

## HMICFRS Area for Improvement – Sign off and closure report

Area for improvement	Protecting the public through fire regulation
Pillar	Protection
Strategic Lead	Lee Brown
Project Lead	Lee Haggath

### Area for Improvement action detail

*AFI Ref: No 5 - The brigade should make sure it has effective arrangements to provide specialist protection advice out of hours.*

### What has been completed?

*(Summary of actions undertaken to deliver improvement)*

A comprehensive programme of work has strengthened Cleveland Fire Brigade's (CFB) out-of-hours (OOH) specialist protection response and closes the HMICFRS Area for Improvement requiring effective arrangements to provide specialist protection advice outside normal hours.

Following a full departmental review, a restructure of the Protection function was completed and approved by the Executive Leadership Team (ELT). This restructure was agreed on 12 March 2026 and went live on 1 April 2026.

The new model explicitly enhances OOH capability by deploying qualified Green Book Protection Inspectors alongside Protection Station Managers, giving the Brigade a sustainable 24/7 protection response and replacing the historic, inconsistent reliance on Flexi-Duty Officers (FDOs).

OOH responsibilities and allowances are now formally embedded, with a defined on-call pool and governance to support rapid access to competent protection advice at any time. Design of the system was evidence-led, using a 12-month demand review that recorded seven OOH callouts totalling 20.5 hours. The rota agreed with the Green Book Inspectors is to provide 365 day out of hours cover utilising a 7 day on 14 day off between the three Inspectors. Details of this change have been communicated to the Organisation via Fire Alert 17/202. [Fire Alert 17-2026 Out of Hours Fire Safety](#). Information has also been relayed via Communication Forum by the Head of Department on Friday 17 April. Emails have also been sent to Control to explain the changes to the Cover Sheet and DSP 367 amended.

### Delivery outcomes

*(What are the success factors)*

CFB now has a resilient, specialist-led OOH provision that removes single points of failure and reduces pressure on the wider FDO cadre.

By keeping OOH within the Protection staff, the model maintains technical competence and mitigates skills fade that previously affected some FDOs.

It improves value for money with the revised structure realigning resources, building in the necessary on-call allowances for Inspectors, and still achieving an overall reduction in departmental costs while improving service quality.

Success for this new structure and procedure will see a decrease in the use of recall to duty for Fire Safety Officers and use of on duty FDO's to deal with Fire Safety issues out of hours. All calls should be dealt with by the designated Fire Safety Officer for that period of out hours.

### Follow on actions?

*(Action to be detailed with target dates and owners identified)*

Action	Owner	Target date
6 Month review carried out to ensure that all out of hours provision has been completed by the designated out of hours fire safety officer rather than the on duty FDO or via recall to duty.	Lee Haggath	31/10/2026
The process of assessing the out of hours provision should be completed by someone external to the Protection Department		

### Supporting Evidence - documents/links

[Protection Restructure Proposal Oct. 2025 - v002.docx](#)  
[Fire Alert 17-2026 Out of Hours Fire Safety](#)

### Lessons learnt

Early, transparent engagement with Inspectors, Station Managers and other Protection staff proved essential to secure buy-in and shape a practical rota around real operational needs.

The work confirmed that OOH protection should be specialist-led rather than solely dependent on FDOs, as this better sustains competence and consistency.

Current level of assurance	Substantial
Sign off and closure confirmed	Yes
Directorate sign off	Yes
Date	29 <sup>th</sup> April 2026
Executive Leadership Team sign off	Agreed
Date	5 <sup>th</sup> May 2026

**Version Control – Governance and Assurance only**

<b>Version No.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Date</b>
0.1	Nicola Tranter	November 2025