



LONDON FIRE BRIGADE

Decision title

## Replacement of Incident Ground Communications – Update

Recommendation by  
Chief Information Officer

Decision Number  
LFC-0019-D

**NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED**

### Summary

In 2015, London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority's (LFEPA) Corporate Management Board (CMB) endorsed a recommendation to defer the renewal of the Breathing Apparatus Respiratory Interface Equipment (BARIE) to 2017 (15-CMB052). A further report was submitted to CMB in March 2017 (17-CMB018) to endorse replacing BARIE equipment as part of a wider refresh of incident ground communications.

LFC-0019 sets out the case for replacing personal issue fireground radios and mobile repeaters under a newly established project, and deferring the replacement of the BARIE and Intrinsically Safe Radios to be carried out under the scope of the Respiratory Protective Equipment (RPE) project.

### Decision

The London Fire Commissioner approves:

1. A decision relating to procurement initiation for replacement personal issue fireground radios and mobile repeaters is delegated to the Director of Corporate Services.
2. The Deputy Commissioner (Operations) is delegated to determine the scope of the replacement personal issue fireground radio project, and Respiratory Protective Equipment project in relations to radios, including the replacement of the intrinsically safe Breathing Apparatus (BA) radios and BA radio interface equipment.

**Tom George**  
Deputy London Fire Commissioner

Date 13/6/2018

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LONDON FIRE BRIGADE

Report title

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## Replacement of Incident Ground Communications – Update

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Report

London Fire Commissioner

Date

21 May 2018

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Report by

Chief Information Officer

Document Number

LFC 0019

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### NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

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#### Summary

In 2015, London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority's (LFEPA) Corporate Management Board (CMB) endorsed a recommendation to defer the renewal of the Breathing Apparatus Respiratory Interface Equipment (BARIE) to 2017 (15-CMB052). A further report was submitted to CMB in March 2017 (17-CMB018) to endorse replacing BARIE equipment as part of a wider refresh of incident ground communications.

This report sets out the case for replacing personal issue fireground radios and mobile repeaters under a newly established project, and deferring the replacement of the BARIE and Intrinsically Safe Radios to be carried out under the scope of the Respiratory Protective Equipment (RPE) project.

#### Recommendations

The London Fire Commissioner approves:

1. A decision relating to procurement initiation for replacement personal issue fireground radios and mobile repeaters is delegated to the Director of Corporate Services.
2. The Deputy Commissioner (Operations) is delegated to determine the scope of the replacement personal issue fireground radio project, and Respiratory Protective Equipment (RPE) project in relations to radios, including the replacement of the intrinsically safe Breathing Apparatus (BA) radios and BA radio interface equipment (BARIE).

#### Background

1. In 2005 the LFB replaced all incident ground radio equipment for operational staff. This included personal issue fireground radios, intrinsically safe (IS) radios to be used with breathing apparatus (BA) sets and BARIE. The anticipated life expectancy of the radios was 10 to 12 years, while the BARIE was expected to need replacement after 8 to 10 years.

2. In 2015 CMB endorsed a recommendation to defer the renewal of the BARIE equipment to 2017 (15-CMB052). A further report was submitted to CMB in March 2017 (17-CMB018) to endorse replacing BARIE equipment as part of a wider refresh of incident ground communications.
3. Following the above report, a meeting was held with AC Richard Mills (AC Ops Policy) about commencing work on the incident ground communications replacement project. This meeting established that there was a desire to re-evaluate the options of extending the current intrinsically safe BA radios and BARIE equipment to align with the RPE project.
4. A meeting was held with Director of Operations Tom George, AC Mills, Head of ICT Julian Martin, and members of the ESN Team designated to undertake the incident ground project in November 2017. The previous reasons for proceeding with the renewal of the intrinsically safe BA radios and BARIE equipment, as detailed in CMB report 17-CMB018, were discussed and it was requested that further investigation be undertaken with the suppliers to establish the options of extending the current equipment to align with the RPE project which is estimated to be 3 years.
5. Entel, the suppliers of both the current personal issue fireground and intrinsically safe BA radios, and Savox, the supplier of the current BARIE equipment, were consulted.
6. The outcomes of the discussions with Entel and Savox were presented to Director of Operations Tom George, AC Mills, Head of ICT Julian Martin, and Robert Donovan Radio Systems Manager in December 2017.
7. At the above meeting, the Director of Operations and AC Operational Policy made a decision in principle to proceed with a procurement for the personal issue fireground radios. The replacement of the Entel intrinsically safe BA radios and Savox BARIE equipment was to be deferred to align with the RPE project, included in the RPE project scoping and financial projections in the future. A CMB paper on initial scoping and market testing for the RPE project has been submitted by Operational Policy (18-CMB010), however figures within this paper did not include any BA communication replacement costs.
8. It is estimated that the RPE project will commence in 2018 and run for approximately 3 years. To allow for this deferral, additional spares would be purchased as part of normal business, so that units that become damaged through general wear and tear could be easily replaced.

### **Anticipated Costs**

9. As detailed in the CMB report 17-CMB018 a total of £4.1M was approved by CMB to replace all fireground radios, BA radios and BARIE units. The intention at this time was to replace all incident ground radio equipment as part of the same project. As the BA radios and BARIE equipment have been de-scoped from this project, the timescales and subsequent capital allocation will need to be amended and re-factored within the RPE project costs.
10. This paper is concerned about specific costs for the replacement of personal issue fireground radios. Such costs will not be known until tendering exercises have been completed, along with final numbers for each item. However, soft market investigations have been undertaken to ensure that sufficient budgetary provision be made for this exercise, which for clarity includes spares holding, radios for training and those on loan to other departments e.g. Community Fire Safety.

