



LONDON FIRE BRIGADE

Report title

Independent Operational Assurance Work plan 2021/22

| | |
|--------------------------|----------------|
| Report to | Date |
| Commissioner's Board | 7 April 2021 |
| Commissioner's Board | 21 April, 2021 |
| London Fire Commissioner | |

| | |
|-----------------------------|---------------|
| Report by | Report number |
| Director for Transformation | LFC 0512x |

Protective marking: **NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED**

Publication status: Published in full

If redacting, give reason: N/A

I agree the recommended decision below.

Andy Roe
London Fire Commissioner

This decision was
remotely signed on
Date 17 May 2021

Executive Summary

As part of its response to the recommendations of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry (GTI) and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary & Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS), the London Fire Brigade (LFB) have commissioned the services of an Independent Operational Assurance Advisor, Alasdair Hay.

Alasdair Hay has been contracted to provide five days of work per calendar month and in order to make sure the work undertaken is coordinated with the priorities of the London Fire Commissioner (LFC), a work plan has been created in conjunction with the Director for Transformation and the Assistant Commissioner – Transformation.

This proposed work plan is now being submitted to Commissioners Board (CB) for scrutiny and if agreed this will form the basis for the work undertaken by the independent Operational Assurance Advisor between March 2021 and June 2022.

Recommended decisions

That the Commissioner:

1. Agrees to the schedule or work as indicated in the 'work plan'.
2. Agrees to the process for scrutinising and supporting each item of work through Commissioners Board (CB) and the Audit Committee.
3. Instructs Directors and Heads of Service to confirm work leads for each area and to offer the necessary support and access to the independent Operational Assurance Advisor.

Introduction and Background

Purpose

1. This paper outlines the proposed work plan for Alasdair Hay, Independent Operational Assurance Advisor, until June 2022. It is intended to ensure that the work carried out reflects the risk critical improvement priorities of LFB in response to the GTI and HMICFRS report recommendations and that this work fits appropriately within the overall business assurance framework for the Brigade.

Methodology

2. LFB has set out and agreed a comprehensive Transformation Delivery Plan with the intention to improve overall service delivery for the people of London. The intended approach to this assurance work is therefore to adopt a variation of the Plan-Do-Study-Act approach.

Stage 1: Plan

- Agree the assurance subject, including a plan for collecting data/information.
- State the objectives of the change.
- Clearly articulate what the improvement will be.

Stage 2: Do

- Carry out the assurance work.
- Document any successes, problems, interdependencies and relevant observations.
- Begin analysis of the collected data/information.

Stage 3: Study

- Analyse the data/information and study the results.
- Complete the analysis of the data.
- Compare the data/information to the stated objectives.
- Summarise and reflect on what was learned.

Step 4: Act

- Determine whether the objectives have been met, based on the evidence from the study.
- Outline what modifications should be made and prepare recommendations.
- Feed the recommendations into the improvement plan going forward.

Proposed work plan

3. The plan set out below is based on Alasdair Hay working five days a month and anticipating that there will be a gradual lifting of COVID-19 restrictions, as set out in the government's roadmap, enabling unrestricted travel and engagement across the organisation.
4. 15 days have been allocated to each area of work, this includes all four stages of the methodology (Plan, Do, Study, Act). To support the approach there will be an LFB lead for each area and to make sure that the remit is focused on the identified areas of concern.

March – May 2021

- Part one PN800 review: Literature review & interim report
 - lead: Director for Transformation
- Part two PN800 review: Field work & final report
 - lead: Director for Transformation
- Review training delivery outcomes
 - lead: Director People Services/AC Operational Policy and Assurance

June – August 2021

- Review Incident command training, competence and the use of risk information and operational discretion.
 - lead: Director People Services/AC Operational Policy and Assurance
- Review Operational Learning.
 - lead: AC Operational Policy and Assurance

September-December 2021

- Review LFB Control Room arrangements and relationship with Incident Commanders and risk information.
 - lead: AC Operational Resilience and Control

January – March 2022

- Review Multi agency response arrangements.
 - lead: AC Operational Resilience and Control

5. If this methodology, priorities and timescales are agreed the next step would be to develop a Project Initiation Document (PID) and a full delivery plan for each area, including identifying supporting resources, mapping the work to the recommendations of the GTI and HMICFRS (set out in Appendix 1 to this report) and agreeing the reporting arrangements.
6. It is also proposed for the Operational Assurance Advisor to become more sighted on the Training and Professional Development function and seek to fully understand and support the developing governance arrangements relating to Leadership, Ethics & Integrity, Stewardship, Accountability & Transparency, Effectiveness, Roles & Responsibilities and participation.

