up to the games. This plan extended well beyond Games venues, to include inspection of buildings within a 0.5 mile radius of any venue that might pose a threat to events at that location. In addition, the question of sleeping risk was identified as needing to be considered: both in relation to hotels and guest houses that will be full at Games time, and in relation to other buildings that might be used illegally to provide sleeping accommodation for visitors to the Games.

Consequently, it was determined that it would be appropriate to develop a co-ordinated inspection programme for a broad range of premises. For hotels and guest houses, it was determined that these could be inspected within the parameters of SFRS's 'business as usual' fire safety enforcement activities in the Glasgow and Edinburgh areas. For other buildings, a tailor made approach was adopted.

Starting in 2013, all premises within a 0.5 mile radius of Games venues were analysed to determine what hazards might be posed by fire and what the consequences would be in the event of a fire. Following that analysis, a judgement was made on whether further investigation was required. If so, in most cases this took the form of an Operational Reassurance Visit which was intended to look in more detail at the premises. These visits were planned to be carried out mainly by operational crews on shift. Where those visits raised specific fire safety concerns, referral was made for a Fire Safety Audit by trained auditing officers. For certain premises deemed vulnerable due to use or compliance history, an ORV was not carried out and the premises were referred directly for Fire Safety Audit.

We consider that this methodology is sound with inspections carried out or programmed to be done, and those premises attracting a higher risk scheduled to be fully audited by the SFRS. The selection criterion for basic consideration of premises is a broad one – location within 0.5 miles of a venue – which has led to a high level of assurance, with an associated high level of activity and demand for resource to complete the necessary visits. Prevention and Protection staff explained to us that additional dedicated resource has been allocated to this activity by SFRS for it to be completed successfully.



At the time of writing this report, the programme of Operational Reassurance Visits and Fire Safety Audits was well advanced. On completion, SFRS will be content that from a Games-specific fire safety enforcement perspective the Service is prepared. We understand that as more information is released from the Organising Committee, there may be a requirement for further inspection work, and the resource to do so has been factored in to staffing requirements in the lead-up to Games time.

The SFRS has recognised the requirement to train Games venue managers in fire precautions and it is planned that once appointed, venue managers will receive input to make them aware of their roles and responsibilities as duty holders under the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005.

Much of the work around the Protection role of the SFRS, for example the inspection of hotels and guest houses for fire safety issues, can be considered business as usual and the Service is remaining focused on providing this function in the lead-up to the Games. SFRS is alert to the risk of premises being adapted for sleeping which do not comply with fire or building regulations. Our understanding is that additional resources will be available to the Prevention and Protection function in the Service to ensure compliance in the run-up to and during the Games.

During the course of our inspection, we were advised of some concern on the part of SFRS regarding the Athletes' Village and the adequacy of the fire precautions there. This reflects a thorough inspection process having been carried out by the Service, with issues identified being relayed to the relevant persons. At the time of writing SFRS continues to engage with the accommodation providers in relation to the provision of building fire safety at the Athletes' Village and we are satisfied that this is being pursued in an appropriate manner.

We have discussed with the Service the way in which it plans to engage with the community as a whole to manage demand for fire and rescue services over the Games period. Games-related activity during July and August 2014 is likely to make this a busy time for the SFRS, and so a parallel can be drawn with events such as bonfire night and occurrences such as industrial action, where it is known in advance that there might be demand or supply issues for the Service.

We have been advised that community safety messaging at Games time will focus on the acknowledged seasonal issues that affect demand for fire and rescue services in the summer time, with the added overlay of additional celebrations connected with the sporting events ongoing as part of the Games. In partnership with Police Scotland, SFRS will be promoting community messaging about the responsible use of alcohol, and avoidance of risky behaviours that could lead to a fire risk.

There may be some additional scope for demand reduction, particularly in relation to AFA activations. July and August will see very large numbers of people coming to Glasgow and Edinburgh, which has the potential to increase the demand on the SFRS in terms of response to incidents.

The SFRS already has a policy of 'call challenging' AFAs in its West SDA to ensure where possible that unwanted activations are identified and response cancelled or modified accordingly. In addition, response to AFAs will be modified should other incidents in the area start to deplete available resources. In the context of the Games, our view is that SFRS is sighted on the relevant issues and has applied reasonable professional judgement to addressing them.

## **Information and communications**

### ***Internal information strategy within SFRS***

There has been a requirement to raise awareness of the nature and extent of SFRS involvement in the Games both at senior leadership level, and among SFRS staff who will be responsible for meeting the resourcing requirements for the Games.

