



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru  
Welsh Assembly Government

# Fire and Rescue Authority Risk Reduction Plan Wales a Safer Country





## Foreword

The Fire and Rescue National Framework for Wales signalled my intention to provide the Fire and Rescue Authorities with guidance on the management of risk. **Fire and Rescue Authority Risk Reduction Plan – Wales a Safer Country** builds on previous guidance, whilst taking into account experience to date. It is intended to provide strategic direction necessary for Authorities to address risk in a structured way whilst embracing the increased emphasis on prevention.



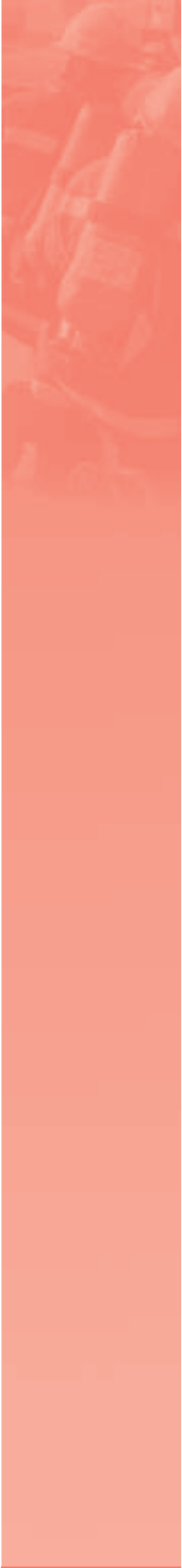
To address risk strategically requires an approach that addresses both corporate and community risk. Fire and Rescue Authorities need to manage a complex environment where they may have competing demands on their resources. Each Authority's Risk Reduction Plan will clearly identify priorities for their Fire and Rescue Service. Fire and Rescue Authorities need the freedom to develop innovative solutions in their quest to manage and reduce risk. However, this needs to be balanced against the views of the communities they serve.

Proposals made under the Authority Risk Reduction Plan must be made in an open and transparent manner, based on evidence that is robust and reliable. Authorities must engage with all stakeholders throughout the development of their plan. Communication, consultation and participation are key to this process. This approach will build upon the high confidence the public already have in each Fire and Rescue Authority.

It is in everyone's interest that Wales becomes a safer place to work, visit, travel and live. I am confident that the **Fire and Rescue Authority Risk Reduction Plan - Wales a Safer Country** will help us achieve this.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Edwina Hart".

**Edwina Hart AM, MBE**  
**Minister for Social Justice and Regeneration**



## Executive Summary

This guidance directs Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) to manage risk in a comprehensive, transparent and robust manner. It allows sufficient scope for local flexibility and innovative ways of delivering their services to citizens and communities they serve. **The primary aim of the Authority's Risk Reduction Plan (RRP) is to reduce risk.**

RRP is a structured approach to managing both corporate and community risk. The Authority's RRP is a fundamental review of risk and a blue print for how they intend to manage risk.


A risk management framework is introduced for FRAs to adopt and will allow FRAs to reduce risk in a consistent, systematic and repeatable manner. **FRAs must have in place a RRP or resulting annual action plan on which they have consulted. Responsibility for preparation of these plans rests with each Authority.**

The aim of RRP is to reduce risk through a managed framework that integrates the FRAs within the wider social justice agenda. The objectives of RRP will allow the FRAs to meet the Welsh Assembly Government's targets for reducing deaths and injuries resulting from fire and road traffic collisions. FRAs are required to publish their plans within the public domain by 31st October.

There is not a standard approach to risk reduction. This guidance introduces and builds on education and prevention, Service Standards and training and development as key aspects of addressing risk. FRAs must design innovative risk reduction approaches for areas that exist outside of these Service Standards.

In the FRAs drive for continuous improvement and risk reduction an evidence-based approach is essential. **The Fire Services Emergency Cover toolkit is not the only modelling tool available to Authorities, but it is the Welsh Assembly Government's preferred option.** FRAs must not rely solely on computer modelling to validate decisions, but utilise other available sources.

Integration of the Authority's RRP with the Welsh Assembly Government's objectives should ensure they focus on the needs of citizens and communities. FRAs will need to engage stakeholders through effective consultation and participation. This will ensure that citizens and communities have their views, values and opinions considered by the FRA.



**FRAs must consult widely on their RRP and resultant action plans and allow a minimum of 12 weeks for the consultation process.** Informal discussions between the Welsh Assembly Government and the FRAs will take place to build upon the already established approach of collaborative and partnership working.

