



Integrated Personal Development System Code of Practice

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Integrated Personal Development System

Code of Practice

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Introduction

- 1 One of the Governments' aims is to ensure that employers' skills demands are met by providing a quality-assured structure of National Occupational Standards (NOS) and Qualifications. This practice is widely embedded in the commercial world with 25 Sector Skills Councils delivering and maintaining standards for employers across a wide range of businesses and millions of employees working to the standards set.
- 2 The importance of this joined up approach is reinforced by work in December 2007 to develop a framework of NOS in planning for and responding to major incidents which fall under the remit of Civil Contingencies.
- 3 Every business has its own method of utilising NOS and Qualifications. For the Fire and Rescue Service, this is achieved through the Integrated Personal Development System (IPDS) which is embedded in the Fire & Rescue Service Act and subsequent Framework documents. Appendix 1 shows this relationship between the Government and the FRS.
- 4 IPDS provides a structure, based on agreed standards of performance, within which organisations can identify, attract, assess and develop people to fulfil their current and future roles. Integral to this framework is meeting the needs of the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP), the promotion of equality of opportunity for every person and a focus on improving the health and safety of staff.
- 5 This Code of Practice (COP) describes how the component parts of IPDS relate to each other, and to the wider objectives of the Fire and Rescue Service. It supports a more standardised implementation of IPDS.
- 6 Adherence to this COP will demonstrate compliance with the requirements of the National Framework. Fire and Rescue Authorities in England are therefore strongly encouraged to follow this code but it does not have legal force, and cannot prevail over statutory or mandatory external requirements.
- 7 As the name suggests, IPDS is an integrated system. The Code of Practice identifies which parts are mandatory and which are advisory but Fire and Rescue Services will gain the greatest benefit if they implement all of the components. IPDS does not exist in a vacuum. Fire and Rescue Authorities need a framework of other Human Resource Management (HRM) and Human Resource Development (HRD) processes in addition to the IPDS components. The guidelines contained in this Code of Practice draw on IPDS advice and published guidance available from the Department for Communities and Local Government, and also from best practices followed by a wide range of organisations in both the public and private sectors but it is not an exhaustive list of HRM and HRD practices.

- 8 This document makes reference to the HR strategy published by the Chief Fire Officers Association but this should not be seen as an endorsement of that strategy.
- 9 FRSs should carry out equality impact assessments in relation to any local working practices, selection and progression practices.
- 10 Note that any reference in this document to rolemaps means the NJC agreed rolemaps. Any amendments to these rolemaps must be sanctioned by the NJC.
- 11 The successful management of IPDS should be aligned to four key aims as shown in the diagram below.

	Key Aims	Why	How
1	Define the jobs that need to be done to deliver the IRMP.	To deliver the service in an organised way To enable people to be trained to the required standard To support continuous improvement	Job Description National Occupational Standards (Rolemaps) Person Specification
2	Select the right people to do those jobs.	To deliver the service in a safe, effective and efficient way To maximise productivity To reduce costs	National Firefighter Selection Processes Assessment Development Centres Selection Processes
3	Train and develop them to do their job competently.	To deliver the service in a safe way To help achieve objectives To make the FRS an employer of choice	Development Programmes (perhaps leading to qualifications) Coaching and Mentoring
4	Ensure that they continue to perform effectively.	To deliver the service in a safe and consistent way To help assure quality of service To engender a professional culture	Continuous assessment of workplace performance and appraisal Recording systems linked to business objectives Continuing Professional Development Instigate a Performance Management System

These are covered in more detail in the following pages.

Chapter 1: Defining the Job

Linking IPDS to the IRMP

- 12 A key part of the Integrated Personal Development System is how it supports the Service's objective of making communities safer. Fire and Rescue Authorities are constantly planning to reduce risks in the community and part of this is making sure their people have the latest skills to contribute to public safety. The table below shows how IPDS and Integrated Risk Management Planning fit together.

IRMP	Identifies existing risks within the community – incident trends, site-specific risks, generic risks, and demographic data linking risk in a geographical area to socio-economic groups.
	Evaluates the effectiveness of current service resources, strategies, practices and procedures and their impact on lowering the risk.
	Determines what new strategies, policies, procedures, standards and activities are required to drive down risk in the community – what can be done differently to increase our effectiveness?
	Determines the service resource requirements.
	Identifies the workforce profile (the number of staff and the roles which people occupy, which are required to provide an effective service).
IPDS	Identifies the specific training and development strategies that are required to develop and maintain a competent workforce.
	Provides the frameworks to support staff develop the skills and knowledge required to deliver the service outlined within the IRMP.

