



INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

YEAR TWO - 2005/2006

PROJECT No. 7

DELIBERATE FIRE REDUCTION STRATEGY
2005/09

DELIBERATE FIRE REDUCTION STRATEGY 2005/09
CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

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1. INTRODUCTION

This Consultation Document has been prepared as part of Lancashire Combined Fire Authority's Integrated Risk Management Planning process. The terms of reference are contained in the current Integrated Risk Management Plan 2005/06 and read as follows:

Develop a risk reduction strategy for deliberate fires.

The demand on fire service resources to address this type of incident is extensive and disrupts more productive activity such as community fire safety work. A national government target is now in place to reduce deliberate fires by 10% by the year 2010.

Perceived benefits from having such a strategy will be:

- *a reduction in the risk to the people of Lancashire;*
- *a reduction in cost, both financial and social, to the people of Lancashire;*
- *an ability to use our staff, and other resources, in a more productive way.*

Having prepared this draft strategy, Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service will now consult widely with stakeholders across the County. Reading the draft strategy you will see that it is abundantly clear: a reduction in deliberate fire setting cannot be achieved by the Fire and Rescue Service alone. Therefore, it is very important that our community safety partners both understand what safety objectives we share and how we can work together to achieve them.

To help our partners and members of the public during the consultation, questions will be developed that may be utilised in framing a response.

Section Two encompasses the draft strategy in summary, with further sections reporting on the background to the strategy development.

2. THE DRAFT DELIBERATE FIRE REDUCTION STRATEGY

The government has set a target of a 10% reduction in deliberate [primary] fires by March 2010 using 2001-2002 as its baseline. Lancashire Combined Fire Authority and the Fire and Rescue Service intend to reduce deliberate primary fires still further; whilst also driving deliberate secondary fires down at the same time.

Reducing deliberate fires accords with the vision of Lancashire Combined Fire Authority and Fire and Rescue Service, which is **TO MAKE LANCASHIRE A SAFER COMMUNITY.**

Our approach will involve a range of activities designed to:

Prevent deliberate fire setting through reducing the opportunities to cause fires by fuel management, education, intervention and diversion

Protect from deliberate fires through problem solving and arson target hardening, and

Respond to deliberate fire setting through effective intelligence gathering, fire investigation and support for the Constabulary

Reductions in the incidence of deliberate fire setting will *only* be achieved through working in partnership with other stakeholders and using the following series of key processes:

Community Safety Partnerships and Local Strategic Partnerships

Community Safety Partnerships and Local Strategic Partnerships are the major structures through which partnership work to reduce deliberate fire setting will be planned and orchestrated.

When engaging with partnerships we will try to align strategies, plans, objectives and targets to avoid duplication of effort and to ensure that we are working towards the same goals.

Information Exchange

We will maximise the sharing of intelligence between partner agencies, using the Multi Agency Data Exchange Facility (MADE), by developing the Service's analytical abilities and by working closely with Lancashire Constabulary on criminal fire investigation. We will build on our working relationship with the Constabulary using an information management framework supported by fire officers accredited under the Constabulary's Community Safety Accreditation Scheme.

Community Engagement

We will work to ensure that Lancashire's communities feel we are visible and accessible to them and that they can influence local fire and rescue service priorities. We will achieve this by engaging with community groups and organisations as part of our community safety work.

We will be responsive to the needs of Lancashire's minority communities and aim to deliver services in ways which are fair and equitable, treating everyone with respect and dignity. As part of the Service's plans to increase dedicated resources for community safety we will welcome applications for community fire safety practitioners posts from minority communities. This will help ensure that when tackling deliberate fire setting and promoting community cohesion, we do so in ways which demonstrate respect and understanding of diversity issues, including race, disability, gender, sexual orientation and faith.

Targeted Campaigns in Partnership with Crimestoppers

Utilising the media: press, radio, television, each year we will provide targeted campaigns across the County at peak times in areas of high risk of deliberate fires.

We will encourage calls to Crimestoppers about deliberate fires using large reusable banners attached to buildings that have been subjected to suspicious fires and similar flyers delivered to addresses in the area.

Fuel Management

Fuel management is about restricting the access for deliberate fire setters to combustible materials. We will work to achieve this by developing, using and maintaining formal communication pathways with all local authority services engaged in the removal of waste and abandoned vehicles.

We will encourage and support local authority campaigns aimed at refuse removal particularly around the Bonfire Night period. We will promote the sensible use of skips to avoid fires, and where possible, we will also assist local authority enforcing officers in identifying environmental offenders.

Arson Target Hardening

We will advise on making property more difficult to obtain, reach or ignite using fire safety officers inspecting businesses and public buildings and operational crews during school educational visits.

We will work to ensure that *Secure by Design* principles are employed in the design of new or renewed buildings reducing the opportunity for arson crime.

We will work with local authorities and other stakeholders to ensure that empty properties are secured before they can be ignited or following a fire.

We will work with local authority environmental health officers to make businesses aware of the risks of storing waste materials close to buildings making them susceptible to fire spread, and support formal enforcement action where necessary.

Problem Solving: Problem Orientated Fire Safety

We will utilise the Constabulary's Problem Orientated Policing process (renamed POFS) for identifying and tackling the underlying causes of community problems and recurring community fire safety issues, in order to eradicate them or reduce their impact.

Arson Control Forum

We will continue to support the work of the Arson Control Forum.

The Arson Control Forum Implementation Fund made grants totaling £689,000 to partnerships in Lancashire in late 2003, including one which has sustained the Arson Reduction Team. Other grants involve employing two community firefighters working with the Constabulary and Youth Offending Teams, and the removal of fly tipping, refuse and abandoned vehicles.

Research by the ODPM, found that where local projects have been set up, for every £1 provided by the Forum, other partners have added an additional £4. It is also estimated that they have resulted in a net saving to society of at least £20 million.

Arson Reduction Team

Lancashire's Arson Reduction Team, comprising of a Fire Officer and a Detective Constable, will now increasingly concentrate on driving up the rates of arrest and detection of offenders in areas where there are high levels of deliberate fire setting. This involves improving the information exchanged with the Constabulary following fire investigation by the Fire and Rescue Service. These improvements allow police officers to progress investigations earlier and establish the evidence that is necessary for a successful prosecution.

Effective Accurate Criminal Fire Investigation

We will work to ensure we support the Constabulary effectively when investigating suspicious fires, re-examining the roles and responsibilities of each service, utilising our time resources to best effect.

We will continue to provide the services of fire investigation (accelerant detector) dogs free of charge to the Constabulary and develop specialist incident

intelligence staff who will positively contribute to the reduction of risk from deliberate fires as well as other forms of incident.

We will continue to provide and develop the fire investigation training provided to fire officers and other agencies maintaining our officers among the best trained investigators in the country.

Fire Investigation and the Region

We will investigate areas where the fire and rescue services in the North West can collaborate on issues affecting fire investigation. Building on our regional approach to the use of fire investigation dogs, we will identify the costs effectiveness of joint training programmes and common working protocols for the region.

Developing Young People: Education, Intervention and Diversion Schemes

We will continue to provide and develop a range of educational packages, and intervention and diversionary schemes, all with the over arching objective of *developing young people*.

The programmes will include:

- FACE for children with a fascination with fire,
- Arson Programme educating convicted offenders,
- Back Fire for secondary school children at risk of engaging in anti-social behaviour,
- FLARE a one week work experience course for young people known to be offending or at risk of offending, and
- Fire Break a one-day a week intervention programme for 12 weeks for vulnerable groups of young people who are engaging in risk taking behaviour.

3 VISION & STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The vision of Lancashire Combined Fire Authority and Fire and Rescue Service is ***TO MAKE LANCASHIRE A SAFER COMMUNITY.***

Reducing deliberate fire setting links to a number of our strategic objectives:

- Reduce the life loss and injury arising out of fires and other emergency incidents.

- Reduce the number of fires and other emergency incidents.

- Reduce the commercial, economic and social impact of fire and other emergency incidents.

- Protect the environment and the Lancashire heritage.

- Support the wider agenda of community cohesion.

- Provide a better value service.

4 BACKGROUND & TERMINOLOGY

Following the publication of the report of the Arson Scoping Study 'Safer Communities – Towards Effective Arson Control', the Arson Control Forum (ACF) was established in 2001 to co-ordinate efforts to reduce arson.

