

## NATIONAL TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP ON FLOODING ISSUES

### ROLE, REMIT AND WORKING ARRANGEMENTS

#### **Purpose**

1. The purpose of this paper is to support a discussion by Members on the role of the National Technical Advisory Group on Flooding and how it will work to address the underlying technical issues of the National Flooding Framework.

#### **Background**

2. Some 77,000 properties in Scotland are estimated to be at an annual risk of 1% of flooding from rivers. In addition, a proportion of the 90,000 properties lying in the coastal zone is at risk of flooding from the sea. Flooding may also arise from sewers overflowing as a result of heavy rainfall and from the overland flow of surface water, as a result of intense rainfall. More generally, flooding impacts on the transport infrastructure and on other aspects of people's lives. Moreover climate change scenarios all point to the flooding situation worsening over the coming decades.

3. In October 2002 an Ad Hoc Committee of Ministers, chaired by the Deputy First Minister, was set up to consider arrangements for addressing flood risk and how advice and support is provided to those at risk from and affected by, flooding. In February the Ad Hoc Committee produced a Statement of Commitments (attached at Annex 1) and drew up an action plan in the form of a National Flooding Framework. The National Flooding Framework aims to address the problems of flooding through four areas of action, namely, Awareness, Avoidance, Alleviation and Assistance. The Ad Hoc Committee recommended that a National Technical Advisory Group ("the Group") be set up to provide technical advice to local authorities and other parties on flood risk.

#### **Terms of Reference**

4. The terms of reference for the Group, as agreed by Scottish Ministers, are attached at Annex 2 to this paper.

5. The main purpose of the Group will be to determine what technical guidance is required in Scotland, agree an action plan for producing that guidance and making it available to local authorities and other interested parties. It is envisaged that the Group will be asked to start by considering the existing Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) guidance (Flood and coastal defence Project appraisal guidance: procedural guidance for operating authorities) and its relevance to Scotland. (The DEFRA guidance can be found at: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/enviro/fcd/pubs/pagn/default.htm>.) At the first meeting members will also be asked to consider the need for technical guidance in areas not covered by DEFRA guidance, for example, improving national guidance in connection with the promotion of flood alleviation schemes.

6. The Group will give technical advice to help in the preparation of Executive guidance to help designated responsible authorities carry out their duty to promote 'sustainable flood management' under Part II of Water Services and Water Environment (Scotland) Act 2003.

7. We anticipate that most of the detailed work will be done through sub-groups set up by the Group - see paragraphs 13-15 below.

### **Structure and Membership**

8. The Group has been set up to discuss and advise on the technical aspects of flood issues and its membership has been drawn from a wide range of experience and expertise from within central and local government, industry, SEPA, Scottish Water, academia and Environmental NGOs to reflect this.

9. Once appointed, it is assumed that Members will be able to draw on expertise and resources of their particular constituent organisations to help deliver the objectives of the Group.

10. The effectiveness of the Group will be greatly enhanced if Members are able and willing to contribute and help in bringing forward particular pieces of work, mainly through short term working sub-groups.

11. Philip Wright, Head of the Scottish Executive's Air, Climate and Engineering Unit will chair the meetings.

### **Pattern of Working**

12. Initially the Group will have a fixed lifespan, meeting approximately every 2 months until September 2004. Meetings will be hosted by the Scottish Executive in Victoria Quay and will start at 10.30 am. It is expected that the meetings will last usually no more than 3 hours but circumstances may dictate the need for longer - or shorter - meetings. Any changes to the venue or format may be arranged with the prior agreement of Members. The first meeting will take place on 17 December. The dates for future meetings are attached at Annex 3. From time to time, Members may also be invited to participate in sub-groups and/or to represent the Group at events. The Group will review its performance and make recommendations on whether there is a continuing need for members to meet regularly to discuss flooding issues for the Executive to take to Ministers by November 2004.

### **Sub-groups**

13. Sub-groups provide the opportunity to draw on the broadest possible range of expertise and involve a wide cross-section of stakeholders in the work of the Group. Subject to the agreement of the Group, sub-groups may be convened from time to time to address and progress specific issues or tasks. As a general rule these will be short-life working groups and will be stood down once they have completed their work. All sub-groups will report and be accountable to the Group.

14. The remit of any sub-groups will be determined by the Group. Ideally, sub-groups will be chaired by Group Members but where this is not possible a member may be asked to sponsor the sub-group. The sponsoring Member will be responsible for ensuring that the sub-group completes its task and reports back to the Group on time.

15. Group Members will be invited to nominate people to serve on sub-groups. It will be for the chair of the sub-group and/or the sponsoring Member to agree with the Secretariat who should be appointed.

