JUSTICE COMMITTEE

AGENDA

23rd Meeting, 2014 (Session 4)

Tuesday 19 August 2014

The Committee will meet at 11.00 am in the David Livingstone Room (CR6).

1. **Decision on taking business in private:** The Committee will decide whether to take item 3 in private.

2. **Police and Fire Service Reform:** The Committee will take evidence from—

    Derek Penman, HM Inspector of Constabulary in Scotland;

    Andy Cowie, Assistant Inspector of Constabulary in Scotland;

    Steven Torrie, HM Chief Inspector of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

3. **Work programme:** The Committee will consider its work programme.

Irene Fleming
Clerk to the Justice Committee
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The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
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The papers for this meeting are as follows—

<u>Agenda item 2</u>

Paper by the clerk   J/S4/14/23/1

Private paper   J/S4/14/23/2 (P)

<u>Agenda item 3</u>

Private paper   J/S4/14/23/3 (P)

Justice Committee

23rd Meeting, 2014 (Session 4), Tuesday 19 August 2014

Police and Fire Service Reform

Note by the clerk

Purpose

1.   The purpose of this paper is to provide background information to inform the evidence session with HM Inspector of Constabulary in Scotland and HM Chief Inspector of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service on their inspection and thematic work in relation to the first year of the single fire and rescue and police services.

2.   The Committee has received a joint submission from HM Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland (HMICS) and HM Fire Service Inspectorate (HMFSI) in advance of the session. That submission is available in Annexe A.

HM Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland

3.   HMICS was established under the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 and has wide ranging powers to look into the "state, effectiveness and efficiency" of both Police Scotland and the Scottish Police Authority, including Forensic Services.

4.   HMICS also has a statutory duty to ensure that the Chief Constable and the Authority meet their obligations in terms of best value and continuous improvement. If necessary, HMICS can be directed by Scottish Ministers to look into anything relating to the Authority or Police Scotland as Ministers consider appropriate. HMICS also has an established role in providing professional advice and guidance on policing in Scotland.

5.   On 2 May 2014 HMICS published a Corporate Strategy for 2014-17 and a Scrutiny Plan for 2014-15. These and other publications, including HMICS thematic inspections, are available here: http://www.hmics.org/publications.

HM Fire Service Inspectorate

6.   The role and purpose of Her Majesty's Fire Service Inspectorate in Scotland (HMFSI) is defined by the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005, which was substantially amended by the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 which came into effect on 1 April 2013.

7.   HMFSI exists to provide independent, risk based and proportionate professional inspection of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service. Its purpose is to give assurance to the Scottish public and Scottish Ministers that the Service is working in an efficient and effective way, and to promote improvement in the Service. Through this, the Inspectorate provides external quality assurance to the Service, and provides support to the Service in delivering its functions. In carrying out its

functions, the Inspectorate has regard to the principles of public focus, independence, proportionality, transparency and accountability.

8.   As with the police inspectorate, HMFSI co-ordinates its work in co-operation with a number of key partners including Audit Scotland and the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman. In light of the technical expertise that exists within the Inspectorate, and its relationship with Scottish Ministers as described in the 2012 Act, the Inspectorate has agreed to provide advice to Ministers on request.

9.   Further information on the work of HMFSI, including its Business Plan, is available here: http://www.scotland.gov.uk/about/public-bodies/HMFSI/OurWork.

Petitions PE 1510 and PE 1511 on Control Rooms

10.   Petitions PE 1510 and PE 1511 on police and fire control rooms were referred to the Committee on 3 June. Copies of the petitions are available in Annexe B. The Committee subsequently sought written submissions, including from emergency planning authorities on the terms of both petitions. The Committee has received nine submissions, all of which are available in Annexe C.

11.   The Committee agreed to consider the issues raised by both petitions during this one-off evidence session.

12.   The Committee will consider all live petitions again at a future meeting and will decide what further action to take on PE 1510 and PE 1511 at that point. In doing so it will take into consideration the written submissions received, and the oral evidence of the inspectors.

Recommendation

13.   **The Committee is invited to note the contents of this paper.**

**Justice Committee
August 2014**

ANNEXE A

Written submission from HMICS and HMFSI

Background

The Justice Committee has requested a one-off evidence session with HMICS and HMFSI on Tuesday 19 August 2014. The purpose of the session is to discuss inspection and thematic work in relation to the first year of the single services and to explore common themes arising from the work of both inspectorates.

Both inspectorates have undertaken a number of thematic inspections[1] and pursued regular engagement with police and fire services and their respective Authorities. Each inspectorate maintains a scrutiny risk assessment which when combined with stakeholder consultation informs our future work programmes. Both inspectorates maintain and publish annual scrutiny plans, which are kept under regular review.

There are a number of **<u>shared key messages</u>** and inspection findings which can be highlighted from our work over the past year:

1.   Reform

On the whole, our judgement is that the reform process has been effective to date. This is reflected in the continuity of front line services from 1st April 2013, with minimal direct impact on the services provided to communities. Our assessment is that both services are operationally effective and better placed to deal with major events than the legacy services. However, the creation of the new services was only the beginning of a major change programme and challenges remain in terms of the medium to long term <u>sustainability</u>. Both services and their respective authorities are aware of this and plans are being developed to address them. The financial challenge still remains and although the targeted savings have been achieved to date, with no discernible impact on service delivery, there is a need for both services to be clear about future structures and have transition plans that deliver sustainable savings.

In terms of the benefits of reform: *(i) to protect and improve local services; (ii) to create more equal access to specialist support and national capacity; and (iii) to strengthen the connection between services and communities,*[2] we have taken the opportunity during our inspections to reflect on the extent to which the reform objectives are being achieved. We have found early evidence that there is more equal access to specialist resources across the country – which is exhibited in our work around Roads Policing and the now routine mobilising of specialist FRS assets across what were previously geographical limits. There is also early evidence in the production of local plans, that the connection with local communities is being

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[1] HMFSI – Equal Access to National Capacity – May 2014, Overview of the SFRS – November 2013 HMFSI & HMICS – Development of local plans and arrangements for local scrutiny & engagement – May 2013.
HMICS – Custody – August 2014, Roads Policing – July 2014, Legacy Recommendations - CONTEST Prepare – June 2014, Incident & Crime Reporting – December 2013,
[2] Scottish Parliament, *Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Bill: Policy Memorandum* (2012).

developed, although we feel there is further work to be done in this area. We consider that the legislative framework supports both national and local delivery, although effective <u>localism</u> and genuine engagement with communities will be a critical success factor for both services moving forward. This is particularly evident in terms of national decisions which impact on local communities.

We plan to undertake further inspection work which focuses specifically on the local delivery of services in order to more fully assess how these have been protected and improved. HMICS has recently introduced a new rolling programme of local policing inspection, and will shortly report on the pilot inspection of Fife.

2. Change Management

Whilst front line services have been maintained, the technical challenges of amalgamating a number of organisations together continues to absorb a great deal of management capacity and consequently allows less time for strategic planning, innovation and improvement. There continue to be issues in developing workforce planning, ICT integration, availability of effective management and performance information, consistent application of policy and the development of effective scrutiny. It is our opinion that both Police Scotland and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service are still at an early stage of a significant programme of transformational change. Some of that change will take time to achieve, and only once implemented will it be possible to fully assess whether the intended benefits of reform have been fully realised. HMICS has committed to scrutiny of Police Scotland and the Scottish Police Authority around their implementation and governance of the corporate strategy and supporting plans.

3. Leadership and Governance

In November 2013, HMIFRS made comment about the importance of effective working between the Fire Board and the Strategic Leadership Team. This has not been explicitly followed up to date but relationships continue to be a matter of interest in the Inspectorate's risk assessment.

Early in 2013, HMICS was proactive in engaging with the SPA and Police Scotland in addressing governance issues which were affecting relationships. These issues were also highlighted by Audit Scotland[3] and have since significantly improved. HMICS is about to undertake a Continuous Improvement Review of the SPA in respect of leadership and governance.

We think that it is inevitable that strong relationships will take time to develop and those bodies with roles which include supporting, promoting and challenging services, will always require to seek an effective balance. That said, there is now a need to strengthen national and local <u>scrutiny</u> arrangements for both services, encourage constructive dialogue and develop a shared understanding across Scotland in terms of individual roles, responsibilities and boundaries for the services, their authorities and scrutiny bodies.

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[3] Audit Scotland 'Police Reform – Update 2013' – November 2013
http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/docs/central/2013/nr_131114_police_reform.pdf

4. Service Delivery

In the HMFSI May report '*Equal Access to National Capacity*'[4], the fragility of the volunteer and RDS service across Scotland was particularly emphasised. 85% of Scotland's fire stations are wholly or partly dependant on RDS or volunteer crews and their long-term sustainability is therefore crucial to the success of the Service. The Inspectorate intends to follow up on this issue and hopes to work with the SFRS on its review project.

HMICS has taken the opportunity in a series of thematic reports to comment positively on the services being provided by Police Scotland, as well as make recommendations for improvement. In *Roads Policing*[5] we have asked Police Scotland to examine the extent to which target setting and performance management processes drive operational behaviours and assess their impact in terms of delivering outcomes and maintaining public satisfaction and confidence. In Custody[6], we made 15 recommendations and identified 39 areas for improvement, highlighting in particular the need for Police Scotland to finalise the Custody Estate Strategy and work in partnership with the Scottish Police Authority and Scottish Government to prioritise investment in the custody estate.

HMICS has also included some capacity for Audit and Assurance reviews within our annual scrutiny plan and has committed to specific scrutiny activity around Stop and Search, Crime Recording and Armed Policing. HMICS also has a programme of collaborative inspections in areas where Police Scotland deliver services in partnership with other agencies, such as Children's' Services and MAPPA arrangements.

In terms of Call Handling, both inspectorates recognise the need to rationalise legacy structures. Whilst these structures worked well for legacy forces and have been supported by dedicated and professional staff, the proposals to develop new structures for the new services are necessary in terms of both efficiency and operational effectiveness. It is a matter for the respective authorities to determine the optimum structures and have these supported by appropriate business cases and implementation plans. While both inspectorates will have an interest in this process, our primary focus is on service delivery and ensuring that communities and front-line staff receive an equivalent or improved service from the new call handling structures. In our *Legacy Recommendations Review*[7] HMICS took the opportunity to recommend that Police Scotland create and publish details of the service that members of the public can expect to receive when they call the police and publish performance information.

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[4] http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0045/00451034.pdf
[5] http://www.hmics.org/sites/default/files/publications/HMICS%20-%20%20Thematic%20Inspection%20of%20Road%20Policing.pdf
[6] http://www.hmics.org/sites/default/files/publications/Thematic%20Inspection%20of%20Police%20Custody%20Arrangements%20in%20Scotland.pdf
[7] http://www.hmics.org/sites/default/files/publications/HMICS%20Review%20of%20Legacy%20Inspection%20Recommendations%20July%202014.pdf

5.   Major Event Planning

Both inspectorates reported on the preparations for CG2014 and stated that we are content with the way the planning process was managed. In our review of CONTEST Prepare[8], HMICS concluded that Police Scotland, working with others, is prepared to respond to and recover from a terrorist incident. There are a number of other significant events which have been handled professionally by both services, including the Clutha Helicopter crash, Glasgow School of Art fire and T-in-the-Park. We are aware that forthcoming events such as the Ryder Cup have also been subject to rigorous planning. We consider that the single services have strengthened capability and capacity around major events in Scotland

6.   Engagement

We have found that partners in the wider justice, community safety, public and voluntary sectors are positive about their relationships with the new national services. They have welcomed the single point of contact that a national service has provided and thought this led to more effective and efficient decision making.

7.   Conclusion

Both inspectorates conclude that the creation of the single Police and Fire Services has been effective to date and that both services are operationally stronger than their legacy services. However, the reform process has only started and there needs to be an ongoing focus on *sustainability*, *localism* and *scrutiny* to ensure the medium to long term success and to fully realise the anticipated benefits of reform.

We hope the Committee find this briefing useful and we look forward to providing further information at our evidence session.

