

DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY



REPORT REFERENCE NO.	CSCPC/09/5
MEETING	COMMUNITY SAFETY AND CORPORATE PLANNING COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	14 JANUARY 2009
SUBJECT OF REPORT	TARGET SETTING FOR DEVON AND SOMERSET FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY CORPORATE PLAN 2009/10 TO 2011/12
LEAD OFFICER	ACFO Community Safety, ACFO Operations, and Head of Service Planning and Review
RECOMMENDATIONS	<p><i>(a) That the options and recommendations for targets contained within this report are considered and;</i></p> <p><i>(b) That the targets are included in the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority Corporate Plan 2009/10 to 2011/12. The Corporate Plan will then be submitted to the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority in February 2008 for final approval.</i></p>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>A key part of any business plan is the setting of targets to demonstrate the level of ambition the organisation wishes to achieve.</p> <p>As in previous years, it is proposed that this Committee discusses and recommends targets for relevant areas of the Corporate Plan before final endorsement by the full Authority in February. Therefore, this paper sets out recommendations for targets under Goal 1 'To proactively reduce risk, to save life, protect property and the environment from fire and other emergencies' and Goal 3 'To provide and effective, efficient and economic service'.</p>
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	There are no specific financial implications contained within the report.
EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT	
APPENDICES	None
LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS	Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority Draft Corporate Plan 2009/10 to 2011/12

1. **INTRODUCTION**

1.1 The draft Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority Corporate Plan 2009/10 to 2011/12 sets out the ambitions for the Authority for the next three years, as expressed through the following Mission and Goals:



1.2 A key part of any business plan is the setting of targets to demonstrate the level of ambition the organisation wishes to achieve.

1.3 Within the Fire and Rescue Service in previous years there has been the requirement to set targets for the next three years for each of the national Best Value Performance Indicators. However, this requirement no longer exists and therefore there is greater flexibility for the Authority in the setting of targets.

1.4 Nationally the former suite of Best Value Performance Indicators has been replaced with the National Indicator Set which consists of 198 performance indicators covering a wide range of areas in the public sector. The recently renewed Local Area Agreements were required to set targets against 35 of the performance indicators in the National Indicator Set. However, all of the 198 indicators will still need to be measured and monitored on a regular basis. Within the set there are 2 specific indicators where the fire and rescue service is the primary source of the data. They are:

NI 33: Arson Incidents. To be measured as

- a) Number of deliberate primary fires per 10,000 population;
- b) Number of deliberate secondary fires per 10,000 population

NI 49: Number of primary fires and related fatalities and non-fatal casualties (excluding precautionary checks). To be measured as

- 1) Total number of primary fires per 100,000 population;
- 2) Total number of fatalities due to primary fires per 100,000 population;
- 3) Total number of non-fatal casualties (excluding precautionary checks) per 100,000 population

1.5 Of course there are other indicators in the set where the work of the fire and rescue service contributes e.g. road traffic collisions, but are not the primary source of the data. Within the four Local Area Agreements within Devon and Somerset neither of the indicators above had targets set against them.

2. TARGET SETTING FOR GOAL 1

2.1 Within the Draft Corporate Plan under Goal 1 there are the following four priorities:

- 1a) To reduce the incidence and impact of fires
- 1b) To reduce deaths and injuries from road traffic collisions
- 1c) To improve planning and response arrangements in dealing with fire and other non-fire emergencies
- 1d) To improve emergency call management arrangements.

2.2 In order to achieve these priorities the Service will be measured against the targets listed below, supporting the relevant priority. Information is provided on current levels of performance, suggested targets to be adopted and activities to be undertaken to achieve the target.

2.3 When setting targets it is important to consider:

- The priority and importance of delivering a specific issue
- Current performance and success of existing strategies to deliver the outcomes
- Resources available to undertake the activity required to achieve the target
- Benchmarking of current performance against other Fire and Rescue Services
- The possible impact of the current economic situation on performance. No-one can reliably predict what this impact might be and therefore setting targets in this climate provides a significant challenge in itself.

