

# Your service Your voice

Have **your** say



A consultation on  
the safe and planned  
future of the  
Scottish Fire and  
Rescue Service

Published 13 February 2018



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Have **your** say



**The creation of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) in 2013 has been good for Scotland.**

The Service has continued to improve the safety and wellbeing of communities while benefiting from the operational and financial efficiencies of bringing eight brigades together as one.

SFRS has proven that it is capable of delivering major reform. It has laid the foundations for future transformation, and it has continued to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the communities it serves.

**But, SFRS needs to continue to transform.**

It is important for Scotland - view our video to find out why.



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The background of the entire page is a photograph of two firefighters in full protective gear, including helmets and breathing apparatus. They are kneeling on a dark surface, possibly a fire scene, with smoke and flames visible in the background. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the firefighters' gear.

# Tell us your views and ideas on the future of *your* Service

**The current SFRS operating model has served Scotland well but was designed to meet the risks of the 1940s - during this time we have seen a significant decrease in fires, but these are being replaced by new and emerging risks. As a result, we are neither as efficient nor flexible as we could be, limiting our ability to meet the needs of a modern Scotland.**

Investing in safe and planned transformation will allow the Service to better meet these risks and do so much more to keep people safe and well. It will ensure our people, stations and fire appliances are aligned to greatest need; will introduce latest technology and techniques; and give firefighters the training and equipment to take on an even wider emergency response and prevention role.

The Scottish Government demonstrated its belief in SFRS and the vision for transformation by increasing the spending capacity of SFRS by £15.5m for 2018/19. This will enable the Service to make the necessary investment to turn this vision into reality. [<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2017/12/8959/11>]

However, we cannot continue to simply spend more money on the same services.

By seeking to transform, SFRS is leading the way in Scotland's public sector.

Operating more effectively and efficiently will deliver so much more for the public who fund the Service through their taxes. It will improve their safety, but also enhance the safety of our valued firefighters, and better reward those firefighters for undertaking a wider role.

This consultation document sets out the vision, explains why the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service needs to transform and demonstrates how that transformation could be achieved.

## Your voice - why are we consulting?

We want you to be part of our decision-making process by giving you the opportunity to tell us your views and ideas on the future of **your** Service. This consultation details issues and proposals under consideration and asks you questions about these and the resulting improvements in outcomes. After the consultation is closed we will publish responses where we have been given permission to do so. Consent to publish is assumed unless you have told us otherwise in your response.

Full details on how to respond are set out at the end. This consultation is now open and will close after a full 90 days on 14 May 2018.

We really do want to hear what you have to say, so please use this opportunity to engage with us and have your voice heard.

We have created a number of ways for you to engage in the consultation, so you can choose the option that best suits you.

## How to engage



**Complete the consultation online at**  
**[www.firescotland.gov.uk/transformation/public-consultation](http://www.firescotland.gov.uk/transformation/public-consultation)**



**Print and post your response to:**  
**Your Service .... Your voice**  
**Scottish Fire and Rescue Service**  
**Management Suite**  
**Headquarters**  
**Westburn Drive**  
**Cambuslang G72 7NA**

If you have any issue accessing our consultation or printing the response form please email:  
**[YourServiceYourVoice@firescotland.gov.uk](mailto:YourServiceYourVoice@firescotland.gov.uk)**

*You can save and return to your response at any time while the consultation is open. But please ensure that your response is submitted before the consultation closes on 14 May 2018.*

*The Respondent Information Form lets us know how you wish your response to be handled, and in particular whether you are happy for your response to be made public.*

*You will automatically be emailed a copy of your response after you submit it. If you choose this method you will be directed to complete the Respondent Information Form.*

# What safe and planned transformation can deliver for Scotland

**Transformation will be comprehensively planned to ensure it is safe for firefighters and the people they serve.**

By transforming, we will be able to give firefighters a wider emergency response role, supported by all necessary training and equipment, which will enable them to save more lives and prevent further harm in some of the most challenging circumstances. But, by far, the biggest impact we can have on safety and wellbeing is by preventing emergencies from occurring in the first place.

