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| This circular is | For information | No response required | |
| This circular is | Not relevant to the National Framework | | |
| Status | This circular informs Fire and Rescue Authorities of the timetable for and changes to the IRMP Annual Data Returns | | |

2009/10 IRMP Annual Data Returns – Spring 2010

Issued by:

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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**

Please forward to:

Primary contacts / coordinators for the IRMP Annual Data Returns

Summary

This circular explains the timetable for and changes to IRMP Annual Returns for the period 2009/10, as well as other actions being taken following from the Review which reported in Summer 2009. Those who are primary contacts, or who act as coordinators for the Annual Returns, should take particular note and communicate to others involved in the returns the content of this Circular highlighting: i) the timetable which will be implemented strictly for the reasons described, and ii) the various data items have been dropped.

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1.0 Background – aims and approach of the Review

1.1 CLG commissioned an independent review of the IRMP Annual Data Returns¹ from Fire and Rescue Services in Autumn 2008 with the following aims:

- To establish precise data requirements to ensure that information collected continues to be relevant and is used effectively to support the Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) modernisation agenda.
- To balance CLG requirements against the practicalities of data collection including cost and burden of supply, data protection and data quality issues and how these affect the fitness for purpose of the information collected.

1.2 The review carried out detailed consultation with Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs), with other organisations that collect or interpret similar information, and with other stakeholders.

2.0 Publication of the Review

2.1 An executive summary of the Review is attached and will also be available on the CLG website shortly.

3.0 Changes to the 2009/10 (Spring 2010 returns)

3.1 The Review's primary conclusions and recommendations can be found in the final section of the executive summary. In response to the recommendations, CLG has:

- i) removed eighteen data tables, though the information of three of these (OP7, FIN2a and FIN2b) is still to be collected but integrated into the collection carried out by CIPFA. Annex 1 lists all changes to the Annual Returns.
- ii) worked with CIPFA staff and the steering group that governs the data collection delivered by CIPFA, which comprises FRS representatives, to agree a streamlining of the two collections. This is described in Annex 2.
- iii) developed guidance further including adding descriptions into the web data collection forms of why the data of each table is collected and how it is used. This is to enable the purpose of the data collection to be visible to all involved in providing data.
- iv) scoped the approach for a line-by-line HR data system. It has not been possible to take it forward in 2009-10 however.
- v) set a timetable to publish [Fire and Rescue Service Operational Statistics](#) and its accompanying spreadsheet data tables on the CLG website eight weeks earlier than previously. This means that a stricter timetable for the supply of data is required, since delays in the past have been predominantly the result of a small handful of late returns. Achieving improved timeliness was both a common theme throughout responses from FRSs to the Review, and had unanimous support of the FRS representatives who comprise the CIPFA steering group.

¹ Human Resources and Health and Safety, Fire Safety (audits and associated actions), Community Fire Safety, and other Operational statistics

4.0 Timetable for the 2009/10 (Spring 2010) returns

4.1 The main contacts in Fire and Rescue Services will shortly receive notifications as per previous years. The key dates are as follows:

| | |
|----------|---|
| 29 March | Data collection web forms available read only |
| 6 April | Data collection web forms live |
| 7 June | Completion date |
| 21 June | Tables sent to FRSs for validation |
| 15 July | Final date for corrections to data |
| 26 July | CLG delivers HR staffing data to CIPFA |

4.2 As noted, there was considerable FRS support for the prompter publication of the data from the returns and the stricter timetable which is necessary to achieve this. It should also allow the streamlining arrangements between the CIPFA and CLG collections to continue in the future.

5.0 Likely changes for returns for the period of 2010/11

5.1 CLG is currently considering proposals to collect information on violence at work (including attacks on firefighters) as part of the IRMP Annual Returns for implementation in the data collection for 2010/11. Details will follow shortly.

6.0 Advisory group for the IRMP Annual Returns

6.1 CLG is keen to set up a group whose role would include advising on the content, definitions and guidance for the annual returns. It could operate largely by e-communication. The role of members might be to provide personal insight and expertise, as well as to pass on views from within their own and from other Services. Both nominations and comments on this proposal would be most welcome.

7.0 Contact

7.1 For further information, please contact:

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Annex 1 Changes to 2009-10 data collection

The Review made recommendations to stop collecting some data items and to look into changing how other items are collected. These tables summarise the changes being made.

