

REVIEW OF CAYMAN ISLANDS FIRE SERVICE

AN INITIAL REPORT

JANUARY/ FEBRUARY 2014

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Executive Summary

This report presents an assessment of the Cayman Islands Fire Service which took place over a four day period in January 2014. The recently appointed Chief Officer for Home Affairs, Mr Eric Bush, invited the Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser for England, Peter Holland CBE QFSM FIFireE, to undertake a review of the Fire Service.

The aim of the review was to provide an assessment of the capacity and capability of the fire service to deliver the Government's objectives for a response to emergency incidents, deliver community safety and welfare, and to contribute to the continued economic and social development of the Islands. The Chief Officer has expressed an intention, subsequently endorsed by the Premier, that the Cayman Islands Fire Service should be the best it can possibly be.

Using a well-established and recognised Audit and Review programme for the fire and rescue service in England and Wales as a basis, a review toolkit was designed for the review of the Cayman Islands Fire Service. The operational areas to be assessed were response, community risk management; prevention, protection, health and safety, training and development and call management and incident support. The review would not examine organisational, financial or structural matters unless they impact directly on the main parameters of the review.

The review team believe that the Cayman Islands Fire Service staff are capable and enthusiastic. Whilst the over-riding view was that the current operating environment could be improved, staff were generally very constructive and honest with their thoughts and had positive views on how the service could be improved going forward.

The review has identified areas within the Cayman Islands Fire Service where resources can be best directed to ensure optimum results. The review makes 18 recommendations, each targeted to a specific area. The recommendations are designed to provide context surrounding the issue which benefits the whole service and the agencies and communities with which it works and serves.

Economic progress and development is a key priority for the Cayman Islands government and it has a clear vision as to how that can be achieved. The review team are of the view that the Cayman Islands Fire Service has an integral role within such progress and development, and share in that vision. However in order to do so it must go through a period of development.

The Chief Officer for Home Affairs is quite clear that he want the fire service to be the very best that it can be. That view is endorsed by the Premier of the Cayman Islands. With such a level of support, determination and vision the review team are confident that the Cayman Islands Fire Service will be at the forefront of the development of the Islands and take its rightful place as a premier public service.

Summary of recommendations

The recommendations are copied here for ease of reference; however it is recommended that the report be read in full to ensure the recommendations are understood in the appropriate context.

Recommendation 1: That the CIFS investigate alternative appliance types and configurations, and evaluate the advantages and efficiencies of procuring alternative vehicle types. (Domestic)

Recommendation 2: That CIFS review their inspection and maintenance programmes for operational equipment and PPE to ensure that operational staff are following established guidelines in the inspection and maintenance of operational equipment and personal protective equipment. The CIFS should ensure that there is a robust inspection and maintenance regime implemented for supervisors and senior managers to review the performance of staff in upholding these standards.

Recommendation 3: CIFS should urgently review the current duty systems at all of their domestic fire stations. The effective use of alternatives modelled on retained duty systems would provide a more efficient service, and reduce the reliance on overtime, compensatory leave and, following experience in other organisations, reduced sickness levels. (Domestic)

Recommendation 4: The review supports the development of a new fire station in the Bodden Town areas to provide improved community service in the south and east of the island. A feasibility study of funding such a project with the savings from the introduction of alternative duty systems and appliances, and extending these systems to the new development, are suggested. (Domestic)

Recommendation 5: There should be a review and re-structuring of the current organisational structure with a view to reducing the current number of positions held at each rank. This should be carried out in accordance with the recommended introduction of alternative duty systems. This should be introduced in such a way so as to not financially penalise incumbent officers, or de-incentivise promotion opportunities. It is recognised that CAA requirements determine the structure of the Aerodrome operation. (Domestic and Aerodrome).

Recommendation 6: That the CIFS implement a robust performance management system for all levels of the service to monitor and record the performance and development of all staff. This should be aligned to any existing performance management systems across the Cayman Islands Government.

Recommendation 7: The CIFS, with the assistance of the relevant Cayman Islands Government department, should introduce an Emergency Medical Responder scheme to support the delivery of the medical service on all three islands.
Recommendation 8: That a review of the CIFS Aerodrome staffing arrangements be undertaken to identify how existing capacity could be better utilised to provide the

required levels of cover, including provision for training time and facilities. Any revised crewing system should ensure sufficient flexibility to accommodate RFFS movements outside scheduled hours at no additional cost to Government.

Recommendation 9: That a review of the aerodrome operation be undertaken to provide understanding of any capability gaps between category 8 and category 9. A plan should be developed detailing progress from the current position to a Category 9 compliant service, which makes adequate provision for training and skills maintenance, and use of excess staffing capacity.

Recommendation 10: That the CIFS engage at senior level with other community agencies (such as Children and Adult services, Police Service) to ensure that the needs of local communities are identified.

