

SOUTH WEST REGIONAL MANAGEMENT BOARD

**M Pearson MCMI
CLERK TO THE BOARD**

**To: The Chair and Members of the
South West Regional Management
Board**

(see below).

**DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE
SERVICE HEADQUARTERS
THE KNOWLE
CLYST ST GEORGE
EXETER
DEVON
EX3 0NW**

Your ref :
Our ref : SWRMB/MP/SY

Date : 17 March 2008
Please ask for : Steve Yates
Email : syates@dsfire.gov.uk

Telephone : 01392 872200
Fax : 01392 872300
Direct Telephone : 01392 872329

SOUTH WEST REGIONAL MANAGEMENT BOARD

Wednesday 19 March 2008

A meeting of the South West Regional Management Board will be held on the above date, **commencing at 11.00hours in Conference Room B in Somerset House of the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters** to consider the following matters.

Mr. M. Pearson
Clerk to the Board

AGENDA

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 30 January 2008 attached (Page 1).

2. Items Requiring Urgent Attention

Items which, in the opinion of the Chairman, should be considered at the meeting as matters of urgency.

3. Declarations of Interest

Board Members are asked to consider items to be discussed as part of this meeting and declare any **personal/personal and prejudicial interests** they may have in any item(s) in accordance with their respective appointing Authority's approved Code of Conduct.

PART 1 – OPEN DEBATE

4. Workstreams Highlight Report

Report of the Secretary of the South West Chief Fire Officers Association (CFO Gunter - Dorset) (RMB/08/7) attached (Page 8).

5. Elected Member Development Opportunities

Presentation by Graham Saunders (Regional Programme Manager), Bob Ross (IDeA) and Cllr. David Wren.

6. Regional Fire Control Project – Creation of the Initial Staff Pool

- (a) Presentation from Mr Chris Perkins, PA Consulting, on proposals for the creation of the initial staff pool required for commencement of operations from the RCC;
- (b) Report of the South West Regional Project Director (DCFO Kemp – Devon & Somerset) (RMB/08/8) attached (Page 27).

7. Exclusion of the Public and Press

RECOMMENDATION that, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) to the Act, namely information relating to contemplated consultations in connection with labour relations matters between individual fire and rescue authorities and their employees.

PART 2 – ITEMS WHICH MAY BE CONSIDERED IN THE ABSENCE OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

8. Correspondence from South West Fire Control Service Ltd. on Regional Control Centre Staffing

- (a) Clerk to report on correspondence received (copy attached – Page 35);
- (b) South West Regional Project Director to report.

MEMBERS ARE REQUESTED TO SIGN THE ATTENDANCE REGISTER

Membership:-

Councillors Hughes (Chair)(Devon & Somerset), Roberts and Walker (Avon), Yeo (Cornwall), Mochnacz and Gordon (Devon & Somerset), Fox OBE DL (Dorset), Windsor-Clive (Gloucestershire) and Willmott (Wiltshire).

Substitute Members

The South West Regional Management Board provides for named substitutes for each of the Members. Named substitutes may attend all meetings subject to the following:-

- if attending in addition to the main Member, the named substitute may **NOT** vote and may only speak with the permission of the Chairman;
- if attending in place of the main Member, the named substitute may act as a full Member of the Board.

Access to Information

Any person wishing to inspect any minutes, reports or lists of background papers relating to any item on this agenda should in the first instance contact Mr. Yates on the telephone number shown at the top of this agenda.

SOUTH WEST REGIONAL MANAGEMENT BOARD

30 January 2008

Present:-

Councillors Walker (Vice-Chair) (in the Chair) and Roberts (Avon); Yeo (Cornwall); Gordon (Devon & Somerset); Jones OBE (Dorset); Windsor-Clive (Gloucestershire); and Willmott (Wiltshire).

Attending in accordance with Standing Order 3(2):-

Councillor Wren (Wiltshire).

Apologies:-

Councillors B. Hughes (Chair) and Mochnacz (Devon & Somerset); Fox OBE DL (Dorset).

RMB/27. Queen's New Year's Honours List

On behalf of the Board, Councillor Walker congratulated Chief Fire Officer Paul Young and Deputy Chief Fire Officer Robert Fyfe (both Devon & Somerset) on their awards of Commander of the British Empire and Queen's Fire Service Medal respectively in the Queen's 2008 New Years Honours List.

RMB/28. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 7 November 2007 were signed as a correct record.

RMB/29. Final Grant Settlement – Implications for Fire and Rescue Authorities

(An item taken in accordance with Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972.

The Chair determined that this issue should be considered by the Board as a matter of urgency to enable the Board to consider making representations linked to the final grant settlement for fire and rescue authorities in the region, which had only been announced following despatch of the agenda for the current meeting.

Chief Fire Officer Young (Devon & Somerset) commented upon the recent announcement by central government on the three year grant settlement (2008 – 2011) for fire and rescue authorities in the region. While certain authorities had fared better than others, it was still the case that all authorities within the region would face considerable difficulties in setting budgets, particularly for the next financial year. Pressures on spending could be exacerbated should certain costs, for example uniformed pay increases, rise excessively.

Following a debate on the issue, Councillor Gordon **MOVED** and Councillor Willmott seconded:-

“that, in light of the final grant settlements for fire and rescue authorities in the region announced recently by Communities and Local Government, and the subsequent likelihood of those authorities facing considerable budgetary pressures as a result of the settlements, the Board authorises the Clerk to make representations to the National Employers to seek to ensure that the July pay settlement for uniformed firefighters be set at a level consistent with the Government’s public sector pay policy”

Councillor Jones moved that the motion be **AMENDED** by the addition of the words “of increases not exceeding 2%” after the words “public sector pay policy”. Councillor Windsor-Clive seconded the amendment and Councillor Gordon, as mover of the original motion, indicated that he was prepared to accept the amendment.

Following a vote on the amended motion it was

RESOLVED that, in light of the final grant settlements for fire and rescue authorities in the region announced recently by Communities and Local Government, and the subsequent likelihood of those authorities facing considerable budgetary pressures as a result of the settlements, the Board authorises the Clerk to make representations to the National Employers to seek to ensure that the July pay settlement for uniformed firefighters be set at a level consistent with the Government’s public sector pay policy of increases not exceeding 2%.

RMB/30. Declarations of Interest

Councillors Willmott, Windsor-Clive and Yeo declared personal, but non-prejudicial, interests in relation to the item on Regional Control Centre Cost apportionment (Minute RMB/35 below refers) by virtue of their directorship (as appointed by their individual constituent fire and rescue authorities) of South West Fire Control Services Limited – the local authority controlled company with overall governance responsibilities for the south west Regional Control Centre.

RMB/31. Workstreams Highlight Report

The Board considered a report of the Lead Officer for the South West Chief Fire Officers’ Association (CFO Standing – Gloucestershire) (RMB/08/1) setting out progress made to date against the agreed set of milestones for delivering against the following workstreams:

- Equality and Diversity;
- Finance and Procurement;
- Human Resources Management and Development;
- Regional Control Centre;
- Strategic Planning (Performance Management);
- Service operations and resilience; and
- Community safety.

In general, good progress had been made across all workstreams.

No milestone highlight report was submitted for the Equality and Diversity workstream as it was in the process of undertaking a fundamental review of its work programme to assist the south west fire and rescue authorities (SWFRAs) meet the requirements of the National Equality and Diversity Strategy 2008-18. A key component of this review would concentrate on assisting SWFRAs secure Level 3 of the Equality Standard for Local Government, this being the standard by which the Audit Commission would judge FRAs on direction of travel.

