



AGENDA ITEM: 8

NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY EXECUTIVE PANEL

6th March 2008

BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITIES IN WALES

**Report by Dawn Docx,
Assistant Chief Officer (Finance and Procurement)**

Purpose of Report

- 1.** To advise members of progress in setting statutory Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPis) for Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) in Wales.

Background

- 2.** The Fire and Rescue National Framework for Wales, published in March 2005, indicated that performance indicators would be reviewed as part of the work to introduce a Wales Programme for Improvement (WPI) for FRAs.
- 3.** The Welsh Assembly Government (WAG), working with stakeholders including the three fire and rescue services, devised a performance measurement framework and consulted on this and the proposed statutory and non-statutory performance indicators at the end of 2007. A draft response from North Wales FRA was considered and approved at the Executive Panel meeting of 15th November 2007.



Introduction

- 4.** A letter dated January 8th 2008 was received from WAG enclosing a draft Order specifying the statutory BVPIs. Comments on the draft statutory indicators were invited by February 4th 2008.
- 5.** Before a response to this letter had been sent, another letter, dated January 29th 2008, was received from WAG on the same subject, but attaching a revised schedule to the Order. This second letter explained that changes had been made to the BVPIs as a result of comments received in response to their letter dated January 8th
- 6.** Comments on the revised draft statutory indicators were invited by February 12th 2008.

Information

- 7.** The draft Order specifies six statutory BVPIs by which Welsh FRAs' performance will be measured. These six are further sub-divided to give a total of seventeen separate elements.
- 8.** A further eleven non-statutory core indicators sub-divided into thirty-three separate elements will also be introduced from April 2008, but do not form part of this Order.
- 9.** A copy of the BVPIs presented with the WAG's letter of January 29th is attached at Appendix 1, and a copy of the response sent is attached at Appendix 2.

Recommendation

- 10.** That members note the progress made in setting BVPIs for FRAs in Wales with effect from April 1st 2008.



Appendix 1

SCHEDULE 1

Risk reduction and community safety

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Indicator</i>
FRS/RRC/S/001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Total number of fires attended per 10,000 population; ii) Total number of primary fires attended per 10,000 population; iii) Total number of fires attended which were started accidentally in dwellings per 10,000 dwellings; iv) Total number of fires attended which were started deliberately per 10,000 population.
FRS/RRC/S/002	<p>The number of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Deaths caused by fires per 100,000 population; ii) Deaths caused by fires which were started accidentally per 100,000 population; iii) Deaths caused by fires which were started deliberately per 100,000 population; iv) Injuries (excluding precautionary checks) arising from fires per 100,000 population; v) Injuries (excluding precautionary checks) arising from fires which were started accidentally per 100,000 population; vi) Injuries (excluding precautionary checks) arising from fires which were started deliberately per 100,000 population.
FRS/RRC/S/003	The total number of fires in non-domestic premises per 1,000 non-domestic premises.
FRS/RRC/S/004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) The number of homes that are within the above average risk category and the well above average risk category (as determined by the Fire Service Emergency Cover model ('FSEC')) that have received, within the reporting year, a home fire safety risk assessment and are within the five minute service standard. ii) The number of homes that are within the above average risk category and the well above average risk category (as determined by FSEC) that have received, within the reporting year, a home fire safety risk assessment and are within the ten minute service standard. iii) The number of homes that are within the above average risk category and the well above average risk category (as determined by FSEC) that have received, within the reporting year, a home fire safety risk assessment and are outside the ten minute service standard.

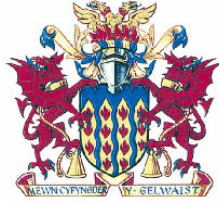


	iv) The total number of fires in homes in which a home fire safety risk assessment and/or associated risk reduction activity had taken place within two years before the fire.
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SCHEDULE 2

Effective Response

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Indicator</i>
FRS/EFR/S/001	Percentage of fires in dwellings, within the ten minute service standard as identified by each Fire and Rescue Authority, that were attended within ten minutes.
FRS/EFR/S/002	Percentage of fires in dwellings, which have been identified by the Fire Service Emergency Cover model as having a casualty rate greater than six, that were attended within five minutes.



Appendix 2

Laura Thomas
Fire and Rescue Service Branch
Welsh Assembly Government
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12 February 2008

Dear Laura

Consultation on the proposed Fire and Rescue Authorities (Best Value Performance Indicators) (Wales) Order 2008

I refer to your letter of 29th January 2008 regarding the above, this having superseded your earlier letter of 8th January 2008 regarding the same subject.

We support the Assembly's intention to specify only a limited number of statutory indicators at this time, and note the decision to incorporate all statutory fire and rescue indicators in the two categories of Effective Response and Risk Reduction and Community Safety.

We have noted: the minor adjustments to some of the wording of the earlier versions; the amendment to the denominator from population to dwellings in FRS/RRC/S/001; and the amendments made to FRS/RRC/S/004.

In relation to the first three parts of FRS/RRC/S/004, the need for a late amendment seems to reflect the difficulty in finding a form of words that captures the complexity of the service standard clearly and succinctly. The most recent version does seem to capture the fundamental aim that prevention activity should be prioritized and targeted according to risk assessed need. The count of Home Fire Safety Risk Assessments (HFSRAs) in areas of above average and well above average risk is taken to be an indicator of the service's compliance with what is referred to more generally in the standard as 'risk reduction strategies'.

The inference from the 8th January version that the only HFSRAs to be counted were those where follow up activity had also occurred was clearly unintended. The additional words had, I think, been inserted to ensure that follow-up visits would not result in double counting of what was essentially a single package of care conducted over more than one visit.



No doubt this issue will be picked up during work to draw up guidance for calculating the indicator, alongside numerous other matters of detail.

In relation to the fourth part of FRS/RRC/S/004, however, whilst the amendment to '**and/or** associated risk reduction activity' resolves the potential problem described in your letter, it unfortunately risks introducing, unintentionally, a perverse incentive for FRAs not to follow up a HFSRA with any other risk reduction activity so as to avoid increasing the number of fires reported in section iv).

One solution to this would be to bring in a time-limiting definition of the word 'associated', so that the risk reduction activity is clearly part of the overall care package provided by the original HFSRA. This will presumably be picked up during the work on the detailed definitions.

More generally, we anticipate that it will prove quite challenging for FRAs to compile and communicate the results of the Service Standard indicators to the general public in a way that is readily understood. FRS/RRC/S/004 combines five different information sources –

- a.) a count of dwelling fires in a financial year,
- b.) a count of HFSRAs in a financial year,
- c.) a record of addresses where HFSRAs were conducted for at least 2 years previously,
- d.) footprinted mapping of where the 5 minute and 10 minute standards do/do not apply,
- e.) risk rated output area mapping from FSEC.

It seems fair to assume that people who do not understand d and e are likely to struggle to contextualize and interpret a and b.

We support the Assembly's wish to bring the Order in ahead of the next financial year, having looked forward for some considerable time to having a new set of strategic indicators for Welsh FRAs. For this reason we sincerely hope that our concerns can be addressed without delaying the process any further, and that work will progress over the next few weeks to clarify the definitions.

Yours sincerely

Shân Morris
Corporate Planning Manager