

Working together for a safer Scotland

STRATEGIC PLAN 2013-2016



SCOTTISH
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Working together for a safer Scotland





Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Strategic Plan 2013 – 2016 approved by Roseanna Cunningham MSP, the Minister for Community Safety and Legal Affairs on 1 October 2013.

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As Chair, it gives me great pleasure to introduce the first strategic plan for the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

The 1st of April 2013 was a significant milestone for Scotland's fire and rescue services. Establishing a single national service provides us with a unique opportunity to build on best practice from the previous eight and, through ambition and innovation, develop into a world-leading fire and rescue service.

This first strategic plan sets out how we will develop the service over the three-year period and meet the expectations within the Scottish Government's Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland. The plan will be formally reviewed in three years' time. However, we will periodically undertake interim reviews to ensure

our strategic aims and activities remain fit for purpose. This plan sets the strategic direction for the service and will be complemented with detailed annual operating plans that will focus on our functional and operational priorities for each of the three years.

My colleagues on the board, with our senior managers and staff, are committed to ensuring that the journey of reform meets all of our aspirations. We aim to deliver high quality and cost effective services across Scotland that break down geographical boundaries and reduce complexity. This will enable us to maximise the use of our resources, skills and expertise to better meet the diverse needs of our communities.

Improving the safety of our communities and staff is at the heart of this plan. We will be a modern and outward-looking service that will play a leading role in ensuring community safety. Working alongside our partners across the public, private and voluntary sectors, we want to make Scotland safer and more secure. We want to encourage and support resilient communities, where people are aware of, and prepared for, risks such as fire and flooding. We will work with our local authority and community partners to ensure that the way we deliver our services is fit-for-purpose and flexible so they can meet changing risk and demand. We will also take a proactive approach to engaging with the business community to improve safety, minimise the economic impact of fire and support sustainable economic growth.

Finally, through working in partnership with our staff we will embed a culture of continuous improvement. We will benchmark with other services to identify best practice and we will ensure that we establish sound financial and governance arrangements for our service. In the current and foreseeable economic landscape this will be critical. As we meet the financial challenges ahead, we will develop and test innovative and effective solutions to ensure we provide cost effective and high quality services.

The building blocks for this journey are already in place. We have skilled and motivated staff ready to take up the challenge. Our job now is to galvanise their commitment and support everyone as we work to achieve our common aims.

Our overarching purpose is to improve the safety and wellbeing of people throughout Scotland. Our strategic plan sets out how we will achieve that over the next three years.

Pat Watters CBE

Chair

Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

Introduction



As Chief Officer of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, I welcome this, our first strategic plan. In the coming years, I look forward to working with my team and the board to deliver its vision and ambition.

I feel extremely honoured and privileged to lead the service through its formative years. This will undoubtedly be a challenging period of change. However, I know that the people who work within the service are committed to meeting these challenges and will adapt to change in a positive way. As we change, we will put improving our services at the heart of everything they do.

As a strategic leadership team, we are developing a strong working relationship with the board. I am

confident that, through constructive challenge, we will develop a service that will improve outcomes for our communities. We will also deliver the expected benefits of reform as set out in the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland.

As the chair mentions in his foreword, effective partnership working will be important. Our service is not alone in facing the financial challenges associated with cuts in public spending. I believe that the quality of public services can be sustained and enhanced if we improve the way we work in partnership and adopt an approach that shares our people and financial resources. It is not about focussing on the input from service providers, but on the outcomes we want to achieve by targeting our shared resources to make the improvements we are collectively seeking. Working together for a safer Scotland is much more than simply meeting with partners. It is about true integration of public services to deliver tangible improvements across Scotland.

To enable us to improve outcomes for communities at the local level, we need to develop a better understanding of the diverse needs of our communities. We need to be flexible in our approach to delivering our services so we can adapt what we do to tailor them to meet specific local risk and concerns. No two communities are the same, so we have structured our delivery model in a way that will better take account of the differences. We have established

a connection with all 32 local authorities in Scotland through our local senior officer arrangements. They will establish strong local partnerships with public, private and third sector colleagues that will collectively focus on improving outcomes.

I mentioned earlier the key role our people will play in delivering this plan. Our people are our greatest asset. We have established a ground-breaking industrial relations partnership model to ensure their needs are considered. This model will help us all focus on meeting our shared challenges and develop innovative and shared solutions by working together. This approach has already contributed to the successful delivery of fire reform to date. I am committed to continuing this partnership approach as we now focus on developing the service to meet our vision.

Partnership will be the key contributor to delivering success. However, we must never lose focus on what success looks like in the context of this plan.

Success is about improving the safety of our communities and staff and I will ensure that all of the activities we undertake help us to deliver this success.

Alasdair Hay QFSM
Chief Officer
Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

The main purpose of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service is to work in partnership with communities and with others in the public, private and third sectors on prevention, protection and response to improve the safety and wellbeing of people throughout Scotland.



Section 1: A Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) was established on 31 August 2012 when our Chair was appointed. We took on our full range of functions on 1 April 2013. The SFRS replaces the eight previous fire and rescue authorities and joint fire and rescue boards. This major reform of fire and rescue services in Scotland presents a range of opportunities and challenges for the new single service, bringing together the best from the previous services. We will create a service that continues to respond effectively, but has greater flexibility and is free from geographical boundaries. We will also provide more equitable access to our services and resources, such as specialist equipment and teams, across the country.

The primary statutory duties of the service have not changed. Our partners and employees will continue to see a service focused on:

- **protecting our communities by working to encourage people and businesses to take action to prevent fires happening**
- **being equipped and ready to respond to emergencies.**

Audit Scotland and HM Fire Service Inspectorate will audit and inspect us and the services we provide. They have agreed a Memorandum of Understanding. This agreement in principle sets out their distinct powers and responsibilities and outlines how they will work together on certain aspects of their audits and inspections.

How we contribute to the Scottish Government's aims for public services

The Scottish Government publication 'The Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 2013) sets out Scottish ministers' expectations for us. It sets out how we should bring together the best from the former eight fire and rescue services, to create a modern, effective and efficient fire service.

It also stresses that this is a continual process.

The Framework sets out 58 priorities for us. These include areas such as:

- working in partnership with local communities and organisations
- **prevention:** for example, identifying people at particular risk of fire and targeting activities to tackle the risk
- **protection:** for example, protecting communities by enforcing fire safety laws and standards
- **response:** for example, working with other agencies to assess the risk of major incidents and how to prepare, plan for, and recover from these.

Our activities also contribute to the following Scottish Government priorities and strategies:

- **Scotland's 16 national outcomes:** These describe what the Scottish Government wants to achieve for Scotland. While we will contribute to all of the Government's national outcomes, the Framework ensures that our focus is on the contribution we can make to the following four:
 - We live our lives free from crime, disorder and danger;
 - We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and the ways in which they affect others;
 - Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local needs;
 - We live longer and healthier lives;

- **Corporate expectations:** These set out how Scottish Ministers expect public bodies to continue improving the services they deliver
- **Strategy for justice:** This stresses how public services should work in partnership to continue improving the services they deliver

There are many challenges lying ahead for us as we reform fire and rescue services in Scotland. However, the challenges of meeting increased demand on our services within an ever-tightening financial framework are not unique to fire and rescue. By working together and delivering on the aims of reform, we will reduce the risk to our communities and make Scotland a safer place.



We must understand Scotland's risk profile to help us continuously improve all aspects of our service.