Using Rolemaps / National Occupational Standards

- 13 National Occupational Standards are important because they describe the skills, knowledge and understanding needed to undertake a particular task or job to a nationally recognised level of competence.
- 14 They are particularly important in the Fire and Rescue Service because, for staff working to the Grey and Gold books, these standards have been developed into rolemaps and incorporated into their pay structures and conditions of service.

How should Rolemaps and National Occupational Standards be used?

- 15 NOS can be used for recruitment and selection (they are an integral part of Assessment Development Centres and National Firefighter Selection Processes). They should be used for job design and evaluation, training needs analysis, learning programmes, workplace assessment and performance appraisals.
- 16 It is important to note that only one 'set' of rolemaps has been agreed by the National Joint Council.

Are Rolemaps mandatory?

- 17 The rolemaps are enshrined in the terms and conditions of all operational staff. But there is flexibility in how they are used. For example, it is not necessary for all staff to work to all parts of their Rolemap.
- 18 Specific activities within roles can be determined by the FRA to meet their local needs and Fire and rescue authorities can require any reasonable activity to be carried out by an individual employee within his or her role map
- 19 Where activities sit outside the expected Rolemap requirements then this may be subject to an enhancement as determined by the Authority For more information see the Grey and Gold books.

What else should be considered?

- 20 The development of job descriptions for each job is considered to be essential as it enables individuals to understand what is required of them. This is true for all staff groups, including those working to 'Green Book' conditions.

Using Job Descriptions and Person Specifications

- 21 For staff working to the Grey and Gold books, Job Descriptions should include the NOS listed in the Rolemap and place each NOS into local context for that particular job in the Fire & Rescue Service. In other words, the NOS explains what the FRS wants its people to do, the Job Description explains how it expects them to do it.
- 22 For example, a Firefighter's Job Profile might include:

Unit	NOS	Context
FF4	Resolve Operational Incidents.	<p>Managing hazards and risks in buildings and structures</p> <p>Identify potential and actual common hazards and risks associated with buildings and structures. This will including those relating to type of structure, type of building material, purpose/content of building, location of building and various combinations of these elements</p> <p>Identify potential and actual specific hazards and risks associated with buildings and structures which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> at high level underground <p>demonstrate a range of methods of gaining access/entry to buildings and structures, in accordance with relevant regulations.</p>

- 23 It is important to note the distinction between a competence – which is a function to be performed; a rolemap – which is a collection of competences for structuring roles locally, regionally or nationally, and a job-description – which is a locally devised job requirement.

Are Job Descriptions mandatory?

- 24 Most organisations consider job descriptions to be essential. In the Fire and Rescue Service, job descriptions show how an individual's rolemap applies to a particular job in a local context.

The person specification

- 25 A person specification is not a legal requirement but can be useful when writing a job advert and defining the qualities expected of candidates. A person specification should include the required knowledge, experience and skills, separating those which are essential for the job from those which are desirable. For staff working to Grey and Gold book conditions such specifications should be based on the competencies identified in the Rolemaps and Personal Qualities and Attributes.
- 26 Person specifications will need to make reference to any national policies on the use of qualifications in the FRS when defining the 'knowledge and understanding' requirements.

Keeping the Rolemaps / National Occupational Standards up to date

- 27 One of the Governments' aims is to ensure that employers' skills demands are met by providing a quality-assured structure of National Occupational Standards (NOS) and Qualifications. This practice is widely embedded in the commercial world with 25 Sector Skills Councils delivering and maintaining standards for employers across a wide range of businesses and millions of employees working to the standards set.
- 28 There is a strict quality assurance process in place that means that the National Occupational Standards have to be regularly reviewed and this review must consist of extensive consultation with the people who use the National Occupational Standards.
- 29 Every Fire and Rescue Service gets the opportunity to comment on changes to the standards. The National Occupational Standards are written and regularly reviewed by people drawn from the Fire Sector. The group that coordinates this work is the Fire and Rescue Sector Vocational Standards Group (FRSVSG). The FRSVSG is the only group in the UK with a strategic

role in developing National Occupational Standards and work-based qualifications for the Fire sector. It is recognised by all relevant government departments and agencies as the body with overall responsibility in this area. More information on the FRSVSG can be found in appendix 2.

Further Information

Guidance for the Fire and Rescue Service on the production of job descriptions and job sizing for staff working to the Grey book conditions of service is in the National Joint Council circular NJC/09/05.

General information on person specifications can be found on a number of websites including that of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD).

