



Prevention Evaluation Principles and Checklist

An Introduction to Prevention Evaluation

Prevention is an inherent and important part of fire and rescue service (FRS) activity as they do not just respond to demand, but seek to reduce risk through advice, interventions and education of communities to adopt safer behaviours, improving their safety, health and wellbeing.

As part of this approach, prevention initiatives are often delivered through partnerships and collaboration with stakeholders to ensure fire, water and road safety is delivered through effective and efficient prevention activity. This integration with other partners makes the FRS service a part of the 'system' of public service with organisations working together to use combined resources and data to improve outcomes. It follows that the way they evaluate their impact on promoting safety should include how they impact positively on people's lives.

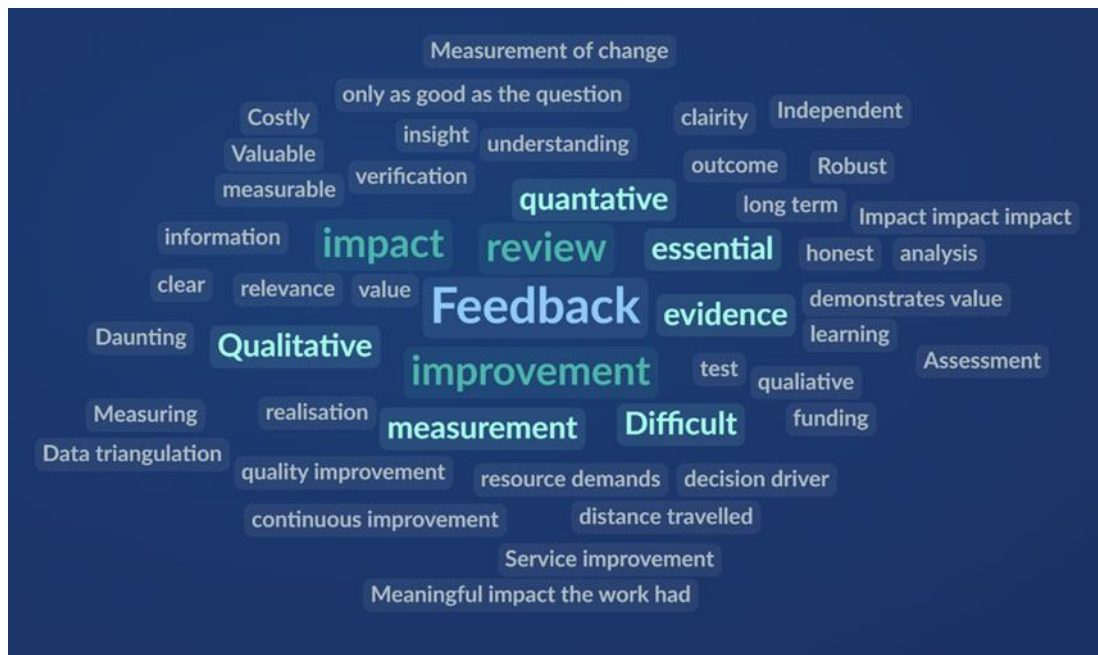
We are committed to improving the effectiveness and efficiency of FRSs. A robust, evidence-based process helps to ensure that we are delivering the best possible prevention activities aligned to FRSs' strategic objectives and would also assist the sector in both demonstrating its value and indeed in seeking additional funding or in commissioning rounds.

This is an introduction to evaluating your prevention activity. It introduces the rationale and principles around evaluation which you can build on from other resources linked to this document. As NFCC develops standardised evaluation tools for different types of prevention activity they will be linked along with examples of good practice.

What is evaluation?

Evaluation is a process used to explore the level of effectiveness of any activity, including prevention activity. It includes planning, gathering evidence, analysis, reporting and sharing findings. It helps to inform decisions about where to direct activity and its effectiveness and if it is an appropriate use of resources. It also highlights future improvement needs and determines whether to continue delivery or if it is transferable to other areas (as part of continuous improvement).

The figure below shows the feedback on how they would describe evaluation. This work was completed as part of NFCC's Prevention Evaluation Sharing Group.



