

The Fire Brigades Union



Integrated Risk Management Planning

Summary

The Framework Document: How to construct an IRMP/RRP



A Message from Matt Wrack General Secretary

"So far, integrated Risk Management Plans (IRMP) have, in practice, not delivered measurable improvements in service delivery. Not ones you can prove, not ones you can point to.

They are not integrated. Most are more budget-management than risk management. With some you would be hard-pressed to see the plan. Instead, with some exceptions, IRMP means CUTS.

Many IRMPs just contain vague promises of service improvement that are not quantified and often not delivered. Where there are improvements in service delivery these are often credited to the IRMP process whether it has played a role or not.

Despite this, the FBU supports the principle of IRMP.

The English and Scottish Governments and the Welsh Assembly have all written short guidance documents describing the IRMP process (Risk Reduction Plans – RRP in Wales – the Welsh Assembly made clear they wanted to reduce risk, not just manage it).

All these documents say that IRMPs/RRPs should be tools that balance the wishes and the needs of a wide range of stakeholders to deliver transparent management of a public service. True IRMP is therefore a process that, if done properly, leads to risk assessed, performance driven, cost effective improvement in fire and rescue service provision delivered by a safe, motivated workforce.

It is this principle that the FBU supports and wants to encourage.

Sadly, other than the brief notes provided by governments, there has been a lamentable lack of guidance on what integrated risk management planning is, and how it should be carried out. The FBU feels strongly that this is damaging the UK fire and rescue service.

Since no other stakeholder has been willing to step forward to fill this knowledge gap, as *the UK's leading organisation for fire and rescue practitioners*, the FBU felt obliged to step forward. The FBU has dedicated a considerable amount of resource into researching all aspects of IRMP that has culminated in the **(full version)** publication of the IRMP Framework Document **(which is available in hard copy and electronically if required)**.

This full version document is aimed primarily at FRS managers who are responsible for writing IRMPs/RRPs. It should also be read by members of fire authorities and fire boards who are responsible for the content of IRMPs/RRPs and thereby the performance of their fire and rescue services.

The FBU looks forward to a genuine dialogue within the service around this Document and around the development of IRMP and a Fire and rescue service for the future."



Matt Wrack
General Secretary
Fire Brigades Union



"The FBU supports the principle of IRMP"

Foreword

The Full version document is divided into 3 parts of which the Part 1 only is reproduced in this booklet.

Part 1: The first part is a summary of the whole document. It covers the main aspects of Part 2 of this document in just 12 pages.

It is intended that this summary should provide a brief overview of the role of this document and the IRMP process. This brief overview is intended for those who want a basic understanding of the IRMP framework without exploring the detailed issues associated with it.

Part 2: The second part of this document goes into detail. It is intended for those who need an in-depth understanding of the subject.

In particular, it is aimed at:

- Members of Fire & Rescue Authorities who are responsible for oversight of fire & rescue services.
- Senior managers in fire & rescue services
- Middle managers with responsibility for working on IRMP production.
- Fire Brigades Union officials with direct responsibility for IRMP co-ordination at brigade and regional level.

Part 3: The whole of this document is based on government guidance on the production of IRMPs (RRPs in Wales). The third part of this document therefore reproduces the relevant English, Scottish and Welsh guidance on the subject.

It is useful not only to read the guidance relevant to your own part of the UK, but to read the others as well. Looking at the similarities and differences is interesting, and there is no reason why ideas from one piece of national guidance shouldn't be used outside that nation if they are of value.

"By using this framework nationally, the ability to manage an FRS based on local need would not be restricted. The ability of FRSs to join together to face cross border challenges would be enhanced. What is more, while it is inevitable that industrial relations will always experience highs and lows, the transparency of the management process provided by this framework should mean that disputes over integrated risk management planning should be few in number and easy to resolve".

Terminology

In the UK, governmental responsibility for the fire and rescue service lies with a department of the main UK government in England. In Northern Ireland and Wales, responsibility lies with departments of the Northern Ireland and the Welsh Assemblies respectively. In Scotland, responsibility lies with a department of the Scottish Government.

