

## Fire and Rescue Services Division

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All Chief Officers  
All Fire Conveners  
Fire Service Employee Representative Organisations  
Department For Communities and Local Government

23 February 2011

Dear Colleague

### LEARNING THE LESSONS FROM FIRECONTROL

The Scottish Government, as explained in the consultation document on the future of the fire and rescue services, is clear that future decisions on control rooms should be balanced and must not be rushed. Ministers believe that a decision on Fire Service reform should be settled and implemented before any changes are considered to control rooms.

Ministers have also stated that it is important that lessons are learned within Scotland from the FiRecontrol programme in England before we proceed to any next steps.

In line with these commitments Fergus Ewing, the Minister for Community Safety, has asked Stephen Hunter, the Chief Fire Officer of Tayside, to chair a stakeholder Working Group to review the development and implementation of the FiReControl project in England. Mr Ewing wishes to ensure that those lessons most relevant to Scotland are taken into account during the fire service reform programme. The Group has been asked to report to incoming Ministers in May; their recommendations will be published. The Group will not make recommendations about any future control room configuration in Scotland. The remit of the Group is as follows:

*'To identify from a review of FiReControl the lessons which are most relevant for the Scottish Government and the Scottish FRSs and to make general recommendations to incoming Ministers in May about how these should be taken into account in the ongoing FRS reform programme in Scotland.'*

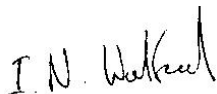
The Minister wants this process to be open and transparent and to involve representatives from all relevant stakeholders of the fire and rescue services and employee representative bodies. I am therefore inviting a representative from each the following to join the group:

COSLA  
Scottish Fire Conveners' Forum  
CFOA(S)  
FBU  
APFO  
RFU  
UNISON  
FOA  
SFRAU

We are grateful for the assistance provided by UK Government colleagues in the Department for Communities and Local Government. They have agreed to provide all the assistance they can and to be involved in the Group.

Graeme Fraser from my Division will act as Secretary to the Group and I should be grateful if you would advise Graeme by 11 March ([Graeme.Fraser@Scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Graeme.Fraser@Scotland.gsi.gov.uk)) if your organisation would be willing to provide a representative. Due to the need to have a Report completed in time for incoming Ministers it is expected that there will be a limited number of meetings, with the first taking place on 15 March at 11:00am in Conference Room 4, [Victoria Quay](#), Edinburgh.

Yours sincerely



**IAN WALFORD**  
Head of Fire & Rescue Services Division