

# Fire and Emergency Operations, Section 26 Plan, Frequently Asked Questions

## 1. What is a Section 26 Plan?

A Section 26 Plan is a Fire and Emergency Operations Plan, which details a schedule of all organisational elements of the provision of fire and emergency operations by a Local Authority through its Fire Service. It depicts the required organisation structure, personnel, equipment, fire stations, water supplies, training, procedures, all resources and other related matters. The plan will detail current arrangements within the fire authority and will also set out strategic plans and targets for the fire authority for the next 5 years.

***Fire Service Act 1981 Section 26.—(1) Each fire authority which maintains a fire brigade shall prepare (and, as occasion requires, revise) plans for fire and emergency operations showing the provision made by it in respect of organisation, appliances, equipment, fire stations, water supplies and extinguishing agents, training, operational procedure and such other matters as may be relevant, and for dealing with operations of an emergency nature under section 25 .***

*(2) A copy of every plan made or revised under this section shall be furnished by the fire authority to the Minister who may, if he thinks proper, direct that plans of adjoining authorities be co-ordinated.*

*(3) The making and revision of a plan shall be a reserved function.*

## 2. Is this Keeping Communities Safe (KCS)?

No, the requirement to prepare a Section 26 Plan pre dates KCS and is referenced in the Fire Services Act 1981.

## 3. How will the process work?

The draft Fire & Emergency Operations Plan 2023-2028, DFB's annual report 2022 and a list of frequently asked questions will be prepared and made available on the 4 Dublin Local Authorities online consultation portals via an online survey. Hard copies of these documents can also be viewed at each of the 4 Dublin Council Head Quarters and at Dublin Fire Brigade Head Quarters at 165-169 Townsend Street, Dublin 2 and the online survey can be returned to the email address [dfbsection26@dublincity.ie](mailto:dfbsection26@dublincity.ie)

We encourage all Dublin Fire Brigade (DFB), stakeholders and the public to view and input into the process. DFB management are committed to a fully inclusive consultation process that allows for all stakeholders influencing the shape and direction of their service into the future.

Consultation will include:

- DFB staff
- The Public
- Trade Union
- Councillors

#### **4. Why are you doing this now?**

A revised Dublin Fire Brigade Section 26 Plan is now overdue and the preparation of a plan is a statutory obligation as stated in the Fire Services Act 1981.

#### **5. Is this linked to the ambulance reviews?**

No, this is a completely unrelated resource schedule and plans focused on the provision of all DFB's emergency service functions.

#### **6. Is this about cuts and saving money?**

No, DFB will continue to create efficiencies and better value for public finances within its service provision. However, this particular plan relates to fire and emergency objectives as listed under S.26 of the FSA and also the substantial volume of work in Fire and Safety and Prevention and Major Emergency Management.

#### **7. How will you ensure full consultation?**

Consultation on the development of this plan has already begun with internal staff engagement and initial discussions with the representative bodies. The draft Fire & Emergency Operations Plan 2023-2028, DFB's annual report 2022 and a list of frequently asked questions will be prepared and distributed through various channels to encourage staff, stakeholders and public to view and input into the process. Anybody wishing to contribute to its development can make a submission on the one of the 4 Dublin Local Authorities online consultation hubs. Hard copies of the plan can be viewed at each of the 4 Dublin Council Head Quarters and at Dublin Fire Brigade Head Quarters at 165-169 Townsend Street, Dublin 2 and the online survey is also available and can be returned to the email address: [dfbsection26@dublincity.ie](mailto:dfbsection26@dublincity.ie)

#### **8. How will this affect me (firefighter/citizen)?**

This will have no immediate effect on the service delivery of DFB, either for the service providers, staff, or the end users the public. DFB business will carry on as normal. It will merely be the case that all resources, activity, processes and

procedures to be clearly depicted in the form of an open and detailed plan. All relevant and realistic input received in relation to possible improvements on service delivery will be addressed in the plan, as future aspirations with defined timelines.

#### **9. What real difference will these changes make and how will I notice?**

Staff, the public and Local Authority Management will have an opportunity to see the planned strategic direction of their Fire Service and an opportunity to engage in its future planning. For the first time members of the public will be able to see and appreciate all of the organisational elements and the processes, which, must come together to create and maintain a modern Fire, Rescue and Emergency Service. A greater awareness of services provided, value for money and appreciation of the allocation of tax payer's money and Local Authority funding will be achieved for Local Authority Management, members of the public and their representatives.

#### **10. Will this affect the ambulance provision?**

No, this plan will have no impact on the Dublin Fire Brigade's Emergency Ambulance provision.

#### **11. Will this involve job cuts?**

The plan is not about job cuts.

#### **12. Have you set reduction targets for incidents?**

Yes, reduction targets will be set for fatality numbers, fires, chimney fires etc in order to improve safety in the community for the public and for fire crews.

#### **13. How will you measure whether your changes have been successful?**

Any proposed changes within the plan will have been agreed as being achievable and feasible and set with clear incremental time lines, expected targets and measurable milestones within specific project implementation teams. Each section will be required to report on implementation progress, the level of implementation achieved and the level of actual provision reached against any pre-described expectation. All progress will be monitored and any shortfall will be addressed with a view for improvement where deemed achievable. Any targets found to be either unrealistic, do not provide value for money will be revised, new targets can be developed and new timelines implemented.

**14. Will you change it back if it doesn't work?**

Yes, any targeted change which is proven to be unworthy of further resources and progression, either through not realising expected savings, increased efficiencies, or having a negative impact on service provision, will be revisited and a new strategic direction will be sought in that area.

**15. How can I become involved with developing this plan?**

All staff and stakeholder input will be welcome. Anybody wishing to contribute to its development can make a submission on the one of the 4 Dublin Local Authorities online consultation portals via an online survey. Hard copies of the plan can also be viewed at each of the 4 Dublin Council Head Quarters and at Dublin Fire Brigade Head Quarters at 165-169 Townsend Street, Dublin 2 and the online survey can be returned to the email address [dfbsection26@dublincity.ie](mailto:dfbsection26@dublincity.ie)

**16. What are the benefits of the Section 26 Plan for Dublin Fire Brigade?**

The Section 26 Plan reflects the work and resources required in the delivery of a modern Fire Service which is representative to the risks and needs of the communities it serves.