

**SAFER & STRONGER COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
30 NOVEMBER 2009**

**FIRE SERVICE COMMAND AND CONTROL ROOM – THE
FiReControl AND FireLink PROJECTS**

**Report by Assistant Chief Fire Officer Colin Thomas (Oxfordshire's Senior
User for the FiReControl and FireLink Projects and
Joint Regional Project Board Member**

Purpose/Background

- Regular update for Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Committee.

Project Summary

There have been no significant changes to the project timetable and we continue to plan for the roll-out of Early Station End Equipment which starts in January 2010 and for the early deployment of Mobile Data Terminals which will immediately follow on in April. The upgrade to the CLG Data Conversion and Migration Toolkit took place as planned at the end of September and the system is now better, although still not completely satisfactory. Work is ongoing to resolve issues. Lastly, we have just completed our normal 6 monthly risk review of our control room mobilising capability and recognise that the additional programmed delay is increasing the risk of failure as our current systems become increasingly obsolete. A mitigation plan is underway.

Ongoing Work

- **Consultation** We remain fully engaged in the Local Authority Controlled Company (LACC) Consultation Forum and expect a second issue of documentation in November. We will ensure our staff and their representative bodies are fully engaged in this process.
- **Early Station End Equipment (ESEE)** We remain on track to complete a trial installation of the FiReControl ESEE equipment at Bicester fire station in November 2009 to test the equipment and ensure it integrates with our mobilising system. The full installation programme should start on 11 January 2010 and should take approximately 12 weeks to complete. We have now completed the replacement of the Alerter Aerials and feeders at all our fire stations.
- **Data Migration** We continue the work to migrate our Gazetteer and match it to the National Land and Property Gazetteer information (NLPG). This is detailed and tedious work which demands a high level of accuracy. We remain concerned about the level of resource which will be required to migrate all rest of the FRS data to the RCC environment which will be critical for effective mobilisation of our emergency response. We will monitor this aspect and consider further mitigation if required.

- **Ways of Working (WoW)** This work is proceeding more slowly than expected with little information being issued by CLG in the past month.
- **Internal Business Process Re-engineering (BPR)** On the 5 November 2009 we will be briefed by Hampshire on the process. Our aim is to complete a first pass on this work by mid-December as the results are required for the RCC to carry out role-matching work.

Early Deployment of Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs) This is a major project in itself. Planning is underway and resources to support it are being identified. We expect to start the roll-out in April 2010 and it will represent a significant technological improvement of the resources available to our fire fighters at incidents. The initial hardware deployment phase should be completed in July 2010.

Business Continuity The project slippage is increasing the technical risk of components of our mobilising system failing. This is reviewed every 6 months and much of the work we have completed recently has been to mitigate the likelihood of failure as far as possible. This is also the reason we have taken advantage of the early roll-out of aspects of the FiReControl project such as ESEE. Even so, the external support for some elements of our mobilising system, particularly the Integrated Communications Control System, has reached the stage where the contractor response is likely to be reduced to 'best endeavours' when the contract is renewed next year. We are in active discussion with the contractor but there is a significant probability that we may have to replace this element of our Control Room system prior to RCC cut-over. The financial aspects of this are included in the Community Safety Star Chamber process.

Colin Thomas

Assistant Chief Fire Officer - FiReControl & Firelink Senior User

Glossary

DCMT1 (2)	<i>Data Conversion and Migration Toolkit 1 and 2 – Computers and software to translate our data to RCC standard formats</i>
EADS	<i>European Aerospace and Defence Systems – lead FiReControl company</i>
ESEE	<i>Early Station End Equipment replacement programme</i>
IRS	<i>Incident Reporting System</i>
ICT	<i>Information and Communication Technology – The OCC ICT Department</i>
JIG	<i>FRS Joint Implementation Group</i>
MDT	<i>Mobile Data Terminal</i>
PDA	<i>Pre-Determined Attendance at incidents</i>
WoW	<i>Ways of Working (this used to be called Convergence – the process of harmonizing procedures across FRSs)</i>
ACO	<i>Chief Fire Officer</i>
DCO	<i>Deputy Chief Fire Officer</i>
FCM	<i>Fire Control Manager</i>
BPR	<i>Business Process Re-engineering</i>
NLPG	<i>National Land and Property Gazetteer</i>
LACC	<i>Authority Controlled Company – the Company that runs the RCC</i>