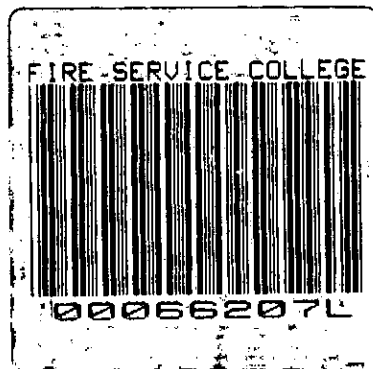




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HOME OFFICE
 HORSEFERRY HOUSE, DEAN RYLE STREET
 LONDON SW1P 2AW



To: All Chief Officers

31. January 1994

Dear Sir

DEAR CHIEF OFFICER LETTER 1/1994

This letter deals with a number of matters which are summarised below. More detailed information is contained in the relevant Items attached to this letter.

A EMERGENCY FIRE APPLIANCE DRIVER TRAINING

2. This item reminds Chief Officers of the need, highlighted recently by the Joint Training Committee, for Emergency Appliance drivers to be trained and aware that they may not be as conspicuous and audible to other road users as they may believe.

B FIRECODE - HEALTH TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM 87 "TEXTILES AND FURNITURE"

3. This item advises Chief Fire Officers of NHS Estates' latest publication in the "Firecode" series. The Health Technical Memorandum sets out recommendations, advice and guidance for the purchase, use and donations of furniture and textiles in healthcare premises. It supersedes the guidance in HTM 87 published in 1989.

C INCIDENTS INVOLVING DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES CONVEYED IN BULK BY ROAD: HAZCHEM LIST NO 8 AND NEW HAZCHEM SCALE CARDS

4. The Hazchem Technical Sub-Committee of the Joint Committee on Fire Brigade Operations has agreed a revised list of dangerous substances, Hazchem List No 8, which also includes emergency action codes and supplementary information. A copy of the new list is enclosed with this item for Chief Fire Officers.

D AERIAL APPLIANCES

5. In 1985, the Joint Committee on Standards of Fire Cover recommended that a study of special appliances should be conducted. The final report of the Joint Committee on Special Appliances has now been agreed and this item contains guidance on aerial appliance siting and provision, attendance times and crewing.

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E FATALITY IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM

6. A new national Fatality Identification System has been agreed and the purpose of this item is to advise Chief Fire Officers that they will shortly be hearing from their local police force about the new arrangements.

F REVISED MODEL SPECIFICATION FOR MOBILISING SUB-SYSTEMS

7. This item advises Chief Fire Officers that the section of the Home Office guidance manuals (the "Logica" guides) on mobilising sub-systems has been revised. Two copies of the up-dated version are being provided to registered holders of the Home Office manuals.

G CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF DOMESTIC FIRES: FIRE RESEARCH PROJECT

8. This item advises Chief Officers of the completion of a research project to study the causes and consequences of domestic fires and a copy of the summary report of the project's results is enclosed.

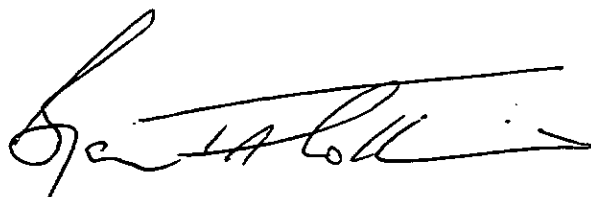
H WELEPHANT FIRESAFE CAMPAIGN

9. This item informs Chief Officers about the Firesafe Campaign to be launched by Welephant Club Incorporated next year. The campaign aims to raise funds for an initiative in fire safety education and projects to provide support to those who have sustained physical or psychological injury from fire.

I COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES

10. This item informs Chief Fire Officers about the work of the Citizen's Charter Complaints Task Force. It also brings to the attention of Chief Officers the decision by the Task Force to include the fire service in a series of visits to a range of public and private sector organisations as part of its programme to review complaints handling in the public sector. A copy of the booklet produced by the Task Force entitled "Effective Complaints Systems: Principles and Checklist" is enclosed with this item.