Recommendation 11: The service should produce a Community Risk management plan detailing issues faced by local communities, how it will then engage in challenging the identified issues, who it will work with, how this will be resourced and clearly identify the intended outcomes. The service should then ensure it has the appropriate delivery mechanisms to undertake these tasks.

Recommendation 12: that the CIFS should consider an increase in the number of inspecting officers, and that this should be based on a robust and transparent inspection programme, clearly defined and with outcomes and targets agreed with key government departments and partners.

Recommendation 13: That a robust system for monitoring the progress of building code contravention reports be developed with a clear feedback system so that actions and decisions arising from the report are clearly recorded and a responsible person identified. Suggestions that previous reports highlighting safety issues have not been properly considered or addressed should be investigated.

Recommendation 14: A system of recording identified characteristics of buildings, manufacturing processes and occupied premises be developed. This will include hospitals, government buildings, and schools. This system should consider factors such as risk to firefighters, environmental risks, building protection systems, evacuation processes, resident/ occupier safety. The results from this should be captured in a format which is easily retrievable, understood and usable by operational crews at an incident. Crews should be able to demonstrate familiarity with the risks in their station areas.

Recommendation 15: The CIFS develop a robust health and safety management framework for the fire service. This should include processes for reporting, monitoring, measuring accidents, incidents and near-misses, and the development of performance indicators. Action taken in response to such a process should be reported to senior manager, in conjunction with the relevant government department.

Recommendation 16: CIFS should introduce a training and development programme linked to a performance review, with clear expectations, guidelines and performance criteria for staff. There should be appropriate development opportunities for staff not achieving the required operational standards. This training and development programme should be clearly linked to personnel policies for dealing with capability, performance and discipline issues within the service.

Recommendation 17: The CIFS should transfer the call handling and incident support capability to the Department of Public Safety Communications. It should also develop a suite of key performance indicators regarding call handling and processing times, and develop data requirements to produce reports on the performance of the fire service. This may include, but is not limited to incident types, attendance times and demand profiles.

Recommendation 18: That CIFS senior management be given assistance to develop robust planning and reporting frameworks and accompanying processes which are integrated into the planning structures of the Office for Home Affairs. Familiarisation and training should be tailored to all levels of the service to ensure the engagement and ownership by the CIFS.

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Introduction

This report provides an assessment of the Cayman Islands Fire Service which took place over a four day period in January and February 2014. The recently appointed Chief Officer for Home Affairs has asked the Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser for England, Peter Holland CBE QFSM FIFireE, to undertake a review of the Fire Service.

The Chief Officer is keen to identify how the fire and rescue service can deliver the Government's objectives for community safety and welfare, and to contribute to the continued economic and social development of the Islands. The Chief Officer has expressed an intention, subsequently endorsed by the Premier, that the Cayman Islands Fire Service should be the best it can possibly be. This level of support is significant and is welcomed by the Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser.

The review team met with many representatives of the Cayman Islands Fire Service and other agencies and services on the Islands. The review team believe that the Cayman Islands Fire Service staff are capable and enthusiastic. Whilst the over-riding view was that the current operating environment could be improved, staff were generally very constructive and honest with their thoughts and had positive views on how the service could be improved going forward.

The review examined key areas of the Fire Service operation, and offers a view on the leadership and governance of the service. The Government of the Cayman Islands is keen that its Fire Service, as well as other public services, is well prepared to meet future challenges and respond to the opportunities of the next period.

The Cayman Islands Fire Service (CIFS) was established in 1956 as an airport fire service. In 1980 the role of the Chief Fire Officer was established when the domestic fire service joined with the Aerodrome Service.¹

In addition to its role in aircraft operations, fire, rescue, traffic collisions et al, the CIFS is involved in hurricane preparedness planning.

The Cayman Islands Fire Service primary function is to save lives and property by:

1. Providing a rescue and fire-fighting service to the Cayman Islands for aircraft incidents, structure incidents, automobile incidents or any other disaster that may occur;
2. Provide inspections for compliance of the Fire Codes for safety and investigation of fires;
3. Issue permits for commercial fire works

There are 5 domestic fire stations: Frank Sound, West Bay and Central on Grand Cayman; and one each on Cayman Brac and Little Cayman. There are Aerodrome

¹ Emerging Findings Progress Report; Review of the Cayman Islands Fire Service (Nov 2010) Public Sector Review Committee

units on Grand Cayman and Cayman Brac which are staffed during airport operating hours. All Domestic stations are staffed 24/7.

The key questions addressed during the review focus on four key areas:

Effectiveness of Service Delivery: this section focusses on response, community risk management, prevention, protection, health and safety, training and development and call management and incident support.