This document is relevant to the whole of the UK, but when discussing the bodies with governmental control of fire and rescue services, the complexity of the situation means that there is no appropriate simple term that can be used to adequately describe all of them. "Devolved administrations" does not address the situation in England, "Regional Government" has a specific meaning in England. Strictly speaking, the term "government" is not appropriate for Wales or Northern Ireland but to prevent the text of this document becoming cumbersome, it is used throughout to refer to the appropriate department, government, assembly or administration.

In Wales, the process known as Integrated Risk Management Planning (IRMP) in England is known as Risk Reduction Planning (RRP). In Scotland the process is called Integrated Risk Management (IRM), the word "plan" or "planning" tends to follow the acronym IRM.

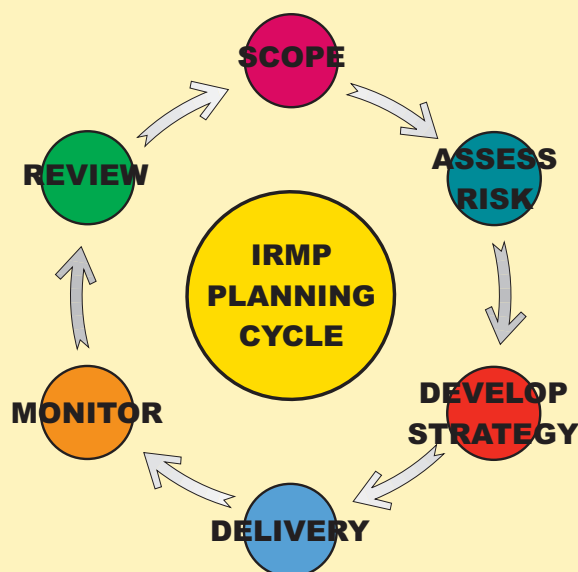
To prevent the text of this document becoming cumbersome, the English terminology is used primarily throughout this document except where it does not make sense to do so.

Finally, direct responsibility for fire and rescue services rests at local government level with a committee of elected councillors. In Scotland and Northern Ireland, these committees are known as Fire and Rescue Service Boards, Fire Boards, or Joint Fire Boards. In England and Wales they are known as Fire and Rescue Authorities or Combined Fire and Rescue Authorities except in London where they are known as the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (there are probably many other names besides).

Once again, the English terminology is used primarily throughout this document.

The author apologises for any offence that this might cause, but it is simply a matter of simplification to make the document easier to read.

Summary of IRMP/RRP Framework Document



Introduction

What is Integrated Risk Management Planning?

Business plans	Vision plans	Fire safety enforcement	Best value plans
Performance management plans	Financial plans	Action plans	
Risk registers	Regional management plans	Local area plans	
Community Plans (Scotland)	Strategic plans	Inter agency plans	
Attendance standards	Service plans	Improvement plans	FRS legislation
Preparedness for national resilience	National frameworks	Recruitment targets	
Firefighting	Community fire safety	Flooding	

Above are a few of the issues that make up the business of a fire and rescue service (FRS) and its objectives. From "business as usual" firefighting to preparing for national emergencies. From setting internal performance standards to external audit.

The questions are, which of the issues takes priority? Which are addressed first? Given the limited resources of the organisation, how much resource is allocated to each issue? With such a wide range of objectives, what direction should an FRS travel in?

The key to the answers is in the fact that in essence, all of the above are about **risk management**. The business and the objectives of an FRS are to manage risk within the community (individually, locally and nationally).

Once it is recognised that the problem facing FRSs is a plethora of risk management issues, it seems clear that the solution is to take them one by one, and to **plan** to address each one of them separately.

However, if each risk management problem is planned for separately, it is very likely that the same resources will be allocated to dealing with two or more issues – one of them will then not get addressed. In addition, it could be the case that some low risk issues are dealt with before the high risk ones.

