



Environmental and Sustainability Strategy



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1

STRATEGY

WMFS is mindful of its ethical and legal responsibilities including those for the environment. Looking after the environment also has a clear link with individual wellbeing. WMFS also recognises that not only do our activities impact on the environment but changes in the environment may impact on our operational response (see Appendix 3).

2

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline organisational commitment and requirements for minimising impacts on the environment.

The requirements in this policy extend to all WMFS employees.

3

RESPONSIBILITY

Facilities Management, Transport Engineering Workshops and Procurement are the key areas responsible for maintaining, monitoring, implementing and advising on this policy.

4

PROCEDURES

4.1 Plan

- The Environmental policy (Appendix 1) gives our direction of travel and shows our commitment to the environment.

4.2 Do

- SET provide strategic leadership on environmental matters. The organisation, i.e. the Authority and Strategic Enabling Team, will ensure the organisation has adequate



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resources to comply with its environmental policy and monitors performance measures on the effective use of natural resources.

- The Strategic Enabler for Finance and Resources is the named SET member responsible for the environmental agenda.
- Managers are expected to provide leadership on environmental matters. Managers will take responsibility for reducing energy usage and use of resources, e.g. gas, electricity, water and paper, as far as possible. They must also consider environmental impacts for any major projects, programmes or purchases by completing a Sustainability Impact Assessment (QuickForms HS31).
- Managers will also take responsibility for ensuring resources are not wasted, both to minimise impacts on the environment and to additionally make savings.
- Relevant managers, in Facilities Management, Procurement and Transport Engineering Workshops, will have the environmental responsibility for building stock and energy efficiency, sustainable procurement and fleet/transport management.
- All crews, teams and Departments should consider environmental issues in their day to day activities.
- Stations and departments are encouraged to have environmental champions to take a local lead on environmental matters. Personal accountability is promoted through the i-sustain message (see Appendix 2) Employees, including the Representative Bodies, will adopt sustainable behaviours and working practices and develop and maintain an awareness of climate change issues. Switching off electrical items and lights gives significant savings. Employees are encouraged to become Environmental Champions, leading on environmental and sustainability issues on their sites.
- Research, Development, Technology and Innovation (RDTI) (Bluelightthinking) will scope and evaluate environmental initiatives that are suggested to them.
- Procurement will consider the environmental impacts when placing orders and contracts.

4.3 Check

- External audit, conducted by Sandwell, currently every 3 years.
- Internal checks through quarterly workplace inspections and station peer assessment.
- Corporate Performance Indicators are used to set targets for the reduction of carbon emissions and the use of gas and electricity. Quarterly performance is reported on gas and electricity use and carbon emissions are reported on annually.

4.4 Act

- Environmental initiatives are identified and implemented locally.
- Relevant managers are expected to act on the findings of audits, monitoring of energy use etc.



APPENDIX 1 - WMFS ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY STATEMENT

West Midlands Fire Service recognises that its operations and activities impact on the environment. Through the conduct of its business operations, WMFS is committed to reducing its use of natural resources (energy, water, fuel and so on) and improving its carbon footprint, preventing pollution and continually improving its environmental performance and will:

- comply with all relevant environmental legislation, regulations and other requirements which relate to the organisation's environmental aspects;
- have the Strategic Enabler for Finance and Resources responsible for the environmental agenda;
- set and report on performance, at least annually, environmental objectives and targets in order to ensure continual improvement, including an annual carbon footprint;
- receive environmental audits;
- adopt water, fuel and energy reduction measures, enhancing the sustainable use of resources;
- carry out sustainable procurement;
- prevent pollution and minimise any adverse impact on the environment at operational incidents or our activities, including by the use of environmental grab bags;
- minimise and reduce waste production and increase the recycling of waste, aiming to recycle the majority of the waste that is produced;
- encourage biodiversity on our grounds and have regard for natural habitats and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs);
- promote the reduction of motor vehicle journeys, adopting more sustainable modes of transport, such as public transport and electric vehicles.

Overall responsibility for the policy lies with the Chief Fire Officer and Fire Authority. It is the responsibility of all employees to implement this policy together with their collective and individual responsibilities.

Chief Fire Officer

November 2020

Supported by the Lead Authority Member for the Environment



APPENDIX 2 - I-SUSTAIN



The organisation aims to support, develop and encourage employees to be aware of the environment and sustainability.

We want our employees to:

Take personal responsibility for their actions in relation to sustainability and the environment, realising that climate change affects us all.

Supporting Individual Behaviours

We want our employees to:

-  Consider volunteering as an environmental "champion" for their site, team or department;
-  Be more energy efficient, by turning items off when not in use, and not leaving items on stand-by unnecessarily;
-  Use less paper, by only printing when necessary, printing double-sided and using paper for scrap paper;
-  Make better use of resources, by reducing, reusing and recycling waste;
-  Save water, by boiling only the amount required to make a drink, by using refillable water bottles and by only washing vehicles when dirty;
-  Save fuel by car-sharing, using public transport; walking or riding a bike, where possible;
-  Consider environmental impacts of projects, plans and policies;
-  Make suggestions, raise issues and get involved; and
-  Be environmentally aware and friendly outside work as well as at work.

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Prevention Protection Response



Appendix 3 - Potential Impacts on Service Delivery

Climate change and other environmental issues have the potential to impact on the way we deliver our operational response, both in the short and long-term. For example:

Drought

Problems with water supply could be:

- as training utilises drinking quality water, which could be in short supply, we may need to use non-drinking water, or recycle the training water used;
- lower water mains pressures;
- water relay becomes more frequent;
- increased use of foam wetting agents or additives;
- increased use of high volume pumping units (HVPU) or water bowsers;
- more efficient techniques or equipment for application of water; or
- new techniques for using water from shallower natural water sources.

Equipment and PPE

Change in tactics, training, procedures and equipment may be required.

Flood response

- Partnership working with Environment Agency and Planning Authorities;
- increased use of high volume pumping units – mutual assistance.
- Consider enhancing our water rescue provision and provide new equipment for example 'Argocat' vehicle.
- Change in personal protection equipment (PPE) for example waterproofs.

Increase in Secondary Fires

Change in tactics, training, procedures and equipment may be required.

Heat stress

In the long-term, there may be a requirement for different PPE to help keep cool in the hotter summers or when dealing with large secondary fires.

Welfare management may need to be developed further.



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DOCUMENT CONTROL AND AUDIT

Audit	
Responsible SET Member Accountable	Finance and Resources
Authorised by	Mike Griffiths
Direct enquiries to	Policyofficers@wmfs.net
EIA (Date Completed & Name)	Complete
PIA (Date Completed & Name)	Complete

Review History		
Version #	Date	Reviewed By
1.0	1/3/2017	Catherine Ince, HSW Team
2.0	1/11/2020	Catherine Ince, HSW Team & Mike Griffiths, SE Finance and Resources

Amendment History					
Version #	Date	Amended By	Section Amended	Amendment	Reason for change
2.0	1/11/2020	Catherine Ince, HSW Team & Mike Griffiths, SE Finance and Resources	Whole policy	Minor amendments throughout, to remove sections that are no longer relevant. The main amendment is the change in responsibility for this policy, to place it under the ownership of the Strategic	In line with the policies three yearly review



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				Enabler for Finance and Resources.	