



Chapter 8: Next Steps

Summary

The preceding chapters set out the emerging conclusions of the Review to date. This chapter explains what will happen between the publication of this Interim Report and the final report of the Review.

It has three sections:

- urgent recommendations;
- a description of how the evidence and interim conclusions of the Review will be developed, and how people can comment and contribute; and
- a full list of all the interim conclusions.

Urgent Recommendations

8.1 The first reason for publishing this Interim Report was to identify those issues which required urgent action. During our evidence collection period over the last four months, we have received a great deal of information, evidence and opinion. Some of this has enabled us to draw up robust, firm recommendations.

8.2 The urgent recommendations are not just for government – local organisations, the private sector and the public also need to take action. All the evidence we have received so far strongly indicates that these recommendations should be implemented urgently in order to prevent or mitigate flooding which might occur this winter or spring. The 15 urgent recommendations are listed below.

8.3 The Review will monitor work against these urgent recommendations and will publish commentary on progress at the end of March.

Urgent recommendations

REC 1 – The Review recommends that more frequent and systematic monitoring of groundwater levels at times of high risk should be undertaken by the Environment Agency, which should begin as soon as possible to predict and mitigate further serious ground water flooding from this winter onwards.

REC 2 – The Review recommends that the Environment Agency, supported by local authorities and water companies, should urgently identify areas at highest risk from surface water flooding where known, inform Local Resilience Forums and take steps to identify remaining high risk areas over the coming months.

REC 3 – The Review recommends that the Environment Agency should urgently develop and implement a clear policy on the use of temporary and demountable defences.

REC 4 – The Review recommends that all Local Resilience Forums urgently review their current local arrangements for water rescue to consider whether they are adequate in light of the summer's events and their local community risk registers.

REC 5 – The Review recommends that all Local Resilience Forums should undertake an urgent review of designated rest centres and other major facilities to ensure either that they have the necessary levels of resilience to enable them to be used in the response to flooding and other major emergencies, or that alternative arrangements are put in place.

REC 6 – The Review recommends that the Cabinet Office, with other departments, should urgently consider the costs, benefits and feasibility of establishing arrangements for the urgent acquisition of supplies during a major emergency, including the use of call-off contracts or the creation of national or regional stockpiles of equipment and consumables.

REC 7 – The Review recommends that Department of Health guidance clarifying the role and accountabilities of organisations involved in providing scientific and technical advice during a major incident should be implemented as soon as possible and understood by Gold Commanders.

REC 8 – The Review recommends that the guidance currently under preparation by Cabinet Office to provide local responders with advice on the definition and identification of vulnerable people and on planning to support them in an emergency should be issued urgently.

REC 9 – The review recommends that, in order to effectively fulfil its Lead Department role for flood risk management and emergency response, Defra needs to urgently develop and share a national flood emergency framework.

REC 10 – The Review recommends that Category 1 responders should be urgently provided with a detailed assessment of critical infrastructure in their areas to enable them to assess its vulnerability to flooding.

REC 11 – The Review recommends that the Environment Agency should work urgently with telecommunications companies, consulting the Information Commissioner as necessary to facilitate the roll-out of ‘opt-out’ telephone flood warning schemes to all homes and businesses liable to flooding, including homes with ex-directory numbers.

REC 12 – The Review recommends that Local Resilience Forums urgently develop plans to enhance flood warnings through ‘door-knocking’ by local authorities based on an assessment of the post code areas likely to flood.

REC 13 – The Review recommends that Local Resilience Forums urgently make arrangements to involve local media representatives in the local preparedness and response to support their public information role.

REC 14 – The Review recommends that members of the public make up a flood kit – including key personal documents, insurance policy, emergency contact numbers (including local council, emergency services and Floodline – 0845 988 1188), torch, battery or wind-up radio, mobile phone, rubber gloves, wet wipes or antibacterial hand gel, first aid kit and blankets.