# Introduction

The Fire and Rescue National Framework for Wales established the Welsh Assembly Government's commitment to reducing risk. In order for each Fire and Rescue Authority (FRA) to address this, RRP guidance has now been developed for Wales. **The Fire and Rescue Authority Risk Reduction Plan – Wales a Safer Country** replaces the previous guidance and policy of Integrated Risk Management Planning.

Each FRA must produce a RRP or annual action plan that focuses on community and corporate risk in a holistic way. The RRP is a strategic document that sets the agenda for the both the FRA and the Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) alike.

Each RRP must be accessible and presented in a clear and concise manner to citizens, communities, businesses and other stakeholders. The RRP must be closely linked to corporate and performance objectives of the FRA.

This RRP guidance gives the FRAs a risk management framework to identify and assess risk. Adopting this framework allows the FRA to allocate resources against known or foreseen risk, whilst considering other competing demands.

Further supplementary information and guidance for FRAs will continue to develop over time. It is envisaged that this information will be issued by Wales Fire and Rescue Service Circulars.

This RRP guidance is set out in 6 Chapters:

- Chapter 1 - A Risk Management Framework
- Chapter 2 - Principles of the Fire and Rescue Authority Risk Reduction Plan
- Chapter 3 - Addressing Risk
- Chapter 4 - Evidence Based Development
- Chapter 5 - Integration of RRP and Risk Management within the Wider Public Service Agendas
- Chapter 6 - Consultation and Participation in the Development of RRP.



# Chapter 1: A Risk Management Framework

## Introduction

As society becomes more complex the duty of meeting the public's expectations whilst developing new and innovative ways of preventing emergency incidents is demanding and challenging. The 21<sup>st</sup> Century has seen a number of naturally occurring and man made disasters that have tested the emergency services. Managing the uncertainty whilst taking opportunities to improve public safety are the challenges that everyone who serves in the FRA face. A risk management approach will ensure FRAs deliver services that are good value, resulting in better decisions for the communities of Wales.

Effective risk management contributes to the better use of resources in reducing risk, whilst improving teamwork and promoting a shared trust in the FRAs from all stakeholders.

Such an approach will promote strong partnerships between the FRA, Welsh Assembly Government, citizens and communities. Risk management covers all aspects of the FRA, including: financial, human resource, health and safety, operational and their reputation. The FRA's RRP is designed to support strategic decision-making.

An integrated approach to risk management builds upon core public service values as identified within the Welsh Assembly Government's vision for public services<sup>1</sup>. This is supported by the Welsh Assembly Government's five-year action plan for delivering better services to Wales<sup>2</sup>, which establishes what, how and where public services should be delivered. **Wales a Better Country**<sup>3</sup> states that public services in Wales need to focus on the needs of the communities and individuals. Further guidance on RRP integration is contained within Chapter 5.

## What is Risk Management?

The Welsh Assembly Government acknowledges the expertise that FRAs and FRSs possess in terms of risk management. However, it is imperative that the terminology relating to risk management and risk reduction used in this guidance is understood by all. There are distinct phases of risk management, which include hazard identification, hazard analysis and risk assessment leading to risk control and planning culminating in a risk management approach to reducing the risk.

**Hazard** - can be defined as something that can cause adverse effects.

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<sup>1</sup> Making the Connections: Delivering Better Services for Wales – October 2004

<sup>2</sup> Delivering the Connections: From Vision to Action – June 2005

<sup>3</sup> Wales a Better Country – September 2003

**Risk** - is the uncertainty that surrounds the future. Risk can also be described as the likelihood of the hazard causing adverse effect.

**Risk management** - combines risk analysis with appropriate control measures. Risk management allows the application of a framework that controls risk in a visible, repeatable and consistently applied manner, whilst supporting strategic decision-making.

There are many and varied approaches to risk assessment that range from quantifying risk to using professional judgement. Whatever method of risk assessment or analysis is used the outcome of assessment and any proposals emanating from the assessment must be validated, transparent and stand scrutiny.

Proposals and options presented should be considered against an options appraisal and must be proportionate to the risk. All risk management has an associated cost, whether it is an opportunity cost or financial cost. It must be remembered that risk control rarely eliminates risk, it serves to control it within acceptable levels.

Risk will change with time. Therefore, regular reviewing and monitoring will be required to ensure risk remains acceptable to the FRA. Risk management is effective when identified risk is reduced or controlled to an acceptable level with available resources. Regular review will deliver assurance that the strategic direction established by the FRA remains appropriate, proportionate and effective.

