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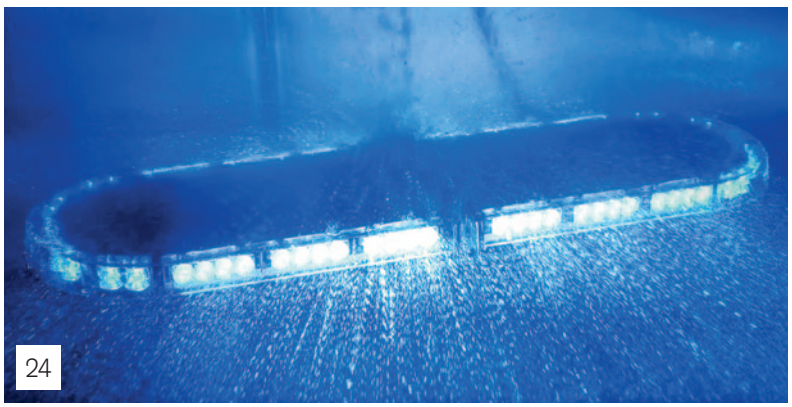

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As the COVID-19 pandemic and Manchester Arena bombing public inquiry highlight concerns regarding the pre-hospital 'care gap', David Morgan, CEO of Black Space Technology Ltd, discusses how technology can playing a major role in closing this gap in various scenarios; London Fire Brigade's Drone Team looks for innovative uses for its drone capability; Adam Liardet, Managing Director and Founder of Audax discusses how secure, real-time live streaming is the future of body worn video; the Emergency Services Network is put through its paces at an intensive testing event in Cheshire; Nick Chorley, Director, EMEA Public Safety & Security, Hexagon's Safety, Infrastructure & Geospatial division, looks at how mental health issues can be addressed through technology; and Alison Baptiste, from the Infrastructure and Projects Authority, part of the Cabinet Office responsible for delivering projects including ESN and ANPR, wants to hear your views on how the Government can improve project delivery.

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"Everyone should have a part to play improving the UK's resilience."

Words: ***Jeannie Barr MEPS, Acting Chair & Director for Professional Standards & Learning, Emergency Planning Society***

The old saying goes that there are only two things guaranteed in life; death and taxes. However, for the resilience professional, we can probably add a third: weather-related incidents. For most people working in emergency planning, disaster management and resilience – no matter in what field of interest or for which organisation – the weather is always something which will have been considered and planned for.

Everyone and everything in our communities has the potential to be affected by an adverse weather incident. And that's why it's so important that planning, response and delivery doesn't all 'sit' in one place.

As we know, resilience professionals prepare for crisis; it's what we do. Some of the things we prepare for thankfully might never happen, or happen only once or twice in our career. But adverse weather events are not rare and, depending on location, can happen multiple times a year – and their effects are felt by a community, including those providing the ongoing emergency and community response for days, weeks or even months.

While the UK is fortunate not to experience the more severe adverse weather events experienced elsewhere around the globe, such as hurricanes and tornados, nevertheless, storms can cause significant disruption and damage.

Take Storm Malik, the most recent to 'strike' the UK and elsewhere in Europe. With 100mph winds, emergency services dealt with a huge volume of incidents. Tragically lives were lost both here and overseas. Hundreds of thousands of homes were left without power – sometimes for days. Trains and other public transport were cancelled and coastal surges led to flooding. Compounding the issue was that this storm was closely followed by Storm Corrie, which hit just hours after. Not too long before, Storm Arwen caused even more widescale disruption and damage.

That weather-related incidents are so prolific – and thanks to weather forecasting's accuracy – fairly predictable, means that professionals can be prepared and, to an extent, know what to expect. To maximise preparedness and response, however, it's vital that professionals and communities communicate clearly, and work together to best effect.

While we wouldn't necessarily expect a community to be prepared for one of our 'once in a career' crises, such as a terrorist incident or chemical leak, they can play an active role in knowing what to do if adverse weather is expected.

Improved and enhanced community involvement and preparedness is a theme set to be explored further in the Government's soon-to-be published National Resilience Strategy and is also cited in the recent Scottish Government review into Storm Arwen as one of its key recommendations, where it states, 'Throughout Storm Arwen, volunteers and community resilience groups played a crucial role in ensuring the welfare of those around them.'

However, despite this, there was a 'broad recognition that more could be done to bring the voluntary and community sector more effectively into the heart of local resilience planning and response arrangements'.

It made a range of recommendations to fully integrate the voluntary sector into resilience partnership planning and resource structures and the mapping of key voluntary and community assets and capabilities to aid activation, deployment and coordination. It called on local authorities to consider what more could be done to support and develop community resilience.

The theme is echoed in the UK Government's Public Response to its National Resilience Strategy Call for Evidence, which will publish fully in the Spring. In this report the vast majority of respondents highlighted 'the importance of individuals, volunteer and community groups in building resilience' and said, "Everyone should have a part to play improving the UK's resilience."

Integrated planning, response and deployment with coordination and cooperation between professionals and communities is the best and most effective way to respond to adverse weather events – the events which can hit the very heart of any one of our communities in the most human of ways.

https://the-eps.org/

Staff from Avon Fire and Rescue Service (AFRS) are celebrating ongoing success with Bristol based charity DigiLocal in helping to tackle the city's digital poverty crisis. Recent studies suggest that nearly 12% of young people don't have access to the internet, making home learning a near impossible task. DigiLocal supports the education of young people by giving them access to technology and also hosts free tech clubs for young people across the community, helping to combat digital poverty. Since partnering with DigiLocal, staff from AFRS have successfully coordinated the donation of over 800 laptops across their stations, which have been used as drop-off points for the repurposed tech.
www.avonfire.gov.uk

Sodexo has been appointed as the single supplier on the London Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) new property services integrator framework, which is accessible to all other UK public sector bodies, including the Offices of the Police and Crime Commissioners, the Greater London Authority and its functional bodies to buy a range of strategic property-related services. Through the framework, UK public sector bodies have access to Sodexo's expertise and strategic advice through a range of property-related services.
uk.sodexo.com

A new rapid response vehicle service has been launched by the Isle of Wight NHS Trust as part of a pilot project to support people in mental health crisis in the community. The vehicle will be jointly crewed by a paramedic and a registered Senior Mental Health Practitioner from the Isle of Wight NHS Trust Mental Health Liaison Team. They will respond to calls triaged to this service via NHS111, 999 and direct referrals from Hampshire and the IOW Constabulary. This new service will be delivered in partnership with colleagues from the Isle of Wight NHS Trust Ambulance Service.
www.iow.nhs.uk

An official 'topping out' ceremony has been held to mark a key milestone in the construction of the new £10.5m purpose-built training centre and new community fire station at St John's Park, north of Huntingdon. The event took place to celebrate the highest point of the main building being complete. The building work is anticipated to be completed in late 2022, with the station expected to be occupied by staff by early 2023.
www.cambsfire.gov.uk

London Ambulance Service brings Make Ready service back in-house

London Ambulance Service has announced a £14.2m investment in its Make Ready service – the team of staff who work around the clock to re-stock, re-fuel and deep clean ambulances at the end of a busy shift – in a move that will improve pay and benefits for these vital staff members and allow for significant investment in new equipment and technology.

Starting on 1 April 2022, the Make Ready teams who work across the capital to get the ambulance fleet ready and stationed in the right places for the next shift will become NHS employees for the service, as the current contracts (which were held by providers Mitie and Churchill Group) come to a planned end.

The move will bring 400 members into the NHS family, with an average hourly pay increase of 8% for most of these teams in line with the London Living Wage and providing access to other NHS benefits, such as the generous pension scheme. It will also bring these colleagues into one team, allowing for even stronger team working, better support for the individuals, and allowing us to bolster the number of people working in the team.

LAS Chief Executive Daniel Elkeles said, "As the current contracts come to an end, we've looked at what's best for the staff, our patients and the organisation, and what provides best value for taxpayer's money. Having fully assessed our options, and with the support of our Trust Board, we look forward to the Make Ready teams joining our Strategic Assets and Property team.

"We would like to thank Mitie and Churchill Group for the support and service to this point.

"It's our aim to build a world-class ambulance service for a world-class city, and we can only do that if we recognise the talent and commitment of our staff, and treat our different teams equitably. This is the right time to welcome these teams back to the NHS family, with all of the benefits that brings."

The £14.2m investment, which will be divided into a multi-million pound cash injection every year for the next five years, will also allow for significant investment into the fleet of support vehicles the team uses, and improvements to the equipment, technology and software upon which the team relies.

Eddie Brand, Branch Secretary, UNISON, London Ambulance Service and Staffside Secretary, said, "This is great news. UNISON have a proud history of fighting to get public services back in house. We believe that services are best provided in-house in order to ensure value for money, accountability and the flexibility to respond to changing needs and priorities.

"Bringing services back in-house will benefit not only hard-working staff in the health sector but all those who rely on the vital services they provide. LAS UNISON will continue to work with our service and will continue to welcome the staff into our branch, the largest ambulance branch in the country."

www.londonambulance.nhs.uk

VCS places first on new NHS national framework

VCS, one of the UK's leading ambulance conversion specialists, has achieved the highest combined score of all bidders in the new NHS Collaborative Procurement Hub Framework Agreement for Ambulance and Specialist Vehicle Conversions. Assessed on its technical ability, exceptional quality and financial offers, the Bradford-based manufacturer is now positioned at the top of the framework.

The NHS Collaborative Procurement Hub Framework Agreement for Ambulance and Specialist Vehicle Conversions is a new initiative to bring the specification of all ambulances in the UK under a single standard. The new framework will be in place for two years with the option to extend for a further year to a three year term.

Being accepted onto this framework allows VCS to undertake conversions of the Fiat Ducato dual-crewed ambulance for NHS ambulance services across the UK. This builds upon the company's rich history in providing vehicles for NHS fleets, such as East Midlands Ambulance Service and West Midlands Ambulance Service.

Paul Croom, Director of Sales at VCS, said, "Our top position placement on the new NHS framework not only confirms the superb quality, innovation and value for money that VCS offers, it also secures our future and provides an excellent platform for growth. This result is testament to the great work done every day by our engineering, manufacturing and commercial teams, and allows us to continue development and maintain our position as a market leader in zero emission ambulances, and lightweight conversions."

www.vcs-limited.com

New Incident Command qualifications launched in line with updated NOG

England and Wales's largest fire and rescue awarding and assessments organisation, which is trusted by more than two thirds of fire and rescue services, SFJ Awards, has launched its new suite of Incident Command qualifications, from initial command at level 3 up to strategic or gold command level 7.

The launch comes as the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) updates it National Operational Guidance (NOG), recognising the increasingly complex and challenging environment in which fire and rescue services operate.

Reflecting the NFCC's updated guidance, the new awards will cover a range of capabilities, including command and leadership skills, communications, associated technical issues and more.

Learning centres approved to deliver the qualifications suite are now inviting applications from learners in fire and rescue coming to the area fresh, as well as experienced professionals revalidating their skills to ensure ongoing competence in the area.

Candace Miller, Managing Director of SFJ Awards, said, "We launch this suite of qualifications at a time of heightened focus on Incident Command. High profile incidents such as Grenfell and extreme weather events in the North of England have demonstrated the importance of a fire and rescue workforce that is skilled in leading, monitoring and supporting the Incident Command System, and we welcome the updated guidance issued by NFCC.

Candace Miller, Managing Director. SFJ Awards.

"Through equipping learners at every level with the very latest knowledge and skills, our fire and rescue services can continue to deliver a robust response to major incidents and, importantly, this gives the public confidence that our frontline emergency services are equipped to respond to a rapidly evolving Incident Command environment."

Jim Davies, Group Commander at London Fire Brigade and Vice Chair of NFCC's National Command & Control User Group, said, "I am very confident these qualifications will provide learners with the effective knowledge, skills and behaviours required to take command at incidents at all levels. Incident command is one of the key pillars of the National Operational Guidance framework and we value the role that SFJ Awards plays in enabling learners to access training that is consistent with the latest developments in the field.

"Learners at all levels will welcome the opportunity to familiarise themselves with incident command hazards and gain proficiency in implementing the relevant control measures in the context of an ever-changing environment. The launch of this suite therefore represents an important step forward for the performance and safety of fire and rescue services and communities nationwide."

Upon successful completion of the course delegates will typically receive 30.5 Institution of Fire Engineers (IFE) Continual Professional Development (CPD) hours.

In addition to Incident Command levels 3-7, SFJ Awards offers 18 additional fire and rescue qualifications.

https://sfjawards.com

Multi-lingual life-saving training aid

A life-saving training aid has been produced in four additional languages to help more people learn how to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

Yorkshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust launched the Pillow Partner last year as a simple, effective and inexpensive way of learning how to save the life of someone in cardiac arrest. Now, the Pillow Partner – pillowcases printed with a torso that you can slip on your own pillow – has been re-printed with basic CPR instructions in English on one side and Urdu, Punjabi, Polish and Arabic on the other so even more people can learn the vital skill.

The project is supported by the Yorkshire Ambulance Service Charity, which has also funded the translation of other life-saving training material in Chinese, Gujarati, Kurdish and Slovak, as well as Urdu, Punjabi, Polish and Arabic. These include posters about how to perform CPR and use defibrillators, as well as subtitled tutorial videos.

Jason Carlyon, Community Engagement Manager with Yorkshire Ambulance Service, said, "We have distributed 20,000 Pillow Partners since they were launched last year, which is amazing, with recent significant orders from the Resuscitation Council (UK) for the British Islamic Medical Association and British Sikh Nurses; St John Ambulance and South Western Ambulance Service.

"The training aid is a really simple and inexpensive way of practising CPR. Now we have developed the multi-lingual version in the top four most widely spoken languages in Yorkshire, other than English, alongside a host of other translated material, even more people will be able to learn this crucial skill. By removing the barriers of cost, availability and language associated with the traditional training manikins, we aim to make CPR training more accessible and improve cardiac arrest survival rates."

There is a suggested donation of £2 per Pillow Partner to help recover some of the costs of producing the training aid, and to cover administration and postage. Any surplus monies raised will be used by Yorkshire Ambulance Service Charity, which enhances the work of Yorkshire Ambulance Service by providing life-saving first aid training and public access defibrillators to communities.

www.yas.nhs.uk

Pillow Partners can be ordered by emailing yas.restartaheart@nhs.net

Fifty-five new emergency ambulances have taken to the roads in the North West, replacing older vehicles in the North West Ambulance Service (NWAS) fleet. Built to Euro 6 standards, the new vehicles are greener and more efficient than their predecessors, produce fewer harmful pollutants, particularly nitrogen oxides, Carbon Monoxide, hydrocarbons and particulate matter. Converted from Fiat Ducato vans, the new ambulances are replacements for existing vehicles over seven years old. Stations in Greater Manchester will get 29 new ambulances and 17 retained, Cumbria and Lancashire will get 24 new and 13 retained, and Cheshire and Merseyside will get two new vehicles and retain 15 existing ambulances.
www.nwas.nhs.uk

BlueLight Commercial, working in collaboration with the National Police Air Service (NPAS) and the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), have published a new tender opportunity for Police Aviation Services. This procurement aims to establish a Police Aviation Services Framework Agreement and immediately enter into two initial call-off contracts for: Lot 1: the lease or capital purchase of seven rotary aircraft for the police purpose, such aircraft to be modified with police role equipment; Lot 2: Delivery of a Police Air Support service to the London Region; or awarding under Lot 3: a combination of Lots 1 and 2.
bluelightcommercial.police.uk

Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service (GFRS) has the highest percentage of female firefighters in England, Home Office figures show. Data from the Home Office shows that 17.1 percent of firefighters at GFRS are women – 73 out of its total – making it the top ranked service in England for its proportion of female firefighters. It was ranked well above West Midlands, the next highest in the list, with 12.1 percent, and Merseyside with 11.4 percent. Gloucestershire was among only five fire and rescue services in the country to have achieved higher than 10 percent when the workforce diversity data was recorded on 31 March 2021.
www.gloucestershire.gov.uk

Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service (TWFRS) has completed construction of a training facility that will help firefighters train to rescue casualties from collapsed buildings. The huge structure simulates the scene of a real-life disaster and snakes through the training yard at the TWFRS Training Centre, located at the service's headquarters site in Barmston Mere, Washington.
www.twfire.gov.uk

Procurement organisation and social enterprise Fusion21 has announced the suppliers successfully appointed to its new £750m decarbonisation framework. Fifty specialist firms, including SMEs and multinational suppliers, are on the four-year framework, which features 'Lot 2 Decarbonisation of Public & Education Buildings (worth up to £250m)' developed for the blue light sector to access, as it continues to implement low carbon solutions and work towards the Government's ambitious 2050 net zero goals. Supporting the design and delivery of energy efficiency measures, Lot 2 offers a 'whole building approach' to non-domestic buildings in the UK, including fabric, renewables, building management system and controls, and improvement works.
www.fusion21.co.uk

Firefighters across Hampshire and Isle of Wight have been given the keys to their new and upgraded co-responder vehicles. The co-responding partnership with South Central Ambulance Service sees Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service firefighters respond to life-threatening medical emergencies, providing patient care prior to an ambulance resource attending the incident. The on-call firefighters based in rural locations are able to utilise the HIWFRS Immediate Emergency Care (IEC) capability and equipment, making a difference in their local communities.
www.hantsfire.gov.uk

The Civil Nuclear Constabulary (CNC) has launched a revamped recruitment website – https://cnc.jobs – giving people interested in joining the organisation even more insight into what a career at the CNC can offer. The CNC Jobs website highlights the wide range of career opportunities available within the CNC – an armed, national, infrastructure police force and one of the most unique in the UK. It also provides applicants important information and advice about entry requirements and enables them to apply for roles in the CNC across the UK.
https://cnc.jobs

Cleveland Fire Brigade has selected the Pro-Cloud BlueLight solution from CCS Europe Limited as its new asset management software platform. Cleveland procured the software through the G Cloud government framework, meaning an extensive and costly tender process was unnecessary. The software will be implemented within eight weeks and Cleveland's staff will be trained in the fundamentals of the system, ensuring they are ready to utilise the software from day one.
pro-cloud.org

The Safeguarding Fire Standard has launched

The Fire Standards Board (FSB) has announced the launch of its ninth professional Fire Standard; Safeguarding.

The Safeguarding Fire Standard aims to ensure that fire and rescue services are doing all that they can to support safeguarding. Its desired outcome is that services work proactively to promote the safeguarding of those within their communities as well as employees and volunteers, reducing the risk of abuse, harm and neglect.

Each of the nine Fire Standards aims to help drive continuous improvement across England's fire and rescue services. The Safeguarding standard accompanies the NFCC Safeguarding Guidance for Children, Young People and Adults, and the Self-Assessment Toolkit.

With development work led by NFCC Strategic Lead for Safeguarding, Donna Bentley MBE, the Safeguarding Fire Standard outlines what a fire and rescue service must and should do to achieve the standard. The standard states that a service must have a designated Safeguarding Lead, and that it should work collaboratively with partners to share learning and experiences to contribute to the continual improvement of safeguarding. Full details of what services need to do to achieve this standard are detailed in the How to Achieve section of the standard itself.

While it is not mandatory for services to comply with the Fire Standards, the National Fire Framework makes clear that services are expected to pay due regard to Fire Standards, as will the HMICFRS in their inspections. The Fire Standards Board are confident that in many cases services are already achieving the outcomes, which are the foundation of each Fire Standard. Where they are not, they accept services will need to implement any changes to enable them to achieve the standards in a way that fits with their strategic planning, improvement work and timetable.

www.firestandards.org

Nottinghamshire's emergency responders unveil new joint headquarters

A new chapter in emergency services history has been opened as Nottinghamshire's police and fire and rescue service (FRS) staff marked the formal unveiling of a new joint headquarters.

Nottinghamshire Police and Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service, which already shared some resources and buildings, agreed to move to a shared headquarters site back in 2018. Work to construct a new three storey building to help facilitate the venture began in Summer 2020 on the site of the existing police headquarters, at Sherwood Lodge in Arnold.

The building, which contains shared office space, a new police-control room, a sports hall, gymnasium and canteen, is the centre-piece of a wider project to improve and expand the old 1970s-built complex. Other key developments include the addition of a new circular access road and the installation of an outdoor exercise trail for staff. The site also contains a joint memorial garden dedicated to the memory of staff from both organisations who have died in service.

The building was constructed on time and on budget by lead contractor Henry Brothers Limited – a particularly impressive achievement as all the work took place during the pandemic.

Headquarters staff from Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service will be moving over to the new site gradually until summer 2022.

www.notts-fire.gov.uk

Truckman storage solution provides rapid access to emergency equipment

South Staffordshire First Responders (SSFR) have been given a helping hand by Truckman, which has supplied its DECKED storage solution to ensure its volunteers can quickly access potentially life-saving equipment from its pick-up truck.

The bestselling pull-out drawer storage system has been fitted to the Community First Responders' (CFRs') recently donated Mercedes X-class pick-up truck, which is deployed to calls across the South Staffordshire area.

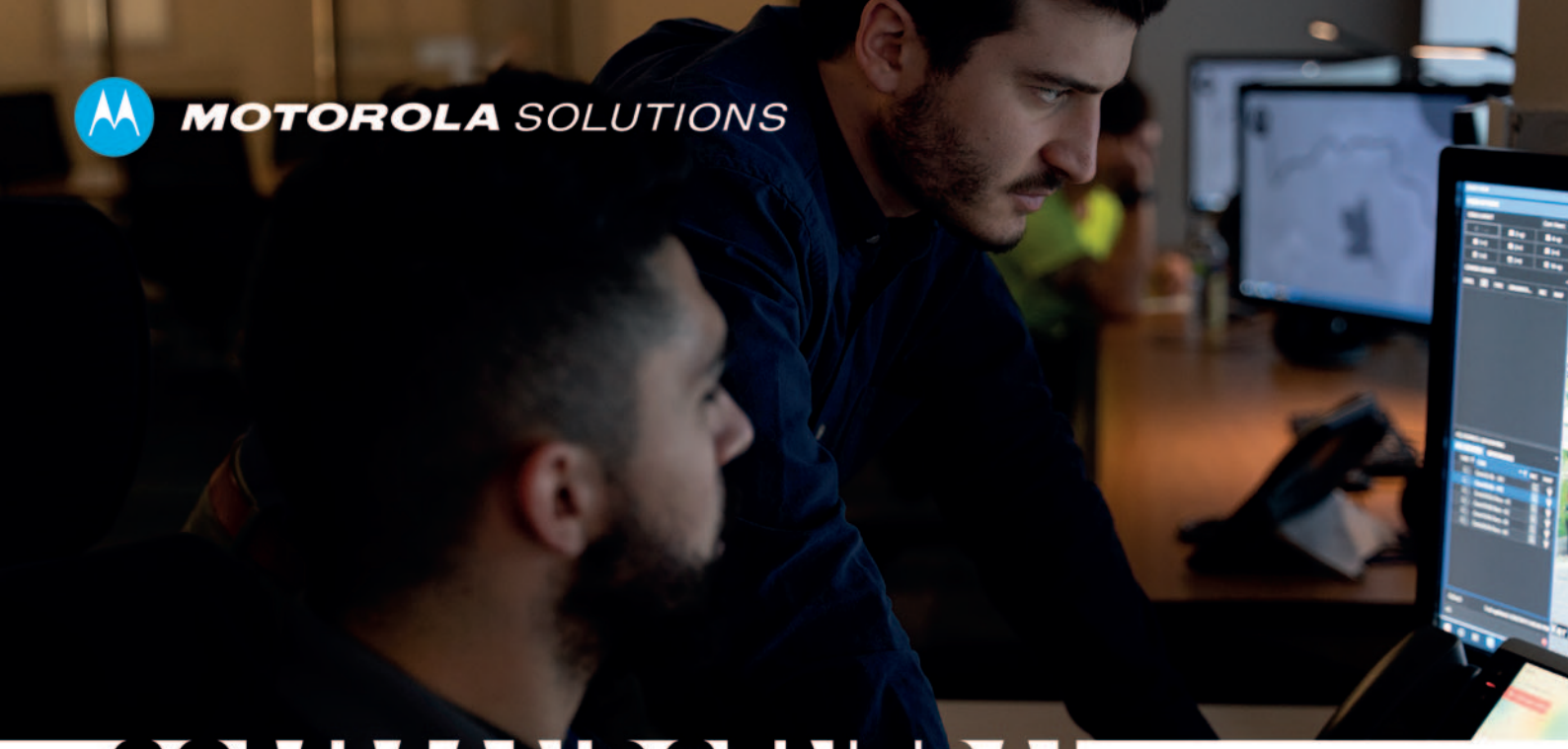
Dudley-based Truckman, which has provided the storage solution to SSFR through its 'Blue Light Discount Scheme', is the UK's only stockist of DECKED. Originally developed in the US, DECKED fits seamlessly into the truck bed and offers easy access to equipment from two secure, full-length roll-out drawers while still allowing full use of the truck bed.

