



**Service Policy: PREPOL04
Operational Planning Policy**

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Document Control:

Active date	Review date	Author	Editor	Publisher
April 2026	April 2028	██████████	██████████	██████████

Amendment History:

Vs	Date	Author	Reasons for Change
1.0	17/04/09	██████████	Policy Review
1.01	Feb 10	██████████	Policy Review
1.02	Mar 11	██████████	Policy Review
1.03	Aug 11	██████████	Policy Review
1.04	Aug 12	██████████	Policy Review
1.05	16/12/2013	██████████	Policy Review
1.06	27/03/2015	██████████	Policy Review
1.07	01/04/2016	██████████	Policy Review
1.08	20/02/2017	██████████	Policy Review
1.09	30/3/2018	██████████	Policy review & Inclusion of information on NOG program and new SOP's
1.10	05/04/2019	██████████	Policy Review
1.11	28/02/2020	██████████	Policy Review
1.12	16/02/2021	██████████	Update of information on NOG program
1.13	13/03/2024	██████████	Policy Review
2.0	15/04/2026	██████████	Policy Review

Equalities Impact Assessment:

Initial	Full	Date	Reviewed by	Comments
	X		ED&I Team	Located on portal

Civil Contingencies Impact Assessment:

Date	Reviewed by	Comments

Related Documents:

Doc. Type	Ref No.	Title	Location

Distribution List:

Name	Position	Department

Sign-Off List:

Name	Position

Target Audience:

All MFRS	Principal Officers	Senior Officers	Operational Crews	Fire Safety	Community Fire Safety	Support Staff
X						

Ownership:

FOI exemption required?	Yes	URL
	No	X Reason

Legislation:

Title	Fire & Rescue Services Act 2004
	Civil Contingencies Act 2004
	Fire & Rescue National Framework Document for England 2018
	Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

Contact:

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Operational Planning & Policy Team	██	████

POLICY

PREPOL04 Operational Planning Policy

1. Policy Introduction and Background:

It is the policy of Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority (MFRA) to ensure that robust and effective operational planning arrangements are in place to support the safe, efficient, and coordinated response to emergencies.

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service (MFRS) is required, under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, to plan and prepare for a wide range of foreseeable incidents and risks. This includes the development of operational procedures, risk information, and planning arrangements that enable the Service to respond effectively to emergencies and protect the public, personnel, and the environment.

National Operational Guidance (NOG), produced by the National Fire Chiefs Council, provides a framework of good practice which is adopted and adapted locally to ensure consistency, interoperability, and alignment with national standards.

This policy establishes the overarching framework through which MFRS will develop, maintain, and assure its operational planning arrangements, including:

- Standard Operational Procedures (SOPs)
- Site Specific Risk Information (SSRI)
- Operational Response Plans (ORPs)
- Supporting risk assessments and training.

2. Policy Explanation:

MFRS has statutory duties to respond to a broad range of emergencies and to manage the risks associated with those incidents. These duties require the Service to ensure that appropriate plans, procedures, and risk information are in place to support operational response.

Operational planning within MFRS will be based on the following principles:

- **Risk-based approach:**
Planning will be informed by the identification and assessment of foreseeable risks, ensuring that resources, procedures, and information are aligned to the risks faced within the community.
- **Alignment to national guidance:**
Operational procedures will be developed in accordance with National Operational Guidance (NOG), ensuring consistency with national standards while allowing for local adaptation.
- **Provision of safe systems of work:**
MFRS will ensure that operational procedures are supported by suitable and sufficient risk assessments, training, equipment, and supervision to enable personnel to operate safely in hazardous and dynamic environments.
- **Integration of operational information:**
Site-specific and risk-critical information will be identified, maintained, and made available to

support informed decision-making at incidents.

- **Training and competence:**

Operational procedures will be supported by appropriate training and development to ensure personnel are competent to apply them effectively.

- **Continuous improvement**

Operational planning will be subject to ongoing review, incorporating learning from incidents, debriefs, exercises, and national operational learning to ensure procedures remain current and effective.

3. Policy Implementation:

This policy will be implemented through the development, governance, and assurance of a structured suite of operational planning products and processes.

MFRS will maintain a comprehensive framework for the creation, review, and approval of operational procedures, ensuring that:

- All SOPs are subject to appropriate governance, consultation, and impact assessment
- Procedures are aligned to national guidance and legislative requirements
- Supporting risk assessments and training packages are developed and maintained.

Governance of operational planning will be delivered through established Service arrangements, including the Operational Procedure Review Governance Group, which provides oversight of:

- The development and review of SOPs
- Quality assurance and consistency
- Alignment to organisational priorities and risk.

Operational planning outputs will be regularly reviewed and updated to reflect:

- Changes in risk profile
- Operational learning and assurance findings
- Updates to national guidance and legislation.

Detailed processes for the development, structure, and application of SOPs, as well as specific operational procedures, are contained within supporting Service documents.

All Policies can be found on the [Website](#)