



HM Fire Service Inspectorate

Local Area Inspection Dundee City



Integrity, Objectivity, and Fairness.

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Inspectorate**

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Dundee City**



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1_ The local area inspection programme

The Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 2013 sets out how Scottish Ministers expect the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) to operate and how, in part, its effectiveness and efficiency are to be measured. We take the Framework as the starting point for structuring and prioritising our inspection programme.


The Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 requires the SFRS to appoint a Local Senior Officer (LSO) for each local authority area in Scotland for the purpose of carrying out its functions in that area. The LSO reports to the Head of Service Delivery for the relevant SFRS Service Delivery Area (SDA) (North, East or West). The SFRS is also required by the Act to have a Local Fire and Rescue Plan for each local authority area, which will set out the SFRS's priorities and objectives for that local area; why they have been selected; how the SFRS intends to deliver them; and (insofar as is practicable) outcomes by reference to which the SFRS's service delivery in the local authority area can be measured. The fact that the 2005 Act is structured in this way is a clear demonstration of the Scottish Parliament's intention that the SFRS's service delivery should be considered both at the national and local authority levels.

Inspections of SFRS service delivery within local authority areas, that examine the development and delivery of Local Fire and Rescue Plans, help to provide assurance about the way in which the SFRS is meeting this intention. By undertaking inspections of SFRS service delivery within local authority areas, HM Fire Service Inspectorate:

- can provide assurance to Scottish Ministers and the public that the SFRS is making adequate provision for local service delivery, and that local areas have access to specialist national resources, and make suggestions for improvement if necessary;
- can take a detailed look at the nature and quality of service provision, including working with partner organisations, within local areas and can draw attention to significant matters and areas of good practice;
- can co-operate with other scrutiny bodies to provide collaborative, 'place-based' scrutiny of service provision;
- maintains a good level of awareness of the Service's functions and builds a record of how the Service is functioning; and
- can gather intelligence that may inform, or cause to be undertaken, more strategic, thematic inspections of the SFRS.

Our local area inspections are intended to be closely tied to the Fire and Rescue Framework. For this reason we have adopted a structure for them which follows the structure of the Framework itself:

- The Local Fire and Rescue Plan and Single Outcome Agreement.
- Improved Service outcomes and protecting frontline services.
- More equal access to specialist resources and national capacity.
- Strengthened connection between SFRS and communities.



We look at a broad range of matters relevant to fire and rescue service delivery within the area being inspected, including any issues arising from our thematic work carried out in that area; and in our inspection report we give an opinion on the manner in which the SFRS is carrying out its functions in the above respects.


In our local area inspections we aim to visit as many service delivery locations as we can, and speak to managers and a range of uniformed and non-uniformed staff. We look at premises and equipment, and view a sample of records to enable us to understand the way in which business within the area is conducted. In this way we aim to cross-reference the SFRS's written plans, and what we are told about the local area by SFRS managers, with our own observations and discussions with staff on the ground.

We do not, however, carry out our local area inspections as a comprehensive audit. The SFRS has a programme of internal station audits that involve a detailed look at station activity and records, and we do not want to duplicate that work. The sampling methodology that we adopt cannot be guaranteed to identify all potential areas for improvement: we intend that it should be a proportionate activity that provides an overview of the area, comparable with other local area inspections that we carry out.

Our report reflects the circumstance at the time of our inspection which was undertaken during January and February 2016. SFRS is continuing to change and evolve, consequently material changes may have occurred since our inspection.

