

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
REPORT TO THE TRUST HEALTHCARE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

HELD ON 26 SEPTEMBER 2011

Subject:	Annual Fire Management Report
Supporting Director:	Phil Brennan, Director of Estates
Author:	David Butler. Trust Fire Safety Manager
Status¹	N

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT:

- To provide an annual report to the Healthcare Governance Committee on Fire Safety within the Trust.

KEY POINTS:

- Relevant legislation, fire safety guidance and Trust responsibilities.
- The Trust's management procedures and controls.
- Summary of fire safety training.
- Summary of fire and false alarm incidents.
- Key outstanding strategic fire risks.

IMPLICATIONS²

Achieve Clinical Excellence	
Be Patient Focused	
Engaged Staff	
CQC Outcome	Outcome 10 – Safety of premises Outcome 14 – mandatory training

RECOMMENDATION(S):

The Committee is asked to note the contents of this report.

APPROVAL PROCESS

Meeting	Presented	Approved	Date
HCGC	DJB/ PGB		26 September 2011

¹ Status: A = Approval
A* = Approval & Requiring Board Approval
D = Debate
N = Note

² Against the three pillars (aims) of the STH Corporate Strategy 2008-2012

**Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Directorate of Estates Management**

**FIRE SAFETY MANAGEMENT
Annual Status Report: September 2011**

1. INTRODUCTION

The primary function of the Estates Directorate fire safety team is to reduce the risk of a fire occurring within Trust premises to as low as reasonably practicable. In any event, the protection of patients, visitors, and staff from the effects of fire is of paramount importance. The strategy for the application of effective fire precautions is to select a combination of measures to produce a fire-safe environment.

The Fire Safety Team is focussed on ensuring that all relevant buildings meet the standards detailed within the relevant HTM codes of practice and are compliant with all fire safety related legislation.

The Estates Director, supported by the Fire Safety Manager, will ensure:

- The implementation of fire safety precautions through a risk-managed approach
- The implementation of monitoring and reporting mechanisms appropriate to the management of fire safety
- The development of partnership initiatives with other agencies and bodies in the provision of fire safety

An effective fire safety management strategy has been developed to enable:

- The upkeep of the Trust's fire safety policy
- Adequate means for quickly detecting and raising the alarm in case of fire
- Means for ensuring emergency evacuation procedures for all occupied areas, at all times and without reliance on external services
- All staff to receive fire safety training appropriate to the level of risk and duties they are required to perform
- Reporting of all fire related incidents via the "EFM-information" database

Work to develop individual building/area operational fire strategies to inform all relevant staff is ongoing. Progress is covered in more detail in Section 2.

Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2006, (RRO)

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order has replaced most of the existing legislation applicable to hospitals; the current suite of Fire Code documents addresses the changes brought about by the Order.

The Fire Safety Order, in line with the other Regulatory Reform initiatives, has limited local government involvement and has placed the responsibility for compliance within an employer's duty to 'self-assess' their own premises and make such modifications as necessary.

The imposed fire risk is managed by the Fire Safety Manager through Trust approved procedures and control measures. The management of fire safety is audited by the Fire and Rescue Authority whose primary role is enforcement and **not** the provision of prescriptive fire safety advice.

TEG and the BoD have approved and implemented a revised structure along with a revision of the Fire Safety Policy to enable the Trust to meet the requirements of the RRO.

2. THE TRUST'S MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES AND CONTROLS

Fire Safety Strategy

Specific building fire safety strategies are being developed for all the main hospital buildings. These documents detail the standards that must be adopted taking into account the revised HTM guidance and in particular detailing the emergency evacuation procedures to be followed by all staff. Each of the main hospital buildings at the Central Campus has an individual fire strategy and the Northern Campus has a single overall strategy document. The Northern Campus, RHH & WPH fire strategies are complete and the remaining CCDH and JHW will be completed by October 2011. The current fire strategies are available on the Trust intranet.

Fire Risk Assessments

For consistency, a specific fire risk assessment format has been established which incorporates the DATIX methodology of quantifying risk. The existing fire risk assessments will be reviewed at the appropriate time dependant on the level of risk. The Fire and Rescue Authority is satisfied with the methodology used and associated action plans in place.

All wards and departments carry out a local fire risk assessment designed to ensure that the existing fire precautions are maintained to the required standard. This assessment process is carried out by ward/department managers, monthly for patient access areas and quarterly for all other areas. The format has been reviewed and includes prescriptive guidance to assist staff to complete the assessment.