Co-operation and mutual assistance between the Police and Fire and Rescue Service in the investigation of a suspected deliberate fire is not a new phenomenon, but the ethos of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 embodies the multi-agency approach to tackling crime and disorder. It provides opportunities for the Police and Fire and Rescue Service to develop local initiatives and programmes with a range of partners in relation to the investigation and prevention of non-accidental fires.

Through the Arson Control Forum (ACF) the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister wasted no time in initiating action intended to provide support and guidance to arson reduction and in November 2003 published '*Arresting Arson – a review of Arson Reduction Partnerships*'.

Containing 14 recommendations this comprehensive review examined how police and Fire and Rescue Services work with other partners to reduce arson and identifies areas of best practice.

The establishment of the ACF also coincided with the publication of Fire and Rescue Service Circular 21/2000 and Home Office Circular 44/2000 which puts the levels of arson and deliberate fires into statistical perspective and re-emphasises roles and responsibilities and partnership working. It provides advice and guidance to police and Fire and Rescue Services in dealing with primary and secondary fires.

Both publications confirm that sharing information and good analysis of data to support an intelligence-led approach to arson reduction is essential to the success of an arson or deliberate fire reduction strategy. Notwithstanding the requirements of data protection legislation, any doubts relating to the shared exchange of relevant information among community safety partners should be dispelled.

The designation of the fire authority as statutory crime and disorder partners ('responsible bodies' - section 97 Police Reform Act 2002) has given a renewed impetus to the Fire and Rescue Service to raise the profile of arson and deliberate fires under the broad umbrella of anti-social behaviour and quality of life complaints from the community and to influence partnership responses. This new role also consolidates the role and influence of the Fire and Rescue Service within the Community Safety Partnership arena.

4.1 An Explanation of Terms:

Categories of Fire

The Fire and Rescue Service divides deliberate fire incidents into two categories for reporting and statistical purposes.

Primary Fires - broadly those involving buildings and structures, and other property such as vehicles, storage, plant and machinery; fires involving casualties, rescues or escapes; fires where significant Fire and Rescue Service resources are employed.

In recording deliberate fires fire and rescue services' sub-categorise primary (FDR 1) fires further, particularly ensuring that those involving vehicles (other than caravans) are separately highlighted.

In many cases vehicle fires are attributed to cars that have been stolen and when identified can usually be aligned with police crime and incident records.

Secondary Fires - broadly those involving derelict buildings/vehicles; single buildings under demolition; fires confined to chimneys; other outdoor fires such as those involving grassland, gardens and fences, refuse and refuse containers.

Secondary (FDR 3) fires account for over 75% of deliberate fires attended by the fire and rescue service across the country and are often nuisance fires set by the same people who are responsible for other forms of anti-social behaviour in our communities. By their nature and volume focused partnership work is required to deal effectively with them.

Deliberate Fire Setting and Arson

Two agencies collect information on deliberate fires, the fire and rescue service and the police service. Only a proportion of the malicious deliberate fires attended by fire and rescue services are later classified by the police as arson offences as defined by the Criminal Damage Act 1971. Under the 1971 Act to record an incident as arson the police have to prove that persons behaved 'recklessly' or 'intended to damage property', whereas the fire and rescue service merely have to suspect ignition is most likely deliberate.¹

¹ The gap between police and fire figures nationally may have narrowed since 2002 with the introduction of the National Crime Recording System, under which an incident will be recorded as a crime if, on the balance of probabilities, "the incident [is] more likely than not the result of a criminal act" (Association of Chief Police Officers, 2002).

For the purposes of this strategy the more inclusive term *deliberate fire setting* has been chosen in favour of *arson* to cover both serious fire crime and fires that are more appropriately considered to be acts of anti-social behaviour.

5 THE INCIDENCE AND COST OF DELIBERATE FIRE SETTING

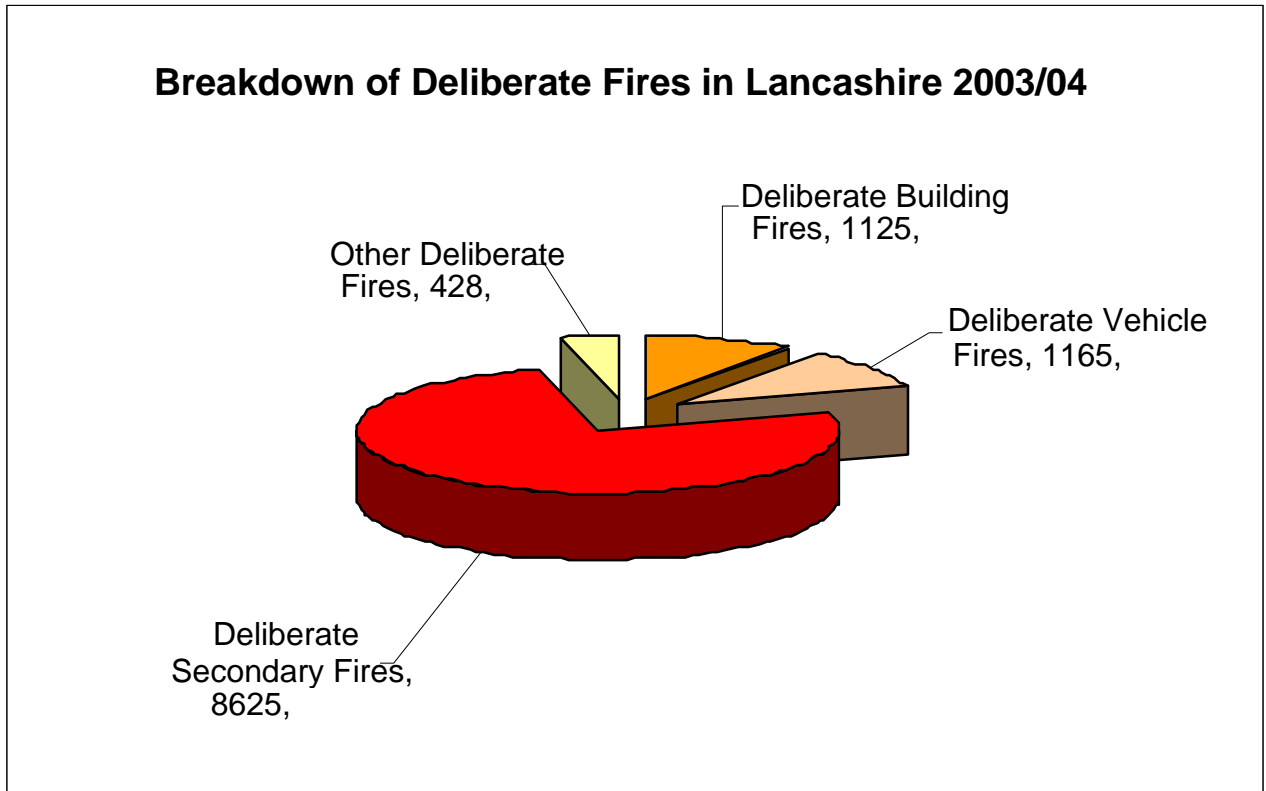
5.1 Deliberate Fire Setting in Lancashire

Volume of Deliberate Fire Setting

PERIOD	NO OF DELIBERATE FIRES	NUMBER OF DELIBERATE FIRES (RATE PER 1000 POPULATION)
April 2001 - March 2002	10190	7.2
April 2002 - March 2003	10167	7.2
April 2003 - March 2004	11343	8.0

- The figures above² represent a 10% increase in the number of Deliberate Fires between 2001/02 and 2003/04.

