

# Service standards

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Responsible work team: **Incident Command Policy and Assurance**

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## Contents

1 Introduction ..... 2  
2 Service standards ..... 2  
3 The aim of service standards ..... 3  
4 Role of Station Based Staff ..... 3  
5 Role of the Operational Assurance Officer (OAO)..... 3  
6 Service standard desktop icon and Hotwire..... 4  
7 Database ..... 4  
8 Governance ..... 4  
**Document history ..... 5**

# 1 Introduction

1.1 Service standards have been designed as a means to set, measure and evaluate the Brigade's performance of individuals, within fire stations directorate. The Brigade has developed 11 service standards which are based on the expected level of performance, resources and demand on the service, and they are important in a number of ways. They:

- Clarify the expectations of the level of service required at fire stations.
- Assist staff to drive service improvement.
- Reinforce accountability by making performance transparent.
- Are integral in meeting the organisation's aims and objectives and effectively managing performance.
- Identify areas for improvement in individuals and/or teams within fire stations.
- Identify opportunities for the sharing of best and/or exceptional practice.

## 2 Service standards

2.1 Each of the service standards align themselves to one of three organisational areas; Service Delivery, Human Resources and Training & Corporate.

These are as follows:

1. Human resources	5. Operations	9. Health and safety
2. Fairness and dignity	6. Operational readiness	10. Financial management
3. Training	7. Operational contingency planning	11. Customer satisfaction
4. Development	8. Community safety and engagement	

2.2 Each of the 11 service standards comprises three constituent parts. These are:

- **The service standard**

Each service standard covers a particular topic and provides clear requirements and guidance on how to deliver and achieve these standards.

- **The outcomes**

These are the key requirements of the standards, which when achieved, contribute to the overall standard being met.

- **Tasks and activities**

In order to meet the required outcomes, a series of tasks and activities must be completed. These tasks and activities support each outcome and standard.

**Note:** If all the outcomes, tasks and activities are not met then the individual or team has not fully met the standard.

### Relationship between the service standards

2.3 The service standards provide a detailed description of the level of service a fire station is expected to provide. The standards themselves should not be treated in isolation, as each contributes towards the total delivery of the service.

### **3 The aim of service standards**

#### 3.1 The aim of service standards is to:

- Ensure that the service is delivered to a specified standard and that when those standards are not met, the cause is identified and remedial action is taken at the appropriate level to improve and maintain the delivery of the service.
- Recognise that action to improve the delivery of the service can be made at individual, team and organisational level.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the expected level of service and understand their role, responsibilities and contribution.
- Be able to provide evidence which indicates whether the level of service is being met across a particular location and the wider Brigade.
- Implement the agreed action and monitor performance after action has been taken to make sure that the level of service has been improved and maintained.
- Identify best and/or exceptional practices and share these across fire stations to improve standards.
- Provide direction to staff on fire stations of acceptable standards of performance.

### **4 Role of station based staff**

- All staff within fire stations (operational and FRS) are responsible for achieving and maintaining the required standards across the service standards.
- Sub officers during their day to day working routines are responsible for maintaining the required service standards.
- Station commanders are responsible for carrying out structured and pre planned Quality Assurance (QA) reviews utilising the QA review document and entering correct information into the QA database. The frequency is one QA review per quarter to review all four watches over a 12 month period.
- If during a QA review an organisational gap in procedure and/or policy is identified, the station commanders will record this and report back to the local borough commanders. In most cases a local solution through the use of an review action input form will resolve the identified gap.
- These gaps will be reviewed and monitored by the Fire Stations Working group on a quarterly basis.

### **5 Role of the operational assurance officer (OAO)**

- OAOs will sample the QAs to ensure consistency and confidence in the information being entered into the QA database by the area station commanders.
- OAOs will focus their sampling on the operational service standards namely:
  - 3 – Training
  - 5 – Operations
  - 6 – Operational Readiness
  - 7 – Operational Contingency Planning
- OAOs will analyse the results of information entered in the database, identify trends and capture these in a quarterly report across all Service Standards, including the results from level 2 evaluation (Qwizdom).
- OAOs will review the solutions put in place to address issues identified during QA reviews, to assess how effective they have been and provide feedback to the stakeholders.

## 6 Service standard desktop icon and hotwire

6.1 A service standards page is available on Hotwire for all personnel. The service standards desktop icon has been developed to provide a portal to information and documentation relating to the service standards. This includes:

- The standard, outcomes, tasks and activities within each service standard.
- The quality assurance review document, which provides staff with the criteria for the QA review in a clear and transparent way.
- Access to the QA database for recording findings.
- The service standards page can be located on Hotwire by following the path below. Home>Guides and policies >Service standards or by following this link: [http://hotwire-live/Guides\\_and\\_policies/service-standards/Pages/default.aspx](http://hotwire-live/Guides_and_policies/service-standards/Pages/default.aspx)

## 7 Database

7.1 The service standard database will record all the results of QA reviews completed by the station commanders and will have the following functions:

- Hold all the quality and performance assurance information for fire stations.
- Provide a platform to generate reports to identify trends and improvements to individuals, teams and fire stations.
- Store a range of action plans which can be used to drive improvements following QA reviews.
- Assist station commanders, borough commanders and deputy assistant commissioners to monitor performance across their respective stations, boroughs and areas.

7.2 The service standard database is located on the service standards hotwire page. Home>Guides and policies>Service standards>Quality assurance or following this link:

[http://hotwire-live/Guides\\_and\\_policies/service-standards/\\_layouts/15/xlviewer.aspx?id=/Guides\\_and\\_policies/service-standards/Documents/Station%20Based%20Quality%20Assurance%20Audit.xlsx](http://hotwire-live/Guides_and_policies/service-standards/_layouts/15/xlviewer.aspx?id=/Guides_and_policies/service-standards/Documents/Station%20Based%20Quality%20Assurance%20Audit.xlsx)

## 8 Governance

8.1 AC Fire Stations PMB will agree improvements identified within the quarterly report provided by operational assurance. This will feed the fire station working group who will oversee and implement the changes.

8.2 Ops assurance working group will identify best practice and will be the interface between policy and assurance. This group will be made up of representatives from fire stations and ops assurance.

## Document history

### Assessments

An equality, sustainability or health, safety and welfare impact assessment and/or a risk assessment was last completed on:

EIA	28/10/2015	SDIA	15/10/2012	HSWIA	21/06/2018	RA	
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### Audit trail

Listed below is a brief audit trail, detailing amendments made to this policy/procedure.

Page/para nos.	Brief description of change	Date
Page 5	'Subjects list' table - template updated.	05/12/2014
Throughout	Minor changes made throughout, due to the TMR	14/10/2015
Throughout	Terminology amended and references to the SSSOs, database and hotwire site added to this policy. Reviewed as current.	05/01/2016
Throughout	This policy has been reviewed as current. Minor changes made throughout to reflect organisational changes. Please re-read to familiarise yourself with the content.	28/06/2018
Throughout	Amended to reflect Role to Rank changes.	04/11/2019

### Subject list

You can find this policy under the following subjects.

Service standards	

### Freedom of Information Act exemptions

This policy/procedure has been securely marked due to:

Considered by: (responsible work team)	FOIA exemption	Security marking classification