

NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE -

MAKING NORTH WALES

A SAFER PLACE TO LIVE, WORK AND VISIT

NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY'S DRAFT RISK REDUCTION PLAN 2009/10

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RISK REDUCTION PLANNING

In 2006, the Welsh Assembly Government issued statutory guidance to support Welsh fire and rescue authorities in managing their corporate and community risks in a holistic way. Each year, all three Fire and Rescue Authorities in Wales develop either a full Risk Reduction Plan or a simpler annual action plan for the forthcoming financial year, with the primary aim of reducing risk.

As part of the process of developing their Plan, Fire and Rescue Authorities are expected to have consulted with their stakeholders on their proposals, and to have taken their views into account before finalising their Plan.

“Each Authority’s Risk Reduction Plan will clearly identify priorities for their Fire and Rescue Service.

Fire and Rescue Authorities need the freedom to deliver innovative solutions in their quest to manage and reduce risk.”

The Welsh Assembly Government guidance lists seven objectives that Fire and Rescue Authorities must incorporate into their overall risk reduction strategy:

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

RISK MANAGEMENT

Hazards, such as fire, flooding, chemicals, etc. have the potential to cause harm. Risk is the chance of that hazard or harm occurring – in many cases the likelihood that fire and other hazards will harm can be reduced.

In 2003, following guidance issued by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, we undertook a comprehensive review of risk in North Wales. The main aim at the time was to secure an increasingly productive fire service that was more responsive to local circumstances and therefore better able to provide protection against fire and other hazards. From that review we identified 8 specific risks and some additional areas for review in future which we addressed through our published Integrated Risk Management Plans between 2004 and 2007.

In 2006, following new guidance issued by the Welsh Assembly Government, we undertook another review of risk, but this time we also looked at risks to the Authority itself, and which hazards existed that could hinder its ability to provide fire and rescue services – including proactive prevention services.

From that review, we identified a number of additional risks, which, for clarity, we categorized as either being 'community' risks or 'corporate' risks. We addressed those through our first published Risk Reduction Plan in 2007 and annual action plan for 2008-09. In reality, however, both corporate and community risks are so closely interlinked that changes in either category will inevitably have an impact on the other.

The process of risk management is a continuous one, and one of our proposals this year is that we undertake another review soon, focusing this time on the standards of fire cover and other risks within the community; the resources available to the Service and where vehicles, premises, equipment and people would be located to best effect.

The Authority now wishes to consult on four risk reduction proposals for 2009-10. Following the close of the 12 week consultation, the Authority will formally consider the responses before finalizing the content of its Risk Reduction Plan for 2009-10. Budgetary implications of the plan will be considered in December 2008.

KEY FACTS ABOUT NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE

	2007/08		2007/08
North Wales:		Activity	
Population	675,563	Fires attended	3,704
Domestic properties	301,063	Non-fire emergencies attended	1,380
Non-domestic properties	27,050	Malicious and automatic system false alarms attended	2,174
Resources		Free Home Fire Safety Checks provided	26,504
Employees	1,040		
Fire stations	44	Cost	
Fire engines	54	2008-09 revenue budget	£30,338,171
Special appliances	32		
Aerial appliances	4		

KEY RISKS FACING NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

IDENTIFIED COMMUNITY RISKS

Deaths and Injuries

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

Fire and Emergency Incidents

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

Community Resilience

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

Environmental Impact

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

Community Engagement

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

KEY RISKS FACING NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

IDENTIFIED CORPORATE RISKS

Capacity to Deliver Services

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

Resilience in Service Delivery

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

Governance

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

PROPOSED RISK REDUCTION ACTION PLAN 2009-10

The Authority, having considered all the risks, is proposing to take forward four items in 2009-10 to reduce the overall risk profile in North Wales.

Following consultation, and assuming that the four proposals go ahead, a fuller analysis will be undertaken for proposals 1, 3 and 4. Comments received during this consultation will be taken into account.

In relation to proposal 2, and assuming that this also goes ahead, the changes will be introduced as part of normal service resource planning.

Decisions about proceeding with the proposals in their current form will be taken in October, and published before the end of October.

We are interested in your views on two aspects of the proposals:

- A) whether the subject areas are, in your opinion, appropriate and feasible; and
- B) any comments you have that will assist the Authority in relation to either the proposed reviews or action.

THE FOUR PROPOSALS FOR 2009-10

Proposal 1: To undertake an Officer Cover Review. By reviewing the way the Service provides supervisory cover by middle and senior managers at emergency incidents the Authority will be able to develop a 'dedicated response option' and provide operational assurance at incidents. Whilst this will ensure that the required number of personnel maintain their operational competencies the Authority will realise efficiencies for investment in other areas of the Service's work.

