



Emergency Service Mobile Communications  
Programme  
Fire Authority Update  
May 2015

## 1. Background

The Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP) is a national, Government-led programme, designed to provide effective operational communications systems for all emergency services and responders. As a replacement solution for the current Airwave system, the ESMCP outcomes will provide effective emergency services interoperability and enable enhanced integration between the services.

Current Airwave contracts for fire and rescue services are due to expire at the end of 2016. The Government is seeking to extend these contracts until the completion of ESMCP. This will ensure continuity until new system cut-over can be achieved. At this stage we anticipate that Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire & Rescue Service (BMKFRS) will cut over to the new system in 2018. The Airwave product has served us well but it cannot provide us with broadband data solutions that we are becoming more and more reliant on. Technological advancements and enhancements since the advent of Airwave will enable a more functionally-rounded solution that will provide effective voice and data communications.

The programme has been in place for the last 24 months to look at the replacement of the Airwave network based on mobile network operators and public communication networks. The programme has defined the user requirements and recently gone out to tender for 4 lots. The results of the procurement process are not yet finalised with the shortlisted providers subject to a negotiation phase prior to final award. The below chart shows the current milestones the central programme team are working towards.

Milestone	Date
Outline Business Case approval	April 2014 ✓
OJEU and PQQ issued	April 2014 ✓
ITT (Invitation To Tender) issued	August 2014 ✓
Tender return	October 2014 ✓
Tender evaluation, negotiation and post BAFO evaluation	Winter 2014 to Spring 2015 ✓
Full Business Case approval	Summer 2015
Contract award	Summer 2015
Mobilisation	Summer 2015 to Late 2016
Transition starts	Early 2017

Extract from ESMCP project publication

## **2. Collaborative Approach**

The Full Business Case (FBC) is currently being drafted for the 3 Government Departments to sign off prior to the contract award and implementation phase. Following a request from DCLG last year, all transition groups were asked to set-up regional groups to facilitate assurance to the Programme Team and to communicate fully with each Fire & Rescue Service (FRS). Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service were already represented on the National Fire Customer group (FCG) at a technical level. However, Government and the Programme Delivery Team felt they needed senior management representatives present at this group to be able to feedback the more strategic concerns.

The South Central Transition Group (SCTG) was set-up with the initial Chairman from Oxfordshire and the following senior managers from the other four FRSs in the South Central group:

ACO Simon Furlong	- Oxfordshire FRS (Chairman)
GM Mick Keenan	- IoW FRS
AM Julian Parsons	- Buckinghamshire FRS
(T)ACO Mick Crennell	- Hampshire FRS
AM Paul Maynard	- Berkshire FRS (Deputy Chairman)

The purpose of this group was to review the project progress, feedback to senior management teams and respond with information requests to the FCG Project Team.

Like Airwave, as it is a common solution nationally, the system provided through ESMCP will be the same for all three Thames Valley FRS and delivered through the Thames Valley Fire Control Service.

## **3. Programme Update**

To date, the programme has progressed well with the user requirements, invitation to tender, tender process and evaluation all moving forwards with minimal slippage. Currently, the project team are evaluating the tenders for the following four lots:

Lot 1 – Delivery Partner – this will provide the programme management services

Lot 2 – User Services – this element will provide the end-to-end systems that support the Emergency Services Network (ESN)

Lot 3 – Mobile Services – which will provide an enhanced mobile communication service

Lot 4 – This was for radio sites with 40 defined remote areas, but due to the better than predicted proposed coverage of Lot 3 providers, Lot 4 has now been withdrawn from the programme.

Following the evaluation of the tenders, a short list of bidders will be pulled together followed by a short negotiation stage in advance of best and final offers. This will feed into the full business case which will seek approval on letting the contract Lots. This approval will be sought from the relevant sponsoring departments (DCLG for Fire, DH for the Ambulance Service and HO for Police) as well as the devolved governments.

Once approval has been given by the sponsoring departments/devolved governments, the contracts will be let and each FRS will be asked to sign-up to the contract. It is not clear when this will be required and I would expect full testing and functionality to be available prior to services being asked to sign any contractual agreement.

The DCLG Business Change Teams (Fire) have been liaising with the transition groups to discuss the elements which are out of scope from the central programme delivery.

These are:

- Local programme management
- Network accreditation (PSN or ESN)
- Control room transition
- Device procurement
- Vehicle installation
- Application requirements
- Training
- User readiness assessments

Each FRS will be required to identify their own needs and to resource or procure the delivery of each of these elements. It is clear from recent meetings with DCLG that they expect FRSs to collaborate on the delivery/procurement of these 'out of scope' elements where possible. Funding will be available for some degree to assist with these resources. DCLG have stated no additional funds will be available until the financial year 16/17.

