

# COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

12 JUNE 2017

County Durham and Darlington  
Fire and Rescue Authority



## EMERGENCY SERVICES MOBILE COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAMME (ESMCP) UPDATE

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### REPORT OF DEPUTY CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

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#### PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. This report provides members with an update on the Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP).

#### BACKGROUND

2. Members have received previous reports explaining how the ESMCP will replace the existing communications service delivered by Airwave with a new national mobile communication service for the three emergency services and the other organisations that currently use Airwave.
3. The new system will be called the Emergency Services Network (ESN) and it will take advantage of the latest mobile technologies to provide national critical voice and broadband data services. It is a cross-government programme hosted by the Home Office (HO).
4. Whilst there is an expectation that the Service will move onto the ESN, as there is no alternative option available that could provide the interoperability or resilience required; the Authority has not yet entered into a final legal agreement to use the network. However, the Authority has agreed the Services 'intent' to move to the ESN and has 'signed up' to a number of elements of the programme. This paper details the current position relating to these elements and the funding arrangements that have been agreed as a result of this commitment.

#### CURRENT AGREEMENTS BETWEEN COUNTY DURHAM AND DARLINGTON FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE (CDDFRS) AND THE ESMCP

5. The elements of the programme that the Service has currently signed up to are:
  - Confirmation of transition to ESN – this was signed by the Chief Fire Officer (CFO) in March 2016 which confirmed that we would transition to the ESN subject to the local funding and the in-year costs of operating the ESN being in line with the information and indicative figures provided in the Sign Off Pack.
  - ESMCP short form framework terms and conditions – signing this provides the Service with the facility to utilise a framework to procure services and have access to the network provision, under a call off contract. Signing this does not legally commit the Service to place any business with the supplier.
  - ESN Usage conditions – there were two elements to this; the first required the Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO) to confirm that the Service would commit to the compliance statement relating to security of the network, agree to have the

appropriate policies and procedures in place, and agree to be audited. This element was signed. The second element required the Accreditor / Information Security Officer to confirm we were compliant with the security requirements laid down in the ESN Code of Practice and ESN Code of Connection (CoCo). This element has not been signed as CoCo requirements have not yet been agreed therefore we are not in a position to state whether we are compliant.

- Direct Network Service Provider (DNSP) – this relates to the ground based network links that will provide the connection between the Services control room and the ESN network. The Service DNSP requirement information has been validated which will now trigger the order process.

## FUNDING

6. Funding for fire and rescue services to implement the necessary work and procure the equipment to enable them to transition onto the ESN is split between two general areas; regional / local transition costs i.e. payment of staff seconded onto the project e.g. ESN coordinator, ICT staff, etc. and costs for network rental, new equipment purchase and existing equipment upgrades.
7. CDDFRS are the lead authority in the region for the ESMCP; therefore; funding allocated for regional and local transition support is provided to us for distribution to the other Services. Funding to support procurement of ESN equipment or remedial works to ensure IT equipment is upgraded to support the new network is provided to Services individually. To date the following funding has been received:

Date	Regional	CDDFRS	Purpose
09/2015	£18,920		Regional transition support. Funded an interim regional coordinator post
06/2016	£56,163	£52,248	Regional / Local transition support. Funds the regional coordinator post and individual Service staff resources.
03/2017		£284,566	ICT Health check remedial action, ICCS upgrades, DNSP installation and 24 month rental.
03/2017	£100,000		To be utilised for additional regional project support, regional training, vehicle fit out etc.

8. The local transition support funding for the expected duration of the project was agreed in the initial outline business case and to date the amounts allocated to the individual Services in the region have been in line with expectations. The £100,000 regional local transition support received in March is additional to the funding previously agreed and is in recognition that the project timescales have been extended.
9. Currently we are in discussion with the HO regarding the funding allocated (£284,566) to enable us to upgrade our IT / Control systems to ensure they are ESN compatible. The funding received so far was based on estimates from our hardware / software suppliers as exact figures were not available within the timescales the HO set. Subsequent to the estimates being submitted and the funding received our suppliers have provided further additional costs. This situation has occurred in a number of other Services and we are in discussions with the HO currently to address this funding shortfall.

## TRANSITION TIMESCALES

10. As reported previously the expected dates for transition onto the ESN have changed; initially the target date for all emergency services to have transitioned onto the network was

December 2019. However, the ESMCP Board have informed the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) that the project is delayed by nine months until September 2020.

11. Under the original project plan regions would transition at different times with the north east expected to have completed transition by late 2018, however this will no longer be possible because of the delays in the programme. At this moment in time it is not possible to state when CDDFRS will have transitioned fully onto the ESN. A revised draft high level programme plan has been produced which has been consulted on with the user organisations (UOs) who will be the primary users of the network (Fire, Police and Ambulance) and issues were raised by the UOs regarding the timescales detailed within this plan. A further revision of this plan is not expected to be presented to the UOs until early summer; the agreement and publication of this plan will hopefully provide a clearer indication of when we will be expected to complete the transition.
12. The delay until September 2020 has highlighted a significant risk to continuing with the current Airwave communication system as an element of the network becomes obsolete in March 2020. The Home Office are engaged in commercial discussions with the various organisations involved in the provision of the Airwave network and they informed the PAC in April that they are confident that this issue can be dealt with. Further updates on how these discussion have progressed are due later in the year.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

13. Members are requested to **note** the contents of the report.

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