



Assessment Report

CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE

Humberside Fire & Rescue Service

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The assessment method used was a full remote assessment due to the current circumstances of the Covid19 Pandemic.

Following the assessment, Humberside Fire & Rescue Service were found to have a deep understanding of, and commitment to, Customer Service Excellence. The commitment was displayed from Senior Management levels through to operations and front line staff.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank those people involved in the overall assessment process. It has been a pleasure meeting with your team and having the opportunity to observe your service in action remotely

The outcome of the assessment was -

“Renewal of the Customer Service Excellence Standard has been recommended”

Address:	Service Headquarters Summergroves Way Hull Yorkshire HU4 7BB		
Standard(s):	Customer Service Excellence	Accreditation Body(s)	UKAS
Representative:	Ms Hazel Bullen		
Site(s) assessed:	Remote assessment	Date(s) of audit(s):	18-01-2021, 19-01-2021



Lead Assessor :	Bob Mandy	Additional team member(s):	
Type of Assessment:	Renewal		
Review of Certification Claims	Claims are accurate and in accordance with SGS guidance		

2. CONTEXT

Humbeside Fire & Rescue Service (HFRS) provides services to four local authority areas covering the Humbeside region: Hull; East Riding of Yorkshire; North Lincolnshire; and North-East Lincolnshire. The service employs more than 1000 staff and provides emergency fire and rescue services with demanding target times for attendance at incidents.

This is the second remote CSE visit and HFRS has continued to deliver their fire and rescue service whilst meeting the constraints placed on them by lockdowns and ongoing Covid-19 restrictions. Their Transition Group had been in place since 13th May and the Service was about to move from Business Continuity to Business as Usual but reverted back to Transition on 23rd October following COVID-19 developments. Despite the restraints placed on them by the pandemic HFRS has used their resources to support the community where possible. This support has included many safe and well calls and visits to vulnerable people and those shielding. They have made food and medication deliveries and supported care homes in training on the use of PPE.

In August 2020 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) was commissioned by the Home Secretary to inspect how fire and rescue services in England are responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. HFRS was inspected in October 2020 and the report findings were very positive. The following is taken from HMICFRS's feedback:

"In summary, the service adapted and responded to the pandemic effectively and continued to maintain its statutory functions throughout. It provided extra support to the community during the first phase of the pandemic. It predominantly used its whole time fire fighters to respond to emergencies. It used the increased availability of its on-call and prevention and protection staff to deliver medicines and food to vulnerable members of the community. On-call staff were trained to drive ambulances and to support mortuaries, but ultimately, this support wasn't needed. The service managed resources well and its financial position was



largely unaffected, especially as it didn't have to use reserves to cover extra costs.

The service was able to respond quickly to staff absences, and it implemented changes to build resilience in its control room. It communicated well with its staff throughout the pandemic, including on issues relating to staff wellbeing. It also made sure all staff had the resources they needed to do their jobs effectively.”

3. METHOD OF ASSESSMENT

The assessment was undertaken in two stages; the first was a review of your self-assessment submission. This review enabled the assessor to gain an understanding of how the organisation has met the requirements of the Customer Service Excellence standard.

The next stage was to review the actual service delivered remotely. This was conducted through reviewing practice as well as speaking to staff, partners and customers. This included following customer journeys through your processes and how these aligned with customer insight.

During the assessment process the criteria are scored on a four-band scale:

COMPLIANCE PLUS - Behaviours or practices which exceed the requirements of the standard and are viewed as exceptional or as exemplar to others, either within the applicant's organisation or the wider customer service arena.

COMPLIANT - Your organisation has a variety of good quality evidence which demonstrates that you comply fully with this element. The evidence which reflects compliance is consistent throughout and is embedded in the culture of the organisation.

PARTIAL COMPLIANCE - Your organisation has some evidence but there are significant gaps. The gaps could include:

- Parts of the applicant's organisation which are currently not compliant and/or
- Areas where the quality of the evidence is poor or incomplete and/or
- Areas which have begun to be addressed and are subject to significant further development and/or



- Areas where compliance has only been evident for a very short period of time

NON COMPLIANT - Your organisation has little or no evidence of compliance or what evidence you do have refers solely to a small (minor) part of your organisation.

The current scheme allows applicants a maximum number of partial compliances, equating to a pass mark of 80% for all criteria.

