

**NORTH WALES
FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

**COMBINED IMPROVEMENT AND RISK
REDUCTION PLAN**

2009 – 2012

This document is a draft produced to accompany a public consultation on proposed improvement objectives for 2011 onwards. Information contained within it is unaudited and subject to amendment up to the point of final publication in October 2010.

This version was last updated on [INSERT DATE].

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SECTION 1

Introduction

The Purpose of this Document

This document has been compiled for three different purposes:

- a) it provides information about North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority, North Wales Fire and Rescue Service, and the context within which they operate.
- b) it records the highest priorities for the Authority, and traces progress towards achieving specific goals.
- c) it is a useful reference document that retains a historical record of performance spanning three financial years.

It has been compiled in accordance with specific duties arising from two sources:

1. the new Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 which requires the Authority to publish annual **Improvement Plans**;
2. the Fire and Rescue National Framework for Wales 2008-11, which requires the Authority to publish annual **Risk Reduction Plans**.

This publication presents within a single document an account of the Authority's activities and performance in 2009-10, a description of the arrangements it has in place for 2010-11, and a description of its proposals for 2011-12.

The Timing of this Document

The stipulated publication date for this document - before 31 October 2010 - is important. Whereas every year the majority of Welsh Improvement Authorities will publish their Improvement Plans soon after the beginning of April, Welsh Fire and Rescue Authorities will publish theirs soon after the end of September.

The Improvement Plans published in April by Local Authorities and National Parks Authorities relate to a current financial year, but those published in October by Welsh Fire and Rescue Authorities relate to a forthcoming financial year. The latter will therefore always be subject to being able to secure the necessary financial resources before the start of the next financial year.

The reason for this difference is that for several years Fire and Rescue Authorities had been publishing their Risk Reduction Plans by the 31 October preceding the financial year to which they related, so it seemed appropriate for the Welsh Assembly Government to align the production of Improvement Plans to this same timetable.

By combining the Improvement Planning and Risk Reduction Planning processes, fire and rescue authorities are able to undertake a single consultation process and publish a single publication before the end of October each year.

Effects of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009

After a decade of Best Value legislation, the new Measure introduced “Welsh Improvement Authorities” operating according to two inter-related principles of public management – short term improvements and longer term community plans.

Guidance issued by the Welsh Assembly Government developed the thinking behind the 2006 Wales Programme for Improvement (WPI-FRA) to a wider definition of improvement included in the new Measure that goes beyond the previous limited definition of ‘efficiency, effectiveness and economy’.

Rather than focus on quantifiable gains in service output the definition of improvement now extends to anything that enhances the quality of life for local citizens and communities.

Fire and Rescue Authorities are accordingly expected to determine their own locally-tailored improvement priorities, and to address them either alone or in conjunction with other organisations.

Fire and Rescue Authorities, as Welsh Improvement Authorities, have been issued with their own specific guidance relating to Part 1 of the Measure concerned with improvement.

Their operations will be subject to an Improvement Assessment by the Auditor General for Wales (operating through the Wales Audit Office) that is undertaken through a forward-looking Corporate Assessment and a retrospective Performance Assessment in each financial year.

The timetable for implementing the new Measure is shown in Section 5 of this document.

Improving and Reducing Risk – the New Combined Approach

The Welsh Assembly Government's guidance on the Wales Programme for Improvement for fire and rescue authorities (FRAs) recognises that reducing risk to communities is the cornerstone of FRAs' improvement agendas, and therefore supports the development of a new combined approach to improving services and reducing risk. A copy of the guidance document is available from the Assembly's website [\[INSERT WAG WEB PAGE ADDRESS DETAILS\]](#)

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

Making Improvements and Reducing Risk

The **Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009** came into effect from April 2010. It requires Welsh Improvement Authorities (county councils, national parks authorities and fire and rescue authorities) to set improvement objectives and make arrangements to achieve them.

Improvement objectives can be anything that can be shown to improve what the Welsh Improvement Authority does (its 'functions') in terms of at least one out of seven aspects of improvement, namely:

1. strategic effectiveness;
2. service quality;
3. service availability;
4. fairness;
5. sustainability;
6. efficiency; and
7. innovation.

The **Fire and Rescue National Framework 2008-11** requires Welsh Fire and Rescue Authorities to establish Risk Reduction Plans aimed at:

1. reducing the number of fires and other emergency incidents;
2. reducing the loss of life in fires and other emergency incidents;
3. reducing the number and severity of injuries in fires and other emergency incidents;
4. reducing the commercial, economic and social impact of fires and other emergency incidents;
5. safeguarding the environment and heritage, both built and natural;
6. providing services that are Value for Money;
7. integrating the activities of the Fire and Rescue Authority within the wider social justice agenda; and
8. addressing the equality and diversity proposals set out in the Framework.

[Note – a new National Framework will come into effect from April 2011. The list above is therefore subject to change.]

Continuously Striving for Improvement

The role of the Fire and Rescue Authority is defined in a range of laws and regulations but the Authority has always sought to improve and enhance the services it provides and to do more than simply meet minimum requirements.

North Wales Fire and Rescue is committed to enhancing people's lives in a number of different ways. These include playing a part in making sure that:

- citizens, workers and visitors are protected so that they can live long and healthy lives;
- whole communities are protected so that people can lead fulfilled lives;
- the area's culture, heritage and language are protected so that people can lead enriched lives;
- cities, towns and villages are protected so that they can be economically and socially vibrant places for people to live, work and visit;
- the countryside and coastlines are protected so that they can continue to provide natural habitats and be rewarding places for people to live, work and visit;
- individual homes are protected, so that people have access to good, safe, housing;
- public buildings are protected so that people can feel safe when they conduct business there;
- workplaces are protected so that people can feel safe when they work there;
- transport networks are protected so that people and goods can pass between places freely and safely;
- the environment and the world's resources are protected so that we leave the world a better place.

Furthermore, North Wales Fire and Rescue is fully committed to ensuring that:

- it does not waste the money and other resources entrusted to it;
- it supports its employees to achieve their full potential and share their knowledge and skills with others.

Arrangements to secure continuous improvement

North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority has made specific arrangements to support the achievement of its improvement and risk reduction strategies.

The Authority itself is organised in such a way that its 28 elected members can maintain a proper involvement in strategic planning, in decision-making and in monitoring the service's levels of performance. The full Authority meets regularly, at least four times per year, with more frequent meetings of the Executive Panel between times. It has an Audit Committee and a separate Standards Committee that meet to consider specific issues. The Authority's correct functioning is further supported by its Clerk and Treasurer. Meetings are open to the public, and records of the Authority's transactions are available from the Authority's website.

The Service is led and managed by the Chief Fire Officer supported by the principal officer team, the senior management team, specialist advisers, and a defined organisational structure.

The Service's structure is aligned to the six North Wales local authority areas, and works in partnership through specific collaborative arrangements with a wide range of organisations including other emergency services, members of the local resilience forum, health, education and voluntary sectors, specific agencies and commissions and local service boards. Where appropriate, formal agreements are entered into for the sharing of data.

Progress against specific departmental and project plans, annual service plans and detailed budget plans is monitored and reported regularly throughout the year, with in-year adjustments to plans being agreed where necessary.

Separate assurance processes are provided through internal and external audits, including financial audits.

A programme of Operational Assurance involving self-assessment against a centrally provided framework followed by peer assessment from the other two Welsh fire and rescue services is observed by the Wales Audit Office and the Welsh Assembly Government and co-ordinated through the Fire and Rescue Adviser's office. Further details are given in Section 5 of this document.

Collaboration with other fire and rescue services supports a range of improvement activities, pooling expertise and sharing resources (e.g. joint procurement of equipment, joint recruitment of wholetime firefighters) where appropriate, at both UK and Wales levels.

The Authority's 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.

The Authority's Corporate Aims

This set of five corporate aims was adopted by the Authority in 2001. It summarises every aspect of what North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority seeks 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.

The Service's Core Values

The Fire and Rescue Service's core values summarise the principles by which it operates and the personal values that staff are encouraged to adopt and demonstrate.

These core values are:

Service to the community

Valuing 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

Valuing 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

Valuing diversity in the Service and the community by:

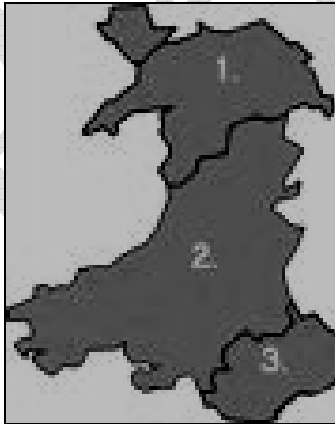
- Treating everyone fairly and with respect
- Providing various solutions for different needs and expectations
- Promoting equal opportunities in employment with progression within the Service
- Challenging prejudice and discrimination

Improvement

Valuing 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).

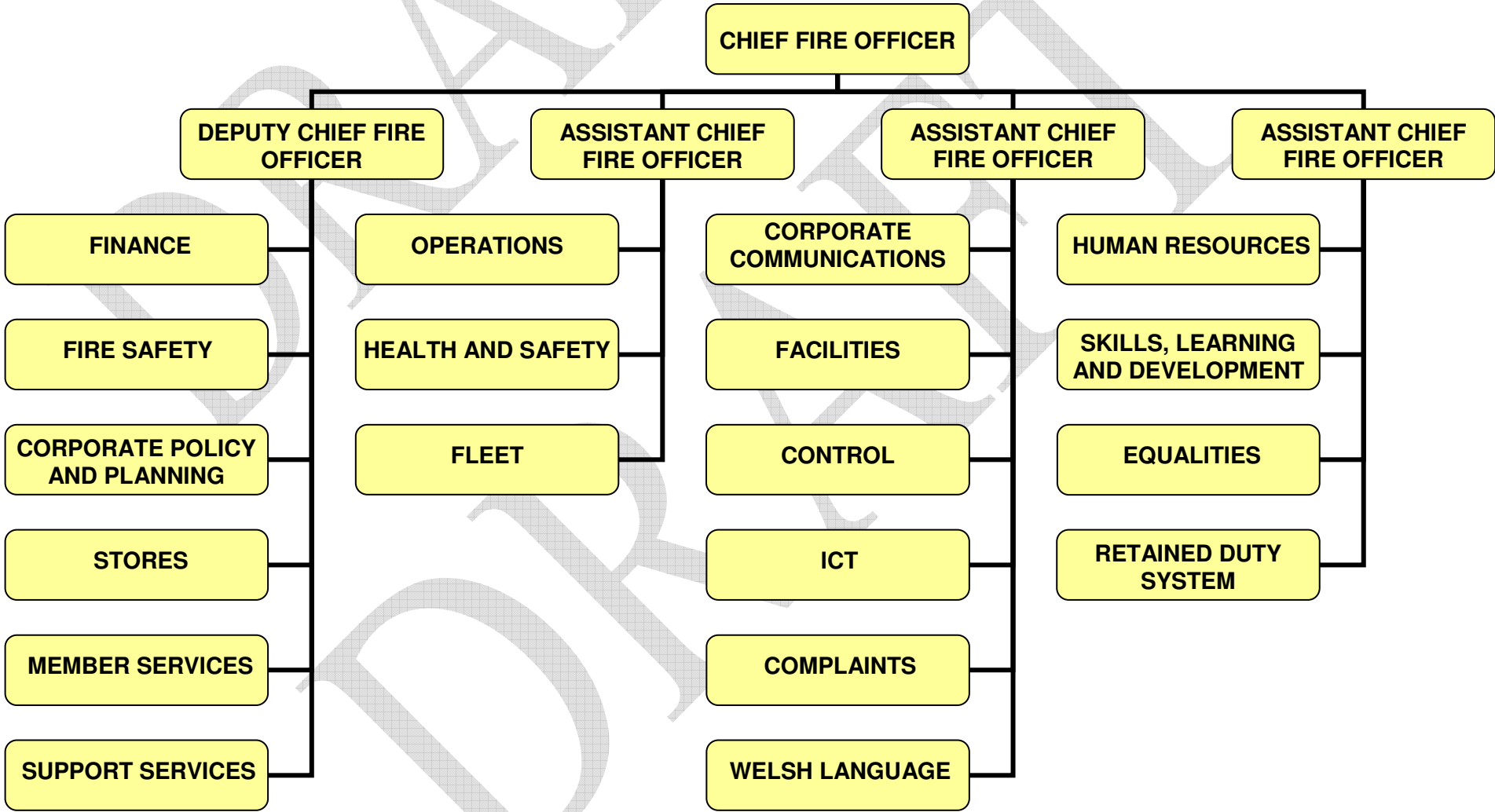
The Welsh Assembly Government's vision is that fire and rescue authorities in Wales should:

- 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)

The Fire and Rescue Service contributes to the achievement of this vision in numerous ways including through active participation in Community Safety Partnerships, working with partners to reduce the incidence of crime and substance misuse.

