Department for Communities and Local Government

Fire and rescue protective security strategy 2012

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Department for Communities and Local Government

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Summary

This strategy is a refresh of the 2009 protective security strategy for fire and rescue authorities. It outlines six key deliverables to enhance protective security for fire and rescue authorities.

Background

The United Kingdom Counter-terrorism Strategy comprises four key work streams: pursue, prevent, protect and prepare.

All government departments and their agencies are required to contribute to the Counter-terrorism strategy. The protect work stream identifies a requirement to reduce the vulnerability of the national infrastructure to terrorism and includes protecting UK borders, the critical national infrastructure and crowded places.

Fire and rescue authorities are part of the emergency services sector of the national infrastructure. This comprises the police service, fire and rescue authorities, the ambulance service and the Maritime and Coastguard Agency. Fire and rescue authorities are also a critical national infrastructure asset owner.

The protect work stream is aimed at the reduction of vulnerabilities to terrorism within the national infrastructure. The strategy identifies a reduction in vulnerability in three key domains: personnel security, physical security and information security.

The Cabinet Office Security Policy Framework directly supports the Counter-terrorism Strategy, and is a series of measures to enhance protective security in the domains of personnel, physical and information security.

The Cabinet Office Security Policy Framework states the framework should be extended to emergency services.

Reducing vulnerability within the emergency services sector

Following the outcomes of a protective security review of the emergency services sector by the Centre for the Protection of the National Infrastructure, a work plan has been agreed comprising the following:

- review existing personnel security policies within the emergency services sector
- establish a departmental security officer within the emergency services sector
- implement a structured personnel security strategy linked to the Cabinet Office Review of Personnel Security, Centre for the Protection of the National Infrastructure guidance and the recommendations of the Cabinet Office Security Policy Framework
- establish a process for providing assurance of protective security

- conduct a comprehensive review of policy and procedures for the handling of protectively marked materials

Fire and rescue protective security strategy

A protective security implementation strategy has been agreed between the Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser and the Chief Fire Officers Association. The strategy comprises three key work streams and six deliverables as listed below:

Work streams:

- physical security
- personnel security
- information security

Deliverables:

- protective security communications strategy and governance model
- introduction of security policy framework
- introduction of national security vetting and personnel security policy and guidance
- introduction of a security awareness programme
- introduction of a protective security assurance system
- electronic security audit of United Kingdom fire and rescue authorities IT infrastructure and promotion of the public services network

Governance arrangements

The Department for Communities and Local Government have established a Fire and Rescue Security Adviser within the Office of the Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser but embedded within the departmental security officer team.

The Chief Fire Officers Association agreed to the establishment of a protective security sub group.

A Chief Fire Officers Association regional security liaison officer has been established in each Chief Fire Officers Association region in England, with similar arrangements established in the Devolved Administrations.

Chief Fire Officers Association regional protective security steering groups are being established to oversee the implementation of the deliverables locally. The constitution of such groups is for local determination, but it is suggested that they include lead officers in respect of protective security, personnel, human resources, information technology, fire control, interagency liaison officers, national resilience assurance officers, and external agencies such as police counter terrorist security advisers.

Definitions of protective security

Personnel security

This will include the development of advice, guidance, policies and procedures to assist fire and rescue authorities in managing the risk of staff or contractors exploiting their legitimate access to an organisation's assets for unauthorised purposes. In this context, 'assets' refers to anything the organisations feel is of value, such as its employees, premises, systems and information. Those who seek to exploit their legitimate access are termed 'insiders'. It also includes national security vetting, which incorporates advice, guidance, policies and procedures to ensure the appropriate level of vetting is established within fire and rescue authorities and effective monitoring and 'after care' is maintained.

Physical security

This will include the development of advice, guidance, policies and procedures in respect of reducing the vulnerabilities of fire and rescue authorities to unauthorised access and use of physical assets, including buildings, vehicles, equipment and plant.

Information security

This will include the development of advice, guidance, policies and procedures in respect of reducing the vulnerabilities of fire and rescue authorities to unauthorised access to, storage, and transmission of both hard copy and electronic data including the protective marking of materials.