

**Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service**  
**Equality Impact Assessment Form**

<b>Title of policy/report/project:</b>	<b>Bonfire Period Campaign 2013</b>
<b>Department:</b>	<b>Community Prevention and Protection</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>24/07/2013</b>

**1: What is the aim or purpose of the policy/report/project**

*This should identify “the legitimate aim” of the policy/report/project (there may be more than one)*

In summary, the aims of the Bonfire Period campaign are as follows:

- Limit the demand on Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service during the Halloween and Bonfire period related to the sales of fireworks and increased Anti-Social Behaviour during the period.
- Work with Merseyside Police and other partner agencies across Merseyside to provide diversionary or distraction activities.
- Work with partner agencies to prevent incidents from occurring through bonfire removal, providing advice to local communities and businesses and provision of planned firework events.

**Background and Introduction**

Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service recognise that a significant increase in calls to the Service is received over the Halloween and Bonfire period. This is directly linked to the sales of fireworks and increased anti-social behaviour over the period. In order to limit the demand, an extensive plan over the period has been formulated to reduce the calls for service, numbers of fires and instances of anti social behaviour which adversely affect the communities of Merseyside.

Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service are working with a number of external partners across Merseyside to deliver numerous initiatives. These initiatives include:

- Safer Merseyside Bonfire Briefings, which will review the previous 72/96 hours of incident activity, and in doing so allow the notification of potential emerging hotspots to be located with briefings held each Monday and Friday from 15<sup>th</sup> Oct to 5<sup>th</sup> Nov 13.
- Merseyside Informed and MF&RS Portal, which is utilised to share information

and intelligence with partner organisations;

- Bonfire clearance, which involves the removal of combustible material that could be used for bonfires.
- A bonfire damping down activity (sweep) will take place on 6<sup>th</sup> November, as historically MF&RS calls for service to bonfire incidents continues the day after bonfire night;
- Void Properties, which involves inspecting and securing empty properties to reduce the risk of arson;
- Arson Incident Risk Assessments, which involves the provision of interventions to properties that have been targeted during the bonfire period;
- Community Engagement and Education, which involves the circulation of leaflets and fire safety advice, provision of skips, delivery of presentations and distraction initiatives to prevent arson and anti-social behaviour incidents;
- Media activities, which involves working with local press and radio to spread the fire safety message and information about planned activities;
- Firework legislation, which involves the Legislative Fire Safety teams enforcing MSER 2005 (the Manufacture and Storage of Explosives Regulations) and receiving and processing applications for the storage and supply of HT3 & HT4 explosives (consumer fireworks).
- Trojan fire appliance, which can be deployed to hotspots of fire related anti-social behaviour and criminal activity;
- The Operational Support Room (OSR) will be operated on key dates during the bonfire period. It will be staffed with a MACC operator, Watch Manager Operations Manager, Admin Support and a Senior Officer;
- A senior officer is deployed to Police Silver command on designated key nights in order to act as MF&RS liaison and update Police on MF&RS issues concerning ASB, Arson and accidental fire related incidents.
- Operational work, which involves operational crews providing a high visibility presence, with specific emphasis on areas that are known to be hotspot locations.

More information about this can be found in the Community Prevention pages on the Portal. <http://intranetportal/sites/trg/Bonfire%202013/Forms/AllItems.aspx>

## **2: Who will be affected by the policy/report/project?**

*This should identify the persons/organisations who may need to be consulted about*

*the policy /report/project and its outcomes (There may be more than one)*

This Bonfire Campaign is concerned with making local communities and businesses safer during the Halloween and Bonfire period. The implementation of this campaign will impact on a number of groups. These groups include those who are likely to be involved in Anti-Social Behaviour incidents during the Bonfire period. Typically, these are likely to be young males, aged between 10 and 19 living in socio-economically deprived localities.

In addition to this, the campaign will also impact on those groups who are most likely to be affected by the anti-social behaviour incidents. This may include:

- Others living within the localities of the incidents;
- Those with an increased perception of fear during this period, for example the elderly;
- Those who may become a victim of hate crime related to their disability, sexual orientation, race, religious beliefs/faith or gender identity.

In addition, the Bonfire Campaign will also affect partner organisations that MF&RS work with during the period.

