Emergency Services Collaboration Working Group

Paper 2: National Overview of Collaboration Initiatives

1. Introduction

1.1 In response to a request from central government to outline a number of collaborative projects suitable for upscaling on a local or national level; the Emergency Services Collaboration Working Group (ESCWG) has worked with services and associations to refresh the 2014 National Overview with examples of collaborative projects, plans and initiatives from across England and Wales.

1.2 The refreshed overview has provided the ESCWG with a significant amount of information and data to assist both central government and the wider sector in determining how collaboration can help to achieve the most efficient and effective delivery of emergency services in conjunction with wider public sector organisations.

1.3 This Ministerial briefing paper has grouped the main findings of the refreshed overview into seven main subject areas: Co-Responding; Demand Management/Rationalisation; Shared Estates/Assets; Strategic Alliances/Partnerships; Multi-Agency Information Transfer; 999/112 and Wider Collaboration.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That Ministers note the considerable and wide-spread progress in adoption of a collaborative approach.

2.2 That Ministers consider the narrative provided on the future potential for each collaboration subject area, and the following proposals:

2.2.1 Promote wide-spread adoption of locally driven co-responding initiatives.

2.2.2 Promote a joint approach to demand management and rationalisation across the emergency services and where appropriate in collaboration with wider local public bodies.

2.2.3 Promote the adoption of shared estates/assets as a matter of course for all future development projects.

2.2.4 Promote the implementation of local strategic partnerships and alliances to drive greater collaboration and efficiencies, bringing together the emergency services and wider local public bodies as appropriate depending on the context, organisational and governance structures.

2.2.5 That Ministers task (subject to resourcing) the ESC Working Group to work with relevant government departments to identify appropriate strategic ownership and to develop a roadmap for the national provision of Multi-Agency Information Transfer (MAIT). This could be achieved through the establishment of a ‘feasibility’ team made up of representatives from the emergency services and government departments.

2.2.6 That Ministers task (subject to resourcing) the ESC Working Group to work with relevant government departments and other core stakeholders to scope and commission a research project into the requirement to modernise the 999/112 emergency call service.

2.2.7 Promote the further development of consensus statements and memorandums of understanding between national bodies, and building on good practice already in place, promote local consideration of collaboration in the context of the full range of public services, not only the emergency services.
### 3. Co-Responding

3.1 Co-responding between the emergency services to medical emergencies has gained significant traction over the course of the last two years.

3.2 The vast majority of ambulance trusts are engaged in co-responding schemes with not only police and fire colleagues but organisations such as the coastguard, RNLI, mountain rescue and other voluntary agencies.

3.3 Fire and rescue services (FRS) in particular are now a major co-responding partner with ambulance trusts. Traditionally co-responding schemes were confined to rural locations where fire and rescue assets (retained fire crews) could be mobilised to assist the ambulance service reach patients in remote locations.

3.4 The recent removal by the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) of its long standing objection to co-responding has now seen significant engagement of full-time firefighters in co-responding schemes including a very successful scheme in Greater Manchester and a current pilot in London.

3.5 East Midlands Ambulance Service (EMAS) have concluded a successful trial of the first regional Emergency First Responder Scheme. This has involved six fire and rescue services adopting a common operating model to work in partnership with EMAS. Significantly the trial involved EMAS tasking FRS resources directly via Airwave radio rather than making a request through Fire Control. This approach saved vital minutes in the response to patients whose chances of survival drop significantly by the minute. This scheme is now being extended across the whole region and will encompass both retained and full time fire-fighters.

3.6 North West Ambulance Service have also established successful co-responding arrangements with police and fire and rescue services including schemes in difficult to access areas such as Morecambe Bay, where firefighters have been first to arrive on scene while the ambulance is en route in 64% of cases, and Ormskirk where FRS were first on scene in 77% of cases. In Greater Manchester FRS have supported NWAS at 550 cardiac arrest incidents since September. As seen in EMAS, the ability to task FRS assets directly has been a significant factor in the success of the arrangements.

3.7 As co-responding schemes have developed in scope and sophistication, the Association of Ambulance Chief Executives (AACE) and the Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) are working in close partnership to develop an agreed national consensus statement and common governance arrangements in order to identify and disseminate emerging best practice.

