

Section I: Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this Fire and Emergency Operations Plan is to fulfill Kilkenny County Council's statutory obligation as a Fire Authority as outlined in **Section 26 of the Fire Services Acts 1981 and 2003**.

Section 26 of the Fire Services Acts 1981 and 2003 states -

"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*
- *Fire Stations*
- *Appliances*
- *Equipment*
- *Water supplies and extinguishing agents*
- *Training*
- *Operational procedure*
- *and such other matters as may be relevant for dealing with operations of an emergency nature under Section 25.*

Section 25 of the Fire Services Acts 1981 and 2003 states:

*"A Fire Authority **may** carry out or assist in any operations of an emergency nature, whether or not a risk of fire is involved, and a Fire Authority may accordingly make such provision for the rescue or safeguarding of persons and protection of property as it considers necessary for the purposes of that function."*

The Fire and Emergency Operations Plan also includes reference to operational duties imposed on the Fire Authority by Sections 10(2) and 10(3) of the Fire Services Acts 1981 and 2003.

Section 10(2) of the Fire Services Acts 1981 and 2003 states -

A Fire Authority shall

- (a) make provision for the prompt and efficient extinguishing of fires in buildings and other places of all kinds in its functional area and for the protection and rescue of persons and property from injury by fire, and*
- (b) establish and maintain a fire brigade, provide premises and make such other provisions as it considers necessary or desirable for such purposes and*
- (c) make adequate provision for the reception of and response to calls for assistance of the fire brigade.*

Section 10(3) of the Fire Services Acts 1981 and 2003 states -

"A Fire Authority shall, in exercise of its functions under subsection (2), have regard (in addition to all other relevant considerations) to the nature of the fire hazards and the probable incidence and extent of fires in its functional area, the character of the area and the value of the property liable to be damaged by fires."

In addition to the specific areas listed under Section 26, this plan will also take into consideration other relevant areas including the substantial volume of fire prevention and fire safety work which is a discretionary power under the Fire Services Acts 1981 and 2003 along with the contribution the Fire Authority makes to Major Emergency Management both within the City and County of Kilkenny and the region.

This plan details current arrangements within the Fire Authority, but it also sets out strategic plans and targets for the Fire Authority for the next 5 years. This plan shall be reviewed from time to time as deemed appropriate, but in any case, it shall be reviewed at least once every 5 years. It should be noted that the making and revision of the Fire and Emergency Operations Plan is a reserved function under Section 26(3) of Fire Services Acts 1981 and 2003.

Definitions

Fire Authority as per Fire Services Acts 1981 and 2003

“A Fire Authority means a Fire Authority to which Section 9 of the Fire Services Acts 1981 and 2003 applies. Kilkenny County Council is the Fire Authority for the City and County of Kilkenny – “Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service” is the common name the Fire Authority is known by and is used throughout this document.

Fire Brigade as per Fire Services Acts 1981 and 2003

“A Fire Brigade means an organised body of persons trained and equipped for extinguishing fires occurring in buildings and other places and for rescuing persons and property from such fires and includes the vehicles and equipment with which that body is equipped”.

Extinguishing of a fire as per Fire Services Acts 1981 and 2003

“Extinguishing of a fire shall be construed as including the prevention of a fire from spreading”.

Senior Fire Officer

“Fire Service Personnel in Kilkenny at the following grades – Chief Fire Officer, Senior Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Assistant Fire Officer and Graduate, in accordance with the provisions laid out in the Fire Fighters Handbook”.

Junior Fire Officer

“Fire Service personnel at the following grades – Retained Station Officer, Retained Sub-Station Officer and Retained Driver Mechanic”.

Retained Fire Fighter

“Officer and Fire-fighters of fire brigades who are part-time and permanent employees of Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service. They are employed in accordance with the conditions, duties, pay, disciplinary code, etc relating to part-time fire fighters in Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service.

Major Emergency as defined by “A Framework for Major Emergency Management”

A Major Emergency is any event which, usually with little or no warning, causes or threatens death or injury, serious disruption of essential services or damage to property, the environment or infrastructure beyond the normal capabilities of the principal emergency services (An Garda Síochána (AGS), Health Service Executive (HSE) and Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service (KKFRS)) in the area in which the event occurs, and requires the activation of specific additional procedures and the mobilisation of additional resources to ensure an effective, co-ordinated response.

National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management (NDFEM)

“Body established on the 22 June 2009, the mandate of which is to create an effective model of integrated leadership, development support and oversight by central government of local authority’s provision of consistently effective, safe and value-for-money fire and emergency services in Ireland. This body also incorporates the work previously carried out by the Fire Services Council. The Directorate operates under the aegis of the Community Division of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.”

Keeping Communities Safe – A Framework for Fire Safety in Ireland (KCS)

‘Keeping Communities Safe’ is the output from a review in 2012 of fire services and fire safety in Ireland. It aims to provide a comprehensive, balanced strategy to ensure the safety of the public in their homes and other locations, as well as worker safety in providing emergency services. It is an integrated blue-print for further development of the critical public safety roles performed by local authority fire services, to be implemented in the period 2013 – 2015. ‘Keeping Communities Safe’ is about managing risk, addressing public safety improvement, incident reduction, response standards and service delivery structures for the decade ahead. ‘Keeping Communities Safe’ is an evidence-led plan, based on international best practice and with international expert validation.

Fire Safety in Ireland- Report of the Fire Safety Task Force - May 2018

This report outlines current arrangements for fire safety in Ireland and explains roles and responsibilities in relation to fire safety. It describes the range of actions taken in Ireland in the aftermath of the Grenfell Tower fire. It highlights the measures and arrangements in place in Ireland to mitigate the risk of a large-scale fire. While the Report is intended to primarily to consider the design and construction of buildings and the operation and management of those buildings for fire safety, it also describes arrangements for intervention by local authority fire services when there is an outbreak of fire, including in case of what is termed a “major emergency”.

Response, Resilience and Recovery - A Review of the impact of COVID-19 on Irish Fire Services - October 2020

The report reflects on fire safety and public safety implications of Covid-19. It examines fire services’ statutory fire prevention work as well as issues of home fire safety, operational response and resilience and the effectiveness of major emergency management arrangements within local authorities in responding to Covid-19.