

## report

meeting	<b>NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND CITY OF NOTTINGHAM FIRE &amp; RESCUE AUTHORITY</b>	
date	<b>1 June 2007</b>	agenda item number

### REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

### POSITION PAPER FOR THE EAST MIDLANDS REGIONAL CONTROL CENTRE AND FIRELINK

#### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To present to the Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority with an up to date position for Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) on both the FiReControl (Regional Control Centre) and Firelink projects.

#### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The UK Fire Service has been tasked by Communities and Local Government (CLG) to implement two significant projects in order to reform and modernise the service. These are the Firelink and FiReControl projects, both of which form a central part of the Government's overall Fire and Resilience Programme.
- 2.2 The Firelink project is responsible for managing the procurement and implementation of a National Wide Area Radio System for the Fire and Rescue Service. The FiReControl project is working to move from the existing system of 46 Fire Control Rooms based at local Fire and Rescue Services in England, into 9 new amalgamated Regional Control Centres (RCCs). Both these projects aim to deliver a more resilient system, with improved capability and greater efficiency.

#### 3. REPORT

##### FiReControl Project

- 3.1 The East Midlands Regional Control Centre is nearing completion and is due to for signing of the lease by the Local Authority Controlled Company (LACC) in July 2007. Details of the building along with photographs can be viewed at [www.firecontrol.odpm.gov.uk](http://www.firecontrol.odpm.gov.uk).
- 3.2 On 29 March, the Department for Communities and Local Government signed a contract worth £200 million with European Aeronautic Defence and Space Systems Ltd to supply the infrastructure services for the nine Regional Control Centres and the associated network. Following on from this significant development, a new RCC transition document has been released, detailing the planned FiReControl go-live and cut-over dates for each Fire and Rescue Service to transfer its control functions over to the RCCs.

- 3.3 The planned timetable for Control Room Go-Live and cut-over to the East Midlands RCC at Castle Donington is detailed in the table below:-

FRS	Control Room functions cut-over to RCC
Derbyshire	October 2009 – Go Live
Leicestershire	January 2009
Nottinghamshire	March 2010
Lincolnshire	May 2010
Northamptonshire	July 2010

- 3.4 By the end of April 2007, all East Midlands Control staff will have had the opportunity to attend a presentation by the Regional Project Team on project progress, TUPE issues and possible shift systems, along with a tour of the Regional Control Centre building. Feedback from these seminars is being collated and forwarded on to the Regional Project Team and the RCC Director.
- 3.5 A letter from the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State has been sent to all Chief Fire Officers, Chairs of Fire & Rescue Authorities and Chairs of Regional Management Boards detailing the process for Transition Governance. A response by 16 July 2007 is required confirming that adequate arrangements are in place along with project structures for managing the implementation of FiRecontrol (Appendix A).

#### Firelink Project

- 3.6 The Firelink Project is also well underway and a vast amount of work has already been done towards implementation. Details can be viewed on [www.firelink.org.uk](http://www.firelink.org.uk).
- 3.7 The Department for Communities and Local Government has informed Fire and Rescue Services that Milestone one of the Firelink contract has been signed off. Consequently 'Phase A' of the Firelink roll-out, the fitting and evaluation of up to eight test vehicles per FRS, has been launched. The planned timetable for the regional roll-out of the Firelink system has been included in the FiReControl RCC transition plans.
- 3.8 The planned timetable for the Firelink system roll-out in the East Midlands region is detailed in the table below:

FRS	Airwave equipment installed in FRS Control Room	Airwave equipment installed in first test vehicles (Phase A)	Airwave equipment installed in fleet vehicles (Phase B)
Derbyshire	July 07	September 07	May 08
Leicestershire	May 07	August 07	May 08
Nottinghamshire	June 07	September 07	June 08
Lincolnshire	July 07	August 07	May 08
Northamptonshire	July 07	September 07	June 08

#### Issues

- 3.9 This updated schedule for the roll-out of the Firelink system and the transition to the RCCs does mean that there will be a longer time period where the interim solution will have to be in place for managing wide-area radio communications. In Nottinghamshire's case, this will be a time frame of approximately thirty-four months. The Department for Communities and Local Government, the National Firelink Delivery team and the Regional project teams are liaising to ensure that the quality of service delivery in Fire and Rescue Services is maintained to an

acceptable standard until the RCC takes over operations. The proposed interim solution may need enhancing. A new joint Firelink/FiReControl interim solutions task force has been established to liaise with all Fire and Rescue Services.