***“The biggest impact we can have is by preventing emergencies from occurring in the first place.”***

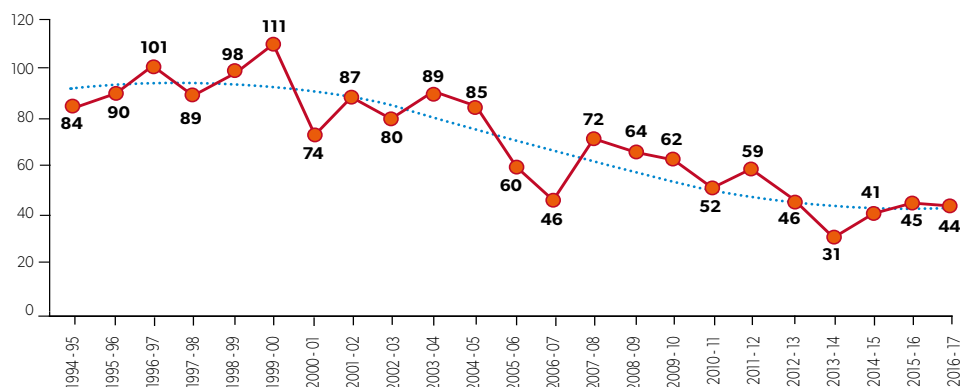
By extending a firefighter’s prevention role, we can increase the impact of their work beyond our success in significantly reducing fires and fire deaths. This would not only improve community safety and wellbeing but would reduce the demand for - and therefore the cost of - other public services.

We want all communities in Scotland to benefit from the specialist firefighter skills and fire and rescue technology that a single national service can offer. As part of that we want to strengthen the service we provide in our rural communities by looking at more effective ways to balance our resources between urban and rural settings.

SFRS will never lose sight of its core emergency response role, but transformation will also allow us to introduce a more effective operating model, combined with latest technology to not only further enhance community and firefighter safety, but deliver a more efficient service for taxpayers.

We believe that a more efficient and effective operating model - one fit for the 21st Century - will allow us to improve both response times and the number of fire engines and firefighting equipment we can deploy to incidents.

**Long-term trend of fire fatalities in Scotland, 1994/95 - 2016/17**



**55%  
DECLINE  
IN FIRES**

**58,500**  
primary fires  
in 1994-95

**26,300**  
primary fires  
in 2016-17

**IN SCOTLAND**

# The SFRS today

**The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) was formed on 1 April 2013, giving the people of Scotland more equitable access to the vast resources and capability of the UK's largest - world's fourth largest - fire and rescue service.**

## Our Statutory Responsibilities

Originally set out by The Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 and as amended by the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012, our duties have continued to evolve to include the provision of advice and guidance relating to fire safety, and responsibility to respond to fires and road traffic collisions.

The Service is also obliged under the Fire (Additional Function) (Scotland) Order 2005 to respond to chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear incidents; to respond to serious flooding; and respond to serious transport incidents. It also gave SFRS responsibility for Urban Search and Rescue in incidents such as a building collapse.

We also respond to a wide range of emergencies in domestic, industrial, urban and rural environments including water rescues, rescue from height, severe weather-related incidents, animal rescues and many other risk-critical events.

SFRS attended over 91,000 emergency incidents of all types in the year to 31 March 2017. In addition, we carried out over 70,000 home fire safety visits and nearly 9,000 non-domestic fire safety audits.



# The mandate to transform

The purpose of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service was set out in the 2013 Framework.

The new Framework which came into effect from 1 September 2016 reiterated the purpose of the SFRS, and also the role the Service plays in the delivery of the National Outcomes. It also emphasised the on-going drive to reform public services, built on the four pillars of the Christie Commission and specified that transformation of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service was to be one of ten Strategic Priorities set by Scottish Ministers.

***“The main purpose of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service is to work in partnership with communities and with others in the public, private and third sectors, on prevention, protection and response, to improve the safety and wellbeing of people throughout Scotland.”***

***“The SFRS should continue to ensure that the benefits of Fire Reform are fully realised, evidenced and tracked, and it should explore through Service redesign new and innovative ways in which it can improve the safety and well-being of communities throughout Scotland by building on the traditional roles carried out by the Service.”***

SFRS subsequently published its Strategic Plan, which sets out how the SFRS proposes to carry out its functions over the period it covers, and the outcomes against which these may be measured.

