FOREWORD by Trevor Roberts

The Chairman of North Wales Fire Authority

This is North Wales Fire Authority's first Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP), which puts forward a number of strategic proposals for making North Wales a safer place to live, work and visit.

"Having Your Say" also gives you the opportunity to comment on our proposals for the future of the Fire Service.

Part of that future is the change of name to "North Wales Fire & Rescue Service." This will properly reflect the Community's expectations of the role of the modern Fire Service.

In 2001 – 2002 more people died in fires in North Wales for the size of our population than in any other area of England or Wales - not in major disasters that claimed large numbers of lives, but in individual, isolated, tragic incidents. For those people, change will come too late. For the people who remain and for the future wellbeing of North Wales, change cannot come too soon.

This plan shows our determination as an Authority to make good use of the opportunity afforded to us by central government in removing constraints and demanding that the Fire Service modernises. By using a mix of modern technology, common sense, knowledge and experience the Authority has produced what it believes to be an effective and meaningful strategy for managing risks in North Wales.

I look forward to hearing what you think of our proposals.

Trevor Roberts

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INTRODUCTION

In April 2003, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister directed all Fire Authorities in England and Wales to produce an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) before the end of 2003. The main aim of these plans is to secure an increasingly productive fire service that is more responsive to local circumstances and therefore better able to provide protection against fire and other hazards to its communities. This is to be achieved by proactively preventing fires, rather than having to reactively fight them.

IRMP's are intended as medium term strategic plans, which will be translated each year into short term action plans. As circumstances change, plans will need to be reviewed to ensure that our performance and the intended outcomes are being achieved.

Consultation with the public, the business community, our employees and other stakeholders is an integral part of this planning process. Comments and views received will be taken into account before the plans are finally adopted and put into action.

To help better understand what we do and how we can improve, North Wales Fire Authority has used the principles of risk management in creating its IRMP.

'RISK MANAGEMENT'

Hazards, such as fire, flooding, chemicals, etc. have the ***potential*** to cause harm. Risk is the chance of that hazard or harm occurring – in many cases the likelihood that fire and other hazards will harm can be reduced. This is essentially what we mean by risk management.

ASSESSING THE RISKS

Information relating to fire and non-fire incidents over three complete financial years (2000 – 2003) has been closely scrutinised. Further assessments were made in light of local circumstances such as population profiles, built and natural environments, commercial and non-commercial considerations, seasonal changes and local transport infrastructures.

Elected Members of The North Wales Fire Authority have led this process of assessing and responding to the risks in North Wales. Through researching historical data and reviewing policies and procedures, officers of the Fire & Rescue Service were tasked with presenting Members with information on which to base the following decisions: -

Risk 1

People continue to die in fires, and yet the warning signs are often very clear

Year on year, the number of people being killed or injured by fire continues to rise, despite the fact that fires are usually preventable and often foreseeable.

The fire prevention work we do with children and young people is paying dividends. However, elderly people living on their own, people with physical or mental impairments, smokers, drinkers, and the socially disadvantaged members of society continue to be at greater risk of dying in fires. This is especially true if there is a combination of these factors.

In recent years, North Wales has seen unacceptably high numbers of people dying in their own homes. In 2001-02, North Wales had the worst statistics relating to deaths from accidental fires in dwellings in the whole of England and Wales.

The Issues:

Over recent years we have developed a central Community Fire Safety Team. Although the work they do has been well-received and largely successful, North Wales is too big and too diverse for one small team to cover effectively.

Rather than keep trying to expand the central team, we intend to introduce a new structure that is better able to focus on each of the six unitary authorities of North Wales individually. The central Community Fire Safety Team would be developed into a strategic support resource, and the separate local teams would be encouraged to build strong links in their local area.

Because of the varied profile of North Wales, we would like to maintain flexibility in the make-up of these local teams for promoting Community Fire Safety.

Part of the working day for our wholetime firefighters involves promoting fire safety in the community, but even then they still need to maintain their availability to respond to incidents that might occur in their area. The main difficulty lies in the fact that operational staff are at their busiest at the same time as householders are at home and easier to contact. We seem to be missing opportunities to prevent fires because we're already busy fighting fires.

Furthermore, only eight of our fire stations are wholetime stations, which means that people living and working in the areas covered by our thirty-six retained fire stations are not receiving sustained fire prevention activity in their area.

What we will do about it:

By re-organising the way 24 hour shift stations work, we could improve the productivity of the crews in respect of Community Fire Safety. It is clear from looking at the number of incidents during the early hours of the morning that the practice of maintaining the same staffing levels at all hours of the day and night in our three wholetime fire stations may not be appropriate. It may be the case that more firefighters are needed at certain hours of the day to maximise their ability to carry out community-based fire prevention work.

We also intend to investigate the feasibility of making part-time Community Fire Safety jobs available to Retained Firefighters. Their existing work commitments for their main employers limits their availability, and we would not be seeking to introduce any greater demands on their work time for their main employers. However, we feel that there may be a good opportunity for Retained Firefighters to develop their role in promoting Fire Safety in their own communities.

Additionally, we propose to investigate whether we could start to use trained, non-operational staff to carry out some of the community-based fire safety work.

The acquisition and maintenance of all the necessary skills will be carefully assessed and monitored as part of the new Integrated Personal Development System which is being introduced across the whole of the fire service.

Proposed Actions:

As a way of reaching more people more effectively, we intend to expand and reorganise the way we provide fire safety advice to our communities by:

Increasing the amount of Community Fire Safety work undertaken by the Service by introducing a new structure to enable closer working within local authority areas.

Assessing the potential for employing non-operational staff for Community Fire Safety work.

Utilising retained personnel to undertake Community Fire Safety work in their own local community.

Researching the effectiveness of existing shift times at 24 hour shift fire stations to find ways to accommodate additional Community Fire Safety work alongside intervention duties.

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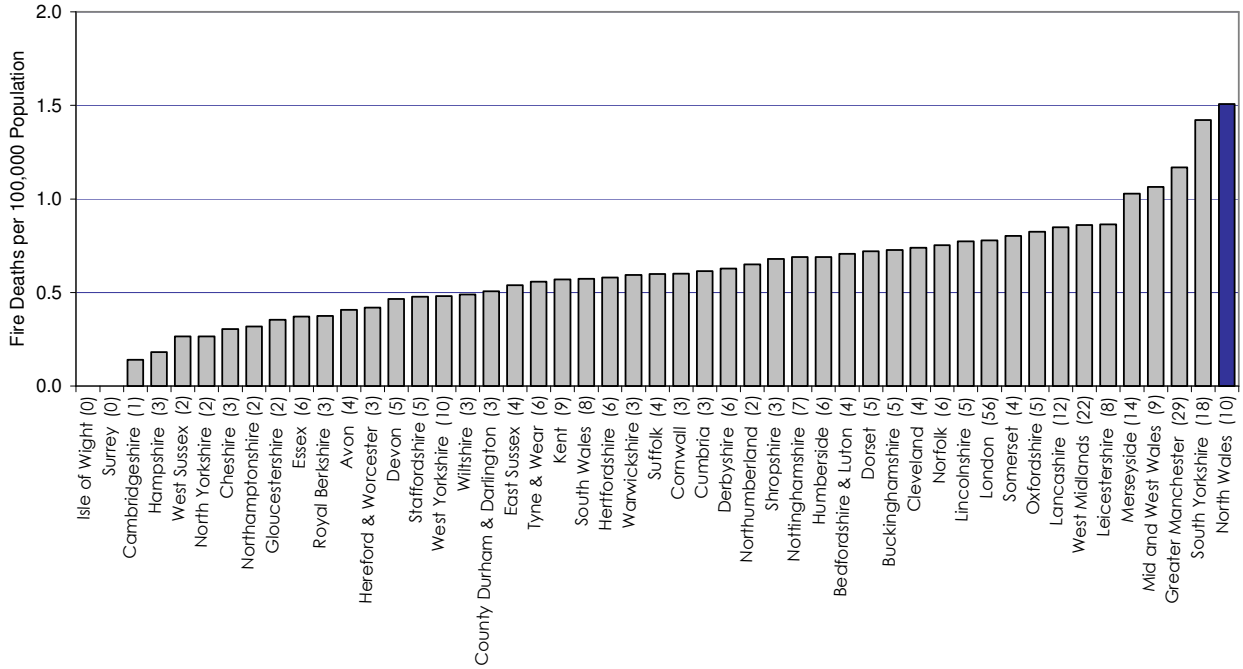
Deaths from Accidental Fires in Dwellings in England and Wales 2001-2002



In 2001- 02, North Wales suffered the highest number of accidental deaths from fire in dwellings per 100,000 population compared to any other Fire and Rescue Service in England and Wales. In the above chart, the numbers of people who died in each area are shown in brackets (*) after the Service name.

The factors that affect the numbers of fire deaths in any area are complex, and have little or no relationship to national standards which require a fire engine to attend in 8, 10 or 20 minutes. For people who need to be rescued, they should know that the fire service will attend as fast as it possibly can, whether that is in the centre of our busiest towns or our remote rural communities.

