



National
Operational
Guidance

Control measure

Specialist resource: Flooding



NFCC
National Fire
Chiefs Council

Developed and maintained by the NFCC



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Control measure knowledge

A national mutual aid scheme has been developed by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) to provide a framework for co-ordinating a rescue response to major flood events. This includes Defra's [Flood Rescue Concept of Operations](#) that provides a model for flood incident management for all flood events from a local deluge to catastrophic wide area inundation.

Co-ordination of wide area flood response will be managed under the National Coordination and Advisory Framework (NCAF), the established formal governance structure for managing National Resilience assets such as urban search and rescue and mass decontamination. Flood response sits alongside these capabilities and mobilisation of flood resources will be in line with existing arrangements for those functions. For more information see [Request National Resilience resources for flood rescue](#).

Water incident managers or equivalent, subject matter advisers (SMA) and subject matter experts (SME) will provide additional support and guidance during a response to a flood and should be considered as part of a response to water incidents. High volume pumps (HVP), water rescue teams and boat teams are also available to assist with incidents when required. A national asset register of available resources to assist services and provide mutual aid, grouped into designated team types, is maintained and updated. This provides a simplified means of identifying and requesting resources for different levels of flooding. Resources can be requested from National Resilience Fire Control (NRFC). Refer to Defra's [Flood Rescue Concept of Operations](#) for further information regarding team typing and available resources. See National Operational Guidance: Major incidents for details of military assistance.

Some organisations such as the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) have inland flood rescue teams that may assist during response to flooding. During response to wide area flooding, resources should be mobilised using established National Resilience protocols. For smaller flooding incidents, resources can be requested using local arrangements. Any local arrangements for mutual aid should consider the impact on neighbouring areas of a flood or its potential development.

Watercraft such as boats or sleds may be available locally or through mutual aid agreements, and offer additional support such as casualty transfer capabilities. They may assist during evacuation and may provide the best means of conducting a search or performing a rescue in large bodies of water or water that may otherwise be too difficult to access or work in.



Any watercraft used should be suitable for the environment, considering:

- Depth
- Strength of flow
- Debris in water that may affect propellers
- Any other hazards present

Watercraft should be crewed by personnel trained for the environment and tasks for which they are deployed.

When using watercraft, suitable launching and bail out sites should be identified and any limitations of the craft considered. All watercraft should be suitably equipped for the environment, task and duration. Certain powered watercraft may not be suitable for deployment in the flood environment due to the depth and presence of debris and road furniture.

Air support assets are available to assist in surveillance, search and rescue, casualty transfer and deployment of equipment and personnel.

Strategic actions

Fire and rescue services should:

- Establish methods of mobilising and accepting National Resilience and mutual aid resources

Tactical actions

Incident commanders should:

- Consider the need for specialist resources during flooding and request them through appropriate channels