The principles of the proposed long-term Vision for the SFRS are, therefore, entirely in line with the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 2016 and SFRS Strategic Plan 2016 - 2019, both of which have previously been subject to public consultation.



# Maintaining public confidence

We understand the public looks to us in their times of greatest need.

It is vital that the public has trust in our capabilities and that we will have the right resources in the right place at the right time and, that the advice we provide on prevention of harm is credible and makes a real difference.

We believe transformation will build even greater public confidence by doing even more to ensure their safety and wellbeing.



MORI Survey of 1,000 adults in Scotland conducted in May 2017

# The need to transform

## Risk has changed

**The number of fires in Scotland has reduced by 40% in the last ten years alone and 55% since 1994, but significant new risks have emerged, including:**

**Severe Weather** incidents, which are now more frequent and more extreme in both scale and impact present an increasing risk to lives and livelihoods across Scotland.

**International terrorism** is a very real risk that Scotland cannot ignore. Recent attacks in the UK and Europe have seen firefighters at the very heart of the emergency response providing vital life-saving interventions.




**Scotland's ageing population** is seeing demand generated from an increase in the number of people who are at risk of fire and other forms of preventable harm, such as trips and falls, or showing early signs of dementia, within the home environment.

Firefighters can play a vital role in saving lives through **Emergency Medical Response** and contribute to improving Scotland's survival rates for medical emergencies such as Out of Hospital Cardiac Arrest -

the pilot of which with the Scottish Ambulance Service saw lives saved by the early intervention of firefighters. When minutes matter, our trained firefighters could save so many more lives.

Scotland's firefighters will often be the first on scene at such incidents - or preventing harm through early intervention -, but only by transforming can we ensure they are trained, equipped and supported by the right operating model that allows them to meet these risks safely and effectively.



The number of fires in Scotland has reduced by **55%** since 1994 but significant new risks have emerged

# We can reduce demand across public services

**Our preventative work has already contributed to a significant reduction in fires and fire deaths. By extending our expertise in prevention, we can make a direct and meaningful contribution to reducing demand across the public sector.**

With access to around 72,000 households a year, the SFRS is in a unique position to contribute to improving wellbeing as well as reducing social and economic inequalities.

We would look to formalise our role in tackling antisocial behaviour, reducing reoffending, and working in partnership to tackle domestic abuse. As respected role models, our diversionary work in communities, supports young people - particularly those at risk of offending - with the aim of avoiding them entering the justice system, as well as working with those who have already entered.

There is scope for the SFRS to work with partners to deliver effective harm prevention measures through a more holistic approach to assessing risk and to take action to reduce or remove it.

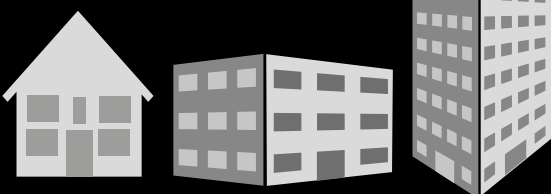
For example, responding to help those who do fall, or installing equipment in the home to prevent future accidents.

This will give increased confidence to the most vulnerable people living independently. In addition, by increasing the prevention and intervention reach of the SFRS, there is potential to reduce the burden on NHS and social care services.

At present, our operating model limits the time firefighters can spend on meaningful prevention, intervention and diversion work. A transformed operating model would see more availability at the optimum time to conduct this work - further reducing the risk of fires but also delivering real benefits in demand and cost reduction for health, social care and justice.

We have set out earlier in this consultation the Emergency Medical Response role that firefighters can play. This would support our valued colleagues in the Ambulance Service, rendering critical initial aid until further assistance arrives.

Access to around  
**72,000**  
households  
every year



Furthermore, when not responding to emergencies, our personnel could be deployed to undertake additional 'safe and well' prevention work such as falls risk assessment and response work such as helping people who are not considered to be a medical emergency.

This would reduce the demand on the NHS, enabling them to focus on emergency response for those who need it most, and ultimately contribute to a reduction in costs to those services.

# We can operate more efficiently

## Aligning resource to need

The fire and rescue service, as we know it, was established via the Fire Services Act 1947. And, although the legislation governing the SFRS has been modernised the operating model established 70 years ago has remained fundamentally unchanged.

The current operating model means that the Service has the same number of firefighters and fire appliances irrespective of the time of day. However, long term incident statistics show that more incidents occur during daytime hours than late at night or the early hours.

