

# Fire Safety Arrangements in Welsh Fire and Rescue Services

## North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority

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# Status of report

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The team who delivered the work comprised Steve Barry and Ron Price.

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# Summary report

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## Summary

1. Promoting fire safety<sup>1</sup> is a core statutory function for Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) in Wales. FRAs have clearly defined roles in relation to fire safety enforcement as set out in the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. FRAs have a good track record of delivering within budget. Some aspects of fire safety activities have been reliant upon grant funding from Welsh Government through its Community Fire Safety Grant and this grant has reduced in the last two years.
2. Section 21 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 requires Welsh Ministers to prepare a Fire and Rescue National Framework (the Framework). A new framework was published in 2016 and highlights three key areas of challenge:
  - ) achieving an effective balance between response and prevention;
  - ) recognising austerity in respect of public sector finance; and
  - ) potential additional risks arising from an ageing population.
3. Welsh Government data shows that:
  - ) attendance at primary fires reduced by 29 per cent, and attendance at secondary fires<sup>2</sup> reduced by 52 per cent between 2010-11 and 2014-15;
  - ) the number of non-domestic<sup>3</sup> fires fell by 26 per cent between 2010-11 and 2014-15;
  - ) in 2014-15 the number of deliberate fires reduced by 15 per cent compared to the previous year and had fallen by two-thirds over the previous 10 years;
  - ) in 2014-15 the number of malicious false alarms (calls made when, in fact, there was no fire) received by fire and rescue services fell by 18 per cent compared to the previous year and had fallen by 69 per cent over the previous 10 years; This significant reduction is regarded as a direct result of the 'Call Challenge' approach adopted in the control room; and

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<sup>1</sup> In this report the terms 'community fire safety' (covering domestic premises and community initiatives) and 'business fire safety' are used to describe particular areas of focus.

<sup>2</sup> **Primary fires** include all fires in non-derelict buildings and vehicles or in outdoor structures, or any fire involving casualties or rescues, or fires attended by five or more appliances.

**Secondary fires** are mainly outdoor fires including grassland and refuse fires unless they involve casualties or rescues, or are attended by five or more appliances. They include fires in single derelict buildings, derelict road vehicles and derelict outdoor structures.

<sup>3</sup> **Non domestic premises** are those premises subject to the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

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- ) in 2014-15 the number of false alarms attended that had been caused by automatic fire detection equipment in non-domestic premises increased slightly compared to the previous year but had decreased by a third over the previous 10 years. In North Wales the Authority introduced revised response arrangements and records a significant reduction in false alarm attendance from 1,250 instances in 2014-15 to 282 instances in 2015-16.
4. In respect of fatal and non-fatal casualties attributed to fire, data shows that for the whole of Wales in 2014-15:
- ) there were 21 deaths due to fire, three more than in the previous year, there being an average of around 20 deaths per year due to fire between 2010-11 and 2014-15; and
- ) there were 543 non-fatal casualties as a result of fire attended by fire and rescue services, lower than the previous year although the number has fluctuated, ranging from 541 to 626 over the period 2010-11 and 2014-15.
5. Whilst it is known that a wide range of targeted prevention activity is being undertaken by FRAs, the effectiveness of arrangements has not been subject to independent assessment. Given the continuing focus on fire safety activity, we asked the overall question 'Are FRA fire safety arrangements helping to address local needs?' which we sought to answer by considering whether FRAs are:
- ) Planning effectively
- ) Delivering effectively
- ) Evaluating the results
6. We found that North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) plans and delivers a range of appropriate activities that improve fire safety and has arrangements for evaluating the impact of campaigns, but, in common with others, lacks a framework for fully evaluating the efficiency and effectiveness of these activities . This is because:
- ) The Authority has clear plans for domestic premises fire safety activity but plans for business premises are less clear
- ) The Authority is supporting community fire safety through extensive fire safety and prevention activities.
- ) There is no consistent approach to evaluating the effectiveness of fire safety work in Wales. Current local reporting arrangements describe the volume of activity and some local effectiveness but provide only a partial picture of performance.

