

BACKGROUND

Prior to the devolvement of Fire Policy to the National Assembly Government in November 2004, performance monitoring would have been undertaken as part of Best Value Legislation. Best Value legislation required the Authority to publish an Annual Best Value Performance & Business Plan, this requirement was removed for 2005/2006.

A WPI Steering Group was established in order to inform the audit review and performance monitoring process for Fire & Rescue Services. This forum recommended arrangements for reporting in the interim period before the WPI-FRA process had been fully agreed and implemented. This process was followed for in 2005/2006 and a Performance plan was produced according to this guidance.

IMPLEMENTATION OF WPI

Guidance on WPI-FRA was expected in the early part of 2006, the process has yet to be finalised but draft guidance on WPI-FRA was issued in May 2006 and this has provided information on the requirements of the process.

A structure that reflects issues and approaches distinct to Wales will be adopted when looking at best value requirements. The WPI guidance for Local Authorities in Wales, which addresses the outcomes of 'Making the Connections' has been used as a basis for this guidance.

Operational Assurance has been recognised as a key area for performance monitoring, and a team from the Welsh FRS's, Wales Audit Office and WAG has developed an operational assurance process. This will allow operational assurance practices in Wales to align to WPI and to provide valuable source information for individual Risk Reduction Plans and for reporting purposes.

The improvement process for FRAs should reflect elements as defined in the National Framework and should integrate fully with existing systems for business, risk reduction and budget planning. The guidance does however, provide a broad context within which FRAs can operate, rather than an extra set of processes, which operate and develop in isolation. It has been acknowledged that FRAs may, in future wish to publish one document where an Annual Improvement Plan will include the RRP report in order to remove the burden of reporting on several issues.

In the absence of the detailed implementation of WPI Fire, WAO have recommended that a similar interim approach to the previous year will be adopted for 2006-2007 and in line with WPI principles, FRAs in Wales will produce a Performance and Improvement Plan for 2006-2007 that includes the following: -

- A summary of the authority's strategic objectives and priorities for improvement.
- Arrangements for addressing the authority's improvement priorities in 2006 - 2007.
- Details of performance in 2005-06
- Outturn performance over the past year (i.e. 2005 - 2006) on all Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs)
- Targets for the current year (2006 - 2007).

M&WWF&RS 2005/06 Performance Plan

The attached Performance Plan has been prepared to incorporate the information as directed. This will, where appropriate, also include links to other strategic documents such as the IRMP and Risk Reduction Plans and Business Plans. This plan will be a strategic plan, which although published on the Service Web Site, will not generally be available in hard copy for publication, except on request.