Summary Minute of 3rd SAGE Meeting
25 February 2014
35 Great Smith Street, London

List of Attendees:

Chair

Mark Walport	GCSA

Attending

Jeremy Benn	JBA Consulting Engineers & Scientists (by telecom)
Ian Boyd	CSA, Defra
Alex Churchill	MoD
Hannah Cloke	University of Reading
Karen Goonan	DfT
Jim Hall	Oxford University
Alan Jenkins	Centre for Ecology & Hydrology
Owen Lewis	Environment Agency
Paul McCloghrie	CCS
Alastair Noble	DECC
Nick Reynard	Centre for Ecology and Hydrology
David Rooke	Environment Agency
Julia Slingo	Met Office
Rod Smith	CSA, DfT
Andrew Brown	HR Wallingford
Colin Thorne	University of Nottingham
Rob Ward	British Geological Survey
Jeremy Watson	Director of global research, ARUP
Doug Wilson	Environment Agency

Secretariat

Ben Edmonds	GO-Science
Nicholas Moiseiwitsch	GO-Science
Giles Robertson	GO-Science
Andy Ryan	GO-Science
Elizabeth Surkovic	GO-Science
Elizabeth Warham	GO-Science

1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed participants who introduced themselves around the table and on the teleconference. He reminded participants that the purpose of the meeting was to determine whether we were approaching the end game, and to identify on going risks and actions.

2. Situation Report and Risk Analysis

Members of SAGE were provided with situation updates from the Met Office, Civil Contingencies Secretariat and the Environment Agency. In particular the Met Office were becoming more confident that the weather was returning to normal with the chances of higher levels of rainfall receding.

EA provided detailed modelling assessment of the speed of flood abatement in the Somerset levels based on likely rainfall scenarios, which suggested that all properties and roads in the Levels would be clear by 2 April under the most likely weather scenarios. Under a worst case scenario, it was not yet clear when flooding would be gone from properties and roads; further modelling would be performed to assess this, though this scenario was considered now to be highly unlikely.

BGS are putting considerable resource into understanding sinkholes, landslip and groundwater assessment, and providing support for relevant agencies and departments. Better cross-correlation of datasets to infrastructure owners was needed, and more granularity sought to develop risk maps rather than the susceptibility maps currently available.

The group agreed that the recovery phase, while the flood water abated, needed to be a time of patience. There was considerable good practice around, which would benefit from being brought together into a single document.

3. Outstanding issues

Work towards developing mapping datasets was supported by the group, with the output of clear layered mapping tools available during a range of crisis situations a worthwhile goal.

It was agreed that a systems approach to flood response would form an important part of a technical cell being developed to assess the lessons learned from science and engineering flood mitigation.

4. Concluding Remarks

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and acknowledged the hard work in preparing briefings for the meeting, suggesting that it was unlikely that a further SAGE would be required. A final meeting specifically looking at groundwater flooding would be convened in March.