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**Zoë Billingham BA Hons (Oxon)**  
Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary  
Her Majesty's Inspector of Fire & Rescue  
Services

08 December 2017

Dear

## **FIRE AND RESCUE INSPECTION PROGRAMME UPDATE**

I am writing to update you on progress to establish the fire and rescue service inspection programme. I am very grateful to you and your colleagues for all of your support and guidance so far.

### **Inspection programme and framework**

We will publish the inspection programme and framework for the fire and rescue service for public consultation before Christmas. This document will set out our inspection approach and methodology, and seeks views on our proposed approach. It will be open for public consultation for 9 weeks. We will use the consultation responses to amend and refine our approach before seeking formal approval from the Home Secretary to publish the inspection programme and framework in March 2018.

In addition to the public consultation, we will consult you and your colleagues on the judgment criteria before it is finalised and in advance of the first tranche of inspections. We will need extensive professional feedback on this document to get the judgment criteria right. We are grateful to you and your colleagues for your help in refining the methodology so far. We found the feedback you provided at the conference on 10 October 2017 invaluable and we have amended the methodology in response to your input and advice.

### **Inspection pilots and tranches**

We have now selected the services in which we will pilot our inspection approach in early 2018. These are Suffolk, Staffordshire and West Yorkshire fire and rescue services. We are very grateful to these services and the other fire and rescue services who volunteered to participate in the pilots. We selected the services for pilot to allow us to test our inspection approach in a range of accountability structures and different geographical areas.

I am also now able to confirm the fire and rescue services allocated to each of the three inspection tranches. I have attached these for your information at Annex A. Please note the tranches are not listed in inspection order. The inspection tranches are expected to start as follows;

- Tranche 1 15 inspections Summer 2018
- Tranche 2 15 inspections Autumn/ Winter 2018
- Tranche 3 15 inspections Spring 2019

I will write to you again when the inspection dates for each tranche are finalised. If there are any particular dates within your nominated tranche which you would prefer the inspection team to avoid, please notify us via [FRS@hmic.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:FRS@hmic.gsi.gov.uk). Please note there may be some flexibility to move inspection dates within tranche, however the tranche in which your fire and rescue service will be inspected is fixed.

We are hosting an inspection preparation conference on 31 January 2018 in London. This event will provide an explanation of what each fire and rescue service can expect the inspection process to mean for them. It will cover how the process of inspection will work for fire and rescue services from start to finish. This will include tactical details such as submitting data for analysis, how the fieldwork timetable will work and how soon you can expect to see a draft report after the fieldwork has finished.

Invitations to the event will go out shortly and we expect the event will be most helpful to the people you have asked to facilitate and support the inspection process. Each fire and rescue service has been allocated two places at the conference. We look forward to meeting your colleagues there.

If you have any questions regarding the pilot inspection please contact Laura Gibb ([lauraalice.gibb@hmic.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:lauraalice.gibb@hmic.gsi.gov.uk)) or Dave Norris ([david.norris@hmic.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:david.norris@hmic.gsi.gov.uk))

Yours sincerely



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