Leadership and Corporate Capacity: regarding the appropriateness of the present structure, leadership and management capabilities and how the service ensures robust governance.

How well outcomes for local citizens are being achieved: how the activities and functions of the service are tailored to the identified needs of the communities it serves.

The effectiveness of organisational capacity to meet future needs: how well the service is working with Government and partner agencies to ensure they are working together to meet the challenges for the future.

Acknowledgement

The Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser would like to thank Chief Officer for Home Affairs Mr Eric Bush, the Cayman Islands Fire Service, Government officials and the many other colleagues from other agencies and departments who made the review so informative, enjoyable and rewarding.

Effectiveness of Service Delivery

Using a well-established and recognised Audit and Review programme for the fire and rescue service in England and Wales as a basis, a review toolkit was designed for the review of the Cayman Islands Fire Service. This was approved by the Chief Officer for Home Affairs prior to the review to ensure the intended parameters would be addressed.

The operational areas to be assessed were response, community risk management; prevention, protection, health and safety, training and development and call management and incident support.

This report makes reference to both Domestic and Aerodrome operations. Where recommendations refer to one specific area of operation (Domestic or Aerodrome), it is indicated in the recommendation box. Should there be no indicator, the recommendation applies to both.

Response

The key question addressed in this section is: How well is the Service delivering its response activities?

The review team sought to establish levels of CIFS response activity and gain an understanding of the types of incidents responded to, and the ability of the CIFS to respond to and resolve operational incidents.

The review team could find little evidence of the collection, analysis and subsequent use of data and intelligence on operational incidents by the CIFS, or the use of any data in directing community safety/ prevention activity.

The review team visited Central and West Bay Fire stations on Grand Cayman, and Cayman Brac Fire station. The stations have a combination of OshKosh response vehicles, Rescue Ladder Tenders and Rescue Tenders. The vehicles are appropriately equipped and in are in a good state of repair. Staff are very proud of their appliances and maintain them to a high standard.

The review team question whether the Rescue Ladder was the appropriate size and configuration of vehicle for the characteristics and geography of the island. The review recommends that the CIFS investigate alternative, smaller vehicles which would be faster and better able to negotiate the road infrastructure of the island, and offer better value for money.

It is recognised that the current fleet was procured and sourced following an extensive piece of work by fire service officers. The review is mindful however that as the infrastructure and communities of the Cayman Islands develop and expand, the larger types of appliance may not be the most appropriate to negotiate the roads, and provide the necessary response whilst also offering best value for money. This is dependent on a range of factors not limited to intended use and technical support.

Recommendation 1: That the CIFS investigate alternative appliance types and configurations, and evaluate the advantages and efficiencies of procuring alternative vehicle types. (Domestic)

The review team identified that on receipt of a mobilisation call, the on-duty station manager determines which appliances respond to the particular incident. Whilst it is recognised that this represents a level of delegation, there remains the likelihood of inconsistent mobilisation to the same category and type of incident. The CIFS should be mindful of this and pay close attention to response standards.

On closer inspection the review team noted that record keeping needs to be improved particularly in relation to the signing for acceptance/ handover checks. The review team found no oversight or scrutiny of these records by supervisory or senior officers. This should be reviewed and appropriate scrutiny procedures implemented.

The review team noted the condition of the personal protective equipment assigned to firefighters. Of the pieces of PPE viewed, all were below an acceptable operational standard. The review team could find no evidence of any PPE maintenance scheduling, inspection or laundering practices or facilities. In some instances the PPE was stored in the mechanics work area and/ or appliance bay. As such that there remains a high risk of the PPE becoming contaminated with exhaust fumes and other contaminants.

Recommendation 2: That CIFS review their inspection and maintenance programmes for operational equipment and PPE to ensure that operational staff are following established guidelines in the inspection and maintenance of operational equipment and personal protective equipment. The CIFS should ensure that there is a robust inspection and maintenance regime implemented for supervisors and senior managers to review the performance of staff in upholding these standards.

Duty Systems and staffing.

The levels of operational incidents and call volumes do not support the current crewing model of 24/7 staffing on Grand Cayman and Cayman Brac. There is significant surplus capacity across the fire service that could be better utilised. This additional capacity, even with the introduction of alternative duty systems, could provide significant assistance to other sectors on the Islands. Consistent with the Emerging Findings report of 2010, this review discovered a pervading view that firefighters are 'well paid to do nothing'. The review team noted that there was a recognition and willingness on behalf of operational staff to do more, both in terms of helping local communities and their own development.

Previous reports² and submissions have drawn attention to the need to ensure the service is fully staffed. The *Emerging Findings Progress report* notes that an 'HR review...will reveal several inefficiencies within the current framework' and this represents 'a unique opportunity for CIFS...to correct longstanding issues'. This

² Emerging Findings Progress Report; Review of the Cayman Islands Fire Service (Nov 2010) Public Sector Review Committee

review agrees. The same report notes that the practice of granting time-off-in-lieu (TOIL) does not solve any problems, and likely contributes to low morale. This review again agrees.