SCOTTISH
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Section 2: The Scottish operating context

We must understand Scotland's risk profile to help us continuously improve all aspects of our service.

To do this, we have carried out a comprehensive strategic assessment of risk using a wide variety of information sources including incident data and trend analysis¹. This is the first step in the process of integrated risk management planning. This process helps us identify and forecast risk in specific communities including economic, demographic and environmental changes. This could include the risk of flooding or properties where frail or elderly people live. We have used this information to develop this strategic plan and are using it to produce the 32 local fire and rescue plans we are developing for each local authority area.

From that assessment we describe the operating context for our service in the following way.

Scotland is a country of contrasts, with a diverse culture and geography. A range of features give Scotland its distinctive risk profile as captured in the Scottish Community Fire Safety Study "Scotland Together"² published in 2009. This includes the following features.

The Built Environment

- Densely inhabited towns and cities that present different challenges: a significant proportion of accidental fire deaths occur in single occupancy households and flatted accommodation
- Three major international airports, two operating nuclear power stations, a number of significant petro-chemical complexes, several large sea ports, major road and rail networks, and the home base of the UK's fleet of nuclear submarines offer specific risks.

Geography

- Scotland has very large expanses of rural countryside and remote land. This requires us to work closely with landowners and managers to ensure we and they understand and reduce the fire risks we face.
- While fire incidents in the sparsely populated part of our extensive coastline and inhabited islands are rare, they present a challenge for the service in delivering an appropriate response.

Industry

- Major industries making a significant contribution to the economy of Scotland. The impact of fire in these industries can have immediate and long-term consequences for the local and national economy.

¹Strategic Assessment of Scotland

²Scotland Together (http://www.strathclydefire.org/media/42937/Scotland_Together_07_09_09.)

Communities

- Our population is diverse in its makeup and widely geographically spread, albeit 70% of our people live in the central belt. Large areas of Scotland are remote and rural, and these locations pose their own challenges in terms of risk and on our ability to provide effective fire and rescue services.

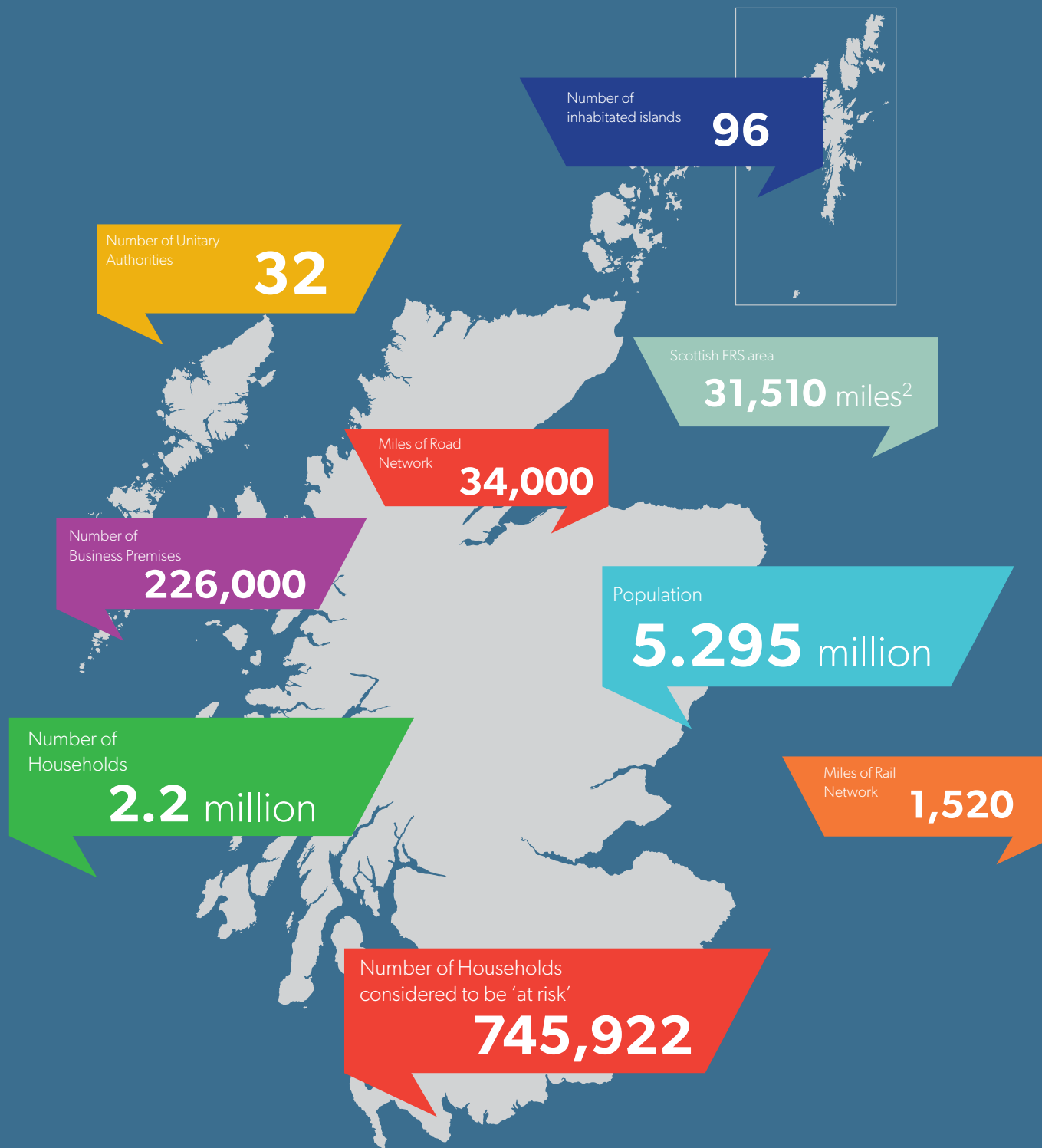
The Government's Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) allows us to analyse which geographic areas are the most deprived in the country, in terms of employment levels, average income, health, education, crime levels and a number of other indicators. Using SIMD alongside other information sources will enable us to

comprehensively assess the risk so we can target the most vulnerable people in any area.

Scotland's population is growing. This is partly because people are living longer. An increase in age does not in itself increase the risk from fire. However, other contributing factors do, for example, mobility problems, disability, mental health issues and alcohol dependence. Scotland also has an increasing number of people living alone, and levels of drug and alcohol misuse are high compared to neighbouring countries. All these factors may have a bearing on the number of fire deaths and injuries we experience in Scotland.

Tourism

- Because Scotland is an important tourist destination, we must consider the safety of a significant number of visitors throughout the year, but especially at seasonal peak times. The country has numerous buildings of both political and cultural significance and also hosts large sporting and cultural events. Along with other agencies, we play a critical part in protecting our heritage and preparing for large scale events, ensuring that we can respond effectively to any emergency incident if required.



We will be a world leading Fire and Rescue Service that others look to because our approach of **working together for a safer Scotland** is delivering real improvements in our communities. As a valued partner we will work with the communities of Scotland to make them safer and stronger; helping them to help themselves; continuously improving our services to meet local needs and responding when required.



Section 3: **Our vision**

Our vision is bold and aspirational. The journey of reform gives us the opportunity to build on best practice and deliver, through our partnerships, real improvements to the health, safety and well-being of Scotland's communities.

