

Fire and Rescue Service

6 March 2026

R.36/2026

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Report by the Comptroller and Auditor General: 6 March 2026

This report has been prepared in accordance with Article 20 of the Comptroller and Auditor General (Jersey) Law 2014.

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Summary

Introduction

1. The States of Jersey Fire and Rescue Service (SJFRS) is a key Island workforce responsible for keeping Islanders safe from fires and other emergencies. SJFRS sits within the Department for Justice and Home Affairs (JHA).
2. In the period from 2019 to 2021 SJFRS saw real terms reductions to its budget. Since 2021, two significant business cases have been approved (one in 2022 and a second in 2025) to invest in SJFRS and to mitigate some of the significant risks that have been identified.
3. The projected annual budget from 2025 to 2029 is shown in Exhibit 1.

Exhibit 1: SJFRS Projected Budget

	2025 £000	2026 £000	2027 £000	2028 £000	2029 £000
Income	(344)	(353)	(353)	(353)	(353)
Near-cash expenditure	10,131	10,539	11,426	11,426	11,426
Non-cash depreciation	141	112	101	101	101
Net revenue expenditure	9,928	10,298	11,174	11,174	11,174

Source: States of Jersey Budget 2025-2028, pay award budget for 2025 and States of Jersey Budget 2026-2029

4. SJFRS is responsible for a broad range of statutory response activities, which includes firefighting, road traffic collisions, hazardous materials, height and entrapment rescues, search, medical co-response and police assistance. It responds to around 1,100 emergencies each year, with the number of emergencies on an increasing trend. SJFRS prevents fires and other emergencies through a risk-based programme of 'Safe and Well' visits for older and vulnerable people and community events. It also runs several preventative campaigns throughout the year, including delivery of workplace

fire safety training courses. It is also SJFRS's role to protect people, infrastructure and the environment in higher risk settings through the enforcement of legislation and fire engineering, issuing and renewing fire certificates. The Chief Fire Officer's legal duties are set out under Article 4 of the Fire and Rescue Service (Jersey) Law 2011.

Key findings

5. The SJFRS Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) Refresh for 2025 to 2026 sits outside of the JHA Business Plan and identifies the key aims of SJFRS. The CRMP is an extension of the 2021–24 Integrated Risk Management Plan and as such, focusses strongly on operational delivery. It contains less emphasis on measuring other functions such as training, leadership and culture, staffing levels and budget management. The CRMP does not set out clear key performance indicators (KPIs) across all areas of activity. In addition, a lot of actions are labelled as 'maintain' or 'continue' with no hard targets outlined. A new suite of KPIs has recently been approved which will be integrated into the CRMP 2027–30.
6. SJFRS has identified a large number of extreme risks, associated with operating at current levels. These extreme risks have been recorded as having a low risk appetite. The mitigations recorded against these risks may not address or improve the risks significantly in the short term. In addition, some of the key dates for implementation appear to be ambitious, and may not be delivered by the deadlines that have been set.
7. While risks had been identified in SJFRS and raised with the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs in 2021, it was not until 2023 that additional funding was incorporated into the SJFRS budget. This additional funding was approved to increase the workforce and to start to move towards meeting National Operational Guidance (NOG) which is the recognised standard for UK Fire and Rescue services. Since 2022 approved business cases for additional funding have set out the risks clearly.
8. The financial performance for 2025 shows a marginal overspend position of £35,000 compared to budget. However, there is an underspend of £566,813

on staff costs, an underachievement on income of £4,879 and £596,686 overspend on operational non-pay expenditure. In practice staff vacancy savings have been used to fund non-pay expenditure. In overall terms the budget is not being used to address identified service delivery risks.

9. The governance arrangements for SJFRS have complex lines of accountability within SJFRS, within JHA and directly to the Minister. An internal review of SJFRS governance undertaken during 2025 identified key areas of strength and opportunities for improvement.
10. SJFRS considers that it is appropriate for the service to work towards alignment with the NOG. There is still a considerable amount of work that will be required for SJFRS to comply with NOG.
11. SJFRS has participated in a substantial array of training courses in recent years, both on Island and in the UK, to assist in bridging the significant gaps identified by a 2022 peer review and aimed at bringing SJFRS in line with other services.
12. SJFRS has been successful in attracting new recruits and at the time of my fieldwork was nearing funded establishment. New officers have been appointed at a senior level from the UK, which should bring additional challenge, experience and expertise to SJFRS. All senior officers have opportunities to take part in leadership training.
13. Progress on implementing key digital projects has been slow, particularly following the Digital Services prioritisation exercise carried out on digital projects across the States. There is a clear identified risk that key digital projects aimed at mitigating significant risks may not be delivered to timescale.
14. The risks of not implementing the recommendations of a 2025 Subject Matter Expert review and of not delivering on the emergency control centre project need to be managed carefully given that the weaknesses identified pose risks to public safety, operational performance and compliance.

