



Council of the
ISLES OF SCILLY



Annual Assurance Statement

**Chief Fire Officer Mark Hewitt
Isles of Scilly Fire and Rescue Service**

2022/23



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1. Governance arrangements

We are required to produce an annual statement of assurance as part of the [Fire and Rescue National Framework for England](#), published in May 2018. The purpose of the statement is to provide assurance to communities and the Government that the service is being delivered efficiently and effectively.

The Annual Assurance Statement for the Isles of Scilly Fire and Rescue Service provides an opportunity to report on progress against the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) 2022-23, but also highlight progress against the identified areas for improvement from His Majesty's Constabulary of Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) 2021/22 report.

In the production of our Annual Assurance Statement we have ensured our responsible elected members, who make up the Fire Authority, have assured themselves of the progress and plans as set out in the Isles of Scilly Fire and Rescue Service's IRMP 2019-23.

The Fire and Rescue National Framework sets out the Government's priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities in England, it does not prescribe operational matters as these are determined locally by fire and rescue authorities. The Framework covers the way Fire and Rescue Services are led by central government, which includes inspection through HMICFRS.

The introduction of the inspectorate has continued to influence our future. We have used the outcomes of our inspections and the ongoing reforms to improve our fire and rescue service and ensure we play our part in fulfilling the government's commitment to deliver greater joint working between public services, which for the Isles of Scilly is already something we do everyday. Our 2018/19, 2020 (Covid-19) and 2021/22 inspection reports can be found using the links below.

[Isles of Scilly - HMICFRS \(justiceinspectorates.gov.uk\)](#)

[COVID-19 inspection: Isles of Scilly Fire and Rescue Service \(justiceinspectorates.gov.uk\)](#)

[Effectiveness, efficiency and people 2021/22 – Isles of Scilly Fire and Rescue Service - His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services \(justiceinspectorates.gov.uk\)](#)

For the period 2021/22 we made the decision to extend the period of our IRMP by one year. This was to ensure that the 2021/22 inspection feedback could be fed into the development of the new Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) continuing to drive our improvements. The new CRMP was developed during 2022/23 and covers a period of 2023-2026.

This annual Statement of Assurance is a backward-looking document aimed at providing assurance, for 2022/23, that we are providing an efficient, effective and value for money

service to the communities within the Isles of Scilly in our financial, governance and operational matters.

2. Our plan

The IRMP evolves on an annual basis driven by many influences including recommendations following audit, assessment and review, consultation with staff, elected members and the public. National, regional and local influences including new legislation, regulation or identified best practice also play a part.

Our five priorities are:

Prevent



To improve the health, safety and wellbeing of the people and communities most at risk

Protect



To protect businesses, people, the local economy and environment from fire and wider community related risks.

Respond



To deliver an effective and efficient emergency response and recovery service both locally and to support national requirements

Perform



To ensure we have the right systems, equipment, vehicles and information to deliver value for money services effectively and efficiently and which are appropriately governed and assured.

People



To ensure our workforce is professional, resilient, skilled, flexible and diverse. Working in a place that is safe, healthy and inclusive, where people feel valued for their contribution and role model our core values.

3. Isles of Scilly Risk

The Isles of Scilly has a **higher proportion of people aged 65+ than the UK and England average**. Over a **quarter of people living on the islands are aged 65+ (28%)** and are therefore at an increased risk of fire. Of the, 262 home fire safety checks carried out over the past four years, 51% of them have been in homes where a resident is aged 65+.

The **increasing number of older people living** on the islands, combined with a **reduction in the working age population**, is one of the key risks facing the fire and rescue service.

Fires are the most frequently attended incident type for the fire and rescue service and the **majority of these are secondary fires** which occur outside in grassland, woodland and crops. However, each year the service is called upon to attend up to four dwelling fires on the islands. Most common dwelling fires are **chimney fires** (linked to the fact that 26% of households on the islands do not have central heating) which tend to be across November to April. In a majority of dwelling fires, alarm systems are not present, suggesting that prevention activity should focus on increasing home fire safety checks as well as messaging around chimney fires.

