

**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 London Commissioner  
The Chief Fire Officer

## Summary of contents in this issue

(The title below is a link to the bulletin page)

### [Title: Localism Bill](#)

The Localism Bill published on the 13 December 2010 includes the provision of general powers for stand alone Fire and Rescue Authorities; a requirement on councils to publish a senior pay policy statement which will also apply to all Fire and Rescue Authorities; and amendments to the current charging arrangements.

### [Title: Fire Futures](#)

This item is to signpost that the Fire Futures workstream Chairs presented the Fire Futures Reports to Fire Minister, Bob Neill MP, at a meeting with the Steering Group on 15 December 2010.

### [Title: Evaluation Options for Fire and Rescue Service Activities](#)

Signposts a publication on Evaluation Options for Fire and Rescue Service Fire Safety Activities.

### [Title: Urban Search and Rescue Personal Protective Equipment specification for high dust and chemical, biological and radiological environments](#)

Signposts two publications on Urban Search and Rescue Personal Protective Equipment.

### [Title: Generic Risk Assessment](#)

Signposts recent publications and the pending Generic Risk Assessments commissioned by the Department for Communities and Local Government under the Operational Guidance Programme.

## Localism Bill

### 1. Background

1.1 The Localism Bill published on Monday 13 December 2010 includes proposals on:

- The provision of general powers for stand alone Fire and Rescue Authorities comparable to the general power of competence for local authorities covered in the same Bill
- The introduction of a requirement on all councils to publish a senior pay policy statement which will also apply to Fire and Rescue Authorities; and
- Amendments to the current charging arrangements.

### 2.0 Localism Bill

2.1 The Fire Minister, Bob Neill, wrote to all Fire and Rescue Authority Chairs and Chief Fire Officers, the Chief Fire Officers' Association and the Local Government Association on Tuesday 14 December 2010 notifying them that the Localism Bill provides for general powers for stand alone Fire and Rescue Authorities and amendments to the current charging arrangements. County Councils will be covered by the general power of competence in the same Bill.

2.2 The proposed powers, for stand alone Fire and Rescue Authorities, will extend the provision of increased freedoms and flexibilities to all Fire and Rescue Authorities and ensure that they can engage in any activity intended to benefit or contribute to the purpose of the Fire and Rescue Service/Authority so long as they believe the activity is connected with any of their functions. The activity does not have to be a direct one: it is sufficient if the activity is intended to be beneficial to the performance of their functions.

2.3 Fire and Rescue Authorities powers will have the same limitations as the general power of competence:

- No power to raise taxes or borrow money – other than in line with existing arrangements
- No power to override existing legislation.

2.4 Alongside the general powers the Localism Bill also plans to free up all Fire and Rescue Authorities from the existing overly complex and cumbersome charging arrangements by removing the order for what may be charged for and replacing it with specific provisions where charging is not possible. Fire and Rescue Authorities will not be able to charge for core functions and other proposed further exclusions.

2.5 The Government's view is that there needs to be greater local democratic accountability and transparency over senior remuneration arrangements and policies within local government. To this end the Coalition Programme included a commitment to give councillors the power to vote on large salary packages for unelected council officials.

2.6 This commitment is being taken forward in the Localism Bill by requiring each council to publish a senior pay policy statement which would be agreed, annually, by full council. This would set the pay framework under which decisions on senior pay could be delegated. The arrangements will also apply to all Fire and Rescue Authorities.

**Continued over . . .**

*continued*

## Localism Bill

2.7 The full detailed clauses in respect of the proposed wider general powers for Fire and Rescue Authorities and the amendment to the current charging arrangements are available at:  
<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2010-11/localism/documents.html>

**END**

For further information please contact:

Andy Swyer	Telephone	0303 444 2956
Fire and rescue Service Localism and Performance	Email	<a href="mailto:Andy.swyer@communities.gsi.gov.uk">Andy.swyer@communities.gsi.gov.uk</a>

## Fire Futures

### 1. Background

- 1.1 This item is to signpost that the Fire Futures workstream Chairs presented the Fire Futures Reports to Fire Minister, Bob Neill MP, at a meeting with the Steering Group on 15 December 2010.

### 2. Presentation of the Fire Futures Reports Summary

- 2.1 The Minister extended his thanks to the workstream Chairs, steering group members and the wider sector for contributing to the Fire Futures reports and for meeting his challenge of drawing ideas from across the whole sector at a rapid pace.
- 2.2 The Minister will be reflecting on the reports and hopes that others will take this opportunity to do the same. If you have any reactions to the options put forward that you wish the Minister to consider as he decides which options to progress you can do so by e-mailing the fire futures account at [firefutures@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:firefutures@communities.gsi.gov.uk) The Government plans to report back by March 2011.
- 2.3 The Fire Futures Reports including the Chairs' Forward can be found at: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/news/newsroom/1804631> The papers that contributed to the reports along with organisation submission are available upon request by e-mailing: [firefutures@communications.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:firefutures@communications.gsi.gov.uk)

For further information please contact:

Graham Pointer	Telephone	0303 444 3257
Fire and Rescue Service Finance, Efficiency and Performance	Email	<a href="mailto:firefutures@communities.gsi.gov.uk">firefutures@communities.gsi.gov.uk</a>

## Evaluation Options for Fire and Rescue Service Fire Safety Activities

### 1. Background

1.1 This item is to signpost a publication on Evaluation Options for the Fire and Rescue Service Fire Safety Activities. This was published on Monday 6 December 2010.

