

DWFRS - HMICFRS Improvement Plan - 2024 Inspection

During April to June 2024, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Service (HMICFRS) inspected Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service (The Service).

The inspection team from HMICFRS carried out an in-depth review, to assess how effective and efficient we are and how well we look after our people.

The Service was judged against 11 inspection 'diagnostics' as set out below.

- Understanding the risk of fire and other emergencies
- Preventing fires and other risks
- Protecting the public through fire regulation
- Responding to fires and other emergencies
- Responding to major and multi-agency incidents
- Making best use of resources
- Making the fire and rescue service affordable now and in the future
- Promoting the right values and culture
- Getting the right people with the right skills
- Ensuring fairness and promoting diversity
- Managing performance and developing leaders

The published inspection report highlighted 11 Areas for Improvements (AFI) and 1 Cause of Concern (CoC) areas across 6 of the diagnostics and included recommended actions for the Service to consider.

This improvement plan details the AFIs and CoC and the Services response to those recommendations.

Progress against these recommendation actions will remain a focus for the Service and will be reported and monitored through our performance management governance.

Our published report is available on the HMICFRS website at the below link

[Fire & Rescue Service 2023–25 Effectiveness, efficiency and people An inspection of Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service](#)

HMICFRS Diagnostic - Preventing fires and other risks

Inspection Recommendation	Service Action	Responsible Person	Delivery date
(AFI) The service should make sure that it prioritises the people most at risk for its safe and well visits.	We will review the risk criteria used to prioritise Safe and Well Visits . This will include exploring the possibility of weighting individual criteria to enable further prioritisation. Progress will be monitored via the Service Delivery Plan	Assistant Chief Fire Officer - Community Safety	December 2026
(AFI) The service should review whether its 56-day performance target for safe and well visits is appropriate for high-risk occupants.	We will review the risk criteria used to prioritise Safe and Well Visits . This will include exploring the possibility of weighting individual criteria to enable further prioritisation. Progress will be monitored via the Service Delivery Plan	Assistant Chief Fire Officer - Community Safety	December 2026
(AFI) When its partners make referrals for safe and well visits, the service should make sure they provide vulnerability information.	A partnerships officer will work with all referring partners to strengthen and streamline the process, including ensuring an accurate assessment of vulnerability is undertaken. Progress will be monitored via the Service Delivery Plan	Assistant Chief Fire Officer - Community Safety	March 2026

HMICFRS Diagnostic - Protecting the public through fire regulation

Recommendation	Service Action	Responsible Person	Delivery date
(AFI) The service should regularly monitor the prohibition notices and enforcement notices it serves and make sure they are being complied with.	<p>The feasibility of a mechanism to improve recording and monitoring of enforcement notices will be explored.</p> <p>Progress will be monitored via the Service Delivery Plan</p>	Assistant Chief Fire Officer - Community Safety	December 2026

HMICFRS Diagnostic - Responding to major and multi-agency incidents

Recommendation	Service Action	Responsible Person	Delivery date
(AFI) The service should make sure appropriate staff understand and participate in a programme of cross-border exercises, with learning from them recorded and shared.	<p>Annual Cross Border plan to be developed. All exercises to continue to be captured through our internal system, for longer term evidence, learning and development. Set up competency records for evidence of individual involvement.</p> <p>Progress will be monitored via the Service Delivery Plan</p>	Assistant Chief Officer - Service Support	March 2026
(AFI) The service should make sure it is well prepared to form part of a multi-agency response to a terrorist incident, and its procedures for responding are understood by all staff.	<p>Review effectiveness of the training to date. Undertake a gap analysis and deliver against any gaps.</p> <p>Progress will be monitored via the Service Delivery Plan</p>	Assistant Chief Officer - Service Support	March 2026

HMICFRS Diagnostic - Promoting the right values and culture

Recommendation	Service Action	Responsible Person	Delivery date
<p>(CoC) The service should update its culture delivery plan to include the following recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The service should make sure that its staff are able to demonstrate that they understand and follow the Core Code of Ethics, and should be able to demonstrate that it has built the code into all relevant policies and practices. • The service should assure itself that senior and middle managers act as role models and show they are committed to service values through their behaviour. • The service should establish a culture where behaviours that aren't in line with its values are routinely challenged, making sure all staff are trained and supported to identify and challenge these behaviours. 	<p>All recommendations are monitored through the delivery of our Cultural Action & Delivery Plan which was recognised by the HMICFRS in their final report.</p> <p>A Culture Steering Group is in place consisting of individuals with responsibility for the successful delivery of the action plan. Progress is actively monitored by the Culture Development Committee which meets quarterly.</p> <p>The CDC is chaired by the CFO and has a broad attendance base including Heads of Department, Representative Bodies, Network Leads, Leadership Consultancy Group representatives and members of the People Services Directorate. An Independent Adviser sits on the Committee to provide additional scrutiny, guidance and Support. Six monthly progress high light reports are presented to the Fire Authority's Finance and Committee. An assurance framework has been developed to assess and evaluate progress in terms of whether the change has embedded and is felt by staff.</p> <p>The plan can be found here - Culture action plan</p>	<p>Assistant Chief Officer - People Services</p>	<p>April 2026</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The service should make sure appropriate support is provided to those raising workforce concerns. • The service should make sure staff fully understand the role of the culture development committee and the actions it is taking. 			
(AFI) The service should proactively monitor working hours to make sure staff (including those on dual and secondary contracts) don't work excessive hours.	<p>A review of working hours will be undertaken to ensure we are monitoring it in the most effective way possible.</p> <p>Progress will be monitored via the Service Delivery Plan</p>	Assistant Chief Fire Officer - Community Safety	March 2026

HMICFRS Diagnostic - Ensuring fairness and promoting diversity

Recommendation	Service Action	Responsible Person	Delivery date
(AFI) The service needs to improve the diversity of its workforce, particularly for wholetime firefighter roles.	<p>We will review approach to wholetime operational recruitment and the effectiveness of our positive action plan</p> <p>We will consider implementing a process to seek feedback from unsuccessful candidates</p> <p>Progress will be monitored via the Service Delivery Plan</p>	Assistant Chief Officer - People Services	April 2026

(AFI) The service should train all staff in equality, diversity and inclusion and make sure staff understand the benefits of positive action.	We will review and update our approach to EDI training Progress will be monitored via the Culture Action Plan	Assistant Chief Officer - People Services	June 2025
(AFI) The service should make sure it has effective grievance procedures that staff have confidence in, and should resolve disciplinary and work-related concerns promptly.	We will deliver a revised and updated Grievance procedure	Assistant Chief Officer - People Services	November 2024 Complete

HMICFRS Diagnostic - Managing performance and developing leaders

Recommendation	Service Action	Responsible Person	Delivery date
(AFI) The service should make sure its promotions process is transparent and fair.	We will undertake a review of the Crew and Watch Manager promotion process Progress will be monitored via the Service Delivery Plan	Assistant Chief Officer - People Services	September 2025