

NORTH WALES REGIONAL COMMITTEE

Date: 19 May 2006

Time: 10.00 - 12.30

Venue: Craig Y Don Community Centre, Llandudno.

Title: Fire Brigades Union Response to Welsh Assembly Government

Consultation on Fire & Rescue Service Risk Reduction Planning Guidance – Wales a Safer Country



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 On the 2nd April 2003 the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) issued Fire Service Circular 7/2003. The Circular informed all fire & rescue authorities in England, Wales and Northern Ireland that Integrated Risk Management Planning was a key element in the Westminster Government's programme of reform and modernisation for the fire & rescue service. Each authority would be required to produce, consult upon, and then implement an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) for their brigade area. This IRMP would direct all service activities and was to be effective from April 2004.

1.2 On the 3rd April 2003 the Scottish Executive issued Scottish Fire Service Circular 4/2003 outlining proposals to introduce a similar system of Integrated Risk Management Planning in Scotland. The Scottish Executive however believed that in order to allow sufficient time for central guidance on Scottish IRMP to be developed, and for brigade plans to be constructed, a realistic timetable for the introduction of IRMP in Scotland would be April 2005.

1.3 Both the ODPM and the Scottish Executive chose to issue central guidance on the construction of local Integrated Risk Management Plans in the form of a series of 'Guidance Documents' which had no statutory footing. This effectively meant that individual fire & rescue authorities could choose whether or not to follow this guidance.

1.4 Section 62(1) of the Fire & Rescue Services Act 2004 devolved responsibility for the fire & rescue service in Wales to the Welsh Assembly. This Section of the Act was brought into effect in Wales by means of a Welsh Assembly Government 'Order' on the 9th November 2004. The Order took effect

on the 10th November. The FBU supported this devolution of power, and recognised that it would allow the Assembly to set a ‘Welsh’ agenda in respect of fire & rescue service policy.

1.5 Section 22 of the Fire & Rescue Services Act 2004 gives the Welsh Assembly Government extensive powers to direct fire & rescue authorities as to what to do. Sections 22(1) and 22(2) of the 2004 Act refer to a ‘Framework’.

1.6 Following devolution of fire & rescue service responsibility the Assembly published the Fire and Rescue National Framework for Wales. The WAG Minister is required to produce the Framework under Section 21 of the 2004 Act, and fire and rescue authorities must have regard to the Framework when carrying out their functions.

1.7 The National Framework Document is critically important and can be considered to be the very cornerstone of the fire & rescue service in Wales. It sets out both the strategic direction and the core principles under which the 3 Welsh fire & rescue services must operate.

1.8 The National Framework for Wales includes a clear commitment to work effectively with stakeholders and front-line staff. Both the First Minister and the Minister with responsibility for the fire & rescue service in Wales have made clear that the views of front-line staff are key to understanding how successful a public service is in delivering to the public "at the sharp-end".

1.9 The Welsh Region of the Fire Brigades Union is pleased to respond to the Welsh Assembly Government’s consultation on Fire & Rescue Service Risk Reduction Planning (RRP).

1.10 The focus of Welsh RRP reveals an approach grounded in a clear agenda and a clear vision of what is needed for Wales. The FBU does not believe that this position is accidental. The RRP consultation demonstrates clear links with other social policy positions and initiatives which have been adopted by the Assembly. The weaknesses associated with announcing policy and then attempting to work out the detail against an unrealistic timescale appear to have been avoided.

1.11 The FBU is also pleased to note that it is the Assembly’s intention to place its Risk Reduction Planning Guidance on a statutory footing by incorporating it within an updated Fire & Rescue National Framework for Wales.

1.12 The FBU is responding simultaneously to the Welsh Assembly Government’s Consultation on Principles of Services Standards for Attendance to Fires in the Home. Service Standards are integrally linked to Risk Reduction Planning and the FBU’s RRP consultation response should be read in conjunction with this paper.

1.13 With this in mind the FBU offers the following comment on the Welsh Assembly Government’s Risk Reduction Planning consultation document:

2. FOCUS OF RISK REDUCTION PLANNING (RRP)

2.1 The FBU supports the Welsh Assembly Government’s ‘Risk Reduction Planning’ terminology.

2.2 Whilst ODPM and Scottish Executive policy and guidance refers to fire & rescue authority "Integrated Risk Management Planning", the FBU is not convinced that this term accurately reflects the aspirations held by the Welsh Assembly Government or the communities of Wales for our 3 fire & rescue services.

