

SAFER & STRONGER COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
6 SEPTEMBER 2010

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

Report by Acting Deputy Chief Officer Colin Thomas (Oxfordshire's Senior User for the FiReControl and FireLink Projects and Joint Regional Project Board Member)

Project Summary

- **Project Review** The outcome of the CLG review of the FiReControl project remains unclear. The Fire Minister has stated that FRAs will no longer have to work through Regional Management Boards and that the Coalition Government will allow greater flexibility over the Fire Service National Framework. Both of these are part of the current Governance structure for FiReControl but we cannot yet assess the impact of these changes. In the meantime, the government has stated it expects EADS (the prime contractor) to meet contract milestones and therefore we continue to work to meet our obligations. The Regional Management Board is continuing to meet until any successor arrangements for ongoing governance are made.
- **Current Resilience** We have let a contract to Sungard to upgrade our existing call concentrator system (the software and hardware that “presents” and integrates incoming telephone and radio calls to the Fire Control Operator). The company has carried out an initial site visit and the planning for the necessary upgrade of the Control Room wiring in October is moving forward. Our aim is to have the replacement system in operation by the end of the year.
- **Consultation** The consultation rounds continue with the DCO actively engaging with Control personnel to ensure their views are represented. We have also completed a series of roll matching questionnaires to allow current Control Room posts to be equated to roles within the RCC. Reasonableness interviews are planned to start in January 2011.
- **Data Migration** The planned User Acceptance Test for the Data Conversion and Migration Toolkit 2 (DCMT2) which is essential to allow both the migration of the bulk of our data into RCC compatible formats expected in the first week of August has been postponed by CLG. The extent of any further delay is unknown but continues to pose a risk to data migration. Despite considerable pressure being exerted locally and regionally this issue is not being resolved adequately and Oxfordshire have formally asked for this item to be addressed by CLG.

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- **Ways of Working (WoW)** The South East workshops to review documentation for the Combined Control Centre Operations (COPS - the new CLG process for Ways of Working) have continued with our support. The SE Policies and Procedures group (SEOPAP) which is working to harmonise Pre-determined Attendance and Standard Operating Procedures across the 9 South East FRSs is now aiming to complete its work by March 2011. The results will form an important element of the data migration work, establishing coherent cross region responses.
- **Early Deployment of Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs)** OFRS have completed phase 1 of the roll-out of Mobile Data Terminals in our appliances. Our detailed planning paid off and the programme went very smoothly finishing a week ahead of schedule. We are now working on phase 2 which will add risk and standard operating procedures to the MDTs. Our current aim is to complete this work by December but is dependent on the DCMT2 data migration toolkit.
- **South East Joint Project Board** Information from the last meeting confirms that the new Fire Minister is focussing on holding the prime contractor to the current contract and schedule. This is expressed as time, cost and quality. The Treasury review of significant government projects includes FiReControl. It is expected that this review will report during the summer recess.
- **South East Fire and Rescue Control Centre LTD** The last meeting recognised that the situation is unclear but accepted that continued progress was necessary. As a result the consultation forum process continues with a range of issues being consulted upon. One significant aspect of these is the overarching Health and Safety Management System and its underpinning procedures. This area is being supported by Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service resources under the oversight of Cllr Rodney Rose who has board level lead responsibility for this area.

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