Guidance on Multi-Agency Interoperability

Issued by:
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Addressed to:
The Chair of the Fire and Rescue Authority
The Chief Executive of the County Council
The Clerk to the Fire and Rescue Authority
The Clerk to the Combined Fire and Rescue Authority
The Commissioner of the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority
The Chief Fire Officer

Summary
This guidance provides direction on interoperability across the blue light services in the UK.

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1.0 Multi Agency Interoperability

1.1 This guidance on multi-agency interoperability has been developed through partnership consultation across the blue light services around the UK. It is a document created by and for the Ambulance, Fire & Rescue and Police Services under the auspices of the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) and it contains principles that may be used by other category one and two responders under the Civil Contingencies Act.

1.2 Contributions have been made by Chief Officers, front-line personnel, central government, emergency planners, subject matter experts and others who all share a passion for improving public services and understand how important effective interoperability is to our collective response to major incidents.

1.3 This guidance reflects existing good practice to enhance the two factors critical to the success of all inter-agency working, communication and coordination, and introduces the interoperability continuum. The continuum describes five capabilities from their minimum, unacceptable level through to a desirable future state, allowing responding agencies to critically assess their current capabilities and identify areas for improvement.

1.4 The guidance reinforces the importance of planning to communicate information between decision-makers enabling them to direct activity, monitor progress and coordinate their resources with consideration of the requirements of the other services and agencies.

2.0 Guidance

2.1 This is the first publication from the Interoperability Programme and it can be downloaded from the NPIA website at http://www.npia.police.uk/en/13291.htm

2.2 These principles will be followed by a template for developing local Standard Operating Procedures to achieve interoperability using the Airwave radio network.

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