



LONDON FIRE BRIGADE

Report title

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## Procurement of Mobilising System

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Report to

**Corporate Services Directorate Board**  
**Operational Delivery Board**  
**Commissioner's Board**  
**Deputy Mayor's Fire and Resilience Board**  
**London Fire Commissioner**

Date

9 November 2021  
17 November 2021  
23 November 2021

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Report classification

### For Decision

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The subject matter of this report deals with the following LFC strategic priorities :

#### **Delivering Excellence**

The procurement of a new mobilising system will ensure that the LFC has a modern system that can be used to underpin and further develop the emergency response service provided to Londoners over the next 15 years. Developments in systems over recent years and innovation in service delivery models present opportunities for the LFC to utilise technology to enhance all aspects of the service at both the control room and station end environments.

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Report number – LFC-0623

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For Publication

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## **PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE TO THE DECISION-MAKER**

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### **Executive Summary**

In March 2020, the LFC (LFC-0261x-D) agreed to establish a project with the objective of delivering a new mobilising solution for the Brigade by 2026 to be delivered in three phases. It was also agreed that funding for procurement/implementation of the replacement solution would be sought by a separate report.

A 10-year contract for the supply of the Vision mobilising system, integrated communications control system (ICCS) and associated services was awarded to Capita on the 1 August 2012, The contract was recently extended for two years and is now set to expire in July 2024.

The LFC also authorised the Chief Information Officer (CIO) to spend on phase 2 of the project (requirements gathering). This phase of the project is now approaching completion and the LFC is seeking authorisation to move to phase 3 of the project (procurement and installation).

#### **For the Deputy Mayor**

That the Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience authorises the London Fire Commissioner to commit expenditure of up to £49,000,000 for the purposes of procuring and running a new mobilising system, ICCS<sup>1</sup>, fire station mobilising equipment and work to interface the new system with existing LFC systems, for a period of up to 15 years.

*This LFC decision will only be taken after further consultation with the Greater London Authority's finance and legal advisers and Corporate Investment Board.*

#### **For the London Fire Commissioner**

That the London Fire Commissioner approves expenditure of up to £49,000,000 for the purposes of procuring and running a new mobilising system, ICCS, fire station mobilising equipment and work to interface the new system with existing LFC systems, for a period of up to 15 years.

That the London Fire Commissioner delegates authority to the Assistant Director Technical and Commercial to award contracts up to a value of £49,000,000 for the purpose of procuring and running a new mobilising system, ICCS, fire station mobilising equipment and work to interface the new system with existing LFC systems.

## **1. Introduction and background**

- 1.1. In March 2020, the LFC (LFC-0261x-D) agreed that a corporate project be established with the objective of delivering a new mobilising solution for the Brigade by 2026 and that the project be delivered in three phases. It was also agreed that funding for phase 3 (procurement and implementation) would be sought separately via the governance process for future financial years, and this is the purpose of this report.
- 1.2. A contract was awarded to Capita for supply of a new mobilising system (Vision) and related services, including an ICCS<sup>1</sup>, fire station equipment and interface to LFC systems, in 2012.
- 1.3. The contract with Capita has been recently extended by two years and is now set to expire in July 2024. Further options are available to extend the contract up to 2026 if required.
- 1.4. Previous procurements suggest that the specification, procurement, testing and implementation of a mobilising solution can take up to four years. With that in mind, a project

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<sup>1</sup> ICCS is an Integrated Communication Control System which provides the voice and data communications hub of the mobilising solution designed to bring together and integrate a number of subsystems like digital and analogue telephone and radio systems, with call handling solution.

was established in March 2020, with the objective of replacing the current system by July 2024. The project was split into three phases as follows:

<b>Phase 1 Enabling activity</b>	Governance approvals to approach; establish project board and team; Approval of a Project Initiation Document (PID); agree requirements for engaging external subject matter experts (SME) (in phase 2); early market engagement; Governance approvals (up to Deputy Mayoral approval to access funding) to move to phase 2.
<b>Phase 2 Requirements gathering</b>	Requirements gathering (including any recommendations emanating from the GTI); draft Statement of Requirements (SOR) produced; sign off SOR; Governance approvals to go to phase 3, and to accept tender up to pre-defined value.
<b>Phase 3 Procurement &amp; Implementation</b>	Initiate procurement action; award contract; systems implementation; system go-live; project closure.