In an undated report on the '*Effects of budget constraints on Services*', the current Acting Chief Fire Officer argues that with the current shortfall in established numbers of staff, 'firefighters lives are at increased risk' and 'the safety of air travellers and residents have been seriously compromised because of the downgrade of quality in Grand Cayman and Cayman Brac'³. This review finds no evidence to support these emotive claims. Indeed this review finds significant surplus capacity and under-utilisation of current resources and staff; additionally there are consistently low levels of operational incidents to which the CIFS responds.

Recommendation 3: CIFS should urgently review the current duty systems at all of their domestic fire stations. The effective use of alternatives modelled on retained duty systems would provide a more efficient service, and reduce the reliance on overtime, compensatory leave and, following experience in other organisations, reduced sickness levels. (Domestic)

Such a system could be offered to existing staff first, who may be off-duty, and then extended to the wider community. This scheme was discussed with operational staff on Grand Cayman and Cayman Brac and crews were receptive to the idea.

Bodden Town development

The review team was presented with evidence for the development of a new fire station in the Bodden Town area of Grand Cayman. The intention is that such a development would provide an appropriate response capability to the new and increasing development of the Bodden town area, and any anticipated developments across the island. Some documents relating to this proposal have been reviewed and seem consistent.

The review team supports the development of a new fire station in the Bodden town area to provide improved community service to the south and east of Grand Cayman. However the funding for the development and associated crewing capability could be provided by savings generated by the introduction of alternative duty systems at other stations, and alternative appliance types for the domestic service going forward. The review team are of the view that any new fire station development would not need to be staffed using a Wholetime duty system.

Recommendation 4: The review supports the development of a new fire station in the Bodden Town areas to provide improved community service in the south and east of the island. A feasibility study of funding such a project with the savings from the introduction of alternative duty systems and appliances, and extending these systems to the new development, are suggested. (Domestic)

³ Cayman Islands Fire Service: Effects of budget constraints on Service: Rosworth McLaughlin Acting Chief Fire Officer (undated)

The review team examined the current organisational chart and profile of occupied and vacant positions. This information was compared against previous reports and interviews with staff. The review team received many comments regarding the perceived and actual levels of staff shortages. Many submissions were received on the need for additional staff to provide the required levels of cover, and reduce the impact of staff shortages and cover moves on existing staff.

In addition to recommendation 8 above, the review team recommends a re-structuring of the fire service to reduce the numbers in the establishment at each rank, from deputy chief fire officer down to and including station officer. This review should not financially penalise incumbent officers, nor dis-incentivise those in the service seeking promotion opportunities. However in the opinion of the review team, the CIFS is top-heavy with senior officers. Roles and responsibilities could and should be shared with between officers of a lower rank, ensuring responsibility and accountability rests at the appropriate level in the service. This will assist with improving the overall management of the service.

Recommendation 5: There should be a review and re-structuring of the current organisational structure with a view to reducing the current number of positions held at each rank. This should be carried out in accordance with the recommended introduction of alternative duty systems. This should be introduced in such a way so as to not financially penalise incumbent officers, or de-incentivise promotion opportunities. It is recognised that CAA requirements determine the structure of the Aerodrome operation. (Domestic and Aerodrome)

Supervisory Management

The review discovered that although some management systems and procedures were established, no evidence could be provided that these were robustly and effectively supervised and managed by line managers. This extended from Leading-firefighters through to senior management. The roles and responsibilities of managers, whilst clear on the establishment list, were less clear in practice.

Improvements and recommendations detailed in this report are unlikely to be implemented successfully unless there is a significant improvement in the performance of the management team. The review team recommend the implementation of a robust performance management system for all levels of the service to monitor and record performance and development of all staff. This should be aligned to any existing performance management systems across the Cayman Islands Government.

Recommendation 6: That the CIFS implement a robust performance management system for all levels of the service to monitor and record the performance and development of all staff. This should be aligned to any existing performance management systems across the Cayman Islands Government.

Opportunities exist for identified staff, with potential for promotion, to visit and spend some time with a UK fire service. This can be discussed further with the Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser.

Emergency Medical Responder

The level of demand for the fire service expressed in terms of fire calls and incidents attended is at consistently low levels, sufficient to support the introduction of alternative duty systems. The review team identified significant surplus capacity. The CIFS, with the assistance of the relevant Government departments should introduce an Emergency Medical Responder Scheme, where the CIFS support the provision of emergency medical care. The introduction of this capability will:

- improve the level of support to the communities of the Cayman Islands,
- work in conjunction with the medical and health service, and
- make better use of the skills and capacity of the fire service.

