



Programme Plan 2009/10

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July 2009



West Midlands Regional Management Board

Delivering a proactive partnership to the Region's communities that satisfies the needs of the present, prepares for the future and insures against the unpredictable.

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1. Executive Summary

The Fire and Rescue Service National Framework 2008–11 sets out Government's priorities and objectives for the Fire and Rescue Service and calls upon Regional Management Boards to now *take stock* of how effectively they have delivered their core functions.

West Midlands Regional Management Board (WMRMB) have reviewed the requirements of the new National Framework (*published May 2008*) and determined a programme of activity that contains a portfolio of five overarching strategic projects streams:

- a) **Operational Response**
- b) **Prevention and Protection**
- c) **Human Resources**
- d) **Performance & Improvement**
- e) **Regional Control Centre**

These project streams operate on a *task and finish basis* where appropriate, and are led by Brigade Managers acting as *Senior Responsible Owners*. To secure synergy and consistency of approach the first four WMRMB projects (a-d) have been aligned to Chief Fire Officer Association's (CFOA) national business model.¹

Whilst the region's Fire Control Regional Project Board now assumes responsibility for the management and delivery of the regional fire control centre (*on behalf of the region's fire and rescue authorities and the newly formed Local Authority Controlled Company (LACC)*), WMRMB maintain a *business interest* to ensure compliance with the National Framework.

This document details WMRMB's modernisation Programme Plan for the period 2009/10 for addressing Government's agenda of reform and sets out the region's programme of consolidation to embed modernisation. The Programme Plan will be updated on an annual basis to take account of recommendations generated by the aforesaid project streams and/or subsequent changes to the National Framework and CFOA's business plan.

WMRMB's mission remains as the delivery of a proactive partnership to the region's communities that satisfies the needs of the present, prepares for the future and insures against the unpredictable.

¹ Available at: <http://www.cfoa.org.uk/10122>

2. Introduction

2.1 Fire and Rescue Service National Framework 2008–11

The Fire and Rescue Service National Framework 2008–11 sets out Government's priorities and objectives for the Fire and Rescue Service. It does this by making clear:

- the Government's expectations for the Fire and Rescue Service,
- what Fire and Rescue Authorities are expected to do; and
- the support the Government will provide in helping them to meet these objectives.

The Framework is a strategic plan which outlines the outcomes the Government expects to see delivered by Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) and Regional Management Boards (RMBs) across the range of their functions. It is not a national blueprint and does not provide detailed guidance on how to meet these objectives.

The Fire and Rescue Service Act 2004 stipulates that FRAs - *'must have regard to the Framework in carrying out their functions'* (Part 3, Section 21 (7)).

2.2 West Midlands Regional Management Board (WMRMB)

WMRMB has, since its inception in 2004, devoted in a structured manner FRAs' resources to the delivery of the requirements set out in the previous national frameworks. No small amount of successful outcomes have been achieved and the work of WMRMB has been recognised by the Audit Commission who, in 2008, commented – *'The extent to which fire services are engaged in the RMB varies. In some regions, such as the North West and West Midlands, engagement is good and working together is bringing real benefits. In others areas, such as the South West, the fire services support their RMB but have been slow to exploit the opportunities of working together and are making less progress'* (source: Audit Commission (2008). *Fire and Rescue Service National Report January 2008*. Page18).

However, despite earlier plaudits the Commission in a more recent study entitled – *'Rising to the challenge'* noted that - *'Fire services can also become more efficient and more effective by building on existing collaboration with one another and with other local agencies. There are good examples of fire services working together. But such collaboration is not systematic within the fire service, and national and regional initiatives have not encouraged it. RMBs in particular need to be refocused or abolished.'*

2.3 Taking Stock

In February 2008 a review was undertaken to *'take stock'* of the *partnership* working arrangements of WMRMB and the requirements of the new National Framework. The findings arising from this review form the basis of this revised Programme Plan for 2009/10.

3. Purpose of Document

The primary aim of WMRMB modernisation Programme Plan is the consolidation of activities to embed government's agenda of reform and modernisation within the region's fire and rescue services.

