EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM TO THE

FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES (NATIONAL FRAMEWORK) (ENGLAND) ORDER 2004

2004 No. 3217

1. This explanatory memorandum has been prepared by Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and is laid before Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.

2. Description

2.1 This Order substitutes the 2005/06 National Framework for fire and rescue authorities for the 2004/05 Framework, which was the original one under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004.

3. Matters of special interest to the Joint Committee on Statutory Instruments

3.1 None

4. Legislative Background

4.1 Section 21 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 requires the Secretary of State to prepare a Framework setting out the priorities and objectives for the fire and rescue authorities. The authorities are required to have regard to the Framework. Any significant revision must be brought into effect by order.

5. Extent

5.1 This instrument applies to England.

6. European Convention on Human Rights

Not applicable

7. Policy background

7.1 Sir George Bain's Independent Review of the Fire Service recommended that the Government produce a National Framework to provide clear central guidance for fire and rescue authorities. The Government's White Paper *Our Fire and Rescue Service* (June 2003) committed to doing this through a Fire and Rescue National Framework.

7.2 The National Framework sets out the Government's priorities and objectives for the Fire and Rescue Service and what fire

and rescue authorities should do to achieve them. The National Framework also sets out the support the Government will provide. It provides strategic direction from central government while ensuring that authorities continue to make local decisions.

7.3 The Draft Fire and Rescue National Framework was issued for consultation in December 2003. The 2004/05 National Framework was published in July 2004.

7.4 Fire and Rescue Service Circular 27-2004 was issued on 31st August 2004 and published on the ODPM website. It invited stakeholders to take part in consultation for the 2005/06 Fire and Rescue National Framework. 38 responses were received as part of the consultation process and, following careful consideration, they have been reflected in the National Framework where appropriate. The Government's full response to the comments has been published on the ODPM website. The 2005/06 National Framework was published on 6th December 2004.

8. Impact

8.1 A Regulatory Impact Assessment has not been prepared for this instrument as it has no direct impact on business, charities, or voluntary or public bodies.

9. Contact

Tom Surrey at the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister Tel: 020 7944 5570 or e-mail: tom.surrey@odpm.gsi.gov.uk can answer any queries regarding the instrument.