2.3 The term IRMP implicitly provides for risk to be managed both upward and downward, without any reference or standard relating to the acceptability or tolerability of the resulting risk.

2.4 Conversely the term "Integrated Risk Reduction Planning" provides a clearer focus of intent for Welsh government, Welsh fire & rescue authorities and brigade managers. RRP must aim to reduce risk, and not simply to ‘manage’ it.

3. AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO RISK REDUCTION

3.1 The FBU recognises that the Welsh Assembly Government's RRP consultation paper sets out a well defined risk reduction planning process for all fire & rescue service activity.

3.2 Community Fire Protection, Community Fire Safety and Emergency Response must be seen as complimentary areas of a fire & rescue authority's total activity, and the local Risk Reduction Plan must recognise this. The RRP must also take account of other statutory and organisational responsibilities to ensure that all risks and risk control measures are fully integrated within the Plan.

3.3 The FBU has included a Risk Reduction Planning Checklist which reflects the areas of overlap between the above primary strands of service delivery (Annexe 1).

3.4 To assist in uniformity of approach across the 3 Welsh Brigades the Fire Brigades Union commends this service-specific checklist to the Welsh Assembly Government, for inclusion as an Annexe to its final Risk Reduction Planning document.

4. RRP & PROPOSED WAG SERVICE STANDARDS

4.1 The Welsh Assembly Government consultation on the Principles of Service Standards for Attendance to Fires in the Home is inextricably linked to its Risk Reduction Planning policy.

4.2 Whilst Service Standards will initially seek to establish emergency attendance times to fires, the size of this emergency response will be determined by reference to the risk-based response planning process set out in the Assembly's RRP policy.

4.3 The FBU recognises the critical importance of establishing the correct process and framework for effective and robust local risk-based response planning. The process must compliment the Service Standard and ultimately it must be capable of delivering the correct level of emergency response to an emergency incident within agreed timescales.

5. RISK-BASED RESPONSE PLANNING PROCESS

5.1 A fundamental part of planning fire & rescue service emergency cover in support of a local fire & rescue authority's Risk Reduction Plan is the determination of the emergency response required to incidents.

5.2 An RRP will require local fire & rescue authorities to set out how they intend to make provision to meet efficiently the emergency response requirements which they can reasonably expect to be placed upon them.

5.3 Planning an appropriate emergency response involves 3 stages:

1. Defining the Planning Scenario that each risk in an area attracts (e.g. a house fire);
2. Deciding what resources are required in that scenario (firefighters and equipment);
3. Deciding how to 'phase' those resources (i.e. in what order and at what intervals they should arrive).

5.4 Clearly fire & rescue authorities will need to provide evidence that the planned response is safe and appropriate. This will be best achieved through detailed risk and task analysis of the identified Planning Scenarios.

5.5 Detailed Risk & Task Analysis is the process of:

assessing the risk from the incident as a whole, and from specific firefighting/rescue actions (or tasks);

matching the tasks to accepted fire & rescue service Standard Operating Procedures – SOPs (which are designed to minimise risk);

determining the length of time each task will take to complete;

determining which tasks can be carried out simultaneously and which tasks can only be carried out after an earlier task has been completed.

5.6 A Task Key and Task Timeline can then be constructed from which the minimum number of personnel and equipment for the Planning Scenario can be derived.

5.7 Whilst the process of planning an appropriate response with accompanying detailed risk & task analysis may initially appear burdensome, much of this work is already complete.

5.8 Although it did not set attendance times to emergency incidents, the Central Fire Brigades Advisory Council's Review of Standards of Emergency Cover published in late 2002 included identification and comprehensive detailed risk and task analysis for the more commonly occurring incidents which fire & rescue authorities could routinely expect to attend (Stages 1 & 2 of the risk-based response planning process above).

5.9 The Fire Brigades Union has further extrapolated the work conducted during this review to match resources and SOPs to current response strategies using existing fire engines (Stage 3 of the risk-based response planning process above). The FBU has termed the results of this further extrapolation the Critical Attendance Standard (CAST).

5.10 The CAST methodology does not deal with attendance times to fires or other emergencies – which the Welsh Assembly Government intends to establish through the Service Standard process. However it does consider the appropriate size for an emergency response to different types of incidents.