The answer to all of this is to write down every risk management issue that is in the scope of the business of the

FRS, to risk assess each aspect, and to allocate resources in proportion to the risk. That is, to **integrate** all of the risk management plans.

At its simplest level, integrated risk management planning is just taking a planned approach to delivering the business activities of a fire and rescue service.

In this document, the process of integrated risk management planning is broken down into six steps. This approach is taken from the work of a group set up by the English government's IRMP Steering Group that reported in 2005. A very similar eight stage process was developed by the Welsh government.

- Step 1:** **Scope.** Identify all of the issues that are the business of the FRS. Identify all of the internal and external controlling factors that impact upon the FRS.
- Step 2:** **Risk assess** each of the issues that are in scope. How likely are they to materialise? how harmful are they? Prioritise them according to overall risk and determine a *performance outcome target* (the degree to which you would like the risk to be reduced).
- Step 3:** **Develop strategies** to reduce the risks. Identify the resources needed to deliver each strategy. Allocate resources according to the degree of risk. Identify the inputs and outputs of delivery strategies – if short term inputs and outputs are achieved, long term outcomes should be satisfactory.
- Step 4:** **Delivery.** Remember that people are the most important part of any delivery strategy, so to make sure that the strategies work, consult staff about the practicalities of delivery mechanisms.
- Step 5:** **Monitor** the whole process from step 1 to step 4. Constantly look for new risks and changes to existing risks. Monitor performance against inputs, outputs and outcomes.
- Step 6:** **Review** the process in the light of performance. Did the strategies deliver the performance outcomes? If so, continue with them, if not, develop new strategies for the next planning cycle.

Health and safety confusion

The *planned approach* to the delivery of FRS business involves assessing the risks posed to the community by the range of issues that are in scope. Confusion can arise because the issues that are in scope are all risks, and dealing with them is often a dangerous job that must itself be risk assessed.

To avoid confusion, it is important to distinguish between the business activities of an FRS (assessing and managing risks to the community) and the way an FRS has to carry out those activities (through safe systems of work that have been risk assessed).

The integrated risk management plan is an outward looking document that describes the community risks that are in its scope, explains the risks they pose, how they will be managed, and how successful performance will be assessed.

When deciding how strategies will be delivered, the FRS must produce an inward looking health and safety management policy that addresses the health and safety of employees. Thus, health and safety will be fully integrated into the IRMP even though they are two quite distinct processes.

- The health and safety policy should be based around the Health and Safety Executive's guide HSG65.
- The IRMP should be based around the principles of business planning and performance management.

Business Planning and Performance Management

If an IRMP is about planning the delivery of the business of an FRS, where does that leave *business plans*? The answer is that IRMPs *are* business plans.

In the Introduction of this document, this is backed up by definitions of business planning and performance management.

An IRMP is a business plan for a fire and rescue service that is based on the principles of performance management.

NOTE: Guidance from the Scottish government actually states that integrated risk management planning requires performance management.

This document uses the term 'business planning' and talks about the 'business of an FRS'. However, it must be emphasised that an FRS is not a commercial enterprise, and should not be run along exactly the same lines. Like a commercial enterprise an FRS must be efficient and effective and must make best use of its resources, but unlike a commercial enterprise an FRS is a public service that must be available equitably ("fairly", which is not necessarily the same as "equally") to all and is free at the point of delivery.

In a commercial profit making enterprise such as a retail chain store, it would not make business sense to locate a shop in a remote hamlet with a small population. However in order to provide an equitable service to all, an FRS might have to provide a fire station. The meanings of some 'business' processes and terms such as "value for money" therefore need to be closely examined before they are applied to FRS management.

In this document:

- The term 'business planning' is used because it describes a well understood and well documented process of good management. It does not imply that an FRS is a commercial enterprise with the objective of financial gain.
- The term 'business of an FRS' refers to the "rightful concern or responsibility" of an FRS. It does not refer to any financial objectives.