**Future potential**

3.8 The refreshed National Overview document reflects the significant development of co-responding schemes and the ESCWG will be working to ensure best practice continues to be identified. One area of potential growth is the increased use of police assets, as is currently being trialled in London, to add another level of response to medical emergencies.
### Demand Management/Rationalisation

4.1 Demand management between the emergency services is well referenced in the overview and looks to ensure a more intelligent led approach is taken to the deployment of emergency service assets and personnel.

4.2 The London Ambulance Service (LAS) have established a 24/7 clinical desk dedicated to calls from the police requesting an ambulance. The clinicians on that desk deal with around 60% of police demand (700 patients a week) without the need to send an ambulance which saves police time on scene and reserves ambulance resources for patients in greater need. NWAS have established similar arrangements and have seen the same benefits dealing with 41% of incidents originating from the police without the need to send an ambulance.

4.3 A Joint Response Unit (JRU) has been piloted in London and sees a dedicated LAS fast response vehicle with a lone paramedic respond solely to police requests for attendance. The JRU provides an on scene triage, assessment and treatment of patients and the trial has highlighted that on 79.3% of occasions an ambulance was not required.

4.4 Increasingly fire crews are being deployed to gain access to premises where a patient is in need of medical support. Traditionally ambulance services have requested police assistance.

4.5 In Lancashire, a Memorandum of Understanding has been signed between Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service, Lancashire Constabulary and North West Ambulance Service to deploy fire and rescue assets (where no crime is suspected) to gain access on behalf of the ambulance service. Initial findings suggest the first five months of the pilot saved 138 hours of police officer time; a faster response from Lancashire fire and rescue service; less damage caused by attending fire and rescue crews due to the availability of more sophisticated equipment and better outcomes for patients in terms of response times because on a number of occasions the fire crews were arriving prior to NWAS staff and providing a level of medical care.

4.6 In 2015, Surrey Fire and Rescue Service attended 644 requests to gain entry on behalf of South East Coast Ambulance Trust, with an average attendance time of 8 minutes 46 seconds. One of the key outcomes was that the boarding up contract was only used 48 times; a significant reduction. This was simply as a result of the fire service being able to deploy more appropriate equipment and thereby causing less damage.

4.7 Joint working arrangements for assisting in missing persons searches are also increasing in prevalence. In Surrey arrangements are in place for Surrey Fire and Rescue and South Coast Ambulance Trust to provide Surrey Police with assistance with high risk missing persons. Fire and rescue services in particular have personnel and equipment such as lighting, thermal imaging equipment and increasingly drones to assist with this type of incident. This was effectively demonstrated in Surrey where the use of fire and rescue thermal imaging equipment led to a missing child being found within minutes of the fire service being on scene.

**Future potential**

4.8 The demand management and rationalisation projects highlighted in the overview are designed to ensure a more balanced response across all three emergency services. This then enables organisations to better match demand, make best use of available assets and release capacity to deal with other incidents and emergencies.
5. Shared Estate/Assets

5.1 Examples of estate transformation, co-location, integration of support functions, joint approaches to procurement and information technology; as well as joint headquarters and command and control facilities are well advanced throughout the refreshed National Overview.

5.2 In Suffolk, fire and rescue, police, ambulance and the county council have come together to produce a shared estates programme. This has led to a rationalisation of the public sector estate and the disposal of less efficient properties; many of which were not in optimal response locations and no longer fit for purpose.

5.3 Under Cheshire’s ‘Blue Light Collaboration Programme’, key areas include:
   - Relocation of Cheshire Fire and Rescue HQ functions to Clemonds Hey (current police HQ).
   - Creation of joint vehicle workshop.
   - The creation of joint back office departments delivering functions to both organisations.
   - The identification of opportunities for co-location across the operational estate.

5.4 In Hampshire, a Joint Strategic HQ between police and fire is being developed through the phased transformation of Hampshire Fire and Rescue HQ in Eastleigh. The Joint Strategic HQ houses senior managers from both organisations as well as support functions. The relocation of police teams will contribute to the estates budget being reduced by £1.490m.

