

WYFRA	FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE	18 July 2008	ITEM NO:
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REPORT OF: DCFO/DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

**PURPOSE OF REPORT: TO OUTLINE FIRECONTROL PROJECT
CUTOVER OPTIONS FOR TRANSFERRING
STAFF FROM WYFRS MACC TO THE
YORKSHIRE AND HUMBERSIDE RCC**

RECOMMENDATIONS: THAT MEMBERS NOTE THE OPTIONS

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT DETAILS

EXEMPTION CATEGORY: NONE

**ACCESS CONTACT OFFICER: MR S PILLING (01274 655702)
DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS**

**MR I BITCON (01274 655720)
AREA MANAGER, OPERATIONS RESPONSE**

**BACKGROUND PAPERS
OPEN TO INSPECTION: NONE.**

1 Background

- 1.1 The FiReControl project will replace the existing 46 FRS based control rooms with 9 networked Regional Control Centres (RCC). The Yorkshire and Humberside RCC at Wakefield is scheduled to open in January 2011. WYFRS will be the first FRS in the Yorkshire and Humberside Region to cutover to the new RCC.
- 1.2 CLG have identified 3 options for executing the process of training staff from West Yorkshire's Mobilising and Communications Centre (MACC) in preparation for commencing work in the RCC. This paper describes each option, considers the costs, benefits and risks of each and proposes a preferred option.

2 Information

2.1 Option 1 – Create a Staff Pool

- 2.1.1 This involves the creation of a large staff pool over and above current establishments, which would enable WYFRS and the other FRSs in the region to both train staff and continue staffing their existing control rooms simultaneously. The overall impact on existing control rooms would be minimal and this option would allow staff throughout the region to train together in preparation of forming the new organisation.
- 2.1.2 This option incurs costs associated with employing up to 40 additional staff throughout the region to backfill posts that are vacated for training purposes. There may be difficulty in ensuring that a balance of experienced staff and short-term contract staff is maintained whilst staff are receiving training at the RCC.

Costs: Additional staffing as described above, however, it is expected that all additional costs would be met by CLG as a new burden

Benefits: Minimal MACC impact and inclusive training for regional staff

Risks: Ensuring balance of experienced staff as described above

2.2 Option 2 – Train Staff at Work

- 2.2.1 This option involves training all staff at their own control room prior to transfer to the RCC, thereby removing the need for a staff pool.
- 2.2.2 Existing control rooms would effectively become training sites, which would raise the question of feasibility of extra equipment and space. Using the RCCs as alternative training sites would also realise risks associated with excessive travel time and maintenance of appropriate staffing levels.
- 2.2.3 High costs would be incurred in overtime to ensure staff for RCC training and staffing the existing control room. Managing groups of trainees through the same stage of training would be difficult and it is likely that refresher courses would be necessary to maintain levels of knowledge prior to cutover.
- 2.2.4 Costs: High overtime costs

Benefits: No staff pool required

Risks: Requirements for additional equipment and space, maintaining staffing during training, refresher courses required

2.3 Option 3 – Emergency Calls dealt with by the RCC Network

2.3.1 This option involves WYFRS transferring call handling of emergencies into the RCC network for a minimum eight week period while MACC staff are trained at the RCC. South Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and Humberside would maintain their own control room facility during this period, therefore it would be West Yorkshire calls only that are answered and managed elsewhere.

2.3.2 Following completion of training, staff would transfer to the RCC and manage WYFRS calls from the new RCC. The other FRSs within the region would go through the same process with the Y&H RCC and the network managing their calls while their staff are trained.

2.3.3 WYFRA can be confident in selecting this option because of our position in the national rollout means that the integrity and resilience of the RCC network should already have been proven in other parts of the country. It should be noted, however, that the system is yet to be tested in the early regions and therefore there is a risk that sign off may not take place. If that is the case and West Yorkshire is not confident of the resilience and effectiveness of the network there can be no means to force this option to take place.

2.3.4 If there is a slight legal risk/implication arising from the handling of WYFRS calls outside the region CLG have advised that this can be overcome by routing WYFRS emergency calls via the Y&H RCC into the network as the new network is designed to do and what would happen during spate conditions.

2.3.5 Before selecting this option, WYFRA will require assurances that Incident Reporting System data arising from WYFRS incidents handled from within the RCC network is passed back to WYFRS by other call handlers.

2.3.6 Costs: Staffing costs already built into assumed figures

Benefits: Newly trained staff placed immediately into RCC

Risks: RCC network yet to be proven, IRS data issues

3 Equality and Fairness Issues

3.1 Any recruitment processes associated with these options will be carried out as appropriate within our current policies. Option 2 if selected may have a negative impact on family friendly issues associated with extra travel and overtime.

4. Financial Implications

4.1 Each of the options included within this report potentially have significant financial implications. However CLG have insisted through the process that any additional costs will be met from within new burdens funding which should result in no additional cost to this Authority.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 Option 3 – Calls Taken by the RCC network appears to present the most practicable way forward. Notwithstanding the risks identified in section 2.3, this option realises the most benefits and is the most cost effective as it ensures that training is both continuous and current in the period leading up to cutover.