A summary of our findings

- The Local Fire and Rescue Plan for Dundee City follows the general structure that the Service has established for these plans and there is an absence of benchmarking and targets.
- Our overall impression of the SFRS's work in Dundee City is positive. Partnership working is well embedded, though there is a desire amongst some of the Community Planning Partners for wider co-location of services, including those of the SFRS. There is evidence of an increase in the number of social work referrals being made by SFRS personnel as a result of partnership work.
- There are weekly tasking meetings of Community Safety partners where decisions are made on actions to take in response to incidents and trend analysis of multi-agency data. This is facilitated by a Partnership Analyst and we were advised that there is scope for SFRS staff to have greater access to the services of the analyst.
- There is a feeling amongst staff that there had been an over-abundance of new information and guidance since the formation of the SFRS with a consequent impact on the ability to process it all. This is particularly the case for RDS (retained duty system) personnel. (The amount of new information arises from the Service's need to create a single operating framework from the eight legacy service operating practices.)
- There is a high fire safety enforcement workload within the area and a high performing enforcement team. Workload is influenced by the large number of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) and the impact of the SFRS policy of auditing HMOs in line with the local authority licencing scheme cycle. A consequence is limited capacity within the fire safety enforcement team to do other thematic work. The SFRS is planning to implement a new national audit policy for HMO premises, with an audit frequency based on individual premises risk, rather than in line with the licencing scheme. The LSO is managing a communications strategy and partner buy-in associated with this policy.
- RDS firefighters form a relatively small cadre of personnel within Dundee City, 14 out of 213 station-based personnel at the time of our visit. The RDS personnel are well supported by local management and benefit from a robust and well-structured training programme. The RDS appliance has seen a recent increase in its unavailability which is due to periods of a reduced availability of crew. We are impressed by the RDS Watch Manager's spreadsheet method of managing his section's workload and training programme.
- There is concern amongst some staff that the implementation of proposed national employment contract conditions for dual contract RDS personnel (RDS personnel who are also wholtime employees) may cause changes to appliance availability in Balmossie Fire Station where dual contractors form the majority of RDS personnel.
- There is a strong commitment and enthusiasm toward the promotion of community safety and for broadening the reach of the SFRS, particularly in working with health and social care partners.
- Although of varying ages, general fire station facilities are satisfactory. All have a very good level of IT, training and fitness equipment available.
- Dundee City has benefited from a degree of stability in membership of the SFRS local management team. This has had an influence on the well-established partnership working arrangements.

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- Although Dundee City is not a pilot area for the SFRS Out of Hospital Cardiac Arrest (OHCA) project, overall, staff are positive about firefighters encompassing the wider public safety agenda, such as this type of medical emergency work, providing it is accompanied with suitable training and equipment.
 - The level of reporting of health and safety near-miss incidents has reduced recently. This reduction coincides with the recent introduction of a new reporting procedure.

2 About the area

The city of Dundee is Scotland's fourth largest city and second most densely populated behind Glasgow. Situated on the Tay Estuary, Dundee's profile has changed over the years with the decline of traditional manufacturing industries. It now has well-developed biotechnology and digital media sectors, building on specialisms from its two universities.

Dundee waterfront area is in the midst of a major £1bn regeneration programme. This development will see the construction of new infrastructure, the V&A Museum of Design, hotels, offices and housing.

The population of Dundee in 2014 was just over 148,000¹. This is projected to rise by 15.6% by 2037 compared to an 8.8% projected increase for Scotland as a whole. The over-75 age group is projected to rise the most in Dundee, which is the same for the rest of Scotland. The estimated number of dwellings in 2014 was 73,575. Dundee City is the local authority with the third largest number of HMOs in Scotland.

The LSO for Dundee is also responsible for SFRS delivery in the neighbouring local authority areas of Perth and Kinross, and Angus. Dundee's risk profile reflects its more urbanised setting, while the other two council areas are more rural in nature.

There are four fire stations within Dundee, which are all multi-pump stations. Three of them, Blackness Road, Kingsway East and Macalpine Road are wholetime crewed; Balmossie is crewed by a combination of wholetime and RDS firefighters.

Due to the area's location, particularly Balmossie Fire Station which sits on the boundary with Angus Council, appliances will attend incidents outside the Dundee City boundary.

¹ National Records of Scotland, December 2015

A look at some key statistics for the Dundee City area

SFRS attended 3,506 incidents in Dundee City in 2014/15.

There were 180 accidental dwelling fire incidents in 2014/15, an almost 8% reduction on the previous year. Based upon the rate of incidents per 100,000 dwellings, Dundee City's figure at 245 is higher than the rate for Scotland as a whole, at 196.

