

THAMES VALLEY FIRE CONTROL SERVICE



SUBJECT	UPDATE ON DATA MANAGEMENT WITHIN THAMES VALLEY FIRE CONTROL SERVICE
PRESENTED TO:	TVFCS JOINT COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	5 DECEMBER 2018
LEAD OFFICER	DAVE NORRIS, AREA COMMANDER
EXEMPT INFORMATION	NONE
ACTION	NOTE

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 At the July meeting of the TVFCS Joint Committee, a request was made for an update on Data Management arrangements following the retirement of Station Manager Eduardo Cardoso.
- 1.2 This report sets out the current position with regard to the management of data and TVFCS computer systems and the actions currently being progressed by the TVFCS Management team in this area.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the Committee **NOTE** the content of the report.

3. REPORT

- 3.1 The Vision DS system is used in the Thames Valley Fire Control to deliver a call handling, resource mobilisation and incident management solution. The Vision system's key function is the handling of emergency calls, identification and mobilisation of appropriate resources and the provision of information to Control Room staff to facilitate effective incident management and support. Vision combines the information from a number of key datasets to deliver these functions.

- 3.2 As part of the TVFCS project, the data held by each FRS had to be incorporated into the new Vision 4 system. As each FRS was using a different Command & Control platform, this data was not in a standard format and was not held in datasets which were directly comparable with the requirements of the Vision system. The time pressures around the TVFCS 'go live' created a situation where it was necessary to import the data without the review, cleansing and standardisation that would have enabled optimum system performance. This led to a situation where information was held in the wrong databases, was often out of date and was difficult for Control staff to locate. This coupled with the faults experienced with the system led to deterioration in confidence in the system both within TVFCS and the Thames Valley FRS.
- 3.3 The Concept of Operations relating to data management was that each FRS would manage their own data and make their own changes in a standard format. This arrangement appears to have presupposed that system data was in an optimal state and that the changes required would be minor and infrequent. This proved not to be the case.
- 3.4 RBFRS placed SM Eduardo Cardoso into TVFCS to improve the configuration of the system, the experience of operators and the operational response of the FRS. SM Cardoso made excellent progress in standardising and cleansing the data held in the system, providing a more workable system for users. Standardisation and improvement was achieved through a combination of SM Cardoso's drive and commitment and having a single point of management for system data. Despite this work, further review and optimisation is still needed. As a result of SM Cardoso providing a single point of contact for system management, capacity within the FRS teams has been reallocated. All three FRS have indicated very limited capacity to absorb the work previously carried out by SM Cardoso and future demand for changes to systems.
- 3.5 The system is now in a stable state, but the data still requires further optimisation to deliver the flexibility and operational improvement that it can deliver. This does not fall within the scope of the data management arrangements outlined in the TVFCS concept of operations and therefore no resource is available to carry out this work. This also creates in risk in relation to TVFCS' ability to respond to emerging risks (for example, managing the requirement to change response arrangements for high rise premises following Grenfell.)
- 3.6 There are a number of areas which are a cause for concern for the TVFCS management team relating to the management of systems and data which would be addressed by the provision of a dedicated resource. These are:-
- 3.6.1 It has been identified that the Vision system contains large amounts of Operational Guidance Information, transferred into the system at 'Go Live', which now requires review and refreshing.
- 3.6.2 Operational Alignment within the Thames Valley will create a requirement for significant changes within some of the datasets used by TVFCS in order to deliver the desired operational outputs.

- 3.6.3 Operational policy and Organisational changes within the Thames Valley FRS will require changes to be made to TVFCS systems.
- 3.6.4 Capita's roadmap for the Vision system includes a number of system upgrades to introduce new features and address known faults. These upgrades require testing and significant planning to apply into the live control environment without disruption of business as usual activity. This activity is time consuming, with a need to write test scripts and assess software against those scripts and then to work with the supplier to ensure business as usual activity is maintained.
- 3.6.5 Information held within TVFCS systems needs to be reviewed and updated on a regular basis to ensure compliance with the GDPR. This includes information held on individuals and also those who have access to TVFCS systems
- 3.7 The various databases that supply the Command & Control system require varying levels of skill and experience to manipulate. Members of the Control Management team have the ability to manage and maintain some aspects of the system through a combination of skills acquired in previous roles and by following guidance notes left by the project team and process maps provided by Capita. None of the Control Management team have the required skills to safely administer the more complex areas of the system, which have the potential to seriously affect the operational outputs of the system if changes are not applied correctly. Due to changes in role and working arrangements, the Thames Valley FRS no longer have the full range of required skillsets present within their own teams, with the ability to carry out tasks varying between the three FRS.
- 3.8 The technical management and administration of TVFCS systems does not sit within the remit of any of the existing members of the TVFCS management team. The work on the system that is within the skillsets of the management team is having to be carried out around other workloads.
- 3.9 An initial business case was presented to RBFRS SLT in September, as the employer, outlining the issues with capacity and capability described in this report. Agreement was given by RBFRS to support TVFCS with the development of a full business case for a resource to address these issues.
- 3.10 The full business case is expected to be presented to the TVFCS Joint Coordinating Group at their meeting in January following an evaluation of the size of the role. Subject to the approval of the JCG, this business case will then be presented at the next meeting of the Joint Committee.

4. COMPLIANCE WITH THE TVFCS PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

- 4.1 This report complies with the "Principles of Collaboration".

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The addition of a resource to the TVFCS establishment, whether on a temporary or permanent basis will have an impact on the TVFCS revenue budget, which will vary depending on the option chosen to address the need.

Income is now being received from Alarm Receiving Centres, which can be used to assist with funding this resource. The administration of Alarm Receiving Centre contracts could also be added to the duties associated with this post, which would release some capacity in OFRS and consequently reduce the recharge from OFRS to TVFCS.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 None.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 None.

8. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Failure to address weaknesses in data management would increase the risk that:-

- The FRS would be unable to evidence HMICFRS requirements around risk information.
- The Thames Valley Operational Alignment project implementation would be delayed.
- That incorrect resources might be mobilised by TVFCS.
- That TVFCS would be hampered in efforts to increase efficiency and effectiveness.

9. PRINCIPAL CONSULTATION

- 9.1 Thames Valley FRS Data teams.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 None.

11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 None

12. CONTACT DETAILS

- 12.1 Group Manager Simon Harris – Thames Valley Fire Control
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