A world leading service

Our aim is to deliver the best service we can 24 hours a day, seven days a week and to keep challenging ourselves to continuously improve it. Our people are well trained to very high standards and we continually seek out new approaches to firefighter training so that we can adopt best practice to maintain those standards.

In addition to this, we will be innovative and creative in looking for better ways to do things, in challenging our own thinking and in challenging the thinking of our partners. We will work in partnership with our communities to develop services. By removing geographical boundaries and reducing organisational complexity we will make sure we have the right resources, such as equipment and people, in the right places to manage risk effectively.

We will strive for excellence and explore new ways to help us develop a fire and rescue service that is recognised as a world leader. We will do this, for example, by exploring how we can best use the available technology to improve our service or develop specialist skills in our workforce.

OUR VALUES

We will develop a values framework which fully aligns with our aspirations for the new service. We will work on this with our staff and our partners. Our values will reflect our role as a modern 21st century public service and, with our supporting behaviours, will define how we will work to achieve our vision. In our first strategic plan, we have identified what we believe to be important from the predecessor services' values statements. These are values that have been consistently demonstrated and constantly reinforced.

Safety

The safety of the communities we serve is at the core of our values. We will do our utmost to enhance and preserve it. In doing so, firefighters must often work in dangerous conditions. We also place a very high value on their safety.

Dignity

We will respect the dignity and worth of every individual within both the communities we serve and in our workplaces. We will be sensitive to individuals' circumstances, particularly those who are most vulnerable in our society.

Excellence

We will strive for quality in everything we do and will act reliably and responsibly at all times. We will behave professionally and take pride and ownership in everything we say and do. We will be a learning organisation, taking on board the lessons learned from our own experiences and comparable organisations.

Diversity

We recognise and value the diversity of our workforce and Scotland's communities. We will implement working practices that will be attractive to and meet the needs of those diverse groups. We will take steps to ensure equality of access to our community safety and fire prevention services and equality of impact in the delivery of emergency response. We will encourage participation in public life by engaging with diverse community groups and their representatives.

Fairness

We will treat people fairly and not prejudice any individual or situation. We will be consistent and considerate in the development and implementation of our policies and practices.

Integrity

We will be open and honest in our dealings with colleagues and with the public. We will not compromise on our commitment to act professionally and deliver greater safety and security to the communities we serve.

Equality

We will remove unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited in the Equality Act 2010. We will promote equality of opportunity through our employment practices, service delivery and engagement activities. We will ensure that our corporate decision-making processes are used to identify and remove barriers and bias that would prevent equitable access and quality of service.

Respect

We will listen to and respect the communities we serve, as well as each other. We will deal with criticism constructively and respect and value each other's contributions. We will respect the views of partners and members of the public, endeavouring to understand their perspectives to improve our quality of service.



During 2012 we worked closely with the Scottish Government to establish the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and to develop structures and plans for the reform of the service.



Section 4: Our aims for the development of the service

The Scottish Government has identified three benefits of reform for us to deliver. They are:

- to safeguard and improve local services, despite budget reductions, by reducing duplication and maintaining frontline outcomes.
- to create more equal access to specialist support services and national expertise and equipment wherever and whenever they are needed.
- to strengthen the connection between the fire service and the communities it serves by creating a new formal relationship with all 32 local authorities. This will create opportunities for many more councillors to have a formal say in fire and rescue services in their areas. It will also allow for better integration with Community Planning Partnerships.

To deliver our vision, the benefits of reform and meet the expectations set out within the Fire and Rescue Framework, we have developed the following four strategic aims.

1. Improved safety of communities and staff
2. More equitable access to fire and rescue services
3. Improved outcomes through partnership
4. Culture of continuous improvement

Strategic aims

Safety of our communities is the single most important strategic aim of the service. Our three further strategic aims help to ensure we deliver this in an efficient, effective and equitable manner.

This period of reform presents some large-scale and exciting challenges for us to:

- deliver a more equitable fire and rescue service
- develop partnerships to help improve outcomes
- develop our new service-based on the government's principle of best value.

As a result, we have established strategic aims in these areas to acknowledge the importance of the work involved and the significant part each will play in realising our vision.

Strategic aim 1

Improved safety of our communities and staff

We will focus on understanding the diverse needs of our communities through aligning our national and local plans with those of key partners. By sharing information and establishing agreements for joint working with partners, we will tailor our approaches in preventing, protecting and responding to incidents and emergencies. This will help us reduce risk across the country, nationally and locally, deliver improved services and reduce organisational complexity. It is also important for us to help communities to help themselves. We will work with communities to help them become more resilient; that is, ready to deal with emergencies. We can do this through education and by giving them access to resources they may need.

An example would be an area that floods each year. We can work with local people to help them better prepare for flooding, for example by making sure they know where to get sandbags when heavy rain is expected. We will continue to focus our education and marketing activities to change people's behaviour. We can do this through effective public safety campaigns, including linking with national campaigns for safer communities and through targeted intervention, such as checking business premises after a fire and providing residents with home safety advice immediately following an incidence of a house fire in their street.

We also have more work to do to ensure safety of our communities and staff when they are responding to emergency incidents. We will deploy our people and equipment in a way that reflects Scotland's risk profile. We have developed this risk profile using information we have about previous incidents and our response to them and from information from other national and international sources.

This risk profile can help us to make decisions about what equipment or number of emergency responders, for example, we need in a particular area. This approach means we can:

- **offer a more flexible and effective response to our communities**
- **develop an audit strategy for our organisation based on these risks**
- **put in place a planning programme that focuses on protecting lives and Scotland's critical assets and heritage.**

We also need to establish national approaches for crewing, mobilising emergency vehicles and resolving emergency incidents. These national approaches will help ensure that when we are called to respond to incidents, we can offer a consistently high level of response across the country.

We are currently developing two strategies on "Prevention and Protection" and "Response and Resilience", which we aim to publish in late 2013. These will set out more detailed information on how we will:

- **work to help people in Scotland prevent and protect themselves from fires by becoming more resilient**
- **respond more effectively to emergencies in the future**