The alcohol needs assessment for the islands highlights issues with **problematic alcohol use** which also presents a risk for fire and rescue related incidents. However, this is not evident in the information that has been collected about fire and road traffic collisions.

The **majority of incidents occur on the most populated island St Mary's**. Over the past ten years there have only been very low numbers of fire, special service calls and false alarms on the other islands. While the service must continue to be equipped and trained to respond to fires and special service calls on the four other inhabited islands the greatest demand for resources is from the island of St Mary's. During the tourist season the population of the islands significantly increases placing a demand on services and infrastructure. **Incidents are most likely to occur during the summer months** with July the peak time for emergency calls. The increase in population during the summer months has the potential to place a **significant demand on emergency services in the event of a period of adverse weather or a large-scale incident**.

Despite the potential risk posed by the water and popular sailing and maritime events on the islands, there is **no evidence of an impact on water rescues** on the service. Over the past ten years, the service has only been called to attend four incidents where boats have been involved.

A key risk for the service is the **potential for a large-scale hazardous material or environmental contamination** incident. Over the past nine years the service has been called to attend three of these incidents. The environmental impact this would have on the islands and passing maritime vessels means that the service must be trained and equipped to respond to this risk.

4. Overview of the Service

We are predominantly an on-call service meaning that operational firefighters have a primary employment elsewhere, but in the event of an emergency are paged and respond immediately to their respective fire station. Given the nature of the service and issues faced in such a remote and isolated community, all fire-fighters need to be versatile and therefore trained to deal with a range of emergency incidents and humanitarian assistance.

In 2020 we appointed the islands' first ever wholetime station manager for the Isles of Scilly to increase capacity in recognition of the significant and essential demands being placed on the service. The post holder has overarching responsibility for operational efficiency and effectiveness across the islands. The service is also supported by a part time, experienced, island-based business support officer.

The resources for each island provide an appropriate response to their particular risks and are summarised below:

Island	Establishment	Appliance(s)
St Marys	1 Station Manager (wholetime) 1 Watch Manager (B) 2 Crew Managers 12 Firefighters	2008 MAN appliance (replaced the previous 1996 Mercedes water tender ladder in 2022) 2010 4x4 Toyota Hilux
St Agnes	1 Watch Manager 1 Crew Manager 5 Firefighters	1991 tractor and water bowser trailer
Bryher	2 Crew Manager 4 Firefighters	1991 tractor and water bowser trailer
Tresco	1 Watch Manager 1 Crew Manager 1 Crew Manager (Temp) 4 Firefighters	2016 6x6 Mercedes sprinter
St Martins	1 Watch Manager 1 Crew Manager 6 Firefighters	1993 tractor and water bowser trailer

The predominantly on call operating model of the Isles of Scilly Fire and Rescue Service is augmented with partnership arrangements with the Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service under a service level agreement. The Isles of Scilly Airport carries out prevention work on

the island of St Mary's as well as equipment maintenance and testing. Cornwall Council provides budgeting, financial management, and IT equipment and support.

5. Your Fire and Rescue Authority

Governance is how the Council operates and makes decisions. It makes sure that decisions take public opinion into account, reflect and respond to the needs of local people and are transparent and accountable.

The Council of the Isles of Scilly acts as the Isles of Scilly Fire and Rescue Authority. Elected Members of the Council hold the service to account on behalf of the public and ensure adequate scrutiny of our IRMP. The Annual Statement of Assurance is signed off by Members of Isles of Scilly Council and provides the public and Government with assurance that the service is being delivered effectively, efficiently and in line with agreed budgets.

The Isles of Scilly have a service level agreement (SLA) with Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service which can be summarised as specialist training, emergency call handling, protection, IRMP development, strategic support and management advice. The SLA outlines in detail the level of support Cornwall will provide to the Isles of Scilly. The purpose of this agreement is to provide an efficient and effective way of working in the delivery of support function activities which a fire and rescue service requires.

