



Members Meeting Draft Minutes
30th April 2024
Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service HQ (Phoenix Room)

In attendance:

In person: Ronnie King RK (NFSN, APPG), Terry McDermott TMc(NFSN), Ian Cox IC(NFSN, BSA), Toni Maddox TM (NFSN), Roger Brason RB (SYFRS), Mark Seroetjchniy MS(WMFS), Dale Kinnersley DK(FPA), Keith MacGillivray KM, Nick Coleshill NC(BAFSA), Ali Perry AP(BAFSA), Scott Harrison SH (GMFRS), Ewan Duncan ED(LFRS), Tom Marchant TM (WMFRS), Alan Brinson AB (ESFN), Nick McCormack NMc(MFRS), Richard Clark RC(NFCC)

On teams: Tom Roche TR(FM Global), Mark Wetherhill MW, Nathan Murphy NM (Water Aid), Johnny Smith JS, Maxwell Fowler MF, Tracey Carter TC(CFRS), Barry Wilson BW , Helen Newton HN(NFCC), Sean Mienie SM (OFRS), Henry Lloyd HL (StaySafe), Carlos Eduardo Morett CEM(LATAM)

Apologies: CFO Rob Barber (SFRS), CFO Jonathan Dyson (NYFRS/NFCC), Ritchie O'Connell

Welcome and Introduction

TMc went straight to TR presentation (TR was up early in USA to deliver update) and all in attendance had been at the previous meeting.

1. **Minutes and actions from last members meeting.** - removed from Agenda
2. **Finance update** – covered in AGM
3. **Update from Tom Roche**

TR (on teams) – provided a presentation on the update on technical guidance under the banner of the Fire Sector Federation. TR is the policy director of the FSF. His report will be an addendum to the minutes.

Highlights:

- Technical review of approved Document B – nothing overt but things are happening in the background – technical pieces are with the BSR.
- ABD being updated with minimum provisions around when a second staircase is needed, particularly in high rise residential, there was no changes to any of the sprinkler provisions.
- Concern in the sector around the lack of a push for evacuation lifts.
- Push to have sprinkler provision in Care Homes, extra care facilities and specialised housing.

- Due issues with reinforced concrete and aerated concrete 119 schools have to be rebuilt and a similar number part rebuilt, it will be interesting to see if they will be sprinklered but TR hypothesises that probably not. It appears BB100 will be diluted from requiring sprinklers in all new schools to only in schools over a certain height, for children with special educational needs or schools with residential accommodation attached.
- Opportunity to provide a cost benefit analysis to show the true cost of fires in schools to encourage government to increase scope of BB100.
- Review of policies around sprinklers in Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland as well as from Europe (Swedish study), which can make an impact on policy in England.
- Government has started to publish IRS data around sprinklers which is normally related to regulatory guidance.
- The need for requirements for sprinklers in hotels especially after the loss of life in the Cameron House fire.

Power cut at 10.50 interrupted TR presentation.

Action: TM to get pdf version of TR presentation for distribution.

Action: The government self insures schools through something called the risk protection arrangement and an average fire claim costs approximately £200,000. Use that information to make a case to the government that sprinklers should be in all schools. Draft a points for the letter.

Action: TMC to share Swedish Document on whole life cost of sprinklers adding to carbon loading.

Meeting recommenced at 11.15

4. NFCC Sprinkler Week (Helen Newton Head of Communications and public affairs at NFCC)

NFCC determined that Sprinkler Awareness week was not reaching the right audiences so is not going ahead.

AP – BAFSA/Zurich had been waiting for word from NFCC to confirm timing of sprinkler week before starting their week long campaign on sprinklers in schools so as not to duplicate their efforts. Will now proceed to start their initiative.

HN – NFCC are looking to provide input and be signatories on the public letter to the Secretary of State concerning BB1000 but will not take the lead.

Action : AP to confirm dates of BAFSA/Zurich initiative as Sprinkler Week confirmed cancelled.

AP – suggested Communications and Marketing Committee at BAFSA are linked to their counterparts at other organisations to have an agreed message around sprinkler awareness and BB100.

AP – Invite someone from NFCC to attend BAFSA Communications meeting as an observer.

TMc -to organise separate meeting with interested party to determine tactics of BB100 what to communicate and when to send – before or after election

NC asked for NFCC support around sprinkler saves and HN thought NFCC could publicise it but do not want to consider a joint campaign. Suggested NC could put something in the next NFCC newsletter (100th edition)

Action – NC to follow up on contribution to NFCC newsletter

Helen was asked if we could continue to send correspondence to FRS through NFCC – she will look into the best way of sending to correct people as they are moving away from workspace.

TMc – to follow up with Helen or JD to see if we can use them as forwarding agent to FRSs

5. Regulatory update (Richard Clark NFCC)

Most significant regulatory change recently has been the commencement of the last part of the Building Safety Act, on 7 April the 7th, with reference to high rise residential buildings. For all buildings 18 metres and above, the accountable person, now has to apply for a building assessment certificate, which will document that you have registered your building and the BSL has accepted the documentation that has been put forward, one of which a safety case report, an assessment of your building to check that it is safe.

The building safety risks contained within the Building Safety Act are about the spread of fire and structural safety. The NFCC is working with regional groups to agree on the regulatory aspects such as to what extent should changes be made to the existing building to ensure occupants are safe (ie installing an evacuation lift when it is impractical to add a second staircase).

NFCC has put out an opinion paper around the amendment to Document B, advice for building designers.

- Flexibility of escapes - having an alternative means escape
- Means of escape for disabled people – ie installation of evacuation lifts
- A second means escape to provide flexibility for firefighting.

