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Status	This Circular provides information on the Communities and Local Government 'Fire Kills' National Fire Safety Advertising and Targeted Campaign Plan		

'Fire Kills' - National Fire Safety Advertising and Targeted Campaign Plan 2008/2009

Issued by:

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Addressed to:

**The Chair of the Fire and Rescue Authority
The Chief Executive of the County Council
The Clerk to the Fire and Rescue Authority
The Clerk to the Combined Fire and Rescue Authority
The Commissioner of the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority
The Chief Fire Officer**

Please forward to:

Heads of Community Fire Safety

Summary

The 'Fire Kills' campaign will continue to focus on smoke alarm maintenance. This has proved to be an effective way of raising awareness and creating a call to action by householders to check and replace their smoke alarms. The campaign will be spearheaded by television advertising and will be underpinned by a programme of tactical PR, sponsorship and partnership work with key organisations to raise awareness with vulnerable and harder to reach groups at high risk from fire.

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1.0 National Fire Safety Advertising 2008/2009

- 1.1 The fire statistics show a pleasing overall downward trend in accidental fires and deaths, the lowest number of fire deaths since 1958. The fact that fire deaths are at their lowest level in nearly fifty years is due in large part to the innovative programme of work delivered locally by the fire and rescue service. But it is recognised that the fire and rescue service cannot deliver the fire safety strategy on its own. Therefore the CLG 'Fire Kills' campaign is designed to support the work of the fire and rescue service by adding capacity and by working at the national level (with media, PR and sponsorship specialists in the Central Office of Information) to facilitate a partnership approach.
- 1.2 This circular sets out the programme of work CLG will be pursuing to support the work of fire and rescue services during 2008-2009. In line with previous years, the CLG 'Fire Kills' campaign will arrange a fire and rescue service campaign briefing day to explain further the detail of the programme of work the Department will be pursuing. The event will be held in the Summer.
- 1.3 National campaigns provide a powerful and direct channel of communication to the public through national advertising in various media. The 'Fire Kills' campaign is a publicity campaign aimed at the general public and designed to deliver our messages to as many people as possible. For 2008/2009, the national fire safety advertising campaign will focus on the key message of smoke alarm maintenance, since this has proved to be an effective way of raising awareness and reminding the general public of the importance of having a working smoke alarm. We plan for the 'Pull Your Finger Out' advert, fronted by Julie Walters, which ran from January to March 2008, to have two further bursts this year; one in autumn 2008 and one in spring 2009. A note on the impact of the initial burst is attached at Annex A.

2.0 Targeted Campaigns

- 2.1 Our research shows that our national media campaigns are successful in educating the public in fire safe behaviour, and careful media planning and selection allows us to target key audience groups with some precision. However, there is a need to augment this proven campaign activity to reach those who may be at particular risk from fire but who are less likely to listen to a safety message from an advert.
- 2.2 To support the national media campaigns we are targeting the vulnerable and harder to reach groups who are at a high risk from fire. A recent study undertaken by the Department entitled 'Human Behaviour in Fatal Fire' identified groups who are more at risk of fire than the general population. The vulnerable groups tend towards lower income and deprived demographic groups, specifically:
- Single middle aged people, who drink and smoke at home (aged 40-59, male bias)
 - Single parents (deprived, female)
 - Very elderly (deprived)
 - Disabled/Impaired

- Young People (16-24) – including students

- 2.3 Following the initial research, we have conducted further research to help us identify the media consumption habits of these vulnerable groups and the way these people view the risk of fire and, consequently, how we can effectively encourage them to take the appropriate steps to reduce the incidence of fire. With these findings, we have been able to propose PR, sponsorship and partnership working with key organisations. Details of this work can be found at Annex B.
- 2.4 A number of BME communities are also deemed to be potentially at higher risk from fire. The Survey of English Housing (SEH) (2004/2005) highlighted that Asian households had lower smoke alarm ownership. The SEH found "*smoke alarm ownership amongst Asian communities is 10% lower than the national average*". To further understand the problem, the Department conducted qualitative research to establish Asian communities' perception of fire and risk, focusing on people who spoke little or no English (Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi). The research also looked at the attitudes of the Somali community and the new and emerging Polish community.
- 2.5 The research concluded that the Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Somali, and Polish communities were potentially at higher risk and had the lowest level of awareness or understanding of risks associated with fire. The SEH findings and the CLG qualitative research have therefore provided the input-based evidence we have used to shape this years BME campaign. Details of our proposed work to reach these communities can be found at Annex C.
- 3.0 **Supporting the work of the FRS**
- 3.1 Following our 2007 review of the 'Fire Kills' literature, we will produce a new suite of material during 2008, which will be freely available to fire and rescue services from the CLG distribution centre at Wetherby. Details of the available literature will follow shortly.
- 3.2 In 2004, the Government launched Directgov. Directgov is designed to bring public services together all in one place across eleven Whitehall departments. Directgov receives more than 2.1 million hits a month and is a single route to a growing number of transactions in central and local government. As from 1 May, the information previously held on www.firekills.gov.uk will be available on the fire safety pages of Directgov at www.direct.gov.uk/firekills.

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