

Equality Impact Assessment – Screening Form (A)

For the purposes of this document, the word 'proposal' can refer to any procedures, strategies, reviews, projects, plans and includes new, reviewed or is significantly amended.

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| Name of Policy/Procedure/Project/Piece of Equipment proposed Health & Fitness Procedures | |
| Directorate/Department/Team Human Resources Department | |
| Date of screening: 17 th April 2014 | Who are the main beneficiaries/users? All employees of NWFRS |
| Aims, objectives and outcomes The aim of this procedure is to ensure an agreed and structured approach to improving the health and physical fitness of all employees. Specifically, it relates to the contractual obligations of operational firefighters to maintain expected levels of fitness for their role. | |

An Equality Impact Assessment helps us promote equality of opportunity and services, as well as prevent unlawful discrimination. It is a tool that will help when you are: making key decisions, developing a project, writing or updating a policy / procedure, or starting an initiative. The assessment will also serve to act as an audit of the decisions you are proposing.

Assessing for impact/risk is a legal requirement. As a publicly funded organisation, we must consider how the decisions we make will impact on people and their protected characteristics namely; age, disability, gender-reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

Screening for Impact

Please consider each of the Protected Characteristics below and note if your proposal has an impact risk of **low**, **medium** or **high**.

| Level of Risk | |
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| Low | Minimal or extremely minor impact on a protected characteristic. Adverse impact unlikely. |
| Medium | <p>A minor to medium risk exists that an impact on a protected characteristic could happen. Measures are in place to ensure no adverse impact will occur.</p> <p>If there are mitigating reasons, such as legal obligations (e.g.; driving license age), job requirements (e.g.; eye test for recruits), or project criteria (e.g.; young drivers), these must be included in relevant section. Please note that cost alone cannot be used as a mitigating reason.</p> |
| High | <p>Major negative impact on the protected characteristic group for the community, staff, or business process. It would lead to non-compliance with legislation and could therefore put the organisation at risk. If this level is identified, the completion of a Full Assessment Form (B) is required.</p> <p>If the impact actually promotes equality of opportunity and services for a group that is under represented (such as access days for females, or a fire safety campaign aimed at mental health service users) this could be a positive impact which is allowed by law.</p> |
| Good Practice/ Mitigating Factors | If the procedure, project, plan, etc will provide improvements – for example the wording becomes more inclusive, ensure this is put in the Good Practice section. Also, if there are mitigators (as discussed in the Guidance), make sure to include them here. |

| Protected Characteristics | Level of Risk high, medium, low | Please briefly explain your assessment | Good Practice and/or Mitigating Factors |
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| <p>Age (younger, older or particular age group)</p> | <p>Medium</p> | <p>Fitness standards are a requirement of the Operational firefighter role. Older operational staff may be impacted as a result of a general fitness decline due to biological changes that are known to occur with age. However, improvements in physical fitness can still be achieved through regular physical training. Additionally, these standards are based on scientific evidence and indicate the minimum level of physical fitness required to ensure effective firefighting performance and the health & safety of staff as well as the public.</p> <p>The legal requirements for standards mean that this impact is mitigated.</p> <p>For other staff, the promotion of healthier lifestyle choices will be commensurate with various age groups.</p> | <p>Information relating to the scientific justification for fitness standards can be found here: http://www.firefitsteeringgroup.co.uk/firefitreport.pdf</p> <p>Collaboration with Glyndwr University. The interns sponsored by NWFRS will implement a research programme designed to meet the aims and objectives of NWFRS. It is vital that the health and fitness of the operational personnel within North Wales Fire and Rescue Service is quantified so that targeted interventions can be put in place if required. In addition, cohort analyses will be undertaken and comparisons made of the health and fitness levels of operational personnel within NWFRS and / or across three Welsh Services (where appropriate).</p> <p>Please see Equality Impact Assessment- Full Assessment B.</p> |
| <p>Disability</p> | <p>Low</p> | <p>Fitness tests and assessments reflect the</p> | <p>Information relating to the scientific justification</p> |