### **3. Monitoring**

*Summarise the findings of any monitoring data you have considered regarding this policy/report/project. This could include data which shows whether it is having the desired outcomes and also its impact on members of different equality groups.*

#### **What monitoring data have you considered?**

Trend analysis of historic Bonfire period incidents

#### **What did it show?**

An analysis of historical bonfire data was completed to gain an understanding of whether there were any trends in the incidents that occurred. The Business Intelligence team within Strategic Planning provided 5 years of historic data from 2008 until 2012. The data provided the following findings:

- There has been a significant decrease in the number of deliberate secondary fires occurring during the bonfire period. Between the period of 2008 - 2012, there has been an overall reduction of incidents by approximately 58%.
- An analysis of deliberate secondary fires by district shows that the greatest number of incidents were within the Liverpool district, followed by the Wirral district, Knowsley district, Sefton district and St

<p>Analysis of historic Bonfire period incidents with areas of socio-economic deprivation</p>	<p>Helens district respectively;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There has been a reduction in the number of incidents related to fireworks by approximately 20% between 200 and 2012.</li> </ul> <p>The bonfire campaign has been running for approximately 10 years, with the bonfire briefings and partnership working increasing in scale since 2006. The reducing number of incidents is likely to be associated with the increased levels of partnership working and communication of information and intelligence.</p> <p>An analysis of historic bonfire incidents was completed to understand the link between the deliberate secondary fires occurring within this period and areas of socio-economic deprivation. The analysis of deliberate secondary fires during previous bonfire periods indicated that the more deprived areas of Merseyside saw a greater proportion of incidents than more affluent areas.</p> <p>During the 2012 bonfire period, 25% of all deliberate secondary fires occurred in the top 10% of the most deprived areas within Merseyside. In addition to this, almost 50% of incidents occurred within the top 20% of the most deprived areas. This compares with only 1% of incidents occurring in the 10% least deprived areas within Merseyside.</p>
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#### **4: Research**

*Summarise the findings of any research you have considered regarding this policy/report/project. This could include quantitative data and qualitative information; anything you have obtained from other sources e.g. CFOA/CLG guidance, other FRSs, etc*

<b>What research have you considered?</b>	<b>What did it show?</b>
<p>Previous Bonfire campaign reports and analysis</p>	<p>The bonfire campaign has been ongoing at MFRS for over 10 years, with the bonfire briefings and partnership working increasing in scale since 2006. As a result of this, the 2012 bonfire period witnessed 427 incidents, making it the quietest bonfire period in the past 6 years. The majority of incident types witnessed reductions when comparing 2011 with the 2012 bonfire periods. These were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “04 01 Derelict Building” with an increase of 1 from 7 to 8 incidents;</li> <li>• “04 02 Grassland” with a reduction of 13 from 37 to 24;</li> <li>• “04 03 Intentional Burning/Bonfire” with a reduction of 77 from 181 to 104 incidents;</li> <li>• “04 04 Outdoor Structure” with a reduction of 2 from 22 to 22;</li> <li>• “04 05 Refuse Fire” with a reduction of 83 incidents from 371 to 288.</li> </ul> <p>The large reductions within “04 03 Intentional Burning/Bonfire” and “04 05 Refuse Fire” incidents types largely contributed to the overall reduction of 188 deliberate secondary fires. A trend analysis illustrated that the pattern of incidents between 2008 and 2012 was very similar, with a peak on the 5th of November.</p> <p>A significant reduction was made compared to previous year on the 6<sup>th</sup> November due to the implementation of the Service wide sweep to extinguish smouldering fires. This resulted in a drop of 75 incidents from 104 in 2011 to 29 in 2012.</p> <p>The majority of deliberate secondary fires between 2008 and 2012 occurred in the late afternoon to late evening hours, between 16:00hrs and 22:59hrs. It is also important to point out that between 02:00hrs and 10:59hrs there is a consistent lack of deliberate secondary fires, with incident numbers after this time increasing exponentially.</p> <p>The cost of 427 deliberate secondary fires attended during the 2012 bonfire period was £886,251.31 when compared to 2011 which cost overall a figure of</p>

