

NFCC Leadership Framework



NFCC
National Fire
Chiefs Council



NFCC
Fire Central
Programme Office

Inspiring Leadership in the Fire and Rescue Service



Foreword

The National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) People Strategy has six key areas for improvements:

- **Strengthen leadership and line management to support organisational change and improved community outcomes**
- **Develop cultural values and behaviours which make the fire and rescue service a great place to work for all our people**
- **Develop ways of working that are able to respond to service needs**
- **Provide excellent training and education to ensure continuous improvement of services to the public**
- **Continue to support the health and well-being of all our people**
- **Strengthen our ability to provide good service by diversifying our staff and creating a fair and equal place to work**

Leadership is key to all of these areas and has never been more important at every level of the fire and rescue service. Delivering an excellent service to our community, and being adaptable to the evolving requirements of a 'modern fire and rescue service' is key to our leadership and management focus for the future.

More than ever before, we need leaders who are both operationally and professionally competent as well as being capable of creating and delivering a compelling vision for the future to inspire and motivate others. We need resilient leaders who will take responsibility for continuous improvement in our performance as a public service and bring other people with them.

We need leaders who are able to collaborate across our different functions internally as well as being able to cross traditional boundaries with other agencies and businesses to achieve more efficient, effective and joined up services for the communities we serve.

This document introduces our new Leadership Framework, which clearly defines the leadership behaviours required at each level of management. This framework details a simpler set of behaviours and sets out the career planning process to support individuals who are looking to develop their career with the service.



Leadership is not defined by what courses we have attended or what qualifications we have achieved, but instead by the difference we are making to the people around us.



The new Leadership Framework links to the new 'Core Learning Pathways' which can be used to support our next generation leaders.

In setting this framework, we recognise that throughout our career there is always something we can focus on to improve. This means a change in focus from outputs to outcomes – leadership is not defined by what courses we have attended or what qualifications we have achieved, but instead by the difference we are making to the people around us and to the performance of the team and organisation. This difference is then ultimately experienced by our communities through improved service delivery.

Roy Wilsher
Chair of National Fire Chiefs Council



Supporting development

Fire and rescue services are committed to supporting the development and progression of all staff and ensuring a fair and consistent approach to performance and promotion.

This relies on managers and staff using their appraisal system to discuss performance, career aspirations and readiness for progression from all aspects, including against the appropriate level in the Leadership Framework. This approach will ensure we identify those ready for progression, with both the technical ability and leadership behaviours matched to the future needs in the fire and rescue service, and that we measure performance of all staff against the Leadership Framework.

As a sector committed to continuous improvement, all staff (not only those applying for promotion) should have a structured development plan. This should look at what may support the individual to be more effective in their current role, adapting to the evolving requirements of a modern service, as well as what is required for progression. This consists of either professional, operational or behavioural development.

Development should be tailored to the individual. Fire and rescue services offer a wide variety of learning and development which is not limited to courses and qualifications, but could include 360° developmental feedback, guided research undertaken, participation in an action learning set, placements within a different organisation, coaching and mentoring (either giving or receiving), and project or assignment work.

Development and career planning principles

Everyone should take responsibility for their own development and career pathway and managers should support them in providing opportunities.

Managers and staff need to use regular appraisal discussions to discuss personal career aspirations and readiness for progression using all available performance evidence and the Leadership Framework.

Individually tailored development plans should be completed to help develop the specific skills needed to be successful in your career choices. Promotion will be based on having experience, effective behaviours, and evidence to meet the next level requirements – not just by attending courses. Development will not be limited to simply attending courses or achieving specific qualifications. It can include deeper learning experiences such as taking part in a work based project, action learning sets to work on particular issues, access to a coach or mentor and various work assignments or secondments.



Four levels of leadership:

To lead the organisation forward in an evolving operating environment, we need individuals who are capable of:

- Creating a compelling vision and engaging people to buy in and commit to that vision
- Leading across boundaries
- Are adaptable within an evolving modern Service
- Utilising high levels of emotional intelligence to support people in achieving the goals of the organisation
- Being in the present, but also horizon scanning
- Promoting and developing distributed leadership (i.e. leadership at all levels)
- Acting as ambassador for learning through both personal practice and creating and sustaining learning organisations
- Embracing inclusion, diversity, innovation, and being open to alternative perspectives
- Demonstrating and promoting compassion for 'self' and others, with a focus on improvement and accountability

The intention is to devise common specifications for core development modules, based on identified needs, which will be relevant to all managers across the organisation. The ultimate aim of the programme is to make development support available to all managers within a given level. There will be a focus on blended learning which maximises use of different learning methodologies to enhance learning.





