



National
Operational
Guidance

Control measure

**Request National Resilience resources
for flood rescue**



NFCC
National Fire
Chiefs Council

Developed and maintained by the NFCC



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Control measure knowledge

Much of the information regarding flood rescue can be found in the [Flood Rescue Concept of Operations](#), published by Defra. The information provided in this section of National Operational Guidance seeks to provide high-level detail that specifically involves the fire and rescue service.

Interoperability is critical for routine cross border mutual aid operations and for larger scale incidents involving deployment of national assets. The duty to co-ordinate inland flood rescue lies with the police; they will have primacy during major flood events. During a major flood event, flood rescue assets will be deployed from a wide range of organisations, including emergency services and volunteers.

The common objectives for a flood rescue response are:

- Saving and protecting human life
- Relieving suffering
- Protecting property
- Providing the public with information
- Containing the emergency – limiting its escalation or spread
- Maintaining critical services
- Maintaining normal services at an appropriate level
- Protecting the health and safety of personnel
- Safeguarding the environment
- Facilitating investigations and inquiries
- Promoting self-help and recovery
- Restoring normality as soon as possible
- Evaluating the response and identifying lessons to be learned

Therefore, the response of the fire and rescue service may include the provision of additional assets, for example, high volume pumps (HVPs), water rescue and other related activities.

Once a full picture of the potential flood is established, a strategy for dealing with the incident must be developed. This should set the priorities for the management of the event and allow an accurate assessment of operational requirements. To provide a safe and efficient response, it is essential that these resources are capable of operating at an incident and do so under a single unified command system.

Requesting a national response

Assets and skills hosted by individual fire and rescue services, and other agencies, can respond if specifically requested to do so as a national capability and where incident timescales allow. If the fire and rescue service incident commander believes that national flood rescue resources are required, they should provide the following information to the National Resilience Fire Control (NRFC):

- Location of incident or the expected time and location of impact
- Nature of the incident and any specific hazards
- Prevailing weather and, if known, water conditions
- Estimated number of persons requiring rescue
- Local resources already in attendance and/or available
- Requirement for urban search and rescue (USAR) teams; they may be able to construct landing platforms, etc.
- Estimate of mutual aid resources required (as detailed in the Flood Rescue of Concept of Operations) – this may be flood rescue teams and/ or flood rescue tactical advisers
- Host fire and rescue service point of contact name and contact details
- Initial location for a rendezvous point (RVP), strategic holding area (SHA) or multi-agency strategic holding area (MASHA)
- Safe approach route to the incident, including any access issues caused by the flooding

Strategic actions

Fire and rescue services should:

- Have systems in place to request national flood rescue resources
- Consider pre-determining locations for rendezvous point, strategic holding area or multi-agency strategic holding area

Tactical actions

Incident commanders should:

- Request flood rescue resources from the National Resilience Fire Control if required, using agreed NCAF protocols
- Establish the quantity of resources being provided and identify suitable locations for them



such as a rendezvous point, strategic holding area or multi-agency strategic holding areas

- Collate team data sheets on arrival of flood rescue resources
- Record all flood rescue assets being deployed
- Establish communications protocols with flood rescue resources, including the issue of radios if not already held
- Establish and record agreed call signs for all flood rescue resources
- Nominate a site for each team within the rendezvous point, strategic holding area or multi-agency strategic holding areas
- Provide welfare facilities for flood rescue teams
- Provide decontamination facilities for flood rescue teams