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## Proposals for improvement

- P1 At national level, develop and agree principles on how to evaluate the success and outcomes of current interventions, events and prevention work that has regard to:
- ) Relevance – the extent to which interventions produce meaningful outcomes.
  - ) Capacity and capability – the effective use of resources.
  - ) Efficiency – a measure of how resources and inputs are converted into results and outcomes.
  - ) Effectiveness – the extent to which interventions were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance.
  - ) Sustainability – continuation of benefits after initial inputs have been completed. The probability of long-term benefits.
  - ) Value for money – how does one input cost get balanced with other initiatives.
  - ) Equalities issues.
- P2 At national level, establish arrangements with the Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust (WAST) and relevant health boards to identify the extent of unreported injuries resulting from fires to enable identification of potentially vulnerable people or higher risk premises.

# Detailed report

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The Authority plans and delivers a range of appropriate activities that improve fire safety and has arrangements for evaluating the impact of campaigns, but, in common with others, lacks a framework for fully evaluating the efficiency and effectiveness of these activities

The Authority has clear plans for domestic premises fire safety activity but plans for business premises are less clear

The Authority's delivery of community fire safety activity is based upon clear plans that reflect local needs and national expectations

7. Promoting fire safety is a core statutory function of FRAs. Section 6 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 requires a fire and rescue authority to make provision for the purpose of promoting fire safety in its area (including providing advice, information, publicity and encouragement to prevent fire and death or injury from fires and to reduce losses).
8. The Authority currently sets out its approaches to fire safety in a number of strategic plans and documents. These include:
  - ) Combined improvement and risk reduction plan 2015-16
  - ) Monitoring reports
  - ) Performance summaries
  - ) Performance self-assessments
  - ) Business fire safety enforcement policy statements
  - ) A variety of public-facing safety advice and information documents available on the website

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9. North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) has been focused on reducing the numbers of deaths and injuries as a result of fire throughout its fire safety work over the last few years. Activities have been driven following a 10-year strategy which was established in 2008 when statistics were showing a high level of death and injury due to accidental dwelling fires in North Wales. A Chief Fire Officer Task Group (CFOTG) was established at the time and factors contributing to the high level of death and injury were examined and analysed. At the time, around 4,000 to 5,000 Home Fire Safety Checks (HFSCs) were being completed on an annual basis. A key part of the strategy then agreed was to increase the volume and frequency of HFSCs being undertaken and this has been pursued over the time of the strategy with evidence supporting the success of this approach now available. In addition to increasing the volume of Home Safety Checks undertaken, the strategy included the need to better target those who were considered most at risk from fires in a domestic setting. The strategy established a target of 30,000 HFSCs per annum to increase the presence of working smoke alarms and other prevention elements in households across North Wales.
  10. The Authority has continued to pursue the importance of HFSCs with a considerably higher number of these completed per 10,000 of the population than the other two FRAs in Wales.
  11. The Authority has a clear hierarchy of plans and actions designed to address fire safety issue. The Combined Improvement and Risk Reduction plan sets out the FRA's key objectives and how they will be achieved, and links these objectives with current and future funding analysis.
  12. There is a good understanding of risk across the Authority. Staff can articulate where effort should be directed to mitigate risk from death or injury from fire. Recent actions have demonstrated an increased focus on critical factors like lone living, dependency on alcohol or drug use, age, or disability.
  13. A clear understanding about broader community safety issues and risks is apparent in the Authority and its plans. The Authority has improved its consideration of factors around safeguarding, domestic violence, vulnerability, diversity and the needs of communities. The Authority has been focused on completing HFSCs as a major part of its fire prevention activities.
  14. The Authority is currently considering a number of new initiatives and pilot schemes to diversify its activities and its collaborative approach to public safety. It is examining the expansion of HFSC activities to widen the consideration of other home safety elements. This will assist, whilst maintaining a crucial operational fire response, in moving activities towards a more prevention-focused service. This fits with the expectations of the Welsh Government National Framework.