The Human Resources Management and Development workstream was showing a number of "reds", however, in relation to predicted achievements for the Integrated Personal Development System (IPDS); the regional recruitment of wholetime firefighters; the implementation of Assessment and Development Centres (ADCs); and implementation of the regional disciplinary and grievance procedures. The first three of these were dependent upon bids for additional regional resources and it was hoped would be rectified following approval of the Board budget for 2008/09. The implementation of the regional disciplinary and grievance procedures was dependent upon completion of Equality Impact Assessments.

The capacity of workstream leaders and Members to take forward the agreed programme of work remained an issue. Each workstreams work programme and milestones would be reviewed and re-prioritised following agreement of the Board's budget for 2008/09 and publication of the final version of the National Framework 2008-11. The consequential changes to the Regional Business Plan would be submitted to a future meeting for approval.

Councillor Willmott reported on discussions on the Regional Control Centre (RCC) project held at a recent meeting of Regional Management Board Chairs. Communities and Local Government were still minded to issue a further version of the RCC Business Case in February 2008 although this would still not contain the pertinent financial and staffing data considered essential by many fire and rescue authorities to enable them to fully and properly evaluate the project. It was unlikely that the full version of the Business Case containing this information would be available until June of this year and the general view was expressed that there would seem little merit in issuing a further version of the case in February that did not add significantly to the information already held by fire and rescue authorities to date.

RESOLVED

- (a) that the progress against National Framework milestones, as set out in report RMB/08/1, be noted;
- (b) that the amendment to the Regional Business Plan equality and diversity objective to reflect that all south west fire and rescue authorities should achieve at least Level 3 of the Local Government Equality Standard by March 2010 (previously Level 2 by March 2010) be approved;
- (c) that it be noted that the Regional Business Plan would be updated to take account of the requirements of the National Framework 2008-11, the National Equalities and Diversity Strategy 2008-18 and the agreed Board budget for 2008/09;

- (d) that Councillor Willmott advise the Project Board of the view of the South West Regional Management Board that the proposed issue of a further version of the RCC Business Case in February 2008 would have little merit but rather that the next version to be issued should contain all relevant financial and staffing information not available to date.

(SEE ALSO MINUTES RMB/33 AND 34 BELOW).

RMB/32. Benefits Realised from Regional Collaboration to Date

The Board received for information a report of the Regional Programme Manager (Graham Saunders) (RMB/08/2) on savings to individual south west fire and rescue authorities and wider benefits realised from regional collaboration. The report identified a minimum of £3.950m savings in total to date secured across the region. Some of the benefits secured had been in the form of sharing best practice and developing policies on a regional basis. Implementation of the Regional Benefits strategy approved by the Board at its last meeting (Minute RMB/24 refers) would assist in the systematic collection of details of future savings and benefits.

RMB/33. Regional Management Board Budgets 2007/08 and 2008/09

The Board considered a report of the Treasurer (K. Woodward – Devon & Somerset) (RMB/08/3) on a revised budget requirement for 2007/08 and a proposed budget for 2008/09. The current constitution for the Board required that it should determine the amounts likely to be incurred by member authorities both collectively and individually for project and support costs for the forthcoming financial year.

The report identified a summary of variations to the approved 2007/08 budget resulting in an estimated net saving of £79,100 which it was proposed to carry forward to 2008/09 to provide funds for new spending. The proposed budget for 2008/09 included three items of new spending (relating to the continuation of the Regional Programme Manager post; project management support for the Regional Procurement Manager; and additional support for the Human Resource Manager) but did not include any costs associated with the Regional Control Centre on the basis that this would be funded both in 2007/08 and 2008/09 from New Burdens grant and would not require any contribution from constituent authorities. The gross proposed 2008/09 budget of £212,300 represented a cash increase of £41,100 over the current year's budget but – pending approval to carry forward the estimated underspend of £79,100 from 2007/08 – the net budget requirement could be reduced to £133,200.

Although this net budget represented a reduction of £38,000 (22.2%) on the current year's budget, this would be as a direct result of carrying forward the 2007/08 underspend, which could only be used once and did not provide sustainable funds available for 2009/10 and onwards. As such, to minimise the any potential increase in 2009/10 it was proposed that individual constituent authorities contributions for 2008/09 should be fixed at the same level as for 2007/08 i.e. to fund a net budget of £171,200. The budget would subsequently be reviewed in the light of the outcome of the LIFT SW bid to support the programme for the period 2008/09 to 2010/11.

In relation to apportionment of RMB costs, the report referred to the consideration of this issue held at the budget meeting in January 2007 necessitated by the merger of the Devon and Somerset fire and rescue authorities. At that time it was agreed that costs should continue to be apportioned as though Devon and Somerset were still separate authorities. It was proposed that this should also apply to the 2008/09 budget but that the apportionment of costs associated with RMB workstreams be reconsidered with a subsequent report submitted to a future meeting of the Board.

RESOLVED

- (a) that the carry forward to 2008/09 of the underspend on the current year's budget, currently estimated at £79,100, be approved;
- (b) that the proposed budget for 2008/09 (totalling £133,200 net), as set out in Appendix B to report RMB/08/3, be approved;
- (c) that the required contributions from each fire and rescue authority to fund the 2008/09 budget be fixed at the same levels as the current financial year, as set out below:-

Authority	Original Contribution 2007/2008 £
Avon	30,171
Cornwall	20,172
Devon and Somerset	50,342
Dorset	25,172
Gloucestershire	20,172
Wiltshire	25,171
Total	171,200

- (d) that the current basis for cost share of RMB costs be continued for 2008/09.

(SEE ALSO MINUTE RMB/31 ABOVE).

RMB/34. Draft National Framework 2008-11 – Potential Implications for the Regional Programme

The Board considered a report of the Secretary to the South West Chief Fire Officers' Association (CFO Gunter – Dorset) (RMB/08/4) on the draft National Framework 2008-11 which was subject to consultation with a closing date for receipt of responses of 6 February 2008. The report set out an analysis, prepared in conjunction with the workstream leaders, which sought to identify implications for the workstreams of:-

- proposed changes to RMB requirements;
- potential areas where regional collaboration would help FRAs meet the requirements of the draft National Framework; and
- the current status of collaboration in those areas.

The RMB core functions remained largely unchanged in the draft framework, with the exception of a number of "shoulds" becoming "musts" although there were two fundamental changes:-

- it was proposed that RMBs should no longer have a direct responsibility for delivery of the regional control centre; and
- there was a new requirement that fire and rescue authorities, working through RMBs, must review the opportunities to deliver greater efficiencies through closer joint working at the regional or sub-regional level.

In relation to the issue of RMB involvement with regional control centres, Members expressed concerns at the proposals in the draft National Framework and considered that, at the least, the Board should continue to have an active role in the implementation of the Regional Control Centre Project if only if a monitoring capacity.

RESOLVED

- (a) that the Regional Business Plan be amended to take account of:-
 - the requirements of the new National Framework;
 - the RMB Budget for 2008/09; and
 - the outcome of the bid to LIFT SW for resources
 with the amended Plan submitted to a future meeting of the Board for approval;
- (b) that workstreams include agreed actions in their work plans;
- (c) that the Clerk be authorised to respond on behalf of the Board to the consultation on the draft National Framework requesting that RMBs continue to be actively involved, in a monitoring role at the least, in the implementation of the Regional Control Centre project.

