



HUMBERSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

CORPORATE ASSURANCE

SOCIAL MEDIA

Owner	Head of Corporate Assurance
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1. INTRODUCTION

This policy highlights the importance of social media platforms for communicating with partner agencies and the public in a responsible, professional, co-ordinated and consistent manner.

Social media (such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, blogging sites and other internet self-publishing) are an increasingly important tool for the Service to communicate with wider audiences and for individuals to keep in touch with family and friends. In making use of these tools, Service staff must ensure they adhere to the guidelines outlined.

The Service has a number of official social media profiles which are managed by the Corporate Assurance team. This policy covers the management of these profiles and guidelines on content to be shared and how to engage with the public.

As many Service personnel utilise social media in a personal capacity, this policy also includes guidelines on what the Service expects from staff in the online environment.

2. AIMS/OBJECTIVES

- To set out the expectations and limitations for the use of social media.
- To give guidance to personnel on the use of social media.
- To make personnel aware of statutory restraints imposed on the use of social media.

3. PURPOSE

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers working on behalf of HFRS and agency staff who use social media corporately or personally.

4. WHAT IS SOCIAL MEDIA?

Social media is the name commonly given to interactive communication technology websites.

Social media sites are used by HFRS to raise awareness about initiatives, campaigns, incidents and general news in a non-intrusive and cost-effective manner.

5. WHO CAN POST SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT ON BEHALF OF THE ORGANISATION

HFRS has one official account on Facebook and Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube on which only selected Corporate Assurance and Public Safety staff can post.

HFRS has one account on Twitter @HumbersideFire which has been opened up to multiple users.

These selected individuals, officers and sections have been given full training in social media and can now Tweet on behalf of HFRS from their Service or personal devices. This includes from HFRS incidents where appropriate or larger scale ('major') incidents and declared emergencies.

When posting from an incident, it is particularly important to ensure that potentially sensitive or confidential information is removed from the text or photo i.e. company names, house numbers, number plates, names or faces of casualties etc.

From time to time an SCG or TCG may request a suspension or restriction of Twitter and a Social Media silence including Facebook and Instagram activities. This will be communicated to all users through the LRF Comms cell (who will assume responsibility for all tweets) or the HFRS Corporate Assurance team via text, email or radio message.

Control staff also have access to the corporate account to Tweet about relevant incidents 24/7, normally when an element of warning and informing is required.

The Corporate Assurance team has the sole authority to grant and revoke access to these accounts as business needs dictate.

6. PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Many staff have their own personal account on a variety of social media platforms.

Care must be taken when sharing / liking / retweeting opinions expressed by others. Whilst phrases such as 'retweet does not necessarily mean endorsement' are often used on Twitter, in reality they offer little protection for staff from an HFRS point of view. Similarly, 'opinions are my own' does not lessen any offence caused or damage to brand reputation.

No additional corporate social media accounts should be created by any member of staff without the appropriate authorisation.

Therefore, when identifying themselves as associated with Humberside Fire and Rescue Service, or discussing the organisation or individual members of staff, all employees must:

- Not engage in activities on the internet which might bring the organisation into disrepute or damage the Service's reputation.
- Not breach any other Service policy (e.g. IT usage, staff code of conduct etc.).
- Not breach copyright or confidentiality clauses.
- Never use social media to intimidate, bully or in any way attack or abuse colleagues or members of the community.
- Not post derogatory or offensive comments on the internet.
- Act in a transparent manner.

- Not contradict the corporate message or stance on particular issues relating to the business of the Service (i.e. safety messages, financial decisions or positive action etc.).

In addition, whether identifying themselves as employees or volunteers working on behalf of the Service or not, staff must not post sensitive or potentially sensitive information relating to HFRS. This includes posting photographs or video footage taken at an incident, information about an operational response or any other information you may be exposed to within your employment.

Information on social media may be available for a long time after it was posted, even if the original post was deleted.

Employees whose use of social media is in contravention of this policy may be subject to the Service's Disciplinary procedure.

**If you require further guidance on this document, please contact the
Corporate Assurance Section**