

<b>REPORT REFERENCE NO.</b>	<b>CSC/22/7</b>
<b>MEETING</b>	<b>COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE</b>
<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	<b>27 APRIL 2022</b>
<b>SUBJECT OF REPORT</b>	<b>RISK-BASED INSPECTION PROGRAMME</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	<b>DIRECTOR OF SERVICE DELIVERY</b>
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<i>That the report be noted.</i>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<p>This paper explains how the Service uses a risk-based inspection programme to enforce the fire safety order within Devon and Somerset. The programme targets our highest risk premises to carry out fire safety audits using staff that are trained in line with the national competency framework. Normal risk premises also have an inspection regime using a fire safety check that can be undertaken by appropriately trained staff.</p> <p>The paper explains the expected number of inspections each year by the Service along with some of the potential risks and challenges that may impact upon delivery.</p>
<b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>	Business as usual. No resource request
<b>EQUALITY RISKS AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS</b>	Complete
<b>APPENDICES</b>	None
<b>BACKGROUND PAPERS</b>	None

## 1. **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1. Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service (“the Service”) has a statutory responsibility to promote and enforce the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety Order) 2005 in regulated, non-domestic premises, such as hotels, care homes and other businesses and public and commercial premises.
- 1.2. There have been many approaches to maintaining an inspection plan of regulated premises over the years, but Her Majesties Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services have said in the state of fire report, *“To make sure services comply with fire safety legislation services should have a risk-based inspection programme targeted at those premises that present the highest risk”*.
- 1.3. The Service’s protection team also has responsibilities in protection delivery such as Building Regulations, Licencing and attendance at Safety Advisory Committee’s along with business safety education and general public complaints regarding fire safety at premises that can at times compete with the risk-based inspection programme.
- 1.4. There is currently no national definition of what constitutes a “high-risk”, and therefore, it is currently for each individual fire and rescue service to define. However, the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) has a working party to provide a more consistent national approach, to which this Service contributes. This work is ongoing.
- 1.5. The Service re-defined its definition of “high-risk” in 2021. The Service uses data sources and risk attributes to identify high-risk premises, for example buildings that have the potential for a significant loss of life in the event of a fire such as large hotels and high rise flats that have an evacuation strategy based on ‘stay put’, or phased evacuation, such as health and social care. These premises rely on high levels of fire safety compliance. Other premises include those that will have the largest community impact in the event of a fire.

## 2. **RISK BASED INSPECTION PROGRAMME**

- 2.1. Following a full review in early 2021, a new definition of ‘Higher Risk’ Premises was established. These premises will be identified as Category 1 premises with the remaining identified as Category 2 ‘Normal Risk’.
- 2.2. The Service ‘High Risk Definition’ (Category 1) is  
*‘Buildings identified as Category 1 ‘Higher Risk’ are more likely to have vulnerable occupants through unfamiliarity and/or their mobility. They are likely to have evacuation methods consisting of stay put, delayed, or phased/progressive strategies.*

*Any fire safety failures or lack of compliance places occupants at significant risk due to the critical reliance on the building design and management of any evacuation strategy. Buildings that have the potential to cause significant harm and/or large loss of life in the event of fire, including indirectly due to community impact/loss, will be our highest priority’.*

2.3. Category 1 ‘Higher Risk’ Premises are:

Premises Source Data (enabler)	Additional Risk Attributes (at least 1)
Buildings identified within the Operational Risk Information System as requiring a Level 3 Site Specific Risk Information Plan	Used for sleeping/residential (6 Storeys +) Identified via Building Risk Review (18m+) FRED* 90%+ Historical risk rating (Very High & High) Buildings with footprint over 10’000m2 Heritage – Grade 1 status Historical Compliance (Risk Rating)  Number = 315
Very large commercial premises	Buildings with footprints 15,000m2 or over  Number = 50
Hospitals (Acute Service)	All Hospitals  Number = 61
Care Homes (Registered CQC)	15 Beds or more Less than 15 beds + FRED* 90%+ Historical Compliance (Risk Rating) Number = 564
Significant Sleeping Accommodation Providers e.g., hotels, boarding, guest, and party houses etc.	Large Buildings / Providers (500m2 footprint or more or 13.5m height or more) Educational Boarding – FRED* 90%+ Heritage (Grade 1 Listed Status) Historical Compliance (Risk Rating)  Number = 579
Annual Intelligence Based Review = Response Identified	Feedback from Internal & External Stakeholders New Buildings Significant Incidents  Dynamic
Total = 1508	
*Fire Risk Event Data – Predictive data analytics of fire likelihood (FRED - technical description)	

2.4. Category 1 Premises will be inspected initially every 3 years except for the 6 Regional Hospitals, which in addition to ongoing compliance support, will be inspected annually. The 3-year inspection will reduce to 1 year as recently recruited inspecting officers achieve competence.

