



ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

Internal Audit Progress Report

27 November 2024

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CONTENTS

Key messages.....	3
1 Final reports.....	5

Appendices

Appendix A: Progress against the internal audit plan 2024/25.....	7
Appendix B: Other matters.....	8
Appendix C: Key performance indicators.....	9

KEY MESSAGES

The internal audit plan for 2024/25 was approved by the Audit and Governance Committee at the 25 July 2024 meeting. This report provides an update on progress against the plan and summarises the results of our work to date.



We have issued one final report as part of the 2024/25 internal audit plan since the Audit and Governance Committee meeting in July 2024:

- **Driving Licence Checks 1.24/25 (Partial Assurance)**

A summary of the outcome of these reviews is provided in Section 1. [\[To discuss and note\]](#)

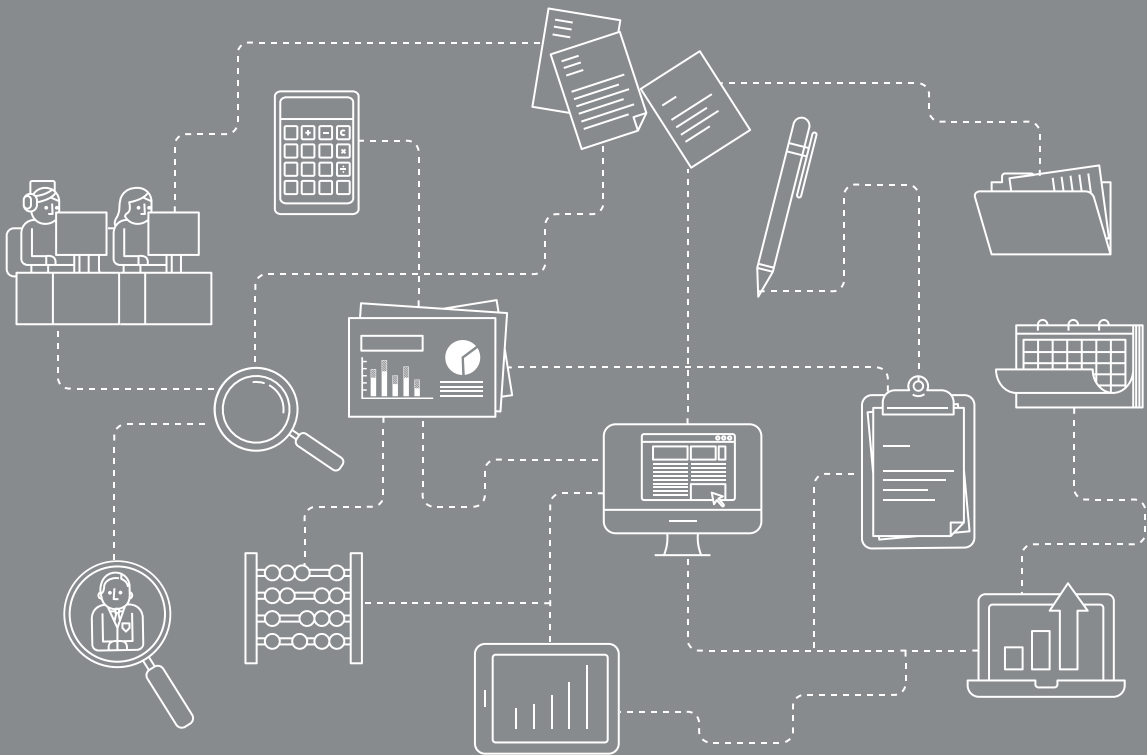
Details of the progress made against the internal audit plan are included at Appendix A. [\[To note\]](#)

We have issued the following client briefings to management prior to this Audit and Governance Committee:

- Emergency Services News Briefing – August 2024
- Final Emerging Risk Radar – Summer 2024
- Client Briefing on Internal Audit Code of Practice. [\[For information\]](#)