(SEE ALSO MINUTES RMB/31 AND 33 ABOVE).

RMB/35. Regional Control Centre – Cost Apportionment

The Board considered a report of the Treasurer (K Woodward – Devon & Somerset) (RMB/08/5) on work required to determine and agree a basis for apportioning running costs associated with the Regional Control Centre once it became operational (currently anticipated for 2009). The report set out some several options for cost apportionment – ranging from equal share to hybrid models factoring in matters such as number of incidents and population - developed followed preliminary consideration of the issue and proposed that a small Member steering group be established to explore possible cost apportionment options and report back to the Board.

RESOLVED that a small Member Steering Group comprising Councillors Yeo (Cornwall), Fox OBE DL (Dorset), Gordon (Devon & Somerset) and Windsor-Clive (Gloucestershire) (or their Regional Management Board named substitutes in the event of the main Member being unavailable to attend a Steering Group meeting) be formed to consider options for Regional Control Centre cost apportionment and report back to the June 2008 meeting of the Board.

(NOTE: Councillors Willmott, Windsor-Clive and Yeo declared personal, but non-prejudicial, interests in relation to this item by virtue of their directorship (as appointed by their individual constituent fire and rescue authorities) of South West Fire Control Services Limited – the local authority controlled company with overall governance responsibilities for the south west Regional Control Centre. The above-named Members remained to speak and vote on this issue. See also Minute RMB/30 above).

RMB/36.

Relationship between the Regional Management Board and South West Fire Control Service Limited

The Board considered a report of the Clerk (M. Pearson – Devon & Somerset) (RMB/08/6) on a request from South West Fire Control Limited – the local authority controlled company (LACC) with responsibility for overall governance of the South West Regional Control Centre (RCC) – to establish (pending future, formal Agreements) channels of communication between the Company, the Regional Management Board and individual fire and rescue authorities in the region.

RESOLVED

- (a) that the procedure proposed by South West Fire Control Service Limited for the Regional Management Board (RMB) and individual fire and rescue authorities (FRAs) to raise matters with the Company – as set out in report RMB/08/6 - be endorsed and the Clerk to the Board authorised to notify individual FRAs of this decision;
- (b) that the reciprocal arrangements for communication by the Company with the RMB and individual FRAs, as set out in paragraph 2.2 of the report, be approved and the Clerk to the Board authorised to request individual FRAs to notify the company of appropriate contacts;
- (c) that any matter raised by the company with the Board be considered and determined, as appropriate, at the next available formal meeting of the Board, with the Clerk to the Board authorised to relay to the company any determination so made;
- (d) that, subject to (a) to (c) above, the report be noted.

The meeting started at 11.00hours and finished at 12.12hours.

REPORT REFERENCE NO.	RMB/08/07
MEETING	SOUTH WEST REGIONAL MANAGEMENT BOARD
DATE OF MEETING	19 March 2008
SUBJECT OF REPORT	WORKSTREAMS HIGHLIGHT REPORT
LEAD OFFICER	Secretary to the South West Chief Fire Officers Association (CFO Gunter – Dorset)
RECOMMENDATIONS	<p>That the Board: -</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Notes progress against “National Framework” milestones; 2. Notes that the Regional Business Plan is being updated to take into account: the requirements of National Framework 2008-11; the National Equalities Strategy and the agreed RMB Budget 2008-09. The updated business plan will be submitted for approval by the RMB at the meeting on 24 June. 3. Notes progress on implementing the regional benefits management strategy. The annual benefits report will be submitted for approval by the RMB at the meeting on 24 June.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>At its meeting on 20 September, the Board agreed that it should receive a highlight report at every meeting showing progress against the agreed set of National Framework milestones and identifying any strategic issues that need to be resolved by RMB.</p> <p>This highlight report covers the relatively short period of six weeks from the last meeting of RMB on 30 January.</p> <p>It has been a busy period with many workstreams reviewing their work programmes to take into account the draft National Framework and the decision on the RMB’s budget for 2008-09. A number of new milestones have been proposed and some deleted (e.g. work on the regional recruitment of whole time fire officers).</p> <p>Changes in status of milestones are indicated by an arrow. An upward arrow indicates that the status has worsened and a downward arrow that the status has improved. No arrow indicates that the status is unchanged.</p> <p>The Executive Management Group (EMG) has reviewed those milestones that are reporting a worse status and initiated corrective action.</p>
APPENDICES	A – Highlight reports for National Framework milestones.
LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS	

WORKSTREAMS HIGHLIGHT REPORT – MARCH 2008

National Framework Milestones

1. *Equality and Diversity Workstream (Member champion – Cllr Yeo) – Annex A*

- 1.1 The Workstream meet on 23 January to agree a regional response to the draft National Equality and Diversity Strategy 2008-18. The response was cleared with the Executive Management Group (EMG) by correspondence and sent to Communities and Local Government (CLG) on 6 February. The next meeting of the workstream is on 12 March.
- 1.2 Following the RMB's agreement that the regional business plan should be amended to include a target that all South West Fire and Rescue Services (SWFRSs) will achieve Level 3 of the Equality Standard for Local Government (ESLG), the workstream leader (Ted Simpson) has drawn up a draft new work programme (copy at Annex B) for the workstream that focuses on helping each FRS achieve the Level 3 of the standard and meeting the requirements of National Equality and Diversity Strategy and National Framework. The workplan will be finalised when the final version of the Strategy and National Framework are published. Chief Fire Officers as members of EMG have agreed to do all they could to assist and influence progress within their fire and rescue service.
- 1.3 Arrangements are being put in place to collect data on the proposed new employment targets through the SW Regional Benchmarking Group.

2. *Finance and Procurement Workstream - Annex B*

- 2.1 The expanded Finance and Procurement workstream has yet to meet and membership yet to be agreed. The Procurement Sub-workstream continues to meet under Mike Pearson's chairmanship.
- 2.2 Milestones have still yet to be agreed for the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and Finance elements of the workstream's work programme.
- 2.3 Procurement capacity remains an issue but has eased. Following a successful bid for funding with RMB, the recruitment process has started to appoint a procurement project manager. The regional procurement administrative support has returned to work. Dorset's procurement officer left on 19 October and, after two unsuccessful advertisements, has not yet been replaced. Dorset is reviewing options.
- 2.4 The Procurement sub-workstream has reviewed their work programme and list of milestones. A number of new milestones/work items have been proposed (numbers 31, 25, 26, 27, 28 and 29). Milestone 16 (Geographical Information System – GIS - business case) will be dropped.
- 2.5 As regards new milestone 27, the existing regional Personnel Protective Equipment (PPE) contract expires January 2009, and it has been expected that the National integrated Clothing Project (ICP) will replace existing arrangements. FireBuy has recommended that each FRS should produce a business case to determine the way forward, including the pros and cons of the different ICP options of a fully managed service or purchase only. The procurement committee will prepare a business case that can be used by each service.

- 2.6 There are still some issues that need to be resolved in relation to service provision and the cost of ICP. A meeting with FireBuy is being arranged to discuss these issues and the options to be included in the business case. Depending on the outcome of the meeting with FireBuy, the business case will also include the pros and cons of a regional or sub-regional procurement. The latter would require approval from CLG and FiReBuy to proceed. EMG has agreed the new milestone, with the caveat that work goes no further than the production of the business case and any further action would need to be agreed with EMG. As this is a sensitive issue, EMG agreed that a letter should be sent to CLG explaining the region's approach to the development of the business case.