4. OPENING MEETING

The remote assessment commenced with an opening meeting conducted as a Teams meeting.

The assessment activity and the observations were discussed. The itinerary had been agreed with Humberside Fire & Rescue Service in advance. The organisation was informed that all information obtained during the assessment would be treated as strictly confidential.

The scope of Assessment was confirmed as: Humberside Fire & Rescue Service

5. ON-SITE ASSESSMENT

I was supported throughout the assessment by Hazel Bullen and other personnel within the organisation were involved when assessing activities within their responsibility.

The assessment resulted in the raising of no partial compliances. A number of observations are listed in Section 7 of this report.

Criterion	Maximum number of Partial compliance	Actual number of non-compliance	Actual number of partial compliance	Actual number of Areas for Improvement
1	2	0	0	0
2	2	0	0	2
3	2	0	0	1
4	3	0	0	0

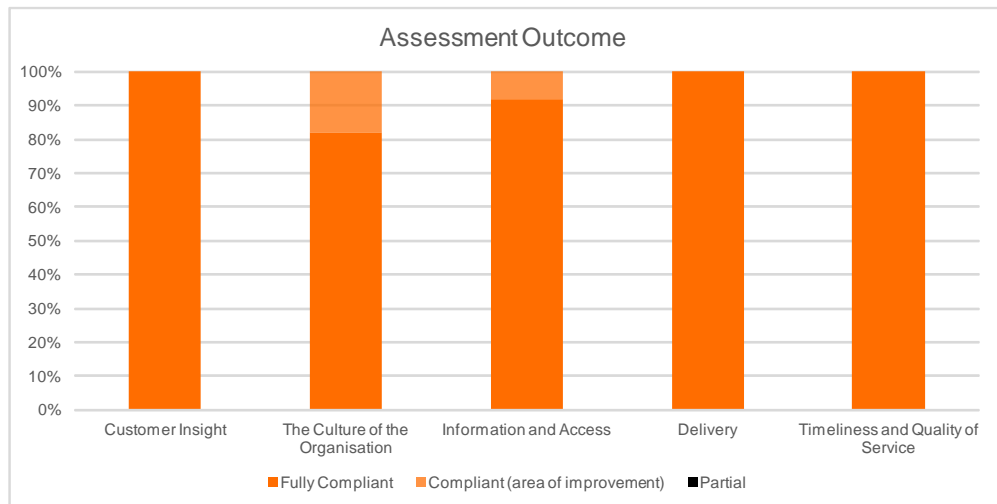


5	2	0	0	0
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Number of good practices awarded during the assessment	9
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Have the partial compliance(s) raised at the last assessment been closed?	N/A
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Criterion	Maximum number of partial compliances	Actual number of non-compliances	Actual number of partial compliances	Actual number of Areas for Improvement	Fully Compliant
1 Customer Insight	2	0	0	0	11
2 The Culture of the Organisation	2	0	0	2	9
3 Information and Access	2	0	0	1	11
4 Delivery	3	0	0	0	13
5 Timeliness and Quality of Service	2	0	0	0	10



6. AREAS OF PARTIAL COMPLIANCE

CRITERION 1

None raised

CRITERION 2

None raised



CRITERION 3

None raised

CRITERION 4

None raised

CRITERION 5

None raised

7. OBSERVATIONS

During the site assessment the following general observations were made. These include: positive areas scored as Compliance Plus; areas of good practice; areas for improvement identified throughout the entire assessment process, as listed below.

Areas for Improvement raised during the 2020

- 2.2.5 The last HMICFRS report marked HFRS as good on efficiency and effectiveness but marked them as needing improvement on “How well does the service look after its people.” This was aimed mainly at non-operational staff.
Since the visit a new Head of Occupational Health has been recruited and this issue has been addressed via staff impact assessments. The HMICFRS report published this week has accepted the work that HFRS has carried out to address this issue as being effective.

Areas for Improvement

The three areas for improvement are not a reflection on the customer service provided by HFRS. They all result from the remote assessment not allowing the assessor to check on these elements of the standard.

- 2.1.5 Due to this being the second remote visit it has not been possible to check on the level of privacy in face to face meetings with customers since 2019. If the 2022 visit can be carried out on site this should be checked by the assessor.
- 2.2.2 As a second remote it has not been possible to test this element. Face to face interviews and observations will be a priority in 2022.



