Fire Safety Policy

This policy applies to all Nationwide employees, including Senior Executive level and above. Contractors and temporary agency staff must also comply with this policy.

1. What does this policy cover?

Nationwide will comply with the requirements of all current Fire Safety Regulations and all other current applicable fire safety standards. Fire precaution standards and arrangements will be, so far as reasonably practicable, at least equivalent to those required by statute.

Nationwide is committed to providing a working environment that supports the fire safety of our employees, customers and third parties. Nationwide, with the help and support of the NGSU, work to develop and promote effective policies and practices.

This policy sets out the legal requirements and responsibilities that we have as a business and your personal employee responsibilities.

It is important that you read and understand your obligations under this Fire Safety Policy. These play a key role in ensuring we can protect the health and safety of everyone who works at Nationwide.

Further information is available in the following documents:

▪ Fire – Your Responsibilities
▪ Fire Management Strategy
▪ Fire Safety for Branches
▪ Fire Safety for Administration Offices

This policy will be regularly reviewed to ensure that it remains appropriate and current.

2. When does this policy apply?

We want everyone at Nationwide to enjoy the benefits of working in an environment where the risk from fire is low. You have an active role in managing fire safety. This policy applies at all times.

As a business we recognise that incidents can occur and it is our responsibility to ensure that there are appropriate management controls in place to investigate.

3. What are the responsibilities of you and Nationwide?

Fire legislation requires everyone including the management team and third party contractors to work together to reduce or eliminate fire risks at work, in order to provide a safe working environment. The identification, assessment and control of fire risks are a managerial responsibility of equal importance to all others. In addition, you must take all reasonable steps to ensure your own personal health and safety, that of your colleagues, our customers and third party contractors. Parts of this will include completing the Health and Safety Personal Responsibilities Statement on an annual basis.

We will consult and regularly communicate with you, providing opportunities to raise issues with the health and safety team, or with your local NGSU safety representative to take matters forward. Priority will always be given to identifying, investigating and controlling the risks involved.

Property and Corporate Services have the responsibility for the provision of a safe and secure physical environment.
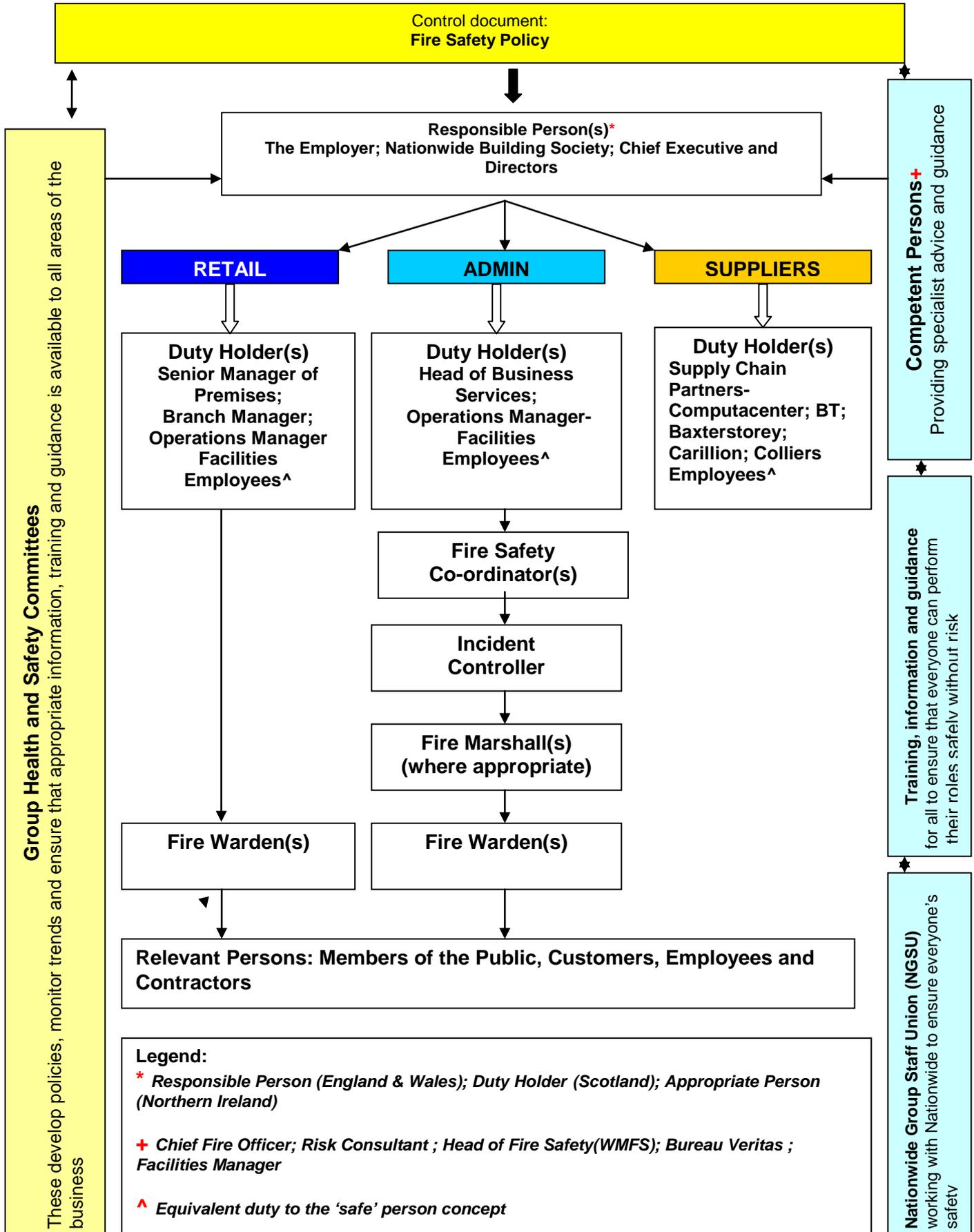
4. What are the fire management arrangements?

