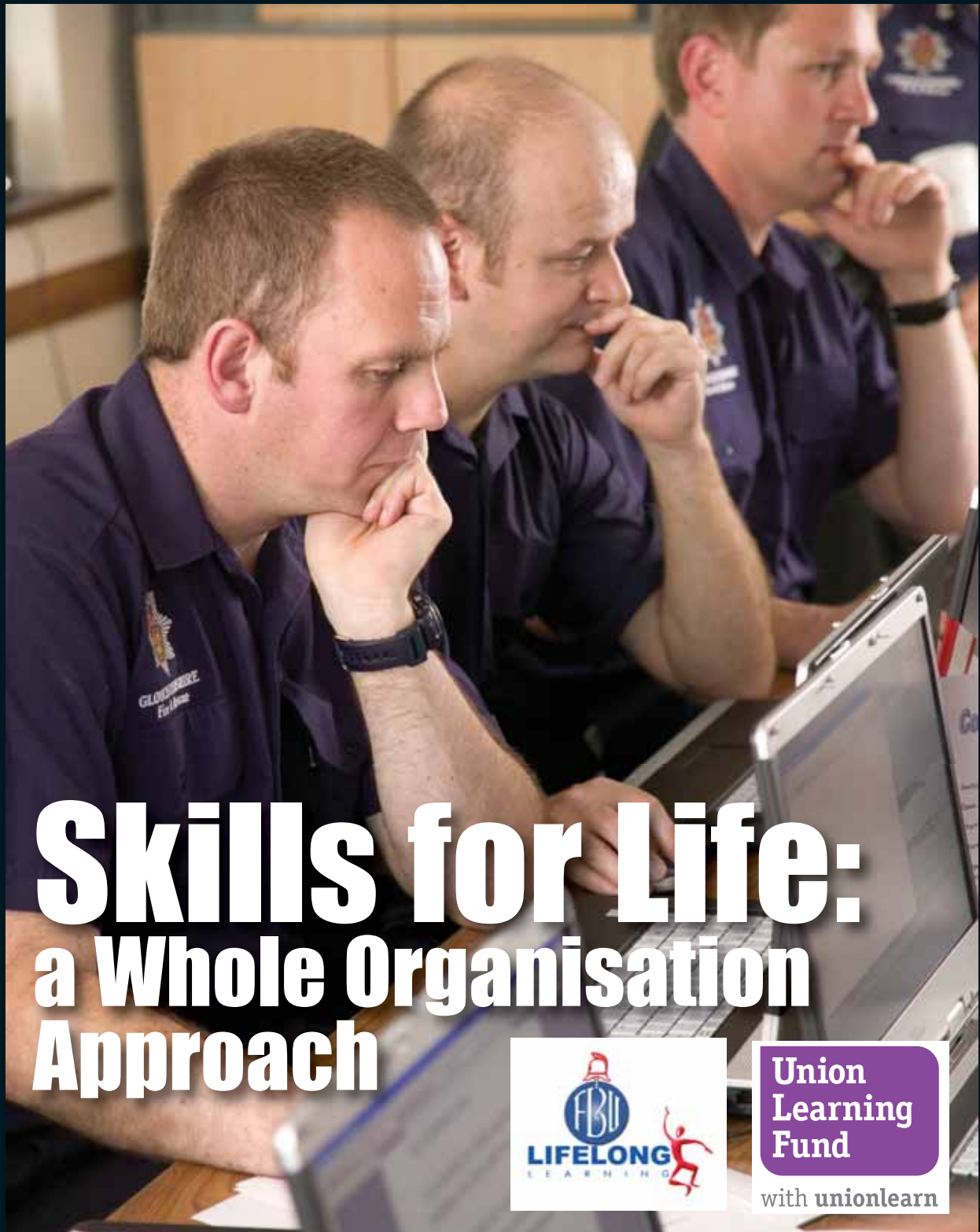
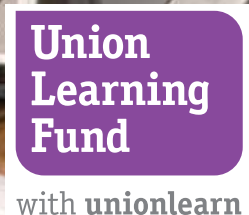


The Fire Brigades Union

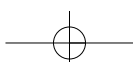
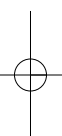
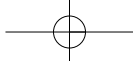


Skills for Life: a Whole Organisation Approach



PAUL BOX

A strategy for the UK Fire and Rescue Service
and the Fire Brigades Union



Foreword



On behalf of the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) I welcome the partnership working within the Union Learning Fund (ULF) that has enabled this strategy document *Skills for Life: a Whole Organisation Approach* to be used as the basis to deal with Skills for Life (SfL) in the Fire and Rescue Service. The ULF has successfully demonstrated how partnership working can benefit both employers and FBU members.

The FBU believes that all individuals should have every opportunity to fully develop their true potential, both at work and in their personal lives. The FBU rule book supports this in its aim 'to serve the community by encouraging its members to be skilled at their craft'.

Partnership working in ULF projects has contributed greatly to a better understanding of learning and development both within the Fire and Rescue Service and in the FBU itself.

During the life of the projects, SfL has been recognised as the underpinning foundation for all learning and development regardless of any final achievement.

The National Fire and Rescue Service Learning and Development Strategy and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Services Strategy have been agreed by all the main Fire and Rescue Service organisations.

Within both strategies is an acknowledgement of the role the ULF projects can play, particularly in improving numeracy, literacy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills.

The FBU is a committed partner to achieving these aims and firmly believes that the Whole Organisation Approach set out in this strategy can only enhance the skills and development of its members and all employees of the Fire and Rescue Service.

This strategy is and will be challenging to all eventual signatures on its completion and final agreement. The FBU looks forward to working with the whole fire and rescue community to ensure that we use it to realise the full potential of all UK Fire and Rescue Service employees.

M. Shaw

MICK SHAW
PRESIDENT - FIRE BRIGADES UNION
MAY 2008



A Comment from the Chief Fire Officers' Association



A partnership approach towards learning and development within the Fire and Rescue Service

The Chief Fire Officers' Association (CFOA) supports the principle encapsulated within the aims and objectives of the Fire Brigades Union's (FBU) Union Learning Fund (ULF) Whole Organisation Approach to lifelong learning and the development of skills for life (SfL) designed to benefit all our employees within our Fire and Rescue Service.

By working together, we believe that we can better contribute towards the development of Fire and Rescue Service employees, promoting safety and effectiveness in the performance of our duties whilst enhancing the quality and scope of service we provide to our communities.

The Workforce Development element of the National Framework challenges us all to think outside of our traditional training structures and fire and rescue institutions. This includes reconsidering our approach to further education, management colleges and other partners, and to e-learning.

In support of the Workforce Development agenda, CFOA is a co-signatory, along with the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG), the Local Government Association (LGA), the Fire Service College and other stakeholders, including the FBU, in the National Fire and Rescue Service Learning and Development Strategy. This provides us with the framework for FRS learning and development over the next ten years. It applies to all our employees and will ensure that the service operates within the government's wider skills development framework, particularly in recognising the value of partnership working to achieve joint aims.

Significantly, Key Element 04 of the Learning and Development Strategy acknowledges the contribution that the Union Learning Fund can make in supporting FRS's broader learning and development programmes, through the targeted improvement of basic skills, particularly in adult literacy, numeracy and ICT.

The Union Learning Fund has been created to support organisational learning and development strategies by providing a link between the development of such strategies and our employees, particularly through encouraging and supporting the attainment of those skills that underpin enhanced levels of employees' competence, performance and future development.

CFOA believes that in a modernised Fire and Rescue Service, the Union Learning Fund Skills for Life initiative complements those strategies, policies and procedures which support the development of a diverse and high-performance workforce within our fire and rescue services, and we are pleased to continue our engagement with this National Strategy.

DES WILLIAMSON
CFOA REPRESENTATIVE FOR ULF
MAY 2008



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Executive summary

The case for a Skills for Life strategy

'In a Fire and Rescue Service context improved Sfl are an essential element in delivering all aspects of the services objectives and for enhancing personal development. Learning opportunities should be made available to all employees and the organisational aspiration should be the attainment of numeracy, literacy and ICT skills at level 2 for all employees. From recruitment to retirement Sfl improvement should be encouraged, supported and developed.'