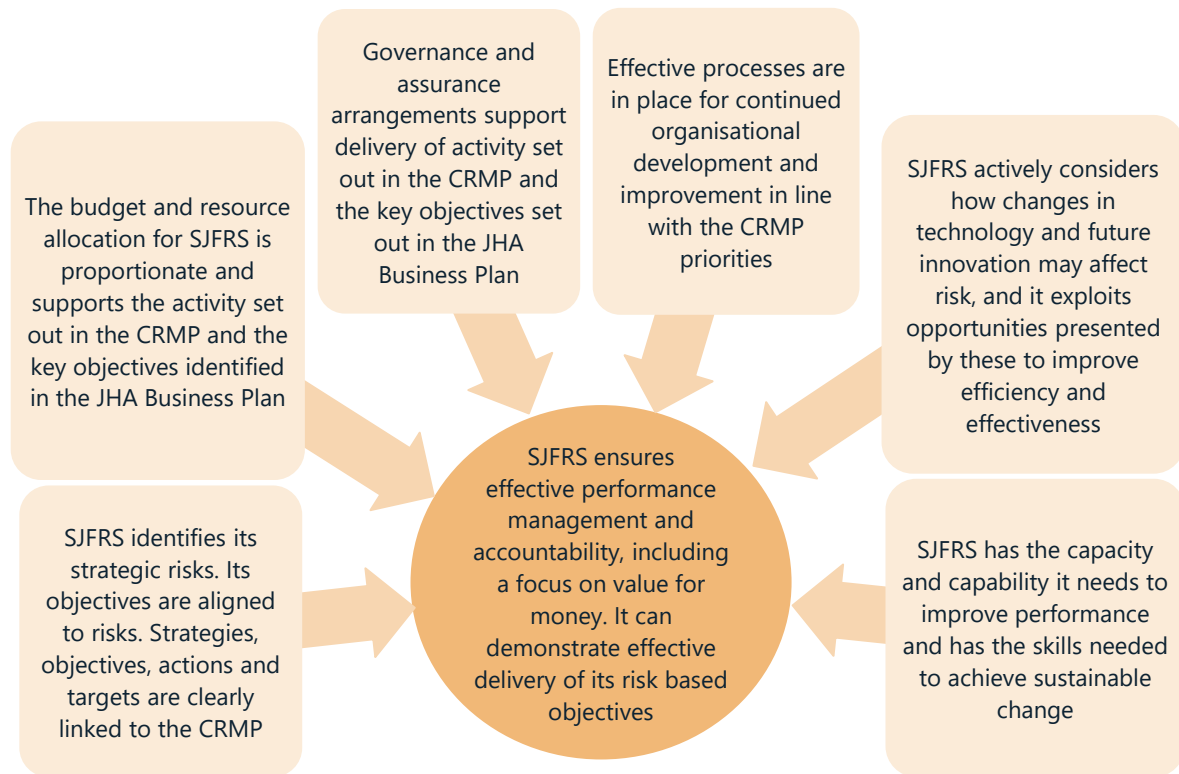
Conclusion

15. Since 2022 SJFRS has been strengthening its operations, from a weak foundation. While additional resources have allowed the recruitment of more full time firefighters, including senior officers, much remains to be done to enable a more effective service response and to eliminate occasions where there has been no available capacity.
16. SJFRS needs to develop and implement a clear strategic plan incorporating all known risks and setting out key objectives, risk mitigations and measurable performance improvement targets. Until such a plan is in place and has been implemented the States continue to demonstrate a high level of tolerance of significant risks.

Objectives and scope of the audit

17. The audit has evaluated how well SJFRS uses its resources to manage risk, and to ensure it delivers an efficient, effective and economic service.
18. The audit extended to:
 - the core SJFRS structure, including management of retained firefighters; and
 - key partnership agreements and governance arrangements including arrangements with the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs and within the States of Jersey.
19. The audit considered how the Chief Fire Officer is responding to the Fire Standards and National Operational Guidance but does not provide an assessment of SJFRS against the relevant Fire Standards.
20. The audit did not evaluate the Emergency Planning responsibilities of the Chief Fire Officer.
21. The relative performance of SJFRS was assessed using criteria I have developed from recognised best practices adapted to be proportionate and relevant to the Jersey context.
22. The criteria are shown in Exhibit 2.

Exhibit 2: Audit criteria



Source: Jersey Audit Office adaptation of identified best practice

23. More details on the Audit Approach can be found in Appendix One.

Detailed findings

Strategy and risks

Strategy

24. The strategy and business plan for SJFRS sit within the JHA Business Plan. The JHA Business Plan sets out clearly the objectives for each of the services within the Department, including SJFRS.
25. The SJFRS Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) Refresh for 2025 to 2026 sits outside of the JHA Business Plan and identifies the key aims of SJFRS (Exhibit 3). The CRMP is a multi-year document and, as such, does not show the same objectives for SJFRS as those set out in the annual JHA Business Plan, although they are similar.

Exhibit 3: Summary of vision and aims of SJFRS



Source: Summary of SJFRS CRMP Refresh 2025 to 2026

26. The current CRMP is an extension of the 2021–24 Integrated Risk Management Plan and as such, focusses strongly on operational delivery. It contains less emphasis on measuring the other functions such as training, leadership and culture, staffing levels and budget management. Work is on-going to develop a broader, more strategic CRMP for 2027–30. The extant CRMP does not set out clear key performance indicators (KPIs) across all areas of activity. In addition, a lot of actions are labelled as 'maintain' or 'continue' with no hard targets outlined. I understand that a new set of KPIs which was

being developed at the time of my audit, is now approved and will be used in future reporting of performance.