FRA and senior management ownership, support and leadership are critical to ensure risk management continues and develops. Communication throughout the FRA is essential for the Authority to build a risk management culture that promotes innovation. Risk management must be embedded within management decisions and linked to corporate objectives. Developing a framework that is transparent, open and repeatable is key to successful risk management.

**Holistic risk management** - is a strategic process that is systematic, proactive, continuous and broad in its vision. This strategic approach to managing risk is required by the Authority to set the direction and establish priorities balanced against opportunities and threats, whilst balancing costs and risks to the FRA. Whilst preparing their RRP, FRAs will need to consider amongst other priorities, technological advances, legislative changes, the social/demographic and linguistic composition that make up their area.

Throughout the whole process of risk management FRAs need to communicate with stakeholders to ensure they understand the FRA's search for continuous improvement. Communication is a continuous process that FRAs need to engage in an open and proactive way.

RRPs should reflect a holistic approach to risk management – reviewing both corporate and community risk. This will demonstrate their willingness to be outward looking, identifying both opportunities and threats. It will allow FRAs to align resources to identified risks based on need. This should enable FRAs to deliver services to the communities of Wales that are effective, based on an economic use of resources and efficient methods of working.

Robust and inclusive risk management should build community engagement in the delivery of FRA services. At an individual level it should assist with workforce development and strengthen individual ability to anticipate, assess and manage risk, whilst allowing them to contribute to the success of the FRA.



# Chapter 2: Principles of the Fire & Rescue Authority Risk Reduction Plan

## Introduction

The Fire and Rescue National Framework for Wales established the priorities for risk reduction.

**An Authority's RRP must make an assessment of risk, analyse the risk and deploy resources appropriately. FRAs must not only focus on the community but must also consider their corporate risk and business environment.**

The FRA's RRP must identify the Authority's aspirations and actions in reducing risk. The RRP is a live document that must be reviewed and monitored on a regular basis to ensure FRAs maintain focus on existing and emerging risk and that proposals made and actioned are having the planned outcome. RRP is based on a fundamental review of risk. Proposals must be managed carefully to ensure changes are planned, considered and justified against robust evidence that supports the proposed change.

## Aim of Fire and Rescue Authority Risk Reduction Planning

The aim of RRP is to reduce risk through a managed framework that integrates the FRAs within the wider social justice agenda in Wales.

## Objectives of Risk Reduction Planning

In order for FRAs to achieve the targets of the Welsh Assembly Government they must establish a strategy aimed at:

- Reducing the number of fires and other emergency incidents;
- Reducing the loss of life in fires and other emergency incidents;
- Reducing the number and severity of injuries in fires and other emergency incidents;
- Reducing the commercial, economic and social impact of fires and other emergency incidents;
- Safeguarding the environment and heritage, both built and natural;
- Providing services that are Value for Money (VFM); and
- Integrating the activities of their FRS within the wider social justice agenda.

## Responsibilities of FRAs

FRAs must ensure they manage risk in a cost effective and efficient way, whilst using resources in a flexible and economic manner. **Responsibility for preparation of the RRP rests with each FRA. The RRP is the Authority's plan and indicates how it will manage risk; it is the FRS which actions and implements the plan.** The RRP is a strategic plan that clearly identifies risk and initiates control measures that the FRA deems appropriate. The Welsh Assembly Government will continue to support FRAs with strategic direction and policies.

The operating environment and the pace of change both internal to the FRA and the external environment will determine the longevity of the current RRP. Within the life of the plan the FRA will determine the level of focus it provides. **Annual action plans must identify the focus of the FRA for the following financial year, which must clearly identify any changes they will be implementing in the year ahead.** Annual action plans must be clearly linked to the current RRP.

The RRP must be clear and precise about the intended actions of the FRA by identifying how they intend to manage risk. **The plan will also need to identify the ways in which the FRA can work in partnership with neighbouring authorities and agencies in delivering their services to the citizens and communities of Wales.**

**FRAs will need to develop, consult, approve and publish their RRP and annual action plans by 31<sup>st</sup> October** for implementation in the following financial year.

This should allow sufficient time for the Authority to identify risk, consult on proposals, review the consultation and publish the RRP or annual action plans as appropriate.

Consultation on proposed changes is an essential element for FRAs whilst preparing RRP and annual action plans. Meaningful communication and consultation will ensure the FRA's stakeholders are fully engaged and participate in the process of continuous improvement. Openness and transparency must be achieved with FRAs presenting their RRP and annual action plans in a manner that clearly explains to a wide range of stakeholders their proposals and the intended outcome. **FRAs must demonstrate they have considered the responses emanating from their consultation.**

FRAs must consult widely and allow a **minimum of 12 weeks** for the consultation process.