FBU ULF project employees and project partners

- To meet and support the aims of the 2005 National Learning and Development Strategy in England as agreed by Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), Chief Fire Officers' Association (CFOA), Fire Service College (FSC) and other stakeholders. (Key Element 04, Union Learning Fund.)
- To meet and support the aims of the 2007 Scottish Fire and Rescue Services Learning and Development Strategy as agreed by the Scottish government, CFOA(S), Scottish Fire Services College (SFSC) and other stakeholders. (Section 2.6 Securing effective collaborative arrangements – Scottish Union Learning Fund.)
- The government's drive for a modern Fire and Rescue Service, moving away from a reactive to a proactive service, has placed more demands on learning and development and has increased the need for Skills for Life (Sfl). Without addressing this need even basic community fire safety messages will not be communicated properly.
- Commitment to delivering a Sfl and lifelong learning culture in the FRS will help meet the Diversity and Equality policies of individual brigades and those standards set by the DCLG.
- The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (DDA) makes it illegal to discriminate against people with dyslexia. The promotion of Sfl can help ensure the proper support is in place for employees who may suffer from dyslexic tendencies (dyspraxia / dyscalculia).
- Sfl funding is free for any learner who does not hold a level 2 qualification or for any learner who has a Sfl need. Funding may be available to support learners gain their first ICT or vocational qualification. (This may vary between the devolved assemblies and governments).
- Engaging in Sfl will help meet the aims and objectives of the government's skills strategies and endorse the FRS as a skilled and learning organisation.
- The FRS Integrated Personal Development System (IPDS) provides a structure with agreed standards of performance to measure competence in role. The National Occupation Standards (NOS) mean employees must have a good standard of Sfl which will help them to learn at their current position while developing for the future.
- The introduction of Assessment Development Centres (ADCs) for progression has challenged employees to prove they have the ability to work at higher and more demanding levels. Sfl improves the ability of individuals to meet the skills needed for the ADC process.
- There are still no academic qualifications required to join the FRS although the national recruitment tests take some cognisance of Sfl. Pre-Sfl application testing, with appropriate support, will help applicants and meet equality and diversity aims in recruitment.
- Understanding the application of numeracy, literacy and ICT skills underpins all aspects of learning and development in the FRS. Ensuring employees have the requisite Sfl will enable them to carry out their roles safely and more effectively.
- The FRS needs its employees to continually develop and improve their skills, thereby providing an effective and valuable public service. Without effective Sfl, employees will take longer to learn and develop their core skills in what can be a demanding and dangerous environment. Sfl will contribute to enhancing the safety and performance of employees in all their roles.
- ICT is becoming an increasingly essential skill for firefighters and emergency control and support employees within the FRS. New technology on the fireground, in emergency fire control rooms and on fire stations is on the increase. Personnel must have the necessary ICT skills to use



applications correctly, thereby reducing errors, hardware problems and pressure on employees.

- Support employees carry out a range of vital functions including administration, budgets, statistical information, catering and cleaning etc. Ensuring the employees have good Sfl will help to reduce errors, ensure employees can follow health and safety instructions, increase productivity and help them develop their own potential.
 - Sfl is to be an integral part of the Investors in People (IiP) award. Employers aiming to maintain or those looking to attain the award for the first time will need to show evidence that they are supporting Sfl with their employees.
 - Local government has recognised that to provide excellence in public services it needs employees to have a good level of Sfl. The GO Fire Award encourages fire authorities to work towards embedding Sfl in partnership with trade unions.
 - The Local Government Association (LGA), through initiatives such as Champions of Local Learning and Community Well-Being, has recognised the importance of Sfl in promoting access and inclusion, social cohesion and social justice. Given its increasing work with communities, the FRS can
- advocate Sfl with young adults through its many community-based initiatives.
 - All individuals deserve the opportunity to learn and develop in the workplace, at home and in their social lives. Sfl are the foundation; good employers and managers recognise this and by supporting their employees will gain an improved and more confident workforce.
 - To develop the skills of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) through engagement with the Scottish government, employers, Scottish Fire Services College and CFOA(S) through the Scottish Qualifications Authority. To support learners gain a qualification up to level 5 of the Scottish Certification Qualification Framework (SFQF).
 - Scottish / National Vocational Qualifications (S/NVQs) are being used across the UK FRS. Key skills underpin all S/NVQs; ensuring employees have good Sfl will help support learners achieve vocational qualifications.
 - Union learning representatives provide a valuable link between learning and development departments and employees. They can offer guidance and support in the access and delivery of Sfl training and provide confidential support for all employees.



REPORT DIGITAL

1. Introduction

Skills for Life ...?

Literacy and numeracy learning which caters for the literacy, language and numeracy needs of all post-16 learners, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, from pre-entry level up to and including level 2. This includes all forms of provision, whether delivered as stand alone, or as part of a vocational programme or bolt on course, and whether delivered full time, part time or through self study or ICT.

Learning and Skills Council

Background

In 2001 the government launched its first Skills for Life (SfL) strategy, as research indicated that there was a clear need to improve the basic skills levels of adults. Statistics showed one in seven adults had the literacy skills of an 11 year old and one in five had a basic numeracy need in order to lead a modern life style.

Since then over 1.5 million adults have gained a SfL qualification with over 1 million achieving at level 2 (the equivalent of a GCSE Grade A-C).

Today, more than one third of adults still do not hold the equivalent of a basic school-leaving qualification. Almost one half of adults (17 million) have difficulty with numbers and one seventh (5 million) are not functionally literate.

In 2004 the government commissioned a review, led by Lord Sandy Leitch, of the UK's long term skills needs. The Leitch Review's final report, *Prosperity for all in the global economy – world class skills*, was published in December 2006. It called for 'radical change across the whole skills spectrum' by increasing skill attainments at all levels and funding new initiatives for improve vocational skills.

'...launch a new 'Pledge' for employers to voluntarily commit to train all eligible employees up to level 2 in the workplace. In 2010, review progress of employer delivery. If the improvement rate is insufficient, introduce a statutory entitlement to workplace training at level 2 in consultation with employers and unions.'

Leitch Review. December 2006.

The Leitch Review also introduced the Skills Pledge, a means of encouraging employers to take more responsibility for the skills of their workforce and to support employees to become better skilled and qualified. This put employers centre stage in creating a 'demand-led' system.

In December 2007 the government published its new skills strategy *World Class Skills: Implementing the Leitch Review of Skills in England*, which set new challenging aims in relation to Skills for Life. By 2020 it expects 95% of adults to have the basic skills of functional literacy and numeracy and that 90% of adults will have gained at least a level 2 qualification (equivalent to a GCSE at A-C grade). This strategy has been supported by increasing the funding for demand-led adult learning through the new Train to Gain training fund.

It provides free SfL learning opportunities and access to National Tests at level 1 and 2 in adult numeracy and adult literacy (where the individual does not already hold a level 2 qualification).

It also adds value and recognition to information and communication technology (ICT) as the third skill for life.

Skills for Life advocates a new workplace partnership for training and skills between the employer, employees and the government. While 'Skills for Life' is the term used in England for literacy and numeracy, in Scotland the approach is called 'Everyday Skills', in Northern Ireland 'Essential Skills', and in Wales 'Basic Skills'.

The Scottish Executive published its Lifelong Learning Strategy for Scotland and following the *Adult Literacy and Numeracy in Scotland (ALNIS)* report launched its major national initiative to improve Everyday Skills. This is currently being reviewed and will be re-launched during 2008

In Northern Ireland the Department for Employment and Learning (DELNI) has successfully promoted SfL through their Essential Skills Strategy which directly supports the Northern Ireland Skills Strategy.

In Wales the Assembly launched its Basic Skills strategy Words Talk, Numbers Count supported by *The Learning Country – Vision into Action* setting out its aims for education and lifelong learning.



Skills for Life and the Fire and Rescue Service

The public service sector has the largest and most diverse workforce in the country with a need for improved skills investment across its workforce. This is paramount to the delivery of public services whose excellence increases social justice issues.

This was recognised by the introduction of the National Support Project for Basic Skills in Local Government. Over 50 local authorities engaged in the initiative and an estimated 20,000 public sector employees improved their SfL; this level of support for SfL in local government needs to include the employees of the FRS.

'Ensuring we have the leaders, middle managers, and front line workers with the skills to develop and provide high-quality public services that put the interests of the user at the heart of their delivery...'

Ruth Kelly, Secretary of State for Education and Skills.