The purpose of this document is to define, at a high-level, the programme's schedule for projects, costs and benefits (as appropriate). This document will be used throughout the programme to track and monitor progress.

The Programme Plan is a key control document and enables the Programme Board to ensure that a planned and controlled environment is established and maintained throughout the life of the programme. The Plan provides the basis for tracking the impact of each project on the programme's overall goals, benefits, risks and costs.

The activities set out in this Plan (see Appendix A) align the work of WMRMB to requirements of the **Fire and Rescue Service National Framework 2008–11** (May 2008).

4. Vision, Aims & Objectives

The mission, vision, aims and objectives of WMRMB are:

4.1 Mission Statement

To deliver a proactive partnership to the Region's communities that satisfy the needs of the present, prepares for the future and insures against the unpredictable.

4.2 Vision Statement

To realise the full potential of Service collaboration, thereby resulting in the delivery of improved efficiencies and secure enhanced operational resilience across the West Midlands Region.

4.3 Aim

To deliver the co-ordinated organisation, direction and implementation of a portfolio of projects and activities that together achieve the outcomes and realise the benefits of a modernised and reformed fire and rescue service.

4.4 Objectives

WMRMB's primary objective is the implementation and delivery of government's agenda of reform and modernisation within the fire and rescue services of the West Midland's region. This document sets out the manner in which WMRMB will achieve this objective and doing so strive to:

- Meet public expectations,
- Enhance resilience, and
- Promote Equality and Diversity.

5. Delegated Powers

WMRMB operates in an advisory capacity to the region's five FRAs, it has addressed its requirement to have **delegated powers** and responsibilities in the following manner:

- (i) In the interests of co-operating more effectively the FRAs of the West Midlands region formally agreed in March 2004 to the establishment of a **joint advisory committee** under Sections 101 and 102 of the Local Government Act 1972. The committee is known as the **West Midlands Regional Management Board**;
- (ii) The creation of a modernisation programme to address regional modernisation and reform;
- (iii) The establishment of a formal Programme Board that provides governance and leadership to the modernisation programme;
- (iv) The establishment of a regional Treasurers' Working Group;
- (v) The appointment of representatives from each fire and rescue service (FRS) to each project stream;
- (vi) The creation of a WMRMB Website acting as a central point of information.

6. Programme Planning

The principal objective of planning a programme is to organise the work in a way that accomplishes the programme's objectives and delivers the benefits. One of the major challenges in running WMRMB's programme is to reconcile project objectives and accountability with the overall programme goals and programme level consistency and control. The WMRMB modernisation Programme Plan comprises of five thematic project streams:

- a) **Operational Response**
- b) **Prevention and Protection**
- c) **Human Resources**
- d) **Performance & Improvement**
- e) **Regional Control Centre**

Each area encompasses the key activities considered by WMRMB to be the minimum necessary to deliver consolidation of government's reform agenda within this region's fire and rescue services, as set out within the National Framework. The summary Programme Plan is shown at Appendix A. The Regional Fire Control Project Board is responsible for the project and programme management of this region's fire control centre.

To secure further synergy and moreover consistency of approach with other related fire and rescue service activity, the WMRMB project streams have been aligned to the regional business-streams² advocated by CFOA.

² <http://www.business-streams.cfoa.org.uk/>

7. Programme Management

WMRMB manages its modernisation programme plans in accordance with the principles of the Office of Government Commerce's (OGC) Managing Successful Programmes (MSP) and PRINCE2³ methodologies. The Programme is governed through a formally established executive Programme Board (Board) representative of the key stakeholders within the Region. Both the Board and WMRMB are provided with financial advice and support from the region's Treasurers' Working Group.

Each project area is overseen by a Senior Responsible Owner (SRO), supported by a lead officer. The SROs and lead officers are responsible for scoping, developing and delivering project plans to support the delivery of the Programme Plan. Up to date details of those appointed to WMRMB, the Board and supporting roles/groups are available at WMRMB's website: www.wmrmmb.co.uk

The programme governance arrangements and relationships with key stakeholder organisations are illustrated in figure 1 below. The LACC project board is not governed by WMRMB, but undertakes a reporting function in advising of progress and risks arising.

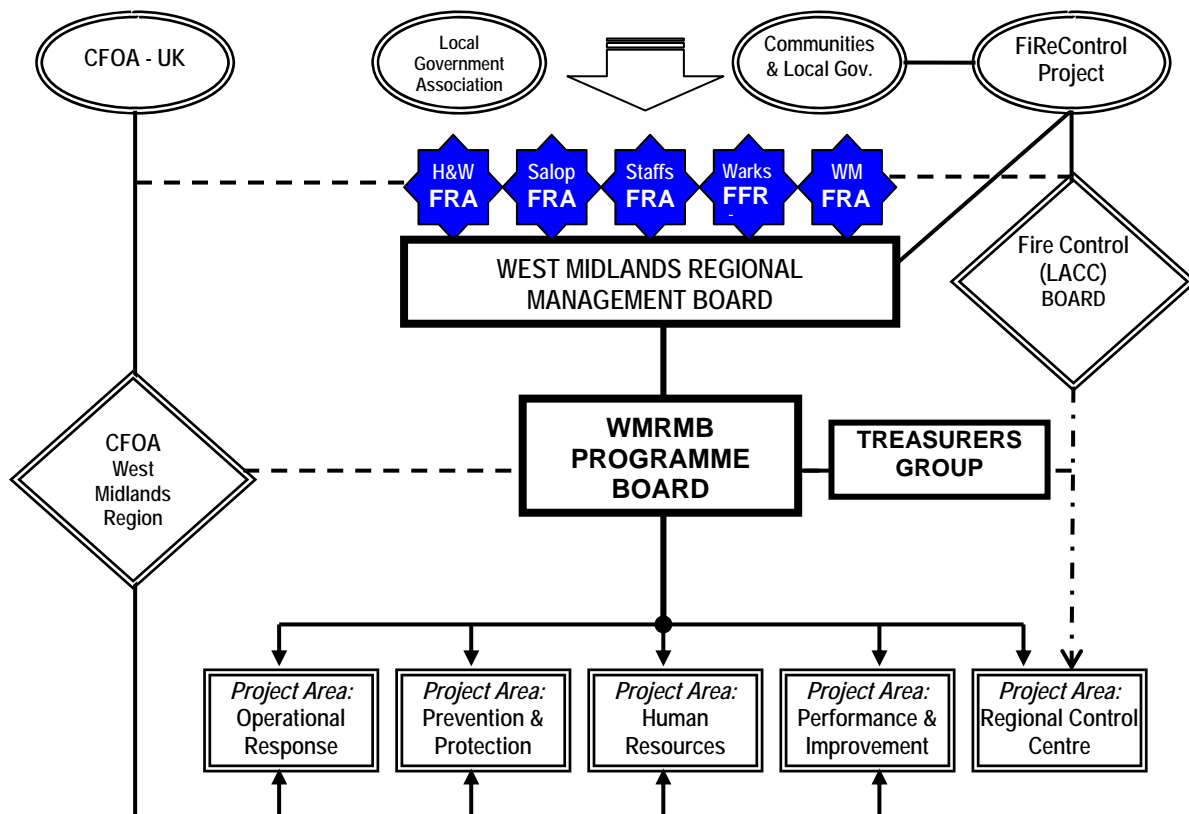


Figure 1 – WMRMB Programme Governance arrangements

³ Projects IN Controlled Environments – Version 2.

8. FRS Equality & Diversity Strategy 2008-2018

The National Framework places responsibilities (Para 3.14) upon FRAs to implement the requirements of the FRS Equality and Diversity Strategy 2008-2018.⁴ The Strategy proposes (Para 5.5) that RMBs contribute to improved performance on equality and diversity by:

- Undertaking an annual progress review on equality and diversity across the region
- Requiring all proposals to the RMB to be equality impact assessed and appropriate action to be taken on the outcomes
- Ensuring all shared services such as training and procurement are equality impact assessed
- Supporting regional collaboration on national processes for recruitment development and progression
- Co-ordinating collaboration on awareness campaigns. Positive action and recruitment to reduce costs and reach the widest pool of talent
- Consulting and involving community groups and representative bodies
- Supporting the development and dissemination of good practice on community engagement and service delivery, and
- Co-ordinating and supporting regular peer review.

