

Contract audit of emergency services network

Date of meeting 5 September 2025

Date of report 11 August 2025

Report by Chief Executive

1. Object of report

To advise the Committee on the findings of a contract audit of the emergency services network. This engagement was included in the annual Internal Audit plan 2025/2026.

2. Background to report

The Emergency Services Network (ESN) is the secure communication network used by the UK Government for inter-communication between the three emergency services: Fire & Rescue, Police and Ambulance. The network enables public safety agencies and the emergency services to communicate directly, immediately, clearly, and securely. This network is not available for consumer or commercial use but can be used under licence by public transport authorities.

Note: this is a single-source UK Government contract.

SPT uses this network for the Glasgow Subway. The ESN hardware and services are currently provided and operated by Airwave (a Motorola company). In December 2015, the UK Government awarded the ESN user services and mobile services contracts to Motorola and EE Limited, respectively.

The contract requirement is to supply, support and maintain secure communications, radio handsets and infrastructure. This is a fully licensed and managed radio communication service that provides installation, hand-held radio devices, training and maintenance, which make up the provision of a radio system service that is secure, resilient, reliable and has interoperability that allows both internal SPT staff communication and Emergency service communication to take place throughout the Subway.

At its meeting of 6 March 2020, the Partnership approved an award of a contract to Airwave Solutions Ltd for the continuation of the Airwave Secure Communications Radio Service. Award included necessary infrastructure upgrades and service provision. This contract was up to December 2022. The UK Government Home Office announced that it was extending the Airwave contract from December 2022 until December 2026.

The objective of this engagement was to review and evaluate the current procedures and monitoring arrangements in place for the emergency services network (ESN) contract.

This engagement tested elements of the internal controls and mitigation against SPT19: Unplanned disruption of Subway as identified in the Corporate Risk register, as identified in the Corporate Risk register.

3. Outline of proposals

The Standing orders relating to Contracts require:

'For contracts which had an original contract award price of more than £50,000 all such modifications or variations will be reported to the Partnership retrospectively on a six-monthly basis if the cumulative effect of these is to increase or decrease the value of the contract by 50% of the award price'.

Engagement testing found that the contract dates, including extension were stipulated by the UK Government. However, the extension was not reported to committee at that time.

The ESN contract provides radio handsets, which are leased. The auditor was unable to match inventory records and found that some radio handsets were in poor condition, requiring repair. Secure lockers (Traka) and battery charging arrangements also require management action to enhance current service provision.

Contract payment arrangements were found to be satisfactory.

There are areas for improvement which are addressed by recommendations which can be found at Appendix 1. Contract management have agreed to implement the recommendations, which are currently being actioned.

Key controls exist and are applied consistently and effectively in the majority of areas tested in this engagement.

Reasonable assurance can be taken from the internal controls in place for the management of the emergency services network contract.

4. Committee action

The Committee is asked to note the contents of this report and agree that the Audit and Assurance Manager submits a follow-up report on the implementation of the recommendations to a meeting in approximately six months.

5. Consequences

Policy consequences	<i>None.</i>
Legal consequences	<i>None.</i>
Financial consequences	<i>None.</i>
Personnel consequences	<i>None.</i>
Equalities consequences	<i>None.</i>
Risk consequences	<i>As detailed in the report.</i>

Climate Change, Adaptation & Carbon consequences *None.*

Name Lesley Aird
Title **Director of Finance & Corporate Support**

Name Valerie Davidson
Title **Chief Executive**

For further information, please contact *Iain McNicol, Audit and Assurance manager* on 0141 333 3195.

APPENDIX 1

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The recommendation from this engagement is listed in the following table. The priorities are defined as follows:

High:	A fundamental control that should be addressed as soon as possible:
Medium:	An important control that should be addressed within three months;
Low:	An issue which is not fundamental but should be addressed within six months to improve the overall control environment.

No.	Recommendation	Priority	Action Proposed	Lead Officer	Due date
1	<p><u>Reporting of contract awards (extension and variations)</u></p> <p>Standing Orders relating to Contracts should be adhered to.</p> <p>The value of any contract extension which exceeds the scheme of delegation limits and or the 50% rule must be reported to the Partnership/committee.</p>	High	<p>Standing Orders provisions will be clarified in the next review.</p> <p>In the interim, Procurement will retrospectively report any single variations or extensions in excess of 50% which have not already been approved by Committee. This has taken effect from 1 January 2025 and will be included in the contract awarded reports to the Audit & Standards committee.</p>	Senior Procurement Officer	Implemented

No.	Recommendation	Priority	Action Proposed	Lead Officer	Due date
2	<u>Radio handset inventory records</u> Complete, accurate and up to date inventory records must be maintained by Subway Operations management in respect of the leased radio handsets. The number of physical handsets in use should be reconciled to those stated in the contract.	Medium	Radio equipment inventory records will be reviewed and updated to ensure they reflect handsets held/in use at various locations within Subway estate.	Head of Service Operations & Security (Subway)	September 2025
3	<u>Handset equipment and secure housing</u> Subway Operations management should <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review the adequacy of back-up batteries for handsets; • seek to repair (if economic) or replace poor condition handsets; and • arrange for the repair of faulty Traka cabinets to enhance security of assets (and provide training on their use). 	Medium	Subway Operations management will <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide additional batteries for handsets in use; • repair/replace handsets; • repair Traka cabinets. 	Head of Service Operations & Security (Subway)	September 2025