Derek Penman   Steven Torrie
HMICS   HMIFRS
13 August 2014

For further information

Our scrutiny plans for 2014/15 can be found at:
http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0044/00449731.pdf
http://www.hmics.org/sites/default/files/publications/SCRUTINY%20PLAN%202014-15%201.0%20FINAL.pdf

HMICS Corporate Strategy 2014/17 can be found at:
http://www.hmics.org/sites/default/files/publications/CORPORATE%20STRATEGY%202014-17%20v1.0%20FINAL.pdf

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[8]http://www.hmics.org/sites/default/files/publications/HMICS%20Thematic%20Review%20of%20CONTEST%20Prepare%202013_1.pdf

ANNEXE B

Petitions PE 1510 and PE 1511

PE1510: Petition by Jody Curtis on behalf of Emergency Service and Non-Emergency Service Call Centres calling on the Scottish Parliament to undertake a committee inquiry into the closure of Police, Fire, and Non-Emergency Service Centres north of Dundee. In particular, the major concerns raised have been the loss of public knowledge; public safety; officers being off the street and overwhelmed in managing the increased workload this would create.

PE1511: Petition by Laura Ross calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to review the decision made by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service to close the Inverness Control Room.

ANNEXE C

Responses to call for evidence on PE 1510 and PE 1511

WRITTEN SUBMISSION FROM JODY CURTIS

I've just received a further email from Aberdeen's FOI department with a short list of further system failures resulting in vital applications to become temporarily unavailable. On both occasions, within the past 12 months, the system which failed, known as STORM, is the system which call handlers use to inform and allocate officers to incidents. This ranges from immediate response (Grade 1/2) calls, through to calls with a lower Grade which require a response time of up to 3 days. Whilst this system is absolutely vital in getting officers to incidents as quickly as possible, it also ensures the safety of police and public as the incident is constantly updated on STORM as it occurs.

When these failures happen, the local knowledge of staff, be it geographical, recognition of a name (eg a repeat offender with a history of violence towards officers), familiarity of local police officers etc, becomes absolutely vital in maintaining efficiency and safety.

Furthermore, the report highlights a power cut at Bucksburn Police Station which resulted in the loss off systems such as STORM, ASPIRE and the Mapping System, to name a few.

Jody Curtis
19 June 2014

SUPPLEMENTARY WRITTEN SUBMISSION FROM JODY CURTIS

Thank you for sending me the agenda for this coming Tuesday's meeting.

I've just realised that I had overlooked your email about not receiving the FOI document from Lewis MacDonald's office re system failures.

I've attached it and hope that it is not too late to submit as evidence.

My apologies for any inconvenience caused at this late date.

Jody Curtis
15 August 2014

Annexe

Extract of FOI response from Police Scotland to Lewis Macdonald MSP's Office

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (SCOTLAND) ACT 2002

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION:

SYSTEM FAILURES – AREA CONTROL ROOMS AND SERVICES CENTRES

I refer to your email of 8 May 2014 regarding the above which has been handled in accordance with the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 and write to provide the response.

For ease of reference, your request is replicated below:
1 List the dates and locations of any computer system failures in Police Scotland Area Control Rooms since April 2013
2 List the dates and locations of any computer system failures in Police Scotland Service Centres since April 2013

We clarified that due to the wide nature of your original request and the term "computer system failures" your focus was on instances where serious technological failures meant that systems or parts of systems failed resulting in business continuity measures being relied upon.

On that basis, I have listed the recorded incidents together with dates, location, system(s) affected and the duration of the failure in each case:

Date	Location	System(s) Affected	Duration
03.05.13	Dumfries SC	Customer Relationship Management	4 hours 25 mins
22.05.13	Stirling ACR	Command and Control	33 mins
18.09.13	Dumfries SC	Customer Relationship Management	44 mins
14.10.13	Motherwell ACR/SC	Command and Control	1 hour 28 mins
07.11.13	Motherwell ACR/SC Helen Street ACR/SC Motherwell ACR/SC	Command and Control	34 mins

I trust that the information available is of assistance and should you require anything further regarding this matter please contact me, quoting the reference number given.

If you are not satisfied with the way in which your request has been dealt with, you are entitled in the first instance and within 40 working days of receiving this letter to request a review of the decision made by the Force. Should you wish to do so, contact details are as above.

Once informed of the review decision, if you are still not satisfied, then you are entitled to apply to the Scottish Information Commissioner within six months for a decision. Contact details are: Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner, Kinburn Castle, Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, Fife, KY16 9DS, telephone 01334 464610.

Freedom of Information Officer
Information Management
Police Scotland

WRITTEN SUBMISSION FROM ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL

Thank you for your invitation to provide evidence in relation to the above. Aberdeenshire Council's response is detailed below. In particular the response focuses on the emergency planning issues as requested.

1   Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

There was a complete lack of meaningful consultation on the closure of the Control Room in Aberdeen.

2   Police Scotland

Minimal genuine consultation on the issue of control room (999) and service centre (non 999) closures was undertaken.

3   General

3.1   No effort was made to engage with Category 1 responders to outline and discuss proposals before closure announced as a fait accompli. We have separately raised our concerns in the process adopted, and on some of the decisions, with the SFRS and Police Scotland.

3.2   Amongst other concerns are doubts about call centre operatives elsewhere in the country understanding local dialect and place names in the North East and misdirecting appliances leading to delays in responding.

3.3   The North East is the focus for a number of key pieces of critical national infrastructure related to the oil and gas industry and it is critical to the UK economy that any incident related to these is tackled without delay.

3.4   The rural parts of the North East are served by a limited number of key routes and local awareness of available routes at any time is critical to avoiding response delays.

3.5   The North East is affected by weather related road closures every winter and close liaison between local control rooms and local authority roads staff ensures that roads available are known to emergency services at any time.

3.6   It would appear that the decisions by both Police Scotland and SFRS were based largely on the savings to be made by reducing the number of centres. The lack of any control rooms or service centres in the area of the country with largest concentration of critical infrastructure appears to be more related to the high cost of living in the North East, rather than a more strategic approach.

3.7   Each service appears to be progressing in isolation rather than truly integrating emergency management such as considering joint control rooms in each area of the country (eg based on the former police force areas giving 8 across the country as opposed to the proposed 9 (3 police,3 fire and 3 ambulance).

I trust these comments are of interest and if there is any further information or input we can provide please get in touch.