Scrutiny and support of the work plan

7. The delivery plan for each item of work will be submitted to CB for approval by the Director for Transformation lead prior to commencement and the outcomes reported to CB following the conclusion of the work.
8. To support transparency, all reports from the Operational Assurance Advisor will be shared with the Audit Committee for review to make sure the outcome inform their judgements around the effectiveness of the Brigade's internal control framework.
9. The reports will not be presented to any other internal governance structures as this work is commissioned on behalf of the LFC with the outcomes presented to the LFC as the independent conclusions of the Operational Assurance Advisor. Relevant Directors and Heads of Service will have the opportunity to review and comment on the factual accuracy of the draft reports, prior to submission to CB.
10. The Transformation Directorate will support the Operational Assurance Advisor, as required, to ensure his activities are carried out in an efficient and effective manner, with full engagement across the organisation. Direct support will be provided via the Assistant Commissioner and a Group Commander from Transformation to help achieve this.

Objectives and Expected Outcomes

11. The work plan will align the work activities of the Independent Operational Assurance Advisor with the priorities of the LFC.
12. The outcomes from the work plan will inform the Brigade's internal risk control environment.
13. It is expected that the outcome of this work will be to provide LFC with assurance of the performance of the organisation against priorities.

Equality Impact

14. The London Fire Commissioner and decision takers are required to have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (s149 of the Equality Act 2010) when exercising our functions and taking decisions.
15. It is important to note that consideration of the Public Sector Equality Duty is not a one-off task. The duty must be fulfilled before taking a decision, at the time of taking a decision, and after the decision has been taken.
16. The protected characteristics are: Age, Disability, Gender reassignment, Pregnancy and maternity, Marriage and civil partnership (but only in respect of the requirements to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination), Race (ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality), Religion or belief (including lack of belief), Sex, and Sexual orientation.
17. The Public Sector Equality Duty requires us, in the exercise of all LFC functions (i.e. everything the LFC does), to have due regard to the need to:

- a) Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other prohibited conduct.
 - b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
 - c) Foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
18. Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:
- a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic where those disadvantages are connected to that characteristic;
 - b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
 - c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
19. The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.
20. Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:
- (a) tackle prejudice, and
 - (b) promote understanding.
21. There are no significant equality impacts arising from the work-plan proposal for the Independent Operational Assurance Advisor.

Procurement and Sustainability

22. For this paper, there are no decisions that would require new procurement activity.

Strategic Drivers

LFB has set out and agreed a comprehensive Transformation Programme with the intention to improve overall service delivery for the people of London.

23. The decisions in this paper support the creation and implementation of a robust assurance and risk framework with an additional layer of assurance on this risk critical area of the organisation provided by the Independent Operational Advisor.

Workforce Impact

24. The decisions in this paper make no changes to the existing workforce.

Finance comments

25. This report considers work prioritisation and makes recommendations to the work plan for the Independent Operational Advisor. There is no direct financial implication.

Legal comments

Under S327A(2) of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 (GLAA), the London Fire Commissioner (the "Commissioner") is established as a corporation sole with the Mayor appointing the occupant of that office.

Section 1 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 (FRSA) states that the Commissioner is the fire and rescue authority for Greater London.

By S327A(7) GLAA the Mayor of London must hold the London Fire Commissioner to account for the exercise of the Commissioner's functions. Under S 327D of the GLAA the Mayor may issue to the Commissioner specific or general directions as to the manner in which the holder of that office is to exercise his or her functions.

In light of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 1 Report the Home Secretary exercised powers under S26 FRSA to require LFB to provide reports and information.

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) is the statutory inspector of the London Fire Commissioner (LFC) with a duty to inspect and report on LFC under S28 FRSA. HMICFRS is an inspectorate, and has powers to secure information, but no powers to give orders for change. It is for the London Fire Commissioner, subject to the oversight arrangements in place from the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Greater London Assembly and Home Secretary, to take action as a result of HMICFRS's recommendations.

The Transformation Board provides internal scrutiny and assurance of agreed actions in response to the GTI and HMICFRS recommendations.

The Independent Operational Assurance Work plan was developed as part of the LFB's response to the Phase 1 Report of the GTI and to the HMICFRS report.