Final Reports

01



1 FINAL REPORTS

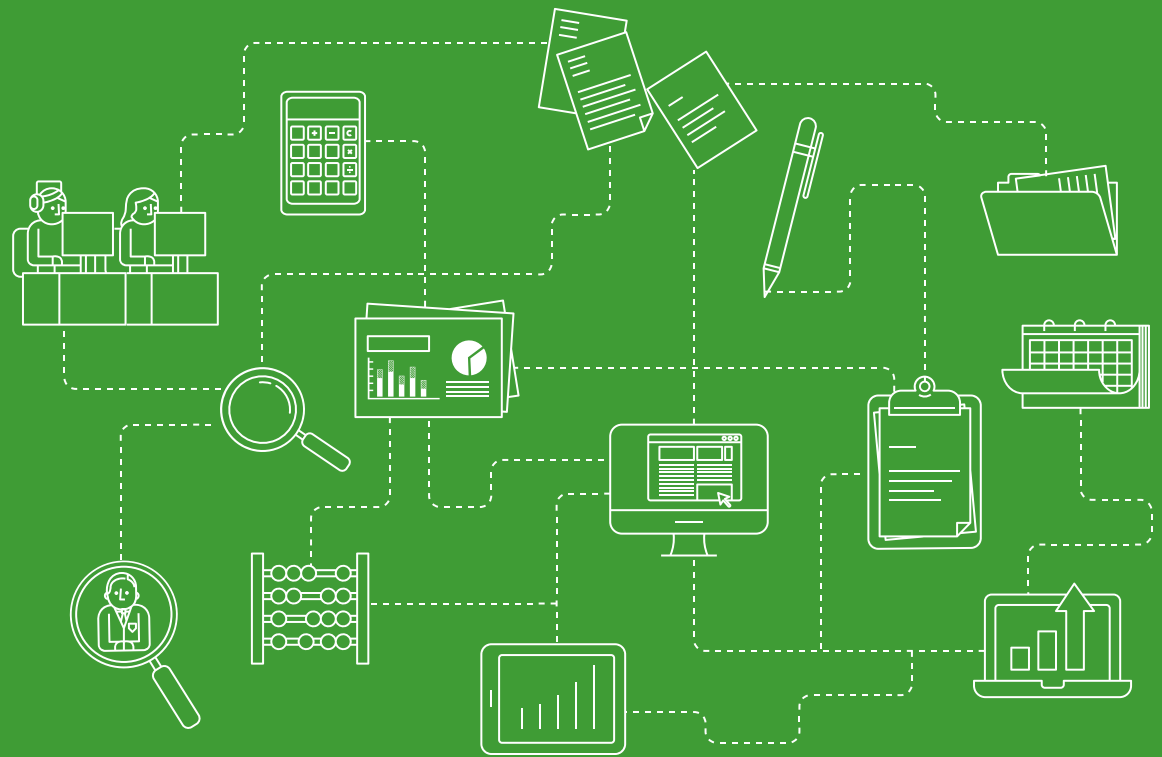
1.1 Summary of final reports being presented to this Committee

This section summarises the reports that have been finalised since the last meeting.

Assignment	Opinion issued	Actions agreed			
		Adv	L	M	H
<p>Driving Licence Checks</p> <p>We identified areas of weakness in the current control framework. We found there to be a lack of an auditable trail for the requesting of specific training sessions for drivers in the Service, we were unable to confirm whether training was attended prior to the driving of any vehicle and we also found that there were no checks undertaken on what vehicles individuals could drive in line with their licence. We therefore found it would be beneficial for this information to be retained centrally detailing this (for example using a new form). We also identified instances whereby pool cars were being checked out without a request form being completed and we found there to be a lack of confirmation by Business Support of training attendance and up to date driving licences being in place on DAVIS. There was also a lack of reporting to senior management on driving licence compliance in DAVIS</p> <p>We did also identify controls that were well designed and operating effectively. Specifically, job descriptions were maintained on the intranet and these detailed driving licence requirements where necessary and access to DAVIS was restricted to only those who needed it (Business Support and Driving Instructors). Sample testing also found there to be up to date driving licences and supporting information on DAVIS with no checks (photocard or licences) overdue and this was supported by the monthly checking of expiring licences within the next 90 days by Business Support.</p>	Partial Assurance	3	1	1	1

Appendices

02



APPENDIX A: PROGRESS AGAINST THE INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2024/25

Assignment and Executive Lead	Status / Opinion issued	Actions agreed				Target Committee meeting (as per IA plan / change controls*)	Actual Committee meeting
		A	L	M	H		
Driving Licence Checks 1.23/24	Partial Assurance	3	1	1	1	December 2024	December 2024
Payroll Provider - Dataplan	Fieldwork in progress					March 2024	
Fire Fighter Pension Administration	29 November 2024					March 2024	
Risk Information	02 December 2024					March 2024	
Discipline and Grievance Handling	04 January 2025					March 2024	
Operational Vehicle Compliance	17 January 2025					March 2024	
Key Financial Controls	24 February 2025					July 2024	
Risk Management	27 February 2025					July 2024	
Follow Up	05 March 2025					July 2024	
Cyber	Planning stage					July 2024	

* The timing of these audits have been changed to accommodate staff availabilities (we have not noted any issues with these timing changes).

APPENDIX B: OTHER MATTERS

Detailed below are the changes to the audit plan:

There have been no agreed changes to the internal audit plan so far this financial year.