REC 15 – The Review recommends that members of the public increase their personal state of readiness and resilience to floods by following the Environment Agency’s practical advice, where appropriate, as summarised below:

- Make sure you have adequate insurance. Flood damage is included in most buildings insurance policies but do check your home and contents are covered.
- Access the Environment Agency’s website to check flood risks to property (this can be followed up by advice from the Agency, for example whether the property in question is protected to some degree by physical defences).
- Contact the Environment Agency to be registered on their Flood Warnings Direct scheme (however, this does not apply to surface water flooding or sewerage flooding and people should also make sure they remain alert to weather forecasts).
- Keep vital possessions, such as financial and legal documents and items of sentimental value, upstairs or stored as high as possible in waterproof containers and have plans in place to move items at short notice.
- Make a list of other useful numbers you may need – your local council, the emergency services and your Floodline quick dial number.
- Make sure you know where to turn off your gas, electricity and water. If you are not sure, ask the person who checks your meter when they next visit. Mark the tap or switch with a sticker to help you remember.

Working Towards the Final Report

8.3. The other reasons for publishing this Report were to set the direction for the remainder of the Review, and to support a process of consultation on our emerging views.

8.4. We need to gather more information in order to reach firm recommendations on the majority of issues which fall within the Review's Terms of Reference. This is for various reasons. In some places we have received contradictory information, or the available evidence to date has been limited by the time available for collection. Other specific reviews, by particular organisations or in relation to specific sectors, are yet to report. It is important that we fully understand the full range of options, including costs, benefits and regulatory impacts.

8.5. The Review Team has worked closely with government organisations and representative bodies from outside government. Visits to affected areas have proved invaluable, providing an opportunity to talk directly to local people. But these processes need to continue to add depth to the evidence base.

How people can contribute and comment

8.6. We are particularly keen to hear the views of those affected by the recommendations as well as all other interested parties. We would welcome any contributions to our evidence base.

8.7. In order to allow proper consideration and discussion of further evidence in advance of the planned publication of the final report in summer 2008, contributions should be sent to the Review Team before 31 March 2008.

- **Written consultation:** We invite all stakeholders to comment on the Interim Conclusions. Please send all written comments to The Pitt Review, 2nd Floor, 22 Whitehall, London, SW1A 2WH.
- **E-consultation:** We also invite people to comment electronically on the Interim Conclusions via the Pitt Review website. The website address is www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/thepittreview. Comments can be emailed to ThePittReview@cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk

8.8. To support this process of additional evidence gathering, the Review will also carry out a number of activities to gather comments. These are likely to include:

- **Public meetings:** Public meetings will be held in affected areas. All meetings will be advertised on the Pitt Review website in advance. If you don't have internet access, please call on 0207 276 5300 for details.
- **Practitioner panels and industry-government forums:** We will invite relevant experts and academics to 'topic forums' to discuss specific specialist topics. Our aim will be to invite people with a range of differing views, from a range of backgrounds and perspectives. We will be writing to invite individuals or their organisations to take part.
- **National and regional conferences:** The Pitt Review Team members will present the Interim Report and the initial recommendations at relevant industry conferences and events. We will list these conferences and events on the Pitt Review website.

Full List Of Interim Conclusions

8.9. A full list of the interim conclusions which appear in the earlier chapters of this document follows below. Many stakeholders will choose to use these as the basis for

comment, but we would welcome all thoughts on our proposals and omissions.

IC 1 The interim conclusion of the Review is that Government takes the lead in making the case for the need for adaptation to climate change and particularly in mitigating the potential impacts on communities.

IC 2 The interim conclusion of the Review is that the Government develops a clear strategy and action plan to deliver the provisions of the Climate Change Bill to support adaptation to increasing impacts from flooding.

IC 3 The interim conclusion of the Review is that the Environment Agency further develops its tools and techniques for predicting and modelling river flooding, especially to take account of extreme and multiple events; and takes forward urgently work to develop similar tools and techniques to model surface water flooding.

IC 4 The interim conclusion of the Review is that the Environment Agency revises its flood maps to identify areas where there is a risk of significant depths and velocity of water, to improve the effectiveness of emergency planning.

IC 5 The interim conclusion of the Review is that the Environment Agency works more closely with Local Resilience Forums to provide information drawn from flood risk modelling and mapping tools to improve the accuracy and consistency of flood risk information in Community Risk Registers.

IC 6 The interim conclusion of the Review is that the Environment Agency progressively develops and brings into use flood visualisation tools, designed to meet the needs of flood risk managers, emergency planners and responders.