Colin D Mackenzie
Chief Executive
24 July 2014

WRITTEN SUBMISSION FROM COMHAIRLE NAN EILEAN SIAR

1.   Thank you for inviting us to comment in the Comhairle's capacity as an Emergency Planning Authority on the issues raised by petitions PE1510 and PE1511, to be considered by the Committee on 19 August 2014.

2.   Following Police and Fire Reform in Scotland in 2013, it was inevitable that change would be necessary in the interests of the new National Services. Our expectations as stakeholders were that the framework for managing change would be evidence-based and without any diminution in the quality and delivery of services to our communities.

3.   The decision to reduce the number of Fire and Police Control Rooms across Scotland has undoubtedly raised concerns in communities in relation to the future delivery of Emergency Services in the Highlands and Islands. The common underlying reasons for resisting change are lack of consultation, lack of understanding of the need to change and a belief that the proposed changes "go against" the core values of the organisation(s).

4.   The Comhairle believes that it is essential that any changes do not have an impact on local control of our own environment and that principles of subsidiarity are adhered to in planning, preparing and responding to emergencies in our Communities. It is acknowledged that the North of Scotland, in terms of infrastructure, has some way to go in securing robust energy, voice and data connections. With no Control Room presence north of Dundee, this increases the risk to remote and rural communities relying on "virtual centres".

5.   As an Emergency Planning Authority, the Comhairle seeks clarity on two distinct issues: the resilience issue regarding the retention of control rooms in the North, and retention of the capability to coordinate a major emergency in the North. Call handling and dispatch arrangements should not be confused with "command and control" functions.

6.   The Scottish Government announced as part of its "closures plan" that Inverness would retain the capability of managing major emergencies in the North, develop an enhanced function as a "National Command Base" and provide a Police National Computer service to front line officers nationally. It would be helpful to know further details of the proposals for staffing the National Command Base; for example, will a commander at "gold" level be located there?

7.   The Comhairle is concerned that Police Scotland does not appear to have provided any further details of the reasons for the decision regarding the Inverness

Control Centre. The centralised resilience "Hub" model proposed by Scottish Government, aligned to the remaining three control rooms, is a different concept. The Comhairle's preference would be to seek to create solutions for our remote and rural areas, starting with proven and successful local response arrangements and enhancing these, rather than further centralising Command and Control functions to locations less familiar with the geography, circumstances and challenges which exist in the North of Scotland.

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar
18 July 2014

WRITTEN SUBMISSION FROM POLICE SCOTLAND

Public petition PE01510 by Jody Curtis on behalf of Emergency Service and Non Emergency Service Call Centres

Petition

Calling on the Scottish Parliament to undertake a committee inquiry into the closure of Police, Fire, and Non-Emergency Service Centres north of Dundee. In particular, the major concerns raised have been the loss of public knowledge; public safety; officers being off the street and overwhelmed in managing the increased workload this would create.

1. Introduction

1.1. A core element to the delivery of policing is the capacity to receive Contact calls from the public. The eight forces that were merged to form Police Scotland jointly received circa 600,000 emergency (999) calls and 3,600,000 non emergency (101) calls per annum.   It is also crucial for the Police Service to be able to Command and Control the response to both these calls from the public and other events and incidents that come to attention of officers and staff. These Contact, Command and Control (C3) services were previously delivered by the eight forces through separate arrangements using varied processes and ICT systems.

1.2. As a result of this history, on formation on 1 April 2013, Police Scotland had nine Contact Centres receiving calls from the public and ten Control Rooms managing the police response. Each force had one Control Room and one Contact Centre with the exception of Strathclyde which operated three Control Rooms and two Contact Centres.   This arrangement provided Strathclyde with business continuity resilience in that if one site became inoperable then the C3 functions could fallback to the other locations: for the other areas there remains a requirement to maintain fallback facilities for use in the event of loss of service at the prime locations.

1.3. Contact, Command and Control (C3) Division, which has responsibility for this business area, engages a total of 1461 personnel, comprising 362 officers and 1099 staff (actual head count figures in April 2014). The total people budget for the Division is circa £56 million per annum.

2.   The Case for Change

2.1. It was apparent from the introduction of Police Scotland that there was a pressing need to integrate and remodel the provision of C3 services to ensure that Police Scotland, as a single national service, can meet its responsibility to ensure parity of service and access to expertise and support right across the country. There is a clear responsibility to ensure that members of the public who telephone the police, regardless of their location, have their call answered promptly and politely, and that the most appropriate police resources are commanded to attend and controlled effectively to secure the best outcome in the circumstances. It would not be possible to achieve this intention with eight separate C3 arrangements that use technology and procedures that cannot inter-operate.

2.2. By introducing a single operating model, Police Scotland will be able to enhance the structures, technologies and processes inherited from the eight forces as these now represent significant barriers to the flexible deployment of officers operating within a single national service. Specific examples of the operational difficulties now being experienced include:

- A particular vulnerability is that some sites operate without the benefit of a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system. If introduced on a national basis, a CRM system would enable C3 staff to immediately see all previous contacts and, as a result, better identify a person's needs, level of vulnerability and the response required.
- Control rooms using different and separate systems are unsighted as to the availability and location of operational units located outwith their own control area even though they may be geographically close to an incident.
- Due to the number of sites in operation, and the use of different and partitioned systems, the co-ordination of an operational response across the boundaries associated with the previous forces is difficult.
- Differing systems and technologies inhibit sites from supporting each other to provide the best response to surges levels of incidents occurring within a particular area. The present 'silo' arrangement leads to variation in service levels and to smaller sites in particular being overwhelmed by the demand associated with larger or concurrent incidents.
- The quality of service to the public can, on occasion, be significantly reduced as a result of the number of incoming calls overwhelming the telephony and staff numbers in smaller Contact centres.

2.3. It is also important to acknowledge that there are significant opportunities to secure savings by reducing the number of buildings from which C3 services are provided; maintaining premises and ICT at 17 locations is much more costly than would be the case by operating from fewer sites.