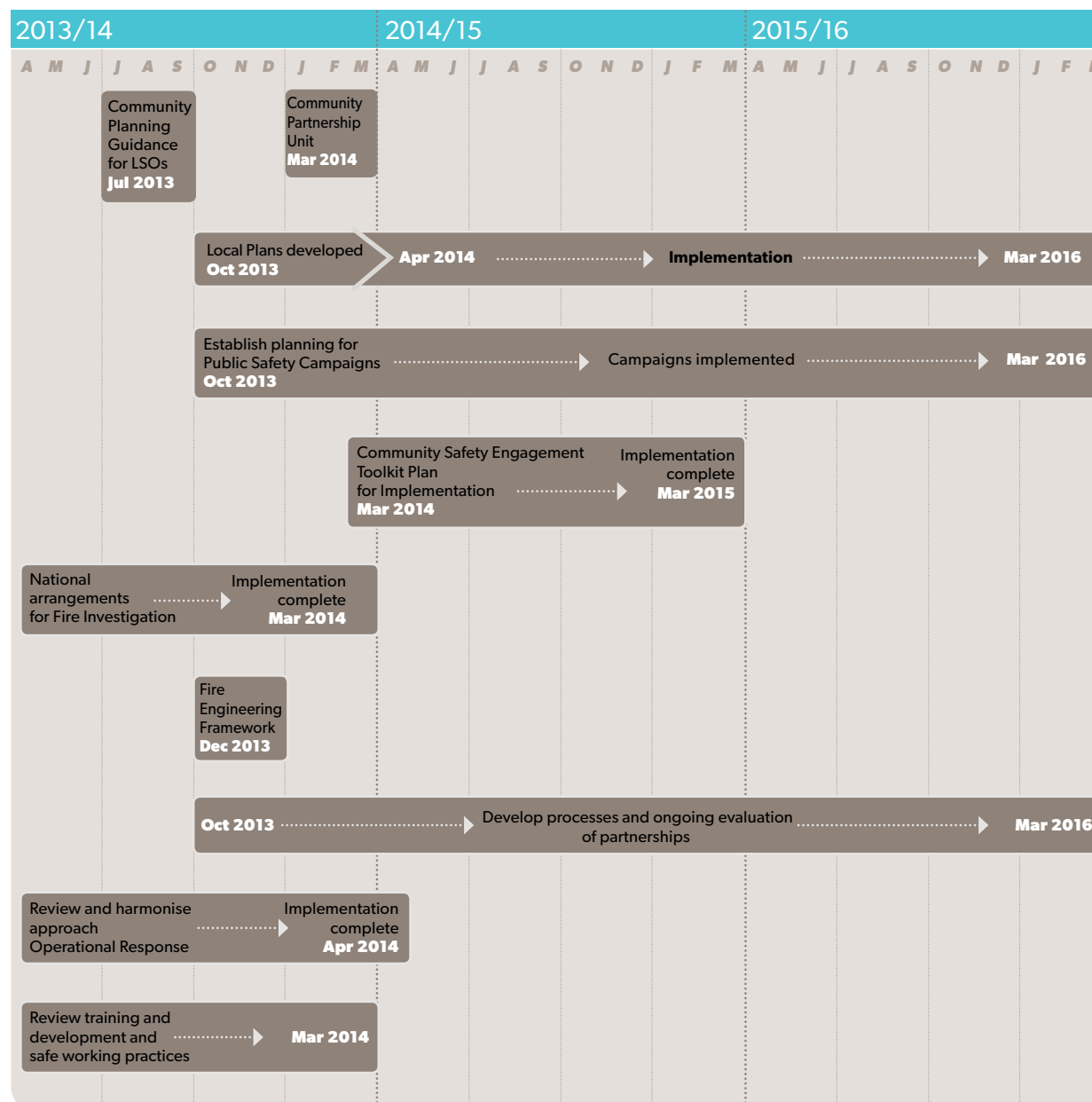
A highly motivated workforce will allow us to service the needs of our communities better. We will ensure that staff are trained to high standards and will continuously work to improve those standards and develop and maintain competence. We will actively encourage a culture of continued professional learning and offer clear pathways for career progression where possible. A development programme will ensure our leaders and managers are capable and confident.

We will develop world-class training facilities to ensure they are a valuable asset to the service. Our performance management and appraisal approaches will recognise and reward good performance and deal fairly and consistently with poor performance. We will also continue to improve the health, safety and wellbeing of our staff.

What we will do:

- Work with our partners in developing safer communities and improved outcomes
- Educate and empower our diverse communities
- Enforce Fire Safety Legislation and Investigation
- Evaluate partnerships
- Ensure a safe and effective response to incidents
- Develop a highly motivated workforce

How we will do it:



Contribution to targets:

- Reduce fire casualties, by 5% each year
- Reduce special services casualties (these are incidents that are not fire-related, for example road collisions)
- Reduce accidental dwelling fires, by 10% each year
- Reduce the number of non-domestic fires
- Reduce firefighter injuries
- Improve staff attendance levels at work

Strategic aim 2

More equitable access to fire and rescue services

By equitable access we mean that, as a single service, we can provide communities with access to skills and services that may not previously have been readily available to them.

We will ensure effective operational arrangements are in place for fire and rescue services in all 32 local authority areas. The LSO will take a lead role in working with partners, including Community Planning Partnerships, to share and gather knowledge. This will ensure that our and our partners' understanding of community requirements is based on evidence. LSOs

will develop a local plan flowing from this Strategic Plan for each area to meet local needs and exploit opportunities, for example, working with the Police to reduce wilful fire raising.

Importantly, we will combine this local information with the risk profile of Scotland and our own risk information to determine the most effective location of resources and services, such as staff and specialist equipment.

We will be working with the other emergency services and voluntary groups with an interest in specialist

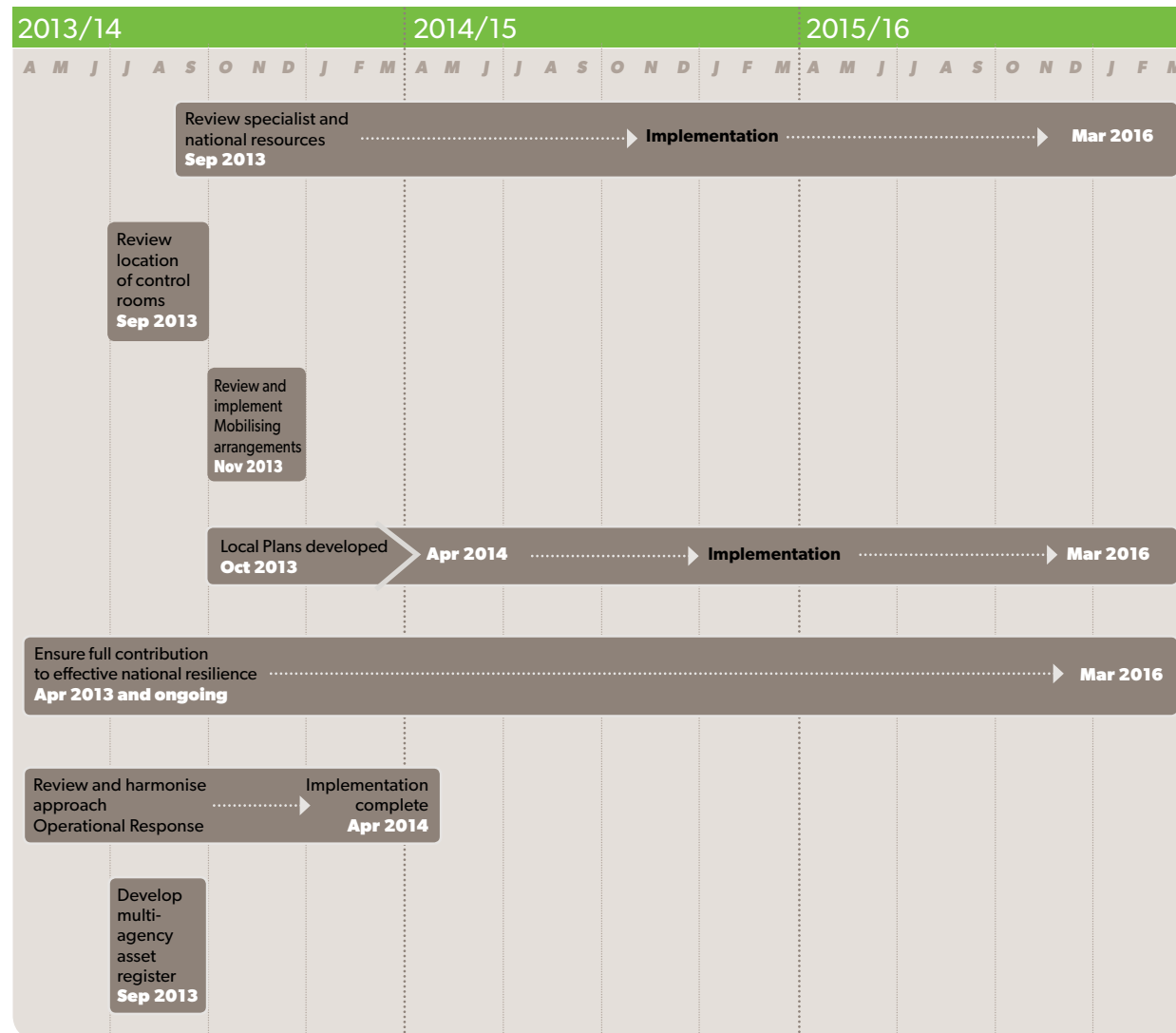
rescue. This will allow us to identify resources, such as skills and equipment, available nationally and take a lead role in championing access to specialist rescue services .