2.5. Category 1 Locations

Response Group	No. of premises	%
Torquay Response Group	406	27%
Plymouth Response Group	301	20%
Exeter Response Group	238	16%
Taunton Response Group	214	14%
Yeovil Response Group	181	12%
Barnstaple Response Group	168	11%
Total	1508	100%

2.6. Category 2 'Normal Risk' Remaining Premises – Inspection Triggers:

Premises Source Data (enabler)	Additional Risk Attributes (at least 1)
All remaining regulated premises	<p><i>Proactive:</i> -            70%+ FRED Identified – 3 Year Cycle            70%+ Identified – historical compliance 1 year revisit            Incident Trends (Local &amp; National)            Thematic Reviews – Sector Specific            Joint Inspections - Partners            Low complexity - Sleeping Risk (Sample)            Any regulated premises            Heritage Buildings (Sample)            Unwanted Fire Signal (AFA) Reduction</p> <p><i>Reactive:</i>            Community Based Intelligence – Reactive – Fire Safety Concerns / Complaints            Partner Referrals / Concerns            Operational Crews – Intelligence            Fire Safety Helpdesk – MOP Concerns            Post Fire Inspections            Statutory Applications – dynamic visit            Spate Conditions / Dynamic Events            Number = 150,000+</p>
*Fire Risk Event Data – Predictive data analytics of fire likelihood (FRED - technical description)	

**3. FIRE SAFETY INSPECTION OFFICERS (FSIO) DEVELOPMENT AND COMPETENCE REQUIREMENTS**

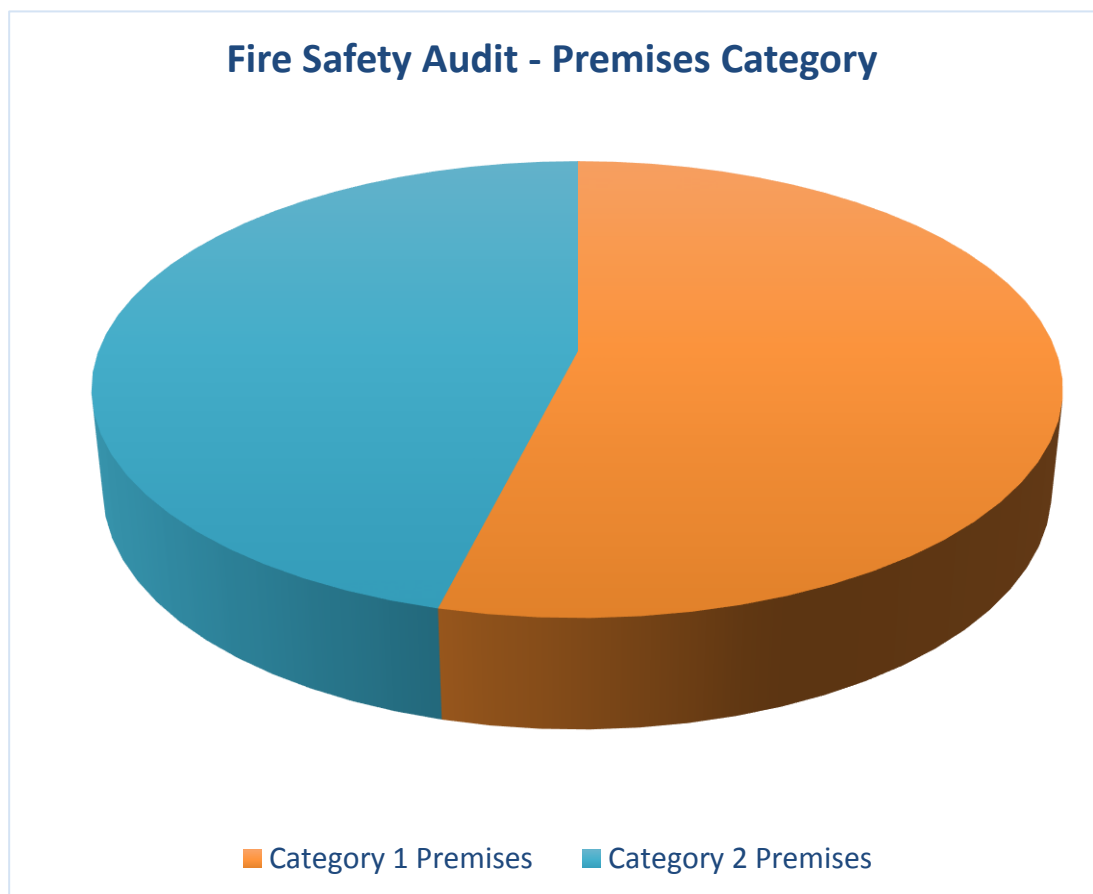
3.1. As stated within the Protection Fire Standards Board and NFCC Competency Framework, Protection Staff will be required to undertake significant development including independent third party accreditation in order to inspect high risk and complex premises. In addition to other statutory duties, the number of competent Fire Safety Inspection Officers will be the critical factor in how many fire safety audits (FSAs) can be undertaken annually.

