

Circular



Circular number W-FRSC(06)08

Date issued 21 March 2006

Status: For Information**Title: Service Standards To Fires In The Home****Issued by:**Kingsley Rees
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This circular formally issues Service Standards to Fire and Rescue Authorities. It sets out the detail of the standard and requests Fire and Rescue Authorities to integrate them in the development of their RRP and risk reduction strategies.

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1.0 Service Standards to Fires in the Home

- 1.1 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 Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) to respond to a range of other emergency situations. To this end the Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs) deserve their reputation for providing an effective and professional response to fires and other emergencies.
- 1.2 Service Standards or attendance standards as they were previously known are not new. The UK was covered by what was known as the '1985 Standards of Fire Cover'. These standards were prescriptive, inflexible and designed to limit the spread of fire from one property to another. They took little account of life risk or any account of built fire safety measures within the property. Subsequently, areas were graded by building density, type and occupancy. This resulted in an area being graded according to building risk and required the FRA to attend the area within a prescribed time. These attendance standards were repealed by UK Government.
- 1.3 In the summer of 2005 the Assembly Government established a technical working group to review this important area of development. The work of the group resulted in the development of Service Standards for attendance to fires in the home. The Welsh Assembly Government considers Service Standards to be an area of a FRAs risk reduction strategy that will further evolve over time.
- 1.4 Although the FRAs need to place a greater emphasis on preventing fires from occurring in the first place, the need for an effective response to those emergency incidents that do occur or are anticipated is not diminished.
- 1.5 **The Welsh Assembly Government will introduce Service Standards 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.
- 1.6 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.
- 1.7 **Service Standards for Attendance to Fires in the Home**
- 1.8 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).
- 1.9 **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 recognises 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.**
- 1.10 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.

1.11 The additional risk reduction strategies must be tailored to the need of the citizen or communities. Service Standards are an assurance to a level of service that people can expect to receive. It is important to stress that intervention is the final stage of risk control. FRAs must proactively target their community fire safety strategies in an attempt to prevent fires in the home from occurring.