Introducing the Leadership Framework

Personal Impact

ensures we value, respect and promote equality and diversity. It's about being a positive presence on others, having personal integrity and an ability to self-manage. The focus is on self and how a manager uses leadership to create a positive, open-working environment focusing on ethics and wellbeing.

Outstanding Leadership

is about building high-performing teams and developing people to their full potential. It's about communicating with integrity, being open and honest to foster trust and building collaborative working partnership. An ambassador and role model for the fire and rescue service. The focus is on others and how a manager uses leadership to create high performance teams.



Organisational Effectiveness

is ensuring everything we do is linked to organisational plans and values. It's driving the mission and ensuring decisions and actions are beneficial to the customer. The focus is on the organisation and how a manager uses leadership to continuously improve, innovate and change.

Service Delivery

is about delivering high quality services now and into the future. It's about intelligent problem solving with an outcome focussed approach, continuous improvement and value for money to our customers. The focus is on task and how a manager uses leadership to produce outcome-focussed results which meet customer needs.

The Leadership Framework replaces the Personal Qualities and Attributes (PQAs), making them simpler, and provides a consistent approach to leadership and development for all staff, irrespective of discipline, role or function. The framework brings together the 'what and the how'; combining traditional operational and professional competence with behavioural expectations. The behaviours are described below and the Core Learning Pathways are outlined in a separate document.

The framework is built around four quadrants as above, and is measured at four levels, with each building on the previous. The critical feature of the fire and rescue service Leadership Framework is that it's relevant to all fire and rescue service roles and uses defined and observable measures to assess the potential and performance of our staff.



Personal Impact – this is about self

Leading Yourself	Leading Others	Leading the Function	Leading the Service
● I value inclusion and set a positive example of appropriate behaviour for peers and new starters.	● I take responsibility for inclusion, and encourage different points of view.	● I role model and mentor others in how they communicate and engage to encourage inclusion.	● I promote and role model inclusion. ● I promote and uphold our values and professional standards and communicate the importance of ethical and inclusive approaches to our work.
● I encourage open communication and actively listen to and value others contributions.	● I communicate responsibly and with sensitivity and respect for others.	● I enter into dialogue not conflict. When conflict does occur, I handle it in a professional manner. ● I use a variety of engagement methods to seek feedback and understand people's views on emerging issues.	● I communicate with passion and integrity to maintain and elevate the reputation of the service to staff, stakeholders and the public. ● I use non-stigmatising behaviours or language and non-stereotypical language. ● I promote two-way dialogue.
● I look for opportunities to learn and develop my skills and behaviours. ● I admit and learn from my mistakes and celebrate my successes with the team.	● I encourage others to admit to and learn from their mistakes, and to celebrate their successes.	● I seek feedback about my own performance in order to keep learning and developing.	● I evaluate my own performance and take steps to continuously improve.
● I understand how my actions and behaviour impacts on others. ● I recognise and challenge inappropriate behaviour.	● I am aware of my impact on the people around me and I always seek to improve how I work with others. ● I take a proactive approach to dealing with difficult or sensitive situations, influencing others to reach an acceptable solution.	● I recognise and monitor the impact of my decisions. ● I am willing to adapt and modify my behaviour in order to meet emerging needs. ● I am willing to coach and mentor others to adapt their behaviour.	● I work hard to build and keep trust by listening to others' views and adapting to change.
● I look after myself and others, and seek help if I need it. ● I look after my mental health.	● I look after the people around me and look for behaviours that show someone might be struggling, ensuring there is support available.	● I create a culture where individual and team wellbeing is a priority and have systems and processes in place to make sure the teams in my area are coping.	● I recognise the pressures of leading an organisation, role modelling resilience and promoting a healthy work-life balance. ● I embed wellbeing and mental health in all strategies, setting up systems to monitor and support employee mental health and organisational wellbeing.



