

AGENDA ITEM:

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>MERSEYSIDE FIRE &amp; RESCUE AUTHORITY MEETING</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>27<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2010</b>
<b>REPORT NO.</b>	<b>CFO/079/10</b>
<b>REPORTING OFFICER:</b>	<b>ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE &amp; TREASURER</b>
<b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>	<b>KEVIN PILKINGTON (TELENT), EXTN. 6444 ED FRANKLIN, DIRECTOR OF ICT, EXTN. 4569</b>
<b>OFFICERS CONSULTED:</b>	<b>AREA MANAGER BERRY, GROUP MANAGER LOMAX &amp; LOCALITY MANAGER O'CALLAGHAN</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>MACC INFRASTRUCTURE REFRESH</b>

**APPENDIX A      TITLE      MACC COMPUTER SYSTEM  
REPLACEMENT BUSINESS CASE**

**ATTACHED – HARD COPY**

**\*A GLOSSARY OF TERMS HAS BEEN PROVIDED AT THE END OF THIS  
REPORT FOR YOUR REFERENCE**

Purpose of Report

1. To request that Members consider the risks associated with ageing technology in the control room and measures that will ensure the mobilising system remains 'fit for purpose' and helps protect the community of Merseyside.

Recommendation

2. That the Authority approve the partial refresh of certain components of its Mobilising and Communication Centre (MACC) service Infrastructure which would require an £117k increase in the Capital Programme.

Introduction

3. Officers have risk assessed the life of technology in MACC and identified need for a partial refresh of certain components.
4. Before bringing a report on this to Members, it was considered appropriate writing to CLG to see if they will fund any required technical refresh.
5. A copy of this letter was presented to the Asset Management Committee on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> April 2010.

6. That Committee asked Officers to bring the report on technology requirement to the full Fire Authority.
7. At the time of writing, no response has been received from CLG.

### Background

8. In order to allow Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority (MFRA) to respond to all emergency calls for assistance with a level of response appropriate to the risk and deal with all emergencies efficiently and effectively MF&RA undertook a comprehensive replacement of its Mobilising and Communications Control (MACC) service infrastructure, including an accommodation refresh in 2004.
9. The original business case for the replacement was based on a cost of £700k and a 5 year lifespan i.e. up to the new national Fire Control introduction - the projected 'ready for service date', for the National Fire Control project at the time was 2008. Permission was required from the Secretary of State to implement the new system.
10. The system is now 5 years old. The projected go live date for Merseyside in the regional control project is now June 2012; however there remains significant concern about the progress the project has made and the reliability of that timescale given previous delays and deferrals.
11. A risk assessment has been undertaken of the requirements of the system. This was carried out by telent, our Infrastructure Service Provision Partner. This is attached 'Appendix A: MACC Computer System Replacement Business Case'.

The risk assessment concludes that there is a pressing need to:-

- Replace computer hardware that is reaching end of life and whose specification is obsolete;
- Upgrade the mobilisation application software to the latest version Vision FX which is now being used by 12 other Fire and Rescue Services.

It is therefore recommended that MFRA undertake a PARTIAL refresh of certain components of the MACC service infrastructure in line with that assessment.

The risks of not doing this are:

- Vision Servers and Clients will start to experience an increasing number of hardware failures. This will result in the loss of primary mobilisation;
- PC and Server security cannot be guaranteed due to the obsolescence of the operating software;

- MACC staff will be put under greater pressure as system performance degrades;
  - Operational Fire Safety will be compromised if MACC is not providing a primary mobilisation service;
  - Lack of third party support for Vision software.
12. The budget cost has been estimated at £192k (approximately 25% of the original system value). The Authority has recognised the need for such potential investment and has set aside already a capital budget of £75k available to finance the upgrade to Vision FX. Approval is sought for further £117k budget to cover the hardware replacement. This investment (based on the current RCC plan) would have a life of 2 years and a maximum lifecycle of 5 years. If however, equipment life is less than 4 years there is a potential to reuse for other projects.
13. After consultation with the Fire Control Project Transition Manager there is no existing budget available within the New Burdens budget line from FiReControl.
14. After discussion with the appropriate operational personnel the target go-live date would be September 2010. This is within the project resources and also allows a bedding in period prior to the busy bonfire period.

#### Equality & Diversity Implications

15. There are no equality and diversity implications arising from this report.

#### Financial Implications & Value for Money

16. The budget cost has been estimated at £192k which represents a spend of approximately 25% of the original project at today's prices. There is a capital budget of £75k available to finance the upgrade to Vision FX and approval is sought for a further £117k budget to cover the hardware replacement.

Note: MACC hardware was not initially included in the ICT Five Year Asset Replacement Plan due to the uncertainty around FireControl 'ready for service dates'.

#### Health & Safety and Environmental Implications

17. The health and safety risks of not doing a partial refresh of the MACC Service Infrastructure are:
- MACC staff will be put under greater pressure as system performance degrades;
  - Operational Fire Safety will be compromised if MACC is not providing a primary mobilisation service.

Contribution to Achieving the Vision:

“To Make Merseyside a Safer, Stronger, Healthier Community”

18. To respond to all emergency calls for assistance with a level of response appropriate to the risk and deal with all emergencies efficiently and effectively.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Appendix A: MACC Computer System Replacement Business Case  
Authority Report CFO/073/10 – Request for Funding MACC Systems upgrade

**Glossary of Terms**

AVLS	Automatic Vehicle Locating System – vehicle locating and plotting service, used by MACC to assign appliances to incidents based on geographical distance to it.
BOSS	Browser for Operational System Status – used by non-MACC personnel to access operational data.
EADS	European Aeronautic Defence and Space – Their Defence and Security Division is contracted to deliver the FiReControl Project.
HP	Hewlett Packard – Computer hardware vendor.
KVM	Keyboard Video Mouse – a switchable device for using a number of computers via a single keyboard, mouse and monitor.
MACC	Mobilising and Communication Centre – the term for MFRS Primary Control Room.
MFRS	Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service.
OSR	Operational Support Room – The Secondary Control Room at Bridle Road.
RAM	Random Access Memory – computer hardware for running applications.
RCC	Regional Control Centre – FiReControl term for the Regional Control Rooms.
WAN	Wide Area Network – Industry term for a network stretching across longer distances.