3. PRIORITY 1A – TO REDUCE THE INCIDENCE AND IMPACT OF FIRES

3.1 Fires can be categorised in several different ways in order to help understand where they are occurring and what action the Service needs to take to prevent and respond to the fire. For the purpose of this priority it has been broken down into four areas:

- Accidental dwelling fires
- Fires in non domestic premises e.g. shops, hotels, offices etc
- Deliberate fires – some of these will occur in non-domestic premises and homes as well as outdoors, rubbish bins, vehicles etc. This relates to national indicator 33 (see paragraph 1.4 above)
- Primary fires – these are all fires that involve property and include house fires and non-domestic fires as well as vehicle fires. This relates to national indicator 49 (see paragraph 1.4 above).

4. ACCIDENTAL DWELLING FIRES

4.1 There are three key long standing measures and targets that relate to accidental dwelling fires that represent the real outcomes of performance in delivering this area. They are:

- Deaths in accidental dwelling fires
- Casualties in accidental dwelling fires
- Accidental dwelling fires

- 4.2 The activities to be undertaken to achieve these targets will primarily focus on carrying out Home Fire Safety Checks and another paper on the agenda for this committee considers how this will be undertaken.
- 4.3 In addition to Home Fire Safety Checks we will continue our schools education programme and undertake seasonal targeted campaigns e.g. the safe use of lights and candles in the Christmas period. To undertake this work we will work with partners and use existing staff.
- 4.4 In terms of response activity to support this priority, new response standards for house fires have previously been presented to this committee and have recently been implemented.
- 4.5 The three boxes below suggest targets for each of these three measures.

Deaths in accidental dwelling fires

The current target set is to reduce deaths in accidental dwelling fires by 20% averaged over the eleven years to 31 March 2010 compared to 5 years to March 1999. This target supports the National target.

Current performance is shown below and demonstrates the service is on course to achieve the target. So far in 2008/09 there have been two fatalities at these types of fires.

Deaths in accidental fires in the home

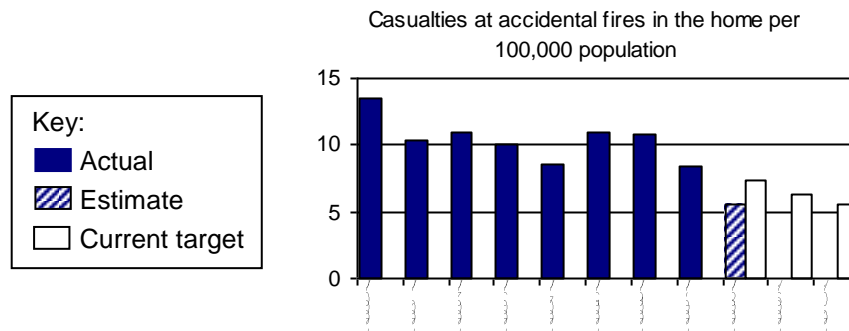
Year	Actual	Actual Average	Target average	Average to March 99
1999/00	5	5.5	6	7.5
2000/01	3	5.5	6	7.5
2001/02	9	5.5	6	7.5
2002/03	3	5.5	6	7.5
2003/04	9	5.5	6	7.5
2004/05	2	5.5	6	7.5
2005/06	8	5.5	6	7.5
2006/07	5	5.5	6	7.5
2007/08	4	5.5	6	7.5
2008/09	2	5.5	6	7.5
2009/10	5	5.5	6	7.5

The Service has a low number of fatalities like many others across the country. Within the region all services within the last few years have shown a decrease.

Recommendation: That the current target continues as it stands.

Casualties in accidental dwelling fires per 100,000 population

The current target set is to reduce casualties at accidental dwelling fires by 13% each year to meet the regional average of 5.5 casualties by 2010/11. Current performance is shown below and demonstrates the service is well on course to exceed this target with an estimated reduction of 35% by the end of the year if current levels of performance continue. This would mean the target for 2010/11 would be met in the first year.



