



# Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

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**Meeting and date:** Executive Committee, 13 July 2022

**Report title:** Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme

**Lead Member:** Councillor Matthew Walsh

**Report sponsor:** Anne-Marie Carter, Head of ICT, Transformation and PMO

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**Action:** Noting

**Recommendations:** That this update is noted

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## **Executive summary:**

This paper provides Members with an update regarding the latest developments in the Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP). The last briefing was provided to Members in November 2021.

The ESMCP Full Business Case was formally approved by the Government's Major Projects Review Group (MPRG) on Friday 23 July 2021. A briefing regarding the Full Business Case has now been released by the Programme and can be seen at Appendix A.

Members may remember that a Market Investigation Referral made by the Competitions and Markets Authority (CMA) in relation to the supply of the Airwave network and ancillary services in Great Britain. The 'Provisional Decision' report is due to be released in June 2022, progress will be reported in future papers.

In May 2021, the Home Office requested that an Independent Assurance Panel (IAP) to undertake a review of the Local user Resource model that forms the basis of the funding support provided by the Home Office to fire services to transition to the new Emergency Services Network (ESN). A detailed examination into how Services have spent their resource funds during 2020/21 is to be carried out by the Home Office Fire Funding Policy (FFP) team. The South Central region was visited on 18 May 2022.

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## **ESMCP Full Business Case**

Members will recall from the last briefing paper that the Full Business Case (FBC) was formally approved by the Government's Major Projects Review Group (MPRG) on Friday 23 July 2021.

This was a key milestone and provided the cross-government support to move the programme into the delivery phase, however this is conditional on the programme meeting the challenges of cost, coverage scope and resilience.

This version of the FBC forecasted two possible delivery dates based on the confidence levels of the Programme being delivered on time. These dates were known as P50 (50% confidence level) which was the preferred option and forecast the Airwave switch off date at the end of 2026, and the other was P90 (90% confidence level), which forecast Airwave switch off mid-2027. The programme expected the pace to pick up to meet the roll-out of ESN, with transition being indicated as commencing no earlier than Spring 2024 to enable Airwave switch-off by the end of 2026.

The last paper to Members talked of an expected briefing regarding the Full Business Case. This has now been released and can be found at Appendix A. As time has passed, some detail such as governance and spending information has changed and therefore it may not perfectly align to the Programme today. It is worth noting that this is a summary of the present FBC and will be subject to review as the Programme moves forward.

### **Competition and Markets Authority (CMA)**

The last briefing talked of the CMA Market Investigation Referral made in relation to the supply of the Airwave network and ancillary services in Great Britain.

The timeline for delivery of the investigation findings is as follows:

- *June 2022 - Provisional Decision report*
- *July 2022 - Response hearings Final deadline for all parties' responses before final report*
- *September 2022 - Publication of final report*
- *24 April 2023 - Statutory deadline*

Currently the impact this could have on the Programme is not fully understood and pending the outcome, the Programme will be releasing communications shortly after the report is published.

### **Planning**

The expected delivery of the Integrated Programme Plan (IPP) v5.0 by March 2022 has been delayed. The Programme is working with each of the internal workstreams to re-baseline their plans and hence the delivery date for IPP v5 is unknown. For reference, Fire and Rescue Services are awaiting the release of IPP v7.0 as this will show the dates each Service will be transitioning to the Emergency Services Network. The South Central team continue to work with the central NFCC team to refine their plans in line with information being made available.

A business change toolkit will be released later in the year which has been designed by the Assurance Partners who have already adopted aspects of the Emergency Services Network (ESN). The toolkit will lead teams through all the aspects of business change that had to be considered when implementing ESN. This will be a good opportunity for the SC team to begin to understand the wider picture with regards to business change.

### **Financial implications:**

### **Local User Resource funding**

It was reported previously that an Independent Assurance Panel (IAP) was established to provide assurance and advice regarding several key topics that affect the strategic direction of the ESMCP.

In May 2021, the Home Office requested the IAP to undertake a review of the Local User Resource (LUR) model that forms the basis of the funding support provided by the Home Office to fire services to transition to the new Emergency Services Network. One outcome of their report was a recommendation to establish an ESMCP Resources Board, which comprises representation from Home Office, the Programme, and the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC).

The Resources Board set up a Task and Finish Group chaired by the NFCC ESN Senior User, and their first task was to consider the roles of the NFCC led Regional Co-ordination Managers and the Programme Managers employed by each regional Board and how they can work together in a different way to deliver national work.

The resultant proposal approved through governance was for the Regional Programme Manager post to be removed from each region and the funding made available by this being redirected to supplement and boost the NFCC Central ESMCP team. This proposal has been agreed despite being contested by the South Central (SC) team.

One of the main concerns was the immediate unplanned increase workload on the Service Project Managers. To mitigate this, the SC team have met with the NFCC central team to propose a restructure with the inclusion of an additional Thames Valley Project Manager. This has been agreed in principle and the SC team have submitted a business case outlining this proposal to the Fire Funding Group and are awaiting their response. It is proposed that the current SC Regional Programme Manager who took on the role in December 2021, would then move into the additional Thames Valley Project Manager role to co-ordinate the SC delivery working with the Service Project Managers.

As the Programme falls under the direction of the Crime, Policing and Fire Group within the Home Office, changes have been made to its monitoring process for LTR spend for 2021/2022. These changes are being monitored by the treasurer for the SC region, however each service is required to make an individual return to the ESMCP Funding team rather than the regional approach that had previously been agreed.

