

FLOODING ISSUES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

AWARENESS AND ASSISTANCE SUB-COMMITTEE PROGRESS REPORT FEBRUARY 2006 FIAC MEETING

Purpose

1. The purpose of this paper is to provide the Flooding Issues Advisory Committee (FIAC) with a progress report from the Awareness and Assistance Sub-Committee.

Background

2. The Sub-Committee has met twice, on 15 June 2005 and 17 November 2005. The current membership is detailed in Annex A, and Tim Jolley (TJ), of SEPA, chairs the meetings.

3. This Sub-Committee is set up to discuss the Introduction of Flood Warning Systems and Dissemination, Flood Maps as a tool for raising awareness and assessing how resilience is raised through awareness campaigns and flood warning schemes

Feedback from the last meeting on 17 November 2005

FIAC Sub-Committee priorities and workplan (attached at annex B)

4. Members discussed the priorities for FIAC detailed in paper FIAC2005 (11) and the paper was amended at paragraph 3 to reflect the importance of community involvement in raising awareness. Members agreed the amended Sub-Committee workplan (attached at Annex B).

5. Members discussed raising awareness, in particular the how we can help people recognise that their properties are at risk of flooding and how they might be encouraged to take resilience measures for themselves. Alistair Dyer gave an overview of the Scottish Water at risk register and how it is used to give householders advance warning of a possible flood event. Members agreed that it would be helpful to have a paper detailing current work on raising awareness of flooding in Scotland. This will be produced for a future meeting.

Flood risk mapping

6. TJ gave an update on the SEPA second generation flood risk map. He explained that the map should be available for release to practitioners in March 2006 although there had been some legal and licensing issues to sort out. SEPA had also brought in new data to improve the quality of the fluvial map before releasing it to the public. Jill Boulton confirmed that the Norwich Union flood risk map for Scotland would be available in 2006 and will show properties at risk of flooding which, in future, could be required to pay a premium. The Environment agency will be publishing a guide on the production of flood maps and the inherent difficulties involved.

Flood warning dissemination advisory board

7. Judith Tracey gave an update on the flood warning dissemination working group, which met for the first time on 9 December 2005.

SEPA flood awareness campaigns

8. David Faichney gave feedback from the 2005 flood awareness fortnight and past campaigns. Members will use this information to help offer advice on future campaigns. It was agreed that community targeting approach taken in 2005 works best. However it would be helpful if campaigns were not confined to a fortnight a year but were spread out through the year when needed.

Glasgow Strategic Drainage Plan

9. David Page of Hyder Consultants gave a presentation on the Glasgow Strategic Drainage Plan, which demonstrates how a range of stakeholders are working together to take a strategic approach to flooding. He explained that the two main areas of difficulty in the implementing the plan are making sure that the process is democratic with so many stakeholders involved and funding the plan itself.

Other business

10. Members were given a guided tour of the SEPA Floodline service and the flood warning systems.

Next steps

11. A further meeting has been arranged for 23 March to discuss current work on raising awareness of flooding.

Conclusion

12. Members are invited to note the above.

**FIAC Secretariat
February 2006**

FLOODING ISSUES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

AWARENESS AND ASSISTANCE SUB-COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Membership

- 1. Dr. Tim Jolley, SEPA – Chair**
2. David Faichney, SEPA
3. Dinah Keal, National Flood Forum
4. Jill Boulton, Norwich Union
5. Prof. Charles Ainger, MWH UK Ltd
6. Judith Tracey, Air, Climate and Engineering Division, SE
7. John Greaves, Highland Council
8. Lynne Mills, Civil Contingences Division, SE
9. Dr. Andrew Black, University of Dundee
10. Stephen McLachlan, East Lothian Council
11. Alistair Dyer, Scottish Water
12. Tony Andryszewski, Environment Agency
13. Alan Motion, Met Office

FLOODING ISSUES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

AWARENESS AND ASSISTANCE WORKPLAN

Purpose

1. This paper outlines the proposed workplan for the Awareness and Assistance Sub-Committee of FIAC.

Background

2. FIAC has been set up to advise the Scottish Executive at a strategic level on a range of flooding issues to help take forward the National Flooding Framework. This will include continuing the work started by the National Technical Advisory Group on Flooding Issues (NTAG) on guidance for local authorities taking forward flood prevention schemes and the meaning of sustainable flood management. The four As (Awareness, Alleviation, Avoidance and Assistance), which support the National Flooding Framework, provide a useful matrix for separating the workplan items.

3. FIAC paper FIAC2005 (4) sets out a clear definition of sustainable flood management, objectives, principles and indicators. Principle 7 [Options] states that all possible options should be considered for flood management that address all four 'A's: Awareness, Avoidance, Alleviation and Assistance, even if regulatory or legal barriers appear to block implementation.

4. The Awareness and Assistance Sub-Committee has been set up to discuss how we can improve awareness of the risks of flooding through the provision of better flood risk information and additional flood warning systems. It will also consider how we can give better support to those affected by flooding. It will discuss these issues within the context of promoting sustainable flood management and consider what the resource implications might be for stakeholders, including the Executive.

Awareness and Assistance

5. Raising awareness of flood risk is central to reducing the impact of floods on life and property. Once aware of their flood risk communities and individuals need to understand what assistance is available to them and how they can turn this into effective action.