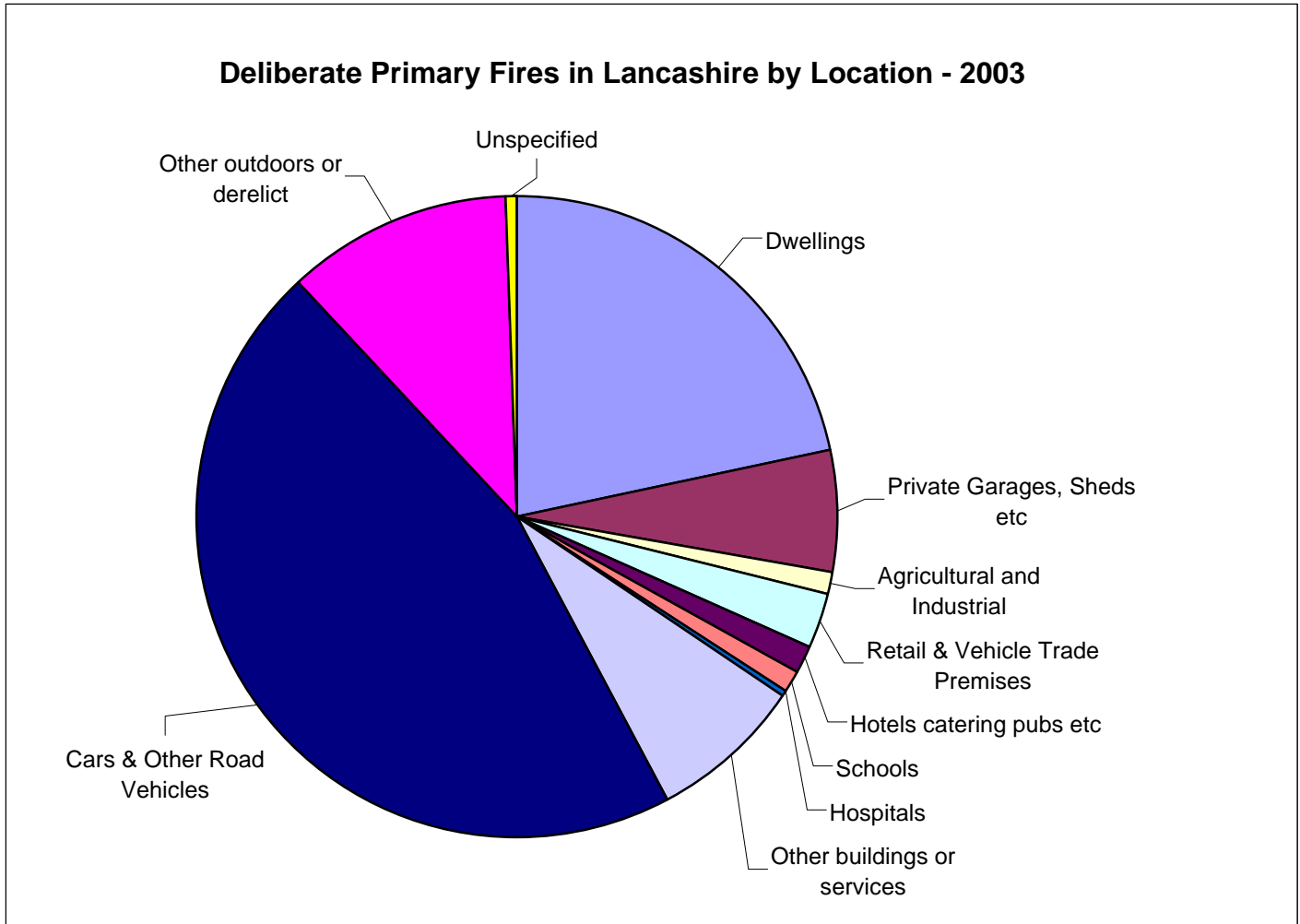
Analysis of Deliberate Fire Setting



- The majority of deliberate fires are secondary fires, i.e. those which do not involve any loss of property. The main types of deliberate secondary fires were refuse/container (60%) and grass/heath/railway (27%).

² Source: Lancashire Constabulary/Lancashire Fire and Rescue/MADE

- Of the 2773 deliberate primary fires recorded in 2003, the most common locations were Cars and Other Road Vehicles (46%), Dwellings (22%) and Other Outdoors or Derelict (11%). See chart below for details.



5.2 Comparing the Incidence of Deliberate Fires with other Fire and Rescue Service Areas

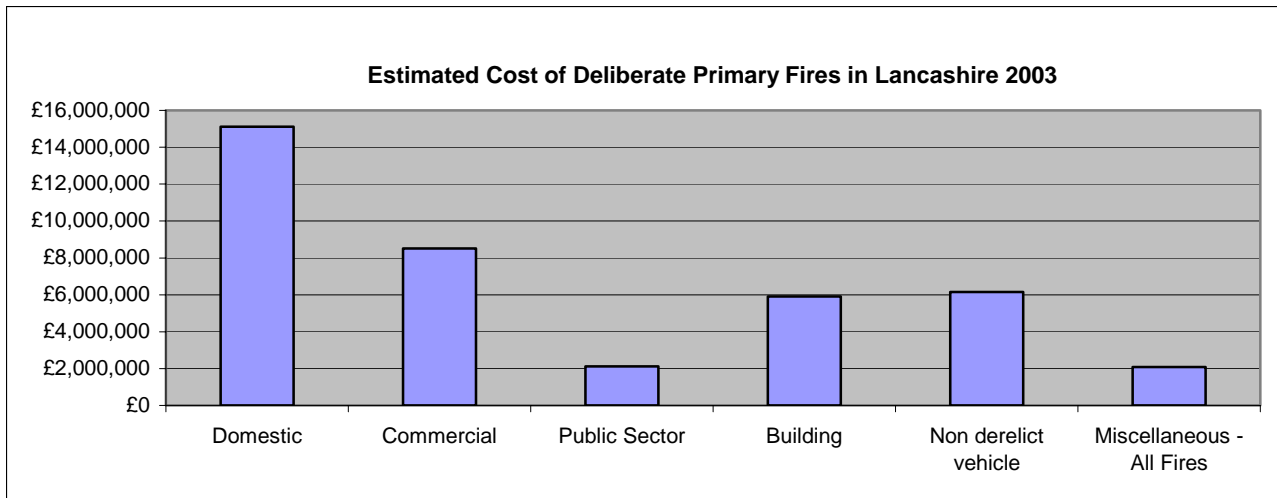
- The table below compares deliberate primary fires in Lancashire with other North West Fire and Rescue Services. Overall, Lancashire has below average incidences of deliberate fires, most notably 38% below average for Cars & Other Vehicles.

**DELIBERATE PRIMARY FIRES BY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE AND LOCATION,
2003³ - RATE PER 10,000 POPULATION⁴**

FRS	Dwellings	Private Garages, Sheds etc	Agricultural & Industrial	Retail & Vehicle Trade	Hotel & Catering, Pubs etc	Schools	Hospitals	Other buildings or services	Cars & Other Vehicles	Other outdoor or derelict	Unspecified	Total
Cheshire	1.73	1.29	0.49	0.47	0.11	0.11	0.17	0.60	9.33	2.07	0.05	16.43
Cumbria	1.47	0.84	0.14	0.20	0.12	0.10	0.02	1.08	8.33	1.02	0.00	13.33
G Manchester	4.56	2.13	0.27	0.73	0.34	0.30	0.19	1.24	20.28	2.71	0.05	32.81
Lancashire	4.23	1.15	0.24	0.52	0.29	0.20	0.08	1.48	8.91	2.21	0.10	19.40
Merseyside	7.24	1.27	0.20	0.89	0.42	0.32	0.20	2.04	25.25	2.54	0.08	40.44
North West Average	3.85	1.34	0.27	0.57	0.26	0.21	0.13	1.29	14.42	2.11	0.06	24.48

5.3 The Cost of Deliberate Fire Setting

- The estimated cost of deliberate primary fires in Lancashire in 2003 was £39,855,700⁵ and can be broken down as follows:



- The estimated cost of deliberate secondary fires in Lancashire in 2003 was £14,231,250 (8625 fires, average total cost per fire of £1650⁶).

³ Source: Table 24, Fire Statistics 2003, ODPM

(www.odpm.gov.uk/stellent/groups/odpm_fire/documents/page/odpm_fire_035909.pdf)

⁴ Source: (www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Expodata/Spreadsheets/D8559.xls)

⁵ Estimates taken from Table 5.4, Economic Costs of Fire Estimates 2003, M.Weiner, Home Office www.odpm.gov.uk

⁶ Source: Table 5.4 Economic Costs of Fire Estimates 2003, as above

6 AUTHORITIES WHO HAVE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE REDUCTION OF DELIBERATE FIRES

Deliberate fire setting is an issue for both the community of Lancashire and its public services. Reducing the numbers of deliberate fires is not the province of any single person or public service.

