



THE CHIEF  
FIRE OFFICERS  
ASSOCIATION

**I&DeA**  
improvement and development agency

# Help

Fire and Rescue Service Equality Framework



FIRE &  
RESCUE  
SERVICE  
EQUALITY  
FRAMEWORK





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**Help**

Fire and Rescue Service Equality Framework

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This document provides reference material that may be useful if you need help with the Fire and Rescue Service Equality Framework (FRS EF) or in addressing a range of equality and diversity improvements.

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## Help with the FRS EF

### The IDeA's website

This website has a substantial section specifically on equality and diversity with links to other relevant issues such as the workforce strategy, community engagement, voluntary and community sector and commissioning and procurement.

**[www.idea.gov.uk/diversity](http://www.idea.gov.uk/diversity)**

There is also a specific section for good practice within the fire and rescue service.

**[www.idea.gov.uk/fire](http://www.idea.gov.uk/fire)**

The IDeA will also publish examples of the evidence that fire and rescue services have used to work across the performance areas of the framework.

### Communities of practice

A community of practice (CoP) is a dedicated online community for sharing information and joint learning. The IDeA facilitates the 'Equality in fire and rescue services CoP'. This community is for any fire and rescue service officer that is implementing the FRS EF.

The main Equality CoP has over 900 members (as of October 2009) and is for anyone involved in following the public sector equality

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frameworks. It also discusses policy and is used to engage practitioners in equality and diversity. There are also a number of sub-CoPs dealing with procurement, equality impact assessments and other issues. The CoP is open to all local government and partner organisation members and officers. Further information on how to join is available from:

[www.communities.idea.gov.uk](http://www.communities.idea.gov.uk)

### ef:ect – the Equality Framework Evidence Collection Tool

This tool is an easy way to measure progress against the Framework by creating an evidence library. Information is then referenced so that a reporting facility can navigate and retrieve evidence from the library.

ef:ect provides:

- open and flexible reporting which allows for multiple ways of structuring and viewing the same body of evidence
- evidence that only needs to be uploaded once
- evidence relating to particular issues, for example comprehensive area assessment or compliance with the public duties, can be viewed separately.

For further information visit:

[www.idea.gov.uk/efect](http://www.idea.gov.uk/efect)

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## The Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA)

This website has a section on equality and diversity which includes tools developed to help the service develop the equality and diversity agenda.

**[www.cfoa.org.uk](http://www.cfoa.org.uk)**

CFOA provides independent professional advice to government on fire prevention, fire protection and intervention issues as well as on a wide range of community safety and rescue matters.

CFOA supports equality and diversity through:

- equality and diversity champions – these are individual members of the association who have a strong personal commitment to improving fire and rescue service performance in equality and diversity and have volunteered to undertake a specific champion role with regard to the various equality strands
- the equality and diversity professionals group – membership consists of senior equality and diversity representatives from each CFOA region, additional members with particular interest or expertise and representatives from the Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG).

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### Equality and diversity stakeholders group

The equality and diversity stakeholders group is comprised of representatives from a range of fire and rescue professional organisations, equality and diversity groups and trade unions. Members contribute to the development of good practice guidance documents and the overall progress of equality and diversity in the fire and rescue service.

### CLG

This website has a section relating to fire and rescue service and resilience issues. There are links to a number of topics including fire safety guidance and legislation and the recruitment and development of fire and rescue service staff.

[www.communities.gov.uk](http://www.communities.gov.uk)

### Audit Commission

This website has a section for fire and rescue organisations.

[www.audit-commission.gov.uk](http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk)



## National infrastructure

The following diagram outlines the national arrangements to support equality and diversity in the fire and rescue service:



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## The development of an equality agenda for the fire and rescue service and reference documents

'Equal opportunities and the fire service' – the Bucke report

[www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs2/r13.pdf](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs2/r13.pdf)

In 1994, the Home Office published the Research and Planning Unit's paper by Tom Bucke on 'Equal opportunities and the fire service'. This examined the extent to which equal opportunities policy had been adopted in the fire service, and how under-represented groups viewed the organisation itself and firefighting as a potential occupation. The findings looked at the reasons for the under-representation of women and black Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) people as firefighters, and informed future policy at both central government and fire authority level.

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## 'Equality and fairness in the fire service: A thematic review by HM fire service inspectorate'

[www.idea.gov.uk/fire-docs](http://www.idea.gov.uk/fire-docs)

The 'Thematic review of equality and fairness', which was published by Her Majesty's Inspectorate in September 1999, was the first of a series of inspections conducted to examine issues of national importance to the fire service. The choice of this particular topic resulted from concerns that the profile of the service's workforce was not representative of the multicultural community it serves.

The study was targeted at establishing a balanced representation of existing policies, practices and performances and set out the conclusions which were reached. It made recommendations for consideration by all who have responsibilities for the fire service. It also drew attention to good practice in the hope that lessons could be learned from these positive aspects as well as highlighting the considerable challenges faced by the service. In many cases these challenges required major change to eradicate outmoded culture and to enhance a spirit of real commitment to equality and fairness. These needs apply both in employment practices and to improving the delivery of services to the public.

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## 'Towards diversity' and 'Towards diversity II'

[www.idea.gov.uk/fire-docs](http://www.idea.gov.uk/fire-docs)

The Home Office had responsibility for the fire and rescue service in 2000. They published the equal opportunities actions plans: 'Towards diversity – promoting cultural change' and 'Towards diversity II – commitment to cultural change'. The two programmes, devised from the 'Equality and fairness in the fire service: A thematic review by HM fire service inspectorate', provided a range of performance indicators for the service to measure progress in meeting the strategic objectives.