Working in partnership with West Midlands Fire Service we will ensure that there is a planned approach to fire safety management by having the appropriate policies, procedures and governance structures in place to meet legislative and best practice requirements. We will consult with the NGSU in the making and maintenance of effective arrangements for fire safety. We will provide such resources, financial and otherwise, necessary to meet our responsibilities.

We will ensure that you receive appropriate training information and guidance appropriate for your role and responsibilities.

5. Fire Safety: Structure and Organisation

This diagram has been produced to give an overview of how it is proposed that Fire Safety is managed within Nationwide, the hierarchy of responsibility and where support, guidance and information will be available

Control document: Fire Safety Policy

Responsible Person(s)*
The Employer; Nationwide Building Society; Chief Executive and Directors

Competent Persons+
Providing specialist advice and guidance

Group Health and Safety Committees
These develop policies, monitor trends and ensure that appropriate information, training and guidance is available to all areas of the business

Training, information and guidance
for all to ensure that everyone can perform their roles safely without risk

Nationwide Group Staff Union (NGSU)
working with Nationwide to ensure everyone's safety

RETAIL

ADMIN

SUPPLIERS

Duty Holder(s)
Senior Manager of Premises; Branch Manager; Operations Manager Facilities Employees^

Duty Holder(s)
Head of Business Services; Operations Manager- Facilities Employees^

Duty Holder(s)
Supply Chain Partners- Computacenter; BT; Baxterstorey; Carillion; Colliers Employees^

Fire Safety Co-ordinator(s)

Incident Controller

Fire Marshall(s) (where appropriate)

Fire Warden(s)

Fire Warden(s)

Relevant Persons: Members of the Public, Customers, Employees and Contractors

Legend:
* Responsible Person (England & Wales); Duty Holder (Scotland); Appropriate Person (Northern Ireland)

+ Chief Fire Officer; Risk Consultant ; Head of Fire Safety(WMFS); Bureau Veritas ; Facilities Manager

^ Equivalent duty to the 'safe' person concept

6. Definitions & Legislation

Responsible Person(s) A3(1). A.5(1) :
The Responsible Person/Duty Holder/Appropriate Person must ensure the provision and implementation of appropriate arrangements for effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review of the preventive and protective measures for fire safety across the Nationwide Group.

Duty Holder(s) A.5(3) :
Duty Holders ensure fire safety policy and procedures are interpreted and implemented at local level.

Fire Safety Co-ordinator(s) A5(3) :
Fire Safety Co-ordinators A5(3) co-ordinate and communicate fire safety precautions and prevention plans across Admin Buildings in conjunction with Duty Holders, Incident Controllers A15(1)(b), Fire MarshallsA15(1)(b) (where appropriate) and Fire Wardens.

