

**RECORD OF DECISION**

**TITLE: Dispatch Communications Server**

**Ref: PCC/D/2021/43**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Dispatch Communications Server (DCS) is a nationally mandated technology that links our Command and Control system (SAAB Safe) to Airwave. The operational impact of not deploying a suitable DCS solution will result in losing operational critical voice services within the OCC resulting in the inability to communicate with Officers and resources in the field. The transition is required to be completed by August 2022. This proposal enables that deadline to be met.

**PROPOSAL**

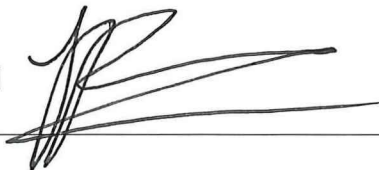
That a capital allocation of £395,000 is made in 2022/23 to enable this work.

Revenue costs will be found from existing revenue budgets

**APPROVAL OF  
West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner**

I hereby approve the above proposal.

Signed



## PART 1 – NON-CONFIDENTIAL/EXEMPT FACTS AND FIGURES

### SUPPORTING REPORT

An upgrade of the force's various SAFE environment platforms is required to support the DCS capabilities. In order to conduct the transition to a fully digital DCS solution integrated with Saab Safe OCC we will need place an order with SAAB by the end of 2021 to secure their resource and delivery timeframe. In addition new DS infrastructure (hardware and servers) will be required to support the solution. No provision has been made for this work to date.

In 2017 Airwave gave notice that they planned to cease support of analogue Centracom and Vortex (CCI port) technologies. These technologies are end of life and are to be decommissioned and removed as by quarter 4 of 2022. As Centracom and Vortex (CCI port) technologies can no longer be supported Airwave are undertaking a national upgrade of the connection technology to a new I.P based solution Dispatch Communications Server (DCS). Following a pilot deployment Motorola have confirmed the required DCS digital migration path away from these older technologies for all ICCS providers nationally. All Public Safety industry Airwave integrators have been required to undertake investigation and subsequent development to support the new Airwave connectivity Dispatch Communications Server (DCS) standard. The OCC currently receive all Airwave services via the SAAB Safe Tactical module using this older technology.

Saab have confirmed the required West Mercia DCS technical solution and target timeline for delivery after the current Saab Safe version 6 upgrade. The DCS solution also requires the delivery of Saab's Radio Module to replace the current Tactical module. This is to align all current Saab Safe users on a single technology platform simplifying delivery and support.

Without this upgrade the West Mercia OCC will lose Airwave connectivity from October 2022 and the following mission critical functionality:

- Airwave Radio within SAAB
- Emergency Button Activation
- Officer Location
- Ambient Listening
- The ability to patch Talk groups

This DCS solution delivery is essential prior to the Airwave technology (CCI Ports) removal. All internal technical resource with the required skills and expertise are currently within the OCC programme, Digital Services or working on the v6 Saab Upgrade.

This is a nationally mandated solution and the operational impact of not deploying a suitable DCS solution will result in losing operational critical voice services within the OCC due to Airwave removal of Centracom and Vortex (CCI port technology) resulting in the inability to communicate with Officers and resources in the field, potentially leading to adverse national publicity and loss of public confidence.

Funding required supports the 3<sup>rd</sup> party IT Hardware and services and 3<sup>rd</sup> party professional services [provided by Saab].

This project will realise the following benefits:

- Delivery of the project aligned to the proposed Saab window for delivery in 2022 and as part of West Mercia's digital roadmap.
- Reduction of the annual Saab support charge through the decommissioning of the SAFE Airwave module.
- Further prepares West Mercia for the ESN Functionality upgrade programme

## STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS

This decision supports the following element(s) of the Safer West Mercia Plan:

- Putting Victims and Survivors First     Building a More Secure West Mercia  
 Reforming West Mercia                       Reassuring West Mercia's Communities

The decision supports this/ these objective(s) through the following:

### **Reforming West Mercia**

Improving technology and working practices to enable roles to be carried out more effectively whilst maintaining pace with associated national programmes

Investing in critical infrastructure and equipment, to enable WMP to continue to run an effective communications system with its officers and staff

## FINANCIAL COMMENTS

In order to conduct the West Mercia transition to a fully digital DCS solution integrated with Saab Safe OCC the Force needs to raise Purchase Orders with SAAB to the value of £220k to secure both Professional Services resource and the delivery timeframe. Additional supporting Digital Services infrastructure will be needed at a cost of £175k (57 servers and associated hardware), £54k server licences and £62k ongoing support and maintenance costs.

The mobilisation of West Mercia skilled resources will be required at a projected worst case costs of £197k over 5 years to support the delivery of Saab's DCS solution into the OCC. Full costings and ongoing maintenance costs are set out in the Part 2 Report.

## TREASURER COMMENTS

The funding bid has been included in the 2022/23 capital programme, for inclusion in the full budget. It is expected that works will not commence until the 2022/23 financial year.

The revenue cost for the additional service licences and support of £580k will be offset by cashable savings from reduced Airwave and SAAB licence of £326k, giving a net impact of £254k. There are other non-cashable savings which will also

be achieved. Budget provision has been made within the 2022/23 force budget for these costs

The proposal is affordable within the proposed budget for 2022/23 and beyond and ensures ongoing operational effectiveness.

### **LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS**

By virtue of schedule 11, paragraph 14 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 the Police and Crime Commissioner may do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the exercise of the functions of commissioner That includes: entering into contracts and other agreements (whether legally binding or not) and acquiring and disposing of property (including land).

### **PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION**

Information in this form is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI Act) and other legislation. Part 1 of this form will be made available on the West Mercia Commissioner's website Any facts and advice that should not be made automatically available on request are not included in Part 1 but instead in a separate Part 2 report

### **OFFICER APPROVAL**

**Chief Executive Officer**

Signature  Date 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2021