



CAREERS

WE ARE SFRS
YOU ARE SFRS

For the Appointment of

DEPUTY CHIEF OFFICER

(October 2026)

CONTENTS

1. <u>Introduction</u>	1
2. <u>About Us</u>	2
3. <u>SFRS Organisational Structure</u>	4
4. <u>The Opportunity</u>	6
5. <u>What We're Looking For</u>	7
6. <u>Why Scotland?</u>	12
7. <u>Recruitment Timeline</u>	13



1. INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your interest in the role of Deputy Chief Officer with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS).

This is one of the most significant leadership opportunities in the UK fire and rescue sector. As a member of our Strategic Leadership Team, the Deputy Chief Officer will play a key role in shaping the future direction of Scotland's national fire and rescue service and ensuring we continue to meet the needs of the communities we serve.

SFRS protects one of the largest geographical areas served by any fire and rescue service in the world, supporting communities from major urban centres to some of the most remote and rural parts of Scotland. We are proud of the contribution our people make every day to improving safety, building resilience and supporting communities across the country.

As Scotland continues to evolve, so too must our Service. The Deputy Chief Officer will help lead that journey, providing strategic leadership across Service Delivery while supporting organisational transformation, innovation and continuous improvement. This is a role that combines operational credibility with executive leadership and the opportunity to influence public service delivery at a national level.

We are seeking an experienced and inspiring leader who can build confidence, develop high-performing teams and work collaboratively with employees, representative bodies, government and partners. Above all, we are looking for someone who shares our commitment to public service and to building on the culture and values that make SFRS a great organisation.

This is an opportunity to make a lasting difference for the people and communities of Scotland. I look forward to hearing from you and wish you every success with your application.

STUART STEVENS KFSM

Chief Officer, SFRS



2. ABOUT US



The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) was established in April 2013. Since then we have built upon the work of the legacy Services from which we were formed. We are also proud to walk in the footsteps of all the Fire Service staff who have served Scotland over the last 200 years. As we look forward, we will maintain our values and traditions while ensuring they remain relevant to Scotland's future.

SFRS has a proud history of serving communities and working with our partners to keep people and communities safe; to achieve our mission of :

**“Working Together
for a Safer Scotland”.**

The primary statutory duties of the service remain the same. Our partners and employees continue to see a service focused on:

- Protecting our communities by working to encourage people and businesses to take action to prevent fires happening.
- Being equipped and ready to respond to emergencies.
- Delivering excellence and best value.
- Continuous Improvement.

Our strategic priorities are set out within the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 2022; these represent Scottish Government's high-level ambition for a progressive, skilled and dynamic fire and rescue service.

A service which carries the shared values of our public sector; which works to combat the threats and risks of modern times; provides national consistency, coordination and specialist resource; and that holds local delivery and prevention at its heart; that has the support of local communities and that is focused on priorities which are relevant to, and serve the interests of local people.

Audit Scotland and HM Fire Service Inspectorate audit and inspect us and the services we provide. Their Memorandum of Understanding sets out their distinct powers and responsibilities and outlines how they will conduct their audits and inspections.

There are further opportunities and challenges lying ahead for the SFRS as we continue the journey of public service reform and transformation in Scotland. However, the challenges of meeting changing demand on our services within a tightening financial framework are not unique to our Service.

Our vision, set out within our SFRS Strategy 2025-28, is:

“To be a leading, sustainable, modern and technologically advanced fire and rescue service that is fit to meet the challenges of Scotland’s future.”

The SFRS must evolve, not for the sake of change, but because Scotland is changing. As a Service, it is our duty to respond to those new risks brought about by change. We will do this in new and innovative ways, whilst continuing to deliver our core services. Innovation in the design and delivery of our Service, in the technology and information we use, and how we work with our partners and communities will be the key to our success.



3. SFRS ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

THE SFRS BOARD

The Scottish Government appoints a Chair and 11 others to serve as members of the SFRS Board. The Board provides strategic direction, support and guidance to SFRS ensuring that it operates effectively and that the Scottish Government's priorities are implemented. Board members are personally and corporately accountable for the Board's actions and decisions. They also scrutinise plans and proposals and hold the Chief Officer and Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) to account.

STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP TEAM

The SLT is responsible for delivering the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service on behalf of the Board.