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 was created to tackle crime and disorder and help create safer communities. It reflects a number of underlying themes including:

- the 'responsible bodies' (Police, fire, local authority etc) - with the whole community - must establish a local partnership to cut crime; and,
- local authorities and other public bodies must consider the crime and disorder implications of all their decisions.

Community Safety Partnerships have helped a range of services to contribute to the reduction of crime and disorder and provide the major framework for all of the Fire and Rescue Service's work with partners.

Section 17 of the Act requires local authorities, police authorities and other authorities including fire authorities to consider crime and disorder reduction, (including deliberate fire reduction) and community safety in the exercise of all their duties and activities. This is a powerful tool, requiring authorities to look at the crime reduction potential of all their policies, budgetary and other decisions and service provision.

Lancashire's Police Authority is responsible for ensuring the detection of fire crime and the enforcement of the Criminal Damage Act (which details the crime of arson). Lancashire's Combined Fire Authority understands and supports the need for the Police Authority to ensure that their existing resources are deployed as effectively and efficiently as possible. Arson crime is only a fraction of the responsibilities of Lancashire Constabulary and is accordingly given a different priority to that given by the Fire Authority.

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service acts as a support service to Lancashire Constabulary when detecting crime as intelligence gatherers and fire investigators. We will provide evidence as to the cause, growth and decay of a fire while the Constabulary investigates the crime and identifies the perpetrator(s).

The people of Lancashire must also be encouraged to support the work of public services – in reducing the opportunities for deliberate fire setting and detecting fire crime – both through community groups and as individuals.

7 LINKS WITH OTHER STRATEGIES AND PLANS

This section describes links between the Deliberate Fire Reduction Strategy and other key local strategies/plans.

7.1 Lancashire Combined Fire Authority Community Safety Strategy

This Deliberate Fire Reduction Strategy is designed to complement the Combined Fire Authority Community Safety Strategy 2005-09. The Community Safety Strategy describes our philosophy and approach and how the different facets of the Fire and Rescue Service—prevention, protection and emergency response—are interlinked in the pursuit of a 'safer community'.

7.2 Lancashire Combined Fire Authority Integrated Risk Management Plan

The Lancashire Combined Fire Authority produces an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP), which is developing a flexible risk based approach to service provision. The plan is integral to the future planning of the Service and will ensure resources are located and deployed in areas where they can be most effective in reducing deliberate fire setting.

7.3 Lancashire Constabulary Annual Policing Plan

The Constabulary's two policing objectives for 2005-06 together with associated priorities identify the link between the work of both services:

Objective 1: To reassure the public, particularly those who are vulnerable

One of the priorities under this objective is to provide policing services that give emphasis to alcohol related and other anti-social behaviour. The Constabulary use deliberate fire incident data provided by the Fire and Rescue Service as one of the measures of anti-social behaviour.

Objective 2: To reduce and investigate crime, particularly those that are of concern to the public

One of the priorities under this objective is to provide policing services that give emphasis to serious and organised crime. This includes serious incidents of arson, particularly where there is intent to cause injury by fire.

7.4 The Fire and Rescue Service National Framework⁷

The Government is responsible for setting clear priorities and objectives for the Fire and Rescue Service. The Fire and Rescue National Framework does this by making clear:

- the Government's expectations for the Fire and Rescue Service;
- what Fire and Rescue Authorities are expected to do; and
- what support Government will provide.

The National Framework is a strategic plan outlining how the Government's new fire Public Service Agreement target for England (see section 7 *Performance Framework*) and other objectives can be delivered.

The document is not a national blueprint. It gives Fire and Rescue Authorities flexibility to meet the specific needs of their local communities. The Framework is designed to give authorities a firm foundation on which to build local solutions.

7.5 Community Safety Partnership Plans

Under the Crime and Disorder Act, Lancashire Combined Fire Authority, in collaboration with other responsible authorities audit levels of crime and disorder across the County and prepares reduction strategies. Members of the Fire and Rescue Service will continue to contribute to the 14 community safety partnerships and help other partners to recognise how they can contribute to a reduction in deliberate fires.

7.6 Prolific and Priority Offenders Strategy

It is estimated that out of a million active offenders, 100,000 offenders have 3 or more convictions and are responsible for half of all crime. The active offender population is not static, 20,000 individuals leave this pool every year and are replaced by another 20,000 offenders. The most active 5,000 of this group are estimated to be responsible for one in ten offences.

A national end-to-end strategy to address this group of offenders was launched in September 2004. There are three complementary parts to the programme:

- Prevent and Deter – to stop people (overwhelmingly young people) engaging in offending behaviours and graduating into prolific offenders;

⁷ http://www.odpm.gov.uk/stellent/groups/odpm_fire/documents/page/odpm_fire_033558.hcsp

- Catch and Convict - actively tackling those who are already prolific offenders; and
- Rehabilitate and Resettle – working with identified prolific offenders to stop their offending by offering a range of supportive interventions. Offenders will be offered the opportunity for rehabilitation or face a very swift return to the courts.

The strategy allows local areas to identify and select offenders using the following criteria:

- The nature and volume of the crimes they are committing
- The nature and volume of other harm they are causing (e.g. by virtue of their gang leadership or anti-social behaviour)
- Other local criteria based on the impact of the individuals concerned on their local communities

This should identify those individuals who are the most prolific offenders, the most persistently anti-social in their behaviour and those who pose the greatest threat to the safety and confidence of their local communities.

The strategy is CDRP led, with schemes set up to cover every CDRP in the country. The emphasis is on a multi-agency approach towards tackling the problem, with Police, CPS, Prisons and Probation working together, with LCJB co-ordination, to effectively catch, convict, monitor and manage these offenders in the community or custody and work towards rehabilitating them.

The strategy will provide opportunities to include those who are repeatedly fire setting and bring the full weight of partnership resources to focus on those offenders.

7.7 Local Strategic Partnership Plans

In addressing the broader issues of community development, environmental and economic improvements local strategic partnership plans provide the umbrella under which community safety strategies operate. They also provide a strategic perspective under which funding opportunities are considered.

8 PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

8.1 National Targets

The Government measures the number of deliberate [primary] fires per 10,000 of the population. The government has also set a target of a 10% reduction in deliberate [primary] fires by March 2010 using 2001-2002 as its baseline.

8.2 Service Level and District Level Targets

The Combined Fire Authority has set local targets for reductions across nine key performance indicators, three of which relate to reducing deliberate fires, both primary and secondary:

DESCRIPTION	2003-04	5 YR TARGET 2008-09
Number of deliberate building fires	1500	1336 (N) 1065 (L)
Number of deliberate vehicle fires	1226	1221 (N) 1050 (L)
Number of deliberate secondary fires	8967	7600

Key - (L) Local target (N) National Target

For each of the above indicators, an analysis of Service-wide trends was conducted over the period April 2001 to February 2004.

Following this trend analysis, projected targets have been set for each year. In arriving at a target, consideration was given to the sustainability of the target suggested by the trend line, and also whether the target was both realistic and achievable.

Each of the proposed countywide deliberate fire reduction targets has been disaggregated to arrive at District-level targets. This disaggregation was achieved by considering relevant activity levels for each of the three indicators in each of the fourteen districts. (For example, if 10% of all deliberate vehicle fires occurred in District X, then the target for deliberate vehicle fires for District X would be 10% of that for LFRS as a whole). Based on a detailed district profile, each year an annual action plan is prepared for all fourteen districts within the county which demonstrate how we intend to achieve the targets. The Service's performance in relation to these targets will be published annually in both the Integrated Risk Management and Best Value Performance plans.

9 KEY PROCESSES FOR DEVELOPMENT

Reductions in the incidence of deliberate fire setting will be achieved through a series of key processes listed below. The list contains both key processes that are in place and working well and others that we are working to implement or improve on.

9.1 Community Safety Partnerships and Local Strategic Partnerships

Community Safety Partnerships (derived from the Crime and Disorder Act 1998) and Local Strategic Partnerships are the major structures through which partnership work will be planned and orchestrated.

The Fire and Rescue Service has a lot to offer community safety partnerships and actively participate in all 14 partnerships in the County. Our representation on LSP's is tailored to the needs of each authority.