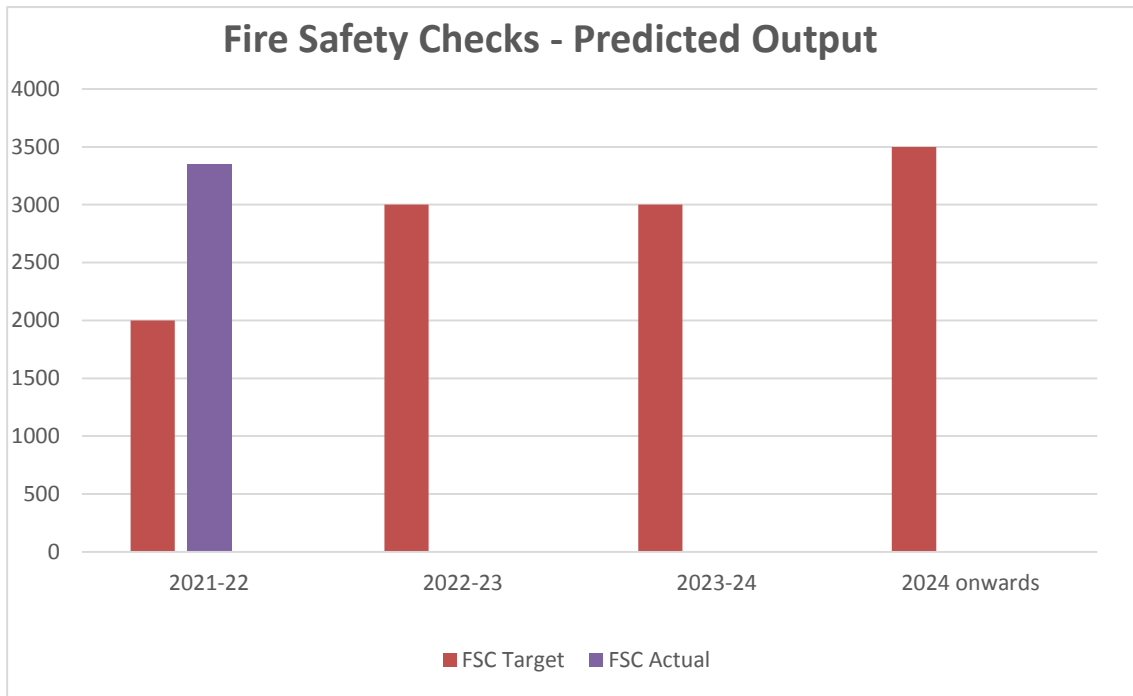
- 3.2. As an example, the recently-recruited trainees will take on average between 24 & 48 months to become competent to inspect the most complex buildings.
- 3.3. Currently Protection Delivery has approximately 16 full time equivalents (FTE) competent FSIOs. Together with the Protection Uplift Grant and ongoing Service investment, it is anticipated this number will grow to over 30 (FTE) during the financial year 2023-24. This will be dependent on the availability of external training courses for new trainees and retention of current high skilled staff. The Service currently has 14 new members of staff undergoing competency training.