- 3.3.3 As this is the second remote visit the assessor must check the premises in 2022 if this is possible.

Areas of Good Practice

- HFRS has continued to work with all local agencies to deliver the best possible service to the public. Whilst continuing to meet all of its fire and rescue aims it has worked to ensure that the most vulnerable people in society remain safe.
- The Safe and Well service targets resources to prevent fires in the home, reduce risk and save lives. However due to the crisis caused by the pandemic it has broadened its remit. Whilst dealing with COVID-19 activities, Advocates also provided community safety support over a weekend in relation to a serious fire involving numerous houses. The activities carried out include:
 - Hotshot 40 houses
 - Completed 6 Safe and Well visits on the door step (5 smoke alarms given)
 - Talked with 20+ families with regards fire safety and answered general queries.
 - Highlighted 7 areas of hotspot fly tipping and organised removal. Offered Safe and Well visits to anyone living next door to the empty properties
 - Visited 2 homes to carry out face to face Safe and Well visits
 - Spoke with 2 children who were frightened by what they had seen (the team will visit their local school once it is back open).
 - Referred an empty property to be secured and boarded up.
- At the time of the 2020 visit HFRS had just started trialling the use of drones. Working in partnership with Humberside Police they now have two drones and eight people are CAA trained to fly them. So far 80% of the jobs the drones have assisted in have been police and 20% HFRS.

The drones have assisted with the following incidents

- The wide scale flooding in Snaith last year.
- Drones were also used for a period of two weeks at a fire on Hatfield Moorland. The Moorland fire was spread over HFRS and South Yorkshire service areas and were deep seated in the peat.

- HFRS have used the drones to monitor large building fires and operations to provide the Incident Commander with additional vital information.
 - Used by Humberside Police throughout the year to assist in various operations, including high risk Missing Persons and to locate criminals in built up areas
 - Incidents of note in 2020 were the Black Lives Matter campaigns during which the drones were used to monitor crowd movement and behaviour, monitor cordons and monitor anti-social behavior.
 - Used to identify rural crime such as hare coursing.
 - Operation Trogon is the police support to onshore oil and gas exploration. The drones were used to monitor protestors and activists and the progress of vehicles on and off the site, to ensure safety and assist in Silver Command.
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- The service is appreciated by the public and this is demonstrated by the exceptionally low number of complaints in 2020 – 21 to date. There have been 21 complaints with only seven upheld. It is clear that the diversification of the HFRS core services into supporting the community throughout the pandemic has led to a greater empathy with the public.
 - Customer satisfaction with the service continues to be high. The Public Perception Survey showed that 86% of HFRS customers thought that they provided an effective service. This compared favorably with other UK Fire and Rescue Services around the country
 - Whilst many of the office based staff are working from home it was good to see that management has the welfare of their staff at heart. Great use is made of Teams meetings to keep in touch with staff and they are in turn encouraged to keep in touch with their close colleagues. This way of working was demonstrated by the Public Safety Centre team. Whilst they are working from home the Team Leader keeps in daily touch with them and they are encouraged to spend a day each week in the office.
 - The partnership with the Red Cross has continued to flourish and has been even more useful during the lockdowns and other COVID-19 restrictions. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic the service offered by the Red Cross Fire and Emergency Support Service has continued. They offer a Safe & Well visit when they are settled in a new property or back in their property once repairs have been completed (depending on the severity of the fire). Examples of incidents where HFRS and the Red Cross have worked together are:

One incident took place at the beginning of lockdown when a young child set a fire under his bed whilst his dad was asleep in bed. The family lost everything from the upstairs of the property. Staff provided drinks to the family at the scene and also some items of clothing over the following days.

Another incident involved a fire at a house, where a firework was posted through a letterbox on bonfire night. Following this incident the family lost everything. Staff took the FESS vehicle to the property where they were staying temporarily and provided food and clothing together with advice on other services where they could get support.

- My Community Alert continues to be used by HFRS for consultations and safety messages. The total numbers reached using My Community Alert are:
 - Member Survey 104,321 reached
 - Comments 51,000 +
 - 9 million email, text and voice messages a monthAlert messages are forwarded to 18.2 additional people, making the national reach over 16.5 Million people.

