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# Assurance Review 0

## Strategic Assessment

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National Fire Chief Council  
Emergency Services Mobile Communication Programme,  
Fire Service implementation programme



**Version number:** Final v01

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**Project Owner:** Ian Taylor

**Gateway Review dates:** 16/01/2018 to 19/01/2018

**Review Team Leader:**

Paul Monaghan

**Review Team Members:**

George Bird

John Massey

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This report is an evidence-based snapshot of the project's status at the time of the review. It reflects the views of the independent review team, based on information evaluated over a three to four day period, and is delivered to the Project Owner immediately at the conclusion of the review.

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## Delivery Confidence Assessment

### Delivery Confidence Assessment

**AMBER/RED**

The Review team finds that there is overwhelming support for the provision of a new secure Emergency Service Network (ESN) across the Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) community. Generally, the internal FRS governance is working well and held in high regard.

The augmented National Fire Chief Council (NFCC) team has been well received and internal FRS communication appears to be working well at local and regional level. The Review team also found there was good cross emergency service communication and liaison in the regions.

FRS stakeholders were taking a pragmatic, realistic and constructive approach and Regional Change Managers (RCMs) were largely effective and supported.

The principal concerns expressed in interviews in this review were that of communication from the programme, and concerns about costs, timelines and the lack of a meaningful ESMCP plan. In particular the lack of key information is having a detrimental effect on the ability of local planning activity and damaging confidence in the ESMCP.

Overall the Review Team consider the implementation programme to have an AMBER/RED Delivery Confidence assessment status, due to the current uncertainty about the status, scope and timing of the Emergency Services Mobile Communication Programme (ESMCP).

If we were solely judging the Delivery Confidence assessment status of readiness of the FRS to implement ESMCP we would have had a greater level of confidence in the likelihood of successful delivery.

The Delivery Confidence assessment RAG status should use the definitions below.

RAG	Criteria description
Green	Successful delivery of the project/programme to time, cost and quality appears highly likely and there are no major outstanding issues that at this stage appear to threaten delivery significantly
Amber/Green	Successful delivery appears probable however constant attention will be needed to ensure risks do not materialise into major issues threatening delivery
Amber	Successful delivery appears feasible but significant issues already exist requiring management attention. These appear resolvable at this stage and if addressed promptly, should not present a cost/schedule overrun

Amber/Red	Successful delivery of the project/programme is in doubt with major risks or issues apparent in a number of key areas. Urgent action is needed to ensure these are addressed, and whether resolution is feasible
Red	Successful delivery of the project/programme appears to be unachievable. There are major issues on project/programme definition, schedule, budget required quality or benefits delivery, which at this stage does not appear to be manageable or resolvable. The Project/Programme may need re-baselining and/or overall viability re-assessed

## Summary of report recommendations

The review team makes the following recommendations which are prioritised using the definitions below.

Ref	Recommendation	Critical /Essential / Recommended
1.	Carefully test the selected option to ensure it meets all service criteria.	Essential (following completion of reset)
2.	Review the new Communication and Engagement Strategy/Plan to ensure that it addresses the issues identified by the FRS.	Essential (following completion of the Communications Strategy/Plan)
3.	Develop a FRS national integrated risk management process to allow the escalation/de-escalation of key risks to the FRS.	Recommended
4.	Carry out scenario planning of reset options to assess risks, associated cost and benefits.	Essential (following completion of reset)
5.	Provide additional resources skilled in programme communications and risk management	Recommended

**Critical (Do Now)** – To increase the likelihood of a successful outcome it is of the greatest importance that the programme/project should take action immediately.

**Essential (Do By)** – To increase the likelihood of a successful outcome the programme/project should take action in the near future.

**Recommended** – The programme/project should benefit from the uptake of this recommendation.

## Background

### **The aims of the programme:**

The ESMCP was established to deliver the next generation of mobile communication for the emergency services. The new secure Emergency Services Network (ESN) will help keep people safe and provide the dedicated teams who work so hard protecting the public and saving lives with the most advanced communications system of its kind anywhere in the world.

### **The driving force for the programme:**

The scope of the ESN programme nationally will include 44 police forces, 50 fire and rescue services (including those in Scotland and Wales) and 13 Ambulance Trusts. A range of other civil contingency user organisations will also join ESN as second tier users. Overall this means that the system is likely to have approximately 300,000 users.