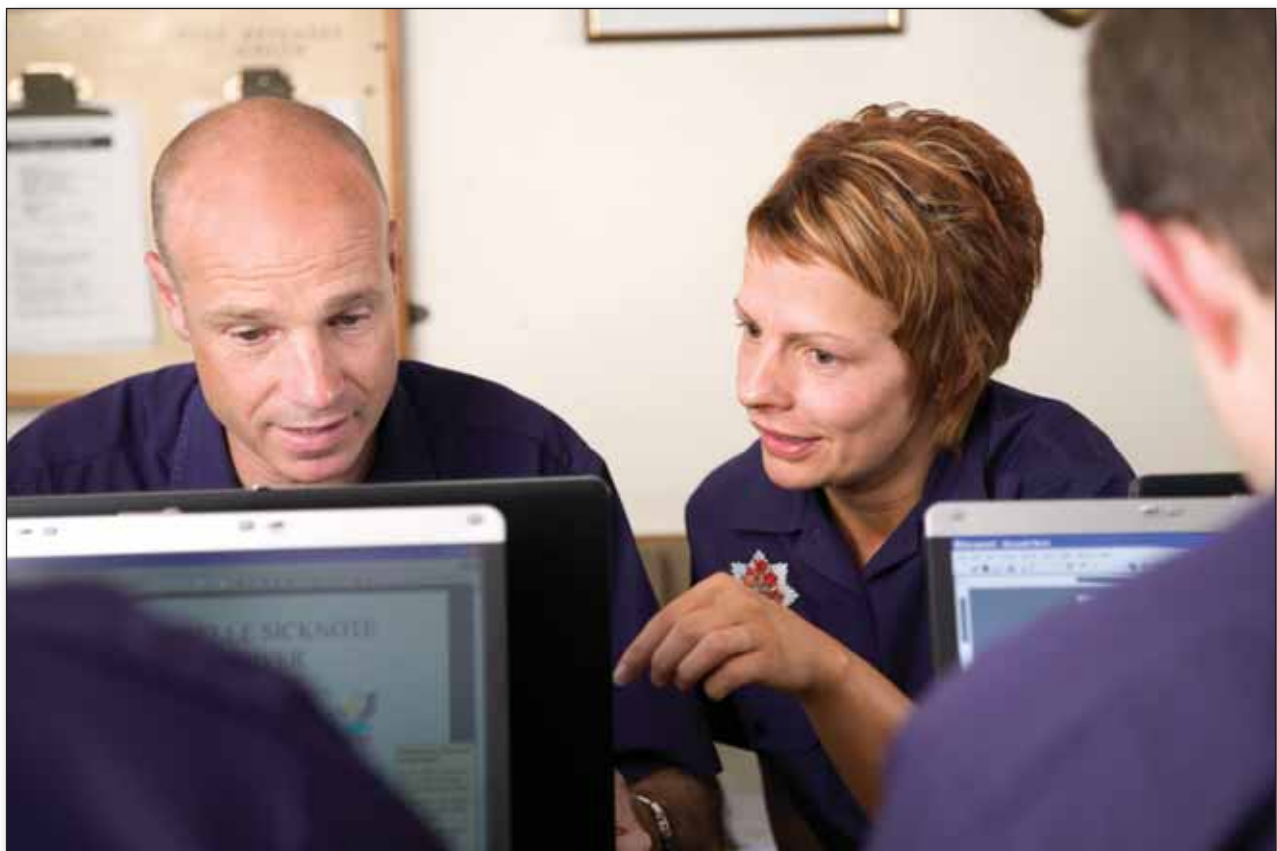
Getting on in business, getting on at work, March 2005

The strategy set out by the Fire Brigades Union in this document gives examples of good practice across the UK FRS and identifies some of the SfL areas that the FBU, FRS managers and employers will want to consult on, develop and move on to deliver. It gives the UK FRS a Whole Organisation Approach for Skills for Life, conveying an agreed united approach to the learning and development of all employees.

The underpinning of SfL in all learning and development will ensure that FRS employees have the skills not only for their current role but in future roles, while at the same time enhancing their social and family lives. Here is the opportunity for all FRS stakeholders to engage in a Whole Organisation Approach to Skills for Life.

Role of the union learning representative (ULR)

For many adults and workers, poor literacy and numeracy skills carry a type of stigma which can make people reluctant to admit that they have a learning need. To overcome this there needs to be a sensitive, supportive and sympathetic method in place for employees.



PAUL BOX

The introduction of union learning reps (ULRs) has provided a link between the learner and learning provision where an employee does not have to raise directly with a manager their particular need; especially if a Sfl need is recognised.

The Fire Brigades Union

The Fire Brigades Union (FBU) has actively promoted the ethos that Skills for Life are integral to the aim of embedding a lifelong learning culture in all elements of training and development in the FBU and the Fire and Rescue Service. It is one of the first unions to develop, in partnership with senior managers, a Whole Organisation Approach to Skills for Life. This embraces the work undertaken by the devolved assemblies and governments of Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales.

This WOA strategy has been the subject of consultation and is supported by the work carried out by the Union Learning Fund (ULF), Scottish Union Learning Fund (SULF), Northern Ireland Union Learning Fund (NIULF) and the Wales Union Learning Fund (WULF). These ULF projects all recognise that Skills for Life – numeracy, literacy and information and

communication technology (ICT) – underpin all learning and development.

The ULF partnerships have challenged and overcome a number of issues in addressing Sfl in the UK FRS and have developed this Whole Organisation Approach (WOA) to Skills for Life. As a result, Sfl learning opportunities have been promoted and delivered across the UK FRS communities, leading to employees successfully gaining national qualifications at level 1 and 2 in numeracy and literacy.

‘Union learning reps are an extraordinary plus for the trade union movement.

‘You can have all the managers and men and women in suits lecturing people and trying their best to enthuse people about picking up new skills, but the union learning rep – the person you trust, who’s got no angle in this, who gets no bonus out of it – is enormously powerful.’

Alan Johnson, Secretary of State for Education and Skills, 2006

The FBU strategy sets out a number of principles and standards reflecting that Sfl impinges on all aspects of FRS work. Importantly, it affects all employees – uniformed and support. Just as significant as improving Sfl in the workplace is the impact of helping individuals achieve social justice, improving their lives not just as employees but at home and in their social lives.



MARTIN WATSON



2. Skills for Life – making the case in the UK Fire and Rescue Service

2.1 SfL initiatives: government and agencies

Since 2001 a number of agencies and initiatives have been set up to help embed Skills for Life. These agencies offer support and guidance and also market materials for employers to promote SfL in the workplace.

The funding of adult learning has changed. The Leitch Report recommends a number of ways to target funding, including access to free training for SfL learners who do not have a level 2 qualification – the equivalent of GCSE at grades A to C. However, there is increasing emphasis being placed on the employer funding courses, e.g. the Employer Engagement Strategy which anticipates having ‘employer champions’ to promote SfL in business.

Supported by the Union Learning Fund, the FBU has been engaged with a number of these initiatives, including those detailed below.

Move On – Get On At Work (England and Wales)

The Move On – Get On At Work initiative is aimed at increasing SfL in the workplace and offers employers the opportunity to take part in the Go Award scheme and engage with their employees through a Test the Company initiative. The Improvement and Development Agency for local government (IDeA) has adapted this to create the GO Fire and Rescue Service Award specifically for the FRS as part of its implementation of the local government Skills for Life strategy.

National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) (England and Wales)

NIACE has worked closely with local government authorities to promote SfL and has already provided guidance and advice to many local authorities. FRS engagement with NIACE offers the opportunity to get professional guidance on dealing with all aspects of Skills for Life and adults’ lifelong learning.

Train to Gain (England)

Train to Gain offers the employer, in consultation with trade unions, free advice from experienced skills brokers on choosing the most appropriate training and finding available funding for learners who do not hold a level 2

qualification. Train to Gain can also source training from local providers for vocational qualifications at level 3, including the Information Technology Qualification (ITQ).

Success through Skills (Northern Ireland)

Northern Ireland’s Department for Employment and Learning’s Essential Skills programme has helped over 25,000 adults in Northern Ireland to improve their reading, writing and maths skills.

Basic Skills Cymru (Wales)

Basic Skills Cymru, also known as the National Basic Skills Strategy for Wales, supports learning across the country and has an inclusive national support project for Basic Skills in the Workplace. It also has a significant influence on the development of national, regional and local strategies to improve basic skills in both English and Welsh. Wales also has an Employers’ Pledge that encourages employers to promote learning and skills improvement.

A fuller list of initiatives can be found at the end of this document.

Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) Core Skills for the future – Scotland

Working with the SQA Academy we will be able to deliver the everyday skills needs of our members in Scotland.

