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Dr Nigel P Brown  
Lead for Resilient ICT Strategy  
Civil Contingencies Secretariat



The UK Cabinet Office wanted an overview of mobile alerting technologies to notify citizens of serious threats. Fujitsu produced an Insight Report assessing the technology involved.

#### At a glance

**Country:** United Kingdom  
**Industry:** Public Sector  
**Founded:** 1916  
**Website:** [gov.uk/government/organisations/cabinet-office](http://gov.uk/government/organisations/cabinet-office)

#### Challenge

The UK Cabinet Office wanted to explore the ability to alert the public quickly in case of emergency, so it commissioned an independent overview and assessment of the technology, including changes since a small-scale mobile alerting trial in 2014.

#### Solution

A research-based approach was used to analyse the mobile alerting landscape in the UK, and internationally, to determine technical options, UK readiness and business considerations. Insight was gained from the review of historic trials, UK mobile provider capabilities, international alerting capabilities, and industry alerting expertise within the Fujitsu Discovery team.

#### Benefit

- The report was used to inform the responsible Minister of the readiness for mobile alerting in the UK
- Collaborative and flexible engagement approach that provided the Cabinet Office with a report which maximised the expertise of both Fujitsu and the Cabinet Office
- Insight Report delivered rapidly within three months to meet tight deadlines
- Insight Report provides foundation for creating actual mobile alerting platform

## Customer

The Civil Contingencies Secretariat (CCS) was formed in 2001 and is responsible for emergency planning amongst other roles. Its remit is to ensure the UK's resilience against disruption and potential threats by warning about actual and impending major incidents. It aims to increase the capability to respond to and recover from civil emergencies and provides advice on preparing for a crisis.

## Products and Services

■ FUJITSU Consulting / Professional Services

### Partnering with a mobile alerting expert

Communicating quickly to citizens at risk during fast moving threats (e.g. severe weather, hazardous substances, significant fires and terrorism) is important to the UK Government.

The public are increasingly on the move with a significant number owning mobile handsets so mobile technology should be considered when striving for improvements to public emergency alerting systems. However, there is some debate about the most effective methods of doing so. Various governments around the world employ either location-based SMS or Cell Broadcast technology to notify citizens. In the UK, the Civil Contingencies Secretariat (CCS) wanted to inform the Cabinet Office which methods might best suit its needs.

This led to an initial feasibility trial in 2014 to ascertain whether it was worth investing in the required infrastructure. This subject was revived in 2018 following a number of major incidents and extreme weather events. The Cabinet Office wanted to introduce an independent third party to undertake the research and provide an expert and detailed view of today's landscape.

"We are always looking for insight from experts so that when we brief Ministers we have an independent approach to give the research credibility," explains Dr Nigel P Brown, Lead for Resilient ICT Strategy, Civil Contingencies Secretariat. "We put out a tender for a partner that could thoroughly explore UK and global platforms and Fujitsu came back with the correct responses and depth of expertise required."

The Cabinet Office was impressed by Fujitsu's understanding of the technology, its appreciation of the impact of 5G networks and the amount of resources it could commit within a very tight timeframe. Fujitsu outshone the other participants with its experience, which came largely from running the flood warning system for England and Wales and a previous trial Fujitsu took part in to notify residents about chemical fires.

"The other applicants had nowhere near the level of experience that Fujitsu demonstrated," adds Dr Brown. "Fujitsu also displayed an innate understanding of the trajectory of the technology involved that would help futureproof our thinking."

### Detailed research enables clear insight

Fujitsu began with a workshop for the Cabinet Office that helped define the scope, boundaries and objectives. It also reviewed and summarised the previous mobile alerting trial from a technology perspective to ensure key learnings were taken on board.



Fujitsu then explored how other countries, including the US, Netherlands, Australia and New Zealand, are implementing alerting systems. Finally, it assessed the leading UK mobile operators – EE, Vodafone, Three and O2 – and their ability to deliver both Cell Broadcast and location-based SMS alerts. All this research was relayed back to the Cabinet Office in weekly calls and fed into the production of an Insight Report.

"It was a very collegiate approach that helped us clarify what we wanted to deliver and how best to do so," continues Dr Brown. "The first report focused on the technical options. Having completed that, Fujitsu came back and said there was still money available, so we continued to look at commercial considerations. That's great value for money."

Fujitsu completed the initial phase of research in just three months, ensuring the Cabinet Office CCS would quickly have a report to inform its thinking. This Insight Report now provides the foundation to create and deliver a new alerting system.

### A flexible and collaborative approach

The Cabinet Office was hugely impressed by the speed with which the report was delivered, its detail and the affordable cost. Moreover, the format of the finished report was designed to cater to a wide range of different audiences with different requirements.

"The flexibility, capability and agility of the Fujitsu team was second-to-none – they were always happy to take on board new considerations and suggestions, which reflects the collaborative nature of the project," remarks Dr Brown. "Importantly, when it came to the final presentation of the full report, Fujitsu delivered it in such a way that it could be understood by many different audiences, which was incredibly useful."

Collaboration has proven to be vital to the success of the process: Fujitsu's technical expertise was supported by the Cabinet Office's legislative insight. The in-house team was well-placed to identify barriers while Fujitsu then produced solutions. Furthermore, when it came to talking to the right people in mobile operators or other governments, the Cabinet Office was able to help establish contact.

"We helped Fujitsu reach the right people in the right places and that in turn helped Fujitsu step up and deliver a comprehensive report. It was a joint effort from the beginning," concludes Dr Brown. "The next step is to identify the types of risks and threats we need to flag. This report has helped inform those critical decisions."

## FUJITSU

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