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**In contrast with arrangements for community fire safety activity, plans and priorities for – business fire safety are less well documented**

- 15.** The Authority is an enforcing authority in respect of the provisions of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (the Order). The Order applies to non-domestic premises and places duties on the responsible person (usually the employer or other person in control of the premises) to ensure general fire precautions. The Authority has inspection and enforcement powers that enable it to adopt options enabling it to specify alterations required, serve enforcement notices requiring alterations or serve prohibition notices prohibiting or restricting the use of premises.
- 16.** The Welsh Government National Framework sets out expectations with regard to business fire safety. It recognises that FRAs have clearly defined roles in relation to fire safety enforcement as set out in the Order 2005. It considers that FRAs should continue to focus their efforts on higher-risk non-domestic premises, providing fire safety advice and support to businesses and, where necessary, using their regulatory powers to continue to drive down the risk of fires. This is because Welsh Government believes that fires in non-domestic properties can have a devastating effect on local communities and a continued effort to reduce the number of fires at business premises will clearly have a positive impact, protecting local employment, and strengthening local commerce.
- 17.** Business Fire Safety activity has regard to the expectations of the National Framework. A risk based approach is being followed to identify premises that are given priority for audit and inspection. This has led to targeting of sleeping accommodation and identification of required improvements. Although at operational level a risk based approach is being undertaken with regard to business fire safety activity, there are limited corporate strategy documents setting out this approach. Greater clarity about how the Authority intends to work with businesses, more information about the interface between landlord roles and responsibilities, and how high risk premises are being targeted (such as temporary sleeping accommodation), would be improved by having a clearer strategic plan to act as a point of reference for the evaluation of activity and support longer term resource planning.
- 18.** There are some aspects of fire safety legislation which complicate planning activities. This is particularly an issue for example, in the boundary between business fire safety as defined under the Order and Housing Act legislation. Potential risks arise should business premises be used as temporary housing; for houses in multiple occupation and un-notified changes of use of business premises. This is an area where further analysis and evaluation in conjunction with Welsh Government and local authorities would bring benefit.

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There is variation in the resource made available for fire safety activity by individual FRAs and government grant funding is reducing

**Exhibit 1: Fire safety expenditure and HFSCs by population**

The amount of expenditure and number of home safety fire checks varies between the three FRAs.

2014-15	Mid and West Wales	North Wales	South Wales
Amount spent on fire safety per head of population (excluding Welsh Government grant)	£6.73	£8.81	£5.72
Number of HFSCs per 10,000 population	245	396	168

Sources FRA Annual Accounts and Welsh Government Statistics for Wales<sup>4</sup>

19. It is for the individual FRA to determine its budget for fire safety activity having regard to local needs, although, the clear variation between FRAs in expenditure per head of population merits further discussion. We also recognise that the number of HFSCs undertaken is not an indicator of the full range of community fire safety activity in an area. Movement towards tailored interventions for people at risk and ensuring the service caters for the individual are important. However, at present, the data available measures the numbers and serves to raise further questions about the nature of the service provided in relation to the differences in the volume of activity
20. **Exhibit 1** shows that in 2014-15, the Authority spent the most per head of population on fire safety and undertook the highest number of HFSCs per 10,000 population. This investment excludes Welsh Government grant funding. The Authority plans fire safety expenditure as part of its medium-term financial planning, and utilises Welsh Government grant to supplement aspects of its community fire safety work. In recent years, the Authority has utilised all available grant, but because grant funding has a degree of uncertainty, it does not assume grant availability in its financial planning and plans on the basis that should grant cease, the additional activity it supports would also cease.
21. The Welsh Government has provided financial support to FRAs for a range of prevention activities, improving fire safety and targeting vulnerable citizens. Compared to 2011-12 the revenue grant for 2014-15 reduced by £10,000 although in 2012-13 and 2013-14 revenue grant was over £100,000 less than 2011-12 levels. Capital grant had remained at £460,000 between 2011-12 and 2014-15.