The SQA has aligned with other national initiatives such as Curriculum for Excellence, Determined to Succeed and the Employability Strategy. Along with the Adult Literacy and Numeracy in Scotland (ALNIS) strategy, all of which underlines the importance of transferable Skills for Life.

2.2 Employers and FRS management

Good written and oral communication skills are fundamental in meeting the high quality of service standards that the public expect and public services employers aim to provide.

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Employers recognise that SfL improves employee retention and encourages progression. Overcoming any barriers that a lack of confidence in literacy, numeracy, ICT or language skills have on employees will be a positive step for employers to take.

Organisations who are unaware of SfL gaps in their workforce take the risk that policies go unheeded or are misunderstood. It is vital to know that all employees have the SfL needed to perform tasks such as reading and understanding health and safety instructions or implementing change.

The SfL strategy will enhance and carry significant benefits for a modern FRS and will need support and direction from DCLG, employers, senior managers, elected members and influential agencies.

In Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland the FRS is a devolved responsibility, although these countries are represented on the National Joint Council for Local Authority FRS (NJC). The WOA strategy supports the specific initiatives taking place regarding SfL in the devolved assemblies and governments and supports the FRS engaging in them.

A strong message of support at strategic management level is required to help middle managers overcome

some of the difficulties they may face in accommodating time off, access and other possible barriers for learners.

Through the ULF partnership, progress is being made with employers and senior managers in engaging employees in lifelong learning and SfL. Joint promotion and encouraging learning will help dispel doubts over the need to support SfL in the workplace.

While there are well defined training opportunities for uniformed employees, equivalent opportunities for support employees are not always so evident. Many of these workers are employed in catering, cleaning and clerical and administration work, and are predominantly women.

Through this strategy we can ensure that their needs are addressed and can help low-paid employees gain qualifications that may help them improve their job prospects. The strategy will also help meet the needs of employees whose first language may not be English.

Not all employees are employed directly by the FRS as more and more work is contracted out. FRS managers can help gain commitment from contractors that their employees are given access to learning and development including SfL.



PAUL BOY

All fire authorities are committed to equality and diversity. Engaging in SfL will enhance fairness at work.

Some local authorities have instigated a SfL strategy and provided opportunities for employees wishing to brush up their skills or gain level 1 or 2 qualifications. It is important for local authorities to ensure that FRS employees are not excluded from such initiatives.

There are a significant number of brigades who have vocational qualification assessment centres with employees trained as qualified and certificated assessors. SfL initial assessment should be provided to support assessors ensuring they have the requisite skills to assess VQs to the key skills standard of the core curriculum.

'Our research showed that there was an increased need for employees to develop skills in dealing with people, problem solving and work planning, in particular to allow them to deal with changes in their jobs.'

Campaign for Learning, *Making Learning Work*, May 2005

The Disability Discrimination Act (2005) prohibits discrimination against employees who may suffer from dyslexia. There is little (if any) screening for employees who may suffer from dyslexic tendencies, neither are there support mechanisms in place. The SfL strategy can help identify employees who may have learning difficulties associated with dyslexia.

Learning agreements are key for employers and unions to have meaningful consultation about learning and development. Setting up learning forums will offer the opportunity to discuss policy and implement SfL agreements on how to support learners.

'...route all public funding for adult vocational skills in England, apart from community learning, through Train to Gain and Learner Accounts by 2010.'

Leitch Review, December 2006

The government's Train to Gain scheme gives the employer the opportunity to work with the unions to gain funding for learning and development up to level 3, including ITQ, the NVQ for IT users which

demonstrates staff competence in using IT at work. (In Scotland the qualification is called the Scottish Vocational Qualification in Using IT.).

Initiatives such as Learning At Work Day and Learning At Work Week give the ideal opportunity for the FRS to promote lifelong learning, and in particular SfL. Working together, employers, managers, unions and learning providers have the opportunity to deliver learning events and taster sessions to encourage employees back in to learning.

Employees supported in this way are likely to be more productive and conducive to change, less likely to take time off work, and more appreciative of the fact that their employer is recognising employees as their most valuable resource.

A Whole Organisation Approach to embed Skills for Life can ensure that the UK Fire and Rescue Service delivers a quality service to the public in all aspects and supports the learning and development opportunities for all its employees.

Recommendations

- Whole Organisation Approach presentations should be made at the FRS NJC, COSLA, CFOA, human resource (HR) stream and individual FRS senior management team meetings to promote debate of SfL.
- Local authorities and fire authorities engaging employees in SfL initiatives should ensure that the recognised trade unions are involved.
- Employers to build SfL into HR strategies.
- SfL mini-test to be available on brigade intranets.
- SfL should be included in local training and development plans.
- Where learning forums have been set up, SfL to be a standing agenda item.
- Training department staff to attain level 2 qualification in adult learning support.
- SfL support for learners should be available via a learning provider who can deliver flexible SfL tutorials and is accredited to deliver the national tests.

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- Brigades and fire authorities should ensure that they have a process in place to support learners with dyslexic tendencies.
- Management and the FBU to work together to secure Train to Gain funding.
- Employers and managers should fully participate in and support.
- Learning At Work Week, and in particular Learning At Work Day.
- CFOA to promote the Sfl advocates and learning champions.

2.3 Modernisation and workforce development

The FRS is a publicly funded service providing an emergency response to a wide variety of situations and provides fire safety advice to the public and business communities.

It has undergone (and is still undergoing) change in many of its facets under a modernisation process. This has included a significant change in the role of the FRS itself where responsibility for responses to certain 'new dimension' incidents, road traffic collisions (RTCs) and other emergencies is encompassed by statute.

This has led to new requirements in the delivery of training and development in technical and operational aspects.

ICT is playing a bigger part in dealing with incidents, with many fire appliances carrying fixed or mobile computers to access data. Projects such as Firelink are also introducing the service to e-technology.

An important change is the move from being a reactive to a more proactive service preventing fires and incidents, with more information, advice and guidance (IAG) being provided about community fire safety and more home fire safety visits taking place. Community fire safety managers, operation managers, firefighters and emergency control staff are all at the forefront of this change which has led to the need for improved communication and presentational skills.

These issues are key to the implementation of Integrated Risk Management Plans (IRMPs) which set out brigades' operational and community plans. The Sfl strategy will help meet learning and development plans,

ensuring that IRMPs are successfully implemented.

Learning and training opportunities for support employees, such as clerical staff, cooks and cleaners, are harder to identify as there is no national training and development programme in place, leaving individual brigades to decide on appropriate training

Including support staff in the strategy gives a commitment from the organisation to equality of opportunity across all departments and sections, and to supporting all staff to access Sfl training and gain appropriate qualifications.

Although changes have been made to rank/role posts in the FRS, there is still a hierarchical structure in place. Employees with a Sfl need are often reluctant to raise such a need with their line manager or more senior manager. The union learning representative (ULR) can play an important role in overcoming some of the obstacles by providing a non-management source of confidential advice.

'I need to get qualified so I can get a better job...'

Paul started to work on his English and maths through group sessions, workshop sessions and Learndirect Skills for Life courses. He did an assessment to find out what his learning needs were and his programme was planned from there. He started by achieving a level 1 certificate in both literacy and numeracy, and has recently passed his level 2 in numeracy. Now he is working toward his literacy at level 2.

'I am now training to become a full-time firefighter, but I realised that I need the evidence to prove my level of literacy and numeracy skills. The skills I learn will also support any future learning I might need in the service.'

RDS firefighter

FRS workforce development (WD) has undergone a major change over recent years with the introduction of the Integrated Personal Development System (IPDS), Scottish/National Vocational Qualifications (S/NVQs) and continuous personal development (CPD). It has taken a number of years to develop and introduce the IPDS that supports the 'safe person concept' whereby individuals have to meet National Occupational Standards (NOS), thereby ensuring





ANDREW BARRETT

that they have the requisite skills to be competent in their role.

IPDS has been implemented across most of the FRS although there has been difficulty in introducing it for employees working the Retained Duty System (RDS).

FRS promotional examinations have been replaced by a new selection procedure for employee progression and promotion opportunities. Assessment development centres (ADCs) and associated evaluation techniques such as 'personal quality attributes' have been introduced to assess the potential of employees to carry out functions in a higher capacity.

Evidence suggests that a number of employees attending the ADCs are found to have difficulties in exercises such as communication and report writing.

The use of vocational qualifications in the FRS has increased greatly over the last five years. With the Leitch Review advocating the need to extend the application and number of VQs employers can offer, more employees may gain qualifications through this route. VQs are underpinned by SfL – an area that is often completely overlooked. Brigades need to ensure that their assessment centres and assessors are fully aware of the needs of employees before they are given access to VQ programmes.

