

Supporting Fire Control with a mobile information tool for responding officers



Entering full operational status in April 2015 the Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) was established as a shared emergency call handling centre to serve Royal Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire to answer 999 calls and mobilise fire appliances to incidents on behalf of the three Fire and Rescue Services.

The core operational systems used by TVFCS are Vision Command and Control and the DS3000 Integrated Communication Control System supplied and supported by Capita.

As part of the solution Capita also provides BOSS, for desktop and mobile use, as an operational situational awareness tool for officers. BOSS is now used by over 100 officers across the three services in addition to being used by, amongst others, the IT support team and the press office.



Facts and Stats



Region

Royal Berkshire
Buckinghamshire
Oxfordshire



Population

>2.4 million



Area

2,217 sq miles



Incidents per year

C. 40,000



BOSS Mobile users

>100

(Officers, IT, Press Office, Data Analysts, Resource Management)



“With the information it provides at my fingertips I find I rely on BOSS Mobile more than my pager”

“It is extremely important, as a responding officer, to know exactly the status of colleagues and the resources deployed to an incident”

“Providing and getting real-time updates on the incident narrative saves me time that I previously would have spent on the radio to the Control Room”

Situational Awareness and Management Information

As the three services centralised the Control Room function into the TVFCS BOSS was employed to provide officers with a single view of all ongoing incidents across the partnership and its use has grown to become an integral part of the Services' operations:

- Once alerted and mobilised to an incident by TVFCS an officer can immediately call up
 - Incident location and type – including mapping
 - Narrative from the Vision Incident log
 - Status of responding resources – both appliances and officers
- All officers can see the Common Operating Picture across the region
- The system provides situational awareness of other incidents in the immediate area so a responding officer can review resource implications
- The Incident log narrative can be updated on scene and shared across responding officers and used as an efficient handover tool for incidents that span multiple days or shifts
- Officers can update their own status
- Provides a full audit log of activity that can be used as part of the Management Information reporting at different levels across the Services.
- Reduces radio-based voice traffic between officers and the Control Room through the use of the narrative

In the event of major incidents, such as widespread flooding, the BOSS Mobile system can also be used to manage multiple incidents by individual officers. A batch mobilising function allows the officer on scene to review, prioritise and resource accordingly. The continued update of the incident allows Senior Officers and the Press Office to monitor progress and, if necessary, escalate any response or briefings accordingly.

Information tool for operational support

It is not just live incidents that BOSS Mobile has become effective in managing. The system is also used for what the Services term 'Information Only Incidents', such as road closure notices or other significant events that would have an impact on operations. At a single glance an officer has all the information at their fingertips and can respond accordingly.

Should issues with any of the Services' IT and communications systems arise during an incident, the on-call operational support team, by being added to the narrative by the Control Room, use BOSS Mobile as an initial information and diagnostic tool to enable them to take prompt action if required. By providing a service-wide picture BOSS Mobile helps the team prioritise and manage their response, rationalise urgent travel and maintain the operational status of the systems.

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