Incident Controller(s) A15(1)(b) :
Incident Controllers take the lead during an emergency evacuation, and liaises with the Emergency Services, Responsible/Competent Persons, Duty Engineer and Fire Marshalls/Wardens, as appropriate, ensuring all persons have evacuated the building and are accounted for.

Fire Block Warden(s) (where appropriate) A15(1)(b) :
Fire Marshalls co-ordinate Fire wardens and collate information from Fire wardens during an evacuation and pass this information onto the Incident Controller.

Fire Warden(s) A15(1)(b):
Fire Wardens check all accessible rooms, including toilets and offices to ensure that people are beginning their evacuation, if necessary, report any issues that pose a threat to life to the Incident Controller/Fire and Rescue Services and report to the assembly point and advise the Fire Marshall/ Incident controller/ Duty holder (as applicable) that the designated area is clear or otherwise.


West Midlands Fire Service (WMFS):
West Midlands Fire Service through the Lead Authority Partnership and agreed Fire Safety Training Plan provide:

- Technical advice on the application, interpretation and adoption of fire safety legislation
- Assistance in reviewing current fire strategies, policies and procedures, including fire risk assessment
- Assistance in developing future strategies, policies and procedures, including the use of value added engineering techniques, to enable cost savings and efficiencies to be made with regard to planned evacuations and the provision of fire safety equipment
- The provision of Lead Authority advice to the Nationwide Group and a point of contact for other fire authorities
- The development of an improved, dynamic, fire safety training program for all levels

Relevant Persons- Members of the Public, Customers, Employees (A23) and Contractors A5(4):
These should conduct themselves, work safely without risk to themselves or others while adhering to fire safety policies and procedures