DECKED also creates a raised deck with a galvanised steel sub-frame within the truck bed, which has a one-tonne load rating and can also work alongside Truckman's range of hardtops to provide additional protection and security.

SSFR's pick-up truck, which was provided by DPD and The National Lottery Community Fund and already features a Truckman Grand hardtop, offers extensive secure storage capabilities, but with the addition of DECKED the CFRs are able to access medical equipment and supplies quickly and efficiently.

Truckman Sales Manager Mark Stidston (left) and SSFR Group Coordinator Jean Morgan (right) with the SSFR pick-up truck, fitted with DECKED.

www.truckman.co.uk



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Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) has launched its new website, providing residents in the region with a 'one-stop shop' for all fire and rescue service (FRS) related information. The service's new website – www.northumberlandfireandrescue.gov.uk – showcases the work of the FRS and contains information on how people can keep themselves and their homes safe from fire as well as staying safe outdoors. Business owners can also find a wide range of business fire safety advice and information. The latest career opportunities, volunteering, and the work the service does with young people can also now be found in one easy to navigate place.
www.northumberlandfireandrescue.gov.uk

A new, fit-for-purpose, joint police and fire station at the heart of the community in Redditch has moved a step closer. Planning has now been submitted for the new hub site, which will be shared by West Mercia Police and Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS). The Blue Light Hub project is supported through the One Public Estate (OPE) initiative.
www.hwfire.org.uk

The Minister for Building Safety and Fire, Lord Stephen Greenhalgh, hosted a virtual meeting with eight apprentices from across UK fire and rescue services, on 10 February, to mark National Apprenticeship Week. The National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) has developed six fire-specific apprenticeships covering the specific roles of: Operational Firefighter, Fire Safety Inspector, Community Safety Advisor, Fire Safety Engineer, Emergency Services Call Handler and Business Fire Safety Advisor. To date, more than 1800 fire service employees have completed apprenticeships since the programme was rolled out in 2018; and another 1400 are under way.
www.nationalfirechiefs.org.uk

Forensic science in policing will receive £25.6m national funding in the 2022/23 financial year. Policing Minister Kit Malthouse confirmed the investment in December as part of a three-year settlement. Forensics received the same amount in 2021/22 and £28.6m in 2020/21. The £25.6m is expected to be split into three main investment areas by the Home Office: annual funds for the Forensic Capability Network (FCN), one-off funds to complete and transition services from the Transforming Forensics (TF) programme, and funds for a new digital forensics programme.
www.fcn.police.uk

MSA Bristol delivers for North Yorkshire FRS

Firefighters across North Yorkshire are sporting smart new top-to-toe structural fire fighting kit, following the delivery of new PPE from MSA Bristol. Purchased through the UK Collaborative Framework, the new PPE was delivered by MSA Bristol on time and to budget, despite the continuing challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Run by Kent FRS, the Collaborative Framework gives UK FRSs access to high quality PPE ensembles and volume discounts through a streamlined procurement process. FRSs can sign up via a purchase-only or fully managed service contract to procure PPE that has been independently evaluated and tested, saving considerable time and costs.

North Yorkshire FRS opted for an eight-year fully managed services contract via the framework. The selected PPE includes MSA Bristol's light-weight structural fire fighting coats and trousers, offering excellent fit and comfort along with superior ergonomic performance. The outer shell is made from Hainsworth's TITAN 1260 fabric with PBI fibres, developed to offer maximum protection while minimising the risk of heat stress. This is combined with a Gore-Tex moisture barrier and an Axion thermal liner for additional thermal protection.

Photo: courtesy of Castle Howard

Mark Naylor, Head of Response and Resilience at North Yorkshire FRS, said, "The high-quality garments provide essential protection from fire and reduce the physiological effects of heat on the body, thereby enhancing the performance of our fire fighting teams and helping them to provide a first-class service to our communities."

Philip Tasker, UK and Ireland Sales Director from MSA Bristol, adds, "It's fantastic to see North Yorkshire firefighters out in the community in their new PPE, benefiting from the protection it provides. We've been working exceptionally hard across every area of the business, from initial sizing to manufacturing and delivery, to ensure that orders are fulfilled on time and to our usual high standards."

https://gb.msasafety.com/MSA-Bristol?locale=en

FRSs interested in signing up to the Collaborative Framework contract should contact: collaborativeppe@kent.fire-uk.org

County Air Ambulance HELP Appeal funds new rapid response vehicle for BASICS Devon

Thanks to the HELP Appeal, BASICS Devon, a network of volunteer doctors, which supports the South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust at emergency incidents, has launched its own rapid response vehicle to support its emergency responders across Devon.

BASICS Devon is one of a national network of 32 regional schemes across the UK, which operates under the umbrella of the British Association for Immediate Care. The new vehicle has been made possible after the group successfully bid for a total of £44,000 from a grant of £250,000, which is given to the association every year by the County Air Ambulance HELP Appeal – the only charity in the country dedicated to funding NHS hospital helipads.

The 4x4 Skoda Kodiaq, is now active across Devon, carrying volunteer doctors, to the scene of critically ill or injured patients in the community or at the roadside. The vehicle has hi-visibility and reflective markings; fitted with communication and navigation equipment; blue lights, sirens, and a dash cam, to ensure its volunteer doctors can drive safely to an emergency incident. It also provides the opportunity for education in pre-hospital medicine to other healthcare professionals.

This will be the first scheme response vehicle for BASICS Devon. Having its own emergency response vehicle to access critical, isolated, sick and injured patients will help to ease pain and suffering and save lives across one of the most rural counties in the country. It will enable the scheme's volunteers to reach remote communities with ease, safely and quickly, in all weather conditions, and in most cases arrive before the ambulance.

Robert Bertram, Chief Executive of the County Air Ambulance HELP Appeal, said, "These volunteers are the unsung heroes of emergency care – giving up their free time to support their local ambulance service. This donation ensures they have the highest standard

of transport at their disposal to ensure they can treat patients quickly and safely, giving them the best possible chance of survival and recovery."

To date, the HELP Appeal has funded over 40 helipads, which have received almost 20,000 landings, including at Derriford Hospital, Plymouth and the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital.

helppappeal.org.uk
www.basics-devon.org.uk

Be curious – sexual safety in the independent ambulance sector

The ambulance sector prides itself on trust, honesty and integrity, absolutes for staff managing the needs of patients (many of them vulnerable) and working with colleagues. The public places their trust in ambulance staff. Paradoxically, this trust attracts offenders* who use it to gain access to vulnerable patients (and/or colleagues).

Words: ***Alan Howson, Executive Chairman, Independent Ambulance Association & Vice Chairman, the Health Practice Associates Council.***

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) 2020 State of Care Report highlighted issues of concern on contemporary safeguarding in independent ambulance providers; these included: personal recruitment processes (such as word of mouth or previous work); Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks not always being carried out; previous employment references not always present in staff files; CQC registered providers sub-contracting work to non-registered providers; and providers registering their business outside England to avoid CQC regulation.

The trust placed in ambulance staff can attract offenders* who use it to gain access to vulnerable patients (and/or colleagues) in order to: engage in unwanted or inappropriate behaviour (both physical and non-physical); access personal details (such as addresses, mobile numbers or social media contact points) in order to 'groom' the victim; and share information with others on potential victims.

The rank structure of the ambulance sector also provides offenders with opportunities to operate in positions of authority, which they use to exploit staff and patients.

'Workplace banter' is a known tool used by offenders to check boundaries and weaknesses in individuals; so be curious when an employee requests a change of work colleague or shift; has this happened before? Is there a pattern?

CQC hosted a three-hour Sexual Safety Webinar, in September 2021, to raise awareness in this area, and to share examples of 'best practice'. This included input from the police, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), the Association of Ambulance Chief Executives (AACE), NHS ambulance trusts, the IAA and independent ambulance providers.

The CQC webinar highlighted extreme instances of offending, including that of Andrew Wheeler, an NHS Paramedic convicted of the rape and sexual assault of two patients and the sexual assault of a child under 13. The offences dated back to 2009 and were carried out across different organisations; he was operating in 'plain sight'.

The webinar highlighted the role of Freedom to Speak Up Guardians, who act as focal points for colleagues to share concerns or experiences without fear of retribution.

The recruitment challenge

The ambulance sector is one that's constantly recruiting, meaning opportunities are many and various.

While Paramedics are regulated (Wheeler was 'struck-off' as a Paramedic), there's currently only a voluntary register for non-Paramedic ambulance staff, whose numbers are estimated somewhere between 15,000-20,000. Paramedics who have been 'struck-off' are known to 'downgrade' to a lower clinical level outside of scope.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) disclosures don't always tell the full story as not all disclosures are notified to the DBS. Similarly, employment references, which in the main simply state the start and finishing dates; at worst references are easily forged or a company created to fill gaps in employment.

There is of course the need to respect the legal principle of innocent until proven otherwise, particularly important to mitigate against malicious or vexatious claims.

> **"The IAA felt there should be no easy or safe hiding place for offenders to operate within the independent ambulance sector."**

Notwithstanding, what can/should an employer do where an individual facing accusations of sexual misconduct (or any offending) leaves before the disciplinary process is concluded? The policy in some organisations is to continue with the process to conclusion, with the individual afforded the opportunity to participate/be represented.

A 'factually accurate' employment reference may put a tick in the recruitment process but exactly what value this has to counter offending is questionable in the context of countering offending.

Raising awareness

The IAA felt there should be no easy or safe hiding place for offenders to operate within the independent ambulance sector. Key to this was raising awareness of the issues and challenges being faced, and the potential consequence for patients and staff.

We invested in a series of webinars to raise awareness about sexual safety, and to shine a light on a subject that's outside normal comfort zones. Be Curious was an expression used by the CQC Head of Inspections when briefing IAA Directors; being curious is what we want people to be.

Be Curious aired in November 2021, led by Dave Blain. Dave is an expert on safeguarding in the ambulance sector and has over 20 years' experience, including involvement in the Saville enquiry.

At the beginning of the webinar, delegates were asked to mark themselves out of 10 on how effective they considered their recruitment, staff monitoring and policies/procedures for managing allegations or instances of offending.

In the conclusion, they were asked to reflect on their original mark; feedback confirmed that scores were lower, and organisational changes were planned. Awareness had been raised and will be further developed in Be Curious II.

Be Curious II (what do you do when…) is scheduled to run from 1-2 March and will take a Town Hall format, with attendees posing (anonymised) questions to Dave Blain on specific safeguarding issues, for example an employer's legal obligations to report information on individuals to the DBS.

Summary

This is not an easy subject; while it's good to know that this issue is being addressed, we simply don't know to what extent this problem exists in the ambulance sector.

If safeguarding was only about DBS checks and employment references, none of the above would have happened.

This is a societal problem, which impacts everyone. The IAA are committed to making it as difficult as possible for offenders to have access to potential victims. We've started with Be Curious and will work closely with the CQC, NHS Ambulance Trusts and independent providers to this end.

www.iaauk.org

For more information on the Be Curious webinars contact the IAA on quality@iaauk.org

**offenders is used to describe those who are committing offences as defined by Law.*

About the author

Alan Howson has worked in the ambulance sector for over 30 years, initially with the NHS Training Authority managing the NHS Ambulance training programmes, including Paramedic.

Alan has been involved with the Independent Ambulance Association since it was formed in 2012 (taking on the leadership in 2016). He is also Vice Chairman of the Health Practice Associates Council, who regulate pre-hospital clinicians below the grade of Paramedic.

NFCC highlights priorities for 2022

The National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) highlights two of its latest programmes: the NFCC Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) project is soon to launch a new way of delivering best practice examples and shared learning; and the council's Data and Digital Programme is commencing the final stage of delivering a national data analytics capability to support current and emerging needs of the UK fire and rescue service (UKFRS).

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) has never been as important as it is right now to the future of the fire and rescue sector and to society as a whole. Working towards inclusive practice is everyone's responsibility.

The NFCC EDI project and its culminating products exist to support UK fire and rescue services on their journey to becoming inclusive workplaces by ensuring that diversity and inclusion is a part of everything they do.

Due to launch in Spring 2022, the NFCC EDI Hub has been established to look at ways of working across the sector, delivering best practice examples and shared learning.

"We want to attract the best in digital and data talent to join us on this journey."

Making a positive difference

Equality of Access documents, which form part of the EDI Hub, are the first of their kind for the fire and rescue sector. Designed in consultation with EDI professionals, they provide a range of information about different groups of people and ideas around the actions which services could take to make a positive difference.

The following Equality of Access (to Services and Employment) documents have so far launched: Vulnerable Rehoused Homeless; Gypsy and Traveller Communities; People from Asian Communities; Roma Community; Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Trans People; Neurodiversity; and the Black Community.

The following Equality of Access (to Services and Employment) document is now open for consultation: People Living in Rural Communities.

To have your say and to shape the future of the sector and the positive difference services could make to people living in rural communities, visit: www.ukfrs.com and click the Consultations page.

The following Equality of Access documents are due to launch: People living with Dementia; and Emerging Migrant Communities.

EDI Toolkits sometimes complement a corresponding Equality of Access document, and they provide further advice to fire and rescue services around particular subjects. The following toolkits are due to launch: Data; Neurodiversity; Gender Diversity; and Equality Impact Assessment (revisited). Further toolkits, currently in the development phase, include Religion and Belief, as well as Staff Networks.

Lunch and Learn sessions

Another area of work within the NFCC EDI Project is Lunch and Learn sessions. Guest speakers join these sessions to talk of often personal experiences to an array of EDI related topics, including: neurodiversity; trans visibility; being part of the LGBT+ community; racial equality; and bitesize techniques to avoid burnout.

These sessions are now available online as podcasts so they can be listened to at a time and a place that suits. Most recently, Lunch and Learn topics have included: International Men's Day; Menopause; Disability History Month; as well as Holocaust Memorial Day. Podcasts for these sessions will be available in the coming weeks.

Aidan Bartley, NFCC EDI Project Manager, said, "We're really proud of the work produced so far and wish to thank those who have supported with the development of it. Collaborative learning with fire and rescue services will enable the NFCC to deliver quality, sector-endorsed tools and guidance, which it is hoped will provide a starting point to drive forward real change within the sector.

"There will be a continuation of the project and providing EDI support to our sector, and Phase 2 is already in the planning stages. One of the focuses will be on helping services to embed the available NFCC EDI products, with the EDI Maturity Model as one of the drivers."

Data and Digital Programme

The NFCC's Data and Digital Programme is commencing the final stage of delivering a national data analytics capability that will make efficient and effective use of data to support current and emerging needs of the UK fire and rescue service (UKFRS), as well as ongoing decision-making and policy development.

Once fully implemented, the resource will be a central function of the NFCC, comprising skilled people, standardised processes and technology, providing national data analytics and data governance to the NFCC and UKFRS to solve problems and support decision-making.

Andy Hopkinson, Programme Executive and Chief Fire Officer of Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service, said, "I'm really proud to be leading the team on this project with NFCC's Data and Digital Programme Manager Steve Beakhust. Its successful implementation will be a game-changer for the UK fire and rescue service. However, customers of the planned National Data Analytics resource could also include partner agencies, such as the NHS, as well as external change programmes and committees associated with NFCC's Portfolio.

NFCC's Data and Digital Programme team (from L to R): Apollo Gerolymbos, Andy Hopkinson, Steve Beakhust.

"We also want to attract the best in digital and data talent to join us on this journey. This is a fantastic opportunity to play a leading part in the development of a project that will be rolled out on a national level, changing the way data is collected and analysed for the fire and rescue sector and beyond."

Core services

The core services provided by the analytics resource will include problem solving (through descriptive, predictive and prescriptive analytics), data sourcing (from internal and external sources, including data cleansing), and data consulting (such as methodology and subject research).

Initially there will be limited capacity and service provision for proving the approach, with a focus on processing the highest value data questions to support areas of the NFCC change portfolio. This pilot approach will launch in early 2022. Over time the capability will scale up to the target state, providing the full suite of business services and a capacity to match demand.

Additional functions of the national data analytics capability will include: a controlled, governed processes to identify, assess and prioritise issues where data could provide insight; support to local data teams for analysis at a national level; support to local data teams to supply data that shares insight to national trends and analytics; establishment of standards, agreements and processes that enable services and partners to share data in a controlled, secure, legal and ethical manner; and driving a culture of standardisation, consistency and efficiency.

www.nationalfirechiefs.org.uk

For more information about the NFCC's Data and Digital Programme, contact the team at: DDP@nationalfirechiefs.org.uk
For more information about the NFCC EDI Project, contact Project Manager Aidan Bartley, at Aidan.Bartley@nationalfirechiefs.org.uk

NFCC Coaching and Mentoring project

The new NFCC Coaching and Mentoring Portal will soon be available, and the NFCC Coaching and Mentoring project team are now ready to identify mentors and qualified coaches within fire and rescue services. If you, or someone you know would like to join and support or be supported by peers from across the sector, please fill out this form: **https://tinyurl.com/NFCCCAMportal**

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National air ambulance awards winners announced

The winners of the prestigious Air Ambulances UK Awards of Excellence 2021, sponsored by BMW Group, were announced at a recent ceremony. Inspiring air ambulance charity crew members, leaders, teams, volunteers and fundraisers from across the UK have been recognised for their outstanding contributions towards helping to save the lives of people in need of their lifesaving pre-hospital care.

Doctor of the Year was awarded to Dr Phil Hyde from Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance (DSAA). Phil is a highly skilled doctor dedicated to patient care and to nurturing the skills of colleagues as well as having a future vision for patient care. Since 2016, he has been working to develop DSAA's clinical team's skills and the clinical equipment needed to support critical paediatric transfers. Phil also led the DSAA team as it worked with the National Ambulance Resilience Unit and other agencies to make critical care transfers during COVID.

Innovation improves resilience

Related to its developments in paediatric retrieval work, Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance won Innovation of the Year for its collaboration with Wales and West Acute Transport for Children Service, Bristol Children's Hospital Trauma Team Leaders and Southampton Oxford Retrieval Team to formally support the time-critical paediatric inter-hospital transport in the South-West region. This innovation, the first of its kind in the UK, has enabled improvements in the resilience of care for children and families in the south west and is making a tangible difference to the lives of critically ill children.

Alan Petch from Great Western Air Ambulance Charity was awarded Pilot of the Year for his exemplary flying skills and his very important piece of work on landing sites for the charity. By putting in many hours of detailed research into possible landing sites in urban areas, Alan created a directory of over 200 sites suitable for landing when attending incidents across the region. Alan also helps to integrate new crew members and trainees and provides additional support by meeting former patients and bereaved families, as well as helping to spread awareness and fundraising.

Doctor of the Year was awarded to Dr Phil Hyde from Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance (DSAA).

Air Ambulance Northern Ireland (AANI) was awarded Campaign of the Year for the charity's exceptional work with the agricultural community in Northern Ireland, a sector that accounts for one in 10 of the service's call-outs. A whole raft of initiatives ran, gaining massive coverage, a 20,000-strong online audience and has so far raised over £92,000.

"It has been a huge honour to receive so many fantastic nominations and hear about all the wonderful work that air ambulance charities, teams and volunteers do across the UK."

Improved service delivery

Charity Team of the Year was awarded to the Operational Support Team at Air Ambulance Kent Surrey Sussex, whose remit is to ensure a consistent approach to the supply of equipment and services to the operational teams, as well as dealing with enquiries from the police, coroners and solicitors. The team of three constantly looks for innovative ways to improve service delivery 24/7. The team rose to the difficult and varied challenges when the pandemic changed everything 18 months ago.

Critical Care Practitioner of the Year was awarded to East Anglian Air Ambulance (EAAA) Critical Care Paramedic Liam Sagi for being an exceptional team member and part of the crew who were dispatched to fellow colleague Dr Trish Mills when she was hit by a van while off-duty, undoubtedly helping to save her life. Liam has also supported many of the charity's fundraising and PR activities, including hosting the acclaimed EAAA Roadshow and using his photography skills to provide images while airbases were locked down during the height of COVID.

The Special Incident of the Year award went to Lincs & Notts Air Ambulance for the extraordinary work of Dr Luke Banks and HEMS paramedic Alex Walker who attended a stabbing and provided advanced pre-hospital care interventions, including a thoracotomy, which proved to be lifesaving and the patient recovered and returned home.

The Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to Bill Sivewright, Chief Executive of Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance (DSAA).

Critical Care Practitioner of the Year was awarded to East Anglian Air Ambulance (EAAA) Critical Care Paramedic Liam Sagi.

The prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to Bill Sivewright, Chief Executive of Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance (DSAA). Bill has led DSAA for more than 11 years, significantly growing income and seeing the number of patients treated annually increase from 350 to 1300.

Among his many achievements, Bill approved the development of a unique post-graduate education programme for paramedics and in 2013 the first cohort began their three-year MSc Advanced Paramedic Practice Critical Care qualification. His public service ethos has inspired many, including four years as Vice Chair and Chair of the former Association of Air Ambulances. His work with the association helped to lay the foundations of success for what is now Air Ambulances UK, the national organisation championing, supporting and representing air ambulance charities.

Simmy Akhtar, CEO of Air Ambulances UK, said, "It has been a huge honour to receive so many fantastic nominations and hear about all the wonderful work that air ambulance charities' teams and volunteers do across the UK. I would like to thank everyone in the sector, all of whom work tirelessly to improve patient outcomes and save lives and to congratulate our 2021 winners for their fantastic and inspirational contributions, which make such a positive difference to the lives of so many."

www.airambulancesuk.org

FIRE AID's largest single donation of equipment to date arrives in Ukraine

During 2020 Ukraine experienced over 140 devastating wildfires, which spread across 93 square kilometres of land and burnt for many weeks. These wildfires destroyed the personal protective equipment (PPE) of over 1000 firefighters, leaving it burnt and badly damaged. The equipment was no longer keeping these firefighters safe. At the same time, perfectly useable decommissioned equipment, which had come to the end of its UK warranted life, was donated to FIRE AID from various UK fire and rescue services.

