



Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

Meeting and date: Overview and Audit Committee, 10 November 2021

Report title: Operational Assurance Improvement Plan

Lead Member: Councillor Steven Lambert

Report sponsor: AC Calum Bell, Head of Protection, Assurance and Development

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Action: Noting

Recommendations: That the progress made against each improvement detailed within the updated OAIP is noted.

Executive summary:

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the progress that continues to be made, with regard to the delivery of the Service's approved Operational Assurance Improvement Plan (OAIP).

The OAIP is a dynamic document, used to enhance the Service's ability to capture, scrutinise and respond to operational learning originating from events such as operational debriefs and Learning Review of Command (LRC) which are now customary for all notable incidents, assurance visits and external reviews, such as the Grenfell enquiry.

The internal approach towards how the Service now gathers and assess learning from operational activity, has better enabled it to effectively identify emerging issues and then implement practical and corrective solutions, in order to enhance operational performance.

The Service had been trialling an electronic monitoring system, the trial has now ended, and the contract with Effective Command has ended. The Operational Assurance Team have built an Incident monitoring and feedback form which is now being trialled by monitoring officers.

The main areas of focus for the OAIP continue to be operational learning from incidents and this is not limited to just those that Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (BFRS) has attended. As part of the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme (JESIP) information is shared across all CAT 1 and 2 Responders through the Joint Operational Learning (JOL) portal and via the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) the Service can access and share "Learning Events" through the National Operational Learning (NOL) framework.

Most recently, BFRS has completed a number of High-rise exercises including a large-scale exercise at the Fire Service College, recommendations from these are currently being actioned. Good progress continues to be made with the work

and actions produced from the Grenfell Tower Inquiry and the project lead will provide further detail.

The OAIP is reviewed by the Operational Assurance Group (OAG), an agenda item is to re-visit archived recommendations of interest to confirm actions, as a consequence of the OAG held 26/05/2021 three recommendations were returned to the live OAIP to be reviewed, these are currently now showing as "in progress" with an expectation to close them at the next OAG.

Financial implications:

There are no direct financial implications associated with this report, as all expenditure is contained within existing budgets. The trial for the electronic monitoring system is now complete and the cost was £2,950 for two trial periods of 6 months.

Risk management:

Delivery of the OAIP will contribute towards ensuring the Service's operational safe systems of work are continuously improved to conform to the latest safety standards and are efficient, effective and responsive to significant changes in the external or internal environments.

Failure to deliver the OAIP could expose:

- the Service, its personnel and the public to operational, health and safety risks;
- Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority (BMKFA) to reputational and / or financial risks.

The OAIP will inform the ongoing development of the operational workforce plan particularly in relation to areas such as maintenance of operational skills, acquisition training and assessment.

Legal implications:

There are no negative legal implications associated with this report.

Privacy and security implications:

The OAIP does not raise any privacy or security issues.

Duty to collaborate:

Although the Authority has committed to a default position of collaboration with Thames Valley Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs). The OAIP relates specifically to BFRS operational activity, however any opportunity to collaborate will be explored, as will the sharing of any identified operational learning.

Health and safety implications:

There are no negative implications on health and safety associated with this report. The delivery of the OAIP will continue to promote and enhance the existing health and safety culture within the Service.

Environmental implications:

Delivery of the OAIP will enhance the Service's ability to identify and manage potential environmental hazards in both the internal and external surroundings.

Equality, diversity, and inclusion implications:

No immediate issues identified in relation to the OAIP, however, IIAs and DPIAs will be completed for any changes that result from any subsequent activity, where there is the potential for equality, diversity and privacy issues to arise.

Consultation and communication:

Learning from operational activity or recommendations following debrief and assurance visits are routinely published and communicated to all staff, utilising either the Intranet or Operational Assurance newsletter. This approach is intended to ensure there is a clear understanding and appreciation of the collective responsibility there is toward continuous improvement in respect to operational performance.

From a monitoring and reporting perspective, the Head of Protection, Assurance and Development leads on the improvement plan and is chair of the Operational Assurance Group (OAG).

The Head of Operational Training and Assurance has responsibility for delivering the OAIP in conjunction with the OA team.

Background papers:

Overview and Audit Committee: 17 March 2021 (item 14)

<https://bucksfire.gov.uk/documents/2021/03/oa-item-14.pdf/>

Appendix	Title	Protective Marking
1	Operational Assurance Improvement Plan	