

Circular number	<b>5/2010</b>	Date issued	<b>5 March 2010</b>
This circular is	<b>For information</b>	No response required	
This circular is	<b>Relevant to the National Framework</b>		
Status	<b><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.</b>		

## “Putting the frontline first: Smarter Government”: performance benchmarking data for the Fire and Rescue Service

### 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:

**Finance Directors & Treasurers  
Performance and Improvement leads**

### Summary

This circular advises that performance benchmarking data for the Fire and Rescue Service is being developed with sector stakeholders and where additional information can be found.

### For further information, contact:

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- 1.0 In April 2009, Government published its final report for the Operational Efficiency Programme (OEP). OEP aims to ensure that efforts to drive efficiency in public services keep pace with developments in the private sector. Five private and public sector leaders with relevant expertise were asked to examine key areas of operational expenditure in the following public sector areas:
- Back office operations and IT
  - Collaborative procurement
  - Asset management and sales
  - Property
  - Local incentives and empowerment
- 1.1 In December 2009 Government published its White Paper “*Putting the frontline first: smarter government*”. It builds on the OEP work and sets out Government’s case for smarter government to meet citizens’ demands for greater local’ accountability and transparency of public services. The publication of FRAs and RMBs Annual Efficiency Statements are an example of this: see Fire and Rescue Circular 2/2010 <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/fire/1472056>.
- 1.2 The White Paper confirmed that local authority benchmarking measures, currently being developed, would be extended to the Fire and Rescue Service as soon as practicable.
- 1.3 CLG is working with stakeholders such as CFOA to progress appropriate benchmarking measures for the Fire and Rescue Service drawing on the wider local government work. Two Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships and the Improvement and Development Agency are piloting the development of corporate measures, including peer challenge processes for local authorities.
- 1.4 The following links provide access to the three publications outlined in this circular:
- Operational Efficiency Report April 2009: [http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/d/oep\\_final\\_report\\_210409\\_pu728.pdf](http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/d/oep_final_report_210409_pu728.pdf)
  - Putting the frontline first: smarter government: <http://www.hmq.gov.uk/frontlinefirst.aspx>
  - Annex: back office and improvement plans: <http://www.hmq.gov.uk/media/54209/annex-backofficeimprovementplans.pdf>
- 1.5 Further information will be issued as the local government pilots and FRS benchmarking data is developed. In the meantime, if you have any queries regarding this circular please contact Andy Swyer: [andy.swyer@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:andy.swyer@communities.gsi.gov.uk)

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