Our experience shows that it is often the case that victims of fire are already dead before the fire service has even been called out. Therefore the best way of reducing the numbers of fire deaths has to be by working with the community – especially with the more vulnerable groups of people – to prevent fires from starting in the first instance.

JARGON BUSTER

Community Fire Safety (CFS) – Outreach activities conducted within and on behalf of the Community for the ultimate purpose of reducing death or injury from fire. This may be targeted at certain groups (e.g. school pupils and the elderly) or of a more general nature.

Non-operational – Either not trained for, or not involved in firefighting duties.

Integrated Personal Development System – A system designed to identify, develop and maintain the skills required to carry out all roles within (in this context) the fire service.

24 Hour Shift - Wholetime firefighters on 24 hour shift stations work to a nationally negotiated shift pattern whereby they work an average of 42 hours a week, in an eight week cycle, based on a shift rota of "two days on, two nights on, four days off".

Days are worked from 09.00 – 18.00 (9 hours)
Nights are worked from 18.00 to 09.00 (15 hours)

Standards of Fire Cover (the 'old' standards) – Developed fully in Risk 4 Page 11.

Risk 2

"Out of sight, out of mind" – that's the risk

Fire services deal with all sorts of situations. In many cases, once an incident has been dealt with, people won't get in touch with us again until they have the next fire, flood, road traffic collision, air crash or other emergency.

Unfortunately, the fire service has not been particularly successful in publicising its work with people and organisations to try to tackle some of the contributory factors that lead to many of these emergencies.

Unless we're speeding to emergency incidents in fire engines, we probably aren't visible enough.

More people and organisations need to be aware that they can call on us when there isn't an emergency – but without dialling 999!

The Issues:

There are two issues here – the way we work in partnership with other organisations, and the way we raise our profile with the public.

Youth offending, drug and alcohol abuse, environmental factors, social exclusion, care of the infirm, crime and disorder, planning decisions, flood control – these are but a few of the wide array of major policy areas that have direct repercussions on the fire service.

Clearly, these are all areas for which other organisations have overall responsibility, but as fire services are now statutory partners for authorities which develop community strategies, being able to strengthen and improve partnerships with other bodies can greatly enhance the work that is already being done.

As for the communities we serve, we could probably help a lot more people if we had more frequent contact with them. We have a main headquarters, three divisional headquarters and forty-four fire stations located across North Wales. In the majority of cases these could be described as little more than garages for fire engines, whereas it may well be that these buildings could be put to far more productive use as drop-in advice centres or public meeting areas for the local community.

Where would a builder or an architect get more information about installing sprinkler systems? Where would a concerned relative of an elderly person find out how to reduce the risks of fire in the home? We have already put a good deal of effort into making information available to anyone who needs it, but the concept of community fire stations is one that we feel is certainly worth adopting.

What we will do about it:

We will raise our profile by developing community fire stations. Obviously, we would need to consider all the implications of developing fire station facilities (e.g. cost, location, staffing and opening hours) before we progress with this.

We will extend our work with young people. We already have two qualified tutors visiting every junior and secondary school in North Wales and our Community Fire Safety team organise and deliver Crucial Crew.

We intend introducing more YFA units at our fire stations across North Wales. YFA is currently undertaken by our personnel on a voluntary basis. We want to put this scheme on a more sound financial footing rather than relying predominantly on donations and goodwill. This scheme will help us achieve greater access to young people while meeting local community objectives of youth inclusion.

"Atal Tân Cymru" is the first charitable trust of its kind dedicated to fire and has recently been set up with the support of all three fire services in Wales to co-ordinate and progress fire prevention work in Wales. Community fire stations would be a good way of supporting the trust's work.

Proposed Action:

Develop fire station facilities and adopt the concept of community fire stations.

Adopt an organisational structure that will allow us to work more closely with Local Authorities, the voluntary sector and other emergency services, to bring about safer, more inclusive communities.

Extend the YFA scheme across North Wales to engage youth and act as a role model to the youngest members of our society.

Work closely with Atal Tân Cymru to develop new and innovative programmes of community based fire prevention education

Members of the Young Firefighters Association (above & left) CFS Team Members (below & right)

JARGON BUSTER

Community Strategies – Plans developed by authorities whereby partner agencies develop and agree a strategic policy agenda for a specific area.

Atal Tân Cymru – This recently established trust was the first fire prevention charitable trust in the UK. Atal Tân is administered by a board of trustees consisting of the three Welsh fire authorities and the Welsh Assembly Government.

Crucial Crew – A safety programme delivered to school pupils by a number of agencies working in partnership. One-day events highlight safety issues that would normally be dealt with by the individual agencies separately (Coastguard, Ambulance, Police, Substance Misuse, etc.).

YFA – The Young Firefighters Association's aim is to contribute to the improvement of community safety by training and educating young people, usually in the age group of 11 to 16 years.

Risk 3

Repeated False Alarms Generated by Automatic Fire Alarms are Dangerous

Every year, we respond to around three thousand false alarms from automatic fire alarms that have been installed in buildings.

Although an essential fire safety measure in many buildings, around 98% of actuations from automatic fire detection systems turn out to be false alarms. We end up making a full response time and time again to non-existent fires, often to the same premises. In extreme cases we attend some premises two or three times a day, even though no fire is present.

We cannot allow faulty systems or poor management of those systems to be a continuing drain on our resources.

The Issues:

The 'old' standards applied to all calls to fire, even though they later turned out to be false alarms. This often results in the fire service mobilising two or more fire engines even though no confirmation of the existence of fire has been received. Because we reliably attend on every occasion, there has been very little motivation for owners of premises to do anything about troublesome fire alarms.

While attending these calls, the lives of others are potentially put at greater risk because resources are mis-directed. It could even be argued that the people at the false alarming premises themselves are put at greater risk because they are less likely to react to the alarm signal when it has become such a familiar event.

Apart from the increased risk to life, this problem represents very poor use of public money. Last year, these unnecessary calls in North Wales resulted in additional payments to retained and wholetime firefighters on day crewing stations of around **£310,000**. This same amount of money could be put to better use in protecting people from real risks, instead of wasting resources reacting to groundless calls for help.

In future, what will change is that calls will be assessed individually. Where we strongly suspect that a call is yet another false alarm from an automatic fire system with a history of false actuations, we may decide not to attend at all until we have had confirmation that our services are really required.

Additionally, we recognise that our own systems and procedures for managing some calls need to be refined so that we can differentiate between high and low risk areas even within the same large complex of buildings.

Where there is an obvious risk to people's lives, we will not hesitate to respond. This is why we have to take such a strict line on false alarms that have the potential to distract us from being able to attend life threatening incidents.

What we will do about it:

There will be occasions when we decide not to respond to calls. We will take a firmer stance in relation to attendance, by developing a clear policy that puts the onus on the managers or owners of the premises to confirm that there is, in fact, a fire that requires the fire service to attend.

Part of our approach will include educating owners and occupiers of premises in how to manage their automatic fire alarms effectively so that they do not generate false alarms.

Apart from reducing costs, we consider it important that we take this pragmatic approach to reducing the risk to the rest of the community by ensuring that crews and fire engines are not committed unnecessarily to non-existent fires.

In the first year after the introduction of a new policy, we will be setting ourselves a target to reduce the number of times we respond to false alarms from automatic fire alarms by around 10% - which would release around **£50,000** for use elsewhere.

Proposed Actions:

To develop a clearly understood policy relating to our response to automatic fire alarms in buildings. The main aim of this new policy would be to increase the availability of our resources to respond to genuine calls for assistance.

To introduce a Call Management System into our Control Room to enable us to respond intelligently and appropriately to calls for assistance.

To advise and work with companies or establishments in order to manage problem systems.

When determining responses, to differentiate between individual systems within one organisation to better tailor our response.