2.4. There is clear evidence from industry and other emergency services that there are opportunities to provide an enhanced service to the public that requires less staff if fewer but larger sites are operated. Efficiencies are achieved with larger teams as a result of removing the requirement to sustain resilience in staffing at multiple sites to address leave, training, illness, other abstractions as well as the need to be in a

position to deal with the, often unpredictable, surges in demand that characterise policing.

2.5. To address the requirement to interoperate and deliver efficiencies to allow local policing to be sustained in a context of financial austerity, an integration and remodelling project was initiated.

3.   The Change Process

3.1. Following sustained examination of the existing arrangements and approaches by other emergency services and relevant industries, a report was placed before the Scottish Police Authority on 30 January 2014 proposing a Strategic Direction for the C3 service. The report set out a phased change to establish a national division, with full geographic interoperability and enhanced ICT operating from fewer larger centres – including a 'virtualised' Contact service to allow calls to be answered by the first available, suitably skilled, staff member. The approach will have the Contact service delivered from Govan, Motherwell and Bilston Glen; with the Command and Control function delivered from Motherwell, Govan, Bilston and Dundee – bolstered by a command support centre at Inverness.

3.2. The modelling showed that with fewer centres and improved efficiency and systems a smaller number of staff can provide a better service – consequently the release of staff from those Contact Centres and Control Rooms that are not recommended to continue operating in the future does not result in a need to withdraw officers from operational roles. The C3 remodelling process examines all the roles and activities currently undertaken by staff at each of the locations and ensures that these are carried forward, reallocated or designed out – again to ensure that workloads are not passed round to diminish operational policing capacity. It is worth noting that notable numbers of C3 staff have expressed interest in Voluntary Redundancy or Early Retirement and so the possibility to reorganise and release posts will be welcomed by many individuals.

3.3. The Strategic Direction was approved by the Scottish Police Authority and the phased implementation was commenced. This includes specific scrutiny by the Authority's Human Resources and Remuneration Committee for each stage of the proposal; this entails a detailed examination of the business case to change the arrangements and staffing for each of the C3 locations. This scrutiny is replicated with engagement with the Unions for each phase of the change programme.

3.4. The first stage of the remodelling programme involved transferring the Contact and Command and Control functions from Dumfries to the wider west arrangements. On 27 May 2014 the services where switched without any technical or service delivery difficulties. There were public and stakeholder concerns analogous with those raised by the petitioner in this case however these have not manifested themselves in practice. Early findings show that the improved processes and staff resilience have delivered an uplift in performance with significantly fewer calls abandoned and the average time taken to answer calls notably reduced.

4. Tackling the Concerns of Callers and Stakeholders

4.1. The proposed changes will implement a single national system that allows full visibility of all resources and an ability to respond to demand from the public right across Scotland. To achieve this Police Scotland will provide common information technology systems across the country.

4.2. The computer systems and the development of the linked gazetteers provide a sophisticated modern suite of applications that provide staff with the best ways of identifying locations across the country. Since the closure of the service centre and control room in Dumfries the new arrangements have worked well to identify locations and task officers effectively. This is enhanced by greater capacity to answer 101 and 999 telephone calls.

4.3. The implementation of a nationwide Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software solution for all incoming calls will provide staff answering calls with a greater knowledge of any previous history and vulnerabilities relating to the people contacting the police. This enhanced knowledge is in place in the CRM systems for the legacy Strathclyde and Lothian and Borders areas and information from the database previously used in Dumfries and Galloway has been included to assist C3 staff covering that area. Thus the legacy information has been maintained and is used to better inform staff and officers enabling them to have high levels of knowledge as they respond to calls, incidents and crimes. Where this level of CRM information does not currently exist, the implementation of the national software platform will bring this facility to all areas of Scotland and allow the start of the capture of data that enhances the service delivered by policing.

4.4. Alongside the information held on systems, there is also the knowledge that individual members of staff and officers can contribute to resolving calls and incidents. It is recognised that C3 staff develop their knowledge of the people, places and more unusual names in the areas in which they work. The computer systems are designed to capture the learning that staff accrue through dealing with incidents and to retain and make this available to their colleagues, overcoming the dependency on individuals that can manifest as difficulties through staff turnover, absence and lapses of memory. This improved corporate knowledge allows the learning gained by each individual to be reused to the benefit of communities.

4.5. The information and knowledge of the C3 staff, supported by their enhanced ICT systems, is also bolstered by the knowledge and memories of the locally bases community and response officers and their supervisors who attend calls and incidents - combining to provide continuity and knowledge.

4.6. The improved technology, working patterns and working practices, allow for staff to be tasked as effectively as possible. This provides a resilient and effective call taking and incident management facility that supports and directs front line policing in a consistent manner across Scotland.

5.   Conclusion

5.1. The remodelling of the Contact, Command and Control division will introduce a national system to manage calls and incidents. This will allow Police Scotland to ensure that the optimum public response is provided to crimes and incidents to improve community wellbeing whilst also delivering efficiencies that will contribute to the sustainability of local policing.

Michael McCormick
Assistant Chief Constable
21 July 2014

WRITTEN SUBMISSION FROM THE SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Background

1.   On 30 January 2014, the Scottish Fire and Rescue service took a decision in relation to the future location of Fire Controls in Scotland. Following a robust discussion in public to scrutinise the proposals presented to the Board, members agreed that Edinburgh and Dundee would join Johnstone Control in Renfrewshire as the three Fire Controls for Scotland.

2.   The decision to reduce the number of Fire Controls in Scotland is part of a wider "Strategic Intent" to reduce duplication of services provided and the number of inherited property assets from the merger of the eight antecedent services.

3.   These proposals will allow us to create the appropriate infrastructure for a single, national service ensuring that we protect and improve frontline outcomes, make best use of resources and ensure an equitable access to specialist resources across the country. Creating the right infrastructure potentially will allow us to invest money to support community safety and frontline activities and outcomes.

4.   A range of criteria was used in determining the most suitable solution to complement the existing control at Johnstone including a comprehensive assessment of risk.

5.   The following addresses the key issues raised in both petitions.

Loss of local knowledge

6.   The loss of local knowledge is an issue raised in both petitions. The existing Control at Johnstone is located in Renfrewshire and has effectively served as the single Fire Control for the Strathclyde area. Johnstone mobilises and dispatches fire appliances in response to 50% of all fire calls in Scotland.

