



Position Statement

Inclusion, Equality and Diversity

January 2020

Introduction

NFCC has and will continue to promote Inclusion, Diversity and Equality as a headline issue for Fire and Rescue Services.

The findings from recent HMICFRS reports into the Fire and Rescue Service highlight that while there is work under way in most services to increase diversity across the workforce, Fire and Rescue Services still have low representation of Race, Religion, Disability, LGBTQ+ and a lack of gender balance in roles and departments.

The business case for diversity is well documented, people from different backgrounds, identities and ways of thinking, behave differently and when this is embraced it enables us to be creative, innovative, adaptable and flexible. We recognise that the continued improvement of service delivery will only be achieved with a workforce that accesses the widest possible talent pool and is made up of individuals who represent the diverse communities that Fire and Rescue Services serve. Leaders in the Fire and Rescue Service must lead a cultural change by effectively communicating the benefits of, and the need for, workforce diversity, with their staff.

Vulnerable communities are [disproportionately affected by fire](#) and feel its affects most acutely. To help protect those communities, we must be able to reach and influence them.

NFCC would like to emphasise that there has been a considerable amount of outstanding work in many fire and rescue services to address underperformance in this area and that celebrating successes and sharing notable practice is important if the service is to move forward as a whole.

NFCC commits to:

- Changing the terms of the whole debate from one based on the statistical make-up of workforces to one that demonstrates the benefit of inclusion and diversity in creating a more effective Fire and Rescue Service.
- Ensuring equality of access and exposure to a career in fire, with the purpose of attracting a wide range of the most talented people.

- Encouraging Fire Authorities to undertake and strive to improve their assessment levels within the Equality Standard for Local Government.
- Ensuring all new and existing policies and practices are impact assessed. The prioritisation of this is especially important at Authority and Government Department level at a time when difficult financial decisions are being made.
- Encouraging learning and development at all levels to promote continuous improvement and understanding of inclusion and diversity which impact our workforce and service delivery.

Further Reading

- [The AFSA Smoke and Mirrors Report 2018](#)
- [The Inclusive Fire Service Group Improvement Strategies, NJC circular, 1/18](#)
- [CIPD, Diversity management that works: an evidence-based view, October 2019](#)
- [NFCC Workforce Committee](#)
- [HMICFRS Inspectorate Reports](#)

Committee
People

Date for Review
January 2023