**Monitoring and reviewing existing plans is essential** for FRAs to plot success of the plan against established objectives and strategies. It is also important to ensure the continued relevance of previous decisions and to demonstrate to stakeholders that there has been no increase in overall risk as a result of those earlier decisions.

When developing RRP, FRAs will need to consider the safety of all of their personnel, in particular **fire-fighter safety**, ensuring proposals do not compromise Standard Operating Procedures. Additionally, FRAs need to recognise the FRS commitment as a category 1 responder to Local Resilience Forums and the need to deliver UK resilience under the auspices of the New Dimension programme.

FRAs will need to integrate fire safety inspections, community safety initiatives and intervention response arrangements, but also consider the wider Welsh Assembly Government's agendas that are impacting upon the public services. Integration of this risk-based approach is described in Chapter 5. FRAs must consider the diversity of the population they serve in order to design services that meet the needs of an inclusive community.

## Contents of a Risk Reduction Plan

Each RRP is specific to the risk identification of individual FRAs but is expected to contain the following:

- **Identification of risk** - as a first priority each FRA will need to identify risk, corporate and community. Each FRA will need to utilise appropriate established intelligence, such as, the Community Risk Register produced under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. It is essential that the FRA identifies historical data to assist in future predictions.
- **Effectiveness of current control measures** - it is necessary for FRAs to examine existing control measures and evaluate their effectiveness. This review will allow opportunities for improvement to be identified, whilst establishing the effectiveness of current resource allocation.
- **Identification of opportunities for improvement** - FRAs must focus on the increased emphasis on prevention based services. Improvement of service provision should be tailored to allow the FRA to achieve the specific objectives of the Welsh Assembly Government in its approach to RRP. FRAs may need to adopt an incremental approach to reducing risk and resource allocation, and should present options for improvement within its RRP.
- **Service Standards** - FRAs must be transparent in the manner they communicate Service Standards with citizens and communities they serve. They may wish to publish a map of the areas where the FRA will be delivering the established Service Standards or community fire safety initiatives.
- **Outcome of proposed changes** - the FRA must present anticipated benefits on how the proposed changes will reduce risk.

In any review of stations FRAs must not only consider existing and anticipated activity levels, but also the interoperability of the station, changing levels of demand throughout the day, week or time of year and the wider role of the station in providing resilience.

To summarise, FRAs must have in place and maintain a RRP or resulting annual action plan that clearly identifies both corporate and community risk. The plan must detail how the FRA intend to manage risk and identify the intended outcome, FRAs must:

- Demonstrate they have adopted a holistic risk management framework;
- Produce a RRP or resultant annual action plan on which they have consulted;
- Have due regard for Welsh Assembly Government guidance in producing their plans;
- Utilise resources in an efficient, effective and economic manner; and
- Be engaged in the wider social justice agenda within their communities.

The outcome of this risk-based approach should be a RRP that clearly illustrates the Authority's commitment to continuous improvement and how they intend to allocate their resources whilst managing risk in a robust and open manner. **The desired outcome of deploying FRA resources must be the reduction of risk.**

The Annex contains questions that FRAs may wish to consider when developing their RRP or annual action plans.

# Chapter 3: Addressing Risk

## Education and Prevention

The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 places a statutory duty on each FRA to promote fire safety in its area. In particular they must provide information and promote safety to prevent fire deaths and injuries, limit the spread of fire and give advice to persons on means of escape from buildings or property.

Community fire safety has a key role to play in meeting the Welsh Assembly Government's targets. The Welsh Assembly Government has established two committees to assist and advise on the development and implementation of policy; the Wales Fire and Rescue Service Advisory Committee (WFRSAC) and the Community Fire Safety Committee (CFSC). FRAs should reflect the deliberations of these committees in their education and prevention activities.

Education and prevention must be directed at the most vulnerable within the community, ensuring those who need the services of the FRA actually receive it. Feeling safe is a very important factor in the well being of the population, FRAs need to adopt a targeted response to ensure this is achieved.

The Welsh Assembly Government has been working with the three FRSs to develop teaching material that covers the 4 key stages of education and learning in schools. This has resulted in a unified programme of fire safety to schoolchildren. FRAs are encouraged to promote this as best practice and are required to pay due regard to this important strand of education and prevention activity. Key Stage 1 learning material has been launched with additional material for subsequent key stages to follow.

This initial material has been achieved by combining the expertise and experience of the Community Fire Safety Departments in Wales to produce core-teaching materials in both English and Welsh that contain a consistent fire safety message within the Personal and Social Education Framework Wales. All schools in Wales will be provided with work booklets to be distributed to pupils. The workbooks include activities covering all aspects of fire safety and intend to encourage a more responsible attitude towards fire. Also included is a fire safety questionnaire for parents and guardians.