The Service's Management Structure



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The Service's Workforce Structure

	All posts	Centralised and county-based functions†	Staff training and development	Legislative Fire Safety	Community Fire Safety	Fire Stations	RDS posts on fire stations as 24 hour units of cover	Control
Principal Officer	5	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Area Manager	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Group Manager	13	9	1	1	1	0	0	1
Station Manager	30	11	3‡	15	1	0	0	0
Watch Manager	105	4	10	13	2	22	45	9
Crew Manager	145	0	0	0	3	48	90	4
Firefighter	564.43	0	0	0	0	130	422	12.43
Support Staff	139	87	9	7	25	11	0	0
Externally funded*	13	3	0	0	8	0	0	2
Totals	1017.43	122	19	36	40	211	557	28.43

† RDS = retained duty system

‡ = non-operational uniformed posts

The table shows the number of posts funded by the Authority (not individual people employed) **as at 31st March 2010**. Not all posts are full-time posts. Temporary posts set up for special short-term projects have not been included.

*Externally funded = non-permanent posts created through separate funding sources e.g. from the Welsh Assembly Government.

†Central and county-based functions include (alphabetically):

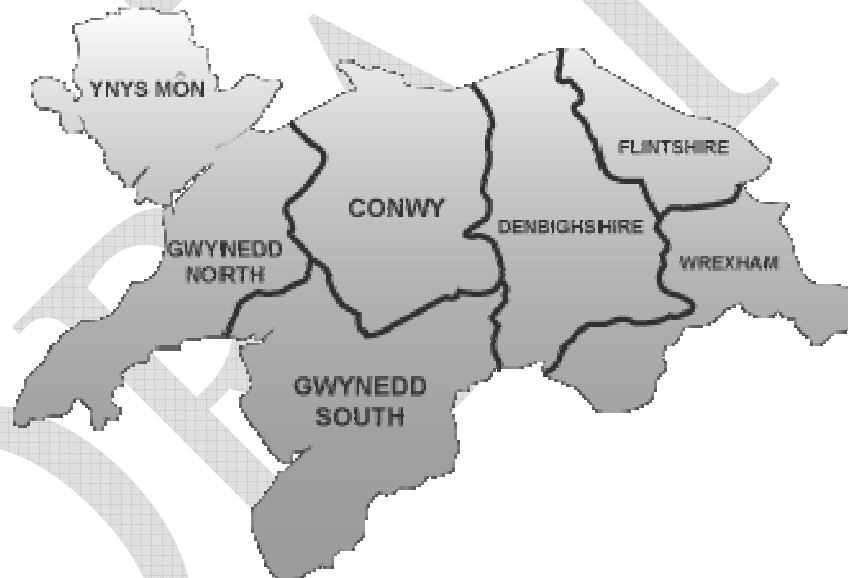
- Administration and Secretarial Services,
- Authority Member Services
- Business Continuity Management,
- Catering,
- Corporate Communications,
- Corporate Planning,
- Equalities,
- Estate Management,
- Finance and Payroll,
- Fleet Management and Maintenance,
- Health and Safety,
- Human Resources,
- Information & Communications Technology (ICT),
- Information Legislation,
- Reception and Switchboard,
- Recording Operational Incidents (IRS)
- Local Resilience,
- National Resilience,
- Operational Support,
- Performance Data Analysis,
- Strategic and Departmental Management,
- Supplies and Stores,
- Translation Services.

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 677,971 people¹, 304,412 domestic properties² and 27,284 non-domestic properties³. Additionally, it protects visitors, transport network users, the natural environment (including beyond its coastline), and public, business 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.

¹ ONS Mid Year Estimate 2008 www.statswales.wales.gov.uk (Revised down from previous estimate of 680,642 on 13/05/2010).

Table 003122 Mid-Year Population Estimates (2001 onwards)

² Council Tax Dwelling Return (CT1) www.statswales.wales.gov.uk

Table 000330 Council tax dwellings by Local Authority

³ National Non-Domestic Rates (NDR1) www.statswales.wales.gov.uk

Table 001546 Non domestic rates estimates by authority (NDR)

Financial Information

In 2009-10, contributions totalling £31,311,563 were applied to fund revenue expenditure from the six Local Authorities in North Wales. Levies for 2010-11 have been set 2.5% higher at £32,093,400.

Authority	Contribution 2009/10	Mid year population estimate 2007	Mid year population estimate 2008	2010/11 contribution (+2.5%)
Conwy County Borough Council	£5,154,755	111,700	112,000	£5,280,536
Anglesey County Council	£3,184,227	69,000	69,000	£3,253,187
Gwynedd Council	£5,463,949	118,400	118,200	£5,572,851
Denbighshire County Council	£4,476,377	97,000	97,600	£4,601,610
Flintshire County Council	£6,945,306	150,500	151,000	£7,119,294
Wrexham County Borough Council	£6,086,949	131,900	132,900	£6,265,922
Total	£31,311,563	678,500	680,700	£32,093,400

Assets

Buildings

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. The first purpose-built community fire station in North Wales was officially opened in Rhyl in October 2008.

Since 2005, the main headquarters function has been run from premises on the St Asaph Business Park, with a few central functions (including the Skills, Learning and Development Centre) located in Rhyl and Conwy. There is a county safety office in each county council area, and additional training facilities in Dolgellau. The fleet maintenance workshops and stores are located in Llandudno Junction.

The main Control function moved from Rhyl to the Joint Communications Centre on St Asaph Business Park in 2008, but with the Rhyl control retained as a secondary fallback control room.

Vehicles

The Service also manages a fleet of operational and support vehicles to respond in a range of emergency and non-emergency situations [figures as at 31st March 2010]:

- 54 operational fire and rescue appliances
- 4 aerial appliances
- 33 special fire and rescue appliances
- 17 reserve appliances
- 3 training appliances
- 144 non-operational fleet vehicles (cars and vans)
- 2 incident response units
- 4 water incident units
- 1 incident command unit
- 2 other operational special appliances (prime movers)

Employees

On 31st March 2010, a total of 1,034 individual people were employed by North Wales Fire and Rescue Service – 276 men and 18 women as wholetime firefighters/operational managers, 537 men and 19 women as retained firefighters, 4 men and 29 women as control staff, and 60 men and 91 women in a range of specialist support roles⁴.

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

⁴ Information supplied in 2009-10 Annual Operational Returns HRFW10-17

WORKFORCE PROFILES AS AT 31ST MARCH 2010

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 2010, the majority - over 78% - 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	54	162	288	33	19	0	556
Wholetime Operational	5	56	183	41	9	0	294
Support	10	30	64	20	16	11	151
Control	2	7	21	3	0	0	33
All staff	71	255	556	97	44	11	1034
As a percentage	6.9%	24.7%	53.8%	9.4%	4.3%	1.1%	

Gender:

Of the 1,034 people employed at the end of March 2010, 877 (85%) were men, and 157 (15%) were women. 18 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:

Of the 1.034 people employed, just over 99% 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.

0.77% of staff classed themselves as coming from a minority ethnic background, which is slightly lower than the 1% of people from minority ethnic backgrounds aged between 18 and 64 years who live in North Wales.

Language:

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 revised Welsh Language Scheme (2010 – 2013) and are reflected in departmental plans. This revised Scheme received the approval of the Welsh Language Board under Section 16 of the Welsh Language Act 1993 on 21st January, 2010. It builds on the Service's first two schemes published in 1999 and 2006.

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 has been provided for all staff and support is available for those wishing to learn the language.

The Service uses the Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE) levels to determine the language ability of its staff. Since January 2009 all new members of staff have been required to have 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:

As at 31st March 2010, 15 operational firefighters (1.76%) categorised themselves as having a disability, as did 9 members of control and support staff (4.89%). This totals 2.32%, 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:

279 days/shifts were spent by staff undergoing training and development activities in 2009-10, 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

With an increasing national focus on what public services actually achieve for all their efforts, this section is aimed at describing the impact of North Wales Fire and Rescue’s activities as well as reporting on the activities it has undertaken.

PAST YEAR 2009-10

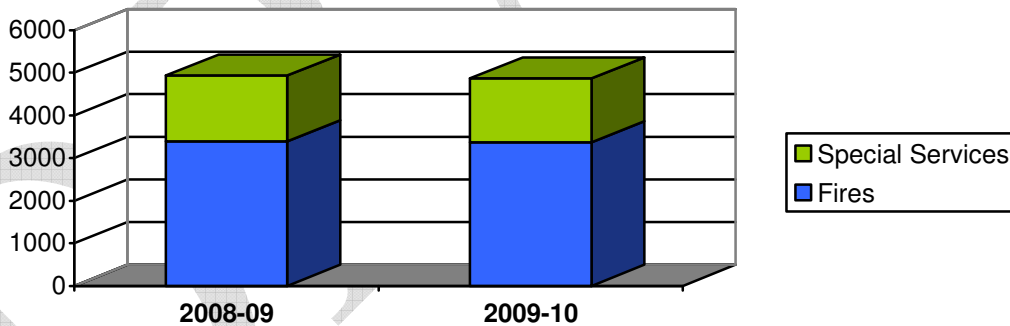
999 CALLS HANDLED

The first point of contact with the Service in emergencies is usually with the control room. A total of 21,688 calls associated with emergency incidents were handled by control staff in 2009-10, which is an increase of 348 compared to the previous year⁵.

FIRES AND SPECIAL SERVICE INCIDENTS ATTENDED

During the year, fire crews and operational managers attended a total of 3,368 fires and 1,499 non-fire special service incidents (including 769 road traffic collisions). This was 21 fewer fires and 44 fewer special service incidents than in the previous year.

Total fires and special service incidents attended



The small overall reduction in the number of fires is part of a steady year-on-year decrease in incidents that reflects the success of the prevention work undertaken by the Service in association with its many partner organisations.

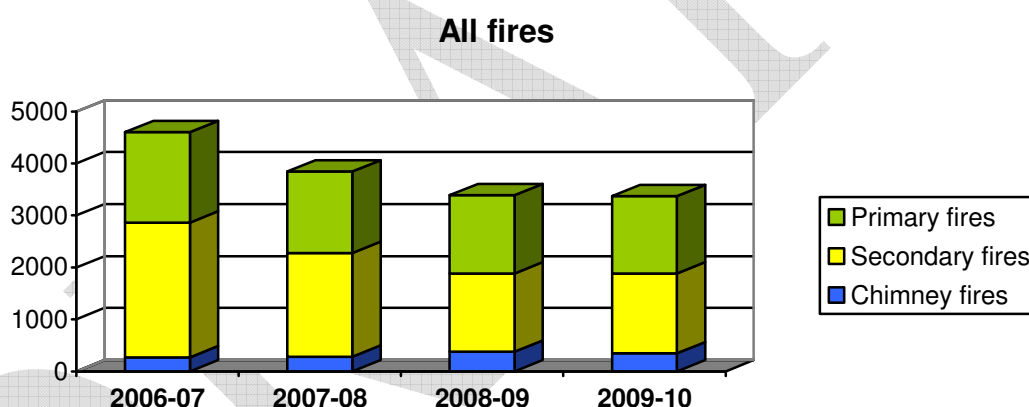
As well as increasing the level of public safety, any reduction in operational incidents is also good news in terms of financial cost to the Authority. With two-thirds of the operational workforce employed on the Retained Duty System where pay is linked to the actual number of incidents attended and how long it takes to deal with those incidents, the effectiveness of the Service’s prevention strategy is also reflected in the overall cost of reacting to emergencies.

⁵ Information supplied in 2009-10 Annual Returns OPSW6.

FIRES ATTENDED

There has been a steady downward trend in the number of primary and secondary fires in North Wales in recent years, although the number can fluctuate from month to month according to weather conditions (in the case of outdoor fires) and the level of deliberate fire setting.

	Primary Fires	Secondary Fires	Chimney Fires	Total Fires
2008-09	1,504	1,509	376	3,389
Per 10,000 population	22.18	22.26	5.55	49.99
2009-10	1,485	1,538	347	3,370
Per 10,000 population	21.90	22.69	5.12	49.71
Change	-1.4%	+1.9%	-7.7%	-0.6%



In 2006-07, the Service attended **68.30** fires per 10,000 population. Sustained improvement every year has seen that number fall to **54.83** in 2007-08, **49.99** in 2008-09 and **49.71** in 2009-10.