Tragically, there were two fire fatalities during 2014/15, and 39 non-fatal casualties². In comparison to the Scotland rate for fatal casualties per 1,000 accidental dwelling fires, Dundee City is slightly lower at 5.6 compared to 5.7. The rate of non-fatal casualties is higher, with a rate of 195 compared to the national rate of 167.

There has been a reduction in deliberate fires with a total of 607 for 2014/15; 86% of these were secondary fires³, just over 56% of which involved refuse or bins.

2,239 false alarms were recorded in 2014/15, an increase of 32 on the previous year. 84% of these false alarms were reported as being caused by a fire alarm system. The national fire and rescue service statistics⁴ provide data on false alarms across all local authority areas. The rate of false alarms per 100,000 population in Dundee City is the highest of all local authority areas at 1,510. The rate for Scotland is 909.

Special service incidents are non-fire related incidents which SFRS is requested to attend. The overall rate of these per 100,000 population is slightly higher in Dundee, at 208 than the rate for Scotland as a whole at 201. While the special service categories of 'road traffic accidents' and 'flooding' are lower than the Scotland rate, the 'effecting entry or exit' and 'other special service' categories are higher than the Scotland rate.

² This includes casualties recorded as precautionary check.

³ Most secondary fires are outdoor fires. These include grassland and refuse fires (unless they involve casualties or rescues, property loss, or are attended by five or more appliances).

⁴ *Fire and Rescue Statistics 2014-15*: <http://www.firescotland.gov.uk/about-us/fire-and-rescue-statistics.aspx>

3_ Our findings

As discussed in the introduction to this report, we structure our findings to be directly referable to the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 2013. The Framework sets the strategic direction for fire and rescue in Scotland, and has sections on governance and accountability (including planning and reporting); protecting and improving local services; equal access to specialist support and national capacity; and strengthening the connection with communities. The way in which we report our findings follows this structure – with an initial discussion of the Local Fire and Rescue Plan and Single Outcome Agreement, which are key planning documents for the SFRS in each local authority area.

3.1_ The local Fire and Rescue Plan and Single Outcome Agreement

There are similarities in the way the 32 local plans of the SFRS are structured, with the content being similar in many of them. Whilst easing the burden of plan production for the Service, if the Framework is not appropriately customised then there is a danger that the plan becomes inappropriate at the local level. The Dundee City plan follows the general structure that the Service has established for these plans and there is an absence of benchmarking and targets.

The Dundee City Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) is a document created at local authority level which sets out that a number of agencies will work together in the area to deliver outcomes aligned to nationally agreed priorities, and the principles of public service reform. SOAs take into account the contributions of various local and national bodies in arriving at these outcomes.

The Dundee City SOA 2013-2017 includes a number of fire-specific indicators, such as the number of fatalities and the number of injuries arising from fires; the number of dwelling fires; and the number of malicious false alarm calls. The SOA assigns targets to these indicators, seeking to achieve improvement of each against the data from the baseline year of 2012.

By inclusion in the SOA, these indicators are for all the partners to achieve and not just for SFRS. Equally the SFRS would be expected to contribute to other targets (outcomes) within the SOA such as *Outcome 5 People in Dundee are able to live independently and access support when they need it*. The SFRS Local Plan for Dundee explains the Community Planning arrangements for Dundee and how the SFRS fits into them.

3.2 Improved service outcomes and protecting frontline services

During our inspection we met with managers and staff from both the Prevention and Protection and Service Delivery functions. We also visited each fire station in the area where we had the opportunity to speak to firefighters. At Balmossie Fire Station where there is a mix of crewing between wholtime and RDS we met with firefighters of both duty systems. We also spoke with the HR and Health and Safety Business Partners and members of the support staff pool based at Blackness Road.

Prevention and Protection

Community Safety Engagement (CSE) and Fire Safety Enforcement (FSE) is provided by staff who are based at local fire stations. CSE staff for Dundee City comprise a Local Area Liaison Officer (LALO), a Community Safety Advocate and one Community Firefighter. There are three enforcement staff who work across the local authority area. There are no non-uniformed auditing officer posts within the wider LSO area.