Recommendation 7: The CIFS, with the assistance of the relevant Cayman Islands Government department, should introduce an Emergency Medical Responder scheme to support the delivery of the medical service on all three islands.

Aerodrome

The Cayman Islands Fire Service provides rescue, fire-fighting equipment and services (RFFS) to two Cayman Islands Aerodromes according to International Civil Aviation Organisation requirements. An agreement was signed between the CIFS and the Cayman Islands Airports Authority in November 2013, which extends the agreement until 2017, with termination clauses.

In order to ensure that the Islands can accommodate certain categories of aircraft, the CIFS along with other services such as Immigration must maintain standards as prescribed in the relevant codes. For Owen Roberts International Airport this is category 8, and for Charles Kirkconnell International Airport this is category 6. The review did not examine the relevant codes.

The review recognises that the CIFS, and by extension the Cayman Islands Government, are obliged to ensure certain levels of fire-fighter, ranks and equipment to provide the services, and to ensure compliance with relevant codes of practice. The review did not examine these in detail.

During a meeting with the Acting Chief Executive Officer for Safety Management systems at the Cayman Airports Authority, the review were informed that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office have been briefed on the Cayman Islands operation and 'were impressed'. The review team have not been able to substantiate this claim.

The review team were informed that there is an ambition to increase the airport capacity from the current category 8 to level 9, which will permit larger capacity

aircraft. This will contribute to the strategic ambitions of the Cayman Islands Government to increase the Islands economic impact. An adequately skilled and resourced fire service will be integral to this development.

To ensure the success of this venture the CIFS will need to be able to guarantee staffing levels and skills capabilities for staff. There is evidence that the staffing levels required at current levels are challenged on occasion, and therefore the requirements at each category not being achieved. Despite repeated requests, the review team were not provided with any data regarding compliance or non-compliance with existing staffing standards for the aerodrome service.

As part of the agreement with the Cayman Islands Airport Authority, CIFS are required to provide Rescue and Fire Fighting Services (RFFS) 'within the perimeter of the Airport during the published operational hours of each Aerodrome'.⁴ The same agreement requires CIFS to make 'reasonable adjustments' to provide the same RFFS arrangements outside of published flying hours 'PROVIDED [Report's capitals] the CIFS is allocated funds by the Cayman Islands Government or Authority to offset the additional cost for the provision of such services'. This is significant as it commits the Government to pay for overtime incurred for late landings etc. over which it has little control.

The obvious challenge is that should the fire service not be able to provide the required level of staff, there will be an increased challenge on the service should the category be extended to 9. Additionally any further costs incurred by the lack of robust staffing arrangements are being subsidised by the Government.

The review team discovered latent capacity in the aerodrome side of the operation. There are low numbers of calls and low levels of training activity being undertaken. The review could find no evidence of any audit or review of the aerodrome capability. As an illustration the latent capability could be utilised to assist with equipment maintenance, servicing, training activities information management etc to support the domestic side of the service.

Although there was latent capacity identified, there were accompanying issues around sickness absence and vacancies. The review recommends that the Aerodrome operation within CIFS is independently reviewed to identify possible alternative staffing arrangements, required and existing skills sets, and to undertake a gap analysis between present capability and future Category 9 requirements. Any revised crewing system should ensure sufficient flexibility to accommodate RFFS movements outside scheduled hours at no additional cost to Government.

The Acting CEO for Safety Management Systems at the Cayman Airports Authority confirmed that there was a report in 2012 which gave assurance of the RFFS being provided by the CIFS; the review team were not provided with a copy of this report.

Recommendation 8: That a review of the CIFS Aerodrome staffing arrangements be undertaken to identify how existing capacity could be better utilised to provide the required levels of cover, including provision for training

⁴ Letter of Agreement between The Cayman Islands Airports Authority and the Cayman Islands Fire Service, November 2013

time and facilities. Any revised crewing system should ensure sufficient flexibility to accommodate RFFS movements outside scheduled hours at no additional cost to Government.

Recommendation 9: That a review of the aerodrome operation be undertaken to provide understanding of any capability gaps between category 8 and category 9. A plan should be developed detailing progress from the current position to a Category 9 compliant service, which makes adequate provision for training and skills maintenance, and use of excess staffing capacity.

Community risk management/ Prevention

The key question addressed in this section is: How well is the service identifying and prioritising the risks faced by the community?

The Five Year Strategic plan dated February 2009 chapter 3 refers to Fire Prevention and Safety recommends the development and implementation of 'fire safety programs in order to improve safety of occupants and property' (page 9)⁵. Objective four from the same page in the document reads 'run fire safety and prevention programs in schools and through other community outreach programs'.