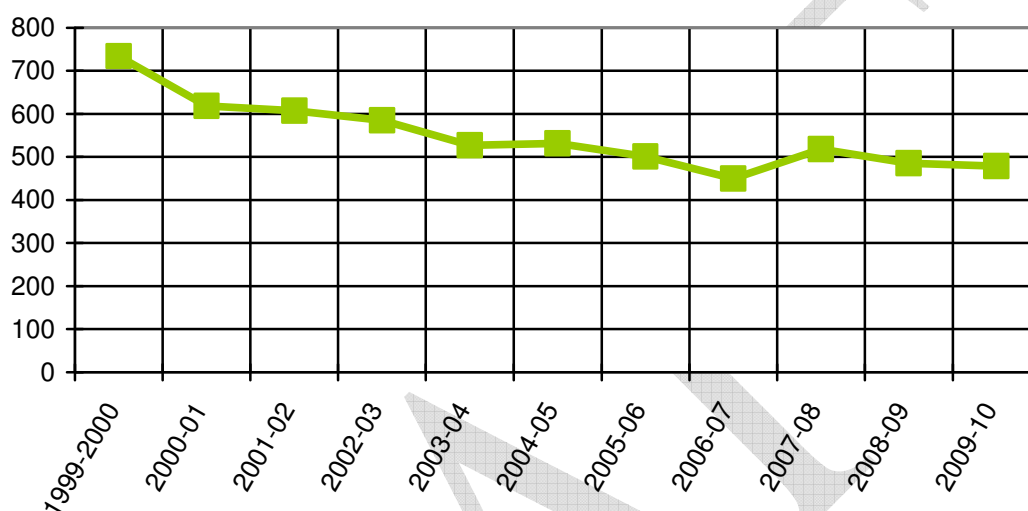
A reduction in primary fires is one of the best measures of increased safety, and is therefore at the forefront of reducing risk. The success of the Service's twin approaches of educating people to avoid accidental fires and taking action to prevent acts of deliberate fire setting is well reflected in this indicator.

A sharp increase in the number of chimney fires in 2008-09 (up from 280 in the previous year to 376) has also reduced slightly in 2009-10 (347). The Service will therefore be following a similarly proactive strategy in 2010-11 of providing timely advice to householders about sweeping chimneys before the winter months to seek to reduce the incidence of chimney fires still further.

DWELLING FIRES

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

Accidental dwelling fires



There are around 300,000 dwellings in North Wales. In 2009-10, 479 of those were damaged by accidental fires that necessitated the attendance of at least one fire engine. Reducing the number of accidental dwelling fires is one of North Wales Fire and Rescue's key aims, and it is pleasing to see the significant reduction achieved over the past decade.

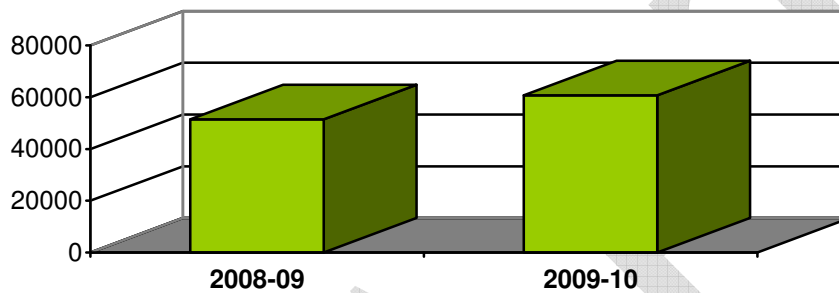
A high proportion (annually between 90% and 95%) of these fires are extinguished before they spread outside the room in which they started. Furthermore, in 2009-10, 93% of the 637 people caught up in accidental dwelling fires were able to escape unharmed without relying on a fire crew to rescue them. This was 8 percentage points better than in the previous year.

These outcomes are associated with the Service's Community Fire Safety strategy, and people taking heed of advice about preventing and containing fires in their homes, ensuring that they have early warning of a fire if one does start, and knowing how to react to secure their own safe escape from any room in their home.

COMMUNITY FIRE SAFETY ACTIVITIES

During 2009-10 the Service attended 436 special events, taking the fire safety message to an estimated audience of 54,779 people. A further 698 organised talks were given to groups totalling 5,978 people. This represents an increase of 9,227 people reached and 387 hours spent on these activities when compared against the previous year.

Total audiences reached at Community Fire Safety Events and Talks



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

During 2009-10, the Service exceeded its own annual target for these checks, spending 41,867 staff hours during the year delivering a total of 32,802 free Home Fire Safety Checks.

WELL- INFORMED AND EQUIPPED PEOPLE

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
- carelessly positioning 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
- not maintaining safe electrical wiring and overloading 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. 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.

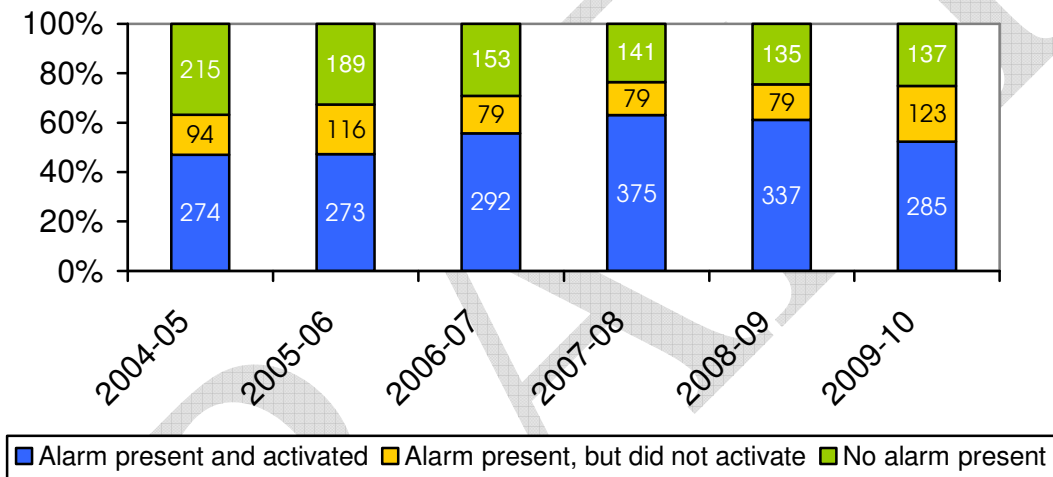
Advice is also given on good night-time routines of checking that doors are shut properly, electrical appliances have been switched off, candles and cigarettes safely extinguished, open fires have been made safe, and so forth.

SMOKE ALARMS

The most recent Living in Wales Survey showed that the majority of homes in Wales had 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 ultimate aim is to ensure that every home has at least one working smoke detector installed.

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.

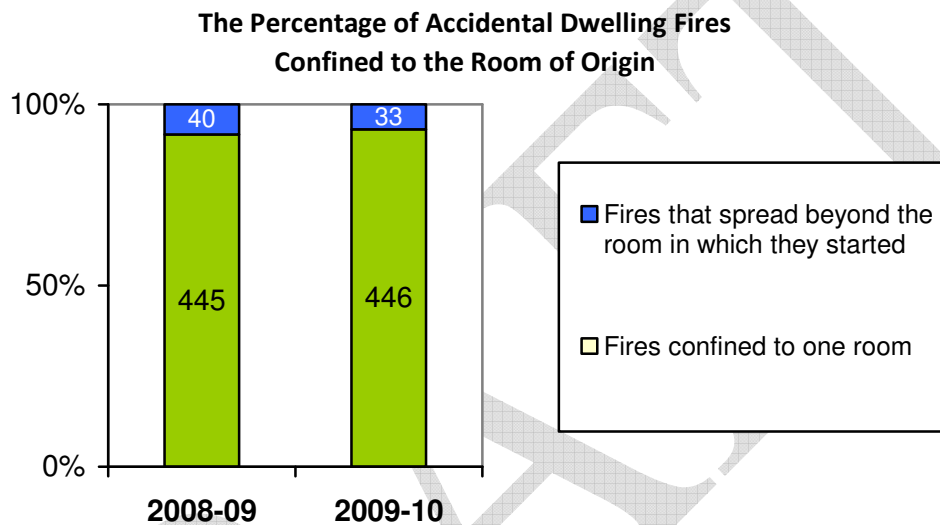
Smoke Alarm Ownership in Dwellings



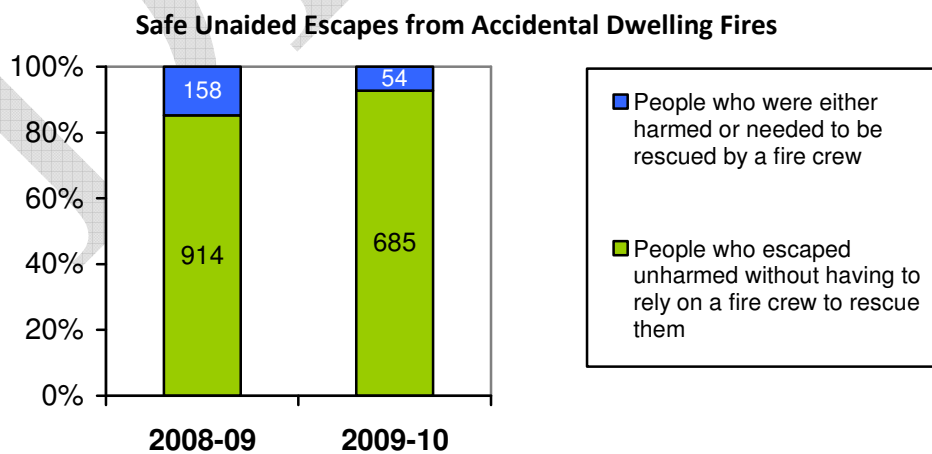
Over recent years, there has been a steady increase in the proportion of dwelling fires where a smoke alarm was already present and worked as it was meant to, giving a warning to anyone in the premises. However, this pattern changed during 2009-10, and the proportion in this category fell. No satisfactory explanation has been found for this, although it may be linked to the way incidents have been recorded since April 2009 using a new UK-wide incident recording system. It may also be that the fires that the Service attends now are amongst harder to reach groups that have not taken account of the many safety messages or taken advantage of free advice and equipment. This will therefore be monitored closely throughout 2010-11.

SAFER PEOPLE

In the majority of cases (93% in 2009-10), accidental dwelling fires can be confined to one room. A dwelling may be located some distance from the nearest fire station, so particular care needs to be taken to ensure that any fire is detected early and that internal doors are kept shut to help stop the smoke and fire from spreading. These simple measures can make all the difference to outcomes for people and property during the time before the fire and rescue service arrives.



Knowing what to do and thinking through an escape plan before an emergency happens helps people in dwellings know what to do if the smoke detector does go off so they can get themselves out safely without having to wait for a fire engine to arrive. The majority (92%) of people caught up in accidental dwelling fires in 2009-10 were able to get out alive and uninjured without waiting for a fire crew to rescue them.



HEALTHIER PEOPLE FOR LONGER

The Authority's aim is to see a time when every dwelling is fitted with a properly fitted, working smoke alarm. However, alongside the strategy of providing as many households as possible with free smoke detectors and free advice we want to focus our efforts on the most vulnerable members of society who are least able to look after themselves. Through collaboration with other caring agencies in North Wales and making use of reliable sources of information we aim to keep the number of instances where people are killed or injured by fire at the lowest level possible.

Back in 2003, the then Minister for Social Justice and Regeneration declared that it was the Assembly Government's target to reduce deaths in fires in Wales by between 30% and 50% in the following five years. Since then, the Assembly has clarified that the baseline figures to be used to assess the progress of Fire and Rescue Authorities against this ambitious target would be those 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 anyone in the fire. On occasion we do not receive the call until 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 2009-10, no fire deaths were recorded as a result of fires in non-domestic premises. However, 8 people lost their lives in fires in domestic premises. Two of these fires had been started deliberately. Fire deaths are very often associated with particular vulnerabilities, so the Service will continue to focus on working with voluntary and caring agencies to identify people who are most at risk in order to target safety advice and support to greatest effect.

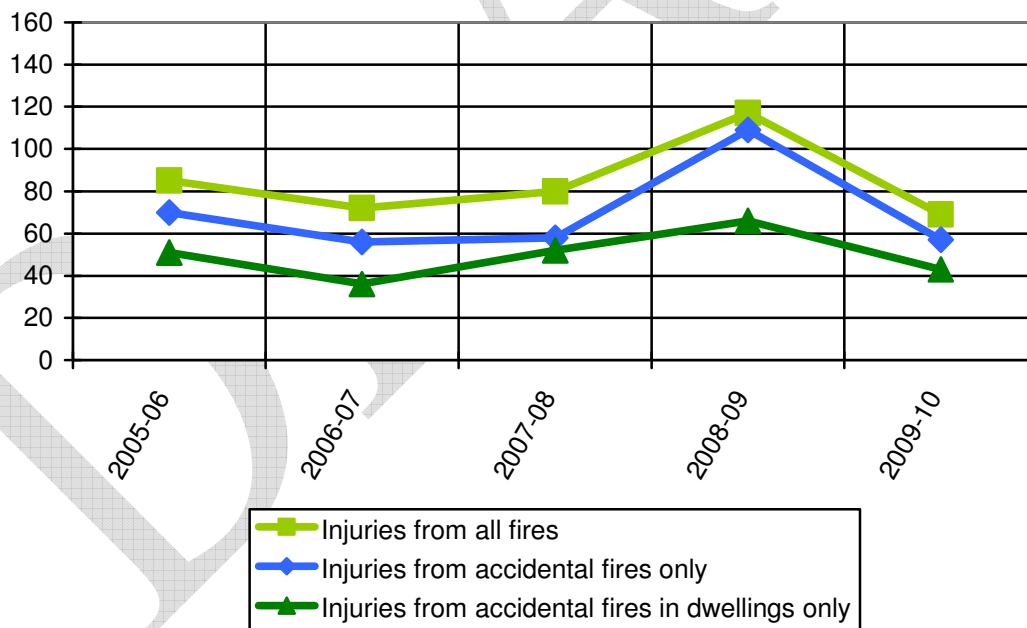
	Fire deaths from accidental fires	Fire deaths from deliberate fires	All fire deaths
2008-09	4	0	4
Per 100,000 population	0.59	0	0.59
2009-10	6	2	8
Per 100,000 population	0.88	0.29	1.18

During 2009-10, 69 people were recorded as having sustained an injury at a fire. This includes cuts and bruises as well as burns and scalds. 57 of those injuries were sustained at accidental fires, of which 43 were at accidental dwelling fires.

