



HM Fire Service Inspectorate in Scotland

Annual Operating Plan 2025-2026

Introduction

As Chief Inspector of HM Fire Service Inspectorate in Scotland (HMFSI), I have an obligation under section 43F of the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 to issue a Plan containing priorities for inspection and information on how inspection will be carried out. The Chief Inspector's Plan covers a three year period and due to the potential for priorities and uncertainties over a three year time period, the Chief Inspector's Plan is written as a situational overview of HMFSI's strategic inspection perspective.

The Chief Inspector's Plan 2025-2028 is complemented by the use of an Annual Operating Plan for each year covered by this document. The use of an Annual Operating Plan facilitates the dynamic nature of inspection planning and is used by HMFSI to identify the specific inspection work to be undertaken each year. The use of an Annual Operating Plan offers flexibility and the ability to respond to changes where necessary.

Each Annual Operating Plan is subject to consultation with the SFRS and relevant stakeholders. Each individual inspection has an inspection outline created, for which there is also consultation in line with our communications and engagement strategy.

Inspection 2025-2026

This Annual Operating Plan details the inspection work that HMFSI intends to undertake or commence during 2025-2026. It should be read in conjunction with the Chief Inspector's Plan 2025-2028 which contains our strategic overview of inspection planning.

Robert D. Scott QFSM
HM Chief Inspector of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

Inspection Activity 2025-2026

Completion of those inspections which commenced in 2024 and which will run into 2025.

This will apply to:

- The publication of the North SDA inspection report
- The conclusion of the thematic inspection of Operational Assurance and publication of the inspection report
- The ongoing thematic inspection of Organisational Culture

New inspection themes to commence during 2025-2026

OPERATIONAL TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

In recent years, there has been a substantial turnover of staff and associated promotions within the SFRS. An inspection is proposed which will examine the delivery of training and employee development of operational staff in the SFRS. Examples of this will include initial induction, point of entry training, arrangements for maintenance of competence, specialist skills courses, incident command training and officer development, competence assessment arrangements, talent management, and the challenges associated with high staff turnover rates.

Anticipated commencement date: June 2025

CORPORATE FUNCTION DELIVERY

HMFSI will be in a position where each of the three Service Delivery Areas have been inspected in respect of service delivery functions. It is proposed to undertake a complementary inspection to examine how the SFRS directs and supports service delivery at a corporate level. This is likely to consider the same themes as were examined during the SDA inspections - People, Partnership, Response, and Prevention - and will provide a balanced approach to the examination of service delivery across Scotland.

Anticipated commencement date: September 2025

	<p>COMMONWEALTH GAMES</p> <p>The Commonwealth Games will take place in Scotland in 2026 and be based in Glasgow. The SFRS will be involved in the preplanning for the Games and in line with previous high profile events, HMFSI will, by inspection, obtain a view of the preparedness of the SFRS for the event.</p> <p>Anticipated commencement date: October 2025</p>
	<p>ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE</p> <p>The inspection of Organisational Culture in the SFRS commenced in 2024. This inspection theme is split into different sub-themes. The second of these inspections will provisionally consider issues around employee behaviour, grievance, conduct and discipline. The detailed terms of reference for this inspection may however be influenced by the findings of the first sub-theme inspection.</p> <p>Anticipated commencement date: December 2025</p>