Item	Quantity	Cost per Unit (Approx.)	Total
Dual Mode non-Intrinsically Safe Radio	6500	£160	£1,040,000
Spare Batteries – 1 x per Radio	6500	£36	£234,000
Multi Charging Unit (based on a 12 battery charging unit)	250	£220	£55,000
Individual Chargers	300	£59	£17,700
Additional Project Costs (approx.) e.g. Disposal of current radios, deployment to stations.	NA	NA	£100,000
Contingency (10%)	NA	NA	£150,000
Total			£1,596,700

11. Based on the above estimates, the project to replace fireground radios will now only require capital provision to be made for £1.6m for 2018/19 financial year.

12. The costs identified in the March 2017 CMB paper (17-CMB018) did not include the replacement of the current mobile repeaters and ancillary equipment that these repeaters require. The current equipment stands as follows, and excludes any fixed repeaters on the Command Units:

- 14 X TSR2000 (Duplex channel 2, 5 and 8) one each per CU, one for training and the remainder are spares or carried on the radio workshop duty van
- 20 X 75m cable drums for linking the TSR2000 whilst deployed in an underground capacity
- 20 X 1m Back to Back connectors for connecting the cables on the drums together
- 17 X 200m leaky feeder cables on drums for increased radio coverage whilst utilising the TSR2000

13. The mobile repeaters will be within the scope of the fireground radio project, but fixed repeaters on the command units will be within the scope of the command unit project managed by Operational Policy.
14. On this basis additional funding will be required to replace the mobile repeater equipment to bring it in line with the replacement radios. The equipment purchased in 2005 was bespoke to the LFB therefore a further £200k is requested. This figure is for budgetary purposes.

### **Procurement Options**

15. The procurement route for the replacement personal issue fireground radios is yet to be determined. Once the specification for the replacement radios has been drafted, procurement will advise as the most appropriate route to market. However, no procurement process can begin until a specification of requirements has been developed.
16. There is an option to utilise the fire consortium framework, however this is dependent on whether radios available on this framework will meet the specification once drafted as part of the project and if purchase takes place whilst the fire consortium framework is active (currently to February 2019).
17. If the radios available do not meet the specification or the framework has expired, then an alternative procurement will need to be initiated.
18. The use and supply of the current intrinsically safe BA radios and BARIE equipment will continue as normal business and does not require the establishment of a specific project.

### **Collaboration**

19. The Brigade have been communicating with a number of other FRSs in relation to the requirement to replace the fireground radios. Once a full specification of requirements has been developed, there may be opportunities for collaboration. A fire consortium framework is already in existence and if the specification for the radios is able to be met via this route, an opportunity to do so exists until February 2019 (while the framework is active).
20. If collaboration opportunities are identified, a decision will have to be made on who leads the procurement. There have been some recent issues in respect to collaborative working and there may be some lessons learned from this experience that may be relevant to this procurement.

### **Resources**

21. The personal issue fireground radio project will be led by Information and Communications Technology Department. It is likely that resources from across the Brigade will be required due to the wide ranging impact of the radio replacement. A detailed stakeholder analysis will need to be carried out as part of the project and is likely to identify a number of stakeholders including operational policy, central operations, fire stations and Special Operations Group.
22. In addition, it is probable that there will be training or familiarisation issues to consider with Babcock and potentially involvement from Technical and Commercial Services in relation to storage and charging.

## **Timescales**

23. The timescales for procurement of the replacement personal issue fireground radios is dependent on the procurement route taken but it is anticipated this will be in 2018/19 financial year. Implementation of the new radios is anticipated to be early-mid 2019, but this is dependent on the procurement route taken and the availability of resources from across the Brigade. Whilst the assessment and selection of a suitable radio replacement will be led from a technical perspective by Operational Policy, it is essential that all identified stakeholders have an input to the final product as there may be significant work to undertake once the operational impact of the new radios are known.

## **Financial Implications**

24. Capital funding was approved as part of CMB report 17-CMB018. See anticipated costs section above for the personal issue fireground radio project and funding to be transferred as part of the RPE project.

## **Finance Comments**

25. This report recommends that the renewal of the BARIE equipment is deferred to align with the RPE project. The report then recommends that a procurement is initiated to replace personal issue fireground radios and mobile repeaters. The capital programme currently includes £1.3m in 2018/19 for personal radio replacements. This report proposes that the pressure is increased to £1.8m for 2018/19, when including the requirement for fixed repeaters on the command units. This will incur forecast capital financing costs of £225k over 10 years, including £180k for the repayment of borrowing and £45k in interest payments. This revised pressure will be included in the capital budget for 2018/19 when reported as part of the Financial Outturn report for 2017/18.

## **Workforce Comments**

26. The intention is for this paper to go to staff side consultation, if the recommendation is agreed by London Fire Commissioner.

## **Legal Comments**

27. Under section 7 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, the Commissioner has a duty to make provision for the purpose of extinguishing fires and protecting life and property in the event of fires in its area. In doing this, the Commissioner must secure the provision of personnel, services and equipment necessary efficiently to meet all normal requirements. It is further the duty, under section 2 of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, of every employer to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of all his employees. The proposals set out in this report are consistent with these duties, though any procurement must be carried out in accordance with the public procurement regulations and the Commissioner's Scheme of Governance.

## **Sustainability Implications**

28. The procurement of the fireground radios will be undertaken in consideration of the Authority adopted GLA Group responsible procurement policy. Disposal options for the existing equipment are yet to be explored but has been taken into consideration as part of the budget identified in this report.

## **Equalities Implications**

29. There are no equality implications attached to the content or recommendation detailed in this report.