5.11 Equally the CAST methodology is not so prescriptive as to limit local decision making on the various response strategies which fire & rescue authorities may wish to adopt to suit local circumstances.

5.12 Rather CAST, taken with the accepted 3 stage response planning process set out in paragraph 5.3 provides a clear framework within which fire & rescue authorities can work to ensure that emergency responses are risk-based and of sufficient size to ensure that the initial emergency response to an incident has a reasonable chance of mitigating the effects of that incident, without compromising unduly the safety of firefighters who will be operating in an inherently unsafe environment.

5.13 The FBU has included an example of risk-based response planning risk and task analysis for a single occupancy dwelling fire as Annexe 2 to this response.

5.14 The analysis and accompanying task timeline in Annexe 2 is based upon accepted Standard Operating Procedures which aim to limit the risk faced by firefighters during firefighting and rescue tasks. The task analysis relates only to basic procedures; additional Standard Operating Procedures, if and when they are adopted at local level, may necessitate the mobilisation of additional resources over and above those listed.

5.15 Following this methodology will ensure that the correct number of firefighters & equipment are mobilised as part of the initial attendance to emergency incidents. It should also ensure that the required firefighters and equipment arrive close enough together to limit the potential for Standard

Operating Procedures to be compromised by a lack of available resources, particularly during the early stages of emergency incidents.

5.16 To assist in uniformity of approach across the 3 Welsh Brigades the Fire Brigades Union commends this process to the Welsh Assembly Government, for inclusion as an Annexe to its final Risk Reduction Planning document.

5.17 Ultimately the responsibility for the safety and effectiveness of the planned response to emergency incidents will lie with the fire & rescue authority and as such they should be approved at the highest level.

6. ISSUES OF NATIONAL RESILIENCE

6.1 Experience to date, coupled with intelligence from the security services, suggests strongly that future fire & rescue service emergency response planning must take into account the potential for coordinated acts of terrorism deliberately aimed at maximising civilian casualties and societal disruption resulting in simultaneous, prolonged and resource intensive incidents in geographically distant locations in different parts of the UK.

6.2 This emergency response planning cannot be restricted to consideration of terrorist attacks alone. An effective response needs to be maintained for other large scale regional or supra-regional emergency incidents such as the Hatfield rail crash, the Glasgow Stockline Plastics factory explosion, the Hemel Hempstead fuel terminal inferno, and increasingly extreme weather conditions which led to the flooding in Boscastle, York and Carlisle and a tornado in Birmingham.

6.3 However the introduction of Integrated Risk Management Planning in England and Scotland has meant that local decisions are now made by local fire & rescue authorities on emergency response levels, availability and disposition in brigades. These decisions are grounded in local and not national priorities.

6.4 Although the ODPM has issued additional equipment such as mass decontamination units, urban search & rescue units, and high volume pumping appliances to fire & rescue services (including Welsh brigades) as part of its 'New Dimension' programme, it has not issued guidance on the necessary planning arrangements to maintain the ability to actually deploy this equipment together with the personnel necessary to operate it.

6.5 ODPM IRMP Guidance Notes have not included direct reference to any regional or national resilience considerations against which fire & rescue authorities should balance local decisions when preparing their local integrated risk management plan.

6.6 It is critical that the Welsh Assembly Government RRP policy directs fire & rescue authorities to consider the likely resource implications which may arise as a result of anticipated commitment to a supra-regional or UK-wide response to an incident or series of simultaneous incidents.

6.7 A failure to consider such potential resource implications could lead to a situation where resources are stripped from brigades irrespective of the effect on local priorities, in an attempt to meet a UK-wide response requirement.

7. DATA CAPTURE & STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

7.1 Risk Reduction Planning must be supported by a comprehensive data capture and analysis system.

7.2 The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has been consulting on a proposal to introduce an electronic data collection system for all incidents that are attended by fire & rescue services – the Incident Recording System (IRS).

7.3 Accurate and speedy recording of incident data can only enhance the planning and resourcing of fire & rescue services in the future by providing firm statistical evidence, in one common and standard format, for all emergency incidents attended.

7.4 The FBU also believes that to enhance consistency and accuracy of data recording an electronic IRS must be extremely user friendly. The FBU supports the ODPM proposal and has responded in detail to this consultation.

