

FLOODING ISSUES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

AWARENESS AND ASSISTANCE SUB-COMMITTEE

Minutes of the fifth meeting held on 18 January 2007, Conference Room 12, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh.

Present: David Faichney (SEPA) – **Chair.**

Scottish Executive (SE): Debi Garft (SE, Climate Change and Air Division), Helen Kemp (SE, Climate Change and Air Division), Lynn Mills (SE, Civil Contingencies Unit).

Paul Hendy (National Flood Forum); Professor Alan Werritty (Dundee University); Mary Donhau (National Flood Forum); Dr John Riddell (Independent Consultant).

Observing: Ronnie Falconer (Jacobs), Frances Conlan (SE, Climate Change and Air Division).

1. **Apologies:** Carolyn Girvan (SE, Climate Change and Air Division); Alan Motion (Met Office); Dr Andrew Black (University of Dundee); Jill Boulton (Norwich Union); Stephen Merrett (Environment Agency); Prof. Charles Ainger (MWH); Alistair Dyer (Scottish Water); Stephen McLachlan (East Lothian Council); Martyn Tulloch (Comhairle nan Eilean Siar).

Agenda item 2: Welcome from Chair and introduction

2. David Faichney (DF) welcomed everyone to the fifth meeting of the Awareness and Assistance Sub-Committee and following the resignation of Di Keal of National Flood Forum (NFF), introduced Paul Hendy (PH) and Mary Donhau (MD) and explained that PH had now joined the Sub-Committee in Di's place.

Agenda item 3: Minutes and action points from the fourth Sub-Committee meeting held on 14 September 2006.

3. The minutes from the previous meeting were not agreed, as there were insufficient Members present who had attended the meeting. Debi Garft (DG) confirmed that Action point 1 was outstanding but Stephen Merrett (SM) has agreed to forward copies of relevant Environment Agency (EA) documents on producing and using flood maps to SEPA. Action Point 2 – the work to add presentations to the website is ongoing.

Action point 1: Secretariat to confirm minutes of the fourth meeting by E-mail.

Agenda item 4 – Review of Awareness and Assistance Sub-Committee Workplan – David Faichney

4. Members considered the items in the Awareness and Assistance Sub-Committee Workplan.

Effective awareness raising

5. PH stated that the National Flood Forum were ready to move to work in Scotland and asked to meet with SEPA and the Executive to work on a plan to take this forward.

6. DF updated Members on SEPA's 3-year awareness campaign, which focuses on areas with Flood Warning Schemes, visiting communities and schools in these areas over a 6-month period. Members discussed the importance of engaging with other groups such as Housing Associations and exploiting good relationships with local authorities to help raise awareness in a systematic way.

Flood Maps as a tool for raising awareness

7. The *Indicative River and Coastal Flood Map – Scotland* has now been launched and has been well received.

Community Models for self-help

8. SEPA would explore opportunities in Scotland with the National Flood Forum.

The introduction of additional flood warning systems including dissemination

9. The Deputy Minister for the Environment and Rural Development will launch the Clyde, Kelvin and Irvine flood warning schemes at the Glasgow Science Centre on 6 March 2007

Cross-cutting issues

10. Members discussed methods for interacting with other groups to improve knowledge sharing and management. Members recognised the important role of the SNIFFER RISE website here.

11. MD cited Gloucester as an example of how the whole community is involved in providing historical data, particularly photographic evidence, of flooding events to help build a knowledge base.

12. MD also informed Members that the Welsh Assembly Government is providing funding towards a Flood Forum for Wales and this will help develop tools and techniques for getting awareness messages across.

13. Alan Werritty (AW) suggested that in some instances local authorities are reluctant to engage with community groups because there may be a perception that the local authority will then assume responsibility.

Agenda item 5: Brief Updates – David Faichney

Feedback on SEPA second generation map

14. The *Indicative River and Coastal Flood Map – Scotland* was launched on the SEPA website on 1 November 2006 and there have been over 1 million hits with peaks occurring during flood events (80,000 on day 1; 220,000 on day 2.) The system is generally busier on weekdays. SEPA pays Multi-map per hit. SEPA received good feedback from 'power' users to start with but this has stopped now. There have also been a couple of interesting challenges over individual properties being shown at risk. So far 28 of the 34 planning authorities have applied for a licence to use the data sets. SEPA are reviewing the print options and colour enhancements for the map.

Coastal Flood Warning

15. The Coastal Flood Warning Framework will take forward work on coastal flood warning required by the Executive after the January 2005 storm. This will be a broad-brush service based storm-tide forecasting service and will go live in February 2007. A SNIFFER project on scoping coastal flooding in Scotland will help identify where SEPA needs to develop this service.

Flood warning dissemination

16. SEPA agreed to be responsible for disseminating flood warnings so ensure that a more focussed approach is taken across Scotland. SEPA has conducted a scoping study and business case, which considers various options for disseminating warnings to present to the Executive. DF explained that there were clear advantages in the multi-media system adopted by the EA. Based on the EA's experience it will most likely take a couple of years to develop a system in Scotland. DF said it would welcome the NFF's support here.

Flood Awareness Campaign 2006-2007

17. The Flood Awareness Campaign 2006-2007 was launched on 10 October 2006 at Colinton Primary School. The 6-month campaign includes school plays, leaflets, flood packs and radio broadcasts, and the feedback to-date shows that the campaign is proving to be effective. DF explained that local authority participation so far has varied from event to event with Renfrew(2005) and Edinburgh(2006) for example supplying very good support materials and personnel but this has not been at all events. The next events will be a Flood Fair in Musselburgh and the launch of the Clyde, Kelvin and Irvine flood warning schemes in February.

