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South East Fire & Rescue Services'  
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c/o Kent Fire & Rescue Service  
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06 February 2009

*Dear Cllr Rowlands,*

**Re: Operational Assessment Toolkit and Process Consultation**

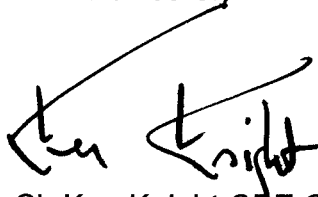
I am in receipt of your letter dated 21 January and I am grateful for the supportive comments regarding the toolkit which is now the subject of trial and consultation.

On the matter of peer review I understand that the outstanding matter is being discussed with CFA, the Audit commission and the IdEA who all recognise the benefits of using peer assessors from outside the Region and equally to permit peer assessors within the Region to be utilised elsewhere.

As you will be aware this approach is in common with all other English Regions. In addition to providing rigour and robustness to the peer assessment process it also provides a helpful interchange of good practice across the country. I am therefore grateful for the positive discussions that are taking place to resolve this matter in the South East.

I am grateful for your assistance in this important matter of continuous improvement of the Fire and Rescue Service.

Yours sincerely



Sir Ken Knight CBE QFSM DL  
Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser