



Awdurdod Tân ac Aisirub Gogledd Cymru
North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority

DRAFT

FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2009-10

and

**ANNUAL RISK REDUCTION PLAN ACTION
PLAN**

2010 - 11

Prepared in October 2009 under section 6 of the Local Government Act 1999 and issued in accordance with guidance issued to Fire and Rescue Authorities in Wales by the Welsh Assembly Government

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INTRODUCTION

North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority's **Annual Improvement Plan** 2009-2010 has been prepared in accordance with guidance issued by the Welsh Assembly Government in November 2007¹. It provides an overview of North Wales Fire and Rescue's performance, both in general terms and in relation to specific issues that affect the running of the Authority and the Service.

This Improvement Plan (previously called a 'Best Value Performance Plan') focuses on three financial years: 2008-09, 2009-2010, and 2010-11, reporting on the progress made last year, what faces the Authority this year, and what is anticipated to affect the Authority and the Service next year.

This year, as last year, details of the Authority's **Risk Reduction Plan** have been incorporated within this publication. In accordance with the Welsh Assembly Government guidance², progress is reported against the full Risk Reduction Plan compiled in 2007 through to the annual action plan for 2010-2011.

We trust that you will find the information provided here both informative and interesting. If you have any comments or wish to respond to any of the issues described in this plan, we would be pleased to hear from you. Please contact us via the Corporate Planning Manager at the address given at the end of this document.

A summary of this plan will be available after 30th November 2009. The Service's website is also continually being updated and hosts a wealth of information on a range of matters such as audit reports, service strategies, and so on. We encourage you to log on to:

www.nwales-fireservice.org.uk

¹ The Wales Programme for Improvement – Guidance for Fire and Rescue Authorities in Wales (November 2007)

² Fire and Rescue Authority Risk Reduction Plan – Wales a Safer Country (February 2006)

SECTION 1

OVERVIEW OF THE AUTHORITY AND SERVICE

This first section presents general information on North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority and North Wales Fire and Rescue Service – why they exist, how they are run and organised, what they achieve, and what they look after.

Our mission is to make North Wales a safer place to live, work and visit.

CORE DUTIES

The principal duties of the Fire and Rescue Authority, as defined in the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, are:

1. To promote fire safety through the provision of information, publicity and encouragement to prevent fires and deaths and injuries by fire;
2. To give advice, on request, about how to prevent fires and restrict their spread in buildings and other property, and on means of escape in the event of fire;
3. To make provision for protecting life and property in the event of fires;
4. To make provision for rescuing and protecting people from serious harm in the event of road traffic accidents;
5. To respond to other emergencies or eventualities as required to protect people, property, or the environment.

CORPORATE AIMS

These five fundamental aims summarise every aspect of what North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority wants to achieve through the day-to-day operations of the Service.

1. To prevent accidental and malicious fires.
2. To protect people from being killed or injured by fire and other hazards.
3. To protect the community, businesses and the environment from being harmed by fire and other hazards.
4. To find ways to improve in order to meet the expectations of the community.
5. To operate as effectively and efficiently as we can, making the best use of the resources we have available.

CORE VALUES

North Wales Fire and Rescue Service has a set of core values which drive our organisation and highlight the priorities of how we work.

Our core values are:

Service to the community

We value service to the community by:

- Working with all groups to reduce risk
- Treating everyone fairly and with respect
- Being answerable to those we serve
- Striving for excellence in all we do

People

We value all our employees by practising and promoting:

- Fairness and respect
- Recognition of merit
- Honesty, integrity and mutual trust
- Personal development
- Co-operative and inclusive working

Diversity

We value diversity in the Service and the community by:

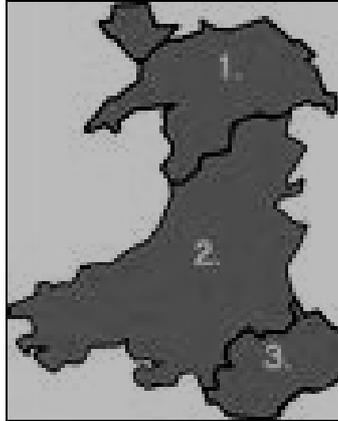
- Treating everyone fairly and with respect
- Providing various solutions for different needs and expectations
- Promoting equal opportunities in employment with progression within the Service
- Challenging prejudice and discrimination

Improvement

We value improvement at all levels of the Service by accepting responsibility for our performance by:

- Being open-minded
- Considering criticism thoughtfully
- Learning from our experience
- Consulting others

RESPONSIBILITY FOR FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES



North Wales **Fire and Rescue Authority** is one of just three fire and rescue authorities in Wales. Its role is:

- To perform all the duties and responsibilities of a Fire Authority in accordance with appropriate legislation and regulations, in particular the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, the Regulatory Reform Order (Fire Safety) Order 2005 - which came into force on 1 October 2006, and the 1995 Combination Scheme.
- To agree the annual service plans, the revenue and capital budgets and the contribution for the constituent councils.
- To monitor the revenue and capital budgets and deal with any significant variations, including decisions on any supplementary contributions.

The Authority was established in April 1996, and comprises 28 councillors from the six unitary authorities of North Wales: Anglesey County Council (3); Conwy County Borough Council (5); Denbighshire County Council (4); Flintshire County Council (6); Gwynedd Council (5); Wrexham County Borough Council (5). The number of representatives from each constituent authority is determined on a population basis.

North Wales **Fire and Rescue Service** is headed by the Chief Fire Officer, who has overall corporate management and operational responsibility for the Service. He also provides professional advice to the Authority.

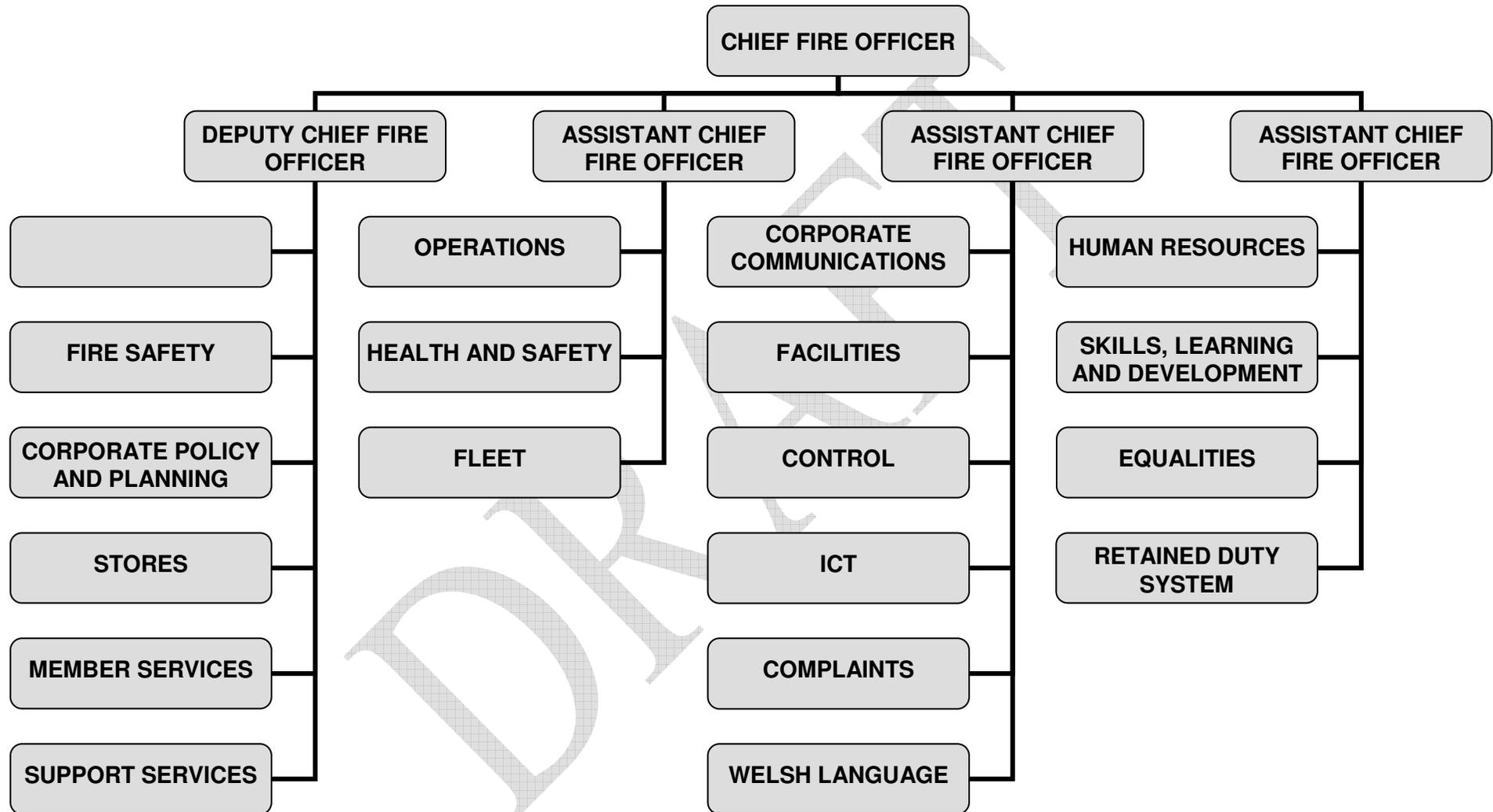
Governmental responsibility for fire and rescue services and the promotion of fire safety in Wales lies with the **Welsh Assembly Government**. The Minister for Social Justice and Local Government heads the Merthyr Tydfil-based *Department for Social Justice and Local Government* which has four divisions relating to: Communities, Local Government Policy, Local Government Finance and Community Safety (which includes fire).

The Welsh Assembly Government's vision is that fire and rescue authorities in Wales should:

- Strive to make communities safer but in doing so be at the heart of the communities they serve, having a transparent decision-making process which involves the communities.
- Work seamlessly with each other, other emergency services, other partners and the community, delivering cohesive services that maximise not only FRAs resources but also those of partner organisations.
- Recognise the impact they can have on the environment (natural and built) and society's social fabric – contributing to meeting Assembly Government sustainability objectives through operational activities, preventative action and by examining the impact of their own organisation.
- Recognise the diversity within their communities, ensure that their staff reflect the diversity in the community and be able to reach their full potential ensuring equality of opportunity for all in delivering services to the public.

(Fire and Rescue National Framework 2008-2011)

SERVICE MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE



SERVICE WORKFORCE STRUCTURE

This table shows the number of posts funded (not individual people employed) as at 31st March 2009.