The Welsh Assembly Government is funding a pilot of Arson Reduction Teams (ARTs); the team consists of a police and fire and rescue secondee with specialist community communication skills. During the FRA's RRP the work of this team will need to be reviewed and developed to ensure the success of these teams is sustained.

FRAs also need to recognise the positive impact the use of their resources have, and in particular the positive role model and image that all FRS personnel presents to the

community and young people. FRSs already engage in very positive work; this helps build community cohesion, reduces community risk and promotes good citizenship. FRAs are encouraged to continue this good work through their innovative approach to ensure all sectors of society are engaged in this wider social justice agenda.

## Service Standards

There is an expectation from the citizens and communities of Wales that fire appliances and resources will arrive quickly to a fire in their home or workplace. Additionally, they expect FRAs to respond to a range of other emergency situations. To this end the FRSs deserve their reputation for providing an effective and professional response to fires and other emergency incidents.

Although the FRA need to place a greater emphasis on preventing fires from occurring in the first place, the need for an effective response to anticipated or actual incidents that do occur must not be diminished. FRAs will also need to develop their capacity to respond to new challenges, such as, terrorist incidents in accordance with emerging needs of the national New Dimension programme.

In the summer of 2005 the Welsh Assembly Government established a technical working group to review Service Standards. **Service Standards will be introduced in Wales.** Initial Service Standards focus on life risk and will be developed to ensure citizens, communities and businesses understand them. The thrust of RRP in Wales is for FRAs to allocate resources appropriately to risk.

**FRAs must clearly demonstrate the level of service that citizens and communities can expect to receive; this information must be based on established Service Standards and community fire safety initiatives.** This promotes open and honest communication between the FRAs and communities they serve, it also allows stakeholders to evaluate the effectiveness of the service against an established standard.

It is envisaged that Service Standards in Wales will develop to reflect the range of activities that the FRAs are engaged in, such as, road traffic collisions, fires in other buildings and other emergency incidents etc.

Whilst these standards will evolve over time, the issue of weight of response in respect of number of fire-fighters and the equipment dispatched to incidents will be the subject of specific consideration by individual FRAs. This allows for local solutions to be developed for local risks. The Authority will need to recognise safe systems of work that are required to ensure fire-fighter and community safety are not compromised. FRAs must define the scenario that each risk attracts, decide the weight of response and determine when resources will arrive.

FRA should ensure a professional and effective response is available to meet the range of incidents they may encounter. This includes:

- Staff are trained to professional standards, are familiar with risks and understand the concept of risk management and reduction;
- Effective command and control systems are in place;
- Incident commanders have appropriate training and experience;
- The right equipment is available and staff are fully supported with appropriate resources to deal effectively with incidents, within agreed Service Standards, to ensure the safety of those undertaking the tasks; and
- Working together as appropriate.

## Training and Development

Personnel working within the FRA require appropriate skills and knowledge commensurate with their role within the organisation. Integrated Personal Development System (IPDS) is a competence-based approach that is targeted at individuals and their specific developmental needs. Individual competence is based on skills, knowledge and understanding with the individual acquiring and maintaining an agreed level of competence commensurate with role.

It is essential that all staff possess the required competence to effectively and safely manage their working environment, whether it be operational or corporate.

During the development of proposals under RRP, **each FRA will need to review the competence of all its personnel.** FRAs must ensure their standard operating procedures, policies and competence of personnel match the resources available to reduce risk.

## Corporate Risk

Understanding the FRAs corporate risk will need an intimate knowledge and a sound understanding of the FRA and the environment in which it operates. Identifying corporate risk is critical to the sustainability and continuity of the vital services FRAs provide to the communities of Wales. FRAs may wish to consider some specific areas during its corporate assessment of risk:

- **Strategic** - long term strategic objectives, such as, regulatory changes, reputation and changes to the physical environment;
- **Operational** - the day to day issues that affect the FRA as it strives to deliver its corporate objectives;
- **Financial** - impacts that may prevent effective management, stewardship and control of finances;

- **Compliance** - these affect FRAs ability to meet health and safety, environmental, data protection, employment practices and regulatory issues;
- **Business Continuity** - FRAs must recognise the commitment FRSs have under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 to have in place adequate business continuity plans; and
- **Technology** - FRAs should consider the advances in technology and how these could best be used.

The above is by no means definitive, but should act to stimulate thought and discussion whilst FRAs are conducting their RRP. Assessing corporate risk will allow FRAs to develop a holistic approach to risk reduction through a robust risk management framework.

