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Status	Invitation to respond to consultation		

Consultation Exercise: 2006-08 National Framework and Strategy for Children & Young People

Issued by:

Rebecca Pearse, Fire Service Improvement Team

Addressed to:

**The Chair of the Fire and Rescue Authority
The Chief Executive of the County Council
The Clerk to the Fire and Rescue Authority
The Clerk to the Combined Fire and Rescue
Authority
The Commissioner of the London Fire and
Emergency Planning Authority
The Chief Fire Officer**

Summary

This Circular asks for responses to questions related to the draft Fire and Rescue National Framework for 2006-08 and the draft Fire and Rescue Service Strategy for Children and Young People. Responses will be considered in drafting the final Framework document and the final Strategy for Children and Young People.

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1.0 Draft Fire and Rescue Service National Framework

1.1 The Government is responsible for setting clear priorities and objectives for the Fire and Rescue Service (FRS). The National Framework sets out:

- The Government's expectations for the FRS
- What Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) are expected to do; and
- What support the Government will provide.

1.2 The National Framework underlines the Government's long term commitment to improving fire and rescue services. To ensure the Framework is a product of partnership and in recognition that its lifespan is now for two years, we are consulting on a full draft of the National Framework document for 2006-2008.

2.0 Draft Fire and Rescue Service Strategy for Children & Young People

2.1 The FRS has unique strengths in supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged young people and reducing risks to them and to their communities. Its contribution is key to the Government's commitment to better services for children and young people, and better support for those at risk. But recent Green Papers on children and young people, as well as the White Paper on public health, the Prolific Offenders Strategy and the introduction of Local Area Agreements, have set a new context and new standards for this work.

2.2 The draft Children and Young People's Strategy seeks to meet this challenge by setting clear goals, to be delivered by a real change in approach. The goals are to prevent fire deaths and injuries to children and young people and to prevent them becoming involved in fire crime and anti-social behaviour. It sets out commitments to involving children and young people, joint development and delivery with partners, comprehensive evaluation and review of impact, and high quality professional development for staff. The aim is to ensure that work with children and young people by the Service is focussed on effective risk reduction, is targeted on the disadvantaged and tailored to individual needs, and is a mainstream activity for the service.

2.3 This Strategy is intended to guide FRSs in drawing up their IRMPs, in developing local partnerships, and in contributing to local youth and crime strategies and Local Area Agreements.

2.4 The draft National Framework requires FRAs to have regard to the Strategy in work with children and young people that they decide to undertake. But it will be for FRAs to decide what type and extent of work is appropriate for their areas, in accordance with local priorities identified in IRMPs.

3.0 Consultation

3.1 The draft National Framework for 2006-08 and the draft Strategy can be found at <http://www.odpm.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1123811>.

- 3.2 Hard copies have been sent to each FRA as well as a number of other stakeholder groups. This Circular sets out the key questions we are asking in this exercise and should be read alongside the draft National Framework and Strategy documents.
- 3.3 We are consulting on the draft National Framework and draft Strategy for a full 12-week period. All comments should be sent to the National Framework Team by e-mail, fax or post by **Friday 10 February 2006**. We will consider all comments received by this date.
- 3.4 All responses will be made public unless confidentiality is specifically requested. Responses may nevertheless be included in statistical summaries of comments received and views expressed.
- 3.5 However, correspondents should be aware that confidentiality cannot always be guaranteed, for example, when it contains evidence of a serious crime. Any automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your organisation's IT system will not be respected unless you specifically include a request to the contrary in the main text of your response.

4.0 Questions

- 4.1 For each chapter, consultees are specifically asked to respond to the following questions in respect of the National Framework document:

- **Is the National Framework clear about the Government's objectives and priorities, what Fire and Rescue Authorities are expected to deliver, and the support the Government will provide? If not, how could it be improved?**
- **Do you agree with the policies set out in each chapter? If not, why not and what alternative policy would you wish to see instead?**
- **Do you have any comments on the implementation of the policies set out that are of relevance to the National Framework?**

Consultees are also invited to comment on the draft Strategy for Children and Young People, in particular:

- **Do you support the goals and underpinning aims set out in the Strategy? If not, why not, and what alternative would you wish to see instead?**

5.0 Significant Revisions to the National Framework

- 5.1 The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 requires the Secretary of State to consult on any revisions to the National Framework that he considers to be "significant". In responding to the questions set out above, consultees are encouraged to consider the following passages which we consider to constitute "significant" revisions to the 2005-6 National Framework.

Chapter 1: Fire Prevention and Risk Management.

Paragraph 1.12 - Considering priority vulnerable groups in Community Fire Safety work.

Paragraph 1.20 - Fire and Rescue Authorities should have regard to the Strategy for Children and Young People.

Chapter 2: The Regional Approach.

Paragraph 2.5 - Regional Management Boards should demonstrate measurable progress against their key objectives and report on efficiencies achieved through Regional Management Boards.

Paragraph 2.8 - Regional Management Board must establish regional control centres and regional procurement.

Paragraph 2.15 - Requirements on Fire and Rescue Authorities in relation to FiReControl.

Paragraph 2.20 - Fire and Rescue Authorities must procure through FiReBuy where directed.

Chapter 3: Effective Response.

Paragraph 3.25 - Tightening of requirement to use Regional Management Boards to pool specialist fire investigation capacity.

Chapter 4: Resilience.

None.

Chapter 5: Fire and Rescue Service Staff.

Paragraph 5.21 - Reference to the current consultation on the selection of firefighters and control and operational managers.

Chapter 6: Workforce Development.

Paragraph 6.2-6.5 - Consultation on the new approach to leadership, learning and development.

Paragraph 6.11 - Fire and Rescue Authorities to have regard to the learning and development strategy.

Paragraph 6.18 - Fire and Rescue Authorities should ensure that all staff have the opportunity to benefit from the approach to leadership, learning and development.

Chapter 7: Finance.

Paragraph 7.9 - The move to three-year local government finance settlements.

Paragraph 7.11 - New arrangements for firefighters' pensions.

Paragraph 7.14 - Details of Supported Capital Expenditure.

Paragraph 7.24 - Details of the cost of FiReBuy.

Paragraph 7.26 - Charging.

Chapter 8: Performance Management.

None.

Chapter 9: Research.

Paragraph 9.9 - Drawing on research in formulating Integrated Risk Management Plans.

6.0 Contacts

6.1 If you have any further questions about the consultation please contact the National Framework Team at national.framework@odpm.gsi.gov.uk

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