		WDS					RDS	Control		Support staff
	All posts	Central /County functions	Staff development	Fire Safety	Fire Stations	Non-operational	Posts on fire stations as 24 hour units of cover	Control non-watch	Control on watch	Support staff
Principal Officer	5	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Area Manager	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Group Manager	13	9	1	2	0	0	0	1	0	0
Station Manager	31	11	0	17	0	3	0	0	0	0
Watch Manager	104	4	10	13	22	0	46	1	8	0
Crew Manager	145	0	0	3	48	0	90	0	4	0
Firefighter	576	0	0	0	143	0	421	0	12	0
Support Staff	118	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	118
Totals	995	32	11	35	213	3	557	2	24	118
		294					557	26		118

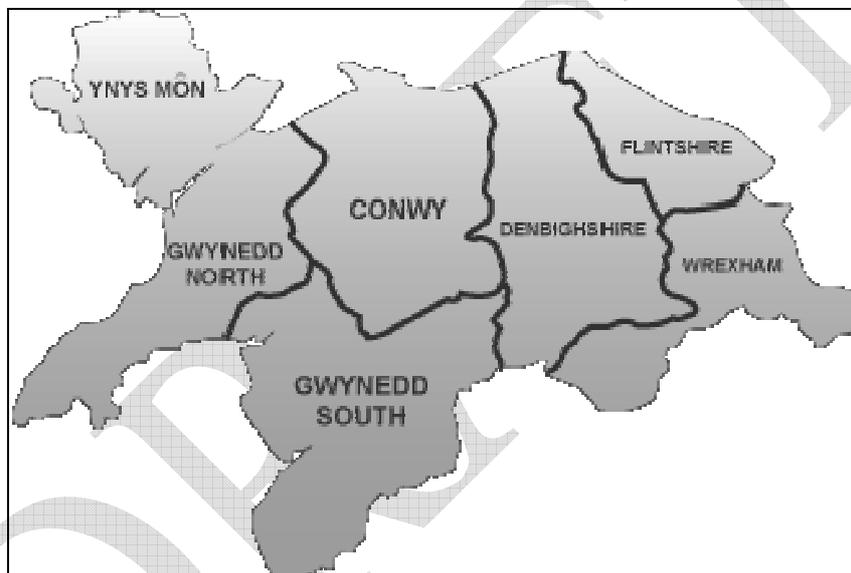
WDS = wholetime duty system

RDS = retained duty system

FACTS AND FIGURES

General

North Wales Fire and Rescue Service operates across the six unitary authority areas of North Wales, helping to protect a population of around 678,543³, 303,377 domestic properties⁴ and 27,055 non-domestic properties⁵. Additionally, it protects visitors, transport network users, the natural environment (including beyond its coastline), businesses and other infrastructures. It supports other fire and rescue services in the UK when required and remains continually prepared to protect in the event of large scale disasters.



Map showing the seven county areas of North Wales Fire and Rescue Service.

Financial

In 2008-09, contributions totalling £30,530,661 were applied to fund revenue expenditure from the six Local Authorities in North Wales. Levies for 2009-2010 were set 2.5% higher at £31,308,000. More details are shown in Section 5.

Employees

On 31st March 2009, a total of 1,043 individual people were employed by North Wales Fire and Rescue Service – 282 men and 14 women as

³ ONS Mid Year Estimates www.statswales.wales.gov.uk

⁴ Council Tax Dwelling Return (CT1) www.statswales.wales.gov.uk

⁵ National Non-Domestic Rates (NDR1) www.statswales.wales.gov.uk

wholetime firefighters/operational managers, 554 men and 19 women as retained firefighters, 4 men and 30 women as control staff, and 55 men and 85 women in a range of specialist support roles⁶.

Staff profiles on the next page give more detail of a workforce that is becoming increasingly diverse.

Assets

In North Wales, there are 44 fire stations, 3 of which (in Wrexham, Queensferry and Rhyl) stay open around the clock; 5 of which are permanently staffed between 12:00 midday and 10:00 p.m. and operate as retained fire stations outside those hours; and 36 of which operate wholly as retained fire stations.

Since 2005, the main headquarters function has been run from premises on the St Asaph Business Park, and there are county safety offices located within each of the six county council areas. Some central functions are run from Rhyl; Fleet Maintenance workshops and Stores are located in purpose-built premises in Llandudno Junction. In addition to the main skills learning and development centre in Rhyl, there are other training facilities in Dolgellau.

The main control room is co-located with the Police Control at the Joint Communications centre in St Asaph, with a secondary fallback control room in Rhyl. The first purpose-built community fire station in North Wales was officially opened in Rhyl by the Rt Hon. Rhodri Morgan, First Minister for Wales, in October 2008.

The Service also has a fleet of operational and support vehicles to respond in a range of emergency and non-emergency situations:

- 4 aerial appliances
- 1 fire bike
- 18 cars
- 4 minibuses
- 75 vans
- 66 fire appliances
- 35 special appliances

⁶ Information supplied in 2008-09 Annual Operational Returns HRFW10-17

WORKFORCE PROFILES AS AT 31ST MARCH 2009

Age Profile:

Part of the modernisation of the fire and rescue service nationally is concerned with creating a workforce that reflects the local communities it serves. By doing so, the service will be better placed to engage with – and therefore to protect – those communities.

The Authority is committed to fairness and equality, and promotes actions that will help to achieve a more diverse workforce.

At the end of March 2009, the majority – over 80% – of the workforce were between 25 and 49 years of age.

Age as at 31 March 2009	16-24	25-34	35-49	50-54	55-59	60+	All
Retained Operational	56	168	289	43	17	0	573
Wholetime Operational	1	56	206	29	4	0	296
Support	5	31	61	19	13	11	140
Control	2	9	21	1	1	0	34
All staff	64	264	577	92	35	11	1,043
As a percentage	6.1%	25.3%	55.3%	8.8%	3.4%	1.1%	100%

Gender Profile:

Of the 1,043 people employed at the end of March 2009, 895 (86%) were men, and 148 (14%) were women. 14 women were employed as wholetime firefighters, and 19 as retained firefighters.

The Authority continues to strive to achieve a better gender balance in the Service – particularly in the operational sector of the Service that is still predominantly male. It does this through positive action campaigns when vacancies arise and through more general messages that challenge stereotyping and show that a career in the fire and rescue service is attractive to both women and men. In the most recent wholetime recruitment campaign, almost 12% of the applications came from women.

Race Profile:

Of the 1,043 people employed, just over 97% classified their racial origin as white. The Authority is committed to achieving a workforce that reflects the ethnic profile of North Wales, recognising the positive impact that a diverse workforce can have in improving safety.

1% of staff classed themselves as coming from a minority ethnic background, which matches the percentage of people from minority ethnic backgrounds aged between 18 and 64 years living in North Wales.

Racial origin	White	Black	Asian	Mixed	Chinese	Not recorded	All
Retained Operational	549	1	3	5	0	15	573
Wholetime Operational	295	0	1	0	0	0	296
Support	137	0	0	0	0	3	140
Control	34	0	0	0	0	0	34
All staff	1,015	1	4	5	0	18	1,043
As a percentage	97.3%	0.1%	0.4%	0.5%	0%	1.7%	100%

Language Profile:

The Service recognises the importance of the Welsh language for day to day communication. Policies, plans and performance indicators are set out in the Authority's updated Welsh Language Scheme (2010 – 2013).

To this end, the Service has adopted a Linguistic Skills Strategy aimed at realising the Authority's vision of delivering services at all times in the language choice of the public. A series of Welsh language awareness-raising sessions was provided for all staff between October 2008 and July 2009, and support is available for those wishing to learn the language.

The Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE) levels are used by the Service to determine language ability. Since January 2009 all new members of staff have been required to have the ability to show at least basic (ALTE Level 1) Welsh language courtesy skills on joining the Service. From January 2010 all new employees will be expected to reach at least ALTE Level 2 within an agreed period, and any existing members of staff

who seek promotion will also be required to have reached this same level.

Disability Profile:

As at 31st March 2009, 14 operational firefighters (1.6%) categorised themselves as having a disability, as did 8 members of control and support staff (4.6%). This totals 2.3%, compared with the 17.6% of people aged between 18 and 64 years in North Wales who fall into the same category.

Although the fire and rescue service has traditionally excluded people with disabilities, recent experience nationally has shown that disability need not necessarily be a barrier to a successful career in the service.

Recruitment and employment policies are now in place to ensure that disability does not of itself disqualify people from employment in the fire and rescue service.

Training and Development:

5,101 days/shifts were spent by staff undergoing training and development activities in 2008-09, which reflects the Authority's ongoing commitment to provide opportunities for staff development, recognising the importance of a highly skilled and highly motivated workforce.

SECTION 2

LOOKING BACK OVER 2008-09

PERFORMANCE

All fires are categorised as being either primary, secondary or chimney fires. Please refer to the glossary for a full explanation.

As defined in the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, the Authority's primary function is to promote fire safety in North Wales. It achieves this in a variety of ways, including through general and targeted Community Fire Safety activities and publicity, arranging and participating in special events, leading and contributing to partnerships, delivering school and youth programmes, working with groups of particularly vulnerable people, giving advice to the owners of commercial, public and other non-domestic premises, and reducing the incidence of arson and anti-social behaviour.

All Fires

All Fires per 10,000 population



Between 2007-08 and 2008-09, the overall number of fires attended in North Wales fell by 10.5%. This successful outcome follows on from an even larger reduction of 16.5% in the previous year.

There was a notable reduction in the number of secondary (outdoor or small) fires attended during the year. The number of outdoor secondary fires tends to be weather-related (see separate section), but the effectiveness of arson reduction strategies has also contributed to a reduction in the number of secondary fires that were started deliberately.

The work of the Joint Arson Reduction Team - comprising personnel from both the Police Service and the Fire and Rescue Service in North Wales - has contributed to a reduction of almost 300 deliberate secondary fires attended in 2008-09 compared to the previous year.

