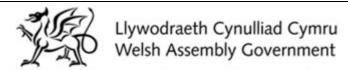# NORTH WALES
FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

IMPROVEMENT PLAN
2006-07

Prepared under section 6 of the Local Government Act 1999 and issued in accordance with interim arrangements made by the Welsh Assembly Government for Fire and Rescue Authorities in Wales

Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

WELSH ASSEMBLY ADVICE ON IMPROVEMENT PLANS IN 2006

Advice from the Welsh Assembly in August 2006 was that:
"In line with WPI principles, Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRA) in Wales will produce an Improvement Plan for 2006-07 that includes the following:-

- a summary of the authority's strategic objectives and priorities for improvement.
- arrangements for addressing the authority's improvement priorities in 2006 - 2007.
- details of performance in 2005-06;
- outturn performance over the past year (i.e. 2005 - 2006) on all Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs);
- targets for the current year (2006 - 2007).

CONTENT OF IMPROVEMENT PLANS

In line with previous interim arrangements it will not be necessary for FRAs to publish information in their Improvement Plans that is already published or available through a different source. This includes the following information:

- summary financial information;
- progress in implementing improvement measures over the past 3 years (although it might be useful for FRAs to indicate where this information may be accessed);
- outcomes or impacts arising from those measures;

PUBLICATION

For the purposes of these interim arrangements, Improvement Plans should be published by means which the FRAs deems fit to meet the information needs of the FRA itself, its staff, partners and members of the public.

This year FRAs may, if they wish, use their Risk Reduction Plans as the vehicle for publication of their Improvement Plan. The text however would need to make clear that the publication discharges the FRA's relevant statutory duty.   Inclusion of text such as "This document is --- FRAs Improvement Plan, prepared under section 6 of the Local Government Act 1999" would meet this requirement.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION AND EXPLANATORY NOTE

Interim Arrangements

This is our third Best Value Performance Plan produced under interim arrangements made for Welsh fire and rescue authorities.

Wales Programme for Improvement (WPI)

The WPI guidance originally developed in 2002 for county and county borough councils and national parks authorities was revised and published in its updated form in December 2005.

Following devolution of responsibility for fire and rescue services in Wales to the Welsh Assembly in November 2004, work has been progressing on developing statutory guidance and an assessment framework for a new Wales Programme for Improvement (WPI) for Fire and Rescue.

We anticipate that the WPI for Fire and Rescue will be introduced properly from April 2007. In the meantime, Welsh fire and rescue authorities were inadvertently included within the scope of the Local Government (Improvement Plans) (Wales) Order 2006. This resulted in an unexpected requirement to produce this Improvement Plan before the end of October 2006 under interim arrangements proposed by the Welsh Assembly as recently as August 2006.

Statutory Performance Indicators

In relation to statutory performance indicators by which a fire and rescue authority's performance is measured, these are similarly still being developed for Wales. The Local Government Order that specified Best Value Performance Indicators for county and county borough councils - No. 665 (W55) 2005 – did not apply to fire and rescue services. We have therefore used the existing set of BVPIs, as specified for English FRAs, with the exception of BVPI 3 (public satisfaction) and BVPI 157(e-services) for this purpose.

Section 1
A SUMMARY OF STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

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

CORPORATE AIMS

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

1. To prevent accidental and malicious fires.

2. To protect people from being killed or injured by fire and other hazards.

3. To protect the Community, businesses and the Environment from being harmed by fire and other hazards.

4. To find ways to improve in order to meet the expectations of the Community.

5. To operate as effectively and efficiently as we can, making the best use of the resources we have available.

CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

Supporting our Corporate Aims, we have a set of just twenty very clear objectives that describe how we intend to go about achieving our aims.

In line with Aim No. 1, we want to:
1) Prevent accidental fires through:
   - Fire Safety Education in schools and other venues
   - Community Fire Safety activities
   - Enforcement of Fire Safety legislation in applicable buildings
   - Promoting the services of the Commercial Fire Safety Unit
2) Prevent malicious fires by:
   - Seeking to influence the behaviour of specific targeted groups of people
   - Participating in partnership activities with Police and other agencies to reduce arson

In line with Aim No. 2, we want to:
3) Sustain our ability to respond effectively by:
   - Maintaining an effective means of alerting the Service
   - Providing an effective Control Room function
   - Attending incidents with appropriate resources and well trained, well equipped fire fighters
4) Vigorously promote the provision of adequate early warning and means of escape from all buildings in the event of fire
5) Provide advice to individuals and organisations on how best to react in the event of fire

In line with Aim No. 3, we want to:
6) Minimise disruption to normal day to day activities following fire or other emergency
7) Assist in achieving early recovery in the aftermath of emergencies and disasters
8) Ensure that our own procedures cause the least damage through the application of responsible and environmentally sensitive practices

In line with Aim No. 4, we want to:
9) Maintain a meaningful dialogue with the Community we serve, our partners and other stakeholders
10) React positively to any complaints that we receive
11) Be able to demonstrate our continuing dedication to fairness and equality in all areas of activity
12) Provide a fully bilingual service where Welsh and English are treated as equal
13) Advocate and maintain professional standards at all times
14) Comply with all legislation applicable to the Fire Service
15) Use the Best Value Framework to involve the Community in seeking continuous improvement in all our functions

And in line with Aim No. 5, we want to:
16) Use and continuously improve our processes within a recognised Performance Management Framework as part of the Best Value regime
17) Seek out and contribute to collaborative and partnership opportunities in order to maximise our capability to serve the public
18) Maintain a dynamic and flexible approach to improvement, including developing our position as active participants in the commercial world
19) Adapt our policies and procedures to meet new challenges and expectations whilst maintaining our compliance with legal obligations
20) Manage our resources well, ensuring that our current and future services are delivered efficiently, effectively and economically

Section 2
LOOKING BACK AT IMPROVEMENT IN 2005-06

The Fire and Rescue Authority seeks to continuously implement strategies that will contribute to increased safety for the public. We strive for excellence in the provision of <u>all</u> our services, but last year we highlighted some specific areas of activity in our interim Best Value Performance Plan that we considered to be priority areas.