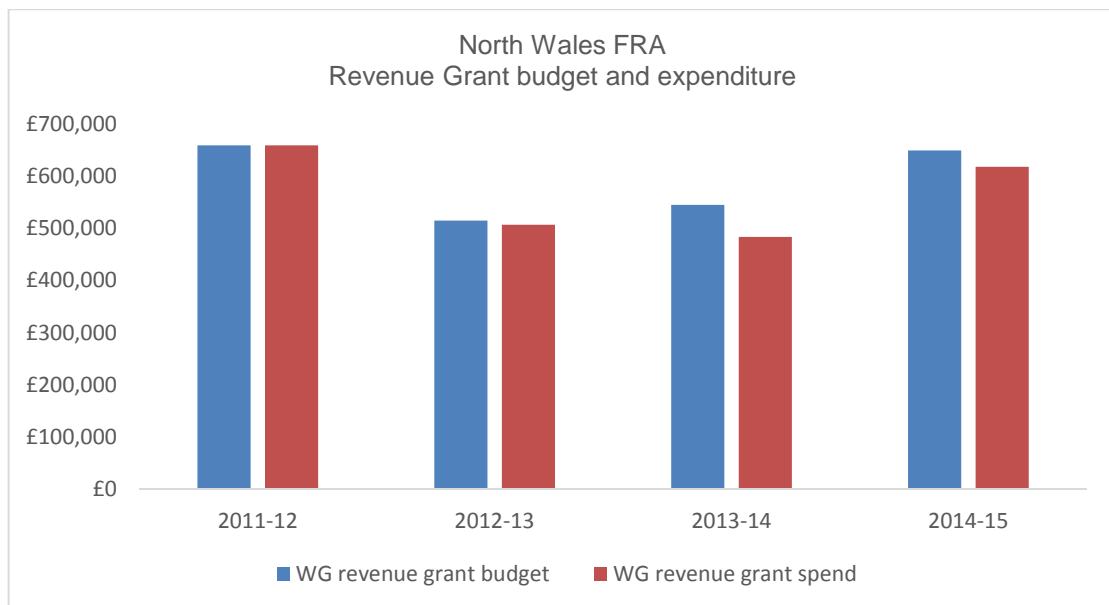
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<sup>4</sup> A range of data about community fire safety activity is available here: [Fire safety activity](#).

22. In 2015-16 grant allocation arrangements changed. The Welsh Government provides an indication of the total revenue and capital grant available, and individual FRAs are now managing elements of the grant programme on behalf of all FRAs. North Wales FRA, for example, manages the grant related to youth intervention programmes across Wales. The three FRAs work together to develop proposals for how the total grant available should be distributed. All were of the view that the change has been beneficial as a means of maximising grant expenditure across Wales.
23. In 2015-16 the total revenue grant available for all FRAs was £1,030,000 (a £997,976 reduction compared to 2014-15). The total capital grant available in 2015-16 was £670,000 (a £649,500 reduction compared to 2014-15). Since 2011-12 the amount of revenue grant available has reduced by 56 per cent and capital grant available has reduced by 50 per cent. With regard to capital grant, changes in 2015-16, whereby grant was available for stock deployed in home fire safety activity (rather than stock purchased) meant that some FRAs required less grant as they used stock held.

**Exhibit 2: Welsh Government community fire safety grant revenue expenditure**

Between 2011-12 and 2014-15 the Authority spent 96 per cent of the revenue grant available.