5.5 Plans are also in place in Hampshire to transform sixteen fire stations into ‘blue light hubs’.

5.6 In Hertfordshire, 18 of the 29 fire stations have East of England Ambulance assets co-located on site.

5.7 In Essex, the East of England Ambulance Service and Essex County Fire and Rescue Service are working to establish Dynamic Activation Points (DAPs), which are locations the NHS has identified as being ideal to allow medical assets to respond to emergencies in a shorter time period than otherwise would have been possible. Essex Fire and Rescue Service has worked with the East of England Ambulance Trust to identify fire stations which would allow NHS resources to deploy as new DAP points.

5.8 In Derbyshire a Limited Liability Partnership (LLP) has been created to enable joint ownership between police and fire of a new joint HQ building. This is managed through a joint board which is co-chaired by the Police and Crime Commissioner and Chair of the Fire Authority. The new HQ is currently under construction and full occupation is due to be completed by November 2016.

5.9 In Cleveland police and fire are currently scoping out the development of fully immersed fleet procurement and management service. The savings are significant and estimated to be in the region of 250K on vehicle servicing alone.

5.10 Cleveland Police and Fire are also working to collaborate across all of the combined estate. Police and fire staff will be able to access all buildings using a common entry card system and it is estimated this will significantly reduce staff travelling distances in order to conduct interviews, access IT systems and use rest facilities. Plans are developing to co-locate operational police and fire teams into four shared locations. The savings are predicted to be in the range of £500K.

5.11 The Joint Control Project in Kent delivered the UK’s first fully multi-agency Fire and Police Control Centre which is anticipated to deliver £1.7m of savings by 2021.

5.12 In November 2014, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service (MFRS) and Merseyside Police built a new £6.6m Joint Command and Control Centre (JCC) at the existing Fire and Rescue HQ site. The JCC was jointly funded on a 40/60% basis through capital investment from both organisations and all running costs are apportioned similarly. Both Merseyside Fire and Rescue
and Merseyside Police relocated their call handling and dispatch facilities to the JCC which also houses a purpose built strategic and tactical command suite facility. The operational planning functions from Merseyside Fire and Rescue, Merseyside Police, Northwest Ambulance Service and Merseyside Resilience Forum are also integrated into the JCC.

5.13 In April 2015, the Chief Officers of Mid and West Wales and South Wales Fire and Rescue Services, South Wales Police, The Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales and the Welsh Government agreed a memorandum of understanding to implement the business case to merge the three control functions into a single co-located facility. Annual savings of at least £2M are anticipated.

Future potential

5.14 The emergency services are commonly considering options for shared estates/assets as part of all relevant development projects. This is becoming a standard approach across the emergency services, signalling the end to new single-service estates/assets projects.

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<tr>
<th>6. Strategic Alliances/Partnerships</th>
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<tr>
<td>6.1 Where collaboration is developing at pace, strategic partnerships and alliances are bringing the key strategic leaders together to drive greater collaboration and efficiencies.</td>
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<td>6.2 In Hertfordshire, Roy Wilsher, Chief Fire Officer and Director of the County Council’s Community Protection Directorate, is also the Chief Executive for the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.</td>
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<td>6.3 In Cheshire, the ‘Blue Light Collaboration’ project (BLC) brings together Cheshire Constabulary, Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service, the Police and Crime Commissioner, and North West Ambulance Service. A Blue Light Executive Board has been established to help drive forward the shared vision across all the respective organisations.</td>
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<td>6.4 A Blue Light Integration Board has been set up in Cornwall and Plymouth Unitary Authority as part of the One Public Estate programme. Members include Cornwall Fire and Rescue, Devon and Summerset Fire and Rescue, South West Ambulance Service and Devon and Cornwall Police.</td>
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<td>6.5 Also within the South West, an Emergency Services Forum has been established that brings together strategic leaders from across the emergency services in Cornwall, Devon, Somerset and Avon to review current joint working and explore future opportunities.</td>
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<td>6.6 In Northamptonshire the establishment of the Northamptonshire Interoperability Board in 2013 has seen the establishment of a joint management team between police and fire; including co-location. This has also helped facilitate a single and integrated management structure; production of a single Prevention and Community Protection Strategy and the sharing of fleet between fire and police.</td>
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<td>6.7 In Surrey and Sussex, the Emergency Services Collaboration Programme (ESCP) brings together partners from six emergency services. The aims of the ESCP include:</td>
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<td>● Improving service to the public</td>
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<td>● Reducing costs and increasing resilience</td>
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<td>● Removing overlaps in service provision</td>
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<td>● Increasing the ability of the emergency services to align resources to meet demand.</td>
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<td>6.8 The Joint Contact, Control and Dispatch (JCCD) theme within the overall ESCP programme is a</td>
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key enabler for delivering the design principles, involving technology integration, changes to working practices and potentially to roles and sites from which some partners’ JCCD functions operate.