Quality assurance and continual improvement

To ensure that RSM remains compliant with the PSIAS framework we have a dedicated internal Quality Assurance Team who undertake a programme of reviews to ensure the quality of our audit assignments. This is applicable to all Heads of Internal Audit, where a sample of their clients will be reviewed. Any findings from these reviews are used to inform the training needs of our audit teams.

In addition to this, any feedback we receive from our post assignment surveys, client feedback, appraisal processes and training needs assessments is also taken into consideration to continually improve the service we provide and inform any training requirements.

Post assignment surveys

We are committed to delivering an excellent client experience every time we work with you. Your feedback helps us to improve the quality of the service we deliver to you. Following the completion of each product, we include a link to a brief survey in each report we issue.

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Currently, following the completion of each product we deliver we attached a brief survey for the client lead to complete.

We would like to give you the opportunity to consider how frequently you receive these feedback requests; and whether the current format works. Options available are:

- After each review (current option).
- Monthly / quarterly / annual feedback request.
- Executive lead only, or executive lead and key team members.

APPENDIX C: KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

	Delivery				Quality		
	Target	Actual	Notes*		Target	Actual	Notes*
Audits commenced in line with original timescales*	Yes	Yes		Conformance with PSIAS	Yes	Yes	
Draft reports issued within 10 days of debrief meeting	10	1 / 1 (100%)		Liaison with external audit to allow, where appropriate and required, the external auditor to place reliance on the work of internal audit	Yes	Yes	
Management responses received within 10 days of draft report	10 days	0 / 1 (0%)	Driver License Checks was 38 days	Response time for all general enquiries for assistance	2 working days	2 days	
Final report issued within 3 days of management response	3 days	1 / 1 (100%)		Response for emergencies and potential fraud	1 working day	1 day	

Notes

This takes into account changes agreed by management and Audit Committee during the year. Through employing an agile or a flexible approach to our service delivery we are able to respond to your assurance needs.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT

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The matters raised in this report are only those which came to our attention during the course of our review and are not necessarily a comprehensive statement of all the weaknesses that exist or all improvements that might be made. Actions for improvements should be assessed by you for their full impact. This report, or our work, should not be taken as a substitute for management's responsibilities for the application of sound commercial practices. We emphasise that the responsibility for a sound system of internal controls rests with management and our work should not be relied upon to identify all strengths and weaknesses that may exist. Neither should our work be relied upon to identify all circumstances of fraud and irregularity should there be any.

Our report is prepared solely for the confidential use of Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue Service, and solely for the purposes set out herein. This report should not therefore be regarded as suitable to be used or relied on by any other party wishing to acquire any rights from RSM UK Risk Assurance Services LLP for any purpose or in any context. Any third party which obtains access to this report or a copy and chooses to rely on it (or any part of it) will do so at its own risk. To the fullest extent permitted by law, RSM UK Risk Assurance Services LLP will accept no responsibility or liability in respect of this report to any other party and shall not be liable for any loss, damage or expense of whatsoever nature which is caused by any person's reliance on representations in this report.

This report is released to you on the basis that it shall not be copied, referred to or disclosed, in whole or in part (save as otherwise permitted by agreed written terms), without our prior written consent.

We have no responsibility to update this report for events and circumstances occurring after the date of this report.

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AUDIT OUTCOME OVERVIEW – DRIVING LICENCE CHECKS

Background: A driving licence audit was undertaken at Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) as part of the approved internal audit plan for 2024/25. The objective of the audit was to allow management to take assurance over the processes in place to ensure that staff hold the appropriate driving licences.

The Service uses the DAVIS (Driver and Vehicle Information Solutions) platform to manage driver and vehicle compliance. DAVIS facilitates the retention of driving licences and issues notifications when driving licences (both photocard and licence) are due to expire. Additionally, DAVIS is integrated with the DVLA, enabling automated, accurate and up to date driving licence checks.

The FireWatch system is also used to record training sessions attended by individuals and their respective dates.





HR are responsible for ensuring job descriptions are available for all roles and that these include the driving licence requirements. Business Support maintain DAVIS and ensure all licence checks are in date. The Driving School are responsible for providing training to all drivers and for ensuring this is conducted on three year rolling basis.

