

24 May 2010

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## **FiReControl**

### **Summary**

Members will receive an update from Roger Hargreaves, Programme Director at CLG and hear from Robin Southwell OBE, Chief Executive of EADS UK. Members are also asked to note the LGA's briefing on the CLG Select Committee report on FiReControl and appoint a new lead member for FiReControl.

### **Recommendations**

Members are asked to:

- receive an update on the project
- note the Select Committee's report
- appoint a new lead member.

### **Action**

As decided by members.

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## FiReControl

### Background

1. At the January 2010 Committee meeting, Members asked that an up-to-date project plan for the FiReControl project, with clear milestones, be brought forward by officers. This has not been made available to us by CLG at the time of writing this report. Furthermore, Fire and Rescue Authorities maintain that confidence in the project remains low as equipment that has been provided to the service, such as Mobile Data Terminals, are of poor quality and do not always function well.
2. Since the Committee discussed the FiReControl project at its meeting on 8 March 2010, there have been two significant developments: the publication of the Select Committee report and a new government in power.

### CLG Select Committee report

3. On 1 April the Select Committee published its report into FiReControl. The Select Committee came to the same conclusion as the LGA: that the FiReControl project was “inadequately planned, poorly executed, and badly managed” and that fire authorities should not be out of pocket as a result of delays in the project. The Committee concluded that given the investment of public funds already committed, and the projected benefits, CLG should press ahead with the FiReControl project as it would cost £8 million more to cancel the project than if it were left to proceed. This conclusion was contingent on CLG resolving project management and contractor issues, and working more closely with end users to meet the target ‘go-live’ date of mid-2011.
4. The Committee asked that the Government report progress to the Select Committee after the general election. A briefing with a covering letter from the Chairman was sent to Fire Forum members on 15 April (attached at **Appendix 1**).

### FSMC Lead Member

5. Cllr James Pearson of Greater Manchester FRS was the Committee’s lead member for FiReControl. He stood down at the recent local elections, and we are grateful to him for his hard work over the last year. Regardless of the future of the project, it is important that we replace him. The role is as ‘senior user’ on the project for the LGA Group and involves attending a number of meetings including the Project Board, Sounding Board and Stakeholder Forum.

## **Position of the new government**

6. At the time of writing this report, neither the incoming Government's position on FiReControl nor the identity of the Fire Minister is known. An oral update will be given at the meeting according to how much information is available. However, we know that FiReControl will be a priority for the new Fire Minister and our congratulatory letter from the Chairman will set out the Committee's position and our desire to discuss the future of the project by way of invitations to an early Central Local Partnership meeting and Fire Forum, as well as lobbying on a bilateral basis via lead members.

## **Financial Implications**

7. The previous Government committed that any costs arising from the FiReControl programme will be fully met by CLG under New Burdens principles. This includes development and implementation of the new ICT infrastructure and grants for any agreed net additional costs incurred by authorities in implementing the change, including those resulting from project delays. The new Government's position is not known.

## **Implications for Wales**

8. This is an England only project and therefore none identified.

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