3.10 NFRS has a FiReControl and Firelink Project Team in place to liaise with the National and Regional project delivery teams, in order to carry out the detailed implementation and convergence work required for the transition to RCCs and the roll-out and subsequent cut-over to the Firelink system. This Project Team along with NFRS's Finance Department are in the process of investigating Firelink First Line Maintenance options along with cost-modelling, in order to recommend the most efficient and cost effective solution for the Service.

3.11 NFRS project team have attended a workshop on Fleet Mapping (the process to determine which service users can talk and listen to the network). Although Airwave will undertake this as part of the contract, we will need to identify the resources and their requirements in order to make efficient and effective use of the network.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 Additional resources will be required to facilitate the transition from our current position to that required for entry to the RCC.

4.2 This is highlighted within the Transition Governance documentation, requiring the Authority to accept the management structures, roles and responsibilities and support these principals.

4.3 The Government have issued the Authority with New Burdens funding, the funding for 2006/07 was £106,435, and for 2007/08 it is £218,602. (Fire Service Circular 76-2006).

#### **5. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are TUPE issues associated with the implementation of the FiReControl and Firelink projects, relating to Control staff and possibly Communications Technicians.

5.2 Additional resources will be required to facilitate the transition from our current position to that required for entry to the RCC. This is highlighted within the Transition Governance documentation, requiring the Authority to accept the management structures, roles and responsibilities and support these principals

#### **6. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

Individual projects from the programme are assessed for equalities issues and a register kept.

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

Individual projects from the programme are assessed for risk issues and a register kept.

#### **8. RECOMMENDATIONS**

That Members note the contents of this report and follow the progress of the project programme.

#### **9. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION**

- Mott Macdonald report – Future of Fire and Rescue Service Control Rooms in England and Wales. 2003
- Fire and Rescue National Framework Document 2006 / 2008
- FiReControl Transition Governance.
- Fire Service Circular 76-2006 (New burdens funding)

Frank Swann  
**CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**



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Dear FRA Chair

### **FiReControl Transitional Governance**

Peter Betts wrote to you earlier this week to inform you that Communities and Local Government has now signed a contract with EADS Defence Systems Ltd for the delivery of the FiReControl Infrastructure Services. You have also had a letter from Richard How, with five notes summarising CLG's current position and proposals on key issues on the project. The contract signature marks the achievement of another major milestone in the FiReControl project and I would like to add my thanks to you, your staff and colleagues for their hard work and support for the project to date. Your continued participation will continue to be invaluable as the project moves forward.

Following the signing of the IT contract, the project has reached the point where detailed implementation work for the transition to regional control centres (RCCs) must start. To aid the regions and individual FRAs through this period, the FiReControl project team has developed a detailed transition plan. This plan has been shared and consulted upon with the regional teams and FRSs during the last 6 months, receiving generally positive feedback, and reissued with changes to address gaps and FRS concerns where possible. An updated version of the plan will be provided shortly. In the meantime, I am enclosing a briefing document [RPT0697 – Transition Governance, Roles and Responsibilities] which sets out the guiding principles and ways of working for transition.

To ensure that there are adequate arrangements in place for delivery, FRAs, together with Chief Fire Officers (CFO) and regional Project Directors, will now need to review their existing project structures for managing the implementation of FiReControl. I would be grateful if you could provide written confirmation that the necessary mechanisms will be in place by 16 July 2007.

Please be assured that Regional Project teams will be on hand to provide advice and support throughout the transition process.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Angela Smith".

**ANGELA SMITH**

CC: Chief Fire Officers  
Commissioner of LFEPA  
Regional Project Directors