3. *Human Resources Management and Development Workstream (Member champion – Cllr Windsor-Clive) – Annex C*

- 3.1 The Workstream has met once since the last meeting of the RMB to carry out a fundamental review of its work programme in the light of the RMB budget decision and the implications of the new National Framework. The next meeting of the workstream is on 2 April.

- 3.2 Further work on the regional recruitment of whole time firefighters (former milestones 1 – 4) and regional approach to Assessment and Development Centres (ADCs) (milestone 5) has been put on hold following the decision not to support the appointment of a regional recruitment coordinator.

- 3.3 A number of new milestones are proposed (22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 13A, 30, 31 and 32). Milestones 13, 14 and 15 relating to annual regional training and learning plans have been dropped and replaced by a proposal to circulate a regional menu of training courses to allow individual services to participate across the region where necessary (milestone 13A). The new milestones include a regional conference to raise awareness of the Retained Duty System (RDS) (27) and establishing a quality assurance framework for training that will enable FRSs to pay staff the development rate of pay in accordance with National Joint Council (NJC) Circular NJC/9/2005.

- 3.4 A job description for a regional HR specialist is currently being drafted. The person would report to Jenny Long (Regional HR Manager) but support all aspects of the workstream's work programme.

4. *Regional Control Centre Workstream (Member champion – Cllr Willmott)*

- 4.1 There is a separate paper on the agenda about the RCC interim staff pool project (milestone 7).

- 4.2 The Local Authority Controlled Company (LACC) – South West Fire Control Service Limited - has met regularly and is making good progress, which is reported in a monthly newsletter.

- 4.3 Weena Combs has been appointed the RCC/regional communications officer. Weena took up her post in February. Linda Schrimp (currently control room manager for DSFRS) has been appointed SWRCC senior operations manager.

- 4.4 At their meeting on 30 January the RMB agreed to set up a task and finish group to make recommendations on the cost apportionment of the RCC between SWFRSs (new milestone 23). The task and finish group is due to report back to the RMB in June 2008.

5. Other workstreams

(a) Strategic Planning (Performance Management) Workstream (Member champion – Cllr Wren)

- 5.1 The workstream met on 16 January to discuss a strategy for rolling out the performance management, partnership working and member development training programmes. The workstream agreed to fund IDeA to carry out a scoping workshop with each FRS to determine their training needs and the benefits they want to realise from the programme. Each FRS is guaranteed a minimum number of trainer days. Scoping documents are to be submitted to project team by 20 March. The workstream is due to meet on 9 April when any unallocated trainer days will then be allocated to FRSs according to the need identified in the scoping documents.
- 5.2 A contract has been let with IDeA for them to develop an induction/briefing pack for elected members and a training course for junior managers on the role of elected members
- 5.3 Feedback from the training scoping workshops suggests take up of the opportunities within the programme for member development despite will not be significantly less than previously indicated. The development opportunities for elected members will be subject to a presentation to the RMB at its meeting on 19 March.
- 5.4 Good progress in being made on the rest of the workstream's work programme. Terms of reference for the Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPI) task and finish group have been drafted and the group is expected to report at the end of March (milestone 23).

(b) Service Operations and Resilience Workstream

- 5.5 Progress has been made on the scoping the individual work items and all leads are clear as to what is expected of them. The next meeting of the workstream is on 13 March.
- 5.6 The development of regional resilience protocols supporting business continuity (milestone 18) needs to be coordinated with work by the Human Resources Management and Development (HRMD) workstream on developing a regional protocol on partial performance (HRMD Milestone 20). An interrelated issue is how many SWFRSs will sign up to Operation FireGuard and the scope for collaboration between those FRSs that take the view that Operation FireGuard is not affordable.
- 5.7 A Template has been circulated to each FRS for complete and return to the workstream by the end of February. This will help inform future areas of work on mutual aid arrangements (milestones 16 and 17).

(c) Community Safety Workstream

- 5.8 The workstream met on 13 February to agree the scope of each work item and to commission development by nominated lead officers for each work item.

(d) Regional Business Plan

- 5.9 The regional business plan is currently being revised to take into account the RMB's budget for 2008-09 and the National Framework 2008-09. The revised business plan will be submitted to the RMB for approval at its meeting on 24 June.

(e) Regional Benefits Management Strategy

- 5.10 Workstreams are making good progress in implementing the regional benefits management strategy. Benefits profiles have been completed for about 50% of the programme. EMG has mandated all benefits profiles are to be completed and agreed by their respective workstreams by 11 April. An annual benefits report that will report on benefits realised in 2007-08 and look forward to 2008-09 will be submitted to the RMB for approval at its meeting on 24 June.

(f) Regional Communications Strategy

- 5.11 Weena Combs has been appointed RCC/Regional Communications Officer. As part of her role, Weena will be reviewing the regional communications strategy and will produce a draft newsletter for approval by the RMB at its meeting on 24 June. Future highlight reports will include a communications update.

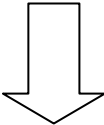
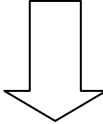
CFO DARRAN GUNTER (Dorset)
Secretary, South West Chief Fire Officers Association

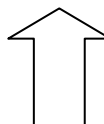
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY WORKSTREAM – DRAFT MILESTONES

Ref	Milestone	Planned Date	Forecast Date	Status Red Amber Green	Progress
	Leadership and Promoting Inclusion				
1	EMG to adopt the Equality Standard for Local Government by all FRSs	January 2008		Complete	EMG and the RMB agreed at their meetings in January 2008 to set an objective that all SWFRSs should achieve at least level 3 of the Equality Standard for Local Government by March 2010
2	Achieve Level 3 for all FRSs by March 2010	March 2010		Amber	
3	Develop a methodology for measuring progress and performance via Regional benchmarking	July 2008		Green	
	Effective service delivery and community engagement				
4	Develop a methodology for FRSs to engage and consult with all our communities	Sept 2008		Amber	
5	Review and revise CFOA SW EIA Toolkit	May 2008		Amber	
6	Develop a methodology to monitor that all plans, policies, processes and procedures are rigorously and effectively equality impact assessed.	Oct 2008		Amber	
	Employment and training				
7	Adopt National recruitment, retention and progression targets for women and minority ethnic personnel in operational roles	April 2008		Amber	
8	Produce a template to identify learning needs and development opportunities for <u>all</u> personnel in respect of equality and diversity	Feb 2009		Amber	
9	Develop and introduce a best practice model for eliminating bullying and harassment	Sept 2009		Amber	

Ref	Milestone	Planned Date	Forecast Date	Status Red Amber Green	Progress
10	Develop a project proposal to share best practice for Positive Action.	Dec 2009		Amber	
11	Develop a methodology to ensure equality and diversity is mainstreamed throughout all training programmes	March 2009		Amber	
	Evaluation and sharing good practice				
13	Develop a methodology for monitoring progress and performance via Regional benchmarking	September 2008		Amber	
14	Develop a template for a Regional Annual Report based on the annual requirements to CLG	March 2009		Amber	
15	Develop Regional medium (newsletter, use of Extranet, etc.) to share good practice and celebrate success	September 2009			
	Accountability				
16	Ensure equality and diversity objectives are part of every manager's personal action plan and appraisal.	Sept 2009		Amber	
17	Develop a means of reinforcing awareness, at Senior Management level, of equality and diversity responsibilities	Sept 2009			
18	Reinforce National Core Values to further development change in Fire Service culture.	Ongoing		Amber	