The strategic objectives of the new ESN are:

- Meeting Requirements (Better): Users are increasingly relying on commercial broadband data to host their applications. ESN will provide this as a core service with appropriate levels of security coverage, and availability
- Improved Flexibility (Smarter): A menu of services ranging from fully operational to administrative only will enable Users to select and pay for only those features that they require to deliver their services effectively. These services will in turn enable further service transformation, driving further efficiencies and improvements
- More Affordable (Cheaper): ESN will be based on a commercial mobile communications network that can be re-competed more regularly to exploit Market forces and take advantage of technological evolution

### **The procurement/delivery status:**

The HO ESMCP programme is currently reviewing options as part of a re-assessment of the full business case and is due to complete this in Autumn 2018.

### **Current position regarding Local Partnerships Reviews:**

This will be the first review undertaken on the Fire Service ESMCP implementation programme. Separate reviews are being undertaken by the Cabinet office on the ESMCP overall programme. LP previously undertaken on the Police Service Implementation programme in June 2017.

## Purposes and conduct of the Review

### **Purposes of the Review**

The primary purposes of a Local Partnerships Review 0 are to review the outcomes and objectives for the programme (and the way they fit together) and confirm that they make the necessary contribution to the authorities overall strategy.

Appendix A gives the full purposes statement for an Assurance Review 0.

### **Conduct of the Review**

This Local Partnerships Assurance Review 0 was carried out from 17 January 2018 to 19 January 2018 at 18 Smith Square Westminster. The team members are listed on the front cover.

The people interviewed are listed in Appendix B.

The Review Team would like to thank Ian, Rowena, Nick and Sarah for their support during the review and the openness of interviewees and the FRS programme team, which contributed to the Review team's understanding of the Programme and the outcome of this review

## Findings and recommendations

### 1: Programme scope and stakeholders

The Review team was advised that the Home Office has decided to re-assess options and carry out a full review of the Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP) business case which is due to be completed in Autumn 2018. As part of this there will be a full reset of the programme plan and communication plan. It has also been decided to re-visit the options appraisal. All this will have a significant effect on the FRS preparation for implementation and wider emergency services planning and approach. We did not interview senior Home Office representatives from the funding sponsor body so are unable to comment on the ability to transfer risk and accountability from the Home Office to FRS's as ESMCP nears completion, nor comment on the broader aspirations and capability of the Emergency Services Network. It will be important in any re-assessment to ensure that all potential options are considered.

We understand a number of options are actively being considered as part of a current re-assessment of the ESMCP. One option the programme team is considering is an incremental approach to delivery to take advantage of those areas of the programme that are well advanced e.g. data. It will be important to ensure that the selected option is consistent with the original user requirement and meets the Service Acceptance Criteria.

It is clear that the Firelink [Airwave] contract will now need to be extended for a protracted period and this could result in a period of dual running. If so this will inevitably incur unanticipated costs and at this stage it is unclear how these will be met and by whom. The selected option will need to be carefully tested against affordability criteria.

#### **Recommendation 1**

**Carefully test the selected option to ensure it meets all service criteria.**

If an incremental approach to rollout is adopted this will increase complexity. It will be particularly important for any future definition of the Mobilisation and Transition phases. The processes for risk transfer from Programme to Service business as usual needs to be clearly defined and agreed. This is to ensure efficient and effective treatment of operational risk and enable exploitation of the new ESN service.

The Review team understands that the Home Office Programme team is currently undertaking a review of Communication and Engagement arrangements. This is welcomed as communication was a major area of concern of the majority of people interviewed in this review. It will be important to consider the user community views in any review of programme communications.

There are numerous informal communication interfaces between the programme and the FRS community. This is creating confusion within the FRS community on a range of programme issues including the scope of the current reassessment of the business case and options.

We also were aware that different approaches were being adopted to communicate with the three emergency services which was also a source of potential concern.

We are also advised information requests from the programme do not appear to be co-ordinated leading to pressure on limited user regional and local resources.

One of the main issues raised was the lack of a current, realistic and detailed ESMCP plan to allow FRS to complete meaningful costed and resourced implementation plans. Currently there appear to be a number of barriers to communication. The impact of these barriers results in a lack of coordination and consistency of messages when issued to the FRS community. This has an effect on limited FRS resources at local level and in reducing confidence in the programme.

