



Special points of interest:

- NRE moves out of pilot phase into Initial Operating Capability (IOC)
- NRE utilised for multi-agency exercise Vulcan, in Cumbria
- Recent software update details

Introduction:

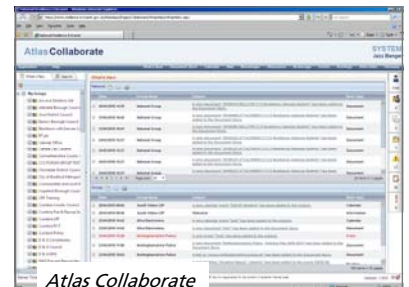
This is the third in a series of monthly newsletters produced by CCS and the service providers BT and Ultra Electronics, to give all stakeholders, or those with an interest in the NRE, an update on how the project is progressing.

NRE Project Update:

At the stakeholder working group held on Friday 30 April, all the stakeholders involved in the Pilot of the NRE were asked to feedback their findings on the final month of this phase. This feedback would decide if the NRE Service could move out of Pilot and into Initial Operating Capability (IOC).

After a unanimous decision, it was decided that the Service was sufficiently ready to enter IOC.

Therefore, as of Tuesday 4 May 2010, I am pleased to announce that the NRE service is available for all members of the UK resilience community to begin subscribing to.



Atlas Collaborate screen shot

Standard Operating Procedures:

The current SOPs manual is at V1.01 and is available here: www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/nre.

A second review workshop was held on 29 April. It was attended by both practitioners from the UKR community and technical staff from the service provider. The SOPs manual will be updated to V1.1 and should be released in the next couple of weeks.

As with every aspect of the NRE,

it is designed for the end user.

If you wish to contribute to its development, please contact the NRE Project Manager. The next review workshop is being held in London on 6 July.

The NRE project team is keen to attend any exercises you might be running where you intend to use the NRE. They will be able to offer technical support on usage of the service and will also

capture findings from the day to incorporate into future service developments and SOPs reviews.



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NRE Governance Structure:

To support the ongoing development of the NRE, a Change Advisory Board (CAB) will be formed to categorise, prioritise, cost, develop and test Requests for Change (RFC). It is anticipated that the majority of RFC will come from the existing NRE user base and be put forward either by contacting the

Service Desk or through the NRE National User Group (first meeting scheduled 7 July 2010). Terms of Reference (ToR) for the CAB and the User Group will be released shortly.

Sitting above the NRE CAB will be the NRE Steering Group. This group will comprise of senior

management from key stakeholders and the service providers. One of its aims is to look at the longer term and strategic development of the NRE over the next 5 – 10 years. The steering group will be an evolution from the existing NRE Project Board.

NRE in Action — Exercise Vulcan:



Exercise Vulcan, Centrica Gas Terminals, Barrow-in-Furness

“We feel that the exercise verified that the essential functionality we require to co-ordinate a multi-agency Strategic response is now with Atlas Collaborate.”



Cumbria exercise, emergency control centre, Barrow Fire Station

Mike Coward, Cumbria County Council, provides an overview of a recent exercise in Cumbria where Atlas Collaborate was deployed:

“A major exercise utilising the NRE to manage information at a Strategic level took place on 21 April in Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria. The exercises main objective was to satisfy the COMAH Regulation requirement to test the Centrica HRL Off-Site Emergency Plan for the On-Shore Gas Terminals at Barrow-in-Furness.

The challenging scenario revolved around a major fire in a crucial item of plant which prompted the introduction of off-site countermeasures. Cumbria Police, Cumbria Fire, NHS Cumbria, North West Ambulance Service, Environment Agency, Health Protection Agency, Barrow Borough Council, Cumbria County Council and, of course, the Site Operator (Centrica), utilised Atlas Collaborate to co-ordinate the strategic response at one of Cumbria’s nominated Emergency Control Centres located at Cumbria Fire Search and Rescue Offices, Barrow. In addition, Atlas Collaborate was used at the Gas Terminals where a driving team simulated the role of the Sites Incident Control Centre by providing regular site updates utilising a pre-prepared Briefing proforma which mirrored the Incident Message proforma that is contained within the Off-Site Emergency Plan.

We configured Atlas Collaborate within the Cumbria LRF Forum to provide a Chemical Incident Group into which we placed all exercise participants in advance of the exercise although this was fine-tuned during the exercise itself to reflect last minute changes to those wishing to

login. Workgroup security proved to be an effective means of managing access rights.