Wales Programme for Improvement
Reference to this is made in Section 1.

National Framework
The first National Framework document for fire and rescue services in Wales came into effect in March 2005. Improvement targets relating to a range of issues were included, with further clarification planned during its lifetime. Under Section 25 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, the Assembly is required to report before March 2007 on the extent to which fire and rescue authorities are acting in accordance with the Framework; and the steps taken by the Assembly to ensure that fire and rescue authorities act in accordance with the Framework. Progress made during 2005-06 includes:

1. National Fire and Rescue Service Standards

In March 2006, the Welsh Assembly Government published its first Fire and Rescue Service Standard, which relates to Fires in the Home.   Other Service Standards are expected to be issued in relation to road traffic collisions, fires in other buildings and other emergency incidents.

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Welsh Assembly Government

Fire and Rescue Service Standard

The Service Standard for attendance to fires in the home has been developed based upon a comprehensive model which considers population (numbers of people), population density (dealing with remoteness) and population type (risk of fire).

This Service Standard aims to provide 80% of Welsh homes with an attendance to a fire in the home within 10 minutes. The Service Standard also recognizes that as a result of local population numbers, population density and population types some areas will attract a 5-minute attendance to a fire in the home. The deciding factor for the introduction of the 5 minute attendance would be where the Fire Service Emergency Cover (FSEC) computer models predicts a casualty rate greater than 6.

Additionally, where areas are classified by FSEC as above average risk each FRA will need to assess individual risk and needs. Where these areas exist each FRA must implement an additional form of risk reduction strategy that complements this Service Standard. It is in this area of risk reduction that FRAs are encouraged to develop innovative risk reduction strategies.

Issued March 2006

A robust performance measure to monitor progress against this Service Standard is being developed.

2. Risk Reduction Planning (RRP) and Integrated Risk Management Planning (IRMP)

Last year we made reference in our interim BVPP to the first three years of integrated risk management planning, undertaken according to guidance issued by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. Our second year action plan relating to 2005-06, "Your Service, Your Safety, Your Voice" was approved by the Authority in March 2005.

In summary, the action points for 2005-6 related to:
- improvements in the Community Fire Safety planning regime;
- collaborating with other authorities to reduce risk and make improvement through better shared outcomes;
- monitoring the effectiveness of new shift start and finish times at day crewed stations;

- changes in accordance with the new Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order;
- increasing the use of technology to inform strategic decision making, focus prevention work on those most vulnerable to fire, and improve mobilisation of resources;
- rationalising the allocation of operational personnel;
- increasing the amount of Community Fire Safety work undertaken;
- researching the effectiveness of existing shift times at 24 hour shift fire stations.

In March 2006, the Welsh Assembly Government published guidance on Risk Reduction Planning ("Wales a Safer Country"), and emphasized that for the avoidance of doubt Risk Reduction Planning replaced the previous policy of Integrated Risk Management Planning with effect from 21st March 2006.

Our first draft bilingual RRP was approved by the Authority just thirteen weeks later, ready for the recommended 12 week consultation period prior to final approval and publication by 31st October 2006.

3. Atal Tân Cymru (Fire Brake Wales)
This charitable organisation works in partnership with the Welsh Assembly Government and the three Welsh Fire and Rescue Services to seek to reduce the number of fire deaths and injuries in Wales.   Information is available from www.firebrake.org/ .

A successful Wales Fire Conference was held over three days in Llandudno during May 2005. The event attracted a wide range of stakeholders and interested parties to attend talks by guest speakers, workshops and displays relating to fire and rescue.

4. Wider Community Safety
We reported in our BVPP in 2005 that in accordance with our corporate aims and objectives, we are also committed to playing our part, where sensible to do so, in community safety generally, not just in relation to fire safety. To this end, we continue to develop our capability to respond to local emergencies such as road traffic and water-related incidents as well as those emergencies that have wider implications, such as chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) incidents.

Throughout 2005-06 the Service continued to raise its profile within the seven county-based areas, working in association with a range of partners and organisations to improve public safety. This approach had been started the previous year following an organisational restructure to replace three divisions with seven county based areas – one in each unitary authority area in North Wales, with an additional one in Gwynedd because of its large geographical size.

5. Integrated Personal Development System (IPDS)

In last year's interim Best Value Performance Plan we signaled our commitment to continuing to use this new system to drive improvement in relation to developing the service's overall ability to achieve our vision of a safer community.

The Service has increasingly adopted the new assessment and development processes, both for recruitment of new staff and for assessing candidates' potential to progress and develop in a new role.

Initially, a Service Level Agreement between the Welsh Assembly and the Fire Service College in Gloucestershire was set up (in July 2005) covering the Assembly's contribution to the implementation of IPDS in Wales. The Service Level Agreement included funding towards the provision of a secondee from North Wales Fire and Rescue Service to the IPDS Hub with the specific role of supporting IPDS Implementation in Wales. Following the discontinuation of the IPDS Hub in December 2005, this support officer for Wales role was continued throughout the 2005-06 financial year.

The three Fire and Rescue Services in Wales operated a collaborative recruitment process during the year, with all three utilising some or all of the aspects of the National Firefighter Selection process.

