

FIRE BRIGADES UNION

IMMEDIATE RELEASE 15th September

FiReControl project fails Governments tests

South west newsdesks:

On Monday 13th September the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (CLG) gave evidence to the CLG Select Committee at which he let the cat out of the bag on FiReControl. In giving this evidence he stated that the June 2011 delivery date could not be met by the main contractor EADS. He went on to say that EADS could deliver some elements but with "reduced functionality".

Given that the Fire Minister, Bob Neill, has stated that the Governments commitment to FiReControl is conditional upon EADS delivering this project on time, on cost and with the necessary quality of system, it is now clear that the time has come for the Coalition to scrap the biggest white elephant the Fire Service has ever had the misfortune to be involved in.

The South West FBU Regional Secretary, John Drake said "*The Secretary of State has finally verbalized what every one involved in this mess has known for a long time, this is a dead project. The Government now needs to act rather than fiddling whilst the project burns. Every hour this project continues costs the taxpayer £140.24 in the South West and £1458.45 in England. This is money being thrown down the drain.*

Now that Eric Pickles has made this statement he is duty bound to act upon it. This is one cut that has the full support of the Fire Brigades Union"

Tam McFarlane said "*Enough is enough, with Fire Authorities making plans to devastate the Fire and Rescue Service through central Government cuts, every penny is vital to protect front line services. The Minister must now act on this and scrap plans to regionalize the fire service as they promised prior to the general election"*

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Note to Editors:

- The South West RCC was to be based in Taunton and would mean the closure of Control Rooms in Gloucester, Devizes, Lansdowne, Taunton, Exeter, Dorchester and Truro.
- The Cost of the South West RCC in rental and other building costs since rent commencement date 15th Feb 2008 to date is £4,544,395

A web cast of the hearing can be found here:

<http://www.parliamentlive.tv/main/Player.aspx?meetingId=6598>

The Secretary of States statement on FiReControl can be found at 2 hours 16 minutes into the hearing.