In addition, fire engines can cover ground much more quickly at night when traffic is lighter - yet our model does not reflect this.

Our resources are simply not being used as efficiently and effectively as they could be. By rebalancing our people against today's risks and demands, they can deliver even more for Scotland.

This would be achieved through greater flexibility in crewing models, a more effective allocation of fire appliances and a wider firefighter role - all of which are explored in more detail below.

## A more effective crewing model

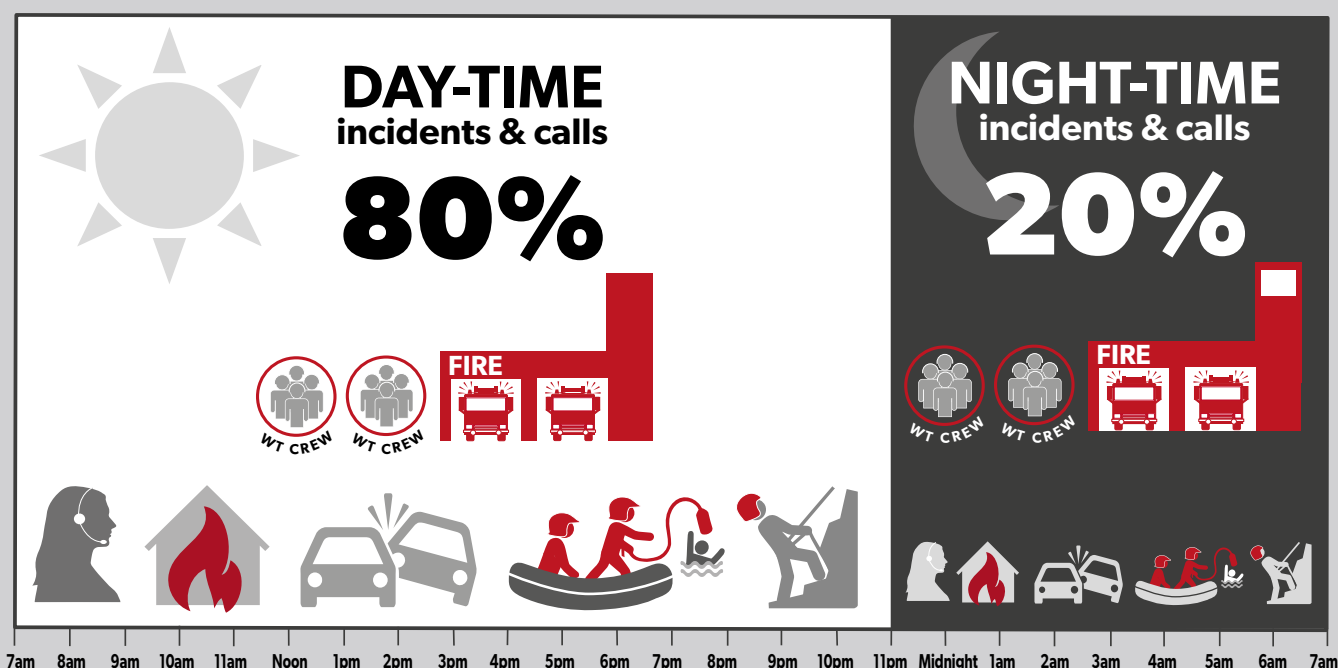
SFRS is the only fire and rescue service in mainland Britain to deploy designated 'first' appliances with a minimum crew of five, and the designated 'second' appliance a minimum crew of four (5+4). All 51 fire and rescue services in England and Wales<sup>1</sup> safely operate with a 4+4 crewing system, or a variation utilising the same number of firefighters.

There is, therefore, significant scope for SFRS to move to a safe yet more efficient model, allowing us to release more of our people to undertake work where there is now new risk and demand. In addition, this will free up resource to reward firefighters for taking on a new role.