7.   Although based in Renfrewshire, Fire Control staff manage calls and dispatch appliances to incidents located within densely populated urban conurbations and to incidents in sparsely populated and often remote areas of Scotland including islands communities off the west coast. The dialects and languages spoken within the area are diverse but do not adversely impact the control operation. Johnstone, therefore,

demonstrates the capacity of a control room operation in any one single location to support communities well beyond its own geographical area.

8. A single mobilising system provides one technical platform delivered through 3 controls providing full interoperability which ensures appropriate resources can be mobilised across the whole of Scotland. In the antecedent services the systems were not compatible which had the potential to create problems mobilising across service boundaries. Now we have the capacity to provide equitable access to intervention and support services. In addition, the system utilises caller line identity software and sophisticated mobilising technology to support efficient call handling and utilise the local knowledge held within stations to mobilise local and national resources. Local knowledge is held by fire crews within fire stations based in local communities and it is the combination of technology, skill and knowledge that ensures control and frontline firefighters provide the right response to the people who need us.

Reduction in service

9. The final decisions on control rooms were taken based on information that supported facilitating and enhancing service delivery, the integration of the Service both internally and externally, being financially sound both in capital and resource budgeting terms and delivering the wider benefits of reform. The decision on control room locations is, therefore, based on creating the right infrastructure for a national service to support the delivery of local frontline services. This decision in no way reduces the level of service any of the communities of Scotland can expect to receive from its Fire and Rescue Service whether they are located in densely populated parts of the central belt or in remote and rural areas of the north of Scotland.

Impact on staff

10. Group and individual meetings are ongoing with potentially displaced staff to consider options, including the location and identification of suitable, alternative posts. There is of course a commitment to no compulsory redundancies in SFRS and we are committed to supporting and reassuring staff through this time of transition.

Chief Officer Alasdair Hay
Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
30 July 2014

WRITTEN SUBMISSION FROM SOUTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

Petitions PE1510 and PE1511

1 In considering the petitioners' concerns, Councils within the Grampian and Highland and Islands areas may raise concerns or provide specific anecdotal evidence that the closure of the control rooms in Aberdeen and Inverness pose issues of public safety.

2   However, in considering this Council's experience I am inclined to comment that South Lanarkshire has not noticed any diminution in the service delivered via the revised control room structures managed by Police Scotland or the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

3   That said, it should be recognised that the geography and demography representative of South Lanarkshire are markedly different from the areas over which the petitioners voice concern.

4   This Council and others defined as Category One (Emergency) Responders, under the terms of the Civil Contingencies Act (2004), share the same statutory obligations as blue light organisations to prepare for and maintain a 24/7 capability to support our communities in a time of emergency; necessitating an interface between (i) organisations with defined local focus and accountability in the form of Local Authorities and NHS Boards and (ii) the blue light organisations with a wider national focus and accountability in the form of Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue and the Scottish Ambulance Service.

5   This local versus national focus may seem incompatible but the forthcoming evidence session affords the Justice Committee and HM Inspector of Constabulary in Scotland and HM Chief Inspector of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service opportunity to emphasise the distinction between the role of control rooms in handling 999 calls and tasking emergency service resources and the collective responsibilities of Category One (Emergency) Responder organisations to manage multi agency emergency responses through collaboration and an effective co-ordination of effort via Local and Regional Resilience Partnership structures.

6   Scottish Government and Category One (Emergency) Responders unanimously endorse and promote the principle of subsidiarity; wherein emergency preparations and the management of emergencies is devolved to the lowest practicable level; establishing a "bottom up" rather than "top down" escalation of resource and co-ordination proportionate to the scale of the emergency and the needs of those affected; retaining local focus, accountability and a short span of control which is agile and adaptive to evolving local needs.

7   As fixed locations control rooms may be distant from the location of an emergency but the locus of multi-agency emergency co-ordination centres, in the majority of cases, will be established as required within the boundary of the Local Authority, NHS Board or Police Division impacted by the emergency, providing a common and contemporary information overview for all concerned. This model also recognises that the role of co-ordinating multi agency emergency responses is not the exclusive domain of the Police Service.

8   Please contact me if you have any further questions or wish clarification of the points raised above.

Kenny Wratten
Contingency Planning Officer
South Lanarkshire Council
8 July 2014

WRITTEN SUBMISSION FROM THE ASSOCIATION OF SCOTTISH POLICE
SUPERINTENDENTS

Emergency and non-emergency call centres
Public petitions PE1510 and PE1511

I refer to the above noted public petitions which are to be considered by the Scottish
Parliament Justice Committee on Tuesday 19 August 2014 and would offer the
following written evidence on behalf of the Association of Scottish Police
Superintendents.

As you will recall our Association supported the creation of a national force in
Scotland in advance of the development achieving wider support. One of the
principles for our stance on this matter was the need to achieve an equality of
service delivery across Scotland and thus remove the artificial boundaries which
were created by the eight force model that existed pre 1 April 2013 with the artificial
inhibitions of service that the structure created.

The maintenance of eight separate control facilities servicing the eight 'legacy' force
areas was one such preventative structure.

Whilst the problems that arose from this multi centred control environment might well
have been alleviated by the introduction of a single command and control ICT
system, the eight force model did not make this possible as each force elected to
introduce incompatible systems and failed to agree on rationalisation of these over
an extended period of time. It was therefore the view of our Association that the
introduction of suitable command and control systems would require a single Chief
Constable and a national police service.

Having put plans for these command and control arrangements in place it defies
logic to maintain eight distinctive service centres within the outdated legacy model.
Indeed, we would argue, such an arrangement would be completely impractical.
Rationalisation of these facilities was not only inevitable but wholly necessary for
operational efficiency.

Whilst our arguments for the creation of a national force were largely based on
practical operational judgement, it must also be recognised that the move only
gained traction when the potential cost savings were identified, particularly in light of
the financial recession of recent years. It was widely recognised that these savings
must be achieved without detriment to service. With this in mind, it is clearly
sensible that savings be achieved from a reduction in call centres across the country.

There is clear evidence from both the private sector and other parts of the public
sector that larger call centre type facilities are the most effective and efficient method
of service delivery. Therefore, in terms of control rooms, a reduction to three allows
Police Scotland to better manage resources on a wider scale, providing an equality
of service delivery at a reduced cost.