The Grey book covers the national pay and conditions for operational and control staff of local authority fire and rescue services. The Gold book covers the national pay and conditions for Brigade Managers of local authority fire and rescue services. Both can be found on the web site of the Local Government Employers <http://www.lge.gov.uk>

Chapter 2: Selecting the right people

- 30 The Service has introduced two processes to support recruitment and progression in the Service.
- 31 For the recruitment of firefighters, there is the National Firefighter Selection Process. This national process measures people's physical abilities and personal qualities to ensure that they can (following training) carry out the role of a firefighter.
- 32 To identify people's potential to move into managerial roles within the Service, there are Assessment Development Centres. These are also national tests that measure people's personal qualities but they are designed only to assess potential. An Assessment Development Centre is not in itself a selection process.
- 33 No assessment centre can be 100% accurate in identifying how people will perform in specific contexts. The ADC process identifies those with the potential to be developed into a future role. Subsequent development of that person can then ensure that they are equipped with the appropriate skills to undertake a specific job role. The ADC forms the first part of the selection process which is completed through a development programme, matching of individuals to specific job roles and assessment of competence before an appointment is confirmed. The ADC is not a stand alone process but should be integrated with wider Human Resource Management activities such as individual performance management, appraisals and role-related assessment of competence.
- 34 ADCs can test the generic management skills required of people at the three levels (Supervisory, Middle and Strategic Management) – such as: dealing with complex information, communicating, problem solving, critical decision-making and handling multiple demands can be tested rigorously at an ADC in exercises designed to put the candidate under a great deal of pressure in the same way that managing any risk critical situation would do. The specific context of a critical incident need not be simulated for those skills to be fully tested.

- 35 However, success at an ADC does not equate to competence. Subsequent development and workplace assessment of that person must take place to ensure that they are equipped with the appropriate skills to undertake a specific job role.

Why are ADCs and NFS important?

- 36 Each FRS has to make sure that it has the right people, doing the right jobs, with the right skills and competences to meet the needs of the business and to achieve its objectives. This will help to deliver the service in a safe, effective and efficient way, maximise productivity and reduce costs. National processes underpin the transferability of staff and support interoperability.

How should ADCs and NFS be used?

- 37 The processes involve participants taking part in a variety of job simulation exercises whilst being observed by a team of trained assessors. Interviews, psychometric tests and written exercises are also used. Detail on how the processes should be used are contained in the IPDS User Guide. Full guidance on the National Firefighter Selection Process can be found on the Department for Communities and Local Government Recruitment Page. In 2008 this will transfer to the IPDS section of the Fire Service College web site. Access is by a password which has been made available to HR staff in each Fire and Rescue Service.

Are the NFS and ADC mandatory?

- 38 The current National Framework makes it clear that all FRS should be using the ADC and NFS processes. There is some flexibility in how the tests can be carried out and guidance is available.

How were the ADC and NFS Processes developed?

- 39 During the production of National Firefighter Selection Process and Assessment Development Centres, representatives from Fire and Rescue Services were involved in the design, trials and pilots of all the tests and processes. Stakeholders will be involved in any future review and revision.

What else should be considered?

- 40 The Chief Fire Officers Association's HR Strategy describes some of the other organisational components that need to be in place to ensure effective recruitment and progression. These include; Workforce planning, Strategies for attracting and recruiting a diverse workforce and Impact assessments.

Why are selection processes important?

- 41 Whilst the behaviours assessed at Assessment Development Centres will be informed by the knowledge, skills, understanding and experience an individual has gained there is no knowledge based assessment during the ADC. To select individuals for specific roles, consideration must be given to previous experience and skills which can be assessed in a variety of ways. For different roles the knowledge, skills and experience will be different. For example, finance qualifications and experience for a finance role, HR qualifications for HR and operational experience and skills for roles with an operational element.

How should selection processes be used?

- 42 It is recommended that FRAs convene a team which can review objectively all the information available on individuals who are successful at ADC (the recruitment pool). The team is likely to be comprised of HR professionals and line managers. This review will include an analysis of the ADC result and an assessment of the knowledge, skills, understanding and experience of the individual which can be compared to the specific requirements of the role. This could be an interview, a formal assessment and it could be undertaken as part of a Professional Discussion. A recommendation can then be made to align the individuals in the pool to specific roles.
- 43 It is likely that individuals will access a Development Programme as part of their journey towards competence. There are some essential elements of a Development Programme including some Generic development, development of role specific and safety critical competences and assessment. The order in which these are delivered can vary according to individual and local need. The aim of such a programme is to ensure that individuals have the right skills

and competences to operate safely in a given role. Some elements will be required before an individual takes up a new role and some may be acquired as a result of development in role.