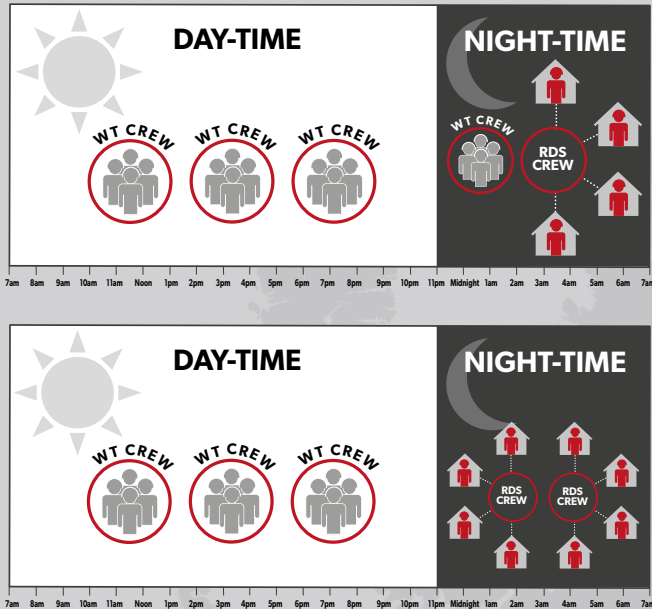
We also believe there could be a more flexible solution for night-time crewing which would safely meet the demand between the hours of 11pm and 7am. Our current system of employing the same number of wholtime firefighters day and night leads to a situation where a significant number are on duty during times of low activity.

These night-time duty patterns also limit the opportunity for firefighters to be deployed to carry out vital preventative work or to engage with partner organisations.

**Day-time and night-time demand is not equal but the number of firefighters on duty is always the same**



**Future crewing models?**



**Options to better align resource to need?**

Whilst the SFRS will always have the right resources in the right place at the right time, we believe we can safely alter the nature of our response to match modern demand and risk.

Bringing together all elements of a more effective and efficient delivery model will allow the Service to deliver improved outcomes with a slightly smaller number of firefighters. This planned rebalancing of the workforce would be delivered through the retirements that are anticipated over the next four years. There would be **no** compulsory redundancies, and we would continue to recruit both wholtime and retained firefighters.

<sup>1</sup> Source: <http://www.cfoa.org.uk/12072>

**Reviewing our national footprint**

One of the strengths of the fire and rescue service has been its unique station footprint, but if the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service were to plan that footprint today, it would do some things differently - again to better meet the needs of a modern Scotland.

Put simply, our stations and the resources within them were designed for another era. Many were built around industries that no longer exist, housing that has changed and moved, and are also based on older firefighting techniques. Indeed, some stations in our biggest cities were located to respond to wartime attacks.

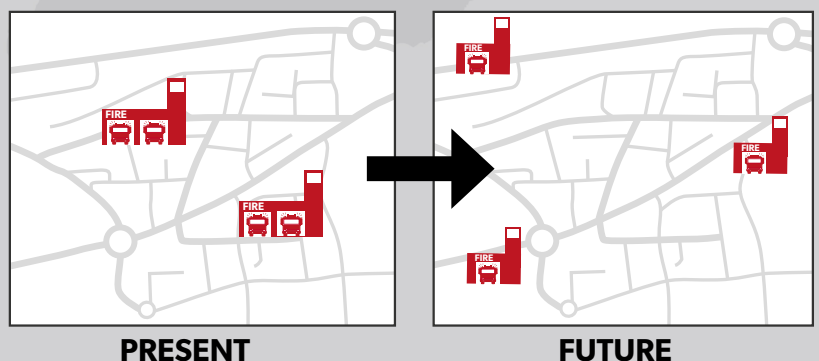
The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service is much more than a collection of fire stations, but simply closing a station to save money is not in our plans.

We recognise fire stations are focal points within their local communities. It is, however, right for us to give consideration to our combined station footprint and ask if the location, and the number of people and fire appliances within our stations are right for the service they now need to deliver. By looking at activity levels, instances of false alarms and the concentration of stations in given areas, we can determine if a more effective approach can be achieved.

This could see us consider building new stations, disposing of others, re-shaping resource and combining local capabilities, including sharing facilities with our police and ambulance partners.

We will look at this in the context of a national service, which allows us to deploy resources from right across the country into communities with the greatest need.