Conclusion:

We identified areas of weakness in the current control framework. We found there to be a lack of an auditable trail for the requesting of specific training sessions for drivers in the Service, we were unable to confirm whether training was attended prior to the driving of any vehicle and we also found that there were no checks undertaken on what vehicles individuals could drive in line with their licence. We therefore found it would be beneficial for this information to be retained centrally detailing this (for example using a new form). We also identified instances whereby pool cars were being checked out without a request form being completed and we found there to be a lack of confirmation by Business Support of training attendance and up to date driving licences being in place on DAVIS. There was also a lack of reporting to senior management on driving licence compliance in DAVIS

We did also identify controls that were well designed and operating effectively. Specifically, job descriptions were maintained on the intranet and these detailed driving licence requirements where necessary and access to DAVIS was restricted to only those who needed it (Business Support and Driving Instructors). Sample testing also found there to be up to date driving licences and supporting information on DAVIS with no checks (photocard or licences) overdue and this was supported by the monthly checking of expiring licences within the next 90 days by Business Support.

Internal audit opinion:

				<p>Taking account of the issues identified, the Authority can take partial assurance that the controls upon which the organisation relies to manage this risk are suitably designed, consistently applied or effective.</p> <p>Action is needed to strengthen the control framework to manage the identified risk(s).</p>
Minimal Assurance	Partial Assurance	Reasonable Assurance	Substantial Assurance	

Audit themes:

Driver Training - Through sample testing, we found that while there was a record of the driver training completed by each individual, we found there was no mention of which driver training courses were required by their role in the service and there was no mention of when the individual was due to begin driving. This lack of documentation could result in a risk of individuals driving without proper training, posing potential safety hazards and financial and legal risks for the Service. **(Medium)**

Pool Cars - Testing found two instances (out of five) where a pool car had been 'checked out' by a member of staff for driving before filling in a request form. We also found Business Support do not carry out checks to confirm that the information populated on the request forms is accurate (driving licences are on DAVIS and training has been completed). If request forms are not completed and checks are not conducted to ensure driving training has been completed or that a driving licence is registered on DAVIS, there is risk of unsafe driving practices, increasing the risk of accidents and injuries, which could result in potential financial and legal consequences. **(High)**

Reporting - There was no reporting to senior management on issues relating to the driver training required / completion or compliance levels of driving licences recorded on DAVIS. There is therefore a risk that senior management may be unaware of potential issues, leading to a lack of necessary interventions and in the worst case, non compliance with legal or regulatory requirements, resulting in fines or legal action. **(Low)**

Regular Checks - We found there to be no regular checks on whether the licence covers the class of vehicle the individual is employed to drive and as such, there is a risk that unqualified drivers may operate vehicles they are not licensed for, leading to increased accidents and legal liabilities. **(Medium)**

Driving Licence Requirements

Through discussion with the HR Advisor Team Lead we were advised that job descriptions are in place for all existing roles and these detail driving licence requirements. Through walkthrough of the intranet, we confirmed that there was a page that included all current jobs and their job descriptions.

Further discussion confirmed that where a role doesn't already exist, it will go through a job evaluation process with various stakeholders involved who decide on the competencies and different driving licence requirements. This will then be included on the job description and included on the intranet page.

Job Descriptions

We selected a sample of five job roles (Community Safety Adviser, Driver Trainer, Hub Prevention Manager, Hydrant Inspector, Lead Driver Trainer).

We reviewed their job descriptions and confirmed in all instances that they included driving licence requirements. Requirements varied depending on the role and included things such as, full UK driving licence and category C unrestricted driving licence held for a minimum of three years, with no more than three penalty points. The job descriptions also detailed whether the requirements were needed on recruitment or would be gained through training.

Licence Management

We selected a sample of 20 members of staff that required a driving licence with their role and confirmed in all instances that a driving licence and supporting information (such as date of birth, address, penalty points etc.) was uploaded to DAVIS under each profile and all were in date at the time of our review.

System Access

We selected a sample of five members of staff with access to DAVIS and confirmed in all instances they were either from Business Support or were a Driving Instructor, who required access with their job role and were still employed by the organisation at the time of our review.

SUMMARY OF MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

The action priorities are defined as*:

High

Immediate management attention is necessary.

Medium

Timely management attention is necessary.

Low

There is scope for enhancing control or improving efficiency.

Ref	Action	Priority	Responsible Owner	Date
1	<p>Form 144 will be completed, detailing the training requirements for the individual. The form will also be updated to include a planned first day of driving and the vehicles the individual can drive that are covered by the licence held.</p> <p>Once all training requirements have been met, forms will be signed and dated to confirm that the individual is qualified to drive the required vehicles.</p> <p>Forms will be retained centrally for ease of access.</p> <p>Revalidation of training will continue to be monitored via the training logs.</p>	Medium	Jordan Fawdon	November 2024
2	<p>We will ensure that the request form is completed by all drivers prior to a pool car being checked out for use.</p> <p>Business Support will also conduct checks on all requests and confirm that driver training has been completed and the individuals driving licence is registered on DAVIS.</p>	High	Samantha Teeling	Immediately