IC 7 The interim conclusion of the Review is that the Met Office and the Environment

Agency produce an early assessment of the costs, benefits and feasibility of techniques which can predict where rain will fall and where surface water flooding will occur.

IC 8 The interim conclusion of the Review is that PPS25 should be rigorously applied by local planning authorities, including giving consideration to all sources of flood risk and ensuring that developers make a full contribution to the costs both of building and maintaining any necessary defences.

IC 9 The interim conclusion of the Review is that householders and business owners should no longer be able to lay impermeable surfaces as of right.

IC 10 The interim conclusion of the Review is that the automatic right to connect surface water drainage of new developments to the sewerage system should be removed.

IC 11 The interim conclusion of the Review is that no new building should be allowed in a flood risk area that is not flood-resilient, and that the Government should work with organisations such as the Royal Institute of British Architects and the building industry to encourage flood-resilient building and development design.

IC 12 The interim conclusion of the Review is that the Government should incorporate flood resistance and resilience requirements for new properties in flood risk areas into Building Regulations as part of the current process of revision.

IC 13 The interim conclusion of the Review is that the Government should incorporate requirements for resistant or resilient refurbishment of flooded properties in high flood risk areas into Building Regulations as part of the current process of revision.

IC 14 The interim conclusion of the Review is that local authorities and housing

associations should take a more active role in increasing the uptake of flood resistance and resilience measures, leading by example by repairing their properties with appropriate materials where it is cost-effective.

IC 15 The interim conclusion of the Review is that local authorities in high flood risk areas should extend eligibility for home improvement grants and loans to encompass flood protection and resilience products.

IC 16 The interim conclusion of the Review is that local authorities, as they discharge their responsibilities under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 to promote business continuity, should encourage the uptake of property-level flood resistance and resilience measures. This should be reflected in guidance from the Government.

IC 17 The interim conclusion of the Review is that local authorities should lead on the management of surface water flooding and drainage at the local level with the support of all responsible organisations including the Environment Agency, water companies and internal drainage boards, the Highways Agency and British Waterways.

IC 18 The interim conclusion of the Review is that local authorities in flood risk areas should assess their capabilities to deliver the wide range of responsibilities in relation to local flood risk management.

IC 19 The interim conclusion of the Review is that the Environment Agency should have a national overview of all flood risk and that, Defra's work on the development of a national overview role for the Agency in relation to surface water flooding should be progressed.

IC 20 The interim conclusion of the Review is that local Surface Water Management Plans, as set out under

PPS25, should provide the basis for managing surface water flood risk. These plans should be coordinated by the local authority and be risk-based, considering all sources of flooding.

IC 21 The interim conclusion of the Review is that a local register of all the main flood risk management and drainage assets (overland and underground) should be compiled by the relevant local authority, including an assessment of their condition and details of the responsible owners.

IC 22 The interim conclusion of the Review is that Defra should issue guidance on how all organisations can be brought together to work with local authorities on surface water flood risk management, sharing information, modelling and expertise on a consistent basis.

IC 23 The interim conclusion of the Review is that the Government, as part of its Water Strategy, should resolve the issue of which organisations should be responsible for the ownership and maintenance of sustainable drainage systems.

IC 24 The interim conclusion of the Review is that Defra should work with Ofwat and the water industry to explore how appropriate risk-based standards for drainage systems (including pumping stations) can be achieved.

IC 25 The interim conclusion of the Review is that, as part of the forthcoming water industry pricing review, the water companies, in conjunction with local authorities and other partners, should develop proposals for investment in the existing drainage network to deal with increasing flood risk.

IC 26 The interim conclusion of the Review is that local authority scrutiny committees review SWMPs and other linked plans, such as Local Development

Frameworks and Community Risk Registers, to ensure that flood risk is adequately considered and to ensure greater transparency and progress in the management of that risk.

IC 27 The interim conclusion of the Review is that it is appropriate for the Environment Agency and other local organisations to continue to focus investment on areas of highest assessed long-term risk, whether or not they have been recently flooded

IC 28 The interim conclusion of the Review is that the Government should commit to a strategic long-term approach to its investment in flood risk management, planning up to 25 years ahead.