More information on these improvement issues are available from our own website, and from the Welsh Assembly's website.:

North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority web page:
http://www.nwales-fireservice.org.uk/page.asp?page=74

Welsh Assembly web pages:
http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/housingandcommunity/safety/fire/?lang=en

http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/housingandcommunity/safety/fire/circulars/?lang=en

SPECIFIC IMPROVEMENTS IN 2005-06

A full breakdown of performance indicators and targets is presented in Section 5, but of particular note are:

Fires:
The total number of fires attended in North Wales fell by 6%, from 4414 in 2004-05 to 4143 in 2005-06.

Encouragingly, the reduction in primary fires – i.e. the more serious, often larger, fires – was well in excess of the year's target. From 1827 in 2004-05, we aimed to reduce this number to 1800 in 2005-06 by increasing our prevention work in the community. By the end of the year, this target had been beaten by another 60 fires.

The dwelling stock estimates for the six unitary authority areas of North Wales published in the most recent Welsh Housing Statistics suggest that there are just over 299,000 dwellings in the area. During 2005-06, the Fire and Rescue Service attended 501 accidental fires in dwellings, equating to 1 fire in almost 600 dwellings, or around 1.6 per 1,000 dwellings.

This compares well with the findings of the most recent Living in Wales Survey, that found that around 12 out of every 1,000 households in Wales had suffered a fire at some point during 2004.

However, the year's target reduction to 490 accidental fires in dwellings was not achieved, and we will be continuing to deliver prevention services through community fire safety initiatives and routine home fire safety checks.

Dwelling stock estimates:
http://new.wales.gov.uk/legacy_en/keypubstatisticsforwales/content/publication/housing/2004/whs2004/whs2004-ch1/whs2004-t1-4.xls

Living in Wales Survey on Fire and Fire Safety:
http://new.wales.gov.uk/legacy_en/keypubstatisticsforwales/content/publication/other/2005/sdr92-2005/sdr92-2005.pdf#search=%22living%20in%20wales%20survey%202004%22

Malicious False Alarms
The number of malicious false alarms, or 'hoax' calls that resulted in a fire engine being unnecessarily sent out fell from 271 in 2004-05 to 237 in 2005-06. This represents only a small proportion of the overall number of such calls that are received by Control Operators each year. Through skilful call management, they are able to filter out almost three-quarters

of these malicious false alarms, leaving our crews and fire appliances free to respond to genuine calls for help.

Sickness Absence:
Although the sickness absence rate across the whole of the Service failed to reach the very challenging national target, we nevertheless managed to reduce it by an encouraging 28%, which equates to a substantial reduction of 3.5 days/shifts per person.

Equality and Diversity:
Our targets for both the Equalities Standard and the Race Equality Scheme were reached.

Our updated Welsh Language Scheme was compiled and consulted upon prior to its publication.

The number of women employed as firefighters continued to rise in 2005-06:

	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Wholetime	4	4	7	8
Retained	12	15	15	18
Total	16	19	22	26

AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

The audit of our interim Best Value Performance Plan 2005-06 by the Wales Audit Office resulted in three recommendations for improvement which were received in February 2006. A further recommendation related to ensuring that these recommendations were followed-up.

R1 In order to measure the Authority's performance across all corporate objectives and initiatives arising from the IRMP a small number of robust local PIs and targets should be developed.

This has been achieved to a degree, but progress has been delayed.

Following the Assembly's review of National Strategic Indicators and Core Indicator Sets for the Unitary Authorities in Wales, a similar exercise is being undertaken by the Assembly to devise a set of indicators and measures for Fire and Rescue Authorities in Wales. Officers have led on specific parts of this development work, and continue to participate in the project generally.

The change from Integrated Risk Management Planning to Risk Reduction Planning in March 2006 required the production of a Service-wide plan for 2007-8 within a matter of weeks. Once this RRP has been formally adopted, it has been agreed at Service level that the development of a set of local RRP indicators can begin, taking into account the final set produced by the Assembly PIs Development Group.

Human Resources recording and reporting system has been installed, providing much needed additional flexibility. With the new system's additional functionality, it will be possible to devise and report against a wider range of workforce and equalities indicators, which would not have been possible using the old system.

R2 Consideration should be given to including long-term targets for those indicators which are of strategic importance.

This will be undertaken during the 2006-07 financial year as part of the adoption of the revised Performance Management Framework that integrates all elements of Service Planning, Risk Reduction Planning, Improvement Planning under the Wales Programme for Improvement, and Financial Planning.

R3 Identify those Performance Management issues arising from WAG guidance on WPI which will inform the Authority's future agenda.

This has been done as part of the process of devising the new Performance Management Framework, aided by a review of this that is being undertaken by the Wales Audit Office.

Section 3
COMPARING OURSELVES TO OTHERS

Best Value Performance Indicators for 2004-05 were published in June 2006 for all Fire and Rescue Authorities in England and Wales. North Wales Fire and Rescue is a member of a comparator group, or 'Family Group 3', together with Cumbria, Devon, Hereford and Worcester, North Yorkshire, Lincolnshire and Mid and West Wales.

South Wales Fire is not considered to be comparable to the other two Welsh FRAs, and belongs to a different comparator group, 'Family Group 4'.

The graphs below illustrate the family group average, the Wales average, and our own performance in 2004-05.

Primary Fires	Accidental Dwelling Fires	Deaths from Accidental Dwelling Fires

Malicious False Alarms	AFA False Alarms	Cost per head of population

Women in the top 5% of earners	Invoices Paid within 30 days	Sickness Absence

Section 4
IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES IN 2006-07

Addressing Community Risks

Following the adoption of our first Integrated Risk Management Plan in 2003, we compiled two further annual action plans to carry forward those original proposals. "Maintaining Momentum" sets out what we aimed to achieve in relation to community risks during 2006-07.