Risks

27. Risks are recorded in the departmental (and where appropriate) the corporate risk register and are discussed at length at both the monthly Performance Delivery Board (PDB) and the monthly Fire Service Management Team meetings.
28. The identification and classification of risk by SJFRS is at a mature level. I found a clear description of each risk as well as an articulation of risk appetite and the direction of travel.
29. SJFRS has identified a large number of extreme risks associated with operating at current levels. These extreme risks have been recorded as having a low risk appetite, however the mitigations recorded are not going to address or improve the risks in the short term. In addition, some of the key dates for implementation are ambitious and may not be delivered by the deadlines that have been set.
30. In discussion with JHA, the SJFRS extreme risks have been summarised into one major corporate risk recorded on the corporate risk register. This risk is that *'SJFRS lacks the capacity and capability to deliver its statutory duties safely and effectively'*.
31. Additional funding has been approved for SJFRS in the Budget 2026-2029 but does not start to mitigate most of the extreme risks until 2027. Even then is potentially insufficient to fully mitigate many of them. There are also a number of other operational delivery risks, that are not associated with funding.

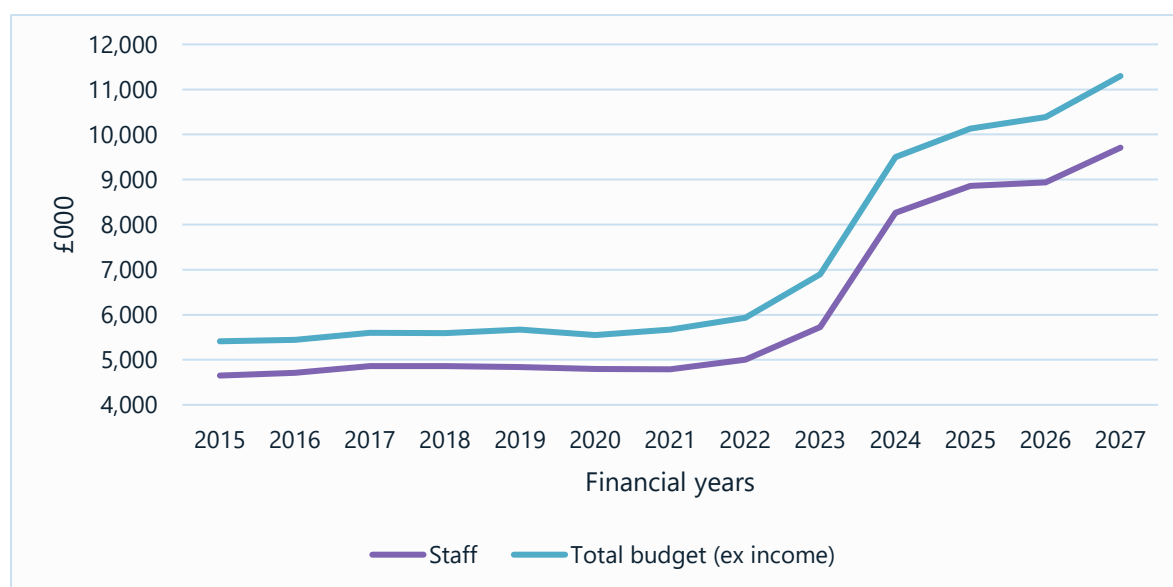
Recommendations

- R1** Review the risk registers and risk appetite in the light of the number of extreme risks, to ensure that:
- there is clarity over risk tolerance and proposed treatment and mitigations; and
 - a clear picture is presented of the timeframes needed to implement the mitigations and any dependencies.
- R2** Develop and implement a four year Strategic Business Plan that takes account of the ambition and vision for the future with clarity over staffing and roles. Ensure that the Strategic Business Plan includes key objectives, with clear measurable targets.
- R3** Implement a new suite of Key Performance Indicators and, in doing so, ensure that the indicators reflect the totality of the service requirements.

Resources

32. In the period from 2019 to 2021 SJFRS saw real terms reductions to its budget. These reductions were not related to efficiency or service delivery and the budget and resource utilisation was not linked to service output and outcome requirements.
33. While risks had been identified in SJFRS and raised with the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs in 2021, it was not until 2023 that additional funding was incorporated into the SJFRS budget. This additional funding was approved to increase the workforce and to start to move towards meeting National Operational Guidance.
34. Since 2022 approved business cases for additional funding have set out the risks clearly. Additional monies have been approved in successive Government Plans, although these have been insufficient to mitigate all the identified risks (Exhibit 4). A significant part of the increase in expenditure relates to pay increases and changes to terms and conditions.

Exhibit 4: SJFRS revenue expenditure budget changes over time



Source: Jersey Audit Office analysis

35. The latest business case was submitted to support additional funding approved in the 2026-29 Budget. There remains a risk however, which was

identified in the business case, that despite this additional funding, SJFRS will not be able to deliver all of its functions.

36. The business case investment of £1.2 million from 2023 to 2026 was in response to findings of the 2022 peer review that had concluded that *'at the moment, the lack of capacity means that we heard the Service cannot assure itself, and others, that it can prevent, or deal with, a major incident, or simultaneous incidents, nor protect its firefighters or residents if such an incident were to occur'*. The investment was staged from £495,000 in 2023 to £1.2 million by 2026 but was reduced by a requirement for (at the time unidentified) efficiency savings of £127,000 in 2024.
37. The investment of £1.4 million in 2024 was to fund changes in conditions of service for uniformed fire service staff, in particular to enable the recruitment of more retained firefighters. Expenditure in 2024 and 2025 has been supported by additional budget in respect of the major incident at Haut du Mont.
38. The financial performance for 2025 shows a marginal overspend position of £35,000 compared to budget. However, there is an underspend of £566,813 on staff costs, an underachievement on income of £4,879 and £596,686 overspend on operational non-pay expenditure. In practice staff vacancy savings have been used to fund non-pay expenditure. An efficiency savings target was in place for 2024 of £127,000 and to manage this reduction, a decision was made to not recruit to the two Crew Commander vacancies originally profiled as a result of the 2022 investment business case. I note that a lack of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is still assessed as a risk in the risk register, despite the additional expenditure on non-pay.
39. The business case supporting investment of £463,000 in 2026 and £1.4 million recurring expenditure from 2027 is for additional staff and operational expenditure. The business case has been made in further response to previous reviews and recommendations and assessed risks. The areas of response include expenditure to support:
 - improved risk and assurance arrangements