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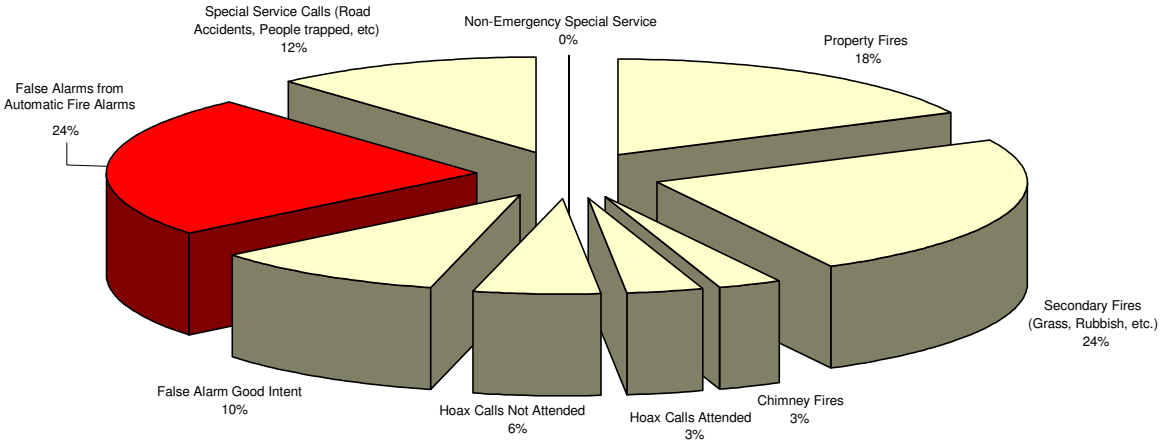
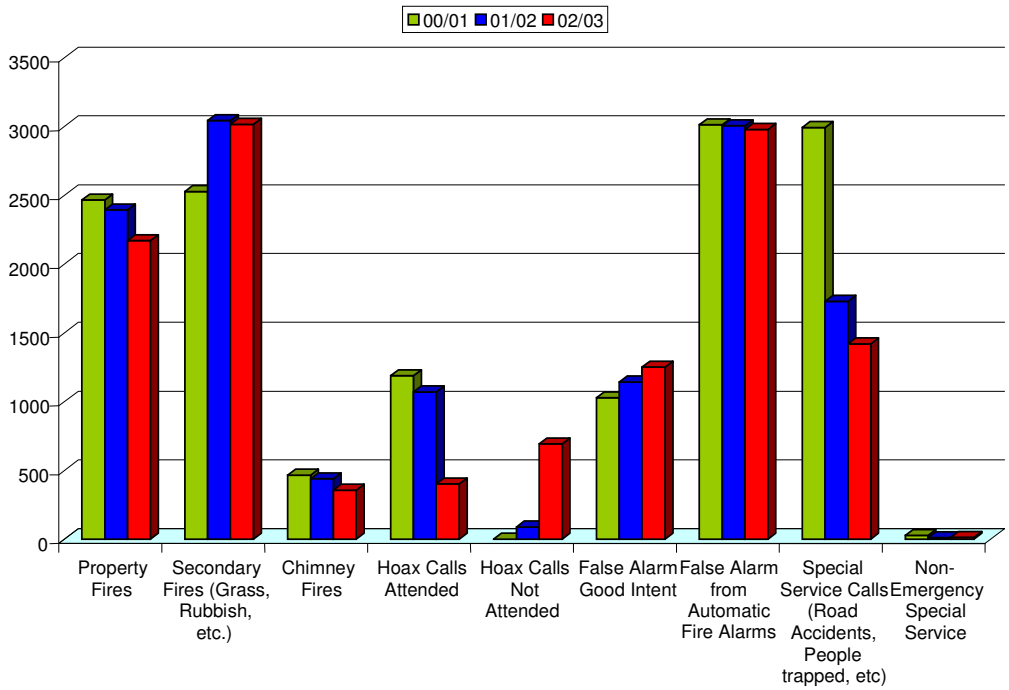
Service Incidents - Percentage Workload



The chart above shows the relative percentages of all the different types of incidents that we typically attend. False alarms from automatic fire alarms constitute a significant part of our workload. These false alarms can also be seen in the chart below which shows the number of incidents over three years.

North Wales Fire Service Incidents



JARGON BUSTER

False Alarm – An event in which the Fire Service believes that it is called to a reportable fire and then finds that there is no such event. (A reportable fire is an event of uncontrolled burning involving flames, heat or smoke.)

Automatic Fire Alarm - More correctly, automatic fire detection apparatus, these are electronic systems installed in buildings for the purpose of detecting and warning of the existence of a fire.

Call Management System – a form of risk assessment conducted by Control Operators over the telephone with the caller, which enables them to mobilise the most appropriate resources available.

Standards of Fire Cover (the 'old' standards) – Developed fully in Risk 4 Page 1.

Risk 4

Standards of Fire Cover are Deceptive

Our success or failure in responding to fire calls is primarily measured against the existing national 'standards of fire cover' that were developed in the 1930s.

Under these current standards, which are soon to be withdrawn, how we respond to fires in any area depends on the number and characteristics of the buildings there. How many people there are in that community is not considered.

Furthermore, there are no standards governing how we respond to fires in remote rural areas; nor how we respond to incidents where there is no fire – such as releasing people from car crashes.

The Issues:

Some people have expressed concern that without minimum standards, we would have no way of measuring how well we are performing. What they fail to realise is that the existing standards don't apply to a large proportion of the incidents we deal with.

The existing standards were developed based on the characteristics and density of buildings in an area. For example, according to the standards, a small fire in an empty shop in a large city would get two fire engines within five minutes and a third within eight minutes. By contrast, a fire at night in a family home in a rural village would get only one fire engine within twenty minutes.

Apart from the remote rural areas of North Wales (where currently no time, crewing or appliance standards apply) the existing standards require that we should arrive at a fire in North Wales in either 10 or 20 minutes, depending on the number and characteristics of the buildings in a particular locality.

In fact, year on year, we attend all incidents in all areas of North Wales in an average time of under nine minutes!

That is not to say, of course, that all areas of North Wales are accessible by road in less than nine minutes. There are many areas of North Wales that are several miles away from the nearest fire station. Which is precisely why the *prevention* of fires is so important.

Unfortunately, even a fully crewed fire engine would be unlikely to save the life of a person who had fallen asleep with a lighted cigarette and set the bed and themselves alight, however quick the response.

Measuring our own performance in future without the existing standards as a yardstick will place a greater emphasis on self-assessment. In future, poor performance and deficiencies in the services will be addressed precisely because they are less than we would wish for, not because they are falling short of unrealistic standards.

What we will do about it:

We have developed new response standards that are appropriate to the profile of North Wales and the resources we have available to us. These new standards are expressed as a general commitment to the local community, and relate to all incidents, not just those that are classed as 'qualifying incidents'.

As part of its plans to modernise the fire service, the Government intends to withdraw the national standards of fire cover, so that local standards can be introduced. This will not be detrimental to our response as we will still be responding as quickly as we can. To make sure that our performance continues to be in accordance with our commitment to the public, we will continue to measure and record how quickly we respond, how many crew attend, which fire engines and specialist appliances attend, and so on.

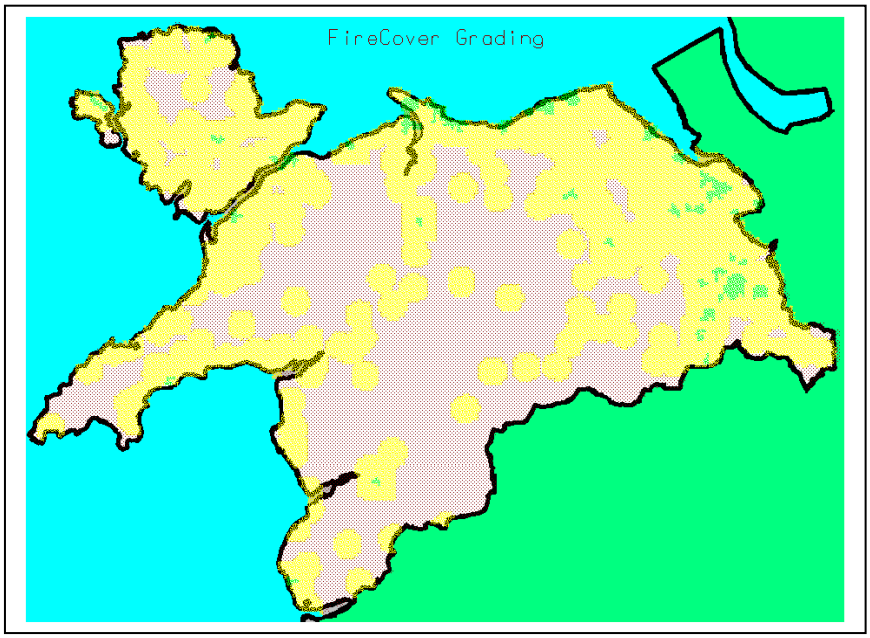
Instead of mobilising according to a rigid pre-determined set of standards, we will use new technologies and the skill and judgement of our trained staff to make a measured and sensible response within clearly defined parameters.

Proposed Actions:

Whilst ensuring that our current average response time to emergency incidents does not deteriorate, our commitment to the people of North Wales is

"That we will respond to fire and other emergencies which threaten life or property by the quickest means possible, using the most appropriate resources at our disposal, without any compromise to current response times or to the scale of our response."

To make sure that we are, in fact, meeting this commitment, we will measure and monitor our performance, analyse the results to identify deficiencies and continually seek ways to improve. By publishing this information, we will be making our performance available for public scrutiny.



Like many other brigades, North Wales Fire Service sends more resources to fires than the minimum required by the old standards. For example, we send two fire engines to known property fires where the standard requires only one. We believe that this scale of response should not be diminished; **therefore we will continue to send the appropriate scale of response to fires in all areas.** The illustration above shows that the old standards didn't actually apply to large areas of North Wales (Remote Rural shown in pink). The very small green areas were the only ones classified as 'C' Risk, whilst the yellow areas were classified as 'D' Risk.