CHIEF OFFICER

Stuart Stevens KFSM

Overall responsibility for the leadership and day-to-day management of SFRS and the effective delivery of its statutory duties.



DEPUTY CHIEF OFFICER

Andrew Watt

Responsible for the day to day running of the operational side of the organisation.



DEPUTY CHIEF OFFICER, CORPORATE SERVICES

Sarah O'Donnell

Leadership and strategic direction across SFRS corporate functions.



ASSISTANT CHIEF OFFICER, OPERATIONAL DELIVERY

David Farries

Director of Operational Delivery.



ASSISTANT CHIEF OFFICER, TRAINING, SAFETY, WELLBEING AND ASSURANCE

Craig McGoldrick

Responsibility for ensuring that we can provide a safe and effective operational response to emergencies when they occur.



ASSISTANT CHIEF OFFICER, PREVENTION

Jon Henderson

Responsible for the identification of risk, the delivery of activities to prevent fires and incidents and for the protection of people within workplaces and public buildings.



DIRECTOR OF GOVERNANCE, STRATEGY AND CHANGE

Mark McAteer

Strategic planning, performance, communications and engagement, change, and corporate business support.



DIRECTOR OF FINANCE, DIGITAL AND INFRASTRUCTURE

James Wallace

Finance, procurement, digital services, infrastructure, asset management, and environmental sustainability.



DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE, COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

Penny McIntyre

Leadership of the People, Communications and Engagement directorate.

THE SENIOR MANAGEMENT BOARD (SMB)

The SMB reports directly to the SLT and comprises Heads of Function responsible for the strategic leadership, development and delivery of services across the Service's directorates.

SFRS delivers its services through six directorates:

- Operational Delivery
- Prevention
- Training, Safety, Wellbeing and Assurance
- People, Communications and Engagement
- Finance, Digital and Infrastructure
- Governance, Strategy and Change

4. THE OPPORTUNITY

The Deputy Chief Officer is a member of the Strategic Leadership Team and provides visible and influential executive leadership across SFRS.

Working with the Chief Officer and Strategic Leadership Team colleagues, the postholder will help shape the strategic direction of the Service and ensure its effective delivery.

The successful candidate will join SFRS at a time when transformation, continuous improvement and sustainable public-service delivery are central to its future. They will help ensure that services remain safe, sustainable, effective and responsive to changing community needs, while maintaining high standards of operational assurance and corporate governance.



NATIONAL INFLUENCE

Shape strategic decision-making at the highest level.



SERVICE DELIVERY

Lead prevention, protection, intervention and response across Scotland.



OPERATIONAL COMMAND

Undertake senior command responsibilities during major incidents and national resilience events.



TRANSFORMATION

Lead improvement, innovation and sustainable organisational change.



PEOPLE AND CULTURE

Develop senior teams and build organisational capability.



PARTNERSHIP

Build confidence with the Board, government, partners, employees and communities.

5. WHAT WE'RE LOOKING FOR

We are looking for an experienced, credible and influential Fire and Rescue Service leader with the strategic leadership, operational command and organisational capability required for a role of this scale.

ROLE OVERVIEW

As a member of the Strategic Leadership Team, the Deputy Chief Officer provides visible and influential executive leadership across SFRS, supporting the Chief Officer in setting the strategic direction of the Service and ensuring its effective delivery.

The postholder is responsible for the strategic leadership, performance and development of Service Delivery, encompassing Operational Delivery, Prevention, and Training, Safety and Assurance, and ensuring the effective delivery of prevention, protection, intervention and response services across Scotland.

Working collectively with Strategic Leadership Team colleagues, the postholder will drive delivery of the SFRS Strategy and lead the transformation and continuous improvement across SFRS within a challenging financial and public-service environment. They will ensure services remain safe, sustainable, effective and responsive to current and future community needs, while fulfilling statutory responsibilities and maintaining high standards of operational assurance and corporate governance.

The postholder will make a significant corporate contribution to the leadership and performance of SFRS as a whole and, as a Brigade Manager, will undertake senior operational command responsibilities

KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES

1. STRATEGIC AND CORPORATE LEADERSHIP

- Work with the Chief Officer and Strategic Leadership Team to shape and deliver the strategic direction agreed by the SFRS Board.
- Translate the SFRS Long-Term Vision and Strategy into clear priorities and delivery plans for Service Delivery.
- Provide professional advice and assurance on matters within the postholder's remit.