6.9 At the start of this project, it was established that the six organisations’ collective spend on contact, control and dispatch was around £45m a year, with approximately 1,200 staff delivering the function from 13 sites, using technology that did not always join up. This suggested that there was significant scope to improve the service and deliver efficiencies.

6.10 A significant number of calls are made every day between blue light and non blue light partners who require assistance from another agency in order to get the right outcome for the public. The Multi Agency Information Transfer (MAIT) project - under the JCCD theme - focuses on creating a single operating picture across services by replacing the phone call currently required to notify another service with an electronic link connecting existing command and control systems. This will ensure that the correct information is relayed more quickly – reducing call handling times, delivering faster response times and providing a better service to the public.

Future potential

6.11 There are clear benefits to the strategic alliances and partnership approach, but due to local context, organisational and governance structures, there is no one-size-fits-all solution. All areas should be encouraged to put in place local strategic alliances as appropriate.

7. Multi Agency Incident/Information Transfer (MAIT)

7.1 The Multi Agency Incident/Information Transfer system is a schema designed to allow information (currently incident data) to be passed between agencies and populated directly into end systems (generally command and control facilities).

7.2 The operational benefits are well understood since it allows the transfer of often time critical incident data sets between agencies in a matter of seconds rather than reliance on a physical phone call.

7.3 One of the key issues regarding MAIT throughout its development has been the lack of strategic ownership. This has led to concerns regarding local systems being developed which are not compatible; along with potential duplication of effort and repetition of error.

7.4 The 2014 commissioned research into collaboration highlighted the issue of data sharing. 60% of respondents to the England and Wales survey stated that issues with data and information sharing were proving significant barriers to their ability to collaborate.

Future potential

7.5 The ES CWG (subject to resourcing) should work with relevant government departments to identify appropriate strategic ownership and to develop a roadmap for the national provision of MAIT. This could be achieved through the establishment of a ‘feasibility’ team made up of representatives from the emergency services and government departments. One proposal could be to move the MAIT system under the umbrella of the Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP).
### 8. 999/112

8.1 Delivery of the 999/112 Service involves many different stakeholder groups both in the public and private sectors. Day-to-day operational delivery of the service is overseen by DCMS.

8.2 The current service does not reflect the phenomenal changes stimulated by the Internet and mobile broadband communications that deliver benefits to society and the economy. The Home Office led Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP) and MAIT (Multi-Agency Incident Transfer), alongside other initiatives present opportunities to improve the effectiveness of delivery of the service to society with cost reduction.

8.3 The current service would be recognisable by those that inaugurated it in 1937. Telecommunications technologies and services are evolving at an ever increasing rate. In particular, the Internet accessed over smartphones is providing new opportunities that challenge existing ways of delivering the service with potentially greater effectiveness. There is an ever widening gap between what currently the service delivers, what could potentially be delivered and what the public might reasonably expect. For example, social media services (such as Twitter, Facebook and Instagram) enabled on smartphones are becoming increasingly central to the way people communicate. There are worrying examples where these services have been used in preference to 999/112.

8.4 In response to these trends “Apps” for smartphones are emerging from both the private sector and at the local level within the emergency services. However, they are incompatible with and risk fragmenting the national service. Fragmentation is likely because 999/112 calls are part of the national psyche and receive a geographically uniform response while local initiatives only work on a local basis. If a local means for contacting the emergency services is used out of the local area the caller might find the response unpredictable or entirely absent.

8.5 Whilst there are many well developed ‘use cases’ business cases for the new technologies assisting emergency response remain elusive. Despite this it is hard to ignore changes in society that have been enabled through the use of smartphones such as their role in organising the riots in the UK in the summer of 2011 and the response to the Boston bombing in 2013. This is fertile ground for research to ensure the service keeps up with the pace of change both technologically and societally. The time is right for capitalising on these trends but effective leadership across all relevant stakeholders is required to do so.

