SWFRS Freedom of Information request response:

We are collecting information about what measures Fire & Rescue Services are taking to address the risk of serious compartmentation failure in High Rise Residential Buildings (HRRB's) since the Grenfell Tower fire of 14th June 2017.

Below is the information we would like to obtain from you under the Freedom of Information Act.

1. **Evacuation**

a. **Any evacuation plans, policies or procedures for HRRBs;**

SWFRS do not have responsibility for designing evacuation plans, this is the responsibility of the building designers/owners and responsible persons.

All operational crews from Firefighter to Area Manager have received practical and theoretical training around responding to High Rise fire incidents.

Operational managers have been informed of the importance of early identification of failure in compartmentation or external fire spread, and communication of this information to service control, to correctly advise residents receiving Life Saving Guidance (LSG) of the appropriate evacuation strategy.

SOP 3.2 High Rise Firefighting: Amendments since June 2017

A revised SOP has been produced to and following extensive consultation is due to be published imminently.

Where the service is aware of buildings failing the cladding test or compartmentation testing we are working to the NFCC Guidance to support a temporary change to a simultaneous evacuation strategy in purpose-built block of flats (01-05-2018), replacing Waking Watch guide issued 2/10/17, which is being monitored by our Business Fire Safety Teams.

https://www.nationalfirechiefs.org.uk/write/MediaUploads/NFCC%20Guidance%20publications/Protection/01052018NFCC_simultaneous_Evacuation_guidance_final_doc.pdf

b. Any actual or proposed amendments to existing evacuation plans, policies or procedures for HRRBs, since 14 June 2017.

See (a) above

c. Any national guidance (since 14 June 2017) on the obligations, under the FSO, of the responsible person of a HRRB to devise an evacuation plan for residents in the event of fire;

To date, there have been no amendments to the FSO specific to this issue, however, this would be decided nationally by NFCC or MHCLG

We are aware of the NFCC are calling for changes and improvements to building safety standards and regulations in a number of forums and Government consultations, including through the Industry

Response Group, the Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety, and the wider Building Safety Programme.

Once a building is built, we respond to fire incidents according to the strategies which are set by the people responsible for the building. We have insufficient powers to require retrospective changes to buildings where inadequate firefighting facilities are installed.

d**. Any national guidance (since 14 June 2017), to assist your FRS to devise an evacuation plan for a HRRB involved in fire?**

On recommendation of the NFCC, all staff from Firefighter to Group Manager, have received theoretical input regarding evacuation strategies and how they will be influenced by fire. This training commenced in September 2018 and is now complete.

The majority of Whole-time staff from Firefighter to Group Manager have also attended practical exercises involving a real fire in a High Rise Building, to apply and demonstrate their understanding of firefighting and incident command (including evacuation strategies) at High Rise incidents. It is anticipated that this training will be completed by March 2020.

Theory training has also been facilitated for all Joint Fire Control staff to enhance understanding of the issues that may be pertinent to Fire Survival Guidance (FSG). This training commenced in September 2018 and is now complete.

All control room staff have also attended exercises to enable practical application of theory input.

The NFCC has invested in a learning process to proactively identify lessons from incidents, trends and emerging risks using a risk analysis methodology. The National Operational Learning (NOL) project began in August 2018, with the first lot of proposals approved in April 2019. Evacuation was already covered by National Operational Guidance – however additional content has been added to emphasise the need to review evacuation strategies during an incident.

2. **Pre-determined attendance (PDA)**

a. **Your current PDA for fighting fires in HRRBs;**

Amended 09/08/18 for confirmed fires in HRRB's to: 5 x Pumps, 1 x Aerial Ladder Platform 1 x Water Bowser

Joint Fire control Action Plan, includes: Two Tactical Managers, plus a Business Fire Safety Officer

b. **Any actual or proposed amendments to your PDA for HRRBs, since 14 June 2017.**

Prior to 14th June 2107 our PDA to fires in HRRB was: 4 Pumps, 1 Aerial ladder platform, 1 x Water Bowser

Joint Fire Control now follow an action plan for HRRB fires, which includes mobilising a Business Fire Safety Officer to confirmed High Rise fires.

3.   Multiple FSGs

a. Any operational policies/training for dealing with multiple fire survival guidance calls (FSGs)

We currently have in place, Life Saving Guidance issued by Joint Fire Control Operators to residents during a fire situation at a HRRB.

All our Joint Fire Control operators have received theoretical and practical training in exercises incorporating simultaneous multiple Life Saving Guidance, resilience arrangements for overflow calls are in place with North Wales Fire & Rescue Service.

b. Any actual/proposed amendments to FSG policies/training, since 14 June 2017.

HRRB Life Survival Guidance within South Wales was updated in September 2018. This is also incorporated within Joint Fire Control Life Survival Guidance aide memoir and Training Note, currently under review.

Since 14th June 2017, a dedicated High Rise team was created to deliver training for dealing with fire incidents within the HRRB environment.

Attached documents:

- WECHP 03 High rise LSG
- LSG HIGH RISE - AIDE MEMOIRE & TRAINING NOTE

Please provide copies of relevant documentation (previous/new policies and/or evidence of proposed changes).