



National Resilience (NR) briefing

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NR Mobilisation

The second quarter of National Resilience Fire Control (NRFC) Operations have now been reviewed. The period from 31st May to 30th September 2017 saw NRFC manage a total of 92 calls from NR asset hosting FRS. Of these calls 7 related to mobilisation requests and 85 were administrative requests.

The maintenance of competence for NRFC staff is continuing and is supported by the NR Command and Control (C&C) Capability Team. In addition, NRFC will participate in FRS exercises which involve the deployment of National Assets.

The C&C Capability Team will undertake an assurance of NRFC in Q4 of the 2017/18 business year.

The C&C Capability Team are undertaking a program of control room training which includes NR toolkit use and NCAF updates.

Work is continuing to add additional specialist resources that can be deployed as national assets (i.e. Drones) to the NCAF Electronic Support System (ESS). Work is also ongoing to enhance the NCAF ESS.

Consultation has commenced with FRS control rooms via the Mobilising Officer Group (MOG) and further opportunities for end user feedback will be provided during the development program.

Command and Control – NCAF review

The C&C Capability Team have delivered a number of NCAF awareness events which centre on the refreshed NCAF, learning from previous incidents and the recent changes within National Resilience.

The suite of presentations cover strategic and tactical considerations as part of NCAF in addition to the responsibilities of affected FRS during NR incidents. The C&C Capability Team have to date delivered NCAF awareness sessions to 25 FRS and a number are programmed for early 2018. In an attempt to capture as many FRS as possible a further request will be sent to those that have not yet responded.

Recent major Incidents have highlighted a delay in the information that is required from the affected FRS to effectively inform the relevant Government departments.

The current process in place, designed to mitigate this delay, involves the initial submission by the affected FRS Control room of one or more essential reporting criteria on the Electronic Supporting System (ESS), which in turn triggers a notification via email to NRAT and Home Office Duty Officers. This is also supplemented by a logged phone call from the NRFC, who monitor the ESS continually, to verbally inform the NRAT Duty Officer.

If an affected FRS does not update the ESS it becomes difficult to ascertain the correct information relating to the incident causing a delay in the information transfer.

To assist in improving the efficient and effective use of the ESS by Control rooms, the C&C Capability Team have developed a training presentation to support Control rooms and raise awareness of the ESS in addition to incorporating NR and NCAF awareness. This was presented to all the Control Managers at the MOG in November.

USAR Assurance

The Year 2 USAR assurance individual team reports and development plans to assist in managing remedial actions were issued in April 2017. Outcomes of the resulting action plans have been reported to the USAR NWG and it has been agreed that the year 2 assurance program has been concluded satisfactorily.

The Year 3 assurance process has been amended as a result of IER demands associated with a MODEX which originally would have formed the basis of the Y3 assurance. Exercise Black Kite in June 2017 and an exercise in Merseyside which will take place between 21st and 23rd March 2018 will fulfil this requirement. Identified teams have been invited to participate.

Work on the review of the USAR competency framework has been completed and the revised guidance has been consulted on and published to the NR website. A trial of an electronic maintenance of competence recording is being undertaken between December 2017 and March 2018 involving search dog handlers. Subject to the completion of a successful trial full roll out of this system is planned for 2018.

HVP/Flood Response

The HVP Self-assessment assurance process has now concluded. A report on outcomes was presented to the NRB on 7th December.

Planning for the assurance programme 2018/19 incorporating previous assurance outcomes where appropriate is underway. In addition the HVP Capability Team will conduct Service Assurance visits on Prime Contractor.

The HVP Capability Team will during 2018 undertake initial scoping and planning for HVP national assurance exercise scheduled for 2019/20.

A review of HVP & Prime Mover inventory will be undertaken to investigate if improvements and efficiencies can be identified.

The HVP Capability Team are involved with a project with EA to place a coupling adaptor on HVP modules that connects HVP delivery hose to EA trailer mounted pumps. EA will procure adaptors and the HVP Capability Team have added them to the inventory. This represents a change to the LTCM but is cost neutral.

The HVP Capability Team are working with LFB following Grenfell Tower on a change of HVP impeller type to provide greater pressure and potential use of HVPs to supply aerial appliances and/or rising mains.

Work is underway to develop and deliver CPD events for HVP instructors & Tactical Advisers. Tac Ad CPD was delivered in November 2017 with 3 HVPi CPD events planned for Jan and Feb 2018.

Flood Rescue

Self-assessment for flood rescue teams declared to the National Asset Register (NAR) commenced October 2017. Any new NAR applicants will now receive assurance visit by NR flood capability officer.

A full assurance programme for flood rescue assets will be developed and delivered in 2018. Future assurance will be planned 2 yearly assurance cycle and all organisations will receive one visit and submit self-assessment in each cycle.

A review of the Flood Rescue Concept of Operations (FRCO) is key to the flood rescue operations business plan. Key stakeholders have been identified – MCA, College of Policing, NFCC Inland Water Group. The proposed review of FRCO structure will include a strategic concept section supported by range of appendices to replace the current version which is all in single section.