Table 1 – Data recommended by the Review for removal which have been removed

| Data table | Description | Action / comment |
|-------------------|---|---|
| HR7 | Absences other than for Sickness and Training | Dropped from collection as a result of a combination of i) no clear future need for these data series was identified, and ii) the view that these data have not provided conclusive insights. |
| HR80 | Number of Complaints (harassment, bullying etc) | |
| HR93,94,95&96 | Non-Routine Referrals to Occupational Health Service | |
| HR 86 | Critical Equipment Failures (Health and Safety) | Dropped from collection – the Chief Fire and Rescue Advisor’s Unit is looking to establish a rapid reporting system for significant safety events which will be much better suited than annual reporting of these statistics. |
| HR 87 | Near Misses (Health and Safety) | |
| OP4 | FRS Appliance Average Cost | Appliance average cost may need to be collected in the future but not every year. |
| OP8 | Station Based Uniformed Posts and Operational Appliances by Station | Dropped from collection. The burden of data entry on an annual basis was found to be incommensurate with the need. Other means of collection would be considered if required in the future. |

Table 2 – Other changes - where Review noted that data items could be collected more efficiently

| | | |
|---------------|------------------------------------|--|
| OP2a & OP2b | Fire and rescue service appliances | Dropped from collection – CIPFA collection includes similar data. |
| OP3 | FRS Appliance Replacement Period | Dropped from collection – CIPFA collection includes similar item ‘average age of appliance’. ‘Replacement period’ may need to be collected in the future but not every year. |
| OP5 & OP6 | Special Service Incidents | Dropped from collection – long planned to cease since this information is now available from the Incident Recording System. |
| OP7 | Fire Stations | The CIPFA collection carries an equivalent table but with fewer categories. The CIPFA table categories will be extended to those of OP7, so that OP7 can be dropped. |
| FIN2A & FIN2B | Pay, Pensions and Capital Data | To be moved into CIPFA collection from 2009-10 data collection, so that all finance data is collected in the CIPFA return. |

Table 3 - Data recommended for removal which had already been removed

| Data table | Description | Action / comment |
|-------------------|---|---|
| FIN 1 | Number of Undisputed Invoices for Commercial Goods/Services | Collection already ceased after 2006-07 |
| HR 6 | Ridership Factor | Collection already ceased after 2006-07 |
| HR 100 | The Level of CRE reached | Collection already ceased after 2006-07 |
| HR 101 | Duty to Promote Race Equality | Collection already ceased after 2006-07 |

Table 4 - Data tables recommended for removal which remain in the returns

| Data table | Description | Action / comment |
|-------------------|--|--|
| FP5 | Number of personnel working on fire protection | To remain but simplified - The table will be simplified to collect just the categories of 'Uniformed' and 'Non-uniformed' rather than the current 7 roles within 'Uniformed'. |
| HR85 | Vehicle incidents | To remain unchanged – There is ongoing interest in this data. It seems a reasonable expectation that there is a national data set of basic totals of the numbers of emergency vehicles incidents and injuries. |
| HR8 | Shifts lost to sickness | To remain unchanged - This is a small table which is complementary to the more substantial tables on sickness (HR97-99) which the Review recommends to retain. |

Annex 2 - Explanation of streamlining of CIPFA and CLG collections

Both collections included data items to a greater or lesser extent on

- i) Appliances and Fire Stations,
- ii) Staffing (there was only a little in CIPFA collection), and
- iii) Financial data (there was only a little in CLG collection).

The new arrangements deliver the following benefits:

- i) the minor overlap in data items eliminated
- ii) no longer collect similar items, and additionally
- iii) collections streamlined such that all data on the three topics in common are consolidated into either the CLG or the CIPFA collection.

Table 5 summarises the changes from the perspective of both the CLG and CIPFA collections.

Table 5 – Details of the streamlining of the CIPFA and CLG annual returns

| Category | Impact/change on collection carried out by CIPFA on behalf of FRSs | Impact/change on CLG’s IRMP annual data returns collection |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>Operational information</u> | | |
| <i>Fire stations by type</i> | Amend the questionnaire to collect the additional categories in line with CLG returns. | No longer to be collected in CLG’s annual returns. |
| <i>Number of appliances</i> | No change. CIPFA will continue to collect numbers of appliances. | No longer to be collected in CLG’s annual returns. |
| <i>Appliance replacement period</i> | No Change. CIPFA currently collects information on average age of the appliance, but no data is available on appliances costs. | It is expected that information on appliance replacement period and average costs of appliances will be collected every two or three years. |
| <u>Human Resources</u> | | |
| <i>Personnel data</i> | CIPFA collection from England FRSs to cease collecting information on number of staff. | CLG to supply the data on staffing numbers that was previously part of the CIPFA collection. |
| <u>Financial Information</u> | | |
| <i>Paybill</i> | Amend the questionnaire to collect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consolidated - Non consolidated pay - Employer pension contributions - Employers NICs - Other pay costs (incl. Equal Pay) | No longer to be collected in CLG’s annual returns. |
| <i>Injury awards</i> | Amend the questionnaire to collect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lump sums - Recurring element | |