- improved health and safety and performance improvement to support National Operational Guidance and health and safety minimum standards
 - additional support being provided to Health and Care Jersey (HCJ); and
 - reduced public and firefighter safety risk from fires in the built environment.
40. In overall terms the budget is not being used to address identified service delivery risks. Non-pay expenditure pressures include demands on the training budget. In addition, expenditure on PPE has been compromised with retained staff only having one set of PPE which represents a health and safety risk.
41. The 2022 business case, for investment across 2023-2026 sets objectives for achievement by the end of 2026. The 2026 peer challenge process (planned for April/May 2026) will assess progress against three of the objectives. However, there has been no systematic assessment of the annual targets outlined in the 2022 business case and whether these have been realised. It is also unclear as to why some of the funding requirements identified in the 2026-2029 business case were not identified at an earlier point.

Recommendation

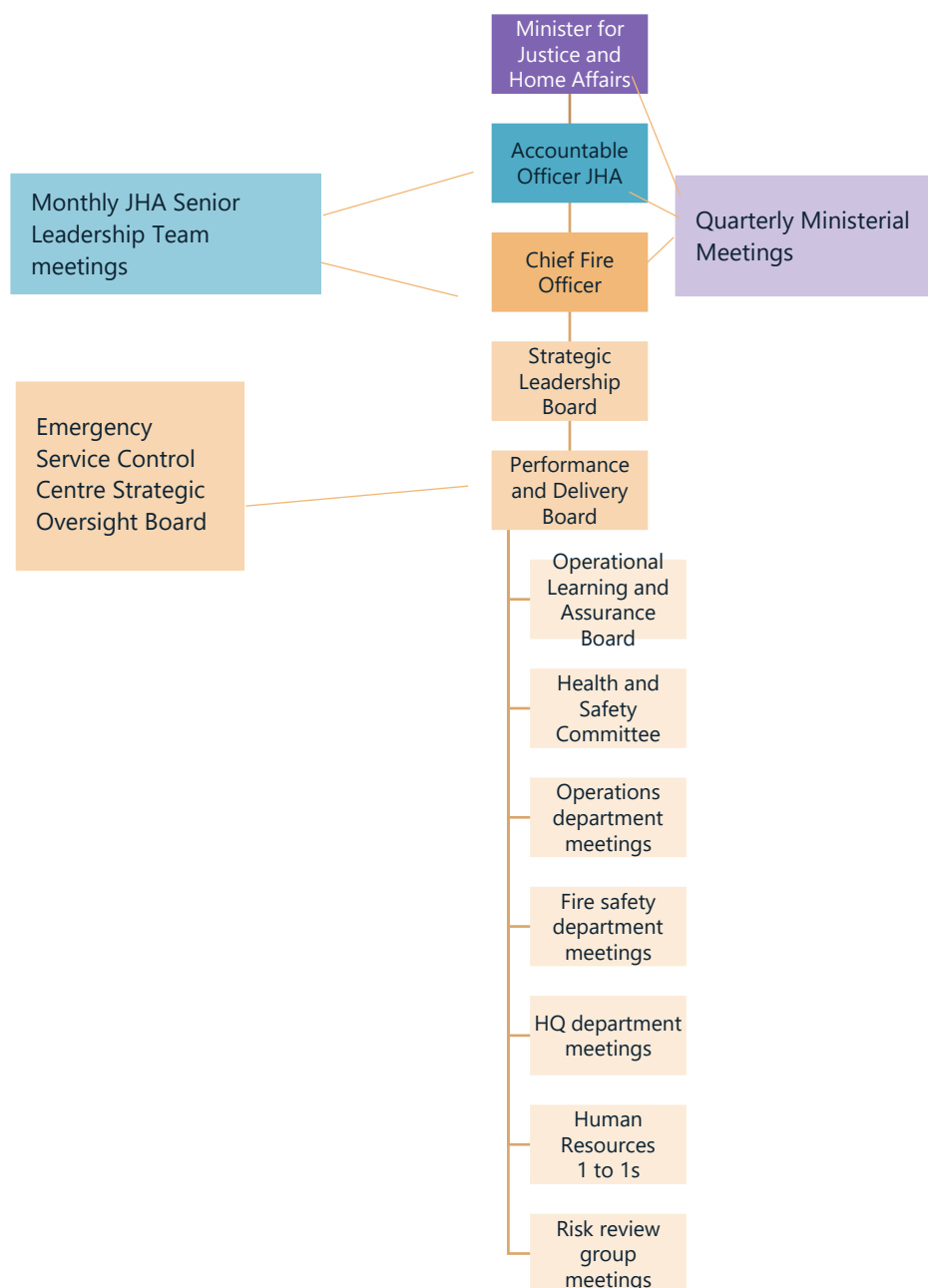
- R4** Track the use of the growth funding approved in the Budget 2026-2029 to demonstrate the benefits achieved through the additional investment. In doing so, ensure there is clarity as to what the additional funding has enabled the service to do and what level of risk remains to be managed.