As a result of the recent incident at the Chesterfield Royal Hospital assurance has been sought from the retail units operating within the hospital buildings that appropriate fire safety measures are being taken and a similar self audit procedure has been developed. The Estates Land and Property Manager is currently liaising with the tenants to implement this.

Fire Evacuation Plans

All wards and departments have a written Fire Evacuation Plan (Fire Plan). Copies are available for all staff and reinforced during the mandatory training sessions.

The provision of 3-D plans detailing the evacuation routes for both staff and visitors, together with the location of fire extinguishers, refuge areas and other fire safety information has been introduced across the Trust. These 3-D plans are affixed to the walls in prominent places and provide an instant visual awareness of key safety information for all building users.

Approximately 75% of all patient access areas now have the plans in place and it is intended to extend the provision of these plans to all buildings including non patient access.

Fire Management Meetings

In addition to a number of routine management and Health & Safety meetings attended by the Fire Safety Team, two key fire management forums are now in place to provide improved lines of communication with key managers within the Trust, and externally with the Enforcing Authority and other local NHS organisations. This has enhanced the overall control of fire risk and ensures that the Trust maintains an effective working relationship with the Fire and Rescue Authority.

- (i) **Fire Safety Group:** Comprises the fire safety team; Estate management, Corporate and Estates health & safety managers; the Security Manager and a representative of the Chief Nurse. The group meets quarterly and provides a forum in which all aspects of fire safety related issues are discussed, communicated, and disseminated throughout the Trust. The intention is to determine, drive, and implement the appropriate fire safety measures necessary to ensure regulatory compliance.

- (ii) **South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Liaison Forum:** Quarterly meetings chaired by the STH Fire Safety Manager, comprising the fire safety advisors/managers of other local healthcare premises within South Yorkshire and managers of the Fire and Rescue Service responsible for enforcement of the fire safety legislation. The objective of this forum is to provide an effective enforcement concordat and to discuss issues, policies, procedures, and strategies with a view to maintaining good relations and problem solving outside of the formal audit process.

The Trust's intranet site now provides direct access to the 'Fire safety' page detailing;

- Individual building fire evacuation strategies
- The fire safety training needs analysis including the training requirements for all staff groups
- Dates, times and locations of all fire safety lectures and practical training delivered by the fire safety advisors
- Procedures for reporting fire incidents and false fire alarms
- Fire safety inspection forms and a comprehensive guidance document

NB. There have been no significant changes to legislation relating to fire safety and the Trust is currently not subject to any enforcement action by the Fire and Rescue Authority.

3. TRAINING AND AWARENESS

Mandatory Training

The delivery of effective fire safety training, together with an understanding of the various fire safety features provided within buildings is critical to the safe implementation of any emergency actions, should an incident occur.

A revised fire safety training needs analysis has been produced to inform staff of the training delivery content required and the frequency of attendance, commensurate with their roles. In low risk areas, the workplace training has been reduced to suit the circumstances, in other high risk areas, the training has been increased.

Approximately a quarter of mandatory fire training is carried out by Directorate training leads and it is intended to further develop a 'cascade' training program to allow the Fire Advisors to spend more of their available time carrying out fire risk assessments. For this to be effective it is essential to have assurance that the quality of training delivered, from any source, is appropriate and is providing the desired outcomes.

A simplified plan to assist in the assessment and assurance of the quality of the various fire safety training delivery methods is in use locally however, it is intended to acquire the services of a suitably qualified training assessor before the end of the current financial year to obtain independent advice on the effectiveness of the current training delivery methods and report accordingly.

Staff Training

More use of cascade training, delivered by the department/ward risk lead officers, has been implemented, but requires support for the implementation of a competency framework plan as outlined previously.

The program of 'hot' practical first aid fire fighting training has continued through 2011 and is now available to all staff. Theoretical and practical fire extinguisher training is also delivered on the Trust Induction Training Course organised by the Learning and Development Department.

The level of fire safety training delivered by the Fire Safety Team is as follows;

Central Campus:

- Annual fire lectures; April 2010 to March 2011 - **85% of staff**.
- The total trained so far in 2011; April to August is **1285**.
- The total number of staff who have received practical fire extinguisher training so far this year is **151**, the total number of staff trained in the use of extinguishers – **423**.

Northern Campus:

- Annual fire lectures; April 2010 to March 2011 – **68% of staff**.
- The total trained so far in 2011; April to August is **1834**.
- The total number of staff who have received practical fire extinguisher training so far this year is **453**, the total number of staff trained in the use of extinguishers – **910**.

The number of staff who has been through the Trust induction process and received the theoretical and practical fire training is **777**.

The total number of staff across the Trust who has now been trained in the use of fire extinguishers is **2110**.

