

Service Position Statement: Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS)

Statement dated: February 2026

HWFRS recognise that BESS are a fundamental part of the UK's move towards a sustainable energy system. In the UK, approval for the majority of BESS installations takes place through the Local Authority planning process.

Whilst the Fire Service is not a statutory consultee, HWFRS encourage early and continuous engagement throughout the planning process.

HWFRS's expectations align to professional [BESS Guidance from the National Fire Chiefs Council](#).

The basis of this advice is that a comprehensive risk management process must be undertaken by operators to identify hazards and risks specific to the facility and develop, implement maintain and review risk controls. From this process a robust Emergency Response Plan should be developed.

This guidance has been developed with the safety of the public and emergency responders in mind and recognises that the ultimate responsibility for the safe design and running of these facilities rests with the operator.

The following principles should be considered by owners, developers and operators:-

1. Effective identification and management of hazards and risks specific to the siting, infrastructure, layout, and operations at the facility.
2. Siting of renewable energy infrastructure to eliminate or reduce hazards to emergency responders.
3. Safe access for emergency responders in and around the facility, including to renewable energy and firefighting infrastructure.
4. Provision of adequate water supply and firefighting infrastructure to allow safe and effective emergency response. This could include the provision of water to allow for defensive firefighting to protect surrounding infrastructure.



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5. Siting and management of vegetation to avoid increased wildfire risk.
6. Prevention of fire ignition on-site that could spread to BESS and associated infrastructure (for example, inverters, switchgear, and transformers).
7. Prevention of fire spread between site infrastructure (for example, solar panel banks, wind turbines, battery containers/enclosures, transformers, inverters, and switchgear).
8. Prevention of external fire impacting and igniting site infrastructure.
9. Provision of accurate and current information for emergency responders during emergencies.
10. Effective emergency planning and management, specific to the site, infrastructure, and operations.