**4. CURRENT PERFORMANCE (AS OF 01/03/2022)**

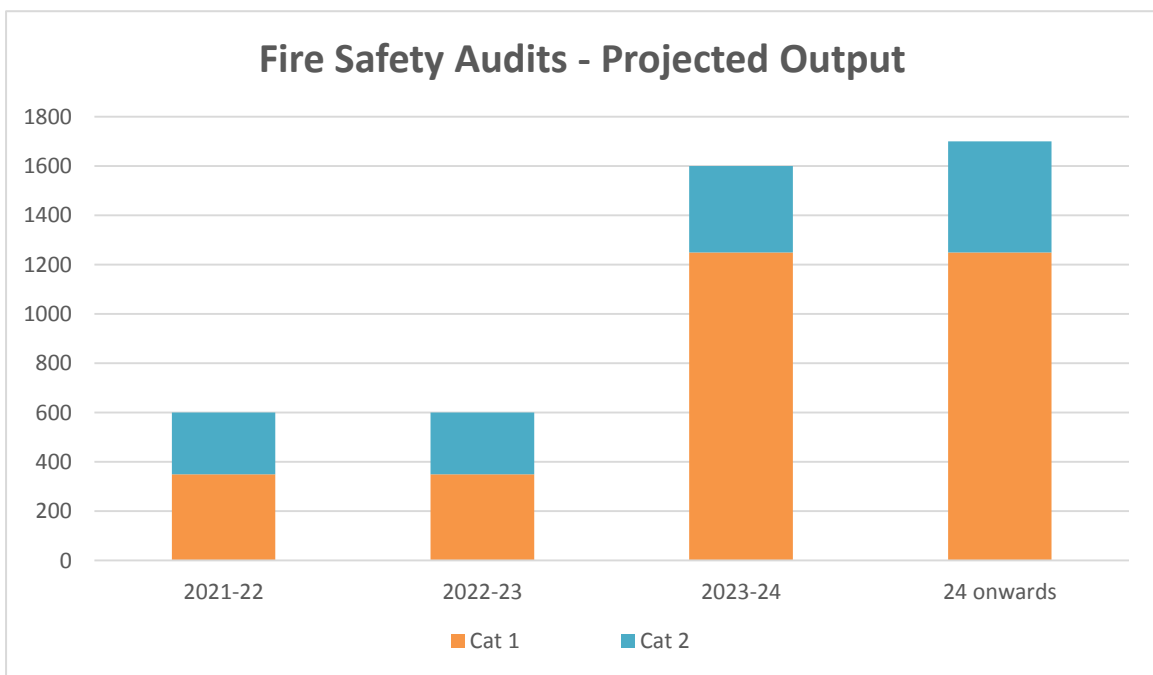
- 4.1. 2021-22 FSA Target = 600 FSAs    Predicted Total = 550 FSAs\*  
2021-22 FSC Target = 2000 FSCs    Predicted Total = 3350 FSCs

(\*The primary reason for the slight underperformance in the number of fire safety audits directly relates to a lower than anticipated number of competent fire safety inspecting officers. However, this has provided an opportunity to undertake additional fire safety checks using developing staff.)





4.2. Due to the number of developing Protection staff, the target for 2021-2022 has been exceeded. An increased target of 3000 Fire Safety Checks will be implemented from 2022 onwards which will be achieved through Protection staff and operational crews.



4.3. Projected Fire Safety Audit outputs are based on the current enhanced establishment and reasonable expectation on the number of competent Fire Safety Inspecting Officers. These additional projected outputs may be impacted by new regulations, government direction through the new Building Safety Regulator and significantly the retention of highly skilled protection officers.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

- 5.1. The Service's risk-based inspection programme has been generated using a combination of data analytics, risk attributes and local knowledge. Its sole aim is to protect communities in the built environment within Devon and Somerset.
- 5.2. The delivery of the programme relies heavily on having the correct number of competent inspecting officers. The Service has a workforce planning strategy for the protection team, utilising uplift grants from Government to ensure the Service has the resources to deliver the programme. One of the biggest challenges for the fire sector nationally is a lack of appropriately trained inspectors that are qualified to inspect in accordance with the National Competency Framework which can be challenging when recruiting.
- 5.3. The Service has a retirement profile that potentially could impact on the future ability to deliver the risk-based inspection programme. The Service has, however, recruited and is training new staff in anticipation of this. The Service is in a good position currently to deliver its risk-based inspection programme. There will always be some margin of risk such as having unplanned leavers from the team, which can impact on the ability to deliver the number of audits planned.
- 5.4. In comparison to other fire and rescue services, the average time to deliver audits can be greater for this Service. This is because the Service has a robust system in place to target audits at the most "at risk" premises. Consequently, this Service has a higher rate of enforcement action per audit undertaken than some other fire and rescue services. The Service is currently in the top quartile for outcomes from audits, with 70% of audits being classified as unsatisfactory. This highlights that the Service is visiting the correct premises. Geography also plays its part, with premises being more widely dispersed than in metropolitan fire and rescue services and therefore having longer travel times for inspecting officers.
- 5.5. The Service's risk-based inspection programme is complimented through its communications strategy and compliance education, to inform businesses on how they can stay compliant with the Fire Safety Order. The Service will be developing a more comprehensive compliance education strategy in 2022/23.

**ACFO PETE BOND**  
**Director of Service Delivery**