# Chapter 4: Evidence Based Development

## Introduction

FRA's must produce RRP's that address local opportunities and risks. **RRP's must be forward-looking and shaped by evidence rather than a response to short-term pressures. RRP's should tackle causes and not the symptoms.**

## Fire Services Emergency Cover Toolkit (FSEC)

FSEC is widely available to Authorities to enable them to predict and manage the risks within their areas. While FSEC is not the only modelling tool available to Authorities, it is the Welsh Assembly Government's preferred tool for gathering and interpreting evidence to inform the development of proposals contained within the FRA's RRP.

FSEC can inform the decision-making process in the placement of operational resources, by testing proposed changes to operational cover.

The use of computer modelling must not be the sole factor in taking such decisions. Authorities will need to validate the information provided by FSEC from other sources and in discussion with personnel, experts in the field and communities affected by the decisions.

When presenting the evidence in the RRP, Authorities must ensure they explain the benefits and assess the implications upon individuals and communities. Evidence must be presented in a form that the audience can understand. As well as assessing the immediate impact, a longer-term view should also be taken.



# Chapter 5: Integration of RRP and Risk Management within the Wider Public Service Agendas

Risk management taken in isolation is an insular approach that will not identify the true risk to the FRA. Holistic risk management is essential in our ever-increasing complex world, especially where there are competing demands for scarce resources. FRAs have two distinct operating environments, which have their own inherent risks; the external community risk and the internal corporate risk. Both environments require careful management if risks are to be reduced or controlled to an acceptable level, opportunities are to be exploited and threats are to be identified.

Public services in Wales, including the FRAs, need to focus on the needs of the communities and individuals alike. An integrated holistic risk management approach will allow each FRA to tailor its resources to identified risk. Each FRA through its effective consultation and participation needs to engage with citizens and communities to ensure their views on service provision are considered.

The following chapter is not exhaustive but identifies to FRAs the level of integration that the Welsh Assembly Government expects from the FRAs whilst they prepare their RRP.

The Welsh Assembly Government has established strategic agendas for the public services in Wales. These include the following:

## **Wales - A Better Country**

The strategic direction of this agenda is rooted in a vision that the country becomes fairer, more prosperous, healthier, better educated and where social justice is embedded within policy making. Key to this strategic vision is smarter working and working together to make a bigger and longer-lasting impact of the Welsh Assembly Government and key service providers.

FRAs will need to recognise this vision in the development of their RRP. The vision of this strategy is for a sustainable future where action for social, economic and environmental improvement work together to create positive change.

One single department or agency can not deliver this vision. FRAs through their RRP should be able to identify ways in which they can influence this agenda and contribute to the wider inclusion of social justice in Wales. FRAs RRP must also identify the way in which the Authority intends to collaborate and work in partnership with other agencies and stakeholders.

## **Making the Connections: Delivering Better Services for Wales and Delivering the Connections – From Vision to Action**

The Welsh Assembly Government's vision is that public services are essential to a prosperous, sustainable, healthier and a better educated Wales. Joint working is vital to deliver public services of top quality; they must be responsive to the needs of individuals and communities, delivered efficiently and driven by a commitment to equality and social justice. In order to deliver this commitment to the public services the Welsh Assembly Government has published a 5-year action plan.

A collaborative model fits within Wales as its geographical pattern is distinct and the attitudes and values of the population is one of a sense of ownership in the public services. FRAs need to include citizens and communities in the development of their RRP to ensure their views and experiences are used by the FRA. This will allow FRAs to forge long and lasting relationships on which each RRP and annual action plan will continue to evolve to suit local needs and risks.

FRAs must design the allocation of their resources in a flexible manner that supports the reduction of risk. Effective, inclusive and open communication and consultation will ensure control measures and proposals made under the FRA's RRP are fully appreciated by all stakeholders.

FRAs need to design services with other agencies and partners in an innovative and planned way to ensure they are delivered in a sustained and efficient manner.

### **People, Places, Futures – The Wales Spatial Plan**

This plan provides the basis for working together on shared local agendas; providing distinct local approaches to local problems.

Spatial planning is about reflecting local activities and investments across a geographical area in a clear and honest manner in order to shape the future of services being provided. FRAs need to pay cognisance to this strategic plan and other emerging groupings to ensure a joined-up and collaborative approach is adopted to local issues; ensuring a sustainable future is achieved. This will ensure the FRA's RRP will have due regard to the impact of their proposals on other sectors or administrative boundaries.