2. SAFE AND EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY

- Provide strategic leadership across prevention, protection, intervention and response, ensuring that SFRS fulfils its legislative responsibilities and delivers a modern, effective and professional emergency service that meets the current and future needs of Scotland's communities.
- Ensure national priorities are delivered consistently while local services remain responsive to community risk and need.
- Provide strategic oversight of local fire and rescue planning, ensuring that local plans support national priorities and reflect community need.
- Champion a positive safety culture and provide effective leadership of health, safety and wellbeing, supported by operational learning and assurance.

3. OPERATIONAL COMMAND, RESILIENCE AND ASSURANCE

- Act as a commanding Principal Officer within a multi-agency Gold Command environment and as duty Principal Officer in accordance with SFRS policy.
- Provide strategic leadership and professional advice during major incidents and national resilience events.

- Maintain effective arrangements for operational preparedness and organisational resilience, including emergency planning and business continuity within the postholder's remit.
- Ensure operational performance is monitored and improved through effective assurance and organisational learning.
- Maintain the professional and operational competence required for the role through continuing professional development.

4. TRANSFORMATION, IMPROVEMENT AND INNOVATION

- Drive the transformation and continuous improvement of SFRS, ensuring that change improves performance and outcomes for communities.
- Provide executive sponsorship for significant transformation programmes, with clear accountability and effective governance.
- Champion innovation in service design and make effective use of technology and data to support decisions and improve performance.
- Anticipate emerging risks and changes in community need and develop an effective response.
- Encourage constructive challenge and use learning to improve the organisation.

5. GOVERNANCE, RESOURCES AND PERFORMANCE

- Prioritise and deploy resources across Service Delivery in line with strategic priorities, community risk and Best Value.
- Ensure Service Delivery operates within delegated authority and complies with financial, governance and statutory requirements.
- Turn strategic ambitions into realistic plans with clear ownership and transparent reporting.
- Use performance and assurance information to support decision-making, scrutiny and improvement.
- Ensure reporting functions contribute effectively to the wider SFRS planning framework.

6. PEOPLE, CULTURE AND CAPABILITY

- Provide visible and inclusive leadership, creating a culture in which employees can contribute and perform at their best.
- Lead and develop high-performing senior teams, setting clear expectations and holding leaders to account.
- Build leadership capability through talent management, succession planning and professional development.

- Engage meaningfully with employees and support a positive learning environment.
- Build constructive relationships with representative bodies and work with People colleagues on consultation and employee relations.
- Build on SFRS culture and values through visible, inclusive and values-led leadership.

7. PARTNERSHIPS, COMMUNITIES AND EXTERNAL INFLUENCE

- Build credible relationships with the SFRS Board, Scottish Government, local authorities, representative bodies and key partners.
- Represent SFRS at relevant local and national forums and, where appropriate, internationally.
- Develop partnerships that improve community safety and support SFRS priorities.
- Ensure communities and stakeholders can inform the planning and development of services.
- Communicate clearly and with authority in high-profile and politically sensitive settings.

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA

AREA	ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENT
Strategic Command	Qualified at Fire and Rescue Service Gold Command level, with extensive and recent experience of strategic command in complex operational and multi-agency environments.
Fire and Rescue Service Leadership	Substantial recent strategic leadership experience within a Fire and Rescue Service, with senior responsibility for operational services, people and resources.
Qualifications and Professional Development	A relevant professional qualification at SCQF Level 11, or an equivalent level of learning and professional attainment, together with membership of an appropriate professional body and evidence of continuing professional and leadership development.
Strategy, Performance and Improvement	Extensive experience of developing and implementing corporate objectives, policies and strategies, and delivering continuous improvement within a complex organisation.
Transformation and Programme Leadership	Demonstrable experience of leading complex, large-scale organisational change and providing executive leadership for significant programmes of transformation and improvement.
Governance and Stewardship	Significant experience of corporate governance, financial management, strategic planning, risk management and the effective stewardship of significant people, financial and operational resources.
Board, Political and Stakeholder Influence	Demonstrable experience of advising and influencing Boards, senior leaders, government and external partners on complex and sensitive matters, supported by a substantial understanding of the political, legislative, financial and public-service environment in which SFRS operates.
People and Organisational Leadership	Experience of visible, influential and values-led leadership, including leading and motivating high-performing teams, building organisational capability and making a significant corporate contribution across an organisation.
Driving requirement	Full, current and valid Driving Licence.