Governance arrangements

Overall governance arrangements

42. The governance arrangements for SJFRS have complex lines of accountability within SJFRS, within JHA and directly to the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs (Exhibit 5).

Exhibit 5: SJFRS governance arrangements



Source: SJFRS presentation and Jersey Audit Office analysis

43. Legislation governing SJFRS includes the Fire Precautions (Jersey) Law 1977 and the Fire and Rescue Service (Jersey) Law 2011. The Laws and supporting Orders establish rules for fire safety in buildings, mandate fire certificates for specific premises and set SJFRS's powers for various emergencies (including fire and other emergencies).
44. The Laws impose a range of statutory duties on the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs to:
- promote fire safety, and to prepare for fighting fires and protecting people and property from fires
 - rescue people from road traffic collisions
 - deal with inshore sea rescues, cliff rescues and firefighting at sea; and
 - deal with other specific emergencies, such as flooding or terrorist attack, which may be specified by Order and can be amended in line with how the role of SJFRS may change in the future.
45. The Chief Fire Officer has a distinct role under legislation, namely that they shall be the head of SJFRS, and are responsible to the Minister for its effective, efficient and economical operation.

Arrangements between the Minister, JHA and SJFRS

46. SJFRS sits within JHA. JHA is headed by a Chief Officer who is an Accountable Officer and responsible for SJFRS as part of her functions. The relationship between the functions of the JHA Accountable Officer and the functions of the Chief Fire Officer require careful management to ensure that there is no conflict or confusion around responsibility. It is also a consideration that the Minister ensures that they are clear on who is accountable for what.
47. The arrangements in place were working well at the time of my fieldwork, partly due to the good working relationships between the Accountable Officer in JHA and the Chief Fire Officer. There could however be merit in considering where governance arrangements would be enhanced through mechanisms such as:

- making the Chief Fire Officer an Accountable Officer
- introducing an arrangement for a separate authority to oversee SJFRS; or
- introducing an advisory board of relevant experts to assist the Minister in overseeing SJFRS.

Arrangements within JHA and SJFRS

48. The JHA Senior Leadership Team, of which the Chief Fire Officer is a member, meets monthly. The agendas and papers are well presented and cover both corporate issues and operational issues where appropriate given the disparity of services.
49. SJFRS has a Strategic Leadership Board which meets monthly and receives reports on finance, risk, HR and updates as appropriate. There is also a Performance and Delivery Board that meets monthly and receives updates on finance, risk and HR issues and also focusses on operational detail. The Performance and Delivery Board has recently been reviewed and planned changes include an increased focus on delivery and less on corporate matters to avoid duplication. In addition, there is a JHA Change Oversight Group that is focussed on digital change.
50. It is hard to follow the implementation of actions from the groups and boards that meet within SJFRS. The decision logs that are maintained are discussed at both the Performance and Delivery Board and the Strategic Leadership Board. However, there were instances of actions being removed from relevant logs without a clear record of the action taken. There is an opportunity to make this process clearer in the minutes.
51. More generally, while I understand that a budgetary overspend on non-pay expenditure was planned, I observed little recorded challenge on the overspend position by senior leaders.
52. An internal review of SJFRS governance was undertaken by JHA during 2025. It identified key areas of strength and opportunities for improvement in SJFRS governance.

53. An action plan has not yet been developed in response to the review and the review report has not been finalised.

Recommendations

- R5** Enhance the processes used to track decisions and actions from all governance groups and meetings relating to SJFRS.
- R6** Develop and implement an action plan to address the points raised in the 2025 internal review of SJFRS governance.

Area for consideration

- A1** Consider enhancing oversight arrangements through the creation of a specialist advisory board or another appropriate mechanism.

Organisational development

Service standards

54. SJFRS has a requirement under the Fire and Rescue (Jersey) Law 2011 Article 12 to secure training and equipment required to undertake duties as a firefighter. In addition, the Health and Safety at Work (Jersey) Law 1989 places a requirement on the States Employment Board to offer suitable, safe systems of work for the roles that the employees undertake.
55. SJFRS considers that it is appropriate for the service to work towards alignment with the National Operational Guidance (NOG) which is the recognised standard for UK Fire and Rescue services.
56. In 2021, the SJFRS produced a NOG Implementation Plan. This was a detailed Project Initiation Document with a flow chart that would be updated as implementation was achieved.
57. The Chief Fire Officer gave a briefing to the then Minister in 2021, setting out the risks of non-compliance with NOG. The briefing stated that *'SJFRS has been seeking to implement NOG since its first publication. All Fire and Rescue Services find this to be a significant challenge, in Jersey it is even more so because there is extremely limited capacity to undertake the necessary work and generate the expertise to refine the guidance and implement it in the local context.'*
58. In August 2025, a new project plan was developed as the 2021 plan was by then out of date. Both the 2025 plan and the 2021 plan appear to cover the same issues and discuss the gap analysis, the immense amount of work needed and the workflow.
59. There is still a considerable amount of work that will be required for SJFRS to comply with NOG.

