



HIGHLANDS & ISLANDS FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE CULTURAL AUDIT SURVEY 2005

1. Introduction

This report should be read in conjunction with the 'Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Cultural Audit Survey 2005', which explains the origins of the Cultural Audit Survey and provides details of how the information has been presented.

2. Summary

The survey followed on the back of a major industrial dispute and the introduction of a modernisation agenda that was daunting and uncomfortable for many F&RS staff. The comments received have undoubtedly been influenced by issues that impacted negatively on staff at the time the data was captured, e.g. implementation of our IRMP. It is accepted that the results of this survey may have been diluted, as a result of the delay in publishing these results and that in many areas HIFRS has made significant progress, which has been evidenced by the assessment process that was undertaken earlier this year by Audit Scotland. The questionnaire was distributed to all employees (1425) in the week commencing 12th September 2005. The cut-off date for returned questionnaires was 28th October 2005. 445 completed questionnaires were returned yielding a response rate of 31%, with the final report being issued at the end of August 2006.

The report is a 'perception based' survey and is not evidence based and represents the views of the 445 respondents that completed the survey questionnaire. In the report the respondents' views are presented as indicative of the remainder of the Service. In the Executive Summary, ORS – the company commissioned to undertake this work, accept that this is an assumption which should be borne in mind when considering the details and impact of this report. The report provides a detailed breakdown of how the weightings have been calculated and presented – and readers are recommended to take this into account when considering the findings of the report. The generic Cultural Audit Survey was customised to reflect the changes within the Service in relation to staff groups, following the implementation of our IRMP, and it had been hoped that more detailed information would have been made available. However, due to some restrictions in the structure of the survey this information is not available across all the areas reported on, and reference is made to this effect in the Executive Summary.

3. Benchmarking

Overall the findings from this survey, in comparison with the other 7 F&RS, are very positive in that for 95.3% of the questionnaire response, the findings for HIFRS were either better or the same. HIFRS scored worse than average in less than 5% of the issues raised by the survey. These areas are:

- Ø Opportunities (p38): in relation to achieving work-life balance;
- Ø Equal Treatment (p55): in relation to bullying and harassment and how effectively did the respondent feel that the matter was dealt with; and
- Ø Policies & Training (p61): in relation to equality and diversity being everyone's responsibility.

4. Issues for Attention

The issues for attention are highlighted in the accompanying action plan (see **Appendix A**).

HIGHLANDS & ISLANDS FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE CULTURAL AUDIT SURVEY 2005 – ACTION PLAN

Issues for Attention	Action	Timescales	Authority	Responsibility	Progress Made since 2005
<p>1. <u>Morale</u></p> <p>1.1 Nearly a quarter (24%) do not feel valued by HIFRS and a third do not feel valued by senior management. This finding probably reflects recent pressures and changes within the UK Fire Service.</p> <p>1.2 15% do not feel they are treated fairly at work, mainly because of their rank/ role/ grade and because they do not have the right contacts and because of their staff category.</p> <p>1.3 21% do not feel everyone has fair and equal access to training courses.</p> <p>2. <u>Opportunities</u></p> <p>2.1 Only 8% have had appraisals in the last 12 months.</p> <p>2.2 41% do not think everyone has fair and equal access to promotion.</p>	<p>Reinforce ‘who is HIFRS’ through the ongoing Diversity Awareness Training. Promote ‘organisational identity’ through the various briefing forums. Other avenues are through the Appraisal route.</p> <p>Clear and robust policies, together with a complaints procedure, are in place to address issues of fairness at work, including equal access to training courses</p> <p>Appraisal Pilot – followed by implementation plan service-wide.</p> <p>A robust and transparent selection process is in place and reviewed annually to ensure fairness. Support this by implementing interim ADC process.</p>	<p>Briefing forums – ongoing</p> <p>Appraisal Pilot to be commenced within the next 3 months</p>	<p><u>Service Plan</u> Diversity Training (existing action)</p> <p><u>Service Plan</u> (linked into IPDS existing action)</p>	<p>Service Support/Service Delivery</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ø Established Communications Forum Ø Newsletter Ø CFO’s evenings Ø Introduced regular briefings on A1 by members of SMT Ø Established Equality & Diversity Forum Ø Implemented Service-wide Diversity Awareness Training Ø Draft Appraisal Policy (Pilot) Ø Completed Mediation Training Ø Revised Grievance procedures (which formally recognises mediation) Ø Fairness at Work policy is currently being revised to reflect changes in legislation Ø Recruited additional staff: HR Adviser: L&D Manager; L&D Assistant Ø Supported CFOA ADC Task & Finish Group Ø Collaborative working with other ‘local’ F&RS on framework for ADC process

