

Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority

Draft Modern Slavery Statement

1. Introduction

Through the Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service (the Service) the Authority supports the implementation of the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

“Modern slavery is a serious crime that violates human rights. Victims are forced, threatened or deceived into situations of subjugation, degradation and control which undermine their personal identity and sense of self.” Home Office, 2021

The Modern Slavery Act 2015 was established to tackle these crimes and it provides the law enforcement agencies the powers to pursue and bring to justice criminal activity related to human trafficking, slavery, servitude and forced labour. The Act consolidates slavery and trafficking offences, introduces tougher penalties and sentencing rules and provides more support for victims.

The following definitions are encompassed within the term ‘modern slavery’ for the purposes of the Modern Slavery Act 2015:

- ‘slavery’ is where ownership is exercised over a person
- ‘servitude’ involves the obligation to provide services imposed by coercion
- ‘forced or compulsory labour’ involves work or service extracted from any person under the menace of a penalty and for which the person has not offered themselves voluntarily
- ‘human trafficking’ concerns arranging or facilitating of another with a view to exploiting them.

The Authority supports the execution of the Modern Slavery Act 2015, in which requires organisations to provide their commitment through the publication of a Modern Slavery statement.

2. Our Commitment

The Authority is committed to eliminating discrimination and exploitation in all business dealings and through our supply chains. We believe the obligations placed upon commercial organisations, within the Modern Slavery Act 2015, as essential in the prevention of Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking.

This statement sets out the current practises in place to tackle and prevent modern slavery and human trafficking, within the Service, including through our supply chains, and our duty to identify and report such instances to the relevant bodies. The Service endorses this through:

- staff training, awareness and education
- working in collaboration with our partners, other agencies and through attending groups
- having appropriate and responsible procurement practices and supply chain management.

3. Our Service

The Service has 50 Community Fire Stations across the two counties of Dorset and Wiltshire, which made up of four Local Authority areas, Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole, Dorset, Swindon and Wiltshire. We deliver a broad range of community safety initiatives, including education programmes, safe & well visits and road safety education alongside fire safety and enforcement activities. We target risk and vulnerabilities and work collaboratively with partners to maximise the effectiveness and efficiency of delivery.

In line with the Act, this statement covers the Service's activities, including all direct employees, agency workers, volunteers and supply chains. This statement will be reviewed annually by the Fire Authority, through the Statement of Assurance.

The Service's organisational structure can be viewed via the following link.

[Organisation Chart](#)

Service procedures:

The Service has several internal procedures to ensure an ethical and transparent nature when conducting our organisation and activities. These procedures are reviewed regularly, being updated as appropriate. The main procedures, which incorporate the identification and approach to Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking, are:

- Safer Recruitment (ED18 SI)
- Safeguarding of Children & Adults at risk (PCE1)
- Adult & Child Abuse (PCE1 SI)
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI 1)
- Whistleblowing
- Code of Ethics.

Service practices:

To ensure the Service is acting responsibly activities are undertaken to protect our staff and agency workers, as well as our supply chains, from modern slavery and human trafficking. These activities include:

- Carrying out pre-employment checks for all directly employed staff and approved staffing agencies
- Ensuring that agency providers used undertake safeguards to ensure that pre-employment checks are carried out on all agency workers and their right to work in the UK
- Having a pay grading system in place to ensure that pay rates are in place and based on the skills and responsibilities required to carry out the role
- Giving appropriate and fair access to training and development opportunities for all staff

- Consulting with the Trade unions and staff representative groups on policies and proposed organisational change
- Purchasing goods and services from UK or Overseas companies, who are required to comply with the Act
- Incorporating a clause in our standard terms and conditions that requires contractors to comply with the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and, when our terms and conditions are not used, adding a bespoke clause to individual contracts to ensure compliance with the Act
- Recruiting professionals who uphold appropriate professional codes of practice, relating to procurement and supply chains
- Ensuring that our staff are aware of their responsibilities, in both their professional and personal lives, to report any concerns regarding human trafficking and modern slavery.

Service procurement and supply chains:

The Service is committed to ethical procurement practices which aims to encourage fair pay and working conditions in our supply chains, to assist in the identification and elimination of modern slavery and human trafficking. The Service expects all its partners, contractors and suppliers, that are subject to Section 54 of the Act, to understand and comply with the requirements set out in the legislation.

In all tender processes, modern slavery is an important consideration and appropriate actions are taken to ensure any risks of modern slavery are addressed. The Service also assesses other actions it can take, such as collaboration opportunities with its partners, to further promote the Act and minimise the possibility of Modern Slavery in its business and in its supply chain.

While it is impractical for the Service to audit and monitor every supplier in its entire supply chain, the Service takes a proportionate risk management approach. As a Contracting Authority, the Service undertakes procurement in compliance with the UK Public Contract Regulations 2015. The Standard Selection Questionnaire, asked in all competitive tenders, includes a requirement to self-certify (where applicable) their compliance with the Modern Slavery Act 2015. Also, specific questions are built into the scoring criteria, where this is relevant, to the procurement being undertaken.

In support of this, the procurement team undertake specific training related to modern slavery and human trafficking in supply chains as part of their annual CIPS (Chartered Institute of Procurement & Supply) Ethical Procurement and Supply Module and Test.

Service training and awareness:

All staff and volunteers attend a Service induction, where safeguarding and modern slavery are covered. In addition, all staff and volunteers are required to complete mandatory, Level One, E-learning training for Adult and Children's Safeguarding, this includes a section on Modern Day Slavery. Furthermore, Level Two Designated Safeguarding training, through the Virtual College, is provided for appropriate staff and officers. Our training is aimed at developing knowledge and awareness in how to identify the signs and indicators of exploitation. It also provides information and learning on what to do when a member of staff meets a potential victim and how to escalate and report concerns.