**Options to look at new approach to our national footprint?**





**We are looking  
at proven  
technology  
currently used  
worldwide**



# The need to adopt the latest technology

**Advances are being made in firefighting technology around the world, which are proven to increase the safety of firefighters and ultimately improve public safety. Adopting the latest technology to our 'toolkit' will allow us to affect the same results but do so more efficiently.**

One example is the Ultra High Pressure Lance (UHPL) system. This enables firefighters to initially tackle fires in enclosed spaces from outside the building. In addition to minimising the need for firefighters to enter the building at the height of a fire, the system reduces the fire and temperature faster than traditional methods.

This technology will be particularly useful in the first few minutes of any fire, and will be particularly effective at helping us deliver greater capability in our most rural communities.

We also believe we need to consider the combination of emergency response vehicles we have in our fleet. Again, we need to look at broadening our toolkit to deploy the right vehicle to the right incident. We must ask ourselves if it is right to deploy a full-size appliance to a small secondary fire, automated fire alarm or to conduct prevention and protection work.

In addition, when firefighters take on a broader role, a faster mid-size vehicle could be more appropriate to deliver the emergency response required. We are not proposing direct replacement of all traditional appliances but a more effective range of vehicle types.

Mid-size vehicles are already being used by fire and rescue services the world over, from New York to Tokyo and we believe this more flexible option is something Scotland must also now consider.

A more effective  
**COMBINATION** of  
emergency vehicles



# We need to take positive steps to improve availability of RDS appliances

## Strengthening our service

**Some 240 of the fire stations that serve Scotland are Retained Duty System (RDS). Our RDS crew members - on call firefighters in our more rural communities - are highly trained and committed, but the delivery model they are asked to work to is no longer robust.**

Recruitment and availability of RDS crew is a global issue, but for Scotland this means that on any given day up to 100 RDS fire appliances can be unavailable during daytime hours in the communities they serve - largely because we cannot secure the traditional crew of four.



# Access to rural communities

We need to take positive steps to improve availability of RDS appliances as our rural communities should expect the same level of protection as those in urban areas.

We want to introduce an integrated programme to strengthen our RDS and improve this availability. This will include the introduction of the latest firefighting technology and vehicles allowing more flexible yet safe, mobilising protocols.

We will also look to introduce new wholetime rural manager positions in key locations across Scotland. These high value and skilled roles will support the delivery of local training, undertake preventative work and increase the availability of appliances during daytime.



**We are proposing  
a four-year  
programme that  
will transform both  
the Service and the  
firefighter's role.**



# The future firefighter

**At the very heart of the SFRS transformation vision, is the future firefighter. Undertaking a new and significantly wider role, they will be trained, equipped and rewarded for meeting new and emerging risks.**

We are proposing a four-year programme that will transform both the Service and the firefighter's role.

In recognition of that new role we are proposing an enhanced recognition package. In return, we are asking firefighters to commit to a solution unique to Scotland.

Furthermore, by combining the more efficient operating model, latest technology and increased flexibility outlined throughout this consultation, means we can deliver improved outcomes with a slightly smaller frontline workforce.