FINANCE AND PROCUREMENT WORKSTREAM HIGHLIGHT REPORT – MARCH 2008

Ref	Milestone	Planned Date	Forecast Date	Status Red Amber Green	Progress
Strategic					
7	Procurement training and development strategy for procurement officers, users and elected members	July 2008		Green 	All procurement officers are undertaking CIPS professional training and have been offered/received Prince 2 training, leadership and management. Currently assisting in the development of a national training and development group through the APPFS, Association of procurement practitioners in the fire and rescue service.) supported by CFOA NPB. TOR circulated. Concern is with loss of qualified staff and process of continuous training. Services invited to Bluelight e-tendering training day and Exor spend analysis training day.
9	TSL (Technical Services and Logistics) Procurement Plan 2007 –2010	Quarterly		Green	Plan agreed April 2007. Reviewed quarterly. Completed.
10	Property and Estates Procurement Plan 2007-2010	Quarterly		Green	Plan agreed June 2007. Reviewed quarterly. Completed.
23	Finance plan 2007-2010 milestones to be agreed	April 2008		Amber 	Initial Meeting held and second meeting arranged for 17 th March. Dorset to Lead and provide secretarial support. Regional procurement manager to provide programme support to finance committee lead and work stream lead where required.
24	ICT plan and milestones to be agreed	April 2008		Red	Role of ICT group to be finalised following discussion with individual ICT managers and ad hoc IT and Communications groups. ICT committee lead and reform ICT Committee required for 1 st quarter 2008.

Ref	Milestone	Planned Date	Forecast Date	Status Red Amber Green	Progress
Regional Procurements					
13	Fire Ground CCTV – contract Award	March 2008	March 2008	Green	NEW - BBP (business benefit profile) completed. Framework arrangement awarded.
1	E-marketplace/E Procurement – Contract Award	Sept 2007	April 2008	Amber	BBP (business benefit profile) completed. Contract award made on basis of being preferred supplier only, as take-up is dependent on service budget planning and requirements. Individual services' position not known at time of writing. Change of contact with supplier. Intended discussion planned for early April 2008. Services to agree contract take-up for 2009.
12	Occupational Health – contract award	Sept 2007	October 2007	Green	COMPLETED- Need to review contract position in Dorset and Avon as priorities. Plan to conduct Dorset comparisons March 2008. Services to undertake pricing and service comparison.
13	HR mobile assessment equipment – contract award	April 2008	Dec 2008	Amber	The intention would be to negotiate a call off contract for individual FRSs to purchase their own mobile units if needed. The contract requirement to be discussed with the HRMD workstream.
14	Vehicle Body repair - business case	Oct 2007	Feb 2008	Amber	On hold until regional procurement officer in place.
15	Vehicle spares – business case	Dec 2007	Feb 2008	Amber	D&S procurement manager now in post and work will commence mid 2008.
16	GIS – business case	Oct 2007	Feb 2008	Red 	Not to be taken forward. Milestone will be dropped from the next highlight report

Ref	Milestone	Planned Date	Forecast Date	Status Red Amber Green	Progress
17	General fire equipment – business case	Dec 2007	Unknown	Amber	Currently on hold until review of priorities for National CFOA Operational Equipment Committee. Regions will be responsible for delivering national procurements. Unknown at this stage whether SW will be progressing this on behalf of the national committee.
18	Energy audits – business case	Aug 2008		Green	SWFRS now collaborating with Torbay District Councils and other SW authorities for delivery of property services, including a wide range of professional services. Services informed of progress through property and estates committee meetings.
19	Exhaust extraction – business case	Oct 2008		Amber	Business case consultation papers circulated. On hold until regional procurement officer in place.
20	Doors and shutters – business case	Dec 2007	March 2008	Amber	As above.
21	RCC Support Services - options appraisal	October 2007	April 2008	Green	Legal counsel on ability for RCC to utilise South West has been sought. The RCC can utilise any SW Fire and Rescue service contract on a case by case basis and can utilise South West One. Specification of requirements being drafted by RPM, comparisons with OGC providers to be sought and introductions arranged for South West One team to be arranged.
25	Driving License Verification Software – business case	March 2008	March 2008	Green	NEW - Business case consultation process. In progress for award end of 2008. Interest from other services outside region.

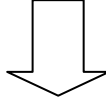
Ref	Milestone	Planned Date	Forecast Date	Status Red Amber Green	Progress
Regional Projects					
5	Stores provision – report of review and business case for rationalisation and improvement	June 2008		Amber	Consolidation of information complete. Will need to agree project structure to develop full business case. Priority for Procurement Committee once appointment of regional procurement officer in place. Dependent on 1 above.
6	Contract Management System – business case	July 2008		Amber	Services invited to training of new Bluelight e-tendering solution, to include contract monitoring and management system. Will review once training of new e-tendering system complete and commence business case.
3	GPC - Roll-out and review (Government Procurement Cards)	Oct 2008	Oct 2008	Green	BBP (business benefit profile) completed. Regional project completed. Roll-out monitored on monthly basis and quarterly against agreed targets. Services to decide if they wish to take up automated solution. Post implementation review (gateway 6) planned for 2008.
8	(Technical) services - research and development, review options, following publication of FireBuy proposals	Dec 2008		Amber	On hold until capacity issues resolved and next national procurement strategy agreed.
National Projects					
22	APPFS (Association of procurement practitioners in the fire and rescue service.) – Contribute to next National procurement Strategy	Nov 2008		Green	The regional procurement manager (RPM) is the communications officer for the APPFS. Currently the RPM is responsible for developing website, communication plans and strategy, communication literature, and representing the APPFS at events and national committees. RPM is assisting in developing the next national procurement strategy and the APPFS AGM.
26	ADSM Water Reduction services contract – roll out scheme.	March 2008	March 2008	Amber	NEW - Presentations received from ADSM regarding the OGC Water reduction services contract. Services to initiate roll-out.

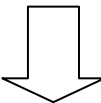
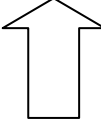
Ref	Milestone	Planned Date	Forecast Date	Status Red Amber Green	Progress
27	PPE and ICP Business case and review	April 2008	June 2008	Amber	NEW - TSL working group led by the RPM are currently composing the cost comparisons and business case of the ICP options on behalf of the SWFRSs, in collaboration with FiReBuy and CLG. EMG to consider the business case before any further action.
28	MOD/BT contract- roll-out	March 2008	March 2008	Amber	NEW - BBP (business benefit profile) completed. Following price comparisons with existing BT lines and (DFTS) MOD/BT lines, there is a potential savings for SW region as detailed in business benefit profile. Further savings available from comparing other non-BT lines. Dependent on ICT progressing contract novation.
29	Pumping Appliance – mini competition guidance	March 2008	March 2008	Green	NEW - Agree national guidance for mini-bid competition process and roll-out within region. Waiting on FiReBuy to agree final version.

