



NEWSLETTER – Edition 7
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Pilot is launched in North East

A pioneering pilot on attribute-based mobilising was launched nationally on 8 January – and the North East is playing a leading role in it.

Tyne & Wear is one of four FRSs around the country that has been selected to take part in the trial run. Members of the regional Project team based at the RCC have done key preliminary work to match Tyne & Wear's incident types to the national incident types that have been defined. The pilot includes members of the Project Delivery Team and members from TWFRS including Operational Officers and Control Staff.

FiReControl will work on two sets of attributes – a basic and an extended list. The basic list is mandatory for all FRSs to enable the construction of PDAs (pre-determined attendance) and to allow cross-border mobilising. The extended list will accommodate special equipment or mobilising requirements.

North East Business Design Workstream Manager Alison Jagers said: "The pilot includes looking at Tyne & Wear's PDAs to see how the attribute list will be able to be set to build them.

"We're starting initially with 25 incident types, and we'll be taking part in a workshop with the other pilot FRSs – Derbyshire, Dorset and Staffordshire – at the end of the month to share feedback. After that, we'll hopefully start working on the rest of the incident types."

Staff workshop talks about what to wear...

A uniform would be the workwear of choice for staff at the RCC, according to feedback from across the four North East Control Rooms.

Representatives from each Control Room met at the RCC on 13 January in the latest of a series of workshops to discuss matters that will affect people once they move to the centre.

The nine representatives from Cleveland, Tyne & Wear, Durham & Darlington and Northumberland brought with them questionnaires filled in by 48 colleagues to provide information on their preferences.

The meeting was hosted by LACC HR Adviser Laura Sellers, who said: "We've made some really good progress in getting people's ideas about what they would like when they move to the RCC.

"In this session, the group agreed that uniform is the preferred option, and the meeting discussed the practicalities of wearing shirts / polo shirts, skirts and trousers.

"A long discussion also took place on the importance of role markings as part of the uniform, and it was unanimously agreed that some type of role markings should be part of the RCC uniform. However, this will differ from current role markings because of the different roles that will exist at the RCC."

Laura will now investigate the uniform arrangements in each FRS, including plans to change this in the near future. "Then the group will consider further whether we are able to remain part of the current uniform provision, and retain the full FRS uniform, or whether we should provide a separate uniform that mirrors the FRS but gives the opportunity to influence



Workwear for staff at the RCC was top of the agenda at the latest workshop

the quality and fit of items," said Laura.

Members of the group were given a progress report on catering facilities by Service Support Manager John Watson. These include trying to find a cost-effective catered option that fits in with shift patterns, vending machine options and investigating the costs of possibly providing a cooker and other facilities so people can have a hot meal. For full details of this meeting and the last one, please ask your Control Room Manager.

Laura thanked everyone who took part in the discussions. "These issues are important to people, and the meetings give the LACC real help in making decisions on them," she said.



Meet the Directors



This month:
Cllr Jean Chaplow

Who do you represent?

The Deerness Valley Division - Esh Winning, Ushaw Moor, New Brancepeth and Brancepeth Village.

What are your responsibilities?

My responsibilities are to the people in my division, to raise its profile and ensure I bring every possible benefit to the area. I have a keen interest in issues affecting the elderly and young people, enjoy cricket, football and local horticultural shows and support the Banner Group and pigeon fanciers.

What do you think about FiReControl?

It's a fantastic investment in the future of the Fire Service and a flagship development which will not only raise the profile of the North East, but also those highly capable members of staff who will ensure that FiReControl provides the very best service to people living in this part of the country.

Tell us a bit about yourself.

My first employment was as a clerk cashier and then school cook which, along with the company of the children, I thoroughly enjoyed. I have been involved with the GMB Union for many years since the privatisation of the schools meals service and have received two gold medals for the union work that I did over 20 years.

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Getting busy with training in the region

Making sure that everyone who is transferring to the RCC is fully trained is going to be a big job – and training activities are now really picking up speed.

Andrew Bays, Transitional Training Manager, has developed a plan for the region, and work has begun to develop training modules for the main system.

Andrew said: "I've been in place for about two months now, and I'm enjoying the role and ensuring the region's personnel get the best available training to carry out their roles in the RCC.

"We're having a busy time in training, regionally and nationally.