In November 2021 a convoy of six fire appliances and a lorry carrying over 2000 sets of PPE, funded by Blythswood Care and the Scottish Emergency Rescue Association (SERA), left the UK for Ukraine. This donation, the largest single donation of fire fighting aid made by FIRE AID to date, brought together 15 different organisations from across the UK and Ukraine.

Michael Pitney, Station Manager from Kent Fire and Rescue Service and FIRE AID Trustee, said, "Collaboration is key with everything we do in FIRE AID. We bring together our knowledge, skills and resources for the good of the country we are helping. This project is the pinnacle of that, with charities coming together under the FIRE AID umbrella alongside various fire and rescue services and most importantly the fire service in Ukraine. There truly is a 'we are doing this with them rather than for them' mentality. A true collaboration and partnership from start to finish."

The convoy, driven by volunteer fire and rescue drivers from Scotland, Devon and Somerset, Kent, London Fire Brigade and South Wales, worked together to drive the appliances over 1900 miles to their destination in Ukraine.

"I can confidently say, any instructor will return to their own service better for the participation."

Working together

The project brought together two regions in Ukraine – Zhytomyr and Poltava – where equipment donations were split evenly between the two fire services. Drivers from both regions joined the convoy on route to support the long drive back to Ukraine. This is the first time UK firefighters have driven the appliances alongside the Ukrainians and it was a great way for Ukrainian firefighters to understand the challenges of this scale and type of delivery.

Oleksii Heraimovych, Station Commander from Zhytomyr, said, "Working alongside UK firefighters to drive the appliances was a great experience, along the way we shared stories and experiences of our work as firefighters. Although the drive was a challenge we worked together to ensure the equipment arrived safely in Ukraine. We now have enough personal protective equipment for 70% of firefighters in the Zhytomyr region. This equipment was much needed; the donation will help protect firefighters and our local community. Thank you."

The journey to Ukraine took three days and on arrival the team took part in three days of familiarisation training with the Ukrainian fire service to ensure they were confident in handling the donated equipment. The team trained a total of 50 firefighters in road traffic response, ladders and pumps.

International Development Programmes

The concept of assistance for Ukraine is supported by The United Kingdom Rescue Organisation (UKRO) who for the past 16 years have been delivering International Development Programmes (IDP) to countries across the world.

Steve North, UKRO Assessor Development Officer & IDP lead for Ukraine, said, "UKRO first visited Ukraine back in 2016. The UKRO sent out a small team to carry out a scoping exercise. Following this, an IDP team was formed and the first training visit was completed in the Poltava Oblast region, in 2017, where training was delivered to 20 firefighters from Poltava and a further 20 from Kremenchug, over a two week period."

Besides training firefighters, the UKRO IDP also support the Ukraine Fire Service in creating their own Rescue Organisation. By doing this, the aim is to further develop the challenge concept, which will then upskill a wider network of firefighters. This is seen as a four to five year project.

"A true collaboration and partnership from start to finish."

Challenges and benefits

The IDP team have to overcome many challenges, including language barriers, as all training delivery is done via translators, and attaining scrap vehicles, which are of a much higher value in Ukraine than most people can imagine. Another challenge is a lack of serviceable equipment. Donations of equipment from both UK fire and rescue services, as well as donations from some of the leading recue tool manufacturers, greatly assist in this area.

Apart from the obvious benefits gained from the countries that the UKRO IDP supports, there is also a huge benefit gained by UKRO personnel and instructors delivering on the projects. Having completed several IDPs across the world, Steve explains, "I can confidently say, any instructor will return to their own service better for the participation. Instructors will find that problem solving and adapting is no longer a challenge to them."

https://ukro.org

Nineteen Group welcomes breakthrough legislation to transform public safety

The Government's Protect Duty legislation represents a significant development in public safety, making venue owners legally responsible for their patrons' safety – a landmark step previously unseen in the UK. This move will not only transform the way the UK protects its people at publicly accessible locations, but introduce a legal duty of care to provide security against potential terror attacks.

Campaigning tirelessly for this change, Figen Murray, mother of Martyn Hett, one of the 22 victims of the Manchester Arena attack, spoke at last year's International Security Expo. She explained that while the proposed piece of legislation will not stop terrorist attacks it will reduce opportunities and deter terrorists to target venues where people congregate while helping businesses and the public to take ownership of their safety. Widely supported by the security community, Figen Murray is recognised for her unwavering determination to improve safety, shining a light on the human cost of the UK's fight against terror.

Proportionate and reasonable measures

For the owners and managers of publicly accessible spaces, the Protect Duty will require businesses to assess a range of potential threats and implement 'proportionate and reasonable measures' to improve security across their sites. Supporting the Protect Duty, International Security Expo – which returns to Olympia, London from 27-28 September 2022 – will provide a critical platform for those businesses who need to comply with the new legislation.

International Security Expo offers the owners and operators of public spaces, such as sports arenas and concert settings, hotels, shopping centres and tourist attractions, the chance to receive advice and source the latest product solutions that make improved safety possible. With more than 350 global exhibitors showing cutting edge innovations and next-generation capabilities, a best-in-class education programme and dedicated zones spanning Disaster and Resilience, Drones and Counter UAVs, Government and Perimeter Protection, it is no surprise thousands of senior vetted visitors return year-on-year to learn about the latest trends, and source and test the latest game-changing solutions from the world's leading suppliers.

The event, which celebrates its 20th anniversary in 2022, also has a long history of Government support, spanning the Home Office, British Transport Police, Counter Terrorism Policing, Border Force, Joint Security and Resilience Centre (JSaRC), Police Crime Prevention Initiatives (PCPI) and more. Furthermore, the show's renowned conference programme and Government Zone attracts high-level speakers. In 2021, this included Security Minister Damian Hinds, who highlighted the role of the event in bringing the international security community together to explore the current and expected challenges facing national and global security.

Determination

Speaking about the announcement, Rachael Shattock, Group Event Director, International Security Expo, said,

Rachael Shattock, Group Event Director, International Security Expo and International Cyber Expo.

"Over the past few years, we've witnessed first-hand the determination of Figen Murray and other representatives of the Survivors Against Terror Campaign Team to not only lobby the Government for tangible change but engage with the security community to learn about current policies and opportunities to enhance public safety. We've been honoured to host Figen at the International Security Expo in the past, and now look forward to helping venue operators adapt and source the solutions needed to adhere to this critical Government legislation."

www.internationalsecurityexpo.com

National conference on child to parent abuse

Emergency services representatives are being urged to take part in a national conference focusing on the issue of Child to Parent Abuse (CPA).

In excess of 3% of UK households are thought to be impacted by this type of domestic abuse, and more than two thirds (68%) who've approached statutory agencies and other services feel they have not been supported well. More than half (53%) have called the police at least once.

The one-day CPA Conference, which takes place on 28 April at the Hinckley Island Hotel in the East Midlands, aims to bring together frontline professionals, academics, and policy-makers to share existing knowledge and good practice – and focus on how collaborative work can increase the efficiency and volume of support going forward.

Speakers include Domestic Abuse Commissioner Nicole Jacobs; Vickie Crompton – Manager of the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence Partnership; Claire Williams – Mid and West Wales Co-ordinator for the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse, and Sexual Violence Partnership; and an array of researchers, local authority leads, and third sector chiefs.

"Child to Parent Abuse has traditionally been under-researched and under-resourced," says conference organiser Michelle John, Founding Director of PEGS.

"We want to bring together all the experts in one room, to work towards a world where understanding and acknowledgement of CPA are widespread, and where parents, carers and guardians can access the professional input they need. In its most severe form, CPA can and does result in the tragic death of the parent. To reduce the number of people being killed or hurt, we need to work collectively on policies and practices which aren't simply there as a tick-box exercise, but make a real difference to the lives of families impacted by this form of domestic abuse."

Tickets for the event are priced at £125, and opportunities are also available for sponsorship, exhibition stands, and advertising space. To book your place or find out more about supporting the CPA Conference, visit the CPA website.

www.cpaconference.uk

Diary dates in 2022

15-17 March
Security and Policing
Farnborough
www.securityandpolicing.co.uk

5-7 April
The Safety & Security Series
NEC, Birmingham
www.thesecurityevent.co.uk
www.healthandsafetyevent.com
www.firesafetyevent.com
www.facilitiesevent.co.uk
www.nationalcybersecurityshow.com

21-22 September
The Emergency Services Show
NEC, Birmingham
www.emergencyuk.com

27-28 September
International Security Expo
International Cyber Expo
Olympia London
www.internationalsecurityexpo.com
www.internationalcyberexpo.com

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Deputy Chief Fire Officer Craig Parkin has been confirmed as the Chief Fire Officer of Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service. He will replace the current Chief Fire Officer John Buckley upon his retirement, after over 25 years' service. Craig has been with Nottinghamshire FRS for 26 years – joining as a firefighter at the Dunkirk fire station after serving in the British Army's Royal Engineers for six years. He also served as a firefighter at Stockhill, West Bridgford and Nottingham Central.
www.notts-fire.gov.uk

The Chair of the London Ambulance Service (LAS), Heather Lawrence OBE, has announced the permanent appointment of Daniel Elkeles as the trust's Chief Executive. Daniel joined LAS in August 2021 on secondment, and following a competitive recruitment process that concluded on 27 January, has now been appointed substantively.
www.londonambulance.nhs.uk

Chief Constable Lee Freeman has confirmed the appointment of David Marshall as a new Assistant Chief Constable of Humberside Police. David, currently Chief Superintendent at Norfolk Police, has been a police officer for over 26 years, serving in West Yorkshire before moving to Norfolk Police in 2008. He succeeds Chris Noble, who moved on to become Chief Constable of Staffordshire Police at the end of 2021.
www.humberside.police.uk

South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority (SYFRA) has appointed a new Chief Fire Officer. Chris Kirby was appointed following a selection process which included a written application, interview with members of the fire authority and presentation to members of a staff stakeholder panel. Barnsley-born Chris joined South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue as Deputy Chief Fire Officer in 2020. He'd previously served with West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service for more than two decades, having joined as a firefighter in 1998.
www.syfire.gov.uk

Following an extensive and rigorous process, which attracted a number of extremely high-calibre candidates, Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service has concluded its search for the service's next Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO). The successful candidate is Mark Arkwell, who has been performing the role on a temporary basis since January 2021. Mark's appointment was ratified by the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority on 5 January.
www.rbfrs.co.uk

EAAA's first female doctor retires after 14 impactful years in the air

Dr Pam Chrispin has retired from East Anglian Air Ambulance (EAAA) after 14 years with the life-saving charity and an incredible 40-year medical career.

Pam's contributions to healthcare across East Anglia have been enormous, and she has proudly 'kicked the door down for women' along the way, becoming EAAA's first ever female flying doctor in 2007, back when all of EAAA's doctors were volunteers. In that time, Pam has helped to shape EAAA into the leading air ambulance service that it is today.

In 2016 Pam was one of the first doctors to be formally employed by EAAA and in 2018 became EAAA's first Deputy Medical Director.

By flying with the air ambulance, Pam has helped countless patients over the last 14 years receive critical care in their hour of need, taking the hospital to the roadside or bedside. Through her role as Deputy Medical Director at EAAA, her legacy has involved helping the charity to better demonstrate how it is positively impacting patient's care, by creating a formal governance structure, and in leading the clinical training and continuous education for EAAA's doctors and critical care paramedics, nurturing the next generation. Throughout her clinical career, Pam also found time to volunteer as a doctor for Suffolk Accident Rescue Service, helping as many

patients as possible receive life-saving care pre-hospital.

Dr Pam Chrispin said, "I've thoroughly enjoyed my time with EAAA, proving that a small middle-aged woman in glasses could do this job back in 2007 when it was, at the time, a job mainly carried out by men. A lot has changed in the last 14 years, the service is now highly professional and the care we can deliver pre-hospital is simply amazing. EAAA has moved on from being a rapid way of taking people to hospital to bringing the hospital to them.

"It's been a huge privilege for me personally to be able to help train the next generation of pre-hospital emergency medicine specialists and to see them leap-frogging me in terms of their skills, drive and ambition to continuously improve patient care through EAAA. It's been wonderful and I am feeling very emotional about leaving, but I've done my bit and am delighted to pass the baton on to the next generation. I will miss everyone dearly but am looking forward to spending more time with my family."

Pam is retiring from EAAA but will carry on her role as a Non-Executive Director at the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital and will work as an executive coach, while continuing her love for tennis, cycling, Liverpool FC and looking after her grandchildren.

www.eaaa.org.uk

Air Ambulance Advanced Practitioner in Critical Care breaks barriers

Vicki Brown, Advanced Practitioner in Critical Care at Great Western Air Ambulance Charity, has become the first person in the country to get on the Faculty of Pre Hospital Care (FPHC) Register of Consultant (Level 8) Practitioners by qualifying from a purely, paramedic background. She is also the first female paramedic on the list.

This is an amazing achievement for

Vicki and is a wonderful recognition of years of hard work and expertise. This is also a big achievement for the paramedic profession and is great for Great Western Air Ambulance Charity (GWAAC). Its crew's capabilities and combined experience as a team are constantly growing and evolving, meaning the best possible care can be delivered to patients.

Vicki joins GWAAC Drs Matt Campbell, Matt Thomas, and Cosmo Scurr on the 70-strong list of people qualified. Other doctors, who completed their training with GWAAC, are also on the register.

On a local level, Vicki is delivering first-class pre-hospital care to patients wherever they are and whenever they need it. And on a national level, her groundbreaking achievement of being the first to qualify with a purely paramedic background, and being the first female paramedic on the register, means she will be an inspiration to other paramedics up and down the country.

Vicki said, "I'm feeling very proud to have achieved this level and hope other paramedics will follow as pre-hospital medicine is very much multi-professional. I hope this shows that paramedics can achieve this level of practice. I intend to continue pushing the boundaries of paramedic practice and hope there is more success to come."

Getting on the FPHC Register of Consultant (Level 8) Practitioners, after just 18 months of being appointed the first Advanced Practitioner in Critical Care (APCC) in the South West, is even more remarkable.

www.greatwesternairambulance.com

Greater Manchester Police appoints new Assistant Chief Constable

Greater Manchester Police (GMP) has appointed Sarah Jackson as the newest addition to the GMP Chief Officer Team. As Assistant Chief Constable Sarah will hold responsibility for the Crime portfolio, which includes Serious and Organised Crime, Public Protection, Forensic Services, Intelligence and Crime Investigation.

Detective Chief Superintendent Tony Creely, Head of GMP's Serious Crime Division, has been acting in the role of ACC since the start of the year and will continue in post until ACC Jackson's arrival.

Sarah started her career in policing with GMP in 1994 as a member of staff before she became a police officer a year later. A career detective, she headed up countless complex investigations while working in Bolton, Salford, Bury and the City of Manchester – delivering justice for victims in their time of need.

Sarah also worked in GMP's Force Intelligence Branch before being seconded to Manchester City Council Children's Services where she played a key role in making improvements to the early intervention service and how the Directorate supports vulnerable people.

Since moving to Cumbria Constabulary in 2017, Sarah has worked as the Head of People, Head of Professional Standards, and the Commander of Operations & Neighbourhood Policing.

Assistant Chief Constable Sarah Jackson said, "I'm really excited to be coming back to Greater Manchester Police and can't wait to join my new chief officer colleagues in delivering the improved GMP that the Chief Constable has promised.

"I was born in Greater Manchester and had lived there for my entire life before moving to Cumbria in 2017 so I'm grateful to have the opportunity to serve

the people of Greater Manchester once again. In addition to it being my home force, I also have lots of friends and family who still work here so GMP is where my heart is.

"I do want to say a big thank you to everybody at Cumbria Constabulary who I have worked alongside over the last five years. I wish the organisation all the best for the future."

www.gmp.police.uk

Bob Forsyth named as new Chair of London's Air Ambulance

The board of London's Air Ambulance Charity has announced the appointment of Bob Forsyth as the new Chair of its Board of Trustees. Bob has been a trustee of the charity since 2017, leading the establishment of the board's Audit and Risk Committee and chairing it for over four years.

Bob is a Senior Assurance Partner at Ernst & Young LLP, having held a number of senior management roles, including leading transformational change programmes, and was Co-Leader of the EY Centre for Board Matters. He has led two cultural change programmes in

a large UK operation and is a proven D&I leader over 15 years.

As the charity continues its implementation of an ambitious programme of transformational change, including the replacement of its two helicopters, the replacement and expansion of its rapid response car fleet, supporting the service's frontline medical teams and enhancing the charity's culture, diversity and inclusion outreach, Bob will bring strong leadership, experience and organisational empathy to these fundamental priorities.

Bob's appointment will take effect when Mark Vickers, the current Chair of Trustees, retires by rotation on 31 March, after seven years in the role.

www.londonsairambulance.org.uk

Leadership team grows at North Wales FRS

North Wales Fire and Rescue Service has appointed a new Deputy Chief Fire Officer. Stewart Forshaw, former Director of Service Development and temporary Assistant Chief Fire Officer at Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service, has taken on a new role as Deputy to Chief Fire Officer Dawn Docx. Stuart Millington has also been appointed permanently into the role of Assistant Chief Fire Officer.

Both Stewart and Stuart will form key components of the Service Leadership Team in North Wales.

Stewart Forshaw, an experienced fire officer and leader, will be moving to North Wales from Greater Manchester having also previously worked in Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service for 28 years. He has undertaken numerous roles across various departments and played a key role in managing several significant projects.

Stuart Millington began his career at Clwyd Fire Service, later becoming North Wales Fire and Rescue Service, where he held numerous roles before moving to work at Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service for six years and returning to North Wales as Area Manager in 2014 and subsequently temporary Assistant Chief Fire Officer.

CFO Dawn Docx said, "Both appointments represent a new chapter for the service – these are individuals who possess extensive experience and bring with them a wealth of knowledge. I have no doubt they will make a fantastic contribution to protecting our communities in North Wales."

www.northwalesfire.gov.wales

Devon & Cornwall Police have appointed two new Assistant Chief Constables to the force's Executive team. Chief Superintendent Nikki Leaper is appointed as Assistant Chief Constable for Innovation, Contact and Demand; a role which includes the contact centre for 999 and 101. Chief Superintendent Glen Mayhew is appointed Assistant Chief Constable for Operations; a role which he carried out during the successful G7 Leaders Summit in 2021.
www.devon-cornwall.police.uk

Iwan Cray, current Assistant Chief Fire Officer, has been confirmed as the new Deputy Chief Fire Officer of Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service. Following the announced retirement of Chief Fire Officer Chris Davies, who will leave the service in April 2022, and the subsequent appointment of Deputy Chief Fire Officer Roger Thomas to the role of Chief Fire Officer; Assistant Chief Fire Officer Iwan Cray was appointed by the authority's Appointments Committee on 31 January 2022.
www.mawwfire.gov.uk

West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) Simon Foster has begun the search for the next Chief Constable of West Midlands Police. After six years in post, Sir David Thompson is due to stand down as planned in late 2022, after the Commonwealth Games have taken place. The PCC is writing to police officers and others across the country holding a rank equivalent to Assistant Chief Constable or above, to invite their interest in the post.
west-midlands.police.uk

London Ambulance Service (LAS) has appointed Roger Davidson as the new Director of Strategy and Transformation. Roger joined the service from NHS England, where he was Director of System Partnerships, working to join up health and care and improve population health through development of integrated care systems (ICSs) across England. In his new leadership role at LAS, he will focus on developing a strategic vision for the service to build beyond its existing organisational strategy, which comes to an end at the end of 2023.
www.londonambulance.nhs.uk

Dorset Police has appointed Chief Superintendent Rachel Farrell as Assistant Chief Constable to join the force's Executive Team. Rachel joins from Hampshire Constabulary and has over 26 years of policing experience, including Head of Prevention and Vulnerability and Head of Major and Serious Crime, along with senior leadership roles in Neighbourhood Policing and Partnerships.
www.dorset.police.uk

Leicestershire Police's Chief Constable, Simon Cole, has announced plans to retire from policing in the Spring of 2022. He became Chief Constable of Leicestershire in 2010 and is the longest serving Chief Constable in the country. He leads nationally on the digital public contact programme, providing online services to the public across England and Wales. He also leads on Prevent, language services and uniform. He was awarded the Queen's Police Medal in the New Year's Honours in 2014, and the Sir Robert Peel medal for problem-solving policing from the University of Cambridge in 2021.
www.leics.police.uk

Chief Constable Carl Foulkes has appointed Chris Allsop to the role of Assistant Chief Constable (ACC) for North Wales Police. Chris is currently a Chief Superintendent with Greater Manchester Police (GMP). A strategic firearms, public order and multi-agency gold incident commander, he has experience managing large-scale events and critical incidents. Chris has undertaken a number of Local Policing command roles in some of the most diverse areas of Greater Manchester and has experience of leading in complex, dynamic and political environments to bring about long term change to help make communities safer.
www.northwales.police.uk

The Prime Minister has appointed Zoë Billingham as the new Chair of the Police Remuneration Review Body (PRRB) and the National Crime Agency Remuneration Review Body (NCARRB). Zoë has spent many years working in policing. She served as Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services for 12 years, during which time she shone a light on all aspects of policing and created the new fire inspectorate. She is also Chair of Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust, a Non-Executive Director of the Security Industry Authority and a Trustee of SafeLives, a national domestic abuse charity.
www.gov.uk

The Northern Ireland Policing Board has confirmed the appointment of two new Assistant Chief Officers and two Assistant Chief Constables to the Police Service of Northern Ireland's Service Executive Team. Mark McNaughten has been appointed as Assistant Chief Officer for Corporate Services and Aldrina Magwood as Assistant Chief Officer for Strategic Planning and Transformation. Bobby Singleton and Chris Todd have been appointed as new Assistant Chief Constables.
www.psni.police.uk

New CFO for Avon Fire and Rescue Service

Simon Shilton has been appointed by Avon Fire Authority as the new Chief Fire Officer (CFO) for Avon Fire and Rescue Service (AFRS), taking up the post on 1 April 2022.

Currently the service's Assistant Chief Fire Officer for Service Delivery Support, Simon will take up the role following the retirement of current CFO Mick Crennell on 31 March.

Having been part of the fire and rescue service for 28 years, during his time, Simon has held the positions of Station Manager, responsible for Urban Search and Rescue, Incident Command Trainer and Training Manager.

Joining and spending the first 15 years of his career at Avon Fire and Rescue Service, he was located as an operational firefighter at Avonmouth, Bath, Temple and Southmead Fire Stations.

In 2008, Simon worked for West Midlands Fire Service for nine years, leaving as an Area Commander, before re-joining AFRS in January 2017 as Assistant Chief Fire Officer for Service Delivery Support. During this time, he has also held the temporary position of ACFO for Service Delivery.

Simon said, "It is truly an honour for me to be appointed as the next Chief Fire Officer for Avon Fire and Rescue Service and I would like to extend my gratitude to the fire authority for giving me the opportunity to take on this role.

"Having spent most of my career with Avon Fire and Rescue Service, I'm looking forward to all that the role has in store. I will of course be building on the outstanding contribution made by Mick and personally and on behalf of the service, I wish him all the very best on his next adventure.

"I fully recognise the responsibility this role brings and although it will no doubt be incredibly challenging, I am grateful to be supported by a strong leadership team and work alongside many talented professionals who work relentlessly to ensure we are the best service we can be.