	Fire injuries from accidental fires	Fire injuries from deliberate fires	All fire injuries
2008-09	109	8	117
Per 100,000 population	16.08	1.18	17.26
2009-10	57	12	69
Per 100,000 population	8.41	1.77	10.1

Compared to the previous year, the number of fire injuries fell significantly in 2009-10 to a level more in keeping with previous years.

Injuries from fire

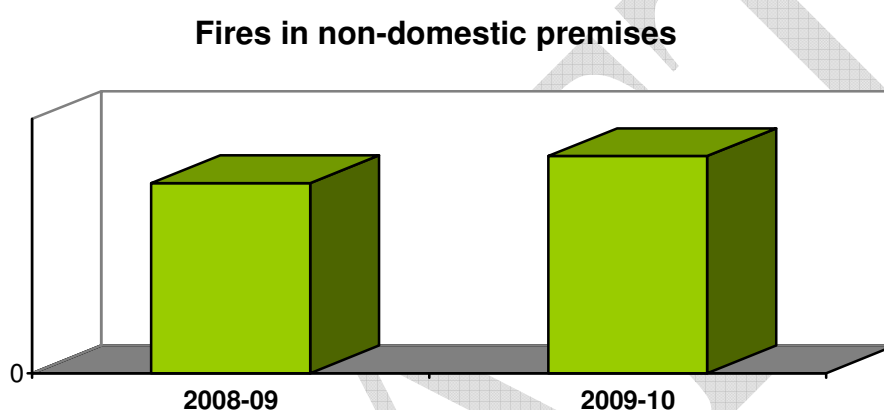


Although pleased at the reduction when compared to 2008-09, changes in the recording of slight injuries in the new national Incident Recording System that was introduced into the Service from April 2009 may account for some differences between years. The Service will therefore be monitoring results in other areas of the UK to help understand to what extent differences in recording and reporting are responsible for differences in our own results.

FIRES IN NON-DOMESTIC PREMISES

There are around 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 2009-10, 256 non-domestic premises suffered a fire that required an attendance by the Fire and Rescue Service.



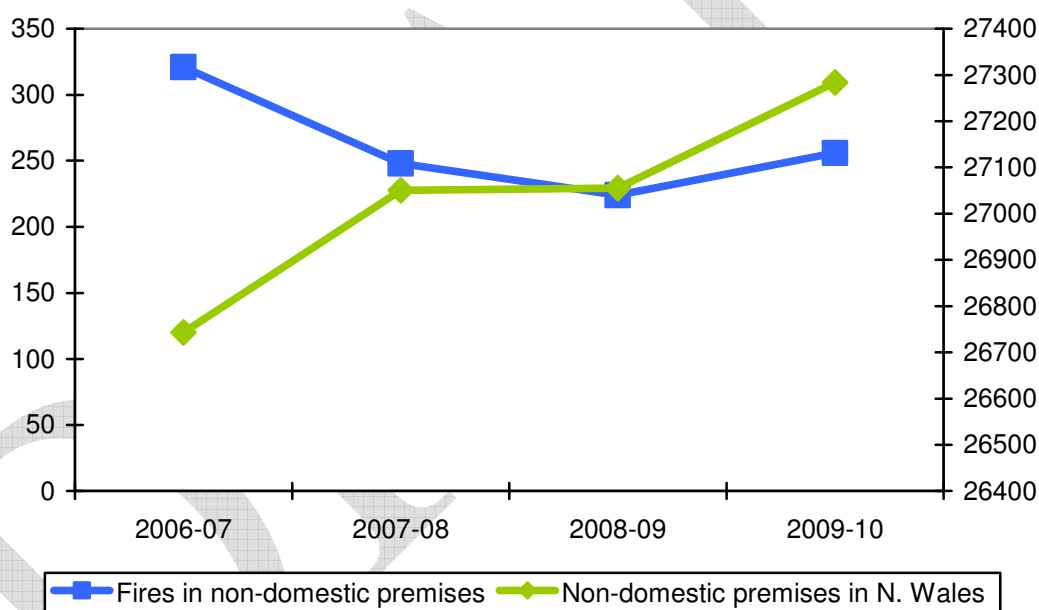
In October 2006, the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 came into force. The introduction of this order changed the role of the Fire and Rescue Authority to one of enforcement rather than of certification, so the focus for the Service has changed more recently to prioritising known premises to undergo a formal audit of their fire safety arrangements.

FIRE SAFETY AUDITS OF PREMISES

A total of 806 fire safety audits were carried out during the year – 275 in hotels and hostels, 123 in factories, offices and other workplaces, 49 in shops, 60 in schools and further education premises, 42 in houses of multiple occupation, those converted into flats and purpose-built flats of 4 storeys or higher. 33 Enforcement Notices and 8 Prohibition Notices were served during the year.

The service responded to 497 statutory and non-statutory consultations by other agencies (e.g. building regulations, care standards and licensing) which accounted for 1,014 hours of work during the year⁶.

Since the introduction of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, the number of non-domestic premises in North Wales has increased from 26,743 to 27,284. In that same period, however, the number of fires attended in those buildings actually fell from 321 to 256, suggesting that the new arrangements under the Order are being effective.

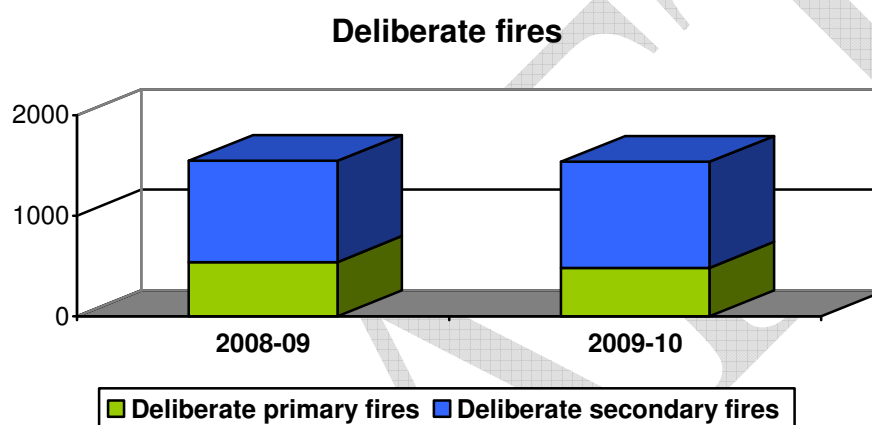


⁶ Information supplied in 2009-10 FSW Annual Operational Returns.

DELIBERATE FIRES

Deliberate fires create significant risk not only to lives but also to the quality of those lives, the economic vibrancy of an area, its schools, its sense of community, its cherished historical and heritage sites, and the environmental and natural landscapes.

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.



The number of deliberate fires fell slightly in 2009-10 compared to the previous year (from 1545 to 1536). Although a significant reduction was achieved in the primary fires category, there was an almost equal increase in the secondary fires category.

That said, the 1,054 deliberate secondary fires in 2009-10 was nevertheless a great improvement on the 1,314 in 2007-08 and the 1,711 in 2006-07. This indicates that the collaboration between North Wales Police and North Wales Fire and Rescue is being effective.

	Deliberate primary fires	Deliberate secondary fires	All deliberate fires
2008-09	540	1005	1545
Per 10,000 population	7.96	14.82	22.79
2009-10	482	1054	1536
Per 10,000 population	7.11	15.55	22.66

SPECIAL SERVICE INCIDENTS

Apart from attending fires, the fire and rescue service attends a wide range of non-fire incidents, termed 'special service incidents'. In 2009-10 the service attended 767 road traffic incidents, 90 (11.7%) of which involved freeing trapped people. This compares with 887 road traffic incidents in the previous year, 100 (11.3%) of which involved an extrication.

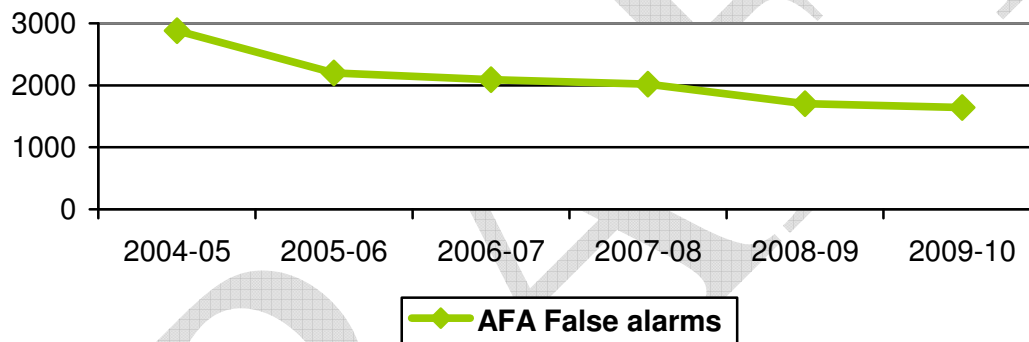
A further 735 special service incidents were attended in 2009-10, including to deal with spills and leaks (81), to remove/provide water (54), to rescue animals (43), to release lifts (56) and to help gain entry (70), to get people to safety (95) and to provide assistance to Police and Ambulance services (40). The total was slightly lower than in the previous year (764).

FALSE ALARMS

The Authority endorses the installation of Automatic Fire Alarms (AFA) in non-domestic properties as a way of warning everyone on the premises that a fire has broken out. However, when these alarms are either incorrectly installed or poorly maintained, or when systems aren't managed properly, they are prone to generate false alarms which presents additional risk if people start to ignore what should be a signal for them to evacuate the building.

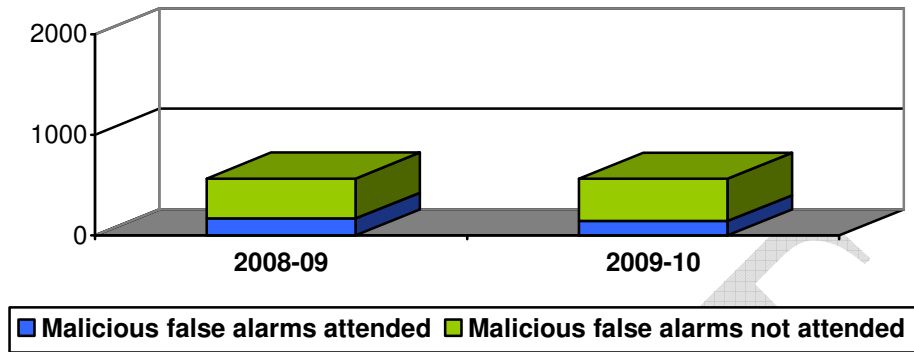
Furthermore, if a fire engine is sent to premises when there is no emergency, it is both wasteful and it means that another fire engine may have to be brought from further afield to deal with any real emergency incident.

False alarms from AFA systems in non-domestic premises



The reduction is certainly encouraging, but the 1,646 such incidents in 2009-10 still equates to between four and five of these false calls per day. The Service will therefore continue to work with premises managers to reduce the overall number, but targeting those whose systems send out multiple false alarms.

Malicious false alarms



Every year the Service receives a number of malicious calls made with the intention of getting a response although there is no emergency situation. As well as being illegal, this sort of behaviour has the potential to increase the level of risk by tying up resources unnecessarily, and is also a pointless drain on the Authority's finances. For these reasons, the Service does its utmost to recognise these false calls as being malicious before committing any resources to them. Wherever possible, the Service also takes action against people who deliberately make these false calls.

RESPONDING QUICKLY TO 999 CALLS

Being able to respond quickly when a 999 call is received is a touchstone of the fire and rescue service, and an issue that is taken very seriously. A recent review of response times in English fire and rescue services conducted by the UK Government sought to explain why attendance times have been increasing nationally since 1999. Their analysis showed that the single most important effect was from increased traffic levels. Other suggestions such as health and safety considerations, the increase in Community Fire Safety work by crews and the removal of national standards of fire cover were not borne out in the evidence.

Our decision to relocate the primary Control room to a purpose built facility with North Wales Police was partly taken to improve co-ordination of response to calls for assistance. We have also entered into an arrangement with the Wales Ambulance Service so that we get to know about road traffic collisions sooner, allowing us to make an informed decision about whether to send a fire crew immediately. What used to happen was that other emergency services would arrive first and only then would someone make an assessment of whether the fire and rescue service was needed, which meant that work to release people trapped in their vehicle did not start until later.