Delivery of this strategy to embed SfL in a Whole Organisation Approach requires a commitment from all FRS stakeholders. They must challenge any assumption that there is not a need for SfL in the Fire and Rescue Service and ensure that proper support mechanisms for employees are in place.

Recommendations

- Staff working in community fire safety to gain qualification in information, advice and guidance (IAG).
- Assess levels of numeracy, literacy and ICT skills against the National Occupational Standards (NOS).
- Ensure employees have the skills to implement the local IRMP.
- S/NVQ assessors to improve understanding of SfL in relation to the NOS, IPDS, and S/NVQs.
- Provide SfL support for employees going through the ADC process.
- IRMPs should be evaluated to ensure that employees have the requisite skills to implement the plans.

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2.4 Fire and Rescue Service recruitment

The FRS has introduced a national recruitment and retention strategy called the National Firefighter Selection Process, although not all individual brigades are committed to using it. There is no requirement for applicants to have any academic qualifications to join the FRS. Instead they undergo a range of tests contained in the national strategy, including ability range tests, psychometric testing and a medical examination.

Many applicants fail at the first sift where their completed application form is scrutinised for simple mistakes. Applicants from ethnic minority backgrounds and migrant workers are particularly susceptible, resulting in failure to progress to the later stages of the process.

A number of individual fire and rescue services hold recruitment open days for possible applicants to the service which give them the opportunity to understand the process they will have to go through and to take a look at the psychometric entry tests. Such open days should be extended to offer SfL assessments and support for potential employees who may wish to brush up on their skills before submitting an application.

Avon Fire and Rescue Service, in partnership with the FBU ULF project and Filton College, has devised a pre-entry package. This consists of offering all prospective applicants the opportunity to acquire the skills needed to enter the fire and rescue service. This course includes:

- taking the free national literacy and numeracy tests;
- having a diet and nutrition programme designed for each individual;
- being taught correct interview techniques, building confidence and helping the candidate be better prepared for the interview.

This course doesn't guarantee the candidate 100 per cent success to enter the brigade but it does increase employment possibilities with any employer.



Recommendations

- Numeracy, literacy and ICT to be embedded within the FRS Recruitment and Retention Strategy.
- FRS to provide applicants with the offer of pre-application SfL tests.
- FRS to provide links to support applicants with a SfL need.
- SfL assessments carried out with new trainees during initial training.
- ULRs should be utilised during recruitment days and initial training.

2.5 Learning and development

A National FRS Learning and Development Strategy was launched in England and Wales in 2005 with the Scottish FRS launching its Learning and Development Strategy in 2007. Both strategies set out goals for learning and development in a modern UK FRS, whilst leaving flexibility for regional boards and individual FRSs to deliver local training.

Both documents have been endorsed by the DCLG, the Scottish Executive, the Local Government Association, the Fire Service College, the Scottish Fire Services College, the Chief Fire Officers' Association, the Chief Fire Officers Association Scotland, and the Fire Brigades Union.

The strategy includes the following:

- Equipping the FRS to meet current and future challenges.
- Equipping the FRS to make the shift from being primarily an emergency response service to being both an emergency response and a community safety service.
- Delivering a better skilled and trained workforce.
- Improving performance.
- Supporting cultural change and the development of an improvement culture within the FRS.
- Allowing for best value from the investment in training.
- Supporting Comprehensive Performance Assessment improvement, including efficient and

effective targeting of expertise and resources.

- Encouraging collaboration and partnership working.
- Supporting equality and diversity across the FRS.
- Enabling FRS people to maximise their personal and organisational potential.

Key Element 04 of the National Learning and Development Strategy and Section 2.6 of the Scottish FRS Strategy endorse the Union Learning Fund and Scottish Union Learning Fund projects as means of accessing and supporting employees in learning opportunities.

The Whole Organisation Approach SfL strategy offers support to sustain national and local training and development issues.

'The Fire and Rescue Service core values recognise the need for organisations and individuals to take responsibility for improving performance and using development to achieve full potential.'

Jim Fitzpatrick MP, Minister with responsibility for fire issues

The FRS has two colleges that deliver training and development in operational and technical areas. Both colleges have delivered thousands of hours of in-house, sector-specific training for all operational and emergency control roles. The Fire Service College (FSC) also delivers courses to overseas students with English as their second language.

The Scottish Fire Services College (SFSC) delivers similar core training for the Scottish FRS but also provides trainee courses for new firefighters across all the Scottish brigades. The SFSC has been at the forefront in the development of a virtual college that provides access to a wide number of e-learning courses including the Firefighter Development Programme. The FSC has recently launched a Managed Learning System (MLS) in the FRS giving access to e-learning across the FRS.

The take up of e-learning is increasing. It is a method of overcoming barriers to employees accessing learning and development opportunities.

**Union
Learning
Fund**

with unionlearn

The introduction of e-learning in the FRS has highlighted a number of issues about ICT training for employees using the virtual college, including the poor ICT infrastructure in many brigades, especially in rural areas where the vast majority of retained stations are situated.

At present SfL is not included in any of the courses, and employees attending the colleges do not receive any pre-training or assessment to support them in completing the course. Given the role of the colleges as the prime deliverers of training and development, offering students the opportunity to access SfL training should be embedded in their courses so they can provide fundamental support for students.

Recommendations

- Greater emphasis on the role of ULF projects in FRS learning and development requirements.
- Centre of Excellence (CoE) to promote ULF projects.
- FBU to raise SfL with appropriate learning and development committees within the FSC.
- FSC and SFSC to look to embed SfL in core training courses.
- SFSC virtual college to look at how to host SfL.
- FSC managed learning system to look at hosting SfL.
- Both colleges' websites to have links with SfL sites.

2.6 Investors in People and other schemes

Many individual fire and rescue services already achieved the Investors in People (IiP) standard which indicates their commitment to investment in employees, while other FRSs are currently striving to do likewise. The standard itself is reviewed and updated every three years to ensure that it remains relevant, accessible and attractive to all types of organisations.

The IiP criteria embrace SfL and their assessors will take brigades' support for SfL training into account when carrying out their awarding assessment. Other similar awards such as Investors in Diversity and Customer First give the FRS the ideal platform to show its commitment to employee training and development while improving the service delivery to the public.

By engaging with the SfL strategy, employers and senior managers will be showing their commitment to employees when applying to be awarded the IiP standard or when re-applying.

Recommendations

- Employers and managers should contact IiP to ascertain SfL criteria.
- Procedures to be embedded to ensure IiP assessors are aware of the service's commitment to employees having access to SfL opportunities.
- Employers and managers to ensure SfL is embedded when applying for other awards.



FBU LEARNING CENTRE



2.7 The UK FRS and community leadership

Through their community safety work and the move towards a more proactive service, a number of individual FRSs work closely with an increasing number of children or young adult organisations. In some cases these are run as a multi-agency function alongside the police, social services, and drug abuse organisations.

These initiatives can vary from helping scouts and guides achieve their fire badges to providing help and advice to young offenders and fireraisers through initiatives such as young people's academies. This work also includes participating in The Prince's Trust and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, promoting Junior Firefighters awards and sponsoring and helping run young people's sports activities such as rugby and boxing.

The majority of FRS employees who work closely with these groups have no background in teaching or learning support. In many cases the young people are from disadvantaged environments where they have missed school and have low levels of numeracy and

literacy. In some FRSs local authority education departments provide a qualified teacher to help overcome learning difficulties.

The community leadership role of firefighters wins the respect of children and young adults, and trust plays an important part in this relationship. An opportunity exists here to promote the importance of Sfl.

Recommendations

- Individual FRSs should review how Sfl could be embedded into community projects.
- Employees working within such initiatives should receive appropriate training.
- Employees should be trained in how to notice learning difficulties such as dyslexia.
- Means of supporting young adults with a Sfl need should be developed, linked with local authority education departments and learning providers.



WEST SUSSEX FRS

3. Skills for Life – the role of the Fire Brigades Union

3.1 Sfl and FBU officials

The FBU has been one of the most proactive unions regarding the training and development of its officials. As well as supporting officials who access the Trades Union Congress (TUC) education programme, the union has delivered bespoke courses such as: Health and Safety, Fairness at Work (Equality), Discipline, Disputes and Grievances.

A national education strategy has been at the heart of the FBU education programme and this has evolved over a number of years. Branch and brigade officials' schools at a regional level have been supported by a national school split into a Year 1 and Year 2. Access to the national school depends on students having attended at least one regional school and a Fairness at Work school.