It must also be recognised that the most common area of concern expressed by members of the public in terms of this alteration to service delivery is the potential for loss of local knowledge. This was most commonly utilised by residents of Dumfries as a reason for retention of the small control facility there. In actual fact, across the majority of the country, our legacy forces had undertaken a programme of amalgamations of small control room facilities without any disruption to service. Indeed, we would contend that, had the Dumfries facility been located in a larger force area it would have been closed many years before.

That said, our Association has also supported a dispersed delivery model which might ensure that police resources are distributed across the country and not located solely in one area or even the central belt. Therefore, we would be concerned at the removal of employment opportunities from certain communities without proper examination of the options available and selection of the most suitable, not based on a financial basis alone.

In this respect, you will be aware that the Aberdeen Service Centre and Control Room have both been identified for closure. We are informed that the decision to remove these facilities has been based on location and the lack of opportunity for expansion. It is apparent that the Aberdeen facilities operate separately and neither currently have the capacity to accommodate a control facility of the size required to service the whole of the North of Scotland. Thus, Dundee has been identified as the North facility due to its room for expansion at a reasonable development cost. It might have been possible to expand the facility at Bucksburn, Aberdeen but that would have involved significant remodelling or building cost.

It should also be recognised that there has been a higher turnover of staff in Aberdeen than anywhere else in Scotland in terms of control room staff. The main reason for this is the fact that the jobs market in Aberdeen is far more buoyant there than elsewhere in the country. Consequently, our Aberdeen facilities are continually required to cope with staffing shortages and re-training of staff, increasing costs accordingly.

In conclusion therefore, we are satisfied that a variety of options have been considered and the most appropriate in terms of distribution of service, operational efficiency and cost has resulted. We would therefore support in full the proposals as outlined by Police Scotland

I trust that this information will be of assistance to you.

Chief Superintendent Niven Rennie
President
31 July 2014

WRITTEN SUBMISSION FROM THE SCOTTISH POLICE FEDERATION

I refer to the above subject and to your e-mail communication dated the 26 June 2014 and thank you for inviting the Scottish Police Federation (SPF) to make a submission in relation to the issues raised within petitions numbered PE1510 and PE1511.

It is our view the contents of both petitions refer heavily to the arrangements of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and believe such matters are for the Fire Brigade Union Scotland and Unison to comment upon. We note the references in the concluding paragraphs of both petitions to John Duffy (FBU Scotland) and Sarah Duncan (Unison).

Our comments are therefore in response to the contents of the section in petition PE1510 – "Police Scotland and the Scottish Police Authority" as well as being general observations in respect of Control Room and Service Centre restructuring within the Police Service of Scotland.

Resourcing

SPF note the inevitable consequence of restructuring will be an overall reduction in staff numbers and that such reductions will primarily affect our Police Staff colleagues engaged in such roles. We are however of the view it is essential for control rooms and service centres to have a sufficiency of suitably trained resources to adequately meet and manage the overall demands upon the Service. SPF are also of the view that with the exception of Police Officers performing essential roles or those on modified duties every effort must be made to ensure Police Officers are not required to backfill vacancies or shortfalls that have been created as a consequence of the overall reduction.

ICT

SPF agree with the submission by Police Scotland in their paper "Contact, Command and Control Proposed Strategic Direction" to the Scottish Police Authority meeting on 30th January 2014 that a fully integrated national command and control system has the potential to improve response times for emergency and non-emergency calls subject to their being a sufficiency of resources to manage the call demand and importantly a sufficiency of operational resources to physically respond to meet that demand when required.

Call management

SPF believe that in addition to adequately resourced, trained and equipped control rooms or service centres it is essential for Police Scotland to critically examine the nature of calls for assistance to ensure the most appropriate response, which need not always result in the physical deployment of a Police Officers, in any given circumstance and we believe this examination would be best undertaken during the development of a national command and control system.

Local knowledge

SPF understands but does not necessarily accept the concerns expressed regarding the loss of local knowledge as a consequence of the restructuring process. Some of the geographical areas covered by existing control rooms and service centres are already so large it is not possible for the operators to hold the "local knowledge" which some contend will be lost through further rationalisation.

Conclusion

SPF is of the view that properly resourced, trained and equipped control rooms and service centres will have the ability to manage demand irrespective of geographical locations and that a fully integrated command and control system has the potential, to continue to meet and improve our response to public expectations and demands.

Calum Steele
General Secretary
31 July 2014

WRITTEN SUBMISSION FROM THE LOCAL AUTHORITY RESILIENCE GROUP
SCOTLAND

Question 1

Consider the information in the petition submitted by Jody Curtis on behalf of Emergency Service and Non-Emergency Service Call Centres calling on the Scottish Parliament to undertake a committee inquiry into the closure of Police, Fire, and Non-Emergency Service Centres north of Dundee and provide views on the issues raised by the petition. Details of the petition can be found at the following link:

http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/GettingInvolved/Petitions/petitionPDF/PE01510.pdf

Comments on Question 1

West Dunbarton Council

My 'professional' opinion is that I am content with resilient control rooms making full use of available technology to provide service overview and incident response functions. I'm content that the movement of the Police ACR from Pitt Street to Helen Street in Govan will not affect the service we receive. On visiting the facility there I have always been impressed with the amount of technology that can be used to obtain situational awareness both of the incident and the proximity of local resources.

Orkney Islands Council

We support Jody Curtis's petition.

Orkney Islands Council is extremely concerned at the direction taken by this proposal, given the vast area to be covered by the proposed new North Command Area Control in Dundee and the impossibility of the staff at that ACR, with the best will in the world, being able to familiarise themselves with the detailed geography of the entire North area. Each part of this area, Orkney included, has its own local dialect and numerous locations with similar or identical names, which an operator with local knowledge would immediately recognise. An operator based in Dundee would take considerably longer to identify the precise location and the potential for

error is high. In our view this represents a significant increase in risk to remote and rural areas of the north of Scotland, which has not been taken into account.

