

FSMC update paper

Purpose of report

For information.

Summary

The report outlines issues of interest to the Committee not covered under the other items on the agenda.

Recommendation

Members to note the update.

Action

Officers to progress as appropriate.

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FSMC update paper

Fires and incidents at sea – Maritime Incident Response Group

1. As reported in the update paper to FSMC in September 2011, central funding from the Department of Transport (DfT) ceased for the Maritime Incident Response Group. The replacement proposal is for a commercial salvor to assess the incident and then assign help. The assessors would not have the capability to contain the fire or offer protection to crew and passengers. Chairman Cllr Coleman wrote to the Shipping Minister Simon Penning in October 2011 opposing the removal of the central funding stream and for choosing to implement a strategy for public safety based on cost rather than risk.
2. Only four Fire and Rescue Services have declared that they will still be maintaining an offshore response capability post April 2012, but this is likely to be confined local incidents only. These responses cannot be guaranteed either as there would be no back-up resources from nearby Fire and Rescue Services, as there was with the previous national structure. We continue to lobby for further clarity about new arrangements and DCLG have indicated that they would consider this issue at the newly formed Strategic Resilience Board which is due to meet at the end of May.

Capital grant funding

3. Following the Government's consultation on the bidding process for the fire capital grant funding last autumn, Fire Minister Bob Neill has confirmed the allocation process for 2013-15. The grant will be allocated by a combination of an efficiency fund administered as a capital grant via a bidding process with a pro-rata distribution using the current distribution method. The bidding round will close on 2 July 2012 and will be assessed by a departmental panel which will then make recommendations to the Minister. The outcome is expected to be announced in the autumn.
4. Guidance has been issued by DCLG and can be found at this web address: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/fire/capitalfunding201315> .

National Operational Guidance

5. In March, DCLG published two publications around Fire and Rescue Service Operational Guidance; one centred on railway incidents and the other focused on incidents in tunnels and underground. You can access these publications at the below web links:

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- 6.1 Fire and Rescue Service Operational Guidance – Railway Incidents:
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/fire/railwayincidents>
- 6.2 Fire and Rescue Service Operational Guidance – Incidents in Tunnels and Underground structures:
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/fire/tunnelincidents>

Fire Kills campaign

- 6. Fire Minister Bob Neill announced that the Fire Kills campaign will continue in 2012. The focus in this round will be on the empowerment of Fire and Rescue Services to disseminate messages on fire safety locally. Detailed plans will be discussed shortly by the Fire Kills Practitioners’ Group.

Sprinklers’ campaign

- 7. The sprinklers’ campaign working group met for the third time in March at Bournemouth. They further discussed the elements of the toolkit and the range of stakeholders that the group can engage. Potential signatories to it include Nick Ross (as a celebrity ‘champion’), the Women’s Institute and the Fire Brigades’ Union. The group are planning to present a prototype toolkit to FSMC in July and anticipate a launch date in autumn.
- 8. In all of this, the working group are mindful of ensuring the other relevant components of the LGA will not oppose the toolkit project. Cllr Richard Hobbs will be presenting to the LGA Environment and Housing Board (chaired by Cllr David Parsons), alongside the project manager of the Callow Mount project (Sheffield retrofitting project) and a representative from Sheffield Homes on 16 May 2012.

Jubilee celebrations – Thames Diamond Jubilee Pageant

- 9. The Government’s Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser, Sir Ken Knight, recently wrote to all Fire and Rescue Services about the Thames Diamond Jubilee Pageant. Seven Fire and Rescue Service boats will be forming a flotilla, provided by London Fire Brigade, Gloucestershire, West Sussex, Merseyside and Strathclyde. The event will be an opportunity to promote the Fire Kills Campaign’s ‘Boat Safety Week’ (3-9 June) to convey important fire safety messages aimed at vessel owners and holiday makers. DCLG will be sending out briefing packs to all Fire and Rescue Services in due course.

The Fire Lecture 2012: FIRE Cost and Consequence

10. This year's Fire Lecture hosted by The Worshipful Company of Firefighters, in partnership with BRE Global, will be held at the Insurance Hall in the City of London on Wednesday 30 May 2012 at 6.30pm. For details and an application form, please go to the Firefighters' Company website at www.firefighterscompany.org.

CFOA's Fire Futures Forum

11. CFOA's Fire Futures Forum next meets on 29 May, themed around the 2020 vision work CFOA is doing. The Forum focal point will be the landscape that the fire sector will be faced with, and have to operate in, in 2020. CFOA are currently undertaking research to develop scenarios that the fire and rescue service may face and this will be shared with attendees prior to the Forum for consideration. A wide range of FRS stakeholders are being invited and the intention is to develop a realistic, tested and rounded vision. The event will take place at the Institute of Directors, 116 Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5ED. If you would like to attend, please let Stephen Service at the LGA know.