



Home Office

Appendix A

**Rt Hon Chris Philp MP**  
**Minister of State for Crime, Policing**  
**and Fire**

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

To: All Chief Fire Officers

**Via Email Only**

8 February 2024

### **Fire and Rescue Services Minimum Service Level Regulations**

Dear Chief Fire Officers,

As you will be aware, the Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Act 2023 received Royal Assent on 20 July 2023. The Act enables the making of regulations which set out minimum service levels during industrial action in some of our most crucial sectors. Since I wrote to you last year inviting your views as part of our consultation, my officials have worked hard to take into consideration the views of our stakeholders and shape the regulations that were laid in Parliament today. Thank you for your involvement in the consultation and for sharing your views with my officials.

The Strikes (Minimum Service Levels: Fire and Rescue Services) (England) Regulations 2024 (the Regulations) apply to all fire and rescue authorities (FRAs) in England. The Regulations will apply to three categories of services:

- **Control room services**, where the minimum level of service is that all emergency calls for help will be answered and assessed and that the control room will be able to dispatch personnel as they would on non-strike days. It will be for FRAs to determine how many personnel are named on a work notice to fulfil that requirement.
- **Emergency incident response**, where the minimum level of service is that each FRA will have available and ready to deploy 73% of the vehicles and appliances that they would have available if a strike were not taking place at that time of day. The 73% is based on modelling which uses both historical incident statistics and appliance data from fire and rescue services. Cover for senior staff and the crewing of specialist vehicles is also included within the 73%. The Regulations also include cover for the deployment of national resilience assets (as necessary), although this sits outside of the 73% appliance figure. Following consultation with the union in dispute, individual FRAs will be able to decide how many firefighters they consider to be necessary to crew this percentage of appliances on strike days.

- **Fire safety services**, where the minimum level of service is provision of cover to deal with urgent issues relating to fire protection and prevention. This could include, for example, if same-day enforcement action needs to be taken in respect of a building where a potentially life threatening fire safety concern has arisen. It will be for each FRA to determine how many personnel are named on a work notice to ensure it can provide such interventions as required.

Alongside the Regulations we have published our consultation response and a factsheet with information about the Regulations. These can be found at Gov.uk. It should be noted that, as per the Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Act 2023, employers are under no statutory obligation to issue work notices. However, work notices will be an effective tool that employers will be able to use to ensure crucial services can continue during strike action.

As you will see from our response to the consultation, the Government firmly believes that the ability to strike is an important part of industrial relations in Great Britain. However, we also have a duty to the public to ensure their safety, protect their property and help them go about their daily lives. Fire and rescue services play a vital role in protecting the public and it is right that we seek to ensure the public can continue to rely on these crucial services during periods of strike action.

I am committed to ensuring that these regulations can be implemented successfully for fire and rescue services. Following the publication of the consultation response, my officials intend to engage with all fire and rescue services, the National Fire Chiefs Council, the Local Government Association and trade unions with a view to producing detailed guidance on how the minimum service levels can be operationalised.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Philp', written in a cursive style.

**Rt Hon Chris Philp MP**  
**Minister of State for Crime, Policing and Fire**