HRMD WORKSTREAM HIGHLIGHT REPORT – MARCH 2008

Ref	Milestone	Planned Date	Forecast Date	Status Red Amber Green	Progress
	Employee Resourcing				
5	Regional approach to ADCs for grades above firefighter – business case (will take into account the lessons learnt from the regional recruitment of whole time firefighters)	Dec 2008	On-hold	Red	On hold following decision not to proceed with the regional recruitment of whole time firefighters for the time being.. Strategic and Middle Manager ADCs undertaken across 3 or more services ADCs are being carried out on a local basis with cooperation sub regionally.
7	Continuous Professional Development pay process –implement and monitor	March 2008	April 2008	Green	NJC issue now resolved. Payments to be made. Future payment policy being drawn up to allow future control and management of the payments, base on Guidance from the NJC
7A	Continuous Professional Development pay process – future payment policy	To be agreed		Green	NEW – Future payment policy being drawn up to allow future control and management of the payments, base on Guidance from the NJC
9	Regional Occupational Health provision – post implementation review	June 2008		Green	
10A	RDS transfers to Whole Time – Business Case to be Developed RMB/1.	Sept 08		Amber	ET expected to report in February 2008. National Assessment Unit and CFOA now considering this aspect. It is thought the SW should be more proactive in this area due to the large dependency on retained staff.
22	Develop Value for Money Indicators with CFOA SW performance Group to enable bench marking across the region	July 2008		Green	NEW – Work underway in February 2008
23	Regional Workforce Plan to be refreshed and revised	July 2008		Green	NEW – National Framework Document Draft paragraph 3.12 refers.

Ref	Milestone	Planned Date	Forecast Date	Status Red Amber Green	Progress
24	Establish a Quality Assurance framework for ADCs for the Region	Nov 2008		Green	NEW – Paragraph 3.29 Draft national framework refers. It is intended to use the CLG Quality Assurance Framework recently published and disseminate through out the region.
25	Establish a post implementation review for ADCs including Quality Assurance and Regional benefits achieved.	Nov 2008		Green	NEW – Paragraph 3.20 of the draft National framework 2008-2011 requires FRAs to use ADCs for all grey and Gold Book Staff.
26	Devise a Talent Management Strategy to include Multi Tier Entry	March 2009		Green	NEW – Paragraph 3.25 of the Draft National Framework Applies
27	Regional conference to raise awareness of the RDS duty system with a wide section of Stakeholders	Feb 2009		Green	NEW – Para. 3.17 of the draft national framework urges FRAs to work proactively to recruit and retain retained staff. HRMD will arrange a conference to build on previous work and demonstrate work and good practice across the region.
	Employee Development				
11	Business case to employ a regional training and learning co-ordinator	Sept 2007		Red	Business case prepared for October EMG. Bid now subject to a bid to the SW Lift Capacity Building Fund
12	Framework for regional collaboration on learning and development	Oct 2007	Jan 2008	Amber	Subsumed into 11 above will be deleted from the next highlight report.
13	Training and learning regional plan for 2008-09 based upon the requirement of SWFRAs IRMPs.	Nov 2007		Red	Work to date has established that this is not going to be achievable. Instead a Regional menu of training courses and activity will be circulated to allow individual services to participate across the region where need arises.
13A	Circulate a Regional menu of training courses and activity will be circulated to allow individual services to participate across the region where need arises.	To be agreed		Green	NEW - see 13 above
14	Training and learning regional plan for 2009-10 based upon the requirement of SWFRAs IRMPs	Nov 2008		Will not be taken forward	See 13 above

Ref	Milestone	Planned Date	Forecast Date	Status Red Amber Green	Progress
15	Training and learning regional plan for 2010-11 based upon the requirement of SWFRAs IRMPs	Nov 2009		Will not be taken forward	See 13 above
28	Publish regional training review and action plan to take forward agreed recommendations	To be agreed		Amber	NEW - Regional training review completed and waiting sign off.
29	Undertake questionnaire of each FRS' current position against FSC 20/2004 benchmark objectives.	To be agreed		Amber	NEW
30	Establish Quality Assurance Framework for Training	Nov 2008		Green	NEW –Paragraph 3.29 Draft national framework applies FRSs who do not have a QA' process in place, in accordance with NJC9/2005, are unable to pay staff 'development' rate of pay. Therefore staff who have completed training are moved from 'trainee' rate to 'competent' rate of pay. What should happen is that staff move from 'trainee' rate of pay to 'development' rate of pay and then, following assessment of competence, move to 'competent' rate of pay. Whilst there is no timeframe, this the time taken to move from development to competent is approx 18mths – 3yrs.
	Employee Relations				
16	Regional Disciplinary procedure – consultation with rep bodies	Aug 2007	April 2008	Green	EIA completed Consultation will take place during March 2008.
17	Regional Disciplinary procedure – issue procedure for implementation in Services	Oct 2007	June 08	Green 	On target for implementation
18	Regional Grievance procedure - – consultation with rep bodies.	Aug 2007	April 2008	Green	EIA completed Consultation will take place during March 2008.

Ref	Milestone	Planned Date	Forecast Date	Status Red Amber Green	Progress
19	Regional Grievance procedure - – issue procedure for implementation in Services	Oct 2007	June 2008	Green 	On target for implementation
20	Regional protocol on partial performance	Jan 2008	March 2008	Green	Policy reviewed. Legal opinion to be sought
21	Regional approach to capability processes – start consultation	Dec 2007	April 2008	Amber 	Delayed due to slippage with the Discipline and Grievance procedure.
31	Review Equal Pay issues between Uniformed and Non Uniformed Staff	March 2009	March 2009	Green	NEW – First report on the issue and possible risks to EMG
32	Report on progress of Equal Pay Reviews for Green Book staff in individual services	Dec 2008	Dec 2008	Green	NEW – NJC agreement 2004 indicates Equal pay reviews should have been completed and implemented by March 2007

RCC WORKSTREAM – MARCH HIGHLIGHT REPORT

Ref	Milestone	Planned Date	Forecast Date	Status Red Amber Green	Progress
	FireLink				
1	Complete installation of Airwave in control rooms.	Oct 2007	March 2008	Amber	Installation complete. Final testing to take place in March 2008.
2	Complete installation of Airwave radios in appliances.	Sept 2008	March 2009	Green	Schedule has been re-profiled. Confident that the project will be delivered within new timetable.
3	Complete interface with SW RCC.	Feb 2009	August 2009	Amber	"Amber" status because of concerns over the RCC timetable.
4	SW regional post implementation (Gateway 6) review.	Aug 2009	Feb 2010	Amber	Review to take place 6 months after the completion of milestone 3 above.
	FireControl				
5	Prepare transition plan & resource plan,	Oct 2007	Complete	Complete	Transition and resource plans completed.
5A.1	Control rooms out of scope – scope content and cost current provision	March 2008		Green	Task and finish group created to identify and cost out of scope activities, and propose options for undertaking the activities.
5A.2	Control rooms out of scope – interim report to project board	April 2008		Green	
5A.3	Control rooms out of scope – final report to project board	May 2008		Green	
5A.4	Control rooms out of scope - report to EMG/RMB.	June 2008		Green	
6	RCC Company incorporated, functioning and making decisions.	Oct 2007	Complete	Complete	RCC Company established, meeting regularly and working well.
7	Decision on how to release control centre staff for testing and training.	Dec 2007	May 2008	Green	Project Board considered feasibility study report on 23 January. Agreed to proceed with early closure of Devon and Somerset option subject to fire authorities' approvals in May/June.
8	Decision on RCC staff numbers, shift patterns and terms and conditions for new staff taken.	April 2008		Green	On schedule

