



**Hampshire
& Isle of Wight**
FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

HIWFRA Full Authority

Purpose: Approval

Date: **16 JULY 2024**

Title: **HIWFRA POLICIES FOR PREVENTION, PROTECTION, AND RESPONSE**

Report of Chief Fire Officer

SUMMARY

1. This report seeks Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Authority (HIWFRA) approval of three HIWFRA Policies for Prevention, Protection, and Response. In addition, the report seeks approval of one new position statement relating to Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) which is an appendix of the Authority's Protection Policy.
2. This report also brings to the Authority, for noting, other position statements that have already previously been approved by the Authority, but have since been transferred into a new format which is in keeping with the Authority's Policy Framework's corporate style.
3. The Authority's role is to take decisions on strategic, budgetary and policy matters and establish the framework within which the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service (HIWFRS) operates. The establishment of the Authority's Policy Framework supports the expectation stated within the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England; Fire and Rescue Authorities function within a long-established statutory and policy framework.

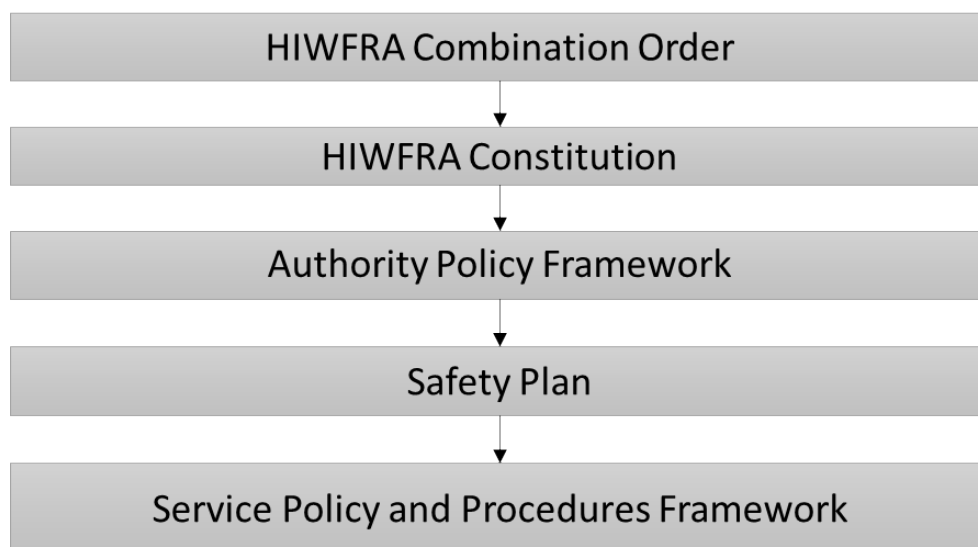
RECOMMENDATION

4. That the Prevention Policy (Appendix A) be approved by the HIWFRA Full Authority for inclusion into the Authority's Policy Framework.

5. That the Protection Policy (Appendix B) be approved by the HIWFRA Full Authority for inclusion into the Authority's Policy Framework.
6. That the Response Policy (Appendix C) be approved by the HIWFRA Full Authority for inclusion into the Authority's Policy Framework.
7. That the Protection Policy Position Statement for Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) (Appendix B4), be approved by the HIWFRA Full Authority for inclusion as part of the Authority's Policy Framework.
8. That the remaining Position Statements (Appendix B1, B2, B3, C1 and C2), that the Authority has previously approved, be noted by the HIWFRA Full Authority for inclusion as part of the Authority's Policy Framework.

BACKGROUND

9. The policies and position statements which are part of this report are in connection with the HIWFRA Safety Plan: Year Five Improvements Report, approved at HIWFRA's meeting on 27 February 2024. One of the activities within the year five Safety Plan is to establish the Authority's Policy Framework by reviewing any current policies and position statements and creating new ones where there are gaps in the framework (see background paper for further details). The diagram below shows how the Authority's Policy Framework fits into the overall corporate governance framework:



10. The Authority's Policy Framework establishes the Authority's commitment to our communities and clearly sets an expectation on the Service for operational delivery to our communities. Each policy within the framework has a clear set of principles designed to clarify HIWFRS areas of responsibility.

11. The Authority do currently have some approved policies, however they do not cover the full spectrum of responsibilities that the Authority hold. They are also inconsistent in terms of content and style and format which leads to a confusing mix of detail. Current approved position statements are also inconsistently formatted with many not having been reviewed for a number of years.
12. The Acting Director of Policy, Planning and Assurance, the Head of Governance and Assurance and the Governance Manager, carried out a review of the Authority's legislative requirements against the current approved Authority Policies. This identified gaps and led to the establishment of the skeleton of the Authority's Policy Framework. Officers are now building the content. The content is a mixture of pre-approved Authority policies and position statements, and new ones which need approving. Once complete, the framework will establish a full suite of Authority Policies.