This work will ensure we can make good use of resources to provide an effective and equitable standard of response and recovery from emergencies and incidents across the country. This will reduce risk and improve the quality of our services for successful outcomes for local communities.

What we will do:

- Enable access to the right resources based on community risk profile
- Work with our partners for safer communities and improved outcomes
- Work to reduce risk nationally, for example, the risk of fire and non-fire casualties
- Ensure a safe and effective response to incidents

How we will do it:



Contribution to targets:

- Reduce fire casualties, by 5% each year
- Reduce special services, that is, non-fire, casualties, such as people injured in road traffic collisions
- Reduce accidental dwelling fires, by 10% each year
- Reduce the number of non-domestic fires, for example in businesses
- Reduce firefighter injuries
- Improve staff attendance levels at work

Strategic aim 3

Improved outcomes through partnership

At the heart of our vision for the service is a focus on making our communities safer. Achieving our vision will require tailored approaches for fire safety locally, linking those approaches to national priorities, and working with our communities to explore and develop how to achieve improved outcomes.

The role of the Local Senior Officer is critical in this. The LSO will work in a way that will bring people together in the local area and will explore opportunities to work with partners across all sectors in the development of the local plan. In partnership working, members of the SFRS Board will provide support to each LSO. This is unique in the public sector. This joint approach will ensure that the contribution of the fire and rescue service makes a real difference to community outcomes. We will build on the new formal relationship with local authorities and actively seek better integration with Community Planning Partnerships to understand and address the root causes of problems. The local plan will require to be approved by the local authority and through our partnership approach we

will work proactively through the development stages of the plan to help facilitate that approval. We expect to be held to account through our local planning mechanisms for our contribution to CPPs and for the delivery and development of new Single Outcome Agreements.

We will involve communities in planning, delivering and evaluating our services, eg through neighbourhood surveys, and public meetings. We will respond positively to ideas from local communities on how the service can better meet their needs.

We will work with the Business Engagement Forum set up by the Chief Fire Officers Association Scotland. It has been established to help the business community in complying with fire safety law, reducing the demand on the fire and rescue service and promoting fire safety awareness. Local Senior Officers will support this work on the ground, working with businesses in their area to benefit economic growth by minimising the economic impact of fire.

Working in partnership also extends to our staff and we will inform, consult and involve our people on issues that affect them. Adopting a partnership approach to employee relations has made a crucial contribution to the reform process and we will continue to build on our partnership work with employee representative bodies.

We will continue to build on our close working relationships with the other emergency services. This includes putting arrangements in place to help them when needed, and to ask for their help if we need it.

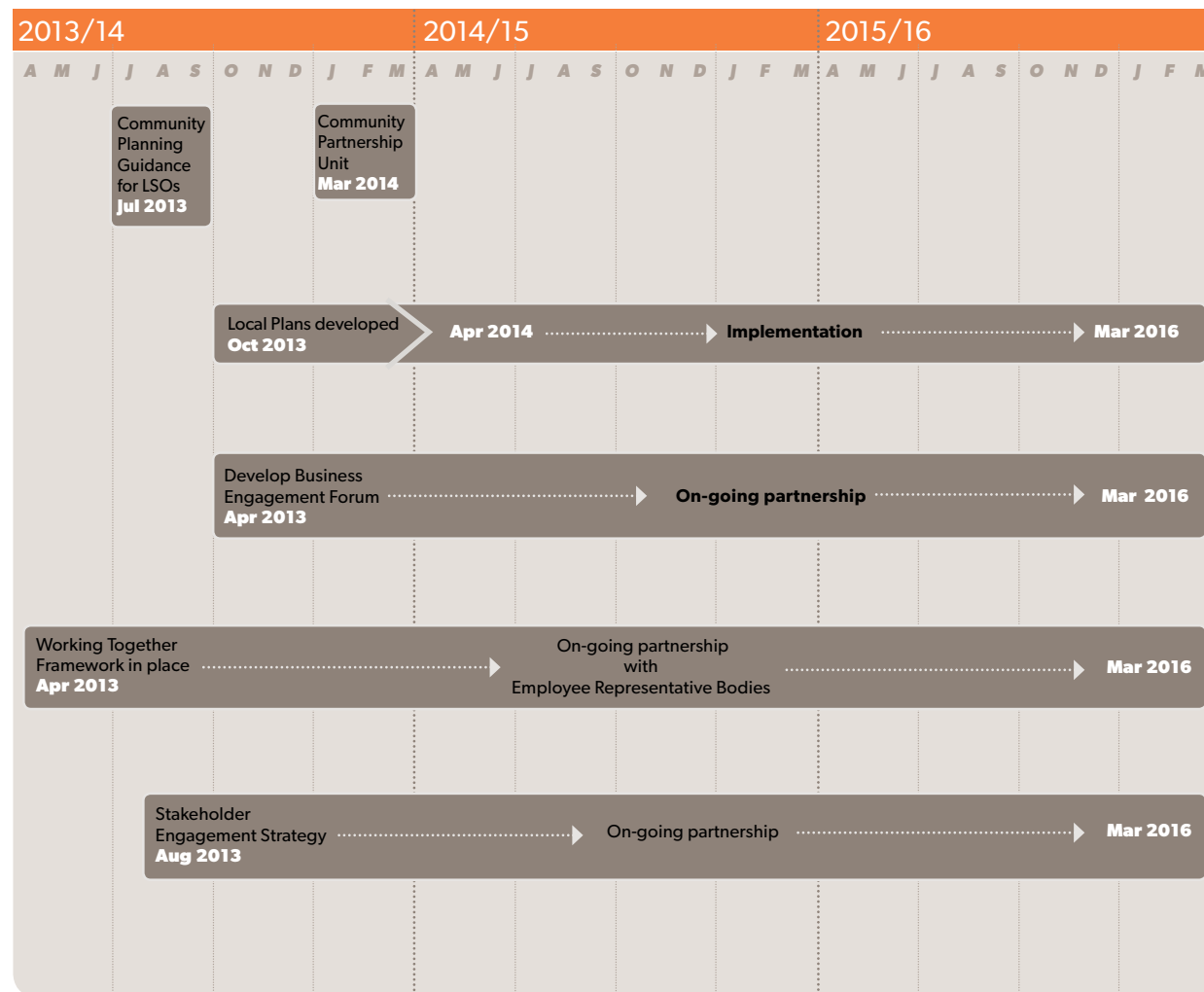
We will also further explore opportunities to share services and assets, to improve both the services we provide and outcomes. We will work with other emergency responders and public agencies in the context of Civil Contingencies legislation to ensure that emergency planning and response arrangements continue to operate effectively and that we are able to:

- support each other effectively during incidents
- act flexibly
- communicate quickly.

