South Wales
Fire and Rescue Service

Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub
De Cymru

Information Communication Technology
Strategy 2016 - 2019

Introduction

Technology is a critical component in how South Wales Fire and Rescue Service support the delivery of its day-to-day activities.

Whether it's mobilising our crews to operational incidents, ensuring they have access to risk critical information, or supporting back office functions in the management and control of our resources, technology touches every part of our Service.

Our future vision for ICT is therefore to:

"ensure our people have access to the right information, at the right time, on the right device to support the delivery of our service"

Achieving this simple yet challenging vision will require commitment from across the service. Embracing and truly capitalising on technological advances will require support and engagement from all levels. While investment into the provision of ICT systems can be made the benefits of such improvements are often not realised until changes to working practices and cultures follow.

We recognise that our people are our most valuable asset. We will support them by providing data that they can turn into intelligence. It is envisaged that this will support our ultimate aim of improving outcomes for the public of South Wales.

Our current ICT infrastructure is undergoing major investment and we are committed to providing a faster, more resilient, more reliable system capable of supporting all aspects of our business. We recognise that current systems have developed over many years, but now is the time to rationalise these and plan for the future. This transition will be challenging in the short term but will produce long term benefits.

Technology has clearly changed the world we live in and the use of social media and the internet is now embedded within society. We will facilitate and encourage the use of social business tools in order to make it easy for our staff to collaborate and communicate both internally and externally. This will develop the use of social media and digital technology to deliver excellent services online to public and provide information in an effective and useable format.

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Our Vision

SWFRS uses an ICT Infrastructure to provide a range of different systems, tools and services for our staff to deliver for our communities.

The Vision for ICT is to:

Ensure our people have access to the right information, at the right time, on the right device to support the delivery of our service.

Security
We have security policies for the organisation that takes an Integrated, Risk Based approach to both Physical and Information security.

Resilience
Improved resilience in the services that are provided especially those of an operational nature.

Mobility
Increased remote and mobile working by the use of mobile devices and the use of secure connections.

Sustainability
Reductions in the use of power and the quantity of consumables such as paper and ink and constraints on the capacity of some services to provide fuel efficiency.

Training
To be provided online, self-guided (How Do I..) for the most commonly used features, On-site basic training when new systems or services are installed, provision of simple user guides and one-to-one where needed. We will also use social media and our website to deliver relevant content to the public.

Our Information Strategy

The following model represents our aspirations for an integrated system where data is held and processed.
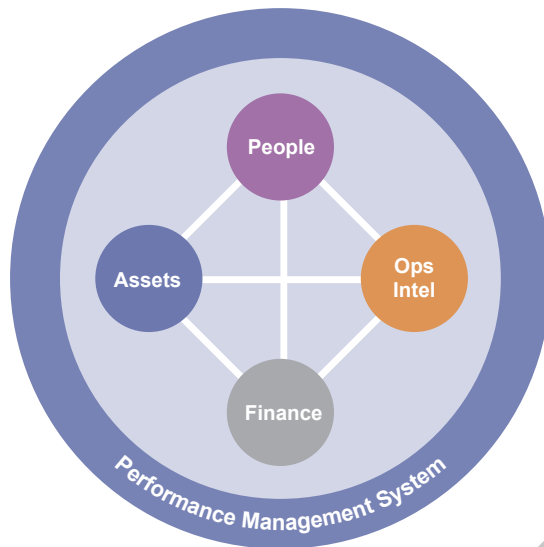
The model is based on four key strands:

1. Personnel data will be integrated, managed and supported through our Core HR system.

2. Operational intelligence will be collated, developed and managed within our G2D system. This will be supported through our partnership with West Midlands Fire and Rescue Service.

3. We will build on the success of our current Asset management systems and work to integrate these and reduce duplication.

4. Following on from the successful the implementation of our Finance system we will build links to ensure integration within the wider model.

These four key strands will be underpinned by a performance management system which will become the pulse of the organisation. The effective use of this will ensure that we are able to transform our inputs as a service into outcomes for the public.

Benefits

Having access to accurate, timely and relevant data will further improve decision making in the Service

Successful delivery of this strategy can also have an impact on Firefighter safety. An example is the use of mobile data terminals on appliance that contains risk information.

Processes improved by automation and a reduction in duplication will help us deliver a more efficient service. Shaping our future project is reviewing the processes used within the organisation to assist in this aim.

All locations will be equipped with new devices and access to Microsoft Office using a virtual desktop with a modern Windows Operating System. Each member of staff will also have the ability to access their virtual desktop or applications from anywhere at any time via a multitude of devices and have a similar experience.

Agile staff will be equipped with new, fit for purpose, mobile devices with the latest software.