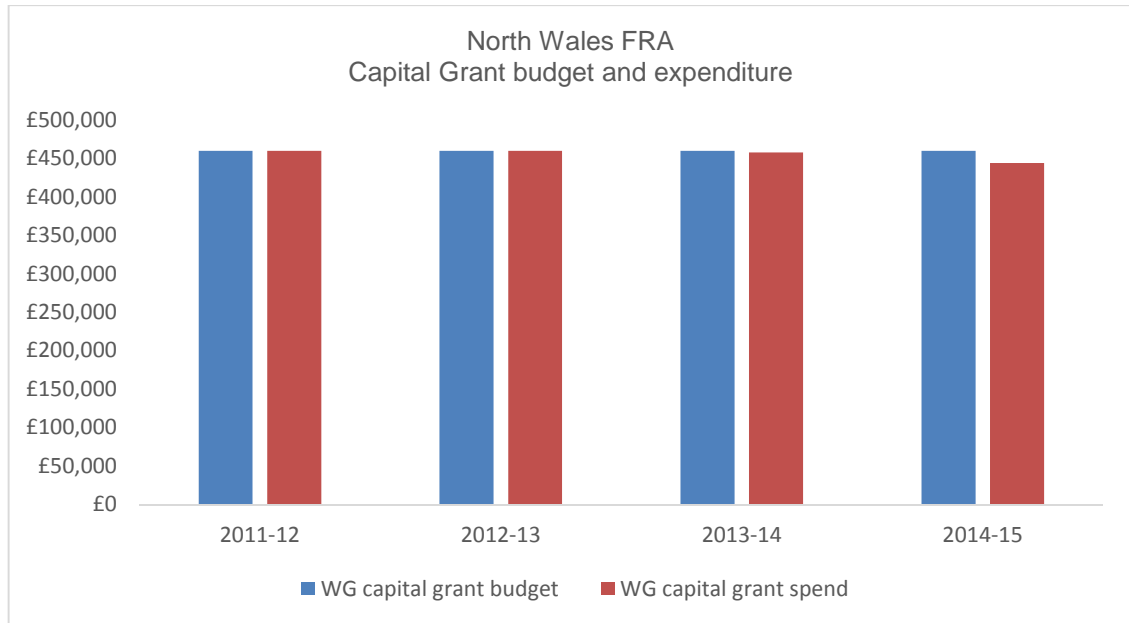


Source: Welsh Government

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### Exhibit 3: Welsh Government community fire safety grant capital expenditure

Between 2011-12 and 2014-15 the Authority spent all of the capital grant available (spend for 2015-16 is based on forecast).



Source: Welsh Government

- 24.** The collective approach of the FRAs in Wales to identifying and accessing additional sources of grant funding is underdeveloped. We have commented positively about the Authority's general approach to financial resilience and management in our recent Financial Resilience report. This concluded that financial management is strong. However, in the areas of income generation and charging for aspects of business fire safety, more could be done by the Authority. Additionally arrangements to seek, identify and access grant funding (other than the Welsh Government grant scheme) are largely ad hoc and opportunistic, rather than being strategically coordinated, as part of the Authority's financial and operational plans.

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## The Authority is supporting community fire safety through extensive fire safety and prevention activities

The Authority is successfully using a variety of intervention and prevention activities to support community fire safety

25. The Authority addresses fire safety through a variety of activities directed at prevention. Some of these are directed at individuals or groups of individuals, through targeted education programmes; for example, some relate to the provision of equipment such as smoke alarms and fire suppressant equipment, and some are general education and fire prevention information.
26. The range of fire safety and prevention activities current undertaken by the Authority which we considered includes:
  - ) HFSCs – 27,352 were carried out during 2014-15.
  - ) Radio advertisements, social media activities and press releases about fire safety.
  - ) Arson reduction team activities.
  - ) Targeted campaigns jointly with others, such as the Electrical Safety Week held in November 2015.
  - ) The Phoenix Project<sup>5</sup> is a five-day programme of engagement in fire and rescue service activities such as hose running, using ladders, and search and rescue. The programme aims to reduce the risk of offending by addressing issues ranging from low self-esteem and lack of confidence.
  - ) Young firefighter schemes which aim to integrate young people with the service and improve communications with communities.
27. The Authority has a clear system in place to record referrals from partner agencies and to inform staff of the need to undertake home safety checks. This categorises the priority given to the referral into high, medium or low levels of risk, and the risk matrix is used to determine the priority and speed of response. Managers monitor completions and timescales to ensure that these are completed.
28. Information about the availability of HFSCs on the Authority's website is clear and informative. It stresses that these checks are free and sets out how long they take, what it will involve and gives some clear basic advice about how fire safety in the home can be improved. A video is on the main website explaining the content of HFSCs and a variety of multi-lingual documents have also been produced.
29. There is a comprehensive range of fire safety advice available to households on the Authority's website. It is clear and easily accessible from the main page of the site. The Authority promotes the availability of free HFSCs through prominent signage on its community safety vehicles with the freephone contact number displayed.

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<sup>5</sup> The Phoenix Project is a Welsh Government sponsored intervention which is aimed at young people aged between 11-25, who have offended or are on the cusp of offending or vulnerable.

