

## Progress against the Statement on Internal Control Improvement Plan 2007/08

### Report of the Chief Fire Officer

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#### 1 Purpose of Report

This report informs Members of the progress made against the Authority's 'Statement on Internal Control' (SIC) Improvement Plan 2007/08.

#### 2 Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note the contents of this report.

#### 3 Background

At the Fire Authority meeting on 13 June 2007, the Chair, Chief Fire Officer and Treasurer signed off the Fire Authority's Statement on Internal Control (SIC), for inclusion in the Final Accounts Statement for 2006/07. The purpose of the SIC is for the Authority to state how effectively its system of internal control has operated over the period covered by the Statement. During the process used to develop the SIC, areas for improvement within the system were identified and a plan was created to ensure these improvements are effectively implemented. The action plan was published at the same time as the SIC and is called the SIC Improvement Plan 2007/08.

#### 4 Progress Summary

Of the twenty two areas for improvement identified in the Plan, eighteen of them are either completed or remain on target for completion by the date initially planned. There are four areas where work has not been completed within the target date, or it is believed that work may go over the planned completion target date. Details about the four areas and the reasons for their delay are included in the next section.



The appendix to this report provides further details about the progress made against all aspects of the SIC Improvement Plan.

## 5 Improvement Plan Slippage

This section includes details about the four areas for improvements that are likely to miss their deadline completion dates. These have been brought to the attention of the Service's Policy Group, with requests for extensions to the initial target completion dates having been duly considered and, where appropriate, agreed.

Members will note that Improvements 6 and 16 are awaiting the outcome from the next TecCom Group meeting. This Group discusses all matters to do with the Service's current and future IT and communications requirements. Following a recent Policy Group meeting, TecCom has been tasked with ensuring that all training and resource requirements from the various IT projects, currently being implemented, are effectively co-ordinated across the whole Service. The proposed new completion dates for these two improvements are, therefore, awaiting the recommendations from this Group.

<b>Improvement ID:</b>	6
<b>Improvement required:</b>	The Authority needs to be able to better demonstrate how its assets comply with all relevant legislation and standards. The new Asset Management System (AMS) will be implemented.
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Andrew Kelcey
<b>Initial target completion date:</b>	September 2007
<b>Progress/reason for slippage:</b>	The most appropriate system has been identified and an order placed. Work is ongoing to develop a service-wide strategy for IT training to incorporate this and other systems and implementation will be re-timed to integrate with this.
<b>New target completion date:</b>	To be decided by TecCom



<b>Improvement ID:</b>	7
<b>Improvement required:</b>	The Authority wishes to be able to demonstrate it complies with all relevant Environmental Legislation. The organisation will seek accreditation to ISO 14001.
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Andrew Kelcey
<b>Initial target completion date:</b>	December 2007
<b>Progress/reason for slippage:</b>	An ISO14001:2004 based management system has been introduced. This will be registered with BSI by July 2008.
<b>New target completion date:</b>	July 2008

<b>Improvement ID:</b>	16
<b>Improvement required:</b>	If a significantly disruptive event occurred in the server room at headquarters, it is likely to have a significant impact on the availability of IT and communication facilities to the whole Service. The ongoing work to develop a 'shadow site' at Telford Central will be completed.
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Glyn Williams
<b>Initial target completion date:</b>	March 2008
<b>Progress/reason for slippage:</b>	Due to high work loads this job is not progressing as quickly as expected. Discussions are ongoing with a Microsoft gold partner to assist with this target. A Project Plan is being developed to ensure this work ties in with the overall IT development programme.
<b>New target completion date:</b>	To be decided by TecCom



<b>Improvement ID:</b>	21
<b>Improvement required:</b>	There are no clear instructions and/or guidance notes for the various office functions undertaken by the Level 2 Commanders, which causes potential problems when there are staff changes in the department. Procedural manuals will be developed for the each of the key functions.
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Martin Timmis
<b>Initial target completion date:</b>	July 2007
<b>Progress/reason for slippage:</b>	Owing to change in staff this work stalled. However, the main part (water schemes) has been completed, and the other work is ongoing.
<b>New target completion date:</b>	December 2007

## 6 Financial Implications

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

## 7 Legal Implications

The SIC is a legal requirement under the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom and must be included in the Fire Authority's Annual Statement of Accounts.

## 8 Equality Impact Assessment

Officers have considered the Service's Brigade Order on Equality Impact Assessments (Personnel 5 Part 2) and have determined that there are no discriminatory practices or differential impacts upon specific groups arising from this report. An Initial Equality Impact Assessment has not, therefore, been completed.