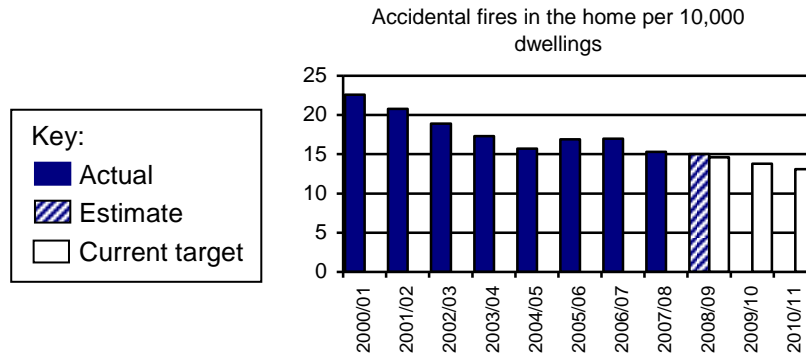
When compared to other services in the region and nationally in previous years, Devon & Somerset have had a very high rate, but the decrease shown so far this year has significantly narrowed that gap and estimates for the end of the year show Devon & Somerset below last year's regional average.

Options:

1. To continue with the existing target i.e. reach the regional average by 2010/11. With the current economic downturn, next year's figures may show an increase and therefore to still achieve a rate of 5.5 by 2010/11 could still be a challenge.
2. Re-set the target to say a 5% reduction based on the 2008/09 levels each year for the next 3 years. If achieved this would position the service beyond the current target and place it firmly back in line with the performance of other services. A 5% reduction equates to approximately 5 casualties.

Accidental dwelling fires per 10,000 dwellings

The current target set is to reduce accidental dwelling fires by 5% each year up to 2010/11. Although the Service is currently recording a decrease for this measure – down by 2%, it is not a big enough decrease to achieve the existing target.



The Service is performing fairly well compared to others Nationally where in 2006/07 (the latest figures available) Devon & Somerset had the same rate as the national average. Within the region, there is a similar picture, i.e. 'about average' and lying in the middle when compared to others. Although we have had a small decrease, a couple of services in the region are currently recording increases in the number of accidental dwelling fires.

Options:

The Service could still achieve the current target by the end of the year and therefore the existing target could continue and be extended i.e. reduce by 5% based on the 2008/09 levels each year for the next 3 years. A 5% reduction equates to approximately 55 fires.

5. FIRES IN NON-DOMESTIC PREMISES

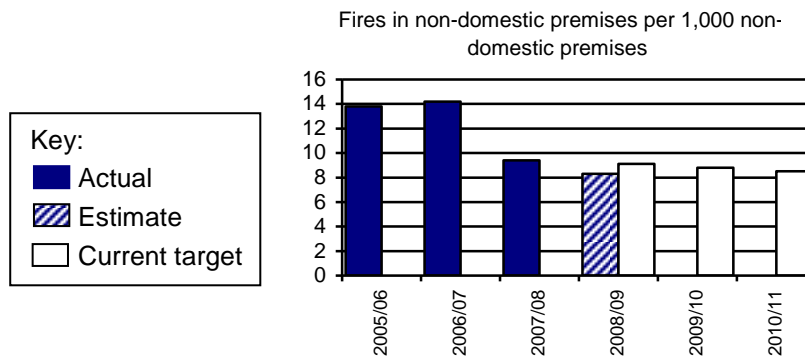
5.1 There is only one key outcome measure for this area which is the number of non-domestic premises fires. In order to reduce these types of fire, the service is undertaking the following activity:

- Undertake building regulations consultations. The Service is required to comment on and consider planning proposals, for both new builds and changes to existing buildings. This therefore gives the Service the opportunity to influence the provision and implementation fire safety at the earliest opportunity. Standards have been set internally to deal promptly with this type of work. So far this year over 1500 building regulation consultations have been completed.
- Undertake a risk based and targeted fire safety enforcement programme. In general businesses are required to comply with fire safety legislation and therefore the service visits premises to ensure this has taken place. With over 60,000 non-domestic premises within the service area, a risk based targeted approach is taken. So far this year nearly 500 audits have taken place with many resulting in improvement actions required by the business.
- Fire investigation will also be undertaken after fires to identify the causes of fire which in turn can feed back into prevention and protection work.

- Follow up visits to premises with false alarm activations are also undertaken to primarily reduce the re-occurrence of false alarms but also have the benefit of reminding owners of their responsibilities and safe systems of work and therefore reduce the likelihood of a fire.
- Finally, new response standards for other buildings are currently in development and will soon be presented to the Fire and Rescue Authority for consideration.

Fires in non-domestic premises per 1,000 non-domestic premises

The current target set is to reduce non-domestic premises fires by 3% each year up to 2010/11. The Service is currently exceeding this target by recording a 12% decrease and estimating a rate of 8.3 by the end of the year and exceeding the 3 year target.



The large decrease in 2007/08 means the Service is doing well and now records a level well within the 2006/07 National top quartile rate of 10.7. Compared to others within the region performance is about average for 2007/08.

Options:

From the information available the Service is doing well compared to others in the country, therefore setting a target should be in the context of the Services existing performance rather than compared to achieving a national average etc. Therefore a year on year % decrease would probably be the most appropriate type of target. A 3% decrease equates to approximately 15 fires.

6. DELIBERATE FIRES

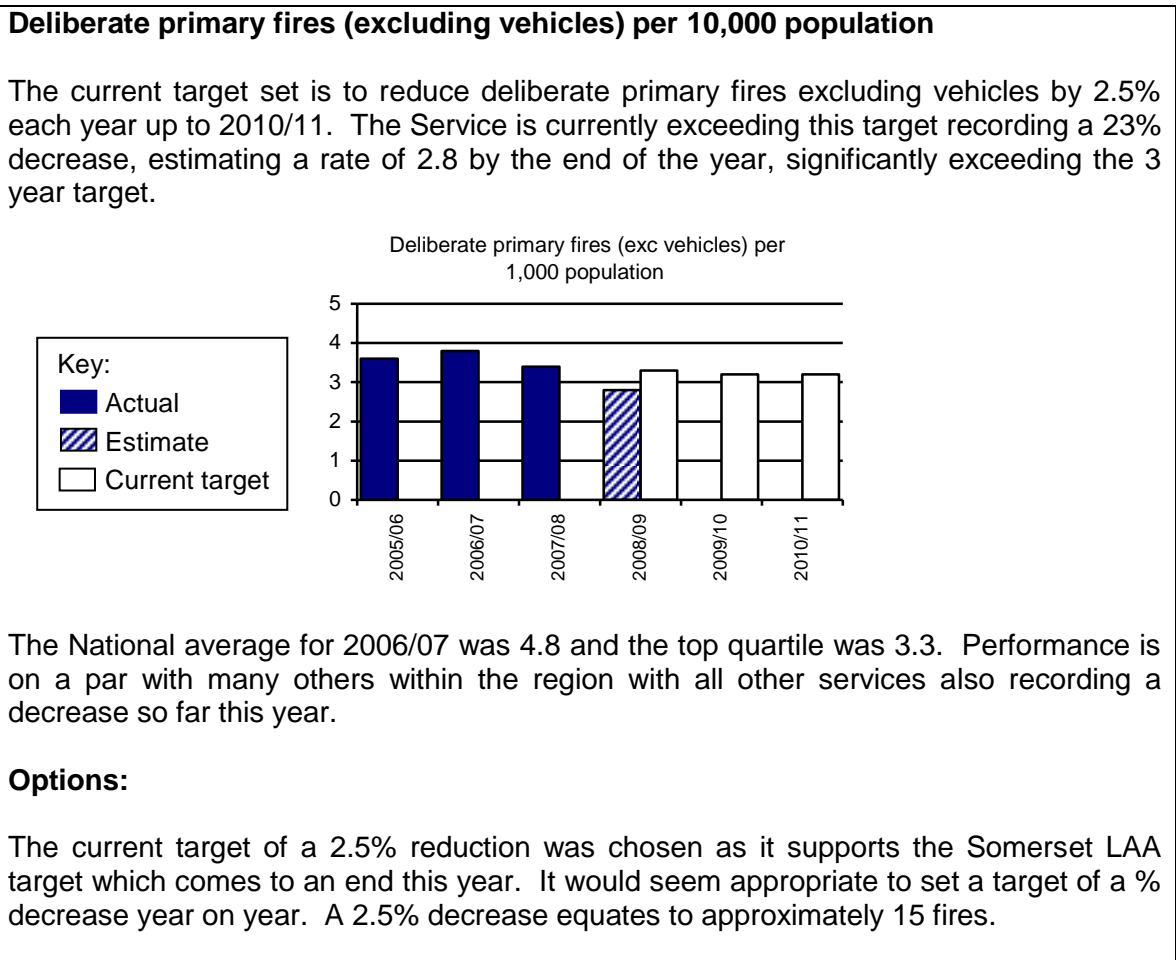
6.1 Targeting the reduction of deliberate fires has been a long standing issue nationally for the Fire and Rescue Service. Over the years it has been measured and monitored in a number of ways and is split by whether it is a primary or secondary fire and whether it involves a vehicle or not. Primary fires are those that involve property or anything of value e.g. building, car or a very large fire e.g. big moorland fire. Secondary fires are much smaller outdoor fires e.g. refuse fires and those involving derelict buildings and vehicles. Therefore, deliberate fires can be measured in the following four categories:

- Deliberate primary fires (excluding vehicles)
- Deliberate primary fires in vehicles
- Deliberate secondary fires (excluding vehicles)
- Deliberate secondary fires in vehicles

6.2 These four measures equate to National Indicator **NI 33: Arson Incidents** as described within the introduction of this report.

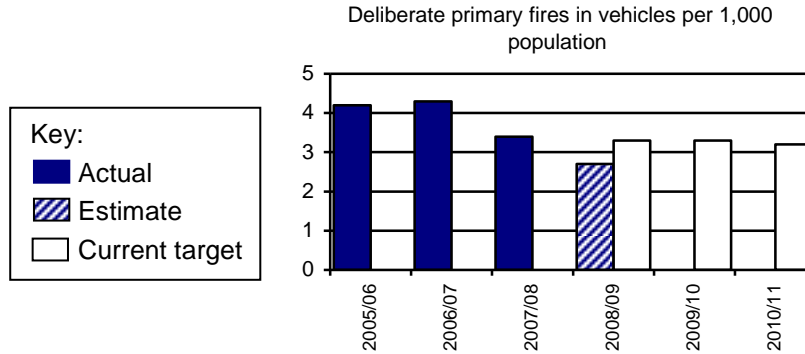
6.3 There is a range of activities the Service will undertake in order to continue the reduction in deliberate fires and these include:

- rigorous fire investigation and working with the police. This will help to ensure convictions are made and will also provide a high profile deterrent to others.
- youth intervention schemes will continue which assist significantly in behavioural change.
- targeted campaigns raising awareness of preventative measures e.g. rubbish storage, car clear scheme
- working with partners with common aims to reduce Anti Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) and criminal damage. Recent research supports this and found a high correlation with certain crimes and the prevalence of house fires.



Deliberate primary fires in vehicles per 10,000 population

The current target set is to reduce deliberate primary fires in vehicles by 2% each year up to 2010/11. The Service is currently exceeding this target recording a 21% decrease, estimating a rate of 2.7 by the end of the year.



Although the Service would like to take all of the credit for reducing these types of fire, it is believed that other external factors such as the value of scrap metal also has an impact on this measure. However, the last few months have not seen a sudden increase in these types of fire following the fall in the value of scrap metal.

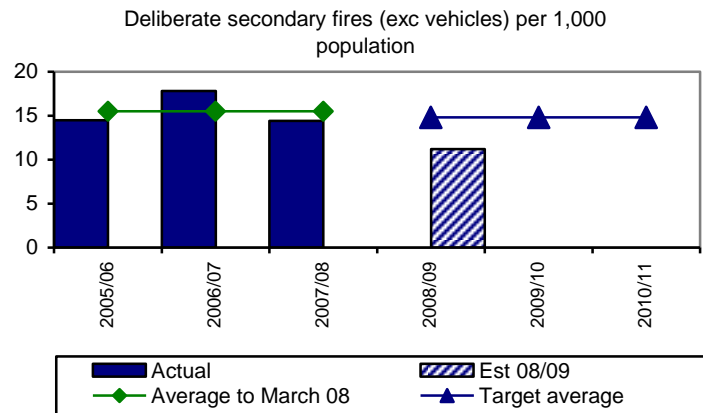
Compared to national and local performance the Service is performing well with one of the lowest rates in the region last year and on a par with the top quartile nationally.

Options:

To continue with a target of reducing by a percentage each year. As with the previous target, the current target was chosen to support the Somerset LAA target. A 2% reduction equates to approximately 11 fires.

Deliberate secondary fires (excluding vehicles) per 10,000 population

The current target set is to reduce the number of deliberate secondary fires by 5% averaged over the three years to 31 March 2011 compared to the 3 years to March 2008. The Service is currently exceeding this target recording a 23% decrease.



Again, with this measure other external influences out of our control have a significant impact – it is believed to be the weather in this case. A hot summer in 2006/07 followed by a wet one in 2007/08 helps to explain the fluctuations in this measure. That is why a target has been set that averages out performance over 3 years.

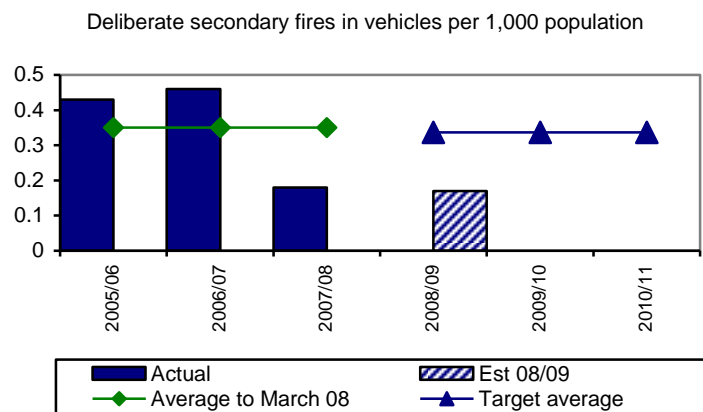
Across the country there is a wide range in performance with an average of 31.7 in 2006/07 and a top quartile rate of 12.4. Within the region however the Service records just above the average.

Recommendation:

To continue with the existing target for the next two years.

Deliberate secondary fires in vehicles per 10,000 population

The current target is to reduce the number of deliberate secondary vehicle fires by 5% averaged over the three years to 31 March 2011 compared to the 3 years to March 2008. The Service is currently recording a 7% decrease, but this only equates to 1 fire.



Rates for this type of fire are low nationally and regionally.

Recommendation:

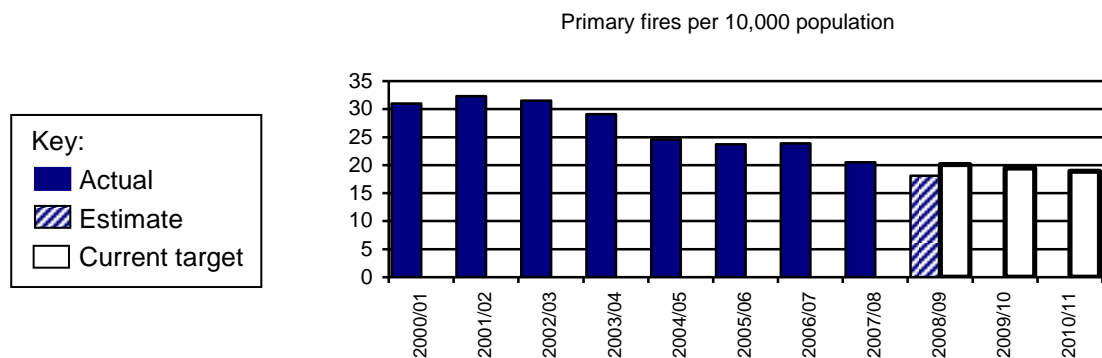
To continue with the existing target for the next two years.

7. PRIMARY FIRES

- 7.1 The final area supporting this priority is primary fires. This generally relates to any fire involving property or anything of value. It therefore encompasses some of the targets already discussed such as accidental dwelling fires, non-domestic premises fires and primary deliberate fires. Therefore activities undertaken to reduce and respond to these types of fires will also have an impact on the overall number of primary fires.

Primary fires per 10,000 population

The current target set is to reduce primary fires by 3% each year up to 2010/11. The Service is currently exceeding this target recording a 12% decrease, estimating a rate of 18.1 by the end of the year.



Compared to other Services nationally, Devon and Somerset has consistently performed better than the national average, but just outside the top quartile. Within the region Devon and Somerset was marginally better than the average last year.

Options:

The target for this measure is linked to some of the other targets set, but some of the other measures are not mutually exclusive e.g. a fire could be both a non-domestic fire and a deliberate primary fires. It is suggested a year on year percentage change is the most appropriate type of target. A 1% change equates to approximately 30 fires.

- 7.2 National Indicator 49, the **Number of primary fires and related fatalities and non-fatal casualties (excluding precautionary checks)** as discussed in the introduction has three parts, namely:

- 1) Total number of primary fires per 100,000 population;
- 2) Total number of fatalities due to primary fires per 100,000 population;
- 3) Total number of non-fatal casualties (excluding precautionary checks) per 100,000 population.

7.3 The first part has been discussed above with the view to continue to set a target for it. However, the Authority does not have to set a target against the other two parts. Neither measure has been included as a Local Area Agreement target. With a view to setting a target for fatalities, the small numbers involved have led to setting very long term targets for reductions for accidental dwelling fatalities. Past statistics for the number of fatalities at all primary fires currently range from 5 to 16 per year. Some of these are at accidental dwelling fires, some are deliberate house fires and others are within vehicles, sometimes at road traffic collision. Every fire involving a fatality is fully investigated and any lessons learnt from this are fed back into both prevention and response activity if needed.

7.4 With regards to setting a target for casualties at primary fires, analysis shows that in the last four years 70% of these were at accidental dwelling fires. It is already recommended a target is set for casualties at accidental dwelling fires and therefore by targeting this type of incident this will have the biggest impact on all casualties from fires.

7.5 It is therefore suggested that a target is not set for either of these measures but close monitoring of performance continues to be undertaken.

8. PRIORITY 2A – TO REDUCE DEATHS AND INJURIES FROM ROAD TRAFFIC COLLISIONS

8.1 Currently there are no targets adopted by the Authority relating to this area. However in the draft Corporate Plan it is suggested that the Authority could support partners in the following three areas:

- To assist partners in reducing fatal and serious road casualties by x% by 20xx
- To assist partners in reducing child road casualties by x% by 20xx
- To assist partners in reducing slight casualty rates by x% by 20xx

8.2 The draft Corporate Plan is currently out for consultation and we are awaiting feedback from our partners on the suitability of this approach. It is considered that any targets set in this area would be an aggregation or direct reflection of our partners targets and would be dependent upon information provided by them to monitor the targets.

9. PRIORITIES 1C AND 1D

9.1 Priority 1c “to improve planning and response arrangements in dealing with other ‘non-fire’ emergencies” does not have any proposed numerical targets to measure the outcome and success of this priority. This is also the case with Priority 1d “to improve emergency call management arrangements”. Instead both the priorities will be progressed through the completion of projects such as supporting the implementation of the South West Regional Control centre.

10. GOAL 2: TO BE AN EMPLOYER OF CHOICE

10.1 The setting of targets for this Goal will be considered by the Human Resources Management and Development Committee.

11. GOAL 3: TO PROVIDE AN EFFECTIVE, EFFICIENT AND ECONOMIC SERVICE

11.1 Within the Draft Corporate Plan under Goal 3 there are the following three priorities:

- 3a) To improve organisational planning and performance management
- 3b) To improve communication
- 3c) To optimise the use of resources

11.2 As with two of the priorities in Goal 1, priorities 3a and 3b do not have specific numerical targets but instead will be progressed through project work.

12. PRIORITY 3C – TO OPTIMISE THE USE OF RESOURCES

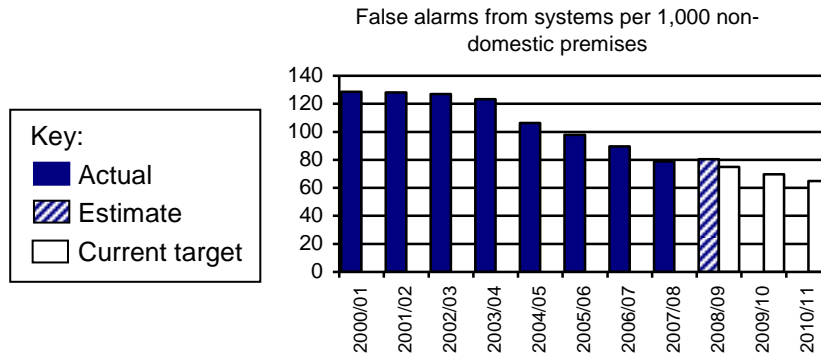
12.1 There are four potential targets within this priority. The first relates to delivering the efficiency savings identified in the business case for combination of the two fire and rescue services. These values have already been set and work continues to deliver against them. The second target is 'to achieve positive results from external assessment'. The Service is assessed in several different ways and the method of assessment continually changes. Therefore this target is left as an intent to apply to all types of assessment. The other two targets relate to false alarms from fire alarm systems and malicious false alarms.