To provide assurance on the activities within the SLA, the services have a working group which monitors and agrees on the performance of the SLA. The partnership has delivered and continues to deliver an effective and efficient arrangement, however it was recognised through the HMICFRS 2021/22 report that governance arrangements for the partnerships and SLA could be improved to provide better oversight and scrutiny. A review of the SLA is a key aim for the 2023-2026 Community Risk Management Plan (which replaces the IRMP).



6. Our Core Values

Our values set out the beliefs and behaviours at the heart of our organisation and are integral to our Integrated Risk Management Plan.



In line with national fire sector improvements, for our 2023-2026 CRMP we have aligned our core values to the Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) in England.

The Core Code sets out the ethical principles to help us continuously improve our organisational culture and workforce diversity and assist us in supporting our community in the best way. It is effective only when we all consistently demonstrate the ethical behaviours.

7. Our Performance

The table provides a breakdown of the islands operational activity in the year 2022/23

Island	Incident Category	No. Incidents
Bryher	FalseAlarm	2
	Fire	0
	SpecialService	0
St Agnes	FalseAlarm	2
	Fire	0
	SpecialService	3
St Martins	FalseAlarm	2
	Fire	2
	SpecialService	0
St Marys	FalseAlarm	6
	Fire	4
	SpecialService	5
Tresco	FalseAlarm	2
	Fire	0
	SpecialService	0
Total		28

7.1 How we performed during 2022/23

This is how we have performed against our 2022/23 objectives:

Specific Objectives	Performance
<p>Prevent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We will continue to deliver our prevention activities and expand our home safety checks process to target prevention work at people most at risk. The new prevention standard will be acknowledged, and the gap analysis used to inform our next risk management plan• Education and awareness campaigns to improve the safety of our communities e.g. fire in the home and in the open, road safety, coast/water/beach safety, BBQ and cooking safety, carbon monoxide, safeguarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Targeting face-to-face visits to individuals and groups at increased risk from fire due, such as referrals from adult social services or a concern raised about a specific person.• Worked in partnership with adult social care; sharing information to support the Home Fire Safety program targeting high risk members of the community.• Refresher training delivered to St Marys Airport fire crews and some on call personnel on Home Fire Safety Checks and safeguarding. This will support future service developments in home fire safety with a view to moving towards living safe and well visits where appropriate.• Attendance at annual careers conventions at Five island school to raise fire safety awareness specifically BBQ safety.• Attended community days, undertaken school visits and run the fire safety element of the Duke of Edinburgh Bronze and Silver awards.• Worked with the community to reduce number of false alarm calls due to bonfires, using face to face engagement opportunities and social media platforms.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced social media presence for prevention messages. Aligning to NFCC safety weeks/messages. Participation in Community Safety Partnership which has brought increased awareness of IOSFRS and greater prevention partnership working.
<p>Protect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to use Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service to delegate fire safety activities through Section 101 powers Deliver protection audit programme Undertake business engagement activity to enable safe, compliant and successful businesses Ensure ongoing elected member scrutiny of protection work following Fire Authority training for councillors Develop a risk-based inspection programme to deliver in line with the 2023-2026 risk management plan Identify opportunities to develop use of sprinklers in homes on the Isles of Scilly and seek elected member champions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk-Based inspection programme developed. This work will be further improved during the next CRMP to ensure all business information is up-to-date. Two seasonal visits per year (one pre-summer and one post-summer) to deliver the fire safety audits in line with the risk based inspection programme – targeting the highest risk business premises. This includes new audits, complaints and re-inspections. In the next CRMP year, we will plan to deliver a member Protection awareness session to inform of current activities and legislative fire safety updates Face to face business engagement activities to provide business safety information in partnership with Cornwall Council and Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service Communications to all accommodation providers and business owners on fire safety, in preparation for the World Pilot Gig Championships 2022.