**Recommendation: 2**

**Review the new Communication and Engagement Strategy/Plan to ensure that it addresses the issues identified by the FRS.**

**3. Review of current phase**

The FRS community appear to be well prepared for the transition approach and in most cases resource is in place. The current status of the ESMCP programme together with competing demands on the service will inevitably lead to a reassessment where local teams could be better tasked/used or stood down during the inevitable programme pause in delivery. There will be a lead time in reforming teams when the ESMCP plan becomes available and priorities change which will need to be built into any future planning, financial and risk management considerations.

There have been some changes to the programme with the introduction of a User Readiness team along with revised roles for ESMCP Transition Managers (ETMs) and Regional Change Managers (RCMs). The changes to the ETM role has been broadly welcomed by the FRS user community but there remains a potential for significant overlap of programme and user roles and responsibilities which may need further consideration.

**4: Risk management**

Each FRS region maintains and reports to the Programme its risk and issues. There is a need to develop a common method to collate and analyse the FRS risks captured and a coherent escalation route at FRS national level for risks that are likely to impact the programme.

**Recommendation: 3**

**Develop a FRS national integrated risk management process to allow the escalation/de-escalation of key risks to the FRS.**

Current re-visiting of the business case by the HO programme team provides an opportunity of the FRS user community to influence the selection of the preferred option and ensure that it is operationally acceptable and identify potential quick wins. It will be important for the FRS to consider how incremental deployment might be exploited operationally. This might result in a proposal to the programme.

In order to prepare effectively and de-risk the selected option, it would be prudent for the FRS to carry out scenario planning of the intended options, with the intention of identifying risk threats and risk opportunities. In addition, wider cost implications will need to be quantified, such as Airwave assets may have to be assessed in terms life expectancy to ensure that their longevity is aligned to the selected option. It will also be essential to revisit and revise the benefit profiles. To allow this it would be beneficial



for the FRS national user representation to have direct access to, and control of, specialised resources skilled in programme communication and programme risk management planning.

**Recommendation: 4**

**Carry out scenario planning of reset options to assess risks, associated cost and benefits.**

**Recommendation: 5**

**Provide additional resources skilled in programme communications and risk management.**

Any incremental approach that involves dual running (Airwave and ESN services working in tandem) will require careful analysis to ensure that it is operationally robust, affordable, and the implication for Mobilisation and Transition are understood. A number of those interviewed expressed concern that dual running would be an expensive option and delaying roll out would put further pressure on budgets.

The responsibility for the FRS has been transferred from the then Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) to the Home Office. The status of the “section 31” grant funding appears to be unclear to some stakeholders. We are advised that guidance has been provided on the new arrangements, but this needs to be further clarified and reinforced.

Concern was expressed that there is a lack of clarity of how ESN ‘in-life’ national contracts will be managed. This issue will become more complex with the potential introduction of an incremental approach. Roles and responsibilities for the future contract management need to be carefully explained and implications understood by the FRS

**6: Readiness for next phase**

The FRS has shown a very pragmatic and realistic approach in response to the changing environment within the programme. The Review team found a FRS community who are keen to engage and support the implementation of ESN. There is an opportunity through ESCMP reset for a more effective engagement of the FRS user organisations which will ensure the most effective and efficient option is developed and selected.

We are advised that some elements of ESN could be ready in late 2018/ early 2019. There may be a range of benefit in early adoption, such as proving coverage, more effective trials, proving robustness of technology, exploitation of data, and building confidence for future development.

We understand that an ESCMP Management Board has been formed to reduce the pressure on the Programme Board and create a forum for more detailed scrutiny and carrying out day-to-day management. This new Board is intended to allow business oversight of developing proposals.

There is concern that trials and mobilisation plans are being developed without sufficient early user involvement which may lead to problems. The Review team suggests earlier involvement of the FRS and wider emergency user community in the development of proposals would be beneficial to reduce the risk of nugatory work and will harness the evident commitment that the user community have for ESN. Going forward, as the programme gets closer to transition, it will be important that FRS can respond quickly to programme proposals. This may require adjustments to FRS governance to speed up decision making.