Proposal 2: To crew Aerial Ladder Platforms (ALPs) differently, so that the 12 posts given over to crewing ALPs would be discontinued, and the work transferred to fire crews. The people filling those 12 posts would continue to be employed by the Service as operational firefighters, but would be transferred into the Community Fire Safety (CFS) function to deliver CFS work. They would remain available to be called to undertake operational duties should the need arise.

Proposal 3: To undertake a review of the existing catering arrangements on fire stations and at other Service establishments. The Authority employs cooks to prepare lunches and evening meals for some members of staff in some locations, but not all. This area of spending has never before undergone a proper review, and it is therefore difficult to know whether or not the arrangements are appropriate. (This is separate from incident ground catering which will continue to be provided when crews are out at operational incidents for extended periods.)

Proposal 4: To establish a small working group consisting of members, officers and representatives from staff representative bodies to undertake a review into whether the standards of fire cover are right for the risks within the community; and whether the Service has the right resources available in the right places to respond to those risks effectively. The findings of this Working Group will form the basis of the Authority's next full Risk Reduction Plan (2010 – 2011)..

WHERE TO FIND MORE INFORMATION

We have learned from past consultations that the level of detail expected by stakeholders varies according to their interest in the Service. We have found that it is almost impossible to get the balance absolutely right in a single consultation document, and have struggled to provide enough information to satisfy those (such as our own staff) who like detailed and sometimes technical information, without overwhelming those (such as members of the general public) who like broader descriptions of what the overall impact of our plans will be.

Mindful of our environmental and value-for-money responsibilities, we have therefore chosen this year to see whether using this consultation document as a signpost to more detailed information will prove to be more popular and effective in meeting the needs of this wide range of stakeholders.

Additional information will therefore be posted on the Authority's website – **www.nwales-fireservice.org.uk** – please log on to it and look for the links to the RRP 2009-10 consultation. If you do not have access to the internet, you can contact our Corporate Communications team (**01745 535 283**) who will be pleased to help you.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

This consultation forms part of an annual cycle of planning stages. Each year, at this time, we conduct a 12 week public consultation on the draft Risk Reduction Plan or the annual Action Plan only.

After the closing date, responses to this consultation will be considered by the Fire and Rescue Authority before the Risk Reduction Action Plan 2009-10 is confirmed and published as a definite action plan by 31st October 2008.

Budgets will be agreed over the winter, ready to start putting the plan into action from 1st April 2009.

CORE DUTIES	CORPORATE AIMS
<p>The principal duties of the Fire and Rescue Authority, as defined in the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 	<p>These five fundamental aims summarise every aspect of what North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority wants to achieve through the day-to-day operations of the Service.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To prevent accidental and malicious fires. 2. To protect people from being killed or injured by fire and other hazards. 3. To protect the Community, businesses and the Environment from being harmed by fire and other hazards. 4. To find ways to improve in order to meet the expectations of the Community. 5. To operate as effectively and efficiently as we can, making the best use of the resources we have available.

CORE VALUES

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

We value **service to the community** by:

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

We value all our **employees** by practising and promoting:

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

We value **diversity** in the Service and the community by:

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

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

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

HOW TO SEND IN YOUR OBSERVATIONS AND OPINIONS

Through our experience of past consultations we have also found that staff appreciate being able to explore the proposals in more detail during face to face meetings with senior managers, as this provides a fuller understanding of the issues and helps them to formulate their own individual opinions and reactions to the proposals. Once again this facility will be available through senior officer visits to fire stations and other normal channels of communication, and we look forward to receiving responses from staff to this consultation.

As always, however, we are particularly keen to receive comments from members of the communities of North Wales as they are the primary focus of our service delivery. We would like to encourage members of the public, their representatives and representatives of community and minority groups to let us know your views.

To respond by post, please address your comments:

FAO Shân Morris, Risk Reduction Plan 2009-10 Consultation, North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority, Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Ffordd Salesbury, St. Asaph Business Park, St. Asaph, Denbighshire LL17 0JJ

To respond by e-mail, please send your comments to shan.morris@nwales-fireservice.org.uk.

Please return your comments by the deadline of September 5th 2008

Data Protection : The information you supply with your response will be processed by North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority for the purpose of administering this consultation. For organisations, authorities and corporate bodies and public figures, we will assume that you have no objection to having details of your response included in a public report, unless you stipulate to the contrary. For private individuals, we will keep your personal details secure and not disclose them to other organisations or third parties without your consent, unless we are legally required to do so. The substance of your comments may be incorporated within a report, but will not be attributed to you without your prior consent.