- Social media has been a key tool for communicating with the public for a number of years but has become even more prominent since March 2020. In addition to their Face Book and Twitter accounts HFRS are looking at other platforms. They are producing videos that are currently on the website but are now appearing on You Tube. As of November 2020 HFRS had the following social media contacts:
 - Twitter 22,664 followers
 - Instagram 3,206 followers
 - Web data 10,821 users
 - Facebook 12,590 page likes
 - LinkedIn 668 follower
 - You Tube 916 subscribers

Areas of Compliance Plus

The areas of compliance plus raised during previous visits continue to be valid

- 3.4.1 HFRS and Hull CCG working together led to the piloting of a rapid falls response team where firefighters attended hundreds of callouts for falls within six months. They reaching fallers on average in around 17 minutes. There are four dedicated teams of two operating across Hull. I spent time at Redwood Glades and spoken to staff there and residents

who have been helped by the team. It is clear that this is an invaluable service that meets a need that the Ambulance Service finds hard to fill as falls are generally given a low priority. I interviewed Dave Collingwood who is part of the Falls Response Team and Sam Teather who is a member of the Corporate Assurance Team. I was impressed by the great working relationship they have with staff and residents of Redwood Glades. This continues to be an area of compliance plus particularly as the Falls Team members are additionally carrying out Safe and Well Visits to vulnerable members of the public.

- 3.4.1 The Jean Bishop Integrated Care Centre (ICC) is an innovative new facility that has been commissioned by Hull Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). It is believed to be the first of its type in the UK. Humberside Fire and Rescue also has an operational fire station on site and provide a falls response team as well as responding to other fire and rescue incidents. Discussions are underway to explore the possibility of crews also supporting rehabilitation and recovery of patients. The combination of the ICC with a fire station is definitely a UK first. This facility demonstrates the way that HFRS's key objective personal safety and fire prevention is being met. This continues to be an area of compliance plus and the role of the ICC has an even higher community role during the current crisis.
- 3.4.1; 3.4.2 The compliance plus raised at last year's assessment is raised again as if anything the partnership arrangements have continued to expand and flourish. There are partnership arrangements, with robust mechanisms to ensure compliance with policies and strategies. Tony Clark from Howden's Joinery was on hand to explain how the partnership had continued to expand, taking the partnership to a new level for fire and rescue services. This has resulted in the arrangement being extended to other fire and rescue services within the UK. As well as extending the pool of retained staff, you are now proposing co-location of a fire station with Howden's premises. This continues to be an area of compliance plus although it was not possible to meet partners via this remote CSE assessment. However, the Howdens Partnership, which has been enhanced by the use of their facilities and resources to assist with delivering 1 million pieces of PPE. In addition HFRS have an excellent working partnership with the Red Cross. This has been in place since the mid 1990s but has been even more important to the service during the pandemic. HFRS provide two vehicles and work with the Red Cross to support victims of fires, floods and anything else that leaves people in need of support.





8. ACTION PLANNING & NEXT STEPS

The achievement of Customer Service Excellence is an ongoing activity and it is important that Humberside Fire & Rescue Service continues to meet the elements of the criteria throughout the three years the hallmark is awarded for. Efforts must be made by Customer Service Excellence holders to continually improve their service.

We recommend that you develop an action plan based on the findings of this report. The action plan does not need to be a separate document and is likely to be more effective if the actions are embedded in your normal improvement and service developments plans.

We will undertake an annual review that will look at your continued compliance with the Customer Service Excellence. As part of the review we will also look at progress on any findings of the previous assessments.

In addition to reviewing progress outlined above, we will also review the services delivery, done so by following customer journeys.

For more information on the annual review please refer to our document “Building on your Customer Service Excellence success – Preparing for the annual review”.

Holders must inform SGS of any major changes in the service provision covered by the scope of the certificate. This includes reorganisation or mergers.

In addition, SGS must be informed should the certified service experience a significant increase in customer complaints or critical press coverage.

If you are in doubt at any stage, we strongly recommend contacting the Customer Service Team for advice on the significance of any service or organisational change, or issues surrounding customer complaints.

SGS will visit within the next 12 months for the annual review.

SGS recommends that Humberside Fire & Rescue Service retains a copy of this report to aid continuous improvement, and as a reference document for future assessment reviews.