1. **Changing Some Front Line Emergency Appliances**

   Introducing six specially designed dual role appliances, and modifying four others, to enable the Service to achieve a 30 minute attendance standard.

   Managing the staged removal of the existing four emergency tenders, following the upgrading of all hydraulic rescue equipment carried on front line fire engines.

2. **Reducing the Number of Repeat False Alarms**

   By working with other organisations, finding ways to reduce the number of times the Service is unnecessarily called out in response to repeat false alarms from automatic fire alarms installed in non-domestic properties.

3. **Trialling Co-responding**

   In response to the Ambulance Service's identified need in Gwynedd, trialling a co-responder scheme (i.e. making a simultaneous attendance with the Ambulance to life-threatening medical emergencies in locations when a suitable fire and rescue service resource is more readily available). This is also in accordance with one of the Welsh Assembly's aims in its Fire and Rescue National Framework.

4. **Increasing Our Engagement with Rural Communities**

   Delivering a community fire safety package that meets the needs of those households in North Wales that are located more than 20 minutes away from one of our 44 fire stations. This will provide home fire safety checks, smoke alarms and assistance with drawing up an escape plan.

5. **Introducing Better Locating Systems**

   Checking that we have stored the most accurate location information to assist fire crews to find properties in an emergency,

and using new technologies to automatically and quickly identify locations together with the most appropriate fire and rescue service resources available to attend.

6. **Developing an Overarching Performance Monitoring System**

   Introducing an overarching system that can provide a consistent reporting viewpoint, accessible to both our staff and members of the public, to monitor the various strands of performance data, such as those relating to emergency incidents, the workforce, inspection and prevention activities, and financial information.

7. **Improving our Corporate Communications**

   Improving our contact with all stakeholders, both internal and external, raising the Service's profile and improving its overall effectiveness.

8. **Tackling Arson**

   Analysing the effectiveness of the Arson Reduction Team, finding ways to improve in areas of arson strategy and building on the relationship we have with North Wales Police.

<p style="text-align:center"><u>Undertaking Improvement Activities</u></p>

In addition to addressing community risks, the Service is engaged in a multitude of challenging improvement activities, many of them new, and most of them undertaken entirely within existing resources.

9. **Reviewing our Provision of Operational Managers**

   Making sure that we continue to make best use of our valued and skilled managers, given the changing nature of their workload.

10. **Reacting to the Wider Welsh Agenda**

    Finding ways to react effectively with existing resources to government strategies and policies such as *Making the Connections*, and *Wales a Better Country,* and high profile national reports such as *Beyond Boundaries.*

11. **Adapting to New Requirements**

    Working to new timetables and Service planning requirements introduced through *Wales a Safer Country*, Service Standards, the Wales Programme for Improvement, and the Operational Assessment Process.

12. **Complying with New Legislation**

Ensuring that we are prepared for changes following the changes in the law, specifically this year in relation to the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order, the Age Discrimination Act.

13. **Dealing with Workforce Issues**

Improving attendance management; working towards a Gold Corporate Health Award; continuing to manage in the Integrated Personal Development System (incl. Assessment and Development Centres) and new recruitment procedures; making arrangements for changes to pensions; overseeing rank to role; and supporting the welfare, health and safety of employees.

14. **Control Room and Communications**

Securing the best possible communications links for Service effectiveness and efficiency.

15. **Business Continuity**

Ensuring the continuing resilience of the service to deliver Services in the face of unforeseen attacks or sets of circumstances.

16. **Strong Governance**

Introducing a new programme of Member Development; and promoting accountability, probity and transparency in leadership and decision-making.

17. **Mirroring the Local Population**

Through positive action, policies and behaviours, encourage the achievement of a truly mixed workforce that respects and celebrates its own diversity as being representative of the population it serves.

18. **Providing Services Economically**

Ensuring the affordable and sustainable provision of services within available budgets through careful planning, efficient use of resources and judicious procurement of goods and services.
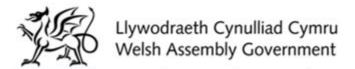
IMPROVEMENT TARGETS IN 2006-07

BVPI	Definition	Target 2006-07	Commentary
142ii	Primary fires	1680	This assumes the achievement of targets for BV206, 206(i) and 206(ii), and assumes that the number of <u>accidental</u> primary fires remains static (1079). 1079 + 601 = **1680** (equates to a 3.4% reduction on 1740).
142iii	Accidental fires in dwellings	486	This seeks a 3% reduction on the number in 2005-06. 501 less 3% = **486**
143i	Deaths from accidental fires in dwellings	3	The target in 2005-06 was 4. This target continues to aim to reduce the number of fire deaths.
143ii	Injuries from accidental fires in dwellings	50	This seeks a 3% reduction on the number in 2005-06. 51 less 3% = **50**
144	% of accidental fires in dwellings confined to the room of origin	90%	This aims to increase the percentage confined, but acknowledges that the challenge will be greater assuming that BV142iii is achieved
146i	The number of calls to malicious false alarms that were not attended	644	This aims to match the overall total for 146i and 146ii in 2005-06, and not attend 75% of them. Total = 622 + 237 = 859 75% of 859 = **644**
146ii	The number of malicious false alarms attended	215	This aims to match the overall total for 146i and 146ii in 2005-06, and attend 25% of them. Total = 622 + 237 = 859 25% of 859 = **215**
149i	False alarms from automatic fire detection apparatus (in non-domestic properties only)	2145	This assumes the achievement of 149(ii) and 149(iii), and assumes that the number of one-offs remains as 2005-06 (377) 1768 + 377 = **2145**
149ii	The number of those properties with more than 1 attendance	340	This seeks a 3% reduction on the number in 2005-06. 97% of 350 = **340**
149iii	The percentage of calls which were to a property with more than 1 attendance	82.4%	This assumes that 149(ii) is achieved, and maintains the average rate of repeats from these premises, i.e. 5.2 from each. 340 X 5.2 = 1768 1768 out of 2145 = **82.4%**
206	Deliberate primary fires	601	This has been calculated by reference to 206(i) and 206(ii). 261 + 340 = **601**, which equates to a 9% reduction on the 2005-06 figure of 661
206i	Deliberate primary fires (excluding primary fires in vehicles)	264	This aims to match the 2004-05 actual (261), rounded up to 22 per month. **264** equates to a 15% reduction on the 311 achieved in 2005-06.
206ii	Deliberate primary fires in vehicles	340	This seeks a 3% reduction on the number in 2005-06. 350 less 3% = **340**
206iii	Deliberate secondary fires (excluding deliberate secondary fires in vehicles)	1608	This seeks to match the 2005-06 actual

