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This circular is	For information	No response required	
This circular is	Relevant to the National Framework		
Status	<i>Putting the frontline first: smarter government</i> sets out Government's strategy for improving public services and community empowerment: delivering greater efficiencies for public services.		

“Putting the frontline first: Smarter Government”: Review of the National Indicator Set

Issued by:

Andy Swyer

Performance and Finance Division

Addressed to:

**The Chair of the Fire and Rescue Authority
The Chair of Regional Management Board
The Chief Executive of the County Council
The Commissioner of the London Fire and
Emergency Planning Authority
The Chief Fire Officer
CFOA President
CFOA Performance and Improvement lead
Fire LGA
The Clerk to the Fire and Rescue Authority**

Please forward to:

Performance and Improvement leads

Summary

This circular advises that the two fire indicators (NI33 (deliberate fires) and NI49 (Number of primary fires and related fatalities and non-fatal casualties) will cease from [1st April 2010]. However, the data for both indicators will continue to be collected and published as National Statistics.

For further information, contact:

**Andy Swyer
Fire & Rescue Performance and Finance
Division
Zone 3/E2 Eland House
Bressenden Place
London SW1E 5DU**

Direct line **0303 444 2956**
Fax
E-mail andy.swyer@communities.gsi.gov.uk

Website www.communities.gov.uk

“Putting the frontline first: Smarter Government”: Review of the National Indicator Set

- 1.0 In December 2009 the Government published its White Paper “*Putting the frontline first: smarter government*”. As part of letting local areas have more control over setting priorities and guiding resources, the Government has reduced targets. For example, cutting the number of national indicators (NIs) for local authorities from 1, 200 in 2006 to 188. *Putting the frontline first* confirmed a review of the first tranche of 188 NIs. The two fire indicators are: (NI33 (deliberate fires) and NI49 (Number of primary fires and related fatalities and non-fatal casualties).
- 2.0 The Chancellor announced in his Budget statement (24th March) that the number of NIs will reduce from 188 to 171 on 1st April. From that date, NIs 33 and 49 will cease to be part of the national indicator set. Data for NI33 and 49 is derived from records of fire incidents attended by Fire and Rescue Services, as collected under the Incident Recording System (IRS). The IRS will continue to provide a common core of incident data thereby enabling data sharing and local benchmarking as required, as well as the production of National Statistics to the standards set by the UK Statistics Authority.
- 3.0 FRAs have a statutory duty to promote fire safety, which includes working with other agencies and local partners to create safer communities. Many FRAs have been successful in establishing their position in Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs)/Local Area Agreements (LAAs) and successfully demonstrated the value the FRS can add to the delivery of a wide range of local priorities, including, but not exclusively, those with improved fire safety outcomes.
- 4.0 Going forward it is important for FRAs to continue to develop and maintain enhanced partnership arrangements at the local level if they are to continue to consider innovative means of delivering their statutory duties to improve community fire safety outcomes. To support the FRS in taking this forward, CLG will shortly be publishing the findings of a recent research report and case studies designed to offer ongoing support to the FRS in negotiating LAAs at the local level. One of the findings of this research was that that the lack of a visible fire-related target need not represent a barrier to the delivery of improved fire safety outcomes.
- 5.0 Currently, 31 LAAs have either NI 33 or 49 as one of their up to 35 local priorities. CLG will work with those LSPs to ensure that the reduction of NIs does not impact on the LAAs, in terms of either loss of target or reward. This approach fits with the principles of Smarter Government e.g. allowing areas more control over their priorities, avoids additional bureaucracy (i.e. another LAA target refresh) whilst ensuring that the majority of areas benefit immediately from the streamlining of the national indicator set. LSPs may opt to continue with their fire indicator as a local target.
- 6.0 If you have any queries regarding this circular please contact Andy Swyer:
andy.swyer@communities.gsi.gov.uk

Andy Swyer

Performance, Finance and Planning Division