

9. Fire Control Resilience Review

Purpose of report

1. With the recent announcement of a further delay to the FireControl Project the earliest cut-over date for this Service is now March 2012. Whilst that project continues, this latest change in dates represents a substantial further risk for the Authority. This paper is designed to outline the issues and to seek to instruct the Chief Fire Officer to undertake actions to reduce the risks to a more acceptable level.
-

Recommendation

2. ***The Fire & Rescue Authority is recommended to instruct the Chief Fire Officer to identify options to eliminate, remove or mitigate the highlighted risks and to deliver a solution within the existing capital expenditure programme having particular mind towards:***
 - (i) ***Opportunities for strategic collaboration with neighbouring authorities***
 - (ii) ***Alternative possible locations***
 - (iii) ***Processes to enable procurement of a replacement Command & Control system.***

In making these recommendations, the Fire & Rescue Authority recognise the possible need for decisions that sit outside of the cycle of full Authority meetings and will support the Chief Fire Officer through use of its Urgent Decisions Committee if necessary.

Issues

3. Regional Control Project

The Government driven FiReControl project is designed to deliver regional fire control centres (RCC) to replace the existing FRS Controls. This project has been delayed by a further 10 months meaning that Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service is scheduled to cutover to the RCC in March 2012.

4. Command & Control System

The lifespan of the existing Command and Control mobilising system is finite and whilst there is a maintenance agreement, this in itself is not a control measure for the risk of breakdown or failure.

5. **Location**

The existing Fire Control room is located on the top floor of Worcester Fire Station, Copenhagen Street, Worcester. This is a 1940s building located in a city centre location with limited infrastructure resilience (eg Power), security or car parking.

6. **IRMP**

The Authority's IRMP and Asset Management Strategy identify that Worcester Fire Station requires replacement / relocation. The current occupancy including Fire Control is a significant block to these plans.

7. **System Fall-back**

In the event of catastrophic failure of the Copenhagen Street facility, secondary control at Droitwich can provide turn-out provision and basic command and control. The Service also has an informal and reciprocal arrangement with Shropshire FRS to provide basic turn-out facilities.

8. **Staff**

The current Control Room is staffed by personnel directly employed, recruited and trained by Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service. Consistent crewing on a 24-7 basis is achieved from a staff pool of 24. This number generally maintains a minimum of three on duty but relies on good-will to cover unforeseen shortfalls

9. **Corporate Risks**

The Authority's Corporate Risk Register has identified specific operational risks that have direct links to Fire Control:

Risk	Current level
Inability to maintain operational functionality of Fire Control	Risk High
FiReLink Project	Risk High
FiReControl Project Pre-cutover	Risk High
FiReControl Project Post-cutover	Risk High
Failure of key ICT or other infrastructure system	Risk High
Inability to attract and/or retain key individual or groups of staff	Risk High

Conclusion

10. To reduce and control the identified risks and to ensure strategic plans can be realised a number of options must now be considered. These include the relocation of Fire Control and the consideration of providing a new Command and Control mobilising system.

Appendices

Nil

Background papers

Nil

Contact Officer

Paul Hayden, Chief Fire Officer
(0845 1224454)
Email: phayden@hwfire.org.uk