

NFCC launch first of evidence-based risk assessment methodologies

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The National Fire Chief Council's (NFCC) Community Risk Programme (CRP) is developing standardised tools to support UK Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs) in their community risk management planning. To date, the programme has worked with the Fire Standards Board to produce a fire standard for Community Risk Management and has delivered several pieces of guidance and tools that are being utilised by UK fire and rescue services.

In 2018, an independent review of community risk management across the UK found a variety of approaches being used by fire and rescue Services. This finding was echoed in the first HMICFRS State of Fire report which set out recommendations to address this variation. The tools being produced by the programme will help services to consistently identify, assess and mitigate community risks and provides a framework and systemic approach for developing community risk management plans.

Amongst the tools being produced are a set of evidence-based risk assessment methodologies, that can be used by all UK FRSs. As more lives are lost in fires that occur in domestic dwellings (residential properties) than any other building fire, the **Domestic Dwelling Fires Risk Methodology** is the first methodology to be developed by the programme.

Last summer, the programme delivered several training workshops on the Domestic Dwelling Fires Risk Methodology to Fire and Rescue Services, the workshops were attended by over 100 delegates representing 43 UK FRSs.

A risk assessment methodology for Other Building Fires or non-residential properties is currently open for consultation and the programme will be consulting on a risk methodology for road traffic collisions in

March. Both methodologies will be published in June this year. All three methodologies were developed with consultants ORH Ltd supported by subject matter experts from the NFCC and UK Fire and Rescue Service.

Chief Fire Officer for Cleveland Fire Brigade, and CRP Programme Executive Ian Hayton, said: “The Community Risk Programme set out to understand the national picture of risk identification, assessment and stratification to bring about the desired consistency to an area that is incredibly challenging to tackle.

“We found a need for standardised, data-led tools for assessing and understanding community risk that can be applied by all fire and rescue services no matter their size or geographical location. Using the same tools and evidence-based methodologies will support decision making on how to mitigate risk locally and support national comparison and collaboration activities.

“I am delighted to launch the Domestic Dwelling Fires Risk Methodology on UKFRS, with two further methodologies to follow this summer. As risk continues to change nationally and data gathering and provision evolves, this methodology will need to be updated and enhanced, and so there will be many iterations to come. Our hope is that this work will be adopted and implemented within services over the coming months and that it sparks new discussions and research into how community risk is analysed, understood and mitigated.”

The methodology is currently being peer reviewed by risk experts at Liverpool University, findings of the review will be published in June.