When engaging with partnerships we will try to align strategies, plans, objectives and targets to avoid duplication of effort and to ensure that we are working towards the same goals.

9.2 Information Exchange

Community Safety Accreditation Scheme

Under the provisions of Section 40 Police Reform Act 2002, the Chief Constable, in consultation with the Police Authority, maintains a Community Safety Accreditation Scheme. The Community Safety Accreditation Scheme has been established for the purposes of contributing to community safety and security. Scheme members work with the Constabulary to combat crime and disorder, public nuisance and other forms of anti-social behaviour.

The Lancashire scheme was one of the first major schemes in the Country and now consists of 13 organisations: 7 local authorities, Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service, Vehicle and Operators Services Agency and two private companies, a security company and a Housing Association. In addition there are 62 Accredited Persons who receive regular communication, share information and intelligence with the police and work on joint operations to reduce crime, increase security, reduce public nuisance and tackle anti-social behaviour.

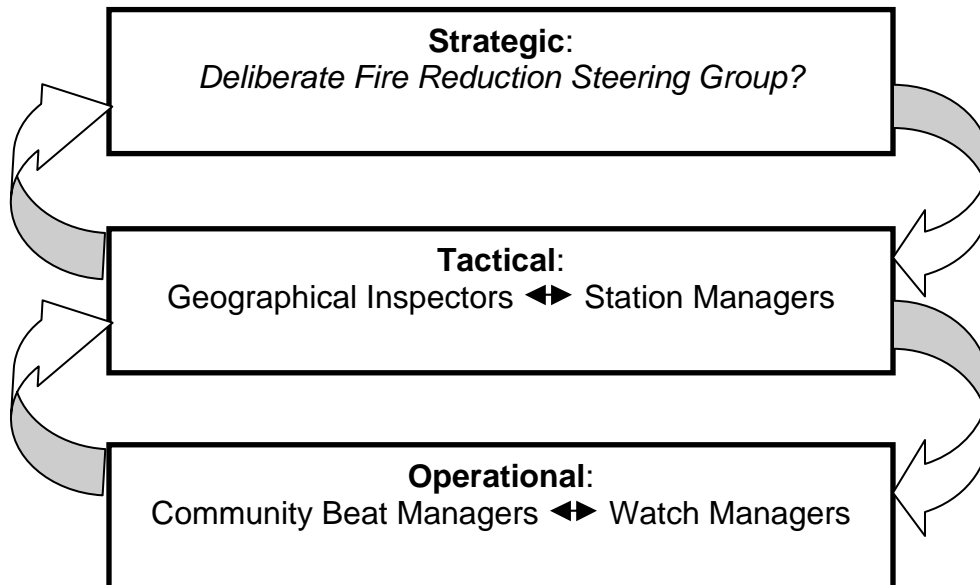
Lancashire is proud to have been the first fire and rescue service in the country to become accredited. Accreditation has allowed Lancashire Fire and Rescue to provide greater assistance to the Constabulary in tackling arson and other crimes.

The Constabulary and the Fire and Rescue Service

The Police and Fire and Rescue Service have worked together on a pilot scheme to maximise information sharing. Accredited fire officers with high level security clearance have been able to attend monthly Intelligence Unit Briefings at Police Stations and to cascade information on known criminals to firefighters. This sharing of intelligence supports the Constabulary's application of the National Intelligence Model and has led to arson related arrests. It is intended to roll out this new communication structure across the County where the successes of the pilot scheme can be duplicated.

In rolling out the communication structure it will become more necessary to complete a management framework covering operations tactics and strategy. Currently there is no specific strategic group. Consideration could be given to broadening the role and membership of the Arson Reduction Team Steering Group (see Arson Reduction Team below). This group would report back into each service's management framework at the appropriate levels.

The Management Framework for information sharing and joint working:



The Operational Risk Management Department Information Section SHQ

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service has been developing further its analytical ability within a newly formed Information Section at Service Headquarters. The Section's analysts provide information (statistics, intelligence, and reports) regularly to both the Service and its partners. The Framework for information sharing with the Constabulary seen above will benefit greatly from this developing Section.

Multi Agency Data Exchange Facility (MADE)

We are also a partner in the Multi Agency Data Exchange facility (MADE): a database maintained by Lancashire County Council and jointly funded by partners in the scheme. Conceived originally to assist the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) in writing their Audits, it has now been developed to inform a wider audience and develop multi-agency working in the County. MADE provides for the sharing and analysis of data sets throughout Lancashire. As one of the best examples of a data warehouse in the country, we will continue to resource and support the MADE.

9.3 Community Engagement

We want Lancashire's communities to feel that we are visible and accessible to them, and that they are able to influence local fire and rescue service priorities. In order to do this, we will engage with community groups and organisations as part of our general community safety work.

Many communities are already benefiting from regular PACT meetings organised by the Constabulary (Police and Communities Together programme), where Community Beat Managers (CBMs) host open meetings to prioritise local issues and co-ordinate action to bring about lasting improvements. Fire and Rescue Service personnel already attend and contribute to established PACT meetings and look forward to the scheme's continued development by the Constabulary.

We are responsive to the needs of Lancashire's minority communities and aim to deliver services in ways, which are fair and equitable, treating everyone with respect and dignity. As part of the Service's plans to increase dedicated resources for community safety we will welcome applications for community fire safety practitioners posts from minority communities. This will help ensure that when tackling deliberate fire setting and promoting community cohesion we do so in ways which demonstrate respect and understanding of diversity issues, including race, disability, gender, sexual orientation and faith.

9.4 Problem Solving: Problem Orientated Fire Safety (POFS)

The Fire and Rescue Service utilises the Constabulary's Problem Orientated Policing process (renamed POFS) for identifying and tackling the underlying causes of community problems and recurring community fire safety issues, in order to eradicate them or reduce their impact.

The Grange Park Estate in Blackpool is now an example of the benefits of applying the POFs approach. Work in partnership with the Constabulary, residents and Blackpool Council under the National Reassurance Programme has led to significant improvements in the residents' quality of life.

Grange Park is a Council built estate is located in one of the most deprived wards in the country. The area had a high number of accidental dwelling fires,

deliberate building and rubbish fires along with many of the other issues around social deprivation.

Initiatives were put in place to target the accidental dwelling fires; high numbers of home fire safety checks were carried out in 31 of the 52 streets identified as high risk on the estate. Memorandums of understanding were signed with partner agencies working with our target groups to enable the vulnerable groups to access the services offered by the Fire Service.

Deliberate building fire locations were identified and target hardening and enforcement action was taken to reduce the risk of deliberate fire setting taking place. Longer-term civil engineering work is planned to replace at risk buildings and a multi agency team is involved in the design.

Deliberate rubbish fires had been identified as a significant problem to the residents of the estate, the council and the Fire Service. Improved rubbish removal systems were put in place, speeding the process up from 2 – 3 weeks to a matter of hours. This combined with enforcement action against persistent offenders and fly tippers have had a massive impact on the estate.

Partnership working with the Council, Fire and Rescue Service and residents has resulted in a 60% reduction in rubbish fires and a 22% reduction in deliberate building fires on the Estate. The benefit of this multi agency working is providing a safer, healthier environment for all the residents of the estate. This work has been recognised nationally with a prestigious ODPM award for *Sustainable Communities*.

9.5 Arson Target Hardening

The Role of Fire Safety Officers

Making property more difficult to obtain, reach or ignite is a successful approach to reducing deliberate fire setting. Our fire safety officers provide advice on target hardening to businesses during inspections enforcing fire safety legislation. We are also soon to distribute thousands of fire safety logbooks in which businesses can keep fire safety records. The log book will also contain a CD Rom and pages of information on fire safety including how to reduce the threat of arson to workplaces and public buildings.

Architects have the earliest contribution to make to arson target hardening, by incorporating measures at the design stage of new buildings or in renewal of existing ones, which in themselves can play a vital part in eliminating the opportunities for arson.

Secured by Design is a UK police initiative supporting the principles of designing out crime. It covers a family of national police projects involving the design for new homes, refurbished homes, commercial premises and car parks. It is primarily an initiative to encourage the building industry to adopt crime prevention

measures to assist in reducing the opportunity for crime, creating a safer and more secure environment. Supported and managed by the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), it has the backing of the Home Office.