"I am committed to working hard to ensure the highest levels of safety for all who live and work in our communities and working side-by-side with our dedicated and hardworking staff, we will continue to Make our Communities Safer and Make our Service Stronger."

www.avonfire.gov.uk

Mark Webster confirmed as Chief Constable of Cleveland Police

Mark Webster has been confirmed as the new Chief Constable of Cleveland Police following a meeting of the area's Police and Crime Panel.

Mark is currently the Deputy Chief Constable at Cumbria Constabulary and has also held senior roles within the National Crime Agency and Greater Manchester Police.

PCC Steve Turner said, "I'm delighted that the panel have confirmed my preferred candidate Mark Webster as the next Chief Constable of Cleveland Police. After a thorough search, I'm confident he is the right person to lead the force forward as they continue to improve the service they deliver to Cleveland's communities. Mark has an impressive track record in policing, including several years' experience as a Chief Officer and in tackling serious violence at a national and international level with the National Crime Agency.

"His significant experience, clear vision for improving the force and commitment to partnership working make him a fantastic choice for the next Chief Constable. I look forward to working with him to make Cleveland safer for those who live and work here."

Mr Webster was selected following a rigorous recruitment and assessment

process, developed in partnership with the College of Policing – the national centre of excellence for police leadership and recruitment. He is expected to take up his post in April.

www.cleveland.pcc.police.uk

Interim Chief Fire Officer for Norfolk

Tim Edwards has been appointed as Norfolk's new interim Chief Fire Officer.

The appointment follows existing Chief Fire Officer Stuart Ruff's announcement of his intention to retire from the service.

Chief Fire Officer Edwards joined Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service at the age of 16, in 1988, and served on various watches as an operational firefighter before rising up the ranks. Most recently he was appointed Assistant Chief Fire officer, in November 2019, and has taken responsibility for leading the assurance side of the service.

CFO Edwards said, "I am privileged to be leading the organisation through the next few months, in what will be a challenging but significant chapter for our service.

"Having started my career here in Norfolk, it is an honour to be appointed to this role. I am committed to the safety of Norfolk and its people and looking forward to continuing to work with our fantastic teams across Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service, our partners and colleagues at Norfolk County Council."

The service's other Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Scott Norman, has also been promoted, to interim Deputy Chief Fire Officer. Both interim posts will be for the next six months, during which time permanent appointments will be made.

www.norfolk.gov.uk

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Health and Wellbeing Conversations

Health and wellbeing are recognised now in the emergency services more than ever as being important to the successful operation of a company, but what are 'Health and Wellbeing Conversations' in the context of the emergency services?

Words: ***Liam Johnston, Executive Director, Railway Mission***

As a chaplain, I often express personal health and wellbeing and an individual's resilience with the metaphor of a battery and its capacity to hold and discharge energy. But my question often comes back to how can the emergency services create opportunities for staff to reflect on their 'battery level' and identify the things they, their line manager and their team can do to recharge and stay well? Also, if the emergency services invest precious time and resources to integrate into their approach, what benefits could they expect?

> **"Chaplaincy Health and Wellbeing Conversations are centred on promoting the ability of the individual to adapt and grow."**

Organisations that have supportive local and senior management and promote genuine staff engagement have lower levels of both absence and 'presenteeism' (turning up for work despite being unwell). Colleagues are less likely to report suffering from work-related stress and they rate their own health and wellbeing more highly. There is also a link to turnover, with engaged employees being less likely to want to leave.

The Stevenson-Farmer review 'Thriving at Work'[1] noted that initiatives focused on improving mental wellbeing, in particular, are shown to have a 1:4 return on investment.

Utilising the chaplaincy service

Health and Wellbeing Conversations take place between an individual member of the emergency services and someone they trust in the workplace. Given the potentially sensitive nature of health and wellbeing conversations, some colleagues will need the option to have conversations with someone other than their manager, this is just one of the opportunities for the British Transport Police (BTP) to utilise the chaplaincy service.

Most Health and Wellbeing Conversations are short one-time engagements that help the colleagues to process situations or dilemmas, but they can also be revisited if situations change or as and when individuals feel the need to do so.

Most Chaplaincy and Health and Wellbeing conversations have three purposes: firstly, to enable all rail staff, irrespective of grade, role or professional background, to have a confidential discussion about their wellbeing and how it might be impacted by: the COVID-19 pandemic, the intensity of their workload, the demands of specific events eg the rate of exposure to distressing or traumatic events or other factors outside of the workplace such as major life events, family problems or health issues, caring responsibilities etc; secondly, chaplaincy conversations can also help to identify what steps individuals and teams can take to nurture their own recovery and increase their capacity to cope with situations and to take appropriate action to reduce the negative effects of stressful working environments or situations; thirdly, a conversation with a chaplain can highlight where someone may benefit from further help, including mental health support, and signpost to that help promptly and support the individual through the process if needed.

The results of a conversation with a chaplain can be: the identification of areas where an individual's health and wellbeing could be improved taking a preventative and self-management approach; signposting to additional, targeted support when needed; and the identification of factors beyond the individual or team level, which are impacting on health and wellbeing and require action at an organisational level to change. The independent and impartial nature of chaplaincy means that sometimes patterns may emerge that can be fed back to the company to be addressed.

Specialist care

Chaplains are often asked by HR Directors or others, what have you noticed the issues are with colleagues? It should also be noted that Chaplaincy Health and Wellbeing Conversations are not intended to be counselling or therapy sessions. It is well established that mental health professionals are not brought in to carry out psychological debriefing or trauma counselling to staff that are going about their job and experiencing perfectly normal reactions to traumatic situations. Nevertheless, individuals who do have significant levels of psychological distress should be offered prompt referral to counselling or therapy services able to provide specialist psychological care.

Chaplaincy is not to be used to 'spy' on the workforce on behalf of the management. It is important conversations take place in an atmosphere of psychological safety. Chaplaincy is and must remain, independent, impartial and confidential, as long as that confidentiality is understood not to allow the self-harm of the individual or others. As an organisation Railway Mission does capture data on the support provided to the British Transport Police in a way that reflects the confidential and sensitive nature of the support provided.

Chaplaincy Health and Wellbeing Conversations are for colleagues, not just at-risk groups. However, chaplains must prioritise those identified at higher risk for their Health and Wellbeing Conversation earlier in the implementation process. These are often those directly or indirectly involved with a fatality on the railway. But others are at significant risk and in need to support; this may be due to the terminal illness or death of a colleague, the threat of redundancy or a host of other situations that can cause distress or anxiety.

Resilience-based approaches to wellbeing

We all know that people are capable of remarkable things, even in the face of adversity. Resilience is about recognising that life often has its difficulties and sometimes these difficulties come with intense negative emotions. Knowing how to manage these emotions and not just to avoid them is at the core of personal resilience; it is the ability to adapt and grow through and following adversity.

> **"Chaplaincy is not to be used to 'spy' on the workforce on behalf of the management. It is important conversations take place in an atmosphere of psychological safety."**

Chaplaincy Health and Wellbeing Conversations are centred on promoting the ability of the individual to adapt and grow. It can provide a structured approach that can help identify an individual's vulnerabilities to stress, assessing the impact of that stress and help them develop strategies to protect the individual or their team from the situation and its effects.

We must understand what makes our BTP colleagues vulnerable to stress. Our experience has highlighted key factors that can increase the risk of stress and negatively impact resilience, such as railway-related fatalities, passenger aggression or personal family issues. BTP officers and staff working in the railway industry may be exposed to these risks under normal circumstances, but COVID-19 has created an added level of exposure to stress, as has the uncertainty concerning the proposed 'Great British Railway'.

Challenges that are being identified by police colleges now include: unclear or conflicting expectations; threat or change to a job role; challenging working environments, including remote working; social isolation; feelings of a lack of personal control; a lack of communication from companies; and TV and social media, where there are mixed, conflicting or hostile messaging.

Knowing what these challenges are can help us to be attuned to these and others' risks. However, when these risks are compounded, there is an even greater need to be proactive and ensure that there are steps in place for the health and wellbeing of our BTP colleagues.

However, we should also be mindful that there is also a healthy amount of pressure or stress, and that this can help bring us to the point of peak performance. Nonetheless, when our stressors and pressures increase too much, it can push us towards feelings of anxiety, unhappiness and reduce our ability to perform well.

Stress is caused by pressure on an individual or team that is greater than their ability to maintain resilience, balance is always optimum for performance.

This image - The Seesaw of Stress - shows a seesaw that identifies the impacts of no-low pressure on the left, moves towards healthy pressure and peak performance through the middle and onto the impacts of stress and over-pressure on the right.

The industry must nurture the things that help colleagues to maintain resilience in the workplace, particularly during difficult times, but support must be in place before the scale tips to the right. This can be achieved through: trusting, supportive relationships – with chaplains, line managers and colleagues; colleagues feel valued and recognised for a job well done; supportive and visible management – clear communication, defined roles and responsibilities and accurate information available; workplace self-esteem – through the encouragement of independence and the freedom to act and take responsible risks; emotional support for things that may occur outside of the workplace; hope/belief that things can change for the better; and perception that things are under control.

Resilience comes together when the working environment and the choices made by management and individuals support colleagues to operate in the best way they can. Health and Wellbeing Conversations with chaplains provide the space to look for opportunities and balance, particularly when there are areas of our life and work that are extremely difficult. Health and Wellbeing Conversations with chaplains are supportive, one-to-one discussions focused on building individual and team resilience.

https://railwaymission.org

Reference:
1 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/658145/thriving-at-work-stevenson-farmer-review.pdf

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Wellbeing or well-meaning? How are you saving the lives of those who save others?

Words: ***Gareth Davies, a former Police Sergeant and co-founder of The Bravest Path***

Action beats reaction. I learnt that phrase years ago on my initial firearms training. During a roleplay I had my weapon drawn and aimed at my instructor, playing the part of an armed suspect. I was determined to de-escalate and resolve the situation. After all, I was in control, wasn't I? My weapon was aimed firmly at his chest and his was hanging down to his side. A second later it was raised. The control I thought I had was gone and we were at a standoff. Another second and two paint splats in the centre of my chest told me it was all over. Action beats reaction.

How much of your wellbeing provision is reaction? How much money is it costing you to service the ever-growing number of your people who need support because they have reached breaking point? Costly Occupational Health and Employee Assistance programmes are so oversubscribed that waiting times are up to nearly a year in some forces. The Mental Health First Aid or suicide awareness training is a nice to have, but still exists to service those who are already struggling. Nothing is going to get better if most resources are being used to react to the wellbeing crisis across our emergency services.

Upon leaving the police, I co-founded a consultancy that I am grateful now counts some of the world's largest organisations as clients. I believe there are lessons to be learnt from the private sector that can be game-changing for the wellbeing, happiness and productivity of those on the front line. And it starts with culture.

Psychological safety

In 2017, Google wanted to better understand what sets the highest performing teams apart and embarked upon Project Aristotle. The study identified five 'pillars', which were present in every high performing team they encountered, and the single-most important of these pillars was psychological safety – the willingness of individuals to share openly and authentically without the fear of being shamed, blamed or judged by their colleagues.

I have personally interviewed suicide survivors and the families of those who have sadly taken their own lives. The lack of psychological safety within emergency services is an ever-present theme. We must recognise that 20 police officers will die at their own hands before we see another Christmas and while I don't have the data for the ambulance and fire and rescue services, I am certain the picture is equally bleak considering we have already lost colleagues from both disciplines this year. It is why, as a leader, no matter how many times you may tell people your door's always open, people rarely walk through it. And it is why a novelty van in the car park giving out tea and biscuits once a year will have little value beyond a Twitter post. Telling people it's good to talk is entirely different to providing the safety and tools with which to have those intensely difficult conversations every day.

Cultural change

As a consultancy, we are currently delivering a cultural change programme across Europe for Microsoft. Our work has centred around concepts including psychological safety, vulnerability, courage and resilience. We have introduced new frameworks to deliver feedback and have brave conversations, including asking for help.

By investing in similar cultural transformation and addressing this wellbeing crisis at source rather than fighting against the torrent downstream, emergency services have the potential to save both money and, more importantly, lives. It is a choice that requires a commitment to proactivity over reactivity, and as we already know, action beats reaction every time.

www.thebravestpath.com

To get in touch, please e-mail: gareth@thebravestpath.com

About the author

Gareth Davies is a former Police Sergeant and co-founder of The Bravest Path, a leadership consultancy specialising in building psychological safety and empathy within teams and organisations. He also produces Behind Blue Lines, a podcast exploring the emotional cost of trauma to our emergency services and those that love them.

Oscar Kilo launches 'Better Sleep' toolkit

Oscar Kilo, the National Police Wellbeing Service, has teamed up with the Sleep Scientist, Dr Sophie Bostock, to launch a new 'Better Sleep Toolkit' aimed at supporting police officers, staff and volunteers with fatigue and sleep problems.

Andy Rhodes, Service Director for Oscar Kilo, said, "We have undertaken extensive work around sleep and fatigue, after it was identified as a concern in our 2019 National Wellbeing Survey, and we know it's making a difference. I am really excited to launch this toolkit; its development has come from feedback and is a continuation of the excellent work done with Sophie last year.

"If you struggle sleeping, you will know what a significant impact it can have on your work and home life, this resource will give you the tools to enable you to learn and practice the habits you need to wake up with more energy, be more productive and worry less."

The Better Sleep Toolkit includes a four-week online course, which aims to help you learn and practice the habits you need to wake up with more energy, be more productive and worry less.

The course is designed not only to help explain WHAT to do, but also HOW to make it easy, and WHY it's important. This programme is open to anyone working in policing, including police officers, police staff, volunteers and specials and can be accessed via the Oscar Kilo website.

The toolkit also includes a series of six bite-sized videos, covering a range of topics, such as snoring, insomnia and nightshifts, they give some quick fixes that you can start straight away to improve your sleep.

Dr Sophie Bostock said, "Whether you're tired of waking up in the middle of the night, you're struggling with shift work, or you're just curious to learn more about sleep, we've designed the toolkit to help! Working with the police family over the last year has made me appreciate that there is a real appetite for bite-sized sleep help. When you sign up for the toolkit you can simply download an audio technique, or follow the four-week course; whatever you need to feel more confident that you know how to sleep well."

https://oscarkilo.org.uk/better-sleep-toolkit/

Haztec maximises efficiency through innovative design

Road vehicles account for a substantial proportion of UK greenhouse gas emissions. Alongside the adoption of electric vehicles, there are significant gains to be made through the careful selection of the ancillary equipment to be fitted to the vehicle. Indeed, with the increasing uptake of electric vehicle technology, opportunities to save energy become all the more valuable in order to reduce battery drain. Yorkshire-based manufacturer of emergency vehicle warning equipment, Haztec International, believes it can help fleet managers through the innovative design and quality of its products.

Haztec International offers a comprehensive range of audible and visual vehicle warning systems. The UK business has been at the forefront of vehicle warning equipment design and build since its formation in 2001, and supplies to the emergency, recovery and utility services worldwide.

The company's customised approach to manufacturing allows end users to specify how many LED modules they require in their lightbars, allowing lighting levels and resulting power consumption to be matched to the vehicle application. In-house manufacture allows customisation to be achieved easily and without impacting on lead times.

Full light coverage

Innovative modules, like Haztec's XEM range, combine LEDs with mirrors to redirect otherwise wasted light. This allows lightbars to achieve full light coverage with fewer LEDs and therefore a lighter weight, lower power consumption and lower overall cost.

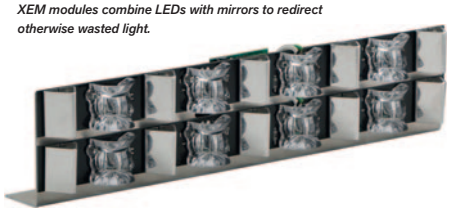
Over the course of a shift, an emergency vehicle can be used in many different scenarios – from high speed response to being stationary 'at scene' – and in conditions ranging from bright day light to night-time, making fast, adaptive switching an important requirement.

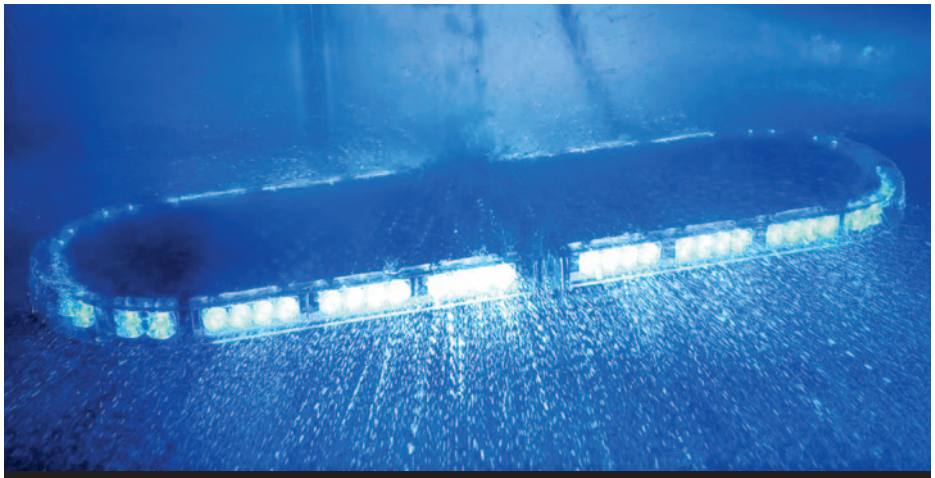
Haztec can offer a wide range of UN ECE R65 Class 2 certified products, which incorporate two easily selectable brightness settings for day, or lower power, night use when required.

Additionally, many modules are available with 'split' functionality, allowing them to be operated with all LEDs lit, or with some LEDs switched off, conserving power in situations where maximum warning is not needed.

The vehicle's warning equipment can be easily adapted to the situation at the press of a single button using the manufacturer's EuroSmart switching systems. For example, full response mode can activate siren and lights at maximum power, while another button press will switch to 'at scene' mode, which can be pre-programmed for any combination of lighting to be dimmed, reduced or switched off entirely. It can also activate supplementary lighting, such as flashing rear red lights.

XEM modules combine LEDs with mirrors to redirect otherwise wasted light.





IPX5/6 water ingress testing
The inhouse IPX5/IPX6 water ingress chamber allows testing at water pressures pressures of up to 100 kPa (15 psi) at 3 metres with a volume of up to 100 litres per minute. The chamber also replicates the water ingress test requirements of ECE R65.

Haztec's attention to detail also extends to siren and speaker design. An example is the manufacturer's 8-82613 Class D compact siren amplifier. The 10-200W variable output of the siren is programmable to match the quantity, impedance and power of the speaker(s). Output will automatically compensate for fluctuations in supply voltage, optimising speaker performance and preserving speaker life. This, coupled with other design features such as overheat protection, reverse polarity protection (which safeguards against incorrect power connection), and speaker short circuit/overload protection, are all designed to preserve the life of the system over many years.

> **"The EuroSmart compact range is much more efficient than traditional siren designs and consumes considerably less power."**

Haztec also offers a range of EuroSmart compact sirens. A fraction of the size and weight of a traditional siren, these compact units will deliver the same, or more volume, but at potentially less than half the power. When combined with one or two 50W 4Ohm compact lightweight speakers, they help by contributing to an incremental overall reduction in the weight of the equipped vehicle but, with a powerful output of 118dBA at 2m with one speaker and 123dBA with two speakers, they don't compromise on warning capability.

The cutting edge design of the EuroSmart compact range also eliminates the need for voltage conversion within the siren amplifier. This saves significant amounts of physical space and weight and also means the siren generates negligible heat, even when running continuously at full power. As a result, the unit is much more efficient than traditional siren designs and consumes considerably less power.

Trouble-free service life

In addition to designing products for maximum operating efficiency, Haztec also ensures products offer a long, trouble-free service life, reducing waste. Not only does this play a part in carbon reduction for the benefit of the planet but it also makes good budgetary sense, delivering value for money and reducing whole life costs for fleet managers while ensuring products deliver the best possible user experience and warning power.

This focus on quality starts with the design of the product and choice of materials and components used in its manufacture. Haztec lightbar, beacon and directional warning light lenses are typically made of UV stabilised, high impact polycarbonate. The stabilisation process ensures that lenses retain their original colours (an inherent part of their warning capability) for many years, and the strengthened polycarbonate minimises the risk of damage when out on the road, particularly when vehicles are travelling at high speed.

Aluminium provides a lightweight but high strength and durable material for lightbar bases ensuring that,

even at long lightbar lengths, bases retain their form and resist buckling so preserving both performance and lifespan. These key components, and many more, are locally sourced, reducing carbon footprint and helping support the local economy.

Latest generation LEDs

Most Haztec lighting products feature latest generation 3W LEDs. Latest generation LEDs provide very high levels of efficiency, maximising light output, and therefore warning power, with minimum power consumption. Lighting products are also designed with optimum heat-sinking properties – this reduces heat generated during operation, ensuring LED life is maximised. Decades of experience in lightbar design allow Haztec to produce lightbars that offer exceptional ingress protection but can still be opened for maintenance if needed.

Thanks to extensive stocks of both current and older lightbar and other components in its Leeds facility, Haztec can quickly despatch a genuine replacement saving on the need to replace the entire lightbar.

Bryn Tennant, Haztec's Founder and CEO, sums it up, saying, "We have always believed that quality counts because it delivers the best value for money for fleet managers. In fact we were one of the first manufacturers to offer a full five-year warranty on many of our lighting products, a reflection of the quality we believe our range offers to the market. We have always focused a great deal of effort on designing and engineering our products in order to maximise their life cycle. I still see many of our lightbars and other lights out on the road, doing their job perfectly effectively many years after they were first purchased.

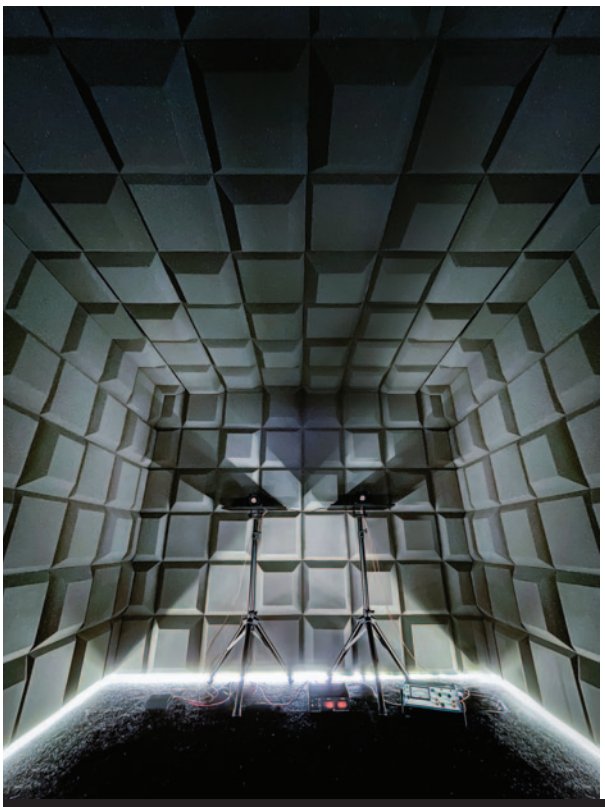
"With every new product in the development programme, our electronics and mechanical engineering design teams take into account many different factors. As with any design, there's always a balance to be struck. Products have to deliver maximum warning power for the safety of the vehicle occupants and other road users, so performance and functionality are key, but we also work hard to keep the size and weight to a minimum, as well as factoring in the need for reliability and long service life with the capability of being recycled at the end of a product's useful life."