Ref	Milestone	Planned Date	Forecast Date	Status Red Amber Green	Progress
23 NEW	Report of RCC Cost apportionment task and finish group to EMG and RMB	June 2008		Green	The RMB agreed to set up a task and finish group at their meeting on 30 January.
9	All key HR policies in place.	Dec 2008		Green	First HR policies are out to consultation with rep. Bodies. First regional consultation meeting with FBU, FOA and Unison has been held.
10	Transfer of staff to RCC (for training and testing) RMB/2.	April 2009	August 2009.	Green	Will depend on milestone 7 above.
11	Go live decision for Somerset (taken by RCC Director, SRO, CLG and CFO)	Oct 2009		Green	
12	Review lessons learnt from first cut over	Nov 2009		Green	
13	Go live decision for Devon (taken by RCC Director, SRO, CLG and CFO) and/or FRA	Jan 2010		Green	
14	Go live decision for Dorset (taken by RCC Director, SRO, CLG and CFO) and/or FRA	March 2010		Green	
15	Go live decision for Avon (taken by RCC Director, SRO, CLG and CFO) and/or FRA	May 2010		Green	
16	Go live decision for Cornwall (taken by RCC Director, SRO, CLG and CFO) and/or FRA	July 2010		Green	
17	Go live decision for Wiltshire (taken by RCC Director, SRO, CLG and CFO) and/or FRA.	Sept 2010		Green	
18	Go live decision for Gloucestershire (taken by RCC Director, SRO, CLG and CFO) and/or FRA	Jan 2011		Green	
19	Regional post implementation review	May 2011		Green	

Ref	Milestone	Planned Date	Forecast Date	Status Red Amber Green	Progress
	Incident reporting system				
20	Each FRS confirms that they are ready to cut over to IRS.	March 2008	March 2009	Green	CLG decision. CLG have revised deadline to April 2009.
21	Implement IRS to agreed national standard	July 2008	April 2009	Green	CLG have revised deadline to April 2009.
22	Regional post implementation review.	Nov 2009		Green	To take place six months after implementation.

REPORT REFERENCE NO.	RMB/08/8
MEETING	REGIONAL MANAGEMENT BOARD
DATE OF MEETING	19 March 2008
SUBJECT OF REPORT	REGIONAL FIRE CONTROL PROJECT – CREATION OF THE INITIAL STAFF POOL
LEAD OFFICER	South West Regional Project Director (DCFO Clive Kemp, Devon & Somerset)
RECOMMENDATIONS	<p><i>That the Board notes:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>The proposed approach to the initial staff pool;</i> 2. <i>That legal advice is presently being obtained on the preferred employer for extra staff engaged to support the strategy;</i> 3. <i>That Fire and Rescue Authorities will be requested to support the strategy at meetings in May or June.</i>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>All of the wave one regions transferring their control room operations into the Regional Control Centre need to have a means of releasing transferring staff early to carry out testing and training on the system prior to “go live” whilst at the same time, continuing to answer emergency calls for their FRS. Extra staff will need to be employed in various fire and rescue services (FRSs) to facilitate this.</p> <p>Due to the demographics of the south west, the issue is more complicated than in other regions where a relatively simple overstaffing solution is being proposed. The South West Project Board therefore looked at the options to safely carry out this migration and has determined that the preferred option is the early closure of the two controls in Devon and Somerset and transferring those calls to Avon, as well as an element of overstaffing in FRSs.</p> <p>This paper discusses the implications for all South West fire and rescue authorities (FRAs) and considers the legal and financial implications as a result of previous decisions made by FRAs and the RMB.</p>
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	There will be no financial implications on any Fire and Rescue Service. The CLG has agreed to fund the initial staff pool from New Burdens funding.
APPENDICES	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. South West Region Feasibility Study 29 January 2008 – Executive Summary <i>ENCLOSED SEPARATELY WITH AGENDA AND PAGE NUMBERED - 1-16 - INDEPENDENTLY</i> B. Letter to CLG from Regional Project Director dated 7 March 2008 C. Letter from CLG to Regional Project Director dated 10 March 2008
LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS	

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 One of the most difficult issues that the Fire Control Project has had to deal with from a transition point of view is that of creating what is termed as an Initial Staff Pool (ISP). This is required to facilitate experienced personnel, who will be transferring to the Regional Control, being available for training and testing on the new system prior to go live, whilst at the same time, maintaining existing operations in the respective legacy controls.
- 1.2 The Communities and Local Government's (CLG) preferred approach was that of overstaffing, i.e. recruiting extra staff early, who would then work alongside existing control room staff to gain experience to enable the transferring staff to be released for the testing and training functions. The South West Regional Project Board has always had a suspicion that this approach would not work on its own in the South West and consequently the Board commissioned a piece of work (funded by CLG) to look at other options.
- 1.3 In total, 4 options were considered:
- Option 1 – The base line staffing option
 - Option 2 – Somerset's calls being transferred to Avon
 - Option 3 – Devon's calls being transferred to Wiltshire
 - Option 4 – Both Somerset's and Devon's calls being transferred to Avon
- 1.4 The feasibility study has now reached a conclusion and it is clear that Option 4 above offers the least risk to the Project and to the public and is consequently the preferred option of the Regional Project Board. Attached to this paper is Appendix A which is the Executive Summary of the feasibility study. This consists of 16 (of 71) pages. Although the study relies on various planning assumptions, it is considered to be work that Members can have confidence in, in planning for transition into the Regional Control Centre (RCC).

2. THE NEED FOR AN INITIAL STAFF POOL

- 2.1 Regions and Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs) will transfer their operations into the regional control in waves (regions) and batches (FRSs). This is to ensure that the system is fully capable of taking all the calls for all Fire and Rescue Services, even in spate conditions, and assuming that one RCC is unavailable at any one time. The South West is a Wave 1 region along with the North East, East Midlands and with the West Midlands as a contingency. In order to transfer operations into the RCC three of these four Wave 1 regions need to be ready to transfer the calls at the same time.
- 2.2 As part of the project plan, personnel who are transferring into the new RCC (and indeed new joiners) need to have extensive training on the new ways of operating and will also need to be involved in the testing of the new system. This means that transferring staff will need to move from the legacy controls and into the RCC in advance of go live (currently anticipated to be October 2009). The issue then remains as to how to run the legacy controls without these experienced staff.

2.3 The CLG's preferred approach, therefore, is the creation of an initial staff pool through overstaffing existing Fire and Rescue Services. The success of this approach depends in large part on the demographics of the particular region and the number of staff that it is anticipated will be transferring into the RCC. The South West Project Board has long held the view that this may not be a feasible approach for the South West and consequently commissioned a piece of work to look at further options as identified in Section 1.

3. **THE PREFERRED OPTION**

3.1 Paragraph 1.4.5 of the Executive Summary (pages 15 and 16) clearly identifies why Option 4 is the preferred solution. In examining the table at the top of page 15, Option 4 is clearly the most beneficial in productive time for new joiners but also significantly requires the least number of promotions. This is a significant advantage as the Project Board have little confidence that the number of promotions in any of the first 3 options could be achieved safely within the RCC. To achieve this level would require relatively inexperienced personnel being promoted once or even twice, probably before they had the necessary skills and experience to undertake those roles. The Project Board considers that this is an unacceptable risk to the project and to service delivery under the new regime.

Turning to the evaluation of options on the top of page 16, it is also clear that although numerically Options 1 and 3 are feasible, these are outweighed by the clear advantage of Option 4 when judged against the weighted evaluation criteria. Option 3 is obviously unacceptable.

