Press Release

Responding to animal rescues

For many years UK firefighters have responded to a variety of rescues involving pets, livestock and wild animals. Animals in distress pose a potential serious risk to the public, members of other agencies and to firefighters. For the fire and rescue services public safety is paramount.

This makes fire and rescue services wary of making a charge for rescuing animals as it may result in individuals attempting to carry out the rescue, thereby putting themselves in danger. If this should happen, the financial cost of rescuing the animal and would be rescuer may well be greater and may well have more serious implications. It is therefore important that firefighters are adequately trained to ensure their own safety and that of others.

In 2008 the Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) established the Animal Rescue Practitioners Forum. Fire and Rescue Services from across England, Wales and Northern Ireland are represented on this forum. The forum is developing training standards for animal rescue, and a national protocol to improve the safety of personnel, the public and animals at incidents. Notable practice is shared via the CFOA website.

The forum also has representation from the RSPCA and the British Equine Veterinary Association (BEVA) who are able to share examples of animal behaviour and inform fire and rescue services of the important role their trained professionals can offer at animal rescues.

- Ends -
Notes to Editors:

The Chief Fire Officers' Association (CFOA)

CFOA is the foremost official organisation for principal fire officers in the UK. The Association was formed in 1974 following local government re-organisation to allow principal fire officers the ability to meet and discuss fire related or government influenced matters. Membership of the Association comprises almost all the senior management of fire and rescue services in the United Kingdom and is the driving force in managing change and implementing reforms in the service.

CFOA provides the chair and secretariat to the Practitioners Forum, the body through which practitioners and stakeholders in the fire community work together to provide advice to Government on policy development, ensuring that specific policy initiatives are consistent with working practices on the ground and are deliverable.

For further information, please contact:
Communications Team at CFOA
Tel 01827 302370
Email: communications.department@cfoa.org.uk
Website: www.cfoa.org.uk

The Chief Fire Officers' Association, 9-11 Pebble Close, Amington, Tamworth, Staffs B77 4RD

28th October 2010