6. Awareness can be defined as:

“The knowledge and understanding of flood risk that allows responsible authorities and the public to take appropriate measures to prepare for and respond to flooding.”*

(* 'flood risk' is the product of the probability and impact of flooding. A frequent but low impact flood may have the same risk as a rare but high impact flood)

7. Successful awareness-raising depends on effective engagement with responsible authorities, communities and individuals. It comprises activities as wide ranging as direct

engagement with those at risk, media campaigns, flood maps and flood warning dissemination. Each one designed to inform a specific audience of the risks of flooding such that they can take appropriate actions to minimise the social, economic and environmental impacts of flooding. Awareness ensures that responsible authorities are ready to provide effective assistance and prepares the public to gain maximum benefit from this.

8. Assistance can be defined as:

“Any help and support that can be offered to those at risk from flooding either before, during or after a flood.”

9. Assistance goes beyond the actions of the emergency services and includes measures taken by all government agencies, insurers, charities and the wider community to minimise the impact of flooding. Assistance refers to the support available before during and after a flood. The delivery of the proposed flood awareness and assistance workplan should be guided by the 12 principles of sustainable flood management as defined in paper FIAC2005 (4).

10. Members will be kept up to date on initiatives to give better support to those affected by flooding; particularly the review of home contents insurance schemes and the implementation of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 as it relates to dealing with flood risk.

Workplan

11. The following four items in the proposed workplan aim to improve our ability to raise awareness of flood issues and to ensure that those at risk are aware of and able to make effective use of the assistance available to them.

Effective awareness raising

12. In order to establish an effective approach to raising awareness the Sub-Committee should consider flooding from the perspective of those impacted by flooding. The views of Flood Forum will be particularly valuable in this respect through informing the group of key issues and lessons from past events.

13. The Sub-Committee will advise on an overall strategy for raising awareness that reflects factors such as the different causes of flooding, the make-up of communities, typical responses to flood risk and flooding and information available from public surveys.

14. There has been an annual flood awareness campaign in Scotland since 2001 initially focussed on the launch of Floodline and latterly focussed on the need to prepare for flooding. SEPA will give the group a perspective of issues that have been covered during these campaigns and the proposals for the October 2005 campaign.

15. The Sub-Committee will assess how the annual campaign fits into an awareness strategy and specifically will advise on what can be done to assist SEPA in its Annual Flood Awareness campaign; in particular raising the profile amongst homeowners of their duty to protect their own properties.

Flood Maps as a tool for raising awareness

16. Mapping is an effective way of communicating different aspects of flood risk to a wide audience. The utility of a map depends on its scale, the underlying methods, the source data and the mapped variables.

17. Flood risk estimation is not an exact science and hence to avoid misuse it is necessary to provide clear guidance along with any map to manage the users' expectations. This is generally done through a combination of technical guidance, support, disclaimers and public awareness campaigns.

18. The Executive has made £1.8m available to SEPA to develop and maintain an indicative flood risk map of Scotland that will be accessible to the public via a web-site.

19. The map will be a strategic map of flood risk that will present the 0.1%, 0.5% and 1% flood outlines for rivers and coasts based on a standard method and a national terrain dataset. Areas that benefit from flood defences will be shown where data is available. SEPA will provide regular updates to the Sub-Committee.

20. The Sub-Committee will offer advice on an overall strategy for flood mapping and access to information on flood risk that looks beyond the development of the map and considers how the various demands for information on flood risk can be met. The strategy might consider the expectations of potential users, the information that is available, the treatment of different flood types, the treatment of climate change, the management of expectations, the management of any risks associated with publishing maps and the framework for producing maps and making them available.

Community Models for self-help

21. Raising and sustaining flood awareness in our communities is a challenge given the relative mobility of society in Scotland today. Flood awareness raised at community level is more likely to be sustained than that raised at individual household or business level.

22. The sub-committee will consider existing models for community engagement and suggest how these might be applied in a Scottish context. This applies to both raising flood awareness and ensuring that those at risk understand the assistance that is available to them to enable them to take effective action at both individual and community level.

23. The experiences of Flood Forum, the insurance companies, The EA and Local Authorities will be valuable in taking this forward.

The introduction of additional flood warning systems including dissemination

24. A strategy for flood warning systems and dissemination is being taken forward in conjunction with key stakeholders i.e. Association of Chief Police Officers Scotland (ACPOS), SEPA, Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers (SOLACE) and CoSLA.

25. SEPA presented a paper at the first Sub-Committee meeting outlining the current coverage of flood warning, the current process for expanding the service to new areas and

SEPA's future role on flood warning dissemination. Members are asked to consider the issues raised.

26. In particular Members will consider how future flood warning schemes might be prioritised, how flood warnings can best be disseminated to vulnerable people, and what the resource implications might be.

Cross-cutting issues

27. The Sub-Committee will bear in mind the cross-cutting issues identified in FIAC workplan paper FIAC2005(3). In particular the Sub-Committee will keep in touch with the on-going research on the social costs of flooding and how it relates to the effectiveness of awareness and assistance.

28. We recognise the importance of having access to reliable data to increase our understanding of flooding and flood processes. The Sub-Committee will consider what data is available, how it is currently collected and held and how this information can be managed and shared so that all stakeholders can have access to it. In particular FIAC may wish to discuss the need for better knowledge management, in particular, the possible added value of a '*knowledge centre*' system, where information could be available for use at a local and national level.

Conclusion

29. The Chair will report progress at each FIAC meeting to inform Members of the Sub-Committee's outputs.

FIAC Secretariat
February 2006