The co-ordination and management of Flood Rescue assets continues to be delivered by NR supported by NRFC on behalf of DEFRA. Work to raise awareness of new Flood Rescue Capability Officer with organisations on the NAR is underway. A meeting with NRFC on the management of asset register has taken place and a proposal for online asset reporting and recording developed. Longer term there will be investigations into the development of an online competence recording system for personnel.

CBRNE – MD Futures Project

The transition to the new Mass Decontamination capability within FRS was completed on 3rd October 2017. The new capability comprises of 28 strategically modelled Mass Decontamination Units (MDUs) providing a specialist response to CBRN(e) incidents. The new deployment model has delivered improvements in the speed with which mass decontamination of the public starts and finishes; refining the overall efficiency of the MD capability.

Following the implementation of MDUs the project focussed on securing the appropriate MD resilience arrangements in support of the 28 MDUs. These arrangements included provision for 6 strategically modelled Mass Decon Support Units (MDSUs). MDSUs contain additional MD equipment to support an MD sector.

The Mass Decon Support Units (MDSUs) were declared operationally deployable on 16th November 2017.

Lastly there is now a provision of 2 Mass Decontamination Training Units (MDTUs), stowed as MDUs, located in London and available for recall to attend an operational incident if required.

Work is underway to support the Police with the storage and deployment of Police PRPS which can be used by either agency during a CBRN(e) incident.

CBRNE – Identify and implement a robust, sustainable DIM delivery model that meets the requirements of the Response Framework and the outcomes of the Cabinet Office DIM review

Following on from the MD Futures project the Home Office has committed to undertaking a DIM review to explore how the capability has diversified since its conception and its continued ability to meet the CBRN(e) risk and support of MD.

There will be three work streams to this review:

Mapping and Scoping Task and Finish Group (MSTFG) - National picture of CBRN and DIM tasks for the FRS and Police. This work stream would also enable the Home Office to have a clear understanding of the Police Service ask so an informed decision on adoption of non-mass decontamination tasks by the FRS can be made.

Science and Technology - Depending on outcomes of the Mapping and Scoping working group the S&T work stream will establish what additional technology and commercial and non-commercial opportunities exist to improve DIM response times and support any additional tasks.

Structure and Strategy - This strand will co-ordinate the outcomes from the other two strands in order to collate these into costed options to put to the Project Board.

International Search and Rescue Team (UK ISAR)

Planning continues towards confirming the first 6 months of training, workshops and exercises for 2018. Good progress is being made with the 2018 SIMEX where the plan is to deploy full heavy and EMT Type 1 teams. It is likely that other international teams will now participate.

At the time of writing UK ISAR have a number of personnel deployed to Bangladesh in support of UK EMT.

Almost 1 million Rohingya refugees have fled their homes and persecution in the northern Rakhine province of Myanmar (Burma) for neighbouring Bangladesh since August 2017. They have set up camp wherever possible in difficult terrain and with little access to aid, safe drinking water, food, shelter or healthcare. These conditions have contributed towards an outbreak of Diphtheria in some of the largest camps around Cox's Bazaar, and as a result, the World Health Organisation (WHO) requested DFID to deploy the UK Emergency Medical team to implement a comprehensive strategy based on the following objectives:

1. Controlling the outbreak
2. Caring for those affected

3. Coordination, technical, and operations support

To date 8 UK ISAR personnel from Hampshire, London, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Merseyside, Mid and West Wales, South Wales and Lancashire FRSs have deployed in order to provide logistics support to DFID and UKMED partners. Specifically, the team has led on safety and security planning, accommodation/transport logistics, in country liaison as well as undertaking a series of WASH assessments in support of the International Organisation for Migration (IOM).

The UN describes the Rohingya's situation as the "world's fastest growing refugee crisis", and undoubtedly the efforts of the team are having a significant impact in preventing the current outbreak from spreading beyond the current numbers (as of 11th January there were a total of 3,868 clinically suspected case-patients reported).

One team member from Merseyside deployed to Hurricane Irma in the Caribbean on the request of DFID. He carried out a number of assessments, reporting back into the DFID field team and local emergency management agencies.

8 team members completed the INSARAG USAR Coordination course, in Sicily. This course was delivered by UK ISAR instructors and supported by THW (Germany) and Italian FRS and Civil Protection agencies. UK ISAR have now trained the recommended number of team members as per the new coordination manual, and have the ability to staff the coordination structures established on the request of the disaster affected government or United Nations.

One team member from Kent participated in an Earthquake simulation exercise which took place in Malaysia. He supported the exercise which was focussed on the interaction between Emergency Medical and USAR teams and gained a great deal of experience from his participation alongside 22 countries from the Asia Pacific region.

A new ISAR Search Dog guidance document has been issued following a period of consultation. This complements and builds on the National Resilience guidance and provides clarity on the position at all levels. A training programme for 2018 is currently under development.

30 team members provided support to the EU Modules exercise which took place in Merseyside and Manchester during October. Teams from France, Germany, Italy, and participated in a 40-hour exercise focussed on USAR and Medical interventions.

12 team members have successfully completed a hostile environments course held in South Wales.

A full operational equipment review has been undertaken and a recommendation made which will reduce the weight by 750 kg once lighter tools have been procured.

A new process has been introduced by the Cabinet Office for the distribution of European Civil Protection Mechanism courses. This will see a reduction in the amount of course places offered to UK ISAR personnel.

Capacity building deployments have been completed in Colombia and Tajikistan.

2018 is the 25-year anniversary of the UK Fire and Rescue Service deploying Search and Rescue teams overseas officially on behalf of the UK Government (although the FRS did deploy to Mexico in 1985, Armenia in 1988 and Northern Iraq in 1991). UK ISAR are planning to mark this milestone by having a number of events throughout 2018, to gather as many members of the team together as possible, and celebrate the work undertaken over the years.

Marauding Terrorist Firearms Attack (MTFA)

The MTFA Concept of Operations has been completed by Station Manager Mark Hitchcock, WYFRS. Mark has subsequently retired from the Service and his role as de-facto Capability Advisor has been filled by Group Manager Kevin Longshaw, Merseyside FRS.

Completion of the ConOps entailed a programme of consultation with in-service users, and relevant interested parties. Their responses were logged, considered, and where appropriate changes or clarification of the ConOp document took place. The ConOps have now been published.

A parallel piece of work has also been taking place, led by OSCT, to review the Joint Operating Principles for the Emergency Services (JOPs) for MTFA incidents. The review was prompted by attacks in 2017 within the UK, none of which were MTFA, but all of which were mass casualty, terrorism events. NFCC lead officers have taken a full, and active, role in this review. The suggested changes will, in the main, focus on the importance of early and effective tri-service communication for the blue light agencies and also recognise the different priorities that will arise if the attack methodology is of a less sophisticated nature than automatic weaponry. This document went live on 1st January 2018. It is not anticipated that this will create a significant workload.

It should be noted, however, that the revised ConOps will have an impact on the FRS MTFA National Operational Guidance document. This document has previously been discussed at considerable length with the FBU, and will require further discussion at an appropriate time. All operational work within the context of the NJC work stream has focussed upon the development, and tentative agreement of, this document.

Work has continued to support those FRS who have agreed to provide an 'uplift' in the FRS national capability, as part of the HO led 'task and finish' group. Whilst there has been progress, led by the Home Office, on the issue of procurement of ballistic PPE, the overall operating environment in terms of the national FBU position on the undertaking of the MTFA role continues to provide a challenge to a small number of FRS.

A meeting has been held between the recently appointed OSCT MTFA Programme Coordinator, the NR capability lead, and NR capability advisor with a view to developing a longer term work programme now that some certainty around ongoing staffing exists. This work plan, which will be shared with NRB at its next meeting will deliver the final elements of the 2017 HO Improvement Plan, many of which are predicated upon the completion and publication of the ConOps.

A draft methodology for the delivery of ongoing MTFA assurance has been developed. This work is in its early stages and comments from NRB members have been requested at this early stage of design.

Procurement/Asset Refresh

An Asset Refresh Board was held in November 2017. Expenditure on USAR 2 training equipment and the refresh of tyres for prime movers is underway as previously reported. This will utilise a considerable portion of the budget for the current financial year. No other significant purchases were submitted for consideration in the last quarter.

Work is ongoing to review and update the forecast in the coming weeks. The Asset Refresh commodity manager will work with Babcock and the Capability Officers to deliver this for approval at the next NR Asset Refresh Board meeting.

Long Term Capability Management contract

The LTCM contract manager is continuing to work with Babcock & Home Office commercial colleagues to scope, design and deliver a contract benchmarking exercise. There has been engagement with the Crown Representative and the Cabinet Office Strategic Partnering Manager in respect of this project which has highlighted the importance of the work to Babcock.

The scope of the project has now been agreed and Babcock and the LTCM contract manager are meeting with potential consultants over the coming weeks to identify what a preferred supplier to undertake the work. It is envisaged that work will commence in early 2018.

National Resilience Training

Delivery of the NR courses in the April 17 to March 18 training year is progressing well with the majority of courses now scheduled. NR training courses delivered through the sector led training model to date have achieved a 98% fill rate. Failure to achieve a 100% fill rate has been due to late FRS withdrawals. Where, as a result of these late withdrawals, a cost has been incurred, NR training will be recharging the FRS involved.

The National Resilience Training Working Group has met twice since the changes to NR training were implemented. The group is being well supported by NR training users and partner FRS who are delivering NR training.

The Training Needs Analysis (TNA) 2018/19 has now closed. FRS have been advised of their course allocations for the 18/19 training year. The overall demand for training in the 2018/19 training cycle has increased compared to 17/18 by around 15%. Courses for 18/19 are now being scheduled with FRS providers. A provisional schedule is expected to be available by January providing FRS with maximum notice to enable nominations.

NR training is being facilitated for UKISAR, Wales and Northern Ireland on the same cost recovery basis.

The CBRN (e) Mass Decontamination team will deliver a new MDUi course in the 18/19 training year, based on a revised KPI provided which is detailed in Information Note 30-2017.