

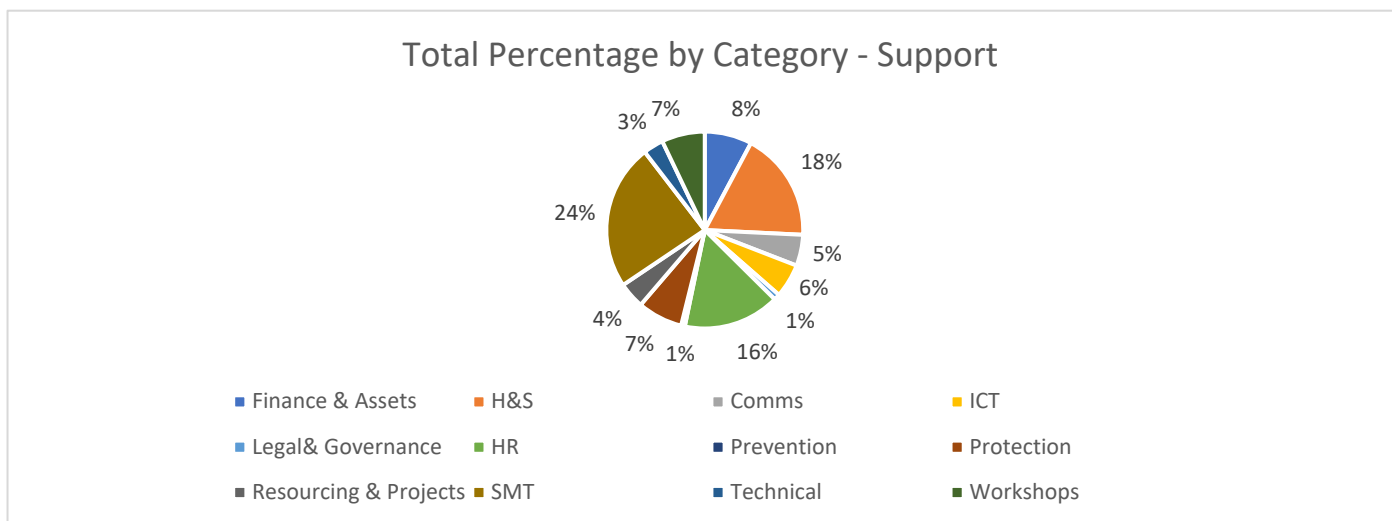
Appendix 4 - Training, Learning and Development

The Training Needs Analysis (TNA) process assesses the need for employees training at least annually. This TNA is translated into prioritised learning programmes, submitted by department managers, approved by the Training Strategy Group (TSG), and scrutinised to ensure alignment with business priorities, business continuity succession plans and approved budgets.

The Service’s 2022-2023 Financial commitment to the training of operational and support employees was comparable with the organisation’s demographic. £139k was invested in operational training and 90k on training support services employees.



There was a spread of investment across a range of departments, significant investment was committed to H&S, Senior Management Team and Human Resources.



In April 2023 the TSG met to review the proposal for allocating funding against the 2023-24 TNA and approved £227k for investment into employees training and development.

Organisational Development work across all the teams in the service to provide further training and development, they support departments to scope and plan innovate learning that develops employees’ skills, confidence and knowledge around subjects which improve their ability to deliver effective services to the community and each other.

Workplace champions play an essential role in shaping and promoting employees' wellbeing both in and out of the workplace. The Service have provided training for EDI Champions, Menopause Champions, along with mental health first aid workers and Trauma support refresher courses.

Operational Training Department

There has been a review of the training department following several changes in personnel through promotions and internal transfers. There are eight Area Trainers in the team from 1 October 2023. In addition, the training department welcomes Firefighters into the team which is an innovative approach to generating a different culture, introducing diversity of thought, and providing a different pathway in which Firefighters can develop themselves, diversify skillsets within BFRS.

To ensure the department remains an attractive proposition for employees the Service has been exploring new and innovative ways of working. This includes training department secondments, providing training and development for existing employees to enable them to reach an associate instructor standard.

The training team is committed to increasing the Services operational establishment with competent, professional Firefighters that are coached and developed to serve the public at their time of need.