7.5 The FBU recognises that the issue of data capture and statistical analysis for the 3 Welsh fire & rescue services for all activities and their outcomes is currently under consideration, and we welcome this position in Wales.

7.6 Since devolution of responsibility for the fire & rescue service to the Welsh Assembly Government, the ODPM has restricted its responses to questions on fire & rescue service statistics to English Authorities only. This is illustrated by responses to questions raised in the House of Commons in June 2005 relating to successful rescues of persons from fires by firefighters, and rescues from road traffic collisions by firefighters.

7.7 In both cases the ODPM Minister only reported the statistics for English fire & rescue authorities for the year 2003, and despite the fact that devolution had not occurred at that point, as follows:

All people rescued alive by firefighters from all fires – 4,341

All people rescued alive by firefighters from dwelling fires – 3,868

Road traffic accidents involving the rescue of persons by firefighters – 9,673

7.8 The FBU will be pleased work with the Welsh Assembly Government in further developing the data capture and statistical analysis systems which will be required to support its Risk Reduction Planning policy.

8. STATUTORY FOOTING

8.1 The FBU is pleased to note that it is the Assembly's intention to place both its Risk Reduction Planning Guidance and its Service Standards on a statutory footing by incorporating them into an updated Fire & Rescue National Framework for Wales.

Annexe 1

To assist in uniformity of approach across the 3 Welsh Brigades the Fire Brigades Union commends the 'checklist' below to be included as an Annexe to the Welsh Assembly Government's Risk Reduction Planning document, and the subsequently updated Fire & Rescue Service National Framework for Wales. The checklist is fire & rescue service specific and is based upon the HSE's Health & Safety Guidance Note 65 (HSG65).

RISK REDUCTION PLANNING CHECKLIST

- A. Risk Identification
- B. Allocation of Resources
- C. Planning and Consultation
- D. Communication
- E. Tolerability of Risk
- F. Changing Demands
- G. Monitoring Performance

A. Risk Identification

Reliable Data

The RRP should demonstrate that reliable data has been considered which has been collected over a 5 year rolling period. In relation to recorded incidents, the following data should be considered as a minimum:

number of incidents;

type of incidents attended;

geographical location;

severity;

cause.

Statistical Analysis

Statistical analysis of incident data should be used to indicate if more could be done through preventative/protective initiatives to save lives and protect property, by targeting specific areas of risk. This will demonstrate a full understanding and evaluation of the effectiveness of prevention/protection and emergency response arrangements and their inter-relationship.

Community Risk

The assessment of community-related risk should take into account factors including (although not exclusively):

age range;

nature of housing;

socio-economic ratings and patterns

crime and disorder issues (particularly the incidence of arson)

The RRP should identify what could be done differently to improve the inter-relationship between the prevention/protection and emergency response roles of the service in order that community risk levels are minimised.

Scope of Fire Risk

The RRP should be capable of demonstrating that sufficient reliable information/data has been utilised from all areas within the fire & rescue authority, to enable:

an understanding of the fire risks in various risk planes/categories;

an understanding of other risks e.g. non-fire emergencies;

assessment of the risks in detail i.e. likelihood of occurrence and potential consequences;

mapping of emergency response resources to the identified risks;

assessment of the level of resources necessary to maintain those risks at their present level and reduce them wherever possible;

provision and implementation of the required fire & rescue service emergency response as determined by the risk-based response planning process ;

monitoring and assessment of new risks being created and existing risks being removed or replaced;

provision of a risk-based fire safety inspection and enforcement programme.

Major Hazard Sites

The RRP should demonstrate that sites or premises assessed as having the potential to pose a major incident hazard are regularly subjected to fire safety inspections, including fire safety enforcement inspections where enforcement of the adequacy of the fire safety measures rests with the fire & rescue authority.

Former Section 1(i)d Sites

The RRP should demonstrate that sites or premises which would formerly have been assessed as falling within section 1(i)d of the 1947 Fire Services Act are regularly subjected to risk inspections by those firefighters who would normally be expected to make up part of the initial emergency response. The risk inspections to both familiarise firefighters with site/premises layout, to update site risk information, and to inform the planned emergency response for the site/premises in accordance with the risk-based response planning process.

High Risk Site Access

The RRP should demonstrate the approach that has been taken to the assessment of the adequacy of fire & rescue service vehicular access, the availability of water and other firefighting media supplies, and the levels of security to be overcome before firefighting may commence at all existing high fire risk/fire consequence buildings and sites within the fire & rescue authority's area.

