# Appendix G – Resilience Forum and Emergency Planner Information Pack

## *Background*

Presently, surface water flooding is less well understood than other sources of flooding, partly because surface water events tend to happen and disperse quickly meaning that there is a lack of accurate and consistent records and partly because they are not tied to readily identifiable features such as rivers or the sea. Therefore this SWMP offers an opportunity to communicate up to date information about locations at risk from surface water flooding to those with an interest. Responses in an emergency will be informed by known surface water flooding locations, especially near public buildings and major transport routes and important infrastructure.

The purpose of this information pack is to assist in communicating surface water flood risk to the London Local Resilience Forum, and Emergency Planners within the London Resilience Partnership to enable them to ensure that incident management plans are updated based on the improved understanding of surface water flooding. SWMP mapping outputs and knowledge will be used to:

- Update Community Risk Registers (CRR);
- Update Multi-Agency Flood Plans (MAFP).

This pack is presented as a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document and contains information that addresses the following points:

1. How can SWMP outputs improve Community Risk Registers?
2. How can SWMP outputs improve Multi-Agency Flood Planning?
3. How do SWMP outputs compliment the Flood Forecasting Centre's Extreme Rainfall Alert (ERA)?
4. Examples of Good Practice

In updating Multi-Agency Flood Plans, as well as the neighbouring boroughs of Harrow, Ealing, and Hounslow , the LB of Hillingdon also have a responsibility to partner with other key stakeholders and risk management authorities, who share the responsibility for decisions and actions. Ideally, the informal relationships established within the context of the Drain London programme should be formalised to ensure clear lines of communication and continued mutual cooperation through the development of a Memorandum of Understanding. This should include appropriate aspects for Surface Water Flood Risk Management.

The West London Local Resilience Forum (LRF) is one of six London Forums, bringing together the London Boroughs of Brent, Ealing, Hammersmith and Fulham, Harrow, Hillingdon and Hounslow. The Forum is responsible for overseeing the local implementation of the policy set by the London Local Resilience Forum and ensuring that all organisations work together in planning for emergencies. The West LRF creates a 'community risk register' of assessed risks that the Council and other responders must take into account when planning for emergencies and planning for business continuity events. As well as local authorities, membership of the West LRF include representatives from emergency services and government agencies.

**1. How can SWMP outputs improve Community Risk Registers?**

**Community Risk Registers (CRR)** are prepared by Category 1 responders and are required as part of the Civil Contingencies Act (CCA) 2004. The CCA requires that Category 1 responders undertake risk assessments and maintain these risks in a CCR. In this context risks are defined as events which could result in major consequences, and they include risks from flooding.

Outputs from SWMP can be used to reduce the uncertainties associated with assessing the likelihood and impact of surface water flooding (see Community Risk Register HL18 for more information on current risk assessment). SWMP presents an opportunity for the identification of vulnerable sites and populations which may be at increased risk, and allows for risk-based prevention or mitigation actions to be taken.

**2. How can SWMP outputs improve Multi-Agency Flood Plans?**

**Multi-Agency Flood Plans (MAFP)** are specific emergency plans which should be developed by LRFs, to deliver a coordinated plan to respond to flood incidents. MAFPs recognise the need for specific flooding emergency plans, due to the complex nature of flooding and the consequences that arise. Guidance on producing a MAFP is available at http://www.ukresilience.gov.uk/media/ukresilience/assets/flooding_ma_planning_guidance_0208.pdf.

Outputs from SWMPs should inform the development of, or update, the MAFP.

The SWMP surface water mapping should be used as an initial indicator of a possible risk. A Flood Risk Assessment at a site shown as being at risk of surface water flooding should consider:

- Impacts on flood receptor sites
- The degree of receptor vulnerability
- In the event of surface water flooding to the site, has safe access to / egress from the site been adequately considered?

The table below indicates the SWMP maps which are of potential use to emergency planning, and indicates which maps may be suitable for updating existing MAFP maps:

**Table H-1: SWMP maps of potential use to emergency planners**

| Issue | SWMP maps | Consider updating existing MAFP maps? |
|---|---|---|
| Surface water flood risk | Figures 13 to 22 | Yes – more detailed methodology to that used for the MAFP. |
| Increased potential for elevated groundwater | Figure 10 | Yes – more detailed methodology to that used for the MAFP. |

**3. How do SWMP outputs compliment the Flood Forecasting Centre's Extreme Rainfall Alert (ERA)?**

In 2008 the Met Office and the Environment Agency set up the Flood Forecasting Centre to provide services to emergency and professional partners. The Flood Forecasting Centre provides an Extreme Rainfall Alert (ERA) service to Category 1 and Category 2 responders. The ERA is issued at county level and is used to forecast and warn for extreme rainfall that could lead to surface water flooding, particularly in urban areas. It is designed to help local response organisations manage the impact of flooding via two products:

1. Guidance – issued when there is a 10% or greater chance or extreme rainfall;
2. Alert – issued when there is a greater than 20% chance of extreme rainfall.

The ERA cannot provide site-specific real-time surface water flood forecast, but does offer a county level alert of impending rainfall. The alert is based on the probability of rainfall occurring, rather than being a definitive forecast.

Surface water flooding has very short lead times and is hard to predict in real time because local topography and drainage infrastructure affect the direction of runoff and location of flooding. However, the assessment carried out as part of this SWMP study has taken an important step towards the likely flow pathways and locations of ponding of surface water. Used in parallel with the ERA, this can be used to improve emergency planning and responses for surface water flooding events.

**4. Examples of Good Practice for Emergency Planners**

- **Ensure that a programme of engagement on flood risk awareness is initiated within the Borough.** Meet with key corporate communications teams to agree an approach to social change, education and awareness raising inline with the needs of the Borough.

- **Build trust -** Public and stakeholder trust in authorities through **long term, transparent engagement.**

    - Ensure there are key messages in the that encourage attitude and behaviour change with the public. This will help to address misconceptions that flooding results from a failure on someone's part.

    - Educate the public to help them better understand where responsibilities lie, changes they can make to their own lifestyles, and actions they can take to physically reduce personal flood risk.

    - Encourage communities towards creating their own community action/response plans to support wider ownership of risk and responsibilities

    - Consider holding face to face interviews with at -risk families and groups to better inform your Community Risk Register. This will help both you and them to better understand risk and plan to manage it.

    - Establish a **common baseline for flood data** and information in line with EA requirements. Set up a Borough '**One-Stop Shop'** to enable efficient information consolidation and data sharing. This will support efficient planning and updating of the MAFP.

    - **Develop a surface water flooding response plan with vulnerable receptors as external partners**. Vulnerable receptors could include hospitals, schools and care homes. Identify these through Emergency Planning and other relevant forums and build into stakeholder engagement. This will assist with prioritisation decisions. For example 'early warning' processes, appropriate measures, funding and resourcing.

    - Link the actions from the SWMP directly to the **Flood Risk Management Strategy** for the Borough such that a programme of work is visible.

- Link with the Planning Department's **Strategic Flood Risk Assessment** (SRFA) to ensure that Emergency Planners are involved in land use decisions for new development.

- Create a key facts and 'what to do' section for surface water flooding in **emergency handbooks**. Provide easy- to- reach contact points, and regularly update your website

- Work with other agencies, such as the **Environment Agency flood alert/warning schemes**, in the interests of cost effectiveness and good communication - but still own the responsibility for your borough. Use others' information to reinforce your own process.