IC 29 The interim conclusion of the Review is that the Environment Agency should open dialogue with all those landowners who will be affected by either a withdrawal from or significant reduction in maintenance of rural watercourses.

IC 30 The interim conclusion of the Review is that the Government should develop a single national set of guidance for local authorities and the public on the use and usefulness of sandbags and other alternatives, rather than leaving the matter wholly to local discretion.

IC 31 The interim conclusion of the Review is that Defra, the Environment Agency and Natural England should work with partners to establish a programme and framework to achieve greater working with natural processes, including the identification of appropriate sites and the development of more incentives for creating water storage, restoring the natural course of rivers and establishing green corridors.

IC 32 The interim conclusion of the Review is that the Environment Agency should provide an analysis of the effect that land management practices had or

would have had on the impact of flooding during the summer 2007 floods.

IC 33 The interim conclusion of the Review is that flooding legislation should be updated and streamlined under a single unifying Act that amongst other outcomes addresses all sources of flooding, clarifies responsibilities and facilitates flood risk management.

IC 34 The interim conclusion of the Review is that the Government and the insurance industry should work together to deliver a public education programme setting out the benefits of insurance in the context of flooding.

IC 35 The interim conclusion of the Review is that the Government and the insurance industry work together to develop options to improve the availability and uptake of flood risk insurance by low-income households and assess the costs, benefits and feasibility of these options, before the Review's final report.

IC 36 The interim conclusion of the Review is that, in flood risk areas, a note on flood risk and the simple steps that could be taken to mitigate it should be included with all insurance renewal notices. Moreover, if Flood Warning Direct is available in a customer's area, one of the conditions of renewal could be sign-up to this service.

IC 37 The interim conclusion of the Review is that the Met Office and the Environment Agency should produce an assessment of the options for issuing warnings against a lower threshold of probability, including costs, benefits and feasibility; this will be considered further in the final report.

IC 38 The interim conclusion of the Review is that unless agreed otherwise locally, 'upper tier' local authorities should be the lead organisation in relation to multi-

agency planning for severe weather emergencies at the local level, and for triggering multi-agency arrangements in response to severe weather warnings.

IC 39 The interim conclusion of the Review is that where a Gold Command is established, the police, unless agreed otherwise locally, should convene and lead the multi-agency response.

IC 40 The interim conclusion of the Review is that Gold Commands should be established at an early stage on a precautionary basis where there is a risk of serious flooding.

IC 41 The interim conclusion of the Review is that Local Resilience Forums should assess the effectiveness of their Gold facilities, including flexible accommodation, IT and communications systems.

IC 42 The interim conclusion of the Review is that the Local Government Association should consider how best mutual support might be enhanced between local authorities in the event of a future wide-area emergency.

IC 43 The interim conclusion of the Review is that Cabinet Office guidance to local planners should specifically include incidents which leave large numbers of people stranded on motorways and trunk roads.

IC 44 The interim conclusion of the Review is that, as part of their emergency plans, Local Resilience Forums should consider the vulnerability of motorways and trunk roads to flooding, and consider the potential for earlier, stronger, more specific warnings, and strategic road clearance and closures, to avoid people becoming stranded.

IC 45 The interim conclusion of the Review is that Defra should review the

current requirement in emergency regulations for the minimum amount of water to be provided in an emergency, to reflect reasonable needs during a longer-term loss of mains supply.

IC 46 The interim conclusion of the Review is that central government crisis machinery should always be activated if significant wide-area flooding of whatever nature is expected or occurs.

IC 47 The interim conclusion of the Review is that Defra extends its current departmental programme to share best practice and provide training in emergency response across the organisation.

IC 48 The interim conclusion of the Review is that Defra and the Environment Agency work together to establish a single London situation room to coordinate flooding information, to act as a focal point for cross-Defra efforts, and to support Defra Ministers.

IC 49 The interim conclusion of the Review is that a national flooding exercise should take place at the earliest opportunity in order to test the new arrangements which central government departments are putting into place to deal with flooding and infrastructure emergencies.

IC 50 The interim conclusion of the Review is that financial assistance for local responders in relation to emergency response and recovery should be revised to improve speed, simplicity and certainty.