Significant effort has been applied to communicating information to staff both at management level and across the SFRS about the Games, their impact on the Service, and opportunities for staff to be involved. These activities have included:

- Presentations to Strategic Leadership Team with subsequent 4-weekly engagement
- Senior officer presentations for roles Station Manager – Area Manager
- Articles in SFRS in-house magazine Newsreel
- Guaranteed fortnightly spot in SFRS e-Zine
- Staff communications on accreditation, assurance and exercising arrangements and leave restrictions
- Communications on opportunities to volunteer to work shifts at Games time
- Advice on Operations Planning and Communications workshops
- Staff engagement at the Clydesmill training centre
- Engagement and liaison with staff representative bodies.

In our view the Staff communication programme has been adequate: and the level of penetration achieved may be gauged by the healthy numbers of expressions of interest to work during Games time (140 flexi-duty officers and over 400 other staff). The feedback we have had from staff representative bodies also leads us to conclude that the SFRS's communication and engagement with staff has been appropriate.


### ***Media strategy for public information***

At the time of preparing this report the SFRS's media strategy for Games time is still in development, and we were advised that it will be assisted by comment and feedback in the London Fire Brigade (LFB) 'critical friend' review referred to below. This will include, for example, identifying a rota of senior officers available to provide media comment at any time during the Games. Although this strategy is, at April 2014, still being worked on, we are satisfied that SFRS is sighted on the need to have a media strategy in place and has received appropriate assistance from LFB in understanding what this strategy will need to include.

### ***Operational communications planning***

SFRS communications planning has looked both at the use of Airwave facilities for command level communications and interagency working, and fireground radios for use within venues and at incidents.

The SFRS does not use substantial amounts of Airwave bandwidth owing to its policy of avoiding 'point-to-point' communication and utilising short message transmissions as much as



possible. Additionally, bandwidth usage is reduced by keeping talk groups at a fairly high command level (Silver/Gold). This is intended to continue throughout the Games. Sufficient existing arrangements are in place to monitor Airwave usage with early warnings of reaching bandwidth limits being provided by Police. SFRS usage is unlikely to create any Airwave capacity issues: protocols are in place for multi-agency co-operation to resolve capacity issues if they occur and these are exercised regularly outwith the specific preparations for the Games.

Additional fireground radio channels have been made available for SFRS personnel based at Games venues to use. These will be employed, for example, for the 'floor walkers' at venues to talk to the SFRS liaison officer in the Venue Control Room.

Overall, our discussions with SFRS left us satisfied that SFRS is planning appropriately to have effective operational communications in place during Games time.

### **The role of London Fire Brigade as a 'critical friend'**

An obvious point for the SFRS to take into account when planning for the Games was that LFB had successfully managed the provision of fire and emergency service cover relating to the Olympic Games in 2012. Indeed, Strathclyde Fire and Rescue had some direct involvement in that Hampden Park was an Olympic Games venue, involving some exposure to the complex interdisciplinary planning processes applicable to an event of this nature.

The lessons learned from the staging of the Olympic Games were a resource available to SFRS in planning for CG2014. Three senior Strathclyde Fire and Rescue officers visited LFB during the Olympic Games, and subsequently they prepared a knowledge transfer and lessons learned document which has been fed into the SFRS CG2014 planning process.

In a further initiative, the SFRS decided to approach LFB to act as a 'critical friend', reviewing and making suggestions on its planning and preparedness for the Games. A visit by SFRS officers to London in late 2013 was followed by a return delegation from London to Scotland in February 2014. LFB officers reviewed SFRS's planning documentation and interviewed relevant workstream leaders and members of SFRS senior management, in order to gain a picture of the SFRS project work and planning activities, and to provide feedback to the SFRS.

We would have expected SFRS to take this initiative to tap into the recent significant experience of a major service south of the border in managing what was an even larger sporting event: accordingly we welcome the fact that this was done and express our appreciation of the time and effort taken by LFB to assist. In the course of our inspection we met with officers of LFB to discuss with them their findings, and from those conversations and feedback from the SFRS, it is clear that LFB's involvement has added significant value to the CG2014 planning process.

