1. We can provide blended and digital learning consultancy, we could design the blended learning programmes as a whole and produce any digital learning elements needed. We are, however, not subject matter experts or face-to-face trainers - so we would not be involved in the physical delivery of the programmes. Is it still worth us submitting a proposal for this opportunity? If so, please answer our following questions:

- **Any eLearning options would be required to support and enhance the practical aspects of the training delivery programme, this would require a detailed understanding of the subject matter and topics to be covered, to meet national scrutiny.**

2. How many participants do you expect annually for the Area Manager and Station Manager programmes? Is this going to grow?

- **Initial programme as outlined in the ITT.**
- **Future years will be dependent on fire services recruitment needs, albeit we do anticipate the programme to be an option for recruitment as part of a services work force planning.**

3. Would there be any value in making some elements of the programmes available to existing Area Managers and Station Managers (any digital learning will be very scalable, so this could give you more value for your investment)?

- **Current station and area managers will have already completed this level of training and development as they progressed with their operational training, however other staff may find this helpful, for example services that may not have e learning packages for new recruits.**

4. Is there an appetite to reduce travel / time away from home / time away from their station (obviously any physical skills will still require in-person learning, however some of the material will lend itself better to self-paced digital learning)?

- **This would be welcomed, although the candidate will need to complete the programme within the agreed timescales.**

5. P.9 Please could you give an example of the kind of thing you expect to see when you say 'suppliers will be expected to identify efficiency improvements throughout the contract period without reductions in the level and quality of service provided. Such improvements should be reflected in the suppliers pricing proposals'

- **Example of delivery, e learning, online tuition, flexible locations when classroom based and not requiring training grounds.**

6. P.9 In the table at the bottom you mention a confidentiality document. Is there an NDA that we need to sign?

- **Yes please, this is on the following link:**
  https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/ab74111c-34a0-40d2-9c5d-b833e1799329

7. P.10 you mention a start date / go-live date of 1 April 2023 in the table at the top. Please can you clarify if this a kick-off date for the project or the date by which you want the programme to be delivered/ start?

- **The contract for the training and delivery elements has yet to be confirmed, but our planning assumption is that it will commence in April / May 23, after our national recruitment campaign.**

8. p.10/ 11 how do the 8 week Station Manager Operational Training Programme and the 6 week Area Manager Operational Training Programme map to the timetables on p10? E.g. does module 1 (5 months) cover the first 3 weeks etc..?

- **Yes, Module 1 Covers the start / week one for the candidate**

9. P.11 What do you mean by 'The successful provider will work with the relevant services for payment details as this is not a nationally funded programme'. If we are providing overall learning design and consultancy for the programme, how will this work with funding?

- **Individual services will be paying for their own candidate.**

10. Please clarify how you will evaluate the tenders on price when you have said that 'providers should not be concerned if they feel they cannot deliver all elements of the training programmes', as you will not be comparing like-with-like

- **If a provider, provides details on one element of training it will be marked inline with the ITT, and also how it supports the candidate and our overarching aim of providing, Competent, Confident and Credible candidates.**

11. Has consideration been given to holding a potential supplier meeting prior to the tender submission date?

- **Due to the current timeline and potential providers we do not feel we can meet all of the providers during the timescales and provide a consistent and transparent approach. If this is a concern, then please submit a specific question (s).**

12. Is this Tender intended to result in a single supplier, or is it designed to establish a framework of suppliers?

- **There is an option for a single supplier approach, and this has obvious merits in the overall management of the programme, however, there is the option to segment the training if suitable.**

13. What are the required sources of bibliography for the Fire & Rescue related elements of the programme?

- **The supplier would be required to signpost/provide handouts/online and training notes throughout the operational / command programmes, however, the candidates will be able to access their bibliography via their home service. There is also ready and accessible reading material via UK FRS, for example, NOG.**

14. For the visual imagery used within the training materials on the programme are there any restrictions regarding service logos or manufacturer details?

- **We would check with home services, although as this is a national programme overseen by the NFCC we wouldn't anticipate pushback.**

15. Which authority would sign off the detailed training content, would this be the NFCC or would it be done by individual services?

- **During the programme design we set up 4 working groups, one being the Operational Foundation Programme and Command,. The NFCC Direct Entry Board would ratify and sign off the detailed content with ongoing consultation with the services. The DE Board meets monthly.**

16. Would the service provider be required to agree service specific elements of the programme with individual services e.g., London Underground procedures with London Fire Brigade?