Action – can we get and post NFCC opinion paper

NFCC (with regards to care homes) wants to make clear the presence of sprinklers doesn't automatically mean compartment size can be increased to an unlimited number of beds because people still need to be evacuated from the compartments on fire.

Discussion on the competence of installers and will they all need third party accreditation.

Discussion on the effectiveness and longevity of water mist systems and that they are only appropriate for limited uses.

The BSI have published free guidance and some webinars about watermist systems available for free to anybody who wanted to understand the differences between watermist technology is in relation to sprinkler systems. The FPA also has information on watermist on their website.

[BSI](#)

[FPA - watermist](#)

Action – TM to put appropriate links on website

Discussion on personal protection systems and the need to have some kind of learning model to pass on to our inspection officers. Derbyshire FRS has put a lot of personal protection systems in place, keep records of activations and it has been a success story.

Discussion on adequate water availability and cost for firefighting systems. Water position statement has issues. IC suggested reconvening Water Liaison Group.

Action – IC to send RC information on last meeting of Water Liaison Group.

Action – AP to provide proposal to action on water supply

Action – HL to provide RC with examples of water issues discussed at meeting

Action – TMc to discuss water issues in Wales with RP

Action – RC to contact Water Uk once proposal finalised

Action - RK to bring to APPG once proposal finalised

6. **Lunch** – adjourned for lunch at 12.28 and reconvened at 1.15

7. Parliamentary Business/ All Party Group reports (to include BB100)

With 20 years of experience with the APPG, 10 with Douglas Smith his predecessor and 10 on his own as the Fire Advisor and current honorary secretary of the group, RK has invaluable knowledge and access to politicians. With at least six meetings, one every two months with minister as well as casual interactions in the Houses of Parliament, RK & NFCC is in a unique position to get first hand knowledge and influence fire safety legislation. RK has just completed a 75 page report for the APPG which will be available on the NFSN website. RK discusses the need of a decision on when to send letter which needs to be decided urgently.

Action - RK to provide TM with 75 page report and current list of 37 ministers for uploading to NFSN website.

8. Bernadette Hartley Award

KM was presented with the Bernadette Hartley award for his dedication to fire safety and protection.

Action – TMc to provide his speech and TM to upload with picture to website

9. Sprinkler Saves update

NC presented an update on the importance of Sprinkler Saves requested help to get more sprinkler saves reported and a better level of detail in the those reports. The number of sprinkler saves reported has risen from 53 to 70 in 3 years but as NC estimates there are probably 236 a year, there is a way to go. One area of attention is industrial sprinkler saves as only a small number are currently reporter.

The importance of Sprinkler Saves was discussed with only one other known Sprinkler Save database available in the USA. It's an invaluable resource.

10. **NFCC** – No update JD could not attend meeting.

11. Group Updates

IC -FSA update – not done as IC had to leave early.

Action - IC to send update report to TMc for distribution

AP - BAFSA/Scottish update.

Discussion of :

- BAFSA 50th year celebrations and lunch at the House of Lords in June.
- Progress with technical guidance around historic building converted into hotels after the Cameron House Hotel fire which claimed the life of 2 people
- The development of new training courses to take the place of LPCB and BRE exams which are no longer being offered. BAFSA will provide the accreditation from now on.

RO - Wales – Apologies

RC - NFCC – covered in his previous presentation

12. Members updates

DK -FPA update

Has been on committee for upcoming new standard right – which is still at least two years away, maybe three years before it is developed.

FPA, BRE, LPCA and BAFSA are writing a white paper for the industry on the potential impact that it is going to have on sprinkler systems: Requirements, regulations, third party certifications and training, and competence. It will come out this year,

MS - WMFRS

In his final year of a fire safety degree. He needs ideas for his dissertation,

Action – Any members with ideas for MS's dissertation please send to mark.seroetschniy@wmfs.net

AB - EFSN

The annual EFSN conference last week in Dublin was very successful. Next year it will be in Salzburg 2-3 April 2025. One of the presentations by Dutch fire researchers who are firefighters and they've witnessed some guidance for firefighters on what to do when attending a fire in sprinklered building, it would be important to have guidelines in the UK.

Action – AP has a copy of Dutch presentation to send to TMc & TM for distribution

HL– Staysafe

Concerns that architects don't have the background to incorporate sprinkler systems and with new regulations, building control will not be able to advise them.

TC – CFRS

Cheshire FRS are doing an event for schools to focus on having sprinklers in just key areas. Looking for members to attend and to present at the events. TMC suggested they meet off line to discuss three schools in Derbyshire that have been built with sprinklers so perhaps can contact the headteachers.

Action – TMc to contact TC to discuss assistance for the Cheshire events

13. LATAM Presentation – CEM

CEM President of the Latin American Fire Protection Network made up of 25 organisations in 15 countries and was promoting the 1st International Fire Prevention Day to be held on 5 October 2024. The event to be hosted in the northern

hemisphere in Geneva and the southern hemisphere in Chile is an effort to globalise fire prevention efforts including the installation of sprinklers.

TMc confirmed we would have a meeting on the 5 October to coincide with the event.

Action TM to ensure 5 October is posted on website as a meeting date along with next meeting date.

14. Future events

Next meeting to be held, 25 June location to be determined (Potentially West Midlands)

As above a meeting will be held 5 October to coincide with 1st International Fire Prevention Day.

TMc – important to vary location of meetings geographically.

It was suggested we have an event at Westminster – possibly in February

Action – RK to look into potential dates for an event at Houses of Parliament.

15. AOB

KM advised Steve Bradley of Armstrong Priestley has expressed interest in being on the executive committee as a representative for industry.

Action - TMc to see who else applies to represent industry and make a final decision later.

Action – How to promote Birmingham/West Midlands success in encouraging retrofitting 218 high rise buildings with sprinkler systems

Meeting concluded 2.50