



**GREATER
MANCHESTER**
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE



EFFICIENCY & PRODUCTIVITY **PLAN** 2025-26

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Introduction

The Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMFRS) Efficiency & Productivity Plan 2025-26 outlines our strategic approach to enhancing operational efficiency and productivity across the Service.

Building on the commitments set out in the Spending Review 2021 and reaffirmed in the Spending Review 2024, GMFRS aims to increase wholetime firefighter productivity by 3% and achieve 2% non-pay efficiency savings. This plan is designed to ensure that GMFRS remains flexible, modern, and resilient, capable of meeting the evolving needs of the communities we serve.

Our approach focuses on streamlining processes, optimising resource management, and leveraging new technologies to improve service delivery. Despite financial challenges, GMFRS is committed to maintaining high standards in prevention, protection, and response services. The ultimate goal is to provide the best possible value to the city-region, ensuring that our operations are both effective and efficient.

The plan includes detailed strategies and initiatives that will drive improvements in productivity and efficiency. These efforts are supported by the Fire Plan and our Annual Delivery Plans, which outline the specific actions we will take to address risks and enhance community safety.

- [Fire Plan - Greater Manchester Fire Rescue Service](#)
- [Annual Delivery Plans - Greater Manchester Fire Rescue Service](#)

Additionally, the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) provides a comprehensive overview of our financial position, including revenue targets, capital investments, and funding requirements.

By implementing this plan, GMFRS aims to deliver benefits to the community, improve the work environment for our staff, and ensure sustainable financial management. We are dedicated to continuous improvement and innovation, striving to achieve excellence in all aspects of our service.

Primary Information

Given the growing financial challenges, this strategy focuses on optimising resource utilisation while maintaining exceptional service quality. By implementing effective budgeting, strategic resource allocation, and proactive cost-saving initiatives, we strive to enhance our financial efficiency without compromising the delivery of our services.

Budget

The Chancellor announced the Spending Review in December 2024 which presented a one-year settlement. In relation to Fire and Rescue Services, the announcements covered the following:

- Fire and Rescue services receive an average 2.8% increase in core spending power.
- The increase for 2025/26 is funded entirely through the assumed council tax increase, with a small reduction in government grant funding.
- The increase in core spending power assumes all Fire and Rescue Services use the full £5 council tax flexibility to protect frontline services.
- Services Grant and Funding Guarantee are reduced by 100%.
- Fire and Rescue Pensions Grant was announced after the budget was approved. This shows a further reduction in grant allocation.
- NIC Compensation totals £515m for all local government, including Fire and Rescue, based on Net Current Expenditure. The allocation received following the approved budget provides funding for 60% of increased costs for GMFRS.
- Protection Uplift Grant has been announced at flat cash allocations in line with 2024/25, however, only half year funding confirmed.

The table below present the budget requirements from 2023/24. This represents the approved budget prior to Home Office grants and NIC compensation grant allocations:

BUDGET (£000)			
Revenue Expenditure	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
Direct Employee	98,779	110,844	116,070
Indirect Employee	1,887	2,108	2,108
Premises	6,645	6,907	6,907
Transport	2,470	2,450	2,450
Supplies and Services	10,594	15,358	14,475
Capital Financing	2,082	1,468	2,544
Other	8,272	11,245	11,245
Total	130,729	150,380	155,799
Income	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
Actual Received from Precept	-60,433	-65,555	-70,855
Local Government Finance Settlement	-44,571	-52,690	-52,024
Other Grants	-22,860	-26,458	-27,368
Income Raised Locally	-2,095	-4,276	-4,321
Total	-129,959	-148,979	-154,567

Budget pressures identified are set out below:

- **Pay Award:** Budget pressures of £5.226m have been calculated based on a 2% increase for uniformed staff and 3% for non-uniformed staff.
- **National Insurance Funding:** According to the Chancellor's budget statements, national insurance was expected to be fully funded for all public sector employers, however, allocations for Fire and Rescue services fall short of this. Analysis by the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) indicates a 50% shortfall in funding across all Fire and Rescue Services, equivalent to the cost of one fully staffed fire engine for GM. Since the budget was approved, allocations amount to 60% of funding of increased costs for GMFRS. Despite recent local funding efforts to add two additional pumps, reducing fire cover due to a shortfall in NI funding would be extremely challenging.
- **Capital Financing Costs:** Calculated based on Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) due to internal borrowing capabilities. As of Q2 2024/25 capital reporting, MRP was forecasted at £2.544m, an increase of £1.076m compared to the 2024/25 budget.