DRAFT FOR APPROVAL

BVPI	Definition	Target 2006-07	Commentary
206iv	Deliberate secondary fires in vehicles	30	This retains the same target as 2005-06
207	Fires in non-domestic properties	323	This seeks a 3% reduction on the number in 2005-06. 333 less 3% = **323**
208	The percentage of people in accidental fires in dwellings who escaped unharmed without fire and rescue service assistance at the fire	86.4%	This seeks a similar percentage as in 2005-06, in what is still a relatively new and as yet not fully understood indicator.
209i	The percentage of fires attended in dwellings (all causes) where a smoke alarm had activated	258	This aims for 46.5% of the total. It assumes a 3% reduction in the dwelling fires total in 2005-06 (all causes). 578 less 3% = 561. Assuming that 6 will have *heat* detectors, and would ∴ be excluded, this leaves 555 dwelling fires. 46.5% of 555 = **258**, equating to a 2.6% reduction on the 265 in 2005-06.
209ii	The percentage of fires attended in dwellings (all causes) where a smoke alarm was fitted but did not activate	113	See commentary on the target for BV209i. This aims for 20.4% of the total. 20.4% of 555 = **113**, equating to a 2.6% reduction on the 116 in 2005-06.
209iii	The percentage of fires attended in dwellings (all causes) where no smoke alarm was fitted	184	See commentary on the target for BV209i. This aims for 33.1% of the total. 33.1% of 555 = **184**, equating to a 2.6% reduction on the 189 in 2005-06
2a	The level (if any) of the Equality standard for local government to which the authority conforms	4	This aims to raise performance to the next level of the standard
2b	The duty to promote race equality – the quality of an Authority's Race Equality Scheme (RES) and the improvements resulting from its application	95%	This aims to achieve at least one additional positive response to the 19 assessment questions. 18 out of 19 = **95%**
8	% of undisputed invoices for commercial goods and services paid within 30 days of such invoices being received	95%	This retains the as yet unachieved target.
11a	The % of the top 5% of earners who are women	13%	This aims to reach a position whereby at least three people in the top 5% of earners are women
11b	The % of the top 5% of earners who are from black and ethnic minority communities	4.8%	This aims to reach a position whereby at least one person in the top 5% of earners is from a black or ethnic minority community
11c	The % of the top 5% of earners that have a disability	4.8%	This aims to reach a position whereby at least one person in the top 5% of earners is a person with a disability
12i	Working days/shifts lost to sickness absence per wholetime uniformed member of staff (including control)	6.5	This retains the as yet unachieved target.

BVPI	Definition	Target 2006-07	Commentary
12ii	Working days/shifts lost to sickness absence per member of staff (for all members of staff)	6.5	This retains the as yet unachieved target.
15i	Employees eligible for membership of the firefighters' pension scheme retiring on ill-health grounds.	3	This retains the same target as 2005-06.
15ii	Employees eligible for membership of the local government pension scheme retiring on ill-health grounds.	1	This retains the same target as 2005-06.
16ai	Wholetime and retained duty system uniformed staff with a disability		This year's target is to complete an audit of all employees to determine accurately, through self-reporting, the number of employees who wish to be recorded as having a disability.
16aii	Control and non-uniformed staff with a disability		This year's target is to complete an audit of all employees to determine accurately, through self-reporting, the number of employees who wish to be recorded as having a disability.
17a	The percentage of uniformed wholetime, retained duty system and control staff from ethnic minority backgrounds.		This year's target is to complete an audit of all employees to determine accurately, through self-reporting, the number of employees who wish to be recorded as being from ethnic minority backgrounds.
210	Firefighters who are women	30	This aims to continue the trend of increasing the number of operational women firefighters in post as at 31st March 2007
150	Expenditure per head of population		

AUDIT AND INSPECTION OF INTERIM IMPROVEMENT PLANS

> ## Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
> ## Welsh Assembly Government
>
> ### WELSH ASSEMBLY ADVICE ON AUDIT OF
> ### IMPROVEMENT PLANS IN 2006
>
> The Local Government (Improvement Plans)(Wales) Order 2006 specifies the date by which an authority's improvement plan for a financial year must be published and the date by which the auditor's report relating to the plan is published.
>
> The timetable for this process in 2006, in line with the 2006 Order is as follows :-
>
> FRAs production of Annual Improvement Plan - 31 October 2006
>
> Annual Audit Letter completed - 30 November 2006
>
> The Wales Audit Office will review the Improvement Plan against the guidance set out in this letter. They will also audit the 2005-06 Best Value Performance Indicators which FRSs have continued to collect.

Section 5
LOOKING AHEAD TO IMPROVEMENT IN 2007-08

We continuously seek to implement strategies that contribute to increased safety for the public and achieving excellence in the provision of <u>all</u> our services.