	<p>£1,280,368.50.</p> <p>The research compiled from the previous bonfire periods indicate that the implementation of the strategy could have positive impacts financially, environmentally and also socially to the communities of Merseyside.</p>
<p><b>5. Consultation</b></p> <p><i>Summarise the opinions of any consultation. Who was consulted and how? (This should include reference to people and organisations identified in section 2 above)</i></p> <p><i>Outline any plans to inform consultees of the results of the consultation</i></p>	
<p><b>What Consultation have you undertaken?</b></p> <p>Bonfire 2012 Debrief</p> <p>Meetings with MFRS colleagues from the 5 Merseyside Districts</p> <p>Planning meetings with partner organisations</p>	<p><b>What did it say?</b></p> <p>This identified that a significant number of persons who were from ethnic minority backgrounds were specifically targeted through firework incidents. The data showed that 9 separate incidents occurred whereby deliberate damage to property occurred through misuse of fireworks in the run up period to bonfire night.</p> <p>Meetings with MFRS colleagues based in each district will be held monthly commencing in June 2013. As a result of this, each district will develop their own district plans for this bonfire campaign. These plans outline the partner organisations MFRS will be working with on each district to address particular issues that may be experienced during the bonfire period.</p> <p>A number of meetings will be held with partner organisation with regards to the bonfire campaign. As a result of this, a number of initiatives are to be agreed to ensure the safety of Merseyside residents during this period.</p> <p>These initiatives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Circulation of bonfire leaflets with contact details for MFRS, Merseyside Police and Crimestoppers and a link to all activities that are being offered during the Halloween and Bonfire period;</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fire Service Direct will be the recipient of any reports of bonfire debris and void properties. This information will be passed to the District Arson Reduction Team for action;</li> <li>• Diversionary activities have been organised at a district level, which include organised firework displays, community bonfires, cage soccer events, climbing wall activities, and numerous smaller public events supported by the Fire Support Network;</li> <li>• Radio City to be utilised as a media outlet to promote diversionary events over the bonfire period.</li> </ul> <p>All of the initiatives agreed between partner organisations at these meetings will help ensure the communities of Merseyside are safe, and reduce the number of anti-social behaviour and arson incidents</p> <p>‘Operation Banger’ is an operation led by Merseyside Police which coordinates Police activity during the Halloween and Bonfire period. The planning phase for Operation Banger has included monthly strategic meetings to agree the strategy that will be used to target those who may be involved in anti-social behaviour and Arson activities and ensure the communities are safe. Meeting commenced in June 2013. MF&amp;RS Prevention attend all Banger strategic meetings.</p>
Operation Banger	
Firework Retailers	<p>Firework retailers are offered specific advice concerning the rules and regulations for storage and sales of fireworks. They can request specific visits and a member of the firework incident research and safety team will contact in order to pass advice as required and specific to their requirements.</p>

## 6. Conclusions

*Taking into account the results of the monitoring, research and consultation, set out how the policy/report/project impacts or could impact on people from the following protected groups? (Include positive and/or negative impacts)*

### (a) Age

It is known that the individuals who are involved in anti-social behaviour and deliberate fire setting during the Bonfire period are typically young males aged between 10 and 19. These individuals may view the implementation of the Bonfire

campaign negatively. A separate Equality Impact Assessment on our “Trojan Fire Engine” contains more detail in relation to this. However, overall, the campaign will have a positive impact on individuals within this age group as it provides interventions to ensure their safety and diversionary activities, such as organised firework displays and bonfires, cage soccer, a climbing wall and youth activities.

In addition, the delivery of the campaign will have a positive impact on those who may be more vulnerable, for example the elderly. These groups may have an increased perception of fear during this period, therefore the delivery of appropriate fire safety messages and diversionary activities to reduce incidents may increase their perception of feeling safe.

The bonfire advice leaflet has been changed to invite the reader to consider the needs and welfare of elderly people over the bonfire period.

Education is recognised as a key method in preventing and reducing instances of arson. Two presentations appropriate for school use have been produced for 7-11 year olds and 11-16 year olds. They have also been made available with an off white (light yellow) background to assist viewing for those with dyslexia.

**(b) Disability including mental, physical and sensory conditions)**

Currently, MFRS do not target initiatives towards individuals with disabilities during the bonfire period. However, as this group is potentially more vulnerable, they may feel safer due to the delivery of the fire safety messages and diversionary activities to reduce arson and anti-social behaviour incidents.

Merseyside Police do implement plans for vulnerable victims and MF&RS arson reduction teams work with District Police units to offer support and assistance to make vulnerable persons more resistant to attacks of arson through target hardening initiatives.

The bonfire advice leaflet has been changed to request that the advice given in the leaflet is passed onto neighbours, especially elderly or vulnerable people.

School presentations have also been made available with an off white (light yellow) background to assist viewing for those with dyslexia.

**(c) Race (include: nationality, national or ethnic origin and/or colour)**

Currently, MFRS do not target initiatives relative to race during the bonfire period.

However, as individuals within this group could potentially be the victims of hate crime incidents, they may feel safer due to the delivery of the fire safety messages and diversionary activities to reduce arson and anti-social behaviour incidents. Hate crime awareness has been included in the school bonfire safety presentations.

