<table>
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<th>Circular number</th>
<th>68/2008</th>
<th>Date issued</th>
<th>22 December 2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>This circular is</td>
<td>For information</td>
<td>No response required</td>
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<td>This circular is</td>
<td>Relevant to the National Framework</td>
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<td>Status</td>
<td>This circular provides information on grant funding totalling £19.49m awarded to FRAs in relation to the New Dimension programme.</td>
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## USAR and other New Dimension Grant Funding

**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:**

Treasurers  
Directors of Finance

**Summary**

This circular provides information on grant funding being awarded to Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) in relation to the New Dimension programme for urban search and rescue, incident response unit (IRU) training, Fire and Rescue Service National Co-ordination Centre (FRSNCC) and enhanced command support (ECS) trainers.

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USAR and other New Dimension Grant Funding

1.0 Background

1.1 The New Dimension programme, as a collaboration between Communities and Local Government (CLG) and the Fire and Rescue Service (FRS), has enhanced the ability of the FRS to respond to major disruptive events, whatever their cause, involving CBRN materials, collapsed or unstable structures, and to displace large volumes of water.

1.2 Government has made over £200m investment plus on-going costs for the continuing delivery of the New Dimension capability. Most of this investment has been directly spent through national procurement of equipment, training and other areas. In line with the new burdens principle, CLG is committed to provide new burdens funding in recognition of the additional costs faced by Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) as a result of hosting, and in due course owning, New Dimension assets.

1.3 This Circular sets out the funding that is being awarded to FRAs for expenditure incurred, or to be incurred, in 2008/09. The areas which this Circular covers include:

- Incident response unit (IRU) training
- Urban search and rescue (USAR) crewing
- USAR personal protective equipment (PPE)
- USAR timber
- USAR canine search teams
- USAR training facility consumables
- USAR oxygen
- Fire and Rescue Service National Co-ordination Centre (FRSNCC)
- Enhanced command support (ECS) trainers.

1.4 In the longer term, we want to examine changing the funding mechanism from direct grants to Formula Grant. We will consider this as part of the formula review of the formula grant distribution, which will involve local authority representation.

2.0 Funding Approach

2.1 FSC36/2008 outlined the funding for FRAs in support of New Dimension over the next three years, to 2010/11. This Circular describes the funding in more detail, including funding for FRSNCC and ECS trainers, which had not been finalised when FSC 36/2008 was issued. The remaining funding streams mentioned in FSC36/2008 which have not yet been drawn down, will be paid later this financial year.

2.2 A copy of the ‘Urban Search and Rescue and other New Dimension Funding Grant Determination 2008/09’ (No. 31/1281), detailing amounts for individual FRAs, is attached. Payment of all funding will be arranged by CLG by the end of December 2008 via BACS.
3.0 Incident Response Unit Training
3.1 In 2004 every FRA in England was provided with at least one incident response unit (IRU) for mass decontamination, along with the necessary initial training to operate it. In 2005/06 it was agreed that annual funding would be awarded to FRAs to ensure that IRU refresher training could be undertaken and competence on the equipment maintained. Total funding in recognition of these costs amounts to £2,366,400 between all FRAs.

4.0 USAR Crewing
4.1 Ministers announced at Fire 2004 that CLG would provide up to £16m per year from 2005/06 to help meet the cost of crewing the second phase of the New Dimension programme (for the purposes of this Circular this means USAR).

4.2 Crewing costs have been established as £779,357 for a full USAR team, based on a team of 30 personnel. West Sussex FRS provides the USAR strategic reserve and will receive half of this amount. This level of funding represents an increase of 2% on last year. Total funding in recognition of these costs amounts to £15,197,461 between those FRAs hosting USAR capabilities.

5.0 USAR personal protective equipment (PPE)
5.1 CLG has paid a grant for the ongoing maintenance of USAR PPE and the replenishment of related PPE consumables since 2006/07 in recognition of the new burden on FRAs associated with maintaining this equipment. Total funding in recognition of these costs amounts to £366,990 between all USAR FRAs.

6.0 USAR timber
6.1 This is another continuation grant, in recognition of the costs to USAR FRAs of replenishing timber used in training. Total funding in recognition of these costs amounts to £195,000 between all USAR FRAs.

6.2 As previously noted, timber bought for USAR must, as a minimum, meet the C16 specification for construction grade timber. (Guidance has been issued under separate cover by the New Dimension USAR team to provide greater detail in this respect.) CLG strongly encourages FRAs to purchase wood from sustainable sources.

7.0 USAR canine search teams
7.1 The USAR canine search teams were established in 2007/08, with a total grant of £429,480, for USAR FRAs to each set up their own dog team, or to contract in the equivalent. Each FRA, including West Sussex, will receive £6,626 to maintain a dog, together with their training, their handler’s training and associated costs.

7.2 The funding for this year, which totals £150,860 between all USAR FRAs, represents the level of funding required to maintain this capability. Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Combined Fire Authority, as lead FRA for canine search teams, will receive an additional amount in recognition of its part-time role as lead authority to ensure that the capability is established. Funding for the lead authority role does not extend beyond this financial year. The lead authority will also receive a funding element for training attrition.
8.0 USAR training facility consumables
8.1 CLG has previously funded each USAR team to have a local training facility to enable the USAR team to maintain its skills in the USAR capability: London were funded for two local training facilities. In undertaking this refresher training, CLG recognises that USAR teams use considerable quantities of consumables. Total funding in recognition of these costs is £390,000 between all USAR FRAs. This is a continuation grant, first awarded in 2007/08.

9.0 USAR oxygen
9.1 This continuation grant provides the funding to cover the costs incurred by FRAs for supplying their own oxygen for their USAR teams, to enable the use of particular USAR equipment and medical oxygen. This is a continuation grant. Total funding in recognition of these costs is £10,847 between all USAR FRAs.

10.0 Fire and Rescue Service National Co-ordination Centre (FRSNCC)
10.1 The FRSNCC was established in 2005 to co-ordinate New Dimension assets, monitoring their availability and facilitating their mobilisation to serious incidents, such as HVPs to floods. It is hosted by West Yorkshire FRS.

10.2 The funding for West Yorkshire FRA to operate the FRSNCC this year is £477,710.

11.0 Enhanced command support (ECS) trainers
11.1 The ECS capability is the final operational element of the New Dimension capability to be delivered. In order to establish the capability, and train the operating crews adequately, each of the nine FRAs hosting the ECS capability is being funded for a trainer this year.

11.2 The funding reflects that these posts were fulltime to the end of October, after which they reduced to half time. Total funding in recognition of these costs is £335,625 between all ECS FRAs.

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