What we will do:

- Work in partnership with communities
- Make partnership working an integral part of all of our business
- Develop our approaches and ability to consult, listen to and respond to the public, and communicate with stakeholders

How we will do it:



Contribution to targets:

- Reduce fire casualties, by 5% each year
- Reduce special services, that is, non-fire, casualties
- Reduce accidental dwelling fires, by 10% each year
- Reduce the number of non-domestic fires, for example in businesses
- Reduce firefighter injuries
- Improve staff attendance levels at work

Strategic aim 4

Develop a culture of continuous improvement

The new national Scottish Fire and Rescue Service inherits a track record of strong performance. However, the financial pressures we face are likely to require significant changes to our services. It is, therefore, essential that we establish strong arrangements for governance, for example, how we manage our business, how we perform as an organisation and how we make information available to the public. Similarly we need to manage our resources, deliver change and work effectively with communities and staff. We need these arrangements to ensure that strategic and operational change not only achieve the necessary efficiencies, but result in effective services for our communities.

We will ensure that we use our resources effectively and efficiently by further developing good practice in how we manage our finances and our performance, reducing complexity and duplication in our systems and processes. In doing so, we will adopt processes for research and benchmarking models of best practice, to draw on the best practice available. We will analyse

risk, identifying options for change and improvement, developing appropriate and sound business cases in support of any change.

We will create an inclusive workplace: that is, one that values equality and diversity and providing evidence on how we are meeting our statutory obligations in these areas. To build up a highly skilled and motivated workforce, we will ensure our people, policies and procedures all work towards helping us to achieve our vision.

Our workforce strategy will cater for the range of staff roles and working patterns involved in delivering our services. These include whole-time, retained duty, volunteer and non-uniformed staff. We will use this strategy to:

- **build leadership and management skills**
- **put our values at the heart of all that we do**
- **develop open and transparent governance arrangements.**

Importantly, the workforce strategy will set out a new approach to delivering services to remote and rural areas.

We will develop a consistent approach to health, safety and wellbeing of all staff by developing a health and safety policy and associated processes. We will develop an occupational health wellbeing and fitness service.

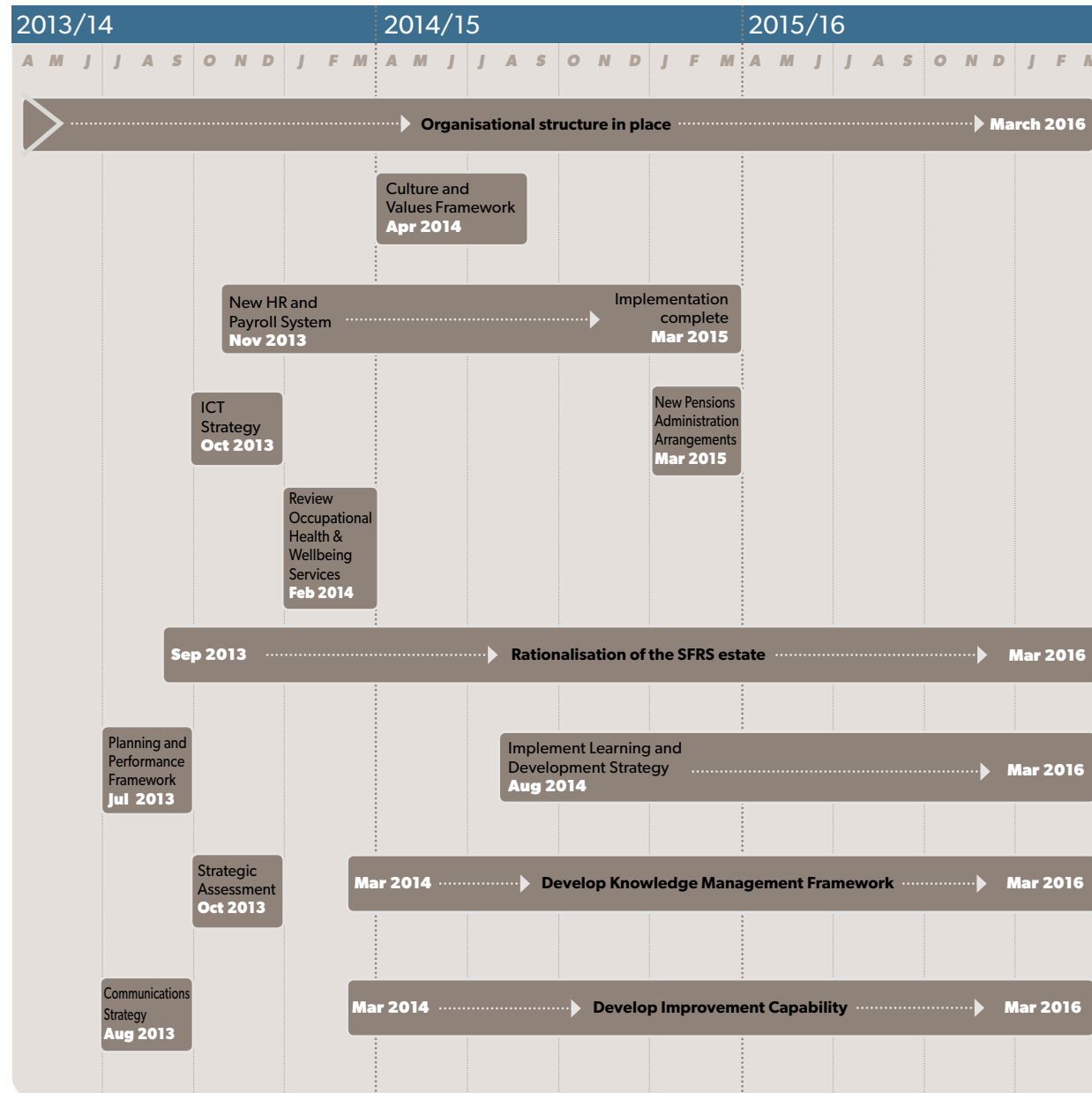
We will develop a comprehensive learning and development strategy that integrates with other workforce strategies and shows our commitment to strategically driven, high quality learning and development for staff.

We will also develop as a learning organisation, ensuring effective knowledge management arrangements are in place to learn from opportunities, encouraging contributions from staff, and helping to ensure we deliver consistently high standards of service across all areas of Scotland.

What we will do:

- Develop an innovative structure that enables us to deliver highly valued and effective services
- Deliver a high performing workforce
- Ensure equal opportunities for our staff and communities
- Improve the quality of our services for successful outcomes
- Minimise the impact of our activities on the environment

How we will do it:



Contribution to targets:

- Reduce fire casualties, by 5% each year
- Reduce special services, that is, non-fire, casualties
- Reduce accidental dwelling fires, by 10% each year
- Reduce the number of non-domestic fires, for example in businesses
- Reduce firefighter injuries
- Improve staff attendance levels at work

Section 5: Meeting our targets

We have agreed targets in the following areas, to reflect the range of activities we provide.