Balanced approach

Haztec Xpert SL and Xpert SLX lightbars are a great example of this balanced approach. With their low profile designs, they're ideally suited for high speed pursuit vehicles. Their aerodynamic profile and lightweight design, combined with their high light output, mean they minimise wind resistance without compromising on warning power.

Assembly and manufacturing are also important elements of quality. Robust ISO 9001:2015 certified quality management systems and Conformity of Production methodology are applied throughout sub-assembly and production to ensure the final product is finished to the highest standards.

Evidence of quality is provided through the rigorous testing and certification that Haztec products undergo, including third party UN ECE R65 certification for light intensity and colour, flash frequency and water ingress protection.



Precision acoustic test chamber
Haztec's anechoic test chamber is used as a controlled environment for testing sirens and speakers. It allows for precision acoustic testing for benchmarking existing products as well as for research and product development.

In-house R&D

The manufacturer's in-house R&D centre includes a range of test apparatus designed to replicate operation under the toughest of road and environmental conditions. Facilities include a salt fog test chamber to verify corrosion resistance and an environmental chamber, which subjects products to a wide range of constant and varying heat and humidity conditions. Water ingress protection is also validated using an in-house IPX5/IPX6 chamber. A vibration test bed simulates the long-term effects of vehicle-mounted vibration under varying road conditions, such as turbulence, inclines/declines and turning, ensuring products will withstand extended use over the roughest of terrains.

Haztec also conducts extensive endurance testing of its sirens and speakers. In addition, the company's in-house anechoic chamber is used to provide accurate detailed performance data for Haztec's wide range of speakers and many different worldwide tones. The chamber is also used for random production audit testing to ensure supplied products consistently meet or exceed all performance claims.

> **"I still see many of our lightbars and other lights out on the road, doing their job perfectly effectively many years after they were first purchased."**

Alongside magnetic mount lightbars and beacons, and adhesive or suction mount internal warning lights, Haztec also constantly looks at ways to preserve vehicle bodywork. One recent Haztec innovation is the universal, hook-on lightbar mount kit. The kit can be simply hooked onto the vehicle roof, saving the need to drill holes in the bodywork, while ensuring the lightbar's light output can be very precisely positioned to compensate for roof curvature and slope.

The commitment to minimising waste extends beyond the service life of the product , Haztec has also recently completely redesigned its packaging for lightbars in order to reduce waste while improving protection during shipment. Recyclable and biodegradable packaging is also now used where possible.

www.haztec.uk

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Fuel consumption and CO_2 figures are provided for comparative purposes only and may not reflect real life driving results, which will depend upon a number of factors including the accessories fitted (post-registration), variations in weather, driving styles and vehicle load. Only compare fuel consumption and CO_2 figures with other cars tested to the same technical procedure.

^ These figures were obtained after the battery had been fully charged. The Compass 4xe is a plug-in hybrid vehicle requiring mains electricity for charging. Figures shown are for comparability purposes. Only compare fuel consumption, CO_2 and electric range figures with other cars tested to the same technical procedures. These figures may not reflect real life driving results, which will depend upon a number of factors including the starting charge of the battery, accessories fitted (post-registration), variations in weather, driving styles and vehicle load.

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Recognition for search and rescue and technical rescue professionals

The Institute of Search and Technical Rescue (InSTR), formerly the Association for Search and Rescue, was established in 2013 as a not-for-profit professional body. The organisation was set up to fill a gap in representation for various technical rescue and search and rescue sectors and to form an organisation that could provide a network and professional recognition for these diverse groups.

Words: ***Mike Fleckney, Chairman, Institute of Search and Technical Rescue.***

Founded by members of the search and technical rescue communities, our aim is to bring together practitioners and experts from across all sectors involved in search and rescue for the preservation of life. We are proud to boast a membership base spanning four continents.

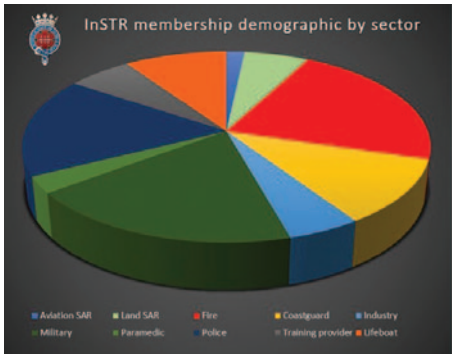
What we do

In practice, the Institute of Search and Technical Rescue: drives personal development through recognised examinations at Graduate (level 3) and Member (level 6) standard, supported by a system of CPD; drives team development by benchmarking roles, team types, standards of equipment and operational practice and sets standards for leadership, team management and safety; offers expertise to drive development in technology, by working with industry both within the UK and abroad, while maintaining InSTR's total independence; provides professional recognition for members and organisations representing the widest range of backgrounds; furthers the interests of the search and rescue and technical rescue communities by providing representation and advice to government, local government, the media and other organisations as required; hosts an annual international conference, to share best practice and emerging technologies in technical rescue; and works with other organisations internationally in a collaborative and cooperative spirit for the benefit of the technical rescue and search community.

Accreditation and training

Utilising the expertise of our membership we can offer accreditation to training providers within the UK and overseas. Successful providers are then able to display our accredited logo on training material and media platforms.

Global climate change is leading to increasing numbers of natural emergencies and these emerging threats, in conjunction with existing hazards, mean there is a growing requirement for both a search and technical rescue capability. However, the distribution of expertise and established programmes of technical rescue skills is inconsistent, with the ability to respond to crises almost entirely absent in some regions. Through its members, the institute has a strong commitment, to maintain a programme of global capacity building to try to reduce gaps in knowledge and provision. This is achieved by utilising the expertise of the membership to share knowledge, skills and experience with military, government and non-government rescue organisations, as well as mentoring and coaching services to national and local teams ahead of re-classification or competition.



Members of the InSTR have undertaken capacity building and exchange of expertise projects in: Mozambique, Pakistan, India, Bhutan, Tajikistan, UAE, Canada, USA, Chile, Bangladesh and Sierra Leone.

Membership benefits

There are membership grades, from student to fellow, representing levels of experience and influence within the sector. These membership grades can be achieved either through evidence of professional experience, or by examination.

> **"Increasing numbers of natural emergencies, in conjunction with existing hazards, mean there is a growing requirement for both a search and technical rescue capability."**

Corporate Partner membership is available to commercial, governmental and voluntary organisations that support the aims, objectives and activities of the institute. Corporate Partners also commit to the continued professional development of their employees or members, often in conjunction with the institute.

The Student grade membership is aimed at junior members of an accredited rescue organisation or unqualified members studying for the entry level InSTR examinations.

The Technician (TInSTR) grade membership is for those qualified in one or more technical disciplines with evidence of currency and continued professional development.

Entry level for Graduate (GInSTR) status membership requires a minimum of three technical rescue qualifications in separate disciplines at the operational

(practitioner) level, eg rope rescue, water rescue and wide area search with evidence of continued professional development. Graduate level can also be achieved following successful completion of the institute's level 3 examinations.

There are two routes to obtaining the Member (MInSTR) grade of the institute: experiential route – achieved by demonstrating significant experience in at least two disciplines, one of which must be in a management or leadership role, which should be at the operational (Silver) level. You will also need to provide evidence of continued professional development in all; or examination route – achieved following the successful completion of the institute's level 6 examinations.

Fellowship (FInSTR) is awarded by the institute's council for outstanding services to search and rescue or technical rescue or for services to the institute.

Examination or experience

The benefits of membership include access to the organisation's library and other resources, an established route through the grades, via examination or experience, CPD opportunities and events, and the prospect of joining capacity building missions around the world.

The institute houses a library of relevant technical publications, allowing our members to improve their knowledge and carry out their own project work or development using sound established principles. Finally, and most importantly, the greatest benefits of membership are the networking opportunities and sharing of experience with fellow professionals across the world.

Our membership is drawn from a wide range of sectors, enabling a healthy knowledge and experience base for the sharing of experience and best practice.

www.rescue-institute.org

For further information please e-mail: enquiries@rescue-institute.org

Ultimate off-roader offers search and rescue support

Jeep's unrivalled off-roading capability has been enabling its customers to explore and traverse rough and challenging terrain for over 80 years, and its use within the search and rescue sector continues to put safe exploring at the forefront of its brand mission.

While many people don't head out with the aim of calling a local search and rescue team to help them, for those unlucky few that have no other resort, it's a lifesaver to have a team kitted out with the right equipment for the job, including vehicles that can safely and confidently get to remote locations where others might struggle.

In 2021, Jeep worked with Storm Jeeps, a company dedicated to creating custom and modified builds to suit any brief, to convert one of its four-door Wrangler Overland models to serve as an emergency response vehicle that services the length and breadth of the UK.

Serving as a 4x4 benchmark of excellence since 1986, the Jeep Wrangler remains the ultimate off-roader. The Wrangler Overland excels in manoeuvrability, ground clearance, articulation, traction and water fording and can tackle any terrain.

The legendary Rock-Trac 4x4 system comes as standard giving the driver more control and more torque. This, paired with Tru-lok electronic locking differentials gives the vehicle ultimate traction. The front and rear Dana axles are reinforced with thicker tubes and forgings, giving this car superior off-roading credentials.

Each Jeep Wrangler Overland vehicle is fitted with a rugged ladder-frame chassis, solid axles and two-speed transfer case, with 2.72:1 low-range transfer gearing intended for rock crawling.

"The Wrangler Overland excels in manoeuvrability, ground clearance, articulation, traction and water fording and can tackle any terrain."

Secure off-roading

Key features that make it perfect for a role within the emergency services include Electronic Stability Control, which corrects for over/under steering of the vehicle by applying the brake of the appropriate wheel to assist in counteracting the over/under steer condition, and Trailer Sway Control, which enables the driver to more easily keep the car and whatever it's towing under control, even on challenging surfaces. The mid-mounted fuel tank is protected by no less than four 2.5mm skid plates on the underside of the chassis, which allows for more secure off-roading.

The Overland's standard suspension comprises coil springs and passive dampers and the electro-hydraulically assisted recirculating-ball steering is geared to a high and suitably forgiving ratio of 16.2:1. A 2in mopar suspension lift kit was also installed to raise the standard clearance of the car, enabling it to transport passengers over even more difficult and dangerous terrain safely.

While the standard Wrangler Overland dons 18in wheels and wears a hybrid off-road tyre, this specially modified vehicle has been fitted with 17x9 wheels and 35x12.50R17 BF Goodrich Mud Tyres, providing an additional increase in clearance.

Additional flexibility

A specialised front recovery bumper has been installed with a heavy-duty WARN EVO recovery winch, as well as LED light pillars and a reinforced rear tow bar and drop plate.

Recovery tracks, and a high-lift jack and spade complement the full-length roof racking system with additional spotlights, jerry cans and roof boxes that have been custom designed and fitted, providing additional flexibility for search and rescue teams to secure kit and other necessary items needed to fulfil their jobs. Door hinge footsteps make access to the roof easily accessible.

Life-saving kit

Internal modifications to the vehicle include a fire extinguisher mounted on to the rear interior cage, with room available for a bell stretcher, a life-saving bit of kit when retrieving people from inhospitable regions.

With over 1000 taskings performed by search and rescue in the UK every year, often over perilous and difficult terrain, it is essential that emergency services have the correct vehicles to manage any eventuality. The role of search and rescue is to ensure the safety of the thousands of people who head out to explore the countryside, beaches and mountains of the UK, and be there as back up just in case. To do this, the kit they use needs to be reliable, responsive and fit for any situation.

Since its modification in 2021, the Wrangler Overland has already been loaned to multiple emergency services and utility companies who require something very different within their fleet, and are able to use the additional specification the vehicle offers to further support their teams.

www.jeep.co.uk/jeep-wrangler

To get in contact with a Jeep representative about converting a vehicle to suit your requirements please contact 08081 685 419.

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Using technology to close the pre-hospital care gap

Recent events, such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the Manchester Arena Inquiry, have highlighted concerns regarding the pre-hospital 'care gap' or 'therapeutic vacuum'. This is a delay or inadequate provision of medical diagnosis and/or treatment resulting in adverse outcomes. The causes may be multifactorial; however, technology can play a major role in closing the care gap in various scenarios, as proposed by the NHS Commissioning Authority in the Technology Enabled Care Services Report.

Words: ***David Morgan FRCS, Consultant Surgeon & CEO, Black Space Technology Ltd***

Chronic disease management

Over 60% of patients admitted to hospital as an emergency have one or more long-term health conditions (LTC), such as Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) and Coronary Heart Disease (CHD). The use of telehealth can dramatically close the care gap by reducing the need for emergency admissions by proactively and pre-emptively monitoring LTC patients and alert healthcare personnel in the event of a deterioration.

South Birmingham PCT achieved a 58% to 87% reduction in unplanned admissions over a 12-month period across COPD and heart failure patients, across 100 patients. Derbyshire Community Hospital achieved a 68% reduction in unplanned admissions, with a 415-bed day reduction across 187 patients in a six-month period, with a net saving of c£100,000. Bristol CCG monitored 400 patients, within just 30 days of the telehealth service starting the number of contacts reduced by 26% with an 18% reduction in face-to-face time and 40% reduction in telephone contacts. After three months, 54% of COPD alerts and 44% of CHF alerts were being self-managed by the patients.

"The use of such technology has significant advantages over the traditional paper triage system."

Great North Air Ambulance Service is trialling a jet suit.

The ambulance service is well placed to run regional telehealth programmes due to call centre infrastructure, existing relationships with 'frequent flyers' and a high level of clinical knowledge. Deployment of the telehealth app onto the patient's mobile phone is initiated by paramedics if interim monitoring is required following assessment. The greatest benefit is gained by the patient.

Mountain rescue

Casualty care in mountainous regions presents significant challenges in terms of access, assessment, and evacuation. Ascent by MRT can take some considerable time depending on location and weather conditions leading to potential clinical deterioration. Air ambulance retrieval is also dependant on weather conditions and access to suitable landing areas.

Currently, in the Lake District, there is a search and rescue capability delivered by mountain rescue and SAR and further advanced medical capability through Great North Air Ambulance Service (GNAAS). By using a jet suit, GNAAS hopes it could provide an additional layer of medical support over and above the helicopter in these challenging environments. The latest jet suit runs 1250bhp of micro jet engines, can fly for up to five minutes and cover over a mile a minute, with a maximum range of 4km. Darkness and rain do not prevent use, only wind up to 50mph gusts prove a challenge. In addition, a lightweight (850g) wireless full vital sign monitoring system has been provided by Black Space Technology for the trial. Andy Mawson, Director of Operations and paramedic at GNAAS, said, "We think these technologies could enable our team to reach some patients much quicker than ever before. In many cases this would ease the patient's suffering. In some cases, it would save their lives."

Marauding Terrorist Firearms Attack

The inquiry into the Manchester attack, which killed 22 people and injured hundreds more, has begun looking into ways of shortening the 'care gap'. Dr Matthieu Langlois gave evidence to the inquiry. He was part of RAID, a French national counter-terrorist armed police unit that responded to various terrorist attacks across France. He told the inquiry that rapid evacuation of casualties from the 'hot zone' and getting them to hospital was the biggest priority in responding to any mass casualty incident. He described at the inquest how, 'RAID worked with the tactical medical triage device (Rapid Triage) that was put on casualties who can be geolocalised at our command post along with all the other information so that everybody will have a map of what the Forward Medical Physician is doing, which triage he is doing, how many casualties there are and their location. The idea is that triage is only done once, and they then go straight to hospital. The only objective is to win a lot of time for the direct evacuation to definitive care.'

The use of such technology has significant advantages over the traditional paper triage system as it provides faster triage, geolocation for rapid evacuation, including track and trace, and real-time interagency data visibility, allowing demand to be matched with the appropriate available hospital resources.

https://blackspacetechnology.com
youtu.be/JF2QLLYokLQ
youtu.be/-7N24DsQMkU
youtu.be/BpPhUUAxBbI

RAID tactical medical triage kit.

London Fire Brigade's drone capability: past, present and future

London Fire Brigade (LFB) looked into and implemented a drone capability mainly based on recommendations following the tragic events of the Grenfell Tower fire. From 2017 to 2019 the team and capability was built based on research into what other fire and rescue services were operating at the time and also how the various assets were deployed, whether by dedicated vehicles or by firefighters on fire appliances.

Words: ***Lee Newman, LFB Drone Team Manager at London Fire Brigade***

The LFB drone team quickly grew to be a busy and integral part of fire service operations, providing situational awareness to incident commanders and giving information not previously available to help bring fires to a safer, quicker conclusion. During this time, we investigated what other roles the drone could carry out. We looked at incidents where they hadn't been present and – thinking outside the box – discussed how drones could be used to improve the response to similar incidents in the future.

Fire escape hoods

Fire escape hoods, which had also come into service mainly after the Grenfell recommendations were made, are usually deployed by fire crews in BA sets. However, in a scenario involving people stuck on balconies or rooftops in thick smoke, out of the immediate reach of aerial ladder appliances or fire crews that had a long commute to reach them, we wondered whether drones might offer an alternative, improved deployment method.

We decided to test the theory and fixed a fire escape hood onto a drone with a dropping mechanism; the idea would be to fly the drone into a balcony to drop the hood to the person in distress. This was successfully carried out in various training exercises. In addition, we used a second drone to utilise the speaker function to relay the donning instructions to the person needing the fire escape hood.

Alpha Geo Sniffer 4D on the M300.

Using drones in a USAR environment.

This capability then led onto the idea of dropping buoyancy aides to people in water-related incidents, which was tested successfully at the Lee Valley White Water Centre. The buoyancy aide deployed by the drone kept the casualties above water and the drone could then help track their path down the river to help direct the water rescue technicians to the correct location.

> **"We used a second drone to utilise the speaker function to relay the donning instructions to the person needing the fire escape hood."**

3D/4D mapping

When COVID hit the UK, in March 2020, the drone team concentrated on day-to-day operations, to keep the training of crews going the best we could and to make sure we were always available when needed.

During this period I looked into 3D/4D mapping software options and had numerous online meetings with various suppliers to determine how LFB could take advantage of the software. The main advantage identified was the digital mapping of high risk buildings and using these maps to build models, which would help teams to train either at stations or via a VR delivery system. The option to make 3D/4D computer models using images captured after a fire was another option, these could be used by fire investigation teams for reports and investigations or by crews or recruits for training purposes.

Other uses of data capture software vary, including HazMat mapping or in USAR incidents at which you could, for example, use the sophisticated tools within the software to measure building walls then provide the USAR technicians with dimensions to build shores without having to get close to it, thus keeping them safe, out of the hazard zone, until the shores are put in place.

Gas detection

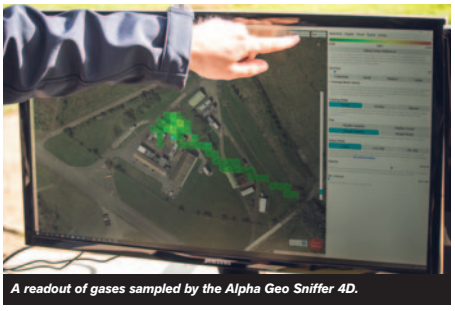
When life started to return to normal in 2021, we again went back to trying to expand what we could achieve as a team and what roles the drone could carry out within the fire service world.

While on a USAR exercise, a team was tasked with entering a confined space to undertake a HazMat sweep using a gas detector. As is standard practice, this took a team of two and a whole host of safe systems of work to implement. I spoke to a few scientific advisors and HazMat officers to determine whether a drone undertaking this task was a feasible option.

To deploy a gas monitor using a drone, to undertake this function, we came up with the idea of attaching a gas monitor to a purpose-built GoPro bracket for the Mavic and using the camera to read the display; for additional protection we added a cage to protect the drone while flying indoors.

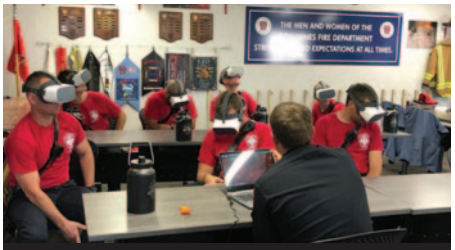
Testing showed that we could use this set-up for internal or external incidents and that, after again consulting the experts, it was determined that the prop wash (the disturbed mass of air produced by the drone's propellers) wouldn't alter the gas detector read out. This

Flying the Alpha Geo Sniffer 4D over a fire to sample the gases given off.



A readout of gases sampled by the Alpha Geo Sniffer 4D.

Flying at the Fire Service College to do an early recce before committing crews.



Example of using a standalone classroom in a box VR headsets (RiVR Link). Photo: Cosumnes, CA (USA) Fire Department.

is still a work in progress and we are still closely working with the advisors to work through all possible scenarios.

We then took this work a step further and investigated what was on the market for industrial and commercial companies for the HazMat role and discovered a device called the Alpha Geo Sniffer 4D. We held an event in Essex, in late 2021, which brought fire and police services together for a demonstration on its uses and applications; we also showcased the smaller drone we had designed for smaller incidents, which was well received by all in attendance.

Plans for 2022

With 2022 now looking to be business as usual, the ambitions of LFB's drone team are to further explore the possibilities of our drone capability.

Getting the HazMat drone capability into service is our main goal for this year and we are planning to have further demonstrations and testing days later this year to make sure that we cover all eventualities, ensuring other police, fire and HART teams can make use of it within their own teams or use the research and learning to bolster their own capabilities.

> **"The ambitions of LFB's drone team are to further explore the possibilities of our drone capability."**

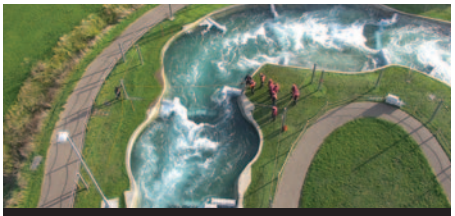
Another project we aim to look into (and hopefully trial this year) is the tethered drone option. This had never really been on our wish list, solely due to the way we operate and the limitations of tethered solutions, however, the end user for this will be the fire boat and a tethered drone option would allow the boat crew to give aerial thermal and optical coverage without waiting for the land-based drone team to attend. A couple of years ago we demonstrated the use of drones on the boat, showing night-time footage of exercises we had undertaken, which was well received, with good feedback, and a possible case for a drone on a boat was raised. Fast forward to the present day and we now have a solution to be able to do this, which will require training up a few operators on each watch then undertaking a trial to provide outcomes for a possible full-time capability.

Improved firefighter safety

The last area we aim to cover this year in more depth is using drones in a USAR environment. At various exercises at the Fire Service College last year we used the drone for initial size up and exploration purposes, the main aim being around firefighter safety and the option to assess an incident before potentially putting responders in danger. A year ago we utilised a drone on a live USAR incident at which we had to check for casualties and building damage at an explosion in a house. The top floor was too high to see inside and no aerial was in attendance at that stage so the IC asked for the drone to be flown to have a look inside the house and help build an assessment of the incident.

There are more exercises planned this year and so work to include internal flying, scene assessment and 3D mapping will continue to increase our depth and knowledge of flying at these types of incidents.

www.london-fire.gov.uk
https://twitter.com/LondonFire/status/1216103487953522688?s=20



Using drones for water related incidents.

First responders reveal how Excelerate is helping them to 'save lives'

For Excelerate Technology, 2021 marked a landmark year. Not least in that the company, known for supplying satellite and cellular connectivity to the UK's emergency services for the past 20 years, led the work package for the award-winning 5G RuralDorset connected coastline for the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport's (DCMS) backed research project.