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30. When incidents occur in communities, operational staff will contact nearby neighbours – described as ‘Hotstrike’ activities – to share information about fire risks, and also put up signs advertising the availability of fire advice and HFSCs. This is important activity in reaching out to communities and potentially reaching hard-to-engage-with groups and individuals.
  31. Where a high-risk individual or household is identified, staff will record when a follow-up visit should be undertaken. This depends upon the risk and vulnerability, and that household will reappear upon the list of HFSCs to be undertaken. However, this arrangement appears subjective and could be more structured in the way it is monitored.
  32. Combining knowledge from other agencies and receiving referrals to identify high-level risk is a clear strategy in North Wales. Staff are focused on this collaboration as the most useful means of obtaining information about the location and circumstances of vulnerable people and those at high risk from fire-related death or injury.

Whilst the number of known non-domestic premises has increased, the Authority has sustained the proportion subject to checking

33. Officers told us of arrangements for business fire safety activity based upon a risk assessment leading to decisions about the nature of activity required. They indicated that a shift to prevention and support work combined with a risk based approach to audit should lead to a more balanced programme of work. They recognised the need to be able to demonstrate the benefits of this revised approach which is not captured in the data currently reported at local and national level.
34. The following exhibits show that since 2010-11:
  - ) the number of non-domestic fires has fallen compared to 2010-11;
  - ) the number of business premises known to the Authority has increased by 28 per cent;
  - ) the number inspected has increased from 723 to 880 (157 more inspections); and
  - ) the average time spent on an inspection has remained at around five hours but the increased number of inspections means 520 more hours have been spent on inspection

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#### Exhibit 4: Business fire safety inspections

Although the number of fires is reducing, the percentage of premises checked has been maintained whilst the number of known premises has increased.

North Wales FRA	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Total number of premises known	12,186	12,853	14,294	15,550	17,000
Percentage inspected	6%	3%	6%	6.5%	5.1%
Fires in non-domestic premises	173	186	147	115	139

Source Welsh Government Statistics for Wales<sup>6</sup>

#### Exhibit 5: Time spent and outcome of business fire safety inspections

Time spent on business fire safety checks has been maintained but overall numbers of enforcement notices have fallen, and prohibition notices have remained at similar levels since 2011-12.

North Wales FRA	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Total hours spent on inspection	3,861	1,560	4,280	5,268	4,381
Enforcement notices served	21	4	11	6	6
Prohibition notices served	5	1	3	5	4

Source Welsh Government Statistics for Wales<sup>7</sup>

35. Since 2014 FRAs have been able to enter into primary authority partnerships with businesses, charities or other organisations which operate across more than one local authority fire enforcement area – becoming the single point of contact for fire safety regulation advice. This is a direction promoted and administered by the Better Regulatory Delivery Office within the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. The Authority has not yet entered into a formal agreement with an external body under this initiative.

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<sup>6</sup> A range of data about community fire safety activity is available here :[Fire safety activity](#).

<sup>7</sup> A range of data about community fire safety activity is available here :[Fire safety activity](#).

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There is no consistent approach to evaluating the effectiveness of fire safety work in Wales. Current local reporting arrangements describe the volume of activity and some local effectiveness but provide only a partial picture of performance.

Fire and rescue authorities deliver fire safety activity with a common purpose and although activity is monitored there is no common approach to evaluating the efficiency of delivery