**Future potential**

8.6 To modernise the service will require joint strategic leadership across relevant public bodies. Logically, development would sit with the emergency services, BT as the current service provider, and with those Departments with a vested interest in delivering the service to the public. I.e. the Home Office, Department of Health and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. In the first instance a research project would be required to better understand current trends and end user requirements, the benefits of local initiatives implemented to date, and to scope potential future solutions.

### 9. Wider Collaboration

9.1 The refreshed National Overview has demonstrated the prevalence of collaboration across the public sector, not just confined to the emergency services. Increasingly this work has included collaboration with local government and public health.

9.2 In Greater Manchester, The Community Risk Intervention Team (CRIT) initiative is run by Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMFRS) in collaboration with North West Ambulance Service (NWAS), Greater Manchester Police (GMP) and a number of local authorities. The service
provides risk prevention and reduction activities across Greater Manchester in relation to fire, crime, falls and other health issues.

9.3 The overall fiscal cost-to-benefit ratio of CRIT is 1:1.6. An (annualised) £820,152 investment by GMFRS generates an (annualised) £1,356,589 in fiscal benefits to a multitude of agencies, including those involved in crime and disorder, healthcare, and fire and rescue services. Indeed, CRIT is fiscally viable balanced purely against the benefits which it generates for partners in GMP, NWAS and the NHS alone.

9.4 Fiscal benefits generated by CRIT are broad in their spread across multiple agencies. While the £820,152 annual cost of CRIT to GMFRS is not offset by benefit captured by any one particular external partner, the accumulation of fiscal benefit by partners more than justifies the investment. Looking purely at benefits accrued by GMP, the NHS (including NWAS) and MCC, and ignoring benefits accrued by GMFRS itself, there is a cost:benefit ratio of 1:1.3. This means that for every £1 spent on CRIT by GMFRS, £1.30 is saved by non-FRS partners as a collective.

9.5 The Salford Integrated Prevention Hub is another example of collaboration across boundaries. The project addresses the needs of 11-25 year olds and their families who fall within the ‘Complex Dependency’ cohort. Integrated teams deliver multi-disciplinary safety education encompassing all Emergency Services’ requirements and those of the Local Authority, to young people both in and out of a school environment.

9.6 In Hertfordshire collaboration between the County Council and fire and rescue in particular is well advanced through the formation of the Community Protection Directorate under the leadership of the Chief Fire Officer. This brings together Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service, Trading Standards, Resilience and the County Community Safety Unit. The formation of the Directorate in April 2011 has enabled agencies to collaborate and work together in a more effective way.

9.7 The Hertfordshire County Community Safety Unit brings together officers from across Hertfordshire County Council and Hertfordshire Constabulary to tackle four priority work strands: vulnerable people including domestic abuse and hate crime; safer communities including alcohol, anti-social behaviour and analysis; drugs strategy and offender management. Funding is provided by Hertfordshire County Council; Hertfordshire Police; Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner’s Community Safety Grant; Home Office IDVA/ISVA Grant; Proceeds of Crime Act (POCA).

9.8 At a national level the Consensus Statement on Improving Health and Wellbeing between NHS England, Public Health England, Local Government Association, Chief Fire Officers Association and Age UK, describes the intent for organisations to work together to encourage joint strategies for intelligence-led early intervention and prevention; ensuring people with complex needs get the personalised, integrated care and support they need to live full lives, sustain their independence for longer and in doing so reduce preventable hospital admissions and avoidable winter pressures/deaths.

9.9 Building on the Consensus Statement is the CFOA Health Strategy Fire and Rescue as a Health Asset which looks to cement the working relationship between fire and rescue and the broader health sector; enabling fire and rescue services to assist health to meet ever increasing challenges.

Future potential

9.10 There are clear benefits of wider collaboration to the effectiveness and efficiency of front line public services. The further development of consensus statements and memorandums of understanding between national bodies should be encouraged, and building on good practice already in place, local collaboration initiatives should be considered in the context of the full range of public services, not limited to the emergency services alone.