One of a number of funded projects where Excelerate was recognised as leading the way in ubiquitous connectivity in challenging environments, this particular £8m-funded programme has had a profound impact upon the safety, wellbeing and quality of life for the residents of Dorset, the first responders it continues to support, and the 12 million tourists who visit the county's coastline each year.

Crucial connectivity

Developing and implementing a robust and resilient 5G network infrastructure has not only improved connectivity along the Jurassic coastline, it has also enabled Lulworth First Responders, volunteers with South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (SWASFT), to overcome challenges with crucial connectivity.

As part of the project, Excelerate fitted the responders' vehicle with a router and its cellular optimisation product, Excell, as well as Linx Hub, a portable WiFi 'hot spot', which gives first responders instant internet connectivity in areas traditionally compromised by unstable, or zero, cellular coverage.

Anthony Pack, community responder for SWASFT, has spoken openly about how he, and other first responders along the Dorset Coastline, get the right information, at the right time. He said, "Where we used to have signal issues in our area, especially around the coastline, Durdle Door and Lulworth cove, we've been able to get to the jobs much easier. Getting the right information at the right time is crucial to the ambulance service and also being able to send messages back to ambulance control.

"Being able to have the connectivity that we've got now has given us a major boost. As it develops, and once it becomes authorised on a secure network, we can access patient data through the crew's tablets and ultimately save lives."

Dave Sale, also of SWAFST, said, "Having this new connectivity and new technology available has enabled me as the community responder officer to better support our volunteers."

Bethan Evans, Chief Operating Officer for Excelerate, led the works package. She said, "For more than two decades we have been developing technology to aid the healthcare sector and ambulance services in improving patient outcomes. To be able to use that technical knowhow and experience and provide Lulworth First Responders and SWAFST with instantly deployable connectivity so that they can do their job more effectively and safely can only be of huge benefit to the public they serve. It has been an extremely rewarding project to date, and I'm convinced it will continue to be so."

Seamless transfer

First responders are now able to connect to the new 5G network infrastructure and benefit from seamless transfer of critical data between their devices and SWASFT teams, along with other off-site locations, to support their response to patients.

www.excelerate-group.com
youtu.be/y6g6Lbdr0DU

To see what members of the South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust, have to say about how the 5G connectivity is making a huge difference to their daily operations, watch the video using the YouTube link above.

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"The future of BWV revolves around secure, real-time, live streaming."

It is well established that the use of body worn video (BWV) deters violence and thus enhances staff safety. With the provision of impartial, accurate evidence these devices are also used to speed up the justice process by reducing case report preparation and thus enabling time and cost savings.

Words: ***Adam Liardet, Managing Director and Founder, Audax.***

Body worn video (BWV) evidence is normally downloaded at the end of a shift and, while incredibly useful for onwards evaluation, there is another aspect that is often overlooked. Considering nearly every incident is often in a fast-moving environment, simply being a few hours 'old' means it is of limited use in dynamic situation decision-making.

Instantaneous interaction

It is widely reported that emergency service staff are over stretched, sometimes single-crewed and often 'pushed' to breaking point. Their role is to react to and attend an emergency situation that they might suddenly find 'unravelling' and they too need support. Training and experience have a place, but let's face it, having an instantaneous 'shoulder to lean on' when under severe pressure is not only good management, but also a legal duty.

The solution we believe (and have done for some years) is that the future of BWV revolves around secure, real-time, live streaming. Recording for later download obviously has its purpose and the continuity of the chain of evidence is vital, but this is data that can't be acted upon immediately in a dynamic situation.

For a control room, maintaining situational awareness in often dynamic, fast-moving emergency situations, is vital to enable accurate decision-making. With the use of Audax cameras and the supplied Camera Management System (CMS), we offer decision-makers the ability to track multiple deployed assets along with live simultaneous video and audio feeds. For authorised personnel, it brings the remote action into the control room in high definition.

Accessible information

Information must be made known, made accessible, shared or freely available to stakeholders yet data often sits on systems in isolation. BWV software must have the ability to sync or share data without resorting to costly supplier-based intervention. We have worked extensively with the likes of Genetec* and Flir Teledyne to provide the ability of connecting our CMS to established CCTV VMS systems in control rooms. We provide, free of any annual licences, a CMS software that shares and makes accessible information to ensure that BWV recordings aren't just stored, they are acted upon immediately.

The Audax BWV CMS software shows information that isn't always available on a CCTV VMS too, for example: control software with mapping showing location of assets in real-time via Google Maps; proactive 'live' risk marking/warning with geofencing and panic button alerts; with our CMS software a control room can remotely command camera recording – the camera's record function (and live stream of video and audio) can be instigated (turned on) by the control room CMS software; with clustered talkback (PTT) you can communicate between cameras in a group or with a control room; and you have the ability to remotely 'stun' a lost camera device – the camera can be sent a command by the control room CMS software that can 'wipe' the firmware and memory.

BWV product interoperability

Interoperability doesn't just cover the sharing of data; it also covers the interoperability of the BWV camera with the numerous variants of users' job roles and tasks.

Not every user finds a chest worn camera the most suitable solution. Since 2005 Audax® has been supplying fire and rescue personnel, mounted officers (motorbikes, cycles and horses) and armed response officers with head-mounted cameras. This product is often the camera of choice for these specialists over the alternative chest-mounted cameras, due to the unobstructed view during everyday use.

The New Audax mini camera, manufactured with these specialists in mind, offers functionality not found in others. Weighing a mere 38g and including HD video with selectable IR for night-time use, it can be attached via our unique specialised tilt mount to a helmet or cap and connected to Audax's award winning cameras for both local record and live streaming.

> **"We offer decision-makers the ability to track multiple deployed assets along with live simultaneous video and audio feeds."**

The docking station solution also is a critical and integral part of a modern BWV system, the importance of which is often overlooked. Assigning a camera to an officer / automation of user settings at the start of a shift and having the correct metadata on each camera is vital, as it forms the evidential chain. There also has to be a system, which allows a device to be allocated/booked out to a user on removal from the docking station and

deallocated/booked in when returned. Getting each BWC 'set up' before the start of each shift / patrol is time consuming and labour intensive. The solution to this issue is, integrated into each Audax docking station, an automated QR code system for booking in and out of cameras. It is a system that assigns a camera to a particular officer and synchronises with the DEMS / CMS.

Preservation of the evidence chain

Ensuring the preservation of the evidence chain can only be efficiently done via a docking station, with a simple and secure method of transferring data to a storage facility on a local or network drive that takes into consideration that most customers operate a secure network. The Audax range of British designed and British manufactured docking stations provide a simple, agile solution for those customers faced with poor or unreliable data transfer upload speeds. These latest products enable users to dock multiple devices simultaneously, sync evidence automatically as well as analyse, tag, store and organise evidence. Audax now provides all software products pre-installed within the docking station and 120GB internal SSD, offering a secure, out of the box solution. The system is fully scalable and can cater for smaller standalone sites through to enterprise cloud requirements.

tinyurl.com/audaxest

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About the author:

Adam Liardet, Managing Director and Founder of Audax, is a former Royal Green Jacket Officer, having served in Northern Ireland and Bosnia. Since 2004, Adam has been a pioneer of the body worn video industry and, alongside managing the company, he is principally involved in innovation, design and marketing within Audax.

ESN under the spotlight at North West Police Hub testing event

Frontline police workers put an Emergency Services Network (ESN) push-to-talk product through its paces as part of an intensive test event staged in Cheshire. The event was hosted for the first time by the North West Police Hub, one of the five key assurance partners (APs), which get involved in ESN testing for the Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP).

The ESN push-to-talk product, known as Direct 2 (D2), is the latest iteration in the development of ESN as a new 4G critical communication tool to replace Airwave across Great Britain.

The testing took place over four days and involved participants from police forces across the north west of England as well as user representatives from the fire and rescue services, Ambulance Radio Programme (ARP), Scotland and Border Force.

This event formed part of the programme's Operational Validation (Op Val) testing, which involves working with ESN's APs in the user community to test the function of each product on user infrastructure and in a pseudo-operational environment.

Clear feedback

Alicia Carr, Op Val Lead for ESN, said, "The testing we do as part of Op Val is important for the programme. We transition from technical testing to user testing with user devices that are enrolled on assurance partner infrastructure and following operational scenarios across multiple test teams. Often the end user participants have never directly interacted with the programme before or held a Direct 2 device in their hands prior to the event. That way, we obtain really clear feedback on what works, what doesn't work, and also observations on how they may use the devices going forward."

The comprehensive set of tests performed in Cheshire, in December 2021, included functionality, such as making standard telephone calls, sending messages and images, using private and group push-to-talk capability and making emergency and broadcast calls. Different operational environments were used as testing backdrops, such as within a high-speed moving vehicle, as well as in areas of weaker signal or limited coverage.

Impact on working practices

Suzy Makinson, ESN North West Assurance Partner Manager, Cheshire Constabulary, said, "A lot of planning and coordination effort has gone into getting here. It's a privilege for us to host the first formal test event with police and it's great for the actual participants, who are real police officers and staff, to be able to get hands-on with the devices. We had good debates and discussions about the opportunities and the potential impact on working practices and business change."

Mitchell Fox, Policing Assurance Lead, Operational Communications in Policing (OCiP), added, "This testing will enable us to learn a lot of lessons on what has gone well, what hasn't and what we need to change for the next phase of testing. We are trying to learn the lessons for all the other police forces so they have a much smoother journey when they get around to technically on-boarding, and ultimately transitioning onto the ESN solution."

All results from these tests are fed back into the programme to inform the future delivery of ESN.

www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-emergency-services-mobile-communications-programme/emergency-services-network
youtu.be/ev1uSP9UgrM

Excelerate partners with OneWeb to connect first responders

Excelerate Technology, a global leader in the supply of ubiquitous and hybrid connectivity, and OneWeb, the Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellite communications company, have signed a Distribution Partner Agreement (DPA) to provide satellite connectivity services to first responders, other government agencies and public sector organisations across the UK and globally.

As a leading provider of communications solutions to first responders in the UK and around the world, Excelerate will offer new connectivity services utilising OneWeb's LEO constellation to select customers, starting in 2022.

Ubiquitous connectivity

David Savage, Group Executive Chairman of Excelerate Technology, said, "I am delighted that Excelerate is now OneWeb's latest official distribution partner. Our two companies will work together bringing new initiatives to the market that embrace the benefits of LEO satellites alongside other partners and allow us to expand ubiquitous connectivity, applications and benefits to our key government and first responder customers.

"We look forward to working with OneWeb's LEO-based solution to provide customers with a combination of cellular, satellite and wireless technology to overcome boundaries and limitations, enabling the flexibility required for any range of mobile or remote environments."

Dylan Browne, Head of Government Services at OneWeb, said, "Resilient communications for first responders are vital when handling crisis situations because they ensure data is shared in a timely manner between the teams on the ground and at the hospital or police station, for example. That will enable decision-makers to see a more comprehensive picture with real time information in hand and be able to act accordingly. For example, OneWeb will enable first responders to fully exploit 5G networks typically used by medical teams to conduct telemedicine and reduce unnecessary hospital admissions – particularly in today's pandemic."

OneWeb's LEO-based solution will also be integrated into the Primary, Alternative, Contingency and Emergency (PACE) communications plans of first responders, enabling real-time connectivity, command and control.

Excelerate's areas of interest include 'Major Incident Ground Technology and 'smart' ambulance and fire platforms and appliances that ensure public safety and patient health applications can be accessed and shared securely and remotely anywhere in the world and at any time.

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www.oneweb.world

Addressing emergency service mental health issues through technology

Emergency response is a high stress occupation. Lives are often at stake, and correct decision-making in fast moving scenarios often determines the success of outcomes. Given the trauma this can entail, mental health is an increasing concern amid emergency response workers.

Words: ***Nick Chorley, Director, EMEA Public Safety & Security, Hexagon's Safety, Infrastructure & Geospatial division***

Recent research[1] from King's College London, The Royal Foundation, and the Open University, found that UK emergency responders may experience more mental health problems, such as depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder compared to the wider UK population. The study also found that a leading cause of stress was organisational – factors such as intense workloads, poor management, staff shortages and burnout.

This is an issue that spans the entire emergency response apparatus – from the call handlers and dispatchers in 999 centres to the police, fire, medical and other rescue workers on the ground. Call-takers and dispatchers in the control room are often regarded as peripheral to the traumatising event; however, it is they who communicate with agitated and distressed callers and who are the first point of contact while an ongoing crisis is unfolding. Underlining this fact, research[2] points to control room staff suffering a similar rate of trauma and mental health problems as their colleagues who respond to the emergency in hand.

Fortunately, awareness around mental health and wellbeing for public safety workers is growing within agencies and the public. Organisations like BAPCO and the Mind Blue Light Programme are shedding light on the issue and providing information resources. Governments are stepping up their efforts, and even Prince William[3] has highlighted the need to enhance support services for responders, while also creating a culture where people feel comfortable to talk about what they are going through.

Additionally, as technology has evolved, advancements have emerged for alleviating the stress placed on public safety personnel of all disciplines, with special emphasis on call centre staff.

The impacts of evolved technology

One of the most impactful ways technology can help combat the stress on personnel is through data analysis. Using analytics from routine operational data, such as call data from computer-aided dispatch (CAD) systems, 999 centre managers can derive insights to benefit frontline workers. For example, supervisors can review reports that allow them to monitor and balance the workloads of call-takers to ensure they are not working extended hours or to understand if staffing levels are misaligned with peak call times. This can help address the intense workloads that have been shown to deteriorate the mental health of workers.

To further the use of operational data and analytics, integrated artificial intelligence and machine learning offer new levels of assistive insights to dispatchers. Autonomous, background processes can quickly and effectively scan for similarities, anomalies, links and patterns across the entirety of calls coming into the comms centre. These capabilities act as a second set of eyes, reducing stress on both comms centre veterans and new employees still building their knowledge base. Another example is routing less traumatic coded jobs to new employees in their first weeks and, where possible, avoiding routing repeated traumatic jobs to the same dispatcher one after the other.

> **"Many researchers believe seeing an event first-hand reduces mental stress as call-takers can see resolution of the situation without wondering what happened to the distressed caller or victim."**

Mobile technologies can connect public safety data and applications with any internet-connected device, giving staff access from home or a temporary office during an emergency or disaster. This also allows field responders to self-serve many information requests and update information, thereby cutting the dispatcher workload and allowing units in the field to be informed on the go. Further, mobile applications facilitate open, real-time communication that allows for timely information about the scene to be relayed quickly, ultimately improving outcomes as the first responders will be better prepared for the specific nature of the call.

Total situational awareness

Adopting the use of live camera feeds provides call-takers and dispatchers with total situational awareness, enabling more informed decision-making. Additionally, many researchers believe seeing an event first-hand reduces mental stress as call-takers can see resolution of the situation without wondering what happened to the distressed caller or victim.

Some operational technologies, such as next-generation CAD solutions, can be configured so that staff are coordinated with and have immediate access to mental health resources following a traumatic event, for example one that might involve a fatality on the scene of an emergency. Having access to these resources immediately and conveniently is an additional step

Nick Chorley, Director, EMEA Public Safety & Security, Hexagon's Safety, Infrastructure & Geospatial division.

leaders can take to ensure the mental health of employees is cared for and stress is reduced as quickly as possible.

Towards a healthier future

Through their work, 999 professionals undergo mental health stressors far beyond what most of the public have to experience, which can lead to burnout, physical illness and trauma. While there is no way to entirely remove the stress of an emergency response role, it's pivotal to take every opportunity to support the mental and emotional wellbeing of these essential workers.

Ensuring proper care of employees is the responsibility of agency leaders and comms centre managers, and modern tools can help mitigate pressures and instil confidence in decision-making. Though technological capabilities can contribute to the ongoing effort to protect the wellbeing of those who work to protect us, there's still much work to be done.

www.hexagonsafetyinfrastructure.com/en-gb

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Enabling sustainable transport technology solutions for the blue light sector

In recent years the blue light sector has come under increasing pressure to deliver effective and efficient services that guarantee public safety. One of the ways it has been tackling this is by improving service delivery through innovative and emerging technology. A new agreement for transport management technology, available through Crown Commercial Service (CCS), will enable the sector to continue this transformation sustainably.

The re-branded Transport Technology and Associated Services [RM6099] framework, launched in October 2021, builds and expands on the success of Traffic Management Technology 2, which expired last year.

The new framework will continue to deliver core services and products for the sector, such as cameras including Automated Number Plate Recognition (ANPR), CCTV, speed cameras, and transport signage and pedestrian management and control systems, but there will be a much stronger focus on sustainable technology.

Blue light customers can now procure sustainable solutions to help them on their carbon net zero journey, including energy efficient light emitting diode (LED) pedestrian street lighting, electric vehicle charging solutions and hydrogen transportation systems, through a dedicated sustainable transport technologies lot. It is just one of a range of solutions from CCS designed to help customers with decarbonisation across their procurement portfolio.

Transport Technology and Associated Services went live on 26 October 2021 and will run for four years. Call-off contract durations can be from two to seven years depending on which Lot is used.

Innovations

The transport technology landscape has evolved, with new product and service offerings becoming available since the launch of Traffic Management Technology 2. The scope of the new agreement, over seven lots, will include the following products and services that will specifically benefit the blue light sector:

Real-time care – Through enabling 5G network capabilities under Lot 4 of the agreement, clinicians and paramedics will be able to collaborate from ambulances even when they are miles apart, enabling crucial efficiencies and reducing the need for some patients to visit A&E.

Responding to emergencies – In the UK, location data is relied upon every minute of the day to support blue light services when they respond to emergency incidents. Every minute counts once an emergency call has been received. The new framework will include the latest geographic information systems (GIS) technology to enable emergency responders to find an address or location quickly.

Monitoring solutions – The new framework will feature the latest available monitoring and enforcement solutions technology, including facial recognition CCTV, real-time body-worn and thermal imaging cameras, which can be used by police officers in a range of scenarios at crowded locations or by fire crews in low visibility areas.

Safer street lighting – LED technology has been added under Lot 5 of the new agreement to support the Government's Safer Streets initiative, which aims to provide brighter street lighting to help cut crime and make women and girls feel safer walking the streets at night.

Further innovations

The lots have been simplified and reduced down from 15 to seven. The new structure reduces the need for customers to separate their requirements across multiple lots.

All suppliers are automatically added to Lot 7 (catalogue), making it quicker and easier for them to upload products and for customers to purchase low value items. A move to public sector contracting terms and conditions to create an easier, more flexible route to market and tailored for the customer's specific operational needs.

Lotting structure

The lots will comprise:

Lot 1 – Transport Professional Services
Lot 2 – Transport & Pedestrian Control
Lot 3 – Transport Signage & Lighting
Lot 4 – Transport Data Services
Lot 5 – Sustainable Transport Technologies
Lot 6 – Major Transport Solutions
Lot 7 – Catalogue

Customer webinars

To support the launch of Transport Technology and Associated Services, an on-demand webinar is now available here: https://www.crowncommercial.gov.uk/webinar/request/38240/transport-technology-and-associated-services-technology-ccs.

You can find a full list of all the commercial agreements offered by Crown Commercial Service (CCS), alongside details of how CCS can help you build policy considerations into your procurement, in the service's interactive digital brochure (https://www.crowncommercial.gov.uk/digital_brochure/request/30384/commercial-agreements-spring-2021-digital-brochure).

https://www.crowncommercial.gov.uk/agreements/RM6099

To find out more about Transport Technology & Associated Services visit the agreement webpage or contact the CCS Service Desk at info@crowncommercial.gov.uk or 0345 410 2222.

Mission critical communications

Airbus and Streamwide have successfully demonstrated the interoperability of the Streamwide MCX (Mission Critical Services) client software for smartphones with Airbus KMS (Key Management System) server. This milestone is a key step in delivering secure solutions based on 3GPP standards to customers in the scope of critical communications.

With the incorporation of the KMS server to the Tactilon Agnet product solution, Airbus is committed to improve and secure the communications of governmental agencies and enterprises on their day-to-day operations by providing interoperable up-to-date technologies for critical services such as voice, video, messaging, geolocation and custom applications.

The KMS is an element of the 3GPP specification for MCX Critical Communication, and it is the central point to generate the security key material to both the smartphone client and the Group Management Server (GMS) on the MCX server side. This is the foundation of the security and end-to-end encryption of group communications for all organisations relying on secure and reliable critical communication solutions.

The common integration of the solutions from Airbus and Streamwide demonstrates the ability of both companies to design, integrate and deliver to the market technologies aligned with the 3GPP standards, which for both companies is the foundation and commitment to support customers in the long term with proven and standardised technologies.

www.airbus.com
www.streamwide.com

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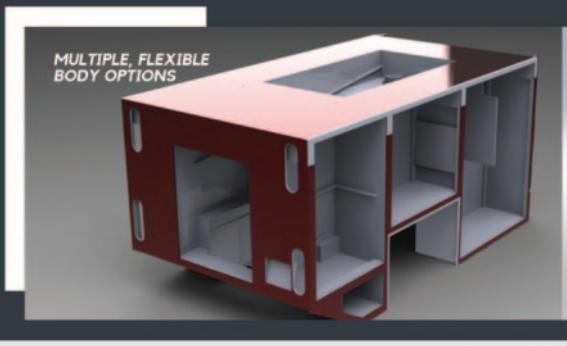

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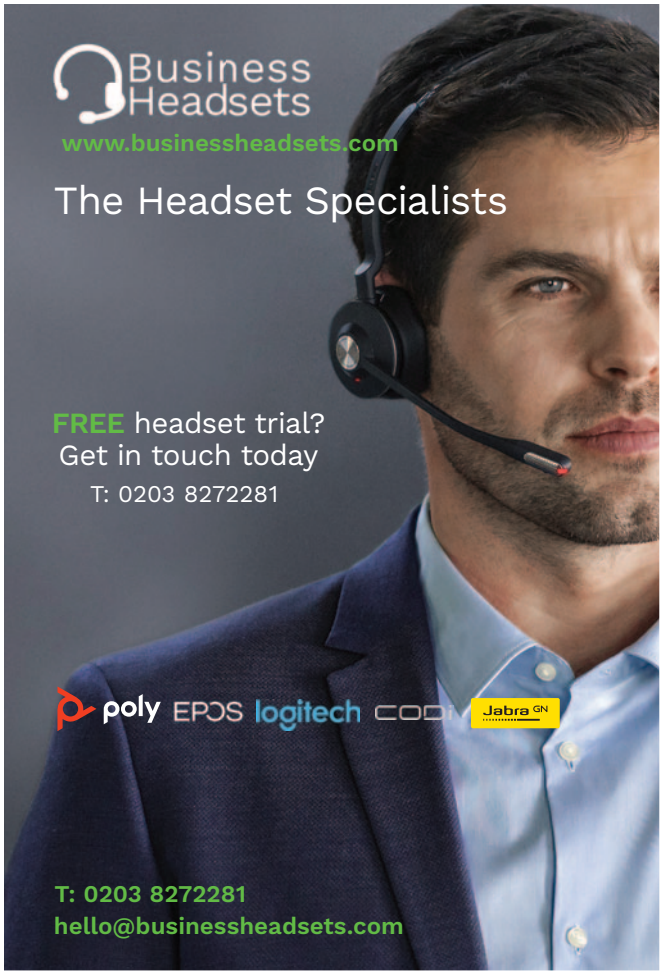

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Digital voice recording offers secure solution for Lancashire Constabulary

The Olympus DS-9000 portable digital voice recorder.