Although Sfl is embedded in all TUC courses which FBU members participate in, historically the content of the FBU's regional and national courses has concentrated on work-related issues. The consultations which have resulted in this strategy have raised the profile of Skills for Life within the organisation and, with the appointment of a new development officer, future courses will reflect this understanding.

As highlighted in the Leitch Report, there is a high percentage of the working population with a Sfl need and this may apply to some union officials. FBU officials have a good understanding and knowledge of subjects such as internal policies, regulations, law, politics, and legal frameworks. But having the knowledge and applying it correctly in a coherent manner is, however, another skill.

Application is just as important and covers a multitude of tasks that require skills in communication, presentations (including PowerPoint), report writing, document reading, ICT and budgets. All of this expertise is Sfl pertinent.

A simple example of the importance of Sfl is submitting a written response to a proposal. A well-constructed response to the actual contents of the proposal, with correct spelling and grammar, is more likely to receive a serious response.

Union learning representatives (ULRs) are recognised in the FBU rule book, as is the appointment of brigade lifelong learning coordinators. The union will need to ensure that they are supported and offered appropriate learning and development to carry out their roles. This should include attending Sfl courses

and taking the Adult Learner Support Certificate, the recognised qualification for people who support learners in the workplace. FBU tutors should also be encouraged to attend such courses.

As a result of the work carried out on behalf of the union, FBU General Secretary Matt Wrack, National Officer John McGhee and ULF Manager Trevor Shanahan have taken on the role of Unionlearn Skills for Life advocates. (Unionlearn is a TUC initiative to help unions spread the lifelong learning message to members.)

Recommendations

- Discussion should be held between the National Officer and Executive Council education sub-committee on how to embed Sfl in the FBU's own education programme.
- A Whole Organisation Approach to Sfl presentation should be made to the FBU Executive Council.
- Sfl should be on the agenda and tabled for national education officers' meetings.
- National Officer should raise the issue of Sfl in TUC education at Unionlearn board/advisory group as appropriate.
- Any proposed changes to the FBU education policy should endorse and support the inclusion of Sfl.
- FBU tutors should gain the Adult Learner Support Certificate.
- Discussion should take place with tutors used by the union as to the best methods of embedding Sfl in courses.
- New officials should be offered the opportunity and encouraged to take the national numeracy and literacy assessment followed by the appropriate national test.
- Bespoke Sfl learning opportunities and courses should be offered to all officials with appropriate training for specific roles, e.g. regional treasurers, health and safety reps.
- FBU advocates should be more prominent in promoting Sfl with officials and members and across the FRS in general.



3.2 FBU members and FBU learning centres

As outlined previously, there have been a number of changes in the FRS that its employees and FBU members have faced. The FBU has been introducing and supporting a lifelong learning culture within its own organisation, while working in partnership with key stakeholders to have a learning agenda across the UK FRS.

This work has been achievable due to the project funding received from the Union Learning Fund (ULF), Scottish Union Learning Fund (SULF), Northern Ireland Union Learning Fund (NIULF), and the recently accessed Wales Union Learning Fund (WULF).

Within the ULF projects, Sfl recognition and support is an important role, touching uniformed and support employees.

Every FBU region has a ULF coordinator whose role is to promote lifelong learning, recruit and support union learning reps, engage with employers, and meet learner targets.

A Skills for Life advisor (Further Education National Training Organisation FENTO level 4) is employed by the Union Learning Fund project to deliver Sfl learning opportunities and develop best practice that can be used across the FRS.

As indicated earlier in this strategy, there are a number of drivers that the FBU has been involved in that link to Sfl. These include changes to learning and development due to the operational and WD modernisation programmes. FBU members are actively involved in IPDS which has now embraced an electronic Personal Development Record (PDR) and underlines the need for all employees to have a good level of ICT skill.

The adoption of formal learning agreements and the setting up of learning forums in brigades gives ULRs the opportunity to raise the profile of Sfl.

'I have recently undertaken Numbers Direct courses in handling data and in measure, shape and space. I found them challenging and interesting and have used the skills I have learned to help my daughters with their schoolwork.'

Learner, Tyne and Wear Fire Safety Dept.

FBU learning centres

The FBU has three Learndirect workplace learning centres in the North East. These are supported in partnership with Northumberland FRS, Tyne and Wear FRS and Cleveland FRS, and deliver a variety of courses to FRS employees and families.



BOB FITZ-GERALD

The centres draw funding from Learndirect with all three brigades supporting the centres with financial and administrative assistance.

The learning centres deliver Sfl tuition and national tests in numeracy and literacy accredited by City and Guilds. ICT courses are accredited through the British Computer Society (BCS).

The Northumberland FRS centre has supported applicants wishing to join the FRS by providing Sfl tutorials leading to passes at levels 1 and 2.

All three centres are part of the Unionlearn Hub with funding allocated specifically to provide Sfl learning opportunities.

Over the previous two years the centres have delivered Sfl to over 300 learners who have undertaken a skills check prior to going on to learning. Around 80 learners have achieved passes at either level 1 or level 2 in numeracy and literacy. All funding for these courses has been drawn through Learndirect with no direct cost to the employer.

The majority of learners wish to take up ICT courses and in particular the European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) and the new Information Technology Qualification (ITQ). There are clear links between Sfl and ICT that can help learners achieve their goals, e.g. ECDL spreadsheet module and numeracy; word processing and literacy.

As identified earlier, a Sfl advisor is employed using funding from the national ULF project and has been working out of the learning centre in NFRS. As well as delivering Sfl tuition and the National Tests the advisor is being utilised in determining how Sfl can be developed across the FRS.

Recommendations: throughout the FBU

- The issue of Sfl should be raised with all members of the FBU through appropriate mediums including Workforce Development, Assessment Development Centres and Continuous Personal Development.
- The learning centres to continue to deliver Sfl and maintain its promotion through the North East FRS.
- The FBU website and the FBU-Learn website should be utilised to promote Sfl.
- A link to the 'Move On' site and the mini-test

should be made with appropriate support mechanisms for individuals who would like to brush up their Sfl.

- A network of ULRs should be in place supported by learning committees and the union rule book.
- ULRs should be encouraged and supported to attend the Sfl additional course.
- At least one ULR in each brigade should gain the level 2 certificate in adult learning.
- Where learning forums are in place, Sfl should be a standing agenda item.
- The FBU to raise Sfl with the appropriate WD national committees.
- The FBU to raise Sfl with the FRS employers at the National Joint Council (NIC) to gain strategic support.

Recommendations: ULF projects

- Project Manager to discuss strategy recommendations with National Officer for ULF projects / education.
- ULF project employees to gain Adult Learning Support Certificate.
- A working group to be set up to identify best practice in embedding Sfl across the FRS.
- Sfl advisor to provide cross-mapping information to the NOS and prepare bespoke material for use in the FRS.
- Regional coordinators to ensure a Sfl regional plan is agreed and in place.
- Regional coordinators to engage with the GO Fire Award and the Get On At Work initiative.
- Learning centre Sfl strategy to reflect national strategy.



Glossary

ADC	Assessment Development Centre	PDR	Personal Development Record
ALNIS	Adult Literacy and Numeracy in Scotland	RDS	Retained Duty System
BCS	British Computer Society	SfL	Skills for Life
CFOA	Chief Fire Officers' Association	SFSC	Scottish Fire Services College
CFOA(S)	Chief Fire Officers Association Scotland	SNVQ	Scottish National Vocational Qualification
COSLA	Convention of Scottish Local Authorities	SULF	Scottish Union Learning Fund
CPD	Continuous Personal Development	TUC	Trades Union Congress
DCLG	Department for Communities and Local Government	Ufi	University for Industry
DDA	Disability Discrimination Act	ULF	Union Learning Fund
DELNI	Department for Education and Learning Northern Ireland	ULR	Union Learning Representative
ECDL	European Computer Driving Licence	WD	Workforce Development
FBU	Fire Brigades Union	WOA	Whole Organisation Approach
FENTO	Further Education National Training Organisation	WULF	Wales Union Learning Fund
FRS	Fire and Rescue Service		
FSC	Fire Service College		
IAG	Information Advice and Guidance		
ICT	Information and Communication Technology		
ITQ	Information Technology Qualification		
IIP	Investors in People		
IPDS	Integrated Personal Development System		
IRMP	Integrated Risk Management Plan		
LGA	Local Government Association		
LSC	Learning and Skills Council		
MLS	Managed Learning System		
NIACE	National Institute of Adult Continuing Education		
NIULF	Northern Ireland Union Learning Fund		
NJC	National Joint Council For Local Authority FRS		
NOS	National Occupational Standards		
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification		