Other recent work 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.

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 to an alert from wherever they might be in the vicinity of the station. The speed of attendance therefore takes this into account, and the availability of sufficient Retained Duty System firefighters is a key factor in maintaining full coverage of North Wales.

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.

On the rare occasions when delays in attending occur, these are thoroughly investigated so that lessons may be learned to improve overall performance.

The Welsh Assembly Government committed to ensuring that 80% of homes (when measured across the whole of Wales) will be close enough to a fire station 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.

The 10 minute standard

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.

In 2009-10, 440 dwelling fires in North Wales met the criteria and were included in the calculation. Of those, 354 (80.45%) were actually reached within 10 minutes.

The 5 minute standard

An Assembly Government 5 minute standard also applies 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 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.

In 2009-10, 151 dwelling fires in North Wales met the criteria and were included in the calculation. Of those, 37 (24.50%) were actually reached within 5 minutes.

Sickness absence

In April 2008 the Service achieved the gold award in 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, reflecting the Authority's commitment to supporting staff health and wellbeing.

In 2009-10, the number of days or shifts lost by staff totalled 4,023, equating to 8.77 per full time equivalent employee (excluding staff on the Retained Duty System). Despite a reduction in the number lost by operational staff, Control and support staff lost significantly more, giving an overall increase of 238 days/shifts lost.

All members of staff who are absent due to illness are subject to the Service's attendance management policy that seeks to balance supportive assistance with fair and clear management action.

Ill-health retirements

The fire and rescue service takes health and safety very seriously, not only for fire crews attending potentially dangerous emergency incidents but also our lone workers, mechanics, cooks, drivers, maintenance technicians – in fact, all our employees.

As far as possible we accommodate long-term serious illness and disability, and make suitable adjustments so that people can continue to be employed with us. From time to time, however, retirement on the grounds of ill-health is the only realistic option.

In 2009-10, there were 6 retirements from the Service due to ill-health. This represents 0.58% of the total workforce.

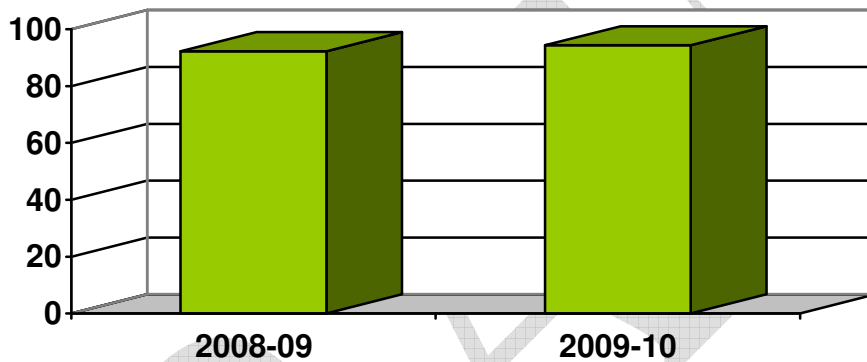
AN EFFICIENT ORGANISATION THAT IS GOOD TO DO BUSINESS WITH

The Authority aims to be a good organisation to do business with, and one aspect of that concerns how quickly it settles its bills with companies that provide commercial goods and services.

In 2009-10, the Service processed 10,435 invoices that fell into this category – 337 more than in 2008-09.

9,841 (94.3%) were paid within 30 days of receipt of the invoice.

**The Percentage of Undisputed Invoices
Paid Within 30 Days**



AMENDMENTS TO PREVIOUSLY REPORTED 2008-09 FIGURES

Changes in incident recording software and electronic systems that were introduced recently have provided an excellent opportunity to check and re-check incident data for 2008-09 that was reported in our Improvement Plan published in October 2009. Furthermore, in May 2010, the Office for National Statistics revised the mid-year population projection for 2008, which has been included here.

As a result, we were able to identify and correct data in the following areas:

Reference	Definition	Published results	Post-audit results	Final checked results
	All fires attended	3,442	3,442	3,389
FRS/RRC/S/001(i)	per 10,000 population	50.73	50.73	49.95
	Primary fires	1,509	1,509	1,504
FRS/RRC/S/001(ii)	per 10,000 population	22.24	22.24	22.17
	Accidental fires in dwellings	501	501	485
FRS/RRC/S/001(iii)	per 10,000 dwellings	16.51	16.51	15.99
	Deliberate fires	1,596	1,596	1,545
FRS/RRC/S/001(iv)	per 10,000 population	23.52	23.52	22.77
	Secondary fires	1,557	1,557	1,509
	per 10,000 population	22.95	22.95	22.24
	Fires in non-domestic premises	258	258	224
FRS/RRC/S/003	per 1,000 non-domestic premises	9.54	9.54	8.28
	Deliberate secondary fires	1,037	1,040	1,005
FRS/RRC/C/004ii	per 10,000 population	15.28	15.33	14.81
	Deliberate primary fires	570	556	540
FRS/RRC/C/004i	per 10,000 population	8.4	8.19	7.96
	Injuries caused by fires	111	111	117

Reference	Definition	Published results	Post-audit results	Final checked results
FRS/RRC/S/002(iv)	per 100,000 population	16.36	16.36	17.24
	Injuries caused by accidental fires	102	102	109
FRS/RRC/S/002(v)	per 100,000 population	15.03	15.03	16.06
	Injuries caused by accidental dwelling fires	55	55	66
FRS/RRC/C/001(v)	per 100,000 population	8.11	8.11	9.73
	Injuries caused by deliberate fires	9	9	8
FRS/RRC/S/002(vi)	per 100,000 population	1.33	1.33	1.18
	False alarms from automatic fire alarms in non-domestic properties	1,301	1,301	1,707
FRS/RRC/C/003	per 1,000 non-domestic properties	48.09	48.09	63.09
	Malicious false alarms attended	170	170	166
BVPI146ii	per 1,000 population	25.05	25.05	24.46

A full breakdown of all the figures is shown in Section 6.

IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF PEOPLE'S LIVES IN VARIOUS WAYS

Success in tackling operational emergencies, often under difficult and dangerous conditions, was evident throughout the year. However, the service was at the same time participating in a very wide range of initiatives aimed at improving the quality of life of people, reducing risk and improving the service generally.

News items are issued throughout the year, and are made available on the Service's website. The following is a selection from the year, showing the wide variety of activities that the service became involved in.

April 2009 – Service managers participated in a mock national exercise (Exercise Taliesin) to help prepare for the worst excesses of a future flu pandemic.

May 2009 – Crews dealt with a chemical incident at an Industrial Estate that involved 22 casualties suffering from breathing difficulties, eye infection and sickness.

June 2009 – As part of Gipsy and Travellers Awareness Month, the Service made a special appeal to people living in caravans and trailers to follow basic safety precautions to keep themselves as safe as possible in their homes.

July 2009 – A new agreement was signed with North Wales Housing Association ensuring that all new tenants receive a free home fire safety check from the Service and all existing tenants receive a check during their annual visit to the property.

August 2009 – An Environmental Action Day saw service people join partners from other organisations to remove 17 tons of rubbish from the streets and conduct 47 home fire safety checks.

September 2009 – Following a joint recruitment campaign, a new intake of 12 wholtime firefighters completed their training and were assigned to their stations.

October 2009 – A Welsh Language Champion Seminar was held for newly nominated Welsh Language Champions who will work within each county area to help support staff learners and promote the use of the Welsh language amongst staff across the area.

November 2009 - As part of Road Safety Week, representatives from the Fire and Rescue Services in Wales attended the Welsh Assembly's Senedd building in Cardiff Bay to raise awareness of their work in relation to road traffic collisions.

December 2009 - Officers from North Wales Fire and Rescue Service and North Wales Police visited the homes of elderly residents as part of an initiative to offer safety advice and reassurance.

January 2010 – Chief fire officers in Wales welcomed the approval of the draft Domestic Fire Safety LCO (Legislative Competence Order) by the National Assembly for Wales that North Wales officers had been instrumental in progressing.

February 2010 – A new partnership was formed with the British Red Cross in Conwy and Denbighshire who were trained by Service staff to give fire safety advice and fit free smoke detectors in the homes of the residents they visit.

March 2010 – the Service welcomed three young people to work with the service for nine months on a special work placement scheme.

DRAFT

WORKING WITH OTHERS – A YEAR OF COLLABORATION

The current drive to achieve more across the Welsh public sector by working collaboratively is one that North Wales Fire and Rescue has been working hard to achieve, and is taking the lead in several aspects of joint working. The following gives just a few examples of the type of initiatives that the Service is involved in:

- Training and equipping staff in partner organisations e.g. Care and Repair (Gofal a Thrwsio), North Wales Housing Association, Pennaf Housing, Tai Clwyd to deliver Home Fire Safety Checks to the people they come into contact with.
- Educating young drivers through the Pass Plus Cymru initiative.
- Reducing motorcycle accidents by working as partners in the BikeSafe initiative with other fire and rescue services and the Welsh Assembly Government.
- Educating all drivers through Impact Roadshows run with North Wales Police, Wales Ambulance and county council road safety officers.
- Visiting schools to provide fire safety information as part of Key Stages 1 to 4 curricula.
- Conducting multi-agency inspections to ensure that all aspects of safety (including fire safety) in licensed premises are satisfactory.
- Collaborating with other local agencies (including utilities companies) to prepare for any future large scale emergencies that could arise.
- Collaborating in a joint on-call press officer service with North Wales Police as a sustainable way of providing out-of-hours assistance to the media.
- Working with Llysfasi College and North Wales Police to develop and assess Welsh language skills amongst staff.
- Collaborating with other fire and rescue services on training, procurement, recruitment, control arrangements, providing mutual support in cross-border incidents.
- Conducting exercises with a range of other response organisations to ensure successful joint working at incidents e.g. Dublin Fire Brigade, RAF, Mountain Rescue teams, trauma care nurses, A55 tunnels, Maritime and Coastguard Agency.

1. Peer Assessment of Operational Assurance of Service Delivery

As part of the Operational Assurance process (further details are included in Section 5 of this document), a team of peer assessors conducted a week-long site visit that culminated in a report on the Authority's self-assessment against two lines of enquiry – Training and Development, and Health and Safety.

The team identified that:

- good progress had been made to embed a Health and Safety culture throughout the organisation. It was evident that the majority of personnel understood their responsibilities and the methods of reporting to further reduce the number of accidents/near misses.
- there was a clearly defined accident investigation process that amends and informs policies and procedures.
- there had been progress with the implementation and the collation of Operational Intelligence using the Hazard Information Cards with a quality assurance system in place to provide consistency.
- operational monitoring procedures had been introduced and the service was learning from de-briefs and experience from past events to improve Health and Safety across the service.
- the publication of the Health and Safety Strategy and the introduction of up to date, user-friendly policies, which highlight any change from the previous version, would support the Service to further discharge its Health, Safety and Welfare responsibilities.
- wider consultation across the organisation would help to further support the existing management structures and arrangements.
- introducing a suite of local indicators would support the Service to drive improvement by identifying trends and highlighting areas for attention.
- the Service had policies and procedures to deliver training and development that reflected National Guidance, and recommended that the service should continue to review its policies to ensure currency.
- the Service had sought to implement and maintain an appropriate structure to design, develop and deliver its Training and Development requirements. The team suggested ways to enhance this improvement still further.
- Audited Personal Development Records (PDR) were maintained to evidence staff competence. The team suggested enhancements to further support the PDR process.

2. Wales Audit Office

In October 2009, the Wales Audit Office issued its Annual Letter to the Authority for 2008-09.

It confirmed that:

- the Statement of Accounts had been prepared correctly, and that no material weaknesses had been found in the significant financial systems.
- the Authority had appropriate arrangements in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources in 2008-09.
- the Authority's Improvement Plan 2009-10 met statutory requirements and provided a balanced view of its performance in 2008-09
- the Authority had made progress in dealing with a range of risks and now needed to address agreed priority areas as identified in the 2009 Joint Risk Assessment.
- the Authority had made progress in reducing the levels of operational risk identified by the Peer Assessment Team and was working to further improve its operational response
- the Authority had made progress in reducing the level of risk identified in the last Joint Risk Assessment

The Appointed Auditor did not identify any need for a statutory inspection under section 10A of the Local Government Act 1999 and recommended that the Welsh Ministers should not at that time give any direction under section 15 of the Act.

3. The Health and Safety Executive

In December 2009 the Service underwent an inspection by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) as part of a sample of eight Fire and Rescue Services across the UK. Four recommendations arose from it.

1. In relation to ensuring that the Service has an effective management structure and arrangements for delivering policies, the HSE recommended reviewing the arrangements that were in place to enable local management to fulfil their role in the delivery of a competent workforce. This review should include the effectiveness of the support mechanisms currently in place (e.g. IDFO, audit, etc.) as well as local management issues and the monitoring arrangements in place.

The Service undertook to set up a working party to conduct an in-depth review of these arrangements, identify precisely where any shortfalls lie and produce detailed recommendations for action by August 2010.