IC 51 The interim conclusion of the Review is that Local Resilience Forums should be made aware of recent Cabinet Office guidance setting out the transition to recovery. Recovery sub-groups should be established from the onset of major emergencies and in due course there should be formal handover from Gold Command to the local Recovery Coordinating Group(s), normally chaired by

the Chief Executive of the affected local authority.

IC 52 The interim conclusion of the Review is that the Government should establish a systematic, coordinated, cross-sector campaign to reduce the disruption caused by natural events to critical infrastructure and essential services.

IC 53 The interim conclusion of the Review is that the Government should develop and issue guidance on consistent and proportionate minimum levels of protection from flooding for critical infrastructure.

IC 54 The interim conclusion of the Review is that infrastructure operating companies should present the case for further investment in flood resilience through the appropriate regulatory process.

IC 55 The interim conclusion of the Review is that a duty should be introduced on critical infrastructure operators to have business continuity planning to BS 25999 in place to more closely reflect the duty on Category 1 responders. This should include minimising the loss of supply as far as practicable in the event of a serious emergency resulting from flooding.

IC 56 The interim conclusion of the Review is that, in relation to information-sharing and cooperation, the Civil Contingencies Act and Regulations should be extended to require Category 2 responders to more formally contribute information on critical sites, their vulnerability and the impact of their loss.

IC 57 The interim conclusion of the Review is that single points of failure and the complete loss of assets need to be explicitly considered in the risk assessment and contingency planning undertaken by operators, emergency planners and responders.

IC 58 The interim conclusion of the Review is that Local Resilience Forums should ensure that Community Risk Registers reflect risks to critical infrastructure from flooding and other hazards.

IC 59 The interim conclusion of the Review is that Category 2 responders should be required to participate fully at Gold and Silver Commands and that the Government should deliver this through the Civil Contingencies Act or other regulatory regimes.

IC 60 The interim conclusion of the Review is that the emergency plans and business continuity plans of essential service providers should be reviewed annually by local authority scrutiny committees.

IC 61 The interim conclusion of the Review is that critical infrastructure planning should become a separate discipline within civil protection at the local level.

IC 62 The interim conclusion of the Review is that the Government should implement the legislative changes proposed in the recently published Environment Agency biennial report on dam and reservoir safety.

IC 63 The interim conclusion of the Review is that all reservoir undertakers should be required by Defra to prepare inundation maps and share them with Local Resilience Forums to improve Community Risk Registers and emergency planning.

IC 64 The interim conclusion of the Review is that the Environment Agency should produce a sliding scale of options for greater personalisation of public warning information, including costs, benefits and feasibility, before the final report.

IC 65 The interim conclusion of the Review is that the Environment Agency works with local responders to raise awareness in flood risk areas and identify a range of mechanisms to warn the public, particularly the vulnerable, in response to flooding.

IC 66 The interim conclusion of the Review is that advice by telephone during a flood emergency should come from just two sources – the Environment Agency for flooding information and local authority contact centres for local advice.

IC 67 The interim conclusion of the Review is that advice disseminated via the internet should be coherent by ensuring integration and consistency between local websites, including that of the Local Resilience Forum and those of all category 1 responders.

IC 68 The interim conclusion of the Review is that essential service providers should maintain continuous provision of public information during an emergency, through a website linked to other responders and local authority contact centres.

IC 69 The interim conclusion of the Review is that the Government works towards a single definitive set of flood-related health advice for householders and businesses, which can be used by media and the authorities locally and nationally.

IC 70 The interim conclusion of the Review is that council leaders and chief executives play a prominent role in public reassurance and advice through the local media during a flooding emergency as part of a coordinated effort overseen by Gold Commanders.

IC 71 The interim conclusion of the Review is that flood risk should be made part of the mandatory search requirements when people buy property and should form part of Home Improvement Packs.

IC 72 The interim conclusion of the Review is that the Government launches an public information campaign which draws on a single definitive set of flood prevention and mitigation advice for householders and businesses, and which can be used by media and the authorities locally and nationally.



Sir Michael Pitt hears Chief Constable Timothy Brain's views on the loss of critical infrastructure at Mythe, Gloucestershire.