The training team are proud to have completed:

- Two Firefighter Development Programs (FFDP) per year using Service instructors at the Fire Service College. Both these programmes have had a total of 18 apprentices each who have started their firefighting journey with BFRS.
- Two competent Firefighter transfer courses per year. The Service continues to develop a new three-week conversion course to support internal and external applicants transferring from on-call to full-time roles. This course can also be utilised to support employees returning to work following long term absences, sabbaticals, or maternity leave. These transferee courses have now opened the pathway for individuals to join the establishment where previously the opportunity was not there.
- Two On-Call training courses per year, increasing the establishment of the On-Call and providing greater resilience during periods of peak demand as per the Resourcing Model.

The training team continue to deliver training, validation of operational employees and set the standards for what good looks like. Fire Service College instructors deliver promotional competency-based courses for Incident Commanders at all levels. All training is Skills for Justice (SFJ) accredited.

Training Assurance

Training Assurance primary focus is on Maintenance of Competency (MOC) and assuring all training being delivered is of the standard expected.

The training platform is the Hub of Education and Training (HEAT), which provides an area where employees can record evidence of competence effectively. Further training and communication were generated this year reference a major change to have employees report and the expectations surrounding competency. The Training Assurance Station Commander changed the MOC year from a calendar year cycle to a financial year, this aligned many of the Services existing measures of success with maintaining competency. Further changes now enable junior officers to train and record more fluently across the year. The Training Assurance Station Commander has set the expectations and responsibilities reference this new MOC whilst creating additional support for new Junior Officers and other supervisory managers that will be developed throughout this first year.

The Training Assurance team complete a range of planned and unplanned visits to Fire Stations. The objective is to support employee development, complete robust Quality Assurance checks on training sessions and provide guidance on processes and procedures.

Good practice is shared through internal communication between Training Assurance, Operational Training and Operational Assurance. Everyone who is training assured are assessed are provided with individual feedback to encourage and support further development. Any individuals who do not achieved the standards required to attain or maintain competency are provided the required support through personal development plans, direct coaching and reassessment.

Operational Assurance

The Operational Assurance Team (OAT) support employee development through a range of informal and formal assessment methods, effective performance management and on-going support utilising a range of methods to include:

- Operational Exercises
- Newsletter
- OAT bulletin
- Quiz
- Learner Review of Command (LRC)
- Operational Reviews
- Operational Assurance Improvement Plan (OAIP)

The operational exercise program continued to run throughout periods of disruption and peak demand, and regularly involved collaboration with other Fire and Rescues

Services, partner agencies and other responders as part of a multi-agency response. The Service utilises a wide range of training sites, including The Fire Service College, local high-risk sites and Service training facilities such as Westcott, which has been developed into a dedicated USAR training resource.

Members of the OAT visit operational crews on Fire Stations, share information on good practice and deliver specific training sessions on thematic areas such as National high-profile incidents and emerging risks. The assurance team also deliver case studies and desk top reviews to improve operational competency.

Good practice and learning opportunities are shared through the publication of a regular internal Operational Assurance newsletter. This helps to share technical training information and good practices, changes in operational procedures and technical assessments which aid assurance of a particular theme for example wildfires which posed a high risk during the summer of 2022.

The team continues to facilitate operational debriefs following attendance at multiple major incidents. The College of Policing format has now been adopted throughout the team which has proved a success whilst the opportunity to evaluate is not underestimated and the OAT is at the forefront of this. Once recommendations have been made and approved through the Operational Assurance Group (OAG) they are added to the OAIP. This improvement Plan then assists in driving meaning change throughout the service.

Good practice and learning from debriefs must be shared far and wide throughout BFRS as this are a key element to how the Service develops and grows without making the same mistakes. The team utilises as many platforms as possible to ensure everyone's individual learning style is catered for, this includes the Services e-learning platform and many of the conduits that have been highlighted above.

Operational and organisational learning is recorded and shared with other Fire and Rescue Services and partner agencies through National Operational Learning (NOL) and Joint Organisational Learning (JOL). There is a recognised process which feeds from NOL and JOL to within operational assurance that accepts learns from across the country and this helps prevent BFRS having similar issues.