

Flood Risk Management Planning in Scotland: Statement of Consultation Arrangements

June 2013

- Revised following December consultation -

Foreword

Flooding, as witnessed once again last winter, has devastating impacts on people, communities and business.

How floods are managed in Scotland is changing.

Government and public bodies are developing a new plan-led approach to better manage current and future flood risk. This approach to flood risk management will encourage Scotland to invest and take action where the greatest risks and benefits have been identified.

SEPA has a central role in this new approach. In addition to pre-existing statutory roles in delivering flood risk planning advice and flood forecasting and warning, SEPA has a new strategic oversight role in flood risk management. Our aim in developing this new role is to work closely and collaboratively with flood risk management authorities and wider stakeholders.

The purpose of this statement is to outline the consultation arrangements for the production of the first Flood Risk Management Strategies 2015-2021, which are one of the key deliverables of the new approach.



David Pirie
Executive Director
SEPA

1. Statement of consultation measures for the preparation of Flood Risk Management Strategies

This statement has been produced by SEPA to fulfil requirements set out under Section 30 of the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009. It outlines the consultative actions SEPA will take in the preparation of the first Flood Risk Management Strategies (FRM Strategies).

Preparation of the FRM Strategies must not happen in isolation. There are close links with the preparation of Local Flood Risk Management Plans (Local FRM Plans) and a need to coordinate with river basin management planning. Proposals for linking the consultation arrangements for FRM Strategies with these associated areas of work are described in this document.

This statement can be made available in other formats or hard copy on request. To request this document in another format or hard copy please write to, or email, the above addresses, or dial: 01738 448194.

2. SEPA consultation actions to date

SEPA has undertaken a consultative, partnership-based approach with responsible authorities and the Scottish Government in the work to date to develop the FRM Strategies and Local FRM Plans. These are outlined in table 1.

National and local advisory groups have been set up during 2011-2012. The establishment of these groups is a key step to engage and consult with responsible authorities and stakeholders involved in flood risk management. These groups are listed in Annex 2.

Guidance documents have been produced by SEPA and the Scottish Government to inform the preparation of FRM Strategies and Local FRM Plans. These guidance documents include:

- **Delivering Sustainable Flood Risk Management** (June 2011);
- **Sustainable flood risk management – Principles of Appraisal: a policy statement** (August 2011);
- **Flood Risk Management Strategies and Local Flood Risk Management Plans** (December 2011);
- **Flood Risk Management Planning in Scotland: Arrangements for 2012 – 2016** (February 2012).
- **Surface Water Management Planning Guidance** (Feb 2013)

The above guidance documents are available on the Scottish Government website:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Environment/Water/Flooding/FRMAct/guidance>

or SEPA's website: http://www.sepa.org.uk/flooding/flooding_publications.aspx

Table 1: Examples of consultative actions undertaken by SEPA to date on flood risk management planning (not exhaustive).

Date	Consultation	Deliverables
August to October 2010	Formal Consultation: Planning for Floods – Planning for the Future: Delivering partnership approaches to implementing the Flood Risk Management Act.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement on the principles for defining Local Plan Districts. • Agreement of the broad remit, membership and procedures of the National Flood Management Advisory Group (NFMAG).
September 2010	Initial workshop with stakeholders themed on the proposals outlined in the Planning for Floods – Planning for the future consultation document.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for the temporary use of the River Basin Management Planning Area Advisory Groups (RBMP AAGs) in 2011 to engage with local stakeholders. • Agreement for the consultation activities proposed in this formal consultation document, including thematic workshops.
April to May 2011	Meetings with local authorities to review Local Plan District boundaries in view of responses to previous consultation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement of Local Plan District boundaries. • Agreement of the flood risk significance threshold for Potentially Vulnerable Areas.
May 2011	Workshops held with local authorities and key stakeholders e.g. Transport Scotland, Scottish Natural Heritage etc on the National Flood Risk Assessment and Potentially Vulnerable Areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement on the location of Potentially Vulnerable Areas. • Agreement of the broad remit, membership and procedures of the Flood Risk Management Local Advisory Groups (FRM LAGs).
June to August 2011	Formal Consultation: Flooding in Scotland: a consultation on Potentially Vulnerable Areas and Local Plan Districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement to use RBMP AAG boundaries as the basis to establish FRM LAGs.

3. Next steps: proposed consultative actions

In drafting the FRM Strategies for formal consultation in December 2014, SEPA will take advice from the local partnerships, established between SEPA, Scottish Water and local authorities for each Local Plan District, throughout 2013 and 2014. Advice will also be sought from the National Flood Management Advisory Group and the Cross Border Advisory Group. Table 2 outlines the key consultative actions SEPA will take to produce the first FRM Strategies. In addition, SEPA will publish a summary of the actions carried out to take account of any views or comments made on the formal consultation in December 2014.

The formal consultation on the FRM Strategies will be made publicly available on the SEPA website at the following link: http://www.sepa.org.uk/about_us/consultations.aspx.