Purpose of this document

It is not the purpose of this document to contain all of the information necessary to prepare an IRMP. It has just been established that an IRMP is in fact a business plan for an FRS incorporating the principles of performance management.

This document uses key aspects of IRMP to describe a performance management business planning framework on which individual FRSs can build their own integrated risk management plans.

This document is intended for use primarily by FRS managers who are tasked with developing all or part of an IRMP, and by FBU officials who will be engaged in consultation throughout the process. It is also intended for elected members of fire and rescue authorities.

For the IRMP process to work, it is essential that members of the fire and rescue authority imagine themselves to be non executive directors of a private company.

Non-executive directors are the custodians of the governance process. They are not involved in the day-to-day running of business but monitor the executive activity and contribute to the development of strategy.

IRMPs (performance managed business plans) are an essential part of FRSs today because so much central control and direction has been removed. Up until the end of the last Century, the role of the FRS was largely set by legislation, conditions of service were inflexible and the detailed performance of the FRS was assessed externally. As a result, it was acceptable to manage FRSs 'behind closed doors'. It didn't matter what the public knew or didn't know about their local FRS, because all of its core activity was centrally controlled.

Today, there are no national minimum standards of fire cover; FRSs are free to pursue any activity they see fit that supports a broad national framework or local objectives; they set their own performance standards; such guidance as is issued from the centre is explicitly not mandatory; audit of overall performance is carried out externally, but audit of frontline practice is largely carried out by self assessment and peer review. Today, FRSs can no longer be managed 'behind closed doors'. Today FRSs are much more answerable to local government and the population they serve. The whole process of running an FRS must be open, transparent and founded on informed public consultation.

IRMP is the vehicle by which open and transparent management should be delivered. The purpose of this document is to describe the IRMP process, or framework. Once the framework has been constructed, the detail of what goes onto it is entirely down to the discretion of local management, local need, negotiation and consultation.

Vision statements – v – focused risk reduction plan

In early IRMPs it isn't hard to find "key objectives" along the lines of:

"We will continue to improve our intervention services to further reduce the impact of fire on the community"

Few people would argue that this is not a good idea, but it is a vision, it isn't a performance managed outcome of a risk assessed plan.

If the IRMP is a high level corporate vision instead of a practical, performance based business plan, the delivery of the fundamental core business of the FRS will be entirely in the hands of individual employees, rather than being the subject of corporate control. At best, if corporate control is operated (but outside of the IRMP process), the delivery of the fundamental core business of the FRS will be a private matter between FRS managers and FRA Members – which is an equally unacceptable situation.

Chapter 1 – Scope

Identifying the scope of an IRMP means identifying the factors that have a bearing upon the business of an FRS locally, regionally and nationally. To use the terminology of business management planning, it is a process of defining the business and its objectives. These might include:

- Fire and rescue services to the local community
- Services across geographical boundaries
- Fire & Rescue Service legislation and National Frameworks
- Civil Contingencies Act 2004.
- Local government legislation, partnership working
- Best value and financial controls.
- Local policies
- Regional policies
- National policies
- International interfaces (such as cross border working between England and Scotland and possibly involvement in EU or wider disaster relief efforts)
- Legislative enforcement
- Compliance with legislative obligations
- Corporate responsibilities
- Social responsibilities
- Response commitments (The types of emergency incident that will be responded to)
- Stakeholder's expectations

These business processes need to be further refined into specific activities so that performance standards can be determined, and so that delivery strategies can be agreed and resourced.

Response commitments might be refined into:

- Dwelling fires
- Industrial fires
- Historic buildings
- Education establishments
- Community buildings
- Environmental/pollution risks
- Wildfire incidents
- Hazardous material incidents
- Rescue from height
- Animal rescue
- Lift rescue
- Water rescue
- Wide-scale wind damage
- Extrication from machinery
- Road traffic collisions
- Rail incidents
- Shipping incidents
- Aircraft incidents
- Terrorist incidents
- Building collapse
- Arson as a special case

Dwelling fires might be further refined into:

- Multi-occupied
- Low rise
- Medium rise
- High rise
- Underground

Scoping the IRMP is only the first stage of the process. At this stage, the FRS is not committing itself to any particular activity. The IRMP process is an iterative one whereby a facet of community risk may be considered to be in scope, but may be later disregarded when the level of risk is assessed at stage 2 (risk assessment), or may be re-evaluated at stage 3 (strategy development) if an appropriate strategy cannot be identified.