- 1.5. With phase two of the project (requirements gathering) and the SOR expected to complete in December 2021 this report is focusing upon phase three – procurement and implementation. The intention is to have any new system in place, prior to July 2024 so that there can be a managed transition from the existing system to a new system. The LFC is seeking governance approvals to award a contract to the successful bidder up to a value of £49,000,000.

## 2. Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1. The procurement of a new mobilising system is a key action within the "LFC Control Improvement Plan" which represents a significant change programme designed to enhance the LFC operational response capability.
- 2.2. The objective of this report will be to secure authorisation to procure a new mobilising system, ICCS, fire station equipment and to interface the new system with existing LFC systems such as Staff Attendance Recording System (StARS) which feeds officer availability information to the mobilising system.
- 2.3. The expected outcome will be that a new mobilising solution is in operation prior to the existing contract with Capita coming to an end in July 2024<sup>2</sup>. However, the mobilising project cannot yet determine a precise go-live date for the new solution until procurement has been completed and a supplier is appointed.
- 2.4. Whilst any system procured will need to be 'configured' to the needs of the LFC, the project intends to deliver an 'off the shelf' solution, rather than customising any solution as has been the case historically. In order to achieve this important goal, senior stakeholders have accepted that where required, the project team will very much be looking to "bend the business" rather than customise an existing product. That is to say that existing business processes will be reviewed and amended where possible to operate effectively with any new system.
- 2.5. The SOR that has been developed is 'agnostic' in terms of the type of solution proposed by suppliers. The current mobilising system is entirely an 'on-premise' system, with Capita servers

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<sup>2</sup> Options exist to extend the current contract with Capita beyond the 2024 date by up to two years to 2026 if required.

located at the Brigade's London Operations Centre (LOC) at Merton, and at the secondary control room site at Stratford.

- 2.6. However, in line with the current Information and Technology strategy (LFB in a Digital World) and indeed the way ICT services are moving in general, a number of mobilising solution providers now offer for some or all elements of their solution to be cloud-based. Cloud-based solutions are hosted remotely (usually in specialist or commercial data centres) and are accessed securely by users via the internet or dedicated communication links. In some cloud-based solutions there may be element(s) of the system installed locally, but in some there may be no server hardware/software installed locally.
- 2.7. This means that it could be possible for the Brigade to use a mobilising solution (or elements of it) that is not installed at the Merton LOC (or the fall-back control at Stratford) as is the case with the current solution. Access to the system would be via Internet links and the Brigade would be consuming a service on a 'pay-to-use' basis.
- 2.8. One of the impacts of moving to a cloud-based model would be that the systems costs would move from being largely capital to revenue-based expenditure. However, it is not possible to state how the costs will be apportioned between capital and revenue at present, other than to say it is expected that the new system will be largely revenue based, with elements of capital expenditure, predominantly at Fire Stations

## 2.9. **Risks**

- 2.10. A project of this scale will invariably have to identify and manage a significant number of risks. All project-based risks will be managed via the established project management governance process, the project has an A1 project governance rating, the highest. Risk workshops are currently being established and a wide variety of stakeholders will be invited to participate in these workshops where all risks will be recorded, assessed and actively managed throughout the life-cycle of the project. A comprehensive lessons learned report has already been used as a key input to the process of developing a statement of requirements and this will also be referenced during this workshop.
- 2.11. The main risk that the project has identified so far relates to the timing around the implementation of any new mobilising system and the transition away from the Airwave national digital radio system. The Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP) is the national project tasked with delivering a new emergency services network (ESN) to replace the existing Airwave service. A revised national plan for transitioning Fire and Rescue Services to ESN is not expected to be in place until mid-2022. However, there is an "interoperability" matrix in place that indicates to the ESMCP Programme any specific dates that FRS have identified that they could not undertake transition, due to technical or operational restrictions. The LFC has stated to the programme that the earliest transition date would be 2025. This is part of a strategy to reduce risk by leaving at least six months after deployment of the new mobilising system (in particular the ICCS component) , before transitioning to ESN.
- 2.12. The actual risk is that should the mobilising project be delayed for any reason, the anticipated implementation date of 2024 may slip and there may not be sufficient time to leave a six-month gap between systems implementation and transition to ESN. One possible mitigation of this risk will be to ensure that the ICCS is the first part of any replacement mobilising system to be replaced, therefore ensuring that the necessary ESN compliant infrastructure is in place to

transition to ESN, even if full implementation of a new mobilising system has not been completed at that time.