2. In relation to ensuring that the Service has adequate arrangements to secure the trust, participation and involvement of all employees, the HSE recommended that the Service should review its effectiveness in this regard, taking into consideration the difficulties experienced in bedding in the PDR system as well as exploring the perceived lack of consultation of employees when introducing new methods of working.

The Service undertook to review current consultation methods with the representative bodies, and find ways to overcome any identified gaps. It also planned to review the memberships of committees, working groups and task and finish groups and to make improvements in how information is disseminated internally. The target date for these was August 2010.

3. In relation to ensuring that the Service has adequate arrangements to secure the competence of all staff, the HSE made the same recommendation as in 1 (above), and added that the Service should ensure that the systems in place to support those less experienced individuals who are placed in incident command positions are fit for purpose and used consistently and correctly. Furthermore, the service should ensure that a robust process is in place for the quality assurance of training provided by trainers.

These recommendations would be picked up by the same working party by August 2010.

4. The HSE made the same recommendation as 1 and 3 (above) in relation to measuring performance against agreed standards to help identify where and when improvement is needed.

The same working party would pick this matter up, too, by August 2010.

SECTION 3

CURRENT YEAR 2010-11

2008 Consultation for Risk Reduction Plan 2010-11 Action Plan

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 decided to continue with work in 2010-11 on the three risk-reducing initiatives that had already been started in 2009-10.

These relate to

1. Reviewing 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 the 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.

SERVICE PLANS

Planned actions have now been integrated into departmental Service Plans for the year. Forty departmental planned actions are summarised here under ten specific improvement headings.

1. Protection and prevention
2. Operational effectiveness
3. Resilience
4. Equality and diversity
5. Language and heritage
6. Sustainability
7. Legal and political change
8. Information
9. Technology
10. Maintaining Excellent, Fair workforce Arrangements

1. Protection and Prevention

The fire and rescue authority's primary role is to help protect North Wales from being harmed by fire and other hazards. This contributes to achieving safe, economically sound communities and to improving the quality and length of people's lives.

Focus Areas for 2010-11

1. To reduce the number of accidental and deliberate fires and associated deaths and injuries by providing timely and targeted support and advice (including through social networking and mobile phone messaging) in conjunction with other public sector organisations, voluntary agencies and Atal Tân as appropriate.
2. To support other agencies in reducing the number of road traffic collisions and associated deaths and injuries.

2. Operational Effectiveness

The Service constantly strives to improve its emergency response by reviewing and updating the way it operates and the equipment it uses.

Focus Areas for 2010-11

3. To progress with the planned introduction of new national radio communications and information systems.
4. To progress with plans for improving urban search and rescue (USAR), rope rescue, water rescue and large animal rescue capability.
5. To introduce six new fire appliances, a new Incident Command Unit and progress with the review into the number and location of light portable pumps.
6. To provide new operational workwear (personal protective equipment) to an all-Wales specification.
7. To build on existing measures to monitor operational performance by fire crews before, during and after incidents.
8. To focus on improving the effectiveness of cover provided through the Retained Duty System.
9. To continue to improve fire control room functions through collaboration with police and ambulance control room functions.
10. To continue to enhance the Authority's buildings by delivering the planned programmes of capital projects, maintenance and minor works.

3. Resilience

The Fire and Rescue Service's resilience to potentially disruptive events both locally and nationally is constantly reviewed and strengthened.

Focus Areas for 2010-11

11. To continue with the all-Wales resilience project between fire control rooms in Wales, including making improvements to data, policies and procedures, and electronic hardware and software.
12. To continue with the rollout of the replacement wide area network and mobile data solution (both part of a national project).
13. To continue to enhance information and communications technology (ICT) systems.
14. To continue to review and exercise Business Continuity Management and enhance the Service's capability to deal with large-scale incidents.

4. Equality and Diversity

The fire and rescue service nationally is still predominantly white and male, but is committed to achieving a more diverse workforce that reflects the diversity of the people it serves, and to ensuring that the services it delivers meets with the needs and expectations of the full diversity of people in the community.

The new Equality Act 2010 is intended to harmonise discrimination law, and to strengthen the law to support progress on equality. Different sections of the Act will come into force at different times. The public sector equality duty is expected to come into force in April 2011.

Focus Areas for 2010-11

15. To progress with the development of a Single Equalities Scheme reflecting the requirements of the new Equality Act.
16. To provide training and development in particular aspects of diversity issues for authority members, senior managers and heads of department.

5. Language and Heritage

The Authority is committed to the principle that by valuing the language and heritage of Wales it can contribute not only to people's sense of wellbeing, but also to their safety.

Language –

Whether in emergency situations or in normal business situations, people appreciate being able to communicate with us in their language of choice. Furthermore, as the number of Welsh speakers rises it becomes increasingly evident that offering a language choice is simply good practice, not a concession. We are committed to delivering a Service that is of the same high standard and quality in both Welsh and English.

In 2009, North Wales Fire and Rescue revised its Welsh Language Scheme and extended its plans to 2010-13. Several of the planned actions relate to cultivating a Service that is fully in tune with our Welsh public. Details of how to access the Scheme are given in Section 5.

Heritage –

North Wales enjoys a wonderfully rich heritage, parts of which would be impossible to recreate if they were to be lost through fire or flood. For example, historic and architecturally important buildings and other structures; wildlife, marine and nature reserves; geologically important sites; historical gardens, plants and designed landscapes; libraries, galleries and special collections; sites of special scientific importance and sites of community importance are all important. As well as enhancing people's quality of life, many livelihoods and communities are also reliant on the continuing existence of these sites.

Focus Areas for 2010-11

17. To monitor the completion of actions associated with the revised Welsh Language Scheme 2010-13.

Particular focus areas in this year include on:

- recruitment processes;
- introducing a new process for recording the number of emergency calls handled in the Control room in Welsh and English; and
- raising awareness of the Scheme amongst external contractors brought in by the Facilities Management department to undertake work, and ensuring that formal signage procured through this department is bilingual.

6. Sustainability

North Wales Fire and Rescue has always sought to operate as effectively and efficiently as possible and to make the best use of the resources it has at its disposal. Furthermore, the Authority recognises the valuable contribution the fire and rescue service makes to improving people's quality of life.

Through our Sustainable Development Plan we aim to ensure that we contribute to a better, safer and greener Wales. We recognise that not only do we owe it to the local people who pay for services today, but also to future generations of North Wales residents that as far as possible we:

- minimise waste in our own operations; and
- prevent and control fires and other potentially environmentally damaging incidents.

Reducing the number of fires helps to reduce carbon emissions and air, water and land pollution. It can also help to protect important natural habitats.

Reducing the number of false alarms helps to cut the number of journeys made by fire engines and other vehicles, which can contribute to a reduction in overall fuel consumption.

Focus Areas for 2010-11

18. To improve the recognition of false alarm calls, thereby reducing unnecessary and wasteful journeys when there is no emergency.
19. To pay particular attention to reducing the number of fires overall, and specifically to outdoor fires that cause damage to the countryside.
20. To improve systems for monitoring fuel consumption and vehicle tracking from the perspective of improving environmental management and energy conservation where possible.

7. Legal and Political Change

As a public sector organisation, the Authority seeks to engage in the political arena in order to maximise its effectiveness. Changes in legislation affecting how the fire and rescue authority is directed and managed are also an important part of this effective management.

Focus Areas for 2010-11

21. To continue to maintain effective relationships with political stakeholders after the 2010 general election.
22. To adapt to the new processes and timetable associated with the introduction of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009.

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8. Information

The service relies heavily on timely, relevant and sufficient information on which to base decisions, drive improvement and measure its own performance.

Focus Areas for 2010-11

23. To continue to increase the availability of timely and relevant performance-related information (including through the national Ffynnon system); and upgrade the service intranet.
24. To contribute to a collaborative development of an all-Wales Incident Recording System (IRS) that is specifically tailored to the needs of Wales.
25. To continue to respond to issues highlighted in the staff survey of views on corporate communications including developing a system of team briefings.
26. To continue to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the budget consultation process; annual service, county and station planning; recording and reporting staff and workforce information; recording and reporting fleet information; operational intelligence and fire safety records management; overtime expenditure and efficiencies.

9. Technology

As with all organisations, the fire and rescue service relies heavily on information and communication technology to support both its operational and corporate effectiveness.

Focus Areas for 2010-11

27. To continue to introduce and upgrade information and communications technology (ICT) systems and capacity to support efficient, effective and safe working. These include audio-visual installations, alerters and fireground radios, computers and printers, control room systems, incident information systems; and financial accounting systems.

10. Excellent, Fair Workforce Arrangements

As a large employer with a diverse workforce, North Wales Fire and Rescue is constantly finding ways of maintaining a skilled and motivated workforce, available when required, to effectively provide and support the delivery of fire and rescue services.

Objectives for 2010-11

28. To complete changes following the review of staffing in the control room.
29. To complete an equal pay audit.
30. To compile a Single Equalities Scheme.
31. To agree a Service Level Agreement with an employment law firm.
32. To agree a Service Level Agreement or appoint an internal investigating officer.
33. To continue to progress the Officer Review.
34. To extend the range of Retained Duty System (RDS) contracts to include 25% and 50% contracts for the purpose of ensuring 100% availability of RDS appliances.
35. To develop a personal qualities and attributes profile of the Service from existing records.
36. To review personal development records and embed revised National Occupational Standards for firefighters.
37. To establish quality assurance systems for learning and development instructional staff.
38. To review the provision of driving instruction for drivers of emergency vehicles.
39. To consolidate the supervisory manager skills development programme.
40. To provide information to Local Government Pension Scheme employees about the options available to increase pensions benefits, including effective measures to save for retirement.

2009 CONSULTATION FOR RISK REDUCTION PLAN 2011-12 AND BEYOND

In Summer 2009, the Authority consulted widely with the public on four fundamental principles that would guide their continuing fundamental review of risks and resources.

These four issues related to:

- Whether to continue to undertake the same level of working with young people if external funding for this were to be withdrawn.
- Whether to redirect resources from other activities and increase flexibility in the way it employs retained duty system personnel.
- Whether to take on the additional (non-statutory) responsibility for co-responding.
- Which approach to adopt in terms of Service providing value for money, affordability and delivering services efficiently.

The consultation publication was sent out to over 850 addresses, including all County Councils and Community/Town Councils within the North Wales area. Also, over 1,000 were posted out to all North Wales Fire and Rescue personnel, as well as being available on the intranet and internet for general public viewing. Presentations were given at local meetings, and copies of the consultation document were handed out at community events in the area during the summer period.

The initial consultation period ran for three months up to September 4th 2009. This was later extended until the end of September 2009 to allow further opportunities to publicise the consultation at routine meetings that are not generally held during July and August – e.g. local authority senior management team and scrutiny meetings and local community meetings. In total, 66 responses were received.

The responses received were:

Question	Yes	No	Other
If external funding for youth work were to be withdrawn, should the Authority discontinue its youth activities?	51.5% (34)	40.9% (27)	7.6% (5)
If 'no' (i.e. it should not be discontinued), should resources be redirected from other services?	51.9% (14)	37.0% (10)	11.1% (3)
Should the Authority redirect resources and increase flexibility in employing RDS personnel in order to maintain and improve availability in rural areas?	75.8% (50)	15.2% (10)	9.1% (6)
Should the Authority introduce co-responding schemes, given the financial obligations and possible Fire Brigades Union resistance?	43.9% (29)	50.0% (33)	6.1% (4)

In response to the question about which strategy the Authority should be aiming for in relation to value for money, affordability and delivering services efficiently, the views expressed were that the Authority should:

	Do more	Do the same	Do less
Cost more	45.5% (30)	13.6% (9)	4.5% (3)
Cost less	6.0% (4)	7.6% (5)	13.6% (9)

Position Statements

Having considered the responses, the Authority developed position statements relating to the first three issues:

Working with young people: the Authority expressed its support for this work and stated its intention to await a report on this subject that had already been commissioned by the Assembly.

Retained Duty System: the Authority expressed its support for innovative and flexible arrangements to sustain fire cover in rural areas, and stated its intention to await the outcome of a review of this System that had already been commissioned by the Assembly.

Co-responding: the Authority decided not to pursue a co-responding scheme.

SECTION 4

FORTHCOMING YEAR 2011-12

Over the summer 2010 the Authority consulted on draft objectives for 2011-12 and beyond. The consultation was concerned with two aspects of improvement.

The **first aspect** related to the general duty to improve and asked people whether they thought the Authority was right to feel confident that it was going to be able to improve. The consultation described:

- the Authority's involvement in partnerships and collaboration, self-assessments and reviews, internal audits, peer assessment and external audit and inspection;
- the Authority's formal planning and reporting procedures, monitoring arrangements, reporting arrangements and sources of professional advice;
- the Authority's arrangements for member development and codes of conduct, committee structures to drive improvement, policies and procedures to deal with failures (e.g. for handling complaints).

The **second aspect** related to seven specific improvement objectives, three of which were identified through the Risk Reduction Planning process.

Improvement Objective 1

Helping to keep people and communities safe by preventing deaths and injuries from accidental fires in living accommodation.