Chapter 2 – Assess Risk

In order to efficiently and effectively deliver risk management services to a community, an FRS must first assess the level of risk presented by each of the issues that are 'in scope'.

Likelihood of occurrence

Step 1: Collect data to show the number of times the event has occurred in the past.

Step 2: Use mathematical techniques and subjective judgement to predict future occurrences.

Document such as the English CLG publication *Fire and Rescue Service partnership working toolkit for Local Area Agreements* gives some useful basic guidance on techniques that may be used. However the analysis of statistical data for the preparation of a business plan for a multi-million pound organisation like an FRS should not be carried out by anyone who needs basic guidance from government publications. If the FRS does not employ someone who is competent, the work should be contracted out to a specialist.

Impact of the event

Only life loss, injury and property damage are taken into account by fire and rescue computer risk models. When assessing the impact of an emergency event, all of the following factors should be considered:

- Life loss
- Injury
- Property damage
- Building fabric
- Building contents
- Heritage loss (both built and natural)
- Business interruption
- Direct impact on premise
- Indirect impact (e.g. effect of fire on nearby transport infrastructure)
- Environmental damage
- Social impact
- Economic impact
- Effect on community cohesion and sustainability

Combining likelihood and impact – prioritisation

The FRS should accept that the “fear of fire” is as real as fire itself, and that recognising this fact helps identify priorities that are not revealed by incident data.

‘Value for money’ should only be used as a tool to select the most cost-effective way of reducing individual risk.

The function of the IRMP process is simply to be honest and transparent about the service proposed. The consultation stage of the IRMP process has to highlight the difference between;

- (a) true efficiency savings, and
- (b) cuts in services that are forced on the FRS as a result of budgetary constraints.

If providing value for money means providing a lower level of service because less money is available, IRMP consultation has to say so. It is the only way that the public can be sufficiently informed to make choices about the services they receive and what they are prepared to pay for them.

Performance measurement

At the risk assessment stage, not only must the actual overall risk be identified, but also performance targets must be set for the *degree of risk reduction*.

The *degree of risk reduction* is the outcome of a delivery strategy, but inputs and outputs as well as outcomes all have to be measured in order to monitor the performance of an FRS.

It would appear that performance measurement should be described under the heading *monitor* rather than *risk assessment*, however in order to monitor a process, it is necessary to have a predetermined performance standard against which to compare delivery.

Also, in order to develop a *delivery strategy*, it is necessary to have a performance standard to aspire to in order to set the level of delivery. Unlike simple health and safety risk assessments, the outcome of an FRS delivery strategy is unlikely to be the complete elimination of risk or the immediate reduction of risk to an 'acceptable level'.

Hence, performance standards in terms of outcomes must be set at the risk assessment stage.

Performance standards in terms of outputs and inputs must also be set before monitoring can take place, but these can only be set once a strategy has been developed.

Chapter 3 – Develop Strategy

When selecting a strategy to address a risk for the first time, the FRS effectively has a free hand to do whatever they think will be most effective and will encompass all of the controlling/limiting legislation.

When selecting a strategy for an existing risk that has already gone through one IRMP cycle, the FRS must take account of the actual measured effectiveness of past strategies. Strategies that have been tried in the past, but have failed to deliver the desired performance measures cannot be continued. Either:

- (a) The existing strategy must be amended and improved.
- (b) A new strategy must be developed that is more likely to succeed.
- (c) Less challenging targets should be set for the next IRMP cycle.