#### **4. Transition Timeframe**

Due to the high costs of extending the Airwave contract, the timetable has been reduced from four years to two years with all groups retaining a 12 month transitional timeframe, but with each group starting the transition every two months. It is envisaged that the South Central area will start to move to the ESN in early 2018. The transition preparation work will need to commence at least 18–24 months prior to this and all Control Rooms will need to be able to access the replacement network once the first regions start the transition in January 2017.

This places additional pressure on the programme with the need for external contractors and local skillsets, to deliver the transition, all being contracted at the same time. The transition group has been given an initial implementation

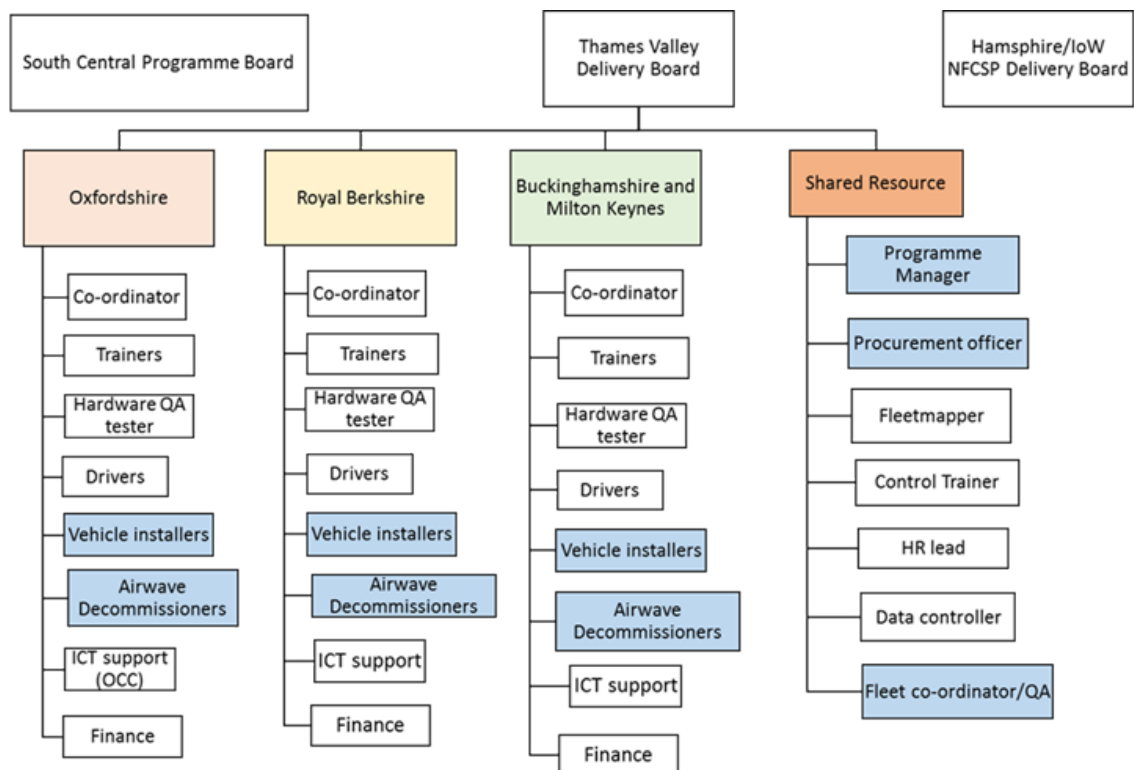
plan which details the out of scope areas - albeit until the Lot 1 delivery partners are on board, it can only be a 'best guess' plan.

The transition group has decided to look at each individual task area to identify which FRS has a requirement for the individual element and how it could be delivered e.g. as a whole group, with neighbouring groups (South West), or if it needs to be at an individual FRS level.

As an example, vehicle fit-out, which is required by all FRSs, could be delivered by sub-groups Hampshire/IoW and Berks and then Oxfordshire/Bucks. This would reduce the resource requirements to manage this part of the process. However, it could be determined that this is outsourced and one FRS leads on the procurement and implementation.

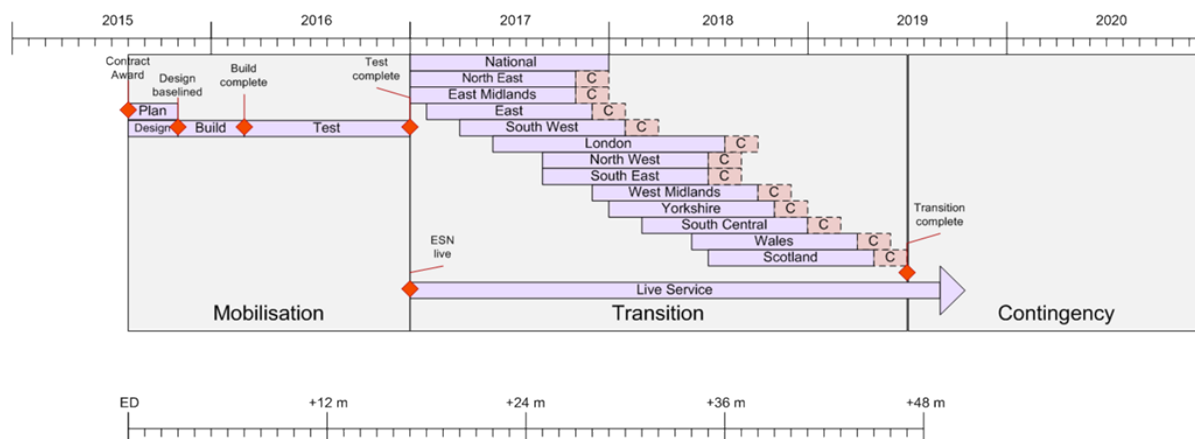
The Transition Group has fed back initial resource requirements to the programme team, which is based on the draft implementation plan. This is completely dependent on the technical solution and we have been clear that this is not our final resource requirement. Below is the proposed structure and requirement for Berkshire, Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and the Isle of Wight. Hampshire has submitted a combined resource requirement as part of their networked fire control project with FRS partners in the South West.

