

PROCUREMENT AND COMMERCIAL

DESIRED OUTCOME

A fire and rescue service whose leaders recognise the importance of procurement and commercial best practice ensuring that contracts and relationships with its suppliers realise value for money (VFM) and result in delivery of quality public goods, services and works that support the environment and the diversity, safety and wellbeing of its people and communities.

A service that makes strategic, ethical, and informed procurement and commercial decisions that are aligned to organisational goals, ensuring fairness, transparency, and integrity throughout the lifecycle of its procurement and commercial activity.

A service that considers procurement and commercial options robustly and thoroughly, engages and consults with staff and wider markets to consider needs, and partners with others to define the optimum procurement and commercial approach. A service that establishes competition, legally compliant, and transparent processes and adopts robust contract management practices, ensuring VFM and security of supply is delivered throughout the procurement and contract lifecycle.

A service that embraces innovation and contributes to continuous improvement and collaboration at local, regional, and national levels. It understands the impact that procurement and commercial activity has on people, the local economy, the environment, and that it delivers its social value and net zero targets. A service that establishes and maintains appropriate capability and capacity by ensuring teams are equipped with the technical skills, commercial expertise, and resources to keep communities safe, supporting continued professional development of its procurement and commercial people.

BUSINESS AREAS

Enabling

CAPABILITIES



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WHAT IS REQUIRED TO MEET THE FIRE STANDARD

To achieve this Fire Standard, a fire and rescue service **must**:

1. have a Procurement/Commercial Strategy (or equivalent) linked to wider FRS goals and objectives.
2. conduct all commercial and procurement activity in compliance with relevant procurement legislation and any other statute, law, government policy notes.
3. have an internal procurement policy in place which defines procurement procedures and complies with all relevant procurement legislation and is subject to regular review.
4. manage the risk of fraud, bribery, and corruption (including cyber risk, data breach, modern slavery) within their supply chains.
5. produce, publish, and maintain a commercial pipeline and contracts register.
6. clearly define those accountable and responsible for its procurement and commercial activity and ensure sufficient capability and capacity to deliver, including ongoing training and continued professional development.
7. make use of appropriate systems and data to enable process efficiency, robust controls and effective and compliant decision making.
8. ensure that both internal and external stakeholders are engaged at the earliest opportunity to help inform the procurement strategy and process.
9. prepare well drafted procurement and commercial documentation (tender documents including terms and conditions) to protect the interests of the service and Fire Authority.
10. conduct proportionate due diligence, including financial analysis on the selected supplier prior to recommending a contract award.
11. publish details of the relevant data and information (where required) in accordance with internal policies, procedures and procurement regulations.
12. identify key suppliers and develop and/or maintain business continuity arrangements for contracts where failure presents a clear risk to organisational objectives.
13. ensure payments to suppliers and subcontractors are prompt and in line with contractual requirements.
14. ensure that organisational decisions and the measures implemented support equality, diversity, and inclusivity, are non-discriminatory and that appropriate impact assessments are undertaken.

To achieve this Fire Standard, a fire and rescue service **should**:

15. segregate expenditure into distinct categories such as markets, geography, and demographics, aligning to national and local strategies and categories.
16. consider aggregating demand and using collaborative and sector led procurement processes.
17. consider the use of established model contract templates (e.g. Government Standards).
18. evaluate options for accessing the supply market in order to conduct efficient procurement processes that maximise competition between suppliers, provide value for money and deliver the intended business outcomes.
19. conduct tender evaluation processes with cross-functional teams and evaluators and ensure there are no conflicts of interest that could prejudice the process.
20. establish contract management plans that defines the roles and the responsibilities of each party.

21. consider grant funding to support efficiency and wider social value agendas.
22. benchmark contract prices against the market and other public sector organisations to ensure prices represent value for money.
23. provide guidance, training and support to staff who are undertaking commercial activities and promote effective contract management and commercial delivery.
24. regularly review supply chains and maintain procurement/commercial risk registers.
25. capture lessons learned through the commercial lifecycle to facilitate continuous improvement.
26. maximise opportunities gained from supporting the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) network by sharing learning and experiences, collaborating, and contributing to the continual improvement of the service.

EXPECTED BENEFITS OF ACHIEVING THE FIRE STANDARD

This Fire Standard will contribute to the following benefits:

1. Continuous improvement in the quality of services to the public.
2. Increased competition, VFM, and return on investment.
3. Improved provision of goods, services and works that are fit for purpose and delivered through a robust supply chain.
4. Collaboration and interoperability with others, improving supply chain arrangements and adhering to legislation.
5. Delivers social value and sustainability, for society, economy, and the environment.
6. Supports the recruitment and retention of an effective, professional, and competent procurement/commercial function.

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS OR MANDATORY DUTIES

This Fire Standard reflects only the most appropriate legislation to this topic. We recognise that fire and rescue services must comply with a broader list of legislation to undertake their duties, which would be applicable to all standards. [View the legislation which applies to all Fire Standards.](#)

- [The Public Contracts Regulations](#)
- [Procurement Act](#)
- [Public Services \(Social Value\) Act](#)
- [Modern Slavery Act](#)
- [The Local Government \(Transparency Requirements\) \(England\) Regulations](#)
- [Environment Act](#)

LINKED QUALIFICATIONS, ACCREDITATIONS OR FIRE STANDARDS

Other Fire Standards:

- [Code of Ethics](#)
- [Community Risk Management Planning](#)
- [Communication And Engagement](#)
- [Data Management](#)
- [Emergency Preparedness and Resilience](#)
- [Leading The Service](#)

- Leading and Developing People
- Internal Governance and Assurance

Other related qualifications and standards (as applicable):

- Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply
- British Standards (BS)
- European Standards (EN)
- International standards (ISO)
- Government Functional Standards

GUIDANCE AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- Blue Light Commercial
- Cabinet Office Model Contracts
- The Cabinet Office Playbooks
- CIPFA Code of Practice
- CIPFA Financial Management Code
- Government Commercial College
- HM Treasury Managing Public Money
- NFCC Environment sustainability and climate change toolkit
- Procurement Policy Notes
- Transforming Public Procurement