Heritage Risk Sites

The RRP should demonstrate that sufficient data and local information is available to allow an assessment of the level of heritage risk present in the fire & rescue authority area, and to plan and prepare an adequate emergency response to a heritage risk incident. The development of such plans should involve other interested bodies and groups who may be able to assist in the preservation of valuable historic artefacts or buildings.

The RRP should demonstrate that National Heritage Agencies or Local Authorities have been contacted to obtain details of the sites of heritage or historic interest within the authority area. It should ensure, where appropriate, that such premises or sites are subject to regular fire safety inspections and that fire safety advice for the owners or occupiers is both proactive and readily available.

Firefighter & Firefighter (Control) Risk

The RRP should demonstrate that the risk to Firefighters and Firefighters (Control) has been assessed in respect of all initiatives and response strategies for the range of scenarios, duties and activities required of them.

Firefighter & Firefighter (Control) Stress

The risk assessment of any changes proposed as part of an RRP should include the assessment of levels of stress experienced by Firefighters, Firefighters (Control) and other fire & rescue service staff, and whether any coping strategies, e.g. team support and management support, could be adversely affected by the proposed changes.

Expert Judgement

The risk assessment process should be documented and include for a qualitative assessment to be made by personnel with key competencies in a structured, consensual setting e.g. facilitated workshop. Whilst this qualitative assessment will include an assessment of the resources required for the more commonly occurring emergency incidents/planning scenarios, it is particularly important in respect of the development and agreement of risk-based response planning scenarios for more complex emergency incidents.

Building Regulations & Standards

The RRP should take into account the effect upon the safety of Firefighters of the Building Regulations, and any proposed revisions to these regulations, and be capable of demonstrating that a fire safety inspection and enforcement programme and procedures are in place to deal with these issues. In this respect account must be taken of the results of the Building Disaster Assessment Group research, particularly the results of the Physiological Assessment study as it affects/is likely to affect the planned emergency response to certain identified planning scenarios.

Risk Model

To help manage large amounts of data, all relevant data should be considered and used in the FSEC computer-based model to apply a quantitative test to any proposals set out in the RRP, and importantly to test their 'sensitivity' to changed or varying conditions, including high resource deployment levels in times of peak demand.

Reliable Data on Non-Fire Risks

The RRP should demonstrate that sufficient reliable information/data has been utilised for non-fire incidents such as special services calls. This should be capable of demonstrating that the fire & rescue authority has:

understood the risk of such incidents in the authority's area;

assessed those risks in detail and the likely frequency of occurrence;

assessed the appropriate level of fire & rescue service emergency response and the level of assistance likely to be required from other agencies to such incidents;

planned the necessary fire & rescue service emergency response to them including any assistance from other agencies;

initiated arrangements capable of delivering the planned emergency response at all times;

reviewed and assessed the effectiveness of the planned emergency response when measured against real incidents;

updated the RRP as the ongoing assessment process predicts.

High Risk Sites

The fire & rescue authority should ensure that any data used recognises that particular areas or sites within the authority's area pose an increased risk to the public from non-fire incidents. If this data predicts a requirement for the implementation of preventative strategies (including fire safety enforcement procedures and/or community fire safety initiatives) or

joint approaches with other safety enforcers or Local Authorities to drive down the level of risk to the public, then the appropriate resources should be identified and allocated.

B. Allocation of Resources

Legal Obligations

The RRP should take into account the effect of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and related regulations upon the safety of Firefighters, Firefighters (Control) and other fire & rescue service employees. Also, the need for appropriate structures and resources to be in place to consult with staff and their appointed representatives on health and safety matters and to investigate incidents in accordance with that legislation.

Resource Levels

There should be a clear demonstration within the RRP that specific levels of emergency response for differing areas/types of risk have been assessed to determine the optimum level of resource requirements in terms of staffing levels, vehicles, appliances and equipment and their distribution within the fire & rescue authority's area.

Resource Assessment

The RRP should demonstrate that an assessment of the fire & rescue authority's ability to respond to fires and other emergency incidents is not adversely affected by the geographical distribution of resources.

Training and Competence

The RRP should take into account the need for, and provide both planning and resources for, the skills and training necessary to enable Firefighters, Firefighters (Control) and other fire & rescue service staff to perform their duties safely and with confidence. The fire & rescue authority should ensure such training is regularly reviewed to assess its adequacy and relevance.

