

PRINCE2™- Project Mandate

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Revision Date	Previous Revision Date	Summary of Changes	Changes Marked

Approvals

This document requires the following approvals. A signed copy should be placed in the project files.

Name	Signature	Title	Date of Issue	Version
Olaf Baars		Deputy Chief Fire Officer	24 March 2011	1.0
Jason Thelwell		Assistant Chief Fire Officer	24 March 2011	1.0
Colin Thomas		Deputy Chief Fire Officer	24 March 2011	1.0

Distribution

This document has been distributed to:

Name	Title	Date of Issue	Version
Iain Cox	CFO RBFRS	28 March 2011	1.0
Dave Etheridge	CFO OFRS		1.0
Mark Jones	CFO BFRS		1.0

Overview

Purpose The Project Mandate is the first document required to initiate a project. The Project Mandate is considered to be a pre-project document; it encapsulates the ideas and basic information that is available at this point.

This project, being of extremely short duration and of closely defined scope, will not be managed within a formal project management framework. However, this project mandate has been prepared to provide a defining document to which partners can sign up, and under which the project (up to and including the production of a Strategic Outline Case (SOC)) may be delivered.

Contents

1. Purpose
2. Authority Responsible
3. Project Definition
4. Background
5. Project objectives
6. Project scope and exclusions
7. Constraints and assumptions
8. Quality expectations
9. Interfaces
10. Business Case Summary and Outline
11. Associated Documents
12. Proposed Executive and Project Manager
13. Project Management Team Structure
14. The customer, user(s) and any other known stakeholders
15. Other Information
16. Role Descriptions
17. References

Authority Responsible

The Chief Fire Officers of the three fire and rescue services within the Thames Valley area, being Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service are jointly and collectively responsible for approving the project, budget and resources.

Project Definition

The project will undertake a comprehensive scoping and feasibility study and produce a Strategic Outline Case (SOC), the precursor to an Outline Business Case (OBC), for a formal collaborative project to develop and deliver a shared fire and rescue service emergency call handling, mobilising and resource management function for the Thames Valley area or whatever larger configuration may be justified on the basis of a full business case. The project will deliver the SOC for consideration by the relevant partners by the end of April 2011 in order to coincide with the publication of the outcomes of the DCLG consultation on "The future of fire and rescue control services in England".

Background

Since late 2003 the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and predecessor departments have been undertaking a project known as the FiReControl project that was to have delivered a resilient national (England) network of nine regional control centres implementing common, enhanced technology and delivering efficiencies. The project was "mandated" through the Fire and Rescue Service National Framework which has the status of statutory guidance. The project was cancelled by the Minister for Fire on 20 December 2010 having failed to deliver against its objectives. During the life of the project most fire and rescue authorities, including those in the Thames Valley have limited investment in their emergency call management, mobilising and resource management functions to what has been absolutely necessary to ensure operational continuity and the discharge of statutory functions. The notable exception being Buckinghamshire, which has through necessity, re-located their Control and introduced a new mobilising and resource management system (MRMS) in 2009.

Following cancellation of the FiReControl Project, the DCLG have published a 12 week statutory consultation on "The future of fire control services in England" which concludes on 8th April 2011. Pending the outcome of this consultation it is already clear that fire and rescue services will, to a large extent, determine the future requirements necessary to discharge their statutory functions under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004.

Irrespective of the outcomes of the DCLG consultation, the government's Comprehensive Spending Review 2010, subsequent Local Government Finance Settlement 2011-12 and the current review of Formula Grant create a challenging economic environment for fire and rescue authorities. It has become essential to identify and deliver efficiencies in the way in which services are managed whilst maintaining or improving the service that the public receive.

The efficient operation of the emergency call handling, mobilising and resource management activity within the fire and rescue service has been subject to review and scrutiny for more than ten years since the government commissioned consultants Mott MacDonald to undertake a study 'The Future of Fire Service Control Rooms and Communications in England and Wales' (April 2000)". It is indisputable that, taking into account the primary activity of a fire and rescue service control room alone, there is currently an extremely wide range of relative efficiency (based on recognised metrics of calls and incidents per head of control room staff). This suggests scope for efficiency arising from the combination of a number of control rooms handling relatively few calls into larger operational units. In all but the largest of fire and rescue service control rooms there is scope to achieve greater efficiency through the integration of non-core activities that can be undertaken by control room staff whilst remaining immediately available to respond to core activity demands when required.

