



Special points of interest:

- NRE Service accepted into Full Operating Capability
- Eastern England start roll out plans for NRE
- Bradford District multi-agency approach
- NRE connectivity tested on Satellite phone system

Inside this issue:

Project update	1
NRE governance	1
NRE in action	2
NRE connectivity	3
Newest subscribers	4
Logging feedback	4
Further information	4

Introduction:

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

NRE Project Update:

The NRE is now in its final month of Initial Operating Capability (IOC). During this period CCS has been monitoring performance of the service against the prescribed targets in the Service Level Agreement with the supplier. The monthly system availability target for the service is 99.6%. Once the NRE had completed its Pilot phase it had to have three consecutive months of 99.6% or greater availability before IOC could be satisfactorily signed off and the Service accepted into Full Operating Capability.

As you can see from the table opposite, the service has provided a consistently high level of "up time" for users. The "down time" was not due to any system

errors or malfunctions but new versions of the NRE Portal or Atlas Collaborate application being installed on the servers. Other than for testing the Service has not yet had any cause to "fail over" to the Disaster Recovery site.

User numbers are gradually increasing too. As of Friday 16th July we have 855 users from 172 organisations and agencies with a further 72 organisations in the pipeline waiting to join in the

next month. Whilst we still have a long way to go towards the scoped 12,000 users, the number and rate of organisations joining is on track. As it is a new IT service many organisations are taking two or three licences to "test the waters". However, we are noticing that many are coming back to procure more licences as they realise the benefits the NRE can provide to secure information sharing across their multi-agency partners.

Average Monthly availability over IOC (to date)	99.98%	May to July
Average Monthly availability over IOC (to date) & Pilot	99.87%	Jan to July
Highest monthly availability	100.00%	Jan & June
Lowest monthly availability	99.68%	February

NRE National User Group:

The first national NRE User Group took place on 7th July at Admiralty Arch, London. This event was well attended by 56 agencies of the NRE user community. Due to capacity limitations of the venue and the demand for seats we had to split the day into two sessions to allow everyone who had expressed an interest in attending the opportunity to do so.

With it being the first session a lot of the administration and the process and procedures the group would need to follow was discussed. The CCS, BT and Ultra

project team presented their thoughts on items such as the groups Terms of Reference, Request for Change (RFC) process and the proposed governance structure of the NRE.

Also as part of the day both the NPIA and DSTL kindly gave all of the attendees' two quick overview presentations on how they are looking to both utilise and grow the NRE's capabilities.

The action points from this meeting will be posted on the NRE, within the 'RFC Supporting Information' folder in Document

Store. To view these documents you will need to subscribe to the Request for Change Group within the Document Store area. Also, all NRE users will be able to add comments in the RFC General Discussion forum in the same group.



NRE in Action — Promoting NRE in the Eastern Region:



"...the NRE was seen initially as a planning tool and that we would seek to establish an initial NRE network with a number of licences with the key partners."

Jeff Stacey, Resilience Team Leader, Government Office for the East of England, provides a summary of how organisations in the Eastern region are implementing the NRE in a joined up manner:

"In order to promote the take up of the NRE in the Eastern Region the Regional Resilience Team at GO East is leading a coordinated application process to encourage organisations to get their NRE licences.

The process started with a workshop held on 16 June. The morning sessions consisted of a tour of the Atlas Collaborate package led by Ultra, followed by a presentation from one of the pilot areas on their experiences of using the system. This was contrasted with another of the pilot areas to bring out the different views on the use of the NRE as a planning tool and its use during the response to an emergency. The morning session

was then completed with a short look at Atlas AIMS and Atlas OPS.

In the afternoon, the workshop sessions focussed on how the NRE might be used by the individual organisations, within the LRF and in the region. Participants were grouped on LRF tables and were asked to discuss and report back on the following areas:

- The way in which the LRF would use the NRE for planning and in emergency response
- What messages the LRF will give to its members about taking up the NRE?
- Who will manage the NRE within the LRF and what role is there for the Telecommunications Sub Group?

Based on the discussions to these issues, the later workshop

sessions covered the following areas:

- The key roles, people and posts that will need a licence
- How many licences will organisations require?
- Setting a timetable for NRE roll out

The conclusion from the workshop was that the NRE was seen initially as a planning tool and that we would seek to establish an initial NRE network with a number of licences with the key partners. A timetable has been established so that applications are made within set periods so that these can be followed up with local training for the sponsors, followed by cascade training for users. This will then be reinforced by running both local and regional exercises to encourage organisations to use and become familiar with the system."

City of Bradford MDC

www.bradford.gov.uk

"...we are progressing training with partners to ensure that they can use the NRE as any other emergency responder. This type of forward thinking can only enhance our response to events."

NRE in Action — Collaborating within Bradford District:

Mike Powell Emergency Planning Manager for City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council deals with emergency planning issues for the Council and public events thorough the Public Safety Advisory Group (PSLG), a multi-agency approach to safety of events within the District:

"Atlas Collaborate fits in well with the collaborative working that is being undertaken across the Bradford District. Those involved include Bradford and Airedale Primary Care Trust, West Yorkshire Police and Bradford University, more on the University later.

The need for multi-agency communications is becoming more important by the day. As well as this collaborative working, Bradford Council has recently signed into a service level

agreement with the PCT on its emergency planning function. Other Category 1 and 2 responding partners not included within the Collaborative working arrangements within Bradford District are included in the normal integrated arrangements.