Are the additional selection processes mandatory?

- 44 No. Whilst the Information on selection is good practice, it is offered as advice only. It is however recommended that Fire and Rescue Services work together to develop common selection processes.

Further Information

More detailed information on selection processes is contained in Fire Service Circular 02/2007

Full guidance on the National Firefighter Selection Process can be found on the Department for Communities and Local Government Recruitment Page. In 2008 this will transfer to the IPDS section of the Fire Service College web site. Access is by a password which has been made available to HR staff in each Fire and Rescue Service.

Chapter 3: Training and Development

- 45 When someone is assessed in IPDS, they have to demonstrate that they have the required skills. But they also need to show that they have the relevant underpinning knowledge and understanding. For example, firefighters have to show that they have technical knowledge of the equipment they use and Watch Managers have to show that they understand the Incident Command System.
- 46 Training and development should be based on identified need and risk assessed by addressing the risk critical development needs. Development programmes are packages of learning activity that offer opportunities to build up knowledge, skills and understanding to meet people's identified training needs against their role. They take into account learning styles and personal circumstances and may include training courses as well as learning in the workplace. Development programmes should be personal to the individual, and planned and timed around what people need to do at work. They should identify where additional skills could be of help and these skills should be detailed in a personal development plan.
- 47 Fire Service Circular 20/2003 issued guidance on training and development and included the following general principles:
- The provision of development opportunities should be determined on the basis of organisational need.
 - Development objectives should be defined in terms of role requirements that can be applied and assessed in the workplace.
 - A person's development needs should be properly established for example through assessment of potential, through an assessment of workplace performance, by considering previous learning and experience.
 - The development of people in new roles should be underpinned by appropriate induction arrangements which will identify and address the individual risk issues relating to the person and the role.

- Development programmes should consist of a range of development opportunities structured in way that meets the needs of people as individuals.
- 48 Fire Service Circular 49/2004 - introduced the Fire & Rescue Service Manual Volume 4: Foundation Training & Development which also provided comprehensive guidance on the implementation and management of all training and development activities.
- 49 General advice on staff development is also included in The Chief Fire Officers Association's HR strategy which states that such development should:
- Recognise the achievement of competence, for example through attainment of vocational or other appropriate qualifications, including academic qualifications.
 - Support flexible learning opportunities.
 - Promote effective working with diverse communities and organisations.
 - Develop an inclusive and positive culture that values diversity and challenges unacceptable behaviours.
 - Ensure that risk critical learning and development needs are prioritised with an appropriate emphasis on critical incident command.
 - Develop the professional capacity to deliver effective learning and development.

Development Modules Database

- 50 This database is available on the IPDS web site and specifies the learning and development objectives that should underpin the acquisition stages of any Fire and Rescue Service development programme. The modules have been specifically designed to help people meet the requirements of the National Occupational Standards. They are used by many Fire and Rescue Services as the design specification for Development programmes for all roles. The database supports individual training needs analysis and development planning.

Is the use of the development modules database mandatory?

51 No. Whilst the database is the only tool of its kind and is widely used by the Service, its use is optional.

What else should be considered?

- 52 FRSs should ensure that risk critical learning and development needs are prioritised with an appropriate emphasis on critical incident command
- 53 FRSs should develop the professional capacity to deliver effective learning and development.
- 54 The provision of high quality training and development is essential if learning and development standards across the FRS are to be maintained and improved. Fire and Rescue Authorities are encouraged to use the Quality Assurance Toolkit that has been developed with stakeholders by the project team at the Fire Service College. This is available on the IPDS page of the Fire Service College web site.

Further Information

Fire Service Circular 20/2003 issued guidance on training and development

Fire Service Circular 49/2004 - introduced the Fire & Rescue Service Manual Volume 4: Foundation Training & Development

General advice on staff development is also included in The Chief Fire Officers Association's HR strategy

The Development Module database is available on the IPDS web site

www.ipds.co.uk

Qualifications

Why are qualifications important?

55 An essential part of any learning and development system is quality assurance. Accredited qualifications are a primary means of assuring the quality of learning and development activities. Qualifications also:

- Offer a consistent National curriculum
- Enable the transferability of skills between organisations.
- Offer the ability to benchmark standards with other organisations
- Provide a framework on which to base organisational and employee development and progression.

How should qualifications be used?

56 Qualifications are a useful testimony of knowledge and understanding and should be used to support people as they work towards the demonstration on competence. For example, National Vocational Qualifications help ensure that consistency of competence is achieved through everyone working toward nationally acknowledged standards.