A combination of encrypted, user-friendly digital dictation management software and hardware from Voice Technologies has replaced Lancashire Constabulary's unsecure audio recorders.

Lancashire Constabulary's armed response unit and their negotiators are required to document and audio record specific interactions while deployed to an incident, either in person or by phone. Officers complained their hand-held audio recorders suffered from poor battery life and interference, resulting in low quality and inaudible recordings.

Voice recordings were manually transferred onto the constabulary's server via a number of available workstations. The recorders were not encrypted or PIN-coded, making them insecure. Positive steps were required to identify an encrypted, user-friendly solution to comply with information security and GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation).

Following a consultation process, which included an onsite demo to show how the proposed solution for voice recording and dictation management could work, Voice Technologies was selected as the supplier.

Encrypted for data safety

Voice Technologies recommended Olympus DS-9000 portable digital voice recorders, with best-in-class file encryption, for officers to use with a telephone pick up or lapel microphone to ensure all audio is captured.

The microphones reduce unwanted noises, such as breath and wind vibrations, ensuring improved sound quality.

To accompany the DS-9000 recorders, Voice Technologies also provided Olympus Dictation Management System (ODMS) software. With ODMS installed, every recorder has an encryption key programmed into it. The software automatically pulls the encrypted dictations onto one of a limited number of designated workstations once a device is docked.

Admin staff then use ODMS to decrypt the dictation and save it to a secure location on the constabulary's main server. This process is much smoother and safer, taking place within the constabulary's infrastructure.

The new hardware and software were introduced without any disruption to existing IT systems. Voice Technologies' project team guided Lancashire Constabulary's IT department through the installation process and provided training so that users were confident in the new system from day one.

"The devices are being used operationally, the quality of audio and battery life is excellent!… even the technophobes are impressed, easy to use and a great product."

Detective Inspector Rachel Higson, Lancashire Constabulary

A team of 50 use the voice recording and dictation management system, regularly commenting on how the quality of recordings and the ease of use of the new devices have helped improve accuracy and speed up the reporting process.

Voice Technologies is an award-winning, employee-owned software solution provider serving the UK market. The company helps organisations to reduce the time and cost of producing correspondence by using information and mobile workflow, speech recognition and digital dictation applications.

www.voicetechnologies.co.uk

FireWatch solutions improve agility, visibility and flexibility

Infographics has announced a joint project with Surrey Fire and Rescue Service to deliver a programme of technology innovation. The project will focus on providing anytime, anywhere access for its fire and rescue service (FRS) users, including their 'on call' firefighters and managers, increasing real-time visibility of availability and resources, and integrating live data with the control room.

The programme includes: deploying the FireWatch Mobile App; a migration from a previous legacy system to the FireWatch fire and rescue service management suite for managing on-call availability; and – as part of that – the deployment of the FireWatch Mobilisation Interface within Surrey's shared county emergency control room and Capita Vision mobilisation system.

Sally Wilson, Head of Data, Digital and Special Projects at Surrey Fire and Rescue Service, said, "Ensuring that we have advanced, flexible and accurate technology is key for our service. We have worked closely with Infographics to ensure that FireWatch is exactly what we need to increase visibility of available resources and people to keep residents safe."

FireWatch Mobile allows users to directly manage data and tasks for time/availability, leave, skills, training and assets, via smart devices. It also enables supervisors and team members to understand the impact of resource changes and to manage and act on any issues or deadlines highlighted within their personalised Key Performance Indicators displayed on screen. This includes workflow-driven resource request and fulfilment processes to address gaps in cover.

Migrating to FireWatch for on-call availability will allow Surrey Fire and Rescue Service to see a complete picture of availability across wholetime and on-call staff – increasing visibility and efficiency across the employee planning and management process. The App can also deliver benefits for the FRS as a whole, offering a flexible self-service capability for all contract types and staff.

The deployment of the FireWatch Mobilisation Interface will ensure an accurate view of real-time availability, skills and asset status across the service, which is directly integrated with emergency dispatch operations within the control room.

www.infographics.co.uk
www.firewatch.co.uk
www.flosuite.com

North Wales Police to deploy cloud-based dispatch system

Hexagon's Safety, Infrastructure & Geospatial division has announced that North Wales Police will deploy Hexagon's next-generation public safety solutions in the cloud. Hosted in Microsoft Azure, HxGN OnCall Dispatch and field mobility solutions will provide advanced call-taking and dispatch capabilities to link callers, dispatchers, managers and field officers for faster, more effective response. HxGN OnCall Analytics will enable data-driven policing by harnessing real-time and historical data for resource optimisation and informed decision-making.

The North Wales Police control room averages more than 1100 contacts per day and annually manages 80,000 emergency 999 calls, 250,000 non-emergency calls, 18,000 webchats and nearly 60,000 emails. Hexagon's next-generation solutions will provide the control room with a seamless, user-focused service with an expanded range of channels for engaging with the public, including SMS, multimedia and more. Additionally, advanced analysis of operational data will enable more effective, efficient and informed use of resources.

Deploying SaaS versions of the HxGN OnCall portfolio will simplify system set-up, administration and maintenance, helping to reduce costs, optimise efficiency and increase focus on pertinent agency tasks. As a managed service, the technology will always be up to date, providing North Wales Police with the latest innovations and security updates.

"The modern police service is becoming increasingly diverse and complex, necessitating a more sophisticated response," said Paul Shea, Call Centre Manager, North Wales Police. "To meet changing

demands, we need modernised capabilities that will enable our agency to improve efficiency and effectiveness, adapt to new mission requirements and leverage burgeoning data resources to inform decisions and carry public support. Hexagon has been our trusted solution provider for 19 years, and we look forward to continuing our relationship with them."

"North Wales Police was seeking an innovative, sustainable, resilient and adaptable technology," said Maximillian Weber, Senior Vice President, EMEA, Hexagon's Safety, Infrastructure & Geospatial division. "Deploying HxGN OnCall solutions in the cloud will allow them to harness data, easily connect systems and people and leverage next-generation technology to better meet their policing goals and future challenges. We're proud to continue supporting North Wales Police in their mission to protect and serve the people of North Wales."

Hexagon's industry-leading public safety solutions are deployed by thousands of law enforcement, fire and emergency medical services agencies around the world, helping to protect nearly a billion people.

www.hexagonsafetyinfrastructure.com/en-gb

Police Scotland invests in new digital technology for its 999 and 101 services

Police Scotland is introducing a new digital contact platform to replace the current analogue telephony infrastructure, and bring greater resilience to 999 and 101 services.

This significant investment represents a significant milestone in Police Scotland's commitment to make contact with the police more accessible, relevant and responsive to the needs of the public through its Public Contact and Engagement Strategy, and Data, Digital and ICT Strategy, delivered under the Modernised Contact and Engagement Programme.

Assistant Chief Constable John Hawkins said, "Our committed officers and staff continue to provide a good service and prioritise our 999 emergency calls, which are answered in under 10 seconds on average. The new digital system will provide greater resilience for these critical services and enable us to develop further ways the public can engage, making it easy, convenient and safe to contact the police.

"Proposals to introduce additional contact methods will be subject to consultation and engagement with our communities and I would emphasise that face-to-face and telephone contact through 999 and 101 will always be available. We know that being visible and making personal contact is important to our communities.

"Please continue to phone 999 for emergencies, or use 101 or Contact Us on the Police Scotland website for non-emergency enquiries."

Better quality data

The new digital technology will also provide better quality data to support workforce planning for Police Scotland's national service centres during periods of peak demand, and it will ensure 999 and 101 services continue to operate when analogue services are switched off in 2025.

It is a major investment in Police Scotland's contact network, and for the 999 and 101 service, with an initial capital spend of £1.2m and ongoing revenue costs of £20.7m over the duration of the seven year contract.

POLICE SCOTLAND
Keeping people safe
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Andrew Hendry, Chief Digital Information Officer, who is leading on Police Scotland's digital transformation, said, "The needs of the public will always be at the heart of any new service design and we aim to provide modern and easy-to-use options for people who need to contact their police service. This enabling technology is part of our wider digital transformation and will form a foundation across Police Scotland that other parts of the organisation will utilise and build upon."

www.scotland.police.uk

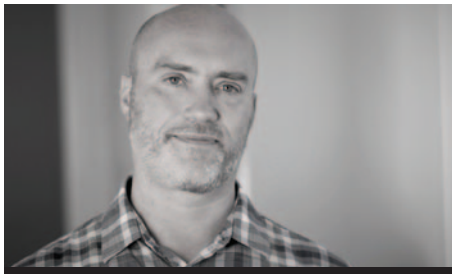
Immersive learning aids complex investigation training

Bolton-headquartered EdTech firm, Near-Life, has successfully launched a ground-breaking immersive learning programme for Greater Manchester Police (GMP) that will support their work tackling Child Sexual Exploitation and protect some of the most vulnerable members of society.

The programme was awarded £241,000 in funding from Innovate UK in November 2020 to accelerate the development of an interactive learning programme tailored to complex investigations – an area of police training identified as challenging and of the greatest need.

Working in partnership with GMP, Near-Life has developed a comprehensive course built using its Near-Life CREATOR+ interactive video software, which uses the latest gamified simulation technology. Learners have the opportunity to take on the roles of both officer and investigator in a simulated Child Sexual Exploitation case.

Each module concludes with an interactive scenario where the user is given decisions to make as part of a simulated investigation.


Mike Todd, CEO of Near-Life.

Each module features a combination of written content and videos on a range of topics, from unconscious bias to recognising risk factors, conducting thorough searches of a missing person's home and using the Appropriate Language Policy.

Interactive scenario

Each module concludes with an interactive scenario where the user is given decisions to make as part of a simulated investigation. Their choice dictates what happens next in the simulation, giving officers the opportunity to test potential decision-based outcomes around complex investigations to improve problem solving and decision-making in a safe learning environment.

The technology will better track performance and learning based outcomes, supporting an improved knowledge base that will allow GMP to share best practice examples of how digital simulations can support learning and training for complex investigations.

New ways of working

Mike Todd, CEO of Near-Life, said, "The benefit to using immersive learning is that it allows you to create real-world scenarios and environments tailored to the needs of the user and the business. Research published by OFCOM found that it can improve knowledge retention by as much as 90%."

Superintendent Gareth Parkin said, "GMP are constantly looking at how to improve learning to help keep our communities safe. This interactive pilot project with Near-Life, which focuses on a very important topic, is a key part of our ongoing efforts to explore new ways in which innovation can support our work."

Mike Todd continued, "Undoubtedly, the learning supply chain is being disrupted. The pandemic has brought with it many new ways of working and immersive technology has been given the chance to really demonstrate how it can be a cost-effective way to improve engagement in ways that are customisable to the user, scalable and generate better results."

near-life.tech

Oxfordshire FRS invests in independently performed risk modelling

Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service (OFRS) has a systems approach to integrated risk management. This prioritises the delivery of statutory duties to reduce risk and vulnerability in Oxfordshire. As part of its prevention programme, it plans to improve efficiencies by targeting communities and individuals in most need of support.

OFRS already benefits from using Cadcorp SIS Desktop and Cadcorp Workload Modeller for a range of GIS analysis. The fire and rescue service approached Cadcorp to provide risk modelling consultancy on the data, methodology and results of risk analysis across Oxfordshire.

Risk rating

Cadcorp analysts utilised a combination of data, including OFRS historical incidents, Ordnance Survey® AddressBase® Premium and Experian Mosaic. Detailed risk models ranging from geographical areas to individual addresses and demographic profiles were then created. This involved using OFRS historic incident data to calculate risk scores using a range of different attributes. Modelling based on Mosaic included calculations on age classification, additional risk and proportional representation of risks. This allows the fire and rescue service to attach a risk rating to each demographic group and individual household across Oxfordshire.

Project deliverables included final risk scores with calculations and a GIS project file with internal overlays for station grounds and Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOA). The map output was themed according to risk, and incident data with spatial tags indicated incident location and severity. All methodology decisions were carried out in consultation with OFRS and logged within methodology documents provided alongside the project outputs.

Referral system

Following this project, OFRS will be reviewing the outputs to define a 'risk scale' based on available resourcing. Once the risk scale is defined, each of the geographic datasets (Household, LSOA, Station Grounds) will be uploaded to the Oxfordshire County Council web mapping platform and made accessible via 4G tablet devices on each fire appliance. In addition, the output data will be integrated with its Safe & Well referral system to improve the targeting of non-referred high risk properties.

Analysis can be re-run at defined time intervals as part of OFRS's service commitments. Resulting from the risk modelling project, data on high-risk areas, high demand areas and population density will be referenced when planning service improvement.

Josh Wilson, Data Systems Manager at OFRS, said, "It has been a really positive experience working with Cadcorp on this project. They were in regular contact throughout, and offered suggestions for an improved methodology, supported with examples and evidence. Receiving external validation and advice to complement our in-house analysis provides OFRS with a robust and effective risk model."

www.cadcorp.com
www.oxfordshire.gov.uk

Helping you keep the public safe

How often and at what point do you hear about the UK's critical projects and programmes that support you in your role of keeping the public safe? Perhaps in the newspapers when something doesn't quite go to plan, or even when a project has been completed and you have been told change is coming very soon and will be implemented within your organisation.

Words: ***Alison Baptiste, Director of Public & Security Services, Infrastructure and Projects Authority, Cabinet Office.***

The Infrastructure and Projects Authority, within the Cabinet Office, is the Government's centre of expertise for infrastructure and major projects in the UK. This means that we work very closely with all government departments to professionalise the project delivery role. We provide critical advice to support the delivery of essential, innovative and life-changing projects that improve the ways in which you do your jobs and keep the public safe.

These projects range from providing a new 4G communications network for the emergency services – giving first responders immediate access to life-saving technology and data – to replacing the Police National Computer, to provide authorities with current and joined-up information in order to prevent crime and better safeguard the public.

So how does the Government make sure that you, the frontline users of these products, are involved in the end-to-end process of delivering these major changes?

Well, we are changing and want to listen to you, so that the products and systems we deliver work first time, all the time.

What projects and programmes?

Government delivers projects commissioned to make your job easier and safer, and also better protect the society you serve. These projects include the National Law Enforcement Data Programme (NLED), National Automatic Number Plate Recognition Service (ANPR), and Emergency Services Network / Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESN/ESMCP) – the communication network set to replace Airwave for all emergency responders.

Traditional approaches to project delivery take a lot of time; identify the problem, gather the requirements, secure funding, design it, develop it, make it, buy it, make it work in practice, develop and deliver training for it, roll it out etc. By the time it reaches your hands, a lot has changed, such as the requirements, the environment in which it will be used and potentially any other systems to which it needs to connect. So, as you can imagine, it doesn't always fit or do the job properly in the new situation.

We're changing the process to be more centred on you – we call that stakeholder engagement. The ways we do that include: roadshows – show and tell events that tour the country or are online for you to see, try and ask about the products and systems under development from the people who are running the programmes. Last year, these three-day events included talks on projects and panel discussions; regular project meetings with representatives from all emergency services; attending regular meetings, eg Operational Communications in Policing Team (OCiP) and National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) to update on progress and answer questions; writing blogs and articles in magazines or for internal communications you may receive in your inboxes and intranets; some projects and programmes have extranets that are able to provide registered public safety workers with frequent updates; plus social media posts across LinkedIn and other platforms.

Why do we do this? We want to keep our users and stakeholders engaged throughout product development so the distance between the 'we need to develop X' and having it in your hand or office, is radically shortened.

We're also bringing users right into the heart of government to help deliver the products.

Examples of how we do this

Simon Parr is the Senior Responsible Owner for ESN/ESMCP, which is the project to replace Airwave. As a former Chief Constable of Cambridge, he knows the imperative, he knows what it's like to be out at an incident and for the kit to fail. He is on the project full-time and focusing on making sure the handset, the Mission Critical Push to Talk Application and the network all deliver for you. The Programme Director, John Black, had over 30-years' experience delivering highly complex IT and communications programmes before joining government, so he understands the technology and the suppliers.

"We want to listen to you, so that the products and systems we deliver work first time, all the time."

The National Law Enforcement Data Platform (NLEDP) is delivering Law Enforcement Data Service in a way that makes it straightforward for users, prioritising functions that are used most commonly.

We are already doing so much to ensure you as our frontline users are at the forefront of delivering these innovative and life-changing projects, and that the final products are fit for purpose. However, we know we can go even further, so we're asking if you'd help us hear your voice more clearly.

The QR code below takes you to a short survey. Please complete it as it will help us in government project delivery, help you on the front line to keep the public and yourselves safe.

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/infrastructure-and-projects-authority

ESN-ready antennas play critical role

Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service (MFRS) is an Assurance Partner of the Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP), which aims to trial the data and voice function capabilities of the Emergency Services Network (ESN), which utilises 4G, and is eventually set to replace Airwave.

With access to a wide pool of in-house talent and an operational DNSP (Distribution Network Service Provider) in place, Merseyside was the first FRS to be issued with the specified interim firewall. In these early stages, Telent, MFRS's outsourced ICT service provider, was instrumental in helping to configure this firewall. By setting up an isolated infrastructure, Merseyside was able to connect and enrol devices with ESN traffic using a Mobile Device Management (MDM) portal.

Speaking with MFRS's Application Manager, Bill Elliot, he explained that having utilised Sure Antennas' ESN Ready 'Mallard' antenna for the service's fleet since 2017, they have become a 'natural fit' for when the programme progresses to testing the fixed vehicle devices. Bill detailed that the Mallard Antennas have 'played a critical role' in the testing to date and noted that other manufacturers involved in the programme were also utilising Sure's antennas. This is a trend that Bill foresees continuing as we move further towards ESN and away from legacy radio equipment.

Discussing the antennas' performance in more detail, MFRS's ESMCP Operation Lead, Mark Jones, commented that the 'antennas have always delivered exactly what we needed them to, both in respect to the ESN programme testing and also as a multi-function antenna operating on Airwave'. Additionally, Mark highlighted the benefits of having a multi-function antenna, explaining that 'The single-hole installation makes the whole process more efficient, and results in less of a risk to the bodywork through water intrusion. Historically we have also had to mount antennas strategically spaced apart, which presented cabling challenges but this is no longer an issue with the Mallard'.

sure-antennas.com

NHS staff to benefit from new digital knowledge hub

Words: ***Sue Lacey Bryant, National Lead, NHS Knowledge and Library Hub***

Sue Lacey Bryant, National Lead at NHS KLS.

A pioneering digital platform launched by NHS Knowledge and Library Services will play a key role in helping UK healthcare staff find evidence-based, trusted information. Healthcare staff make millions of decisions every day and the challenge of ensuring those decisions are based on the latest insight, married with established knowledge and research, is one that is being met head-on with the arrival of a new digital platform.

The NHS Knowledge and Library Hub (NHS KLS), funded by Health Education England (HEE), is a 'one-stop' platform that gives NHS staff and students easy access to a significant range of quality resources, services, tools and databases through a single, national gateway. Resources include the latest, specialist emergency response information in thousands of journals, books and e-publications, including OUP handbooks.

Offering an intuitive search experience for quick and in-depth study, the new platform provides free, unrestricted access to the whole collection of HEE-funded core content as well as locally procured content provided by NHS trusts – all in one place, informed by evidence and data and just a few clicks away.

"Basic searches and abstracts are available to anyone. Full access to all content is available to NHS staff and students in England via one-time-registration to an NHS OpenAthens account."

Be it published knowledge and evidence for patient care, clinical and operational decision-making, education, research, or just professional curiosity, the NHS Knowledge and Library Hub has the potential to become the starting point for every search for insight among healthcare professionals, ensuring that the millions of decisions made by them and their teams every single week are based on the latest knowledge.

One-time registration

Basic searches and abstracts are available to anyone. Full access to all content is available to NHS staff and students in England via one-time-registration to an NHS OpenAthens account. Once signed in, users will be able to tap into the same system wherever their career takes them. The hub will also streamline the search for healthcare knowledge, meaning users only need to look in one place, rather than scouring multiple resources to find answers to the questions they face.

Healthcare staff across the globe played a key role in leading the fight against COVID-19 and despite practitioners being posed with questions never before asked of them, greater collaborative working between professionals across the globe helped ensure the UK was best-prepared to fight the virus and provide the best possible service to our communities.

However, as we look to a future post-COVID and reflect upon what has been a truly unprecedented period for the sector, one of the main asks of healthcare professionals will be how we build upon this collaborative culture, which helped pull the nation through the crisis and save millions of lives in the process. That is where the NHS Knowledge and Library Hub will really come to the fore and ensure that – as we begin to re-emerge from the pandemic – staff have access to everything they need to ensure they continue to develop, learn and deliver the best possible service.

https://library.nhs.uk/knowledgehub
https://openathens.nice.org.uk

Network refresh gives Hereford and Worcester FRS optimum SD-WAN capacity

2022 sees a major step forward for Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service's network capacity thanks to an exciting technology refresh, under its renewed contract for managed network services with MLL Telecom.

The refresh will include the provision of services based on a software defined wide area network (SD-WAN) with the aim of boosting bandwidth, security and resilience. It will support the HQ at Hindlip Hall, outside Worcester, as well as the service's 25 fire stations.

The contract, with a value of £550,000, will run for at least three years with an option to extend for two more, adding another £300,000.

The solution provides flexible connectivity to support known – and unknown – future changes in digital technologies/requirements. Pete Chatwin, HWFRS Head of IT, said, "The technology refresh of our existing fibre network will ensure we continue to have access to fast, reliable and secure WAN and internet communications. Our network, and the digital services it provides, is of paramount importance to our efficient operation and the safety of the public. We're totally confident in the technology we have chosen to deploy while leaving the responsibility for managing the new SD-WAN in MLL's capable hands."

Ross Billington, Strategic Client Director at MLL Telecom, added, "At MLL, we could tell the HWFRS Technology team had a very clear vision of what they wanted to achieve, which we're confident we can provide. We're excited to work with HWFRS supporting them in rolling out the latest connectivity technology, providing critical emergency services with increased management visibility and control, as well as resiliency, availability and bandwidth."

MLL has been the network services provider to HWFRS since 2017. It also provides WAN and internet services to other public sector organisations in the region, including Herefordshire and Worcestershire County Councils and the two city councils.

www.hwfire.org.uk

Huge tech discounts available from Blue Light Card

Whether it's a new phone for your spouse, a laptop to send your eldest off to university with, or a new smartwatch to help you track the gym sessions you've finally got around to, shop and save on tech essentials with Blue Light Card, the UK's number one discount provider for the emergency services, NHS, social care sector and armed forces.

While the cost-of-living soars and homes across the UK feel the squeeze more than ever, Blue Light Card is here to make things easier for the hundreds and thousands of you who have kept our communities safe this year and beyond.

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DETERRING CRIME & ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR
PROTECTING VOID & EMPTY PROPERTIES

BLOCKABOX is a premium anti arson letterbox blocker and was originally designed and developed by Andrew Pickersgill, a retired Fire Service manager, to prevent and reduce arson related incidents but over time it's use has grown, seeing police forces, local council authorities and private landlords using the product to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and to protect void or empty properties.

- Designed to fit the majority of door types and letter plate openings
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- Re-usable so can be used again and again
- 2 year manufacturer's warranty

Blockabox offer FREE samples and support to all UK Fire & Rescue Services who are interested in using this as their preferred arson reduction tool. For more information on Blockabox visit www.blockabox.co.uk

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First UK fire and rescue service invests in Dräger's new PSS® AirBoss SCBA

Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service (NRFS) has become the first UK fire and rescue service to invest in Dräger's new AirBoss Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) with telemetry, as it looks to provide its firefighters with the most advanced fire safety equipment on the market today.

Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service is one of the most diverse fire and rescue services in the UK, responding to risks from the urban south east corner of Northumberland to the remote rural areas in the north and west of the county. The service operates 16 fire stations, which are responsible for the safety of 316,028 people within an area of 5026 square kilometres.

"The PSS® AirBoss Connect provides maximum situational awareness for the firefighter."

Operationally-proven

The Northumberland team has chosen the PSS® AirBoss Connect, providing maximum situational awareness for the firefighter. Dräger provides the only operationally-proven telemetry solution in the UK, which is compliant with relevant British Standards for telemetry, delivering vital information, which is automatically communicated between the wearer of the BA set and the Entry Control Point.

NRFS has also invested in Dräger's SCBA cleaning system for cleaning breathing apparatus facemasks, which protects emergency responders from the effects of contaminants. All equipment is supported by a full service and maintenance provision.

Northumberland's SCBA and telemetry equipment investment benefits from being able to utilise an upgrade path of existing equipment, which takes advantage of the already-embedded telemetry. The contract will therefore deliver real savings of over 25% when compared to a complete system replacement. These savings have been realised in a time when efficiencies and value for money are paramount for our public services while also delivering the most advanced BA safety technology for firefighters.

Paul Hedley, Chief Fire Officer at Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service, says the investment has been driven by safety, scalability, reliability and value for money. He said, "We do everything we can to provide our employees the highest levels of protection, and this investment will also further enhance our ability to make the communities of Northumberland safer. This means better protecting firefighters from the contaminants their SCBA are exposed to, and it therefore was logical to invest in Dräger-approved systems, which will ensure effective and deep cleaning of equipment.

Backwards and future compatible

"Moreover, this kit is both backwards and future compatible, meaning it can be integrated with our existing equipment that is still operational, giving us the option to upgrade more advanced elements of the technology over time as they develop."

Dräger will continue to work as a strong partner of Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service to develop joint community initiatives across the county and will provide beneficiary and financial support where possible, supporting Northumberland in their delivery of the Prince's Trust Programme, Young Firefighters Association, youth engagement initiatives as well as providing support for under-represented and disadvantaged groups.

Dräger equipment is also British built, which Paul Hedley says provides a high level of assurance in the face of global supply chain issues. Paul said, "With Dräger's Global Centre of Excellence in our neighbouring Blyth, our supply of equipment is both local and secure, providing assurances to us as a service, as well as boosting the local and national economy."

"We do everything we can to provide our employees the highest levels of protection, and this investment will also further enhance our ability to make the communities of Northumberland safer."

(From L to R) Gary Hopper, Project Manager, Drager Safety; CFO Paul Hedley, Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service ; Matthew Bedford, MD, Drager Safety; and Liz Millward, Marketing Manager – Emergency and Rescue Services, Draeger Safety UK.

Matthew Bedford, Managing Director of Dräger Safety UK, says, "Our relationship with the service goes back more than 30 years, and we are proud to meet its desire to provide the latest, most innovative technologies that promote the health and wellbeing of its firefighters."

Improved wearer comfort

Liz Millward, Marketing Manager at Dräger Safety UK, says the new AirBoss provides the utmost in usability, safety+, serviceability and connectivity. "The kit includes the new and innovative core AirBoss features such as a carrying system with pneumatics, monitoring systems, masks and communication technologies and numerous accessories, including a Quick Connect system for rapid connection and disconnection of cylinders," she says. "The important high levels of usability and state-of-the-art ergonomics provide improved wearer comfort and mobility, complemented by a pivoting waist belt and three-step height adjustments, which address the now more diverse workforce across our fire services."

www.draeger.com

Safelocking offers bespoke access control solutions

The modern workplace, be it in the public or private sector, presents unique challenges to today's security professionals. Keeping large numbers of keys, vehicles and devices all safe, and yet accessible at all times for authorised staff, is enabled by the use of a IQ key and asset management system.

Whether it is permanent staff or temporary contractors, the footfall in secure areas can be controlled, monitored and recorded by date and time.

Access to the IQ key and asset management system is by: pin code; card; biometric entry; or dual authentication. On entering the system only, the authorised key or keys allocated to the individual can be removed and must be returned within the allocated time frame. An alarm will be triggered if the key is not returned within the timeframe, and an e-mail will be automatically sent to the administrator.

The modular design of the key panels and storage boxes allows for a custom-built and variable system, logging and tracking every key movement.

The cabinets can operate as: stand alone, simply plug and play; and can be integrated into companies' ERP and access control systems.

Fleet locking – the key to fleet control

The IQ system managing keys and assets now allows you to book vehicles to individuals or teams, with optional time restrictions. All controlled by RFID technology, you can book your vehicle by time, report mileage, damage and service history. This latest and exciting software update was launched in Autumn 2021.

The Fleet Locking software includes a secure 'one way trip' feature, which enables vehicles to be deposited at different locations that have been linked and authorised by the company fleet manager. All activities are automatically reported daily via e-mail to the administrator.

This bespoke system allows secure storage of related work items in boxes of your required size, under the key positions, in the same cabinet. This user friendly, easy to use system facilitates ease of movement in what is sometimes a rather confined space for the workforce.

Weapon storage cabinet

The weapon storage system has pressure sensors, allowing the system to recognise whether the weapon is in place.

Weighted trays

The weighted trays in the lockers are unique to the IQ cabinet. As with the normal locker, an authorised key opens the box so that the item can be removed – for example if an unloaded pistol is removed from the cabinet, but was replaced loaded into the locker, an alarm would be triggered in the cabinet and an e-mail sent to the administrator.

Keyring options include: *Smart Key Holder* – a one-time use keyring, with wired cable, which keeps your keys secured and together; and *Sealed Keyring* – a secure keyring with resealable feature, which has been designed to prevent unauthorised key removal/exchange, with cost benefit of recycling the ring using special tooling.

Whether it be simple plug and play, charging lockers, managing your fleet or a synchronised system completing the loop of your access control package, the IQ cabinet provides a comprehensive audited key and asset management system. It comes complete with two-year warranty, remote assistance, battery backup and no annual licence fee.

www.safelocking.co.uk

Letterbox innovation protects people and property from arson

East Midlands-based Blockabox supplies a range of innovative products that have been designed to protect people and property from arson and other crimes linked to anti-social behaviour.

Designed and manufactured in the UK, Blockabox is a low cost, re-usable and quick to fit, security solution that intrinsically seals letterboxes and other openings in external doors to reduce the likelihood of targeted attacks on domestic and commercial properties. Blockabox takes around five minutes to fit, causes no damage and can easily be removed when required.

Blockabox is currently contracted to supply a number of UK fire and rescue services and has been awarded a place on the NFCC National Framework Agreement, led by West Midlands Fire Service, to supply and deliver Safe and Well equipment to all UK fire and rescue services.

Andrew Pickersgill, a retired operational fire service manager, designed and developed the Blockabox product. He said, "The initial response to the solution has been phenomenal and we're receiving enquiries on a daily basis from up and down the UK, not only from the fire sector but also private and social landlords who are keen to secure and protect their stock.

"When I developed the product, I was keen to use my experience of dealing with vulnerable members of our community to design something that would be easy to use, cost effective but furthermore provide a gold standard product that actually worked. I have seen so many products that simply don't work or create more issues due to the damage and distress they cause once fitted. Blockabox addresses all of these issues in one holistic solution."

Blockabox offers free samples and support to all UK fire and rescue services who are interested in using this as their preferred arson reduction tool.

www.blockabox.co.uk
www.youtube.com/watch?v=xyKREHMjOAg
www.youtube.com/watch?v=yNbldOX1v74

Electric ambulance pioneer continues to drive for innovation

Bevan Davidson International Ltd, exhibiting under its subsidiary company name, International Ambulances, debuted the revolutionary Aceso ambulance and launched the new Integro-E electric version of the vehicle at The Emergency Services Show 2021 (ESS), which took place from 7-8 September at the NEC in Birmingham.

The vehicle displayed was a development prototype.

Phil Bevan, Founder, BDI, said, "Before we start production on a series of evaluation ambulances, we wanted to display a full-size version to paramedics, fleet managers and operators. We value their opinions and comments, especially as most have not seen the vehicle before. From the very start of this project, we have worked hand-in-hand with industry professionals in the design and development of the Aceso and Integro-E, and it has been extremely exciting that we have received so many positive and encouraging comments at the show."

Functionality and features

The Integro-E is similar in design to the International Ambulances Aceso, retaining all its functionality and features. The magic happens underneath, within the chassis and its electric drivetrain technology. To overcome the issue, which puts current electric ambulances over the 3.5-tonne weight limit, requiring the paramedic driver to pass a Category C1 driving test, Bevan Davidson International Ltd has developed a unique patented solution. By making the rear axle and chassis section a separate removable battery pack, which is considered a trailer, housing a proportion of the total battery pack, the ambulance remains under the 3.5-tonne weight limit, allowing the paramedic to tow our battery packs weighing up to 3500kg. This battery trailer is removed and automatically re-attached with a hydraulic ram, which locks the unit into the chassis prior to driving off.

The other unique feature of the vehicle is the ability to effortlessly exchange a depleted battery trailer for a fully charged one in minutes, from the driver's seat, eliminating the need for hours of recharging downtime.

This drive for innovation is continued further in the design of the ambulance, integrating a range of high-end technologies such as onboard X-Ray capabilities, air ride suspension for increased occupant comfort and advanced onboard diagnosis and connection capabilities. This will advance the capabilities of dual crew ambulances with a focus on improving patient outcomes.

"By making the rear axle and chassis section a separate removable battery pack, which is considered a trailer, housing a proportion of the total battery pack, the ambulance remains under the 3.5-tonne weight limit."

Purpose-built production facility

Following the tremendous reception the Aceso and Integro-E received at ESS, the company is now making plans to build demonstration vehicles for evaluation in Q1 and is looking to set up a purpose-built production facility in the UK. At the same time, the Aceso is being adjusted to provide multifuel options, including Hydroxy, Diesel, and LPG / CNG gas powered, which will also be ready for a market release soon. This innovation for power options has enabled the company to work towards maximising effective uptime of the service. By working to minimise maintenance, International Ambulances will help ensure these valuable assets are able to be used consistently.

"From the very start of this project, we have worked hand-in-hand with industry professionals in the design and development of the Aceso and Integro-E."

The team at International Ambulances has also recently seen some exciting developments, with David Dunn and Keith Bolton joining as Joint Managing Directors. Between them, they have over 50 years of experience in the medical field. They are aiming to accelerate the release of the evaluation vehicle for testing to enable NHS trusts, and interested companies, to get hands-on with one of the company's fully functioning ambulances, gather feedback from their paramedics, and for the team to further develop the Integro-E and Aceso. David and Keith bring a wealth of knowledge and insight into the operations and needs of the NHS and medical service providers, enabling the business to further refine the models on offer as well as optional equipment for specialised vehicles. This will culminate in an ambulance that is designed to provide the best possible working environment for paramedics and ultimately improved patient outcomes for any scenario.

https://internationalambulances.com
youtu.be/ehFnANDrkcw

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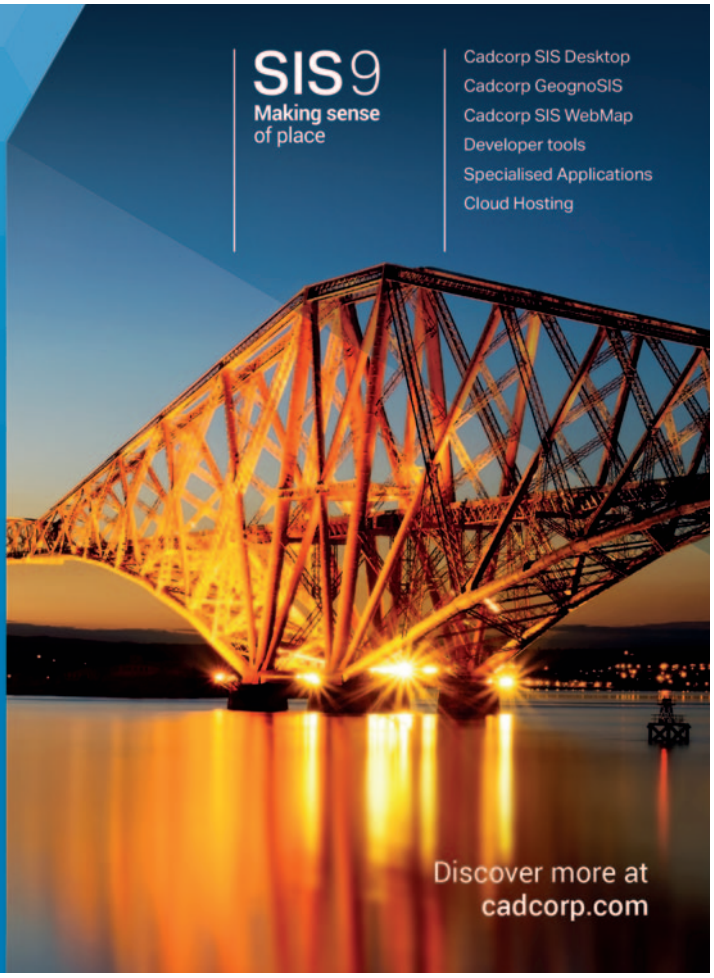

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ZX10 fully rugged tablet – Getac

1

www.getac.com/en

The ZX10 fully rugged tablet is a versatile new 10in device built around the Android 11 Operating System (OS). Available from March, the tablet's combination of Android 11 OS, Qualcomm Snapdragon 660 Mobile Platform and Adreno™ 512 GPU delivers a seamless user experience, enabling efficient workflow in a wide range of field scenarios. Dual hot-swappable batteries ensure full-shift operation, while the LumiBond® sunlight readable display (boasting 800nits of brightness) with rain and glove touch capability helps maintain productivity in a range of weather conditions. The ZX10 also has options of up to 6GB LPDDR4 RAM and 128GB storage to help customers prepare for future industry demands. An 8MP front camera and best-in-class 16MP rear camera deliver exceptionally high-quality photo/video capture, while dual integrated microphones filter out loud background noise for enhanced audio quality. Emergency first responders require real-time access to electronic patient health records (ePCRs) to deliver appropriate care and medication, often in high pressure environments. The ZX10's powerful connectivity options allow them to quickly access this information, while optional barcode/RFID and smart card readers help verify IDs, check operational procedures and ensure patient confidentiality. MIL-STD-810H and IP66 certification means it can easily withstand drops of up to six feet, shocks, rain, vibration, dust, and liquid spillages. Furthermore, an operating temperature range of -29°C to 63°C (-20°F~145°F) delivers year-round usability. With all these built-in rugged features, the ZX10 is still only 17.9mm thick and weighs just over 1kg, offering excellent portability and mobility in the field.

Data analysis software – Chorus Intelligence

2

www.nottinghamshire.police.uk

Drug dealers and serious crime offenders are likely to be taken off the streets of Nottinghamshire more quickly, thanks to the introduction of new technology that is capable of piecing together their movements and contacts. The advanced number-crunching Chorus Intelligence software, capable of processing and analysing thousands of lines of mobile phone data, has already been used in a limited capacity by Nottinghamshire Police and is now being rolled out to more investigative teams. Nottinghamshire Police will be using Chorus to help combat crime and allow analysts and detectives to work closer together. Detectives have been using mobile phone data to gather crucial evidence against suspects for many years, but the process has traditionally taken days or even weeks. Thanks to the use of the Chorus software, many hours of detectives' time can be saved and connections made to potential suspects that may otherwise have gone unnoticed.

Glucose meter technology – Nova Biomedical

3

www2.novabio.us/ukemsbasic1

StatStrip® Xpress®2 Glucose/Ketone meters offer simple, fast and accurate testing in the field. Abnormal glucose levels are frequently encountered in ambulance patients, and critically ill patients regularly exhibit confounding factors such as abnormal haematocrit levels and complex drug regimens that can cause glucose meter inaccuracy. StatStrip Glucose patented technology automatically measures and corrects for these factors. In addition, Nova Biomedical provides field testing for lactate, haemoglobin and haematocrit to assist with rapid detection of sepsis and evaluation of trauma.

LEADER MIX A 1000 foam proportioner – LEADER

4

www.leader-group.company

The ideal autonomous foam proportioner for interventions on class A fires, the LEADER MIX A 1000 is calibrated for class A additives (foam concentrates and wetting-foaming agents). Designed and patented by the LEADER company's R&D team, its unique operation is based upon a powerful venturi system that allows it to precisely aspirate the quantity of additive requested (0.3%, 0.5% or 1%) and to mix it with water. Just turn the selector to instantly change the concentration rate. The LEADER MIX A 1000 adapts, in real time, the amount of foam concentrate to be aspirated according to flow variations. It operates over a wide flow range, from 200 to 1000l/min, for a pressure between five bar and 16 bar. Unlike electronic foam proportioners, which require a power supply and regular maintenance, the LEADER MIX A 1000 operates without electronics and without a power supply: it is a 100% mechanical system that is reliable and autonomous. Its robust construction, as well as its extremely compact and light format (16kg), allow it to be easily installed in fire fighting vehicles.

Bronto5+ control system – Bronto Skylift

5

https://brontoskylift.com

The soul of Bronto Skylift's HLA-range aerial platforms, the Bronto+ control system, has been upgraded to the company's most advanced control system, the 5th generation Bronto5+. For operators this means faster levelling, easier control of working lights, light groups and cage load, bigger displays with better visibility (even in sunlight), easier navigation, more chassis information available on screens, integrated help texts and quick manuals, as well as resistive touch screens. For the fire fighting sector there is also an integrated fire pump screen with improved possibilities to operate the pump. The Bronto5+ sends all operational data to Bronto's fleet management tool, the Skyliftfleet portal, where owners, operators, fleet managers and the service can easily check and optimise daily usage, performance and plan preventive maintenance cycles. Skyliftfleet also stores the service history, important manuals and other information about each unit for easy access.

Research shows critical role of the helicopter emergency medical service in the COVID-19 response

Research by Air Ambulance Charity Kent Surrey Sussex (KSS) and the University of Surrey demonstrates the critical role of the Helicopter Emergency Medical Service (HEMS) and South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (SECAmb) played at the frontline of the COVID-19 response.

Alongside its primary service of providing 24/7 pre-hospital emergency care for the 4.5 million people who live in its region, since April 2020, KSS, in partnership with SECAmb, has extended its service to include the transfer of patients between Intensive Care Units (ICUs) in and beyond Kent, Surrey and East and West Sussex in order to alleviate pressure on the NHS during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since the start of 2020, KSS has completed 164 critical care transfers and has continued to deliver its primary service, without interruption, throughout.

Now, the charity – which relies on public donations and fundraising for the £15.2m it costs each year to operate its service – has conducted a retrospective study and case review of its first 50 transfers, and the findings show how the transfer of seriously ill patients, including those with COVID-19, by HEMS services can be achieved safely with specific planning, protocols and precautions in place.

"The KSS study describes an operational framework that could be useful for other emergency medical services tasked with setting up this service."

Working collaboratively

The findings also highlight how a charity like KSS can work collaboratively in partnership with SECAmb to deliver critical services to support a regional ambulance service and the wider NHS and indicate how regional planning enables even greater patient benefit.

The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged health systems across the globe. In particular, a major demand has been placed on critical care facilities. A significant proportion of COVID-19 patients require treatment with critical care interventions, including ventilatory support. This unprecedented demand has led to ICU resources being put under significant strain on both regional and national levels.

Despite measures taken, the ambulance service and critical care capacity in many hospitals remain under significant pressure, and hospitals are experiencing acute demand and have needed to request critical care transfers to other ICUs.

The situation reached a peak between December 2020 and March 2021 when the Alpha variant rapidly spread through the South East of England – the region which KSS and SECAmb serve.

Pre-hospital critical care teams like KSS – whose senior clinicians are experienced in providing complex multi-organ support in an out-of-hospital setting – were asked at very short notice, in partnership with SECAmb, to increase their capacity and adapt to being able to transfer seriously ill patients, often over large distances.

Standard Operating Procedure

Within days of being tasked by the NHS to transfer intensive care COVID-19 positive patients, KSS had developed a Standard Operating Procedure to enable this extension to its service.

A Duty Clinical Manager and on-call Transfer Consultant – with experience in both pre-hospital emergency medicine and current ICU COVID-19 care – oversaw each transfer request, which, due to the complexity and instability of these critically ill patients, needed to be considered on a case-by-case basis. The highest risk transfers were escalated to the charity's Medical Director for further review and final decision-making.

Transfers were carried out by KSS's Duty Transfer Crew, comprising a Transfer HEMS Doctor and a Transfer Paramedic. All Transfer HEMS Doctors were additionally Consultants in Anaesthesia or Intensive Care Medicine, with recent or on-going experience of caring for COVID-19 patients in ICUs.

A training model was developed and implemented, and all transfer team members undertook training in Critical Care COVID-19 Transfer Medicine.

Protective measures

The highly infectious nature of COVID-19 required specific protective measures to be taken to safely transfer these patients, to minimise the risk to HEMS crews. Escorting clinicians need to wear ICU-level PPE throughout, and familiarity between members of the team was shown to be very important given the potential challenges of operating in this equipment.

Although the majority of transfers to date have been by road using a SECAmb dedicated transfer ambulance, the charity's AW169 helicopter was adapted to protect the pilots from COVID-19 infection risk and has also been used for transfers. KSS was one of the first air ambulance charities to transfer patients by air.

The KSS study describes an operational framework that could be useful for other emergency medical services tasked with setting up this service.

Dr Duncan Bootland, Medical Director at KSS, said, "The transfer of critical ill patients, be it from the scene of an accident or between hospitals, requires high levels of clinical ability allied to strict and high standards of care. All critically ill patients, and particularly those being treated for COVID-19 infection, who need to be moved between hospitals, present challenges in terms of ensuring that the standard of care they receive is maintained at every point of the transfer. Our team worked tirelessly, providing training and education to our staff and rapidly creating standard operating procedures and the highest levels of clinical processes, to ensure that the levels of critical care alongside the levels of comfort and care were matched during every step of each patient's journey.

"We are very proud that we were able to bring our experience and high levels of clinical care that we have developed over many years in order to support the NHS and our community when it was most needed. This paper describes the efforts of a wide group of professionals at KSS over an unprecedented time in healthcare."

David Welch, CEO of KSS, said, "Our healthcare service continues to face unprecedented challenges, and now more than ever it is vital that we work together to ensure the best possible outcomes for patients within the communities we serve. This study highlights the critical role of charities like KSS working in partnership with SECAmb and the NHS to ensure we achieve this.

"In 2021 we experienced the highest demand for our service in our 32-year history, responding to 3051 incidents, a 19% increase on the previous year.

"My sincere thanks goes to all our supporters and volunteers, whose generosity means that we can be there for the most seriously ill patients in their hour of need, and to our extraordinary crews, who have been operating at the frontline of the COVID-19 pandemic, delivering life-saving, critical care across our region 24/7. Their expertise, determination and dedication are an inspiration."

www.aakss.org.uk

The study has been published by the Scandinavian Journal of Trauma, Resuscitation and Emergency Medicine (SJTREM): https://sjtrem.biomedcentral.com/track/pdf/10.1186/s13049-022-00994-7.pdf

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