WMRMB has an established 'HR Exchange' practitioners group which is responsible for implementation of the above areas of the Strategy.

9. Frequency of Meetings

The frequency of meetings held within the region is illustrated within table 1 below, with an indicative schedule of meetings illustrated in table 2. Dates and venues for each respective meeting are published on the region's website.

Table 1 Frequency of Meetings

Board/Group:	Frequency of Meetings:
WMRMB	Annually (AGM)
WMRMB Programme Board	Three monthly
Treasurers Group	Three monthly
Project Streams	As deemed necessary

Table 2 Schedule of Meetings (Indicative 2009/10)

	2009									2010			
	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
WMRMB				◆ (AGM)									
Programme Board	◆						◆			◆			◆
Treasurers Group			◆			◆			◆			◆	
Project Streams	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆

⁴ <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/fire/equalitydiversitystrategy>

10. Costs

For the period 2009/10 (*reviewed thereafter annually*) the implementation and management of the WMRMB modernisation Programme Plan will operate on a cost neutral basis, with no operating budget.

An under-spend of £30,000 from 2008/09 has been carried forward to support the appointment of a regional 'ADC' coordinator for a fixed term (12 months) during 2009/10.

Any expenditure incurred to address Member and/or FRS officers' expenses etc to attend or host WMRMB, Programme Board and/or project board meetings will, as in previous years, be borne by each respective FRA.

11. WMRMB Administration

Clerking and secretariat functions during 2009/10 will be undertaken by Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council on behalf of WMRMB. The WMRMB website will continue to act as the repository of all agendas, reports and minutes.

12. Communications

The WMRMB website acts as the primary means of communication and dissemination. The website's functions are:

- information dissemination;
- awareness raising and promotion of the WMRMB Programme; and
- awareness raising in support of specific activities within each project.

The site may be accessed at:

www.wmrmb.co.uk

Responsibility for the management and maintenance of the region's website will rotate on an annual basis between FRAs, with the hosting FRA bearing all hosting/maintenance costs. Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority will undertake this function during 2009/10.

13. Annual Efficiency Statement

The National Framework (paragraph 4.44) places a requirement upon FRAs and RMBs to continue to report efficiencies. FRAs forming WMRMB are expected to report collectively on efficiency savings delivered through the RMB.

14. Glossary of Terms

CLG	Department of Communities and Local Government <i>(formally the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister)</i>
CFOA	Chief Fire Officers Association
Fire & Rescue Authority (FRA)	A statutory body established under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004
FiReControl	The CLG national project established to oversee the development and implementation of regional fire controls
Firelink	The CLG national project established to oversee the procurement and implementation of national fire service voice and data communications system
LACC	Local Authority Controlled Company
OGC	Office of Government Commerce
PRINCE2	PR ojects IN a C ontrolled E nvironment (Version 2)
Programme	A portfolio of projects and activities that are co-ordinated and managed as a unit such that they achieve outcomes and realise benefits
Programme Board	The Sponsoring Group established to assist in the direction-setting and leadership of the programme
Programme Plan	The document scheduling the projects, their costs, resources, risks, and transition activities together with the monitoring and control activities
Project	A temporary organisation that is created for the purpose of delivering one or more business products according to a specified Business Case
Project Board	The Sponsoring Group established to assist in the direction-setting and leadership of a project
Project Manager	The person given the authority and responsibility to manage the project on a day-to-day basis on behalf of the Project Board
Project Portfolio	A list of all the projects and activities to deliver the required 'future state' described in the programme's 'Blueprint'
RMB	Regional Management Board
Senior Responsible Owner	The role ultimately accountable for the for the successful delivery of a project/programme
WMRMB	West Midlands Regional Management Board