Deployment of Resources

The RRP should demonstrate the effective deployment of firefighting resources to respond to anticipated incidents in all areas of the brigade and at all times of the day and night, in terms of staffing levels, vehicles, appliances and equipment and any specialist support necessary.

Varying Resource Levels – internal incidents

The RRP should identify all special risks which could give rise to an incident that requires enhanced levels of fire & rescue service emergency intervention within the authority area. It should be able to demonstrate that emergency response plans are in place. Such plans should be agreed with the owner(s)/occupier(s) of the premises/site and such other agencies or emergency services as are appropriate. The plans should be regularly practised and reviewed. They should be capable of demonstrating that resources have been allocated to ensure such sites and premises are part of the fire safety inspection programme, are regularly subjected to fire safety enforcement inspections, and that where necessary, such inspections are made in conjunction with other safety enforcers.

Varying Resource Levels – external incidents

The RRP should identify and ensure that the authority has made arrangements and retains the capability to provide the anticipated level of fire & rescue service emergency deployment required of it in the event of a regional or supra-regional response outside the authority area e.g. to a New Dimension type incident. The RRP must pay particular regard to the maintenance of local risk reduction capability for the entire anticipated duration of such a deployment.

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)

The RRP should demonstrate that SOPs are based upon a set of standards or procedures that have been developed to co-ordinate the activities of the fire & rescue service and which ensure that everyone is clear what they are expected to achieve. It is important that these documents clearly identify who is responsible, what they are responsible for (including resource provision) and what are the expected results.

Health and Safety Responsibilities

The RRP should clearly identify those members of the fire & rescue service with specific responsibilities for health and safety and these responsibilities must be included within their job description.

Competence of Employees

The RRP should demonstrate that adequate plans are in place and are regularly reviewed and practised to ensure the competence of Firefighters, Firefighters (Control) and other fire & rescue service staff to deal with potential emergency incidents relevant to the fire & rescue authority's area, which may include any of the following;

fire or explosion where large numbers of the public or employees are present;

major incident caused by unusual or severe weather conditions;

incident involving multiple road vehicles both on a motorway and elsewhere;

major railway incident;

an aircraft crash at an airport and/or an incident involving an aircraft crash off an airport;

a terrorist attack (conventional, chemical, biological, nuclear);

an uncontrolled release of radioactive material;

the collapse of a building;

the collapse of a trench or excavation;

an rescue from a sewer;

a rescue from water;

a chemical spillage;

an incident involving a ship, or port, or harbour installation.

Training Budgets

The full extent of training and competence requirements must be assessed and budgeted for within the RRP.

C. Planning and Consultation

Strategic Fire Safety Plans

The RRP should demonstrate the development of strategic fire safety plans to reduce fire risks and improve the level of fire safety awareness and fire safety measures throughout the fire & rescue authority area. These plans should include:

the implementation of fire safety enforcement inspection programmes;

community fire safety awareness initiatives and programmes;

the development of public fire safety awareness access programmes;

the development of contacts with other agencies to ensure joint working on fire safety awareness programmes and also with the local press and media for swift fire safety messaging;

the preparation of a crime reduction strategy in accordance with the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (as amended).

Firefighter & Firefighter (Control) Involvement

The RRP review process should demonstrate that Firefighters and Firefighter (Control) have been heavily involved in the preparation of the RRP and fully understand the risk assessment process and the agreed response/control measures that have been developed.

Stakeholder Involvement

The RRP should demonstrate that all stakeholder groups have been identified and consulted and are happy that their views have been heard and taken into consideration in formulating or revising the RRP.

Interfaces with Other Organisations

The nature and extent of responsibilities and measures proposed or provided by other local or government initiatives and emergency services should be considered in order that the interfaces between these activity areas are properly understood and managed through the RRP.

Phasing of Plans

Where improved prevention strategies are proposed within the RRP, the plans need to demonstrate that sufficient allowance for incremental improvement/phasing has been made for such proposals to become effective through synchronisation with the associated response arrangements from other local service providers (e.g. education may take several years, practical solutions may be effective almost immediately).

Best Practice

The RRP should take into consideration and be informed by relevant best practice within other emergency services and/or relevant research.