### **3. Collaboration**

- 3.1. Both during the initial phase of this project and previously, the LFC has explored collaboration opportunities, with both Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and London Ambulance Service (LAS). These discussions did not result in any joint approach to procure a system that would suit the needs of all three services. Both the MPS and LAS have since embarked on individual procurement projects for systems designed for Police and Ambulance control functions. Collaboration between these services is therefore focused on "digital" transfer of incident information between systems, for example via MAIT (Multi Agency Incident Transfer). MAIT is a protocol that allows emergency service organisations with compliant mobilising systems to exchange incident data, securely in "real time".
- 3.2. The LFC has also had discussions with other fire and rescue services (FRS) in order to identify any collaboration opportunities. In common with the LFC experience, the FRS contacted have not joined with either police or ambulance partners to procure a new mobilising system. Furthermore, the LFC has not as yet identified any opportunities to jointly procure a new system with other FRS. Some of the reasons as to why this is the case are set out in the following paragraphs.
- 3.3. Modern mobilising systems are increasingly cloud based, as set out in paragraph 2.6. This means that the infrastructure is no longer stored on an organisations premises (as is the case with the LFC current mobilising system, Vision). The adoption of this cloud model means that benefits that could perhaps have been anticipated by two or more services collaborating to co-host the infrastructure required for a system, are reduced.
- 3.4. Many systems have operating models based on purchasing licences for use of the general system, with extra costs to integrate the system with other systems already in use by that service. Given the different ICT systems employed across emergency services, the integration time will most likely be longer if the new mobilising system is procured with another service. This is predominantly due to the requirement for multiple sets of interfaces to other ICT systems to be written, rather than just those for the LFC.
- 3.5. Referring to the risks raised in paragraph 2.12 (above), if a joint collaboration with other FRS was adopted, this would add extra layer of complexity and risk to the implementation, as the schedule would have to take into account the timelines for multiple FRS ESN cutover schedules, not just London's.
- 3.6. Having a joint procurement and implementation process can have an impact on the required timelines for go live, meaning that one service has to wait for the other, to the detriment of both.
- 3.7. In terms of procurement, the timeframes for starting and completing the process will differ between services, mostly driven by contract arrangements and local governance structures. Unless these are aligned, then scheduling and contractual arrangements, both with the LFC existing supplier and any new one, become more difficult to control.
- 3.8. The requirements gathering and evaluation process and subsequent tender generation for a joint procurement process is often more complex, due to increased potential for conflicting requirements and contract terms. This can lead to a less competitive tender process where one

supplier has been able to meet the needs of one of the services, but not the other, meaning they have had to drop out of the process for both.

- 3.9. In participating in a collaborative procurement, there is also a risk that there may be resource "conflicts" both in the pre and post implementation phases. Issues may take longer to resolve if a supplier has to support multiple services who have just gone live.
- 3.10. In terms of choosing a collaboration partner for procurement and subsequent implementation of a new system, the logical choice would be with a 'buddy' FRS such as NW, Staffordshire or West Midlands. Alternatively, a border FRS such as Essex or Hertfordshire, or the MPS, LAS. However, allied to the reasons already stated above, all of those services also have different lifecycles for moving to a new system, e.g. some are not ready to start looking for a new system for a couple of years and others having already procured a system. However, The LFC recognises and has considered the potential benefits of closer cooperation with other services in the procurement and subsequent use of a mobilising system and will continue to explore opportunities, especially around data sharing and easier integration of systems via interfaces or shared access.