JARGON BUSTER

Standards of Fire Cover - (the 'old' standards) – The fire service categorises areas according to the concentration and types of buildings in them. Minimum standards apply for how many fire engines, how many firefighters and how long they should take to arrive at fires in A – D category areas (see later). These standards apply only for fires, or where it was believed that there was a fire (i.e. false alarms).
There are 5 separate risk categories – A, B, C, D and Remote Rural. North Wales does not have any areas categorised as A or B (found in major cities and larger towns).
'C' Risk relates to smaller towns and urban residential areas.
'D' Risk relates to rural village areas.
Remote Rural areas are isolated from any centres of population and contain few buildings.
The minimum standards are as follows:

Risk Category of the area in which the qualifying incident has occurred	Minimum number of fire engines (pumps) to be sent to qualifying incidents	Maximum time (in minutes) by which the first fire engine (pump) should reach a qualifying incident		
		First pump	Second pump	Third pump
A	3	5	5	8
B	2	5	8	-
C	1	8-10	-	-
D	1	20	-	-
Remote Rural	1	-	-	-

Located within these risk categories are a number of areas and premises such as hospitals, tower blocks, airports and major chemical plants that are designated as **'Special Risks'**. In each case the brigade will have decided beforehand what a suitable attendance would be to those premises (known as "a pre-determined attendance" or PDA) in the event that they are ever called there.
Qualifying incidents - the existing standards do not apply to all incidents. Many types of incidents would not qualify for measurement against the standards. The following would be excluded from the calculation:

- Incidents that were not considered to involve fire (releases from cars, floods, etc.);
- Incidents that were considered to be 'known small fires' (in vehicles, rubbish skips, grassland, derelict buildings, etc.);
- Incidents in remote rural areas;
- Late calls to fire (one that was not reported until it was already out);
- Incidents attended by a fire engine that is redirected when it was already on its way to/from another call.

Risk 5

Our working days don't match our busy times

Fire stations in North Wales are at their busiest in the afternoons and evenings. This is as true for quiet villages as it is for the more heavily populated towns.

The problem is that the existing shift patterns were never developed with this in mind. What happens now is that many of our firefighters leave work at 6 p.m., just as the number of calls is beginning to rise.

The Issues:

Wholetime firefighters at our three 24-hour shift fire stations (Deeside, Rhyl and Wrexham) are working and able to respond whatever the hour, day or night.

Firefighters at our five day crewed stations (Bangor, Caernarfon, Colwyn Bay, Holyhead and Llandudno), however, work differently. Day crewed stations operate as if they were shift stations between the hours of 8 a.m. and 6 p.m., but outside these hours, they operate in the same way as a retained station.

On day crewed stations, the response time for incidents occurring between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. are naturally shorter than the response time outside these hours.

Wholetime firefighters at our three 24-hour shift fire stations get paid a set amount, however many incidents they attend.

Wholetime firefighters at our five day-crewing stations get paid a set amount for working between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m., however many incidents they attend. The difference is that each additional attendance outside those hours attracts an additional payment. This averages a total of **£65 - £100** each time a fire engine is turned out.

Wholetime firefighters working on day-crewing stations and retained firefighters are required to live/work in close proximity to the fire station to minimise the delay before they can turn out to incidents. Current rules stipulate that the travel distance must be achievable within four minutes.

Because of nationally negotiated Conditions of Service, local fire authorities have been compelled to accept a one-size-fits-all work pattern for day-crewing stations. More recently, however, as part of central government's drive to modernise the fire service, local fire authorities have been encouraged to manage their workforce in a way that makes sense in terms of improving public safety and making the best use of public money.

We would be particularly interested in looking into the possibility of offering new part-time contracts for firefighters, so that they would be paid to work for a set number of hours, irrespective of how many incidents they attend during their shift.

New arrangements such as these could be particularly significant for those retained firefighters who work from day-crewed stations, as well as those who currently turn out to significant numbers of false alarms. We acknowledge that some of the changes being proposed in this plan will probably reduce the number of incidents that they would normally attend; and therefore reduce the money they would expect to earn from incident fees.

What we will do about it:

Rather than continue to operate a system that sends firefighters home just at a time when the number of incidents is continuing to increase, we will change the hours they spend on duty to reflect the times of greatest demand. By doing this, we will have crews ready to respond sooner to a larger number of incidents. This is illustrated in the graph opposite.

Based on the number of calls received between 6 p.m. and 10 p.m. at our day-crewed stations last year, this change would release around **£75,000.**

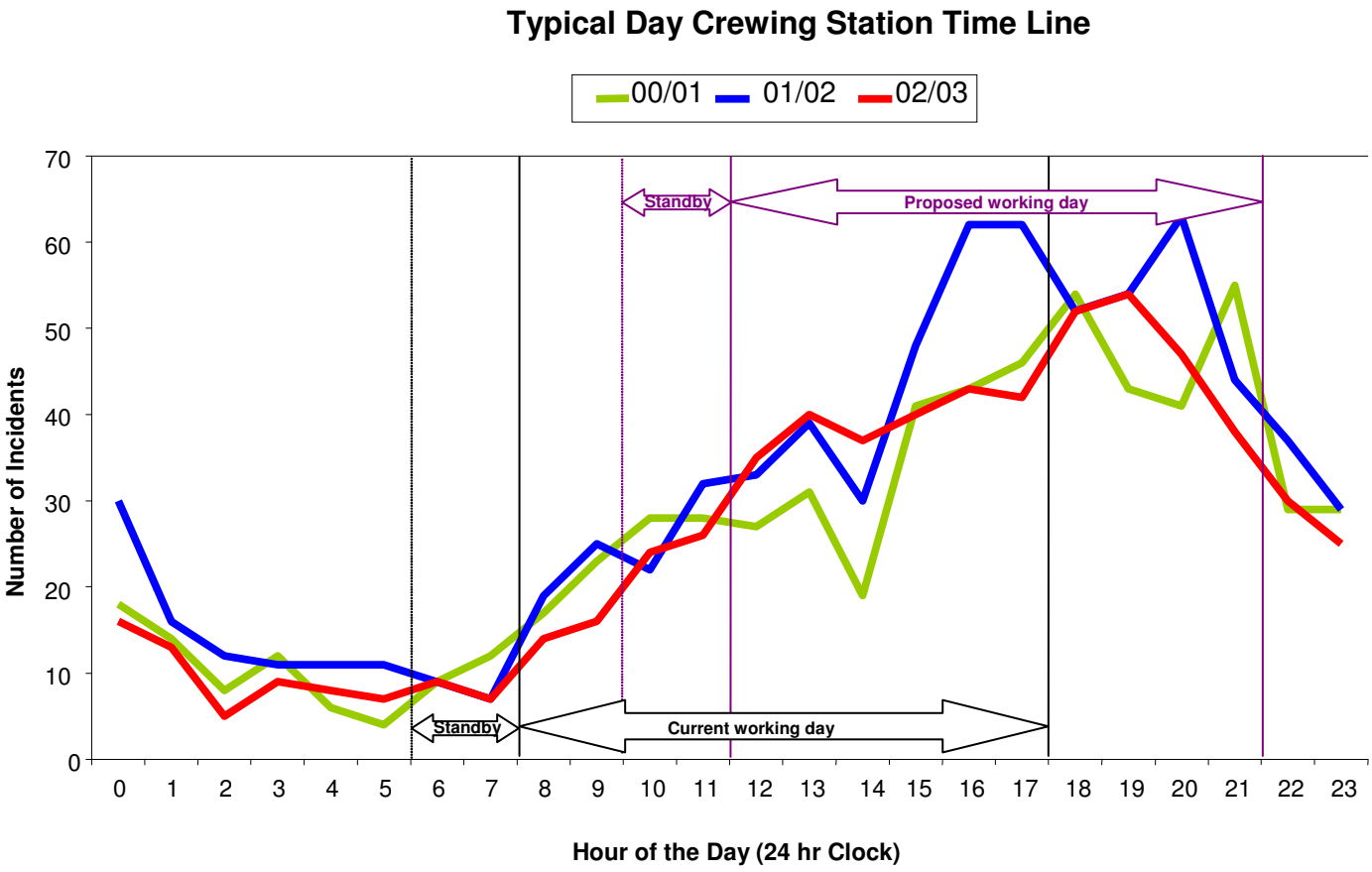
From the point of view of the wholetime firefighters on day crewed stations, they would find that their busy times fall within their normal working day leaving them with fewer turnouts to respond to from home during their standby hours.

Analysis of the times of day when incidents happen did not lead us to conclude that there was any reason to change the four-days-on, four-days-off working pattern. Neither did we see any reason to change the number of hours spent on duty.

Proposed Actions:

To introduce a later start and finish time for wholetime firefighters on day crewed stations.
The morning standby hours from home will be worked between 10.00 and 12.00, and the time on duty from the station will be from 12.00 until 22.00.

To assess the effectiveness of offering new part-time contracts for firefighters so that their income is not dependent on the number of incidents that they attend during their contracted working hours.



This graph shows how many incidents a day-crewed fire station would typically attend in a year at every hour of the day. The same general pattern is replicated at fire stations right across North Wales, and shows that the busiest times are during the afternoon and evening, tailing off again in the early hours. By changing the times of the working day for wholetime firefighters on day crewing stations so that they start and finish a few hours later, we can improve our reaction time when most incidents occur.

JARGON BUSTER

The Times People Work:

Day Crewing
Wholetime firefighters on day-crewed stations work to a nationally negotiated shift pattern to ensure an average of 42 hours per week, including rest and meal breaks. In North Wales this is a "four-days-on four-days-off" pattern over an eight week cycle. The first two hours of every working day is on standby from home, the following ten hours are spent on duty from the fire station, and the remaining hours overnight are on standby off station (including from home).

06.00 – 08.00	Standby off station (no additional pay for incidents attended)
08.00 – 18.00	On station (incl. meal & tea breaks)
18.00 – 06.00	Standby off station (additional pay for incidents attended)

24 Hour Shift
Wholetime firefighters on 24 hour shift stations work to a nationally negotiated shift pattern whereby they work an average of 42 hours a week, in an eight week cycle, based on a shift rota of "two days on, two nights on, four days off".

Days are worked from 09.00 – 18.00 (9 hours)
Nights are worked from 18.00 to 09.00 (15 hours)

Retained
Retained firefighters are released by their main employers to attend their local fire station to respond to emergency incidents. They are paid an annual retainer fee, for which they provide agreed on-call hours each day or week over the year. They are also paid for turning out in response to calls, for attending incidents and for attending training.

Risk 6

Have we got the balance right?

The right vehicles and the right number of people to crew them might not be available in the best place to respond to calls for assistance.

In some cases, even the fire stations themselves might not be in the best locations.

Sending too many firefighters or vehicles would be costly, and could leave other areas vulnerable. On the other hand, sending too few resources could be ineffective, or even dangerous.

The Issues:

As previously explained in this document, much of our response has been governed for many years by the 'old' standards

In some situations, however, an ordinary fire engine would not be the most appropriate vehicle to send. For all sorts of reasons (e.g. the nature of the incident, rough terrain or difficult access), special appliances can sometimes provide a better solution.

Over the years we have tried to locate our special appliances strategically across North Wales to maximise their usefulness. This was always done according to our professional judgement of the risks. What we find now, however, is that some of these special vehicles are under-utilised. Re-locating vehicles is not the simple matter that it might at first appear to be. Problems can stem from difficulties in recruiting enough retained firefighters in some areas to be able to crew both a fire engine and a special appliance. It is also worth remembering that specific skills and training are needed to crew these special appliances. Sometimes, quite simple (but often costly) matters such as having enough room to garage some of the bigger special appliances have to be addressed.

Whilst most of our retained fire stations were built to house just one fire engine, we send two fire engines to tackle certain types of property fires. This is because our risk assessment has shown that we need the additional firefighters to ensure public safety and to protect our own crew in these dangerous situations. On these occasions, additional firefighters are brought in from adjacent fire stations.

In many cases, however, the second fire engine is only needed to transport a crew and equipment to the incident. Alternative transportation might be more appropriate in these circumstances, although this would have to be carefully assessed to ascertain the overall effects of such a change.

The location of many of our fire stations was decided a long time ago. Given the changes in the demography and infrastructures of North Wales since that time, it is unlikely that those same decisions about location would be taken today.

Detailed analysis of each fire station's activities reveals a wide variation in workload, in average attendance times at incidents, in how often the station has sufficient retained firefighters available to crew the fire engine, and performance in relation to the 'old' standards of fire cover.

In the summer of 2003, the introduction of sophisticated new GIS mapping into our Control Room has also greatly improved our ability to pre-plan our response to incidents in any location in North Wales, and to send the nearest and most appropriate resources available.

What we will do about it:

It is our considered opinion that now would not be the best time to make decisions about changing the location of our fire stations. Especially as we are proposing a new local response standard. However, we will reassess the effectiveness of our new arrangements once they have had time to take effect.

In the meantime, we will look in detail at the disposition of special appliances. Although, for safety reasons, we do not intend to change our policy of sending two crews to known property fires, we do intend to review the way in which we routinely use a second fire engine to transport firefighters to some incidents.

Proposed Actions:

To undertake a review of the disposition of special appliances.

To initiate a project to examine the routine mobilisation of second fire engines, especially with regard to introducing alternative means of transportation of crews to incidents.

To require Control Operators to manage the way we mobilise to incidents, using a Call Management System, and to give effective survival guidance where appropriate.

To continuously monitor our performance under the new standards, and to review the performance of our fire stations against these new standards by December 2005.

Fire Engine

- Crewed by 6 firefighters.
- Carries a wide range of firefighting and rescue equipment.
- Can deal with a variety of incidents including road accidents and chemical spillages.

Approximate Cost £150,000

Aerial Ladder Platform

- Crewed by 2 specially trained personnel.
- Maximum working height of 30 metres.
- Used for rescues and hi – reach firefighting.
- Can provide a high volume jet of water and elevated scene lighting.

Approximate Cost £365,000

Emergency Tender

- Crewed by 4 firefighters.
- Carries heavy cutting, winching and lifting equipment.
- Particularly useful where people or animals are trapped in difficult non-fire situations.

Approximate Cost £215,000

JARGON BUSTER

GIS – Geographic Information System: computer software that helps us to plot and analyse facts about incidents and areas. Information is stored in several different layers where each layer holds data about a particular kind of feature. Each feature is linked to a position on the map.

Call Management System – A protocol for dealing with emergency 999 calls by means of a risk assessment conducted by Control Operators over the telephone with the caller, which enables them to mobilise the most appropriate resources available, and give any necessary advice to callers.

Control Room – Where we receive 999 calls and co-ordinate a response by despatching the required resources to the incident

Control Operator – A member of staff that works in the Control Room and has the responsibility for interacting with both the public in receiving a 999 call and fire stations for ensuring the correct resources are sent to the incident.

Risk 7

Arson an Increasing Menace

Vandals, insurance fraudsters, wilful fire-raisers, child fire-setters, joy-riders, whatever they are called, they are all guilty of unlawfully destroying or damaging property and putting lives at risk.

The overall effects on society are immense – apart from the human suffering that arson can cause, financial implications run into the millions, sites of natural beauty and cultural and historical sites are put at risk, and all manner of normal day-to-day activities are needlessly disrupted.

In North Wales 42% of all primary fires are started deliberately, this increases to 66% for all vehicle fires.

While the fire service is out dealing with these intentionally started fires, people will be at greater risk from accidental fires.

The Issues:

In the UK in the last ten years there have been around 2.4 million arson fires, 32,000 injuries and 1,200 deaths with an annual cost in England and Wales of over £2 billion, all attributable to arson.

Because arson fires are started for a whole variety of reasons, there is no single solution to the problem. To be able to reduce the overall number of deliberate fires, Fire and Rescue Services have to become involved in a wide range of different activities.

We already deliver programmes of work with children and young people that are designed to educate them about fires and steer them away from starting fires deliberately. This work is most successful when we work with other agencies, such as Youth Offending Teams.

As a member of the North Wales Community Safety Group we work closely with Local Authorities, Health Boards and the other emergency services to make North Wales safe. Working in partnership helps us to raise the profile of Arson as an important local issue for many areas of North Wales. By developing solutions to the problem with other agencies, through initiatives such as data and information sharing, we are able to implement appropriate prevention strategies to eradicate the Arson menace.

We also carry out fire investigations where we suspect that a fire was not accidental, in which case the police are brought in to conduct their own investigations into a possible crime.

What we will do about it:

The "Up in Flames" report recommended a whole range of possible measures to reduce arson. Some of these recommendations related to an all-Wales strategy, spearheaded by the Welsh Assembly Government. As this strategy unfolds, we will be fully involved in its successful implementation.

For our own part, we will be making increased use of technology and shared data links with other agencies to improve our ability to spot localised increases in certain types of arson activity. This will be done with the aim of reducing the incidence of arson by 30% by March 2009 in line with Government targets.

Although arson is often unpredictable, there are certain local signs and patterns (e.g. times of day, days of the week) which could help us to spot some of the danger signals before a fire is started. We therefore intend to improve the way we monitor the numbers of deliberate fires we attend. This will also mean that where arson incidents have reduced, we can establish exactly how and why numbers have fallen so that we can learn lessons from our success.

We will also continue to identify funding, with the assistance of Atal Tân Cymru, from bodies such as the Arson Control Forum. This has already proved successful in our partnerships with local authorities, such as Wrexham and Denbighshire, and the Police in reducing vehicle arson in abandoned vehicles in those areas.