- 36.** This review has shown that the Authority undertakes a broad range of activity designed to prevent or minimise the risk of future incidents. Activity is directed toward particular premises, or groups of people that may be more vulnerable, or who may be perpetrators or potential perpetrators of incidents. Whilst it is difficult to attribute the degree to which this is leading to the overall reduction in the incidents of fire, activity is appropriate and being planned with the purpose of addressing local issues.
- 37.** Our consideration of the data available and how it is being used has, however, identified challenges to the ability of all FRAs to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of fire safety work because:
- J there is a lack of a commonly agreed framework for evaluation of the wide range of activity undertaken across Wales; and
  - J local reporting which, whilst providing information about the volume of activity and in some instances a narrative explaining the impact for individuals, lacks a sufficient range of information to make judgements about efficiency and effectiveness.
- 38.** There are some common general factors such as:
- J The need to sustain a minimum establishment of trained firefighters means that these personnel may have spare capacity which is deployed towards fire safety activity. However, there is no agreed method for assessing the best use of such personnel, and local circumstances dictate the specific crewing arrangements FRAs will have in place. The Authority has invested in the provision of a dedicated Community Safety and Business Fire Safety resource to support the delivery of its objectives, having regard to making best use of the resource it has available.
  - J In the context of continued pressure on budgets, priorities about the balance of expenditure are being made by FRAs. **Exhibit 1** shows that in 2014-15 there were differences in the levels of expenditure and in the proportion of HFSCs by each FRA but there is no readily accessible rationale to explain the difference.
  - J Explicit reporting about the use of available resources to target one aspect of fire safety over another is underdeveloped. Whilst it is clear that the overall thrust of fire safety and prevention activities is helping to minimise and mitigate the risks or death and injury from fire, the success of using financial resources for one activity as opposed to an alternative activity is un-quantified. Cost benefit analysis has not been used in key areas of delivery.



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Home fire safety checks are used extensively to address and mitigate domestic fire safety risks but evaluation criteria are limited

39. Home safety fire checks (HFSCs) are acknowledged to play an important role in informing occupiers of domestic properties of ways in which the risk of fires can be reduced.

Exhibit 6: Home fire safety checks

The Authority completed more than 99,000 HFSCs between 2010-11 and 2014-15.

North Wales FRA	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Completed HFSCs	36,905	28,471	22,201	26,703	27,352

Source Welsh Government Statistics for Wales<sup>8</sup>

40. The Authority covers over 321,000 dwellings. In 2013-14 the National Survey for Wales estimated that around four per cent had no smoke alarm. This would equate to a figure of around 12,842 dwellings. Between 2010-11 and 2013-14 the Authority completed over 87,000 HFSCs with more than 54,000 completed in the following two years. Numbers would suggest a potential for ensuring smoke alarms were fitted to all dwellings but activity reporting does not clarify if this is happening. However, it is recognised that the national survey data must be treated with caution because it is based on individual responses to questions and does not test if a smoke alarm is actually fitted, or whether it is working. For this reason, the Authority appropriately utilises local knowledge of its teams when planning activity.
41. Information about the results achieved by the programme of HFSC is limited. For example, we do not know from published reporting:
- ) how many HFSCs are undertaken at households who already have working smoke alarms, a plan of escape and adequate fire safety prevention arrangements;
  - ) how often entry to households is refused;
  - ) how many are repeat visits from previous HFSC visits;
  - ) the cost of each individual HFSC; and
  - ) the age, gender, disability, ethnicity, marital status or sexual orientation of the households where HFSC are undertaken.

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<sup>8</sup> A range of data about community fire safety activity is available here: [Fire safety activity](#).

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42. Measuring success of a particular set of actions or initiatives around fire safety is a challenge for the Authority. It would not be practical to undertake a controlled experiment of comparing one area, town or county that had an intervention with another that did not to compare outcomes. There are elements of comparison or evaluation that could be undertaken, particularly in the area of value for money and additional targeting of activities where potentially outcomes could be measured.
  43. The Authority has recognised the need to further develop the way in which it is able to evaluate the impact of its fire safety activity. Since April 2015, the Campaigns Steering Group has acted as a forum for evaluating proposed interventions and their subsequent impact.

**Coordinated use of equality and diversity information is not being used to shape fire safety activities and lack of data sharing among partners is a barrier at operational levels**