13. FALSE ALARMS FROM FIRE ALARM SYSTEMS

13.1 For several years it has been acknowledged that responding to false alarms is an inefficient use of resources and undermines the effectiveness of any fire alarm system. Research in the past has also shown that 97% of alarm activations result in no fire. Therefore work has been undertaken both locally and nationally to develop new policies to reduce the occurrence of alarms and our response to them. This involves working with premises that have repeat calls and using enforcement where necessary. In addition to this an element of call filtering is undertaken by the control rooms where appropriate in line with a risk assessment to reduce unnecessary appliance mobilisations.

False alarms caused by automatic fire detection equipment

The current target is to reduce false alarms by 5% in 2008/09 and reduce by a further 7% in 2009/10 and 2010/11. Current performance shows an increase of 2% over the previous year. If this increase continues to the end of the year it will equate approximately to an additional 95 false alarms.



When performance is compared to the national picture, the service consistently records rates better than the national average, but is currently just outside the top quartile.

Future recording practices for incidents will also have an impact upon this measure. Currently, although the indicator is meant to only measure false alarms from non-domestic premises it also includes those from domestic premises as current computer systems cannot automatically distinguish between them. Devon and Somerset is not unique with this situation. However, from the 1st April a new national system will be introduced that will allow this distinction. Local research has identified that the current increase in false alarms is primarily due to an increase in those from domestic premises.

Options:

Re-set the target to say a 5% reduction based on 2008/09 levels each year for the next 3 years.

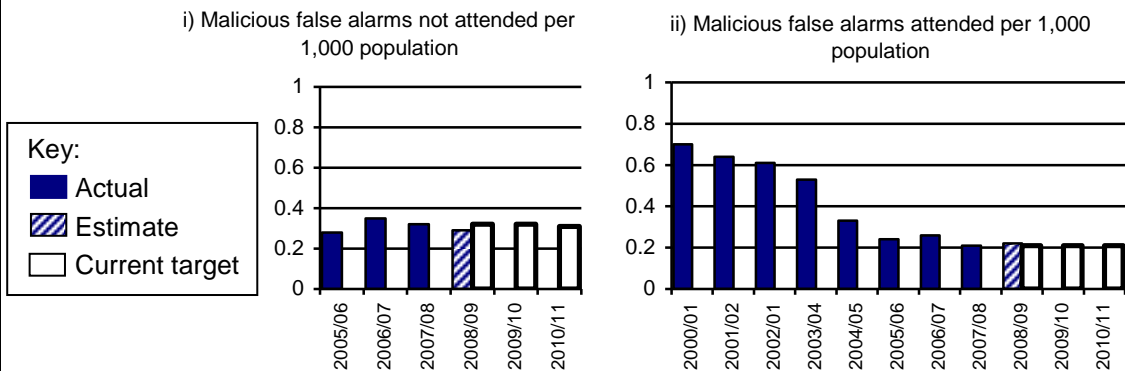
MALICIOUS FALSE ALARMS

Malicious false alarms per 1,000 population.

The current target is to reduce malicious false alarms by 1% each year until 2010/11. It is monitored in two parts:

- i) Malicious false alarms not attended per 1,000 population
- ii) Malicious false alarms attended per 1,000 population

For part i) there has been a decrease of 9% so far this year (27 calls) and for part ii) an increase of 7% (17 calls). Therefore, overall calls received are decreasing, but we have attended more of them. Rates for the number not attended are slightly higher than national top quartile whereas those attended are much lower. The charts below show past figures and current targets and are plotted on the same scale. From this it can be seen that we are more likely not to attend a malicious false alarm rather than mobilise an appliance



Recommendation:

To continue the existing targets of reducing both malicious false alarms not attended and those attended by 1% each year for the next 3 years.

To achieve these targets the Service will continue to work to the service policy of call challenge and work closely with telephone providers and the police to follow up offenders of malicious false alarms to seek prosecution where appropriate. In addition to this the schools education programme and youth intervention schemes will assist in reducing the number of malicious false alarms received.

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