When SEPA launches the formal consultation on the FRM Strategies or modifies the FRM Strategies in response to ministerial recommendations the following actions will be taken:

- an email will be sent to inform key stakeholders and partnership groups listed in table 5, Annex 2;
- a notice will be published in one or more national newspapers to advertise this fact (for example, The Herald, The Scotsman and The Edinburgh Gazette);

It will be possible to request a copy of the consultation document in hard copy or an alternative format e.g. large scale print if required.

Table 2: Key dates for the consultation and preparation of FRM Strategies.

Key dates	Consultation and preparatory actions
22 December 2013	Flood risk and flood hazard maps published.
22 December 2014	SEPA launches a formal consultation on the draft FRM Strategies: aimed at the public, public bodies and stakeholders involved in the management of flood risk. Three month consultation period.
22 March 2015	Opportunity closes to make comments on the draft FRM Strategies.
22 May 2015	SEPA to receive from Lead Local Authorities any comments relevant to the FRM Strategies made on the Local FRM Plan consultation (the consultation carried out by Lead Local Authorities).
October 2015	SEPA submit FRM Strategies to Ministers for approval. Modifications made to FRM Strategies to be publicised prior to 22 December 2015.
22 December 2015	First FRM Strategies published.

The production of the draft FRM Strategies will also identify priority areas for surface water management planning. The surface water management planning process will be led by local authorities and inform the most sustainable measures to address surface water flooding.¹

The three month formal consultation period is considered particularly important for engaging with the public on the draft FRM Strategies.

¹ The Surface Water Management Planning Guidance provides more information on this process and how this complements the FRM Strategies and Local FRM Plans. This is available on the websites listed in Section 2 of this document.

4. Coordination between Flood Risk Management Strategies and Local Flood Risk Management Plans

SEPA will work in partnership with local authorities throughout 2013 and 2014 to ensure consistency between the complementary plans; FRM Strategies, Local FRM Plans and Surface Water Management Plans (SWMPs). The Flood Risk Management Local Advisory Groups (FRM LAGs), chaired by SEPA, and the local partnerships will be used to engage with stakeholders to develop the Local FRM Plans and FRM Strategies. Each Lead Local Authority, with assistance from the relevant local authorities where appropriate (under Section 44 of the FRM Act), will also be responsible for engaging with the public on the development of the plans.

In 2013, Lead Local Authorities will work in partnership with SEPA and the Scottish Government to further develop proposals on how best to coordinate the consultation arrangements planned for December 2014 on Local FRM Plans and FRM Strategies.

Table 3: Key dates for Lead Local Authority consultation on the preparation of the Local FRM Plans.

Key dates	Consultation and preparatory actions
22 December 2014	Lead Local Authorities launch formal consultations on the draft Local FRM Plans: aimed at the public, public bodies and stakeholders involved in the management of flood risk. Three month consultation.
22 March 2015	Opportunity closes to make comments on the draft Local FRM Plans.
22 May 2015	Lead Local Authorities provide SEPA with comments relevant to the FRM Strategies received via the local FRM Plan consultation.
22 June 2016	First Local FRM Plans published.

5. Coordination with river basin management plans

SEPA and Lead Local Authorities will continue to work closely together and with stakeholders to ensure consistency between the FRM Strategies, Local FRM Plans and the river basin management plans. The proposed consultative actions for the development of the second river basin management plans were consulted on in the **Getting Involved in developing the second river basin plan**² consultation which closed on 28 February 2013. Dates of the current key proposals to coordinate with flood risk management planning are outlined in table 4.

FRM LAGs have a specific role to provide advice on the coordination between flood risk management planning and other relevant plans and policies, particularly river basin management planning. The FRM Act requires consistency and coordination between river basin management planning and flood risk management planning. River basin management planning takes a catchment based approach to improve the quality of Scotland's waters. Linking the two planning processes will help identify areas with potential for multiple benefits or where conflicting objectives in flood risk management and the Water Framework Directive need to be managed. Areas for coordination include, for example, promoting land management measures that deliver coincident flooding and environmental benefits, ensuring that flood defences are designed in a way that causes least environmental damage, and managing advisory groups and consultation activities to reduce consultation fatigue.

Many of the stakeholder organisations interested in catchment issues such as flooding, the quality of the water environment and biodiversity are the same for both flood risk management planning and river basin management planning. These include, for example, Scottish Water, Scottish Natural Heritage, relevant national parks, environmental non-governmental organisations and other interest groups such as fishery trusts and land managers. SEPA therefore intends to co-ordinate advisory group arrangements for both planning processes where practical and review how well this is working at appropriate times.

² This can be viewed on SEPA's website: http://www.sepa.org.uk/about_us/consultations/closed_consultations

Table 4: Key consultation and publication dates for the preparation of the river basin management plans, FRM Strategies and Local FRM Plans.

