



**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE**  
**Fire & Rescue Service**  
*Creating Safer Communities*

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham  
Fire and Rescue Authority  
Community Safety Committee

# **REDUCED IGNITION PROPENSITY CIGARETTES UPDATE**

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

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**Agenda Item No:**

**Date:** 18 January 2008

**Purpose of Report:**

To inform Members of National and International progress related to Reduced Ignition Propensity cigarettes (Safer Cigarettes). The progress has recently been communicated to the Service via Communities and Local Government (CLG) .

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## **1. BACKGROUND**

The Fire & Rescue Authority and the Community Safety Committee are aware of advancements in attempts to manufacture cigarettes which “self extinguish” if dropped or are left attended. In Nottinghamshire, research has shown that over 80% of deaths in accidental dwelling fires are caused by cigarettes. Nationally, smoking materials are the greatest source of ignition for fatal accidental fires in dwellings, accounting for an average of 32% of fatal fires between 1995 and 2005 (Fire Statistics, 2005).

## **2. REPORT**

- 2.1 The recent information received from the Fire & Resilience directorate details an overview of progress (Fire Service Circular 57/07 attached at Appendix A). However, the progress within Europe is considered of particular note and worthy of specific mention.
- 2.2 The UK Government, supported by Sweden requested the European Commissions General Product Safety Committee (EPSC) to explore the development of an appropriate technical standard for fire safer cigarettes. Over the last eighteen months this has been pursued.
- 2.3 Alongside this move, the Fire & Rescue Service in general and the Authority specifically have championed moves to introduce safer cigarettes by raising awareness and lobbying stakeholders to act.
- 2.4 This work has now produced a significant outcome, in that on 29 November 2007 the European Union (EU) member states endorsed the European Commission plan to develop proposals for a Pan European standard for fire-safer cigarettes. This will produce a consistent technical standard. Although this will take some time, other world standards will be used to provide a platform for progress. In the UK, the Chief Fire & Rescue Advisors Unit will be heavily involved.
- 2.5 Manufacturers will, of course, play a pivotal role in this development. Once a standard is agreed, it will be referenced in the official journal of the EU and manufacturers will be invited to voluntarily comply with the standard. However, it is likely the commission will push to have the standard recognised and used as the industry norm. This could involve some form of regulation.
- 2.6 A consultation process is to begin in the UK in the New Year.

## **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

This report highlights international progress. No additional costs are pinpointed at present other than costs highlighted in the previous report to the Authority in September 2007.

#### **4. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no personnel implications arising from this report.

#### **5. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

The initial equality impact assessment is attached at Appendix B.

#### **6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

#### **7. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire & Rescue Authority are committed to reducing deaths and injuries in the community. It is clear that recent advances in the areas related to this report complement this commitment and failure to continue this support could produce adverse effects and scrutiny from central government.

#### **8. RECOMMENDATIONS**

That Members of the Community Safety Committee note the report and continue to support the Services active campaign in the introduction of safer cigarettes in the UK.

#### **9. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION (OTHER THAN PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS)**

None.

Frank Swann  
**CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**



Circular number	<b>57/2007</b>	Date issued	<b>7 December 2007</b>
This circular is	<b>For information</b>	No response required	
This circular is	<b>Relevant to the National Framework</b>		
Status	This Circular provides background on fire safer cigarettes and work that is taking place to create a European Standard		

# Update on work relating to fire safer cigarettes

## Issued by:

Mike Larking

Fire and Resilience Directorate

## Addressed to:

The Chair of the Fire and Rescue Authority  
 The Chief Executive of the County Council  
 The Clerk to the Fire and Rescue Authority  
 The Clerk to the Combined Fire and Rescue Authority  
 The Commissioner of the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority  
 The Chief Fire Officer

## Please forward to:

## Summary

This Circular provides background on fire safer cigarettes (also known as Reduced Ignition Propensity (RIP) cigarettes) and work that is taking place to create a European Standard.

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## Update on work relating to fire safer cigarettes

### 1.0 Fire statistics

1.1 Fire statistics show an overall downward trend in accidental fires and deaths and the lowest number of fire deaths since 1959 for the UK. The average number of deaths per year over the seven year period from 1999/2000 is 274 which is 20% lower than the fatality levels of the mid to late 1990s. The total number of fatal casualties from accidental fires in dwellings in the UK has dropped 36% from 481 in 1995 to 310 in 2005. Smoking materials are the greatest source of ignition for fatal accidental fires in dwellings, accounting for an average of 32% of fatal fires between 1995 and 2005<sup>1</sup>.

### 2.0 Fire safer cigarettes

2.1 For some time now, the cigarette manufacturers have had the technology to make cigarettes fire safer (by reducing the ignition propensity). A common technique used to create fire safer cigarettes is to wrap the stem of cigarettes with two or three thin bands of less-porous paper that act as 'speed humps' to slow down a burning cigarette. If a fire safer cigarette is left unattended, the burning tobacco will reach one of these speed humps and self-extinguish.

2.2 Fire safer cigarette products have been introduced into the markets of several countries, including the United States, where 22 states have passed, or are in the process of passing, legislation to require that cigarettes sold and manufactured in the state meet a national cigarette fire-safety standard. On 1 October 2005, Canada became the first country to implement a cigarette fire-safety standard at a national level. And in March 2007, Australia released its own standard based on the US standard. However, in the EU there is no current standard and no legislation requiring that cigarettes sold and manufactured in nation states meet any fire-safety standard.

### 3.0 Experience of and research into fire safer cigarettes

3.1 New York State was the first US state to adopt a fire safer standard in 2004. It is too early to draw too many conclusions from their experience, however fire deaths have dropped from 38 in 2003 to 33 in 2005. Whilst it is not possible to directly attribute the fall to the introduction of the new legislation, it is nonetheless encouraging.

3.2 In Canada, prior to the Standard being introduced, the Government published its Impact Assessment which provided a best and worse case scenario. The Canadian impact assessment assumed a 68% reduction in fires/casualties; the worst case scenario reduced this by half, to 34%. Applying the Canadian Regulatory Impact Assessment to the 2005 UK fire statistics would have meant 2,116 fewer fires, 731 injuries prevented and potentially 75 lives saved. A further positive impact would also be a reduced risk to firefighters attending fewer dangerous fire incidents.

3.3 CLG undertook some research into the comparisons of the propensity of fire-safer cigarettes and conventional cigarettes to ignite textile materials used in a domestic environment. The CLG research estimated that had cigarettes in the UK conformed to the New York standard in 2003, the number of smoking-related fires would have been reduced in that year by nearly two thirds.

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<sup>1</sup> Fire Statistics United Kingdom, 2005

## Update on work relating to fire safer cigarettes

### 4.0 Work in Europe

- 4.1 At the request of the UK Government, supported by Sweden, the European Commission's General Product Safety Committee (GPSD) undertook to look into the case for developing an appropriate technical standard for fire-safer cigarettes. Over the past eighteen months or so the Committee has discussed the issue, gathering evidence from member states to underpin the requirement to create a European Standard.
- 4.2 In parallel, Fire and Rescue Services have championed the introduction of fire safer cigarettes. CFA along with many individual Fire Authorities, the FBU, FOA and many other organisations with an interest in fire safety have come together to lobby under the banner of the RIP Coalition. The lobbying has contributed to raising awareness of this matter in many quarters.

### 5.0 Moving towards a European Standard

- 5.1 On the 29<sup>th</sup> November 2007, the EU member states overwhelmingly endorsed the EC plans to draw up proposals for a European standard for fire-safer cigarettes. The Commission has therefore instructed the European Standards body (CEN) to develop a harmonised technical standard on the lines indicated in the mandate.
- 5.2 The process to create a European Standard will take some time - up to three years. The Technical Committee which will do this work will use the existing American Standard as a starting point with a view to building on previous experience and not 'reinventing the wheel'. The UK, through the Chief Fire and Rescue Advisors Unit, will be heavily involved in this work.
- 5.3 Once the standard is finalised, the next steps will be for it to be referenced in the Official Journal of the EU. In essence, this means manufacturers can voluntarily comply with the standard. However, the Commission will push to have standard recognised and used as the industry norm.
- 5.4 If the standardization goes smoothly then the Commission may decide that the Standard should become part of regulation in some way, either in a dedicated Directive or Regulation or a Commission decision.

### 6.0 Work in the UK

- 6.1 We are considering what work we can usefully do whilst the Technical Committee develops the European Standard. Ministers have agreed to officials developing a consultation document to explore the views of stakeholders on the introduction of UK legislation in anticipation of the Standard. This work will commence in 2008. We will of course be consulting with Fire and Rescue Services as part of this process.

Mike Larking

Fire Policy

## INITIAL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

<i>Section</i>	<i>Manager</i>	<i>Date of Assessment</i>	<i>New or Existing</i>
RISK REDUCTION	ACFO HORTON	DECEMBER 2007	N/A
Name of Report to be assessed		REDUCED IGNITION PROPENSITY CIGARETTES UPDATE	
1. Briefly describe the aims, objectives and purpose of the report.		THIS REPORT HIGHLIGHTS PROGRESS IN THE INTRODUCTION OF REDUCED IGNITION PROPENSITY CIGARETTES.	
2. Who is intended to benefit from this report and what are the outcomes?		COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE MEMBERS WILL BENEFIT FROM THE RAISED AWARENESS.	
3. Who are the main stakeholders in relation to the report?		FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY MEMBERS.	
4. Who implements and who is responsible for the report?		RISK REDUCTION	

5. Please identify the differential impact in the terms of the six strands below. Please tick yes if you have identified any differential impacts. Please state evidence of negative or positive impacts below.

<i>STRAND</i>	<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>	<i>NEGATIVE IMPACT</i>	<i>POSITIVE IMPACT</i>
Race		<b>X</b>		
Gender		<b>X</b>		
Disability		<b>X</b>		
Religion or Belief		<b>X</b>		
Sexuality		<b>X</b>		
Age		<b>X</b>		

6. Can this adverse impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group?	<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>	7. Should the policy/service proceed to a full impact assessment?	<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>

**I am satisfied that this policy has been successfully impact assessed. I understand the impact assessment of this policy is a statutory obligation and that, as owners of this policy, we take responsibility for the completion and quality of this process.**

Signed (completing person) ACFO HORTON.....

Date ...DECEMBER 2007.....