#### **4. Cost of a replacement system**

- 4.1. As modern mobilising systems differ in their deployment and support to the LFC current system (Vision), it is difficult to provide an accurate estimate of the costs both, from an initial purchase price and ongoing annual system support/licence costs. Discussions with other much smaller FRS have revealed that licences and support (for less than 20 percent of the users London would require), have cost those FRS several million pounds over a 10-year period. Considering the much larger user base the LFC has, similar license costs and system support for up to a 15-year period could equate to a spend of up to £34,000,000. This figure will ultimately depend upon the actual number of licenses procured.
- 4.2. In addition to licenses, costs will be incurred at the system implementation stage. These could include design and development of interfaces to other LFC systems, integration and configuration of the system according to LFC requirements and hardware purchase costs (for the control room at the Merton LOC and at 103 Fire Stations). Whilst it is difficult to provide accurate cost projections at present (until potential suppliers start submitting tender

responses), a figure of up to £15,000,000 for implementation is likely to be a good estimate of likely costs for purchase of and deployment of a system.

**Breakdown of anticipated costs (pre-tendering)**

Software license provision and support (including annual running costs for 15 years)	Up to £34,000,000
Procurement and implementation (includes replacement of all Fire Station mobilising equipment).	Up to £15,000,000
Estimated Total	£49,000,000 <sup>3</sup>

- 4.3. As it is not yet known if a cloud-based solution (or part cloud-based solution) will be recommended as a result of tendering, it is not possible to state what the split between capital and revenue costs will be. Cloud based systems tend to require less capital funding, instead the whole life cost of the system (or parts of it) move to revenue-based funding.

**5. Equality comments**

- 5.1. The LFC and the Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience are required to have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) when taking decisions. This in broad terms involves understanding the potential impact of policy and decisions on different people, taking this into account and then evidencing how decisions are reached.
- 5.2. It is important to note that consideration of the Public Sector Equality Duty is not a one-off task. The duty must be fulfilled before taking a decision, at the time of taking a decision, and after the decision has been taken.
- 5.3. The protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership (but only in respect of the requirements to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination), race (ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality), religion or belief (including lack of belief), sex, and sexual orientation.
- 5.4. The Public Sector Equality Duty requires decision-takers in the exercise of all their functions, to have due regard to the need to:
- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other prohibited conduct
  - advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
  - foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 5.5. Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

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<sup>3</sup> The costs shown include a planning assumption for indexation at 5 percent each year for the term of the contract using the current spend with Capita for the Vision mobilising system as a baseline. More precise figures cannot be established until it is known if the system will be fully or partially cloud based infrastructure hosted elsewhere

- remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic where those disadvantages are connected to that characteristic
- take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it
- encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

5.6. The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.

5.7. Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

- tackle prejudice
- promote understanding.

5.8. As outlined in the March 2020 report (LFC) an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) has now been carried out in respect of this project to make sure that any replacement mobilising solution will not have a disproportionately adverse effect on any persons with a prescribed characteristic. The development of a specification for a replacement mobilising solution is ensuring the needs of staff users with protected characteristics are taken into account; this will be particularly important where any business process changes are needed if the LFC is to adopt an 'off-the-shelf' solution. The Statement of Requirements is also taking account of the impact on those members of the public with protected characteristics that might need to engage with the LFC to call for assistance and whether they would be affected by any change of mobilising solution.

5.9. At this stage, the EIA has shown a positive impact on two of the groups with prescribed characteristics, age and disability. The fact that the SOR makes provision for the interface to be configured (change font size, background colour etc) will potentially be beneficial to disabled staff and some older control staff who may have vision impairments. Given the approach is to acquire an 'off-the shelf' solution with minimum customisation for the Brigade, the EIA, will need to be reviewed and updated once a selected solution and supplier have been identified, and in advance of a decision to accept a tender.

## **6. Other Considerations**

### *Workforce comments*

6.1. The LFC will undertake formal staff side consultation in respect of this report at the appropriate point.

### *Procurement and Sustainability*

6.2. The proposed route to market is to use the Find a Tender (formerly OJEU) process following a review of the frameworks currently available. This decision has been reached on the basis that there are currently no known frameworks that meet the requirements of the SOR whilst also offering a longer contract term. A longer-term contract should encourage greater engagement

from this sector of the market and more competitive pricing as any supplier will be able to bid for the work. Use of the Find a Tender process allows consideration of any solution available in the market and so has the flexibility required for this contract.