The review team could not locate a clear policy, which was driven and supported by senior managers, on how the CIFS would discharge its duties regarding community protection as detailed in the strategic plan.

The review team questioned operational crews and officer on the planning and structure of prevention and safety activity. It was clear that data was not used to target prevention activity, and provide an intelligence led prevention function. There was some evidence of engagement with schools, but no evidence was found that this was a systematic or themed engagement.

Examples were provided of Children and Adult services making referrals to the fire service, and operational crews would then respond as appropriate. There was no evidence that this activity was coordinated at senior level, between the service and other agency representatives.

By engaging in such coordination and partnership working, the service can ensure that the needs of the local communities are identified and the activities of the service are shared with community activity from other services and community groups.

Statistical data is available and this should be analysed and used to assist the service in targeting activity and safety campaigns to specific audiences. The results of this activity can then be monitored against data trends.

Recommendation 10: That the CIFS engage at senior level with other community agencies (such as Children and Adult services, Police Service) to ensure that the needs of local communities are identified.

⁵ Cayman Islands Fire Service 1-5 year Strategic Plan February 2009.

Recommendation 11: The service should produce a Community Risk management plan detailing issues faced by local communities, how it will then engage in challenging the identified issues, who it will work with, how this will be resourced and clearly identify the intended outcomes. The service should then ensure it has the appropriate delivery mechanisms to undertake these tasks.

It is convenient to provide clarification on these recommendations together. The review was unable to see a clearly articulated plan for how the fire service was going to implement and 'run fire safety and prevention programs in schools and through other community outreach programs' (Cayman Islands Fire Service 1-5 year Strategic Plan).

There was evidence of some local working following referrals from Children and Adult services. However following the direction of the strategy, it would be appropriate for a plan to be developed which clearly sets out how community safety and protection will be delivered and what the fire service would achieve. This plan should be designed and delivered with key partner organisations. The Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser can provide further details on the panning and delivery process should this be required.

There was recognition across other departments that there was a real benefit in developing closer working with the CIFS to assist in delivery of key community objectives.

However in order to facilitate this, and to ensure the necessary exchange of information, the fire service needs to introduce a system of vetting operational staff. This should be designed and implemented in conjunction with the Royal Cayman Islands Police Service.

As part of the system design and implementation, the fire service will need to ensure it has robust procedures established to enable it to deal effectively with any issues such a process may raise.

Protection

The key question addressed in this section is: How well is the Service delivering its regulatory fire safety strategy?

The Fire Brigade Law (2006 revision) is clear on fire safety standards in buildings. (sections 14, j and K), and these are based on NFPA standards. Further clarity is provided in the 1-5 year Strategic Plan, however the review team could find no evidence as to how the CIFS prioritised and formulated an inspection programme. The review team were impressed with the dedication and professionalism of the Inspecting Officer. There was evidence of joint inspections with Planning Departments, and the commissioning of fire safety systems (sprinklers) in Hotels and some public buildings. This is viewed as good practice.

The inspecting officer also covered Little Cayman and Cayman Brac. The review team was informed that there are approaching 300 liquor stores; 300-500 hotels; 80-

100 medical establishments and any number of schools and day care establishments which would need an inspection regime.

There is an ambition to inspect each hotel at least once per year, and that period checks should be undertaken. This ambition is not being achieved and the suggestion is that this is due to staff shortages.

While best efforts are made to inspect the other premises, this can clearly not be achieved by one inspecting officer. The review agrees that there should be an increased provision of Inspecting officers; however the suggestion that 6 more are required is not supported.

The review team recommend that the increase in the number of inspecting officers should be based on a robust and transparent inspection programme, clearly defined and with outcomes and targets agreed with key government departments and partners. The review suggests three officers should be sufficient, accompanied by better use of on duty crews.

Recommendation 12: that the CIFS should consider an increase in the number is inspecting officers, and that this should be based on a robust and transparent inspection programme, clearly defined and with outcomes and targets agreed with key government departments and partners.

There is evidence that crews support the Inspecting Officer by visiting premises such as Liquor Stores, Night Clubs and Discos. However there is no evidence that this is part of a systematic, risk prioritised and planned inspection programme.

Following a premise inspection, a report is produced and submitted for action where necessary should a contravention of the relevant National Fire Protection Association code be discovered. The review found evidence of joint working between the CIFS and other agencies in bringing pressure on a hotel owner who was reluctant to comply with the relevant codes. This is an example of good practice and it commended.

Of concern to the review team is the suggestion that some reports on new-builds and refurbishments which are critical of fire safety standards and practices are not being fully considered and the matters raised not fully and transparently addressed. Such suggestions are worthy of investigation.