Yours faithfully



Mr B T A Collins
Her Majesty's Chief Inspector
of Fire Services

EMERGENCY FIRE APPLIANCE DRIVER TRAINING

1. DCOL 1/86 and DCOL 11/87 contain advice on Emergency Fire Appliance Driver training and High Speed Driver training respectively. At a meeting of the Joint Training Committee on 11 November 1993 the result was discussed of recent research into the conspicuity of fire appliances. It was agreed that Emergency Fire Appliance Drivers needed to exercise particular caution that any increasing conspicuity of their vehicles would not lead to them taking less notice of other traffic and other road users. This should be pointed out to drivers during the period of EFAD training.

2. It was also suggested that EFAD drivers needed to be more aware of the limitations of audible warning devices such as sirens and two-tone horns, particularly in relation to drivers of larger vehicles where higher cab noise may make any warning sounds inaudible until the fire appliance and the heavy vehicle are very close. Advice on this should therefore also be included in EFAD training.

Telephone contact number 071 217 8753 Diana Symonds

FIRECODE - HEALTH TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM 87 "TEXTILES AND FURNITURE"

1. NHS Estates (an Executive Agency of the Department of Health) has recently issued to health estate managers a revised version of Health Technical Memorandum (HTM) 87 - "Textiles and Furniture". This is part of the FIRECODE series and supersedes the Memorandum published in 1989. The guidance it contains is more concise, with an emphasis on the management of risk. Performance levels have been brought into line with expected European Standards and references to British Standards have been updated.

2. This revised Memorandum forms an essential part of Firecode with which the Secretary of State for Health requires NHS trusts and health authorities to comply. The Home Office recommends that the document be used by fire prevention officers when responding to requests for advice.

3. Copies of HTM 87 "Textiles and Furniture" may be purchased from HMSO, priced at £15 (fifteen pounds); (ISBN 0-11-321636-X).

4. There are no cost implications, apart from the purchase of copies of the publication, and no additional manpower implications arising from the issue of this guidance to fire brigades.

Home Office contact: Mr A Jack 071 217 8741
FEP/93 47/94/1

INCIDENTS INVOLVING DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES CONVEYED IN BULK BY ROAD: HAZCHEM LIST NO 8 AND NEW HAZCHEM SCALE CARDS

1. The Hazchem Technical Sub-Committee of the Joint Committee on Fire Brigade Operations (JCFBO) has agreed a revised list of dangerous substances - Hazchem List No. 8. It includes emergency action codes and supplementary information and replaces Hazchem List No. 7 which is cancelled.
2. Hazchem List No. 8 is published jointly by the Home Office and the National Chemical Emergency Centre at AEA Technology, Harwell. It incorporates amendments made by the United Nations and includes changes which reflect an increased requirement to protect the environment.
3. The new emergency action codes will not appear on vehicle placards until the Health and Safety Executive's revised "Approved List of Dangerous Chemicals" is produced in about a year's time. In the meantime, the National Rivers Authority have stated that they will be sympathetic to brigades taking emergency action based on the old codes.
4. List No. 8 also contains revised advice about Hazchem Code E (consider evacuation). The Hazchem scale cards have been amended to take account of the revised guidance on Code E. These new scale cards are now available from HMSO for £2 per pack of ten.
5. The National Chemical Emergency Centre has provided one copy of Hazchem List No 8 for each Chief Fire Officer. Additional copies can be obtained from:

AEA Technology
National Chemical Emergency Centre
Environmental Informatics
7.22 Harwell
Oxfordshire
OX11 0RA

Telephone 0235 432919

The price is £25 per copy: ISBN 1 872884 05 9.

6. There are no manpower implications to this item and the cost implications are minimal.

Telephone contact: 071 217 8745 (administrative)
071 217 8408 (technical)

FEP/93 64/1500/1

AERIAL APPLIANCES

Background

1. In its report published in May 1985, the Joint Committee on Standards of Fire Cover recommended that a study of special appliances should be conducted. This work was taken forward by the Joint Committee on Special Appliances, which has now fulfilled its terms of reference.

2. The final report by the Joint Committee on Special Appliances was considered by the Central Fire Brigades Advisory Council at its 99th meeting on 17 November 1993 when it was agreed, amongst other things, that the following guidance on aerial appliances should be issued to the fire service.

