

MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY			
MEETING OF THE:	POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE		
DATE:	2 OCTOBER 2025	REPORT NO:	CFO/19/2526
PRESENTING OFFICER	CHIEF FIRE OFFICER, NICK SEARLE		
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	AREA MANAGER, DAVID WATSON	REPORT AUTHOR:	STATION MANAGER, JANET ROBINSON
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	HEAD OF PROCUREMENT, HYWYN PRITCHARD, GROUP MANAGER, PAUL HITCHEN, GROUP MANAGER MARK BALDWIN, USAR CAPABILITY OFFICERS, STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP TEAM		
TITLE OF REPORT:	PURCHASE OF HEAVY VEHICLE STABILISATION EQUIPMENT (NEW DIMENSIONS 2)		
APPENDICES:	NONE		

Purpose of Report

1. To request that Members authorise procurement of Heavy Vehicle Stabilisation equipment for together with an additional training set, as part of the New Dimensions 2 Programme that supports the nationally funded National Resilience capability refresh.

Recommendation

2. It is recommended that Members;
 - a) note the contents of the report; and
 - b) approve the award of the contract to VimpeX Limited for the provision of Paratech Heavy Vehicle Stabilisation equipment (as detailed within the report) at a total cost of £1,567,580 net of VAT.

Introduction and Background

3. New Dimensions 2 (ND2) is a national capability uplift programme that delivers the refresh of National Resilience assets. As Members are aware, one of the National Resilience Capabilities provides a response to Urban Search & Rescue (USAR) incidents.
4. The Urban Search and Rescue capability provides a response to a range of catastrophic incidents, including natural and deliberate events, and specifically included a response to large scale structural collapse and serious transport

incidents. Under ND2, National Resilience are seeking to enhance the USAR capability with regards to transport incidents. A key phase in the response to these incidents is the stabilisation of the vehicle or vehicles involved.

5. Due to the demanding nature of rescue operations, the Heavy Vehicle Stabilisation kits requested must be rapidly deployable, durable, and suitable for high-pressure application in challenging environments. USAR teams deploy to locations nationally and will need to operate in extreme weather conditions and challenging dusty environments. Heavy Vehicle Stabilisation equipment will play a critical role in rescue operations, enabling USAR technicians and other personnel to operate safely around heavy vehicles. The aim is to introduce an enhanced transport rescue capability on to the USAR FRV fleet.
6. The equipment to be procured is detailed below:

Various Types of Struts
Cribbing and Blocks
Air Lifting Bags
Air Controllers and Hoses
Attachments and Bases
Chains, Straps and Anchor Systems

7. The Authority conducted a tender exercise utilising a YPO Dynamic Purchasing System Framework. The 12 suppliers on the framework were invited to the tender with the Authority ultimately receiving two bids. Following the conclusion of the tender exercise the preferred bidder was identified to be VimpeX Limited, as the UK supplier for the Paratech equipment.

Equality and Diversity Implications

8. There are no identified equality or diversity implications related to the procurement of the stabilisation equipment. The equipment is designed to ensure safe operation in USAR environments, prioritising safety across all personnel, regardless of background, identity, or physical characteristics.

Staff Implications

9. Training of USAR Instructors who will then cascade to USAR Technicians within their USAR Teams. Use of this equipment will also form part of the regular maintenance of competency training USAR Technicians undertake.

Legal Implications

10. Procurement would be consistent with the Authority's Contract Standing Orders.

Financial Implications & Value for Money

11. The total cost of the procurement is £1,567,586 net VAT.

12. Funding is provided by Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) as part of the ND2 Programme and has no impact on the MFRS budget

Risk Management and Health & Safety Implications

13. Provision of Heavy Vehicle Stabilisation equipment will enhance the safety of USAR operations for both responders and members of the public through mitigation of the risk of vehicle movement.
14. Stabilisation equipment specifically designed for heavy vehicles will improve the times to resolve incidents through the time taken to stabilise these types of vehicles. This has the potential for saving lives.

Environmental Implications

15. The equipment being sourced is durable with a long lifespan which reduces the need for frequent replacement.
16. The equipment will improve incident resolution times, and the time taken to stabilise these types of vehicles, which can reduce the time between incident and the commencement of clean-up operations.

Contribution to Our Vision: *To be the best Fire & Rescue Service in the UK.*

Our Purpose: *Here to serve, Here to protect, Here to keep you safe.*

17. The recommendation supports the Authority's vision and purpose by allowing crews to respond faster and more effectively and contribute to the saving of lives, ensures responder and public safety during complex rescues thereby reducing the risk of injury or fatality, and improves resilience and readiness for major incidents.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NONE

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

FRV	First Response Vehicle (FRV)
MHCLG	Ministry for Communities, Housing and Local Government (MHCLG)
ND2	New Dimensions 2 (ND2)
USAR	Urban Search & Rescue (USAR).
YPO	Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation (YPO)