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## 'Fire and rescue service: Equality and diversity strategy 2008 - 2018'

The 'Fire and rescue service: Equality and diversity strategy 2008 - 2018' sets out a number of equality and diversity objectives for the fire and rescue service in England, under five major priorities:

- leadership and promoting inclusion
- accountability
- effective service delivery and community engagement
- employment and training
- evaluation and sharing good practice.

The strategy aims to support the fire and rescue service in tackling current inequalities, promoting equality, diversity and fairness and establishing a culture of inclusion which enables the fire and rescue service to meet the needs of all diverse communities.

**[www.communities.gov.uk](http://www.communities.gov.uk)**

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'Equality and diversity matters: examples of good practice to promote equality and diversity in the fire and rescue service', CLG, 2006

[www.communities.gov.uk/publications/fire/equalitydiversity](http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/fire/equalitydiversity)

'A survey of current and ex-firefighters in England – fire research technical report 8/2008', CLG, 2008

[www.communities.gov.uk/publications/fire/frtp82008](http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/fire/frtp82008)

## Fire and Rescue Service Annual Equality and Diversity Report

CLG annually produces an equality and diversity report.

This is in order to:

- determine where progress has been achieved
- identify good practice
- encourage and nurture change through effective leadership and sound policies
- encourage better performance by each fire and rescue service.

The report details progress made in achieving recruitment targets and provides information on initiatives that have been highlighted through the CLG's equality and diversity awards.

2009's report is available from:

[www.communities.gov.uk/publications/fire/equalitydiversity2009](http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/fire/equalitydiversity2009)

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## Equality and diversity awards

The aims of the annual awards are to encourage the development and sharing of good practice, support the promotion of equality and diversity across the fire and rescue service, and to raise awareness about the issues and celebrate achievement. The scheme is designed to promote equality and diversity and the integration of the fire and rescue service into the community, focusing upon creativity, innovation and good practice, and providing recognition of commitment and endeavour.

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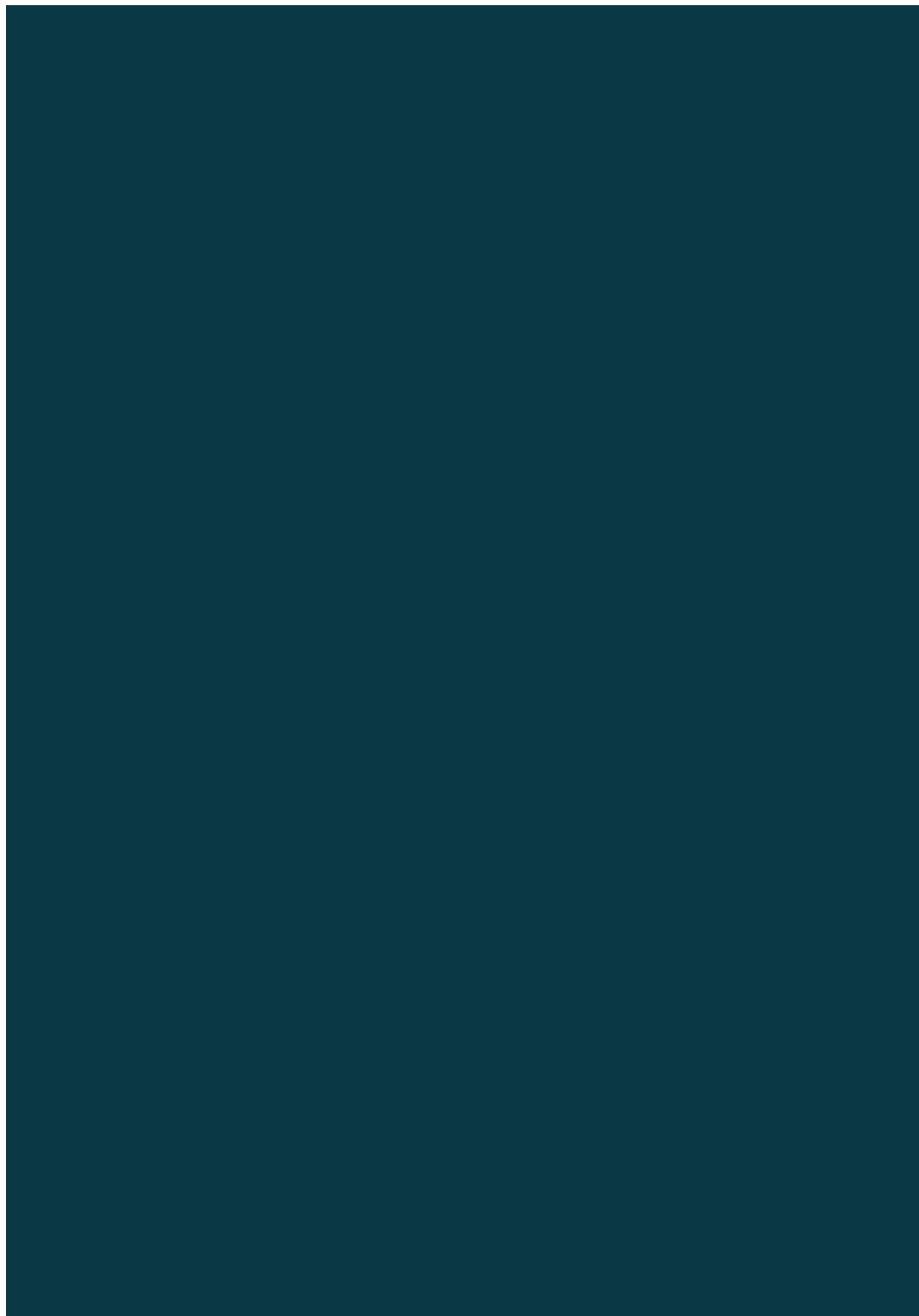
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**Notes**





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