

Welcome to **Issue 7** of the FiReControl Newsletter. This issue focuses on the HR issues surrounding the move to the new Regional Control Centres.

Department for **Communities and Local Government**

On 5 May 2006, Number 10 Downing Street announced the creation of this new department, under Ruth Kelly's leadership. DCLG will be the successor department to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM).



Angela Smith MP has now replaced Jim Fitzpatrick as Under Secretary of State with responsibility for Fire.

The website address for the new Department is www.communities.gov.uk.

importantly to enable you to plan for the future – we have tried to provide as much useful information as we can at this current time.

What happens to my pay, pension, terms and conditions?

The Cabinet Office has issued a statement of practice that where there is a public sector transfer TUPE is deemed to apply which means you should continue on the same terms and conditions that you are on at the time of transferring, and have access to a comparable occupational pension scheme. Any new staff appointed to the RCC will join on comparable conditions to those of the staff who are transferring.

If I move to the RCC who will be my employer?

Staff who transfer to the RCC, as well as any new joiners, will be employed by a company which will be governed by constituent Fire and Rescue Authorities in providing vital service to the FRS.

How will those transferring to the RCC be identified?

Except for two separate circumstances, all staff who are currently employed on work which is transferring will automatically transfer to the new RCCs.

Firstly, if it is not reasonable for you as an individual to transfer, then your role will be considered to be redundant although every effort will be made to find alternative work for you in your FRS. However, should you still wish to transfer to the RCC you will be considered to be in the same position as someone for whom it is reasonable to transfer. Decisions will need to be made within your FRS, in liaison with the company on what is 'reasonable': criteria may include the distance and time of travel to the new place of work, personal caring responsibilities, access to mode of travel etc. This criteria will be the subject of collective consultation and you will also be consulted individually on how it applies to your circumstances.

Secondly, if there are more people who can transfer than there are posts available, this is likely to lead to a redundancy situation. In this case, there will be a selection process to decide who will be made redundant and therefore not required to transfer.

The 'reasonableness criteria' and the selection criteria for redundancy will be consulted on by the company and the FRA working together.

If a member of control staff cannot be transferred to a post within the RCC, and cannot be redeployed by their FRS, then they will be entitled to redundancy based upon the terms already in existence within their FRS. The FRS and the company will work together and will consult with



Firelink Update

In addition to supporting FiReControl's members seminars, the Firelink team has started a parallel programme of Regional Roadshows. These events are intended to provide the FRSs in each region with better visibility of the Firelink capability, the implementation timeframe for the region, indicative costs, and the crucial role the FRS has in the successful delivery of the project. The presentation also seeks to explain the ongoing interaction between Firelink and FiReControl, from governance arrangements to how we are managing our collective demands on limited FRS resources. O2 Airwave has committed to supporting these Roadshows and is providing users the opportunity to see some of the kit that will be rolled out in the future.

The People Issues



The People and Organisation Design workstream (POD) are working with the FRS and, once established, the Local Authority control companies, to provide guidance on policies and procedures for the Regional Control Centres (RCC).

As a control employee there are many things you would like to know to help put your mind at rest and more

Coming Soon - Please keep an eye out for the next edition of the FiReControl Q&A document to be published in July. You will be able to find it on our website www.firecontrol.communities.gov.uk

representative bodies on minimising the impacts of any redundancy situation, and on the 'reasonableness criteria' for transfer and the selection criteria for redundancy.

Will there be support for relocation?

If it is reasonable for you to transfer there may be scope for assistance with relocation. The relocation package will be based on existing terms and conditions and in agreement between the FRS and RCC. Where there are no existing terms and conditions in place the company will be responsible for establishing appropriate packages.

Will redeployment be considered?

Where it is not reasonable for you to transfer there may be an opportunity to be redeployed within your FRS. The terms and conditions and opportunities available are for the FRS to agree and will depend on there being suitable opportunities available.

Will staff in the RCCs wear uniform?

The company will decide on whether or not staff in the RCC will wear uniform. In deciding on the approach the RCC will be advised if the staff transferring have any contractual entitlement to the provision of uniform and this will be taken into account.

Is there a risk of decreased professionalism?

There is concern that the role of the control room operator is being downgraded. Please be assured that the skills and professional expertise in handling calls, mobilising resources, management of incidents, liaison with other emergency and statutory bodies, and ensuring that the information used is factually correct will still be the core functions of the operator and vital to the smooth operation of the RCC.

What will the shift system be?

The company will be responsible for making a decision on what shift system will best meet call patterns and volumes within their region. In making this decision they will take into account current working practices, as well as their legal obligations to consider flexible and part-time working patterns.

Interview

This month we interviewed Stuart Errington, a secondee and member of the Business Change Workstream.

Where did you work previous to joining the FiReControl Team?

I have been in County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service for nearly fourteen years. Before joining the project I was a Flexible Duty Officer, working in Learning and Development.

What made you decide to join FiReControl?

I have been involved with various aspects of the modernization agenda for a number of years, in my previous roles and I'm interested in change management in general. I saw the FiReControl project as offering a unique opportunity to be involved in a complex organizational change programme which will help shape the future of the Fire and Rescue Service. The project will deliver some significant benefits to the service and being in a position to influence this was an appealing proposition.

What does your job in the Business Change team involve?

The Business Change team is the main interface between the national project team and the regional project teams. This is an interesting and challenging role which involves providing advice and guidance to both parties, where appropriate, to help ensure the project is delivered successfully.

What do you feel is the most challenging aspect of your job?

Perhaps the most challenging part of my job is dealing with a wide range of stakeholders who each have very different needs from the project. Recognizing and being sensitive to these needs is vital if we are to gain support for the project.

What do you enjoy about being part of the FiReControl team?

I have had the opportunity to meet and work with some very interesting people who have a diverse range of experience and skills.

Contact Us - Please send us your feedback on this newsletter and let us know what you would like to see in future editions. Are there any specific issues that you would like us to cover? You can provide this via the website or through your regional representative.

WHO IS MY REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE?

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