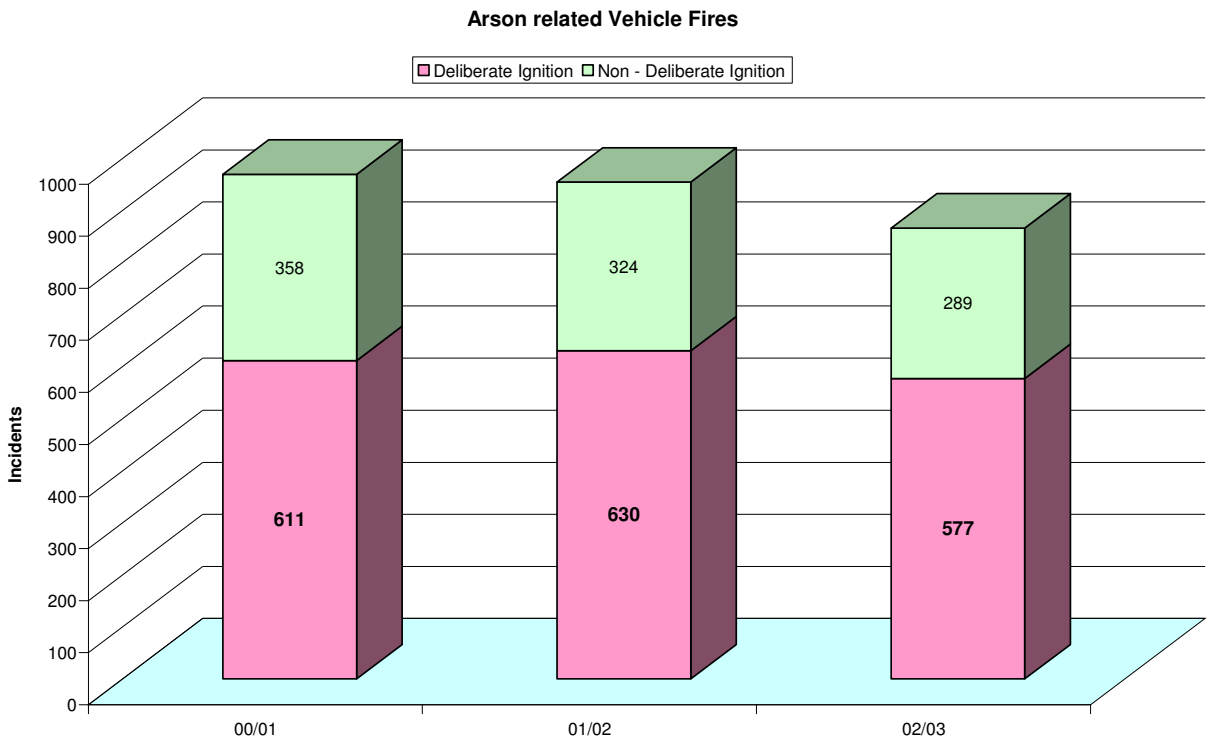
Proposed Actions:

To engage fully in recommendations for arson reduction put forward by the Welsh Assembly Government following the publication of the "Up in Flames" report.

To improve inter-agency data and intelligence sharing for the joint aim of reducing the total number of incidents attributed to acts of arson.

To increase our in-house monitoring of incidents attributed to arson in order to improve our own ability to react quickly and intelligently to problem areas, and to allow us to identify how and why we have been successful.

To identify funding opportunities for continued partnership working for the reduction of arson in our local communities.



The graph illustrates the extent of the vehicle arson problem. Almost two-thirds of all vehicle fires in North Wales are started deliberately. Despite some notable successes through co-ordinated campaigns in known trouble spots, this problem continues to pose a serious risk in all areas.

JARGON BUSTER

Arson - Strictly speaking, arson is as defined in the Criminal Damages Act 1971. However, the way arson incidents are recorded by Police varies considerably from the Fire Service. The Police look for a higher level of proof that the criminal offence of arson has been committed whereas the Fire Service requires only a reasonable level of certainty that a fire was started deliberately to record it as such.

The Community Fire Safety Working Group – Initiated by the Welsh Assembly Government the group brought together people from a range of public and private sector organisations to work jointly on reducing the numbers of deaths and injuries from fires, and protecting domestic and public property in Wales. Their report, "Wired for Safety" was published in October 2001.

Arson Working Group - This is a sub-group of the previously established Community Fire Safety Working Group that was set up by the Welsh Assembly Government in 2001. The membership of the sub-group is just as diverse as the main working group, but looked specifically at the issue of arson in Wales.

"Up in Flames" - A report compiled by the Arson Working Group, and submitted by the Community Fire Safety Working Group to the Welsh Assembly Government in February 2003.

Arson Control Forum – A body established by Central Government in April 2001 to lead a national drive against arson in its many forms.

Risk 8

The Service wasn't set up for this – Our structure can't support it.

The direction we want to take in order to make the people of North Wales safer would be difficult to achieve if we kept our existing organisational structure.

We find ourselves with an organisational structure that came about when we amalgamated the former Gwynedd and Clwyd Fire Services in 1996.

It served its purpose then, but in today's world we have to face up to the fact that the organisation is top heavy with too many tiers of management adding to bureaucracy and stifling innovation at lower levels. The associated costs have the potential to be redirected to allow us to achieve the goals set out in this document.

The Issues:

North Wales Fire Service is now arranged around three divisions, but we have realised that we need to work much closer with the people and organisations in the six unitary authorities. We have to arrange ourselves better.

Many of the issues relating to our current organisational arrangements have already been presented in other sections of this document, but essentially they are concerned with: -

a) Making our organisation better able to focus on local needs, community strategies, social inclusion programmes and community partnerships so that we can improve our ability to prevent fires from starting whilst maintaining our ability to respond to genuine emergencies;
b) Re-thinking the need for some posts to be allocated to trained operational firefighters, when specialist non-uniformed staff might be more appropriate;
c) Dismantling the current top-heavy management structure in favour of an establishment that accommodates and supports increased numbers of employees lower down the organisation.

Overall, the total number of employees will not need to be changed. What would have to change would be the roles that employees are expected to perform.

The Integrated Personal Development System (IPDS) is a new system that is being implemented in Fire & Rescue Services across the United Kingdom, which seeks to develop and maintain people's skills in the fire service in an ordered, fair and logical way. This new system heralds a move away from the old rank structure to a new role-related structure that focuses on the aims of the organisation and the aspirations of the individual. Jobs that have traditionally been allocated on the basis of rank will now be mapped against national occupational standards that concentrate more on the requirements of the job than on what rank the post holder has previously attained.

In our existing structure, there is a supervisor (Leading Firefighter and above) for every wholetime firefighter. This 1:1 ratio is both a costly and an inefficient use of people's skills.

What we will do about it:

We will adopt a new organisational structure that is designed to meet the three basic criteria previously described.

We will create a single point of support from the centre with direct lines to seven community based areas (instead of three divisions with duplicate posts in each), so that we can concentrate on building excellence in the centre and maintain a consistent approach in each of the community-based areas.

The seven areas relate to the unitary authority areas in North Wales (Anglesey, Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire, Gwynedd and Wrexham), but with Gwynedd split into two areas in order to accommodate its large geographical area.

The number of operational personnel at all levels within the organisation has been calculated to ensure that the service given to the public is not reduced by the change of structure.

North Wales Fire Service has been planning towards a restructure for the past 18 months and as a consequence has taken management action to reduce the number of senior managers, gradually as, and when, the opportunity presented itself. This pragmatic approach has placed us in a position to implement the restructure with the minimum of disruption at both organisational and personal levels.

The potential effect of realigning senior management posts to the role related structure would be to release finances, approximately **£130,000** that will be ploughed into the support staff structure of the Service to increase the efficiency of our front line service.

Proposed Actions:

To adopt the principles of the new organisational structure as recommended in the report "Review of the Management Structure of the North Wales Fire Service" which was published in 2002.

Isle of Anglesey

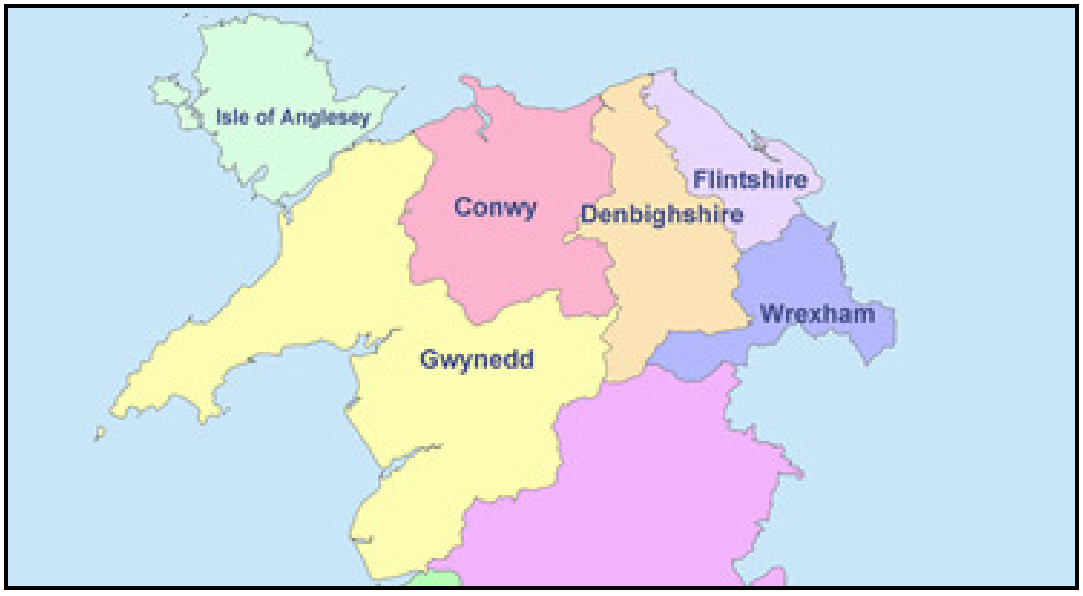
Coun. W.J. Chorlton
Coun. A. Roberts
Coun. W.T. Roberts

Conwy

Coun. P.C. Evans
Coun. J.R. Hughes
Coun. S.C. Jones
Coun. W. Jones
Coun. J.A. MacLennan

Denbighshire

Coun. M. Lloyd Davies
Coun. D. Jones
Coun. N. Hugh – Jones
Coun. D. Morris



Gwynedd

Coun. D.B. Evans
Coun. M. Griffith
Coun. E. Morgan Jones
Coun. W.T. Owen
Coun. T. Roberts

Wrexham

Coun. E.C. George
Coun. F.A. Nichols
Coun. G. Roberts
Coun. H.T. Williams
Coun. M. Williams

Flintshire

Coun. A.R. Cattermoul
Coun. T. Evans
Coun. R. Hill
Coun. R.P. MacFarlane
Coun. D.G. Parry
Coun. C. Shone

The map above shows the boundaries of the Unitary Authorities. This will be the basis of the new organisational structure in developing community partnerships and fire safety education. The Elected Members nominated by each Unitary Authority to serve on the North Wales Fire Authority are listed in the colour coded boxes.

