

Multi-Agency Response to Flooding in Scotland

Ian Walford

Head of Scottish Resilience

Context

Major risks for Scotland are much the same as for rest of UK:

- Pandemic flu
- Terrorism
- Extreme Weather
- Utility Failure (including fuel shortage)

Context

- Framework for planning and response similar to rest of UK
- Many cross-border linkages: e.g. UK or GB bodies, mutual aid, inter-operability
- Scottish Ministers committed to common objective

Context

- But Scotland is distinctive
- Has some unique challenges and opportunities
- Want to show how we are developing a Scottish approach to resilience – consistent with Government's purpose

Scottish Government's purpose

To focus Government and public services on creating a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth.

The purpose of Scottish Resilience

To help and equip frontline agencies to prepare for and, where necessary, respond to all types of emergencies, ranging from house fires and road traffic collisions to major disasters.

Scottish Resilience Support

Focus on improving capacity to deal together with extreme scenarios through:

- Planning
- Exercising and training
- Supporting response and recovery
- Learning lessons

Current multi-agency arrangements

- Civil Contingencies Act (2004)
- Strategic Co-ordinating Groups (SCGs) given clear responsibility for coordinating a multi-agency approach to planning, responding and recovering from all civil emergencies, including flooding
- Multi-agency approach is the overarching principle of the wider Resilience Strategy

Current multi-agency procedures

- Each SCG publishes identified flood risks facing that area
- Multi-agency approach to Risk Management
- Multi-agency arrangements in place to mount a **co-ordinated** response to flooding
- All responder roles clearly defined

Current multi-agency - benefits

- Provides **flexible** response to range of events
- Ensures the **right resources** are deployed to meet specific needs
- SCG is **enabled** to make relevant local decisions

Scottish Government support for current multi-agency arrangements

- Provision of Water Rescue Training for all FRSs by the Scottish Fire Services College
- Funding SCG Co-ordinator and Regional Resilience Adviser posts
- Emergency co-ordination training for SCGs
- Guidance on emergency preparation and response e.g Warning and Informing
- National level exercise programmes

Scottish Government – future plans

- Provide **robust and clear guidance** for the roles of designated responders in flooding and fast water rescue
- Collate National **inventory** of resources and capability for flooding and fast water rescue
- Fund feasibility study into joint forecasting project between SEPA and Met Office

Tomkins Review

- Paddy Tomkins will examine:
 - Resources & capabilities of all agencies
 - Need for change
 - Level of public awareness of risks

Underpinning principles

- Worst-case scenarios are the benchmark
- Need an all-Scotland approach across public, private and voluntary sectors
- Need to work with partners elsewhere in the UK and beyond

Underpinning principles

- Need to scan horizon – lateral thinking required
- Long-term view necessary – resilience strategy for Scotland
- Generic planning – for anything, *not* everything