We discuss in greater detail below the partnership activities which encompass the Community Safety work of the CSE staff. In addition to the work of this dedicated team, Watch-based and RDS personnel also undertake Community Safety Engagement. One of the improved outcomes we describe later is an increase in referrals to Social Work of people who may be considered vulnerable. Social Work in turn also make referrals to SFRS of people who may be at risk from fire.

The enforcement activity within Dundee City, as with other LSO areas, is in part defined by the SFRS's Fire Safety Enforcement Framework which sets out a risk-based hierarchy of premises type where audit activity will take place.

Enforcement staff have a personal target of 132 audits per year equating to an overall target for the Dundee area of 396 for 2015/16. Due to the high number of HMO premises within Dundee and the SFRS policy of auditing HMOs in line with the local authority licensing scheme cycle, this is having an impact on the ability to carry out thematic audits in other premises types. However, SFRS is moving to a revised national policy for the frequency of auditing HMO premises. Under the new policy it is anticipated that the frequency between audit visits will be dictated by the risk rating of the individual HMO and not by the licensing renewal cycle. What effect a new policy will have in Dundee will depend on the frequency of audit introduced and the risk profile of the HMOs in Dundee. This change is in line with a comment in our Overview Report of SFRS⁵ published in November 2013, that SFRS should consider auditing HMO premises in line with the level of risk in individual premises. We were advised that some of the local authority officers were as yet unconvinced of the merits of such a change.

We reviewed some communications with dutyholders and found the content to be consistent with the standard generally prevailing within the SFRS.

⁵ HMFSI *An Overview of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service*: <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0043/00437774.pdf>

There are local prevention and protection delivery plans which support SFRS's national objectives in these subject areas and we are told that the LSO intends to further develop and enhance them. We would encourage this approach as it will enable greater partnership and staff buy-in to meeting the goals set for the local area. We would also encourage greater use of the Community Safety Partnership's data analyst, who we are informed is available to assist with the development of local plans.

Service Delivery

The building fabric of the fire stations and associated training facilities are of varying ages and conditions, all are considered fit for purpose. The stations have good provision of IT equipment, training facilities and fitness equipment. There are other service delivery related assets located within the Dundee City area not in the direct control of the LSO and therefore are outwith the scope of this inspection, such as the Operations Control room at Macalpine Road and the vehicle workshops and stores at Blackness Road.

The four fire stations in Dundee are multi-pump stations and include some specialist resources, details of which are covered later in the report.

The level of operational activity varied across the stations, from an average over the past five years of 1,755 calls per year at Blackness Road to 383 at Balmossie. During the last five years there has been an overall reduction in the number of mobilisations from the stations in Dundee.

SFRS has a statutory duty to obtain information which may be required by its personnel in carrying out their operational role. We found that there are established central procedures, which have been recently revised, for creating and updating operational risk information within the area. Each Watch on a fire station is allocated, from a central database, a number of premises to review and update risk information as required. Any amendments are then centrally uploaded to the appliance based Mobile Data Terminal (MDT) system.

Watches also visit on a three-monthly basis, where applicable, multi-storey flatted accommodation to inspect the condition of any firefighting and fire safety installations present in the common areas. There are also established procedures for Watch visits to any care homes within the station areas for the purpose of providing familiarisation of the premises for crew members.

Generally, operational crews are content with the progress of fire reform, however, there is a feeling of an over-abundance of new information and procedures and inability to process it all. This is particularly the case for the non-dual contract RDS personnel where they have a finite time to complete all that is required during a training night. They do of course benefit from the support given to them by their dual contract colleagues. Although Dundee City is not a pilot area for the SFRS Out of Hospital Cardiac Arrest (OHCA) project, overall, the firefighters we spoke to were positive about their role encompassing a wider public safety agenda, such as this type of medical emergency work, providing it is accompanied with suitable training and equipment.