Due to the high risk of arson, *secure by design* principles are suggested and incorporated into all schemes for new or materially altered schools and nurseries. This takes place during consultation with local authority building control officers and Constabulary crime prevention officers. Using *secure by design* principles these premises are being built to better withstand and to deter would be fire setters.

Working with Local Authorities: Waste Containers

Every year thousands of fires involving waste materials are started deliberately. These fires often involve piles of rubbish, waste skips, and other types of large plastic containers. If these containers are placed too close to a building, radiated heat could damage the structure, and flames may enter the premises via windows, eaves and wall claddings, thus causing a serious fire to develop resulting in the loss of property and jobs.

These fires may also endanger the lives of staff, firefighters, and members of the public. Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service would like to work with local authority environmental health officers to improve awareness amongst businesses. In serious cases the enforcement powers of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 could be utilised to require improvement to waste storage facilities.

Working with Local Authorities: Securing Empty Properties

The housing stock across parts of Lancashire is in a poor state of repair with significant percentages in some towns empty. Often young people enter or break into empty properties causing damage or to use them as illicit drinking and drug taking dens. After use they will sometimes set fire to the property. Re-securing many of these properties is very important to prevent further damage, injury to trespassers and reduce acts of anti social behaviour.

Clearer guidance is needed on what property local authorities are responsible for re-securing; in what circumstances they should act; and what are the alternatives where a local authority is not responsible.

Working with local councils, we would like to investigate opportunities for attaching a land registry charge to properties that it has been necessary to secure in the absence of the property's owner. The charge would provide for the cost of securing the property from further entry and damage.

We also wish to work with local councils during the tendering process of demolition projects, to ensure that communities are not inconvenienced by deliberate fire at these sites.

We believe that the issues surrounding empty property would benefit from a general county-wide review and the development of a consistent more proactive approach, using robust methods of securing doors and windows that is clearly understood by fire service personnel, other stakeholders and the public. The review would help identify all the agencies with opportunity or responsibility for securing property before and after fires have occurred within them. We would then:

- provide a clearer strategy for securing property, listing contact names and numbers to whom the Fire and Rescue Service and others can turn;
- help educate stakeholders and the public.

The Role of Operational Firefighters

This year will see the introduction of free inspections for schools on reducing the threat of arson. Operational crews will inspect and advise school staff whilst at the same time visiting the school to deliver fire safety education for pupils. Operational crews conduct more than 1,100 school visits each year. Schools will also be encouraged to nominate pupils to monitor the school's arson resistance measures.

9.6 Targeted Campaigns in Partnership with Crimestoppers

Crimestoppers is an independent UK-wide charity working to stop crime. Anyone can call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111 with information to combat crime. Campaigns to combat deliberate fire setting will be carried out in partnership with Crimestoppers.

A Crimestoppers campaign targeted in Blackburn with Darwen is planned for August/September 2005 starting with a launch designed to attract television coverage. Advertisements on buses, flyers and posters will supplement the campaign along with large reusable banners being purchased to attach to buildings that have been subject to suspicious fires. The banners, which will be used throughout the County, will ask viewers to contact Crimestoppers with information about persons starting fires.

9.7 Fuel Management

Fuel management is a term used to describe restricting the access for deliberate fire setters to combustible materials of all descriptions.

Refuse Removal

Local Authority and County Cleaning Services are responsible for removing abandoned materials from highways and council land. Environmental Health

Department officers can also require the removal of materials from private land where there is a public health hazard or effect the removal themselves and reclaim costs from land owners.

It is a concern of the Fire and Rescue Service that some, mostly young, people believe they are able to light refuse fires and remain undetected. The fact that some people discard rubbish so flagrantly and inappropriately, despite the provision of waste removal services is of concern to local authorities. Whilst changing people's behaviour is the best method of dealing with both concerns, it remains a fact that if there is less rubbish about there can only be fewer rubbish fires.

The Fire and Rescue Service often requests the removal of rubbish piles that are expected to be the target of fire setters. The response to our requests is often very positive and swift. On occasions some of these identified areas are found by cleansing services to be private land and no further action is taken. Yet environmental health officers might have been able to deal with the matter under environmental legislation.

Arrangements for response to our requests for rubbish removal work best where the Fire and Rescue Service is viewed as a stakeholder. The Fire and Rescue Service is directly affected by fly tipping and rubbish when we are called to deal with rubbish fires, taking resources away from other activities like community fire safety.

Formal communication pathways are needed between the fire, environmental health and waste removal services to help prevent anti social behaviour through fire setting. These include telephone, email and fax contact and should be guided by memoranda of understanding based on standard local authority service performance levels.

Using incident data from the Fire Service and actively targeting areas for waste removal where rubbish fires are prolific might also be a feature of partnership arrangements.

Instruction could also be given by local authority officers on how environmental legislation applies to waste - its storage and removal; how law is enforced and what part the Fire and Rescue Service could play in securing compliance or assisting prosecutions.

There are many examples of schemes that have been run by local authorities successfully removing rubbish and unwanted vehicles from streets. *Thrash the Trash* and *Beat the Banger* are schemes run by Blackburn with Darwen Council. Using a hotline number local residents and partner agencies have been able to see refuse and abandoned cars removed quickly.

Lancaster's Community Safety Partnership provided personnel and a Rapid Response Unit for rubbish removal; funded by grant from the Arson Control

Forum (see *Arson Control Forum* later in this section) and Poulton Neighbourhood Management.

This new vehicle has been set to use removing refuse and fly tipping in the Poulton and West End areas of Morecambe. Through links with City Council Legal Services and Council Strategic Housing, the unit has been able to promptly remove rubbish from private premises, particularly the rear yards of multi-occupancy premises, as well as public areas.

Bonfire Nights

During the period around Bonfire Night (5th November) the arrangements for refuse removal between local authorities and other stakeholders such as the Constabulary and the Fire and Rescue Service become even more important. There are many examples around the County of bonfire night working parties, formed each year through Crime and Disorder Partnerships, to deal with specific issues.

These cross agency groups often look to:

- Improve the reporting procedures for complaints about bonfires and firework nuisance between the various agencies.
- Improve the response to such complaints.
- Identify problem sites; building a history to guide enforcement action in future years.
- Encourage community groups to organise bonfires/firework displays safely and ensure that they do.

There are examples of agreements or memoranda of understanding that provide for performance measurements such as:

- No of test purchases of fireworks made by Trading Standards representatives.
- No of complaints to Trading Standards over sale of fireworks.
- Burn injuries associated with bonfires/fireworks.
- Number of complaints of juvenile nuisance.
- Percentage of nuisance calls involving fireworks or bonfires.
- Number of requests for advice on bonfires.
- Number of problem sites identified and dealt with by the local authority.

- Bonfire clearance and reinstatement costs
- Number of emergency calls to LFRS requiring emergency attendance of fire crews to bonfires/refuse fires.

Actions that lead to successful campaigns have included:

- **Areas of council land designated as bonfire tolerance zones** during set periods of time. Outside of the set periods these areas to be subjected to regular inspection and clearance of accumulations of combustible materials.
- **Zero tolerance zones.** Hot spot approach to problem sites with more regular visits to clear accumulations.
- **Clearance costs.** Capital set aside during budgeting for site clearances taking account of the effect of wet/dry weather on bonfire building.
- **Statutory nuisance orders.** Issue of statutory nuisance orders to problem private sites.
- **Health and Safety campaign.** Aimed at venues (which are workplaces) holding bonfires and serving alcohol. Campaigns are led by Environmental Health Officers.
- **Publicity.** Concerted and previously agreed between relevant departments including advertising the success of the previous year's campaign.

The Fire and Rescue Service will continue to encourage partnership work in this area. Success in this area means safe, enjoyable organised bonfires that do not involve anti-social behaviour that causes distress to community members and damage to public and private property.

Abandoned⁸ Vehicles

The Government, in its paper *Cleaner Safer Greener Communities: Removing Nuisance Vehicles*⁹ sets out proposals for addressing the increasing number of nuisance vehicles and outlines the Government's strategy for ensuring the predicted increases in the number of abandoned vehicles are avoided.

⁸ A vehicle is *abandoned* when it does not have a current vehicle excise licence and no current owner of the vehicle can be traced. It is the *duty* of the local authority to remove these vehicles.

⁹ See the full report at the ODPM's website:
http://www.odpm.gov.uk/stellent/groups/odpm_urbanpolicy/documents/page/odpm_urbpol_033023.hcsp

Each year over 2 million vehicles reach the end of their useful life, the majority of which are disposed of legally in authorised facilities. A minority are illegally disposed and abandoned on our streets and public spaces. The last ten years has seen a dramatic increase as a result of numerous changes including more complex car maintenance, periodic falls in price of scrap metal, environmental disposal standards and societal attitudes. The consequence has been a rising number of vehicles that once left on the street attract crime, anti-social behaviour and arson.

The proposals broaden existing local authority powers; for example:

- Allowing councils to seize cars causing a nuisance immediately rather than having to wait 24 hours before taking action.
- Giving councils the power to destroy abandoned cars immediately instead of waiting until the tax disk expires.
- Broadening councils' powers to tackle dumped cars on publicly accessible private land such as supermarket car parks and housing estates. At the moment cars on such land can take up to 15 days to deal with.

We will continue to:

- support local authorities and the Constabulary in identifying vehicles that have been abandoned to allow their early removal;
- support car clearance schemes operated by local authorities through grant or core funding.

Without the support of local authorities it will not be possible to significantly reduce the number of deliberate vehicle fires attended by the Fire and Rescue Service.

Skip fires

Many refuse containers and particularly skips are left in areas exposed to delinquents. They form ready sources of combustible materials for fire setters. Their location next to buildings and vehicles can often lead to secondary fire spread dramatically increasing the amount of damage.

Those with responsibility/opportunities to prevent skip fires include skip hire companies and local authority departments who deal with skip hire. A small number of companies supply skips for all local authority works. Some skips are hired by companies and stored in close proximity to their premises often leaving them vulnerable to fire setters. . There examples of good practice around the County in this area that we would encourage:

- all contracts to supply skips to local authority departments could include a requirement to risk assess skip use in relation to deliberate fire setting; and describe controls needed to reduce the risk. In some high-risk areas only enclosed lockable containers would be supplied for use.
- The Fire and Rescue Service has a code for the responsible use of skips that could be incorporated in to the detail of contracts. This code is also sent to businesses that have had skips that have been set fire to. The Fire and rescue Service cannot require such businesses to take more care but insurance claims can be affected where the insurer learns of a company's behaviour in spite of advice from the Fire and Rescue Service.

9.8 The Arson Control Forum

The Arson Control Forum (ACF) provides strategic direction to the arson prevention programme, combating arson through an agreed action plan which should help the Government meet its target of reducing by 10% the number of deliberate fires by 31st March 2010.

New and innovative projects across the country that enable the best arson reduction methods to be rolled out received a share of over £9 million of funding over three years from the ACF Implementation Fund.

The money comes from the Government's £43 million three-year investment in community fire safety and arson reduction in England and Wales. Furthermore, it reinforced the key message of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, which placed a greater emphasis on prevention work by the fire and rescue service.

The funding also assists the Government's wider neighbourhood renewal plans and complements the Anti-Social Behaviour Action Plan launched by the Prime Minister in October 2003.

Research carried out by the ODPM¹⁰ has shown that where local projects have been set up, they have had a significant impact on the level of deliberate firesetting with the number of such fires falling by about 2%. In comparable areas where no action had been taken to address deliberate fires, they increased by about 27%. In other words, had the projects not been run nearly 30% more fires could have been expected.

The projects have shown what can be achieved by dedicated multi-agency partnerships with a high level of local support - for every £1 provided by the Forum, other partners have added an additional £4. Moreover, these projects

¹⁰ *Evaluation of the Arson Control Forum's New Projects Initiative*, January 2003
http://www.odpm.gov.uk/stellent/groups/odpm_fire/documents/page/odpm_fire_033599-02.hcsp#P42_1906

have been remarkably cost-effective - it is estimated that they have resulted in a net saving to society of at least £20 million in terms of reduced fires.

Details Of Successful Bids in Lancashire

Lancashire and Rescue Service and Lancashire Police submitted a bid of £209,400 for continued funding of the Arson Reduction Team for a further 2 years (see below *the Arson Reduction Team*).

Total funding approved £209,800

A bid was submitted by South Ribble Community Safety Partnership for a 3-year initiative relating to a Task Force to deal with the removal of abandoned vehicles, fly tipping and rubbish.

Total funding approved for the initiative is £141,000

Blackburn with Darwen Community Safety Partnership had submitted a bid for a car clearance scheme to remove abandoned vehicles.

Total funding approved for the initiative is £130,000

Lancaster Community Safety Partnership had put in a bid for financing the removal of rubbish left in properties in the West End and Poulton areas of Morecambe. The bid was for dedicated staff and a vehicle.

Total funding approved for the initiative is £133,400

Blackpool Community Safety Partnership had made a bid for two community firefighters, one of which was to work with the local police beat officer in the Park and Brunswick wards and one to work with the youth offending team.

Total funding approved for the initiative is £76,000

The success of the bids, which totals £689,800 of funding, has enabled the best arson reduction methods to be rolled out across Lancashire.

9.9 The Arson Reduction Team

Lancashire's Arson Reduction Team comprising of a Fire Officer and a Detective Constable, was one of the first such teams set up under the ACF funding stream. Amongst a range of activities completed, they were the first Team to introduce a nationally recognised problem solving model into the Fire and Rescue Service (see *Problem Solving: Problem Orientated Fire Safety (POFS)* earlier in this section). This has enabled both organisations to address shared community based issues with evidence based solutions – a principal of The Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service and Lancashire Constabulary successfully bid for a further two years funding under the ACF Implementation Fund enabling the Team to continue and to change focus. The Team's objectives are:

1. Improvements to arson investigation and information exchange
2. Supporting problem solving partnerships
3. Supporting Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnerships
4. Arson target hardening, information exchange and exercise of agency/local authority statutory responsibilities

Under the first objective, the Team is now increasingly concentrating on driving up the rates of arrest and detection of offenders in areas where there are high levels of deliberate fire setting. This involves improving the information exchanged with the Constabulary following fire investigation by the Fire and Rescue Service. These improvements allow police officers to progress investigations earlier and establish the evidence that is necessary for a successful prosecution.

Their work in this area also involves arson awareness training for first response police officers, police community safety officers and local authority neighbourhood based community officers.

9.10 Effective Criminal Fire Investigation

Arson is often seen as a good means to destroy evidence of other crimes and indeed, fire does ordinarily cause damage to evidence; however, what remains often amounts to more than enough to secure convictions. And if 10% of active offenders are estimated to be responsible for 50% of all crime¹¹ then clearly, ensuring that deliberate fires are investigated effectively and offenders identified can be very productive.

Roles and Responsibilities

Some staff in both the Fire and Police services are confused about where the role of the fire and rescue service starts and finishes. The government last considered this in a circular in 2000¹². At page 3 it describes how:

The police service is responsible for the prevention and detection of crime and for reporting to the Coroner any death that results from a fire. The police are solely responsible for the direction and control of any criminal investigation into the cause of any non-accidental fire. In order to facilitate such investigation,

¹¹ See earlier section *Prolific and Priority Offenders*.

¹² Fire Service Circular No 21/2000 Home Office Circular No 44/2000 *The Investigation Of Fires Where The Supposed Cause Is Not Accidental*

access to the scene of the fire post-extinction should be at the discretion and direction of the police senior investigating officer.

It goes on to report how:

The training [given to police and fire officers] emphasises that the primary task of the fire officer is to investigate the cause of the fire and to assist the police by providing them with information and evidence about the origin, growth and decay of the fire. Where a police investigation is being conducted, it is the responsibility of the police to collate all the information that comes to light, to collect and maintain the integrity of recovered evidence, to take appropriate measures in co-operation with the fire officer to preserve the scene of the fire and to decide in each case whether to arrange the attendance of forensic scientists.

Police officers sometimes assume that fire officers will provide further evidence beyond the cause of fire that would progress the criminal investigation. Fire officers assume that this is the role of the police, and once they have explained or stated their opinion that the fire was caused deliberately, that a criminal investigation would be commenced.

Neither party's assumptions are entirely true but if the Fire and Rescue Service is to reduce deliberate fire setting it is necessary for both services to determine more clearly what should be expected of each.