Nevertheless we have identified some specific areas of activity that reflect our commitment to continuous improvement and the achievement of our aims and objectives.

1) Increasing engagement with communities, particularly those in rural areas, to improve public safety.

2) Taking advantage of opportunities to join forces with other agencies to secure improved public service delivery for north Wales.

3) Securing long term financial support to meet the public's expectations of what the Service can provide in terms of community fire prevention.

4) Focusing attention on specific causes of dwelling fires, viz. unattended cooking, smoking materials and unprotected open fires.

5) Ensuring an appropriate distribution of rescue and extrication equipment across the whole of North Wales.

6) Developing a co-ordinated strategy for improving road safety.

7) Assessing the feasibility of providing co-responding services following trials.

8) Improving resilience, in terms of both maintaining normal services in abnormal circumstances, and securing national and local resilience to major incidents.

9) Ensuring the continued provision of excellent emergency Control Room and communications links.

10) Ensuring that the Service can continue to deal with the effects of adverse environmental and climatic changes, without itself contributing to their increase.

11) Ensuring that the Service meets the needs of all sections of the community, and that its workforce reflects the diversity of people that make up the local population.

12) Reviewing the Service's partnerships to check that they are both ethical and effective.

13) Developing the performance management framework in response to government-led changes to improvement planning, incorporating risk reduction and operational assurance.

14) Improving the provision of occupational health services for staff.

15) Investing in the training and development of all those involved in the delivery of excellent fire and rescue services in North Wales.

16) Ensuring that staffing levels at different times reflect the predicted levels of demand for services.

Section 6
RECENT PERFORMANCE AND TARGETS

Calculation figures used (CIPFA Fire and Rescue Service Statistics 2005) – Population 663,700, Domestic properties 298,076, Non-domestic properties 26,485.

BVPI	Definition	Target 2006-07	Actual (p) 2005-06	Target hit?	Target 2005-06	Actual 2004-05	Actual 2003-04	Actual 2002-03	Notes & Comments	Link to Annual Return
	CORPORATE INDICATORS									
2a	**The level (if any) of the Equality standard for local government to which the authority conforms**	Level 4	Level 3	✔	Level 3	Level 1	Not Adopted	Not Adopted		HRF 104
2b	**The duty to promote race equality – the quality of an Authority's Race Equality Scheme (RES) and the improvements resulting from its application**	95%	89%	✔	89%	74%	53%	N/A	Relates to the % of positive responses to a checklist of requirements.	HRF 107
(8)	The number of undisputed invoices for commercial goods and services received		10,408			10,961	10,460	10,416		
(8)	The number of undisputed invoices for commercial goods and services paid within 30 days of such invoices being received		9,321			10,145	9,095	9,499		
8	**% of undisputed invoices for commercial goods and services paid within 30 days of such invoices being received**	95%	89.6%	✘	95.0%	92.6%	87.0%	91.2%		FIN 1
(11)	The number of people making up the top 5% of earners		23			19	24	21	Where a number of employees on the same salary straddle the 5% point, all are included.	

BVPI	Definition	Target 2006-07	Actual (p) 2005-06	Target hit?	Target 2005-06	Actual 2004-05	Actual 2003-04	Actual 2002-03	Notes & Comments	Link to Annual Return
11a	The % of the top 5% of earners who are women	At least 3 people (approx 13%)	1 person - 4.3%	✔	At least 1 person	0%	4.2%	4.8%	Indicator does not take account of the different salary scales used in the Fire and rescue service.	HRF 4
11b	The % of the top 5% of earners who are from black and ethnic minority communities	At least 1 person (approx 4.8%)	0%	✘	At least 1 person	0%	0	0		HRF 4
11c	The % of the top 5% of earners that have a disability	At least 1 person (approx 4.8%)	0%	✘	At least 1 person	N/A	N/A	N/A	Introduced from April 2005	HRF 4
(12i)	The number of working days/shifts lost to sickness by wholetime uniformed staff (incl. Control)		2818			3956	3591	3755	.	
(12i)	The average number of wholetime uniformed staff employed (incl. Control)		327			328	328	327		
12i	Working days/shifts lost to sickness absence per wholetime uniformed member of staff (including control)	6.5	8.6	✘	6.5	12.1	10.9	11.5	Relates to days or shifts that were due to be worked. National target seeks 6.5 lost per firefighter and 5.4 per control operator	HRF 7 using HRF 4 for last 2 years, added ÷2 to calculate average number of relevant FTE staff
(12ii)	The number of working days/shifts lost to sickness absence by all staff		3711			5056	4651.5	4860		
(12ii)	The average number of staff employed		427			415	414	408		

BVPI	Definition	Target 2006-07	Actual (p) 2005-06	Target hit?	Target 2005-06	Actual 2004-05	Actual 2003-04	Actual 2002-03	Notes & Comments	Link to Annual Return
12ii	Working days/shifts lost to sickness absence per member of staff (for all members of staff)	6.5	8.7	✘	6.5	12.2	11.2	11.9	As for BV 12i	As for BV 12i
(15i)	The number of employees eligible for membership of the firefighters' pension scheme retiring on ill-health grounds.	4	4		3	4	3	0	Control and non-uniformed staff are not eligible for membership of this pension scheme.	HRF 86 and HRF 87
(15i)	The number of employees eligible for membership of the firefighters' pension scheme.		294			300	297	293		HRF 10 and HRF 11
15i	The percentage of employees eligible for membership of the firefighters' pension scheme retiring on ill-health grounds.	1.4%	1.4%	✘	1.3%	1.3%	1%	0%		
(15ii)	The number of employees eligible for membership of the local government pension scheme retiring on ill-health grounds.	1	0		1	1	2*	0	* Error in ODPM stats publication - 3 reported instead of 2. 1person discharged on medical grounds, but not retired.	HRF 88 and HRF 89
(15ii)	The number of employees eligible for membership of the local government pension scheme.		153			129	128	123		HRF14 – HRF17
15ii	The percentage of employees eligible for membership of the local government pension scheme retiring on ill-health grounds.	0.6%	0%	✔	0.6%	0.8%	1.6%*	0%	* See above. Relates to Control and non-uniformed staff.	
(16ai)	The number of wholetime and retained duty system uniformed staff with a disability		1			N/A	N/A	N/A		HRF77