Key Objectives

Priorities might change – new work might appear which we weren't expecting – but our key objectives will guide everything we do and will allow us flexibility to address the technical and organisational challenges the service will face going forward.

Maintaining ICT Services

The principal objective of this element of the service is the maintenance of the availability of services. Infrastructure includes not only physical hardware but also the software and intangible elements. Customer expectations of ICT are and have been for some time that key services are permanently available during agreed operational hours. The ICT department have spent considerable effort in ensuring that the major application services are available and this is monitored. Breaks in service are dealt with as fast as possible

Accessing ICT Services

The principle of mobility both in mobile delivery of services and in mobility in the delivery of services is addressed in allowing access to services. In reducing use of office space and travelling costs there will be a reduction in environmental costs as part of the drive towards sustainability.

Improving ICT Services

Existing applications will be examined to see if the capability is there or if it can be activated; analysis will examine whether improved functionality can be achieved by integration between applications.

We will also work with departments to procure and install new applications where needed

Delivering ICT Services

In the delivery of services to customers a number of processes are adopted to ensure the quality of services. These will ensure that services meet customer needs and expectations of quality. There is also a Service Improvement process.

One of the key themes addressed will be sustainability as steps will be taken to ensure proper use of resources and adherence to waste directives and regulations.

Our Strategy

The next section outlines the general activities we will undertake to deliver the ICT Strategy over the next three years with more specific detail being documented in the Annual Business Plan in each year.

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2016/2017
What we will do

- Provide support and development to rationalise our business applications such as Asset Management, HR/ Payroll and Operational Intelligence Systems.

- Provide support for the Joint Control Project and then take the ICT lead on behalf of both services.

- Complete and review the Infrastructure Replacement Project (Virtual Desktop and mobile devices).

- Review our disaster recovery plan due to the Joint Control Project and Infrastructure Replacement Project

- Continue our asset replacement program of station mobilising equipment and printers across the service.

- Review of our Communications Systems - Telephony / Video Conferencing / Switchboard / Voicemail.

How will we know if we've been successful?

- Business systems that serve the whole of SWFRS.

- ICT equipment to support the changing needs of the service.

- Staff trained in the use of new equipment and software.

- Provide enhanced user support including self service.

2017/2018
What we will do

- We will continue to develop on-going projects to rationalise our business applications such as operational intelligence, training and others based on the service priorities.

- We will undertake a multimedia equipment replacement program across the service.

- We will further enhance our Datacenter infrastructure (back end equipment) at Fire Service Headquarters.

- We will replace and update key elements of our security systems.

How will we know if we've been successful?

- If we don't suffer security breaches and our ICT health checks are successful

- The infrastructure supports our key activities

- The service business application projects continue to deliver improvement for users and the service

2018/2019
What we will do

- We will begin implementation of the Firelink replacement program called the Emergency Services Network

- We will undertake a smart phone replacement program and associated applications

- We will continue to develop projects that enhance and renew our business applications based on the service priorities

- We will further enhance and replace our key infrastructure equipment

How will we know if we've been successful?

- Integrated network infrastructure to support our key activities

- The service business application projects continue to deliver improvement for users and the service

Key Enablers

This strategy can't be delivered on its own. It needs a whole range of things to support it.

ICT Department

We have developed the structure of the department to deliver the strategy. Our structure may change over time to meet the requirements of the service but this strategy will guide any changes.

Governance

ICT is subject to Corporate Governance in its strategic direction and in its allocation of resources to projects. This Governance is exercised through Director of Technical Services, Executive Leadership Team, Senior Management Team, ICT Strategic Steering Group and Finance Working Group.

Collaboration

The public sector faces many challenges, including financial pressures and greater expectations. The Fire and Rescue Services in Wales have established the National Issues Committee (NIC) to further improve collaborative working, service delivery and sustained service improvement within the Fire sector.

We will also continue to work with others such as Joint Emergency Services Group, Chief Fire Officers Association, Emergency Services Mobile Communication Project and other partnerships.

Procurement

Advice and guidance is provided on technology-related purchases, and ICT will assist in the procurement of technology. Technology purchases will be monitored for technical suitability and compliance with the strategy. We will look to make use of existing frameworks and contracts where possible such as the National Procurement Service which can deliver savings and add value for the organisation.

Service Engagement

ICT will work closely with the organisation and its key stakeholders to ensure it meets the service requirements. Customer service mechanisms will enable continuous improvement in the services we provide.

Project Management

The corporate project management methodology will be followed. ICT may provide project management either overall or for the ICT element of projects.

Service Management

Services will be delivered according to government standard Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) principles. This proposes a model for management of services