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2.3 38% think their possible applications for job flexibility are unlikely to be granted.	Clear guidelines are in place to guide managers when determining requests.	Ongoing	<u>Service Plan</u> (existing action)	Service Support/Service Delivery	Ø Revised Flexible Working policy implemented.
2.4 30% do not feel that HIFRS takes enough account of their needs for satisfactory WLB.	As part of the modernisation agenda, work routines have been reviewed and revised to take account, as far as is reasonably practicable, WLB. This work will remain ongoing and will be included as part of any future IRMP.	Ongoing	<u>IRMP</u>	As above	Ø Implemented changes to duty systems
2.5 26% feel work of equal worth does not receive equal pay.	The Service has implemented Rank to Role and will shortly be progressing with implementation of the Single Status agreement. (which is being carried out on the back of Highland Council's SSA as agreed by the Fireboard)	R2R Appeals to be concluded by 31 st Oct 06. Plan for implementation of SSA to be agreed within 6 months of this date.	<u>Service Plan</u> New action: Roll out of SSA to be included in SP 07/08	Service Support	Ø The Service has agreed and implemented a framework for the delivery of R2R and has communicated the outcomes of the processes. The Appeals process will be concluded by 31 st Oct 2006 ₂
3. <u>Diversity</u>					
3.1 Many have reservations about people with disabilities working as firefighters.	Diversity Awareness training.				Ø Established an Equality & Diversity Forum
3.2 9% are not happy to work with people with a disability	Continue to develop and implement vocational testing for existing and new employees.	Diversity Awareness Training planned	<u>Service Plan</u> (existing action)	Service Support	Ø Diversity Strategy
3.3 8% disagree with providing special facilities for those with disabilities.	Foster & promote Partnership working at local/national levels. Look at linking into existing disability support networks, with the view of establishing our own local support group.	Sep –Dec 06 (8 x 2day courses (full-time); 5 x 5 hr courses (part-time))	<u>Diversity Strategy</u> (existing action)		Ø Piloted the Diversity Awareness training wi Ø Established a framework for the Disability Discrimination Act Review Group (will be linked into new Occupational Health contract which is currently out to tender).
3.4 20% would mind if a person with a disability was appointed as their line manager.					Ø Renewal of Positive about Disability 'two-tick' scheme.
3.5 10% are not happy to work with people known to be LGBT.					Ø Partnership working through the Well Being Alliance and local disability groups in preparation for the forthcoming Disability Equality Duty. Collaborative approach, through CFOA, to developing a framework for the Disability Equality Scheme.

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3.6 32% would mind if a person from another service division was appointed as their line manager.	Diversity Awareness Training. LGBT Article in Newsletter (Dec 06), working in partnership with local LGBT communities (through Out Reach Highland). Education & awareness through policy development. Become a Stonewall Diversity Champion.	Article – Dec 06 Newsletter Partnership working – ongoing Stonewall Diversity Champion – subject to available funding	<u>Service Plan</u> (existing action) <u>Diversity Strategy</u> (existing action)	Service Support	Ø Contact has been made with Outreach Highland who act as a signpost to local LGBT Support Groups. Discussions are underway to secure a LGBT Lay Speaker for future Diversity Awareness Courses. Contact details for local support groups will be made available through the Diversity Awareness training and will be included within the revised Equal Opportunities Policy (currently out to consultation).
3.7 58% would mind a person from a non fire-service background was appointed as their line manager.	It is assumed that this means someone from another F&RS. This will be picked up in the Diversity Awareness training under the banner of ‘organisational identity’. This finding probably reflects recent pressures and changes within the UK Fire Service. Procedures are in place to protect individual employees from bullying, harassment or other discrimination. Appraisals may provide an opportunity to dispel any concerns individuals may have and the Diversity Awareness training will promote HIFRS as ‘one team’ irrespective of background.	Ongoing Ongoing	As above As above	Service Support	Ø HIFRS have made a number of non-Fire & Rescue Service background appointments, and there is greater integration between uniformed/non-uniformed which is supported by ‘inclusive’ policies e.g. grievance; maternity; and flexible working etc. Ø Mediation Training Ø Communications Forums Ø Draft Appraisal Policy
3.8 38% and 22% (respectively) feel that it is easier for women and people from minority ethnic groups to get jobs in the F&RS.	Robust and transparent recruitment and selection procedures are in place to ensure the best candidates are fairly selected. Recruitment Review Working Group is currently conducting a review of all our recruitment & selection processes.	Recruitment Review Working Group to complete their report by Mar 07.	<u>Diversity Strategy</u> (existing action)	Service Support	Ø Recruitment Review Working Group established to look at all recruitment issues to ensure compliance with changes to legislation and changes within the F&RS. In the first instance focussing on retained/CRU recruitment.
3.9 A quarter think special facilities should not be provided for minority ethnic groups.					