- **Individual training related to services specific Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP), will be dealt with by their home service, although the provider may want to add case studies or introduce a number of evening sessions covering case studies where the NFCC could coordinate a guest speaker.**

17. What will be the contract duration?

- **The initial contract would run for a 3-year duration covering the entirety of the Station Manager and Area Manager programme. For example Cohort One commences training in April 2023 and concluded in April 2026.**

- **There would be the option to extend the contract if the demand from FRSs instigates a new set of cohorts to run in the following years**

- **The running of the course will be dependent, as covered, on the sector's need.**

18. What will be the criteria, or metrics, for evaluating the performance of the successful contractor(s)?

- **The NFCC would work with the supplier and agree on quarterly contract meetings covering:**

  - **Locally agreed performance indicators,**

  - **Review of the weekly feedback from candidates,**

  - **Review of the overall delivery of the programme will be completed in an agile manner by the NFCC Course Director (GM) who will be from an operational and training and delivery background.**

  - **Review that the programme is on track and delivered in line with the desired outcomes,**

  - **Provider to attend monthly TEAMS Meeting to provide an update to the DE Board,**

19. What will be the process for managing any future requirements for content refresh or required additions to course content?

- **Any additions outside of the contract/agreement would require additional discussion and agreement on cost, albeit we would expect that updating the programme on a year-on-year basis would be completed at the supplier's costs.**

20. The ITT details the opportunity for providers to be involved in "one of more of the product requirements" please can clarification be provided as to what the individual product requirements are?

- **The product requirements would be to provide a route and delivery method for the training of the relevant officers, be it:**

  - **Station and Area Manager Programme covering the details in the embedded spreadsheet, which was updated on the 13 of October 2022. The topics have been agreed on via the national working groups and signed off at the board level, albeit the provider has flexibility in how this is delivered. We would also welcome some online options be it e-learning or TEAMS / ZOOM to**

alleviate travel and overnight stays. The candidate will also complete training at their home service during the consolidation periods of the training programme.

- **On command, this will not just be about the assessment process, it will be introducing the candidate to the role of the IC and creating a formatted syllabus that can then be supported by their host service as we start building technical knowledge. We also anticipate the majority of the training, certainly at L1 and L2 will be practical based on a training ground, supported with simulated activities. The candidate will also complete training at their home service during the consolidation periods of the training programme.**

- **On the overall training delivery, certainly on the Operational Foundation Programme, it is not the intent to create "firefighters"; it is to provide a solid base of knowledge to provide support and understanding as they progress to the next stages of the 3 / 2-year programme.**

21. Are there any 'Fit to Train' requirements for trainers delivering the required courses?

- **The training team will need to have a level of experience and hold any relevant qualification standards, for example, BAI, RTCI to provide a level of assurance,**

- **The training team will need to have a depth of experience that can be evidenced with CPD, to ensure the training programme has a national level of credibility,**

- **The command training will need to be delivered and signed off by accredited staff, for example in line with Skills for Justice,**

- **The supplier's training team will be supported by an NFCC Group Manager who will be seconded for an 18-month period, this individual will be the conduit from the training provider to the NFCC and host service.**

22. The ITT details that the SM and AM programme can be delivered as a cohort, with some Area Managers having the option of choosing to complete the 8-week SM programme. With this being the case, would AM's still be required to additionally complete the AM programme given there appears to be duplication across the two programmes?

- **The AMs could, as we have highlighted complete all of the elements included in the SM programme, this will be a service decision. They could also attend and "dip into" a cohort of SM as required to complete their assigned 6 weeks of training. This is to ensure the training provider has a standalone course that can be adapted to fit both distinct roles.**

- **The content and approach for AMs are an outcome of national collaboration.**

23. In the Workbooks embedded in the ITT document entitled "AM Awareness Prog – 270722" and "SM Found Prog – 270722" there are three tabs included named "Sheet 1", "Details" and "Sheet 2" it is not clear of the relevance of these worksheets to the ITT, can clarification be provided please?

- **This is an error and was clarified on the 13 of October 2022 and should be ignored.**

24. Re: where you are now: What do you do now to train SMs and AMs? What works well and what doesn't? Have you carried out any kind of training needs analysis in order to create this brief - if so could you share it?
- **Currently station and area managers start their careers as firefighters and progress through the organisation completing learning and development over time,**

- **We have some currently serving strategic managers who have completed a direct entry approach, the difference in this project is that it will be a nationally agreed and coordinated,**
- **The syllabus has been built on existing training and in line with our national doctrine that covered the details of a national approach to a TNA. [National Operational Guidance Homepage | NFCC CPO (ukfrs.com)](#)**

25. Learning structure and scope: Re: structure and timetabling 3.1 - can we ask for some clarity?
-Station Manager Operational Training Programme.
(Operational Foundation Programme (OFP) and the Professional Development Programme (PDP))
-Area Manager Operational Training Programme.
(The Operational Awareness Programme (OWP) and the Professional Development Programme (PDP))
-Incident Command - L1, L2, L3
Does the timetable detailed in 3.1 of your ITT cover all of the above? Meaning the 8 Week OFP / 6 Week OWP are part of the first module? Or is the timetable just Incidental Command 1,2,3 which would mean the 8 Week OFP / 6 Week OWP take place prior to this?