57 Any qualification should help people to achieve their role objectives. National Vocational Qualifications and Vocationally Related Qualifications (VRQs) are based on National Occupational Standards. They are nationally recognised qualifications and are part of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) which sets out the levels against which a qualification can be recognised in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

58 A Framework of Qualifications is being developed for the Fire and Rescue Service by the Fire and Rescue Sector Vocational Standards Group.

Is the attainment of academic or vocational qualifications mandatory?

59 No. However, it is recognised that awarding qualifications is a way of recognising someone's professional status and can motivate them. The

attainment of qualifications is also in line with Government policy for skills development.

What is the difference between National Vocational Qualifications and Vocationally Related Qualifications?

- 60 National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) recognise your competence in specified areas of work - that is your ability and skill in actually doing the tasks required. This is demonstrated through evidence you provide yourself and supported by observations from someone who assesses you in the work place. Your evidence also has to show that you understand why you do what you do and that you have a level of underpinning knowledge that supports you to deliver good work.
- 61 Vocationally Related Qualifications (VRQs) focus more on assessing and recognising your knowledge and understanding. They are delivered through a taught programme and have a work placement running alongside - this gives you an opportunity to use what you are learning and to develop your skills as you work through the programme. To achieve a VRQ you are required to complete a series of set tasks and exercises that will help demonstrate your knowledge and understanding, each of which will ask you to reflect on and give real examples from your practice - giving you the opportunity to show that you can use your knowledge and understanding in your work. The full list of Fire and Rescue Service VRQs can be found on the National Database of Accredited Qualifications (type 'Fire' into the search facility).

Coaching

- 62 Coaching is an integrated set of actions aimed at boosting a colleague's performance—so that the person being coached (the 'learner') reaches his or her full potential, or even redefines their view of their own potential. Coaching is a systematic form of on-the-job training, provided by professional outsiders, by peers, or (preferably) by the learner's line manager. Coaching typically aims to build skills in communications (written and oral), problem-solving, teamwork, or even to enhance personal characteristics such as 'impact'.

Mentoring

63 It can be difficult to distinguish between coaching and mentoring. In practice, 'mentoring' is sometimes used interchangeably with 'coaching'. Traditionally, however, mentoring in the workplace has tended to describe a relationship in which a more experienced colleague uses their greater knowledge and understanding of the work or workplace to support the development of a more junior or inexperienced member of staff.

Further Information

Details on Coaching and Mentoring can be found at the Centre for Leadership page on the Fire Service College web site.

Information about the Qualification Framework can be found on the web site of the Qualification and Curriculum Authority

64 Chapter 4: Maintaining Skills

Why is Workplace Assessment important?

65 The acquisition of skills and knowledge through training is essential but, people must then show that they can apply them in the real-life workplace, i.e. at incidents, during Community Fire Safety events and all other aspects of their role. It is impossible to demonstrate competent performance through training alone. It is for this reason that workplace assessment by a line manager is so important to people's development.

66 It is possible to train for competence but competence is more than training. It is about success in the real world. IPDS is about making sure that people can do their jobs. workplace assessment is at the heart of this and it can help individuals and managers to:

- Identify and recognise personal strengths and areas for improvement;
- Consider how to build on, and extend, strengths and successes from both the personal and organisational point of view;
- Share good ideas and exemplar practice within organisations;
- Consistently measure progress towards individual and organisational objectives;
- Achieve a common sense of purpose and direction, based on a shared view of what needs to be done;
- Link development needs to development opportunities.

How should Workplace Assessment be used?

67 Workplace assessment should be a shared and positive experience, carried out to support the development of people. It should be a two way process with open, honest and transparent communication between those being assessed and the assessors, who will normally be their line managers. People should be able to discuss their performance and agree a plan for development in a constructive and positive way. Because it uses the requirements of the NOS and Personal Qualities and Attributes as the benchmarks that identify and

support competence in the workplace, it then becomes a supportive process that assists people to develop and maintain competence in their role.

- 68 To ensure that the assessment process is effective, it is important that:
- Line managers/assessors are familiar with the requirements of the relevant rolemap/NOS
 - The assessment is planned wherever possible identifying opportunities to assess competence across the role rather than on a unit basis
 - People and assessors generate, collect and record relevant evidence to demonstrate competence
 - Evidence of a person's performance is judged against the relevant rolemap/NOS
 - Assessors make assessment decisions and provide feedback
- 69 Effective workplace assessment is dependent upon the following elements being in place:
- Agreed objectives;
 - Rolemaps/NOS;
 - A robust assessment strategy;
 - A robust recording system
 - Competent assessors;
 - Quality Assurance systems.
- 70 The requirement to assess is built into every management rolemap; accordingly, every line manager will be required to assess the performance of the people for whom they have line management responsibility.