Unlike the Police and Ambulance Services, the fire and rescue service is experiencing an established and continuing downward trend in demand for emergency response services with a corresponding reduction in the call volumes and incidents being managed by our control

rooms. It is not uncommon for fire and rescue services to be dealing with in excess of 40% less demand than five years ago. Much of this reduction can be attributed to successful strategies for fire prevention and the reduction of unwanted fire signals. It would seem unlikely that the current downward trend can be continued indefinitely, there would equally seem to be no reason to believe that current or even lower levels of demand could not be maintained in the future.

Traditionally, emergency call management and mobilising systems and infrastructure were kept entirely separate from non-mission critical ICT systems and infrastructure for resilience and business continuity reasons. Advances in technology now mean that, with appropriate safeguards, the two can safely be combined leading to real business benefits, efficiency and optimum return on investment.

The greatest weakness in the traditional model of fire and rescue call handling, mobilising and resource management systems originate from their stand alone nature, falling back to secondary facilities within the same organisation. This creates difficulties in overflow call management during peak or spate conditions and limitations in the resilience of fallback arrangements. Fewer, joint control rooms, whilst more efficient, also increase the scale of the potential impact of these weaknesses. Additionally there is a longstanding recognition that an absence of intraoperability (fire – fire) and interoperability (fire – police – ambulance) has created barriers to overcoming these issues. These barriers now need to be overcome in order to deliver resilient and efficient control room services.

Project objectives

The Project will:

- Explore the scope for initiating a collaborative emergency call handling, mobilising and resource management function.
- Ascertain the feasibility of establishing a collaborative emergency call handling, mobilising and resource management function.
- Explore resilience issues and options for providing resilience in emergency call management capacity and fallback arrangements.
- Produce a Strategic Outline Case (SOC) for approval for establishing a collaborative project to develop future emergency call handling, mobilising and resource management function.
- Complete and present the deliverables by the end of April 2011.
- The costs of the project will rest where they fall and be met from within existing budgets.
- The resources required to complete the project will be satisfied from within existing FRS resources and will be allocated on the basis of the priority and timeframe of this project. Each FRS will provide personnel with the necessary skills, knowledge, experience and access to information to facilitate the delivery of the project.
- The deliverables will be sufficiently comprehensive and of a quality necessary to inform strategic decision making in relation to establishing a formal collaborative delivery project.

Project deliverables

- Strategic Outline Case (see attached reference document “The Strategic Outline Case”)
- Presentation pack to support the Strategic Outline Case – a presentation pack to support the presentation of the SOC to the relevant management teams and fire authorities.
- Joint, speculative response to the DCLG Consultation “the future of fire and rescue control services in England” (to be properly approved as required by each fire and rescue authority by 7th April 2011) – a speculative response to the CLG consultation registering our collective interest in receiving government support for a subsequent collaborative delivery project to provide a joint emergency call management,

mobilising and resource management function within the Thames Valley or larger area.

Project scope and exclusions

The scope of the collaboration is based, as a minimum, on collaboration between the three fire and rescue services within the Thames Valley Area

The scope will include the investigation of other potential collaborative partners from:

- Other fire and rescue services beyond but adjoining the Thames Valley area
- Other blue light emergency services operating within the Thames Valley area

Explore the scope of appropriate activities, beyond the core activities (those involved in emergency call management, mobilising and resource management) that could be undertaken alongside the core activities:

- On behalf of the partners in the collaboration
- On behalf of others on a client/provider basis

Explore the potentially viable options within the market for technology solutions that will support the project objectives.

Explore the extent to which the technology and infrastructure required to facilitate the core activities can provide the basis for wider business improvements, efficiencies and shared services within and between the collaborating partners.

