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Date
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Dear Simon

Improvement Assessment: Performance Indicator Audit

Each year fire and rescue authorities in Wales collect and publish details of how they have performed against a series of performance indicators (PIs) set by the Welsh Government. The Wales Programme for Improvement (WPI) Steering Group agreed to use a set of interim PIs during 2010-11. The interim PIs will be used in the same way as if they were final statutory and core versions. Therefore, data collection, audit and reporting will be in line with existing arrangements and will take account of requirements under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 (the Measure). Details are contained in the Welsh Government Circular W-FRSC (2010)10. Fire and rescue authorities are under a legal duty to collect and report on all of these indicators, as audited out-turn data in 2010-11 statutory improvement plans.

Wales Audit Office staff undertook the PI audit of the 12 National Strategic Indicators (NSIs) during July and August this year. The two main objectives of the PI audit for 2010-11 were to:

- inform the assessment of whether an authority has achieved planned improvements; and
- satisfy the requirement for NSIs to be subject to a statutory risk based audit.

This letter contains our main findings which are summarised below more detail can be found in the attachment to this letter. We have also identified a number of areas for improvement which we believe will not only improve the collection and recording of data but also improve the efficiency of future PI audits.

Findings

All 12 of the NSIs audited were found to be correctly stated. However, two figures did require amendment during the audit, but the amendments were not material and did not affect the resulting PI value. The reason for the amendment was as a result of missing 'over the border incidents'. The audit revealed that there was a problem with downloads of records from CLG into the Vision Oracle database as records of incidents in North Wales where an IRS record had been compiled and published by neighbouring authorities were not being received by the Vision Oracle database. We have been informed that the Authority is ensuring that records are complete in terms of 'over the border incidents' from April 2011 onwards.

Fire deaths; in this particular authority there is a presumption that all deaths occurring in a fire are deaths caused by fires for recording purposes. It is only when coroner reports are received and state that it is not a fire death that the Authority then amends the figures. Our work, this year, on the PI audits of all three fire authorities have identified different approaches to the identification and recording of fire deaths. As a result of this we will be discussing this with the Welsh Government and seeking clarification and guidance.

Areas for Improvement

The PI audit has identified the following areas where we propose the Authority considers taking action.

1. Ensure that data on 'over the border incidents' is correctly captured via the IRS and downloads to the Vision Oracle database are operating properly.

Yours sincerely

Lisa Williams
Improvement Assessment Lead

Cc Kerry Citric, Fire and Rescue Services Branch Welsh Government

North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority – NSI PI audit findings 2011

PI	Original Data		Final Data	Audit Comment
RRC / S / 001 i Total number of all fires attended per 10,000 population	Total number of fires attended by the FRS	3,289	3,297	The amendment was due to eight 'over the border incidents' not being recorded. As the amendment was not material we have not requested that the PI value be amended.
	Population of FRA area	678,750	678,750	
	PI Value	48.46	48.46	
RRC / S / 001 iv Total number of fires attended which were started deliberately per 10,000 population	Total number of all deliberate fires attended by the FRS	1,435	1,438	The amendment was due to three 'over the border incidents' not being recorded. As the amendment was not material we have not requested that the PI value be amended.
	Population of FRA area	678,750	678,750	
	PI Value	21.14	21.14	