Workforce

HR advice and support for managers on matters such as discipline, grievances and attendance management, is provided by a North SDA resource based at Blackness Road. The HR function is organised on a Service-wide basis and, if required, cover and support is provided by staff based in other SDA areas.

Administrative support is provided by staff from the North SDA pool based at Blackness Road. The complement of staff supporting the LSO area is a mix of ex-Tayside FRS staff and more recently appointed agency workers. As a former legacy service headquarters, used to providing support to a wider area, the staff based at Blackness Road have, in general, seen little change to the role that they fulfil. However, as we have seen in other areas there has been an overall reduction in the number of office-based support staff, and those remaining feel this is negatively affecting the level of service they are able to deliver. An overall consequence of this, linked to reductions in their own employment terms and conditions, is a general feeling of low morale.

Station-based operational staff generally described feeling well supported by Station Managers. At the time of the inspection there are 213 station-based operational firefighters, 14 of whom are RDS personnel. Of these 14 RDS staff, eight are also employed by the Service as wholetime personnel. In effect they have two employment contracts, one wholetime and one RDS. The SFRS is currently in the process of harmonising uniformed terms and conditions across the Service. There is some concern within dual contract staff, that harmonisation may introduce changes to their contracts which would restrict their personal availability and which would in turn affect the RDS appliance availability at Balmossie.

The availability of the RDS appliance is monitored locally using a legacy Tayside system, Fortek Rappel. Reports provided to us have shown a recent decrease in its availability. We would expect the LSO to continue to monitor appliance availability and take remedial action if appropriate. Unlike the majority of RDS units we have visited previously, there are currently no major problems of recruitment or retention of RDS personnel at Balmossie station.

The organisation by local managers for the delivery of training programmes to RDS personnel is more structured than we have seen in other areas. Generally, record-keeping by the RDS Watch Manager was of a very high standard, both for training programme planning and for capturing detail of individuals' activity. This was achieved through the use of both a bespoke spreadsheet and the standard Service PDRpro records.

Health and Safety

Health and safety reporting is carried out using the RIVO Safeguard system. In the view of the North SDA Health and Safety advisor, generally the Dundee City area is performing well in regard to health and safety issues, except for an increase in vehicle accidents, predominantly low speed impacts with stationary objects. There have also been a number of training related injuries at the hot fire training facilities. These are national facilities located within the LSO area under the direct control of the SFRS Training Department, not the LSO.

The reporting of near-miss incidents has, however, decreased under a new reporting procedure. Near-miss reporting is described by the Health and Safety Executive as a very important way of identifying problem areas. A simple, and potentially anonymous, system for reporting near-miss incidents can help highlight some of the less obvious hazards in a workplace, or identify areas where a problem is developing. We would expect the LSO and his team to continue to monitor the level of near-miss reporting within Dundee City and to

compare the level with reporting levels in other areas, and if there is a reduction in other areas too, then to investigate potential causes and take action as necessary.

The provision of health and safety advice, monitoring, and investigation is carried out across the North SDA by two staff who are based in Stirling and Inverness. Although the two advisers have designated geographic areas of responsibility there is, when required, a degree of cross-border working, even outwith the North SDA. There is a designated Health and Safety Liaison Officer (HSLO) within Dundee City, and a flexi duty manager, who acts as a conduit for managing local issues. The relationships and processes of managing health and safety are positive.

3.3 More equal access to specialist resources and national capacity

As indicated earlier, the fire stations within Dundee City provide a number of specialist resources. Balmossie has a demountable capability which is used to transport either a welfare or a foam salvage unit. Additionally, Balmossie supports the operation of a Detection, Identification and Monitoring (DIM) vehicle. The DIM vehicle operates as a mobile laboratory and provides enhanced detection support in the event of serious chemical, biological, nuclear or radiological incidents.

Blackness Road provides Incident Command and Mass Decontamination resources. Mass Decontamination is the procedure used to remove contaminants from very large numbers of people in the event of accidental or intentional contamination; by chemicals, biological, radiological material, or other substances potentially damaging to health.