AUTHORITY'S POLICY FRAMEWORK

13. The Authority's role is to take decisions on strategic, budgetary and policy matters and establish the framework within which HIWFRS operates. The Policies within the framework are aligned to the HIWFRA vision: HIWFRA is committed to ensuring that Hampshire and the Isle of Wight have an efficient and effective fire and rescue service which makes life safer for everyone.
14. The Authority's Policies and Position Statements will be published on the website and form part of the Authority Policy Framework in accordance with its Constitution. All Policies within the Framework are to be considered as a collective and not read in isolation, this provides an integrated approach. The Authority's Policies include high-level principles setting the Authority's expectations, of which HIWFRS will be responsible to deliver.
15. Authority Policies may include Position Statements as an appendix. This may be the case:
 - Where legislation states it's the Authority's responsibility to determine the extent that it wishes to carry out a particular activity. The Position Statement is created to establish clear expectations of activities or priorities (for example, Appendix B1 - HIWFRA's Position Statement for Fire Safety Advice); or
 - Where there is no legislative requirement, but the Authority wishes to carry out an activity. The Position Statement in this case, sets out a clear position that aids clarity and transparency and creates

understanding of HIWFRS responsibilities (for example, Appendix B2 – HIWFRA’s Position Statement for Sprinklers).

16. In accordance with the Constitution, the Authority’s Policies clearly state that the HIWFRA delegates to the HIWFRS Chief Fire Officer, the day-to-day responsibility of ensuring the policy principles are effectively managed, maintained and delivered. The Chief Fire Officer will determine through Service Policy and Procedure, how the principles set by the Authority will be delivered.
17. The three Authority Policies for Prevention, Protection, and Response, include an overarching statement, designed to link them together:
 - “Should it be needed, the fire and rescue service will provide a highly skilled operational response, but wherever possible, we will look to reduce the risk of fire in the first instance, supporting the vulnerable and ensuring our built environment complies with fire safety regulations.”
18. This statement has been included to create the understanding that the best way to fight fire is to prevent it and ideally, we would prevent fires and emergencies occurring within our communities in the first place. These three policies fit together by describing that through our prevention activities, we will provide targeted early intervention, and through our protection activities, we will regulate and enforce fire safety in buildings to improve fire safety and continue to reduce incidents. However, if fires and emergencies do occur, we will be there when our communities need us and provide an appropriate response.

AUTHORITY’S PREVENTION POLICY

19. The Prevention Policy (Appendix A) sets HIWFRA’s commitment to meet its statutory responsibilities to educate and engage our communities to adopt safer behaviours and improve their safety, health, and wellbeing.
20. This new policy has been developed with subject matter experts and is presented to Members seeking approval. It clearly defines the principles of which the Authority expect the Service to deliver on.

AUTHORITY’S PROTECTION POLICY

21. The Protection Policy (Appendix B) sets HIWFRA’s commitment to meet its statutory responsibilities to provide information and advice for the purposes of promoting fire safety; and educating and regulating those responsible for keeping buildings safe.

22. HIWFRA received a report in July 2023 and approved The Policy Framework for Fire Safety (the Protection Policy), the relevant content has been transposed into the new Authority Policy template. The high-level principles have been drafted from the content of that policy and additional principles included where gaps have been identified. It is presented to the Authority for re-approval.
23. The Protection Policy includes several Position Statements:
- The Authority approved the Position Statement for Fire Safety Advice (Appendix B1) in February 2019. Promoting fire safety is a core function and the Authority needs to determine the extent it considers reasonable to do so. The Position Statement does that. The content cross-references the Position Statement for Sprinklers for further information relating to fire safety specific to sprinkler installation.
 - The Authority approved the Position Statement for Sprinklers (Appendix B2) in February 2012.
 - The Authority approved the Position Statement for Buildings Regulations, Planning and Legislation (Appendix B3) in March 2018. Since March 2018, Officers have added to this position statement the desire to be a statutory consultee for Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS).
 - The one new Position Statement, that sits under the Protection Policy, is for Battery Energy Storage System (Appendix B4). This new Position Statement requires approval by the Authority. The content includes a cross-reference to the existing Position Statement for Buildings, Regulations, Planning and Legislation, as per above to recommend that the Authority/Service becomes a statutory consultee for BESS.

AUTHORITY'S RESPONSE POLICY

24. The Response Policy (Appendix C) sets HIWFRA's commitment to provide a highly skilled operational response in compliance with our legal duty and as described within the Safety Plan. The Policy describes that the Authority will operate within the law and the Service will deliver activities aligned to the Authority's vision. The new Policy is presented to the Authority for approval.
25. The Response Policy appendices include Position Statements that capture operational response activities where there is no statutory duty to respond.

