

REPORT OF THE
Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority
PART II

167. UNITED KINGDOM INTERNATIONAL SEARCH AND RESCUE TEAM'S DEPLOYMENTS TO NEW ZEALAND AND JAPAN

1. The Authority received a presentation on the Service's involvement in the work of the United Kingdom International Search and Rescue Team (UKISART). The presentation included details of Hampshire's deployment to Christchurch in New Zealand after an earthquake on 22 February, 2011; and the role the Hampshire team played in coordinating the deployment of UKISART to Japan in response to the tsunami and earthquake on 11 March, 2011. The Authority placed on record their sincere thanks to those involved for their humanitarian efforts in helping to deal with the devastating results of natural disasters occurring around the world. Also, their immense pride and gratitude at Hampshire's part in this work.

168. RESPONSE TO DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT FIRE CONTROL CONSULTATION AND FIRE CONTROL REPLACEMENT PROJECT

1. After the closure of the Fire Control project at the end of last year, the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) began the process of reviewing the project and consulting with fire and rescue authorities, and other interested parties, for their views on priorities for the future provision of control services in England. The consultation was for 12 weeks from 13 January this year.

2. The Authority's response described a preferred option to work in partnership on this matter with Dorset, Wiltshire and Devon & Somerset Fire and Rescue Services. It is felt this will provide the best balance between resilience efficiency, local management and accountability. Also, by working together a number of benefits have been identified. This includes each fire and rescue service retaining its own control room function for command and incident management but with full mobilising interoperability with the other fire and rescue services. The partnership will enable Hampshire to meet its own deadline of replacing its existing control room system by the end of 2013. The partnership model for delivery of control services between the four services will also provide opportunities for efficiency savings. CLG has given an undertaking to publish a summary of the responses it receives within three months of the end of the consultation period. The Authority will receive a further report once the CLG's response is published.

169. RESPONSE BY DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT TO THE "FIRE FUTURES" EXERCISE

1. The "Fire Futures" project began in September 2010 with an invitation to all interested parties to offer suggestions on how the fire and rescue service of the future might look. Four working groups were established to collate ideas and present these to Government in a formal way. The four workstreams were entitled:

- Role of Fire and Rescue Services
- Efficiency, Effectiveness and Productivity
- Localism and Accountability
- National Interests

2. The workstreams' reports were produced in early 2011 and these included a substantial number and wide range of suggestions: some radical, others conventional. Given the wide variety of views, the reports lacked a single coherent or compelling argument to take the fire and rescue service in a particular direction. The Government's response to this can be divided into four broad areas: local decision making; cross sector collaboration, commitment to retain national fire training college and local and national resilience. It introduces some key pointers for future fire policy. There is likely to be an emphasis on decentralisation and local decision making - held to account by greater transparency and critical challenge. CLG's role will be to co-ordinate national resilience activity and to support fire and rescue services by removing obstacles which constrain greater efficiency and flexibility. Fire and rescue authorities will be expected to take on those national functions previously the domain of central government and will be expected to look to others, particularly the private sector and voluntary sector to help drive improvements in delivering services to the public.

3. The Government's response to the "Fire Futures" projects sets the scene for future pieces of work to be undertaken over the coming months. The Authority will be kept fully informed of future developments.

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Authority