"We've established a national Training Group Network with representation from CLG, main system training providers FDM, training managers and training advisers from the first

wave regions. We've conducted a National Occupational Standards Gap Analysis to see where there are needs to be met, and we're also working with Skills for Justice to establish a qualifications framework."

An assessment process for call and incident quality has been identified and is being developed, and non-system training modules are also being identified and defined as either national or regional requirements.

"In the coming weeks, I'll be researching regional learning and development strategies and policies, and drawing up draft RCC versions," said Andrew. He has also been involved in a Solution Establishment Workshop with CLG's principal contractor EADS at Newport to help identify training requirements from Ways of Working documents. Andrew said: "The closing date for job applications for our new Training

Adviser role closed on 15 January, and we hope to get the new person on board and up to speed as soon as possible."

Left – Transitional Training Manager Andrew Bays - developing training for the region and nationally.



Got a query about the RCC? Email Adrienne Humberstone at ahumberstone@nercc.co.uk



Cllr Jean Chaplow, cont. from P2

My training from the union gave me a strong feeling for community and raised my awareness of the need to campaign for greater investment in our villages.

I first became a Parish councillor, serving for eight years before standing for the County Council where I have won the seat twice.

Busy year for visitors at the RCC

2009 was a busy year for visits to the Regional Control Centre.

Security records show that more than 1450 visitor passes were issued during the year. Groups holding meetings there included the Carbon Trust, Fire Authorities, FirePro and the North East Civil Resilience Forum, as well as FiReControl meetings including the staff focus workshops.

The building is also home to two groups of staff – the Local Authority Controlled Company, currently eight people, and the Regional Project Team, who at the moment also have eight people based there. The RCC also houses security and maintenance staff.

Service Support Manager John Watson said: "We are pleased to see the building getting used for a variety of purposes, and that this is helping identify any snagging issues as well as the potential use for the building following go-live."

Looking ahead to progress in 2010

In the last RCC newsletter, Regional Control Centre Director Kevin Robson closed 2009, so this month I'm taking the opportunity to wish you a happy and healthy new year, and to look at what's ahead for us all in 2010.

We've started the year in a position that includes some strengths and some challenges – and we're going to be working hard throughout the year to maximise our advantages and overcome any obstacles that stand in the way of our success.

In a couple of weeks, the Department for Communities and Local Government's (CLG's) Select Committee will be taking a look at

FiReControl, and a National Audit office review is currently underway. The results will be made public and we await the review's outcomes with interest.

As you know, it was announced before Christmas that Intergraph are to be the suppliers of our mobilising system (MRMS), and we're continuing to push CLG for more detail on the solution and

visibility of the end product. I'm delighted to say that there are plans in the pipeline for a series of roadshows where some people will be able to get a look at the system.

Principal contractor EADS and CLG have conducted an impact assessment on the implications of changing MRMS supplier, and CLG are now waiting for EADS to deliver a detailed schedule. During March, Regional Project Director John Hindmarch, RCCD Kevin Robson and I will be attending a workshop along with other first wave regions to review this schedule and provide the FRS perspective on delivering the transition activities. Watch this space for more details.

One area of concern we'll be tackling is the impact this is having on some parts of the project, particularly the implementation of the Ways of Working - the new consistent national way of working. It's also delaying our work on the conversion and migration of data.

Regionally, we're continuing to deliver. On P1, you'll find an update of our work on the attribute based mobilising pilot.

Work also continues to build a new gazetteer that will use the National Land and Property Gazetteer (NPLG) as a base for address matching. FRS Data Transition Managers, working with Control Rooms, are currently

working on the first stage of this, which involves matching and assuring the quality of addresses held in NPLG, particularly for high risk sites.

The roll out of mobile data terminal (MDT)1.0A has started, with train-the-trainer events taking place on December 14, 15 and 16.

Northumberland FRS began training

with fire crews on January 11, and to date this has been well received. MDT1.0A will be installed on NFRS appliances from April. Durham and Darlington FRS will commence training in February, and their MDT1.0As will be installed from May 10.

So 2010 is already shaping up to be a busy year. And as ever, all the staff involved in this major project are top of our agenda, and we'll be continuing to keep you well informed.

My thanks go to everyone for your help, patience and involvement during 2009 – we look forward to continuing to work closely with you all as we move forward together in 2010.



By Regional Project Manager Helen Bashford