- Reduce fire casualties, by 5% each year
- Reduce special services casualties, that is, from non-fire incidents
- Reduce accidental dwelling fires, by 10% each year
- Reduce the number of non-domestic fires
- Reduce firefighter injuries
- Improve staff attendance levels at work

Reducing fire casualties

Since 2004, real progress has been made in reducing the number of fires and casualties in Scotland. Our predecessors used Integrated Risk Management Planning (IRMP), which is a structured approach to identifying risks in communities and prioritising how to use available resources such as staff and equipment. This has helped place an increasing focus on fire prevention. Much of this has taken place in partnership with other public sector bodies, such as police, housing services and schools. Over this period, the number of fires and casualties has steadily reduced, with around 23 per cent fewer house fires and 33 per cent fewer casualties than a decade ago. As a result, around 30 fewer people die in fires each year.

However Scotland still has a higher rate of dwelling house fires than other areas in the UK, and a high number of casualties result from fire in the home³. There is a need to identify why this is still the case. We need to further analyse the risk and incident profile of Scotland as a whole to help us understand the cause and effect of these incidents. We can then focus our efforts in working with communities through programmes of increased awareness,

education and tailored intervention, for example, fitting sprinklers in vulnerable people's homes. This, in turn, would decrease risk and reduce casualties and deaths. Through continual monitoring and realising opportunities to promote community safety we will strive to maintain an appropriate balance between prevention and intervention.

Reducing special services casualties

Special services is a collective term for the non-fire related incidents the service attends. They include road traffic collisions (RTCs), people who are trapped, rope rescue and water rescue incidents. The trend over the last three years has been for casualties and deaths from RTCs and water incidents to decrease. Although there are no reported fatalities from flooding, the number of incidents is on the increase and will require our attention to reduce the impact on individuals, communities and the economy.

Our priority over the next three years will be to maintain our efforts to reduce the number of special services incidents and casualty rates through joint campaigns and education initiatives with partner organisations. We

³SFRS Strategic Plan Section 2: The Scottish operating context

will also ensure our staff have the specialist skills they require to deal with these incidents effectively.

We will work with people to develop tailored solutions for community resilience, helping them understand local risks and be better prepared to support each other to respond to them.

Reducing accidental dwelling fires

The number of accidental dwelling fires in Scotland has been steadily decreasing over the last ten years. However dealing with dwelling fires remains a significant area of our work. And as a result, reducing the numbers of accidental dwelling fires and their impact on communities, from year to year, will continue to be a high priority area. We will further develop our education activity in communities and establish a targeted approach for completion of home fire safety visits across the country, prioritising those most at risk.

Reducing the number of non-domestic fires

Non-domestic properties include businesses, schools and hospitals. The Scottish Government has recently started working to develop a greater understanding of the economic cost of fire. This work is still in its early stages and we do not yet have reliable data on financial losses. However we will ensure we continue to work with the business community to reduce the number of non-domestic fires in workplaces and public buildings. The aim is to reduce the impact on the business community and the economy. We will focus on extending a fire advisory service for business and we will work proactively to promote fire safety in the business community.

Reducing firefighter injuries

The number of firefighter injuries in Scotland is currently low. We ensure our firefighters receive high quality training and development throughout their career

and that they are issued with high quality personal protective equipment and specialist equipment as required. We will continue to develop our training and development programmes to maintain consistently high levels of knowledge and skills for staff across the country. We will continuously focus on firefighter safety and work toward reducing firefighter injuries further.

Improve staff attendance levels at work

The number of days lost to sickness absence has been reducing significantly over the last three years. We aim to reduce absence through sickness even further through our absence management policies. We also plan to extend support for staff, including developing an occupational health, wellbeing and fitness service.

We aim to be a world leading fire and rescue service delivering real improvements in our communities. We are starting out as a modern, forward-looking organisation with highly skilled staff and we aim to develop and improve to provide the people of Scotland with the best possible fire and rescue service.



Section 6: Developing and improving the service

We aim to have the best staff, equipment, systems and technology serving our communities. We will continue to build on our strengths and develop our learning as an organisation, building and using our knowledge and information to help us develop our services for improved community safety.

The current financial climate will require us to make significant savings maintaining and improving the effectiveness of the services we provide. This will focus our attention on:

- achieving efficiencies and savings
- making the best use we can of our resources to improve outcomes for the people we serve.

We will work in collaboration and consultation with communities and stakeholders, led by the Local Senior Officers, with support from our board members. This will focus on developing an understanding of community priorities and allow us to develop local

plans for the services we provide. Along with the risk profile information, this will help us identify the skills and resources required for prevention, protection, resilience and response in each area. This will also help us to identify other areas within communities where we can potentially add value, for example, tackling anti-social behaviour.

Additionally, in looking to improve our services we will develop our research and development skills to improve our knowledge of the work of others to help benchmark best practice.

Our immediate priorities in Year 1 will be to continue the merger and harmonisation of the previous eight services into one, developing a strong foundation for efficiencies and improved practice.

In Year 2, we will continue to change and improve the service, through innovative approaches and removing unnecessary duplication. Year 3 will bring a focus on improving our services.

We will reform the service using a Service Transformation Programme, encompassing the whole service, to deliver the improvements needed for us to achieve the benefits of reform.

Organisational development

We will improve outcomes in how we deliver services and for our communities by consulting with, investing in and involving our people. This will include focusing on the role of retained duty staff and developing our approach to ensure that the system is fit for purpose.

To achieve our goals we will develop the Organisational Development Framework to show how we will:

- develop and support a culture of continuous improvement through modern and creative approaches to improving the knowledge and skills staff need in their careers
- ensure we always act in accordance with a common set of values across the new single service
- develop our organisation to increase capacity, capability and accountability.

Information systems and technology

We already operate with some of the best technology available to us. Over the next few years technology will continue to play a significant part in supporting our services as we continue the transformation from eight services into one. To achieve our goals, we will develop an information and communications technology (ICT) strategy. This will show how we will develop our ICT systems that will help us to continuously improve our services.

Communications and working with stakeholders

Working in partnership to improve the safety of our communities is critical to the success of our strategy. We will develop a communications strategy and a stakeholder engagement strategy to set out how we will:

- consult, listen and respond to our partners and communities
- establish and manage our communications

- raise awareness and keep staff, partners, communities and other stakeholders informed of our messages, plans and progress towards achieving the benefits of our strategic programme
- actively encourage two-way communication with our staff, partners, communities and other stakeholders
- use comments and feedback we receive from staff, partners, communities and other stakeholders
- deliver our prevention message.

Finance

Sound financial and asset management are key operating principles for the SFRS. We will develop our financial systems and processes so that they contribute to best value. We will develop a finance strategy to show how we will:

- ensure sound financial and asset management arrangements are in place
- make best use of the money at our disposal to help us achieve our strategic aims and realise the benefits of reform
- ensure our procurement systems and practices meet best practice standards.

To set the financial context for the service, the budgetary position for the next three years is as follows.

Resource budget

2013/14

Our resource budget covers day-to-day operations; our predecessor organisations used the term “revenue budget”. Their revenue budgets totalled £291m. Our

equivalent budget in 2013/14 is £273m. We have also had to absorb cost increases, notably:

- **£6.5m to cover the additional cost of VAT caused by losing local authority VAT status**
- **£1.7m to cover a 1% pay award, which is anticipated for all staff during the year**
- **£0.2m in contractual pay increments for staff.**

The net impact of these is that we have to reduce our operating costs by £26m compared with the final year of previous services.