EMPLOYMENT AND OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

- The role is politically restricted because of its senior advisory, decision-making, representative and media-facing responsibilities.
- The post is subject to the National Joint Council for Brigade Managers' Scheme of Conditions of Service. The postholder will be required to operate in accordance with the Brigade Manager role map.
- The postholder will participate in the duty Principal Officer arrangements and undertake the operational command responsibilities associated with the role.

CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITIES

- Undertake all duties in accordance with relevant legislation, the SFRS Code of Conduct and SFRS policies, actively promoting equality, inclusion, dignity and respect.
- Promote the health, safety and wellbeing of employees and service users, leading by example and ensuring compliance with relevant statutory and SFRS requirements.
- Protect confidential, personal and organisational information and comply with SFRS information governance, data protection, cyber security and records-management requirements.

* This job description describes the nature and level of responsibility associated with the role. It is not intended to be exhaustive. Responsibilities may evolve in line with the continued development of SFRS, following appropriate consultation with the postholder.

6. WHY SCOTLAND?

Following the inception of the first municipal fire service by James Braidwood over 200 years ago, the Scottish Fire Service continues to serve the communities of Scotland. From major urban centres to remote rural and island communities the opportunities SFRS can provide its staff are rarely found anywhere else within the United Kingdom.

As well as an attractive remuneration package aligned to national Brigade Manager arrangements, generous annual leave entitlement, a provided car, contribution within the relevant Scottish Firefighters' Pension Scheme and support with relocation assistance, Scotland can offer the following;

- **Health & Wellbeing**
– Scotland offers some outstanding scenery and outdoor activities often within an easy drive of towns and cities.
- **High quality education systems**
– Scotland has a major potential financial advantage for families thinking about their children's future
- **Different Family lifestyle** – Scotland can offer a balance between accessible towns, community life and nearby green space which is ideal for spending time together as a family.

Scotland's people are at the heart of our nation. Their diverse backgrounds, experiences and cultures combine to create a modern, welcoming and vibrant country in which to live and work. Whether seeking professional challenge, personal fulfilment or an exceptional place to call home, **Scotland offers opportunities without limits.**



7. RECRUITMENT TIMELINE

HOW TO APPLY

19 OCTOBER 2026 – APPLICATIONS OPENS

Full details of the qualifications, experience and essential requirements for the role are contained within the Deputy Chief Officer Job Description.

Applications should be submitted through **myjobscotland** and must include:

- A completed application form
- A current curriculum vitae

8 NOVEMBER 2026 – APPLICATIONS CLOSES

OUR RECRUITMENT PROCESS has been designed to provide a fair, robust and evidence-based assessment of the experience, leadership capability and operational credibility required for the role of Deputy Chief Officer.

WEEK OF 9 NOVEMBER 2026 – SHORTLIST AND INVITATIONS

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to a selection centre with further briefings provided on preparatory themes.

PRIOR TO THE SELECTION CENTRE – PRESENTATION QUESTION FOR PANEL INTERVIEW

23 & 25 NOVEMBER 2026 – THE SELECTION CENTRE

THE SELECTION CENTRE will take place at SFRS Headquarters, Cambuslang on 23th and 25th November 2026. Candidates will be invited to attend on one of these dates.

This will include:

- Stakeholder engagement exercise
- Incident Command, multi-agency and media observation
- Formal interview

30 NOVEMBER 2026 – CANDIDATE OUTCOMES

WEEK OF 30 NOVEMBER 2026 – CONDITIONAL OFFER

The successful candidate will be expected to support in the **ASSISTANT CHIEF OFFICER SELECTION PROCESS**. Candidates should therefore note that assessment and selection activity is planned during December 2026 and January 2027.

16 MAY 2027 – START DATE



CAREERS

WE ARE SFRS
YOU ARE **SFRS**

This is an opportunity to influence the future direction of Scotland's national fire and rescue service and make a lasting difference for communities across Scotland.

If you are ready to bring your experience, leadership and ambition to SFRS, we look forward to receiving your application through **myjobscotland**.

For an informal discussion regarding the role, please refer to the contact details provided within the advertisement.

FIRESOTLAND.GOV.UK

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