Is workplace assessment mandatory?

- 71 Yes. The current Framework document makes it clear that Fire and Rescue Authorities must assess workplace performance and that this should be linked to the National Occupational Standards.

- 72 The Health and Safety Executive recognise the need for workplace assessment. In their guidance document “Successful Health and Safety Management” (HSG65) they state that:

If all employees are to make a maximum contribution to health and safety, there must be proper arrangements in place to ensure that they are competent. This means more than simply training them.

Experience of applying skills and knowledge is another important ingredient and needs to be gained under adequate supervision.

- 73 Also, it is worth noting that the National Joint Council for Local Authorities’ Fire Brigades have issued a circular containing a Code of Practice for the workplace assessment of competence in relation to pay and guidance on the assessment of Continual Professional Development (CPD). More information can be found on the Local Government Employers web site.

Further Information

Extensive guidance on workplace assessment was issued in Fire Service Circular 14/2003.

The Health and Safety Executive recognise the need for workplace assessment. In their guidance document “Successful Health and Safety Management” (HSG65)

Continuing Personal Development (CPD)

Note that Continuing Personal Development as described within IPDS is somewhat different to the Continual Professional Development process agreed by the NJC.

Why is Continuing Personal Development (IPDS) Important?

74 People need to continually update, expand and demonstrate the skills needed for their role. Continuing Personal Development ensures that:

- People can continue to operate competently within their current role.
- People can develop new or enhanced knowledge, skills and understanding for change within their current role.
- People can develop the knowledge, skills and understanding necessary to prepare them for progression beyond their current role.
- Personal development needs arising from organisational development requirements are identified and addressed.

How is Continuing Personal Development used?

75 Much of the continuous learning is routine and contained within everyday activities, for example responding to incidents or carrying out community safety education. Further personal development may be linked to new trends or risks and people's own needs, for example improving communications skills, or other abilities that will help them to maintain currency in their present role or move on to a new one. Sometimes it may be necessary to attend a training course. All learning and development must be applicable in the workplace to ensure relevance, e.g. attendance at a seminar is not considered to be CPD until the knowledge gained is applied in the workplace and the outcome assessed.

Is the IPDS information on CPD mandatory or advisory?

76 It is a requirement under IPDS to maintain competence. Indeed, every rolemap contains the requirement for people to develop their own skills to improve their performance so in that sense, Continuing Personal Development is mandatory.

Continual Professional Development (National Joint Council)

77 The National Joint Council for Local Authorities' Fire Brigades has introduced a process of Continual Professional Development. This Scheme is designed to recognise and reward experienced employees who are able to demonstrate Continual Professional Development over and above that required at 'competent' level. It is linked to an annual payment and although it refers to national standards, these are not the same as the National Occupational Standards in the rolemaps. For these reasons, the NJC scheme should not be seen as a replacement for the more comprehensive IPDS guidance. The application for Continual Professional Development (NJC) is optional.

What else should be considered?

78 FRSs should carry out equality impact assessments in relation to any local working practices, selection and progression practices.

Further Information

For further guidance on Continuing Personal Development (**IPDS**) see Fire Service Circular 11/2003

Performance Management

- 79 Performance management is a method of helping Fire and Rescue Authorities deliver lasting improvement. It does this by providing a 'Golden Thread' from the organisation's vision through to team and individual plans and should be aligned to the relevant National Occupational Standards so that everyone knows how they contribute. People will then be clearer about what they should be doing and how they should be doing it and take responsibility for what they achieve.
- 80 Performance management places the emphasis on managing, supporting and developing staff at all levels in the Fire and Rescue Authority. An integral part of this is the need to monitor performance, reward staff that perform well, and assist those who do not.

Appraisal

- 81 A performance appraisal system should be aligned to the relevant National Occupational Standards so that everyone knows how they contribute. It is traditionally used to set objectives, identify support needs and measure individual progress against those objectives. For it to work effectively it needs to be clearly understood by both managers and employees. This means ensuring that managers have access to guidance and training on how to undertake appraisals.
- 82 To ensure that any appraisal system is embedded, managers must manage performance effectively throughout the year within a culture of performance management. Employees at all levels should have the necessary support, guidance or training to enable them to actively engage in the performance appraisal process. The performance appraisal system should also be regularly reviewed to ensure that it is achieving what is required.
- 83 IPDS supports the assessment of performance against objectives using the NJC agreed rolemaps, National Occupational Standards and Personal Qualities and Attributes.