Flood risk management planning consultative arrangements	Key dates	River basin management planning consultative arrangements
Flood Risk and Hazard maps published.	22 Dec 2013	SEPA launches Current condition and challenges for the future: a risk assessment of the attainment of objectives set out in the first river basin plans, description of water services, and identification of significant water management issues that should be the focus of development. Six month consultation
SEPA launches a formal consultation on the draft FRM Strategies. Lead Local Authorities launch formal consultations on the draft Local FRM Plans. Three month consultations	22 Dec 2014	SEPA launches formal consultations on the second river basin management plans. Six month consultation
Opportunity closes to comment on the draft FRM Strategies and draft Local FRM Plans.	22 Mar 2015	
	22 June 2015	Opportunity closes to comment on the draft river basin management plans.
First FRM Strategies published.	22 Dec 2015	Second river basin management plans published.
First Local FRM Plans published.	22 June 2016	

Annex 1: Background

The Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009 sets out a new approach for managing flood risk in Scotland. Key elements of the new approach are described below.

1. **National Flood Risk Assessment (NFRA):** The NFRA was published in 2011. It assessed the likelihood of flooding from rivers, groundwater and the sea, as well as flooding caused when heavy rainfall is unable to enter drainage systems or the river network. The likelihood of flooding is considered alongside the estimated impact on people, the economy, cultural heritage and the environment.
2. **Identification of Local Plan Districts:** 14 Local Plan Districts have been identified. These correspond with catchment boundaries. By 2016, these districts require the production of a FRM Strategy and a Local FRM Plan.
3. **Identification of Potentially Vulnerable Areas (PVAs):** 243 Potentially Vulnerable Areas have been identified. These are areas based on catchments, where the potential impact is sufficient to justify the further assessment and appraisal of flood risk management actions.
4. **Preparation of flood risk and flood hazard maps:** These will be produced for PVAs. Flood hazard maps are more detailed technical assessments of flooding that will show floods with low, medium and high probability along with the flood extent, depth or water level, and velocity where appropriate. Flood risk maps will show the potential adverse consequences associated with these floods.
5. **Flood Risk Management Strategies (FRM Strategies):** The FRM Strategies will identify the main flood hazards and impacts, setting out objectives for reducing risk and the best combination of actions to achieve this, such as the appropriateness of an alleviation scheme or improving flood warning arrangements. SEPA will prepare and consult on the FRM Strategies required for each of the 14 Local Plan Districts.
6. **Local Flood Risk Management Plans (Local FRM plans):** The Local FRM Plans take the agreed objectives and explain what actions will be taken, by whom and at what time, to deliver them within a six-year planning cycle. The first cycle will run from 2015 to 2021. A Lead Local Authority will prepare and consult on the Local FRM Plan for each of the 14 Local Plan Districts.

The NFRA and further information on the FRM Strategies, Local FRM Plans and work undertaken to date can be viewed on SEPA's website: http://www.sepa.org.uk/flooding/flood_risk_management.aspx

Annex 2: Consultative groups

Table 5: Table of the consultative groups set up to facilitate the production of the FRM Strategies and the Local FRM plans.

Group	Purpose
Scottish Advisory and Implementation Forum for Flooding (SAIFF)	SAIFF was set up by the Scottish Government and comprises of a series of working groups (called Task and Finish Groups), each with a specific remit. These are convened to help develop specific guidance or undertake further analysis of important technical issues. Membership varies between groups to ensure appropriate representation from policy, stakeholders and technical experts.
National Flood Management Advisory Group (NFMAG)	NFMAG covers the whole of Scotland and includes wider stakeholders with an interest in flood risk. It provides advice to SEPA on its new flood risk management functions.
Cross Border Advisory Group (CBAG)	CBAG covers the Solway Tweed River Basin District. It provides advice to SEPA and the Environment Agency on the delivery of cross border flood risk management issues. Membership includes the Environment Agency and local authorities in England that border Scotland.
Lead Local Authority Forum (LLAF)	The LLAF provides an opportunity for Lead Local Authorities and SEPA to discuss issues relating to their functions within the local partnerships. Membership includes Lead Local Authorities, Scottish Water and SEPA. SEPA will work with this group throughout 2013 to develop proposals on how best to coordinate the consultation arrangements for Local FRM Plans and FRM Strategies.
Flood Risk Management Local Advisory Groups (FRM LAGs)	There are currently 10 FRM LAGs. These largely correspond with the Area Advisory Groups used for river basin management planning and help provide a key link between the two processes. These groups include wider stakeholders with an interest in flood risk and provide advice to Lead Local Authorities on the preparation of the Local FRM Plans. Lead Local Authorities and SEPA will take the appropriate draft Local FRM Plans and draft FRM Strategies to these groups.
Local Partnerships	There are 14 Local Partnerships. These correspond with the Local Plan Districts. Membership includes key partners (local authorities, SEPA and Scottish Water) to inform the production of FRM Strategies and Local FRM Plans. These groups will act as a key link to ensure consistency between the Local FRM Plans and FRM Strategies. Membership can be widened if viewed appropriate to seek advice on a particular issue.