The exercise commenced with the creation of an “Event” Exercise Vulcan. The notification facility was utilised, resulting in a room full of chirping hand held devices which reacted to the incoming e-mail message prompting agencies to login into the NRE. The Fire station has a dedicated LAN to facilitate the co-ordinated multi-agency response. The LAN has one ADSL line which was delivering 6000K/bits (6Mb) download and 250K/bits upload speeds. 15 laptops logged into Atlas Collaborate using role-based accounts, some of which were agencies, others were utilised by Media Co-ordination, Briefing Officers Team, Public Information and GIS functions and, as Exercise Director, I utilised my personal login to monitor the exercise on my own laptop utilising a 3G card.

As described earlier, the Site Operators Briefing proforma was used to provide weather details, description of the incident, casualty details, rendezvous point information, etc. The Police reacted to the initial phone call from Centrica and produced a Public Warning Message to local residents utilising a pre-prepared template intended for this purpose. The Initial Public Warning Message contained within the Off-site Plan was accessed from the Document Store and transferred to the Briefings template using Copy and paste functions. It was then edited to reflect the correct time and date and then published.

Throughout the exercise, the Briefings function was used to produce Press Statements using another pre-prepared template.

Agencies utilised the mail function to communicate with each other and to external contacts using the new external mail facility.

It was agreed during the debrief that Atlas Collaborate provides the functionality we require to replace our existing bespoke Gemini software application. However, areas for improvement were identified, which included the need to speed up Internet access (an internal Cumbria issue to be addressed locally). Specific areas for Ultra Electronics to consider included: the Save as draft function that needs to be modified and applied to Mail as well as the Briefing function. Another area warranting further development is the way Briefings are currently displayed. It is likely that several different templates will be utilised therefore the ability to search / order / view by type is essential as is the ability to sort by date / time.

We feel that the exercise verified that the essential functionality we require to co-ordinate a multi-agency Strategic response is now with Atlas Collaborate. Given that Ultra Electronics and Cabinet Office continue to exhibit an enthusiastic response to feedback, we are confident that the product will evolve over time under the management of the Change Advisory Board as other counties make constructive criticism. This now gives us the confidence to commence the process which will see us move from Pilot stage to operational usage in a phased way during the coming months.”

GCSx and PNN to GSE Connectivity Issues:

The GCSx connectivity issue has now been resolved. However, there is still the possibility that new organisations connecting to the NRE via the GCSx may suffer some initial connection problems. These problems will likely be due to unique local settings that may need to be amended for a

connection to be established. If you have any issues with your NRE access via a GCSx connection you can contact Ultra Electronics NRE Service Desk for advice and assistance in establishing the required setting changes at your local level. Please note other GCSx issues should be referred to

the GovConnect Service Desk. With regards to the connectivity via the PNN, Ultra Electronics are continuing to working with C&W and NPIA to rectify this issue. Once connectivity has been established, Ultra Electronics will undertake some testing with NPIA and several police forces.

Once this testing has been completed satisfactorily, CCS and NPIA will release a communication to all police forces in England and Wales to inform them of any local settings that may be required to support this connectivity.

Fixes, Updates and Patches:

There were two major upgrades to the NRE within April.

Atlas Collaborate V1.003 – (12 April)

- Ability to save draft briefings has now been implemented. Users can create a briefing as draft whilst they are working on it, the briefing will only be visible to the originating user when in a draft state
- Coloured tabs are now incorporated in populated areas of briefing
- Ability to send outgoing mail to non-NRE users has now been included. Due to security issues and requirements, it is not possible to receive mail from non-NRE users within the NRE mail facilities
- Briefings can now be attached to notifications being sent to other users
- Black list for documents that cannot be uploaded. This includes file types that could include malicious code such as executables (.exe)
- Add document ID to search criteria within Document Store search
- Discussion board topics now have a maximum idle time of 100 days
- Notification emails will now be marked with the classification of the item being notified
- Start Date field now added to Event dialogue in Events
- Workgroup Security Default values and inheritance have been improved

- New event confirmation prompt added, for example: “You are about to add an event to group ‘Lancashire LRF’, please confirm this is the correct group for this Event”

NRE Portal V1.1 – (12 April)

- Bookmark link now added to the NRE login page (using the URL in the login bar to create a bookmark will not work)
- Issue with unsuccessful login counts has been fixed
- Confirmation pop-up box wording has been changed
- Issue with initial user login sometimes timing out has been fixed
- Disabled accounts e-mail wording changed to make it more relevant
- Login Page re-worded
- Auto generated account expiry e-mail now states NRE in the subject title
- Read-only mode issues fixed