The Home Office Fire Funding Policy (FFP) team will be carrying out a 'deep dive' investigation into how the resource funds of each region have been spent in year 2021/22. This is due to continual concerns raised by FFP with some of the claims for funding being made by regions, and the differences in the amounts being claimed. The South Central team claims for funding have always been monitored closely by the regional treasurer and worked on the principle that the team only claim for work done. As a result of this, the South Central region is recognised as being respectful to the principles to which the funding has been provided and had no concerns around the 'deep dive' process.

The 'deep dive' for the South Central region took place on 18 May 2022, where representatives from the SC Programme Board met with Emma Lawrence, Head of the Fire Funding & Resilience Team. The region has since received assurances that it is felt that there are robust governance processes in place and that the region has a 'clear grip

on the finances and how any claims can be evidenced'. The comment was made that 'this is what we want to see across England'. Since these assurances were received, a meeting of the Fire Customer Group has taken place, where the SC region have been asked to present to a future meeting on the approach being taken. One further outcome from the 'deep dive' meeting was that the business case to create a Thames Valley project manager has been approved. Infrastructure funding will continue to be directed through the Fire Directorate via a business case.

The expected in life costs for Fire and Rescue Services predicted in the FBC are still being monitored closely by the SC team so that the overall cost implication to the region when switching over to ESN is understood. Indication from early in-life modelling was, for the Thames Valley Fire and Rescue Services, the cost of ESN will increase compared to what is currently being paid for Airwave at a local level. The reality is that with any potential delay and the subsequent changes to the FBC because of this, the in life costs will be difficult to fully assess at this time, although continual work and discussions around the in-life costs have been taken to the Fire Finance Network from which the 'ESN costs' is a reference for one of the members.

### **Risk management:**

The South Central Programme team maintains a risk register on behalf of the South Central Programme Board. The Risk Register v24 was reviewed by the three TV FRS project managers in April 2022.

### **New risks:**

**ESMCP 044** – *Amber* – Capita Secure Solutions and Services (SSS) performance during and beyond corporate take-over by NEC resulting in poor progress in all elements of the SSS service (which provides the mobilising system to the TVFCS)

### **Risk changes:**

**ESMCP 010** – *Red to Black* – Due to delays already experienced within the Programme, reduced experience in managing the roll-out of the programme as retirement profile suggests experience from ESMCP, Vision system and Airwave delivery projects will be lost.

Probability *increased* from medium to very high due to current retirement profile – some or all the project managers may not be in post at the point of mobilisation

**ESMCP 013** – *Red to Amber* - Unable to fit out fire service vehicles

Impact and probability *reduced* from high to medium due to early fit hybrid approach of many services

**ESMCP 022** – *Green to Amber* - Correct funding for TVFCS upgrade work may not be achieved or delayed due to timescales for submission of estimates – Estimates provided 2017.

Probability *increased* from Low to High due to potential change in App and technical providers

**ESMCP 037** – *Red to Black* - Uncertainty regarding the cost of delivering the Full Business Case. 29/04 Timescales have not been met and will need to be revisited.

Probability *increased* from High to Very High due to current delays and potential revisit of the FBC

**ESMCP 041 – Amber to Red** - Timescales for TVFCS governance signoff for the spend for DCS upgrade mean that this approval will not be given until July 2022, ahead of Capita SSS order being placed and scheduled for completion by September 2022.

Probability and impact *increased* to High from Medium due to need for ESMCP board to agree funding for increased SSS costs and concerns regarding spend to SSS considering current performance

**ESMCP 043 – Green to Amber** - Funding shortfall in financial year 2022/23 onwards

Probability *increased* from low to medium due to no confirmation of existing funding being secure and the LUR review reviewing the current LTR model

#### **Legal implications:**

Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service have already signed up to the principles of the ESN. Officers will continue to monitor the progress of the Programme closely and will provide challenge to the process where it is felt necessary.

#### **Privacy and security implications:**

As the Programme remains in the 'Prepare' phase, there have been no privacy issues or security implications identified. This will remain under review, particularly when the Programme moves to the 'Mobilisation' phase.

#### **Duty to collaborate:**

This Authority remains an active participant of the South Central Transition Delivery arrangements. The governance and delivery models have now been established and Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service officers are involved at each level. The principle has been adopted that information is shared across all three South Central services and where appropriate, joint responses to work requests are submitted.

The South Central region is also working with the South East region and Thames Valley Police on activities such as the Coverage and Assurance work in order to achieve a consistent approach and effective use of the limited resources available.

#### **Health and safety implications:**

There are no health and safety implications perceived at this time. There is constant review of this and any issues that may arise in the future will be referred.

#### **Environmental implications:**

There are no environmental implications perceived at this time. There is constant review of this and any issues that may arise in the future will be referred.

#### **Equality, diversity, and inclusion implications:**

There have been no equality and diversity implications identified to date. As the programme progresses, further information, and a confirmed plan become available, then an impact assessment will be completed.

#### **Consultation and communication:**

The need to communicate and consult with all identified stakeholders is reviewed regularly. Once the Programme has entered its mobilisation and transition phases then regular communications will be established.

**Background papers:**

ESMCP Update, Executive Committee 17 November 2021

<b>Appendix</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Protective Marking</b>
A	ESMCP Summary of Full Business Case 23/07/2021	None