Jargon buster

Establishment – the number of operational staff who are employed at each level of the organisation. Previously notified to the relevant minister of state until the repeal of Section 19 of the 1947 Fire Services Act in September 2003. The repeal of Section 19 means that decisions on the numbers of staff employed in the Fire & Rescue Service can be taken locally without the unnecessary intervention of Government.

Rank Structure – the existing scheme for identifying command levels within the fire service. There are 12 ranks covering junior, senior and principal officer grades from Leading Firefighter to Chief Fire Officer.

Role Related – a system of identifying individuals to their function within the Service based on what they do rather than what rank they hold. This system will be introduced as part of IPDS.

Challenges for the Future

During this process of integrated risk management, we identified areas of possible risk about which we could not gather sufficient information in the time available to enable us to develop clear recommendations about the way ahead.

Nonetheless, these issues are significant, and we did not want to ignore them. We are therefore proposing to include them in our action plan as areas for further investigation in the coming year.

The Issues:

1) Co-Responding

Co-Responding is basically making a simultaneous attendance with the Ambulance to life threatening medical emergencies in locations where a suitable fire service resource is more readily available and will be able to provide additional life-saving services to local communities. This is done by training firefighters in resuscitation techniques, including the use of defibrillators.

Some people see this as a common-sense approach to community safety that helps the existing ambulance service to save lives, whilst others see it as reducing firefighting capacity and just a way of plugging holes in an over stretched ambulance service.

This is obviously a complex area that needs to be analysed from varying points of view, including in terms of the aspirations of the Ambulance Service, introducing and maintaining the skills of operational firefighters, the investment in additional equipment and the overall cost-benefit of such a scheme to our communities.

2) Control Room

A Best Value Review of Control in 2000-01 recommended that in view of the perceived disadvantages associated with merging the three separate fire control rooms in Wales into one or two larger ones, our professional judgement is that we should challenge any proposal to do so if it could be shown to have an appreciably detrimental effect on the service.

Since that time, industrial action by members of the Fire Brigades Union (which included Control Operators) resulted in fire control functions being carried out temporarily from police control rooms. Principal officers from the fire service and senior officers from the Police and Ambulance staffed these. This provided, in effect, one joint control room. It was possible then to experience some of the advantages associated with working so closely with control operators from other emergency services.

Given the widening role of our Control Operators to manage our response to emergency calls (as opposed to reacting with pre-set standard responses), we would like to assess the feasibility and effects of a joint emergency service(s) control room in North Wales.

3) Proportionate Response

In the past, we have tended to respond to most calls for assistance in a fairly standard way. Not only have we responded to calls for help at life threatening incidents (fires, serious flooding incidents, chemical spills, etc.), but also to calls for help when lives have not been in danger, such as people stuck in lifts, when perhaps the services of a lift engineer would have been more appropriate.

This raises two issues – should we attend some calls at all, and if so, should we attend with a full fire crew on a fire engine? We would need to weigh up the risks associated with declining to attend some calls against the risks associated with being unavailable to attend real life threatening emergencies if we're already busy.

What we will do about it:

We will investigate the feasibility of each one these issues to ensure that we are giving the best possible service to the community in respect of safety.

This will be done through engaging other agencies in consultation to discuss our plans and proposals and seek their views on future collaborative work.

Proposed Action:

To undertake additional investigations into the three areas of co-responding, control room arrangements and providing proportionate response to non-life-threatening incidents.

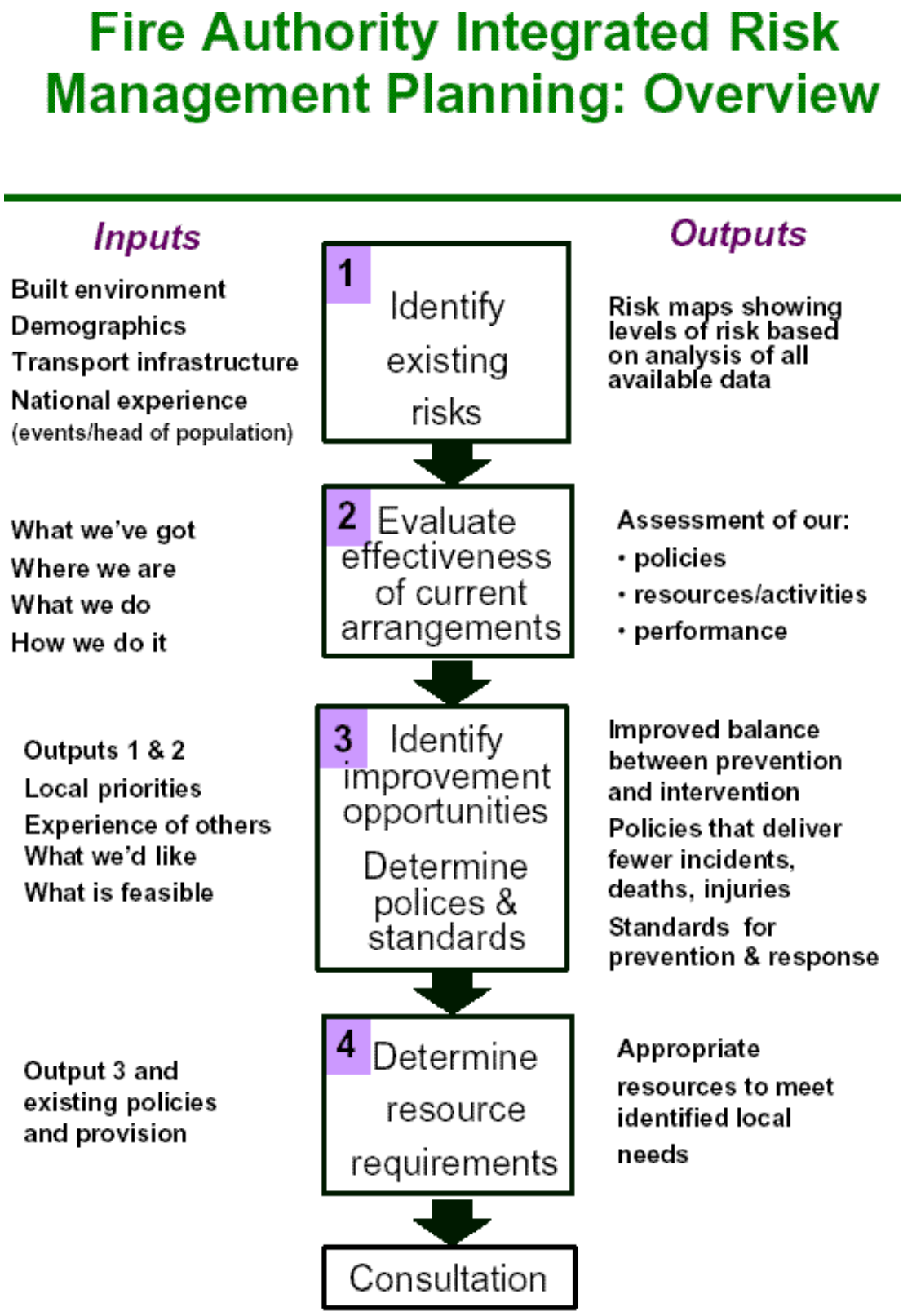
SUMMARY OF ADDITIONAL COST OF/MONEY RELEASED FROM PROPOSED MEASURES

Risk	Proposed Action	Financial Implications	£
Risk 1- Fire Deaths	• Potential of non-operational personnel	Costs related to trialling post, if successful an amount in salaries for a post in each of 7 organisational areas.	£140,000 p.a.
Risk 1 – Fire Deaths	• Utilising Retained for CFS	Costs related to pay.	£90,000 p.a.
Risk 1 – Fire Deaths	• Researching effectiveness of shift times	No Cost Implications.	
Risk 2 – Service Profile	• Develop fire station facilities	Capital Costs related to structural work as part of the property improvement programme.	Undefined
Risk 2 – Service Profile	• Extend YFA	Costs related to each unit uniform and equipment.	£24,000 p.a.
Risk 3 – A.F.A.'s	• Develop a strategy for dealing with Automatic Fire Alarm systems	Potential savings based on targeted reduction.	£51,000 p.a. (Based on 10%)
Risk 3 – A.F.A.'s	• Call Management System	Potential savings based on targeting emergency resource provision.	Undefined
Risk 4 – Standards of Fire Cover	• Development of response standards	No Cost Implications.	
Risk 5 – Day Crewing Day	• To move the working day at Day Crewing fire stations	Potential savings based on reduced calls between 18:00 and 22:00 hours	£75,000 p.a.
Risk 6 – Getting the Balance Right	• Review of Special Appliances	Potential savings of Capital Costs based on a rationalisation of vehicle fleet	Undefined
Risk 6 – Getting the Balance Right	• Call Management System	Potential savings based on targeting emergency resource provision.	Undefined
Risk 7 – Arson	• Inter agency strategy	Potential savings based on targeted reduction.	Undefined
Risk 7 – Arson	• Monitoring Incidents	No Cost Implications.	
Risk 8 – Service Structure	• Reduction in the levels of management	Potential long-term savings related to pay.	£130,000
FUTURE CHALLENGES	• Co-Responding • Control Room • Proportionate response	No Cost Implications of investigation	

Costs shown, as "Undefined" cannot be quantified until more detailed financial analysis has taken place based on the results of the policy implemented.

