Publication of Statutory Guidance: Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities, and notification of a proposed Economic Assessment Statutory Duty on Local Authorities

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Addressed to:
Please forward 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

Summary
This Circular is to inform Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) that: 1) Statutory guidance, 'Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities' was published on 9 July and 2) A new statutory duty for upper tier and unitary local authorities to assess the economic conditions of their area is currently under consideration, and it is proposed that FRAs are named as statutory consultees.

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1.0 **Publication of statutory guidance: Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities**

1.1 Section 4.13 of the National Framework alerted FRAs to new prospective guidance for Best Value authorities in fulfilling community engagement responsibilities under the provisions of the Local Government and Public Health Act 2007. The National Framework requires FRAs to have regard to this guidance in how they exercise their duty to consult communities.

1.2 The final statutory guidance *Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities* was launched on 9 July alongside the Empowerment White Paper *Communities in Control: Real People, Real Power*. It includes guidance to Best Value authorities (coming into force 1 April 2009) on their duty to involve, under the new section 3A of the Local Government Act 1999. This will help FRAs in implementing existing responsibilities to consult communities in their IRMP and business planning processes.


2.0 **Prosperous Places: Taking forward the Review of Sub-National Economic Development and Regeneration**

2.1 FRAs will wish to be aware that CLG is considering a new statutory duty for upper tier and unitary local authorities to assess the economic conditions of their area. This assessment will feed into the new single regional strategy and the Local Area Agreement. CLG is proposing that FRAs should be included in the list of public bodies to be consulted by local authorities as part of the Local Authority Economic Assessment process. The statutory duty is currently under consideration, following a recent consultation exercise.

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