FBU LEARNING CENTRE

Skills for Life – initiatives and agencies

Basic Skills Agency

Adult Basic Skills Strategy Unit

Learning and Skills Agency

Step into Learning

Sure Start and Skills for Families

Learndirect

Information, Advice and Guidance Partnerships

Move On

NIACE

Adult and Community Learning Fund

Investors in People

Employer Training Pilots

Employer Engagement Strategy

Train to Gain

BBC Raw Campaign

<http://www.move-on.org.uk/links.asp>



WEST SUSSEX FRS

FBU and the Fire & Rescue Service

– WOA Skills for Life strategy

Priority Action Points

Recommendation	Responsibility	Support/Organisation	Links
Utilise National Learning & Development Strategies that encompass the ULFs to promote SfL	CFOA, FSC, SFSC, FBU GS, FBU National Officer	ULF Manager, SULF/NIULF/WULF Regional Managers	DCLG, LGA, local government organisations
Assess how the WOA SfL strategy meets the government's modernisation agenda, local government SfL strategies, & the Leitch Report	CFOA, NJC employer organisations, FRS Training & Development Managers, FBU National Officer	ULF Manager, ULF Coordinators, FRS Learning Forums, ULRs	DCLG
Work with ULFs to access external funding for SfL and ICT learning and the government's Train to Gain initiative	CFOA, Individual FRSs, FRS Training & Development Managers	ULF Manager, FBU Learning Centres, ULF Coordinators, Joint Learning Forums, ULRs	Unionlearn, DfES
Employers/managers to build SfL in Equality & Diversity policies and HR strategies	NJC employer organisations, CFOA, Individual FRSs, HR Managers	ULF Coordinators, SULF/NIULF/WULF Regional Managers, Joint Learning Forums, ULRs	DCLG, Elected member learning champions
IRMPs should be evaluated to ensure employees have the requisite skills to meet the needs of the plan	CFOA, Individual FRSs	IRMP Practitioner Groups, FBU Officials, Joint Learning Forums, FBU Brigade Lifelong Learning Committees	
Support to be available for employees going through IPDS & ADC process with access to prior skills check	FSC, SFSC, IPDS Team, Individual FRSs, FBU National Officer	ULF Manager, FBU Learning Centres, ULF Coordinators, Joint Learning Forums, ULRs	FE providers
Promote the link between SfL and access to a pre-enrolment skills check	FSC, SFSC, Individual FRSs, FBU National Officer	ULF Manager, FBU Learning Centre Manager, VQ Practitioner, SfL Advisor	Accreditation bodies
All FRS colleges & brigade training departments can support learners with dyslexic tendencies meeting the DDA 2005	FSC, SFSC, CFOA, Individual FRSs	ULF Coordinators, FRS Training & Development Managers, Joint Learning Forums, FBU Learning Centre, SfL Advisor	Supporting Dyslexic Learners in Different Contexts – CfBT Education Trust
FRS to undertake a review of how SfL can be embedded in Community Fire Safety work with young adults	CFOA, FBU, Individual FRSs	ULF Coordinators, Joint Learning Forums, FBU Brigade Lifelong Learning Committee, SfL Advisor, FBU Learning Centres	All relevant organisations e.g. Prince's Trust, Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Young Offenders
Carry out assessment of current ICT training in the FRS and confirm links to SfL	CFOA, FSC, SFSC, Individual FRSs, FRS Training & Development Managers	ULF Coordinators, Joint Learning Forums, FBU Brigade Lifelong Learning Committee, SfL Advisor, FBU Learning Centres	FSC & SFSC e-learning group
FSC & SFSC to investigate methods for SfL to be embedded in core training courses	FSC, SFSC, IPDS Team	CFOA, FBU, ULF Manager, ULF Coordinators, SfL Advisor	FE providers
Review and assess how SfL can be embedded in the delivery of local training	Individual FRSs, FRS Training & Development Managers	ULF Coordinators, Joint Learning Forums, Brigade Lifelong Learning Committee, ULRs	

Medium Action Points

Recommendation	Responsibility	Support/Organisation	Links
Whole Organisation Approach Sfl presentations to NIC/employer organisations	NIC employer organisations, CFOA, FBU GS, FBU National Officer	ULF Manager, SULF/NIULF/WULF Regional Managers	LGA, local government organisations
WOA Sfl presentations to CFOA	CFOA	FBU National Officer, ULF Manager	
WOA Sfl presentations to individual FRS senior management teams	Individual FRSs, ULF Coordinators SULF/NIULF/WULF Regional Managers	Brigade Lifelong Learning Committee	
Centre of Excellence to engage with the ULFs	FSC	FBU National Officer, ULF Manager	
Where Joint Learning Forums have been set-up Sfl to be a standing agenda item	CFOs, FRS Training & Development Managers	ULF Coordinators, SULF/NIULF/WULF Regional Managers, Joint Learning Forums, Brigade Lifelong Learning Committee, ULRs	
Sfl provision to be accessible, with the flexible support and availability to take national tests during working hours	FRS Training & Development Managers	ULF Coordinators, Joint Learning Forums, Brigade Lifelong Learning Committees, ULRs	NIACE, Get On At Work
Make the Sfl mini-test available on intranets etc	NIC employer organisations, CFOA, CFOs	Local authority Webmasters, individual FRS Webmasters	Get On At Work
At least one member of the training department employees to attain level 2 qualification in adult learning support	CFOA, Individual FRSs, FRS Training & Development Managers	ULF Coordinators, SULF/NIULF/WULF Regional Managers	Unionlearn
Local authorities engaging employees in Sfl initiatives should ensure FRS involvement	NIC employer organisations, CFOA, CFOs	ULF Coordinators, SULF/NIULF/WULF Regional Managers, Joint Learning Forums	NIACE, Get On At Work
Employers and managers should participate and support Learning at Work Week and in particular Learning at Work Day	NIC employer organisations, CFOA, Individual FRSs	Joint Learning Committees, ULF Coordinators, SULF/NIULF/WULF Regional Managers, Brigade T&D Departments, Brigade Lifelong Learning Committees, FBU Learning Centres	Unionlearn, NIACE, Get On At Work
WOA Sfl presentation to Fire Conference	CFOA	FBU National Officer, ULF Manager	
CFOA to promote Sfl advocates and learning champions	CFOA	FBU National Officer, ULF Manager	Unionlearn



Action Points – Learning & Development

Recommendation	Responsibility	Support/Organisation	Links
FBU to raise Sfl on appropriate L&D groups/committees within the FRS community	FBU National Officer, FBU EC members, ULF Manager	FSC, SFSC, CFOA, IPDS, ULF Coordinators	Recognised FRS TUs
FSC & SFSC to look at how Sfl can be embedded in core training courses	FSC, SFSC	CFOA, IPDS, FBU, ULF Manager, SULF Regional Manager, ULF Coordinators, Sfl Advisor	
Promote the link between Sfl, WD and IPDS with access to a prior skills check	FSC, SFSC	ULF Manager, FBU Learning Centre Manager, Sfl Advisor	Recognised FRS TUs
Support to be available for employees going through ADC process with access to prior skills check	Individual FRSs	FBU Learning Centres, ULF Coordinators, Joint Learning Forums, ULRs	FE providers
SFSC virtual college to host Sfl support	SFSC	SULF Regional Manager, ULF Manager	MDC Learning Systems
FSC Managed Learning System to host Sfl support	FSC e-learning board, E-learning Manager	ULF Manager	Appropriate Sfl sites
FSC/SFSC websites to host links with Sfl websites	FSC & SFSC	ULF Manager, SULF Regional Manager	
Stakeholder seminars to be held covering Workforce Development aspects	FSC, SFSC	FBU National Officer, ULF EC members, SULF/NIULF/WULF Regional Managers	

Action Points – Investors in People/Investors in Diversity/Other Awarding Bodies

Recommendation	Responsibility	Support/Organisation	Links
Employers/managers should contact Investors in People to ascertain Sfl criteria	Individual FRSs, Joint Learning Forums, FSC, SFSC	Investors in People, FBU Lifelong Learning Committee, ULRs	
Embed procedures to ensure IIP assessors can ascertain Sfl commitment to employees	Individual FRSs, Brigade training departments, FSC, SFSC	Investors in People, Sfl Assessors	
Embed Sfl to meet other appropriate awards	Individual FRSs, Brigade training departments, FSC, SFSC	Investors in Diversity, Customer First, etc.	