We propose to do this through:

- a targeted programme of prevention activity and advice, with a particular emphasis on homes occupied by people who are vulnerable or disadvantaged. For this we will use our own sources of information and staff but we will increasingly encourage other agencies to share information with us where that helps to keep people safe;
- a swift and even more effective emergency response when fires do occur, to give the best opportunity for rescuing anyone who has not been able to escape and limiting the spread of the fire. For this we will increasingly use the records we hold to help us to anticipate levels, times and locations of demand.

Improvement Objective 2

Helping to minimise the risk of fires starting accidentally in non-domestic properties, so that normal activities can continue and the lives of people visiting and working there are not put at risk.

We propose to do this through:

- a carefully targeted programme of inspections of fire safety arrangements in non-domestic properties, using local intelligence and special computer technology to help with this;
- a swift and even more effective response when fires do occur to give the best opportunity for rescuing anyone who has not been able to escape and limiting the spread of the fire. This will be achieved through effective management, technical procedures and communications systems, supporting a highly skilled workforce with the necessary information, equipment and appliances.

Improvement Objective 3

Helping to minimise the danger and damage caused by non-fire emergencies, such as flooding, road traffic collisions, and chemical incidents.

We propose to do this through:

- a swift and even more effective response when these events do occur, especially where lives are at risk. This will be achieved through effective management, technical procedures and communications systems, supporting a highly skilled workforce with the necessary information, equipment and appliances. We will also seek to use the records we hold and any other relevant sources of information to help us to anticipate levels, times and locations of demand.

Improvement Objective 4

To help tackle problems of deliberate fire-setting so that people, communities, businesses, the environment and the area's heritage are not put at risk.

We propose to do this through:

- collaborating with North Wales Police and other agencies to prevent arson and acts of vandalism by fire;
- working with particular groups and individuals to influence behaviour away from deliberate fire-setting.

Improvement Objective 5 (Risk Reduction Plan)

To focus on improving the sustainable development of the Authority by finding the right balance between the environmental, economic and social impact of providing a fire and rescue service.

We propose to do this through:

- the roll-out of an agreed action plan centred on consumption, climate change and energy, enhancing the environment and promoting sustainable communities.

Improvement Objective 6 (Risk Reduction Plan)

To become better at identifying and engaging with people who could find themselves socially and/or economically disadvantaged, so that we can enhance their sense of wellbeing and reduce the level of risk to their personal safety.

We propose to do this through:

- the roll-out of an agreed Single Equality Scheme that helps to protect people from being disadvantaged unfairly on account of their age, disability, gender, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy, race, religion or belief, or sexual orientation;
- developing a deeper understanding of the diversity of people living within our service area so that we are better equipped to protect and support them to live long and productive lives in safe and vibrant communities.

Improvement Objective 7 (Risk Reduction Plan)

To ensure that the Service's Business Continuity Planning and Management arrangements are as comprehensive and secure as they can be.

We propose to do this through:

- undertaking a reappraisal of how Business Continuity Planning resources and responsibilities are allocated so that we can place renewed emphasis on progressing with existing plans and continuously developing new plans;
- assigning equal importance to corporate and operational business continuity management so that we can be sure that no area has been overlooked and that recovery plans are robust.

[Description of consultation process and any issues arising to be added into the third (post-consultation) draft for approval in October 2010.]

[Description of assigned responsibilities for each objective, timescales and milestones, tests of achievement (e.g. performance indicators) and monitoring arrangements to be added into the third (post-consultation) draft for approval in October 2010.]

SECTION 5

OTHER INFORMATION

CONTACT DETAILS

Postal address: North Wales Fire and Rescue
Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters
Ffordd Salesbury
St Asaph Business Park
St Asaph
Denbighshire
LL17 0JJ

Telephone: 01745 535250

Website: www.nwales-fireservice.org.uk

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- The **Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004** came into effect in October 2004, replacing the previous Fire and Rescue Services Act 1947 in England and Wales. It clarifies the duties and powers of Fire and Rescue Authorities to:
 - Promote fire safety
 - Fight fires
 - Protect people and property from fires
 - Rescue people from road traffic accidents
 - Respond to other specified risks, such as chemical incidents
 - Respond to large scale emergencies such as terrorist attacks
- The **National Framework 2008-11** was issued by the Welsh Assembly Government under section 21 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004. It sets out the Assembly's vision and priorities for the three Fire and Rescue Authorities in Wales and what is expected of them during the lifespan of the framework.
- **The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009** came into effect from 1st April 2010. It created a statutory regime that integrates shorter term local service improvement and long term community planning. Specific guidance relating to the improvement element (Part 1) for fire and rescue services was issued by the Assembly in May 2010.
- The **Fire and Rescue Authorities (Improvement Plans) (Wales) Order 2010** came into force on April 1st 2010. It requires fire and rescue authorities to publish their improvement plan as soon as reasonably practicable after 30 September of the

year prior to the financial year to which the improvement plan relates.

- The **Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005** came into effect in October 2006, replacing over 70 pieces of fire safety law. It applies to all non-domestic premises in England and Wales, including the communal parts of blocks of flats and houses in multiple occupation. It abolished the requirement for businesses to have fire certificates and put the onus on the person responsible for the premises to address fire safety in those premises.
- The **Equality Act 2010** received royal assent in April 2010, replacing over 100 pieces of equality law. It is anticipated that the public sector equality duty will be brought into force from April 2011, some six months after the main provisions of the act have been brought into force.
- The **Civil Contingencies Act 2004** received royal assent in October 2004. It provides a single framework for civil protection involving local responders to large scale emergencies that threaten serious damage to human welfare, the environment or to security. Fire and Rescue Services are 'Category 1' responders under this act.
- **Welsh Assembly Government Fire Branch**
The responsibility for providing fire and rescue services and promoting fire safety in Wales was devolved to the National Assembly for Wales on 10 November 2004. The Community Safety division of the Welsh Assembly Government is based at Rhydycar, Merthyr Tydfil CF48 1UZ.
<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/housingandcommunity/safety/?lang=en>
- **The Fire and Rescue Adviser**
The Fire and Rescue Services (Appointment of Inspector) (Wales) Order 2009 came into force 14 May 2009. Mr Paul Young was the first to be appointed to this role in Wales under section 28(1) of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004. He advises on operational assurance, guidance and technical policy issues, as well as performance, equality and diversity.
- **Wales Audit Office**
The Wales Audit Office publishes reports on behalf of the Auditor General who is required to assess the likelihood that the Authority will continue to improve and whether the Authority is discharging its duties and acting in accordance with relevant issued guidance. Auditors also work with fire authorities across Wales to deliver a programme of financial and value-for-money audits.
<http://www.wao.gov.uk/>

INTERVENTION IN THE EVENT OF FAILURE OR POTENTIAL FAILURE TO COMPLY

The Assembly has powers of intervention:

- under section 22 of the **Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004** if it considers that a Fire and Rescue Authority is failing, or is likely to fail, to act in accordance with the National Framework.
- under section 29 of the **Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009** if it considers that a Fire and Rescue Authority is failing, or is at risk of failing, to comply with the Measure. However, in all but the most exceptional circumstances, Welsh Ministers may only intervene after they have offered voluntary support to the Authority under section 28 of the Measure.

FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY TIMETABLE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (WALES) MEASURE 2009

The incremental application of the new Measure takes effect over a number of months as fire and rescue authorities follow the associated annual processes.

Two Orders also need to have been introduced:

- The Fire and Rescue Authorities (Improvement Plans) (Wales) Order 2010 (No.481) was introduced in April 2010 to enable the publication of fire and rescue authorities' improvement plans in October each year.
- An Order to introduce new statutory Performance Indicators from 2011-12 onwards. This will be drawn up during 2010-11, but in the meantime fire and rescue authorities and the Wales Audit Office have agreed to use interim arrangements.

Although the Measure first came into effect from April 2010, it will take another two-and-a-half years before it comes fully into effect:

October 2009	Authorities publish their Improvement Plan and forward-looking Risk Reduction Plan (RRP) for 2010-11 under previous arrangements.
April 2010	Wales Audit Office (WAO) undertakes its first forward looking "Corporate Assessment". In the absence of improvement objectives published under the new Measure, WAO will refer to the Authority's Risk Reduction Plan objectives that they published in October 2009.
October 2010	Authorities publish their first Improvement/Risk Reduction Plans under the Measure. The backward look at performance will be based on reporting on performance against their Improvement/Risk Reduction Plans from October 2008 which cover 2009-10 (not published

under the Measure).

The forward plan will include improvement objectives as set out in the Measure for the year 2011-12.

November 2010	WAO's assessment of performance will look at Performance Indicators (PIs) that were statutory under the Local Government Act 1999 for 2009-10 and performance for 2009-10 based on the October 2008 Risk Reduction Plan (not published under the Measure).
February-April 2011	WAO's forward looking Corporate Assessment will use the first combined Improvement/Risk Reduction Plan 2011-12 objectives under the Measure.
October 2011	Authorities publish Improvement/Risk Reduction Plans covering performance in 2010-11 based on the Risk Reduction Plan published in October 2009 (not published under the Measure). They will also include Performance Indicators developed but not statutory by Order for 2010-11. Plans will include improvement objectives for 2012-13.
November 2011	WAO's assessment of performance will include an assessment of non statutory PIs for 2010-11 and improvement objectives for 2010-11 (not published under the Measure).
February-April 2012	WAO's forward looking Corporate Assessment will use Improvement/Risk Reduction Plan 2012-13 objectives under the Measure.
October 2012	Authorities publish Improvement/Risk Reduction Plans covering performance in 2011-12 based on their Improvement/Risk Reduction Plan published in October 2010 under the Measure. They will include statutory PIs for 2011-12. Plans will include improvement objectives for 2013-14.
November 2012	WAO's assessment of performance will include an assessment of statutory PIs for 2011-12 and improvement objectives for 2011-12 under the Measure.

The Welsh Assembly Government introduced new arrangements for the assessment of Fire and Rescue Authorities operational performance in November 2006. The assessment process, which feeds into the Wales Programme for Improvement, involves Authorities completing a self assessment against a provided framework, followed by peer assessment by teams from the other two fire and rescue services in Wales reporting on the accuracy of this self assessment.

Year 1 (2006) – A full assessment using a toolkit derived from the English toolkit.

Year 2 (2007) – An assessment of the specific topic of preparedness for major disruptive emergencies, with a focus on flooding events.

Year 3 (2008) – An assessment based on progress made against issues identified in the previous two years' assessments.

Year 4 (2009) – A full self-assessment against seven Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOEs) relating to Community Risk Management, Prevention, Protection, Response, Health and Safety, Training and Development, and Call management and Incident Support. Peer-assessment focused on two KLOEs of Health and Safety and Training and Development.

Year 5 (2010) – An assessment of the two specific KLOEs relating to Community Risk Management and Prevention.

SECTION 6

PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Summary of performance figures :

Year	2007-08	2008-09 published	2008-09 post-audit	2008-09 updated	2009-10 provisional
NATIONAL STRATEGIC INDICATORS					
RRC/S/001i N Total number of fires	3704	3442	3442	3389	3370
RRC/S/001i D Population of FRA area	675563	678543	678543	677971	677971
per 10,000 population	54.83	50.73	50.73	49.99	49.71
RRC/S/001ii N Total number of all primary fires	1564	1509	1509	1504	1485
RRC/S/001ii D Population of FRA area	675563	678543	678543	677971	677971
per 10,000 population	23.15	22.24	22.24	22.18	21.90
RRC/S/001iii N Total number of accidental fires in dwellings	526	501	501	485	479
RRC/S/001iii D Total number of dwellings in FRA area	301063	303377.13	303377.13	303377.13	304412
per 10,000 population	17.47	16.51	16.51	15.99	15.74
RRC/S/001iv N Total number of all deliberate fires	1840	1596	1596	1545	1536
RRC/S/001iv D Population of FRA area	675563	678543	678543	677971	677971
per 10,000 population	27.24	23.52	23.52	22.79	22.66
RRC/S/002i N Total number of fire deaths	10	4	4	4	8
RRC/S/002i D Population of FRA area	675563	678543	678543	677971	677971
per 100,000 population	1.48	0.59	0.59	0.59	1.18
RRC/S/002ii N Total number of accidental fire deaths	8	4	4	4	6
RRC/S/002ii D Population of FRA area	675563	678543	678543	677971	677971
per 100,000 population	1.18	0.59	0.59	0.59	0.88