7. Fire Safety Management System
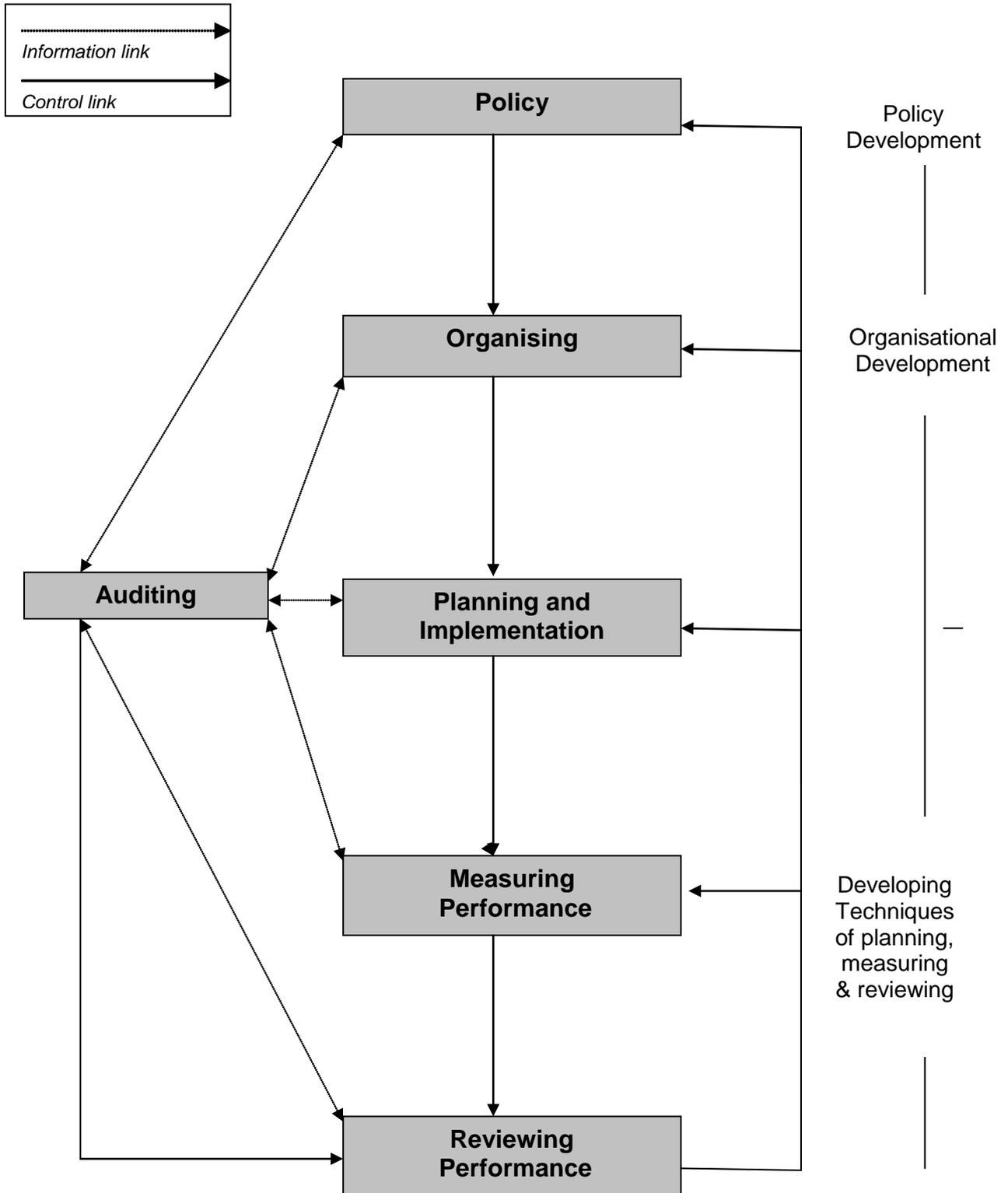
Policy:

An effective fire safety policy sets a clear direction for the organisation to follow. It contributes to all aspects of business performance as part of a demonstrable commitment to continuous improvement. Responsibilities to people and the environment are met in ways which fulfil the spirit and letter of the law. There are cost-effective approaches to preserving and developing physical and human resources, which reduce financial losses and liabilities.

Organising:

An effective management structure and arrangements are in place for delivering the policy. All employees are motivated and empowered to work safely and to protect their long-term health, not simply to avoid incidents and accidents. The arrangements are:

- underpinned by effective employee involvement and participation; and
- sustained by effective communication and the promotion of competence which allows all employees and contractors to make a responsible and informed contribution to the fire safety effort.

There is a shared common understanding of the organisation's vision, values and beliefs. A positive fire safety culture is fostered by the visible and active leadership of senior managers.

Planning:

There is a planned and systematic approach to implementing the fire safety policy through an effective fire safety management system. The aim is to minimise risks. Risk assessment methods are used to decide on priorities and to set objectives for eliminating hazards and reducing risks. Wherever possible, risks are eliminated through selection and design of facilities, equipment and processes. If risks cannot be eliminated, they are minimised by the use of physical controls or, as a last resort, through systems of work. Performance standards are established and used for measuring achievement. Specific actions to promote a positive fire safety culture are identified and implemented.

Measuring Performance:

Performance is measured against agreed standards to reveal when and where improvement is needed. Active self-monitoring reveals how effectively the fire safety management system is functioning. This looks at both property (premises, plant, substances) and people (procedures and systems) including individual behaviour and performance. If controls fail, reactive monitoring discovers the reason for the failure by investigating incidents, ill health or accidents which could cause harm or loss. The objectives of active and reactive monitoring are:

- to determine the immediate causes of sub-standard performance; and
- to identify the underlying causes and the implications for the design and operation of the fire safety management system

Longer–term objectives are also monitored, reviewed and revised, as appropriate, to reduce incidents.

Auditing and reviewing performance:

The organisation learns from *all* relevant experience and applies the lessons. There is a systematic review of performance based on data from monitoring and from independent audits of the whole of the fire safety management system. These form the basis of self regulation and of complying with the requirements of relevant fire safety legislation. There is a strong commitment to continuous improvement involving the constant development of policies, systems and techniques of risk control.
Performance is assessed by:

- internal reference to key performance indicators (e.g. unplanned alarms, evacuations and compliance with fire safety maintenance requirements); and
- external comparison with National Business Fire Safety statistics, in particular with regard to incidents, unplanned alarms and evacuations

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Document Control

SUPERSEDED DOCUMENTS

Fire Policy Statement - undated

VERSION HISTORY

Version	Date	Comment
1.0	23/10/2012	First draft of updated policy issued
2.0	12/02/2013	Document amended following WMFS review
3.0	21/05/2013	Minor amendments following GH&SC review
4.0	26/06/2013	Document approved by WMFS
5.0	31/07/2013	Final version approved Group H&S Committee

CHANGES SINCE LAST VERSION

- None