



Home Office

Rt Hon Dame Diana Johnson
DBE MP
Minister of State for Policing, Fire
and Crime Prevention
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London SW1P 4DF
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Rt Hon Dame Karen Bradley DBE MP
Chair, Home Affairs Select Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

17 January 2025

Dear Dame Karen,

INSPECTION OF FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES IN ENGLAND

I am writing to inform you that the Home Secretary, pursuant to section 28A of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, has approved His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services' (HMICFRS) fire inspection programme and framework for 2025-27. As a result, HMICFRS' inspectors are now able to act, and use their inspection powers, in accordance with it. Unlike police inspection, there is no statutory requirement for HMICFRS to lay this document before Parliament; however, in the interests of transparency I wanted to bring this to your attention, and I attach a copy of the programme and framework document which will be published on HMICFRS' website.

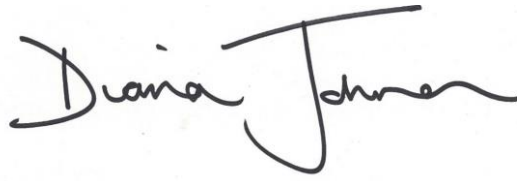
Over the course of their inspection programme HMICFRS will assess how effective and efficient each of the 44 fire and rescue services in England – under the oversight of their accountable fire and rescue authority – are at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks. The Chief Inspector of Fire and Rescue Services will report to Parliament annually, providing an assessment of the efficiency and effectiveness of fire and rescue authorities in England who had been inspected during that year. This report was last made on 9 May 2024. The Home Secretary and I have asked for regular updates as and when key findings emerge.

I also refer you to the direct interest that the Home Affairs Select Committee's work has on HMICFRS inspecting fire and rescue services. The Committee heard directly from the Inspectorate as part of its inquiry proceedings carried out on fire and rescue service workplace culture, specifically the thematic into the handling of misconduct and the spotlight into values and culture. I continue to work closely with the Inspectorate to ensure tackling culture-related challenges remain a priority.

You are welcome to share this letter with your Committee. I am copying it to the Chief Inspector of Fire and Rescue Services for England.

I will also arrange for a copy of this letter, along with a copy of the HMICFRS fire inspection programme and framework for 2025-27 to be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Diana Johnson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent 'J'.

Rt Hon Dame Diana Johnson DBE MP
Minister of State for Policing, Fire and Crime Prevention