

## EMERGENCY SERVICES COLLABORATION THE CURRENT PICTURE



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The emergency services are not exempt from funding pressures and the need to transform to ensure they continue to provide the best possible service to the public.

Whilst the political parties may not agree on the organisational and governance models, there is broad consensus around the benefits of better joint working and that is likely to be taken further post the 2015 elections.

However, until recently, the evidence of what was happening on the ground was incomplete and there was only limited chance for organisations to learn from others' experience.

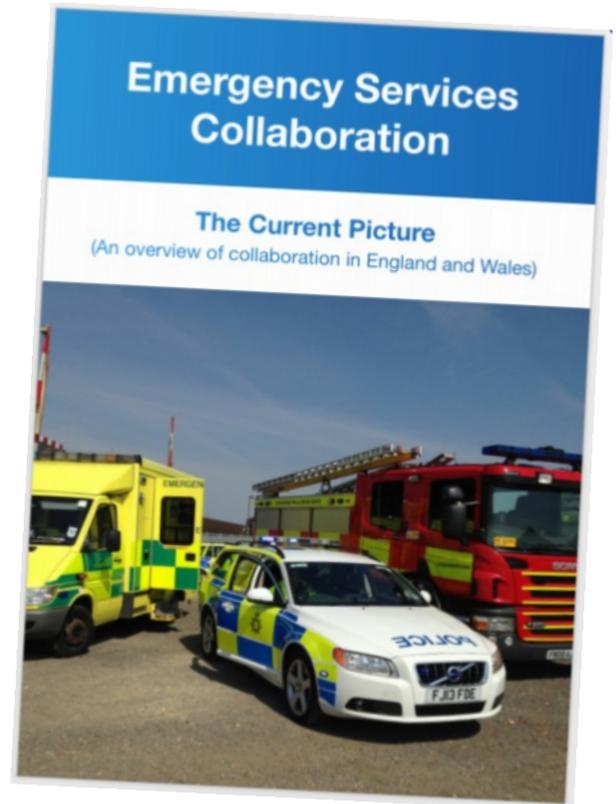
During the summer of 2014, central government asked ambulance trusts, fire and rescue authorities and police forces to provide examples of collaborative transformation initiatives.

The resulting wide range of examples is highlighted in this overview entitled **"Emergency Services Collaboration – The Current Picture"** and is well worth a read.

The Emergency Services Collaboration working group, which published the overview, is made up of partners from the three emergency services and the Local Government Association.

The working group highlights the difficulty of reconciling increasing demand in many areas with the current and expected funding restrictions and concludes that *"collaboration provides opportunities to truly innovate and save money"*.

If you are about to embark on a collaborative initiative, then read the section on *'What makes a collaboration successful?'* The characteristics described mirror the learning from the Shared Service Architect's programmes.



Collaborative transformation can take many forms and the report identifies first the work being done at a national level – such as improving interoperability between emergency services at major incidents – and the funding being made available to help support transformation. Perhaps the section that is missing is examples of collaboration between Whitehall departments.

But it is at a local level that the examples really demonstrate exciting developments in working together.

### The A-Z of blue light collaboration

In an A-Z of schemes across England and Wales, there are descriptions of 38 collaboration projects.

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The range of initiatives is quite amazing; no two projects are the same. For example there are case studies on:

- combined support services,
- sharing senior officers,
- sharing premises,
- joint operational teams,
- locating management teams together,
- improvements to lifesaving response,
- data sharing,
- training together,
- aligning governance models,
- common contact management

.....and other collaborative activities.

The overview provides a really concrete way in which people can gain inspiration, learn from others and avoid re-inventing the wheel. Most, if not all, of the examples are capable of being transferred to other geographical areas if the will and leadership is there.

And the final bonus? The overview sets out not just to report on the various examples but also provide a practical way to share good practise and innovation. So, the working group has established a peer-to-peer network.

This network will help you to learn about the its role, the overview of projects and, really helpfully, a way to contact project leaders. A shared community has been created to share information and learning.

To follow this up, email [info@999collaboration.org.uk](mailto:info@999collaboration.org.uk)

**Emergency Service Collaboration: The Current Picture**

can be downloaded from the CFOA website at [www.cfoa.org.uk](http://www.cfoa.org.uk)

Click on the 'Guest' button to gain access

**Example Case Studies In The Report**

**Improving Life Saving Response**

Retained firefighters in East Cleveland co-respond to medical emergencies in partnership with North East Ambulance Services

**Joint training of Police and Fire**

A shared training facility for Cumbria Constabulary and the Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service is located at the force's headquarters and has brought down training costs for both organizations and facilitates the joint training of police officers and firefighters.

**Community Safety Task Force**

In January 2012 the Margate Task Force was formed to tackle a range of community safety and social health challenges in two of the most deprived wards in the UK. Led by a fire service group manager, 14 agencies (including fire, police and health) have completed detailed joint risk and vulnerability assessments and delivered directed interventions to tackle on-going problems.

**Co-location of blue light services**

The Civil Contingencies and Resilience units of Greater Manchester Police (GMP), ten local authorities and representatives of the Fire Service, Ambulance Service and the NHS Resilience team are co-located at GMP headquarters. This places key expert advisers together and adjacent to the primary Command and Control facility, and promotes better and more integrated approaches to collaboration