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This circular is	<b>For information</b>	No response required	
This circular is	<b>Relevant to the National Framework</b>		
Status	<b>This circular informs Fire and Rescue Authorities and senior staff in the Fire and Rescue Service of progress with the Fire and Resilience Programme.</b>		

## Fire and Resilience Programme Highlights – July 2009

### Issued by:

**Bess Teeger**

**FRS Development Division**

### Addressed to:

**The Chair of the Fire and Rescue Authority  
The Chief Executive of the County Council  
The Clerk to the Fire and Rescue Authority  
The Clerk to the Combined Fire and Rescue Authority  
The Commissioner of the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority  
The Chief Fire Officer**

### Please forward to:

### Summary

This continues the series of monthly 'highlights' notes to inform Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) and senior staff in the Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) of progress with the Programme.

### For further information, contact:

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### 1.0 New Dimension

#### TRANSFER OF ASSETS CONSULTATION

- 1.1 Through Fire Service Circular 16/2009, CLG undertook a second consultation with FRSs earlier this year on the transfer of ownership of New Dimension assets. Following this, 39 FRSs provided responses, the majority of which confirmed support in principle for the transfer, although many had further questions. The Department has been considering these responses carefully, and is replying individually to FRSs regarding all points raised. The first letters have been sent, but inevitably it will take some time to answer all the queries. Please bear with us if the response to your queries have not yet arrived, and be assured that we will respond to all FRSs over the coming weeks. Following the completion of those letters, the Department will also be placing summarised responses to all the queries on the website.
- 1.2 One point raised by many FRSs relates to the need to see the contractual documentation for the maintenance contract. You will be aware that in signing up to the transfer of ownership agreement, fire authorities will also be obliged to sign up to the maintenance contract (the Prime Contract). The contract itself is between VTCS and Firebuy (the contract manager) and the services provided by this contract are accessed through the Terms of Access. CLG, as the current owner of the New Dimension assets, have initially signed the Terms of Access to ensure that the vehicles and equipment are being maintained. However, upon transfer of the assets it is a condition that FRSs will use the maintenance contract, and hence each FRA will need to individually enter into the Terms of Access themselves.
- 1.3 A copy of the Terms of Access will be enclosed with the reply to each FRS and sent to those who did not respond to the consultation. However there are restrictions on the circulation of the Prime Contract for commercial reasons. For those FRA legal advisors who wish to see a copy of the Prime Contract, this can be obtained via Angela Hooton, Firebuy Contract Manager (email: [angela.hooton@firebuy.gov.uk](mailto:angela.hooton@firebuy.gov.uk)) who can supply a PDF copy. Copies will only be available from **1 August 2009** onwards and in obtaining a copy you may be asked to enter into a confidentiality agreement.

### 2.0 FiReControl

- 2.1 On 15 July 2009 the Fire Minister, Shahid Malik MP, made a Written Statement to Parliament announcing a ten month delay to FiReControl. Under the new schedule we expect the first three regions to start taking calls in spring 2011. A revised table of cut over dates was published with the Statement.
- 2.2 The statement set out the very significant benefits the project intends to deliver, progress so far and the Minister's firm commitment to the delivery of FiReControl. The Minister also explained improvements to the project approach. Joint CLG and EADS (the main contractor) teams would be working on a day-to-day basis with the Fire and Rescue Service. A series of Solution Establishment Workshops have started at EADS, involving the CLG team, FRS representatives and EADS.

- 2.3 There will also be greater assurance of progress through setting shorter-term milestones. EADS has put their Chief Technical Officer Mark Bentall on to the project. All these moves will ensure more effective joint working and consistent progress.
- 2.4 CLG issued a press release on FiReControl and Firelink on 15 July. This highlighted progress on Firelink, which has now reached the stage of two-thirds rollout into FRS vehicles. The Minister has sent letters to chairs of Regional Management Boards, Fire and Rescue Authorities, and Local Authority Controlled Companies. Shona Dunn has written to Chief Fire Officers and the Commissioner in London.
- 2.5 For the Written Statement and press release, please follow the links below:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/statements/corporate/firecontrolprogress>  
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/news/corporate/1283906>

### 3.0 Firelink

#### PHASE B ROLLOUT

- 3.1 Operational rollout of Firelink voice terminals to Fire and Rescue (FRS) appliances and officers' cars in England is going well. Thirty four of forty six fire and rescue services in England are now operational on Airwave.

#### IN-SERVICE MANAGEMENT

- 3.2 Maintenance and support arrangements are in place for those FRSs now operating on Firelink. Reporting is undertaken through service management terminals located in each FRS.

#### TRAINING

- 3.3 A Firelink training DVD was distributed earlier in the month to all Chief Fire Officers. The DVD provides an overview of the Firelink radio system and outlines the operational functionality of the Firelink radio equipment. It is designed to support the initial user training delivered during rollout of the Firelink system. For a copy or for further information about the DVD please contact Keith Donnelly, Firelink Training Manager, telephone: 020 3174 0152 or email [keith.donnelly@communities.qsi.gov.uk](mailto:keith.donnelly@communities.qsi.gov.uk)

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