List of Appendices

| Appendix | Title | Protective Marking |
|----------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. | GTI/HMI recommendations | None |

Appendix 1 – GTI/HMI recommendations

Grenfell Recommendations

- a) The information made available to Fire and Rescue Services about materials and methods of construction used in external walls of high rise residential buildings.
- b) The arrangements made by LFB to discharge its duties under section 7(2)(d) of the fire services Act 2004
- c) The availability of plans of high rise residential to local fire and rescue services and the provision of premises information boxes in high rise residential buildings.
- d) The regular inspection and testing of lifts designed for use by Firefighters.
- e) Communication between the LFB control room and the incident commander.
- f) The way in which fire and rescue services handle emergency calls.
- g) The LFB Command & Control procedures and use of resources, in particular the capture of information from crews returning from deployments and the sharing of information between LFB Control Room, the incident commander and the Bridgehead.
- h) The communication equipment available to the LFB for use by crews deployed in firefighting and rescue operations in high rise buildings.
- i) The evacuation of high rise residential buildings, including the provision of equipment enabling Firefighters to send an evacuation signal to whole or selected part of the building.
- j) The provision of fire safety information to residents in high rise residential buildings and the marking of lobbies and staircase landings.
- k) The inspection of fire doors and self-closing devices.
- l) Aspects of co-operation between emergency services.

Full details of these recommendations are set out in Chapter 33 of the Inquiry stage 1 report.

HMCIFRS Recommendations

- a) Develop a plan to reassess incident command competence at all levels in line with national operational guidance, and to determine what arrangements it will put in place when staff fail to achieve the standard set by the Brigade.
- b) Develop a plan to remove gaps in all risk critical skills training.
- c) The Brigade should ensure that all its firefighters have access to relevant and up to date risk information.
- d) The Brigade should fully evaluate its prevention work, so it fully understands how effective it is at reducing the risk of fires and other emergencies.

- e) The Brigade needs to be able to ensure that it is meeting the targets set out in the risk based inspection programme to be assured it is effectively protecting the public from fires.
- f) The Brigade should ensure that it responds on time to building regulations consultations.
- g) The Brigade must ensure that it address effectively the burden of false alarms.
- h) The Brigade should make sure it puts in place and delivers a plan to adopt National Operational Guidance.
- i) The Brigade should make sure staff accurately record risk assessments and control measures implemented at an incident to alert commanders to workplace risks and help put safety control measures in place at the incident ground.
- j) The Brigade should make sure that the system for learning from operational debriefs is effective and that staff understand how to record learning from operational incidents.
- k) The Brigade should make sure that cross border risks are known to crews. It should run cross border exercises, passing on the lessons learned from these exercises.
- l) The Brigade should make sure that all frontline staff, not just specialist response teams, are well protected and prepared for being part of a multi-agency response to a community risk identified by the local resilience forum, including a marauding terrorist attack. It should make sure that all staff understand the procedures for terrorist related incidents.
- m) The Brigade should make sure it reviews how it allocates its resources to activities based on risks set out in the London Safety Plan.
- n) The Brigade should make sure that it effectively monitors, reviews and evaluates the benefits and outcomes of any contractual arrangements, collaborations or other improvement projects.
- o) The Brigade should make sure that it has good business continuity arrangements in place across all parts of the organisation and that these are understood by staff. The plans should take account of all foreseeable threats and risks.
- p) The Brigade should make sure it has strong financial plans in place to face challenges beyond 2020 and secure an affordable way of managing the risk of fire and other risks.
- q) The Brigade should ensure that the values and behaviours are understood and demonstrated by staff.
- r) The Brigade should ensure that staff know how to get support after a traumatic event.
- s) The Brigade needs to train all staff for their roles, including developing all levels of leadership and management competence.
- t) The Brigade should extend its new maintenance of competence programme to all operational staff groups as intended. It should make sure this programme can assure the Brigade of the competence held by staff.
- u) The Brigade should identify and overcome barriers to equal opportunity, so that its workforce better represents its community. This includes staff understanding the benefits of positive action and having a diverse workforce.
- v) To ensure fire stations have suitable facilities for women.
- w) The Brigade should ensure it has an effective system in place to review individual staff performance and development.

- x) The Brigade should ensure that it selects, develops and promotes staff in an open, accessible and fair way. Including Temporary promotions.
- y) The Brigade should put in place an open and full process to identify, develop and support high potential staff and aspiring leaders.