

The tri-service review of the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles April 2016

Background

In times of emergency, the emergency services of ambulance, police, and fire and rescue must be able to work together effectively and seamlessly to contain and respond to the crisis, protect the public and save lives. However, reviews following major incidents such as the July 2005 London bombings, the wide-area floods across the UK in 2014, and the shooting of 12 people in Cumbria by Derrick Bird in 2010, all reported gaps and failings in the interoperability between the services.

In January 2015, the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles (JESIP) Ministerial Board commissioned an HMIC-led tri-service review of JESIP in collaboration with ambulance and fire and rescue services. This review examined the extent to which the three services have incorporated the principles of joint working into their preparation for responding to major incidents. The findings of the review suggest areas of good practice, however this was nationally inconsistent.

Police & Crime Commissioners Response

I welcome the report describing the results of the HMIC-led tri-service review of the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles.

The report applied a system of judgements prescribed by a maturity matrix, however the report notes that it was not easy to apply this matrix to the principles. The report tries to focus on the supporting narrative but in my view this would have been more effective and made the report more coherent had the report relied entirely on narrative evidence rather than the matrix judgements.

In Devon & Cornwall the principles of JESIP are relatively well embedded with strong links to Local Resilience Forums. We face some particular challenges due to the large geography of the force area and the complex partnership landscape that supports it. For example we have a Cornwall Fire Service, a Devon & Somerset Fire Service, Devon & Cornwall Police and South West Ambulance Trust. This complexity is even more marked in relation to the local authorities and other partners and stakeholders. Despite this we have a well developed training programme and conduct regular joint training exercises.

The timing of this report is such that my successor will need to consider the content of this report in order to form a view. They will then need to hold the Chief Constable to account for ensuring that the recommendations from this report are met. I will ensure that the Chief Constable is tasked to provide an evidence-based review of the key report findings to support that process.