Outstanding Leadership – this is about others

Leading Yourself	Leading Others	Leading the Function	Leading the Service
I am an ambassador for the service, taking pride and responsibility for the work we do and encouraging others to do the same.	I work with the team to establish a clear sense of purpose and set expectations to achieve our goal.	I work with people both inside and outside the organisation to set clear work and objectives, actively monitoring the performance of the team and giving positive developmental feedback.	I work with others to establish the strategic direction and the working goals of the organisation.
I take responsibility and accountability for the quality of my own work.	I take responsibility for team effectiveness which focusses on improving outcomes and decisions.	I am accountable for the output of my teams and devolve responsibility for work to the appropriate level.	- I communicate with passion and integrity to maintain and elevate the reputation of the service to staff, stakeholders and the public. - I use non-stigmatising behaviours or language and non-stereotypical language. - I promote two-way dialogue.
I value and appreciate differences in people and treat everyone with kindness and respect.	I encourage all the people in my team to speak and share their views.	- I value the team and know how to make best use of their diverse skills and strengths. - I use a variety of engagement methods to seek feedback and understand people's views on emerging issues.	I champion our ambition to display outstanding leadership at every level, to create an environment where people can bring their whole self to work and be the best they can be.
I role model proactively, learning new skills and behaviours.	- I look for opportunities to support others through appraisal and coaching, developing my own skills where necessary. - I use debriefing and other learning from the organisation to help my team develop. - I am flexible in my leadership approaches, appropriate to the individual and situation, to ensure people give their best.	- I look for opportunities to develop people and promote a learning culture. - I nurture future talent and proactively plan for succession. - I take the opportunity to coach, support and mentor people outside of my own immediate team or discipline.	- I foster and embed the principles of a learning organisation. - I ensure fair and effective systems and methods are in place for succession and nurturing people's career. - I role model ethical and outstanding leadership, encouraging a coaching culture and putting in place mechanisms which give people access to coaching and mentoring.



Service Delivery – this is about task

Leading Yourself	Leading Others	Leading the Function	Leading the Service
- I am focussed on customer needs in my approach to my work, including issues of safeguarding and inclusion. - I act as a role model for my community.	- I focus on the needs of our customers. - I seek to understand and address the specific risks and diverse needs of people and communities.	I take a business-like approach that considers how to achieve better outcomes for communities.	I am aware of the wider impact the organisation has on improving community outcomes.
I plan ahead and prioritise my work, managing my time effectively to get things done.	I look ahead to anticipate issues with local service delivery and performance, and make plans to resolve or minimise issues.	I monitor the quality of service delivery and share information so that people know how well we are performing and can plan accordingly.	I take a long-term view to consider the future political, social and economic landscape and communicate this to the organisation.
I am careful with all types of resources (money, time, materials, fuel and energy) to provide value for money.	I develop and review plans to make the best use of resources, and challenge any misuse of resources.	I consider the financial and resource implications of decisions and adjust my approach and recommendations, and manage budgets accordingly.	I set strategies and budgets through consultation, which represent the best value service now and into the future for communities. I ensure that all staff demonstrate appropriate levels of business awareness.
I spot opportunities to improve the way we do things for people, and put ideas forward.	I develop systems and processes that are people focussed.	I seek the views of others on service quality and effectiveness to identify ideas for improvement.	I promote the use of formal and informal engagement and consultation methods to get feedback from staff and customers about how we deliver and improve our service.
I actively contribute to problem-solving and take time to understand the issues fully.	I use different problem-solving techniques with others to generate solutions that improve the service for our customers.	I develop and implement thoughtful solutions or recommendations based on sound evidence and feedback from internal and external sources.	- I implement systems to measure the quality of our decision making and to learn lessons. - I take account of emerging issues and risks and put in place plans to limit the negative consequences to our service.
I take decisions based on supporting evidence, risk, and my prior knowledge of good practice.	I make evidence-based decisions and consider the risks, including financial and resource impacts.	I evaluate the impact of any changes to service delivery to learn lessons and implement that learning.	I use evidence from our own and other's organisations to set strategy and direction for the service.
- I work to foster trust with others and build constructive working relationships to achieve goals. - I find out about my local community and risks, to ensure we are offering the best service.	- I encourage my team to build constructive working relationships with others to achieve our aims. - I'm outcome focussed in my approach and make decisions based on better service outcomes.	I seek out opportunities to work collaboratively across teams and functions to improve service delivery.	- I proactively build and sustain collaborative relationships with members, partners and high-level stakeholders to shape and influence wider public service delivery, reducing barriers to effective working. - I encourage innovation, including new technology, to improve service delivery.



