



Home Office

Rt Hon Mike Penning MP  
Minister of State for Policing,  
Fire, Criminal Justice and  
Victims

2 Marsham Street  
London SW1P 4DF

[www.gov.uk/home-office](http://www.gov.uk/home-office)

All Police and Crime Commissioners  
All Chief Constables  
All Chairs of Fire and Rescue Authorities  
All Chief Fire Officers

26 January 2016

Dear All

## **GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO EMERGENCY SERVICES COLLABORATION CONSULTATION**

I am writing to inform you that the Government's response to the 'Enabling Closer Working Between the Emergency Services' consultation was published today, 26 January. The Home Secretary made a written statement to Parliament to announce the publication of the response and the full document is now available online on the Gov.uk website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/enabling-closer-working-between-the-emergency-services>

The Government received over 300 responses to the consultation from a wide range of stakeholders and I would like to thank all those who gave their time to respond and contribute to the consultation process.

The Government is committed to supporting collaborative working between all three emergency services. The services already work highly effectively side by side in a wide range of situations; keeping our communities safe and ensuring value for money for taxpayers. The Government believes this way of working must become standard practice to deliver a more efficient and effective service for the public.

Having carefully considered all the consultation responses, the Government intends to legislate to:

- introduce a high-level duty to collaborate on all three emergency services, to improve efficiency or effectiveness;
- enable Police and Crime Commissioners to take on the functions and duties of fire and rescue authorities, where a local case is made;
- further enable Police and Crime Commissioners to create a single employer for police and fire staff where they take on the responsibilities of their local fire and rescue service, and where a local case is made;
- enable Police and Crime Commissioner to have representation on their local fire and rescue authority with voting rights in areas where they have not become responsible for fire and rescue and where the fire and rescue authority agrees; and
- abolish the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority and give the Mayor of London direct responsibility for the fire and rescue service in London.

Our aim is that these measures will help to ensure collaboration is widespread and ambitious across the country. Introducing a new statutory duty on the emergency services to collaborate with one another in the interests of efficiency or effectiveness will drive the sort of innovative collaboration between services that are essential for continuing to keep our communities safe and ensuring value for money for taxpayers. Moreover, enabling a new model of governance for fire services through Police and Crime Commissioners, where a local case is made, will help drive greater accountability to the public and further improve local collaboration.

The Government also believes that central policy making, as well as local delivery, can benefit from a more joined up approach. That is why the Prime Minister recently announced a Machinery of Government change that has transferred responsibility for fire policy from the Department for Communities and Local Government to the Home Office. This is a natural progression of our work on emergency services collaboration and, as a former fire fighter myself, I am particularly delighted to have taken on responsibility for fire policy alongside my existing responsibilities for policing, criminal justice and victims.

I hope you share my ambition for closer working between the emergency services and I look forward to working with you to achieve these aims.



**Rt Hon Mike Penning MP**