4. KEY RISKS

Central Campus

The guidance contained within HTM O5-O1 concerning patients in the very high dependency category details “Height above ground floor level” (i.e. above 12m) as an issue and therefore this risk remains at the RHH. Work has commenced on the scheme to relocate ITU/HDU to K floor incorporating the designation of two lifts in the main lift hall for fire evacuation purposes. This will also enhance the overall emergency evacuation plans for the whole building.

A recent survey has identified the four main stairways at the RHH do not fully comply with the current building regulations for buildings of this height, in relation to the potential for ingress of smoke in the event of a fire. To be classed as fully protected stairways, under the current regulations, stairways must either be pressurised or be provided with ventilated lobbies. At present there is a high probability that one or more of the stairways would be rendered impassable by smoke in the event of a fire and could seriously affect the safe evacuation of the building.

The cost of works required to fully protect the stairways is estimated at £200K. The risk has been identified on **Datix (No 928)** and prioritised accordingly.

During the current upgrade work to two of the RHH operating theatres on A floor, has found the standard of fire compartmentalisation is worse than originally thought. Many of the required lines of separation are either severely breached or have never been in place. The risk has been identified on **Datix (No. 742)** and prioritised accordingly.

Below is a summary of the main key fire safety risks:

- Relocate ITU/HDU patients at the RHH site to an acceptable location and introduce two fire evacuation lifts into the fire strategy to reduce the risk to other high dependency patients situated above 12m (work commenced).
- Fully protect the escape/fire fighting stairways.
- Maintenance of the existing fire compartmentalisation provision for each building.
- Provision of permanent decant ward to facilitate a program of refurbishments and fire precaution works.
- Create sub compartmentalisation in all wards, to support progressive horizontal evacuation.

- Create additional sub compartmentalisation and repair breaches to existing fire lines in 'A' floor theatre complex, RHH.
- Complete the fire stopping program - Weston Park Hospital.
- Complete fire separation to all vertical risers – CCDH.
- Upgrade fire alarm system and fire separation - Residential Blocks 12&3.

Northern Campus

Funding has been secured and work has commenced to upgrade the fire alarm infrastructure at the Northern Campus which was detailed in the last report. It is envisaged that this work will take between 4-5 years to complete.

5. INCIDENTS

Fires and False Alarms at the Central Campus

During the period April 2010 - March 2011 there were **103** unwanted fire signals and the Fire Service were not summoned to attend.

From 1st. April 2011 there have been **40** unwanted fire signals, none of which have resulted in the Fire Service attending. During this period there has been **1** reportable small fire incident which was dealt with effectively by Trust staff. This was in an isolation room on P floor, RHH involving a patient's personal DVD player which developed a charging fault.

Fires and False Alarms at the Northern Campus

During the period April 2010-March 2011 there were **112** unwanted fire signals which the Fire Service were not requested and did not attend. However, there were **18** unwanted fire signals which resulted in the Fire Service attending. During this period there have been **2** reportable small fire incidents again both dealt with effectively by Trust staff.

From 1st. April 2011 there have been **60** unwanted fire signals which the Fire Service were not requested to attend and **4** unwanted fire signals that did result in a Fire Service attendance.

During this period there has been **1** reportable small fire incident which was dealt with effectively by Trust staff and the attendance of the Fire Service was not required.

The number of Fire Service attendances to unwanted fire signals has been significantly reduced and the Trust has received appreciation from the Fire Service to that effect. This continues to follow a downward trend which in the main is as a result of the revised internal fire signal handling procedures and the extended time of 5 minutes before a 999 call is made.

On completion of the fire alarm infrastructure work it is envisaged that the attendance of the Fire Service to unwanted fire signals will be reduced to a similar standard to the levels at the Central Campus, the target being nil.

6. CONCLUSIONS

To ensure continuing compliance with the relevant fire legislation, attention will be focused on the following areas over the forthcoming reporting period:

- Continue the program of works required to remove the key risks, detailed above.
- Upgrade of the fire alarm infrastructure at the Northern Campus.

- Further reduce the number of Fire Service attendances to unwanted fire signals at the Northern Campus.
- Continue to review all existing fire risk assessments as necessary.
- The use of the Trust's intranet to make relevant information available to all members of staff.
- Positively contribute to all relevant fire safety management forums.
- Continue the program of 'hot' practical first aid fire fighting training and adopting the defensive approach to small fires.
- Ensure that all training is fully integrated and appropriate to risk. Implement a program to train the trainers and continue to cascade fire training in accordance with the HTM guidance.

DJ Butler
Trust Fire Safety Manager
September 2011