44. Whilst identification of risks facing the elderly or people with disabilities are clear in particular circumstances, the Authority lacks coordinated plans about evaluating success and outcomes through the use of diversity and equality information, but recognises the need to close knowledge gaps and is working with partners to improve arrangements. There is a plethora of data and information but the joining up of information to enable better targeting is ad hoc and lacks systematic evaluation.
45. A substantial element of HFSCs relates to the education of households and dissemination of information about fire safety and prevention activities. This is work that goes beyond the fitting of smoke alarms and other prevention equipment. For some elements of the community different characteristics may be more effective – for example, in areas of high black and minority ethnic populations staff of BME origin could be utilised, or more female staff for working with lone female households. This area of evaluation is underdeveloped in the Authority.
46. Strategic data and information sharing arrangements are in place and at a high level appear effective. However, staff report that at more operational levels there remain some barriers to effective planning and delivery through partners citing data protection issues. The Authority is a partner organisation in the Wales Accord for Sharing Personal Information (WASPI) but further identification of operational barriers to data sharing should be evaluated to prevent restrictions being established.
47. Evaluation and planning would be strengthened by explicitly reflecting the requirements of the Equalities Act 2010 in improvement plans and their development. The national mandatory recording system – the Incident Recording System (IRS) – is a limiting factor in the ability of the Authority to adequately obtain, record, and monitor information on protected characteristics. For example, the Authority does not publish trend information about the numbers of HFSC completed by age, gender, ethnicity of disability protected characteristics.

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- 48.** The extent to which injury arising from fire is reported, or not, across Wales is unclear. Sometimes people receive minor injuries which will result in the Wales Ambulance Service Trust (WAST) being called and the person treated for minor burns at accident and emergency departments. These near miss events are a valuable source of information about vulnerability and risk from fire death. At local level, the Authority and WAST control operators has arrangements to pass information to each other. A WAST manager is seconded to the Authority and it proposes to examine arrangements further along with representatives from North Wales Police service.

# Appendix 1

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## All Wales Fire and Rescue Authority Data

Data sources: Welsh Government Statistics Wales<sup>9</sup>

### Exhibit 1: Primary and secondary fires

Primary fires attended reduced by 29 per cent and secondary fires reduced by 52 per cent between 2010-11 and 2014-15.

Wales	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Primary fires	6,414	5,687	4,745	4,790	4,560
Secondary fires	13,503	10,162	5,922	7,801	6,541

### Exhibit 2: Fires in non-domestic premises

The number of non-domestic fires in Wales fell by 26 per cent between 2010-11 and 2014-15.

Wales	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Non-domestic premises	964	822	713	679	717

**Primary fires** include all fires in non-derelict buildings and vehicles or in outdoor structures, or any fire involving casualties or rescues, or fires attended by five or more appliances.

**Secondary fires** are mainly outdoor fires including grassland and refuse fires unless they involve casualties or rescues, or are attended by five or more appliances. They include fires in single derelict buildings, derelict road vehicles and derelict outdoor structures.

**Non-domestic premises** are those premises subject to the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

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<sup>9</sup> A range of data about community fire safety activity is available here: [Fire safety activity](#).

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### Exhibit 3: Casualties attributed to fires

The number of fatalities attributed to fire has not reduced over the five years from 2010-11 and the number of non-fatal casualties has fluctuated.

Wales	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Fatal casualties	21	23	17	17	21
Non-fatal casualties	607	592	541	626	543

**Casualties** from fires are categorised as fatal and non-fatal casualties. A fatal fire casualty is someone whose death is attributed to a fire, even if death occurred weeks or months later. However, it is possible that, in some cases, a subsequent death is not reported.

### Exhibit 4: Percentage of dwellings with smoke alarms in 2014-15 by fire authority

A small percentage of dwellings have no smoke alarm, ranging from four per cent in North Wales to six per cent in the rest of Wales.

Fire authority	One smoke alarm	Two smoke alarms	Three or more smoke alarms	No smoke alarm
Mid and West Wales	21%	51%	22%	6%
North Wales	20%	50%	26%	4%
South Wales	24%	51%	21%	6%

In 2014-15 smoke alarms/detection equipment activated in more than half of the dwelling fires:

- ) in Mid and West Wales, 44 per cent of alarms/detectors activated but 14 per cent that were fitted did not activate;
- ) in North Wales, 65 per cent of alarms/detectors activated but 23 per cent that were fitted did not; and
- ) in South Wales, 51 per cent of alarms/detectors activated but 15 per cent that were fitted did not.

### Exhibit 5: Home fire safety checks

Between 2010-11 and 2014-15 almost 350,000 HFSCs were completed in Wales.

Wales	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	Total
HFSCs	85,100	64,199	57,613	68,673	74,335	349,920

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