

## **Training, development and leadership**

Our next update in the journey to deliver the recommendations from the Fenella Morris Independent Culture Review highlights the meaningful progress we've made in transforming our approach to training, development, and leadership - setting the standards and expectations for a more inclusive, empowered, and future-ready Service.

Neil Davies, Head of Training and Development, commented:

*“Creating a culture where everyone feels respected, supported, and empowered isn't just a goal - it's a responsibility. The steps we're taking now, from inclusive training to leadership development, are shaping a Service that reflects the values we stand for. As we look to the future, we're building a Service that's not only fit for today, but ready for tomorrow.”*

## **Setting a new standard for behaviour**

Respect, inclusion, and integrity are at the heart of everything we do - and now, they're embedded in every step of our training journey.

All recruits and staff across the Service must now complete the *Taking Care of Behaviours* (TCoB) programme. The training sets clear expectations for behaviour across the Service, using real-life scenarios and practical guidance. Our values are reinforced through posters, workshops, and resources at every stage.

More than 85% of staff have also undertaken DICE training, either face-to-face or online.

Our DICE Champions network is now active across the Service. Our champions are based on stations and across departments, and are leading the way in promoting diversity, inclusion, cohesion, and equity.

## **Training and development**

Through our partnership with Cardiff and Vale College (CAVC), the one-day *Living the Values* course delivered by CAVC has been launched and will be delivered to all new instructors, corporate staff working with apprentices, cadet instructors, and the learning and development team. This training reinforces our core values and supports consistent standards, ensuring all staff and instructors are equipped to model and uphold them in their roles.

A new Level 3 Award in Education and Training (L3 AET) programme has been introduced to support instructors who do not currently hold a teaching qualification. Delivered by Cardiff and Vale College (CAVC), this is a closed course and includes

training for business fire safety (BFS) staff to facilitate delivery of new qualification Level 2 Award in Carrying Out Fire Safety Checks, to benefit operational staff.

### **Leadership for the future**

We have launched a comprehensive leadership and development programme, delivered in partnership with Academi Wales, for our executive and senior leadership teams. The programme includes facilitated sessions, diagnostics, and coaching on inclusive leadership, self-reflection, and building trust.

In April 2025, we launched our new *Leadership and Personal Development Academy*. Open to all staff, the Academy offers workshops, group coaching, and development pathways for everyone—from new firefighters to senior leaders. The launch of the Academy brought together staff and external experts for hands-on learning and open discussion. In July 2025, we launched the New Personal Development Prospectus, a dynamic and comprehensive guide to the wide range of opportunities available through our Learning and Development team.

We have held multiple learning and development sessions including:

- The Leading Others Programme, which welcomed 50 attendees
- 36 members of staff participated in the Leading the Function Programme
- 9 delegates joined the Pioneer Programme
- An 18-month Senior Leadership Team (SLT) development programme has also been designed to support strategic growth
- We have held middle manager sessions led by Professor Steven Carver and the Red Arrows.

Looking ahead, the theme for 2026 is *Learning to Living — Making Leadership Real*, focusing on embedding leadership into everyday practice.

We have held sessions with external speakers and staff across the Service. 70 middle leaders and members of the Senior Leadership Team attended the Red Arrows Debrief and Just Culture Session. Nine attendees from SWFRS participated in the WFS National Training and Development weekend. Over 100 middle leaders and staff from across the Service attended a session on learning lessons on risk and innovation from the Space Industry with Professor Steven Carver.

### **Updated training and equipment**

Since January 2024, we have trained 142 new recruits at our Operational Training, Leadership and Personal Development Academy. Our wholetime recruits' courses have now been extended with an additional week of values and standards training.

We now have lived-experience sessions as part of our regular training. These sessions, featuring both internal and external voices, help staff connect with the real impact of actions and decisions.

### **Embedding the change in everyday practice**

- More open conversations about values, standards, and inclusion—at every level of the Service.
- Visible DICE Champions and new internal resources to help you connect, learn, and get involved.
- Leadership that listens, reflects, and acts—supported by new development pathways and coaching.
- Training that’s practical, relevant, and accessible, with real-life stories and interactive learning.
- A culture where everyone is encouraged to speak up, challenge poor behaviour, and support each other.

### **Measuring the change**

Cultural feedback from learners has been positive, with 97% reporting that they enjoy the apprenticeship experience—an increase from 91% in 2023. Additionally, 97% rated SWFRS as very good or good in providing safety support. We have also received strong ratings for wellbeing, with 94% of learners recognising our encouragement of wellbeing, and 93% rating its overall wellbeing support as very good or good.

Every conversation, every training session, and every act of leadership helps shape the future of our Service. Whether you're a new recruit or a senior leader, everyone has a role in building a respectful, inclusive culture. Together, we're creating a workplace where everyone feels safe, respected, and valued.