BVPI	Definition	Target 2006-07	Actual (p) 2005-06	Target hit?	Target 2005-06	Actual 2004-05	Actual 2003-04	Actual 2002-03	Notes & Comments	Link to Annual Return
(16ai)	The average number of wholetime and retained duty system uniformed staff		854			N/A	N/A	N/A		HRF 10 – HRF13 for last two years added, ÷2 to calculate average number of relevant staff
16a(i)	**The percentage of wholetime and retained duty system uniformed staff with a disability**		**0.12%**		**To audit staff to determine numbers**	**N/A**	**N/A**	**N/A**	Introduced April 2005	
(16aii)	The number of control and non-uniformed staff with a disability		1			N/A	N/A	N/A		HRF77
(16aii)	The average number of control and non-uniformed staff		147			N/A	N/A	N/A		HRF 14 – HRF17 for last two years added, ÷2 to calculate average number of relevant staff
16a(ii)	**The percentage of control and non-uniformed staff with a disability**		**0.7%**		**To audit staff to determine numbers**	**N/A**	**N/A**	**N/A**	Introduced April 2005	
16b	**The percentage of the economically active population in the authority area who have a disability**		**19%**			**N/A**	**N/A**	**N/A**	Introduced April 2005 Derived from Stats Wales tables 79,000 out of 398,000 people of working age in North Wales.	http://www.statswales.wales.gov.uk/TableViewer/tableView.aspx?ReportId=922

BVPI	Definition	Target 2006-07	Actual (p) 2005-06	Target hit?	Target 2005-06	Actual 2004-05	Actual 2003-04	Actual 2002-03	Notes & Comments	Link to Annual Return
(17a)	The number of wholetime, retained duty system and control staff from ethnic minority backgrounds.		0		6*	5*	2*	1	*'White Irish' not included in the count of people from ethnic minorities for this indicator. .	HRF 10 - 15
(17a)	The average number of wholetime, retained duty system and control staff		883			912	928	906		HRF 10 – HRF15 for last two years added, ÷2 to calculate average number of relevant staff
17a	**The percentage of uniformed wholetime, retained duty system and control staff from ethnic minority backgrounds.**		**0%**		**0.7%**	**0.5%**	**0.2%**	**0.1%**		
17b	**The percentage of economically active (persons aged 18-54) population from ethnic minority communities in the fire and rescue service area**		**Less than 1.0%**			**Less than 1.0%**	**Less than 1.0%**	**0.7%**		2001 Census data, Table S101
(210)	The number of firefighters who are women (wholetime and retained duty uniformed operational)	30	26	✔	25	N/A	N/A	N/A		HRF10 – HRF13
(210)	The average number of firefighters employed (wholetime and retained duty uniformed operational)		854			N/A	N/A	N/A		HRF 10 – HRF13 for last two years added, ÷2 to calculate average number of relevant staff

BVPI	Definition	Target 2006-07	Actual (p) 2005-06	Target hit?	Target 2005-06	Actual 2004-05	Actual 2003-04	Actual 2002-03	Notes & Comments	Link to Annual Return
210	The percentage of firefighters who are women	3.5%	3%	✔	2.9%	N/A	N/A	N/A	Introduced April 2005	
	SERVICE SPECIFIC INDICATORS									
(142ii)	The number of primary fires	1680	1740		1800	1827	2196	2252		
142ii	Primary fires per 10,000 population	25.3	26.2	✔	26.8	27.2	33.1	33.7		
(142iii)	The number of accidental fires in dwellings	486	501		490	502	528	571		
142iii	Accidental fires in dwellings per 10,000 dwellings	16.3	16.8	✘	16.5	16.9	18.1	19.4		
(143i)	The number of deaths from accidental fires in dwellings	3	5		4	3	5	6	Figures sometimes revised following checks against death certificates.	
143i	Deaths from accidental fires in dwellings per 100,000 population	0.45	0.75	✘	0.60	0.45	0.75	0.89		
(143ii)	The number of injuries from accidental fires in dwellings	50	51		67	116	88	102		
143ii	Injuries from accidental fires in dwellings per 100,000 population	7.53	7.68	✔	10	17.3	13.4	15.3		
(144)	The number of accidental fires in dwellings	486	501		490	502	N/A	N/A	Introduced April 2005	
(144)	The number of accidental fires in dwellings confined to the room origin	437	448		458	458	N/A	N/A		
144	% of accidental fires in dwellings confined to the room of origin (in all areas)	90%	89.4%	✘	93.5%	91.3%	N/A	N/A		
(146)	The number of calls to malicious false alarms that were attended	215	237		250	271	399	391 (408)		
(146)	The number of calls to malicious false alarms that were not attended	644	622		676	659	702	691 (723)	(2002-03 adjustment shown)	