Appendix A: WMRMB Programme Plan 2009/10

Project Area: Operational Response		Senior Responsible Owner: CFO ??		Project Lead Officer: ACFO Bob Russell	
National Framework Paragraph/ Requirement:	1.6 (MUST) & 2.5, 2.6, 2.17, 4.3 (MUST) & 4.5 (MUST) 1. Review and where appropriate, develop effective resilience plans for large scale emergencies ⁵ 2. Review the effectiveness of 'cross-border' integration arrangements (both internal and external to the region) 3. Support the delivery of the West Midlands Fire and Rescue Services Regional Fire Control, as set out within FRS National Framework				
Associated CFA objectives:					
Deliverables/ Benefits:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced cross-regional, regional and sub-regional resilience for large scale emergencies • Shared use of specialist resources for large scale emergencies • Smooth transition to RCC • Improved capacity • Sharing of best practice • Reduced costs 				
Risks:					
Activities:	Activity Owner/Team:		Start Date:	End Date:	

⁵ Note: This objective is no longer a RMB responsibility within the final version of the FRS National Framework (May 2008)

Project Area: Prevention and Protection		Senior Responsible Owner: CFO Vijith Randeniya		Project Lead Officer: ??	
National Framework Paragraph/ Requirement:	Paragraphs: 1.4 – 1.16 Identification of collaborative opportunities to support prevention and protection opportunities.				
Associated CFOA objectives:					
Deliverables/ Benefits:	Sharing of best practice and expertise to enhance regional prevention and protection arrangements.				
Risks:					
Activities:	Activity Owner/Team:		Start Date:	End Date:	

Project Area: Human Resources		Senior Responsible Owner: CFO Paul Hayden		Project Lead Officer: ACO Christine Walker	
National Framework Paragraph/ Requirement:	3.14 (MUST) & 4.3 (MUST) 1. Review and where appropriate, introduce regional and/or sub-regional personnel and human resource functions (activities), 2. Review and where appropriate, introduce regional and/or sub-regional training and development functions (activities), 3. Raise awareness of the benefits of the Retained Duty System to both potential recruits and their employers 4. Implement Para 5.5 of the FRS Equality and Diversity Strategy 2008-2018, including the development of a WMRMB Equality Impact Assessment Process.				
Associated CFOA objectives:					
Deliverables/ Benefits:	Identification of further areas for collaborative working at regional/sub-regional levels, potentially leading to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved capacity • Sharing of best practice • Reduced costs • Improved performance on E&D issues 				
Risks:					
Activities:	Activity Owner/Team:	Start Date:	End Date:		
Work towards the achievement of the activities defined within the regional people strategy					

Project Area: Performance & Improvement		Senior Responsible Owner: CFO Paul Raymond		Project Lead Officer: ACFO Steve Worrall	
National Framework Paragraph/ Requirement:	No specific RMB requirements, but collaborative work to support Paragraphs 4.18 - 4.31 of the National Framework to enhance regional performance and improvement.				
Associated CFOA objectives:	Objectives: 4.3, 4.4 & 4.5 (pages 140 & 141)				
Deliverables/ Benefits:	Sharing of best practice and expertise to enhance regional performance.				
Risks:					
Activities:	Activity Owner/Team:	Start Date:	End Date:		
• Establishment of regional pool of peer reviewers	ACFO Steve Worrall	May 2009	July 2009		
• Review outcomes from OpA & CAA reviews/assessments, identifying areas of notable practice and areas of collective weakness	ACFO Steve Worrall	November 2009	December 2009		
• Produce recommendations for improvement arising from above, working with IEWM where applicable	ACFO Steve Worrall	December 2009	February 2010		
• Consider merits in regional benchmarking using proposed CFOA Performance Indicators	ACFO Steve Worrall	August 2009	December 2009		

Project Area: Regional Control Centre		Senior Responsible Owner: CFO Peter Dartford		Project Lead Officer: Mr Philip Purssey	
National Framework Paragraph/ Requirement:	Paragraphs 2.6 – 2.20 Implementation of Regional Control Centre and Firelink (in accordance with Framework requirements)				
Associated CFOA objectives:					
Deliverables/ Benefits:	Achievement of benefits as defined in FiReControl / Firelink Business Case documents				
Risks:					
Activities:	Activity Owner/Team:		Start Date:	End Date:	