Agenda item 6 –The Social Cost of Flooding – findings from Dundee University research – Prof Alan Werritty

18. AW presentation provided a useful look backwards at the intangible, often long lasting, social impacts of the effects of flooding. The main objective of the study was to gathered new knowledge of people's experiences, their attitudes and behaviour but also to establish best practice and evidence to help inform policy. PH added that a flood event can lead to a loss of or enhanced community spirit. AW explained that the study showed that no long term clear benefit of receiving a flood warning as some people were ill equipped to act on it. He confirmed that he had compared the findings with other reports and some, but by no means all of the new report's findings, had been reported elsewhere. The new study was specific to Scotland and, in terms of flood impacts, registered significant new findings.

Action point 2: Secretariat to add AW's presentation to the website.

Action point 3: Secretariat to send a copy of Chapter 8 (draft) of the technical guidance to AW for comments.

Action point 4: JR to provide a reference for the report on flooding in Leeds for Secretariat to circulate.

Agenda item 7 – The role of community groups in raising flood awareness – Mary Donhau

19. MD gave Members some background on the work of the NFF, which was set up in 2000 following the flood in Bewdley. The EA provided a start-up grant but this will decrease significantly in 2007 and will stop in 2008. A Board of Directors runs the NFF.

20. Members agreed that there is a role for a Forum in Scotland to bridge the gap between the public and local authorities. However it is important that it does not dilute local authorities' responsibilities in Scotland. As a first step, SEPA, NFF and the Executive should meet soon. (Scheduled for 28 February)

Action point 5: Secretariat to pass Paul Hendy's contact details to AW and DF.

Action point 6: Secretariat to place Mary Donhau presentation on website.

Action point 7: DF to set up a meeting between Executive, SEPA and NFF.

Agenda item 8 – Risk to life from flooding – discussion paper – John Riddell

21. JR presented various aspects of the risk to life from flooding and provided examples of flood events where deaths might occur. He differentiated between passive and active deaths and recognised that thankfully these have been rare occurrences so far. However he is concerned that in future an inquiry could reach a verdict of unlawful killing as it did with deaths during a flood event at Glanrhyd Bridge in Wales in 1987. In these circumstances public bodies would be in a difficult position. He called for the Executive to start to identify sites where there is the potential for the type of flooding incidents highlighted in his paper and to consider how the emergency services might be made aware of these risks.

22. Lynn Mills (LM) said that the Community Risk Registers (CCR) - flood risk assessment category does not specifically list these scenarios. But it might be helpful for local authorities to carry out a gap analysis. It was agreed that it is important for local authorities to identify local risks but it would take a lot of information to build a comprehensive picture. RF suggested we could learn from the Making Space for Water RF7 project (Increasing Awareness and Resilience to All Forms of Flooding Including Through Improved Flood Warning in England), which aims to identify this type of risk.

23. Members felt that this is a cross-cutting issue for all Sub-committees and as such should be taken to the FIAC meeting on 1 March 2007.

Action point 8: FIAC should make reference to JR paper, respond to it and recognise it in the Final Report. It will be attached as an annex to the Sub-committee Report.

24. DF thanked AW, JR and MD for their presentations.

Agenda item 9: Any other business

Community Risk Registers – Lyn Mills

25. LM explained that CCRs are required under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. SEPA and the Met Office provide information on weather hazards and local authorities are required to prepare a Risk Analysis based on this. So far only the basics have been provided so a lot of work still required to fill in the gaps in all areas. The Scottish Civil Contingencies Committee (Weather) is to take forward a review of how climate change will impact on emergency

planning for weather in the next 5-20 years and how the emergency services will respond. It will look at the CRRs in high-risk areas and attempt to identify what the new risks might be. This is a challenging piece of work because of the huge amount of information available and the tight timeframe.

Building standards and resilience – David Faichney

26. Members agreed that the Sub-Committee had been unable to look at this issue in detail but it was essential that it is included as an issue for the ‘next steps’ in the Sub-Committee final report and we need to develop relevant contacts. The Scottish Building Standards Agency is keen to be involved.

Hydrometric Network Study - David Faichney

27. DF updated the members on this 2004 report by Andrew Black (NTAG2004(34) Hydrometric data collection for flood estimation in Scotland - A brief report with recommendations. The report makes 7 recommendations for SEPA and DF gave an update on progress that has been made in these areas, recognising that SEPA has not received any additional funding. The main progress areas are:

- As part of the Water Framework Directive by the end of 2009, 8 new flow stations will be in place on small catchments.
- SEPA is working towards a centralised data information management system and there will be a National Hydrological Information Management System in place in 6 months.
- The National Tidal Water Level Monitoring System will be taken forward as part of a UK network.

28. SEPA recognises that it would be helpful to gauge the interest from users in real time data on the website and will consider whether to test this through some form of market research.

29. Members discussed the particular problem of SEPA not being able to recruit suitably qualified hydrologists and the general problem of attracting graduates to this area. This should be highlighted in the final report. Members agreed that as millions of pounds will be spend on flood prevention schemes in future it would make sense to have sound hydrometric data and expertise to base these decisions on.

Action point 9: Secretariat to forward a copy of Chapter 8 (draft) to Members and comments to be returned to Secretariat by 16 February 2007.

Agenda Item 10: Next steps

30. DF called for recommendations and next steps to take to FIAC in the Final Report from the Sub-Committee.

Action point 10: Secretariat will prepare a draft of the report and pass to Members for their comments.

**FIAC Secretariat
February 2007**