



# Inspection Outline

## Training of personnel on the Retained Duty System

### 1. Introduction

Fire-fighting and other emergencies are by their very nature, hazardous operations. Chapter 2 of the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 sets out the Principal Fire and Rescue Functions. The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) requires to secure the provision of training for personnel for fire-fighting (section 9(2)(b) of the Act), for road traffic accidents (section 10(2)(b) of the Act), and for other emergencies (article 8(1)(b) of the Fire (Additional Function) (Scotland) Order 2005).

Firefighter training is not only a statutory duty, but also a health and safety requirement, as it has a fundamental impact on firefighter safety.

During our Scotland-wide local area inspection programme we have witnessed the retained duty system (RDS) training programme and recording system in place. The training programme consists of initial training, maintenance of skills training both theoretical and practical, specific/core skills training and officer command training. We have carried out sample inspections on the contents of the Service's recording systems, where we have identified that there have been gaps in the records for a considerable number of individuals.

RDS firefighters have consistently raised issues and concerns with us about the Service's training and recording systems. The concerns raised have been wide spread and include: access issues related to computerised systems, applicability of training delivered to local risks, flexibility, balance between knowledge acquisition and practical demonstration, and the time available to complete the program.

We have made a number of recommendations to Local Senior Officers via our local area inspection reports, but in doing so we recognise that the core SFRS systems are beyond their individual control. We have raised our observations with SFRS strategic management. They have briefed us on the current system and changes that they are introducing to ensure improved compliance with the SFRS recording requirements.

HMFSI has decided to conduct a thematic inspection into the efficiency and effectiveness of RDS training systems, as we have concerns about the potential risk to the Service as a consequence of the issues described above.

### 2. Areas of interest

During the course of this inspection, and taking particular account of our stated purpose, we will be focussing our attention on the following areas:

- 
- Pre-employment training provided as part of positive action, which is aimed at enabling recruitment of under-represented sectors of the community.
  - Trainee firefighter development to competence programme.
  - Key skills training in order to obtain competency as a firefighter.
  - Maintenance of skills arrangements.
  - Specialist/core skills training.
  - Training undertaken in the arena of continuous professional development.
  - Training of managers with skills needed both in incident ground command and within station management.
  - The administration, planning recording and quality assurance of all of the above elements of training and development.
  - How the Service arrived at and authorised the current arrangements.
  - The Service's learning and plans for the future.
  - Performance Management/Measurement Arrangements

### **3. Who we would like to talk to and documents we would like to review**

We would like to talk to a range of staff engaged in the delivery of training and development from the strategic to the operational level. We will carry out some of these discussions with staff as we conduct our local area inspection programme, so as to reduce the impact of this thematic inspection, but we will want to sample some other areas in Scotland so that a holistic overall representative view is established.

We will want to see supporting documentation that demonstrates the current and historical position and links the implemented arrangements to the strategic decision making and governance forums of the Service.

We will be following the approach proposed by the HSE in its new revised HSG 65 model. This is a generic model, which is an integral part of good management and follows the *Plan, Do, Check, Act* approach, with each of these actions broken down as follows

Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy</li> <li>• Planning</li> </ul>
Do	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk Profiling</li> <li>• Organising</li> <li>• Implementing your Plan</li> </ul>
Check	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measuring Performance</li> <li>• Investigating non-compliance (accidents/incidents/Near misses)</li> </ul>
Act	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reviewing Performance</li> <li>• Learning Lessons</li> </ul>

In following this approach we will not only be looking at what is happening now, but how training and the systems that support it evolved into their current state, what lessons SFRS has identified and how it intends to improve for the future.

## 4. Timetable

Our outline timetable is:

June 2017	Pre-planning.
Early July 2017	Consultation on the inspection outline.
July – Dec 2017	Inspection team document review.
July – Dec 2017	Inspection team field work and interviews (to be conducted in part during local area inspections).
Jan/Feb 2018	Report drafting and consultation
March 2018	Report submission to SFRS/Ministers/publication

## 5. The Inspection Team

The inspection team members are:

Martyn Emberson QFSM, Chief Inspector

Simon Routh-Jones QFSM, Assistant Inspector

Brian McKenzie, Assistant Inspector

Graeme Fraser, Inspection Officer

Steven Harkins, Inspection Officer (on secondment from SFRS)

---

The team's work is reviewed by a quality assurance panel who will be nominated.

## **6. Responding to this Inspection Outline document**

This inspection outline document has been prepared to describe why we are carrying out an inspection and how we will go about the work. It is also intended to support our consultation with Ministers, the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, management team and representative bodies. If you wish to make any comments or observations, these should be submitted to the Chief Inspector by emailing [HMFSI@gov.scot](mailto:HMFSI@gov.scot)

The team members can also provide clarification on any of the content and can be contacted through the same email address.