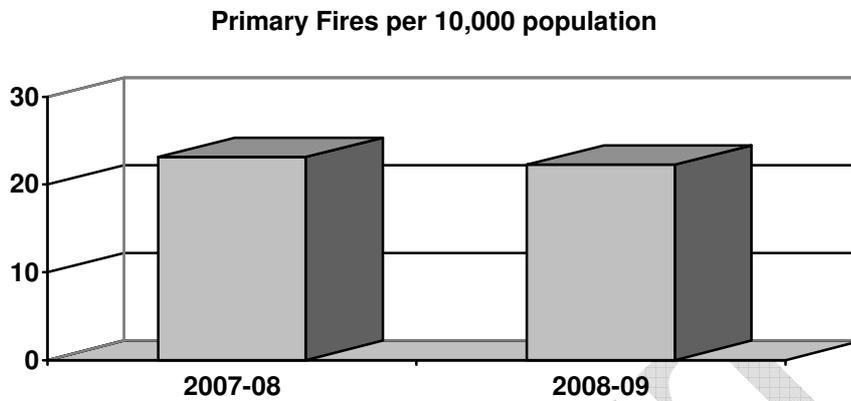
There was a small reduction of just under 4% in the number of fires attended in non-domestic properties. This follows a much larger reduction of 23% between the previous two years, which coincided with the introduction of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order in 2006. This relatively new legislation replaced most fire safety legislation with one simple order that requires any person with some level of control in premises other than domestic dwellings to take reasonable steps to reduce the risk from fire and to make sure people can escape safely if there is a fire.

There was also a small reduction of just over 4% in the number of accidentally-started fires in domestic premises, representing a welcome contrast to the 16.8% increase between the previous two years (see separate section).

However, despite campaigns to raise awareness of the importance of maintaining clear chimneys, the Service was called nevertheless to attend almost 100 more chimney fires than in the previous year.

	Primary Fires	Secondary Fires	Chimney Fires	Total Fires
2007-2008	1,564	2,000	280	3,844
Per 10,000 population	23.15	29.60	4.14	56.90
2008-09	1,509	1,557	376	3,442
Per 10,000 population	22.24	22.94	5.54	50.73
Change	- 3.5%	-22.2%	+ 34.3%	-10.5%

Primary Fires



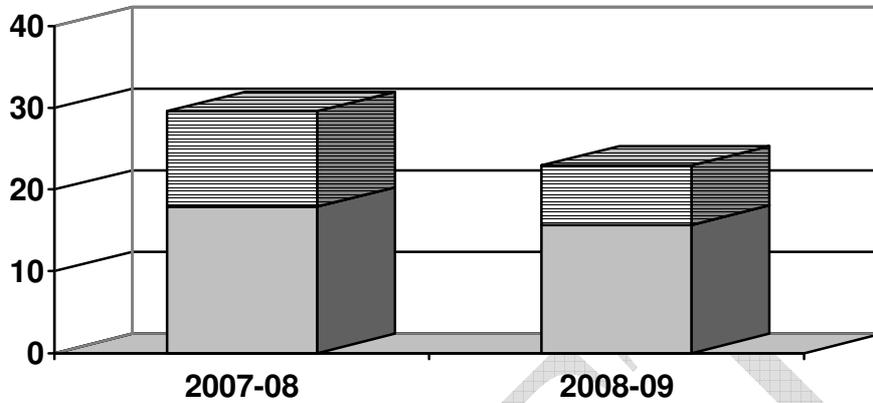
Between 2007-08 and 2008-09, the overall number of primary fires attended in North Wales fell by 3.5%.

A reduction in primary fires is one of the best measures of increased safety, and is therefore at the forefront of reducing risk. Performance in this area has been improving steadily in recent years and reflects the Service's continued efforts to reduce the number of primary fires.

The success of the Service's twin approaches of educating people to avoid accidental fires and taking action to prevent acts of deliberate fire setting is well measured by this indicator.

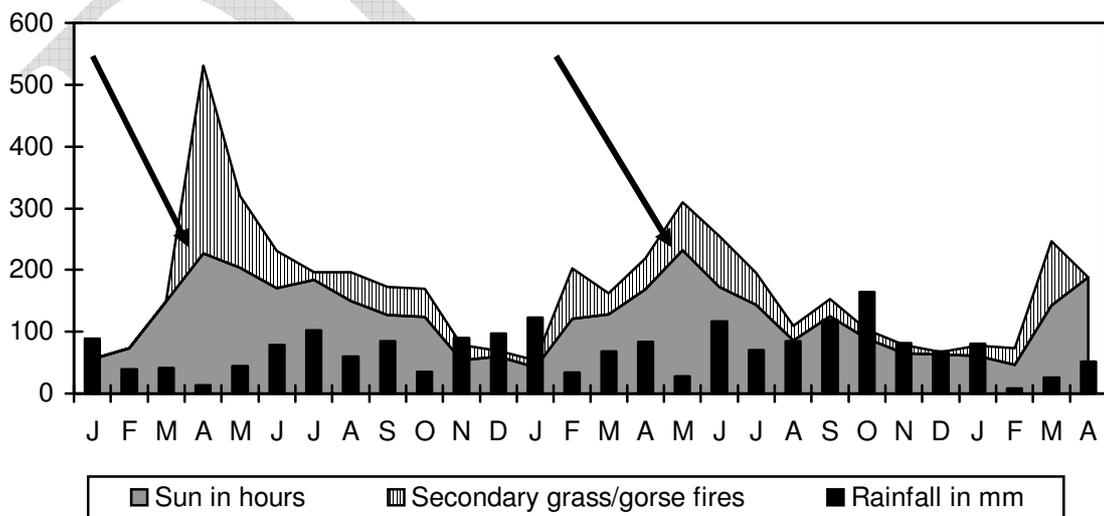
Secondary Fires

Secondary Fires per 10,000 population



In 2008-09 the Service attended 22% fewer secondary fires than in the previous year, partly as a result of preventative work and timely reminders, but also probably as a result of different weather conditions that gave rise to fewer grass and gorse fires (as illustrated by the striped area in the graph above).

Comparing sun and rain information and the number of secondary grassland and gorse fires attended between Spring 2007 and Spring 2009 illustrates how peaks in the number of those fires correspond closely to times of high sunlight hours and low levels of rainfall.



(Sunshine and rainfall information from www.metoffice.gov.uk/climate/uk/stationdata/valleydata.txt.)

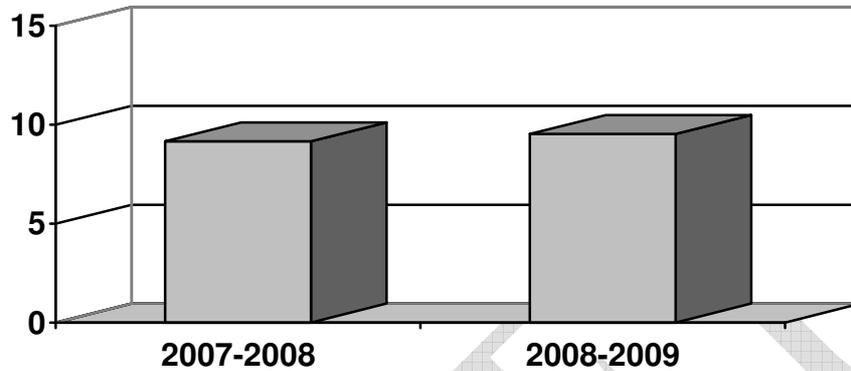
This relationship between the number of calls to North Wales Fire and Rescue Service and the fluctuations of the weather has an organisational impact. Two-thirds of the operational workforce are employed on a Retained Duty System where pay is linked to the actual number of calls attended. Financial planning therefore needs to take account of the unpredictability of when periods of high levels of calls will occur, whether as the result of particularly hot dry conditions or of stormy wet conditions.

The Retained Duty System is currently the subject of a root and branch review by the Assembly Government.

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Non-domestic Fires

Fires in Non-Domestic Premises per 1,000 Non-Domestic Premises



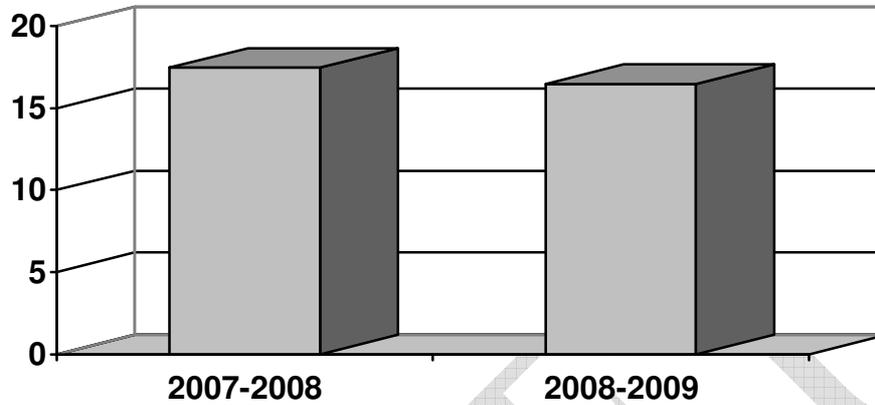
The number of fires attended in non-domestic premises in 2008-09 (258) was almost 4% higher than in the previous year (248).

There are just over 27,000 non-domestic premises in North Wales, most of which are subject to legislation designed to ensure the safety of the people inside them. These buildings include, for example, hospitals, care homes, houses converted into flats, public buildings, schools, shops, licensed premises, offices, factories, hostels and hotels.

In October 2006, the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 came into force. The introduction of this order changed the role of the Fire and Rescue Authority to one of enforcement rather than of certification, so the focus for the Service has changed more recently to prioritising known premises to undergo a formal audit of their fire safety arrangements. In 2008-2009, 781 audits of premises were conducted, resulting in 36 enforcement notices and 9 prohibition notices being served where arrangements had not been up to standard.

Fires in the Home

Accidental Fires in Dwellings per 10,000 Dwellings



There are around 300,000 dwellings in North Wales. In 2008-09, 501 of those were damaged by accidental fires that necessitated the attendance of at least one fire engine. This was 4.8% fewer than in the previous year.

Fires in the home have been shown to be the ones where people are most often killed or injured, and therefore reducing these is a primary objective for the Authority.