When designing services and proposals under RRP, FRAs need to recognise the distinctiveness of the communities that exist throughout Wales. Through effective communication, consultation and participation FRAs can build upon the already established sense of place and pride within the communities they serve. The challenge for FRAs will be to retain this sense of place and pride whilst embracing and promoting cultural changes that exist in our society today.

In summary, the FRAs need to engage with a wide spectrum of stakeholders to ensure the agendas impacting on the public services are recognised. The Welsh Assembly Government's policies are designed to ensure that the people of Wales receive the highest standards of public services. Each FRA has an important role to play in contributing towards this searching agenda.

## **Wales Programme for Improvement (WPI)**

WPI is built on a process of self-review and improvement established against a risk assessment, where Authorities seek arrangements for continuous improvement. A programme of self-assessment will allow each FRA to identify the main opportunities, threats and constraints they face in meeting their aims.

By the very nature of the distinctively Welsh focus of RRP, FRAs will be undertaking a fundamental review of their whole operating environment; community and corporate.

There is an emerging understanding amongst key stakeholders that where possible, planning processes and plans should be streamlined and unified as far as possible. This is considered to be the case with RRP and WPI – Fire.

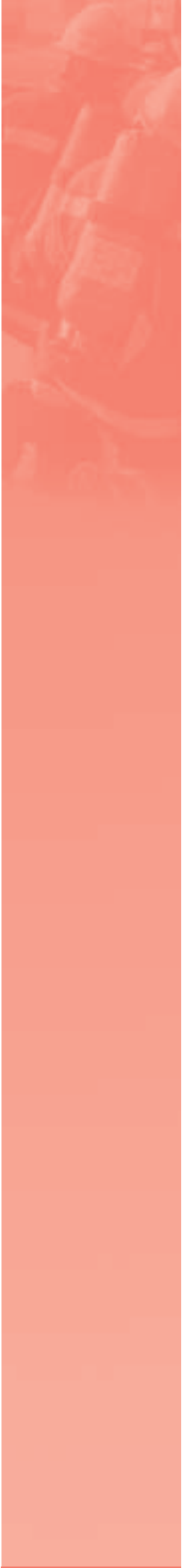
It has always been a principle of WPI - Fire that regulation should support improvement; it should not simply highlight where action is required, but it should be part of the solution.

The full detail on the integration of these two processes will emerge under the guidance that emanates from WPI - Fire.

## **Financial Planning Cycles**

This initial guidance allows FRAs to integrate their RRP with their financial planning processes. Prudent resource planning needs to consider the financial implications of the proposals being made under the FRA's RRP. The full impact of proposals can be identified early allowing the FRA to consider the options available to them whilst considering their financial climate.

A key objective of the Welsh Assembly Government is to assist Local Authorities to plan more efficiently over a longer time horizon than is currently the case. The Welsh Assembly Government is consulting on the introduction of three-year revenue and capital settlements for Local Authorities, including the FRAs. FRAs will be notified of developments within this area as and when they are available.



# Chapter 6: Consultation and Participation in the Development of RRP

## What is consultation?

Consultation and participation are a means of engaging individuals and organisations in the discussion, shaping and delivery of policy. It is the formal process by which outside interests and views are asked for on proposed policies stemming from the RRP. It is a way of testing the proposals contained within the RRP with those with an interest and/or expertise and of demonstrating a willingness to make changes or amend proposals as a result of responses received. Consultation is not an option. It is a statutory duty.

## Who should be involved?

Involving citizens, communities and personnel in shaping the proposals from the outset through to formal consultation will lead to better and more inclusive policy-making by the FRA. Authorities must, as a matter of course, consult all those who have an interest in the RRP. A diversity of views must be sought to test received wisdom and avoid unintended consequences. FRAs must work with representative and community groups through wide-ranging media and information campaigns to ensure they reach as wide an audience as possible.

The Welsh Assembly Government would expect FRAs to consult as widely as possible and with those who are directly affected by any proposals being made. The following list is not exhaustive and is supplied for consideration:

- The general public served by the FRA. FRAs need to consider how to engage the populations they serve as widely as possible; methods could include leaflet drops in communities specifically affected by proposals in the RRP; local media and public meetings;
- Community organisations, including specific community groups such as ethnic minority and other often excluded groups. There are three statutory equality organisations – the Equal Opportunities Commission, the Commission for Racial Equality and the Disability Rights Commission, as well as groups such as the All Wales Ethnic Minority Association, Wales Women’s National Coalition, Stonewall Cymru and Disability Wales;
- Public representatives including politicians representing the local area;
- Local business and business representative organisations such as the Federation of Small Business Wales and Chambers of Commerce and Trade;
- Local Authorities, Town and Community Councils, public agencies and other emergency services, including neighbouring FRAs with which the consulting FRA

may have reciprocal agreements (i.e. reinforcement schemes), Local Resilience Forums, etc;

- Employees and their representatives; and
- Assembly Members and Welsh Assembly Government as the elected representatives of the people of Wales and the body with principal responsibility for fire and rescue issues in Wales.