Consultation Process

The RRP should demonstrate the development of permanent links and the establishment of agreed consultation procedures with all Local Authority Planning and Building Control Departments within the fire & rescue authority's area in order that advice can be given and received on fire safety standards and fire safety measures in sites to be developed and buildings to be constructed.

D. Communication

Key Information

The RRP should demonstrate the means by which key information is gathered and communicated to Firefighters, Firefighters (Control) and other fire & rescue service staff. This should include, but not be limited to:

- policy statements;
- plans, standards and procedures,
- performance measurement and reports;
- lessons learned from incidents;
- ideas for improvement.

Lines of Communication

The RRP should include strategies to establish and maintain regular lines of communication with other agencies to ensure that any proposed or likely change in demographic risk is notified. These include, but are not limited to:

- Local Authority planners;
- Housing Departments;
- Social Service Departments;
- Police Forces;
- Coast Guard;
- Health Authorities;
- Local Education Authorities.

Environmental Risk

The RRP should identify a clear line of communication and close liaison with other local and national agencies and service providers to assess the risk of pollution events occurring. This assessment should include details of how the plans of these agencies interface with other fire & rescue service functions including firefighting and fire safety enforcement. Consideration should be given as to what can be done jointly to reduce the likelihood of such an incident occurring and what can be done to mitigate the consequences if it does occur. Where such potential risks exist within the fire & rescue authority area the RRP should describe what plans are in place for responding to it.

Major Hazard Sites

If major accident hazard sites or premises are present within the fire & rescue authority area, the RRP should demonstrate that:

there is regular and adequate liaison between the fire & rescue service, the site managers/owners, the Health and Safety Executive, the relevant Local Authorities, other safety or environmental enforcers, other emergency services and local residents;

the fire & rescue service has consulted with or been consulted over the preparation of an emergency response plan for that site in order to protect the general public, the environment, the emergency services and the site employees from an incident at that site or premises;

the emergency response plan and the fire & rescue service's role within it is both adequate and periodically practised and reviewed;

where enforcement of such an emergency response plan rests with another safety enforcer, that enforcer should be able to demonstrate that they have taken into account the views and any concerns of the fire & rescue authority.

RRP Briefing

The RRP should include for an awareness-raising process, piloting or bedding-in process to ensure that all stakeholders fully understand any proposed changes to the fire & rescue service.

E. Tolerability of Risk

Cost Benefit and Option Selection

There is a need to demonstrate that a balance between cost, safety and commercial benefit has been made in assessing the level and deployment of resources to achieve the RRP objectives. This should include detailed costs of the RRP proposals assessed on an annual basis, plus start up costs.

A reasonable range of alternative approaches or options need to be considered and documented when arriving at preferred RRP strategies. These may be evaluated using Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA) techniques which consider all relevant costs on a like-for-like basis. A standard approach, such as discounted cash flow, allows the time-value of money i.e. the relative costs of taking immediate or deferred actions, to be taken into consideration. This approach is based upon the concept of Net Present Value (NPV) i.e. all future costs are reduced to current costs for comparison purposes.

A robust CBA process will consider commercial loss in its widest context e.g. property, business interruption, worker dislocation, job losses.

Risk Tolerability

If any risks identified for either the public or for Firefighters, Firefighters (Control) or other fire & rescue authority employees are assessed as intolerable, then the RRP must demonstrate that effective measures are being put in place to reduce these to broadly acceptable or tolerable levels.

F. Changing Demands

Impact of Change

If within the RRP there is a proposal that could result in a change in the facilities (appliances, uniform and equipment, fire stations, training facilities, buildings, transport, duty systems, staffing levels, fire safety enforcement support, etc) which Firefighters and/or Firefighters (Control) may reasonably expect to have at their disposal, then the proposal should demonstrate how this impacts upon their ability to respond to emergency incidents safely and effectively.

Risk Trends

The RRP should specifically address any risk trends and implications which are identified from the available statistical data, and demonstrate how these are managed.

Strategic Funding Plan

The RRP should contain a long term strategic funding plan to secure the necessary investment in new facilities and equipment, including:

fire stations;

uniformed personnel;

fire appliances;

uniforms and equipment;

state of the art mobilising systems and technology;

fire & rescue service and community training facilities;

fire safety offices and equipment;

community fire safety equipment and facilities;

vehicle repair and maintenance support;

the appropriate level of non-uniformed support.