Figures in red show additional costs.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister issued guidance to Fire Authorities on how to conduct Integrated Risk Management Plans. The illustration below outlines the process that was followed.



FACTS AND FIGURES RELATING TO NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Fire Stations:

There are 44 fire stations in North Wales.

- **Three are wholetime shift fire stations,** which are continuously occupied, 24 hours a day. These are in Wrexham, Deeside (Queensferry) and Rhyl.
- **Five are day crewed fire stations**, which are continuously occupied during the day only. Nighttime cover is provided as for retained stations. These are in Colwyn Bay, Llandudno, Bangor, Caernarfon and Holyhead.
- **Thirty-six are retained fire stations**, which are normally unoccupied, except when retained firefighters are there responding to calls, doing routine work or training. These are distributed throughout the areas of the six unitary authorities of North Wales (Anglesey, Gwynedd, Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham).

Staff numbers:

- **We employ almost a thousand people.**
- 295 of our employees are wholetime uniformed staff; 584 are retained uniformed staff; 31 are control room staff; and 78 are non-uniformed support staff.

Vehicles and Equipment:

- Our fleet of vehicles consists of 54 fire engines (with 9 reserves), 4 aerial special appliances, 70 non-operational vehicles (cars, vans and minibuses, etc.), and 27 special appliances (including emergency tenders and control appliances). In addition to these, generators, portable power tools, lifting/winching equipment and other items complement our capability to respond to many different types of incident.

Annual budgets:

2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
£21,209,000	£22,653,210	£23,954,820	£25,304,230

Incidents:	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03(p)
Total number of incidents attended	11,754	12,030	11,466
Number of calls to incidents where fire was present	5,349	5,868	5,540
False alarms from automatic fire alarm systems	3,009	3,004	2,978
Secondary Fires (less serious ones, grass, rubbish, etc)	2,527	3,052	3,021
Primary fires (more serious ones, property based)	2,332	2,358	2,169
Vehicle fires attended	969	954	866
Accidental fires in dwellings	618	604	561
Deaths in accidental fires in dwellings	4	10	6
Injuries in accidental fires in dwellings	77	87	91
Road traffic accidents attended	483	450	501
Malicious false alarms (hoax calls) attended	499	478	391
Average time taken to arrive at all incidents except those over the border to assist neighbouring brigades	9 minutes	9 minutes	9 minutes

(p) Provisional figures

SUMMARY OF RISKS, LONG TERM STRATEGIES AND FIRST ACTION PLAN

	Risk	Strategy for reducing the risk	First action plan	By when
1	The number of fire-related deaths and injuries is unacceptably high.	To place greater emphasis on providing advice and support that will help to prevent fires from starting.	Increase the amount of Community Fire Safety (CFS) work undertaken by the Service by introducing a new structure to enable closer working within local authority areas (i.e. the findings of the management structure review).	Start from April 2004
			Assess the potential for employing non-operational staff for Community Fire Safety work.	Complete by September 2004
			Utilise retained personnel to undertake Community Fire Safety work.	Start from April 2004
			Introduce changes in relation to wholetime firefighters' working day to accommodate Community Fire Safety work	Complete by December 2004
2	Fire safety messages are either not reaching sufficient numbers of people, or are being ignored.	To raise the profile of the fire service locally as a source of information, advice and support.	Develop fire station facilities and adopt the concept of community fire stations.	Complete by December 2008
3	False alarms from automatic fire detection apparatus (AFDA) in buildings are an unnecessary drain on resources.	To take steps to substantially reduce the number of occasions when we respond to false alarms from AFDA.	Develop a clearly understood policy relating to our response to automatic fire alarms in buildings. The main aim of this new policy would be to increase the availability of our resources to respond to genuine calls for assistance.	Implement by April 2004
			Introduce a Call Management System into our Control Room to enable us to respond intelligently and appropriately to calls for assistance.	Develop in line with National Project. Start from April 2004
			Advise and work with companies or establishments in order to manage problem systems	Start from January 2004
			When determining responses, differentiate between individual systems within one organisation to better tailor our response	Complete by December 2004
4	National 'standards of fire cover' may not necessarily provide the best protection for the communities of North Wales.	To develop the best response standards for the protection of the communities of North Wales.	Respond to fire and other emergencies, which threaten life or property by the quickest means possible, using the most appropriate resources at our disposal, without any compromise to current response times or to the scale of our response.	Start from April 2004

	Risk	Strategy for reducing the risk	First action plan	By when
5	Shift times are not sufficiently flexible to deal with variations in workload.	To add flexibility to shift patterns to reflect the times of increased demand; thereby improving our ability to respond sooner to a larger number of incidents.	Begin to introduce a later start and finish time for the day shift at day crewed fire stations, so that daytime standby hours are worked from 10.00 to 12.00 hrs., daytime hours on station are worked from 12.00 to 22.00 hrs. and overnight standby hours are worked from 22.00 to 10.00 hrs.	Start from April 2004
6	Resources may not be located so as to provide the best protection possible.	To use all available means to ensure that people, vehicles and equipment are intelligently located to provide the best protection possible.	Undertake a review of the disposition of special appliances.	Complete by March 2004
			Initiate a project to examine the routine mobilisation of second appliances, especially with regard to introducing alternative means of transportation of crews and equipment to some incidents	Complete by March 2004
			Require Control Operators to manage the way we mobilise to incidents, using an Emergency Call Management System, and to give effective survival guidance where appropriate.	Develop in line with National Project. Start from April 2004
			Continuously monitor our general performance under the new standards, and review the performance of fire stations against these new standards.	Review in December 2005
7	The crime of arson is a particular risk for most communities.	To utilise our Information Technology and our contacts with other agencies to track, monitor and reduce the incidence of arson in North Wales	To engage fully in recommendations for arson reduction put forward by the Welsh Assembly Government following the publication of the "Up in Flames" report	On going
			To improve inter-agency data and intelligence sharing for the joint aim of reducing the total number of incidents attributed to acts of arson	On going
			To increase our in-house monitoring of incidents attributed to arson in order to improve our own ability to react quickly and intelligently to problem areas, and to allow us to identify how and why we have been successful.	Start from April 2004
8	Effectiveness could be reduced if the correct organisational structures are not in place to support them.	To align ourselves to the six unitary authority boundaries and reduce the levels of management and bureaucracy	To adopt the principles of the new organisational structure as recommended in the report following the 2001 Review of the Management Structure of the North Wales Fire Service.	Start from April 2004
	Challenges for the Future.	To broaden the Services view of Community Safety beyond that which relates solely to fire.	To undertake additional investigations into the three areas of co-responding, control room arrangements and providing proportionate response to non-life-threatening incidents.	Complete by December 2004

HOW TO RESPOND

We welcome your views and comments on the recommendations presented in our first Integrated Risk Management Plan. We want to encourage everyone who has an interest in our services to let us know whether or not they agree with our proposals, and why. We would also like to hear about any alternative proposals for change which we could consider including either in our main plan or in one of our annual action plans.

It would help us to make a balanced assessment of the responses if you provided us with the following information:

• **Name:**
• **Name of Organisation:** (if you are responding on behalf of that organisation)
• **Address:**
• **Are you a former or current employee, or a close relative of an employee of North Wales Fire and Rescue Service?**
• **Are you a Member of North Wales Fire Authority?**
• **To which proposal does your comment relate?**
• **Your comments about the proposal.**

Please return your comments **by the deadline of 31st January 2004**:

By post to:

IRMP Consultation
North Wales Fire Authority
Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters
Coast Road
RHYL
Denbighshire
LL18 3PL

By e-mail to:

IRMPviews@nwales-fireservice.org.uk

Data Protection Act 1998

The information you supply with your response will be processed by North Wales Fire Authority for the purpose of administering this consultation.

For organisations, authorities and corporate bodies, we will assume that you have no objection to having details of your response included in a public report, unless you stipulate to the contrary.

For individuals, all responses will be treated as confidential. We will keep your personal details secure and will not disclose them to other organisations or third parties without your consent, unless we are legally required to do so. The substance of your comments may be incorporated within a report, but will not be attributed to any named individual.