



IRMP 21-25 Risk Review; National and Regional Risk.

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Executive Summary

In 2019 not many people would have foreseen BREXIT being removed from the daily narrative and replaced by COVID-19. National and in this case international events impact at a local level.

Findings

The Fire Alliance

The alliance with Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS) has been in place since 2018. The purpose of the Fire Alliance is to enhance the capacity and resilience of both Services supporting their long-term sustainability. It provides both Services with the strengths of a larger organisation without losing individual identities. Both SFRS and HWFRS remain separate organisations, operating independently, with full control of their own resources.

The Fire Alliance is guided by a joint Fire Alliance Strategic Plan (2018-2022), which aims to provide both Services with the long-term capacity and resilience to meet the increasing pressures of budgetary restrictions, changing demands and specialist skills requirements. At the heart of this lies collaboration in sharing resources, knowledge and expertise.

The Services have identified 4 key areas that are currently being developed. These areas were identified as foundation activities that would also, in time, support wider future working.

- Fire Control

- Integrated Risk Management (IRMP)¹
- Information and Communication Technology (ICT)
- Procurement

West Mercia LRF

Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service are an active member of the West Mercia Local Resilience Forum (LRF). The LRF is established to manage foreseeable risks and provide an effective multi agency response to rising tide incidents such as flooding and sudden impact emergencies affecting our communities.

West Mercia LRF also ensure effective business continuity arrangements are in place for multi agency activity, with the aim being for stakeholders to identify vulnerabilities within respective services and assistance provided from partners within the LRF, therefore reducing the impact upon the affected service and communities. A recent example of LRF business continuity planning is the EU Exit arrangements as part of Operation Yellow hammer.

Brexit

In June 2016, a referendum to decide whether to leave the EU or remain was held. Leave won by 52% to 48% with a high voter turnout of 72%, equating to more than 30 million people. The total number of Leave votes stood at 17.4 million.

To ensure service delivery and business continuity, the Service has been seeking to understand the impacts upon its departments. This was supported by EU Exit planning meetings that commenced in February 2019. The main sources of information relating to the possible impacts were intelligence from the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) such as the LRF Strategic Co-ordination Group (SCG), work undertaken by the Risk Assessment Working Group (RAWG) considering the impact of National Planning Assumptions locally within the West Mercia region, and through managers liaising with partners and colleagues within the sector.

Working in conjunction with partners, Local Planning Assumptions have been produced which are considered specific to West Mercia. They are broadly similar to the National Planning Assumptions and explore potential risks that include areas such as;

- no deal Brexit
- loss of supply chains

All SFRS departments have Brexit planning within the Service business continuity arrangements.

COVID-19

At the time of writing the tragic consequences of this pandemic are not fully known, however many aspects of life and public service will change to a new normality. Living in sparse areas, especially in retirement may become even more popular, or

¹ HWFRS Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP)

will it be seen as a barrier to receiving support and care? If care facilities become hotspots of virus then it seems natural to expect a growth in living independently in the community away from the communal nature of care homes and sheltered accommodation. This in turn will disperse more vulnerable people across the county. This could also reduce the availability of property and force more younger people to migrate away. Such a change would significantly impact on community care provision. The FRS support to NHS and Local Authority may lead to a greater level of interoperability between Fire and our partners including MHLG.

Prevention activities might significantly change. We may end the summer of 2020 with over 1.5 million people shielded from our traditional safe and well visits for an extended period. How will we engage and protect remotely?

Public expectations of public services. Will this virus reset our priorities in life? Will we have the same verve and focus on dog fowling or pot-holes? This pandemic has the potential to change service delivery, organisations may limit future focus to core service delivery. Local authorities are re-deploying staff to cover statutory key service delivery (adults and children services). When the dust settles and finances dictate this may become the new norm. Will the government and/or public want a more joined up emergency service where a driver is a driver regardless of ambulance, hearse or fire engine. Shortages in personal protective equipment and frontline resources are at present (April 2020) subject to huge media and public scrutiny. Public services will need to have a resilience and sustainability that is real rather than theoretical.

Resourcing to risk with an On-Call Fire Service depends on resilience and maintaining capacity. The increasing On-Call availability, a result of furloughed On-Call staff, may end with On-Call being a more resilient and popular.

The brave new world may reset priorities. Society might become a more collegiate entity. Equally it might not. Quality of life and family needs may well pressurise recruitment and retention. Carbon footprints may well slip down the agenda until the next wave of floods and wildfire.

Protection teams may find a business world in turmoil. On-line commerce has continued unabated whilst the high street has been shut down, previously strong industries have become vulnerable and high risk. Cruise lining may never recover. Will the FSO be a priority for commerce? The future economy will impact on business rate provision and potentially our income.

Residents in dangerously clad buildings in lock down potentially still live in such buildings. When the crisis moves away from the heavily populated areas of the UK will people still want to live on top of each other in these busy vibrant metro areas?