The FRAs and the Welsh Assembly Government enjoy good working relationships in the development of strategic policies. As a continued commitment to collaborative and partnership working FRAs must informally discuss proposals and options within their RRP and annual action plans with the Minister for Social Justice and Regeneration prior to the FRA commencing its public consultation. The National Assembly's Social Justice and Regeneration Committee may also wish to view the FRA's RRP or subsequent annual action plans.

Wide inclusive consultation and participation with stakeholders will ensure robust and inclusive decisions are taken, whilst promoting ownership, responsibility, transparency and openness. Internal to the FRS it should also increase motivation, morale, learning and teamwork. Communication and consultation is required with both internal and external stakeholders. This will ensure the perception of risk, the risk management process and expectations are understood by all partners. This will allow expectations of stakeholders to be managed against FRAs priorities.

## Risk Management Framework

A risk management framework is shown below. The framework has 8 distinct components, which will allow for a robust approach to risk management and the production of the Authority's RRP.

- 1 Scan the environment** - this involves FRAs conducting a critical review of its operating environment to identify opportunities, threats and hazards.
- 2 Contextualise risk** - once opportunities, threats and hazards have been identified FRAs will need to define what these mean in terms of risk to the Authority.
- 3 Assess impact and establish priorities** - this is when the FRA will determine their acceptable level of risk and establish their own priorities.
- 4 Develop options** - by determining their acceptable level of risk, each FRA must establish options for reducing the risk.
- 5 Select the strategy** - when selecting a strategy FRAs must determine the control measures they feel appropriate and proportionate to the risk.
- 6 Consult stakeholders and consider responses** - during the consultation FRAs must also make available their risk assessments and evidence they have used to propose the chosen strategy. FRAs must consider views of the consultees and publish their response to the comments submitted.
- 7 Implement strategy** - following consultation FRAs can then implement their proposals or amended proposals as determined by the consultation.
- 8 Monitor, evaluate and review strategy** - once a strategy has been implemented it will require evaluation against established objectives. The environment within which the FRAs operate will require monitoring to ensure the RRP remains valid and current.



The following is a list of questions that FRAs may wish to consider in the development of their RRP. This list is not intended to be exhaustive but to act in stimulating thought and debate within the FRA.

## Identification of risk

- How many and what type of incidents has the FRS attended?
- How serious were the incidents?
- How many fatalities and injuries have been attributed to fires, road traffic collisions or other emergency incidents?
- What are the causes of fire, road traffic collisions or other emergency incidents?
- How many rescues have the FRS conducted?
- Have there been any changes or are there any impending changes in legislation?
- Have there been any changes to policy (either internal or external)?
- What are the demographics of the community within the FRA area?
- What is the risk profile of the communities within the FRA area?

## Effectiveness of current control

- How effective are existing control measures; prevention, education and intervention?
- How efficient is the current allocation of resources?
- How effective is communication with stakeholders?
- How do injury rates to personnel compare to previous years and other FRSs?
- What responses have the FRA received from their stakeholders on the quality of services provided?
- What responses have staff made to the FRA on existing control measures?
- Are services being delivered that best utilise the FRA's resources?

## Identification of opportunities for improvement

- Could the FRA have reduced deaths and injuries from fires, road traffic collisions or other emergency incidents by using their resources differently?
- Could resources be deployed in a more efficient, effective or economic manner?
- What education, prevention or intervention initiatives might the FRA embark upon in the future?
- Will changes in legislation allow the FRA greater opportunity for improvement?
- Are resources allocated against known risks and priorities?

## Service Standards

- What is the existing level of performance against Service Standards and established objectives?
- Is there any spare capacity within the FRS for new or additional work?
- How effective are prevention, education and intervention based services?
- Against risk, what level of special appliance provision is required?
- Have personnel the required competence to operate within their known or predicted environment?
- How effective are existing safe systems of work?
- Are section 13 and 14 provisions in place to ensure interoperability and the best use of resources?

## Outcome of proposed changes

- How will the proposed change be managed?
- How will the outcome of the changes be measured?
- How will the FRAs proposals be reviewed and monitored?
- How will the FRA sustain communication with stakeholders throughout the change programme?