As a sponsor, I did have some concerns of going outside of the Category 1 & 2 responding agencies to be included within the Bradford Group, but as progression has been made through the pilot process, and reviewing the NRE literature it became clearer that my University Partners could also become members of the NRE and this has been seen by the members of the University to Emergency Response Programme Board as greater partnership

working.

The security processes had to be established along with the audit processes which ensured that they were in line with the other members of the Bradford Group.

With my team members, we are progressing training with partners to ensure that they can use the NRE as any other emergency responder. After all, it is meant to be a national system, where organisations can share information. This type of forward thinking can only enhance our response to events.

I am currently evaluating the feasibility of using the NRE for PSLG work, which aims to reduce the possibility of incidents and emergencies affecting the people of Bradford."

NRE in Action — South Tyneside Council Satellite Phone Tests

James Elliott, Emergency Planning and Response Coordinator for South Tyneside Council, tested whether a working satellite data link could be used to access the NRE through a laptop computer 'in the field' away from the office.

"The Thrane and Thrane Explorer 300 satellite system allows responders to make voice calls and make use of broadband connectivity from any location where a signal can be established. Although the satellite system is considerably slower than a 3G connection, it is still sufficient for accessing web-based content such as the NRE.

The Test: Connecting to the NRE via the Explorer 300

After making a successful voice call to Tyne and Wear Emergency Planning Unit, a data connection was established using the satellite link. After the connection was established, a broadband speed test was conducted online which came out at around 200 kbps – still sufficient for the test

connection to the NRE.

I was able to navigate to the NRE through the web-browser and after passing through the security of the NRE portal using my named user account, access was established to the NRE

Flexibility & benefits for resilient multi-agency information sharing & communications

This test has proved two things. Firstly, that it is possible to establish a working data link 'in the field', away from the office using the Explorer 300 satellite system. Secondly, the test demonstrates that it is possible to access the NRE over the satellite data bearer.

This gives us a new capability for multi-agency interoperability during Major Incident response.

It means that not only will agencies be able to speak to each other using the voice capabilities of the system, but agencies will also be able to share information via the NRE 'in

the field' or as part of the response to a Major Incident where there has been a significant disruption to the telecommunication network.

Accessing the NRE via the Explorer 300 gives us a new level of flexibility that has not previously been tested in anger.

Therefore, in the event of a major telecommunications failure, the Explorer 300 satellite system (and its ability access the NRE) can be used to manage the wider Major Incident or emergency response and brings a new level of capability to the National Resilience Extranet.

This test has proved that it is possible to use the Explorer 300 'in the field' to establish a usable connection and use that connection to not only make voice calls, but to access web based services such as the National Resilience Extranet and its associated products."



NRE Collaborate screen on the laptop which has been accessed via the satellite link

GCSx/PNN to GSE Connectivity:

In the last few weeks it has been confirmed that the PNN is now configured to allow full access to the NRE. There have been a few isolated issues at some sites; however all of these have now been rectified.

Please note the PNN has been upgraded. Although this should be transparent to NRE usage, if there are any issues please contact the NRE Service Desk so that we can track the situation and inform the PNN supplier in a timely manner.

Fixes, Updates and Patches:

Following the issue of the User Guides in May, on-line help is about to go-live. With this and the release of the Training mode there is now a lot of reference material for users and the ability to self-learn within the system itself.

'Hints and Tips' have been updated and can be viewed from the policy documents page on the NRE portal. Also 'Known Issues' are currently being reviewed and will shortly be available from the Known Service Issues page of the NRE portal.

"BT and Ultra are committed to evolving the NRE so that it continues to meet subscribers' needs."

Call for Articles:

Do you have any NRE news or experiences that you would like to share with others within the wider community? If so, please contact:

- NREenquiries@cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk
- NRE.marketing@ultra-ccs.com.



NATIONAL RESILIENCE EXTRANET



NRE Newbies:

A warm welcome to the following organisations that have signed up or bought additional licences on the NRE this month:

- Derbyshire County Council
- North Wales Fire & Rescue Service
- Monmouthshire County Council
- Rother District Council
- NHS Cornwall & Isles of Scilly
- Manchester City Council
- South Lakeland District Council
- Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service
- Newport City Council
- Merseyside Police
- Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council
- West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service
- Humberside Police
- NHS Plymouth Teaching PCT
- Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)
- North West Ambulance Service
- North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service
- Lancashire Police
- Greater Manchester Police
- Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council
- University Hospital of North Staffordshire NHS Trust
- City of Wakefield Metropolitan District Council
- Craven District Council
- BAE Systems Submarine Solutions
- South Staffordshire Water
- East Sussex County Council
- St Helens Council
- Lancashire County Council
- Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Foundation Trust



Working together to deliver the NRE

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.

Further information:

Websites

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

Telephone

- 0207 276 5383 – CCS
- 01772 907 600 – Ultra Electronics

E-mail

- NREenquiries@cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk
- NRE.marketing@ultra-ccs.com

IMPORTANT: dates for the calendar...

Autumn — NRE & Atlas Regional Road shows, various
Look out for further details about these events and how to register over the coming weeks

4 Nov. — NRE National User Group, Brindley Place, Birmingham
Register your interest by email to NRE.marketing@ultra-ccs.com or NREenquiries@cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk