

**LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY  
PLANNING COMMITTEE**

Meeting to be held on 15 November 2021

**AUTOMATIC FIRE ALARM ATTENDANCE POLICY CONSULTATION REVIEW  
(Appendices 1, 2 and 3 refer)**

Contact for further information:

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*Table 1 Executive Summary and Recommendations*

**Executive Summary**

The Fire Authority was asked to consider, and endorse for public consultation, a recommendation made by the Performance Committee at its meeting on 17 March 2021 to remove attendance to Automatic Fire Alarms (AFA) at non-sleeping premises unless presence of fire was confirmed staged over two years; to be introduced during the day in year one and during the night from year two. Full Fire Authority considered and approved the matter for public and stakeholder consultation at its meeting on 21 June 2021. The resulting consultation commenced on 12 August and concluded on 21 September 2021. In accordance with standing terms of reference, the consultation outcomes and associated recommendations are now brought back for consideration by the Planning Committee.

This paper summarises the consultation strategy, its outcomes, and policy development and implementation approach previously adopted elsewhere in the NW and nationally (LFRS has the benefit of late adoption and thus the ability to identify best practice) and advocates a way forward for consideration by Planning Committee.

The recommendations not only relate to the AFA attendance policy but also the wider UWFS reduction benefits that could be achieved through the implementation campaign and associated improvements to the wider UWFS policy. All options proposed in this paper align with current NFCC [guidance](#).

This paper does not consider the broader issue of escalating alarms originating from Telecare systems in domestic dwellings. This will be considered separately through the creation of a specific policy in the 2022-23 LFRS Prevention Department Plan.

**Recommendations for consideration to proceed to full Authority on  
13 December 2021:**

1. Adopt a False Alarm Reduction and Emergency Call Management (ECM) policy already in use by one NW FRS within NWFC as the baseline for the revised LFRS approach;
2. In addition, exempt Grade 1 and 2\* Heritage premises from the non-attendance policy;
3. In addition, exempt Primary and Secondary Education premises from the non-attendance policy;
4. In addition, exempt premises with 'Enhanced Reliability Alarm Systems' from the non-attendance policy;

5. Undertake a three-month implementation phase to engage stakeholders, and launch the new policy from 1 April 2022;
6. Ensure Fire Alarm Monitoring Organisations sign up to refreshed 'call back' agreements;
7. Implement changes by day in year 1 and review thereafter (Day 08:00hrs to 19:00hrs).

## Background and Information

Consultation commenced on 12 August 2021, closed on 21 September, and was undertaken in accordance with the Authority approved [LFRS consultation strategy](#).

Externally; 2500 letters were sent out to all premises which have generated one or more AFA calls in the past three fiscal years, 510 emails and 60 further letters were sent to identified external partners.

Internally; MS Teams sessions were held with all Operational, Fire Safety Enforcement and Community Safety staff to provide an overview, encourage feedback, and start to warm staff up to the potential for change in this key policy area, and their role in it.

Two options were available to provide feedback, using a web-based survey, and via a bespoke email consultation account.

215 web survey responses were received, along with 11 e-mails. Survey responses were received from Local Authority partners (30%), businesses (32%), Lancashire residents (16%), LFRS staff (14%) and a staff representative body. The latter was a lengthy submission based on a detailed comparison with the [CFOA Guidance for the Reduction of False Alarms and Unwanted Fire Signals](#).

Responses were generally supportive of the proposed policy change with 83% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that LFRS resources could be used more effectively. When asked specific views on appliances only attending non-sleeping risk premises when fire was confirmed by a 999 call, 70% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed. 22% disagreed or strongly disagreed. A summary of the responses in graph format is provided as Appendix 1.

53% of respondents indicated that they used the services of a Fire Alarm Monitoring Organisation (FAMO) or Alarm Receiving Centre (ARC). In these cases, the survey asked respondents to provide contact details to ensure the implementation phase of any resultant policy change could be as inclusive as possible. Other FRS' have emphasised the importance (in terms of reduction in calls that could be achieved) of ensuring FAMOs sign up to 'Call Back' agreements as these effectively 'screen out' the unwanted call from ever reaching the Fire Control. The other notable learning was the need to ensure FAMOs refer to the precise *building type* when they contact NWFC as failing to do so (which has been commonplace) can result in no or an inappropriate attendance.

The survey allowed respondents to add free text explaining their answers / rationale, with details of these responses available as Appendix 2.

The staff representative body, Fire Brigades Union (FBU) submission has been considered in detail and is available as Appendix 3; it is not considered that the LFRS proposal deviates from the good practice advocated by the national guidance, indeed

the LFRS proposal is a refinement on policies already in use throughout the NW in that the Lancashire approach features exemptions (from non-attendance) not featured elsewhere e.g. heritage, education premises and those with certain types of alarm systems.

### Emerging Themes

In terms of assessing the likely/foreseeable impact of policy change, the free text responses added by respondents were considered (Appendix 2).

Some trends emerged which have influenced the proposals in this paper and (if approval to proceed is given) will help shape the implementation plan and engagement with key stakeholders. The themes were:

- An apparently widely held belief that fire and property safety is LFRS' responsibility (rather than starting with the premises owner / Responsible Person, as detailed within legislation)
- A view that asking staff or volunteers to investigate buildings when fire alarms sound is dangerous
- A view that LFRS appears to be trying to free up time and resources, but for what purpose?
- A view that differentiating based on sleeping or non-sleeping is potentially overly simplistic in this context and broader impacts should be considered, namely: societal, environmental, community, heritage, education and commerce (critical supplier of goods or infrastructure)

### North West Fire Control

As well as Lancashire, NWFC serves Cumbria, Manchester and Cheshire FRS', all of whom have existing AFA policies which include a non-attendance option for certain premises via call challenge (referred to in NWFC as the 'Emergency Call Management' or EMC process) which enable Fire Control Operatives (FCOs) to process calls more efficiently than the current LFRS approach.

Two FRS' operate their non-attendance policy 24 hours a day.

One operates their non-attendance policy between 08:00hrs and 19:00hrs.

The closer LFRS' future policy is to the other FRS' baseline approach, the easier the implementation will be and the greater the potential for improving call-handling times (the LFRS script is currently the slowest which regularly impacts wider call handling times).

The term 'exemption' is used to assist explanation but should be used carefully. All incoming calls to NWFC are subject to the EMC process but the confirmation of premises type, or another over-riding factor such as the premises being subject to a polygon, determines the appropriate attendance standard and reduces the number of further questions that need to be asked. Consequently, no premises are 'exempted' from *call challenge* but the EMC process has the effect of creating premises which are 'exempted' from the *non-attendance element* of the Services AFA policy but will still be subject to a reduced attendance (versus the fire PDA).

NWFC offer the ability to 'exempt' premises in two ways:

1. Via the EMC call handling script. This relies on the caller being able to describe the premises type accurately and unambiguously;
2. Via a 'polygon file' which overlays a geographic shape on the premises and is detected when a call for that premises is received. One polygon file can include many premises across Lancashire and has the effect of over-riding the general EMC and providing a specific script or actions for that premises type e.g a High Rise in Interim measures.

The distinction is important as it shapes how the facilities can be used to create the leanest most reliable, effective, and sustainable approach for all parties. In short if the caller can reliably state the building type, then the EMC is the appropriate approach (e.g., school). If however the caller would find it difficult to definitively describe a certain premises attribute (e.g. whether it is a heritage building) then assigning a polygon is the appropriate approach.

Two North West FRS' operate the following exemptions to non the attendance policy (each with a suitable PDA proportionate to reports of a fire alarm sounding):

### **FRS 1**

- COMAH sites
- High Rise
- Site Specific PDA due to polygon (e.g. Interim Measures premises)
- Enhanced Reliability Alarm Systems
- Actuation of Suppression System
- Sleeping Risks – see below

Premises categorised as 'sleeping risk are:

Residential Care Homes, Nursing Homes, Elderly Persons Homes, Sheltered Housing and extra care/supported living schemes, Specialised housing schemes. Houses, Flats or Maisonettes used as domestic or residential accommodation (including HMOs – Houses in Multiple Occupation). All guest accommodation properties, e.g., bed and breakfasts, guesthouses, inns, short term lets, holiday lets, restaurants with rooms, and farmhouses. Hotels/Motels, holiday villages, serviced apartments, and aparthotels. Student accommodation and areas of sleeping accommodation in other training institutions including military barrack style quarters. Boarding School Pupil Dormitories. Hospitals. Hostels, e.g., Y.M.C.A., Y.W.C.A., youth hostels, bail hostels or homeless persons' accommodation. Refuges, e.g., family accommodation centres, halfway houses. Residential health and beauty spas, resort, and destination spas. Residential conference, seminar, and training centres.

### **FRS 2**

- COMAH sites
- Sleeping Risks – see below

Premises categorised as sleeping risks are:

Boarding House/B&B for homeless/asylum seekers. Boarding House/B&B other Boarding School accommodation. Children's Home. Domestic Premises. Hospital

Hostel (e.g. for homeless people). Hotel/motel. Nurses'/Doctors' accommodation  
Nursing/Care Residential Home. Another holiday residence (cottage, flat, chalet)  
Other Residential Home. Prison. Retirement. Student Hall of Residence. Young  
offenders' unit. Youth hostel.

### Proposed improvements

Based on the consultation feedback, the baseline options offered by existing NWFRS policies which are already working, and best practice observed nationally and in the CFOA guidance, the following recommendations are offered for consideration:

1. Adopt a False Alarm Reduction and Emergency Call Management (ECM) policy already in use by one NW FRS within NWFC as the baseline for the revised LFRS approach;
2. In addition, exempt Grade 1 and 2\* Heritage premises from the non-attendance policy;
3. In addition, exempt Primary and Secondary Education premises from the non-attendance policy;
4. In addition, exempt premises with 'Enhanced Reliability Alarm Systems' from the non-attendance policy;
5. Undertake a three-month implementation phase to engage stakeholders, and launch the new policy from 1 April 2022;
6. Ensure Fire Alarm Monitoring Organisations sign up to refreshed 'call back' agreements;
7. Implement changes by day in year 1 and review thereafter (Day 08:00hrs to 19:00hrs).

*\*Enhance Reliability Alarm System; To be considered for this exemption, the fire alarm system must meet specific criteria; Certification confirming that the fire alarm system has been installed to BS 5839 Part 1 or equivalent. Evidence that the fire alarm system is serviced and maintained in compliance with the recommendations of BS 5839 Part 1 or equivalent. Certification confirming that a fire signal is only obtained when at least two independent triggering signals are present at the same time. This is referred to as a 'Coincidence Alarm' or that the origin of alarm is a sprinkler system, other fixed installation, or call point (i.e. sources of alarm actuation not normally associated with false alarm conditions).*

The suggested exemption for heritage premises is based on the content of the subjective consultation feedback, and the significant scale and scope of Lancashire's heritage stock, versus the objectively low call volumes generated by this type of premises (thus limited risk that policy objectives will be eroded).

The suggested exemption for primary and secondary schools is based on the subjective consultation feedback and the objective frequency of fires involving schools and the extent of loss experienced in recent years (Lancashire schools have experienced an average of 16 fires per year based on the 5-year period 2015-19) and 2 high loss fires within that period (Leyland St Marys and Asmall). The caveat to this suggestion is that it be accompanied by extensive sector liaison during the implementation phase. During term time schools are very well staffed and should be more than capable of determining if a genuine emergency is in progress and yet currently, tend to default to calling 999 and summoning attendance to check the premises when an alarm sounds. Liaison with the sector would involve the offer of the exemption *provided* it was met by a commitment to investigate the source of alarms when premises are staffed, to remove unnecessary calls during staffed periods. This engagement would mostly be with the upper tier authorities.

The suggested exemption for 'Enhanced Reliability Alarm Systems' (ERAS) is based on content of the CFOA guidance and to afford provision for high risk / high community consequence sites which are unstaffed (eg critical national infrastructure) to be able to secure an attendance to an activating alarm. The conditions attached to the ERAS are such that false alarms are extremely unlikely to be received.

### Implementation Plan

The implementation plan is a vital component of successful policy change.

The NFCC (CFOA) guidance sets out the potential benefits to be accrued externally by engaging with businesses (to allow time for them to modify their fire procedures and train staff) and FAMOs (to ensure they undertake 'call back' prior to contacting NWFC and pass accurate premises types when they do).

A well planned and executed campaign also has significant benefit internally in terms of helping staff understand the need for policy change, the precise nature of it (i.e., risk based and refined following consultation), their role in it, and the wider benefit to the community and staff safety.

Experience of other FRS' is that unwanted call volumes can start to drop before the actual 'go-live' date as the engagement with businesses and FAMOs causes them to amend their practices with a consequential reduction in call volume to NWFC.

The implementation plan would be mindful of the consultation feedback, including that there are some 'myths' to dispel in terms of the actual risk associated with investigating the source of a sounding alarm versus the perception that staff and volunteers would be endangered by doing this. LFRS already offers advice for businesses in this area – see [guidance](#).

The plan would be developed in conjunction with Corporate Communications and would identify key stakeholders in line with the initial consultation.

### **Financial Implications**

Medium – Financial benefits to Service in increased productivity of operational crews through reduced disruption, reduced fuel costs, vehicle wear and road risk liability. Increased availability of Fire Safety Inspectors to inspect high risk premises.

Prior to implementation extensive engagement would be undertaken with commerce and owners of non-sleeping risk premises to inform them of the benefits of the new approach and the changes needed to their fire alarm investigation procedures.

### **Sustainability or Environmental Impact**

Medium – significant reduction in unnecessary appliance movements across Lancashire leading to reduced carbon production.

### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

Low

## Human Resource Implications

Low

## Business Risk Implications

High – should the Service not act to refine the AFA and UWFS policy there is a high probability that the next HMICFRS inspection could see a deterioration in outcome, from ‘good’ to ‘requires improvement’ across both Efficiency and Response areas of inspection due to continued impact of UWFS which:

- Divert essential resources from genuine emergencies
- Create road risk to crew and public whilst responding
- Disrupt Community & Business Safety activities
- Disrupt operational training
- Create avoidable environmental impact
- Drain public finances
- Disempower businesses from managing their own fire safety
- Divert Protection activity away from high risk premises
- Create disruption for businesses employing On-Call FF’s
- Cause avoidable call handling delays in NWFC

Low – Failing to attend a fire which is occurring in a non-sleeping risk premises.

The frequency of this is low and further mitigation comes in the form of the exemptions to non-attendance advocated in this paper and effective business engagement emphasising the importance of back-up 999 calls from occupied premises during the implementation phase.

The non-attendance policy proposed has been used by other FRS’ in the NW for circa 3 years.

## Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 List of Background Papers

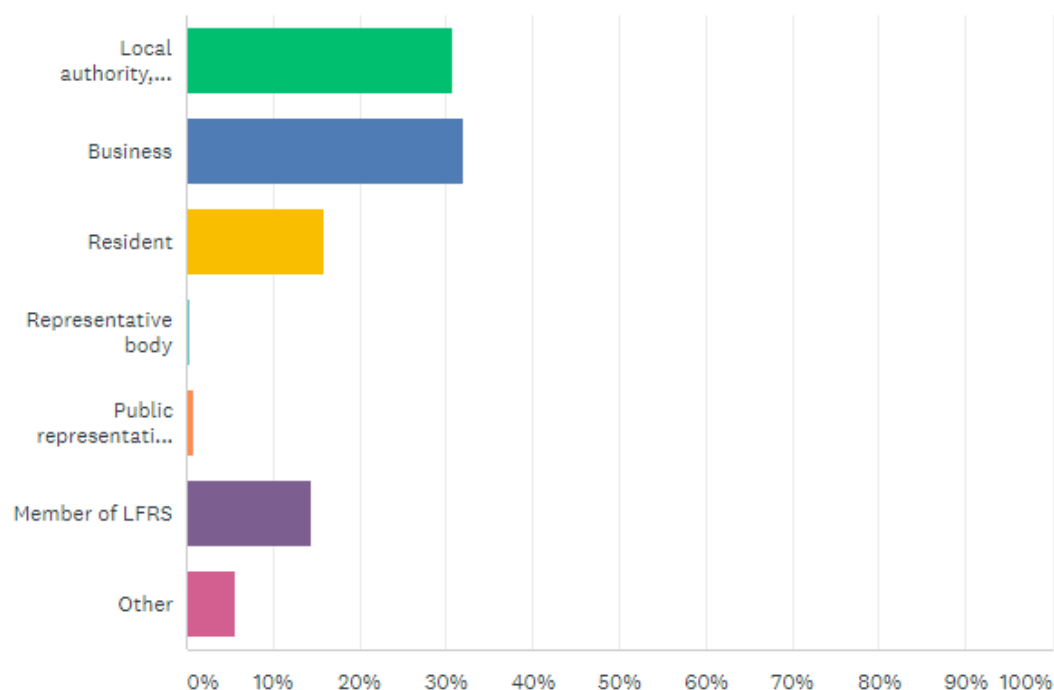
*Table 2 Details of any background papers*

Paper:	Performance Committee Unwanted Fire Signals (UWFS) Proposals for Change
Date:	17 March 2021
Paper:	Full Authority Unwanted Fire Signals (UWFS) Proposals for Change
Date:	21 June 2021
Contact:	DCFO Steve Healey
Reason for inclusion in Part 2 if appropriate:	N/A

## APPENDIX 1 – SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES

### What is your main connection with LFRS?

Answered: 215 Skipped: 3

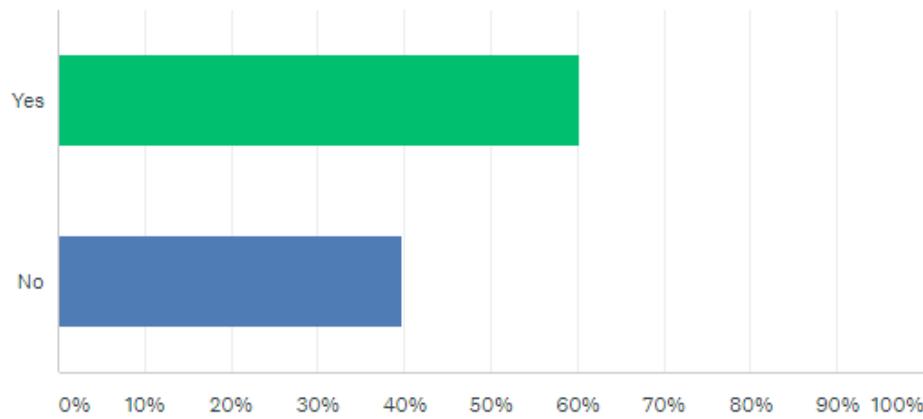


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Local authority, public agency or emergency service	30.70%	66
Business	32.09%	69
Resident	15.81%	34
Representative body	0.47%	1
Public representative such as councillor or MP	0.93%	2
Member of LFRS	14.42%	31
Other	5.58%	12
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>215</b>



# Are you representing an organisation?

Answered: 216 Skipped: 2

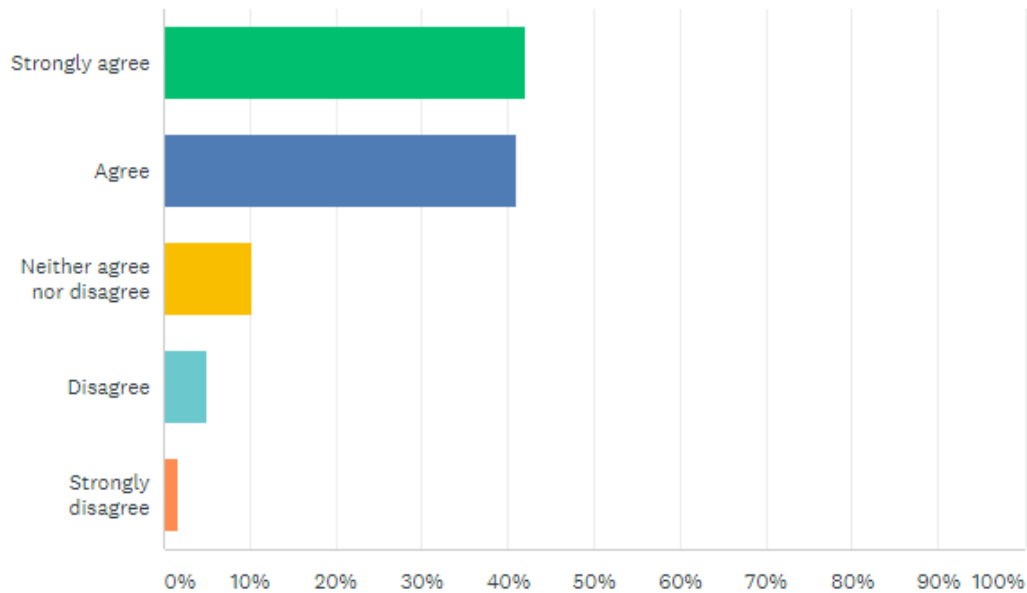


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	60.19%	130
No	39.81%	86
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>216</b>

[Comments \(128\)](#)

# To what extent do you agree or disagree that Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service resources can be used more effectively?

Answered: 176 Skipped: 42

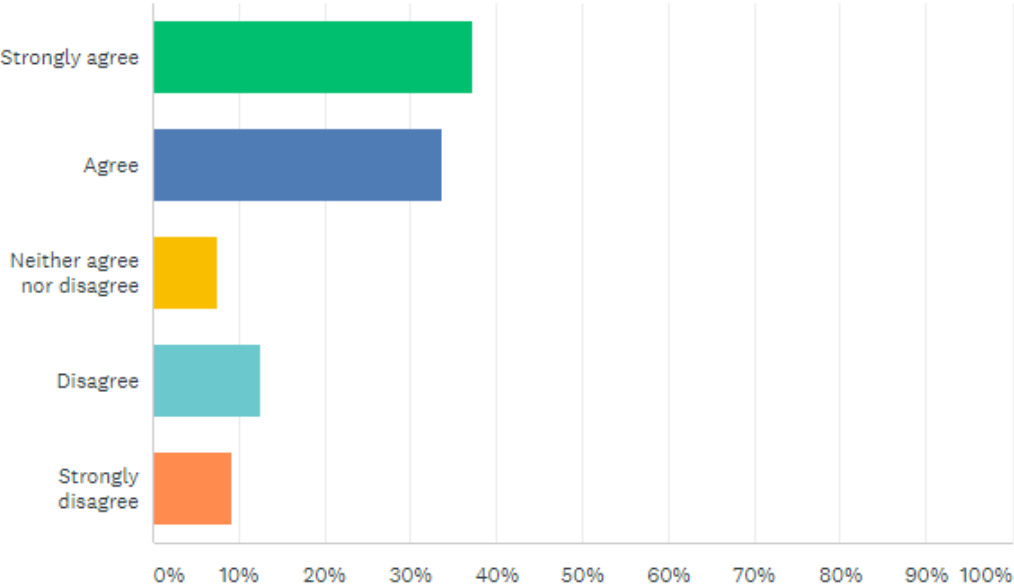


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	42.05%	74
Agree	40.91%	72
Neither agree nor disagree	10.23%	18
Disagree	5.11%	9
Strongly disagree	1.70%	3
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>176</b>

[Comments \(116\)](#)

To reduce the adverse impacts of false alarms, to what extent do you agree we should only send fire appliances to automatic fire alarms in non-sleeping buildings when signs of fire have been confirmed? (This change would be introduced in two stages; during daytime only in year one and, subject to review, at all times from year two onwards).

Answered: 175 Skipped: 43



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	37.14%	65
Agree	33.71%	59
Neither agree nor disagree	7.43%	13
Disagree	12.57%	22
Strongly disagree	9.14%	16
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>175</b>

[Comments \(106\)](#)

## APPENDIX 2 – OPEN TEXT RESPONSES

(Reproduced verbatim, with individual premises details redacted)

educate premises owners that the fire service are not there to manage their fire alarm to allow the fire service to be available to attend critical incidents.
To the extent that all services and resources can always be used more efficiently. The issues concerning call outs are noted and it is agreed that this needs addressing.
As outlined in Mr Healey's letter only 0.2% of calls resulted in actual fire thus by a policy change resource can be used deployed more effectively.
While time can be spent in other areas LFRS has a duty of care to attend these incidents. In my 20 + years with LFRS I have attended many incidents that were indeed a serious fire and not a false alarm, also these early interventions by LFRS have prevented rapid escalation of an incident.
AFA's/UWFS cause a significant disruption to other important activities such as training/community work. We have modern technology at our fingertips which will inform us if a real fire was occurring.
Clearly not necessary in a lot of cases
They could be needed at a real emergency. It puts lives at risk on the roads when they are driving to it. It costs money that could be spent on other things.
Reducing call outs to false alarms would certainly increase the effectiveness to attend other more reliable calls.
99% is pretty overwhelming
I think the service does well at the moment
The facts speak for themselves and the highlighted advantages are sensible.
Many of these calls during opening hours for a business are caused through false alarms which can easily be identified, therefore can be a waste of resources.
xxxxxxx xxxxxxxx xxxxxxxx to provide a formal response
too many hoax calls and unconfirmed fires attended
The amount of time spent responding to fire alarms within Lancashire is an unnecessary drain on resources and puts both employees of LFRS and members of the public at unnecessary risk due to both the increased number of appliance movements under blue lights and the increased likelihood of an appliance being unavailable to attend a genuine incident due to being assigned to an AFA. When considering the minute proportion of AFAs which are then found to be genuine fires, this policy appears to be a very reasonable proposal. The proposal will also bring Lancashire in line with other services who have had a similar policy for many years.
I trust that if Lancashire Fire & Safety feel the service can be used more effectively this must come from evidence of wasted time and resources. Within our organisation we do have the automatic call out to the fire brigade, alongside a call monitoring centre. We have had numerous false alarms however this was due to poor wiring which has now been resolved. I am confident now if an alarm were to sound this could be a real incident.
In the case of businesses, if a small fire occurs and can be handled by using trained people with fire extinguishers, then the fire rescue service should not be called out as an emergency, but should be contacted (non-emergency number), to inform them that this has occurred should they wish to come and have a look to confirm the cause and ensure that everything was now safe. if the fire is deemed to be too large or unsafe to be handled this way, then the fire service should be called immediately.

<p>Don't think it's a case of using resources more effectively, perhaps differently. The crux of the matter is that resources for public services have been massively diminished and are under huge pressure, that is the challenge facing all public services</p>
<p>Instead of sending a full team out to check on the non-sleeping buildings they could send one person in a car to check.</p>
<p>I agree that Lancashire Fire and Rescue provide an invaluable service to public and private sector organisations and members of the public. It is my understanding that due to historic efficiency savings in recent years, the service has reduced in respect of its capabilities due to reduced staffing, engines, etc. This has resulted in the service becoming overstretched at times and therefore I agree that any opportunity to use resources more effectively to service users as this could result in lives being saved, property being saved and valuable facilities being retained along with necessary service provision that they provide to communities.</p>
<p>Brigade time should not be wasted on False Alarms and is better used for genuine emergencies</p>
<p>It is important to reduce the number of false alarms if possible. Without adding risk.</p>
<p>Our business has three premises including our Head Office. They are closed with no-one on-site from 5.00pm until 8.30am.</p>
<p>From our point of view the alarm call outs are almost entirely caused by pupils pressing contact points</p>
<p>I believe it is a waste of time for the fire service to respond to a false fire alarm if it can be confirmed by the business. (As long as the premises are manned 24/7)</p>
<p>I appreciate that very often you are called out to check premises at night and this means you are unable to attend other emergencies.</p>
<p>Vital that Lancashire has an efficient fire service</p>
<p>Clearly there are premises that present a low risk to life and where the building itself is not that important or where the owner has not invested in adequate fire detection systems.</p>
<p>As a heritage site, it is very important to us that LFRS attend activations of our fire alarm, particularly during out of hours periods. Our current system contacts the 'on call' manager and LFRS who both attend. The xxxxx xxxxxx is 127 years old and is seen as the best surviving example of the work of xxxxxx xxxxxx, the most prolific theatre architect of the xxxxxx age. If appliances fail to attend, and the building is alight, we are concerned that this locally resource, of great national significance, could be lost forever. For our part we have updated our alarm system, carry out significant checks and balances to ensure the fire safety of the building etc. but we are restricted in terms of finances and unable to employ a night watch man at this time.</p>
<p>All public buildings must have accidental alarm activations. We have had the alarm sounded in the past when we knew it was a false alarm but cannot stop the tender attending. Which is a complete waste of time and resources</p>
<p>there are often system blips which can trigger the monitored alarm centre or internal system failures due to unscheduled events that are not actual fire related, but once triggered it is hard to cancel the service from the Rescue services.</p>
<p>Working more closely with the commercial team- environmental health in relation to businesses. Actively inspecting commercial businesses with the local authority concerning fire regulatory reform.</p>
<p>Attend specific emergencies when confirmation supplied by named person. Deal more resolutely with malicious and nuisance calls</p>

I SEE THE NUMBER OF APPLIANCES THAT SEND ATTEND FALSE ALARMS
No need to attend commercial AFAS if no sign of fire like other north west fire services.
I understand and agree with the balanced reasoning provided in the letter from Lancashire Fire and Rescue sent to school dated 12th August 2021 outlining the change in procedures to reduce risk.
Agree with points in your letter
As a site H&S and Facilities Manager we have had the blue light fire engines called out to our site for false alarms in the past, each time it has been a false alarm or a communication problem with the monitoring office. I would be, like any others deeply concerned if we needed this rescue service at home and a crew was not available due to being elsewhere for a false alarm.
Based on the data that only 4 in 2,000 calls required a fire crew
The approach suggested is similar to that adopted by West Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service
not attending false alarms
I fully support the efficiency improvements that would certainly follow a change in procedure to reduce wasted time for the fire service.
I believe if there was a real fire at the school then someone would ring for your service and you would be required instead of coming to the school and you not being needed when there could be a real emergency happening somewhere else.
The vast majority of these AFA's are false alarms and as such the resources are being wasted.
I do understand the requirement to concentrate on preservation of life and responding to emergencies.
Try to lower hoax calls, plus premises to show more responsibility
as a former member of LFRS my experience matches the information given in your letter. My only concern is that in premises such as ours which are unoccupied at night a fire could become well developed before it is discovered. However the risk of a fire starting at during unoccupied hours is small.
As an essential day service for people with Learning Disability, Autism, Physical Disability or Sensory Impairment, there would be emergency care implications for 150 service users if the premises were to be damaged or destroyed during times of non occupancy. Whilst I appreciate that a false alarm uses resources that could be needed elsewhere, any potential fire not investigated when the premises are closed could have serious and long-term implications for vulnerable people whilst, or even if, alternative care services are sourced.
As a school, staff appreciate the early response of the fire service to assist in the control of the incident. As a relatively old, large school, checking the building for incident location could be time consuming and potentially place an unprotected member of staff at risk. I understand the implications and risk of driving with blue lights and at speed, may be consider driving at normal road conditions to incidents unless repeated calls are being received.
Compelling reasons given in the letter (Ref SH/SJC) dated 12th August 2021.
AFA, particularly repeated attendances at premises, are a nuisance and increase risk to fire crews and the public. They also represent additional cost to the taxpayer when on-call crews are involved.
As a Control Room Operator working at NWFC, This procedure is currently seen results within the other Brigades and reduced the number of AFA incidents being attended on a daily basis.
Appliances tied up with false alarms reduces capacity where it is actually needed.

<p>There are clearly times when your teams cannot respond to emergency's as you would like, due in part to other none emergency call outs that you have to deal with.</p>
<p>The businesses should be responsible for checking if an alarm is false and only call the FB if necessary and needed.</p>
<p>if the premises are occupied then it is fairly reasonable.</p>
<p>Less than 0.2% of calls attended were for actual fire.</p>
<p>I would consider it important to contact the FRS if there is a concern regarding possible fire, therefore it is understandable that there are a high amount of false alarms. I would consider the responsible person to ensure their staff are safe so a cautious approach to fire is the best action so calling the FRS i would consider the best action if in doubt.</p>
<p>should only be attending real attications where risk of life is shown</p>
<p>The number of false alarms is significant. Attending false alarms may prevent or slowdown response to actual incidents which may lead to more casualties/loss of life.</p>
<p>waste of resources attending when false alarm</p>
<p>We have had numerous call outs over the years for false alarms and I always felt it was unnecessary for the fire service to attend. A waste of your time and potentially a danger to road users when a fire appliance is on a blue light journey.</p>
<p>With the limited information you have provided it is difficult to reach any firm conclusion. I do however believe that even when attending false alarms your service can provide help and advice to those concerned and that what you are proposing may result in less interaction with the public.</p>
<p>Often wondered why you haven't done this before Trained fire wardens in school could have that role and a call our late at night would definitely save resources for one small inconvenience for school staff</p>
<p>When the fire service turn up at the school for a false visit, it has many benefits. Children get to 'see' the service and we then explain why they have turned up and how the Fire Service are 'there' always to help. We have a conversation with the fire service about what has led up to this alarm, how we can avoid it in future and simply have an update from the service on our current protection etc. Each conversation is always useful. When else would we have these conversations? What would fire service be doing if only ever dealing with real fires? Surely it is good practice too for the fire service to be amongst the community and being 'seen' protecting us?</p>
<p>Agree with your comments about number of false alarms and the resources they require.</p>
<p>A small false positive rate is needed to ensure that emergencies are covered, but 99% false alarms seems way way too high false positives.</p>
<p>We have had a number of alarm activations where there was no actual fire, where an fire appliance and crew have turned up on site as we haven't been able to cancel the call in time to prevent this.</p>
<p>When appliances are mobilised to incidents that are found to be UwFS, those appliances are unavailable for other incidents, training, prevention and protection activities.</p>
<p>You able to target recourses where they are needed ie dealing with fires rather than false alarms</p>
<p>I don't think we can really comment on resource management as it doesn't really have a bearing on the issue at hand.</p>
<p>False alarms are a waste of LFRS resources, they tie up appliances that would normally be available for other incidents.</p>

All the recent calls to site have been as a result of a false alarm.
I believe it depends on what the building is being used for. In the prison environment LFRS should still attend if the fire alarm is activated even in non sleeping parts of the prison.
Attendance at false alarms reduces fire engine availability and increases road risk.
False call outs is an issue
False alarms do not help anyone, we understand the importance of reducing the number of false alarms to enable the fire & rescue services to use there resources to tackle real fires.
The previous times our alarm has activated has been with no fire (fault on system).
Resources tied up at Unwanted Fire Signals could be better utilised for training, premises inspections as well as other additional duties such as medical emergencies.
I have been on site when we have had many false alarms over the years and it is such a waste of valuable time for the LFRS
amend AFA response rule
I agree that buildings where there is overnight accommodation should continue to be responded to with blue lights but I also agree that with so many false alarms, there must be a more effective way of managing them than responding with an engine travelling there when there was no need for it.
The vast majority of the times when Lancs fire and rescue have been to our premieses have been to false alarms. I worry for the safety of service members and other road users when they are called out on these false alarms. Busines owners should put more attention on the fire risk assessments and getting competent fire alarm service companies to maintain the fire detection system.
We spend a lot of time going to afa calls that could be investigated by a responsible person before hand.
Not attending AFA's will free up time for Operational crews to train, but also carry out Business Fire safety checks at the properties in question. As a service we know little about these commercial premises, as most of our fire safety inspections are based around sleeping risk. The Operational crews being able to inspect commercial warehouses and factories will allow them to identify the risk to them from the premises.
False alarms are wasting time and money
Response currently from LFRS is fine. The Council has a well maintained fore alarm system.
A fault on a detector has lead to the fire service attending our business premises when we could have checked the situation ourselves
we have experience of the fire truck being sent to our centre on an automatic call which was caused by cooking fumes.
This is part of a plan to reduce the number of FFS and pumps which is totally unacceptable. The xxxxx view that the service can be run by on call is dangerous at best as on call pumps are being propped up by wholetime personnel
The time that is waited to attend the site of an non sleeping business when their is no genuine signs of fire could have been used to attend the actual site of a building that has fire.
Raising awareness in the community about how to sensibly and safely deal with a potential fire/ fire alarm would be a good start. Freeze, panic, or bravado seem to be common responses, in my experience, when an individual has not developed common sense around fire safety. It would be interesting to know the actual number of call outs to false alarms - the percentage communicated is concerning. Growing up, I enjoyed the local fire departments visits.



I STRONGLY AGREE WITH RESOURCES BEING USED FOR GENIUNE FIRE SITUATIONS ETC BUT I DONT AGREE IF IT IS JUST A WAY OF REDUCING FIRE FIGHTER NUMBERS. I STRONGLY AGREE WITH THIS DURING WORK HOURS TOO, BUT NOT OUTSIDE OF WORK HOURS AS BY THE TIME SOMEONE HAS DRIVEN TO SITE THEN CALLED 999, THE BUILDING AND EVERYTHING IN IT WOULD ALREADY BE LOST.

From our experience we had the fire brigade come out once and it was a false alarm. it was down to a technical issue - so instead of the system going onto test, it got delayed so when we did test the alarm it went down as a proper call out. Half an hour later a fire engine turned up. We didn't know they were attending until they actually showed up.

I understand the amount of false alarms generated. My background

I think what you have proposed makes sense and your resources should be used where there are confirmed fires.

From the Building I manage all of the calls since we opened have been false alarms, caused by smoking, cooking or children pressing the call points. During times we are open it would make more sense for my team on site to carry out an initial inspection to source the cause of the activation and then decide whether to confirm the need for attendance. This would reduce business disruption caused by false alarms but would Im sure enable the Fire service to make better use of their limited resources. However I do think a different approach should be taken outside of the core opening hours. For example during the night and at weekend when the complex is closed.

MUCH BETTER FOR ALL CONCERNED IF UNNECESSARY ATTENDANCES CAN BE AVOIDED

As a business offering kitchen facilities to our staff, we have been caught out by many false alarms over time. We have felt guilty at times calling the crew out for an alarm triggered by a toaster, knowing that this could have prevented them going elsewhere. With the crew being very fast to respond to us I have only ever once been able to stop attendance.

Calls can be confirmed by owners

Mainly for the reasons you have already stated in your introduction.

As the emergency control room for LFRS, I agree that aligning call challenge with other services and allowing managers of buildings to take responsibility for their own building will ensure that resources are managed more appropriately as well as simplifying the call challenge for NWFC.

Resources are limited and therefore should be used most effectively I don't think using them on automatic fire alarms is affective

Set benchmarks for fire safety and lead by example with FRAs and audits to give a benchmark. Fine repeat offenders and work with insurers to drive enforcement and improvement.

I see it from being a resident within the area and also an on call firefighter within LFRS.

The supporting statistics you have given prove the point.

Should attend all false alarms as you never no what it could be,

It's a waste of time going to false alarms, and there are two risks - one that there will be an accident on the way due to blue lights etc and travelling at speed, and secondly that the appliance will be out of place when w real emergency comes in.

Activity levels for the FRS are very low compared to the other 999 services although more should be done to reduce the calls , each call does have the potential to be a large fire. It would seem disproportionate to stop attending. I am led to believe that only 10% of your calls now are for true fires. I would ask what

would you do instead if not attending alarm calls although a solution could be to send a sole responder to carry out an early assessment though
The risk to the public and LFRS is heightened by needless responding on blue lights to AFAs especially when there is no sign of smoke/heat/fire. The police do not respond to every burglar alarm actuating and the during day time people should at these non sleeping risk properties to confirm a fire.
I don't have any inside knowledge of how LFRS resources are currently used so it's not possible to say they can be used more efficiently. I'm concerned that the subtext to this question is that resources are stretched due to lack of funding and that cuts to services need to be found somewhere. Having said that, if LFRS employees believe so, I'd be inclined to listen to their expertise.
Fire engines should be available for emergency incidents not false alarms
It's a time issue, false alarms are a drain on resources and can disrupt genuine cases
AFAs should only be checked if there is reason to believe there is a fire, not just an alarm.
Firefighters could spend the time wasted on fire alarms on prevention and protection activities
I believe through better call handling in line with a modern response policy, the service can utilise its resources in a better fashion, providing improved emergency cover, reducing the driving risk and re allocating the current costs of responding to AFA's, into improvements across the wider service, especially on the prevention and fire safety side. However i still believe there should be a response to critical nation infrastructure sites where due to there nature if an incident were to occur the public would expect a response at the earliest identifiable opportunity.
The rationale for this is narrow and does not consider the risks to the buildings. A number of Council assets are of historic importance and delays in response time would have significant implications for them.
Eminently sensible given the stats over the last 5 years
No life risk
The police don't deploy to a burglar alarm for the same reasons we shouldn't attend AFA's.
I think this doesn't take into account the different types of building eg the community value of a school or museum. I agree that private businesses should have to provide their own response.
The policy appears to not discriminate buildings on the basis the level of consequential loss
Because you say 'The legal responsibility for dealing with a fire alarm actuation rests with the responsible person' so why should you deal with it? You are allowing them to pass their responsibility onto you.
This would truly monitor the effectiveness of the attendance over a sustained period
I would recommend straight to night time only as long as there is somebody there
Although a life may not be in immediate danger many lives could be affected if a fire catches and a business burns down
We are a school and would want an appliance sent out as we cant always check to see if it is a false alarm.
There are certain exceptions where a non-sleeping building is of great Heritage importance and may contain priceless collections. i.e. xxxxxx xxx is the only Grade One building in the Borough of xxxx and has an accredited museum collection which is of great importance to the heritage of the local area. We feel this is an exception to the new rules. During the daytime we have staff onsite to

assess any alarms. However, during the evening periods the xxxxx is secured, alarmed and should therefore not raise any false alarms unless there is a technical fault which develops on the system.

It is our understanding that xxxxxxx Council will be responding on behalf of all premises occupied by xxxxxx staff including xxxxxxx Museum. For info xxxxxxx Council Museum Service is contracted to manage xxxxxxxx xxxxxx Museum by the site owners xxxxxx xxxxxx xxxxxx. xxxxxxx Council does not rent the museum from xxxxx xxxxxx Council. The complex is shared occupancy with the xxxxxxx operator. The fire alarm contract is between xxxxxx xxxxxx Council and their service provider. The locations in the xxxxx complex that fall outside the Management Agreement for the museum are the xxxxxx, xxxxxx xxxxxx, top floor and basement of the xxxxxx xxxxx. The xxxxxxx café is operated independently during museum opening hours but also out of hours.

I am H&S Lead / Fire Safety officer in a school. If our alarm goes off generally the 'watch' centre phones before sending appliances.

Time taken to get to a building, check it and call 999. Possibility that a fire has caught hold before the 999 call is made, more extensive damage to the property and contents. Putting staff at risk when checking a building. It would be quite some time to check a building such as the xxxxx xxxx, by which time a fire could have taken hold putting our staff at risk.

The lack of life risk in non sleeping buildings justifies this move. The availability of technology to businesses to remotely monitor premises and identify confirmed fires would result in a response where required.

I feel as long as the changes are slowly implemented and reviewed to ensure if this doesn't work other options are explored. We are a non sleeping organisation closed after 8pm in an evening however we are a public service environment with vulnerable clients, we are montoured by a call centre, it would be good to know if the call centre cannot contact an emergency contact will the fire brigade still come out or would they need physical signs of a fire.

Same comment as previous

We feel that during the daytime while the business is open this would work, but then when the business is closed the fire appliances should automatically attend the building.

As indicated earlier I am employed as manager of a xxxxxxx Services Department at xxxxx Council. The fire alarm systems we have installed at our premises are good systems and are extremely well maintained and rarely result in false alarms as a consequence. Taking into account the essential role that xxxxxxx Services provides within communities and societey as a whole, in respect of its burial and cremation facilities, it is esential that these premises are attended and protected by the fire service on all occasions. This is to ensure minimal damage and destruction to facilities and property such as crematoriums etc which if lost would be detrimental to local communities, grieving families and our ability provide the essential services such as cremation and burial.

as above

In xxxxxx larger and more complex buildings, generally the FRS would be called either on discovering a fire following a fire alarm activation or (where buildings have a 2 stage system) if the system goes straight into a full evacuation (meaning more than 1 device has been activated). The latter, may mean that the FRS is called before the investigating person discovers smoke and/or fire however, due to the scale, complexity and risk to persons within the building would require an immediate response from the FRS. In these types of premises, a delay in the

FRS attending could be catastrophic. xxxxxx xxxxxx estate includes major stations managed by train operating companies. These premises often have complex layouts along with a significant number of occupants, who although they are awake, are NOT familiar with the premises. A change to the FRS response in these locations would require consultation with the Responsible Persons to ensure that Policies and Procedures including emergency response plans are updated accordingly. Additionally, other parts of the estate include National Critical Infrastructure where agreed emergency and contingency plans are followed which may include 'defend in place' procedures. Additionally, a delay in FRS response to a fire scenario in these locations, could allow the fire to develop further and have a significant impact not just on the building or local area but on the National Rail Infrastructure. ie prevent trains from running in Great Britain. I've answered the question re auto signalling below as a yes, however I don't believe that xxxxxx xxxxxx use this directly however, some premises which we own and are operated by a third party often use monitoring centres.

We have concern over no response when building is empty. We are a charcoal business and had a large fire in 2000. Another large fire would be a disaster. I agree if the site is manned then a confirmation could be requested / received before attending site. Maybe response should be different depending on the contents of the building?

Year 1 proposal of no alarm response in daytime; Your letter says you expect the building to be evacuated on hearing a fire alarm. However your plans indicate you expect a member of staff not to evacuate but to investigate where the sensor is identified as activated, with no specialist equipment, no training nor specialist knowledge and going back into the building to do so once the sensor location is identified by the central monitoring station. Year 2 proposal; If fire sensors trigger the alarm at any of our premises whilst unattended from 5.00pm until 8.30am, it is the LFRS emergency response to that alarm that will reach the premises with specialised heat-sensing equipment before any other Security call-out (xxxxxxx used). We know this from experience in January 2021. This is the only certain check of the premises to stop fire potentially destroying the premises including our Head Office. LFRS proposals seem to; 1. Expect the public to go with no protective clothing or equipment into a high risk situation to identify signs of fire, putting their life at risk. 2. Accept that fires will only be attended when a real fire reaches such a critical damage stage to be visible by untrained individuals, regardless of a full alarm system, putting people's lives at risk.

Subject to being able to make contact with a person within short timescale to confirm / deny fire.

I would agree to send fire appliances once a fire has been confirmed in term time after confirmation from an adult in the building. However, I feel uneasy about this if the building is unoccupied: overnight, weekends and school holidays

You attend a large amount of false alarms which costs money and resources and takes you away from a real emergency.

As previous response

There are historically significant building that are 'non-sleeping' but where the building itself is of local or national importance. These buildings should not be excluded.

Whilst we agree that LFRS should direct its resources to building that are occupied we feel that a special dispensation should be made for the significant number of heritage sites that Blackpool has to offer.

Will this new policy apply to schools and buildings of historical importance?

Our building is not occupied at weekends and during bank holidays. No one would call if the fire alarm was sounding at those times.
we have trained fire marshals to deal with evacuations and check the building, this should be the trigger for the rescue services to be called out, otherwise why train personnel.
Concerns about commercial premises which have domestic flats situated above them.
This would be subject to LFRS meeting their response times on all occasions otherwise, waiting to confirm a fire, could lead to loss of property or worse still life. This would be especially relevant in a school environment where a delay in locating persons missing, may occur due to a delay in LFRS attending through waiting for confirmation of a fire. I feel that schools and in fact any premises where vulnerable people are present, should still have a automatic attendance
THE OCCUPIERS SHOULD BE CHECKING THE PREMISES AND CONTACTING 999 IF THEY HAVE A FIRE
Protecting human life is paramount but the building needs to be protected if signs of fire have been confirmed
We have a monitoring system in place currently who calls the site on activation of the fire alarm system, our changed procedure is to tell the monitoring station that if needed we will call 999 if needed, this is why we check to confirm if this is a fire or most probably a false alarm.
The two stage approach makes sense, we continue to send appliances to non sleeping risk premises out of hours.
call monitoring centres should contact the site representative , who could attend site and the representative should contact the fire brigade once on site if needed.
It makes perfect sense because people may be in danger.
Our building is in use between 8.00 am - 8.00pm 7 days a week. We would be deeply concerned if there was not an automatic response to a fire alarm outside these times when there would be no one in the building to call 999.
do not want to waste resources
As so many AFAs are false alarms I do believe that there should be more of a call challenge and ARCs should be directed to contact the premises first before the fire service. I imagine the vast majority of these AFA attendances could be avoided if this was carried out and the premises confirmed it was a false alarm before the call even made it through to the FRS.
Although our fire marshals are trained to look for signs of fire as they assist in the evacuation of our buildings, I would not be comfortable if someone had to go into a complicated building to ascertain a fire in the area of activation. All our buildings are remotely monitored. The monitoring service would not know if the alarm was as a result of a fire so would be unable to confirm. The resultant time lag for confirmation from staff would be unacceptable. Also, at night our buildings are empty. Generally when an alarm is raised via the remote monitoring service, the fire service are in attendance before key holders or duty officers arrive on site. If you do not attend this could result in a fire being undetected for some time and potentially putting our staff at significant risk not only from fire but also from a violence and aggression situation.
Cut costs and a genuine 999 call may come through at same time
Our building is large with only a small team working from it. It is our priority to get ourselves out and any visitors out of the building without investigation for possible fire - that is why we have a system linked to the Fire station. How do we confirm if there is a fire in the building or not when no one is on the premises eg 11.30pm (from year two)? What will this change mean to insurance policies?

Confirmation might take sometime when buildings are not occupied by which time the fire might, if present, have taken hold
see previous comments
Please see above
As previous answer, Again you are putting a member of staff at risk to determine the level of the incident prior to your attendance. What appears to be a significant saving for the local fire authority is minuscule to the individual establishment that contributes in the funding of your service.
Completely agree!
Daytime response to confirmed alarm only strongly agree. Out of hours keyholder response time can be 15-30 mins, therefore confirmation of actual fire would lead to unnecessary fire fighting delay. Could a fire system be programmed to only require fire service response when system detects two detectors activated to overcome a single detector false activation.
This proposal makes sense, and helps you utilise your resources.
The premises of xxxxxxxx is quite spaced out with four areas which have detection services attached to them through a monitoring system. We would be concerned if confirmation that there was a fire in these areas had to be agreed before our monitoring service could ask you to come out. We feel that in the time it would take to check the areas and ensure that there was a fire the damage done would be considerable much worse compared to confirming a yes at point of call of an alarm going off. Detection only confirms an area for us, some of which under shift patterns are not always occupied, but still present a risk. One of these areas houses a biomass boiler which would be a huge risk to confirm, rather than assume that the alarm is going off because it is a fire. We have an internal protocol in place for false alarms which reduces the need to confirm a 'yes' at point of call from our monitoring service. As with all systems we appreciate that there will be on occasion false alarms are created due to dust, or 'pranks', but this have been minimal in the 6 years that this monitored system has been in place. We must also ask you to consider all the above points when taking action for a decision including the risk of arson to the property due to the nature of the business; we deal with prosecutions and removals of xxxxxxxx from xxxxxxxx and their xxxxxxxx which can sometimes lead to highly volatile situations.
I agree that business have a duty to check their own buildings on an alarm sounding.
Automatic fire alarm response should take place as normal when building are unoccupied especially in our case where we have spent a lot of money on sophisticated P1M system. Much more damage could be done by delaying a response to unoccupied buildings. For example in our business we supply the majority of the worlds xxxxxxxxxx and if the fire was not captured early then there would be a much more significant health effect felt worldwide.
This would rely on a member of our staff (usually the Site Supervisor or a member of the SLT) attending school out of hours. Very often, staff do not live locally and therefore the time it would take them to attend when the fire alarm activated would be too long.
There needs to be a clear responsibility to a resident/business owner to ensure adequate provision is put in place to assist in the detection and management of an alarm situation. The risk and outcome of mis-directed services to a non-emergency situation can be life threatening and everyone needs to do all they can to support the available resources that are there to save lives and tackle fire.
This will improve availability of fire appliances to attend serious incidents, reduce school disruption loss of productivity.

<p>The school is residential so I would expect emergency cover out of hours but during the school day we could alert the fire service if they were required.</p>
<p>Whilst I have some support for the daytime change, I am concerned that the consequences of not attending night-time activations, in the event of an actual fire, could (for those concerned) have devastating consequences.</p>
<p>Best use of resources</p>
<p>I worry this may lead to more onus on us locating the fire delaying the visit...our focus is always firstly getting everyone out...</p>
<p>We are a museum and need a robust response to any fire alarms.</p>
<p>No lives at risk, obvious if there are smoke and flames and this can be reported as genuine by phone</p>
<p>We would currently ask our waking nights staff and fire marshals to call 999/911 on confirmation of a fire in any case.</p>
<p>If there is a confirmed fire, then there probably won't be much difference in the time it takes the appliance to get there but would save a lot of money in dispatching crews. It would put the onus on property owners to make sure their alarms work properly and not just rely on the service all the time.</p>
<p>To make better use of the fire brigade resource. In the event of a real emergency, dialling 999 is recommended rather than reliance alone on the custodian monitoring.</p>
<p>In premises that do not have anyone sleeping are deemed to be lower risk than those that do have a sleeping risk. The occupants in premises without a sleeping risk will be more alert and responsive to a fire situation and are more likely to operate a simultaneous evacuation strategy. The type of premises referred to in the question are likely to be businesses where employees receive training on what to do on hearing the fire alarm and/or what to do on discovering a fire.</p>
<p>You should instead be encouraging owners/operators/maintainers of automated systems to switch to 'double knock' so the alarm has to receive two separate signals from two detectors before it enters into an alarm condition. In many cases, the automated signalling is a mandatory requirement from the property insurers.</p>
<p>This protects fire and rescue resources fire actual emergencies. Have you given consideration to higher risk premises such as COMAH site, for which there would be no sleeping risk but it may still be prudent to send an attendance based on relative risk.</p>
<p>Even in parts of the prisons that are non sleeping LFRS should still attend a fire alarm activation as if a fire was declared and LFRS were not on their way - we would lose valuable time checking the building etc which if there was a fire would still be detrimental to the running of the prison.</p>
<p>There needs to be a caveat to ensure that buildings that have a fire alarm system, with an autodialler or control centre link and are not occupied still have the facility to have a suspicion of fire investigated. During the day or night a premises may not have any occupants to investigate and therefore a fire might go unobserved until it can be observed externally, this would cause greater damage, a larger more developed fire and pose greater risk to the firefighters attending. A better solution might be to consider a response being made but under normal road conditions i.e. not a blue light response.</p>
<p>This makes sense, the priority should be to always to focus on saving lives first</p>
<p>There has to be a better use of tax payers' money to provide the best public service, therefore the responsibility of checking alarm activations has to lie with the premises rather than the fire service, who would still provide a response to confirmed fires. Premises need to be less reliant on fire service checking activations.</p>

Same reason as above. On may occasions we have known why the alarm has been activated and a phone call could have prevented the fire service attending
Whilst I want to agree with the fire service, there are times when someone is not able to confirm there is a fire until it is too late. This comes down to the business/property owner having adequate fire detection systems in place that are monitored either by a monitoring company or by a smart phone app, preferably both. In an ideal world, this would be possible, however, there are some business/property owners that will give the illusion of compliance even though the system is inadequate.
for the very reason you want to implement the rule
I agree as long as the response was rapid if there were signs of fire and there was a robust evacuation plan - I appreciate that will be up the business to ensure.
This would seem to be a logical answer to supporting an under funded service. Although we have a large site and it would be difficult to spot smoke from the fire assembly location, it would be a simple adjustment to our induction process/ fire evacuation procedure to say, once you have left the fire exit use your mobile phone to report the fire and its exact location.
I belive only the first stage should be implemented.
Some buildings will be exempt this though i.e. heritage buildings
Some Council building are unoccupied some times of the day/night and the current system of ringing an employee works well if they are on site. If not on site LFRS should still respond unless there is a history of numerous false alarms at the same premises.
I agree with the staged approach to this as the situation is easiest to monitor during daytime when the premises is occupied
waste of resources attending if no fire has been confirmed
As above
This would help to eliminate wastage of time and resources.
With community involvement and local businesses fulfilling their legal duties to staff regarding fire safety, enough knowledge to safely investigate an alarm should be gained. Reducing the number of false call outs ensures that adequate resources are available for true emergencies and active fires.
I HAVE TICKED THIS BECAUSE I AM UNSURE OF WHERE INSURANCE COMPANIES WOULD LIE WITH IT. WE WOULDNT KNOW WHAT TO DO IF INSURANCE COMPANIES WOULDNT INSURE US BECAUSE OF THIS. I WOULD THEN STRONGLY DISAGREE WITH IT UNTIL AGREEMENT HAS BEEN MADE. HAS ANYTHING BEEN AGREED WITH INSURANCE GROUPS ??
If you confirm first if there is a fire - it will reduce false alarms. If this had been done with ourselves the one time we had a call out we could have informed them it wasn't needed.
same as above
I agree it makes sense to only send crews to a non sleeping building when signs of fire have been confirmed.
I think the evening issue needs to be addressed. So when Buildings are Closed and therefore staff are not on site to provide confirmation a different approach needs to be undertaken.
WE AGREE THAT WEEKDAY ATTENDENCES SHOULD BE TO VERIFIED FIRES. HOWEVER, OUR PREMISES IS NOT OCCUPIED FULL TIME AT WEEKEND OR ANY NIGHT AFTER 7-8PM SO IT WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE



TO VERIFY AN ACTUAL FIRE EVENT BEFORE IT WAS PROBABLY ALREADY OUT OF HAND.
This would be extremely effective in cutting down false visits although I would be concerned in an out of hours situation. As fire warden my out of hours response time to our facility is 10/15 mins by road and an actual fire could have taken hold by then, being severely detrimental to our business.
Sounds like a sensible approach
Aligning with other FRSs. Releasing resources to deal with other emergencies. The data supports a review of the procedure.
Businesses can be repaired. No persons at risk, no rush.
Appropriate use and deployment of resources.
The owner or occupant should be responsible for their building and making sure everyone vacates the premises if an alarm goes off. Damage should then be limited to property without lives at risks. We should ensure that homeless people who may shelter in empty but alarmed buildings are warned of the change in person (ie not through the internet to which they may not have access) to ensure they are aware of the dangers.
I agree but only for sites that are not producing or storing dangerous products that could have significant impact on local community if fire was not noticed
I think that every alarm should be treated as a potential fire/real emergency unless proven otherwise. I would also have concerns that 'non-sleeping' buildings might include buildings that have (occasionally or regularly) overnight/out-of-hours events with multiple occupants.
It should be the owners responsibility to check and put detectors in.
Proportionate response over a reasonable timescale
Again i agree with the new policy. I do not believe we should be responding without positive indication of signs of fire
As we are a Grade 1 listed building we ready could do with a chat on how this is to impact the Hall.
I work for a company called xxxxx in which we have the fire alarm monitored. We have received the information letter from yourselves regarding the changes that are upcoming. One question, is there not a time period which could be added to individual files to outline times in which a AFA can receive a callout and times in which a call-out can be confirmed by a responsible person?
A number of sites have been receiving the letters requesting their views on false alarms and forwarding them to us to answer on their behalf. As xxx have a significant number of sites and also concerned with the number of false alarms generated, we would like to participate in discussions and also contribute and communicate any developments.
We currently are linked to xxxxxxx Monitoring Service and on an automatic response from Police & Fire due to the Nature of our service. We are part of the xxxxxx xxxxxx, xxxxxx & xxxxxx xxxxx Contract in xxxxxx, providing support to vulnerable clients. We have clinics on certain days with registered nurses and GP prescribers and I just wanted to ask if we would be classed as medical in anyway, to keep the automatic response. If not please could I ask would the process be that an alarm would go through to our monitoring center, if out of hours a call to our Management Team or during he day a call to the office, if there is no response would this still mean no services would arrive until contact is made with signs of a fire? We operate Monday – Friday 9am until 8pm some evenings with the occasional Saturday, however we are a non-sleeping environment.
We are a large museum across several buildings and so under usual circumstances calling to confirm the alarm is real would be fine but the visual

check on a fire would be challenging and potentially putting others at risk. We have a few questions about the proposals and what can be done to consider a working museum:

- Would this guidance apply when the museum is open or just when out of hours?
- Would this include our office staff rota as being classed as open or just for the public?
- Would the guidance for calling when a fire has been visually confirmed still apply when the museum is hosting an event ?
- Likewise would this still apply when the museum is hosting sleep overs and so be temporarily classed as a place of residence for the night?
- Would we be able to call prior to such an event and then have an arrangement?

If implemented (particularly year 2) the following concerns are raised.

1/ Our premises are unoccupied at night and therefore a small fire would have to develop significantly before an alarm is raised. 2/ This proposal would mean that we would effectively have no AFA. 3/ This could have cost implications for our insurance.

Would it be possible to use a motorcycle with livery and blue light to attend AFA call outs to assess if an appliance is required. The rider could be first aid trained as well as trained to determine the level of response required.

Can I ask if this matter has been considered in terms of unoccupied building which may have people of no fixed abode residing within them?

**Attached as Appendix 3 is the FIRE BRIGADES UNION RESPONSE TO THE COMMUNITY RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN (incorporating response to the AFA consultation).**