Option (c) is effectively an admission that either poor judgement was applied in selecting the initial targets or that the FRS is 'giving up' on proactively attempting to improve its service delivery. Selecting this third option is therefore not a decision that can be made by managers in an FRS. It should only ever happen after informed debate between senior FRS managers, key stakeholders and elected members at Fire and Rescue Authority level.

Selecting strategies

Typically, strategies for dealing with response commitments can broadly be divided into three areas:

- Prevention
- Protection
- Intervention

Other potential strategies are:

- Do nothing
- Limited intervention
- Sharing the management of risk

Health and safety

Delivery strategies cannot be developed in a 'bubble' that excludes health and safety. Health and safety must be woven into every activity of an FRS. Every delivery strategy must have its health and safety implications taken into account when it is considered, and health and safety must be an integral part of every delivery strategy that is adopted.

Through the FBU, the FRS has the opportunity to draw on the combined experiences of the majority of its workforce when considering the health and safety implications of potential systems of service delivery work.

Selecting delivery strategies

Fire prevention and protection

Prevention and protection strategies can be split between domestic/residential fire and commercial/industrial fire. The delivery of commercial/industrial fire safety is mainly through the provision of advice and the enforcement of 'new fire safety legislation'.

New fire safety legislation makes a 'responsible person' responsible in law for compliance, but the FRS still has responsibility to deliver fire safety to people, property and the environment by actively and effectively overseeing compliance.

Arson reduction is normally treated as a 'special case' through specific 'arson reduction strategies'.

Strategies at a national level such as involvement in BSI committees and the drafting of regulations can have a significant effect on local risk.

Intervention

Intervention strategies must include the role played by call receiving and handling as well as speed and weight of attack. The attendance standards that will form part of the intervention strategy must be drawn up in co-operation with neighbouring FRSs and FRSs in the same family group. This is because while IRMP is about addressing local needs, the FRS nationally would be harmed by accusations of being a 'post code lottery'.

Any proposed intervention strategy must take account of the need for appropriate operational guidance, workforce skills and resources before it is adopted.

Responding to an incident that was not considered when developing the scope of the IRMP is understandable as long as training, equipment, procedures and high quality supervision ensure that the risk is dynamically assessed, and the principles of the 'safe person' are adopted. This does not mean that reasonably foreseeable incidents can be ignored when considering the scope of the IRMP in order to 'get around' the need for developing a strategy.

Setting performance standards

Broad outcome performance standards are set during the risk assessment stage of the IRMP cycle. Once a strategy has been selected for dealing with a response commitment, it is necessary to set input and output performance measures that will ensure that the desired outcomes will be achieved.

Presentation

It is not uncommon for IRMP documents to attempt to fulfil a public information function, but in the attempt to be a 'glossy brochure', they then fall short of being a 'business plan'. The aim should be one job, one document.

Two categories of document are required by the end of this stage of the IRMP process:

- Consultation documents about scope and risk philosophy
- draft plans.

Following the consultation stage on the draft plan, a further two documents should be produced:

- IRMPs and Annual Plans (publicly available but for internal use).
- 'Glossy brochures' presenting the actual service provided.

Chapter 4 – Delivery

Consider human factors

It is often the case that the reason for incorrect implementation of strategies is that systems, rules, procedures or instructions are not complied with. There are many reasons why this might occur, but the underlying causes often lie in systems that are designed without taking proper account of human factors.

By far the most effective way of ensuring that delivery mechanisms take proper account of human factors is to involve employees in the process of developing those mechanisms.

The next step

The FRS is a labour intensive industry where every service delivered involves direct contact between employees and the public. As a result, while an adequate service will be delivered if employees' experiences have been incorporated into delivery mechanisms, the best services will be delivered by employees who are motivated, enthusiastic and who feel valued by their employer.

This means that even staffing policies must be assessed under the umbrella of IRMP in terms of their impact on motivation and morale. Policies that have an adverse effect on motivation and morale are likely to have an adverse effect on service delivery and consequently on the outcomes of the IRMP. The adoption of policies that value and respect staff, such as genuine family friendly policies, will have positive effects that will filter through to better service delivery.