Introduction

3. The siting of aerial appliances should take account of perceived need for their use for rescue or firefighting and the attendance time considered appropriate.

4. This need is currently determined by local circumstances and the professional judgement of the Chief Fire Officer.

5. The following general guidelines on the siting and the appropriate attendance times of aerial appliances afford flexibility to Chief Fire Officers to use their professional judgement when considering individual and specific cases.

6. Since the reorganisation of Local Government in England and Wales in 1974, many brigades have rationalised the number and location of special appliances based on need rather than tradition. With traditional boundaries removed and traditional buildings replaced by new purpose built structures incorporating internal fire protection measures, the necessity of providing a suitable formula to assist in estimating adequate provision is long overdue.

7. These guidelines should enable regular assessment to be made, taking into account the effect of demographic and other changes of risk assessments and should provide a foundation on which to establish a policy for the provision of aerial appliances.

Siting and provision

8. Predetermined attendances that include aerial appliances are predominantly in A and B risk category areas. However, this does not preclude their attendance in other circumstances as considered necessary.

9. Examples of risks where an aerial appliance might be considered necessary as part of the initial attendance include one or more of the following:-

- i) Premises of more than three floors containing a sleeping risk, eg hotels and hostels.
- ii) Premises of more than three floors that contain a high risk to life, eg hospitals, departmental stores, large schools and office blocks.
- iii) High and mid rise residential property, eg tenement and multi-storey property.
- iv) Large commercial or manufacturing premises where the fire loading and the potential for fire spread is high.
- v) Historical buildings and congested town centres where the fire loading and the potential for fire spread is high.

Attendance times

10. The report of the Joint Committee on Standards of Fire Cover stated that the risk category of an area is determined on the basis of the predominant risk. Once determined, the appropriate number of pumping appliances can be deployed to meet the demands that risk will place on the resources of the brigade. It follows then, that where there exists a demonstrable operational need to enhance the normal area pre-determined attendance to provide fire cover to a significant number of risks such as those in paragraph 9, consideration could be given to the deployment of an aerial appliance.

11. As a general principle, the attendance of aerial support should be commensurate with, though not necessarily the same, as the speed of attack provided by pumping appliances in accordance with Standards of Fire Cover, ie the higher the predominant risk category the faster the initial response time required.

12. In exercise of the discretion of Chief Fire Officers in accordance with paragraph 5 above and bearing in mind the predominance factors referred to in paragraph 10 above, an appropriate method of determining the attendance time, would seem to be as follows:-

- i) A risk areas - 10 minutes.
- ii) B risk areas - 13 minutes.
- iii) C risk areas - 20 minutes.
- iv) D risk and remote rural areas - unspecified.

Crewing

13. The necessity for suitably trained crews is of paramount importance for the safety of crews and public alike.

14. Mutual support to adjacent stations and neighbouring brigades should preferably entail the response of fully crewed appliances to offer the skill levels required on individual makes or types of appliance.

15. Whilst local circumstances together with the Chief Fire Officer's professional judgement may determine otherwise, it is recommended that at any incident there should be a minimum of two fully trained personnel available, ie driver/operator and cage operator/OIC.

Telephone contact number: 071 217 8746
FEP/91 127/1500/1

FATALITY IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM

Introduction

1. Details of a Fatality Identification System were given in Dear Chief Officer Letter (DCOL) 4/1991 Item 5. Since the issue of that DCOL on 3 May 1991, consultations have taken place between the Chief and Assistant Chief Fire Officers' Association (CACFOA), the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and the Ambulance Service with a view to a standard fatality identification system being introduced by all of the emergency services and other agencies.

The new system

2. A new National Fatality Identification System has been agreed and the purpose of this item is to advise Chief Fire Officers that they will shortly be hearing from their local police force if they have not already been contacted.

3. A copy of the agreed body label is attached at Annex 1. The label has been produced in blue on specially coated material. The labels have been made up in pads of ten with one thousand labels per police force. Also attached to this item at Annex 2 is a copy of the instructions for completion which will be included in each pad.

