



Promoting improvements
in policing and fire & rescue
services to make everyone safer

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Sir Thomas Winsor ws
Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Fire and
Rescue Services

Chief Fire Officers, England
Commissioner, London Fire Brigade
Chair, Fire Services Management Committee
Police, fire and crime commissioners
Mayor, Greater Manchester
Deputy Mayor for Fire, London
Chairs, Fire and Rescue Authorities
Chair, National Fire Chiefs Council
General Secretary, Fire Brigades Union
Chair, Fire Standards Board
Chief Executive, Fire & Rescue Services Association
Chief Executive, Fire Officers' Association

17 August 2021

Dear Colleagues,

ANNUAL ASSESSMENT OF FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITIES IN ENGLAND

This letter asks for your advice and assistance in connection with my preparation of the annual assessment of the efficiency and effectiveness of fire and rescue authorities in England. This is the report which I am required by section 28 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 to submit to the Home Secretary and lay before Parliament. I shall greatly value your views.

2. The 2021 annual report will provide my final annual assessment before my term ends as Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Fire and Rescue Services. I intend to take this opportunity to reflect on the overall progress made since July 2017, when HMICFRS had its remit extended to include inspections of England's fire and rescue services.

3. Part 1 of the annual report provides my assessment of the state of fire and rescue authorities in England. Whilst the experiences and events of the last eighteen months in particular have stimulated many thoughts on what I ought to include, I should appreciate your input, to ensure the report concentrates on the things which matter most.

4. To this end, I should be grateful for your views on the following questions in particular:

- (a) what do you think are the most pressing areas for reform in the fire sector;
- (b) where do you think the fire sector ought to be in 2026;
- (c) what changes have occurred – both locally and nationally – in response to the first round of our inspections; what effect have they had, or do you expect them to have;

(d) COVID-19 continues to test the resilience of every service; what went well and what could be improved;

(e) what short-term changes do you think COVID-19 has had on individual services and the sector;

(f) what medium- and long-term changes do you think COVID-19 is having and will have on individual services and the sector;

(g) what has your organisation done to implement the learning and recommendations made in the Grenfell Tower Inquiry's Phase 1 report (published on 30 October 2019); and

(h) what are your current people priorities, and what challenges are you facing to implement your people strategy?

5. The plan is to publish the annual assessment in late 2021. It would be greatly appreciated if I could have your views no later than 15 September 2021.

6. If you have any queries about this request, and indeed wider views on what I should include in my assessment, please let me know.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sir Thomas Winsor', written in a cursive style.

Sir Thomas Winsor ws

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Fire and Rescue Services