- **Pensions Costs:** In 2024/25, pensions costs caused a £800k pressure on the Service, which we understand will not be reviewed despite disproportionate impacts on some authorities. This funding significantly affects the Service's spending power. We requested a reconsideration of the 2024/25 allocations and assurances that the 2025/26 allocations will not result in further shortfalls, however, we have seen a further reduction in grant of £202k creating a further funding gap.
- **Budget Pressure:** At the point of budget approval, the 2025/26 budget faced a £1.2m pressure. Since then, with further information received from billing authorities in respect of business rates, this has reduced to £977k after efficiency savings. We will address this gap through reductions in non-frontline expenditure or GMFRS reserves.

The table below presents the Service's reserves from 2023/24 to 2027/28:

RESERVES (£000)					
Reserves	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028
General Reserves	11,782	11,782	11,782	11,782	11,782
Earmarked Revenue	4,592	2,570	1,339	1,339	1,339
of which MRP reserve	0	0	0	0	0
Earmarked Capital	13,386	13,386	13,386	13,386	13,386
Other Reserves	0	0	0	0	0
of which revenue	8,765	8,689	8,689	8,689	8,689
of which capital	0	0	0	0	0
Total	38,525	36,427	35,196	35,196	35,196

Efficiency

In the face of increasing financial pressures, it is crucial to identify and implement strategies that enhance efficiency while maintaining high standards of service delivery. The following information provides details of how GMFRS has achieved these savings and the challenges anticipated in meeting future targets.

The efficiency savings shown against previous financial years have been achieved through negotiation of contracts, line by line reviews undertaken plus the introduction of new delivery models, some of which has enabled the reinvestment required to ensure we are providing an effective service within the changing environment of our city-region.

2024/25 Efficiencies:

The efficiency data, provided in the table below, details the savings achieved over the three financial years, 2023-24, 2024-25 and 2025-26, in line with guidance which equates to 2% of the budget excluding direct employee costs.

The below details how the 2024/25 efficiencies have been achieved:

- Fire Cover Review efficiencies of £1.179m were implemented in the financial year which enabled reinvestment to increase fire engine numbers from 50 to 51, placed within Manchester city centre due to the risks posed due to the level of high-rise buildings.
- Renegotiation of cost apportionment in respect of North West Fire Control provision enabled a budget reduction of £325k.
- The remaining £125k was met through a line-by-line review.

EFFICIENCY DATA (£000)

	Actual 2023-24		Actual 2024-25		Forecast 2025-26	
Opening Revenue Expenditure Budget (Net)	128,634		146,104		148,722	
Less Total Direct Employee Costs	-98,779		-110,844		-116,070	
Non Pay Budget	29,855		35,260		32,652	
Efficiency Target - 2% non-pay budget	597		705		653	
Efficiency Savings	Recurrent	Non-recurrent	Recurrent	Non-recurrent	Recurrent	Non-recurrent
<u>Direct Employee</u>						
Reduction Prevention/Protection/Response Staff						
Reduction in Support Staff	-37					
<u>Indirect Employee</u>						
(e.g.training,travel etc)						
All Indirect Employee Costs	-200					
<u>Premises</u>						
Utilities						
Rent/Rates						
Other Premises Costs			-125			
Shared Premises						
<u>Transport</u>						
Fleet						
Fuel						
Other Transport Costs						
<u>Supplies and Services</u>						
National Procurement Savings						
Local Procurement Savings			-325			
Other Technology Improvements	-45					
Decreased Usage	-190					
<u>Capital Financing</u>						
Revenue Expenditure Charged to Capital						
Net Borrowing Costs						
<u>Other</u>						
Green Book Pension Contribution						
Rate Reduction	-109					
Fire Cover Review			-1,179			
Ill Health Costs	-131					
Unallocated Savings 2025/26					677	
Total Efficiency Savings	-712		-1,629		677	
Efficiency Savings as a Percentage of Non-Payroll Budgets	-119.24%		-231.00%		103.67%	
Efficiency Savings Target	2.00%		2.00%		2.00%	
Over/(Under)	-121.24%		-233.00%		101.67%	