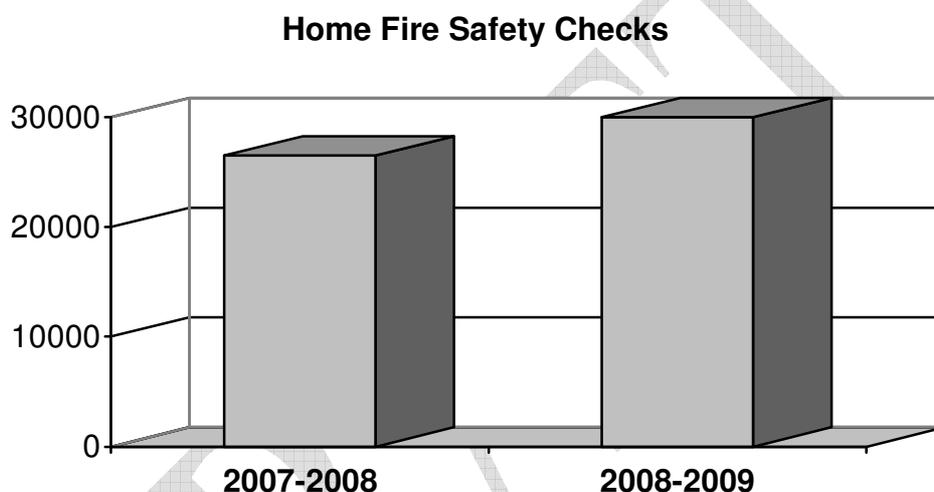
According to the Living in Wales Survey conducted across the whole of Wales, around 1.2% of households in Wales experienced a fire in 2008. Analysis of the survey results showed that an estimated 64% of those fires had been reported to the fire and rescue services, compared to 54% four years earlier.

A maximum Service target of 480 accidental dwelling fires was not achieved in 2008-09, although the Living in Wales Survey did show that the number of households affected by a fire in North Wales had fallen to 8 per 1,000 in 2008 compared to an all-Wales rate of 12 per 1,000.

Home Fire Safety Checks

Following a peak in the number of fire deaths in North Wales in 2006, the Service embarked on a programme of substantially increased Community Fire Safety activity, which included setting an initial target to deliver 30,000 free Home Fire Safety Checks per year.

Advice and guidance is freely available on request to anyone living in North Wales, including through referrals from other agencies concerned with the safety and wellbeing of particularly vulnerable individuals.



The Service places a particular emphasis on the delivery of free Home Fire Safety Checks in North Wales. During 2008-09, the Service exceeded its own annual target for these checks, providing a total of 31,180 across the region within twelve months.

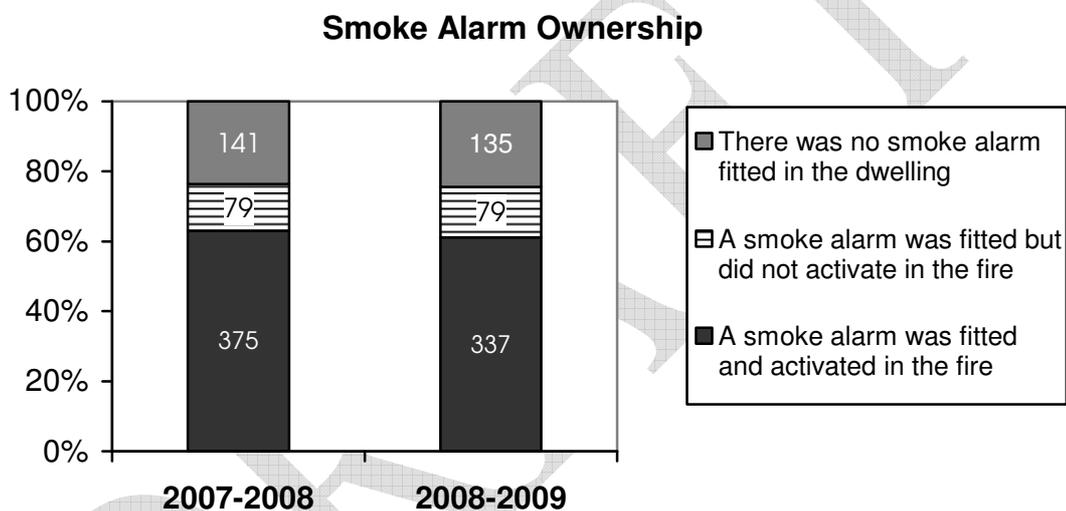
The importance of this strategy and of targeting the most vulnerable is evidenced by the fact that 71 domestic fires attended during the year were at addresses that had received at least one home fire safety check within the two years before the fire.

However, of the 551 dwelling fires attended (both accidentally and deliberately started), 135 were in dwellings without any form of smoke detection, which underlines the importance of maintaining the Home Fire Safety Check strategy over the longer term.

Smoke Alarms

The results of the Living in Wales Survey show that the majority of homes in Wales now have at least one smoke alarm fitted, and that the number without one had fallen to around 10% of the total in 2008 from around 14% four years earlier. The Service aims to ensure that eventually every home in North Wales has at least one working smoke detector.

Although it is impossible to know precisely how many homes in North Wales have a working smoke detector installed, a proxy indicator relates to the number of domestic fires attended where a smoke alarm activated.



The graph above illustrates how a higher percentage of working smoke alarms is already being seen in the dwellings where the Service attends to deal with a fire.

Smoke alarms have been shown to save lives by providing early warning of a fire starting thereby giving time for people to escape before the fire spreads.

By 2008-09 the percentage of fires attended in dwellings where a working smoke alarm had activated had actually fallen by 10.1% but there was a welcome reduction of 4.3% in the number of fires attended in domestic premises without any smoke detectors at all.

Smoke Alarms

	Accidental dwelling fires attended	Deliberate dwelling fires attended	Number already fitted with a working smoke alarm ⁷	Number not fitted with a smoke alarm
2007-08	526	69	375	141
Per 10,000 dwellings	17.5	2.3		
2008-09	501	50	337	135
Per 10,000 dwellings	16.51	1.6		
Change	-4.8%	- 27.5%	- 10.1%	- 4.3%

The figures in the table above show the reduction in the number of both accidental and deliberate dwelling fires attended in 2008-09.

Of the dwelling fires attended, there was a welcome reduction in the number that were not fitted with a smoke alarm, but also an unwelcome reduction in the number that were fitted with a working one. The Service's aim is to reach a point whereby all dwellings in North Wales are fitted with a working smoke alarm, and the results from 2008-09 illustrate the continuing need to emphasise their importance.

⁷ For consistency, fires where a working heat/fire alarm was fitted have been added to this category although the reported % in the now discontinued Best Value Performance Indicator 209 specifically excluded these.

Keeping People Safe

Although one fire per 600 dwellings in North Wales may not initially seem high, national statistics over several years have shown that fires in the home are the deadliest, accounting for the highest number of fire deaths. They are also the most preventable if residents follow guidance that should by now be becoming familiar.

Hard-hitting messages have been issued by the Service over many years about (amongst others) the dangers of:

- using a chip pan
- leaving cooking unattended
- cooking when under the influence of drink or drugs
- not switching off electrical appliances after use
- careless positioning of lit candles
- smoking in bed
- carelessly disposing of cigarette ends
- playing with matches
- failing to use a fire guard in front of open fires
- not ensuring that chimneys are swept regularly
- unsafe electrical wiring and overloaded sockets
- placing clothes to air near heaters and open fires

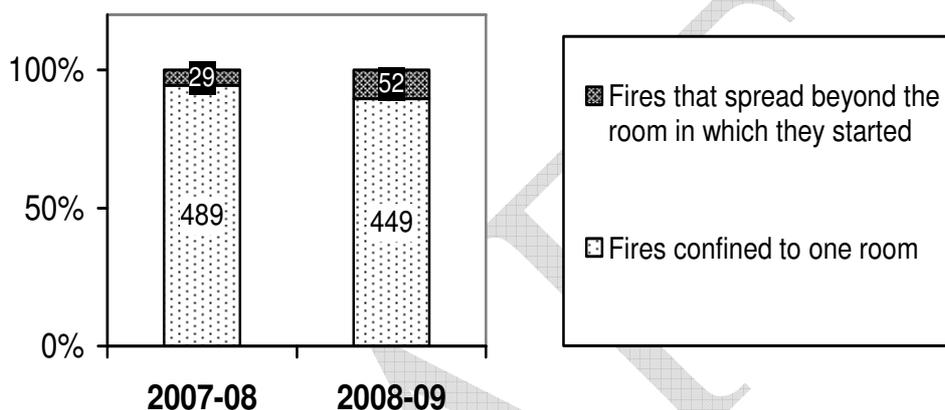
This free advice and Home Fire Safety Check includes the free supply and fitting of smoke detectors in people's homes, and can include other specialist equipment to help keep them safe. Friendly Fire and Rescue Service staff help residents to consider their escape plans in the event of a fire, which is especially important if residents are very young, frail, or disabled.

Advice is also given on good night-time routines of checking that doors are shut properly, electrical appliances have been switched off, candles and cigarettes safely extinguished, open fires have been made safe, and so on.

Keeping People Safe

In the majority of cases (92.6% in 2008-09), accidental dwelling fires can be confined to one room. This relies mainly on early detection and closing internal doors, but is also partly dependent on how soon a fire engine arrives.

Percentage of Accidental Dwelling Fires Confined to the Room of Origin

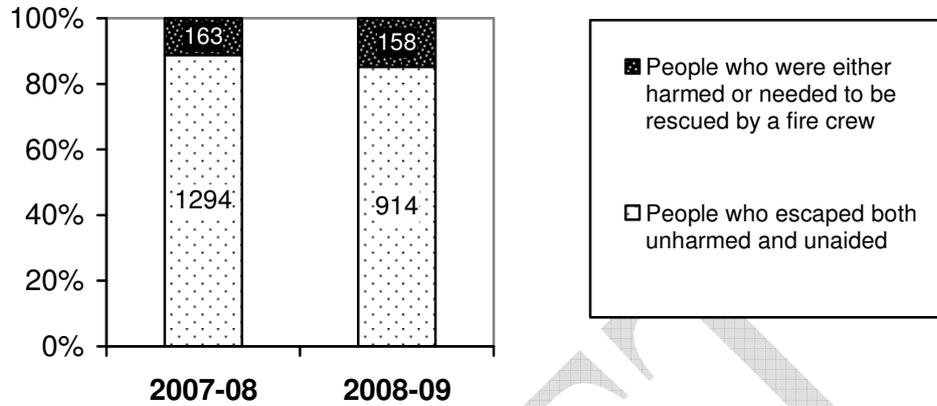


The Service emphasises the need for smoke alarms to give early warning so that people can escape safely before the fire has had time to spread and grow.

The Authority's aim is to reach a position whereby every dwelling is fitted with a properly fitted, working smoke alarm. The smoke alarms fitted by the Service have 10 year batteries that cannot be removed. By adopting a target of providing 30,000 Home Fire Safety Checks per year, the Authority's aim is to have reached the majority of the 300,000 dwellings in North Wales by the time the first smoke alarms fitted need to be replaced.

