



The Emergency Planning Society Core Competences Framework

Briefing Note from the EPS Board of Directors

During the last few months we have provided number of updates on the Core Competences Framework, through articles in Blueprint and briefings we have delivered both nationally (at meetings of the EPS Council) and locally (through a series of Branch roadshows).

During the Council meetings and Branch roadshows, a number of questions have been raised in relation to the progress of the project, expected outcomes and what plans the Society has for the framework once our colleagues in the Cabinet Office Civil Contingencies Secretariat (CCS) hand the final product over to the Society. We are pleased to report that we are now at a stage where elements of the project are at a sufficient point to enable much more focused and detailed communications with our members. The purpose of this Briefing Note is to inform you all of progress made to date, project timelines and work streams.

What is the Core Competences Framework?

In simple terms, the framework is a documented set of knowledge, skills, attitudes, experience and qualifications required to work in the field of 'resilience'. It focuses on the key transferable skills required to perform our function in the private, public, voluntary and not-for-profit sectors. The framework will also be transferable between the Society's geographic areas as we are establishing a concurrent stream to ensure that the needs of our colleagues in Ireland and Europe are also met.

What will this bring for the profession?

The aim is that this will bring a more professional standard for resilience. It will lift the skill set of those employed in the field and establish resilience as a more formalised career.

As the framework is transferable between employment sectors it will open up employment options for those employed in resilience. In theory there should be nothing stopping someone assessed against framework moving between the private, public, voluntary and not-for-profit sectors.

In respect of career development, it will provide a footprint for helping practitioners to develop themselves to defined levels of competence. It will also detail requirements for individuals to keeping their competences current and relevant to the challenges of their roles.

Ultimately, it will bring a much more 'professional' standing to our profession, particularly a much more academically focused one. It will set a basis for educational streams to train resilience practitioners and will allow the Society to clearly demonstrate that it is making a significant contribution in the field of Emergency Planning, a key requirement for attaining chartered institute status, one of the Society's strategic objectives.

What is in this for employers?

The framework will provide a mechanism where by EPS members can be accredited as 'Fit to Practice' based on the framework. The Society will also build elements of governance into the framework as assurance to employers that skills are current and members are keeping them up to date. The framework will also provide a clear development path for practitioners. In the United Kingdom this will be based on National Occupational Standards (NOS).

Aren't the National Occupational Standards and Core Competences Framework one and the same?

Although they are explicitly linked, the Core Competences Framework and the NOS are distinctly different. The NOS will set out the 'Functional Map' for all practitioners working in the public, private, voluntary and not-for-profit sectors. The Core Competences Framework will build upon the foundation of the NOS, and provide additional guidance and benefits for the practitioner, for employers, and for training providers. Indeed, the Society will use the framework to develop educational standards and accreditation for academic courses, training and CPD as well as to define the EPS membership structure (see **What are the workstreams?** p3);

For more information on the NOS, go to the Skills for Justice website www.skillsforjustice.com/civilnos/. Links with the Core Competences Framework can be found on the CCS' Local Response Gateway website at http://www.ukresilience.info/ccs/local_response_gateway.aspx.

How will the Society make this happen?

We have established a number of work streams within the Society and appointed one of the Directors to lead on the implementation of framework, supported by the Company Secretary. This is a huge piece of work and will not be achieved over night. The emphasis is on getting this right; not on getting it done quickly. At our meeting of the Board of Directors on 27th February 2008, we agreed an outline timetable (see page 3) for delivery of the project. This will be supported by a project plan, detailing key milestones and success criteria, which we will shortly be sharing with members.

Is the Society doing this in isolation?

In short, no. The Project Team leading on the development of the framework is a partnership between the EPS, Cabinet Office (CCS and the Emergency Planning College) and independent consultants. We are also consulting a number of key stakeholders from the main employment sectors in the UK. Furthermore, we have a Project Steering Group; with membership drawn from our Branches in England, Republic of Ireland, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The Steering Group will ensure that the end product is applicable across, the Society, its membership and the roles in which they are employed. The Steering Group will also highlight any stakeholders not already involved in the process so we can engage and communicate with them as the project develops.

There are also a number of work streams in which members can get involved.

What are the work streams?

Membership Criteria

- Working on translating the framework into the Society's membership structure;
- Development of membership application process in line with membership levels;
- Establish definition of membership levels;

Educational Standards

- Working on a scheme to accredit existing academic training against the framework;
- Developing academic modular content in line with the framework;
- Conducting academic research to establish currently available training in line with the framework;

Training Accreditation

- Development of policy for accessing training provision in line with framework;
- Development of policy to accredit training for Continuing Professional Development (CPD);

CPD

- Development of the EPS' CPD scheme;
- Establishment of governance criteria for the scheme.

Throughout this process we will be running a number of 'Focus Groups' where you can get involved before we go to full consultation with the membership (see **How do I get involved?** p4);

What are the project timelines?

19 th March 2008	5 th draft of Core Competences Framework produced
20 th March – 22 nd May 2008	Closed consultations with Steering Group, Board of Directors, Focus Groups and Stakeholders
16 th June 2008	Full consultation process launched with members at Conference and presentation to AGM
12 th September 2008	Consultation ends
November 2008	Core Competences Framework launched at EPS Autumn Study

Due to the nature of the project, some of the work streams will have other specific tasks and areas of work to focus on post the November 2008 launch of the framework. This will form the second phase of the project.

How do I get involved?

We are keen for members to get involved throughout this process and we are specifically looking for members to participate in the following:

Focus Groups

- Focus Group Workshops – General
- Focus Groups – Work Stream Specific
- Web Consultations

Project Groups

- Training Accreditation Group
- CPD Group

If you would like to participate in any of the Focus Groups or Project Groups, please contact the Society's Operations Manager (Dan Taylor), indicating your preference and submitting a short (no more than 1 side of A4) résumé and some details of where you feel you can add value to the group. Dan can be contacted at:

The Emergency Planning Society
The Media Centre
Culverhouse Cross
Cardiff
CF5 6XJ

Phone: 0845 600 9587; Fax: 029 2059 0397; Email: opsman@the-eps.org

How do we plan to communicate with members about the project?

The Director of Communications will be ensuring that members are kept informed about the project. The Society's website now has a dedicated section on the Core Competences Framework project which we have set-up as your 'one-stop-shop' for all future communications.

We will also issue updates issued in Blueprint, in the new E-Newsletter to all members and we have set-up a Core Competences Framework 'thread' on the Discussion Forum to encourage a 2-way dialogue between the Project Team and you. So, if you have any questions that you would like to raise at all, do log-on and post these on the Discussion Forum. We will be checking the postings regularly and will do our best to answer your queries for you.

This is possibly one of the most crucial elements of work undertaken by the Society so far and we are committed to ensuring its success.

Marc Beveridge

Director of Membership Services / Core Competences Project Lead