Action Points – Community Initiatives

Recommendation	Responsibility	Support/Organisation	Links
FRS to undertake a review of how SfL can be embedded in young adults projects	CFOA, FBU, Individual FRSs	ULF Coordinators, Joint Learning Forums, FBU Brigade Lifelong Learning Committee, SfL Advisor, FBU Learning Centres	All relevant organisations e.g. Prince's Trust, Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Young Offenders
Employees working within such initiatives should receive appropriate training	CFOA, Individual FRSs	ULF Coordinators, Joint Learning Forums, FBU Brigade Lifelong Learning Committee, SfL Advisor, FBU Learning Centre	
Means of supporting young adults with a SfL need should be developed	Individual FRSs, FSC, SFSC	Joint Learning Forums, FBU Brigade Lifelong Learning Committee, ULRs, Brigade T&D Departments, SfL Advisor	Local authority education departments, FE providers
Employees should be trained in how to notice learning difficulties such as dyslexia	Individual FRSs	Joint Learning Forums, FBU Brigade Lifelong Learning Committee, ULRs, Brigade T&D Departments, SFL Advisor	Supporting Dyslexic Learners in Different Contexts – CfBT Education Trust
Provide qualifications in Information Advice & Guidance for employees	CFOA, Individual FRSs	ULF Manager, FBU Learning Centre Manager, SULF/NIULF/WULF Regional Managers, ULF Coordinators	FE providers, Open University, Learning and Skills Council

Action Points – Union Learning Fund

Recommendation	Responsibility	Support/Organisation	Links
Discuss SfL strategy recommendations with National Officer	ULF EC Members, ULF Manager	ULF Coordinators	FBU TU Tutors
Deliver a draft strategy for discussion at FBU ULF Coordinators meeting and ULF Strategic Partners Meeting	ULF Manager	ULF EC Members, ULF Coordinators, FBU Learning Centre	Unionlearn
A working group to be set up to identify best practice in embedding SfL across the UK FRS	ULF Manager, Strategic Partners	FBU National Officer, ULF EC Members, SfL Advisor, FBU Learning Centre Manager, ULF Coordinators, ULRs	Unionlearn
Provide information to cross-map the NOS and key skills, prepare bespoke material for use in the FRS	ULF Manager	ULF Coordinators, SfL Advisor, FBU Learning Centre Manager	
Regional Coordinators to ensure SfL is in regional plans	ULF Coordinators	ULF Manager, FBU Brigade Lifelong Learning Committee, ULRs	
Regional Coordinators to link with the Get On At Work	ULF Coordinators	ULF Manager, FBU Brigade Lifelong Learning Committee, ULRs	Get On At Work
Learning Centre SfL strategy to reflect national strategy	FBU Learning Centre Manager	SfL Advisor, ULF Manager	Unionlearn
Coordinators to gain the level 2 certificate in adult learning support	ULF Coordinators	ULF Manager	

Action Points – FBU Members & Education

Recommendation	Responsibility	Support/Organisation	Links
The issue of SfL should be raised with all members of the FBU through appropriate mediums	General Secretary, FBU President, FBU National Officer, Education Committees	FBU National Education Officers, FBU Brigade Lifelong Learning Committee, ULF Coordinators ULRs, FBU Learning Centre, FBU Media	Unionlearn
The FBU website and FBU-Learn website should be utilised to promote SfL	FBU media department	ULF Manager, ULF Coordinators, FBU Webmasters, FBU-Learn Webmasters, SfL Advisor	Unionlearn
A link to the SfL mini-test should be made with support mechanisms for individuals with learning needs	FBU media department, FBU National Officer	ULF Manager, Webmasters, FBU Learning Centres	Get On At Work
A network of union learning reps (ULRs) should be in place supported by learning committees and the union rule book	General Secretary, FBU National Officer, ULF Manager	All FBU Officials, Education Officers, ULF Coordinators, FBU Brigade Lifelong Learning Committees	
ULRs should be encouraged and supported to attend the SfL additional course	ULF Manager	ULF Coordinators, Education Officers, ULRs, FBU Brigade Lifelong Learning Committee	TU Studies departments, Unionlearn
At least one ULR in each brigade should gain the level 2 certificate in adult learning support	FBU National Officer, ULF Manager	ULF Coordinators, FBU Learning Centres, SfL Advisor	Unionlearn, TU Studies departments
Where Joint Learning Forums are in place SfL should be a standing agenda item	FBU Brigade Lifelong Learning Committee	FBU Brigade Officials, ULRs	
The FBU to raise SfL at appropriate national Workforce Development committees	General Secretary, FBU National Officer, EC Members	ULF Manager	
The FBU to raise SfL with the FRS employers at the National Joint Council (NIC) to gain strategic support	General Secretary	FBU National Officer, FBU EC, CFOA, ULF Manager, LGA, COSLA, NI Assembly, Wales Assembly	
Embed SfL in the FBU education programme	FBU General Secretary, FBU President, FBU National Officer, EC Education Sub-Committee	FBU EC, National Education Officers Committee, ULF Manager, ULF Coordinators, SfL Advisor	FBU TU tutors, TU Studies departments
A SfL Whole Organisation Approach presentation should be made to FBU Executive Council	FBU General Secretary, FBU President, FBU National Officer, EC Education Sub-Committee	EC Education Sub-Committee, ULF Manager	
SfL should be tabled on agenda for National Education Officers' meetings	FBU National Officer	EC Education Sub-Committee, ULF Manager, ULF Coordinators	
Issue of SfL in TUC education programme raised at general council/education officer level	FBU General Secretary, FBU National Officer	ULF Manager, ULF Coordinators	FBU TU tutors, Unionlearn

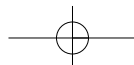
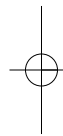
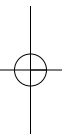
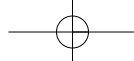
Action Points – FBU Members & Education (continued)

Recommendation	Responsibility	Support/Organisation	Links
Proposed changes to the FBU education policy should be inclusion of WOA SfL strategy	General Secretary, FBU National Officer, EC Education Sub-Committee, National Education Committee	EC Education Sub-Committee, National Education Officers Committee, ULF Manager, ULF Coordinators	FBU TU tutors
FBU tutors gain the adult learning support certificate	FBU National Officer	ULF Coordinators, FBU Learning Centre	Unionlearn
Discussion to take place with TU tutors of methods to embed SfL in courses	FBU National Officer, EC Education Sub-Committee	National Education Officers Committee, ULF Manager, ULF Coordinators, SfL Advisor	FBU TU tutors, Unionlearn
New officials should be offered and encouraged to voluntarily take the national numeracy & literacy assessment and national test	FBU General Secretary, FBU President, FBU National Officer, EC Education Sub-Committee	Regional, Sectional, Brigade & Branch Officials, ULF Coordinators, FBU Brigade Lifelong Learning Committee, ULRs, FBU Learning Centres	FBU TU tutors, TU hub learning centres, FE providers
Bespoke SfL learning opportunities/courses should be offered to officials with appropriate training for specific roles e.g. regional treasurers/H&S reps	FBU General Secretary, FBU President, FBU National Officer, EC Education Sub-Committee	Regional & Brigade Officials, TU Tutors, ULF Coordinators, ULRs, FBU Learning Centre	FBU TU tutors, Unionlearn
Advocates should be more prominent in the promotion of SfL across the FBU and FRS	All FBU advocates	ULF Manager	Unionlearn

Action Points – Recruitment and Retention

Recommendation	Responsibility	Support/Organisation	Links
SfL to be incorporated within national FRS recruitment & retention strategy	FRS committee developing R&R strategy	NJC, FBU National Officer, CFOA	NIACE, Get On At Work
FRS to provide applicants with the offer of pre-application SfL tests	FRS training departments, Joint recruitment boards	ULF Coordinators, Brigade Joint Learning Forums, FBU Lifelong Learning Committees, FBU Learning Centres	Job centres, FE providers
FRS to provide links to support applicants with a SfL need	Individual FRS training departments	ULF Coordinators, Brigade Joint Learning Forums, FBU Lifelong Learning Committees, ULRs	NIACE, Move On, FE providers
ULRs to be utilised during recruitment days	Individual FRS training departments, Brigade Joint Learning Forums	FBU Learning Committees, ULRs	







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