2025/26 Efficiencies:

The 2025/26 target remains unallocated at this point in time. The Service will need to take a different approach to previous years in how we identify the cashable savings required as this is proving more difficult to achieve through a review approach against the backdrop of increased costs.

Budget Challenges:

The future challenges / risks that may impact our budget are outlined below:

- **Government Funding:** Future government funding beyond 2025/26 has not been confirmed. It is expected to be announced in the next Comprehensive Spending Review.
- **Fair Funding Review:** Potential changes arising from the Fair Funding Review, specifically impacting the Fire Formula, which is currently under consultation.
- **Pay Inflation:** Pay inflation for firefighters and local government employees exceeding the assumptions set out in the MTFP.
- **Pension Increases:** Funding beyond 2025/26 has not yet been confirmed for pension increases.
- **McCloud/Sargeant Remedy:** The Court of Appeal's ruling that the Government's 2015 public sector pension reforms unlawfully treated existing public sector members differently based on age. The implications of this remedy are being determined but are likely to be significant in future years.
- **Pension Grants:** Fire and Rescue Pension Grants continue to be paid at current levels, resulting in ongoing shortfalls.
- **ESMCP:** The Emergency Services Mobile Communications Project (ESMCP) – a national project to procure and replace the emergency services network – has been paused but may create budget pressures in future years.

The table below sets out the income for 2023/24, 2024/25 and 2025/26. We will continue to look for opportunities to increase our income generation.

INCOME						
£000						
Income generated from	Actual 2023-24		Actual 2024-25		Forecast 2025-26	
	Recurrent	Non-recurrent	Recurrent	Non-recurrent	Recurrent	Non-recurrent
Charging policies	217	93	196	7	191	0
Trading operations	2,008	354	1,967	95	1,878	0
Shared premises	0	0	0	0	0	0
Interest on investments	0	983	0	250	0	0
Other sources	106	39	289	25	289	53
Total	2,331	1,469	2,452	377	2,358	53



The below sets out a range of activities that further support delivering efficiencies across the Service:

- **Annual Delivery Plan Improvement Portfolio:** Our improvement portfolio is essential for achieving our strategic priorities. It provides a robust framework for tracking progress and measuring performance against set targets. This enables us to identify areas requiring improvement and make the necessary changes quickly, ensuring we remain on course to achieve our objectives.
- **Overtime costs:** We have implemented a more efficient shift scheduling system, improving crewing efficiency and helping to reduce overtime costs. Efforts to reduce sickness and absence, along with enhanced oversight are expected to assist with driving further cost reductions..
- **Staffing Adjustments:** Administrative processes have been streamlined, reducing the need for additional support staff. Changes to the business support team have been made at no additional cost to support increasing demands.
- **Non pay savings:** Savings target of £0.677 million set for 2025/26. This represents 2% of non-pay budgets for 2025/26.
- **Travel and Subsistence:** A review of the detachment mileage matrix and detachments policy has been undertaken to reduce the costs associated with travel. We estimate this will reduce costs by approximately £50,000 annually.
- **Shared Premises:** We undertake reviews of the rateable value of our premises to ensure budget alignment and challenge assessments when necessary through the appeal process.
- **Engagement with Public Buying Organisations (PBOs):** GMFRS collaborates with PBOs to access wholesale energy markets and implement risk management strategies for procuring gas and electricity. We project that we will save approximately £50,000 in electricity costs fir 2025/26, with further reductions expected in subsequent years. Gas savings are projected at £42,000 for 2025/26.
- **Feed-in Tariff Benefits:** Solar PV systems have generated significant savings and income, with total financial benefits exceeding £1.1 million since installation.

