

NATIONAL TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP ON FLOODING ISSUES
DEPARTMENT FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS GUIDANCE
OVERVIEW

Purpose

1. This paper summarises the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) Flood and Coastal Defence Project Appraisal Guidance (FCDPAG).

Background

2. The National Technical Advisory Group on flooding issues (“the Group”) will provide expert advice to the Executive on how best to provide technical guidance on flood risk management in Scotland. In order to ensure that the Group makes the most efficient and effective use of the limited time available to it, it is important that it first considers and offers a view on the relevance of existing DEFRA guidance to Scottish circumstances. This paper gives brief details of the DEFRA flood and coastal defence guidance for England and Wales. There are six titles in this guidance, designed to provide an integrated package on project appraisal. The papers may be found in full at: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/envirom/fcd/pubs/pagn/default.htm>.

3. The final paper in this series (FCDPAG6) has yet to be published, whilst it is also DEFRA’s intention to revise all other papers (FCDPAG1 to 5) in light of changing policies and objectives. The intention is to complete both exercises by the end of 2005. In the meantime, DEFRA will be reviewing the need for interim guidance.

Overview (Including General Guidance) (FCDPAG1)

4. FCDPAG1 provides guidance on combining the different aspects covered in volumes 2 – 6, and recommends how to use the document series. This volume also considers technical issues, climate change and sustainability and how they may be incorporated into the project appraisal process. A final section on ‘pitfalls’ and ‘common mistakes’ is included to enable users to learn from past mistakes. The content of this overview is largely new and compiled by The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF), and extensively revised through consultation in autumn 2000.

Strategic Planning and Appraisal (FCDPAG2)

5. FCDPAG2 discusses potential means to improve decision making for investment in sustainable river and coastal flood alleviation and coastal protection, through improved appreciation of issues within a strategic framework. The focus is primarily on the appraisal and development of strategy plans relating to river catchments or lengths of coast, but the principles are also applicable at the large-scale planning and design and appraisal stages of scheme development. In particular, this document sets out the generic principles to be considered for the strategic planning of flood defence and land drainage works (fluvial, tidal and coastal) and coastal protection works in England and Wales.

Economic Appraisal (FCDPAG3)

6. FCDPAG3 sets out the principles that should be used in undertaking economic appraisals of nationally-funded projects for river and coastal flood alleviation, coast protection and other related purposes. Specifically, it provides an interpretation of how the requirements set out in the Treasury's Green Book (HM Treasury: *Appraisal and Evaluation in Central Government*, HMSO, 1997) can be achieved, whilst also setting out good practice recommendations.

Approaches to Risk (FCDPAG4)

7. FCDPAG4 aims to facilitate the proper consideration of risk issues and the derivation of appropriate economic values and decision making, as set out in FCDPAG3. It provides guidance for all levels at which relevant decision-making is addressed, namely: large-scale planning; strategic planning; scheme appraisal; scheme design; scheme construction and maintenance. Whilst it is concerned mainly with flood and coastal erosion risks, it also covers other types of risk which influence the effectiveness of flood and coastal defences. FCDPAG4 assumes that the reader has prior knowledge of general risk and sensitivity analysis techniques within project appraisal.

Environmental Appraisal (FCDPAG5)

8. FCDPAG5 follows on from FCDPAG4, providing a similar function in the derivation of economic values for input into economic decision making, set out in FCDPAG3, for environmental aspects of flood and coastal defence works. In particular, this publication seeks to:

- advise on how to take account of environmental objectives and sustainability in scheme design;
- improve project appraisal by drawing attention to the range of techniques available for use in environmental evaluation (including monetary and non-monetary techniques);
- provide updated guidance on compliance with the Habitats and Birds Directives following the announcement that features within European sites must be protected from flooding and coastal erosion and
- provide advice on scheme design by reference to theoretical examples.

Post Project Evaluation (FCDPAG6)

9. FCDPAG6 has still to be published.

Conclusions

10. **Members are invited to discuss and advise the Executive on the relevance of each of the six pieces of DEFRA guidelines to flood risk management issues in Scotland.**