BVPI	Definition	Target 2006-07	Actual (p) 2005-06	Target hit?	Target 2005-06	Actual 2004-05	Actual 2003-04	Actual 2002-03	Notes & Comments	Link to Annual Return
(146)	The total number of malicious false alarms received	859	859	✔	926	930	1101	1082 (1131)		
146i	The number of calls to malicious false alarms that were not attended per 1,000 population	1.0	0.9	✘	1.0	N/A	N/A	N/A	Introduced April 2005	
146ii	The number of malicious false alarms attended per 1,000 population	0.3	0.4	✔	0.4	N/A	N/A	N/A	Introduced April 2005	
(149)	False alarms from automatic fire alarms in non-domestic properties	2145	2201			N/A	N/A	N/A		
149i	False alarms from automatic fire alarms (in non-domestic properties only), per 1,000 non-domestic properties	81.0	83.1		To monitor new PI	N/A	N/A	N/A	Introduced April 2005	
149ii	The number of those properties with more than 1 attendance	340	350		To monitor, new PI	N/A	N/A	N/A	Introduced April 2005	
149iii	The percentage of calls which were to a property with more than 1 attendance	82.4%	83.7%		To monitor new PI	N/A	N/A	N/A	Introduced April 2005	
(206)	The number of deliberate primary fires	601	661		N/A	690	971	N/A		
206	Deliberate primary fires per 10,000 population	N/A	N/A		N/A	10.3	14.6	N/A	New indicator introduced in 2004-05. Discontinued after 31/03/05	
(206i)	Deliberate primary fires (excluding primary fires in vehicles)	264	311		250	N/A	N/A	N/A		
206i	Deliberate primary fires (excluding primary fires in vehicles) per 10,000 population	4.0	4.7	✘	3.7	N/A	N/A	N/A	Introduced April 2005	
(206ii)	Deliberate primary fires in vehicles	340	350		403	N/A	N/A	N/A	Introduced April 2005	
206ii	Deliberate primary fires in vehicles per 10,000 population	5.1	5.3	✔	6	N/A	N/A	N/A		

BVPI	Definition	Target 2006-07	Actual (p) 2005-06	Target hit?	Target 2005-06	Actual 2004-05	Actual 2003-04	Actual 2002-03	Notes & Comments	Link to Annual Return
(206iii)	Deliberate secondary fires (excluding deliberate secondary fires in vehicles)	1608	1608		2500	N/A	N/A	N/A		
206iii	Deliberate secondary fires (excluding deliberate secondary fires in vehicles) per 10,000 population	24.2	24.2	✔	37.3	N/A	N/A	N/A	Introduced April 2005	
(206iv)	Deliberate secondary fires in vehicles	30	32		30	N/A	N/A	N/A		
206iv	Deliberate secondary fires in vehicles per 10,000 population	0.45	0.48	✘	0.45	N/A	N/A	N/A	Introduced April 2005	
(207)	The number of fires in non-domestic properties	323	333		396	N/A	N/A	N/A	Excludes fires in houses HMOs	
207	Fires in non-domestic properties per 1,000 non-domestic properties	12.2	12.6	✔	15	N/A	N/A	N/A	Excludes fires in HMOs. Introduced April 2005.	
(208)	The number of people who left dwellings as a result of an accidental fire on the premises		1176			N/A	N/A	N/A		
(208)	The number of people who left the property unharmed without fire and rescue service assistance at the premises		1019			N/A	N/A	N/A		
208	The percentage of people in accidental fires in dwellings who escaped unharmed without fire and rescue service assistance at the fire	86.4%	86.6%		To monitor new PI	N/A	N/A	N/A	Introduced April 2005	
(209i)	The number of fires attended in dwellings (all causes)	555	578			N/A	N/A	N/A		
(209i)	The number of fires attended in dwellings (all causes) where a smoke alarm had activated	258	265			N/A	N/A	N/A		
209i	The percentage of fires attended in dwellings (all causes) where a smoke alarm had activated	46.5%	45.8%	✔	45%	N/A	N/A	N/A	Introduced April 2005	

29

BVPI	Definition	Target 2006-07	Actual (p) 2005-06	Target hit?	Target 2005-06	Actual 2004-05	Actual 2003-04	Actual 2002-03	Notes & Comments	Link to Annual Return
(209ii)	The number of fires attended in dwellings (all causes)	555	578			N/A	N/A	N/A		
(209ii)	The number of fires attended in dwellings (all causes) where a smoke alarm was fitted but did not activate	113	116			N/A	N/A	N/A		
209ii	**The percentage of fires attended in dwellings (all causes) where a smoke alarm was fitted but did not activate**	**20.4%**	**20%**	✔	**20%**	**N/A**	**N/A**	**N/A**	Introduced April 2005	
(209iii)	The number of fires attended in dwellings (all causes)	555	578			N/A	N/A	N/A		
(209iii)	The number of fires attended in dwellings (all causes) where no smoke alarm was fitted	184	189			N/A	N/A	N/A		
209iii	**The percentage of fires attended in dwellings (all causes) where no smoke alarm was fitted**	**33.1%**	**32.7%**	✔	**35%**	**N/A**	**N/A**	**N/A**	Introduced April 2005	
150	**Expenditure per head of population**		**£41.57***	▬	**£41.44***	**£37.22**	**£34.50**	**£34.30**		WAG RO(F) line 13, column 10 less specific grants column 11

*For consistency, the expenditure figures for 2005-06 have been calculated on the basis of the ONS 2004 mid-year population figure of 674,500, as used in the fire BVPIs publication issued by the Welsh Assembly in June 2006. Actual expenditure reported in the RO form for 2005-06 was £28,038,000.

Section 7
STATEMENT RELATING TO CONTRACTS

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

North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority states and certifies that no individual contracts have been awarded during the past year involving transfer of staff where the above Code of Practice would apply.

Section 8
SOURCES OF INFORMATION

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

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

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

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

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

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

01745 535 250