- **The timetable for the SM / AM outlined below is the time period that all of the training must be delivered.**

Station Manager – Timetable

Module 1	Consolidation	Module 2	Consolidation	Module 3	Consolidation
5 – Months	7 - Months	4 – Months	7 - Months	3 – Months	10 – Months

Area Manager – Timetable

Module 1	Consolidation	Module 2	Consolidation	Module 3	Consolidation
2 – Months	6 - Months	3 – Months	6 - Months	3 – Months	4 – Months

- **Module 1 covers the operational foundation / awareness programme in both timetables.**
- **The command training will commence in the later modules, 2 and 3.**

Also, regarding the national coordination of the programme (3.2) - how big is the potential cohort/ how many learners would take part?

- **The cohort numbers are outlined in the ITT and below, albeit will depend on candidates being successful in our recruitment and selection process.**

> **5. Services & Candidate Numbers**
> We currently have 10 services that are supporting the national programme and have been working with the NFCC regarding outcomes and course content. The training programmes may need to accommodate the following placements:
>
> - Station Managers x 12
> - Area Managers x 1

26. Learning delivery:
We have some questions around what you expect of delivery:
1. It looks like you expect delivery to be a blend of mostly f2f/residential with some eLearning and virtual classroom. Can you clarify that we've understood that correctly, and if you have any other expectations about that blend, or other methods to be used?

- **Your understanding is correct.**

2. About the calendar of learning (f2f residential with eLearning and virtual classroom) – how final/fixed is this?

- **We are open for suggestions on the format.**

3. Who will deliver the f2f element of the programme? Would you prefer to find a single contractor who can deliver both? Can we tender for digital only?

- **There is an option for single supplier approach, and this has obvious merits in the overall management of the programme, however there is the option to segment the training if suitable.**

4. You mention 13 placements (3.5) – how do these fit in with the wider programme?

- **This is currently the agreed programme, with the aim of looking to expand this in the coming years. This approach will provide the sector with a range of options to compliment the current route in progression.**

5. Where will the digital elements of the training programme sit? LMS? Intranet? Web?

- **There is an option for e learning although there is not a nationally agreed learning and development platform.**

6. For any digital elements – would you be interested in interactive/game-based learning or do you expect using more traditional elearning?

- **Yes, this would be of interest in support of the operational training but cannot be seen as substitute.**

Re learner cohorts: The ITT mentions that you could potentially deliver SM/AM Foundation as a single cohort - where do you see the difference in learning content / delivery for that stage?
- **The eLearning could be the same with specific items addressed by their home fire service.**

Practicalities and general queries about delivery:
Re 2.19 Timetable: The ITT says that the contract is awarded in November but the contract start date isn't until April – is there a reason for this gap? Can any design/development work happen before April? It also says that the contract start date and go-live date are both on the 1st of April – can you expand on how this works?
- **The gap is to allow services to plan accordingly, and then progress in the new financial year.**
- **There could be an option to commence work, but this would be at the providers risk as payment wouldn't take place until the next financial year and would have a link to the success of the recruitment campaign.**

Re: contract / finance management: In the ITT you state
'The successful provider will work with the relevant services for payment details as this is not a nationally funded programme.'
and
'We currently have 10 services that are supporting the national programme and have been working with the NFCC regarding outcomes and course content.' (specifically, does this mean that the budget of £100k would be broken down and covered by separate providers? And the 10 services you mention are already signed up and anticipating costs of up to £10k each? What would this mean in practical terms re managing the contract and payments?)

Can you elaborate on these points and their implications please? What do they mean for us, and what are you looking for us to make clear or evidence in our submission?

- **The assumption that services have already signed up and anticipating up to £10K each is incorrect, the tender submissions will be judged in line with the scoring criteria in the ITT and will be judged on a case by case basis.**
- **The programme is being coordinated and delivered by the NFCC; the provider should treat this as one submission.**
- **The NFCC will coordinate the payment aspects with the services by acting as a conduit and coordinator.**

Re submission of costs and ongoing life costs: where it states *'The Supplier should ensure that the proposal includes all ... on-going life cost-plus anything else for which the supplier would expect to charge, to deliver a successful Service'* - do you mean yearly service level agreement costs by ongoing life cost? Can you clarify?

- **It means that all costs should be identified so we have clear picture of the finances we have available.**