



AFSA Business Strategy 2012-14

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A word from Our Chair – Zahoor Ahmad



This Business Strategy sets out the focus of AFSA's the strategic direction for the period 2012-14. However, it is recognised that during this period many policy and service changes are likely to occur, therefore the strategic cornerstones and objectives are flexible and have been developed to outline the way in which AFSA will realise its strategy. The strategic direction is intended to be both ambitious and sustainable.

This strategic direction is based upon the premise that AFSA's culture is one of promoting the interests of the Fire & Rescue Service (FRS) through openness and honesty, is consultative and also seeks to promote fun and good humour.

The Fire Service faces many challenges in the future. This strategic direction will enable AFSA to play its part in (a) supporting and in some cases (b) acting as a critical friend and (c) suggesting alternative and innovative strategies for action.

The challenge now before us all is to secure and sustain the highest quality of service to meet the identified needs of today's and tomorrow's population within the available resources. The simplicity of this definition belies the complexity of the task.

This strategy is intended to provide a positive practical and supportive framework to help the FRS move forward on this journey and making the best use of real and growing opportunities for the future and at the same time release the very best potential from everyone within it through integrating equality and diversity.

The expertise of the AFSA executive team together with our members and non members from within the FRS as partners will be harnessed to support this strategy.

We regard our members exactly as that- partners. We continue to build an association of like minded individuals



and organisations who share our vision, values and commitment to equality and diversity – but this is a task with many facets. We need every insight and contribution we can harness. Our members and also non members are central to achieving our vision.

I am delighted to share this strategy with you which sets out the foundations for how we will approach our work at AFSA. If you are not a member reading this I would urge you to make contact with us to talk about how we might connect with you and share our ideas, research, people and networks. If you are already a member of ours, thank you for your support for what we do and through this strategy I hope we can deepen our relationship even further.

Zahoor Ahmad
Chair, AFSA

About us

1. The Asian Fire Service Association (AFSA) is an independent inclusive employee led support group with the desire to raise the profile of Asian staff and associated issues.
2. AFSA works with Fire and Rescue Services (FRS) to mainstream issues around equality and diversity in two priority areas:
 - Service provision
 - Employment policy and practice
3. AFSA's main source of income is the £800 per annum received from each of its Corporate Members. We have traditionally done further work to potentially generate income through the development of various products i.e. community handbooks/conferences etc.
4. AFSA's direction and behaviour are governed by:
 - Our existing Vision
 - Our existing Core Values
 - Our proposed four Strategic cornerstones & accompanying objectives



Reviewing our vision, core values and developing our cornerstones

5. We reviewed our vision and core values and developed our strategic cornerstones by involving FRS employees, employers and stakeholders. We have collated views about our strengths, weaknesses and direction of travel, in a variety of ways:
 - Executive meetings
 - Conferences/regional workshops
 - Strategic review of challenges facing the FRS
 - Cascading vision, values and strategic objective options to members for general discussion
6. Our **Vision** remains (what we are seeking to become):
 - AFSA will work with the National Fire and Rescue Service and supporting agencies to enhance equality and diversity and associated values.
7. Our **Core Values** reflect the values of the Fire and Rescue Service and remain (determining the way we operate and enabling us to achieve our vision):
 - **Service to the community** – and our united purpose - to improve the quality of service.
 - **Our People** – we look to harness the collective strength of staff from the FRS.

Diverse communities – we are prepared to stand up and be counted; we continually seek to develop new and better ways of working with and for the diverse communities.

Continuous improvement – we understand the FRS, the many challenges it has overcome and the transition it is now undertaking. We are authoritative and have proven expertise in helping to deliver for staff and the public.

8. Our four **Strategic cornerstones** (which support the fulfillment of our vision) are:

- **Build and secure the core**
- **Become the practical experts**
- **Be responsive and proactive**
- **Generate diverse income**

9. To **build and secure the core**, we will:

- Secure new FRS members and add further value to existing members
- Undertake a member satisfaction survey
- Secure our legitimacy to provide support to FRS

10. To **become the practical experts**, we will:

- Communicate research and offer advice and support to FRS bodies
- Develop guides and tools; advice and information, e.g. on the Equality Act

- Train and develop executive team to become industry experts
- Develop memorandums of understanding with key partners
- Support regional development events and host national events

11. To **become more responsive and proactive**, we will:

- Raise our profile and accessibility, i.e. media and expert articles; speaking at external conferences and events; utilise enabling technologies
- Respond to policy and practice e.g. Red Tape Challenge/ Fire Futures
- Support FRS members to develop regional activities
- Support charitable causes at home and abroad

12. To **generate diverse income**, we will:

- Recruit new members and source alternative funding streams
- Dedicate staff and resources to identifying opportunities and partnerships
- Apply industry-best principles and processes through developing guidance and tools
- Hold conferences and workshops
- Build partnerships, e.g. with legal experts and other key stakeholders

4 Cornerstones & Smart Objectives 2012-14

Cornerstone 1 - Build and secure the core

Suggested Objectives;

- Develop an annual media campaign to recruit more corporate members
- Hold AFSA surgeries at annual AFSA events to encourage delegates to come and discuss key issues and receive advice and support
- Undertake a annual AFSA members Equality Performance survey
- Undertake a annual membership satisfaction survey
- Develop Quarterly newsletters/tri Monthly briefings

Cornerstone 2 - Become the practical & applied experts

Suggested Objectives;

- Develop guides and tools e.g. Sikhism and the workplace, Risk Assessments & community organisations & enforcement notices and BME Businesses & Asian staff members past and present contribution to FRS
- Undertake an annual skills analysis across the AFSA Executive Team to identify any gaps in knowledge/skills/expertise
- Undertake regular development of the AFSA Executive team
- Undertake an annual programme of research/analysis on emerging workforce & service delivery issues within FRS
- To establish & build upon relationships with other expert organisations to seek and share knowledge/information

Cornerstone 3 - Be responsive and proactive

Suggested Objectives;

- Support regional activities through workshops/events
- Hold regional AFSA events and produce an e- newsletter to be used as a wider communication tool
- Use modern technology innovatively (social media, facebook etc and increasing the number visitors to the AFSA website)
- Hold a National Conference, AGM/Development day annually that meets member satisfaction and is cost effective
- Undertake charitable activities locally, nationally and internationally

Cornerstone 4 - Generate diverse income

Suggested Objectives;

- Offer three individually tailored half day Board level E&D business case development course for FRS to purchase
- Offer AFSA Consultancy advice and support at a reasonable cost to members
- AFSA Tools:
 - to market the tools within our membership, networks and contacts to secure a margin
 - to develop strategic partnership with experts to secure a margin
- Generate sponsorship of events and AFSA products to secure a margin for AFSA