Organisational Effectiveness – this is about organisation

Leading Yourself	Leading Others	Leading the Function	Leading the Service
• I know what the key organisational goals are and how I make a difference.	• I make sure the team understands how our work contributes to and delivers organisational priorities.	• I am aware of wider organisational and political priorities and how our function contributes more widely.	• I lead the organisation and develop the vision, mission and strategic business plan, which are inclusive of diverse and changing community risks. • I take a long-term view which considers the future political, social and economic landscape as well as other public service drivers to set a clear and positive direction for the organisation.
• I work within the organisations policies, procedures and processes. • I speak out promptly if I see or hear of a safety or organisational risk.	• I manage quality in my team, and use various sources of feedback and evidence to understand how we are performing and managing risk.	• I actively seek to understand the nature of risk in various projects and act to mitigate those risks or report them.	• I act as a professional advisor to governance at all levels. • I ensure that our approach to corporate risk is well considered and reasonable in the circumstances.
• I offer ideas and feedback to improve our services, and take on board other's ideas.	• I encourage staff to be flexible in their approach and empower them to contribute and influence decisions. • I create conditions where team members are empowered to suggest and implement new ways of working.	• I look at what other organisations are doing to solve similar organisational issues, taking on board what they are doing and sharing best practice with them. • I encourage and respond to challenge appropriately, and am willing to adapt my thinking with new information or better evidence.	• I strive to establish a learning ethos both internally and externally. • I create conditions for innovation and change that support our vision.
• I continuously seek to improve my performance to contribute to organisational goals.	• I promote continuous improvement for the team and the organisation.	• I improve business processes to promote more efficient ways of achieving our plans.	• I foster and enable continuous improvement through using the right tools and methods. • I continuously develop the organisation to be an inclusive employer of choice.
• I am open to, and positively engage with, new ways of working.	• I take time to understand how change will impact on our work and how we can contribute to success, evaluating how things are working and how change is being embedded.	• I take ownership of change and help others to understand, adapt to, implement and embed change.	• I challenge the status quo and compare our performance against other fire and rescue services, other public services, and other relevant business sectors. • I evaluate and ensure changes are being embedded in the organisation.
• I positively seek organisational information about how well we are doing and what is changing. • I can be trusted with sensitive information.	• I set up communication processes to ensure that people in my team have access to accurate information, clarifying information where I need to.	• I take responsibility for delivering organisational messages positively, even in difficult circumstances.	• I take responsibility for crafting key organisational messages, monitoring and evaluating how they are being received and passed down the organisation.



Contra indicators for each quadrant

Personal Impact	Outstanding Leadership	Service Delivery	Organisational Effectiveness
• Displays inconsistent behaviour and fails to keep commitments. • Fails to understand or appreciate impact on others; does not consider situation from others' viewpoint. • Spends little time on personal and professional development activities. • Exhibits aggressive, defensive, overpowering, bullying, or defensive behaviour. • Does not lead by example or stand by own principles or spoken beliefs. • Offers advice beyond boundaries of knowledge or experience. • Applies preconceptions and stereotyping in dealings with others. • Is unwilling to share expertise with others; or withholds relevant information, expertise or knowledge. • Does not contribute willingly to the team and adopts a passive role. • Refuses to acknowledge personal mistakes.	• Displays obstructive behaviours rather than progressive ones. • Tends to apportion blame and accountability to others when things go wrong. • Makes unrealistic promises about what can be delivered • Unwilling to recognise, or deal with, capability or performance issues in self or others; avoids difficult conversations and confrontation. • Challenges others in a way that intimidates or undermines. • Gives little time to the development of peers and colleagues. • Shows stubbornness in the face of opposition, even when proved wrong. • Shows general lack of confidence in own knowledge, abilities and judgements. • Sits on the fence rather than taking a clear stand. • Shows little consideration or respect for other colleagues. • Fails to allow others to put in different views in meetings.	• Does not focus on a drive to improve service delivery. • Is preoccupied with own or hidden agenda rather than the needs of staff, customers, clients or partner agencies. • Doesn't take into account local needs. • Fails to appreciate the need to engage the support of stakeholders. • Consistently works in isolation, pursuing own solution without involvement of appropriate stakeholders. • Fails to build contact with people beyond own work area. • Fails to recognise the value of diversity. • Works in an unfocused way, failing to prioritise, keep track of progress, or adapt approach when deadlines, targets or standards are threatened or changed. • Gives up in the face of obstacles and does not demonstrate a sense of personal responsibility for delivery.	• Obstructive towards learning or progress. • Fails to see relevance of wider organisation issues, sector trends or contextual developments to organisation or role; fails to communicate these. • Needs to know all the answers, rather than the right method of enquiry. • Rejects ideas quickly or spontaneously without reflection or adequate insights. • Is focused on the present and the past and has a low interest in emergent or future issues. • Avoids long-standing, difficult or sensitive issues. • Focuses on symptoms rather than causes. • Fails to understand organisational decision-making processes (explicit or implicit) and how these translate into personal authorities. • Overlooks inappropriate behaviour with regard to the organisation's processes, values and expected behaviours.

Please note – these are not to be used by themselves to performance manage people or to focus on everything they are doing wrong, more as a warning sign that someone may need some development around these areas. They could be useful in a behavioural capability scenario where people are struggling to express what needs to be improved.

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