### **Remuneration**

16. Membership of the Group or any of the sub-groups will not normally attract any remuneration. However, the Secretariat will consider reasonable travel and subsistence expenses.

17. Exceptionally, it might be necessary to meet some consultancy expenses. Any such expenses must be approved in advance by the Secretariat and, depending on the sums involved, may also require Ministerial approval. It may also be necessary to commission research studies to support the work of the group.

### **Secretariat**

18. The Secretariat will provide direct administrative support to both the Group and its sub-groups. This will include arranging and recording the outcome of meetings, preparing or commissioning papers, and managing the Group's work programme.

19. The Secretariat will be provided by the Scottish Executive's Air, Climate and Engineering Unit. However it will be important that the Secretariat is able to draw on resources and expertise from partners.

20. In line with the principles of open-government and to assist Group members the Secretariat will establish a web-site for access to Group papers and proceedings. The Secretariat will also provide guidance on the format, process and timescales for submitting papers to the Group.

### **Conclusion**

21. **Members are invited to:**

- **consider the role of the Group as set out in this paper within the terms of reference at Annex 2;**
- **agree to meet as per the schedule at Annex 3;**
- **discuss how their respective organisations might contribute to the work of the Group;**
- **discuss the proposals in relation to sub-groups and identify specific areas of work that a sub-group might carry out, and**
- **consider and discuss the relevance of existing DEFRA guidance in Scotland and identify and develop any further guidance that may be considered appropriate.**

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**January 2004**

**NATIONAL TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP ON FLOODING ISSUES**

**ROLE, REMIT AND WORKING ARRANGEMENTS**

**EXECUTIVE STATEMENT OF COMMITMENTS TO REDUCE THE RISKS AND IMPACTS OF FLOODING**

**Awareness**

1. We will seek to improve awareness of the risks of flooding through the provision of better flood risk information and additional flood warning systems.

**Avoidance**

2. We shall publish revised national planning policy intended to strengthen the ability of planning authorities to prevent unsuitable further development where there is significant flood risk.

**Alleviation**

3. We are investing £40 million over the next three years to reduce flood risk for 1850 properties.

4. We will seek to reduce the risk of sewer flooding by continuing to encourage the use of sustainable urban drainage systems and working with Scottish Water to ensure that such systems are properly maintained.

5. We will seek to manage flood risk by improving national guidance and administrative procedures for promoting new flood alleviation schemes.

6. We will encourage joint working between local authorities, SEPA and Scottish Water to improve flood risk management and will establish a national technical advisory group.

**Assistance**

7. We are helping those who might be affected by flooding by encouraging the take up of insurance.

8. We will give better support to those affected by flooding.

**Scottish Executive: Air, Climate and Engineering Team  
February 2003**

**NATIONAL TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP ON FLOODING ISSUES****ROLE, REMIT AND WORKING ARRANGEMENTS****TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE NATIONAL TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP ON FLOODING ISSUES****Background**

The Ad-hoc Committee of Ministers on Flooding Issues, which reported in March this year, recommended that a National Technical Advisory Group (NTAG) is set up to consider flooding issues.

**Remit**

NTAG is tasked with addressing many of the technical issues lying behind the National Flooding Framework, in particular NTAG will: -

- Provide the Scottish Executive with advice to inform the preparation of technical guidance for local authorities and interested parties. In particular it will consider existing technical guidance (e.g. the DEFRA: Flood and coastal defence Project appraisal guidance: procedural guidance for operating authorities) and its relevance in Scotland. It will look to identify technical areas, including economic aspects, which need Scotland-specific guidance on managing flood risk.
- Give the Scottish Executive technical advice on sustainable flood management to inform the preparation of relevant guidance.
- Provide advice to the Scottish Executive on the second generation of flood risk maps and their dissemination.
- Provide advice to the Scottish Executive on the interaction of flood prevention schemes and planning procedures, including land-use outwith the planning control. NTAG should also consider the social impacts of flooding and the importance of flood management responsibilities.
- Provide a forum:
  - to facilitate discussion about technical issues on flood risk.
  - to identify best practice issues, and
  - to allow the views of experts to be taken into account in the development of measures designed to improve our approach to addressing flood risk.
- Provide leadership to the professional community interested in flood risk issues.
- Consider how the latest developments in climate change impact on flood risk and to come forward with proposals for adapting to the impacts.

**NTAG Secretariat, January 2004**

**NATIONAL TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP ON FLOODING ISSUES**

**ROLE, REMIT AND WORKING ARRANGEMENT**

**PROPOSED DATES FOR MEETINGS**

Wednesday 17 December 2003

Thursday 5 February 2004

Thursday 1 April 2004

Thursday 3 June 2004

Thursday 5 August 2004

Thursday 23 September 2004

Meetings will start at 10.30 a.m.

**NTAG Secretariat  
November 2003**