## 9 Appendix

SIC Improvement Plan Progress Summary Report

## 10 Background Papers

Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority  
13 June 2007, Paper 12, Statement on Internal Control



Implications of all of the following have been considered and, where they are significant (i.e. marked with an asterisk), the implications are detailed within the report itself.

Balance Score Card		Integrated Risk Management Planning	
Business Continuity Planning	*	Legal	*
Capacity	*	Member Involvement	
Civil Contingencies Act		National Framework	
Comprehensive Performance Assessment		Operational Assurance	
Efficiency Savings		Retained	
Environmental		Risk and Insurance	
Financial	*	Staff	
Fire Control/Fire Link		Strategic Planning	*
Information Communications and Technology		West Midlands Regional Management Board	
Freedom of Information / Data Protection / Environmental Information		Equality Impact Assessment	*



**SIC Improvement Plan Progress Summary Report**

Area of review	IRN	Improvement required	Improvement Owner	Planned completion date	Current status	Likely completion	Progress made
Strategic Planning Process	1	The process by which the Authority identifies the stakeholders with whom it should consult is not clearly defined. Develop a Stakeholder Management Policy	Steve Worrall	Nov-07	Not yet started	On track	Work not yet started, but scheduled completion date should be achieved.
	2	With no formal communication strategy in place, the Authority cannot be sure it is providing information to, and getting feedback from, everyone that has a vested interest in the Service. A Communication Strategy will be developed following the guidance given in the Stakeholder Management Policy.	Steve Worrall	Nov-07	Not yet started	On track	Work not yet started, but scheduled completion date should be achieved.
Performance Management	3	Following a review of the Authority's Performance Management systems and processes, improvements to the Performance Management Framework have been identified and included in an Action Plan. The Performance Management Framework Action Plan will be implemented.	Steve Worrall	Mar-08	Work ongoing	On track	Work has commenced with the development of an Integrated Strategic Planning Process (ISPP) that has been presented to Policy Group (August 2007) and to the CFA Budget Working Group (30 Aug 2007). The ISPP is an integral element of the Performance Management Framework, acting as the mechanism to identify aims, objectives and priorities with corresponding targets/indicators.

Area of review	IRN	Improvement required	Improvement Owner	Planned completion date	Current status	Likely completion	Progress made
Performance Management (continued)	4	The Authority has provided the funds for a new Performance Management System. Having identified the most appropriate system and supplier, this system now needs to be implemented. The new Performance Management System will be implemented.	Steve Worrall	Mar-08	Work ongoing	On track	The performance management system - 'PB Views' and 'Track' have been procured and are currently undergoing the implementation stage of a detailed rollout programme which is on schedule for delivery pre 1 April 2008. The rollout programme is being proficiently managed by the recently appointed Information Officer.
Resource Management	5	The Authority needs to be able to demonstrate the benefit it accrues from its Capital Investment Programme. A review of all capital investment projects will be conducted which will identify any learning outcomes. The review will also quantify the actual benefit to the public from the Authority's Capital Investment Programme.	Andrew Kelcey	Oct-07	Work ongoing	On track	Report to Strategy and Resources to be presented on 20 September 2007
	6	The Authority needs to be able to better demonstrate how its assets comply with all relevant legislation and standards. The new Asset Management System (AMS) will be implemented.	Andrew Kelcey	Sep-07	Work ongoing	Behind plan	The most appropriate system has been identified and an order placed. Work is ongoing to develop a service wide strategy for IT training to incorporate this and other systems and implementation will be re-timed to integrate with this.



Area of review	IRN	Improvement required	Improvement Owner	Planned completion date	Current status	Likely completion	Progress made
Resource Management (continued)	7	The Authority wishes to be able to demonstrate it complies with all relevant Environmental Legislation. The organisation will seek accreditation to ISO 14001.	Andrew Kelcey	Dec-07	Work ongoing	Behind plan	An ISO14001:2004 based management system has been introduced. This will be registered with BSI by July 2008.
Human Resource Management and Training	8	The Rank to Role process needs to be completed across all ranks. Rank to Role process to be completed	Louise McKenzie	Mar-08	Work ongoing	On track	
	9	With support staff induction training only being held twice a year, some staff have to wait several months before receiving their introduction to the Service. A review of the support staff induction training will be undertaken, to ensure it is able to meet the needs of all staff.	Louise McKenzie	Mar-08	Not yet started	On track	
	10	Officer training records currently sit outside of the training department's administration system. Officer training records will be integrated into the system operated by the Development Department.	Louise McKenzie	Mar-08	Not yet started	On track	
	11	The Service needs to encourage all managers to be more involved in the new sickness absence procedures. Managers will be given additional training on the sickness absence procedures to ensure they are effectively implemented.	Louise McKenzie	Mar-08	Work ongoing	On track	





Area of review	IRN	Improvement required	Improvement Owner	Planned completion date	Current status	Likely completion	Progress made
Risk Management and Business Continuity Planning	12	The Corporate Risk Register needs to have a procedural manual so that people, other than the Risk Manager, can undertake the recording and reporting procedures. A Risk Register procedural manual will be developed.	Andy Johnson	Jul-07	Completed	On track	Procedural manual created and published with the risk register.
	13	The recently published Business Continuity Manual needs to be tested to ensure it is fit for purpose. Initial test of the procedures detailed in the Business Continuity Manual is to be undertaken.	Andy Johnson	Jul-07	Completed	On track	Initial Business Continuity Plan exercise conducted on 25 June 2007. Improvements identified from exercise are now being implemented.
	14	The Business Continuity Manual needs to be regularly tested. A programme of tests is to be developed.	Andy Johnson	Dec-07	Not yet started	On track	
	15	The Business Continuity Manual needs to be subject to regular review to ensure the information contained therein is current. Annual audit of all departments' Business Continuity Plans to be conducted as part of the SIC Assurance Process.	Andy Johnson	Apr-08	Not yet started	On track	
	16	If a significantly disruptive event occurred in the server room at headquarters, it is likely to have a significant impact on the availability of IT and communication facilities to the whole Service. The ongoing work to develop a 'shadow site' at Telford Central will be completed.	Glyn Williams	Mar-08	Work ongoing	Behind plan	Due to high work loads this job is not progressing as quickly as expected. Discussions are ongoing with a Microsoft gold partner to assist with this target. A Project Plan is being developed to ensure this work ties in with the overall IT development programme.



Area of review	IRN	Improvement required	Improvement Owner	Planned completion date	Current status	Likely completion	Progress made
Health and Safety Management	17	Whilst there is a Member Champion for Risk Management and Audit, their responsibility does not specifically cover the health and safety function. Explore the possibility of either having a specific Member Champion for Health and Safety, or having this as a role within one of the existing positions.	Andy Johnson	Mar-08	Work ongoing	On track	In July 2007 CFA agreed to health and safety responsibilities falling into the role of the Member Champion for Risk Management and Audit. Role description in the process of being reviewed to accommodate these new areas of responsibility with Member Champion and Health and Safety Officer.
	18	The Retained Support Officer and District Support Officer roles are not currently included in the health and safety structure detailed in the Brigade Order No.1 Part 2. The Brigade Order will be reviewed to take account of new Brigade structures	Andy Johnson	Mar-08	Not yet started	On track	
	19	The health and safety training programme needs to be reviewed in light of the rank to role process the Brigade is currently going through. The health and safety training programme will be developed to take account of the new Role Maps	Andy Johnson	Mar-08	Work ongoing	On track	Training department is in the process of revamping the training matrix to bring it in line with the role maps. Health and safety requirements are an integral part of this training needs analysis. Once completed a new programme covering all aspects of training needs, including health and safety, will be published.



Area of review	IRN	Improvement required	Improvement Owner	Planned completion date	Current status	Likely completion	Progress made
Health and Safety Management (continued)	20	Although the Brigade has gone through several audits of its health and safety function over the last few years, it is not included in the rolling programme of audits currently undertaken by Internal Audit. Consideration is to be given to the inclusion of an audit of the Brigade's health and safety function, within the next Internal Audit contract.	Andy Johnson	Aug-07	Completed	On track	Discussions with the Auditors about the next three year programme have now started. The requirement for health and safety to be included in that programme has been noted and will be included in the discussions.
Achievement of the Authority's Strategic Aims and Objectives	21	There are no clear instructions and/or guidance notes for the various office functions undertaken by the Level 2 Commanders, which causes potential problems when there are staff changes in the department. Procedural manuals will be developed for the each of the key functions.	Martin Timmis	Jul-07	Work ongoing	Behind plan	Owing to change in staff this work stalled. However, the main part (water schemes) has been completed, and the other work is ongoing. Anticipated completion is now December 07 (subject to no further staff rotation).
	22	Operational resilience needs to be improved to ensure the Authority is able to continue to deliver its frontline services during incidents that may in themselves cause severe disruption to our Service. An Improvement Plan to meet the requirements of the recently developed Operational Resilience Contingency Plan (ORCP) will be implemented according to a Policy Group approved timetable.	Martin Timmis	To be determined following Policy Group approval.	Work ongoing	On track	This work will be long term. Policy Group has not set dates owing to the volume of work involved. Initial meetings with Human Resource Dept, Training and the various employee representative bodies have been held to begin exploring options. The Strategy document was accepted and approved by Policy Group.