Staff training, development and engagement

60. I found that most SJFRS staff are participating in manager and senior manager leadership training and completion of mandatory training modules by wholetime staff is good.
61. The peer review carried out in 2022 set out some deficiencies in terms of training, leadership and culture. The report stated that *'the functions 'Prevention, Protection and Response' cannot be achieved because of reduced resources – no Deputy and Group manager, and Fire safety, policy development and training reduced'*. The report noted that *'Equipment was good quality but the training needed for new equipment was needed and they didn't have the resource'*.
62. The peer review report also set out that data was not available on training records, operational learning and how staff learn from incidents.
63. A new system has been implemented since the peer review to record training, learning and development activities. There are some issues however with the quality of data in the system and printed records and other alternatives continue to be used. In addition, the reports on activity and monitoring records from the system are not yet mature. Further modules may need to be implemented to streamline reporting to provide more useful monitoring information.
64. SJFRS has participated in a substantial array of training courses in recent years, both on Island and in the UK, to assist in bridging the significant gaps identified by the peer review and aimed at bringing SJFRS in line with other services. This training activity has in part been funded by underspends in the staffing budget. These underspends have arisen partly due to the difficulties experienced in recruiting to approved posts.
65. The overall proposed training programme for each year is agreed before the start of the year at the Performance and Delivery Board. I have identified weaknesses in the management of the training programme and the associated budget. These weaknesses include:

- the apparent lack of a formal mechanism for making changes or additions to the approved programme. I found that some of training courses do not seem to be approved
 - potential procurement breaches in respect of some courses. Some training providers have been sourced locally on a single tender basis with the reason that the local supplier provides better value for money. This is not however an acceptable reason in itself for not testing the market; and
 - the budget for training is consistently overspent.
66. Going forward it may not be possible to continue to use the staffing budget to fund non-pay related expenditure in respect of training, particularly as and when more posts are successfully recruited to. SJFRS is in the process of developing the training needs assessment for 2027 but it is difficult to see how future training requirements will be funded.
67. The employee engagement score in the Government's Be Heard Survey undertaken in 2024 showed an improvement compared to previous years. While engagement was scored as good there was a low overall response rate of 45% of SJFRS staff completing the survey. The response rate for whole time firefighters (51%) was higher than retained firefighters (18%).

Leadership and capacity

68. In 2023, the Chief Fire Officer put together a proposal to source assistance with organisational development. Previous reviews had highlighted issues with leadership capacity, policies and processes, capacity and capability, Headquarter function support and culture. A resource was commissioned to lead an organisational development programme.
69. Three workstreams were set up:
- forward to basics (recruit, retain, develop and nurture talent)
 - leadership and culture; and
 - well-being and resilience.

70. The action plan supporting the programme was detailed and included dates for delivery in 2023 and Q1 2024. A tracker was developed to manage all the actions. While the tracker is comprehensive, many dates have slipped and detail is not recorded on when the actions are now expected to be delivered.
71. SJFRS has been successful in attracting new recruits and at the time of my fieldwork was nearing funded establishment. Two new officers have been appointed at a senior level from the UK, which should bring additional challenge, experience and expertise to SJFRS. All senior officers have opportunities to take part in leadership training.
72. Work was undertaken in June 2025 to form a Talent Pool for Station Commander, Watch Commander and Crew Commander roles. It is too early to assess the success of this scheme in providing good succession planning and a strong, well equipped workforce able to step into managerial roles.

Workforce planning

73. A strategic workforce plan has been developed using the Government template. While the plan follows the template and is comprehensive in aims and objectives, it does not detail the staff numbers required for the future, or the changing skills that will be needed for the future.
74. Work has progressed on the areas covered by the plan but in some cases implementation is slower than anticipated.

Recommendations

- R7** Progress and track the implementation of compliance with National Operational Guidance to agreed timescales.
- R8** Undertake a review of training needs and associated budget provision. In doing so:
- prioritise training approvals to match the available budget; and
 - review all ongoing training contracts to determine what contracts should be subject to future market testing.

Exploiting future technology and innovation

75. The CRMP 2025-2026 sets out a number of planned technology improvements to be delivered. These include:
- mobile data terminal deployment to provide electronic risk information at incidents – a contract has been signed, and the project was commenced. However, implementation has been delayed due to a lack of Digital Services capacity
 - emergency control centre technology
 - online fire safety engagement tools – to adopt the National Fire Chiefs Council's online Home Fire Safety check tool
 - false alarm reduction by way of control systems; and
 - new PPE technology adoption.
76. The Justice and Home Affairs Change Oversight Group, which is attended by SJFRS, focusses on these projects. However, progress on them has been slow, particularly following the prioritisation exercise carried out on digital projects across the States. There is a clear identified risk that the SJFRS digital projects may not be delivered to timescale.
77. The mobile data terminal project was originally scheduled to be completed in Q1 2025. It is now scheduled for August 2026. The implementation of this project is critical to mitigate significant risks that have been identified.
78. The National Fire Chiefs Council Organisational Learning Debrief in September 2023, following the incident at Haut du Mont in December 2022, made three recommendations in relation to the emergency control centre. In 2025 an external review by control subject matter experts was commissioned by the Chief Fire Officer and this commenced in May 2025. It provided a current state baseline against relevant sector standards, from which to plan and continue longer-term development of the function, beyond work already undertaken. This review assessed the operation of the emergency control centre over ten key areas of which seven were assessed as inadequate and three were assessed as requiring improvement. The review identified

significant gaps across key areas of operations, policy, training, systems and governance.