**Programme Title:** Fire Service ESMCP implementation programme

**Local Partnerships Assurance Number:** [LP537G000](#)

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**The next Local Partnerships Gateway Review is expected after the completion of the ESCMP revised business case has been issued to the emergency services use community in later 2018.**

## APPENDIX A

### **Purpose of a Local Partnerships Review 0: Strategic assessment**

- Review the outcomes and objectives for the programme (and the way they fit together) and confirm that they make the necessary contribution to Authorities overall strategy.
- Ensure that the programme is supported by key stakeholders.
- Confirm that the programme's potential to succeed has been considered in the wider context of the Authorities delivery plans and change programmes.
- Review the arrangements for leading, managing and monitoring the programme as a whole and the links to individual parts of it (e.g. to any existing projects in the programme's portfolio).
- Review the arrangements for identifying and managing the main programme risks (and individual project risks), including external risks such as changing business priorities.
- Check that financial provision has been made for the programme (initially identified at programme initiation and committed later) and that plans for the work to be done through to the next stage are realistic, properly resourced with sufficient people of appropriate experience, and authorised.
- After the initial review, check progress against plans and the expected achievement of outcomes.
- Check that there is engagement with the market on the feasibility of achieving the required outcome.

## APPENDIX B

### Interviewees

NAME	ROLE
Ian Taylor	Assistant Chief Fire Officer ESMCP Business Change Lead (seconded to NFCC / ESMCP)
Phil Hales (phone interview)	Deputy Chief Fire Officer West Midlands
Kristina Evans	ESMCP Deputy Director of Mobilisation
Simon McCutcheon	Motorola Solutions Limited
Sarah Ormerod	ESMCP Deputy Director Coverage
Becca Jones	ESMCP Transition Director
Steve Foye	Deputy Chief Fire Officer Royal Berkshire FRS
Darryl Keen (phone interview)	Chief Fire Officer and Director of Community Protection Hertfordshire FRS and NFCC Operational Communications Lead
Derek Smith	Regional Programme Manager West Midlands
Steve Whatson	ESMCP Deputy Director of Transition
Paul Netherton (phone interview)	Police Senior Reporting Officer South West Region
Julie Grosert	Group Manager NFCC ESMCP Regional Coordination Manager East of England and London
Dave McGarry	London Fire Brigade Programme Manager
Lucy Baker	EE Mobile Network
John Pratt	Strategic lead and SRO for Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service (FRS)
Dean Fell	ESMCP Head of Communications
Chris Lucas	Ambulance Radio Programme BCAM (Business Change and Assurance Manager)
Dominic Hurdall	ESMCP Programme Reset Team
Richard De Kerbrech	ESMCP User Readiness Lead
Ian Julian	Regional Programme Manager (RPM) South West
Roy Wilshire	Chair of National Fire Chiefs Council
Charles Loft	Local Government Association (LGA) Officer
Ian O'Donovan	Northampton FRS Programme Manager
Debbie Powell	ESMCP Transition Portfolio Lead
Dale Harrison	Group Manager NFCC ESMCP Regional Coordination Manager North West
Liz Unwin	Regional Police Programme Manager South East and South Central region
Richard Morris	Police Business Change Lead for ESMCP
Sandra Fox (phone interview)	Scotland FRS representative
John Dickie (phone interview)	Scotland FRS representative
Andrew Mosely (phone interview)	Scotland Technical Lead for FRS
Richie Prendergast (phone interview)	Assistant Chief Fire Officer South Wales Fire who sits on JESG (Wales) ESMCP Strategy Group
Dave Topping	ESMCP Control Room Delivery Manager
Jeremy Kemp	ESMCP Senior Enterprise Architect- Devices
Paul Flaherty	Area Manager, South East Regional Lead

<b>NAME</b>	<b>ROLE</b>
Martin Reohorn	Finance Director Hereford and Worcester FRS and Fire Finance Network Lead for ESMCP
Lesley Troke	NFCC Collaborative Procurement also sits within LFB
Nick Carroll	Transition Support Coordinator
Mark Mulcahy	Delivery Partner Transition Support Lead
Jane Reynolds-Smith	Area Manager, NFCC ESMCP Business Change and Assurance Manager (BCAM) (Seconded to NFCC/ESMCP)
Kristian Irving	Delivery Partner Transition Lead
Ben Bush	West Yorkshire Fire Service
Nick Smith	Strategic lead and SRO for West Yorks FRS
Dan Stephens (phone interview)	Chief Fire Officer Merseyside Fire and Rescue service and chair of NFCC Operations Coordination Committee
Mark Jones (phone interview)	Merseyside FRS Programme Manager