Atlas Collaborate V1.1 – (30 April)

- Major redevelopment of Messenger functionality:
 - Users can now re-join conversations they previously left
 - User can reject or accept conversation invites without a full Messenger session starting
 - Users can now set their status as Available, Unavailable, Busy and Away
 - Invites and invitees can view status of users invited to the conversation

- Document Store notification e-mails now contain a link to the document within Document Store
- Documents can now be moved from one folder in Document Store to another folder
- Briefing titles are now visible on an unexpanded briefing, making it easier to distinguish different briefings
- Briefings now have a deadline date
- Quarterly e-mails are sent inviting users to update contact details they are responsible for
- When uploading a document to document store, an upload indicator is now displayed rather than a pause during the upload
- Calendar events can now include hyperlinks to external URL's
- Admins now have the ability to view which users belong to which Workgroup

NRE Portal V1.2 – (30 April)

- Issue with organisational Super-Users sometimes not able to access functionality has been fixed
- Fix to ensure that sponsors cannot add their own account as a guest within their own contract group
- Deletion of notification configuration now has a confirmation dialogue (System Operators only)

“BT and Ultra Electronics are committed to delivering the NRE, and will provide both the ongoing day-to-day support and the enhancements agreed by a change control process in order to evolve the system so that it continues to meet the subscribers’ needs.”



NATIONAL RESILIENCE EXTRANET



NRE Newbies:

The following organisations have signed up to the NRE this month:

- NHS Wiltshire
- Staffordshire County Council
- Methyr Tydfil County Borough Council
- Grampian Police
- Scottish Government
- Carmarthenshire County Council
- Pembrokeshire County Council
- Manchester City Council
- Devon & Cornwall Constabulary
- Leeds City Council
- West Yorkshire Police
- Wiltshire Police
- Rochdale MB Council
- British Transport Police
- North Tyneside MB Council
- Stockport MB Council
- Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council

They will be joining the organisations listed below that are already using the NRE:

- Govt Office East Midlands
- Govt Office West Midlands
- Hampshire County Council
- Hampshire Fire & Rescue
- Isle of Wight Council

- Isle of Wight NHS PCT
- East Midland Ambulance
- NHS Nottingham City
- NHS Nottinghamshire County
- Nottingham City Council
- Nottinghamshire County Council
- Nottinghamshire Fire & Rescue
- Nottinghamshire Police
- Arun District Council
- Chichester District Council
- West Sussex County Council
- Suffolk Resilience Forum
- Highways Agency
- Severn Trent Water Limited
- Airwave Solutions
- NPIA
- Merseyside Fire & Rescue
- Merseyside Police
- South Tyneside Council
- City of Bradford MD Council
- Dudley MB Council
- BT Plc
- Lancashire County Council
- Southampton Port Health
- Copeland Borough Council
- Communities & Local Govt
- Govt Office East of England
- Govt Office London
- Govt Office North East
- Govt Office North West
- Govt Office South East
- Govt Office South West
- Govt Office Yorkshire & the Humber
- Environment Agency Midlands
- St John Ambulance
- Worthing Borough Council
- NHS Blackburn with Darwen
- Paradigm Services
- Environment Agency
- Cabinet Office
- Blackburn with Darwen Council
- South Lakeland District Council
- Southampton City Council
- Allerdale Borough Council
- Barrow Borough Council
- Carlisle City Council
- Cumbria County Council
- Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service
- Cumbria PCT
- Cumbria Police
- Eden District Council
- Maritime and Coastguard Agency
- North West Ambulance Service


CabinetOffice


Working together to deliver the NRE

Further information:

Websites

- www.resilience-extranet.co.uk
- www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/NRE

Telephone

- 0207 276 538 – CCS
- 01772 907 600 – Ultra Electronics

E-mail

- NREenquiries@cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk
- support@ultra-datel.com

Feedback on the NRE:

All feedback on any aspect of the NRE, the Atlas Collaborate application, training or the Standard Operating procedures should be sent direct to Ultra Electronics' support desk.

Contact details:

e-mail: service.desk@ultra-ccs.com

telephone: 01772 907 600

By sending feedback here it can be logged and a unique reference assigned. This will allow users to track their call through the system and allow Ultra Electronics to provide updates or explain fixes directly to the person who reported the issue.