Relationships with Unions are likely to change. The FBU memberships drive to become more involved with the COVID-19 response will provide a foundation for Fire and Rescue to evolve with public expectation and the ever-changing risk.

National Risk Assessment and National Risk Register

The National Risk Register is intended to capture the range of emergencies that might have a major impact on all, or significant parts of, the UK. It provides a national picture of the risks we face, and is designed to complement Community Risk Registers, already produced and published locally by emergency planners. The driver for this work is the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, which also defines what we mean by emergencies, and what responsibilities are placed on emergency responders in order to prepare for them. Further information about the Act can be found on the UK Resilience website².

Risks include;

- Natural Events
- Major Accidents
- Malicious Attack

These risks breakdown into a register or categorisation of risk

Major Transport Accidents

Attacks on Critical Infrastructure

Major Industrial Accidents

Animal Disease

Severe Weather

Electronic Attacks

Non-conventional Attacks*

Coastal Flooding

Pandemic Influenza

Inland Flooding

Attacks on Transport

Attacks on Crowded Places

Relative Likelihood

Relative Impact

* The use of some chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) materials has the potential to have very serious and widespread consequences. An example would be the use of a nuclear device. There is no historical precedent for this type of terrorist attack which is excluded from the non-conventional grouping on the diagram.

National Resilience and Assets

Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service are committed to providing an excellent service locally, regionally and nationally. Within the County we have specialist crews equipped

² www.ukresilience.gov.uk/preparedness/ccact.aspx

with High Volume Pumping capabilities to assist at incidents where large volumes of water are required to be moved. Examples of this include flooding events. The Service also host a registered boat team that will attend national incidents to offer assistance. This is in addition to the Service being supportive of National Resilience requests for assistance at significant incidents, with examples of deployment including the Winter Hill wildfires and South Yorkshire floods.

Terrorism

Currently the UK faces a number of terrorist related threats, the most serious being from Islamic State extremists; however, terrorists associated with the extreme right also pose a continued threat to the UK's safety and security. Although Shropshire is judged a low risk area, it is important not to be complacent as terrorist incidents have occurred within the county. The most notable being in 1992 when the IRA planted three firebombs in Shrewsbury. Bombs were placed in Shoplatch, The Charles Darwin Shopping Centre and Shrewsbury Castle, the latter causing the most damage as the castle housed the Shropshire Regimental Museum and many priceless historical artefacts were lost and damaged by fire and smoke.

The UK's National Prevent Strategy is part of the Government's Counter Terrorism Strategy called CONTEST, the aim of the Prevent Strategy within CONTEST is to reduce the terrorism threat to the UK by stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. SFRS contributes to each of the four CONTEST work strands in the following way

Prevent

Actively partaking and engaging in Intelligence briefings with multi-agency partners, special branch and regional CT ensuring that an accurate risk picture is available.

In addition to this all Operational crews and Incident Commanders receive training on Safeguarding, and the reporting of suspicious activities.

Pursue

Security cleared officer's regularly attend special branch briefings to identifying threat activity within Service boundaries and ensure response plans meet the needs of the National threat level and evolving attack methodologies.

All operational crews are trained in CBRN protocols including IOR and are aware of Run Hide Tell procedures.

Protect

The Service has fully embedded JESIP principles, and is involved in specific site security needs, hostile recognisance and suspicious activity reporting.

Preplanning for public order events and sporting events throughout the county is dealt with on a regular basis by the Services Operational and risk planning team.

Prepare

All frontline operational staff receive multi-agency training and awareness which includes, CT training, Ballistic PPE training, NILO and ACT awareness.

The basis of Prevent is simple, it's about keeping the communities of Shropshire safe from terrorist activities by being responsive to the prevailing national and international situation.

Terrorism is a low threat in Shropshire, with the highest potential risk being from a 'lone actor' style attack carried out in one of the counties larger towns. The Service has proportionated response plans in place designed to mitigate any potential threat, risk or harm posed to communities from extremist individuals or groups.

As a Service we will continue to promote strong and positive relationships with our partner agencies as well as within the diverse communities of Shropshire.

Emergency Services Network (ESN)

ESN will be the new communication system utilised by the three emergency services and other public safety users in the UK and will provide the next generation integrated critical voice and broadband data services.

SFRS are engaged and supporting an incremental approach to adopting ESN, which will provide a resilient multi-agency communications network.

ESMCP

Within SFRS, the Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP) Team have identified a number of products that can potentially be adopted locally, these include;

- MDT replacement- Completed
- New mobile phones
- Tablet procurement
- Changes to the methods of alerting/mobilising – both critical and non-critical.

The team are also fully engaged with the ESMCP Regional Management Team and EE to ensure areas of poor coverage are identified and are working towards bringing together a Coverage Assurance Strategy.

In addition to ESN, SFRS along with Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS) have entered into a joint procurement project for replacement Integrated Communication Control Systems (ICCS). Although not specifically an ESMCP project; it is very closely linked as the ICCS will be required to be ESN compliant.