- **Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme:** GMFRS successfully secured grant funding of £620,000 supported LED lighting and solar PV installations, reducing carbon emissions by over 85 tonnes CO2e annually and saving approximately £135,000 in energy costs.
- **Fleet Capital Replacement Plan/Investment (Operational & Support Fleet Assets):** Investing in fleet upgrades enhances operational response and sustainability. This includes newer vehicles and research opportunities in de-carbonisation and net-zero emissions.
- **Fleet Asset Management Plan:** This plan provides comprehensive management of all fleet areas over the next five years, outlining key interdependencies, foster improved productivity, efficiencies, and collaborative opportunities across various functions.
- **Digital Fleet and Equipment Management System – Papertrail:** The ongoing implementation and embedding of Papertrail, will enhance transparency and governance across the service, particularly in relation to statutory inspection and maintenance workstreams for all fleet, equipment, and PPE assets.
- **Specialist Vehicle Acquisition:** Benchmarking against new and second-hand prices resulted in a one-off saving of £47,000. Additionally, the recent procurement of BA Compressor Servicing and Maintenance delivered savings of £135,000.
- **Electric Vehicle Integration:** The acquisition of electric vehicles aims to replace older diesel vehicles across multiple locations, contributing to our sustainability goals.
- **Fleet Expansion for Flexible Duty Officers:** Purchasing a fleet of vehicles for Flexible Duty Officers enhances operational resilience and improves road risk management, saving £6,300.
- **Streamlining Processes:** Structural reviews within the Fleet and Logistics functions have identified opportunities to streamline processes, reducing the need for additional support staff.
- **Introduction of Vehicle Telematics:** We have introduced vehicle telematics to enhance fleet management and operational efficiency.
- **BA Compressor Servicing and Maintenance:** The recent procurement of BA Compressor Servicing and Maintenance delivered savings of £135,000.

- **Procurement Savings in 2024/25:** These include £56,000 from works at Manchester Central Community Fire Station and £47,000 from specialist vehicle procurement.
- **Shared services:** Through our Combined Authority governance model, services are delivered on a shared basis across GMCA and GMFRS. These include legal services, accountancy, audit, digital, insurance, HR and commercial.
- **Collaboration:**
 - **Shared Estate:** 22 out of 41 fire stations have a shared premises commitment, including partnerships with NWAS, GMP, and community groups. This includes the purpose-built shared facility at Wigan Community Fire and Ambulance Station.
 - **Shared Fire Control:** Collaboration between Greater Manchester, Cumbria, Lancashire, and Cheshire has realised savings of £0.325 million through shared fire control operations.
 - **Multi-Agency Planning Team:** Collaboration between GMP, GMFRS, NWAS, and BTP to provide a multi-agency planning team for a full-scale, no-notice MTA exercise has provided non-cashable savings by sharing the costs and labour.
 - **Future Collaboration:** Planned collaboration between GMFRS, GMCA, TfGM, and GMP aims to deliver shared office accommodation and public sector realm accommodation, incorporating residential properties into the site. The land value will be leveraged to fund a new purpose-built Fire and Community Fire Station.
- **Research and Evaluation:**
 - Collaborating with local universities to enhance research capabilities and integrate academic evidence into practices.
 - Conducting evaluations to refine strategies and processes, identifying opportunities for organisational learnings and ensuring effective service delivery.
- **Future Efficiencies:** Our future approach to deliver the efficiency savings of £677k and start to mitigate future shortfalls includes:
 - **Governance:** Strategic Finance and Investment Board (SFIB - previously Budget Management Group) meets monthly and serves as the primary forum for discussions and scrutiny over savings progress..