Question 2

Consider the information in the petition submitted by Laura Ross calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to review the decision made by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service to close the Inverness Control Room and provide views on the issues raised by the petition. Details of the petition can be found at the following link:

http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/GettingInvolved/Petitions/petitionPDF/PE01511.pdf

Comments on Question 2

Orkney Islands Council

We support Laura Ross's petition.

Orkney Islands Council is extremely concerned at the direction taken by this proposal, given the vast area to be covered by the expanded control room in Dundee and the impossibility of the staff at that control, with the best will in the world, being able to familiarise themselves with the detailed geography of the entire area. Each part of this area, Orkney included, has its own local dialect and numerous locations with similar or identical names, which an operator with local knowledge would immediately recognise. An operator based in Dundee would take considerably longer to identify the precise location and the potential for error is high. In our view this represents a significant increase in risk to remote and rural areas of the north of Scotland, which has not been taken into account in the risks assessed as part of the option appraisal as summarised in the report. Operational resilience in the north will be very severely impacted by the removal of control room operations to Dundee, and the risk to Orkney would be unacceptably high.

Local Authority Resilience Group Scotland
13 August 2014

WRITTEN SUBMISSION FROM THE FIRE BRIGADES UNION SCOTLAND

1.1 The FBU support the petitions from Laura Ross and Jody Curtis as they relate to the planned closure of Inverness Command and Control Centre. The Scottish Fire & Rescue Service, North Service Delivery Area has a number of unique challenges that require a different solution and options to the planned 3 enlarged control rooms to be sited in the central belt.

- Greater impact as a result of a loss of local knowledge
- Less requirement for enlarged controls
- Greater reliance on Retained duty system response
- Need to adapt Policies /procedures to meet local requirements
- Maintaining SFRS footprint across Scotland
- Limited opportunities for displaced staff

- retention of skilled jobs in remote and socio–economically disadvantaged areas

1.2 Wildfires for example are significant in the Highlands & Islands and Grampian areas. Clearly the Forestry industry is a vital part of the Scottish economy that supports many jobs in rural areas and which requires a strategic risk assessment.

1.3 Technology can assist with the initial call and will recommend to an operator where the nearest available appliance is. It cannot recognise tired crews or the impact on fire cover in the local area and potential increased risk that may be created by removing the nearest appliance from its local area.

1.4 Inverness control is also one of only two in Scotland that currently manages call handling, mobilising and incident support for island communities, some where Gaelic is the prevalent language and staff have a recognition of the Gaelic place names which they can quickly translate to retrieve a match on the system.

1.5 To provide the best solution for the North Service Delivery area it requires the retention of a Control room in both the North East and North West of Scotland to recognise and ensure a robust response to the unique risks and challenges presented by these large areas. This would also assist with considerably reducing the numbers of displaced staff (and associated costs), particularly if Inverness was to be retained as a future control with a similar staff profile and footprint as now in addition to retaining a proportionately enlarged future control at Dundee using existing control rooms to largely cover the footprint of the former Tayside and Grampian Fire and Rescue Services.

1.6 It is also apparent that the retention of as many control staff as possible that have the local knowledge and types of key skills required, within a future control room, is vital to the success of the SFRS control project.

1.7 This could also be contained within existing control project cost budgets for IT and property upgrades as there is evidently suitable capacity for extending the control rooms at Mc Alpine Road in Dundee addition to retaining Inverness.

1.8 This would also negate the need to consider Blackness Road in Dundee with its extensive capital spend requirements of up to £2.1 million pounds and represent best use of existing assets. Even given that there may be some requirement to upgrade Inverness Control also to meet the requirements of the Control project and the planned development of the site as an Asset Resource Centre this shall still be considerably less than the most expensive potential scenario. It is apparent that the site that consists of 9,580 sq. metres (of which the Control room accounts for 300 sq. metres) has considerable room for expansion and also for the development of other SFRS functions if required.

1.9 Emergency Fire Control staff carries out a wide range of additional tasks other than responding to emergency calls, mobilising appliances and dealing with incidents. We would also propose that a future Control room in Inverness is utilised for these purposes as widely as possible. There may also be a case for extending the current footprint of Inverness control south to help alleviate the additional burden that

shall be placed on Johnstone following the planned closure of Dumfries and Galloway control room.

1.10 We also believe that Inverness could be utilised as the co-ordinating centre for the mobilisation and maintenance of specialist rescue resources both for the SFRS (including Scottish Control Co-ordination Database) and for other providers as recommended in the HMI report following the fatalities at Loch Awe in 2009. This would also assist with a key aim of Reform in establishing the SFRS as the champion of specialist rescue.

1.11 Retaining an enhanced control room in the North at Inverness would considerably assist in diminishing our concerns over the reduction of control rooms and the over reliance on technology rather than the local knowledge, skills and experience of trained control staff. The ability of the SFRS control project to deliver the key aims would also be enhanced: to improve community and firefighter safety, maintain business as usual throughout the project and enhance resilience. The FBU believe that this is indisputably an enhanced and superior solution than the proposed 3 control rooms.

Particularly as:

- It can be provided at little or potentially less additional cost,
- Retains additional experienced Emergency Fire Control Staff in their current careers,
- Enhances Service delivery and supports business continuity,
- Retains additional experienced staff in their current locations,
- Flexible option of utilising a smaller control in addition to the 3 larger controls,
- Provides enhanced resilience to the service as a whole,
- Retains safety critical local knowledge in an area where specific geographical and rural issues occur and this is required,
- Provides the service with an option to investigate an additional use as a ground breaking stand-alone peripatetic Emergency Fire Control Training facility.

Efficiency

Scottish Government National Outcomes state that our public services should be high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs.
The proposed closure of Inverness is opposed by local communities, staff, local and national politicians and Trade Unions as there is a firm belief that this will compromise community and firefighter safety.

To put it succinctly:

To reduce the number of Emergency Fire Control Rooms as planned and also
the number of Emergency Fire Control Operators would result in less staff dealing
with more Calls over larger geographical areas . This coupled with the potential loss
of local knowledge may result in calls taking longer to process and errors more likely
to be made, This may also result in increased response times, and inevitably
Firefighters having to deal with more developed fires and incidents

We believe this would not represent best value for the people of Scotland and that Inverness should therefore be retained

Fire Brigades Union Scotland
19 August 2014