Keeping People Safe

Safe Unaided Escapes from Accidental Dwelling Fires



The majority of people caught up in accidental dwelling fires (85.26% in 2008-09) were able to get out alive and uninjured without waiting for a fire crew to come to rescue them. However, some were not as fortunate.

Keeping People Safe

The Minister for Social Justice and Regeneration stated in 2003 that it was the Assembly Government's target to reduce deaths in fires by between 30% and 50% in the following five years. Since then, the Assembly has clarified that the baseline figures that will be used to assess the progress of Fire and Rescue Authorities against this ambitious target will be the figures for the calendar year 2004 when there were 26 fire deaths in Wales (21 as a result of accidental fires and 5 as a result of deliberate fires).

Although fire deaths happen comparatively infrequently in North Wales, they are nevertheless tragic occurrences that the Authority is determined to do its utmost to reduce even further. The sad truth is that by the time the Service has received a call for assistance in most cases it is already too late to save some people from the danger of fire. Some are not discovered until some time after the fire has burned itself out. Prevention is therefore at the forefront of the Authority's strategy for reducing the number of people killed or injured by fire.

In 2008-09, no fire deaths were recorded as a result of fires in non-domestic premises. However, four people lost their lives in fires in domestic premises. All of those fires had started accidentally.

	Fire deaths from accidental fires	Fire deaths from deliberate fires	All fire deaths
2008-9	4	0	4
Per 100,000 population	0.59	0	0.59

Fifty-five people were injured in accidental dwelling fires during 2008-09.

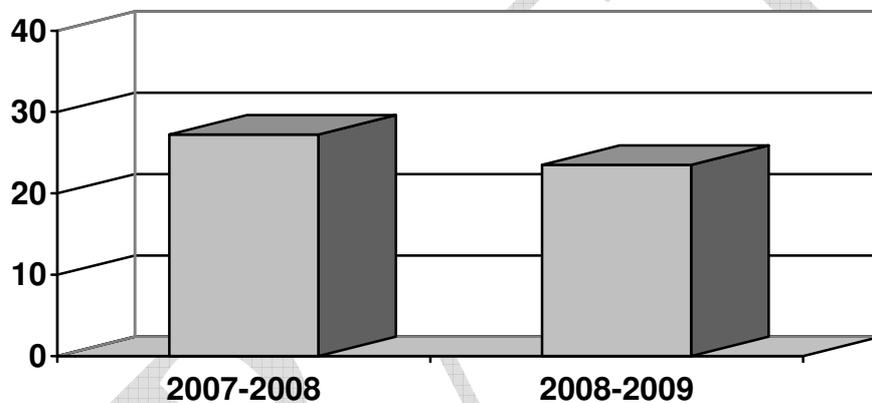
	Fire injuries from accidental fires	Fire injuries from deliberate fires	All fire injuries
2008-09	102	9	111
Per 100,000 population	15.03	1.33	16.36

Fires Started Deliberately

Deliberate fires create significant risk to lives, businesses and the economy, schools and other community activity, the natural environment and heritage sites.

A team from both Police and Fire working together is helping to tackle this issue across North Wales. An all-Wales Arson Reduction Strategy has been developed to co-ordinate and add impetus to the work being undertaken.

Deliberate Fires per 10,000 Population



People have a range of motives for deliberately starting fires including to conceal evidence of criminality or to defraud insurers or to deliberately cause harm to themselves or other people. As such, it makes sense for the Fire and Rescue Service and the Police to work together to reduce the incidence of deliberate fires, whatever the motive behind them.

Fires Started Deliberately

	Deliberate primary fires in vehicles	Deliberate primary fires in other locations	Deliberate secondary fires	All deliberate fires
2007-08	260	266	1,314	1,840
Per 10,000 population	3.85	3.94	19.45	27.24
2008-09	289	267	1,040	1,596
Per 10,000 population	4.26	3.93	15.33	23.52
Change	+ 11.2%	+ 0.4%	- 20.9%	- 13.3%

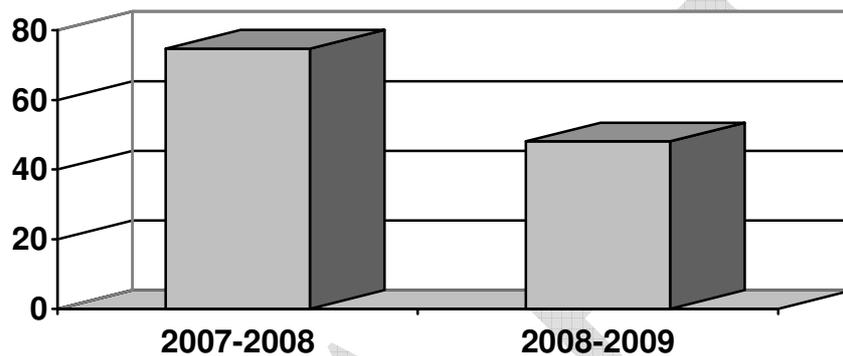
By working together in a highly effective collaboration, North Wales Police and North Wales Fire and Rescue Service have been able to tackle both serious criminal acts and low level anti-social behaviour that lead to deliberate fire-setting.

Between 2007-08 and 2008-09 there was a reduction of 244 deliberate fires. This improvement in performance again underlines the valuable contribution that effective partnership working can make.

False Fire Alarms

Automatic Fire Alarm False Alarms - Repeat and nuisance false alarms from non-domestic premises increase risk and waste fire and rescue service resources.

False Alarms from Automatic Fire Alarms per 1,000 Non-domestic Properties



Between 2007-08 and 2008-09, the number of these false alarms fell significantly - by 719 (35.6%) from 2,020 to 1,301. This was well ahead of the set target figure of 1,818 and represented a remarkable reduction in the level of risk in the area as well as a significant cost saving.

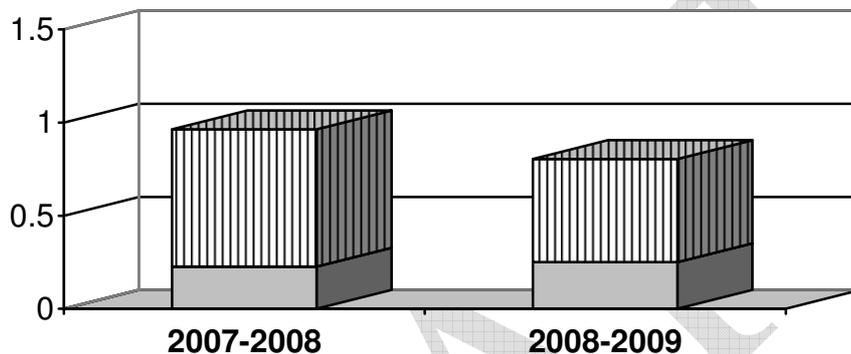
The Authority endorses the installation of Automatic Fire Alarms in non-domestic properties in order to warn anyone on the premises of the presence of fire. However, careful installation, maintenance and management of these systems is essential in order to avoid false alarms.

During 2008-09, the number of non-domestic properties that generated multiple false alarms during the year fell from 342 to 216, leading to a reduction in the number of actual false alarms from this category of premises from 1,547 to 820.

False Fire Alarms

Malicious False Alarms – Acknowledging the risk-increasing effect of attending malicious false alarms, the Service aims to reduce the number that it receives each year, and to recognise any such call as being malicious before committing any resources on at least 75% of occasions.

Malicious False Alarms Attended per 1,000 population



The striped areas on the graph above illustrate how many malicious false alarms were identified as being false before any fire appliances had been mobilised.

The Service takes steps to identify the source of malicious false alarms and wherever possible takes action against people who deliberately make these false calls to the fire and rescue service.

In 2008-09, 545 malicious false alarms were received, of which 170 (31.2%) were attended. The remaining 375 (68.8%) were correctly recognised as being malicious attempts to call out the fire and rescue service knowing that there was no real emergency.

Although the percentage target for non-attendance was not reached in this year, the fact that just six more received an attendance in 2008-09 than in the previous year is considered a good level of performance given the additional pressures associated with the relocation of the control room and the change of electronic mobilising system during the year.

Response Times

In addition to preventing fires from starting in dwellings, the Authority acknowledges the need to respond both quickly and safely to any that do start.

Average Time Taken

In 2008-09 the average time taken to attend a dwelling fire in North Wales was **8 minutes 41 seconds**. This was measured from the point at which the Control operator had received enough information from the caller to summon the appropriate fire crew, to when the first fire engine arrived at the scene of the fire.

Given the rurality of large parts of North Wales the distances of dwellings from the closest fire station inevitably mean that in many cases it will take much longer than 10 minutes to attend. Although almost 97% of dwelling fires were attended in 20 minutes or less in 2008-09, the Authority continues to emphasise the importance of preventing fires.

The calculation includes the time needed for Retained fire crews to turn in to the local fire station having received an alerter message and get changed into their firefighting kit, and the travel time from the fire station to the incident.

10 Minute Service Standard

The Welsh Assembly Government has committed to ensuring that 80% of homes (when measured across the whole of Wales) will be close enough to firefighting resources to enable a fire engine to arrive within 10 minutes. Dwellings located inside these catchment areas are said to fall 'within the 10 minute service standard'.

Allowance is made in the 10 minutes for Retained crews to respond to their fire station and get changed into their firefighting kit before setting out. The distance from a fire station is therefore necessarily going to be fairly short.

Fires that were known to be already out at the time the Service was called are excluded from the calculation.

In 2007-08, 560 dwelling fires in North Wales met the criteria and were included in the calculation. Of those, 421 (90.34%) were actually reached within 10 minutes.

In 2008-09, 445 dwelling fires in North Wales met the criteria and were included in the calculation. Of those, 391 (87.87%) were actually reached within 10 minutes.

5 Minute Service Standard

A 5 minute standard also exists in some particularly densely populated high risk areas of Wales. Although they have been identified through computer risk modelling as being prone to higher casualty rates, these areas are not necessarily located within 5 minutes of a fire station.

In 2007-08, 89 dwelling fires in North Wales met the criteria and were included in the calculation. Of those, 44 (49.44%) were actually reached within 5 minutes.

In 2008-09, 115 dwelling fires in North Wales met the criteria and were included in the calculation. Of those, 31 (26.96%) were actually reached within 5 minutes.

Improving Response Times

The Service, of course, responds quickly to all emergency incidents, not just to fires in dwellings. By moving its primary Control room to a purpose built facility with North Wales Police this will help in that both services are better placed to co-ordinate their response to calls for assistance. An arrangement with the Wales Ambulance Service also ensures that the Fire and Rescue Service gets to know about road traffic collisions sooner than used to be the case, allowing it to respond and arrive quicker, thereby shortening the time until any work to release people trapped in their vehicle can begin.