There are different types of evaluation; we focus on the following in FRS prevention activity;

Process evaluation focusses on how the intervention was delivered, user and stakeholder engagement with the intervention. It results in certain outputs.

Effectiveness evaluation focusses on measuring the progress in the outcome that the activity has achieved. It results in certain outcomes.

Impact evaluation focusses on the difference the intervention has made to individuals' attitudes, intentions and behaviours. It results in certain change.

Principles

FRSs should be committed to the following principles when evaluating prevention activity;

- 1) The planning of evaluation comes first in the design, development, delivery and review of prevention activity.
- 2) The planning of evaluation assists in the design of activity in a way that can maximise learning.
- 3) The evaluation should be proportionate, scalable, fit for purpose and tailored to the type of prevention activity.
- 4) The evaluation is objective and open to finding out what is effective, impactful and improved.
- 5) Data collection quality is an important part of the evaluation process in order to produce valid reporting.

- 6) Evaluation methodology should always seek to evidence the impact of the intervention.
- 7) Stakeholder engagement is an integral part of the evaluation process – this includes the public, those delivering interventions, academics, researchers, those planning future interventions, and those providing scrutiny.
- 8) Ethical issues should be considered in advance and throughout the evaluation process
- 9) Recognise the importance of collaboration to deliver prevention activities. When activity is commissioned by partners, they should take responsibility for evaluating the impact of the prevention activity.

Quality Improvement Model



Plan

- Identify project/intervention outcomes and delivery/ theory of change
- Understand the purpose of the evaluation
- Choose the evaluation approach and define the questions to answer
- Design the method (including the data collection method)

Do

- Deliver the prevention activity (including recording of any evidence of the work)

Report

- Report evaluation and recommendations

Review

- Implement evaluation findings

Checklist

This can be used to support your planning and delivery of prevention evaluation.

- 1) Check whether an evaluation has been done before or whether existing research has addressed the issues you aim to evaluate and consider how you can learn from this. This could be national or local work.
- 2) Do you have a clear set of aims and objectives for the evaluation? This will provide the focus and allow you to plan to meet the project aims. Have you considered the public sector equality duty as part of your planning?
- 3) Do you have a clear plan in place to demonstrate the required tasks by when and by whom? Do examples or case studies exist to help develop your plan?
- 4) Is the proposal achievable within the timeframe? Does it need reducing to be more manageable?
- 5) Do you have a budget or resource for the evaluation? Have you considered shared resources?
- 6) Is a risk and issues register in place that includes the risks/barriers to meeting the aims and objectives? How will this be monitored?
- 7) What are the potential challenges or sensitivities? It is important to consider how to overcome these.
- 8) Who are your stakeholders? Does this include both those interested and involved? These may be individuals or multiple organisations. How will you communicate and engage? Do you have a stakeholder engagement strategy? Do you need to include specific target groups that need to be engaged?
- 9) What ethical issues does your evaluation raise? Think about how to address ethical issues. Have you sought the necessary permissions for your evaluation? Have you explored the data collectors/evaluators as part of your key ethical considerations?
- 10) What are the best approaches/methods to use to collect the data required to answer the evaluation questions? Are these feasible for an evaluation being conducted remotely? If not, how can you adapt them? How will you recruit participants/ access information?
- 11) How will you analyse your data? Do you have access to any necessary software?
- 12) How will you publish and disseminate the findings/outcomes after the work? What is your agreed plan and resource to do this? Does this link to your communications plan?

Key points

Identify the purpose of the evaluation and set clear aims and objectives

Plan your evaluation early with your key stakeholders

Involve all key stakeholders and ensure appropriate public involvement

Understand the evidence base and how the service will lead to the desired outcomes

Share your findings and **act** on them

Signposting

The [Magenta Book](#) which is the HM Government guide to evaluations provides further information on the principles outlined in this Guide.

Prevention evaluation tools are being developed and launched by NFCC's Prevention Hub. These tools have been developed by FRSs and other key stakeholders. They will be hosted in the Prevention area of the NFCC website.

Thank you to all the Fire and Rescue Services who contributed to the development of this document.