- 6.3. The duration of the contract is proposed to be 10 years with the option to extend by a further 5 years, allowing for up to 15 years in total.
- 6.4. Due to the potential contract value additional sustainability and responsible procurement requirements will be included within the tender including the requirement for bidders to have in place an organisational Carbon Reduction Plan aimed at achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

## **7. Financial comments**

- 7.1. This report seek the approval to commit expenditure of up to £49,000,000 for the purpose of procuring and running a new mobilising system, ICCS, fire station mobilising equipment and work to interface any new system with LFC systems for a period of 15years.
- 7.2. Revenue costs are estimated at £34,000,000 including assumption for indexation at 5 percent per annum for the term of the contract. There is currently a budget of £1,821,000 per annum for the existing contract set to expire July 2024.
- 7.3. This report sets out plan to replace the current system by July 2024 and it is anticipated that the revenue costs of the new contract will be contained within the existing budget of £1,821,000 per annum subject to any variation in the assumption on inflation, that will need to be incorporated in the medium term financial plan in the relevant year.
- 7.4. The total cost of up to - £15,000,000 is estimated for capital costs. Currently, the capital programme incorporates a budget of £3,800,000 in 2022/23, £5,600,000 in 2023/24 and £3,605,000 in 2024/25 totalling £13,005,000 for the three-year period.
- 7.1. There is a potential risk of additional costs to revenue that may occur due to variation to the assumption on inflation and also, the existing and new contract for the system running concurrently for a period before July 2024. There is also a potential risk of additional costs on capital if the procurement and implementation including replacement of all Fire Station mobilising equipment exceeds £13,005,000 for the three years period.
- 7.2. It is now too late to amend the draft budget submission to make provision for the additional capital funding that "may" be required. However, this potential funding shortfall will be addressed before the final budget submission to the Mayor in February 2022.

## **8. Legal comments**

- 8.1. Under section 9 of the Policing and Crime Act 2017, the London Fire Commissioner (the "Commissioner") is established as a corporation sole with the Mayor appointing the occupant of that office. Under section 327D of the GLA Act 1999, as amended by the Policing and Crime Act 2017, the Mayor may issue to the Commissioner specific or general directions as to the manner in which the holder of that office is to exercise his or her functions.

8.2. By direction dated 1 April 2018, the Mayor set out those matters, for which the Commissioner would require the prior approval of either the Mayor or the Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience (the "Deputy Mayor").

8.3. Paragraph (b) of Part 2 of the said direction requires the Commissioner to seek the prior approval of the Deputy Mayor before "[a] commitment to expenditure (capital or revenue) of £150,000 or above as identified in accordance with normal accounting practices...". The decision to approve expenditure up to the value of £49,000,000 for the procurement and running of a new mobilising system, ICCS , fire station mobilising equipment and work to interface the new system with existing LFC systems, for a period of up to 15 years, will therefore require approval from the Deputy Mayor.

8.4. The General Counsel notes that the procurement of the new contract for a new mobilising system, ICCS , fire station mobilising equipment and work to interface the new system with LFC systems shall be conducted in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the LFC Standing Orders.

8.5. The statutory basis for the actions proposed in this report is provided by sections 7 and 5A of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 ("FRSA 2004"). Under Section 7 (2)(a) FRSA 2004 the Commissioner has the power to secure the provision of personnel, services and equipment necessary to efficiently meet all normal requirements for firefighting and section 5A allows the Commissioner to procure personnel, services and equipment they consider appropriate for purposes incidental or indirectly incidental to their functional purposes.

8.6.

## List of Appendices

Appendix	Title	Open or confidential
1.	EIA- Replacement Mobilising Solution	Confidential
2.	Replacement mobilising solution options	Open

**Part 2 Confidentiality:** Only the facts or advice considered to be exempt from disclosure under the FOI Act should be in the separate Part 2 form, together with the legal rationale for non-publication.

**Is there a part 2 form – /NO**

### ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION:

Drafting  
officer to  
confirm the  
following  
(✓)

#### Drafting officer

Julian Martin has drafted this report and confirms the following:

**Assistant Director/Head of Service**

Julian Martin has reviewed the documentation and is satisfied for it to be referred to Board for consideration.

**Advice**

The Finance and Legal teams have commented on this proposal;

Saminara Rahman Legal Advisor, on behalf of General Counsel (Head of Law and Monitoring Officer)

Omolayo Sokoya - Financial Advisor, on behalf of the Chief Finance Officer