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<p>4. <u>Equal Treatment</u></p> <p>4.1 21% (102 cases) have witnessed harassment or discrimination over the last 3 years.</p> <p>4.2 15% (72 cases) have experienced the same.</p> <p>4.3 9% (32 cases) have reported a case of discrimination or harassment, but 74% of this group felt their complaint was not dealt with effectively.</p> <p>5. <u>Policies & Training</u></p> <p>5.1 32% would like clearer leadership.</p>	<p>Diversity Awareness Training; revision of Equal Opportunities Policy (currently out to consultation).</p> <p>Figures do not reflect number of complaints received by the Service. Review Fairness at Work Policy to separate Bullying and Harassment (B&H) as a standalone issue. Review monitoring processes to capture relevant data.</p> <p>The new discipline and grievance procedures are modelled on the ACAS Code of Practice. These procedures are designed to ensure consistent and fair decision making, and in the case of the latter, are focussed on the preferred outcome of the complainant whilst complying with legal and moral requirements. It is not clear from the survey whether the 74% were unhappy with the outcome or the processes employed. If the former it is recognised that not all parties involved in a grievance will be happy with the outcome.</p> <p>Further training is currently being investigated.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>B&H Policy to be completed in finished draft by Dec 06, ready for consultation.</p> <p>Review of monitoring processes to be undertaken by E&D Adviser on appointment.</p>	<p><u>Service Plan</u> (existing action)</p> <p><u>Diversity Strategy</u> (existing action)</p> <p>As above</p>	<p>Service Support</p> <p>Service Support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ø Revised our Race Equality Scheme (2002-2005) Ø Implemented Diversity Strategy Ø Diversity Awareness Training Ø Established Equality & Diversity Forum Ø Partnership working with the Highland Alliance for Racial Equality (HARE) Ø Implemented inclusive grievance procedures, which formally recognises mediation. Ø Trained an additional 12 mediators, which required attendance at an intensive 5 day training course). Ø Recruited additional HR professional (provide advice & support on B&H issues). Ø Established Equality & Diversity Forum and have commenced discussions on role of First Contact Advisers. Ø ACAS led training on discipline & grievance Ø Commenced review of monitoring processes in preparation for new appointment of Equality & Diversity Adviser.

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<p>5.2 63% would welcome less bureaucracy.</p> <p>5.3 54% would like more consultation with employees.</p> <p>5.4 35% think HIFRS does not deal effectively with poor performers</p>	<p>A variety of consultation forums and communication methods are used to provide details of strategic direction and encourage employee involvement.</p> <p>IT Project, which includes provision for more efficient document management.</p> <p>See above re consultation forums</p> <p>Revised Disciplinary Procedures modelled on the ACAS Code of Practice. Appraisal Pilot (see above). IPDS.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p><u>Service Plan</u> (existing action)</p> <p>As above</p> <p>As above</p>	<p>Service Support</p> <p>Service Support/Service Delivery</p> <p>Service Support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ø Established Communications Forum Ø Newsletter Ø IT Project Ø Work has been undertaken on Document Management (e.g. G Drive) Ø CFO's evenings Ø Implemented revised Consultation and Negotiation procedures Ø Implemented revised structure for Wholetime/Retained Officers Meetings Ø Website Ø Meetings on A1 by SMT Ø Performance Management framework documents e.g. Service Plan; Public Performance Report; Service Support/Service Delivery meetings etc. Ø Draft Appraisal Policy (Pilot) Ø ADC frameworks (see above)