Chapter 5 – Monitor

Outcome performance measures are set at the risk assessment stage of the IRMP cycle.

Output and input performance measures are set at the strategy development stage.

The FRS should be continuously monitoring its environment in order to make sure that the scope of its IRMP is still reflective of the environment in which it operates.

Inputs and outputs of the delivery mechanism must be monitored to ensure that the strategy is likely to deliver the outcomes.

- It may be that a different strategy needs to be considered.
- The delivery mechanism may not be functioning as intended.

Monitoring is a continuous process that operates at every level from the broad scope of the IRMP right down to the detail of delivery mechanisms.

Incident investigation

In the medium and long term, monitoring performance by comparing numerical indicators against pre-set standards is essential. In the short term, it should be recognised that emergency incidents also represent an opportunity to monitor the effectiveness of a wide range of strategies.

Fire investigations examine the cause and effect of fires. *Incident* investigation can be used as an opportunity to monitor anything from intervention strategies to prevention strategies, the sufficiency of the enforcement of new fire safety legislation, the breadth of the scope of the IRMP, the effect of human factors on delivery mechanisms and many more besides.

Incident investigation must examine such things as:

- The immediate cause of the incident
- The underlying cause of the incident

- The reason/s for escalation of the incident
- The harm caused by the incident (was it in line with the IRMP assessment of risk?)
- The suitability of the control strategy
- The adequacy of systems for gathering tactical information
- The effectiveness of the legislative enforcement strategy
- The implementation of the control strategy
- The effectiveness of the intervention delivery mechanism
- Compliance with controls such as health and safety and environmental pollution

Chapter 6 – Review

It seems that it should not be worth saying that *the purpose of applying performance management to a business plan is to gather information to be fed back into a review of the business plan so that each successive plan is better than the last*. However, Chapter 6 of this document describes some of the many examples in which second and subsequent IRMPs have not been developments of past plans.

Performance targets must be described in each IRMP. In the subsequent plans, the performance of the FRS must be measured against those targets. To do otherwise is to mislead the public.

If performance targets are not achieved, new delivery strategies must be developed for the new IRMP cycle. To set lower targets and then continue with the same delivery strategy is an admission of defeat. The IRMP belongs to the Fire & Rescue Authority, and their informed approval is essential before targets can be lowered for this reason.

A cycle, not a repeated linear process

There are many examples in early IRMPs where past performance targets are not mentioned in later plans, and where missing a performance target has simply resulted in a lower target being set for the future.

In these cases, IRMP is being treated as a linear process with *monitoring* at the end, but with no attempt to feed the results of that monitoring into the next IRMP. The next IRMP is written from scratch, with little more than a passing mention of what was promised by the previous plan, let alone how well it was delivered.

However, IRMP planning is a cycle. The findings from the **monitoring** of performance must be fed into a **review** of the existing plan so that the next plan is an improvement on its predecessor.