The Authority have used its discretionary powers and deemed it an appropriate response activity aligned to HIWFRA's vision. These are:

- UK International Search and Rescue (UKISAR) (Appendix C2) approved by the Authority in December 2019.
- Marine Incidents (Appendix C1) approved by the Authority in February 2019.

SUPPORTING OUR SAFETY PLAN AND PRIORITIES

26. The Authority's Policy Framework is directly linked to the delivery of our priorities, specifically supporting our communities, our people, public value, high performance and learning and improving. The Authority's Policy Framework also supports the principles set out in the Core Code of Ethics.

CONSULTATION

27. Engagement sessions relating to how HIWFRS respond to the communities have been held with a number of community groups across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. The feedback provided will be used as part of the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) process to create the new Safety Plan 2025-2030.

28. Acting Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Stew Adamson, met with seven Fire Authority Members to seek views on the principles within the Response Policy. Members views have been incorporated into the Response Policy being presented for approval today.

COLLABORATION

29. The Authority's Policy Advisory Group (APAG) provides valuable engagement and collaboration opportunities which assist the development of policy matters and consider future strategic direction. Following the outcome of the ongoing CRMP process, future Authority Policy and Position Statements may be developed and reviewed. The use of APAG will be a key part of this process and informal discussions at APAG will take place as appropriate. Following informal discussions, new and reviewed Authority Policy and Position Statements will be brought to the Authority for consideration and approval.

30. Many of the current Position Statements are dated and need reviewing. Therefore, Members can expect to see Position Statements returning to an Authority meeting for further approval throughout this year, once they have

been reviewed by Officers. Discussions will take place at APAG, prior to the Authority meeting, as is necessary.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

31. There are no specific financial or resource implications from the contents of this report. The Authority's Policy Framework will integrate with the Service's Policy Framework which is the responsibility of Officers and is managed within current resources.

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

32. There is no requirement to complete an impact assessment for the Authority's Policy Framework. Impact Assessments may be required for the delivery of activity in relation to the framework, where this is the case, Officers will complete them as necessary.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

33. Approving the Authority's Policy for Prevention sets HIWFRA's commitment to meet its statutory responsibilities to educate and engage our communities to adopt safer behaviours, improve their safety, health and wellbeing.
34. Approving the Authority's Policy for Protection sets HIWFRA's commitment to meet its statutory responsibility to provide information and advice for the purposes of promoting fire safety; and educating and regulating those responsible for keeping buildings safe.
35. Approving the Authority's Policy for Response sets HIWFRA's commitment to meet its statutory responsibility to respond efficiently and effectively to fires, road traffic accidents and emergencies.
36. Legal advice has been sought throughout the formation of the framework and its Policies. The Authority must comply with a broad list of legislation for undertaking its various duties. The Authority Policy template is structured in a clear way which includes a list of the most relevant legislation, regulations and professional guidance associated with that policy topic.

BENEFITS

37. The Authority's Policy Framework provides transparency and demonstrates accountability. It sets out clearly, in one place, the commitment to our communities and the principles by which the Authority will operate. It also creates clarity for the Service around the Authority's expectations for delivery. It has the added benefit of being created against the Authority's

legislative requirements and therefore, we can be confident there are no gaps in what the Authority's responsibilities are.

EVALUATION

38. HIWFRS are responsible for ensuring compliance with legislation and to deliver activities that adhere to the policy principles. The Service's performance is regularly monitored by the Executive Group who will continue to oversee progress, with regular performance reporting to the Authority and its committee which includes the HIWFRA Safety Plan Improvement Report, and Performance Report.
39. The Authority's Policies are designed to last a number of years before periodic review but may be subject to review early, should there be a change in legislation that may have an impact. The need for review, will be monitored by Officers.
40. As mentioned in paragraph 30, the Authority's Position Statements will be reviewed throughout this year, and if necessary, further reports will be brought to a future HIWFRA Full Authority meeting at an appropriate time.

CONCLUSION

41. This report and its appendices seek Authority approval of three Authority Policies and associated Position Statements. The creation of the Authority's Policy Framework is a vital part of our corporate governance framework. It establishes strategic direction, clearly defines the principles by which we operate and creates clarity. The Prevention, Protection, Response Policies and the associated Position Statements are an important part of the framework and support the Authority's vision and priorities.

APPENDICES ATTACHED

42. Appendix A: Prevention Policy
43. Appendix B: Protection Policy
44. Appendix B1: Position Statement for Fire Safety Advice
45. Appendix B2: Position Statement for Sprinklers
46. Appendix B3: Position Statement for Building Regulations, Planning and Legislation

47. Appendix B4: (New) Position Statement for Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS)
48. Appendix C: Response Policy
49. Appendix C1: Position Statement for Marine Incidents
50. Appendix C2: Position Statement for UK International Search and Rescue (UKISAR)

BACKGROUND PAPERS

51. HIWFRA Safety Plan: Year 5 Improvements - 27 February 2024

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