

## Information provided by the Fire Brigades Union to CLG Select Committee

23 February 2010

### Specific Examples of End User Requirements not being met by FiReControl

#### 1. Officer Availability and Mobilisation

A major part of mobilising emergency resources to incidents includes the ability of fire controls to mobilise officers to incidents. Currently this is done via a pager system.

Ensuring the correct number of officers to incidents with the correct attributes (or specialisms) is essential for proper command control on the incident ground. To do so, controls must be able to have information readily to hand to know whether these officers are in fact available for duty and their location.

All this at present is done via local fire controls which monitor officer availability and attributes and update this as and when their availability and/or location changes. For example if you require a Fire Investigation Officer or a Hazmat Officer, these are specific attributes (there are many different attributes).

We are informed that FiReControl will now have the facility for officer availability as currently. However, what isn't clear is how officers will be mobilised.

The original specification was for officers' cars to have Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs) fitted. The FBU understands that this option has now been withdrawn since many Officers cars are actually privately owned or leased. Due to the introduction of Firelink radios and the removal of legacy radio equipment from existing Controls, and all of the above mentioned, local controls are currently mobilising Officers via private pager bureaux or the mobile phone network. Neither of which can be classed as resilient methods.

This was reported in CLG's FiReControl Newsletter Jan 10 - **Project Ellipse**.

These problems have been recognised by FRSs and finally CLG are having to address them but this was never part of the original specification with EADS. - How is live real time information and updated data transferred from FRS's to RCCs in a secure and resilient way to ensure it meets their own criteria for resilience. This would include such things as officer availability, officers Rotas,

retained availability. The FBU has received PR materials provided to FRSs by private companies offering to address this shortfall to capitalise on the situation. One such company is *Infographics* offering to supply 'middleware' for RCC integration.

The matter of officers status (availability) has been discussed with CLG. CLG have stated that no determination has yet been made on this and that the options under consideration for officers' status to be notified to RCC network are via:

- Handheld radios, or,
- Two way pagers, or,
- Satellite navigation devices, or,
- Voice

Status changes have to be verified. Currently this is carried out by a fire control officer dedicated to that task. This matter has not been considered in the CLG staffing model as at that time it was widely viewed that officers would use MDTs.