Use of Multi Agency Incident Transfer (MAIT)

Complex incidents often require a multi-agency response that includes the emergency services and other government and non-governmental agencies. Traditionally the emergency service receiving the initial call from the public will rely on telephone calls to other agencies and these agencies will use manual re-keying to raise incident on their own systems. This process can be time consuming and prone to error. When incidents are in progress it is also difficult and time consuming to ensure all involved agencies are similarly up to date with the current situation.

The Multi Agency Incident Transfer (MAIT) interface standards development being led by the Cabinet Office, is being driven by the need for a way to standardise and automate the flow of information. The aim is to enable interoperability between different systems to facilitate information exchange between agencies such that relevant information is pushed out reliably to all the right people in a timely way whilst maintaining appropriate security.

By using MAIT enabled systems incident, multiple agencies can exchange data directly between their systems, speeding up mobilisation and improving services and ongoing overall situational awareness as an incident progresses.

At the core of the MAIT service is a resilient data hub that provides switching of messages between all the participating agencies. It is proposed that the security and resilience of the PSN make it the appropriate communication platform to interconnect the agencies to the hub.

The MAIT standard is currently in draft (version 1d) and is based on an XML schema. The standard defines incident creation and incident log update messages together with corresponding acknowledgment messages. Elements within the incident creation message includes, for example, allowing for the exchange of caller details, incident location details, risk information, RVP information, resource attendance and request information, vehicle and vessel information, persons involved and casualty related information. The log update message allows for comment tagged to a previously exchanged incident to be shared.

The project proposes the use of MAIT to provide the common platform for information exchange between the LFB, LAS and MPS command and control systems. It is assumed that at the time of implementation LAS and MPS will both be using systems from Northrup Grumman and LFB will have migrated to the Capita VISION system. Although MPS and LAS do currently have facilities to share incident information electronically the addition of the MAIT capability offer not only the ability to extend this facility to include LFB but also to other partner agencies as they too become connected to the MAIT Hub.
Overt National Asset Tracking (ONAT)
It is also proposed to make use of the emerging Overt National Asset Tracking (ONAT) project outcomes to provide the coordination centre with a picture of assets deployed within their area of interest. This project is currently underway to provide a standard, probably xml based, schema for providing visibility of assets of participating agencies on a national basis. It is in an earlier state than the MAIT but there is currently consideration of using a common shared Hub between the two services.