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| (physical, sensory, mental health, long term illness, hidden) | | <p>activities for firefighting, and therefore are role specific requirements.</p> <p>Paragraphs have been kept as short as possible to assist anyone with dyslexia, and it is explicit that if anyone has questions, further assistance can be provided.</p> <p>In recognition that some staff may choose to share private information within the course of fitness interviews (HIV status, treatment for cancer, being dyslexic, etc), the document makes it clear the high level of confidentiality which Occupational Health staff work to.</p> <p>Also, flexibility regarding assessments and fitness interviews are in place to take into consideration health related delays or rescheduling- for example, any time delay requirements following insulin injections)</p> | <p>for the required standards as a Firefighter can be found here:</p> <p>http://www.firefitsteeringgroup.co.uk/firefitreport.pdf</p> <p>Reasonable adjustments / allowances are made where possible / appropriate.</p> <p>NWFRS Disability and Redeployment Procedures: <i>'It is recognised that ensuring equal opportunities for disabled people may involve adjustments being made to the working environments or other employment arrangements'</i>.</p> |
| <p>Gender Re-assignment (someone in transition from one gender to another)</p> | Medium | <p>It is important to acknowledge that an individual in the process of gender re-assignment may experience some adverse effects to their health.</p> <p>The policy is clear regarding private facilities, what clothing needs to be worn, and confidentiality. Also, there is the provision for sports massage to be provided by an external service for any transitioning members of staff.</p> | <p>In the event of an adverse impact, advice will be sought from Occupational Health.</p> <p>The Service's Equality Adviser will provide additional information to line managers when required.</p> <p>Please see Equality Impact Assessment- Full Assessment B.</p> |
| <p>Marriage/Civil Partnership (married as well as same-</p> | Low | <p>This document relates to fitness requirements for Operational staff and the promotion of healthier living to all staff; so there is low impact on someone's relationship status.</p> | |

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| sex couples) | | | |
| Pregnancy and Maternity (Pregnancy, maternity leave, breast-feeding) | Low | Pregnant firefighters and those on maternity leave are not subjected to fitness tests until they return to work. | <p>Maternity, Paternity and Adoption Policy and Procedures.</p> <p>Pregnant individuals are removed from operational duties for health & safety reasons and will not be subject to mandatory fitness assessments. Support on return to work is available and reasonable time frames allowed prior to a fitness assessment.</p> <p>Operational employees will not be allowed to return to full operational duties whilst breastfeeding. However, following a risk assessment, they can take part in training and other workplace events.</p> |
| Race (Ethnic origin, nationality, colour, including gypsies and travellers) | Low | For Operational staff, there are role specific requirements for regular fitness tests. This is irrespective of ethnic origin. | <p>Equality and Diversity Policy and Procedures.</p> <p>In line with the Service's commitment to improvement we recognise the right of ethnic minority communities to receive an equitable standard of service. We recognise and are committed to equality in the provision of this service and to our employees.</p> |
| Religion/Belief (Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Jewish, Buddhist) | Low | For Operational staff, there are role specific requirements for regular fitness tests. This is irrespective of religion or belief. | <p>Equality and Diversity Policy and Procedures.</p> <p>The Service takes a sensitive and proactive position on religion and belief. We aim to enable people to participate fully and equally in our entire organisational work irrespective of their religion and belief.</p> <p>It is understood that there could be religious based reasons why a member of operations</p> |

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| | | | could not receive sports massage from someone of the opposite sex. For this purpose there is an ability to request a provider to be of the same sex. |
| Sex (Female, Male) | Medium | <p>Fitness standards are a requirement of the Operational firefighter role, so female Operational staff may be impacted as a result of biological and physiological differences that exist between females and males.</p> <p>The legal requirement for standards mean that this impact is mitigated.</p> | <p>Information relating to the scientific justification for minimum fitness standards can be found here:</p> <p>http://www.firefitsteeringgroup.co.uk/firefitreport.pdf</p> <p>Fitness advice given at all health & fitness reviews on how to keep physically fit within relation to person specific requirements.</p> <p>One sex may not be comfortable with receiving a sports massage from someone of the opposite sex, so if requested, a same sex practitioner can be provided.</p> <p>Please see Equality Impact Assessment- Full Assessment B.</p> |
| Sexual Orientation (Gay, Lesbian, or Bisexual) | Low | No information is requested regarding sexual orientation during any part of the fitness and health process. | <p>Reasonable adjustments / allowances are made where possible / appropriate.</p> <p>Staff who are LGB can request a different practitioner for sports massage, and it is recognised that in doing so, they may fear “outing” themselves, however, no such assumption will be made as there are other groups who also have the ability to request a different provider.</p> |
| Language | Low | The policy would not adversely impact on this characteristic. | Reasonable adjustments / allowances are made where possible / appropriate. |

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| (Welsh language, minority ethnic languages, braille, BSL) | | | Corporate staff who may require language support (such as British Sign Language) can inform the Human Resources Department, who will ensure support is available. |
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If high risk is identified for any protected characteristic, a Full Assessment (Form B) will be required. If the risk is medium, but there are no Mitigating Factors, a Full Assessment may still be needed, so speak with the Equality Adviser.

Please ensure that this form is signed by the person who requested you to complete it (yourself, your line manager, project leader, etc.) and a copy is kept with the accompanying document.

By Law, all EIAs must be published, so this will be uploaded onto the *Completed Equality Impact Assessment* section of the intranet, and may also be made available on our website.

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| Signature of person carrying out screening: | | Signature of person who authorised : | |
| Signature: | | Signature: | |
| Name: Chelsey Hughes | Date: 24th March 2014 | Name: Llinos Gutierrez-Jones | Date: 24 th March 2014 |