### 2. Summary of Reports

2.1 Workshops were held with Fire Safety Officers and data specialists in June 2010 to canvas views on the benefits of evaluating fire safety data, current best practice in data evaluation and the quality and availability of fire safety data in the Fire and Rescue Services. These and the follow-up questionnaire to all Fire and Rescue Services, found that Fire and Rescue Services consider they have a strong and clear need to evaluate their fire safety activities, and that more could be done to advance data analysis and evaluation in this area.

2.2 The Department for Communities and Local Government has published this report, which illustrates how fire safety data could be used by Fire and Rescue Services for evaluation purposes. This report is intended to be of use to fire safety team managers, and highlights a number of possible evaluations that could be undertaken to support local decision making, resource allocation and to demonstrate locally the effectiveness of fire safety audit and enforcement activities carried out under the Fire Safety Order.

2.3 The reports are available at:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/fire/researchandstatistics/researchpublications/fulltechnicalreports>

For further information please contact:

Russell Hocken	Telephone	01608 650004
Research and Statistics Division	Email	<a href="mailto:russell.hocken@communications@communities.gsi.gov.uk">russell.hocken@communications@communities.gsi.gov.uk</a>

## Urban Search and Rescue Personal Protective Equipment specification for high dust and chemical, biological and radiological environments

### 1. Background

- 1.1 This item is to signpost the publication of two research reports on urban search and rescue personal protective equipment specification for high dust and chemical, biological and radiological environments. These were published on Monday 6 December 2010.

### 2. Summary of Reports

- 2.1 In 2007, the Department for Communities and Local Government commissioned research from the Health & Safety Laboratory. The aim of this work was to assess the protection provided by the Fire and Rescue Service urban search and rescue personal protective equipment against high dust and/or chemical, biological and radiological materials, and to identify options to enhance the protection against these hazards.
- 2.2 Key deliverables from this research were specifications for the selection and procurement of personal protective ensembles suitable for high dust and chemical, biological and radiological environments.
- 2.3 A Fire and Research Service Task and Finish Group, reporting to the Fire and Rescue Service Urban Search and Rescue National Working Group, has been convened to consider and implement as appropriate the research outputs.
- 2.4 The reports are available at:  
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/fire/researchandstatistics/researchpublications/fulltechnicalreports>

For further information please contact:

Dr Suk Athwal	Telephone	0303 444 2810
Research and Statistics Division	Email	<a href="mailto:suk.athwal@communications.gsi.gov.uk">suk.athwal@communications.gsi.gov.uk</a>

## Generic Risk Assessment

### 1. Background

- 1.1 The Department for Communities and Local Government through the Operational Guidance Programme commissioned a series of Generic Risk Assessments.
- 1.2 The ongoing series assists Fire and Rescue Authorities in England in developing their own risk assessments for their fire and service operational activity.

### 2. Generic Risk Assessments

- 2.1 The Department for Communities and Local Government has recently published further Operational Guidance for the Fire and Rescue Service. The four guidance documents are part of the series of Generic Risk Assessments and are published to assist the Fire and Rescue Service produce their own risk assessments and support interoperability of fire and rescue services across England.
- 2.2 Generic Risk Assessments published in October 2010 were:
- 5.4: Incidents involving biological hazards
  - 5.9: Incidents involving asbestos containing materials.
- 2.3 Generic Risk Assessments published in December 2010 were:
- 2.5: Large Animal Rescue
  - 4.5: Working with Helicopters.
- 2.4 Hard copies of these documents have been sent to the Chief Fire Officer in each Fire and Rescue Service. The can be fond via the following link below:  
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/fire/firerescueservice/operationalguidance/>
- 2.5 The publication of the following Generic Risk Assessments is programmed for the early months of 2011.
- Transport systems 'Railways'
  - Incidents involving 'Radiation'
  - Fires in Buildings
  - Incidents involving 'Chemicals'
  - Flooding.
- 2.6 More information on Operational Guidance for the Fire and Rescue Service is available at:  
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/fire/firerescueservice/operationalguidance/>

For further information please contact:

Chris Sewell	Telephone	0303 444 3807
Office of the Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser	Email	<a href="mailto:ChiefFire&amp;RescueAdvisers@communities.gsi.gov.uk">ChiefFire&amp;RescueAdvisers@communities.gsi.gov.uk</a>

Department for Communities and Local Government  
Eland House  
Bressenden Place  
London  
SW1E 5DU  
Telephone: 0303 444 0000  
Website: [www.communities.gov.uk](http://www.communities.gov.uk)

© Crown Copyright, 2011

*Copyright in the typographical arrangement rests with the Crown.*

*This publication, excluding logos, may be reproduced free of charge in any format or medium for research, private study or for internal circulation within an organisation. This is subject to it being reproduced accurately and not used in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Crown copyright and the title of the publication specified.*

Any other use of the contents of this publication would require a copyright licence. Please apply for a Click-Use Licence for core material at [www.opsi.gov.uk/click-use/system/online/pLogin.asp](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/click-use/system/online/pLogin.asp), or by writing to the Office of Public Sector Information, Information Policy Team, Kew, Richmond, Surrey TW9 4DU

e-mail: [licensing@opsi.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@opsi.gov.uk)

If you require this publication in an alternative format please email:  
[alternativeformats@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:alternativeformats@communities.gsi.gov.uk)

Department for Communities and Local Government Publications  
Tel: 0300 123 1124  
Fax: 0300 123 1125  
Email: [product@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:product@communities.gsi.gov.uk)  
Online via the Department's website: [www.communities.gov.uk](http://www.communities.gov.uk)

January 2011

ISBN: 978 1 4098 2723 8