

NFCC statement on ESN following Home Sec / Police & Fire Minister's announcement

The NFCC welcomes today's announcement from the Home Office that the decision to deliver the future Emergency Services Network (ESN) will be in an incremental way.

The ESN will provide the platform for future operational communications and will also provide a resilient and secure mobile broadband capability for the emergency services across Great Britain.

This incremental approach will require additional verification by specialists within Government before it can be formally endorsed by signing off the revised full business case, which is anticipated in early 2019

The NFCC Lead for Operational Communications, Chief Fire Officer Darryl Keen, said

"I'm pleased that the future of the Emergency Services Network is looking secure as it offers fantastic opportunities for the future. The Fire and Rescue Service has always believed that the ESN is the right direction of travel for emergency services communications. ESN products being available earlier should allow the emergency services to access many of the benefits and capabilities ahead of the full suite of products being available"

The NFCC Chair, Roy Wilsher, said

"I'm heartened to hear positive news for the future of the ESN as it forms a cornerstone of the NFCC's digital strategy. The ESN will encourage greater information sharing and collaboration between the emergency services. One of the capabilities of ESN, the ability to stream video and photographic images to firefighters on route to incidents, will no doubt assist in saving lives and all together should improve the outcomes for the communities we serve.

"The NFCC will continue to work with Government to achieve greater clarity on the actual costs of ESN for Fire and Rescue Services."

The NFCC has been supportive of the ESN from the very outset on the proviso that ESN is technically viable, affordable, and that it delivers the benefits intended.

It is anticipated that the first ESN products will be available in 2019, which following thorough testing and evaluation, will be available for front line deployment.

The announcement by the Home Office can be found at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-strategic-direction-for-the-emergency-services-network-esn>