The review team did not have the capacity or remit to pursue these suggestions. The review team were informed that a robust systematic approach will be developed and the challenges faced in dealing with historic issues were recognised. Clearly the matter of a robust inspection programme with appropriate mechanisms for raising and remedying issues in of significant importance to the economy of the Cayman Islands.

The fire service inspecting officers have carried out some excellent work in this area. Consideration should be given to how the work of the inspection team can integrate more closely with colleagues in other departments, to share resources and expertise thereby building on the progress made thus far.

It is recognised that threats to the standards of hotels, which may compromise the safety of tourists, are of serious concern to the Government of the islands. It is recognised as a significant risk that safety and well-being of tourists are of significant importance to the economic well-being of the Country.

Recommendation 13: That a robust system for monitoring the progress of building code contravention reports be developed with a clear feedback system so that actions and decisions arising from the report are clearly recorded and a responsible person identified. Suggestions that previous reports highlighting safety issues have not been properly considered or addressed should be investigated.

The review team was keen to examine any programme or system by which operational crews developed and recorded an awareness of the particular characteristics of a building; its construction, fire safety features, emergency procedures for example. Such information may produce a catalogue of valuable risk information for firefighters, to enable a professional and prompt response to any incidents.

The review discovered a pro-forma which captured the building information. There was no evidence of the completion of these forms and the systematic capture of any accompanying data, which would provide real-time information to crews on risks and operational procedures to follow which were building specific. The review team were informed that familiarisation visits were arranged for crews, and for all watches. However this does not represent a system for capturing and recording risk information.

Recommendation 14: A system of recording identified characteristics of buildings, manufacturing processes and occupied premises be developed. This will include hospitals, government buildings, and schools. This system should consider factors such as risk to firefighters, environmental risks, building protection systems, evacuation processes, resident/ occupier safety. The results from this should be captured in a format which is easily retrievable, understood and usable by operational crews at an incident. Crews should be able to demonstrate familiarity with the risks in their station areas.

Health and Safety

The key question in this section is: How well is the Service ensuring its responsibilities for health, safety and welfare are met?

The review focussed on the Health and Safety arrangements of the CIFS in relation to processes and procedures for reporting injuries and/or near misses. Areas of interest included arrangements for monitoring and management on duty incidents and accidents, identifying causes and effects and measuring improvement. The review found that awareness of health and safety systems and processes was low amongst operations staff, however there were robust views expressed from staff regarding events and occurrences which could reasonably be expected to be captured in a robust Health and Safety framework.

The review was informed that once an 'Accident and Untoward Occurrence reporting Procedure' form had been completed, it is forwarded to Risk Management. The review could find no evidence of a robust health and safety management framework for the reporting, monitoring and auditing of health and safety events.

Recommendation 15: The CIFS develop a robust health and safety management framework for the fire service. This should include processes for reporting, monitoring, measuring accidents, incidents and near-misses, and the development of performance indicators. Action taken in response to such a process should be reported to senior manager, in conjunction with the relevant government department.

The review recognises that operational staff are a key factor in ensuring the success of such a process, and to ensure that their safety is their highest priority.

Training and Development

The key question addressed in this section is: How well is the Service ensuring its responsibilities for training, development and assessment of its staff are met?

The review team met with the Training Manager to discuss operational and organisational training. A training plan for watch based staff had been developed and covered staff on the three islands.

The Training Manager is very enthusiastic and has views on how training and development can be improved across the service. The review team identified a lack of engagement from senior officers and crews for training planning and activities citing amongst other things the physical remoteness of training facilities as an obstacle (Grand Cayman). It was noted that the crews on Cayman Brac had developed an innovative Breathing Apparatus training facility.

An operational training programme had been developed for, but not implemented by, watch officers nor managed by station managers. This presents a significant concern to the review team; that operational crews are presented as available for operational duties, but their operational competence could not be confirmed. The same concerns were not obvious on Cayman Brac, and Little Cayman was not reviewed.

A fitness programme has been developed and evidence was presented to the review team of this, however there is evidence that this has been 'rejected' by operational crews. It was explained to the review team that operational crews felt that they could not undertake training exercises as they may 'get a call' (emergency incident call) and that response times would therefore be compromised. The review team found no evidence of this. Indeed operation crews volunteered that although they believed themselves to be operational competent; there was room for improvement in their performance. The review team could not find robust evidence of the assessment of operational performance.

The training plan covered most operational roles; however there was no evidence of training and development plans for senior officers. There was evidence of a performance review/ appraisal process and this was welcomed by the review. However there was no evidence of how this performance review led to identified training needs and/ or development opportunities, and whether these were completed.

The review recommends the introduction of a training programme linked to a performance review, with clear expectations, guidelines and performance criteria for staff. There should be appropriate development opportunities for staff not achieving the required operational standards. This training and development programme should be clearly linked to personnel policies for dealing with capability, performance and discipline issues within the service.

Recommendation 16: CIFS should introduce a training and development programme linked to a performance review, with clear expectations, guidelines and performance criteria for staff. There should be appropriate development opportunities for staff not achieving the required operational standards. This training and development programme should be clearly linked to personnel policies for dealing with capability, performance and discipline issues within the service.

Call management and Incident Support.

The key question addressed in this section is: How well is the Service delivering its call management and incident support activities?

CIFS call handling is operated by control staff who are usually firefighters unable to continue operational duties. Emergency calls are received from the purpose built Cayman Islands Government Department of Public Safety Communications. The calls are received by CIFS control staff, handwritten in an Incident Log and then passed through to the relevant fire station by telephone.

The review team visited both the CIFS control room, located on the airfield on Central Station, and also visited the Department of Public Safety Communications. The review team discovered that there is an historic reluctance on behalf of the CIFS to engage with the purpose built command centre, despite the later handing calls for the RCIPS and Emergency Medical Service.

An emergency call (911) is received by the Department of Public Safety Communications then passed to the CIFS Control Room. The call is logged by hand, then the nearest station mobilised.

In the view of the review team this is not only in-efficient, but also results in an unacceptable delay in processing and emergency call and mobilising the nearest available resource. There is also the possibility of inaccuracies being introduced as information taken from the primary source is indirectly passed to operational crews.

The Department of Public Safety Communications centre is able to accommodate the CIFS mobilising arrangements into its operation, and can provide a highly accomplished data recording and management system capability. This will provide real time and historic data which can be used to provide improved management information and drive improvements through the service.

Further, the Department of Public Safety Communications centre is able to provide a higher level of integrated support and coordination to operational crews. This command, control and coordination capability is far beyond the levels currently existing within the service, and would enable the service to stay ahead of the demands required by a category 9 level organisation.

Recommendation 17: The CIFS should transfer the call handling and incident support capability to the Department of Public Safety Communications. It should also develop a suite of key performance indicators regarding call handling and processing times, and develop data requirements to produce reports on the performance of the fire service. This may include, but is not limited to incident types, attendance times and demand profiles.

Leadership and Corporate Capacity

The 1-5 year Strategic Plan for the Cayman Islands Fire Service expires this year (2014). The review team could find no evidence of a new strategic plan being produced. The review team were aware of a strategic away-day planned and delivered by the Chief Officer for Home Affairs, to which the CIFS was invited. This away-day was designed to discuss the strategic direction for the department over the coming period. The review team understand that although the CIFS attended for the first day, their attendance may not have been for the duration of the away-day programme.

Consequently there was no evidence of considered and robust strategic direction for CIFS, and certainly no plan which is aligned to the overall direction of the Office for Home Affairs and the Chief Officer. This is a fundamental concern.

As an example the review team are aware that there may be a 2-3 year lead-in for changes to Aircraft scheduling. It is difficult to envisage how the CIFS can currently achieve a 2-3 year timescale for transfer to Category 9 without the necessary level of organisational development and planning to achieve this transfer. Such planning would need to be linked to the capabilities of associated departments.

The above example is symptomatic of the findings of the review in relation to the lack of systemised policy, process and planning. Where certain processes do exist, such as the 'Accident and Untoward Occurrence reporting Procedure' process, understanding amongst operational staff is patchy at best. The review team view this as a fundamental weakness across all levels of the fire service.

This organisational weakness suggests an absence of monitoring and performance management by managers and senior leaders and a fundamental lack of process.

The review team recommend that the CIFS be given assistance to develop robust planning and reporting frameworks and processes which are integrated into the planning structures of the Office for Home Affairs. This would be linked to a comprehensive and appropriately resourced organisational improvement programme.

With this assistance, the CIFS can ensure that its activity is aligned to achieving the ambitions for the development and economic growth of the Cayman Islands.

Recommendation 18: That CIFS be given assistance to develop robust planning and reporting frameworks and accompanying processes which are integrated into the planning structures of the Office for Home Affairs. Familiarisation and training should be tailored to all levels of the service to ensure the engagement and ownership by the CIFS.

The review team did not find evidence of robust financial planning and financial management by senior officers. Whilst many memoranda and reports had been prepared detailing the cost of incurred overtime and compensatory leave, this did not extended to financial and organisational analysis of the reasons with accompanying options for remedy. Any recommendations seemed to be limited to requests for an increase in staff, and the payment of accrued hours. There was no evidence of concrete proposals for addressing challenging issues.

The review team could find no evidence of rigorous oversight of the performance and planning on behalf of the management team of the CIFS. When questioned on this the Acting Chief Officer was able to articulate ideas for future development. In the experience of the review team these plans were not well developed beyond the concept stage, and there is no evidence as to how they would contribute to the development of the service or benefit the communities on the islands.