What are the benefits of performance management?

- 84 Having an effective performance management system has multiple benefits for Fire and Rescue Authorities, ultimately resulting in better, more efficient, services.
- 85 Firstly, it means everyone knows where the Fire and Rescue Authority is going, as there is a clear focus on key objectives and priorities. People understand how they personally contribute to achieving those objectives. This level of clarity helps to correctly direct resources, which means there are less instances of over and under-resourcing.
- 86 Secondly, it makes life more satisfying for employees because they know what is expected of them, and how this fits into the bigger picture, but also that they can call on extra support to help them to perform well.
- 87 Thirdly, because the whole emphasis is on meeting set criteria and meeting targets, it is easier to monitor how services are performing in order to take timely action to intervene and improve where necessary.
- 88 Finally it helps Fire and Rescue Authorities to meet their legal responsibilities in employment in terms of health and safety, equality and diversity. Employees and the Fire and Rescue Authority itself will be bound by implied and explicit contractual terms, such as codes of conduct, the duty of mutual trust and confidence and the duty to obey reasonable instructions, as well as health and safety and equalities legislation. Legal issues may also arise in cases where the Fire and Rescue Authority seeks performance improvement or decides to terminate employment on the grounds of the employee's incapability to do their job.
- 89 A performance management approach that recognises and promotes diversity, while supporting fairness and equity will ensure that people are selected and developed on the basis of their capability to do the job.

- 90 General information on performance management can be found on a number of websites including that of the Improvement and Development Agency for local government (IDeA).

Chapter 5: Recording

Why are Personal Development Records important?

91 Records provide people and organisations with evidence of their learning and development achievements. This helps people to monitor, build and reflect upon their personal development. Personal Development Record (PDR) will guide and support people to learn through a process of self-reflection and focused action. The PDR is an instrument for enabling people and organisations to -

- Identify and record training and development needs
- Plan the training and development activities
- Implement and record those activities
- Measure subsequent performance in the workplace
- Identify and record training and development needs

How should PDRs be used?

92 A PDR is not intended to be a record of all the tasks which people undertake at work. It is important that it is not perceived as just a training record showing how frequently training is carried out. It should instead help people to observe, measure and record the outcome of learning, development and workplace activity and only record those issues relevant to the attainment, demonstration or maintenance of competence.

93 However, the level of detail recorded in a PDR can vary depending on the stage someone has reached in their career. For example, someone in development may need to record more information than someone who is competent and in the 'maintenance' phase.

94 PDRs should include what people have done well, things they didn't do so well and where they have been given guidance or training to improve. This will provide an accurate record of what they do and how well they do it at work. The Personal Development Record will help in monitoring, and help people build on their own personal development within their role.

- 95 PDRs detail workplace activity and can support National Vocational Qualifications. They help team, watch and section planning and can support the development review process.
- 96 There is a clear link between organisational strategy and individual Personal Development Records and this should be recognised in the planning process. Organisations, teams and individual people all have to react to the internal and external risks which impinge on their organisation. People must be able to associate their role with the strategic objectives identified through the integrated risk management planning process.

Are Personal Development Records mandatory?