### Local Impact Assessment for South Central Fire & Rescue Services



<b>ESMCP Resourcing Requirements – Job Descriptions Post</b>	<b>Description/Responsibilities</b>	<b>FTE / timeframe</b>
Project Manager	Overall responsibility for all activities in relation to ESMCP Coordinating activities of FRS Coordinators	1 x 1.0 FTE / duration of programme
FRS Coordinator	Planning and overseeing all activities within each FRS	1 x 1.0 FTE per FRS / duration of the programme
Trainer	Providing Operational training for Stations/Officers	2 x 0.5 FTE per FRS / 9 months
Control Trainer	Providing Training to Control personnel	2 x 0.5 FTE TVFCS / 3 months
Hardware / QA Tester	Handover and testing of vehicles/installations	1 x 1.0 FTE per FRS / 6 months
Drivers	Moving vehicles to installation workshop and back to Station	2 x 1.0 FTE per FRS / 6 months
ICT Support	General support from ICT department in relation to interfacing/accreditation/installation designs/maintenance etc.	1 x 0.3 FTE per FRS / duration of programme
Fleet Support	General support from fleet department in relation to installation designs/vehicle availability/new vehicles	1 x 0.3 FTE per FRS / 18 months
Vehicle Installers	Installation of ESMCP equipment in vehicles based on 2 appliances and 2 cars/light vehicles per day. Use of apprentices recommended.	To be procured / 6 months
Procurement and Buying	Procurement/buying of all equipment/services	1 x FTE / 12 months
Training Coordinator	Coordinating all training activities and preparing training packages	To be shared with NFCSP
Fleetmapper	Production of NFCSP Fleetmap	1 x 1.0 FTE / 6 months
System Tester	Acceptance testing of Control interfaces and end to end testing of terminal equipment	1 x FTE / 6 months
HR Support	Recruitment of ESMCP posts	1 x 0.5 FTE / 3 months
Fleet Co-ordinator	Advise on vehicle designs and quality assure vehicle installations	To be procured
Commercial ICT Consultant/s	Advise on and accreditation of ESN links and other security matters	If required to be procured
Data Coordinator	Developing a common data package for the TVFCS mobilising system and ESMCP terminals	1 x 0.5 FTE / 9 months

Due to the timing of the transition for the South Central area, the Transition Group predicts there will be no significant resource requirements in the financial year 2015/16. They will continue to monitor this situation and report to each management team as more information is provided by the Programme. The below project plan extract shows the proposed phasing of transition to the ESMCP solution.



Extract from ESMCP Project Documentation

It can be seen from the above extract from ESMCP programme documentation that BMKFRS are scheduled for transition to ESMCP solution in 2018 (South Central timeline). The exact dates are not yet known. This provides us with the opportunity to learn from the progress of the FRSs in the regions that are scheduled to go live in the first tranche. This commences in 2017. These FRS will have to start preparatory work during 2016. This will provide the Transition Group the opportunity to have a watching brief with these FRS and monitor their progress and learn lessons from their projects. This should better inform any opportunities there may be for FRS and cross service collaboration to deliver the project in the most efficacious manner.

## 5. Business as Usual Funding

The Fire Finance Network is currently looking at the on-going grant funding of the core elements of ESMCP following its implementation. They are looking to equalise the funding discrepancies that were implemented following the introduction of Airwave with a range of central grant funding between 2%-98% for FRS.

This may cause funding pressures for some FRSs with a potential reduction in grant funding dependent on previous allocation. The overall user costs are not yet known, so this may be a lower overall cost and, therefore, a reduction in funding may not have an impact. It is impossible to know with any certainty the likely impact of BMKFRS revenue budget at this time. The current Airwave solution is considered to be very expensive and an update mobile communication

platform (utilising 4G mobile telephony technology) could be significantly more cost effective.

BMKFRS was recently written to by DCLG confirming that the current national arrangements for financing Airwave will be in place until 31 December 2019 during which the ESMCP project will be delivered.

Report Ends