



R B F & R S

news release

20/01/2009

No: 03/F&R

ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE LAUNCHES STATE OF THE ART INCIDENT CONTROL UNITS

Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service is proud to launch the newest additions to its fleet – the Incident Command Unit (ICU) together with its sister appliance, the Multi-Role Vehicle (MRV).

These state of the art units will attend incidents across the county. They are packed full of the latest satellite and communications technology and are designed to function as a standalone command and control facility – in fact, senior officers can run Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service operations from the ICU if necessary.

The launch event will begin at 10.30 on the Long Walk in Windsor, by the Cambridge Gate entrance to Windsor Castle. Following the photo and interview opportunity at Windsor, the event transfers to Maidenhead fire station, where demonstrations of the units in operation, together with additional interviews, will take place from 12 noon.

Guests will include Windsor MP, Adam Afriyie, Reading West MP, Martin Salter, Slough MP Fiona MacTaggart and the Mayor of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, Councillor Mrs Dorothy Kemp, who will join Dr Paul Bryant, the Chairman of Royal Berkshire Fire Authority, Fire Authority Members, Chief Fire Officer Iain Cox, Deputy Chief Fire Officer Olaf Baars, who led the ICU project, together with senior executives from the suppliers involved in the project and officers from other fire and rescue services, to welcome the new vehicles to Berkshire.

Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Olaf Baars, said: “These vehicles will play a key part in ensuring that we are able to meet our statutory duty under the Civil Contingencies Act to maintain operational functionality regardless of circumstances. The Multi-Role Vehicle will be used for community outreach work in helping us work with our communities to make them safer but it can also function as forward incident command unit and communications hub when required.

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“The ICU provides a 21st-century platform for incident command, not only in terms of its technological capabilities in terms of supporting operations but because of its capacity to act as a multi-agency command centre, linking directly to police and other emergency response organisations. I would like to thank the Fire Authority for its support for this major project and to the suppliers themselves for their hard work and commitment in developing these impressive vehicles.”

Huw Owen, business development director for WH Bence, the coachbuilder responsible for the vehicle itself, said: “As one of Europe’s leading specialist vehicle designers, we were delighted to be approached with this commission by Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue.

“This project was enjoyable and challenging to work on, from the very start of the design process to the handing over of the vehicle itself, because this was a very demanding specification. It was essential that only the highest quality standards of build quality, fabrication and finishing were applied and the experience of our in-house teams shows in the final result.”

David Savage is chief executive of Excelerate Technology, the company responsible for equipping the new major incident command unit with a range of satellite and wireless-based technologies that enable cutting-edge voice, data and video solutions to be rapidly deployed regardless of location.

He said: “Excelerate Technology has been responsible for some of the largest and most advanced mobile command and control vehicles for fire and rescue services throughout the UK. We are pleased to have played such an active role in helping RBFRS become a leading pioneer in the development and application of innovative communications solutions for emergency planning and management applications. The Royal County of Berkshire will be one of the first regions to achieve true interoperability with sharing of information well on the way to fruition.”

VectorCommand is the organisation responsible for the ICU’s leading-edge information management system, the Command Support System. VectorCommand’s executive chairman, Neils Andersen, said: “VectorCommand is delighted to be supporting the launch of Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service’s new incident command vehicles and their integration within the service’s overall command and control process.

“The service has demonstrated a highly innovative and progressive approach to the introduction of new technology, such as the Command Support System. We look forward to working in close partnership with the service as it applies the Command Support System in innovative new ways to serve the people of Berkshire and beyond. With the Command Support System, we have developed an integrated solution, tailored to Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service’s specific needs, that elevates command and control to new levels and sets a marker for the use of advanced technology in the emergency services.”

ENDS.

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Notes for Editors:

You are welcome to send a photographer and/or a reporter to both the Windsor and Maidenhead events or to either if you prefer. Directions attached. Ellie Gray will be in attendance on the day of the launch and she will ensure that you have access to everyone that you would like to speak to. A light buffet and refreshments will be available at Maidenhead.

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Please also find attached useful information from the suppliers involved in the project. You will

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be able to interview senior staff from each of the partner suppliers on the day, together with Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service officers and Fire Authority Members.

Attached:

- Directions to the Windsor site (no parking at the Long Walk)
- Directions to the Maidenhead site (limited parking – please contact Ellie, 0118 932 2214, or myself, 0118 932 2283, if you wish to bring a vehicle to Maidenhead)
- Information on Excelerate Technology
- Information on VectorCommand and Command Support System
- Link to WH Bence website