Kingsway East has a water rescue resource and linked to this capability, a rope rescue capacity. The intention of the SFRS is to enhance the water rescue capability by the provision of a dedicated vehicle and permanently inflated boat.

Macalpine Road has Environmental Protection and Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) resources. The USAR resource provides the Service with a rescue capability suitable for incidents such as a collapsed building.

Nationally the Service has recently concluded a review of specialist equipment. Following the review, the intention is for the above specialist resources to remain within the Dundee area. Additionally the review proposed relocating a High Volume Pump to Dundee from another area. The implementation plans from the review have yet to be finalised and are dependent on a number of factors.

The SFRS's policy on access to specialist resources is to maintain a geographic spread intended to reflect varying risk rather than by operational or local authority area. This means that if a particular resource is required at an incident, it could be requested from neighbouring areas were it not to be available locally. This approach seems to us to be appropriate.

3.4_ Strengthened connection between SFRS and communities

Knowing the community

Dundee has a LALO, Community Safety Advocate and a Community Firefighter to assist in the delivery of community safety initiatives. Joint initiatives, with Community Safety Wardens and police are undertaken to tackle anti-social behaviour. The Community Safety Engagement (CSE) team have recently worked on producing a film using 'off site' school pupils to highlight the impact of secondary fires. At the time of our visit the project had been nominated for an award at the Dundee Community Spirit awards event. 'Dundee Fire College' is a programme run for young adults with learning difficulties to build their confidence, team building, communication and life skills. The creation of the 'Dundee Fire College' pre-dates the SFRS.

Watch-based personnel describe a feeling of being well connected to the community; Watches are allocated particular schools to engage with. The Service also participates in the 'Safe Taysiders' scheme, a multi-agency safety awareness school education programme. This again pre-dates SFRS and forms a target within the SOA for the participation of all P7 pupils by 2017.

Home Fire Safety Visits are undertaken by both Watch and RDS personnel and the CSE team. Watches and the RDS crew have an annual target for the completion of visits. The SFRS standard CSET (Community Safety Engagement Toolkit) tool is used to record and report on visits. SFRS personnel thought it to be a useful and user friendly resource.

Although occurring outside the Dundee City area, staff from Balmossie also take part in the delivery of fire safety advice to migrant seasonal workers living in caravans on farms within the surrounding area.

Working in partnership

There is a long-standing positive relationship between the Fire and Rescue Service, Dundee City Council and other Community Planning Partners in relation to prevention activity and this has continued with the SFRS. Partnership working is mature, partly due to a degree of continuity in SFRS personnel working within this function.

The Dundee City Community Safety Partnership, Community Safety Hub (CSH) was established in December 2012 and is located in the council's West District Housing Office. The CSH brings together Dundee City Council staff from the Community Safety Team, Community Safety Wardens and Community Safety Workers; Antisocial Behaviour Team; Night Time Noise Team; DUNCAN (Dundee Co-ordinated Anti-Crime Network) and Police Scotland's Community Intelligence Unit, including analytical staff.

A Multi-agency Tasking and Coordinating Group meet weekly and we observed one of the meetings. Like similar meetings we have observed elsewhere, partners come together to discuss emerging issues from incidents, identify appropriate action and co-ordinate appropriate responses.

We spoke with community safety partners and representatives from Dundee City Council who were overwhelmingly positive about the contribution that SFRS makes to community safety, in particular its work with very vulnerable persons. There is evidence to support this view given the recorded increase in the number of referrals to Social Work from SFRS staff.

Health and Social Care agencies in Tayside and the SFRS recognise the importance of close partnership working to identify, access and share information about groups and individuals most at risk from fire. Understanding the respective roles of the agencies involved is seen as key to being able to work in a truly integrated way. In order to address this desire an education and training strategy was developed. A direct outcome from this strategy was the creation of a practice placement opportunity for two occupational therapy students; one in third year and one in fourth, to work directly with SFRS. This placement opportunity was the subject of evaluation and was given a resounding endorsement by both educators and students. The placement model was highlighted as important in continuing to support strengthening partnership working between health and the fire service. Following the successful implementation of the Tayside placement a similar project was launched in Aberdeen.

