

Foreword to RES
From the Chairman of the Fire Authority and Chief Fire Officer

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority is committed to improving the safety of our community. To do this, we need to recognise the diversity within our community and work to develop services and ways of working that are focused, appropriate and accessible to everyone, whatever their culture, ethnicity, background or lifestyle.

This Race Equality Scheme will help us to make equality a central part of the way we work. It will help us to achieve our aims of eliminating racial discrimination, promoting equal opportunities and developing good relations between people of different ethnic groups. It provides us with a structured, three-year plan for measuring progress and ensuring we stay accountable to the people who rely on us. It allows us to build on existing initiatives, like providing fire prevention information to immigrants and asylum seekers, and assessing the fire risks connected with specific cultural celebrations. It will assist us when developing new initiatives, through taking action to remove language barriers, and finding new ways to consult meaningfully with different groups within our community.

A key element in delivering this plan will be providing Members of the Fire Authority and employees with the training and development they need to improve their knowledge of cultural and religious diversity. In this way we can equip them to develop their roles as providers of a first class Fire and Rescue Service to everyone in our community, fairly and equitably. In response, we hope that our community will develop a better understanding of the challenges faced by today's Fire and Rescue Service and that eventually our staff will more accurately represent the community we serve.

The duty to promote race equality (under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000), which was a direct result from the Macpherson Inquiry in 1999, provides Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority with tremendous opportunities as well as some challenges. It provides:

- a framework to assess, monitor and consult over the way we plan and deliver services, taking into account the needs of our diverse community
- a structure for analysing and measuring the effect of our employment and corporate policies and
- the opportunity to continuously develop a culture of respect and equality of opportunity.

Changing society and communities mean a change in service provision and planning. Change is never easy and helping our employees and communities to understand and respond to this change is one of the many challenges ahead.

This Race Equality Scheme is both a structured plan for promoting race equality and a vision for a future Fire and Rescue Service that meets the needs of everyone in our community with understanding and compassion. We would like to thank Harmesh Lakhanpaul, the Chairman of Peterborough Race Equality Council, for reviewing the draft Scheme and would like to take this opportunity to invite you to share your opinions on the Scheme, its promotion and content, so we can improve our ways of working with you.

Councillor Mac McGuire
Chairman of the Fire Authority

Tom Carroll, QFSM, MIFireE
Chief Fire Officer

Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Fire Authority **Race Equality Scheme**

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Working Together to Improve Community Safety

Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service (the Service) exists to serve a community of approximately 730,200 people throughout Cambridgeshire and Peterborough . It does this through a devolved structure of six Districts aligned with District and Unitary Council authority boundaries and supported by corporate functions at Headquarters in Huntingdon.

The Service's primary functions are to protect the people of Cambridgeshire by helping to prevent fires, and to respond, when fires and other emergencies occur, to reduce loss of life, injury and damage to property. We cannot do this without input and support from the wider community and so work in partnership with a number of different agencies and organisations. In order to plan and manage our service delivery it is essential that all parts of the community are consulted and listened to.

Our Community

The community of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is very diverse – it is estimated that over 70 different languages are spoken and people from many different ethnic or racial groups live in our cities, towns and rural areas. Such diverse groups will, at times, have diverse needs and the service we deliver needs to be able to reflect this. Despite 30 years of race relations legislation, people from black and minority ethnic communities often still experience the impact of inequality and unfair discrimination. To ensure fair and accessible services are provided for everyone and to eliminate the impact of any unfair racial discrimination, the Service needs to ensure positive relationships with black and minority ethnic groups are developed, their opinions sought, particular needs identified and creative approaches taken to meet them. Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority (the Fire Authority) is responsible for ensuring that Service aims, objectives, policies and plans fully reflect this commitment to racial equality.

Any attempt to describe the diversity of a community runs the risk of “labelling” people in a way which some find offensive – even divisive. But if we want to understand the needs of our local community we need to recognise that there is no “one size fits all” solution. To respond appropriately to the ethnic diversity of Cambridgeshire, we need to be clear about which ethnic groups make up our community. This knowledge will help us to identify how different groups prefer to access our services. It will also help us to gather information about the impact our services have on different groups. We can use this information to assess whether any adverse impact occurs and so change our policies and practices to make a positive one.

The summary below describes the population of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough by the broad ethnic categories used in the 2001 census. While it does not profile every separate ethnic, racial or cultural group, it provides an overview of the rich diversity that is Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Communities are dynamic and it is acknowledged that the population is now greater and even more diverse than the data obtained in 2001 suggests. Local knowledge, developed from working within our community, has also been used to supplement the statistical census data.

Peterborough

The city has long been home to people from Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Bangladesh, Ireland, China and India and there are thriving communities from Italy, Portugal and Pakistan. In 2001, 10.3% (16,060) of the population of Peterborough classified themselves as belonging to a Black or Minority Ethnic (BME) Group, with the largest minority ethnic group being the Asian community which forms 7% of the total population. Many of the eastern European communities have found work in the rural economy which is difficult to staff but vital to the local economy. The size of our travelling and gypsy communities, like migrant workers, is difficult to quantify but there are a number of encampments in the area. In 2001 Peterborough was designated a dispersal area for asylum seekers. A resource centre (New Link) for new arrivals exists to welcome them to the city and help them to integrate into Peterborough. 100,000 visitors from a total of 56 nationalities and speaking 79 languages visited the centre in the past year.

Cambridgeshire

The ethnicity of Cambridgeshire's population varies considerably across the local authority boundaries. In Cambridge City, 10.6% of the population classified themselves as belonging to a BME group, with the largest minority ethnic groups being Asian (3.7%) and Chinese communities (2.13%). In Fenland, BME residents account for 1.4% of the population while in East Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire, between 2.1% and 2.9% of the population are from BME groups.

Year by year seasonal migrant worker communities in East Cambridgeshire and Fenland grow, making precise calculations difficult. Many workers and their families only stay for short periods of time, moving to wherever work is. This also applies to some of the travelling and gypsy communities, who move from county to county as work dictates.

1.2 Developing Quality People

We recognise that to provide a fair and accessible service to such a diverse population, our workforce must adequately reflect that diversity. Additionally a climate of openness and understanding towards different cultures and ways of life needs to be developed.

The Fire Authority is committed to ensuring that the Service operates within a culture of fairness. They are also responsible for making sure that potential and existing employees do not suffer unfair racial discrimination in any aspect of recruitment and employment. Meeting this responsibility is just one aspect of the Fire Authority's overall and continuous approach to developing a working environment that is free from discrimination, promotes diversity and ensures that all employees have the right to be treated with dignity and respect.

1.3 What is our Race Equality Scheme?

These responsibilities (1.1 and 1.2) are embodied in the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 (RR(A)Act), which gives most public authorities a general duty to promote race equality. The aim of the RR(A)Act is to make race equality a central part of the way in which public authorities work by putting it at the centre of policy making, service delivery and employment practice.

Under the general duty, authorities must have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
- promote equality of opportunity
- promote good race relations between people of different racial groups

In addition, a number of specific duties are placed on public authorities to help them meet this general duty. One of the specific duties is to prepare and publish a Race Equality Scheme (RES).

A RES is both a strategy, setting out the Fire Authority's approach to promoting race equality, and a realistic action plan explaining what arrangements it will make to meet each of the specific duties, which are:

- to prepare and publish a RES and review this on a three yearly basis
- to identify, on an annual basis, the functions and policies that are likely to affect people differently depending on their ethnic group
- to assess proposed policies for their impact on race equality and consult relevant groups that may be affected by them (impact assessments)
- to monitor existing policies for any adverse impact on race equality
- to ensure all sections of the community have access to information and all our services
- to publish the results of impact assessment, consultation and monitoring

- to provide:
 - training to all staff on the general duty
 - role specific training to those who have responsibilities under the specific duties.

In addition, the Fire Authority has a further specific duty as an employer to monitor the ethnicity of potential and existing employees at various stages throughout their employment (see 4.3).

The detailed action plan which provides objectives, timescales and accountabilities for delivering the RES is given in Appendix 2.

2.0 Context and Background

2.1 Equality and Diversity in the Fire Service

The report of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry published in 1999, found that institutional racism had played a part in the flawed investigation by the Metropolitan Police Service into Stephen's murder. The Inquiry accepted that institutional racism existed in other institutions and identified it as:

“The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people.”

In response, the Home Secretary strengthened race relations legislation giving public authorities, including fire authorities, a duty to positively promote race equality and so make racial equality a reality.

In 1999, a national thematic review of equality and fairness in the Fire Service found a number of weaknesses in this area. A number of recommendations for improvement were made and a number of challenging targets for recruitment, retention and progression of ethnic minority staff were set.

In response to the review's recommendations, an Equal Opportunities action plan was developed for the Fire Service in December 2001.

Also in that year, the Local Government Equality Standard was developed. It recognised that local government (including fire authorities) should provide a fair and equally accessible service to all people. The aim of the Standard is to provide local authorities with a way of working which will ensure continuous improvement in equality practice. The Standard will ensure that equality is considered as part of all aspects of work within and across local government.

All of the above have informed and guided the development of the Service's Equality and Diversity Strategy (E&D Strategy) which details our plans for

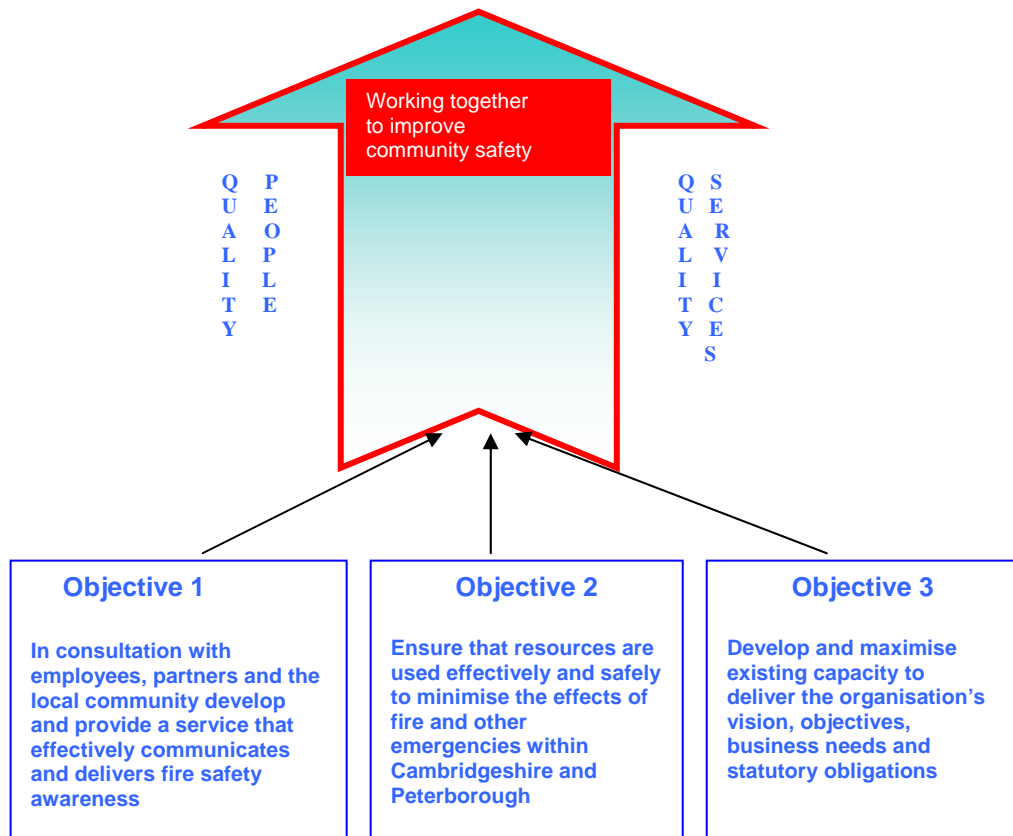
developing a culture of fairness that promotes equality of opportunity in service delivery, recruitment, training and promotion and all other aspects of employment. This strategy was last updated in 2002 and will be reviewed in 2006/7. This Race Equality Scheme forms part of that strategy.

2.2 Role of Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service – Service Provision, Planning and Performance

Both national and local objectives direct the activities and priorities of the Service. Legislation (Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004) along with government plans for modernising the Fire and Rescue Service (as laid out in the National Framework), local consultation and risk assessment (as described in our Integrated Risk Management Plan) direct the way in which we carry out our business. Our Corporate Performance Plan brings these elements together and sets out our vision, expressed through three broad objectives to improve community safety. These objectives reinforce our commitment to listen to and work with diverse communities and ensure those communities are reflected in our workforce. Our plans to promote race equality are an integral part of achieving these objectives.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority's Vision is:

For the Service to become a key contributor to Community Safety by proactively identifying risks and taking positive action to save lives, protect people and safeguard the environment



2.3 Continuous Improvement

When planning and prioritising the Service's work, the Fire Authority ensures that each piece of programmed work fulfils an objective and so contributes to the overall achievement of our aim. A number of performance indicators - both local and national - are used to measure how we are doing against our stated objectives. The Service is also subject to regular scrutiny by the Audit Commission through a process of Comprehensive Performance Assessment. We will also work towards the Equality Standard for Local Government, aiming to mainstream equality and diversity into service delivery and employment.

3.0 Race Equality Scheme – Meeting the General Duty

3.1 Our Responsibilities

Section 1.3 broadly defined the purpose of a Race Equality Scheme. The following two sections provide the details of how our Scheme will help us to identify, carry out and monitor activities which will have positive outcomes for black and minority ethnic people through the services we provide; the policies which guide service provision; and in employment, recruitment and career opportunities. Our Action Plan, which provides objectives, timescales and accountabilities for delivering the RES, is given in Appendix 2. This Race Equality Scheme will be reviewed on a three yearly basis, the next review being due in 2008.

The Fire Authority recognises its responsibility under the general duty to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Promote equality of opportunity
- Promote good relations between people of different races

To ensure that the above objectives are central to the way we carry out business, all our functions and policies have been subject to a relevance assessment process described below.

3.2 Identifying Relevant Functions and Policies

“Public Authorities must list in their race equality scheme the functions and policies (including proposed policies) that are relevant to the general duty to promote race equality. They should review this list at least every three years.”

(Commission for Racial Equality Statutory Code of Practice).

The definition of ‘functions and policies’ is a wide one. “Functions” refers to all our powers and duties and covers internal and external functions, including service delivery. “Policies” means informal decisions, custom and practice as well as explicit written policies and procedures.

The aim of this part of the duty is to tackle institutional racism by mainstreaming race equality and making it part of our everyday work.

Our main functions are outlined overleaf and a comprehensive list of all our functions and policies and their relevance to race equality is given in Appendix 1.

Method of Assessing their Relevance

Functions and policies detailed in Appendix 1 were identified in consultation with District Managers, Heads of Groups and other staff with responsibility for policy development. The responsible managers then assessed each one to determine relevance to the general duty, by considering the following three questions:

*Could this function/policy be relevant to eliminating unfair discrimination?
Could this function/ policy be relevant to promoting equality of opportunity?
Could this function/policy be relevant to promoting good race relations?*

The extent of the relevance was also given a grading – High, Medium or Low. Using these assessments, a judgement was then made on the overall relevance of the function or policy. The relevance determines the priority with which the function or policy will be reviewed (e.g. high relevance to be reviewed in Year 1 of the scheme). Reviews will be carried out using the impact process outlined in section 4.1.

Existing Functions and Policies – Impact Assessment

Each function or policy identified as relevant will be initially impact assessed following the Service procedures established for initial screening. Should this initial screening indicate that the policy or function has a different impact on different groups of people, a full equality impact assessment will be done. Where this assessment indicates that the policy or function has had a negative impact on a specific group and there are no mitigating factors, the policy or function will be changed to bring it into compliance with the duty to promote race equality.

Where there is insufficient data to assess whether there has been any differential impact, a system for monitoring the ethnicity of recipients and service users must be established to provide this data in the future.

Relevant Functions

The following existing functions of FRS are relevant to the duty to promote race equality.

- ***Community Safety***

Prevention of fire and other emergencies: This includes carrying out home fire risk assessments, providing advice and guidance to home occupiers and promoting fire safety to the community often in partnership with others (e.g. education, health, voluntary organisations, District Councils etc). The type and extent of services provided are based on our annual integrated risk management plan (IRMP), which takes account of local needs and areas of specific risk.

Protection through assessing risk to users in commercial and public buildings, inspection and enforcement. Although much of this activity is statutory and therefore dictated by legislation, it involves contact with private and public sector managers and business owners and is therefore relevant to the general duty.

Response to and **Intervention** at fire and other emergency incidents. Many of those policies relating to our response to fires and other emergency incidents are of a highly technical nature dealing with fire and rescue techniques and are regulated by appropriate legislation. However, it is acknowledged that response to and attendance at fires and other emergencies brings both control room operators and firefighters into contact with members of the public and therefore has an impact on the promotion of race equality. Employee responsibilities under the general duty to promote race equality in this situation are covered in the “Employment – Training” section. Incidence of fire and other emergencies also need to be monitored to ascertain whether specific ethnic groups are more vulnerable than others.

Partnership Working. A priority for CFRS is to use local and regional partnerships effectively to deliver projects, improvements and efficiencies. Partners may be other public, private or voluntary organisations. CFRS will ensure all parties to partnerships are treated as stakeholders to our race equality scheme and action plans. We will encourage our partners to place race equality at the centre of joint projects and to build commitment to meeting the general duty into partnership activities and working arrangements. To help us in this CFRS will follow the guidance provided by the Commission for Racial Equality on partnership working.

- **Policy Development and Planning**

Policy development and corporate work planning relating to Community Safety activities have considerable impact on the community and are therefore relevant to the general duty. Policies dictating the way resources, finance and support services are managed may have less relevance with the exception of policies governing the procurement of equipment and services.

- **Procurement**

Procuring goods and services is a major function for CFRS and the process is subject to a number of legal provisions and regulations. However, these do not exempt us from responsibility to meet the general race equality duty in procuring goods and services under contract or agreement.

The procurement function provides an opportunity to encourage suppliers and private contractors to consider their own equality schemes and to make clear to them that CFRS has an expectation that the goods and services supplied will be without racial discrimination.

CFRS is currently developing its procurement strategy in a regional partnership with five other Fire and Rescue Services. In doing so, the guidance on public procurement and meeting the race equality duty provided by the Commission for Racial Equality will be followed.

- **Employment**

In its capacity as an employer, the Fire Authority is responsible for ensuring arrangements for recruitment and retention; training, development and progression; conditions of employment and HR policies; and that procedures comply with employment legislation and good practice. All policies and

functions of the employment role of the Fire Authority are relevant to the general duty.

New and Revised Functions and Policies

When new functions or policies are being developed or revised, they will be assessed for relevance to race equality at the outset. Where these are found to be relevant, proposed and revised policies will be impact assessed as described below, which will include identifying appropriate groups for consultation and setting up monitoring systems to ensure information about the potential impact of the policy on different groups in the community is gathered, analysed and interpreted.

4.0 Race Equality Scheme - Specific Duties

4.1 Arrangements for Policy Assessment and Consultation – Proposed Policies

All proposed policies will be assessed to ensure they will not negatively impact on any particular ethnic or racial group. Groups affected by the policies (i.e. public, partners and staff) will be consulted over the impact of policies relevant to them.

- **Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs)**

All proposed policies that are considered relevant to race equality will be assessed for the impact they are likely to have on different ethnic groups. Impact assessment reports will form part of policy proposals to the Fire Authority. Responsibility for carrying out EIAs will generally be devolved to the level of management closest to the point of service delivery affected or to the policy developer. All relevant managers and supervisors will be given guidance and training to carry out EIAs. While only those policies identified as being relevant to the General Duty need to be fully assessed, all policies need to be initially screened for relevance.

- **Consultation**

As part of the impact assessment process, stakeholders to a particular policy will be identified at the earliest opportunity to allow for constructive and appropriate consultation.

External: Members of the community likely to be affected by proposed policies will be consulted through community groups; partner organisations, use of the CFRS website and local facilities (e.g. libraries). Where appropriate and particularly in the case of identified hard to reach groups, small focus groups and existing links with community groups will be used. The language, format and appropriateness of policy documents will be reviewed to ensure they reach all members of the community affected.

Internal: Members of staff affected by proposed policies will be consulted via Trade Unions (FBU, RFU and Unison) through the joint consultative process. The Equality and Diversity Service Advisory Group (E&D SAG) will also be consulted over any such policies. Consideration will be given to ensure those staff who do not have TU representation are given the opportunity to express their views.

In the case of proposed regional policies, the lead policy developer will carry out impact assessments with local consultation being carried out by each Fire and Rescue Service. Regional impact assessment reports will form a part of all proposed policies directed to the Regional Management Board.

- **Compliance**

If, through assessment or consultation, the proposed policy is considered likely to have an adverse impact on race equality and there are no mitigating factors, the policy will be amended to bring it into compliance with the duty to promote race equality.

4.2 Arrangements for Monitoring for Differential Impact

- **Ethnic monitoring**

The ethnic group of applicants for employment within the Service is already monitored to assess the impact of our recruitment and selection processes. Similarly the ethnicity of existing staff is monitored so the impact of employment processes, e.g. grievance and discipline outcomes and decisions can be assessed.

As part of the impact assessment process, a method of gathering and interpreting data (monitoring) about the ethnicity of the service user/recipient will be established, where none exists. This will aid us in assessing whether our policies have a differential impact on different ethnic groups. Information will be collected using the 16-category ethnic classification system used in the 2001 census so comparisons can be made between number of service users/recipients of a particular ethnic group and number of people in that ethnic group generally. Service users or recipients will be asked to self classify themselves using an appropriate monitoring form. It is critical that people are reassured as to the reason for collecting the data and how it will be used.

- **Performance Indicators**

The Fire Authority already reports on the effectiveness of its policies against Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPs). These give an indication of resources devoted to a particular service, the quality of the service and the service user's experience of delivery. Additional performance data is also reported to the Department of Communities and Local Government on an annual basis. This data is collated quarterly and forms the basis of management reports which assists the Service to reassess priorities and use of resources.

Existing performance data will be reviewed to ensure it provides relevant information about the impact of policies on different ethnic groups. Where the effectiveness of services are not monitored and evaluated at present, appropriate systems will be established.

- ❖ **Methods of Collecting Information**

The methods of collecting data (e.g. customer satisfaction surveys) will be reviewed to ensure they are appropriate and relevant to all ethnic groups. We will ensure that any language or communication barriers to obtaining such information are addressed.

In analysing data to evaluate the impact of policies, any adverse impact will be acted upon through a process of policy revision, assessment and consultation.

4.3 Arrangements for Publishing Assessment, Consultation and Monitoring Reports

In the interests of increasing openness and accountability to the public, the following arrangements will allow access to impact assessments, the results of consultation and monitoring.

Impact assessment reports will be maintained electronically by CFRS. On request, assessments will be made available to members of the public and/or employees requesting that information. The procedure for making a request will be outlined at the time of consultation.

A summarised report of all impact assessments carried out, including the results of consultation and monitoring, will be included in the annual Performance Plan.

The results of monitoring existing policies (see 4.2) will also be included in the Performance Plan.

4.4 Ensuring Access to Information & Services

We will ensure that all groups of the community we serve have full and appropriate access to information and services. Using demographic information and local knowledge, we will continue to identify specific ethnic minority groups, consult with them on their specific needs and work closely with existing community groups to deliver appropriate services. We will continue to build relationships with community leaders to ensure that the climate for consultation is right and that the services we provide are relevant, appropriate, accessible to all, delivered fairly and with due regard to cultural diversity.

Our Achievements

The following examples of work already undertaken in this area will be reviewed on a continuous basis with the intention of developing good practice and implementing this throughout the county.

- We continue to build a bank of “multi-lingual” community activists, to enable the translation and understanding of fire safety information relevant to the specific needs of our ever-changing communities.
- We are working in partnership with employers of seasonal migrant workers, ensuring the specific fire safety education needs of these workers are understood and addressed. This work will be developed to include the fire safety needs of **all** migrant workers.
- We are varying CFRS staff working hours, days and types of engagement to ensure all communities have the greatest opportunity to receive fire safety information.

- We are working to provide relevant fire safety education to asylum seekers and refugees via a one-stop centre addressing their needs.
- We provide Islam awareness training primarily for firefighters and Community Safety staff and will work to extend knowledge of this and other cultural and religious communities to all employees.
- We provide safety advice to Travellers, which is geared particularly to their lifestyle and are developing a better understanding of issues relating to a travelling lifestyle.
- We are providing fire prevention safety leaflets in a number of different languages relevant to our local communities.
- We consult with community champions on the appropriate medium for fire safety advice to ensure the highest level of understanding possible.
- We have instigated and worked with designers to produce a no-text poster that is being used nationally by a range of service providers.
- We contribute to a national project producing educational resources for FRS staff to enhance their understanding of cultural issues that may impact on service delivery.

4.5 Staff Training

Providing appropriate communication, training and development to all staff on their responsibilities under the general duty is a key factor in achieving true race equality. Development in this area will take place in six stages.

- **Communicating RES to all staff**
Initially, information about the RES will be made available to all staff through the intranet, in summarised written format, through team briefings and internal publications.
- **Fire Authority Members and Senior Managers**
External training providers will facilitate awareness raising sessions for Fire Authority members and members of the senior management team. This will include the effect of the RES and impact assessment process on corporate planning and service delivery.
- **Managers and Supervisors**
Managers down to Station Manager level will receive training on managing diversity and the proactive nature of the duty to promote race equality.
- **All Employees**
Following evaluation of the above communication and training, a training needs analysis will be carried out for all other staff. Depending on needs

identified, a package of training resources will be produced by the Development Team, delivered locally, and recorded using the Integrated Personal Development System. This training will be consistent with National Occupational Standards.

- ***Managers and Policy Developers***

Those employees identified as having a role in policy formulation and development will receive training on carrying out equality impact assessments.

- ***Cultural Awareness Training***

Following training needs analysis, a programme of cultural awareness training which builds on existing community knowledge and good community relations will be developed.

Training and development programmes will take account of the needs of different groups of employees (e.g. firefighters on different duty systems, control operators, support staff). A wide variety of training methods and materials will be developed and made available to accommodate the emergency response role of the majority of staff and will include the involvement of the Trade Unions wherever possible.

4.6 *Employment - Specific Duties*

Nationally, the Fire Service is committed to achieving improved representation in the workforce by ethnic minorities and a number of strategies have been developed to improve diversity in general throughout the Fire Service. In its role as an employer the Fire Authority has for some time worked to promote equality and fairness in the workplace and the Equality and Diversity strategy details a number of objectives and targets concerning employment. In addition, the following arrangements for measuring progress in equality of opportunity, as required by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act, will be put in place.

- ❖ ***Ethnic Monitoring***

The purpose of ethnic monitoring is to check that we are offering equality of opportunity and treatment to all ethnic groups. We cannot know whether our race equality policies are working without ethnic monitoring. Ethnic monitoring, analysis and reporting will be carried out using the categories and guidance given by the Commission for Racial Equality.

The ethnic group of all existing staff and those applying for employment, training and/or promotion will be monitored. Additionally, the ethnic grouping of staff as they go through the following employment procedures will be monitored.

- Training and development
- Performance assessment
- Grievance procedures
- Disciplinary procedures
- Leaving employment

The above data will be analysed and reported on annually to the Fire Authority through the HR Panel and Senior Management Team. A summary will also be reported in the Fire Authority Performance Plan and reported to all consultees.

4.7 Positive Action

Staff from ethnic minority groups are currently (Jan 2006) under-represented in Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service. In the past, positive action initiatives have tried to address this imbalance by promoting annual career events aimed at providing information about careers in the Fire and Rescue Service specifically to individuals from ethnic minority groups. This policy acknowledged that these groups do not currently benefit from the 'word of mouth', informal network of advice and information about the fire service, which predominantly stems from and flows to members of the white ethnic group.

Recent research concludes that positive action measures need to be evaluated and that existing CFRS employees need a clearer understanding of what positive action means for this approach to be really effective. Our policy on positive action will therefore be reviewed as part of the overall review of the Equality and Diversity strategy.

5.0 Conclusion

5.1 Complaints

This RES is a significant step on the way to improved racial equality and good community relations. However, we recognise that there is a lot of work to be done and that we may occasionally get things wrong, particularly in the early stages. We are committed to listening to people who are dissatisfied with the way we are carrying out our duties so that we can put right any performance problems. We have a corporate complaints procedure which is outlined below and can also be found on our website www.cambsfire.gov.uk. This procedure should be used to make any complaint about the way we are delivering our Race Equality Scheme.

5.2. Complaints Procedure

Complaints can be made in person, by phone, in writing, or by email to any fire station or to Service Headquarters. If you wish to complain in person and for any reason are not able to confirm your complaint in writing, you may explain it to the receiving officer and it will be written down, word for word. Your complaint will be passed to the relevant manager as quickly as possible. An Examining Officer will be appointed and a thorough examination will start on the next working day. In normal circumstances, the relevant District Manager or Head of Group will reply to you in writing within 10 days. If the examination is a lengthy one, you will be regularly advised of progress throughout. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your complaint you will be given the opportunity to make further comment to the Chief Fire Officer, and if necessary, an independent arbitrator.

5.3 Monitoring, Consultation and Publication

This Race Equality Scheme has been made available to CFRS employees and Trade Unions for consultation prior to presentation to the Fire Authority. The Scheme will be published and made available to the public on the Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service website and to various community partners through existing links. Comments will be invited and taken into consideration at the first review date of the Scheme (March 2008). Thereafter the Scheme will be reviewed every three years.

Publication of this Race Equality Scheme is not an end in itself. It serves simply as a plan to help make our equality and diversity policies more effective and to make us more accountable in this area to the communities we serve. To bring these plans to fruition, the Action Plan will be regularly monitored for progress by the RES Project Team and updated as required.