North Wales has 44 fire stations, 36 of which are crewed entirely by firefighting staff who work on a Retained Duty System whereby they respond from wherever they might be in the area whenever they are required to attend an emergency incident. The speed of attendance therefore takes this into account.

Other work that has been undertaken in recent years to improve the turnout and attendance times of fire stations includes the use of new technology to assist with selecting the closest fire engine or other vehicle to attend, changing the shift start and finish times at day crewed stations, and continuously updating mobilising, communications and information systems in the Control room.

Any delays in attending are thoroughly investigated, so that lessons may be learned to improve overall performance. Good fleet management and high quality regular servicing of vehicles also play their part, including the careful scheduling of maintenance checks – on the fire station itself, if possible - to shorten the period during which vehicles are unavailable.

The availability of sufficient Retained Duty System firefighters to crew fire engines at all times is also a key factor in maintaining full coverage of North Wales.

Sickness Absence

Challenging targets were set a few years ago by the UK government for an average of 6.5 working days/shifts lost to sickness absence per wholetime firefighter. This target that was initially set for achievement by 2005 has been adopted across the whole Service, and remains in force.

Excluding firefighters who work the Retained Duty System, the number of working days or shifts lost to sickness absence by all other staff (as full time equivalents) in 2008-09 totalled 3,755 compared to 3,594 for the previous year. At 8.1 days or shifts per person, this is still higher than the target set, despite improved sickness management practices.

In April 2008 the Service received a gold level award against the Corporate Standard for Health at Work in recognition of its achievements in workplace health and wellbeing. It is now working towards the platinum level.

	Days/Shifts Lost due to Service 2007-2008	Days/Shifts Lost due to Service 2008-009	Days/Shifts lost not due to Service 2007-2008	Days/Shifts lost not due to Service 2008-2009
Wholetime Operational Staff	111	199	2,199	2,321
Support Staff	21	12	1,114	1,078
Control Staff	0	0	149	145
Total	132	211	3,462	3,544

Figures in the table above relate to full-time equivalents: 296 wholetime operational staff, 124.4 support staff and 31.5 control staff.

Ill-Health Retirements

As a balance to the target for reducing sickness absence, a national target for ill-health retirements was also set for achievement initially by 2005 to 6.9 retirements per thousand employees.

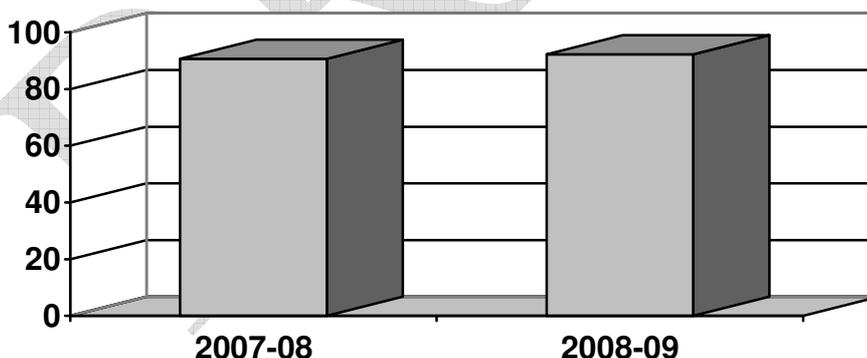
In 2008-09, there were three retirements from the Service due to ill-health. This represents 0.29% of the total workforce, or 2.9 per thousand employees, which is well within the target.

Prompt Invoice Payment

The Authority aims to be a good organisation to do business with, and one aspect of that is the prompt payment of undisputed invoices for commercial goods and services.

In 2008-09, the Service processed 10,098 invoices that fell into this category – 449 more than in 2007-08. Despite this, the percentage paid in 30 days or sooner increased to 92.2%, compared with 90.7% the previous year.

The Percentage of Undisputed Invoices Paid Within 30 Days



The improvement in this measure of internal efficiency is encouraging.

PERFORMANCE COMPARED

North Wales Performance Compared With Other Areas

Fire and Rescue Services are not all the same – size, population density, population profile and the characteristics of the terrain are just a few examples of the kinds of things that influence the way they operate. Comparing performance against other Services therefore has to be done carefully in order to get a fair and meaningful set of comparisons.

A few years ago, 'family groups' of fire and rescue services were set up by the UK Government to facilitate comparison of performance. North Wales was put in the same group as Cumbria, North Yorkshire, Lincolnshire, Hereford and Worcester, Mid and West Wales and Devon. Devon and Somerset fire and rescue services have amalgamated since that time.

The following comparisons are based on data provided from each of the comparator fire and rescue services, and provide an indication of North Wales's relative strengths and areas for improvement.

Better than the Comparator Group Average in 2007-08

	FAMILY GROUP AVERAGE	NORTH WALES
The number of fires in non-domestic properties per 1,000 non-domestic properties.	10.4	9.17
The number of deliberate secondary fires (excluding those in vehicles) per 10,000 population	20.9	19.3
The percentage of accidental fires in dwellings confined to the room of origin	92.3%	94.4%
The number of calls to malicious false alarms attended per 1,000 population	0.3	0.2
The percentage of dwelling fires attended where a smoke alarm had activated	50.2%	59.3%

At or Approaching the Comparator Group Average in 2007-08

	FAMILY GROUP AVERAGE	NORTH WALES
The percentage of operational staff who are women	3.96%	3.57%
The number of deliberate primary fires in vehicles per 10,000 population	3.9	3.9
The number of deliberate primary fires (excluding those in vehicles) per 10,000 population	3.4	3.9
The number of false alarms attended that came from Automatic Fire Alarms per 1,000 non-domestic properties	74.3	74.7
The percentage of false alarm calls from automatic fire alarms in non-domestic properties that had more than one attendance during the year	76.2%	76.6%

Not as Good as the Comparator Group Average in 2007-08

	FAMILY GROUP AVERAGE	NORTH WALES
The number of primary fires per 10,000 population	21.2	23.2
The number of accidental fires in dwellings per 10,000 dwellings	15.7	17.5
The number of deaths from accidental fires in dwellings per 100,000 population	0.64	1.03
The number of injuries from accidental fires in dwellings per 100,000 population	5.08	7.25
The percentage of people who escaped unharmed and unaided from accidental dwelling fires	93.0%	88.8%
The number of working days/shifts lost to sickness absence per full time equivalent employee	7.8	8.1

SECTION 3

RISK

Inspection of Fire and Rescue Authorities in Wales falls to the Wales Audit Office. Its inspection combines the outputs of an Operational Assurance of Service Delivery process and a Non-Operational Assessment.

The Operational Assurance process comprises a self-assessment by the Authority against prescribed key lines of enquiry. Under a reciprocal arrangement this self-assessment is then subject to an on-site peer-assessment process by a team of fire service personnel from the other two Welsh fire and rescue services, supported and observed by auditors from the Wales Audit Office.

The non-operational assessment is conducted by Wales Audit Office in discussion with the Service.

The findings of these two processes are then fed into a Joint Risk Assessment agreed by the Wales Audit Office, the Peer Assessment Team and officers of the Fire and Rescue Service. The Joint Risk Assessment is updated each year.

Joint Risk Assessment 2009

Three key issues arising out of the most recent Joint Risk Assessment were summarised in a report by the Wales Audit Office in June 2009. This report was presented to the Authority and is available to view in full on the Service's website (www.nwales-fireservice.org.uk – please refer to documents from the Authority's Business Meeting of 15 June 2009).

KEY ISSUE 1. - Reduction of Operational Risks

"The Authority has made progress in reducing the levels of operational risk identified by the Peer Assessment Team and is working to further improve the operational response of the Service."

The report highlighted the Peer Assessment Team's overall opinion that, "The employees of North Wales Fire and Rescue Service were both professional and enthusiastic. The personnel had embraced the change of recent times and supported the Service approach to Community Fire Safety."

In particular, it was noted that significant progress had been made in resourcing and implementing the recommendations of the Chief Fire Officer's Task Group which was originally convened in 2006 in response to a sudden increase in the number of accidental dwelling fire deaths in North Wales at that time.

Another area where significant progress had been achieved was in developing the Service's role within the North Wales Resilience Forum. This forum co-ordinates planning and activities associated with major incidents (www.walesprepared.org/).

Operational risk had been further reduced through the considerable investment made in mitigating the effects of road traffic collisions as part of the Service's Road Traffic Collision Strategy.

The relocation of the Control Room to the Joint Control Centre and the introduction of new mobilising and communications systems were also highlighted, specifically in terms of the increased resilience this provides.

A range of other internal arrangements that contributed to reducing the level of operational risk (recording of risk-critical training, the process of reviewing operational policies, and the use of Fire Service Emergency Cover computer software) were also noted.

KEY ISSUE 2. - Reduction of Previously Identified Risks

"The Authority has made progress in reducing some of the high level risks identified in the last Joint Risk Assessment. In particular, 10 high level risk areas have now been reduced to medium risk. These were in the areas of:

- Contribution to the Assembly Government's social justice and supporting people agenda;*
- Reducing the carbon footprint of the Service;*
- Home Fire Safety Checks;*
- Reducing the commercial, economic and social impact of fires;*
- Protecting firefighters carrying out their duties;*
- Contingency Planning;*
- Flooding and Water Rescue;*
- Control Rooms;*
- Performance Management."*

In addition to the list above, the Wales Audit Office report noted the progress made in a number of identified medium risks, including the role of Members, performance management, sustainability and equalities.

Areas highlighted in the Joint Risk Assessment related to the continuing development of the Chief Fire Officer's Task Group recommendations, the sharing of Control facilities with North Wales Police and the associated improvements to both response and resilience, the development of internal plans and policies to improve service continuity in extreme conditions, fire safety arrangements targeted at non-domestic properties, and the continuing challenging programme of Home Fire Safety Checks and targeting of vulnerable and at-risk households.

Furthermore, several examples of good practice had been noted in relation to the way the Service manages its fleet of vehicles. Its approach to fleet management was considered to "make good use of resources to support improvements in service delivery".

KEY ISSUE 3. - Remaining Risks

"The risk of loss of life and injuries, service standards and co-responding remain as high risk. In addition the Fire and Rescue Authority faces further risks in respect of financial pressures, IT, Scrutiny, Home Fire Safety Checks, improving procurement and the retained duty system."