## A more diverse firefighter role map

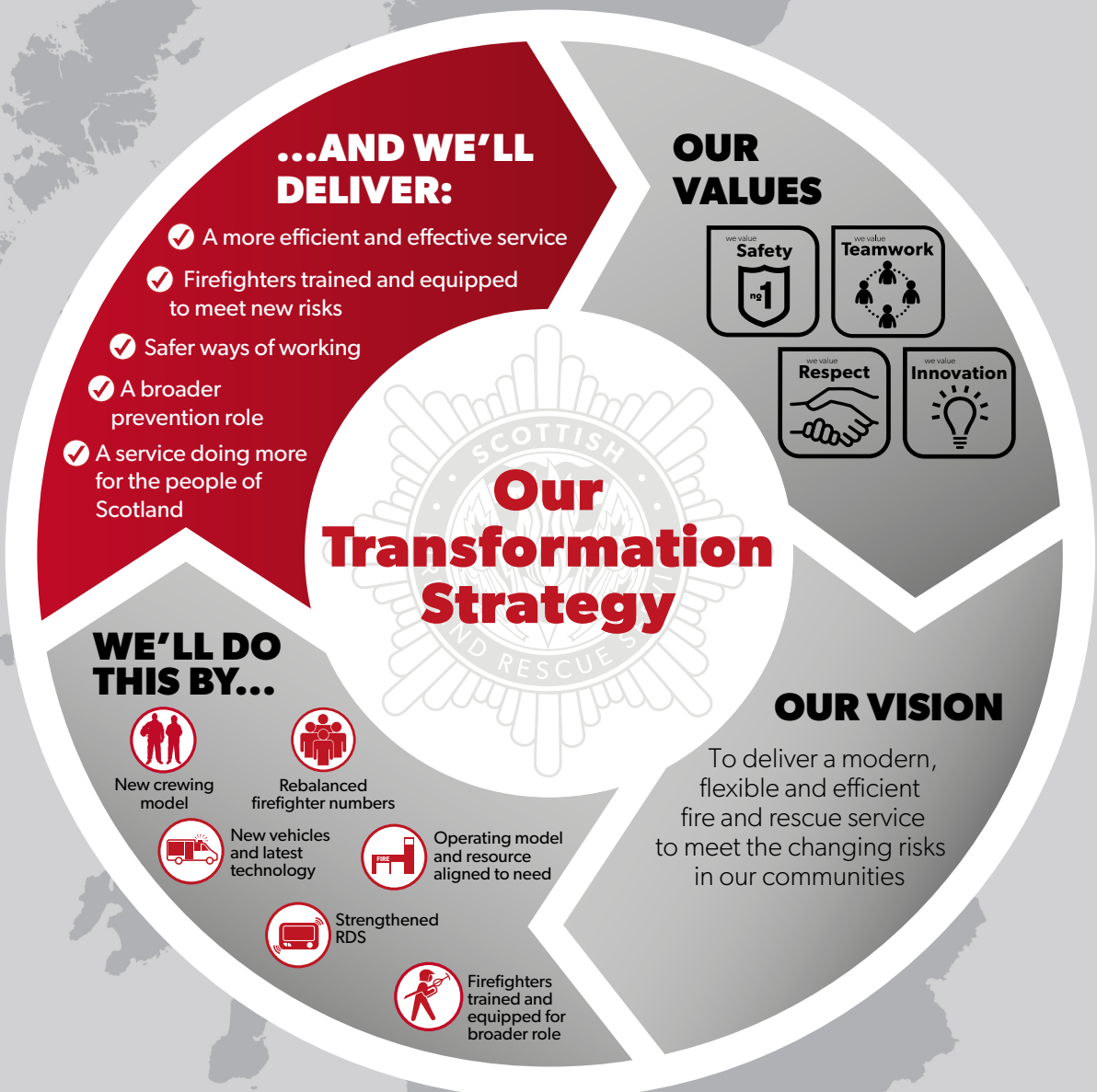
- Emergency medical response
- Multi-agency response (terrorism)
- Responding to environmental events
- Wider youth and social prevention work
- Inspection and enforcement responsibilities

- New fully-harmonised Terms and Conditions – all firefighters treated equally across Scotland
- More flexible working arrangements and mobility
- Revisions to crewing models and mobilising arrangements
- The use of new operational techniques, tactics and technologies

# The SFRS Strategy for safe and planned transformation

In summary, we believe safe and planned transformation will see a more effective and efficient SFRS delivering more for Scotland.

**We will achieve this by:**



# Responding to this consultation

Your name:  Your email:

Are you responding on behalf of: An organisation  Your organisation:   
As an individual

Do you agree with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service overall vision for transformation? Yes  No

Please say in the box below what you think the main benefits for Scotland will be:

Please provide your response to the following statements by ticking the relevant box:

Statement	Agree	Disagree	No opinion
I trust the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service to change its operating model – including station footprint - in ways that are safe for Scotland	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Firefighters should be trained and equipped to meet the new and emerging risks Scotland faces	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Firefighters should be rewarded for taking on an expanded role, and in accordance with the risks they take	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Latest technology should be used where possible to improve firefighter and public safety	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Firefighters could be trained to take on roles that would reduce the burden on other public services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A more flexible approach to crewing during the late evening and early morning hours would allow firefighters to do more during the day when demand is higher	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please say why you agreed or disagreed, in the box below:

What single thing is most important to you about the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service?

Do you think there is anything the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service should NOT do as part of transformation?  
Please give a reason for your answer in the box below.

Do you have any final comment to make on the transformation of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service?

I do not wish my response to be published



# SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Working together for a safer Scotland

Your service.... Your voice.... Have your say

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