**(d) Religion or Belief**



Currently, MFRS do not target initiatives relative to religion or belief during the bonfire period. However, as individuals within this group could potentially be the victims of hate crime incidents, they may feel an safer due to the delivery of the fire safety messages and diversionary activities to reduce arson and anti-social behaviour incidents.

**(e) Sex (include gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership and pregnancy or maternity)**

It is known that the individuals who are involved in anti-social behaviour and deliberate fire setting during the bonfire period are typically young males. These individuals may view the implementation of the bonfire campaign negatively. However, overall, the campaign will have a positive impact on individuals within this age group as it provides interventions to ensure their safety and diversionary activities, such as organised firework displays and bonfires, cage soccer, a climbing wall and youth activities.

School presentations have been developed and will be rolled out across Merseyside to Senior/High schools and targeted junior schools in order to promote the key messages over the Bonfire Period.

**(f) Sexual Orientation**

Currently, MFRS do not target initiatives relative to sexual orientation during the bonfire period. However, as individuals within this group could potentially be the victims of hate crime incidents, they may feel an safer due to the delivery of the fire safety messages and diversionary activities to reduce arson and anti-social behaviour incidents.

**(g) Socio-economic disadvantage**

It is anticipated that residents living within areas of socio-economic disadvantage will experience a positive impact through the implementation of the bonfire campaign. An analysis of incidents occurring during previous bonfire periods indicates that deliberate secondary fires and anti-social behaviour incidents are more likely to occur in more deprived areas.

MFRS will work closely with partners again during the 2013 bonfire campaign, ensuring that appropriate preventative measures are in place and resources placed in hot-spot localities. These activities will have a positive impact on the local communities as they have the potential to prevent incidents from occurring or reducing the impact of incidents that do occur. School presentations are being rolled out across Merseyside to Senior/High/Junior schools in order to promote the key messages of the Bonfire Period. School Presentations are being given by Police and Fire Service embedded officers and Advocates.

**7. Decisions**

*If the policy/report/project will have a negative impact on members of one or more of*

*the protected groups, explain how it will change or why it is to continue in the same way.*

*If no changes are proposed, the policy/report/project needs to be objectively justified as being an appropriate and necessary means of achieving the legitimate aim set out in 1 above.*

It is recognised that MFRS and its partner organisations are currently facing financial challenges; however the implementation of the 2013 Bonfire Campaign has the potential to reduce the number of incidents related to anti-social behaviour.

The bonfire campaign has a strong focus on preventative initiatives, such as bonfire clearing, school presentations and diversionary activities, which not only prevent incidents from occurring, but also increase the perception of safety amongst residents.

It is anticipated that a number of protected groups will experience a positive impact through the implementation of the bonfire campaign. In particular, those groups who are most likely to be involved in anti-social behaviour and arson initiatives will be provided access to other diversionary initiatives. These groups are typically young males living in socio-economically deprived locations.

The implementation of the bonfire campaign activities will also have a positive impact on residents living close to hotspot localities for anti-social behaviour and arson initiatives. In addition to this, those protected groups who may be at risk from hate crime may also feel safer because of the regulation of firework sales, clearance of combustible materials and provision of diversionary activities for those likely to be involved in anti-social behaviour incidents.

## **8. Equality Improvement Plan**

*List any changes to our policies or procedures that need to be included in the Equality Action Plan/Service Plan.*

Long term plans for 2014 can consider the following:

- Specific safety messages for people with disability. In order to obtain this information, meet with key partners and invite feedback from them.
- Consider how to record incidents to capture if specific strands or characteristics were a factor in the incident occurring. ie targeted firework incident due to a person characteristic of the individual.
- Community events and bonfires to evidence and record methods of ways of considering access to all abilities and those with sensory conditions.
- Bonfire debrief for 2013 to consider E&D issues and capture both good practice and ways of improvement.

- Record firework incidents whereby the investigating officer or the person concerned perceived the attack to be specially targeted due to a prejudice against them.

**9. Equality & Diversity Sign Off**

*The completed EIA form must be signed off by the Diversity Manager before it is submitted to Strategic Management Group or Authority.*

**Signed off by:**

Wendy Kenyon

**Date:**

17.9.13

Action Planned	Responsibility of	Completed by
See actions contained in section 8 above	Ian Mullen and Wendy Kenyon	Next Bonfire Planning round 2014

For any advice, support or guidance about completing this form please contact the Wendy Kenyon on 4422

**The completed form along with the related policy/report/project document should be emailed to the Diversity Team at: [DiversityTeam@merseyfire.gov.uk](mailto:DiversityTeam@merseyfire.gov.uk)**