Facility Closure

Where there are proposals within the RRP to downgrade or close existing facilities a clear and robust risk-based case should be made that is based upon unequivocal and reliable statistical evidence which has been gathered/developed over a substantial period of time. The case must demonstrate a clear downturn in the level of incidents attended and the reduction of risk levels in all areas affected by the proposals. The ability to maintain the planned emergency response assessed as being necessary to support relevant Standard Operating Procedures must be demonstrated.

G. Monitoring Performance

Risk Reduction Targets

The RRP should clearly state risk reduction targets and have procedures and resources in place to monitor performance on an on-going basis.

Active Monitoring

Active monitoring should be defined within the RRP to ensure the achievement of specific initiatives and objectives and compliance with performance standards. It is important that these systems are used to measure success and used to reinforce good practice as well as to monitor for problem areas.

The RRP active monitoring systems should provide ongoing feedback and the following elements should be considered for inclusion:

compliance with health and safety;

systematic inspection of equipment;

employee health surveillance;

observation of actual behaviour;

specific initiatives;

audit systems;

regular feedback reports.

The RRP should demonstrate how the outputs of the active monitoring system will be utilised to identify problems with current Standard Operating Procedures and other procedures and standards and so inform the update of the RRP. The RRP should also identify the necessary resources and procedures to ensure that investigation of fires and other emergency incidents can take place in order that lessons can be learned from incidents and any information gained fed back into the RRP.

Reactive Monitoring

As a minimum, the RRP reactive monitoring systems should include the identification and reporting of the following:

- hazards encountered;
- near misses;
- injuries;
- ill health;
- damage to equipment;
- improvements to procedures and standards.

The RRP should demonstrate how the outcome of the reactive monitoring system will be utilised to identify the reasons for the incident, learn from the event, prevent its recurrence and inform the update of the RRP.

H. Reviewing Performance

The RRP should demonstrate that procedures and resources are in place to continually review performance at all levels of the fire & rescue service.

Review Process

The review process reflects the objectives of the planning stage and should include consideration, as a minimum, of the following:

operation of the safety management system i.e. the RRP;

performance of the system as designed;

response of the system to changing circumstances;

results from active and reactive monitoring systems;

results from audits.

Review Schedule

The schedule for the review of performance should be clearly stated to ensure that relevant information is fed back into the RRP in a timely manner.

Information Capture

The RRP should demonstrate that procedures and resources are in place to capture the relevant information for use in both active and reactive monitoring systems including:

- the completion and collation of forms;
- the review of documentation;
- interviews of individuals;
- direct observation by a responsible and competent person.

THE RISK-BASED RESPONSE PLANNING PROCESS

CAST 12 EXAMPLE

Key to Tasks for CAST 12 - Dwelling Fire: Single Occupancy

2 to 4 casualties involved rescue via internal staircase

Firefighting on ground floor. 2 to 4 casualties trapped on upper floor and visible on arrival.

Initial entry via ground floor, and rescue via stairs.

Task No	Task Description
1	Initial information gathering
2	Incident command
3	Cause establishment

4	General fireground liaison
5	Provision of hose reel branch - 2 Firefighters
6	Provision of water from pump/tank - high pressure pump
8	Provision of hose reel branch - 2 Firefighters
11	Provision of water from hydrant to pump/tank - 2 Firefighters
15	BAEC
16	Remove casualty to external opening - BA
17	Remove casualty to place of safety
18	Casualty treatment
19	Liaison with ambulance - Officer
20	Remove casualty to external opening - BA
21	Remove casualty to place of safety
24	Gaining entry to premises with breaking in gear - 2 Firefighters
25	Salvage - 2 Firefighters
27	Ventilation of other areas - BA
28	Damping down - 2 hose reel - BA
29	Turning over - BA - thermal imager

30	Cutting away - BA
31	Isolation of services
35	Resource replenishment water
36	Debrief
37	Ventilation of premises - fire compartment - BA
38	Debris/water removal - with salvage equipment
39	Firefighting/Rescue 2 Firefighters BA - hose reel branch
40	Firefighting/Rescue 2 Firefighters BA - hose reel branch
41	Firefighting/Rescue 2 Firefighters BA - hose reel branch
47	Make up equipment - 6 Firefighters
48	Fireground servicing - 2 BA
49	Fireground servicing - 6 BA
50	Make up equipment - 1 Firefighter