Community Planning Partners have a desire for greater co-location of personnel in the prevention arena and we would encourage the LSO to explore this further with partners. We have seen elsewhere that co-location can add value to service delivery, though every area has its own unique set of demands and potential solutions.

Local scrutiny arrangements

Dundee City Council's formal scrutiny of the SFRS sits with the Policy and Resources Committee. The Committee receives regular submissions and performance data from the LSO's team. The council is currently reviewing its committee structure, the intention being to create a new scrutiny committee aligned to community safety.

Due to a change in council business we were unable to observe a meeting of the Committee. However, we reviewed reports of past meetings where a detailed breakdown of quarterly statistics on SFRS activity was presented along with comparison data for previous years. Details of any notable events is also reported to members.

The Dundee performance reports contain information on the percentage of SFRS operational personnel who have demonstrated competency in their risk critical core skills, such as breathing apparatus. This arrangement dates from the early days of fire reform when reporting mechanisms were being established. Although this is important information for Service managers we think that its reporting within the scrutiny arrangements offers little value.

From our discussions with the council Chief Executive, Lord Provost and the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee, the council is positive about the relationship with the LSO and his team. There is satisfaction with the performance reporting mechanism and the level of detail of Service activity provided to elected members.

There is also dialogue and a good relationship between the Service and the local authority at a senior level, outwith the formal scrutiny meetings.

3.5 Overall conclusions

There are strong local partnerships. SFRS staff and managers are seen as being open and engaging and willing to act to support partners' objectives where possible.

There are structures in place for local scrutiny of the SFRS, with elected members and council officials satisfied with the performance reporting provided by the LSO and his team. The level of scrutiny within Dundee City is similar to examples we have seen elsewhere.

There is access to specialist resources within Dundee City, some of which are due to be changed as a result of the specialist appliance review, although the implementation plans have yet to be determined.

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. We are therefore confident that where we have expressed a view on particular issues, the LSO will consider what we have said and will take it into account in forward planning. In relation to certain significant issues that we encountered in the course of this inspection we would highlight the following:

The LSO should review the level of reporting of health and safety near-misses within Dundee City and compare this to the experience elsewhere. Having done so consider whether there may be any contributing factors to the reduction in near-miss reporting.

The LSO should investigate the desire of partners to see greater co-location of staff and assess the benefits.

We encourage the LSO to continue with his intention to implement improvements to the local delivery plans for prevention and protection and in so doing, use the partnership analyst to assist with their preparation.

The LSO should consider the RDS Watch Manager's system of managing personnel workloads, training and performance to see if this can be utilised elsewhere.

The LSO should continue to maintain an awareness of the development and implementation of changes to staff employment terms and conditions and monitor the effect, if any, of national changes to contracts on Balmossie dual contract personnel.

The LSO should investigate the reasons for the reduction in the availability of the RDS appliance and take remedial action if appropriate.

Glossary and abbreviations

Throughout this report, at the risk of some repetition, we have minimised the use of abbreviations in the interests of readability. There are some exceptions, particularly where an abbreviation is used so widely within or outside the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service that spelling it out on each occasion would look unnatural. An example is ‘SFERS’ for Scottish Fire and Rescue Service. An explanation of abbreviations used can be found below.

CPP	Community Planning Partnership
CSE	Community Safety Engagement
DIM	Detection, Identification and Monitoring
FSE	Fire Safety Enforcement
HMO	House in Multiple Occupation
IT	Information Technology
LALO	Local Area Liaison Officer
LSO	Local Senior Officer: by law the SFERS has to appoint a LSO for each local authority area in Scotland
MDT	Mobile Data Terminal
RDS	Retained Duty System
SDA	Service Delivery Area. The SFERS is organised into three SDAs, North, East and West
SFERS	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
SOA	Single Outcome Agreement: documents created by Community Planning Partnerships in each of the 32 local authority areas across Scotland, which include specific plans for the delivery of improved outcomes locally
USAR	Urban Search and Rescue
2005 Act	The Fire (Scotland) Act 2005



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