- **Learning:** Further discussions with GMP regarding Operation Rydal will be pursued, with terms of reference already received for information.
- **Corporate Recharges:** Ongoing conversations with the GMCA will ensure value for money and proportional costs for support services delivered to GMFRS.
- **Budget Subgroup:** A subgroup, including all GMFRS Heads of Service and Head of Finance, will be considered. This subgroup meet bi-monthly ahead of SFIB.
- **Current Budget Review:** A line-by-line budget review will be conducted with each Head of Service and the Head of Finance to identify potential efficiencies.
- **Zero-Based Budget Review:** This review will separate budget requirements into statutory and non-statutory activities, assessing activities against local risks.



Productivity

Shared Premises

- GMFRS collaborates with NWAS and GMP at various locations, including the purpose-built Wigan Community Fire and Ambulance Station. We share facilities with GMP, GM partners, and charities like Moss Side Fire Station Boxing Club CIO, Barnardo's, and Bolton Mountain Rescue.
- Estates Management services are provided to the Service by GMCA, who provide similar services for GMP, offering opportunities to collaborate and utilise our estates.
- Future collaboration planned between GMFRS, GMCA, TfGM and GMP to deliver a shared office accommodation and public sector realm accommodation with residential properties incorporated into the site, using the land value to leverage funding for a new purpose-built Fire and Community Fire Station.
- **Emergency Medical Response:** As part of our partnership approach, we are scoping out the delivery of an Emergency Medical Response (EMR) in support of North West Ambulance Service (NWAS). The aim is to help improve health outcomes for people in our city-region and relieve pressure on the health service.
- **Local Resilience Forum:** GMFRS actively engages with the Greater Manchester Local Resilience Forum (GM LRF), leading multi-agency exercises and training, and collaborating closely with GMP, GMRU and NWAS.
- **Marauding Terrorist Attack (MTA):** Joint training programmes with GMP and NWAS enhance our MTA capability. These will be delivered annually with specific training themes to further improve interoperability and preparedness.
- **Safer Communities and Interventions Team:** this team is dedicated to enhancing community safety and reducing risks through a variety of educational and intervention programmes, including:
 - **Atlas Programme:** Collaborative programme with the Greater Manchester Probation Service, providing tailored interventions for adults convicted of fire-setting crimes, recognised as promising practice by HMCFRS and other awards/accolades.
 - **Apollo Programme:** Themed intervention designed for individuals involved in the criminal justice system or need early intervention and aims to build strength and resilience through education and support.

- **Athena Programme:** Supports young people in developing essential life skills and improving their future prospects. It focuses on providing a blend of classroom learning and practical activities, promoting teamwork, communication, risk assessment, and understanding the consequences of actions.
- **Prevention in Prisons Programme:** In collaboration with the Probation Service, this programme aims to educate and support individuals within the prison system to reduce reoffending and promote positive behaviour change.
- **Progression Coaching Pathway:** Delivered by the Safeguarding Team this intervention supports individuals in their personal and professional development through tailored coaching sessions, goal setting, and skill development to enhance productivity and career advancement.
- **Road Safety:** GMFRS will support the delivery of [Vision Zero](#) which aims to eliminate road deaths and life-changing injuries by 2040, with a target to achieve a 50% reduction by 2030. Delivery of the strategy and action plan is being led by the Greater Manchester Safer Roads Partnership, made up of the GMCA, our ten local authorities, TfGM, GMP, GMFRS and National Highways. As part of this work, GMFRS has introduced a Motorcycle Risk Reduction Team and we are actively working with partners to reduce motorcycle collisions within the region. We have also developed road safety educational packages and campaigns on our website.
- **Water Safety:** GMFRS delivered a GM Water Safety Summit involving our key partners. This partnership has [published a strategy](#) outlining its aims and overseen the creation of local water safety partnerships in all ten local authorities. These local partnerships will develop action plans detailing measures to be taken to reduce risk.
- **Grenfell Tower Inquiry (GTI):** Following the publication of the final report on Phase 2 of the GTI in September 2024, GMFRS has been actively reviewing and implementing the recommendations. This includes enhancing fire safety measures, improving building regulations, and strengthening community engagement. GMFRS remains committed to collaborating with local authorities and stakeholders to address the findings and continuously improve fire safety standards across Greater Manchester.
- **Payroll Services at GMCA:** GMCA's payroll services cover approximately 2,600 employees, managing five salary sacrifice schemes worth £1.2 million, resulting in savings of £200,000. GMCA also provides payroll services for NWFC and Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service, generating £72,000 in income.