High Risk

The Joint Risk Assessment highlighted three main areas where the level of risk remains high, reflecting the Service's continuing efforts to prioritise in these areas. These are:

- Reducing the loss of life and injuries in fires and other emergency incidents;
- Delivering preventative activities to households that lie beyond the current Assembly Government Service Standard to Fires in the Home;
- The issue of co-responding (a scheme whereby the fire and rescue service would act, in effect, as an agent to the Ambulance Trust through a formal partnership, responding to life threatening emergencies at the request of the Ambulance Service and providing care for the patient until the ambulance arrives).

The Authority's review of the Service as part of its Risk Reduction Plan has considered all of the above. A full Risk Reduction Plan will be developed and consulted upon over the Summer 2010.

Medium Risk

There were also a number of areas where the level of risk has remained within the medium risk category.

- Acknowledging the Authority's good track record of operating within its budget and the low risk associated with its financial management and financial statements, the Assessment nevertheless identified that future financial challenges mean that financial standing remains as a medium risk.
- The majority of Service employees work on the Retained Duty System (RDS). The medium risk associated with this for the Authority recognises that there may be an impact from the Assembly's

review of the system as well as the ongoing challenges in terms of recruitment and retention of RDS staff.

- A further three areas were highlighted as continuing to present a medium level of risk to the Authority: a) procurement in line with the sustainable procurement assessment framework; b) contribution to a sustainable Wales, and c) the ability to support a potential deployment of senior staff at Gold and Silver Command levels in other fire and rescue service areas.

Actions by the Authority

The Authority's development of a Risk Reduction Plan for 2011 onwards has included a comprehensive public consultation during the Summer of 2009 on issues of financial strategy, the retained duty system and the Service's involvement in non-statutory activities of youth work and co-responding.

This work will continue during the second half of 2009-10, culminating in a full Risk Reduction Plan to take effect from April 2011 that will impact on the majority of the issues raised in the Joint Risk Assessment and reduce the levels of risk associated with them.

In the meantime, the Authority and the Service will continue to:

- monitor spending against budget
- identify and consider future budgetary pressures
- change the way aerial ladder platform appliances are crewed thereby releasing resources to reallocate to prevention work
- review the way officer cover is provided
- support the recruitment and retention of retained duty system firefighters, and carefully manage gaps in crew availability to secure the best possible operational coverage.

Risk Reduction

Guidance issued by the Welsh Assembly Government lists seven objectives that Fire and Rescue Authorities must incorporate into their overall risk reduction strategy – these are:

- Reducing the number of fires and other emergency incidents
- Reducing the loss of life in fires and other emergency incidents
- Reducing the number and severity of injuries in fires and other emergency incidents
- Reducing the commercial, economic and social impact of fires and other emergency incidents
- Safeguarding the environment and heritage, both built and natural
- Providing services that represent value for money
- Integrating the activities of their Fire and Rescue Service with the wider social justice agenda

As well as following a process of Risk Reduction Planning, the Service participates in the work of the North Wales Local Resilience Forum and the Wales Resilience Forum. As a Category 1 Responder under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, the Service works with other agencies to ensure that they are prepared to deal effectively with the full range of emergencies from localised incidents through to catastrophic events.

In addition, the Service has implemented a Business Continuity Management process whereby risks are systematically identified and reduced or controlled.

Specific Risk Reduction Themes

As a matter of course the Service finds ways to reduce risk in a wide range of service activities. This is in addition to risk reduction through the Risk Reduction Planning process (see Section 4). Examples are:

Community Safety Activities

The Service continues to give the highest priority to reducing deaths and serious injuries from fire through emergency response capability and its preventative work with households and vulnerable groups. The large number of free Home Fire Safety Checks delivered illustrates the Service's commitment to reducing risk in this area.

The Service also provides a wide range of other activities designed to engage with local communities to raise awareness and spread the safety message. These include:

- a well-established programme of schools visits
- special publicity events
- talks and demonstrations to communities and special groups
- active involvement with a number of organisations and initiatives .

Through these activities alone, in 2008-09 the Service reached a total audience that equates to 17.5% of the population of North Wales.

Activity	Delivered by operational staff	Delivered by specialist fire safety staff	Total audience reached
Fire safety publicity events	190	318	49,004
Fire safety talks	35	528	2,526
Talks in schools	0	474	21,113
Home Fire Safety Checks	19,634	11,546	46,320
Totals	19,859	12,866	118,963

Working in Partnership

Close working with other emergency services is co-ordinated through the Joint Emergency Services Group and the North Wales Resilience Forum.

Moreover, the Service works in partnership with a very wide range of public and voluntary sector organisations and special interest groups in order to increase safety. As well as partnerships aimed at increasing safety, the Authority also works with other public sector organisations for the primary purpose of improving efficiency, effectiveness and economy, although these inevitably have an associated impact on increased safety.

Examples include:

- arrangements for managing the Authority's estate facilities using professional expertise and capacity of North Wales Police facilities management department;
- working with the Environment Agency to help protect rural premises thereby helping to protect the rural environment; and
- working through the Arson Reduction Team to reduce the number of deliberate fires.

Using New Information and Communications Technology

The Service continues to develop its technological capability through work to both improve existing IT systems and infrastructures and to introduce new IT solutions.

This work includes participation in national strategies to make relevant information available to fire crews through mobile data terminals in fire appliances, introducing a new single digital wide area communications system (Firelink), increasing inter-operability between control room systems in Wales, and providing an SMS text option for emergency 999 calls.

In addition, internal systems will be enhanced through the introduction of a new records management system, RDS alerting system, and alternatives to the in-house developed finance systems.

SECTION 4

RISK REDUCTION PLAN

A comprehensive review of community risks undertaken by the Authority in 2003 was updated in 2006. The Authority has been working to reduce the level of risk in the following key areas:

Identified Community Risks

Deaths and Injuries

- Fire related deaths and injuries
- Road traffic collisions causing deaths and injuries
- Properties and their remoteness from resources
- Lives at risk in the community

Fire and Emergency Incidents

- Performance
- Automatic Fire Alarms
- Children and young people with a fascination for fire
- Deliberate fire setting
- Properties and their remoteness from resources
- Service standards

Community Resilience

- Preparedness
- Identification of community risks
- Multi-agency planning
- Protecting local communities using UK Resources

Environmental Impact

- Climate change
- Spate conditions
- Intervention techniques
- Economic and social impact

Community Engagement

- Community fire safety education and prevention
- Communications
- Welsh Language
- Equality and diversity

Corporate Risks

Capacity to Deliver Services

- Modernising the Fire and Rescue Service
- Sustaining partnership working
- Performance management
- Employee health and development
- Funding arrangements

Resilience in Service Delivery

- Human resources
- Business continuity
- Call handling and dispatch
- Communications
- Information Technology
- Assurance of operational intervention
- Resilience of suppliers
- Reputation

Governance

- Developing the Fire and Rescue Authority
- Financial controls
- Legal services
- Procurement of goods and services
- Corporate social responsibility
- Legal compliance

Progress in mitigating these risks has been achieved through a range of annual action plans and Service-level improvements.

RISK REDUCTION PLAN ANNUAL ACTION PLAN 2010-11

The Authority published a full Risk Reduction Plan in October 2006 for 2007-08 and beyond. The annual action plan for 2009-10 included four proposals, one of which was later put aside following the 12-week consultation in Summer 2008.

In order to progress the Service's two key objectives of increasing community safety and enhancing operational excellence, the Authority will progress with work on the three risk-reducing initiatives already started in 2009-10.

The three initiatives relate to:

1. Undertaking an Officer Cover Review to review the way the Service provides supervisory cover by middle and senior managers at emergency incidents with the aim of providing resources for an operational assurance team and community safety work.
2. Discontinuing twelve posts dedicated to Aerial Ladder Platforms (ALPs), transferring to work to fire crews and reallocating resources to prevention work.
3. Establishing a small working group to undertake a review into Risk across North Wales to ascertain whether the standards of fire cover are appropriate for the risk within the community and to examine whether the best resources are in the best place to respond to those risks.

RISK REDUCTION PLAN ANNUAL ACTION PLAN 2010-11

In June 2008, the Authority considered the large amount of work involved in conducting the review of risk in North Wales, and decided to set up the small working group early, rather than wait until 2009-10. This group met regularly between November 2008 and March 2009.

In June 2009, the Authority took the decision to allow sufficient time for the three large pieces of work originally designated for 2009-10 to be completed by carrying these over into an action plan for 2010-11. In the meantime they consulted widely with the public on four fundamental principles during Summer 2009, so that the response would guide their continuing fundamental review of risks and resources.

These four issues related to:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whether to continue to undertake the same level of working with young people if external funding for this were to be withdrawn. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whether to redirect resources from other activities and increase flexibility in the way it employs retained duty system personnel.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whether to take on the additional (non-statutory) responsibility for co-responding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Which approach to adopt in terms of Service providing value for money, affordability and delivering services efficiently.

	Consultation	Publication	For year
Full Risk Reduction Plan	Summer 2006	October 2006	2007-08 onwards
Annual Action Plan	Summer 2007	October 2007	2008-09
Annual Action Plan	Summer 2008	October 2008	2009-10
Annual Action Plan	Summer 2008	October 2009	2010-11
Full Risk Reduction Plan (principles)	Summer 2009		
Full Risk Reduction Plan (detailed)	Summer 2010	October 2010	2011-12

SECTION 5

SPENDING AND MAKING EFFICIENCIES

The Authority is aware of the increasing pressure to provide high quality fire and rescue services without passing on large increases in its budget to its constituent Authorities to fund revenue expenditure.

The amounts levied on each constituent authority to fund the fire and rescue service were:

	2007/08 £'000	2008/09 £'000	2009/10 £'000
Anglesey County Council	3,019	3,114	3,184
Gwynedd Council	5,171	5,345	5,463
Conwy County Borough Council	4,886	5,029	5,154
Denbighshire County Council	4,207	4,342	4,476
Flintshire County Council	6,581	6,782	6,945
Wrexham County Borough Council	5,718	5,919	6,086
Total Levies	29,582	30,531	31,308

2008-09 Spending

Expenditure	£	% of Total Spend
Employee Costs	23,163,550	75.87%
Premises Costs	1,252,647	4.10%
Transport	1,029,534	3.37%
Supplies and Services	2,625,252	8.60%
Support Services ⁸	811,428	2.66%
Capital Financing Costs	2,102,254	6.89%
Income		
Sales, Fees and Charges	-504,004	-1.65%
Contribution to Pension Provision	50,000	0.16%
NET EXPENDITURE	30, 530,661	100%

⁸ Support Services – e.g. Agency Payments, Support Service Agreements

2009-10 Budget

The budget of £31,311,563 set for 2009-10 equates to £46.15 per head of population for the year, or just over 88 pence per week.