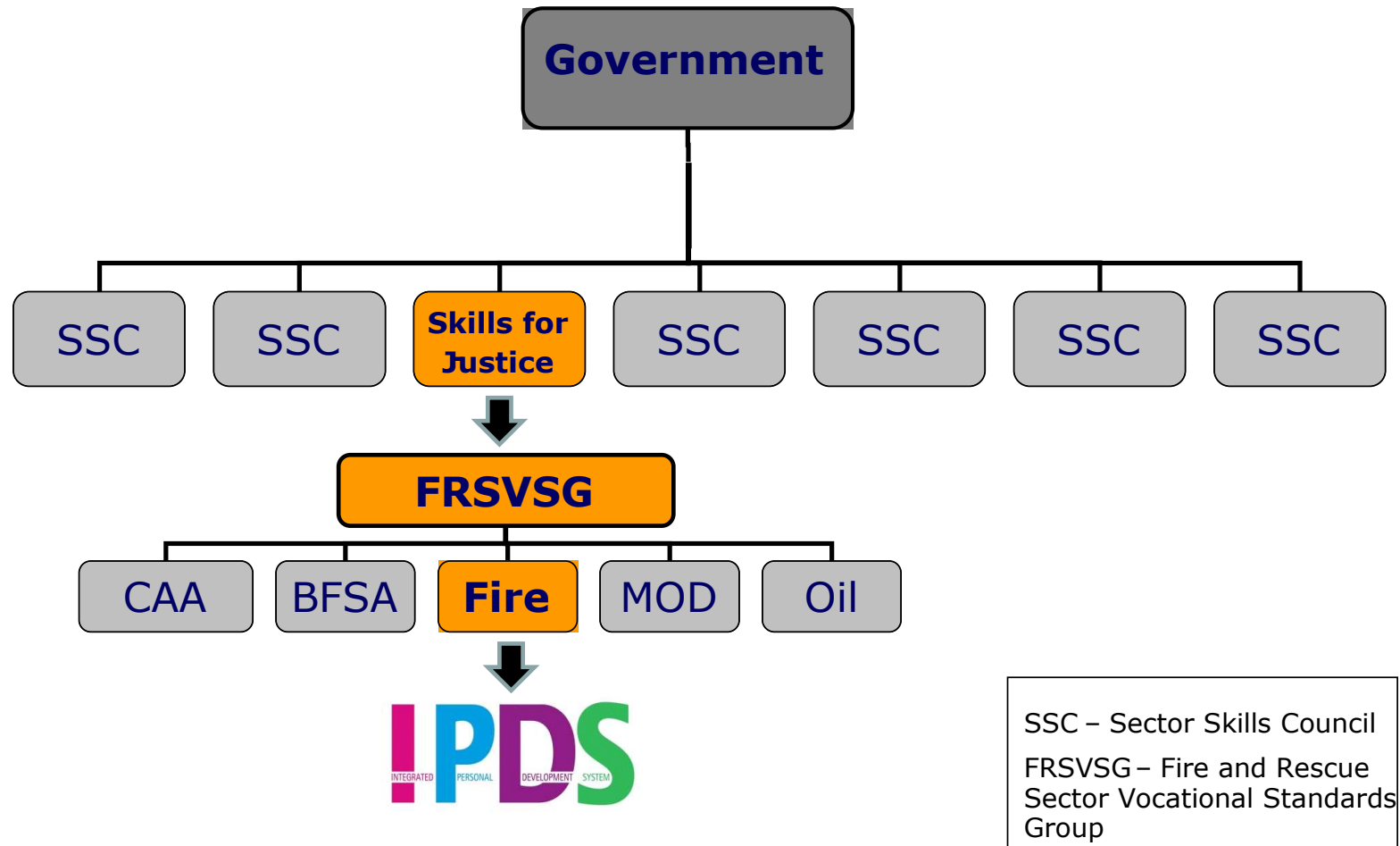
- 97 The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 requires employers to provide whatever information, instruction, training and supervision as is necessary to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety at work of their employees (Section 2 (2)(c)). The Health and Safety Executive's guidance note on training (INDG345) states the importance of keeping records of such training and monitoring those records.

Further Information

Guidance on Personal Development Records can be found in Fire Service Circular 20/2003.

The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 (Section 2 (2)(c)) and the Health and Safety Executive's guidance note on training (INDG345) state the importance of keeping records of training and monitoring those records.

The Skills for Business Network



Appendix 2

Fire and Rescue Sector Vocational Standards Group (FRSVSG)

What is the FRSVSG?

The FRSVSG is the only group in the UK with a strategic role in developing National Occupational Standards and work-based qualifications for the Fire sector. Through its partnership with local government employers (SkillsPlus UK), it is recognised by all relevant government departments and agencies as the body with overall responsibility for these key responsibilities. However, the FRSVSG is not only for local authorities. It embraces all other fire services and relevant interest groups in the UK. Represented on the Group are, for example:

Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA)
 The Fire Brigades Union
 Civil Aviation Authority and the Airport Operators' Association
 Ministry of Defence
 British Nuclear Fuel Ltd
 Joint Oil and Industry Fire Forum

What Does the FRSVSG Do?

The FRSVSG works closely with employers across all its sectors to develop National Occupational Standards in the following areas:

Operations in the Community (Fire Fighters)
 Watch Management
 Control Operations
 Fire Safety
 Fire Investigation
 Management and Leadership
 Specialist Technical Roles

Qualifications

The FRSVSG also works with UK awarding bodies to develop a range of qualifications based on these standards that can either prove competence or underpin competence. It promotes the standards and qualifications to organisations across the Fire sector.

Currently there are National Vocational Qualifications covering:

Operations in the Community (Fire Fighters) Level 3
 Control Operations Level 3
 Watch Management Level 3
 Fire Safety Level 2
 Fire Safety Level 3
 Fire Safety Level 4