79. A working group was established to oversee implementation of the 2025 Subject Matter Expert review recommendations. However, the risks of not implementing the recommendations of the 2025 Subject Matter Expert review and of not delivering on the emergency control centre project need to be managed carefully. The critical weaknesses highlighted by the 2025 Subject Matter Expert review pose risks to public safety, operational performance and compliance.

Recommendations

- R9** Ensure robust performance management is in place for the implementation of all recommendations from the 2025 Subject Matter Expert review.
- R10** The Chief Officer of Justice and Home Affairs and the Chief Fire Officer should reassess the urgency and timescales being applied to key digital projects aimed at mitigating extreme risks.

Performance improvement

80. SJFRS is developing its performance information and support for management processes from a low baseline. There had been a lack of managerial capacity until a Deputy Chief Fire Officer, one area commander, one station commander and two fire safety watch commanders were appointed in 2024.
81. In June 2024 a full time Head of Headquarters was commissioned to provide an organisational development culture programme and enhance project and performance management arrangements.
82. A limited range of service delivery KPIs has been collected and reported although none were published during 2025. A new suite of KPIs was in the process of being agreed at the time of my fieldwork.
83. Historically, there has been little or no project and performance management in SJFRS. The recommendations tracker updated in 2025 contained 202 recommendations and until recently there is little evidence that these had been prioritised for implementation.
84. Performance reporting to the Minister lacks sufficient detail and encompasses only 'response related' KPIs (those relating to information about responses to incidents). The reporting of risks and extreme risks has continued from one quarter to the next with no evidence of what has been or is being done to mitigate or resolve them. There is no documented evidence of challenge from the Minister on risk mitigation actions and the business case for extra investment has been put forward as the only mitigating action.
85. SJFRS has benchmarked some response KPIs against Crown Dependencies and UK fire service averages where these are considered to be comparable. There is an inherent difficulty in benchmarking against other fire and rescue services due to the challenge in finding like for like comparators.
86. The benchmarking that has been undertaken shows:
 - fire incidents per 100,000 population are lower in Jersey but the proportion of dwelling fires is higher in Jersey

- the level of special service incidents per 100,000 population is much higher in Jersey. This mainly relates to assists undertaken by SJFRS in respect of ambulance call outs which are increasing. The number of SJFRS responses to road traffic collisions is also increasing. Analysis shows that the SJFRS undertakes a significant amount of work outside the normal fire categories compared to other fire services. This needs to be explored further to ascertain whether the SJFRS is the most efficient and effective service response option
- fire fatalities per 100,000 are lower in Jersey but are increasing compared to a decreasing trend in the UK
- false alarms per 100,000 are slightly lower in Jersey; and
- cost for each resident is higher in Jersey than in the Isle of Man.

87. SJFRS acknowledges that there needs to be significant improvement in its project and performance management.

Recommendations

R11 Implement enhanced performance management arrangements that include:

- setting realistic action plans linked to CRMP priorities
- reporting of relevant performance data on a timely basis
- enhanced project management arrangements
- benchmarking of performance against relevant peers; and
- challenge and oversight from governance structures including the Minister.

R12 Review the work that SJFRS is undertaking outside of the normal fire service categories to determine whether SJFRS is the most efficient and effective service response option. In doing so, consider whether a formal Service Level Agreement with Health and Care Jersey would be beneficial to manage expectations, service standards and value for money.

