



LONDON FIRE BRIGADE

Report title

Rapid Intervention Set – Renewal

Report to

Fire and Resilience Board

Date

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Report by

Assistant Director, Technical and Commercial

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Summary

The rapid intervention sets (RIS) on frontline appliances are coming to the end of their serviceable life and are due for renewal. This report outlines the process that has been undertaken to identify the most appropriate replacement equipment and seeks permission to place orders and drawn down on the funding previously agreed by the LFEPA Resources Committee (FEP 2508 – 17 September 2015).

Recommended decision

The Assistant Director Technical and Commercial be authorised by the London Fire Commissioner to place orders under the vehicles and equipment contract with Babcock Emergency Services, for the replacement of the rapid intervention sets and vehicle modifications, at a total cost not exceeding £1,250k, to be funded from within the approved capital programme for 2018/19.

Background

1. The current rapid intervention sets are powered by internal combustion engines that run on petrol. They are coming to the end of their serviceable life and funding of £1,558k to replace them was initially agreed by the LFEPA Resources committee (FEP 2508 – 17 September 2015).
2. There have subsequently been significant technical advances in this type of equipment, so the procurement tendering process has been undertaken to identify a battery powered RIS. This is to;
 - Reduce the risk of high-pressure oil injection to operational personnel
 - Cut emissions in line with the LFB sustainability objectives and the London Mayoral agenda
 - To facilitate the safe use of the RIS in confined and unventilated spaces, without exposing any of our personnel or members of the public to additional harmful exhaust fumes.

Tendering process

3. LFB Officers identified the user specifications and passed them to our vehicles and equipment contractor, Babcock Emergency Services, who have undertaken the tendering process on behalf of the LFB under the extant vehicles and equipment contract.
4. To assist Babcock Emergency Services in identifying equipment that would meet the necessary requirements, LFB officers took part in physical user testing of equipment offered up by the bidders under the tendering process.
5. Following a competitive tender process and evaluation of the tenders, Babcock Emergency Services identified two bidders that met the requirements and subsequently informed us they have a preferred bidder. The quote from the preferred bidder for 168 RIS sets sits within the identified budget and is valid until mid November 2018. Details of the quote are given in confidential appendix A.
6. On top of the costs of purchasing the replacement equipment, there will be additional costs to modify the frontline appliances in order to ensure safe carriage of the new equipment. The cost of these modifications is also given in confidential Appendix A. There will be no change to the revenue budget for these equipment slots. The ongoing maintenance costs for these will remain the same as the existing equipment slots.

Equipment

7. The identified equipment that preferred bidder offers to provide is made up of both a Combi-tool and a dedicated cutter which is detailed as follows;
 - Dedicated cutters capable of cutting to the required specifications.
 - Combi tool capable of spreading to the required specifications.
 - The equipment is powered by a battery capable of meeting the required performance specification.
 - The power source is self contained within the equipment, so there is no requirement for hydraulic pipes

Benefits

8. Having no external high-pressure hydraulic pipes or connectors, the risk to operational personnel of high-pressure oil injection is greatly reduced from that of the equipment currently in use.
9. Due to the fact that an external generator and high-pressure hose is no longer required, the cost of this project has been reduced from the original estimate of £1,558k down to £1,250k, which includes the appliance modifications. This represents an estimated saving of £308k.
10. This equipment is easier and more flexible to use as a result of not having the restrictions of the connecting high pressure pipework and generator.
11. There are no harmful exhaust fumes which aides the use in confined and unventilated spaces.
12. Being self contained smaller power tools they do not have separate power pumps and hoses. This gives the benefit of being able to be used from the cage of an aerial appliance providing enhanced access at height outside of buildings.

13. The equipment has no exhaust emissions and are each lighter than the existing Rapid Intervention Set tool providing manual handling benefits, so the change to using it will support the LFB sustainability objectives along with the Mayoral agenda.
14. This purchase sees the added benefit of a dedicated cutter in addition to the combi tool. The dedicated cutter is an additional tool to what is currently carried on our frontline pumping appliances, we will therefore get greater operational capability if we purchase this new RIS.

Replacement

15. Once the procurement is agreed via the LFC governance process, it is anticipated that the order will be placed, the replacement equipment will be delivered in March 2019 and come into service shortly after that.
16. The identified equipment is very similar to the operation of the current RIS, so there are no perceived operating training needs other than crews familiarising themselves.

Finance comments

17. The capital budget requirement has reduced from £1,558k to £1,250k, following the removal of the external generator and high-pressure hose from the specification by purchasing a battery powered RIS, resulting in a saving of £308k.
18. There is an allowance of £1,250k in the 2018/19 capital fleet and equipment replacement budget for the purchase and installation of the RIS equipment. If external borrowing was used to finance this expenditure, the annual debt charges would be £160k, based on a ten-year life and an interest rate of 2.8%.

Workforce comments

19. The representative bodies are aware of the identified equipment and have been involved in the evaluation of the tools, they foresee no issues regarding its introduction to front line use as the operation of the tools work in the same manner as the current RIS and provides more operational capability for rapid intervention.

Legal comments

20. 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.
21. 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").
22. 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...".

23. The Deputy Mayor's approval is accordingly required for the London Fire Commissioner to place orders with Babcock Emergency Services for rapid intervention sets and vehicle modifications, at a total cost not exceeding £1,250k.
24. The statutory basis for the actions proposed in this report is provided by Section 8 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, which states that fire and rescue authorities must make provision for the purpose of rescuing people in the event of road traffic accidents and protecting people from serious harm, to the extent that it considers it reasonable to do so, in the event of road traffic accidents in its area. In making this provision a fire and rescue authority must, amongst other things, secure the provision of the equipment necessary efficiently to meet all normal requirements. The proposals in this report are in line with the provision of services under the Commissioner's contract with Babcock Emergency Services.

Sustainability implications

25. The tendering required bidders to set out their sustainability benefits. These impacts have been included in the tender evaluations. The outcomes established that the proposed new equipment supports both the LFB sustainability objectives and the London Mayoral agenda. The selected tools utilise recyclable materials wherever possible and have also offered the option to return the tools at the end of their 10 year life where they will be recycled or where possible refurbished and donated to charities.

Equalities implications

26. There are positive equality implications arising from the recommendations contained in this report. In particular they are lighter, smaller and easier to handle.