Chapter 7 – Conclusion

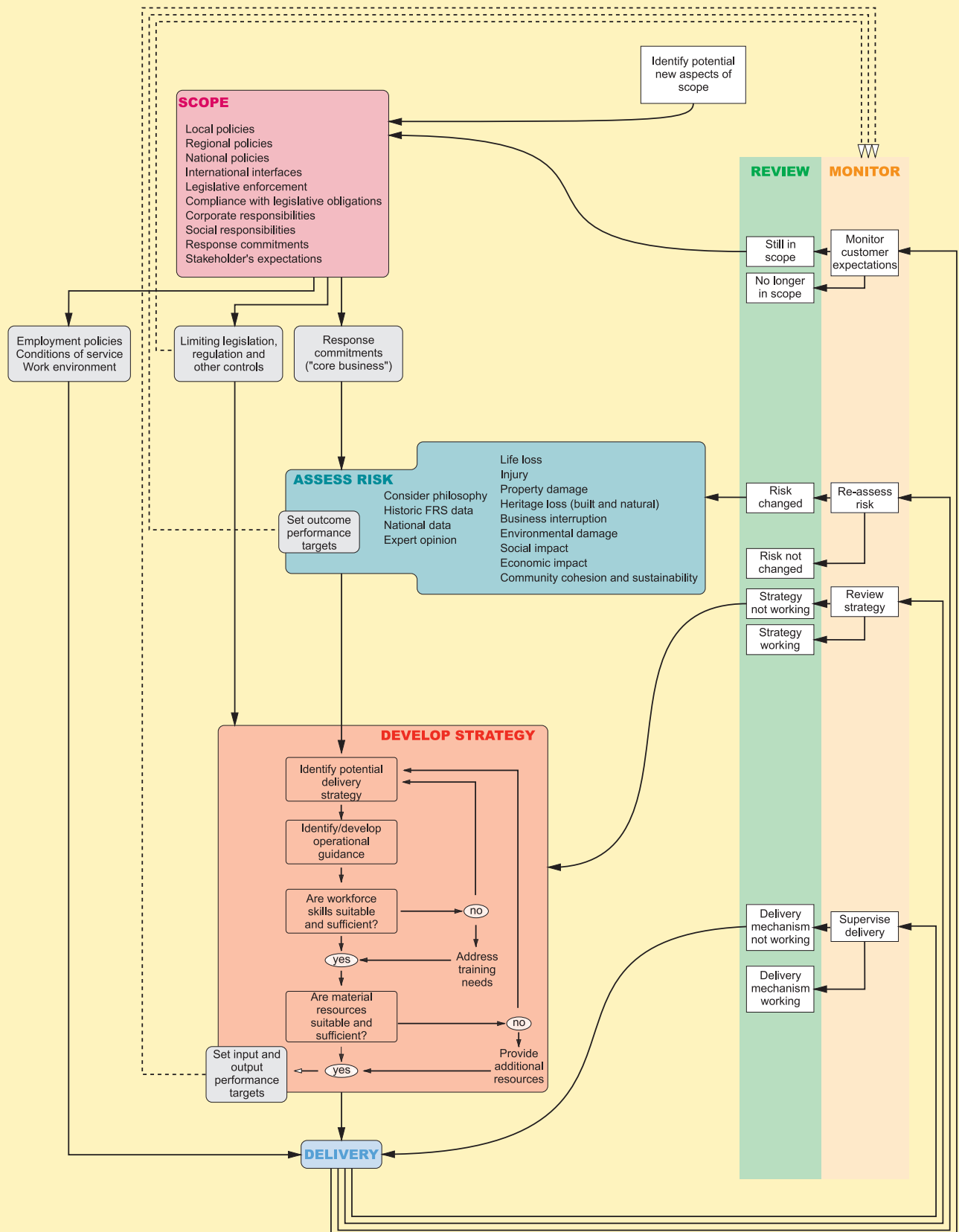


Figure i: The IRMP framework with key points included

The process

The FBU firmly believes in and supports the process of IRMP as described in all of the current national guidance documents. The FBU wants to work with fire and rescue authorities, FRSs and governments to implement and to further develop the IRMP process.

Where the FBU has in the past come into conflict with others over the content of IRMPs, it has almost always been the case that if national guidance documents had been followed in full, either the contentious content of the IRMP would never have been included, or the conflict could have been resolved more quickly.

This document as part of the process

To produce a universally applicable document that presents a full detailed explanation of the IRMP process would neither be desirable nor possible. Such a document would have to describe business planning and performance management processes that could be applied to every UK FRS.

Instead of producing such a comprehensive document, the FBU has therefore produced this document, illustrated by examples, summarised in Figure i, to show how locally identified business planning and performance management agendas can be attached onto a common framework.

By using this framework nationally, the ability to manage an FRS based on local need would not be restricted. The ability of FRSs to join together to face cross border challenges would be enhanced. What is more, while it is inevitable that industrial relations will always experience highs and lows, the transparency of the management process provided by this framework should mean that disputes over integrated risk management planning should be few in number and easy to resolve.



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