Respond

- Explore opportunities to work differently aligning our resources to risk and vulnerability
- Continue to learn from local and national incidents and implement changes when required, including debriefs and our own effectiveness processes
- Identify ways to improve how we gather, store and share firefighter safety risk information across the service
- Work to align the resources to risks is ongoing and will be form part of the production of our 2023-2026 plan
- Continue to implement National Operational Guidance jointly with Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service as part of the collaborative alliance approach to implementing national policy and fire standards.
- Worked with CFRS to look at implementing a new integrated availability and payroll system (GARTAN) ensuring all our personnel and appliance data is integrated into the GARTAN build. This includes data on training, compliance and skills to ensure an appropriate response can be mobilised.
- Developed a comprehensive list of site specific risk information (SSRI) and undertaken regular visits to keep up-to-date. This ensures in the event of a fire or other incident, firefighters have the relevant information to understand the associated risks. This is available to all firefighters through the MS Sharepoint platform.
- Training exercises undertaken for specific locations based on the identified risk for that site (linked with SSRI visits).
- Collaboration exercise with St Marys Hospital which incorporated incident management and patient evacuation.
- Aligned to CFRS to embed and implement National Operational Guidance.
- CFRS share operational learning which identifies potential firefighting improvements. Where relevant we share this across the service and include in operational preparedness audits.
- Sharing learning outcomes across the service from local incidents.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of scheduled operational preparedness completed. • In response to the learning identified in the Grenfell Tower Inquiry we have introduced smoke hoods across the service. • Two watch managers across the service have undertaken defusing training to enable them to support post incident debriefs. • Crews all have access to officer functional cards and aide memoirs which provide additional incident information for individuals and incident type. • Developed a new 2023-2026 CRMP in consultation with communities. Consultation was carried out by island crews in line with their local knowledge of the resident population. • Working alongside CFRS to develop NOG and NOS within IOSFRS • Undertaken ICS training level 1 for 15 operational personnel • Training exercises completed for all station watches for safety at height and confirmed space (SHACS) and hazardous materials (HAZMAT).
<p>People</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the national and service's core values are known and understood and that this is promoted to staff and public through social media and community open 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attended the first Island Pride event to demonstrate our lead and support for equality, diversity and inclusion. • 100% of eligible staff have had a

<p>days</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide leadership and management training for supervisors to ensure greater understanding and awareness of fairness and diversity, managing grievances. This will support improvements in service culture and could include opportunities for greater involvement in Cornwall Council and fire and rescue groups and forums Undertake an internal peer review of service culture to identify further improvements Continue with a blended approach to training using both online and practical methods, supported by Cornwall Fire and Rescue Ensure the Code of Ethics are understood, and implementation is included within the new risk management plan. 	<p>performance appraisal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% of eligible staff have completed corporate mandatory training All risk critical training has been undertaken through blended learning Ongoing development of the IOSFRS sharepoint page to embed shared learning across the service. Ongoing communications to staff including twice yearly newsletter, quarterly watch manager briefings and ad hoc engagement sessions as and when identified. All staff up-to-date on medicals and fitness tests Recruited three new firefighters, based on St Agnes, Bryher and St Marys. Each new recruit has own development page on PDRpro Recognised 2 staff members with 30 year service badges, and 1 staff member for 40 years service.
<p>Perform</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare to implement outcomes of recommendations from HMICFRS action plan. Review service level agreement focussing on an alliance approach to further develop collaborative relationships Implement Chief Fire Officer from Cornwall to provide the strategic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New action plan developed which incorporates outstanding and ongoing actions identified in the 2021 (Covid) and 2022 HMICFRS inspections. This is reviewed periodically and rated according to the level of risk (RAG-rated) associated with each action. Review of SLA was postponed pending appointment of Chief Fire

<p>command of the Isles of Scilly from 1 April 2022</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to embed excellent progress in business continuity planning across the service • Invest in firefighter safety by implementing a capital replacement programme for appliances, equipment and uniforms, which is prioritised according to risk. 	<p>Officer. This has been incorporated into year one of the new 2023-2026 CRMP.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Chief Fire Officer appointed in February 2022. • Business Continuity Plan developed and regularly reviewed in line with policy • New fire appliance for St Marys as part of the capital replacement programme. • Increased governance and scrutiny from Fire Authority Members undertaken, including development and consultation of the the new CRMP, and oversight of the most recent HMICFRS reports.
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