Planned revenue expenditure for the year is:

Expenditure	£	% of Total Spend
Employee Costs	24,016,839	76.70%
Premises Costs	1,218,750	3.89%
Transport	1,006,620	3.21%
Supplies and Services	2,328,920	7.44%
Support Services ⁹	796,700	2.54%
Capital Financing Costs	2,471,354	7.89%
Income		
Sales, Fees and Charges	-527,620	-1.67%
NET EXPENDITURE	31,311,563	100%

⁹ Support Services – e.g. Agency Payments, Support Service Agreements

Efficiency Gains

Efficiency gains are reported as being either 'cashable' or 'non-cashable'.

Recurring Efficiency Gains

The recurring efficiency gains introduced by the Authority in 2008-09 relate to:

- a) making better use of staff time, skills and expertise by introducing Planned Maintenance Programme (PMP) contracts to reduce callout costs from contractors on reactive maintenance (£20,000)
- b) using in-house maintenance assistants in place of outside contractors (£15,000)
- c) smarter procurement of mobile telephony through the Office of Government Commerce (OGC) Catalyst Framework for IT Goods and Associated Services (£16,000)
- d) smarter procurement of fleet equipment across budget heads (£23,000)
- e) providing manual handling training to all staff to reduce injuries (£13,000)

Non-recurring efficiency gains in the same year amounted to £131,000 through smarter procurement and £18,000 through making better use of staff time, skills and expertise.

Forecast Efficiency Gains

The forecast for 2009-10 adds new recurring efficiency gains of £32,000 through smarter procurement and £440,000 through making better use of staff time, skills and expertise.

SECTION 6

STATEMENT RELATING TO CONTRACTS

Code of Practice on Workforce Matters in Public Sector Service Contracts.

This Code of Practice was adopted by the Welsh Assembly in April 2003. North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority states and certifies that no individual contracts have been awarded during the past year involving transfer of staff where the above Code of Practice would apply.

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SECTION 7

GLOSSARY AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Population and property figures used in calculations

	Population	Dwellings	Non-Domestic Properties
2006-07	675,563	301,063	27,050
2008-09	678,543	303,377	27,055

All collected from StatsWales.

Categorisation of fires

All fires fall into one of three categories – primary, secondary or chimney.

Primary fires are fires that are not chimney fires, and which are in any type of building (except if derelict), vehicles, caravans and trailers, outdoor storage, plant and machinery, agricultural and forestry property, and other outdoor structures such as bridges, post boxes, tunnels, etc.

They are fires in any location if they involved casualties, rescues or escapes, or were attended by five or more fire appliances.

Secondary fires are fires that are neither chimney fires nor primary fires (described above). They do not involve casualties, rescues or escapes, and were attended by four or fewer fire appliances.

Secondary fires are those that would normally occur in locations such as open land, in single trees, fences, telegraph poles, refuse and refuse containers (but not paper banks, which would be considered - in the same way as agricultural and forestry property - to be a primary fire), outdoor furniture, traffic lights, etc. etc.

Chimney fires are fires in occupied buildings where the fire is confined within the chimney structure, even if heat or smoke damage extends beyond the chimney itself.

Chimney fires do not involve casualties, rescues or escapes, and were attended by four or fewer fire appliances.

Useful web addresses for further information:

www.nwales-fireservice.org.uk for information relating to North Wales Fire and Rescue Service

www.wales.gov.uk for information relating to fire and rescue services in Wales

www.statswales.wales.gov.uk for statistical information on Wales

www.communities.gov.uk for information relating to fire and resilience in England and other parts of the UK

www.scotland.gov.uk for information relating to fire services in Scotland

www.nifrs.org/ for information relating to fire and rescue services in Northern Ireland

<http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/headlines/releaseindex2009/?lang=en> for an index of statistical bulletins released by the Welsh Assembly's Data Unit in 2009.

**NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE HEADQUARTERS
FFORDD SALESBURY
ST ASAPH BUSINESS PARK
ST ASAPH
DENBIGHSHIRE
LL17 0JJ
01745 535 250**

APPENDIX

Summary of performance figures :

Reference	Definition	Actual 2007-08	Target 2008-09	Actual 2008-09
FIRES				
	The total number of all fires attended	3,884		3,442
FRS/RRC/S/001(i)	per 10,000 population	56.9		50.73
	The number of primary fires attended	1,564		1,509
FRS/RRC/S/001(ii)	per 10,000 population	23.15		22.24
	The number of accidental fires in dwellings attended	526	480	501
FRS/RRC/S/001(iii)	per 10,000 dwellings	17.5	15.8	16.51
BVPI 144	The percentage of dwelling fires that were confined to the room of origin	94.4%		92.58%
	The number of deliberate fires attended	1,840		1,596
FRS/RRC/S/001(iv)	per 10,000 population	27.2		23.52
	The number of secondary fires attended	2,000		1,557
	per 10,000 population	29.6		22.95

Reference	Definition	Actual 2007-08	Target 2008-09	Actual 2008-09
	The number of fires attended in non-domestic premises	248		258
FRS/RRC/S/003	per 1,000 non-domestic premises	9.2		9.54
	The number of deliberate primary fires in vehicles	260		289
BVPI 206ii	per 10,000 population	3.9		4.26
	The number of deliberate primary fires (excluding those in vehicles)	266		267
BVPI 206i	per 10,000 population	3.9		3.93
	The number of deliberate secondary fires	1,314		1,037
FRS/RRC/C/004ii	per 10,000 population	19.5		15.28
	The number of deliberate primary fires attended	526		570
FRS/RRC/C/004i	per 10,000 population	7.79		8.4
SAFETY				
FRS/RRC/C/005i	The percentage of dwelling fires where a smoke alarm was fitted and activated	63%	Over 63%	61.2%
	The number of free Home Fire Safety Checks delivered	26,504	30,000	31,180
	The percentage of people in accidental dwelling fires who escaped unharmed and unaided by a fire crew	88.8%	90.0%	85.26%

Reference	Definition	Actual 2007-08	Target 2008-09	Actual 2008-09
CASUALTIES FROM FIRES				
	The number of deaths caused by fires	10		4
FRS/RRC/S/002(i)	per 100,000 population	1.48		0.59
	The number of deaths caused by accidental fires	8		4
FRS/RRC/S/002(ii)	per 100,000 population	1.18		0.59
	The number of deaths from accidental dwelling fires	7	0	4
FRS/RRC/C/001(i)	per 100,000 population	1.03	0	0.59
	The number of deaths caused by deliberate fires	2		0
FRS/RRC/S/002(iii)	per 100,000 population	0.30		0
	The number of injuries caused by fires	80		111
FRS/RRC/S/002(iv)	per 100,000 population	11.84		16.36
	The number of injuries caused by accidental fires	58		102
FRS/RRC/S/002(v)	per 100,000 population	8.59		15.03
	The number of injuries from accidental dwelling fires	49	36 (max.)	55
FRS/RRC/C/001(v)	per 100,000 population	7.25		8.11

Reference	Definition	Actual 2007-08	Target 2008-09	Actual 2008-09
	The number of injuries caused by deliberate fires	22		9
FRS/RRC/S/002(vi)	per 100,000 population	3.26		1.33
SERVICE STANDARDS				
	The number of fires in dwellings, within the ten minute service standard as identified by each Fire and Rescue Authority, that were attended within ten minutes.	421		391
FRS/EFR/S/001	The percentage of fires in dwellings, within the ten minute service standard as identified by each Fire and Rescue Authority, that were attended within ten minutes.	90.34%	-	87.87%
	The number of fires in dwellings, which have been identified by the FSEC model as having a casualty rate greater than six, that were attended within five minutes.	44		31
FRS/EFR/S/002	The percentage of fires in dwellings, which have been identified by the FSEC model as having a casualty rate greater than six, that were attended within five minutes.	49.44%	-	26.96%
FRS/RRC/S/004(iv)	The total number of fires in homes in which a home fire safety risk assessment and/or associated risk reduction activity had taken place within the two years prior to the fire.	-	-	71
FRS/RRC/S/004(i)	The number of homes that are within the above average risk category and the well above average risk category (as determined by the FSEC model) that have received, within the reporting year, a home fire safety risk assessment and are within the five minute service standard.	-	-	-
FRS/RRC/S/004(ii)	The number of homes that are within the above average risk category and the well above average risk category (as determined by the FSEC model) that have received, within the reporting year, a home fire safety risk assessment and are within the ten minute service standard.	-	-	-
FRS/RRC/S/004(iii)	The number of homes that are within the above average risk category and the well above average risk category (as determined by the FSEC model) that have received, within the reporting year, a home fire safety risk assessment and are outside the ten minute service standard.	-	-	-

Reference	Definition	Actual 2007-08	Target 2008-09	Actual 2008-09
FALSE ALARMS				
	The number of false alarms from automatic fire alarms attended in non-domestic properties	2,020	1,818	1,301
FRS/RRC/C/003	per 1,000 population	74.7	67.2	48.09
	The number of malicious false alarms attended	154		170
BVPi146ii	per 1,000 population	22.8		25.05
FRC/RRC/C/002iii	The percentage of the malicious false alarms received that received an attendance.	24%	25% (max.)	31.2%
STAFF SICKNESS				
	The number of shifts/days lost due to sickness absence by all staff (excluding those on the Retained Duty System)	3,594		3,755
FRS/CHR/C/004i	per full time equivalent staff	8.1	6.5	8.3
	The number of ill-health retirements	4		3
	per 1,000 full time equivalent employees	3.8	6.9 (max.)	3.1

Reference	Definition	Actual 2007-08	Target 2008-09	Actual 2008-09
OTHER				
	The number of operational staff that are women	32		33
FRS/CHR/C/003	as a percentage of all operational staff (excludes control staff)	3.57%		3.8%
	The number of operational staff who categorise themselves as having a disability	16		14
FRS/CHR/C/001i	as a percentage of all operational staff (excludes control staff)	1.8%		1.6%
	The number of control and non-operational staff who categorise themselves as having a disability	8		8
FRS/CHR/C/001ii	as a percentage of all control and support staff	4.8%		4.6%
	The number of staff who belong to a minority ethnic group	9		10
FRS/CHR/C/002i	as a percentage of all staff	0.80%		0.96%
FRS/CFH/C/001	The percentage of undisputed invoices for commercial goods and services that were paid within 30 days.	90.7%		92.2%