Year	2007-08	2008-09 published	2008-09 post-audit	2008-09 updated	2009-10 provisional
RRC/S/002iii N Total number of deaths caused by fires started deliberately	2	0	0	0	2
RRC/S/002iii D Population of FRA area	675563	678543	678543	677971	677971
per 100,000 population	0.30	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.29
RRC/S/002iv N Total number of fire injuries (excluding precautionary checks)	80	111	111	117	69
RRC/S/002iv D Population of FRA area	675563	678543	678543	677971	677971
per 100,000 population	11.84	16.36	16.36	17.26	10.18
RRC/S/002v N Total number of injuries (excluding precautionary checks) arising from fires started accidentally	58	102	102	109	57
RRC/S/002v D Population of FRA area	675563	678543	678543	677971	677971
per 100,000 population	8.59	15.03	15.03	16.08	8.41
RRC/S/002vi N Injuries (excluding precautionary checks) arising from fires started deliberately	22	9	9	8	12
RRC/S/002vi D Population of FRA area	675563	678543	678543	677971	677971
per 100,000 population	3.26	1.33	1.33	1.18	1.77
RRC/S/003 N Number of fires in non-domestic premises	248	258	258	224	256
RRC/S/003 D Number of non-domestic premises in FRA area	27050	27055	27055	27055	27284
per 1,000 population	9.17	9.54	9.54	8.28	9.38
RRC/S/004i Number of homes in above and well above average risk category (as determined by FSEC) and have received within the reporting year a HFSC and are within the 5 minute service standard.	-	-	-	-	1273
RRC/S/004ii Number of homes in above and well above average risk category (as determined by FSEC) and have received within the reporting year a HFSC and are within the 10 minute service standard.	-	-	-	-	2157
RRC/S/004iii Number of homes in above and well above average risk category (as determined by FSEC) and have received within the reporting year a HFSC and are outside the 10 minute service standard.	-	-	-	-	1917

Year	2007-08	2008-09 published	2008-09 post-audit	2008-09 updated	2009-10 provisional
RRC/S/004iv Number of fires homes in which a HFSC and/or associated risk reduction activity had taken place within two years before the fire.	-	-	-	71	129
EFR/S/001 N Total number of incidents within criteria attended within 10 minutes	-		391	391	354
EFR/S/001 D Total number of incidents within criteria	-		445	445	440
Percentage attended within 10 minutes			87.87%	87.87%	80.45%
EFR/S/002 N Total number of incidents within criteria attended within 5 minutes	-		31	31	37
EFR/S/002 D Total number of incidents within criteria	-		115	115	151
Percentage attended within 5 minutes			26.96%	26.96%	24.50%
CORE INDICATORS					
RRC/C/001i N Deaths caused by fires started accidentally in dwellings	7	4	4	4	6
RRC/C/001i D Population of FRA area	675563	678543	678543	677971	677971
per 100,000 population	1.04	0.59	0.59	0.59	0.88
RRC/C/001ii N Deaths caused by fires started deliberately in dwellings	1	0	0	0	2
RRC/C/001ii D Population of FRA area	675563	678543	678543	677971	677971
per 100,000 population	0.15	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.29
RRC/C/001iii N Deaths caused by fires started accidentally in non-domestic premises	0	0	0	0	0
RRC/C/001iii D Population of FRA area	675563	678543	678543	677971	677971
per 100,000 population	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
RRC/C/001iv N Deaths caused by fires started deliberately in non-domestic premises	0	0	0	0	0
RRC/C/001iv D Population of FRA area	675563	678543	678543	677971	677971
per 100,000 population	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
RRC/C/001v N Injuries (excluding precautionary checks) arising from fires started accidentally in dwellings	52	55	55	66	43
RRC/C/001v D Population of FRA area	675563	678543	678543	677971	677971
per 100,000 population	7.70	8.11	8.11	9.73	6.34

Year	2007-08	2008-09 published	2008-09 post-audit	2008-09 updated	2009-10 provisional
RRC/C/001vi N Injuries (excluding precautionary checks) arising from fires started deliberately in dwellings	17	5	5	4	4
RRC/C/001vi D Population of FRA area	675563	678543	678543	677971	677971
per 100,000 population	2.52	0.74	0.74	0.59	0.59
RRC/C/001vii N Injuries (excluding precautionary checks) arising from fires started accidentally in non-domestic premises	2	6	6	6	7
RRC/C/001vii D Population of FRA area	675563	678543	678543	677971	677971
per 100,000 population	0.30	0.88	0.88	0.88	1.03
RRC/C/001viii N Injuries (excluding precautionary checks) arising from fires started deliberately in non-domestic premises	2	1	1	1	3
RRC/C/001viii D Population of FRA area	675563	678543	678543	677971	677971
per 100,000 population	0.30	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.44
RRC/C/002i N Total number of malicious false alarms received	652	545	545	565	563
RRC/C/002i D Population of FRA area	675563	678543	678543	677971	677971
per 1,000 population	0.97	0.80	0.80	0.83	0.83
RRC/C/002ii N Total number of malicious false alarms not attended	498	375	375	399	423
RRC/C/002ii D Total number of malicious false alarms received	652	545	545	565	563
% of the total that were not attended	76.38%	68.81%	68.81%	70.62%	75.13%
RRC/C/002iii N Total number of malicious false alarms	154	170	170	166	140
RRC/C/002iii D Total number of malicious false alarms received	652	545	545	565	563
% of the total that were not attended	23.62%	31.19%	31.19%	29.38%	24.87%
RRC/C/003 N Total number of false alarms caused by automatic fire detection and alarm systems in non-domestic premises	2020	1301	1301	1707	1646
RRC/C/003 D Number of non-domestic premises within FRA area	27050	27055	27055	27055	27284
per 1,000 non-domestic premises	74.68	48.09	48.09	63.09	60.33

Year	2007-08	2008-09 published	2008-09 post-audit	2008-09 updated	2009-10 provisional
RRC/C/004i N Number of deliberate primary fires	527	570	556	540	482
RRC/C/004i D Population of FRA area	675563	678543	678543	677971	677971
per 10,000 population	7.80	8.40	8.19	7.96	7.11
RRCC/004ii N Number of deliberate secondary fires	1313	1037	1040	1005	1054
RRC/C/004ii D Population of FRA area	675563	678543	678543	677971	677971
per 10,000 population	19.44	15.28	15.33	14.82	15.55
RRC/C/005i N Dwelling fires attended where a smoke alarm and/or other fire detection equipment had actuated	375	337	337	337	285
RRC/C/005i D Total number of dwelling fires attended	595	551	551	551	545
% where alarm actuated	63.03%	61.16%	61.16%	61.16%	52.29%
RRC/C/005ii N Dwelling fires attended where a smoke alarm and/or other fire detection equipment was fitted but did not actuate	79	79	79	79	123
RRC/C/005ii D Total number of dwelling fires attended	595	551	551	551	545
% where alarm fitted but did not actuate	13.28%	14.34%	14.34%	14.34%	22.57%
RRC/C/005iii N Dwelling fires attended where a smoke alarm and/or other fire detection equipment was not fitted	141	135	135	135	137
RRC/C/005iii D Total number of dwelling fires attended	595	551	551	551	545
% where no alarm fitted	23.70%	24.50%	24.50%	24.50%	25.14%
OTHERS					
CHR/ C/001i N The number of individual operational staff working the wholetime and retained duty systems who categorise themselves as having a disability	16	14	14	14	15
CHR/ C/001i D The total number of individual operational staff working the wholetime and retained duty system	896	869	869	869	850
% with a disability	1.79%	1.61%	1.61%	1.61%	1.76%

Year	2007-08	2008-09 published	2008-09 post-audit	2008-09 updated	2009-10 provisional
CHR/ C/001ii N The number of individual control and non-operational staff who categorise themselves as having a disability	8	8	8	8	9
CHR/ C/001ii D The total number of individual control and non-operational staff	167	174	174	174	184
% with a disability	4.79%	4.60%	4.60%	4.60%	4.89%
CHR/ C/001iii N The total number of people aged between 18 and 64 years who categorise themselves as having a disability in the FRA area	68848	68848	68848	68848	68848
CHR/ C/001iii D The total number of people aged 18 - 64 years in the FRA area	391153	391153	391153	391153	391153
% with a disability	17.60%	17.60%	17.60%	17.60%	17.60%
CHR/ C/002i N The number of individual members of staff who categorise themselves as belonging to a minority ethnic group	9	10	10	10	8
CHR/ C/002i D The total number of individual members of staff	1063	1043	1043	1043	1034
% minority ethnic	0.85%	0.96%	0.96%	0.96%	0.77%
CHR/ C/002ii N The total number of ethnic minority persons aged between 18 and 64 years in the FRA area	3930	3930	3930	3930	3930
CHR/ C/002ii D The total number of people aged 18 - 64 years in the FRA area	394760	394760	394760	394760	394760
% minority ethnic	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%
CHR/ C/003 N The total number of individual women firefighters employed	32	33	33	33	37
CHR/ C/003 D The number of individual firefighters employed	896	869	869	869	850
% women	3.57%	3.80%	3.80%	3.80%	4.35%
CHR/ C/004i N The total number of FTE working days/shifts lost to sickness absence by all staff (excluding RDS staff)	3594	3755	3755	3755	4023
CHR/ C/004i D The average number of all staff (excluding RDS) as FTE	441.7	449.98	449.98	449.98	459
days/shifts lost per person	8.14	8.34	8.34	8.34	8.76
CHR/ C/004ii N The total number of FTE working days/shifts lost to sickness absence by wholetime uniformed staff	2310	2520	2520	2520	2241
CHR/ C/004ii D The average number of wholetime uniformed staff as FTE	299	298	298	298	295

Year	2007-08	2008-09 published	2008-09 post-audit	2008-09 updated	2009-10 provisional
days/shifts lost per person	7.73	8.46	8.46	8.46	7.60
CHR/ C/004iii N The total number of FTE working days/shifts lost to sickness absence by control staff	149	145	145	145	444
CHR/ C/004iii D The average number of control staff as FTE	30.82	30.82	30.82	30.82	30
days/shifts lost per person	4.83	4.70	4.70	4.70	14.80
CHR/ C/004iv N The total number of FTE working days/shifts lost to sickness absence by non-operational staff	1135	1090	1090	1090	1338
CHR/ C/004iv D The average number of non-operational staff as FTE	111.8	121.16	121.16	121.16	133
days/shifts lost per person	10.15	9.00	9.00	9.00	10.06
CHR/ C/005i N Total number of ill health retirements	4	3	3	3	6
CHR/ C/005i D Average number of total FRS employees	1050.5	1053	1053	1053	1039
as % of total workforce	0.38%	0.28%	0.28%	0.28%	0.58%
CHR/ C/005ii N Number of wholetime operational ill health retirements	0	1	1	1	0
CHR/ C/005ii D Average number of wholetime operational personnel	299	298	298	298	295
as % of total WDS workforce	0.00%	0.34%	0.34%	0.34%	0.00%
CHR/ C/005iii N Number of RDS ill health retirements	3	2	2	2	6
CHR/ C/005iii D Average number of RDS personnel	587	584.5	584.5	584.5	565
as % of total RDS workforce	0.51%	0.34%	0.34%	0.34%	1.06%
CHR/ C/005iv N Number of control personnel ill health retirements	0	0	0	0	0
CHR/ C/005iv D Average number of control personnel	32.5	33	33	33	34
as % of total Control workforce	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
CHR/ C/005v N Number of non-operational personnel ill health retirements	1	0	0	0	0
CHR/ C/005v D Average number of non-operational personnel	132	137.5	137.5	137.5	146
as % of total non-ops workforce	0.76%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

Year	2007-08	2008-09 published	2008-09 post-audit	2008-09 updated	2009-10 provisional
CFH/ C/001 N The number of undisputed invoices which were paid within 30 days	8748	9310	9310	9310	9841
CFH/ C/001 D The number of undisputed invoices which were paid during the year	9649	10098	10098	10098	10435
% paid within 30 days	90.66%	92.20%	92.20%	92.20%	94.31%
Local N Total number of secondary fires attended		1557	1557	1509	1538
Local D Population of FRA area	675563	678543	678543	677971	677971
per 10,000 population		22.95	22.95	22.26	22.69
Local N Total number of malicious false alarms attended	154	170	170	166	140
Local D Population of FRA area	675563	678543	678543	677971	677971
per 10,000 population	2.28	2.51	2.51	2.45	2.06
Local The total number of Home Fire Safety Checks delivered	26,504	31,180	31,180	31,180	32,802
Local The percentage of accidental dwelling fires confined to the room of origin	95%	92%	92%	92%	93%
Local The percentage of people who escaped unharmed and unaided from accidental dwelling fires without FRA assistance at the scene	88%	85%	85%	85%	92%
Local The number of ill-health retirements per 1,000 FTE employees		3.1	3.1	3.1	5.8

CONSULTATIONS

	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 and Improvement Plan (detailed)	Summer 2010	October 2010	2011-12

HOW YOU CAN CONTRIBUTE TO FUTURE IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVES

Sections 5 and 6 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 require the Authority to consult widely before coming to final decisions about improvement.

The Assembly Government recommends that Authorities should consult citizens, local businesses, community planning partners, other fire and rescue authorities, and other current or potential partners.

The Authority conducts a public consultation each summer when it publicises its proposed improvement and risk reduction objectives for the following year and invites comments from anyone with an interest in what the Authority does. All comments received are taken into account before finalising the following year's plans.

If you wish to contribute new ideas about future improvement objectives, please write to the Corporate Planning Manager at the Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Ffordd Salesbury, St. Asaph Business Park, St. Asaph, Denbighshire LL17 0JJ.