

**North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service  
Standard Operating Procedure**

**TFS guidance - Complaints about Fire Safety**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

This procedure is designed to assist staff when responding to complaints about fire safety standards from members of the public, business, commerce and other authorities.

**2. SIGNIFICANT HAZARDS AND RISKS**

Receipt of Complaints  
Response to Complaints

**3. CONTROL MEASURES**

- 3.1 When complaints are received regarding fire safety in premises, these control measures will ensure that each complaint is dealt with and any action taken by the fire authority is recorded.
- 3.2 It will be necessary to create a premises record within CFRMIS where one does not exist and open a "job" to deal with the complaint.
- 3.3 On receipt of verbal complaints, take sufficient details in order to complete the "Complaints log" within CFRMIS. The name and address of the complainant should be recorded, when given, in order that they may be contacted later. However, it is recognised that some complainants may wish to remain anonymous.
- 3.4 On receipt of written complaints, transcribe details into "Complaints log" within CFRMIS and further details in a Note for Case which can be found in letters.
- 3.4 CAO Performance will request the attendance of a fire safety inspector or an appropriate station manager to investigate the nature of the complaint.
- 3.6 If the complaint is received out of hours then the duty Silver Officer will allocate an appropriate manager to investigate the nature of the complaint.
- 3.7 The investigation of the complaint will take place within 24 - 48 hours, or immediately should there be the suggestion that there is a serious risk to life in case of a fire.
- 3.8 When the investigation finds fire safety deficiencies present these will be dealt with in accordance with the guidance covering:
  - Enforcement Policy
  - Investigation and Evidence Gathering
  - Witness Statements
  - Interview Procedures
  - Formal Caution Procedures
- 3.9 Upon inspection, there will be circumstances when the complaint should be directed to another enforcing authority or a dual enforcement role exists, in these circumstance the relevant enforcing authority will be informed by telephone and when appropriate by letter.
- 3.10 The fire safety inspector or the appropriate station manager assigned to investigate the complaint will complete the "Complaints log" within CFRMIS. Any further notes must also be added to the existing Note for Case by going into letter history on the premises screen and opening the Note for Case letter and going into update.

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- 3.11 Where complaints take time to resolve, the assigned officer will be asked for an update. Each month a routine check will be made as to the progress of any outstanding complaints.
- 3.12 The person making the complaint will receive a letter within five working day from the fire safety inspector visiting the premises, the COM01 letter will be sent stating that the complaint will be dealt with appropriately (unless the complaint was received anonymously) and stating that if individuals are unsatisfied with the outcome they should contact CAO Service Information.
- 3.13 Following the inspection of the premises should the person making the complaint not be satisfied with the outcome, the matter changes from one concerning fire safety standards to one concerning how the fire authority has discharged its functions.
- 3.14 In these circumstances the matter will be referred to CAO Information at service headquarters.

**4 SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

**Policy Framework – Complaints about Fire Safety Standards**  
**Fire Safety Public Guidance Note - Complaints about Fire Safety Standards**