- **Digital Solutions:** The implementation of various digital solutions will collectively enhance productivity, efficiency and governance across GMFRS:
 - **Papertrail:** Enhances transparency and governance for fleet, equipment and PPE assets, streamlining record-keeping and improving reporting processes.
 - **Prevention & Protection Digital Solution:** A single unified solution, delivering change through process improvement and technology, yielding measurable time and cost savings once implemented.
 - **Performance Portal Digital Solution:** Will provide real-time information access and a self-service facility, enhancing efficiency and effectiveness.
 - **New Intranet:** This provides an improved search facility and responsiveness, reducing demand on corporate services and enhancing employee experience.
 - **Active Monitoring:** The new assurance system records learning from incidents, reviews debriefs and tracks actions, driving change and improvement.
- **Operational capabilities:** Investments in equipment and technology including Surface Pro Devices and Mobile Data Terminals, enhance safety, communication, and operational workflows.
- **Apprenticeship Scheme:** We utilise the GMCA Apprenticeship Matchmaking Levy Service to access additional income to support the firefighter apprenticeship provision.
- **Fire Cover Review / Strategic Review of Special Appliances:** Recommendations from these reviews include:
 - **Enhanced Rescue Stations (ERS):** Implementation of a new operating model and staffing structure at two ERS to improve response capabilities and resilience. Each station has two fire engines and 44 firefighters in total (compared with 56 at each).
 - **Additional Fire Engines:** Addition of two more fire engines at Manchester Central & Moss Side, to improve resilience in the city-centre.
 - **Special Appliance Review:** A range of enhancements to special appliances to improve efficiency and effectiveness and included 15 types of vehicles, a total of 44 appliances.
 - **Aerial Appliances (AAs):** These remain at seven, with changes to some vehicles and locations. One Turn Table Ladder will change location to improve our cage-rescue coverage. Two additional High Reach Extendable Turrets (HRETs) will be

purchased to replace two Hydraulic Platform Vehicles (and reserve HPV) that have reached the end of their serviceable life.

- Breathing Apparatus Unit (BAU): Further training to be provided to crews in the BA command function improving organisational resilience.
- Command vehicles and Welfare units: Our three current command vehicles and three welfare units will be replaced and be based together.
- Wildfire units: Purchased two Hagglund tracked vehicles (currently leased) and transportation vehicles to improve existing wildfire capability.
- Foam unit: Purchased new equipment to enhance capability, allowing us to deal with larger risks at known COMAH sites.

- **Training & Development:** Developing a new risk-based training matrix and operational training strategy. Training delivery now incorporates station-based video technology using micro teach sessions. Productivity sessions have been delivered to improve meeting structures and day to day ways of working, including digital note taking and report writing learning sessions.
- **Income Generation:** We are exploring opportunities to generate income through training and shared facilities. We have expanded our primary authority offer to new partners and generated income of c£70,000 that we reinvest in business engagement.
- **Governance:** Service improvements achieved through consistent programme and project implementation through the Programme Management Office. The Organisational Learning Framework is assisting with driving productivity improvements and evaluating learning assurance.
- **Procurement:** Collaborative procurement and the use of frameworks to generate savings, implementing best practice has generated savings of £30,000 pa.
- **Capacity Project:** Gathering and analysing data on workload, staffing levels, skillsets, equipment, and resources. Consultations undertaken with key stakeholders, including frontline staff, managers, and partners, to create a blueprint for more effective work and greater productivity.
- **Professional Standards Team:** The team will undertaking all serious and complex investigations releasing capacity back into the wider workforce whilst also creating additional capacity by dealing with issues quickly, preventing escalation.

