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www.gov.uk/home-office

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Dear Chief Fire Officer

As you are aware the Building Safety Act (2022) places new requirements on Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs). Under the new regime, Fire Protection Officers will provide assistance to the work of the new 'Building Safety Regulator' (BSR) which will regulate higher-risk buildings through a multi-disciplinary team approach led by HSE. To create that capability and capacity, the Impact Assessment for the Act identified a need to 'pump prime' local regulators ahead of the Building Safety Regulator being able to re-charge.

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) is therefore providing a one-off 'New Burdens' funding package for this Spending Review period. The purpose of this funding is to recruit and train 111 new Fire Protection staff (89 Inspecting Officers, 22 fire engineers). The recruitment of these new staff and their training will be supported at national level by the National Fire Chiefs' Council (NFCC), which is working to support FRA preparations for implementing the measures necessary to fulfil obligations under the Building Safety Act.

Funding

I can confirm that the Home Office has now received confirmation that DLUHC will provide £25.9m Resource Departmental Expenditure Limit (RDEL) programme costs, across the three years of this Spending Review period. This funding is for FRA BSR costs relating to recruitment and training. The annual breakdown of funding is as follows and has been calculated by the NFCC to reflect the planned roll-out:

- 2022/23: £1.6m
- 2023/24: £13.4m
- 2024/25: £10.9m

This funding will be transferred from DLUHC to the Home Office, with the Home Office taking responsibility for overseeing distribution to FRAs and ensuring that it is only used to meet the new obligations placed on FRAs under the new regime. The £25.9m RDEL funding is to cover the funding of the whole role and employment of any additional staff employed or seconded specifically for the 'new burden' of delivering the BSR. This includes salary and on-costs, professional training and

overheads. The overheads will vary between FRA but may include any equipment, uniform, PPE, IT and other role-based training that are required to carry out the BSR role. The funding will be available from 1 January 2023 to cover salaries and other costs of staff engaged from the date of their appointment.

The Protection Uplift funding should not be used to support any BSR-related costs during this Spending Review period, as the BSR is fully funded during this time.

The NFCC has modelled available funding against the distribution of HRRBs (based on Building Risk Review data) and the funding will be available in accordance with this and local working arrangements. We will shortly be issuing Memorandums of Understanding (MoU) to those FRAs recruiting staff. The MoU will set out the payment and performance management arrangements, and reimbursement will be via invoicing in arrears.

Annex A provides a regional breakdown of recruitment by fire protection officer, engineer and regional manager posts. This model has been developed by the NFCC, and I understand that you are all familiar with it. Administration will be provided on the basis of a single national team based in London. The maximum salary rates for each role for 2022/23 are as follows:

Inspecting Officer	£71,400
Fire Safety Engineer	£90,300
Regional BSR Manager	£90,300
Senior Fire Engineer (London only)	£100,800
BSR National Co-Ordinator (London only)	£105,000

Recharging

Work remains ongoing with respect to recharging arrangements for the BSR which will provide FRAs with the ability to cost recover in the long term. It is anticipated that this will come into effect in October 2023 which will result in some crossover with the three-year Spending Review period. FRAs will be expected to recharge the BSR for hours worked (taking into account overheads and training costs) once recharging comes into effect, but will continue to invoice the Home Office for the ongoing training and recruitment costs incurred over and above monies recovered through recharging during this Spending Review period. HSE has recently run a consultation on recharging and FRA rates are being reviewed by the NFCC. Given the aim of the BSR is that it is self-funding via charges, it is possible that we may need to work with DLUHC, HSE and NFCC as this programme progresses to adjust the staffing numbers where it is clear there is a significant difference between the level of chargeable work and the number of staff recruited.

Protection Uplift Grant Funding

As the BSR new Burdens funding introduces an additional source of funding for BSR staff, I just wanted to also take this opportunity to restate the purpose and boundaries for protection uplift funding. The protection uplift funding you receive should remain ringfenced to protection activity, in the way that it always has been.

This funding stream is explicitly for the investment in additional staffing, training and technologies to bolster all elements of protection capability and capacity to support delivery in line with local community risk plans and risk-based inspection programmes. It should not be used to make up any actual, or perceived shortfall in BSR-related funding, as the BSR programme is fully funded in this SR period. Should you have any queries about the ongoing uplift funding, please contact the team at: fireprotection@homeoffice.gov.uk.

I would also like to take this opportunity to record that I am extremely grateful to you for all of your work and support to deliver this key element of the new building safety regime. Fire protection is vital to reducing risks and incidents in the built environment. Working collaboratively, including with partners, is a fundamental part of keeping communities safe, and I fully acknowledge your commitment to that.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sarah Gawley', with a stylized, cursive script.

Sarah Gawley
Interim Director of Fire, Events and Central Management Directorate

Annex A

London

	New Staff in 2022/23					New Staff in 2023/24	
	Inspecting Officers	Fire Engineers	Senior Fire Engineers	Manager	BSR National Co-Ordinator	Inspecting Officers	Fire Engineers
London	36	8	2	4.0	1.0	10	2

South East

	New Staff From 1st Jan 2023		
	Inspecting Officers	Fire Engineers	Manager
Buckinghamshire	0	0	0
East Sussex	2	1	1.0
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	1	1	0
Kent	2	0	0
Oxfordshire	0	0	0
Royal Berkshire	2	0	0
Surrey	1	0	0
West Sussex	1	0	0

South West

	New Staff From 1st Jan 2023		
	Inspecting Officers	Fire Engineers	Manager
Avon	1	0	0
Cornwall	0	0	0
Devon & Somerset	1	0	0
Dorset & Wiltshire	2	1	0.5
Gloucestershire	0	0	0

East Midlands

	New Staff From 1st Jan 2023		
	Inspecting Officers	Fire Engineers	Manager
Derbyshire	0	0	0
Leicestershire	1	1	0.5
Lincolnshire	0	0	0
Northamptonshire	0	0	0
Nottinghamshire	1	0	0

Eastern

	New Staff From 1st Jan 2023		
	Inspecting Officers	Fire Engineers	Manager
Bedfordshire	1	0	0
Cambridgeshire	0	0	0
Essex	1	1	0.5
Hertfordshire	0	0	0
Norfolk	1	0	0
Suffolk	1	0	0

North East

	New Staff From 1st Jan 2023		
	Inspecting Officers	Fire Engineers	Manager
Cleveland	0	0	0
County Durham & Darlington	0	0	0
Northumberland	0	0	0
Tyne and Wear	3	1	0.5

North West

	New Staff From 1st Jan 2023		
	Inspecting Officers	Fire Engineers	Manager
Cheshire	0	0	0
Cumbria	0	0	0
Greater Manchester	4	1	1.0
Lancashire	1	0	0
Merseyside	2	1	0

West Midlands

	New Staff From 1st Jan 2023		
	Inspecting Officers	Fire Engineers	Manager
Hereford & Worcester	0	0	0
Shropshire	0	0	0
Staffordshire	1	0	0
Warwickshire	0	0	0
West Midlands	6	1	1.0

Yorkshire & Humberside

	New Staff From 1st Jan 2023		
	Inspecting Officers	Fire Engineers	Manager
Humberside	1	0	0
North Yorkshire	0	0	0

South Yorkshire	2	0	0
West Yorkshire	4	1	1.0