4. **THE IMPLICATIONS FOR FRSs**

4.1 Option 4, if adopted, will assist in the creation of the initial staff pool although it does still require an element of overstaffing in all Fire and Rescue Services other than Devon and Somerset. The assumed level of overstaffing (based on current estimates of staff in Fire and Rescue Services who may transfer) is as follows:

Service	Level of Overstaffing
Dorset	5
Avon	2 plus the 16 additional staff required to take Devon and Somerset's calls
Cornwall	2
Wiltshire	5
Gloucestershire	2

4.2 As the strategy recommends that all staff who are transferring to the RCC do so at the same time, this will require overstaffing of FRSs in June 2008. As such, it is highly likely that a positive resolution will be required at each Fire and Rescue Authority to enable the overstaffing to take place. It should be noted that there will be no additional financial implications for FRAs or the company as the employment of the extra staff will be fully funded by CLG.

5. **LEGAL ISSUES**

5.1 An issue that presently remains unresolved is to who will be the employer of the transferring staff and of the additional 16 personnel in Avon Fire and Rescue Service. Two options exist:

- (a) That the host FRSs employ the extra staff and consequently make any necessary redundancies at the end of the short term contract period (where applicable). It should be noted however that in respect of Avon, it is anticipated that the 16 additional staff employed to take Devon and Somerset's calls in the interim will transfer to the RCC; OR
- (b) That the local Authority Controlled Company (LACC) employs the staff from June 2008, and subsequently seconds them to the Fire and Rescue Services until they are required in the RCC to undertake their new duties.

5.2 It may be that both of these solutions are used in different circumstances e.g. 5(b) in respect of the 16 extra staff in Avon and 5(a) in respect of others. Legal advice on the preferred option is being obtained to inform FRA decisions in due course. It is hoped that a verbal update on this issue can be given at the meeting.

6. THE EFFECT OF PREVIOUS FRS/RMB DECISIONS

6.1 Members will recall the discussions that took place at the RMB and Fire and Rescue Services when the Local Authority Controlled Company was set up. All Fire and Rescue Services (with the exception of Avon) undertook to participate in the LACC under the following conditions.

- (i) No final commitment to the project until the full business case is published and the legal obligations of Best Value have been satisfied.
- (ii) The Authority reserves the right to withdraw from the Company at any time and
- (iii) The Authority will not agree to finance long term financial or contractual obligations entered into by the LACC (e.g. the lease to the RCC)

6.2 In terms of (i) above, it is not anticipated that the business case containing information upon which members can rely in order to make a decision to finally commit to the project, will be available until the Summer of 2008. It is therefore unlikely that Fire Authorities will be able to consider the issue until the autumn of this year.

6.3 However, item (iii) does not preclude either:

- (a). the LACC entering into financial obligations supported long term by CLG, or
- (b). FRS employing extra staff to support the strategy providing all risks, including financial ones, are held by CLG.

7. STAKEHOLDER ISSUES

7.1 All staff have been written to inform them of the initial staff pool work and the emerging outcomes.

7.2 The representative bodies have been informed of the preferred option, and a copy of the report has been sent to them for information. They have been comprehensively briefed on the preferred approach.

7.3 The CLG has discussed with us the preferred option and have agreed to fund Option 4, as part of the project. See Appendices B and C

7.4 A meeting has been held with Chief Fire Officers and Chairs of Devon and Somerset, and Avon to present them with both interim and definitive findings.

8. RISKS

- 8.1 The adoption of Option 4 (indeed any of the Options) is not without risk. The principal risks are identified in the table on page 14 of the feasibility study Executive Summary but it is considered that these risks can be managed to an acceptable level. It is also worthy of note that the CLG has agreed to carry the contingency for this option as opposed to the normal practice of allocating budgets for the project as a whole including contingencies. This initiative, based on assumptions which will undoubtedly change, will require careful and dedicated management over the next eighteen months.

9. PROJECT MANAGEMENT

- 9.1 This is a complex project in its own right and will require dedicated resources to ensure that it is successful. As such, within the costings, there is funding for a dedicated Project Manager who will report to the FiReControl Project Manager and subsequently to the Regional Project Board. This dedicated resource will reduce the risk to the project. It is considered by the Project Board that this person needs to be properly qualified and externally sourced in order not to further denude already depleted resources within FRSs.

10. SUMMARY

- 10.1 The problem of how to carry out testing and training for the RCC whilst at the same time maintaining existing standards within the legacy controls has been one of the most difficult issues that the project has had to face to date. The demographics in the South West require that a mixed approach to the creation of the Initial Staff Pool is adopted including overstaffing and early closure of 2 legacy controls. The Initial Staff Pool project is based on various assumptions and is not without risks. It is however the only option that the South West Project Board considers is feasible to deliver the RCC within the required timescales.

CLIVE KEMP
Regional Project Director

APPENDIX B TO REPORT RMB/08/8

**P Young OBE MPhil FIFireE
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**

**Richard How
Project Director
FiReControl Project
Communities and Local Government**

**SERVICE HEADQUARTERS
THE KNOWLE
CLYST ST GEORGE
EXETER
DEVON
EX3 0NW**

Your ref :
Our ref : CK/JW
Website : www.dsfire.gov.uk

Date : 7th March 2008
Please ask for : Clive Kemp
Email : ckemp@dsfire.gov.uk

Telephone : 01392 872200
Fax : 01392 872300
Direct Telephone : 01392 872202

Dear Richard,

South West Initial Staff Pool

I refer to a meeting held in London on 31st January where the Initial Staff Pool (ISP) solution for the South West was discussed with Dermot Paddon and Doug Weekes. At that meeting I promised to write to you to seek certain assurances which we would need in order to progress the ISP process.

At the meeting in London, the conclusions that we reached broadly were as follows:

- 1) That Option 4 of the feasibility study dated 29th January 2008 was the most feasible and deliverable solution for the South West, and
- 2) The creation of any approach contained significant risks, for example, industrial relations, financial, variations to assumptions etc.

I am now in the process of taking papers to the next meeting of the Regional Management Board. Subsequently, I hope, FRS Project Board members will be taking papers to their individual Fire and Rescue Authorities in May or June of this year to seek their approval. As you are aware, the current position in South West is that Fire and Rescue Authorities will not enter into any long term financial commitments as a result of this project until such time as the business case has demonstrated best value which we hope will be in the summer of this year. Because of this, similar constraints also apply to the company who effectively have no additional resources outside of those provided under new burdens. As such, in order for everyone to sign up to the ISP in advance of the next iteration of the business case, they will need certain assurances from CLG. I would therefore be grateful for your written confirmation that:

- a) CLG recognise the risks associated with our approach

- b) CLG agree to fully fund the costs of the South West ISP solution. The South West will conduct its business in order to minimise costs and achieve value for money. It will use all reasonable endeavours to deliver the ISP within the resources allocated to it within the current assumptions. CLG will favourably consider requests for additional funding, if the SW can demonstrate that there has been an unavoidable increase for specific reasons or assumption changes. Any savings in an area of the staff pool budget will be used to offset any increases in another part of the same budget. To facilitate this, the South West will keep separate financial accounts for the costs associated with the initiative. These accounts will be shared on an open book basis with CLG to ensure transparency.
- c) If the go live date is amended and this increases the life of the ISP, CLG undertake to meet the extra costs relating to extending the life of the ISP.
- d) If an FRS, or the company, engage staff early for the ISP project, and it is subsequently found that the role is not required, the Department will financially support a notice period in line with the current policies in force for existing control room operators.
- e) If there is any dispute with item b) above, both parties will enter into independent arbitration, the outcome of which will be binding on both parties.

The Regional Management Board meeting is on 19th March with papers being issued on 12th. I would therefore be grateful for your written confirmation of the above not later than 11th March 2008.

Yours sincerely

Clive Kemp
South West Regional Project Director