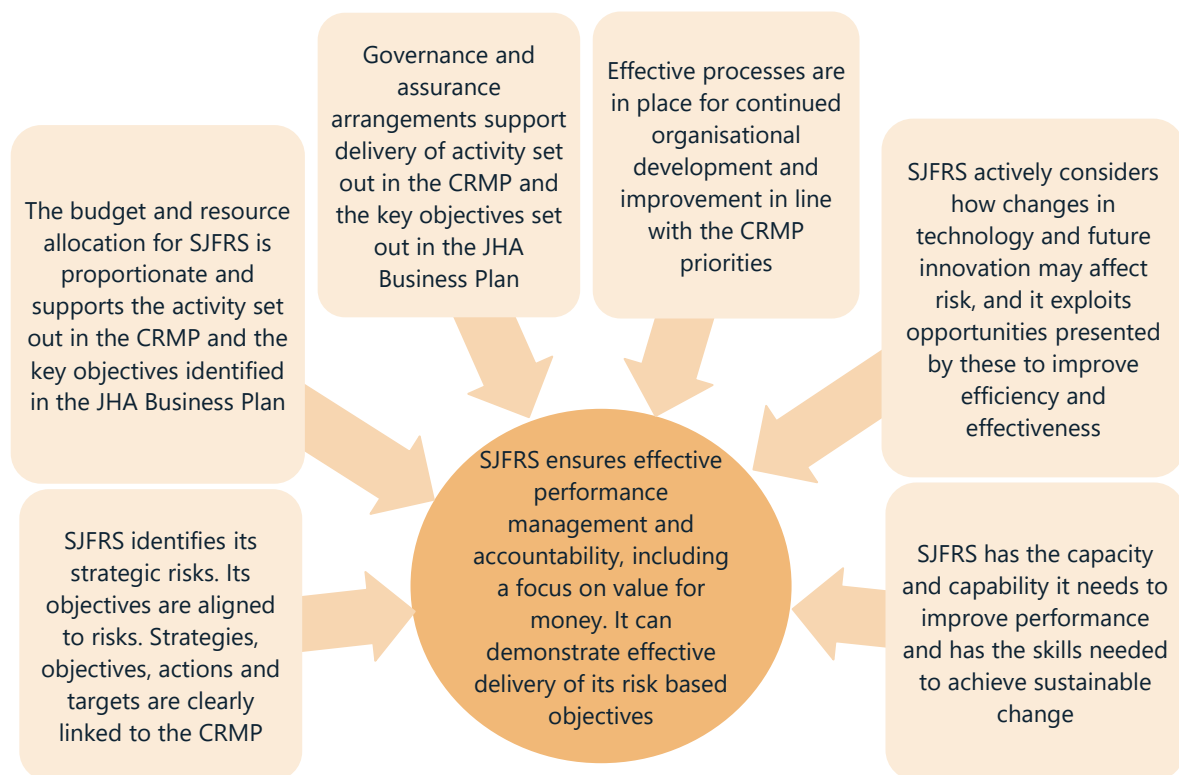
Appendix One

Audit Approach

This audit used a:

- results-oriented approach (is the SJFRS meeting the States' objectives and ambitions?); and
- system-oriented approach (are robust systems / processes in place for the SJFRS to support performance and value for money?).

The audit used the following criteria:



The approach included the following key elements:

- Document request followed by review and analysis; and
- Interviews with key officers, contractors and the Minister for JHA.

The documents reviewed included:

- Agendas, papers and minutes of SJFRS and JHA management team meetings, SJFRS Performance Delivery Board, SJFRS Operational Learning and Assurance Board, JHA Change Oversight Board
- Be Heard staff surveys
- Comparative performance management information from other fire services
- Documentation supporting quarterly Minister review meetings
- Documentation supporting technology improvements
- Emergency Services Control Centre (ESCC) programme
- External peer reviews of SJFRS and ESCC services, SJFRS action plans and their implementation in response to review recommendations
- Internal review of governance arrangements
- Investment business cases in 2022 and 2025
- JHA Business Plan 2025
- JHA governance statements and Scheme of Delegation
- Proposals for reformed fire safety legislation
- SJFRS and JHA risk registers
- SJFRS Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP)
- SJFRS detailed financial budgets and staff structures and budget variances from 2016 to 2025
- SJFRS documentation supporting the implementation of arrangements for meeting UK fire standards and national operational guidance
- SJFRS operational people dashboard
- SJFRS performance management reports
- SJFRS service delivery plan and associated action plans

- SJFRS workforce and organisational development plan

The following people contributed information through interviews or by correspondence:

- Area Commander (Prevention and Protection)
- Area Commander (Response)
- Chief Fire Officer
- Chief Officer Justice and Home Affairs
- Deputy Chief Fire Officer
- Finance Business Partner, Justice and Home Affairs
- Head of Business Support, Justice and Home Affairs
- Head of Finance Business Partners, Justice and Home Affairs
- Head of Fire Service HQ
- HR Business Partner, Justice and Home Affairs
- Minister for Justice and Home Affairs
- Station Commander (Policy and Learning)
- Station Commander (Prevention)
- Station Commander (Protection)
- Station Commander (Response)

The fieldwork was carried out by affiliates working for the Comptroller and Auditor General, in October to December 2025.

Appendix Two

Summary of Recommendations and Area for consideration

- R1** Review the risk registers and risk appetite in the light of the number of extreme risks, to ensure that:
- there is clarity over risk tolerance and proposed treatment and mitigations; and
 - a clear picture is presented of the timeframes needed to implement the mitigations and any dependencies.
- R2** Develop and implement a four year Strategic Business Plan that takes account of the ambition and vision for the future with clarity over staffing and roles. Ensure that the Strategic Business Plan includes key objectives, with clear measurable targets.
- R3** Implement a new suite of Key Performance Indicators and, in doing so, ensure that the indicators reflect the totality of the service requirements.
- R4** Track the use of the growth funding approved in the Government Plan 2026-2029 to demonstrate the benefits achieved through the additional investment. In doing so, ensure there is clarity as to what the additional funding has enabled the service to do and what level of risk remains to be managed.
- R5** Enhance the processes used to track decisions and actions from all governance groups and meetings relating to SJFRS.
- R6** Develop and implement an action plan to address the points raised in the 2025 internal review of SJFRS governance.
- R7** Progress and track the implementation of compliance with National Operational Guidance to agreed timescales.
- R8** Undertake a review of training needs and associated budget provision. In doing so:

- prioritise training approvals to match the available budget; and
 - review all ongoing training contracts to determine what contracts should be subject to future market testing.
- R9** Ensure robust performance management is in place for the implementation of all recommendations from the 2025 Subject Matter Expert review.
- R10** The Chief Officer of Justice and Home Affairs and the Chief Fire Officer should reassess the urgency and timescales being applied to key digital projects aimed at mitigating extreme risks.
- R11** Implement enhanced performance management arrangements that include:
- setting realistic action plans linked to CRMP priorities
 - reporting of relevant performance data on a timely basis
 - enhanced project management arrangements
 - benchmarking of performance against relevant peers; and
 - challenge and oversight from governance structures including the Minister.
- R12** Review the work that SJFRS is undertaking outside of the normal fire service categories to determine whether SJFRS is the most efficient and effective service response option. In doing so, consider whether a formal Service Level Agreement with HCJ would be beneficial to manage expectations, service standards and value for money.

Area for consideration

- A1** Consider enhancing oversight arrangements through the creation of a specialist advisory board or another appropriate mechanism.



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