- **Hybrid Working Arrangements:** Continue to support modified working practices for corporate personnel through hybrid working arrangements, providing increased flexibility without negative impact on productivity.
- **Station Work Routines:** Reviewing and updating Station Work Routines and Planning Policy to promote more efficient and productive use of time on station.
- **Performance Management and Monitoring:** Framework and reporting process will measure workforce productivity, enabling ongoing scrutiny of performance and identification of areas for improvement. This will be supporting with monthly/quarterly monitoring and the performance tool which allows further data analysis.
- **Volunteering:** We currently have 92 volunteers, including 4 Chaplains, providing over 4,000 hours of free time to support the Service, its partners, and communities. We have an additional 13 volunteers currently being onboarded into the Service, and therefore anticipate a total of 105 volunteers by May 2025. Our Volunteer Strategy, launched in March 2023, aligns with GMFRS's strategic priorities to maximise the potential of volunteers and enhance the services delivered.



Operational Productivity

As a public service, we recognise the importance of ensuring our operational workforce delivers an effective and efficient service. Our commitment to excellence drives us to continuously improve our processes and support systems, enabling our teams to perform at their best.

Over the past year, the introduction of digital solutions and streamlined processes in frontline Service Delivery has empowered managers and teams with greater autonomy and ownership. These innovations include advanced crewing and resourcing solutions that simplify and expedite workflows, freeing up valuable time for other critical tasks and activities. By leveraging these digital tools, the Service has enhanced operational efficiency and effectiveness, allowing frontline staff to focus more on their core responsibilities.

The Service has also reviewed areas of governance to ensure that meetings are streamlined, creating greater capacity for middle managers.



Additionally, the Service has approved the establishment of a Professional Standards function. This initiative aims to create greater efficiency in handling performance, grievance, and discipline cases. By providing support to managers at all levels, the Professional Standards function helps address issues at their incipient stages, preventing escalation and reducing the workload associated with complex investigations. This proactive approach not only fosters a more positive work environment but also increases capacity and productivity opportunities for frontline managers and staff, enabling them to concentrate on delivering high-quality service.

The Service has introduced further plans to drive productivity over the 2025/26 financial year through its Annual Delivery Plan and includes:

- Instigating improved processes for place-based plans which will result in enhanced targeting of services to the most vulnerable areas of our communities improving productivity.
- A review of Service Delivery's governance arrangements has led to streamlining and realignment of Middle and Strategic level meetings to align with the Service's governance timelines. This has led to freeing up capacity for Middle Managers in Service Delivery.
- An ongoing review of the safeguarding referral processes, ensuring that referrals can be made expediently by the frontline, reducing the administrative workload and creating capacity to undertake other work.
- A baselining capacity exercise which will improve target setting and workloads ensuring that targets are data lead and evidence based. Additionally giving absolute clarity on the capacity of our frontline crews.
- Long term succession planning including coaching and mentoring to improve efficiency and productivity across the management structure.

Table 1 below provides a summary of completed activities by operational crews over the last four years and the projected growth in productivity for 2025/26 across six prevention and protection activities.

Table 1

Activity	21/22*	22/23	23/24	24/25	Planned 25/26
HFSAs	4,977	18,498	28,308	27,995	27,800
School Visits	268	466	617	604	661
Hydrant Inspections	884	1,447	2,029	2,661	3,000
7(2)(d) Visits	1,522	1,213	1,693	1,024	1,236
Fire Safety Checks**	NA	NA	N/A	218	960
Firework Licensing Visits	304	282	288	275	250 - 300

** Figures for 21/22 were impacted by COVID restrictions*

*** Impact on protection activity figures due to vacancies, recruitment and training new staff.*