2014/15 and 2015/16

In 2014/15 the resource budget is set to fall by at least a further £12m to £265m and by a further £7m in 2015/16.

Over our first three years, our resource funding is set to reduce by over 10%. Taking account of foreseeable, unavoidable cost increases, we currently anticipate that we will have to achieve a cumulative cost base reduction of £43.5million, or around 15%.

Capital budget

2013/14

The capital budget pays for assets such as equipment and buildings. Our predecessors' combined capital budgets were £22million in 2012/13, including capital grant of £16.4m. Our capital budget for 2013/14 is £15.3m, a reduction of £1.1m on the capital grant. However this is supplemented by committed reserves of £2.64m carried forward from the predecessor authorities for projects that had started but were not complete by 31 March 2013.

2014/15 and 2015/16

The capital budget is set to rise by £6.9m to £22.2m for 2014/15. This is in line with the Scottish Government's commitment to infrastructure investment. We anticipate a further increase of £1.8m for 2015/16 to £24m.

Governance

In March 2013, the Scottish Government, published a 'Governance and Accountability Framework'⁴. It sets out the broad governance structures within which we will operate.

⁴Governance and Accountability Framework
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2013/03/2213>

These structures cover areas including how we are held accountable, how we take decisions and how we perform as an organisation.

The governance infrastructure of the service is developing through the establishment of our Board and its four standing committees:

- **Audit and Risk Assurance**
- **Local and Stakeholder Engagement**
- **Service Transformation**
- **Employee Partnership Forum.**

We have also set up a committee to deal with staffing issues. It is an ad hoc committee, meeting as and when needed.

We will agree standing orders and an interim scheme of delegation. These will govern how we operate and conduct meetings, and outline the powers, duties and authorisations delegated to specific employees.

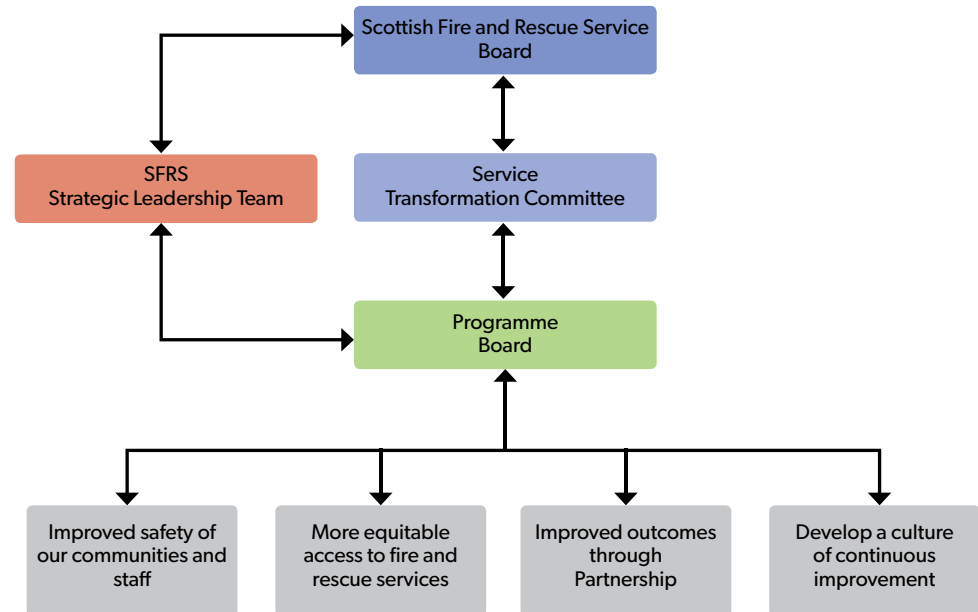
Service Transformation Programme

We will develop our Service Transformation Programme to manage how we achieve the crucial improvements our service is to deliver. It will be the means by which we will ensure we realise the benefits of reform. We will deliver the programme over the next three years through four workstreams, which are in line with our strategic aims. These are as follows:

- Improved safety of our communities and staff
- More equitable access to fire and rescue services
- Improved outcomes through partnership
- Develop a culture of continuous improvement.

A Programme Board, will manage the delivery of the Programme. The Programme Board will report on progress, risk and issues to the Service Transformation Committee. This will ensure oversight and good governance of the programme.

- The Service Transformation Committee will make recommendations to our board;
- Stakeholders will be involved throughout the process of delivering the programme. We will also develop a comprehensive programme of communication and consultation with stakeholders.
- We will publish an annual operating plan with detailed actions.



Audit and Scrutiny

Audit Scotland and HM Fire Service Inspectorate in Scotland (HMFSI) have developed a Memorandum of Understanding, agreeing to co-ordinate their audit and inspection activity of the SFRS. HMFSI has said that it will carry out an inspection in 2013 to:

- assess the impact of transition on how we deliver services
- assess the effectiveness and ability of the new management and supervision arrangements to monitor performance and provide quality assurance
- gauge the extent and with what degree of clarity we have set out our plans to deliver the agreed benefits of reform.

Although this is very early in the life of the new service the service transformation programme will attempt to show that the right structures and processes are in place to track progress against the benefits of reform.

In addition, Audit Scotland conducted a Best Value Review of the previous eight services and has presented us with several challenges to consider including:

- **how we will respond to Audit Scotland findings that the cost of providing Scotland's fire and rescue services is relatively expensive compared to the rest of the UK**
- standardising approaches to how we deploy the resources available to us
- sharing services with other emergency responders
- better consultation with local communities and the workforce
- better targeted preventative work.

Each of these challenges features in the strategic plan. We will consider each in the context of potential areas where we can improve our services.



Section 7: Delivering our strategic aims

Delivering our strategic aims will require us to have reliable and effective national and local plans in place. These need to ensure partners and everyone in the service understands how we will work together to achieve agreed goals and to manage our performance effectively.

The strategic plan will help us to develop our annual operating plan and individual business unit plans and local plans. These will specify delivery targets in more detail, stating how we will achieve them, in what timescales, and how we will monitor and review our performance.

Our Planning and Performance Management Framework will set out:

- how we will use the strategic plan to help us develop local plans
- how we will monitor and manage plans from year to year
- how we will ensure there is a link with team and personal development plans
- how we will continue to improve organisational performance and effectiveness through using our sophisticated approaches to performance management
- how we will further develop management information systems to help us to manage how we perform, plan and develop our services effectively.



We will develop a performance map linking our strategic aims and delivery targets with expected outcomes. This will set out key performance indicators that we can use to monitor how well we are performing.

Contact us

This Strategic Plan supports the work of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service in providing the best possible service for our communities and for the people of Scotland. We know that the way in which we deliver our services can have a great impact on the local community, and we value every opinion in striving to achieve the highest of standards.

If you have something to tell us, no matter how important or trivial it may seem, please do not hesitate to get in touch using any of the lines of communication below:

- Use the electronic feedback form on our website.
- Contact your local community fire station. You will find details listed on our website or in your local telephone directory.
- Contact our HQ by telephone or letter at the address below:

Scottish Fire and Rescue Service HQ
5 Whitefriars Crescent,
Perth,
PH2 0PA
Tel: 01738 475260
Email: strategicplan@firescotland.gov.uk

- Our website can be found at
www.firescotland.gov.uk

Contact details:

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format or a version in another language please contact:

Scottish Fire and Rescue Service HQ
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SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE





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