The feedback received from LFB was positive both in terms of the project management structures that SFRS had in place, and the work that was being done towards preparedness for the Games. LFB reported a positive direction of travel and advised that there were no issues that would cause concern to LFB. There were, as was to be expected, a number of points in detail where LFB suggested possible improvements or additional work to enhance the SFRS preparedness program. The timing of the LFB critical friend work was such that sufficient time has been available to take on board and implement the LFB feedback and suggestions. Having discussed this with SFRS staff following our meeting with LFB, we are confident that the issues raised by LFB have been noted and are being actively considered.

## 4 Conclusions

As stated in the Summary of this report, this inspection was intended to be collaborative in nature, and if issues were identified during the course of our inspection activity, we discussed these at the time they arose with a view to enabling the Service to address them. The intent of this report is not to identify shortcomings and make recommendations: rather, it serves as a record of the areas we inquired into and our impressions of the SFRS's preparation in relation to each of them.

The 2005 Act requires that the SFRS must have regard to this report and, having done so, must take such measures (if any) as it thinks fit in relation to the report. There are a very few instances, for example in relation to the continued provision of staff and resources for particular areas of CG2014 work, where we have implied that a future course of action may be desirable, and for ease of reference we collect these below.

Overall, we are of the view that the SFRS has planned and prepared adequately for the 2014 Commonwealth Games, and will deliver the public safety outcomes that the Games organisers, the Scottish Government, and the community expect of it.

We greatly appreciate the assistance of the members of SFRS staff who helped us to organise visits and contributed constructively to discussions and interviews, often at times when they were under significant pressure of work from Games planning activities.

### ***Summary of issues requiring ongoing attention by SFRS***

- The SFRS is expecting to confirm its readiness for Games operations in June 2014: the form of this is not yet confirmed and this may be internal to the SFRS or may take the form of providing assurance to a third party. Ongoing monitoring of the status of the various project workstreams will be required to allow for readiness to be confirmed at the appropriate time. HM Fire Service Inspectorate will liaise with SFRS at the time that this confirmation of readiness is provided and may provide a short supplement to this report.
- At the time of writing this report not all SFRS workstreams are complete, and certain tasks require to be finalised particularly in relation to legislative fire safety enforcement, and staff training. By its nature some of this work has to continue until closer to Games time (for example Games-specific training cannot be provided too early as it still needs to be fresh at the time the Games start), so that the fact it is not finished does not imply criticism. The SFRS needs to monitor the progress of this work on a regular basis to ensure that it will be delivered by the relevant date.
- Plans for resourcing operations on the Clyde and the QBR need to be finalised, and this will include obtaining sign-off for the relevant risk analysis and strategic resourcing decisions at SRO level. In relation to the risks associated with river use during the Games, this will also need to include a consideration of any necessary community safety activities.
- The required numbers of staff to fill CG2014-related roles during Games time are, on the information presently available, assured. SFRS should maintain visibility of the numbers of staff available to ensure that no unforeseen fall-off in availability occurs.
- An ongoing media strategy will be desirable both to promote fire safety messages in an effort to manage levels of 'business as usual', and capitalise on SFRS participation in the safety and security of the Games.

## Glossary and abbreviations

AFA	Automatic Fire Alarm
CG2014	Commonwealth Games 2014
ECR	Emergency Control Room, a facility provided at each Games venue
Games, the	Commonwealth Games 2014
GSR	Games Support Room, a facility to be provided at SFRS West SDA Control
LFB	London Fire Brigade
MACC	Multi-Agency Coordination Centre
ORI	Operational Risk Information
QBR	Queen's Baton Relay
SDA	Service Delivery Area
SECC	Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre, Glasgow (a Games venue)
SFRS	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
SRO	Senior Responsible Officer (SFRS CG2014 project 'owner')
TNA	Training Needs Analysis
VERP	Venue Emergency Response Plan
VOP	Venue Operational Plan

## About this inspection

The Inspection took place between November 2013 and March 2014.

The Inspection team members were:

Steven Torrie QFSM  
Paul Considine  
Bob Arnott

We began this inspection process by interviewing the Service's senior managers with responsibility for Commonwealth Games planning and service delivery. We also reviewed SFRS project documentation that related to its CG2014 preparations.

We conducted interviews with a number of stakeholders both within the SFRS and external to it, in order to build a picture of the expectations that had been placed on the Service; the way in which the Service was meeting them; and any pressure points that might risk effective service delivery. We also engaged with staff representative bodies and spoke to those who wished to meet with us.

We are grateful to Brian Plastow, Lead Inspector, HMIC Scotland and Brian McKenzie, Assistant Inspector, HMFSI for helping us by challenging a draft of this report.





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