Constraints and assumptions

This project is purely exploratory/investigative in nature leading to the production of a Strategic Outline Case (SOC) for a larger, formally constituted business change project.

In order to be in a position to benefit from any additional funding or assets available from central government that might be announced at the conclusion of the consultation "The future of fire and rescue control services in England", this project must report by the end of April 2011

There is no separate budget for this project and all costs must be met from within currently agreed budgets

There are no staff resources dedicated to the delivery of this project. All project work must be prioritised against and carried out alongside the normal work commitments of those involved

This scope of this project falls short of that required in order to develop an Outline Business Case (OBC). It is limited to the development of a Strategic Outline Case (SOC) on which an OBC could be developed at the outset of any business change project initiated as a result of this project.

The SOC is a scoping and planning document, designed to:

- establish the strategic context and need for the project
- identify key dependencies between the project and other developments
- identify the view of main stakeholders and gatekeepers and the position of potential public sector partners and other potential partners
- identify a wide range of viable options for meeting the service objectives
- appraise the relative efficacy of the options and their affordability and, where feasible, identify a short-list for more rigorous assessment at the OBC stage
- identify the critical success factors for developing and implementing the project with emphasis on risk management and benefit realisation
- identify what further work needs to be undertaken to inform the development of the OBC and the procurement process.

Quality expectations

The deliverables must be of a quality that will underpin and facilitate strategic decision making and if appropriate, financial commitment to a full business change project

Interfaces

By the very nature of this project the key interfaces for this project will be between the partner's strategic representatives and key contacts in other, potential partners

Business Case Summary and Outline

The three fire and rescue services within the Thames Valley area each operate their own control rooms with in house fallback arrangements, each providing limited resilience. The level of emergency calls taken and incidents managed by any one of the three control rooms falls a long way short of what could be considered to be optimal or efficient use of resources. It is anticipated that the combined cost to the tax payer of providing these control rooms is in excess of £3.5m per annum. Also within the Thames Valley area there are two police control rooms and two ambulance control rooms also taking emergency calls and managing incidents for their respective organisations. Whilst Buckinghamshire has recently replaced its mobilising and resource management system (MRMS) and associated technologies, both Oxfordshire and Royal Berkshire fire and rescue services are continuing to support outdated MRMS and some of the associated technology and equipment. There is scope across all three fire and rescue services to implement enhanced control room functionality and introduce more efficient ways of working that will enhance performance. There is clear potential through a collaborative project to realise significant efficiency savings, optimise return on investment and deliver performance enhancements. A collaborative control room would provide the basis for significantly enhanced operational interoperability, aligned operational procedures and greater shared use of operational assets; it would also provide a platform for further collaborative initiatives including procurement, asset management and training.

Associated Documents

DCLG Consultation – "The future of fire and rescue service control services in England"

SE FiReControl Post Project Report

'The Future of Fire Service Control Rooms and Communications in England and Wales' (April 2000)

The Future of Fire & Rescue Service Control Rooms in England & Wales - Update 2003

Proposed Executive and Project Manager

The Project Executive will be jointly held by DCFO Olaf Baars for RBFRS, DCFO Colin Thomas for OFRS and ACFO Jason Thelwell for BFRS.

The project will be jointly managed by Bryan Morgan and Jon Ball for RBFRS, Mat Carlile and Tony Lewis for OFRS and Marie Crothers for BFRS.

Project Management Team Structure

Due to the limited lifespan of the project the above nominees will comprise the project team at this stage.

The customer, user(s) and any other known stakeholders

The Customer: The Chief Fire Officers of the respective Services, Fire Authority Members, Cabinet Officers and Portfolio Holders for Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service.

The User: The fire and rescue services of Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Royal Berkshire.

Other Stakeholders: Relevant staff, relevant trade unions, partner agencies (particularly Cat 1 responders as defined by the Civil Contingencies Act 2004) the Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum.

Full stakeholder analysis will be mapped as part of the SOC.

References

The Strategic Outline Case” – A technical note that explains, defines and provides guidance on the production of a SOC.