Fire Investigation - a joint memorandum of understanding between Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service and Lancashire Constabulary

A successful deliberate fire reduction strategy requires an equally effective approach to arson investigation. A clear understanding by both Police and Fire and Rescue Service officers of their duties and responsibilities at scenes of fires and an agreement in relation to information sharing is essential. The existing memorandum of understanding between the services requires review and needs to take into account the guidance provided by the Government through circulars and a recent review of arson reduction partnerships¹³

The principle areas of mutual interest between the Fire and Rescue Service and the Police we believe are:

1. All fatal fires.
2. All fires involving serious injury.
3. All fires where the cause or circumstances are suspicious.
4. All fires that are believed to be politically or racially motivated.

¹³ *The Investigation of Non-Accidental Fires*, Fire Service Circular 44/2000 and *Arresting Arson: a Review of Arson Reduction Partnerships*, ODPM 2003.

This description needs to be refined to ensure that fire officers only commit time to preparing extensive fire investigation reports for suspicious fire incidents that the Constabulary has reason to investigate further.

Detectives and Arson Investigation

Criminal investigation of arson does require a good understanding of fire and how services such as the Fire and Rescue Service and Forensic Science Services can assist. However, due to the relatively low proportion of arson cases featuring in serious crime categories, not all police detectives can develop and maintain the experience necessary.

To resolve this we recommend that the Constabulary establish detectives within Police Divisions who are nominated to deal with arson cases. With this in place, support services like the Fire and Rescue Service can appoint fire investigators to liaise with each detective.

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service fire investigators are a good resource for detectives when formally interviewing arson suspects. Through their knowledge and experience they can help establish the validity of a suspect's description of events saving valuable police time.

Fire Investigation Dog Services

Since 1996, fire investigation dogs, specially trained to detect accelerant substances, have been employed by a growing number of fire services in the UK. It was rapidly proven that dog deployment in many high profile incidents had identified evidence that would have otherwise have gone undetected.

The olfactory capability of dogs trained to alert to the presence of accelerant substances has a proven superiority to portable scientific equipment. By harnessing this capability fire investigators have the means of detecting the use of such substances with greater speed and accuracy. The location or elimination of accelerant substances in suspicious fires is one of the fundamental considerations of any fire investigation. Fire investigation dogs are an important tool in this process.

There are many advantages to using fire investigation dogs as part of the investigation process, including:

- Because of its keen sense of smell, the dog will be able to detect the presence of accelerants that might be missed or misinterpreted by other means.
- Dogs are fast and accurate and reduce the time an investigator needs to spend excavating fire scenes.

- Dogs are trained to differentiate between natural hydrocarbons produced during combustion and accelerants introduced in illegal fire setting.
- Because of their accuracy dogs reduce the number of samples that require expensive forensic testing.
- A dog may be able to gain access to small or confined areas where a fire investigator may not.

Lancashire retains the services of fire investigation dog and handler. At the request of a fire service investigator and at no cost to the Constabulary a fire investigation dog is available for deployment throughout the County. The fire investigation dog service is also utilised by other fire and rescue services in the region.

Incident Intelligence Capability

As part of our Integrated Risk Management Planning, a project is currently under way to develop an efficient and effective incident intelligence capability to improve the quality of emergency incident investigation and data collection, and to better inform targeted risk reduction strategies.

Although in its early stages it is expected that the project will result in specialist investigation staff who will positively contribute to the reduction of risk from deliberate fires as well as other forms of incident.

Fire Investigation Training

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service's operational fire officers are some of the best trained investigators in the country. Lancashire's Washington Hall International Training Centre at Euxton, Chorley provides two levels of training through courses *Fire Investigators 1* and *2*. *Fire Investigators 1* (1 week) is attended by all operational officers and *Fire Investigators 2* (2 weeks) by those officers who are called on to investigate more complex and serious incidents.

Other fire and rescue service personnel, forensic scientists and crime scene investigators also attend the courses from the Constabulary.

Recently, national occupational standards in fire investigation were published for the guidance of organisations. Both training courses are being restructured to meet the requirements of the standards.

9.11 Fire Investigation and the Region

The 2005/06 Fire and Rescue Service Framework document¹⁴ states “through Regional Management Boards, Fire and Rescue Authorities should pool specialist fire investigation capacity to provide an effective regional capability.”

As a consequence, we will examine areas where the fire and rescue services in the North West can collaborate on issues affecting fire investigation. Building on our regional approach to the use of fire investigation dogs, we will identify the cost effectiveness of joint training programmes and common working protocols for the region.

9.12 Developing Young People: Education, Intervention and Diversion Schemes

Lancashire combined Fire Authority and the Fire and Rescue Service are working hard to provide a range of educational packages, and intervention and diversionary schemes. The overarching objective of all the programmes is to help *develop young people* and at the same time reduce the incidence of deliberate fires, other crimes and related anti-social behaviour.

In order to meet the demand for the programmes you will read about below, over the near future, the Combined Fire Authority are increasing the numbers of community fire safety practitioners employed by the service to forty.

Back Fire Programme

In addition to educating year 2 and 6 primary school children in home fire safety we also provide a programme for secondary schools. Backfire is an interactive educational programme delivered to Year 7 pupils in targeted areas or at the request of head teachers. The aim of the programme is to reduce instances of anti social behaviour and the number of hoax calls received by Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service.

The Backfire programme can be delivered within a 50-minute period as part of the Personal Social Health Education and citizenship timetable (PSHE).

We will also use other bespoke packages as the need and availability arises.

Fire Awareness Child Education (FACE) Programme

The FACE Programme is an educational programme delivered to children between the ages of 4-12 years of age who have demonstrated a fascination with fire. The aim of the programme is to address the fire setting behaviour through a system of direct intervention increasing their knowledge of the risk that fire presents.

¹⁴ http://www.odpm.gov.uk/stellent/groups/odpm_fire/documents/page/odpm_fire_033558.hcsp, Chapter 3 pg 24.

Successful intervention and delivery of the programme works towards reducing the number of deliberate fires and instances of anti social behaviour. More than 1,700 young people have received the programme since its inception and referrals to the FACE programme have been increasing by 17% year on year.

Arson Programme

The Arson Programme has been developed for young people between the ages of 10 and 17 who have admitted or been found guilty of a crime involving fire, such as arson or criminal damage. The aim of the programme is to prevent them from re-offending.

Since the arson programme came into being (summer 2001) 285 programmes have been completed. The programme varies from a single session to a once a week session lasting five weeks. Each session is approximately one hour in length. Following the signing of a Service Level Agreement with the County's Youth Offending Teams more referrals are being received.

Flare (Fire Life Skills and Rescue Education)

Flare is a new intensive five day basic 'work experience course' for young people who are known to be offending or at risk of offending between the ages of 12 and 17. All the participants volunteer to go on the course, which aims to:

- Enable young people to experience being part of a team
- Increase awareness of impacts of offending/anti-social behaviour
- Enhance employment opportunities
- Develop personal and social confidence

Two courses have already been completed and very well received. A further six will take place this year.

Fire Break

This is a course currently under development. The Firebreak scheme is intended to act as an intervention programme for identified vulnerable groups of young people. The target group of young people are aged between 11 and 14 (Key Stage 3 pupils in high school).

The aims of the intervention are to raise awareness of the risks of some of the behaviour that the young people may become involved in, to raise self-esteem, develop coping skills and leadership skills, improve attendance at school and to contribute to raised attainment.

A pilot course will take place between January 2006 and March over a period of 12 weeks. The course will be delivered at the Fire Service Training Centre at Washington Hall in Chorley. Young people will attend the training centre for 1 day a week for the 12 week period.

It is envisaged that the 12 days of delivery will be broken down into ½ day modules – giving 24 activity based modules. The content of the modules is negotiable depending on the particular priorities of the partner agencies involved in the delivery of the programme. The Fire Service will provide the venue for delivery and will also deliver some of the modules.

Following negotiations with the selected high schools Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service will run a 2-day Firewise programme (fun outdoor activities involving team work) with pupils from the high schools. Selection of suitable young people for the Firebreak scheme will be made on the basis of assessment on the Firewise programme.

The Firewise programme will take place in the second half of the autumn term 2005 (November / December). 12 young people will be selected to take part in the Firebreak scheme.