4. The ACPO recommendation to all police forces is that a proportion of the forms are held by both Fire and Ambulance Services, such arrangements being by local agreement. Printing of the forms is now complete and they are being circulated to police forces. Chief Fire Officers can therefore expect to hear from local police forces shortly.

5. There are no cost implications arising from this item.

Telephone contact number: 071 217 8746
FEP/89 10/31/1

REVISED MODEL SPECIFICATION FOR MOBILISING SUB-SYSTEMS

1. Dear Chief Officer Letter 2/1992 dated 29 January 1992 and Item 1 of Dear Chief Officer Letter 8/1992 dated 8 July 1992 referred to the central initiative on the replacement of mobilising and communication systems being pursued by a Home Office project team. More recently, DCOL 8/1993 described that part of the initiative concerned with the development of Standard Technical Specifications and the establishment of Framework Agreements for certain elements of mobilising and communication systems. The purpose of this item is to advise Chief Fire Officers of the outcome of that part of the central initiative which dealt with the review of guidance on specifying mobilising sub-systems.

2. Guidance on the preparation of a mobilising sub-system specification was given in the Home Office guidance manuals (the "Logica" guides) which were issued in August 1990. In the light of experience and following consultation with user groups and extensive field trials, a revised version of the model specification and guidance notes has been produced.

3. The revised version is a replacement for volume 6, chapter 5 of the previously issued Home Office guidance manuals. Two copies are being provided to all registered holders of the Home Office manuals. Disk based versions are available on request.

4. Any enquiries regarding the above should be addressed to:

Mr D Meakin (G1 Division)
Tel no: 071 217 8290

or

Mr D Lillicrap (FRDG)
Tel no: 071 217 8776

CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF DOMESTIC FIRES: FIRE RESEARCH PROJECT

1. This item informs brigades of the completion of a research project initiated by the Home Office to study the causes and consequences of domestic fires by analysing data from home accident records and by interviewing a sample of people injured in fires. The project results are summarised in the enclosed summary report (Research Report No 54).

Background

2. It is estimated that up to 90% of all accidental domestic fires never come to the attention of the fire service, either because they extinguish themselves or because the householder extinguishes them without assistance. A proportion of those people who tackle fires themselves incur injuries in the process. The aim of this project was to investigate domestic fires in which an injury was incurred but which did not necessarily come to the attention of the fire service.

Conclusions

3. The research showed that many casualties were willing to tackle a fire in their home, despite the risk of injury, rather than having their dwelling burn down. It was often the action of the casualties that led directly to the injuries sustained and such actions were usually based on instinct rather than knowledge of fire safety procedures.

Further action

4. In view of the sampling difficulties which hindered this project, further research has been commissioned into this field. The purpose of this research is to broaden the understanding of how injuries are sustained in domestic fires. There is no intention to alter the Home Office's primary and long-standing advice that people should "get out, get the brigade out, stay out" in the event of a fire.

Telephone contact number: David Payne 071 217 8203
FEP/91 20/26/1

WELEPHANT FIRESAFE CAMPAIGN

1. Chief Officers will be aware that the educational material produced by Welephant Club Incorporated is used in varying degrees by most brigades in the United Kingdom and that the Home Office has given support to several initiatives carried out by the Charity in the past. The purpose of this item is to inform brigades of the launch of the Welephant Firesafe Campaign in early 1994.

2. The Firesafe Campaign, which has the support of HRH The Princess of Wales, aims to raise funds for the Welephant Charity for use on two particular initiatives:

- a) To develop a technologically advanced interactive computer programme on fire prevention and personal safety. To provide one unit to every Fire Brigade in the United Kingdom for use in schools and community fire safety work.
- b) To fund specific projects to support those who have suffered mental or physical injury arising from fires and to assist in their treatment and rehabilitation. These projects will concentrate on addressing the psychological trauma and long term effects of disfigurement arising from fires.

3. The Firesafe Campaign will run for approximately one year. The first stage of the campaign will be to provide an information pack to every fire station explaining the aims of the campaign and the ways in which firefighters might be able to help. Later in the year, the campaign will be launched in the private sector with information being provided to selected organisations seeking their financial support.

4. The Home Office supports the objectives of the Welephant Firesafe Campaign. There are no resource implications for brigades associated with this item.