1. Apologies

2. Declarations of Interest

3. Minutes of the Board meeting held on 25 April 2017 and matters arising

4. Chief Executive's update

5. Committee meetings – oral updates and forward look
   - Audit and Risk Assurance
   - Pensions
   - FCRM
   - E&B
   - Remuneration Committee

6. Strategic Review of Charges
   *For information*

7. Committee on Standards in Public Life, 7 principles of public life in regulation
   *For information*

8. Communications Forward Look
   *For information*

   *For information/delegation*
<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Schemes of Delegation</th>
<th>For approval</th>
<th>Bob Branson</th>
<th>12.10pm</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Clive Elphick</td>
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<td></td>
<td>SE IDB Annual report and accounts</td>
<td>For approval</td>
<td>Toby Willison</td>
<td>12.15pm</td>
<td>5 mins</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Governance/Transformation and EU briefing</td>
<td>For information</td>
<td>James Bevan</td>
<td>12.20pm</td>
<td>30 mins</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Betsy Bassis</td>
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<td></td>
<td>AOB and date of next meeting – Tuesday 27/28 June 2017, Thames Barrier</td>
<td></td>
<td>Emma Howard Boyd</td>
<td>12.50pm</td>
<td>5 mins</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Review of meeting</td>
<td></td>
<td>Emma Howard Boyd</td>
<td>12.55pm</td>
<td>5 mins</td>
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<td>Board only working Lunch in the Chairs office, a continuation of discussions from the meeting.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Emma Howard Boyd</td>
<td>1.00pm</td>
<td>120 mins</td>
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Information paper - Chair’s update
Minutes of the Board meeting held on 25 April 2017 at Ergon House, London.

Present
Emma Howard Boyd Chair
James Bevan Chief Executive
Richard Macdonald Deputy Chair (items 1-7 and 9.1-9.2)
Peter Ainsworth Board Members
John Varley
Gill Weeks
Joanne Segars
Karen Burrows
Maria Adebowale-Schwarte (items 1-8.2 and 9.1-9.2)

In attendance
Harvey Bradshaw Executive Director of Environment and Business
Toby Willison Executive Director of Operations
Peter Kellett Director of Legal Services
Alison Baptiste Director of Strategy and Investment

Items 1-6 and 8-10
John Leyland Chief of Staff
Sam Lumb Deputy Director Governance and Engagement
Beth Axtell Board Governance Advisor

Item 4
Tony Grayling Director Sustainable Business and Development

Item 4
Andy Croxford Deputy Director Europe Unit

Item 7
Pete Fox Director of Water, Land and Biodiversity

Item 8
Joanne Reilly Customer Engagement and Market Research Manager

Item 8
Betsy Bassis Defra Group Director General Chief Operating Officer

Item 8
Ian Randall Director of Human Resources

Item 1  Apologies for absence

1.1 Emma Howard Boyd welcomed Joanne Segars to her first full Board meeting and Alison Baptiste to the meeting.

1.2 Bob Branson, John Curtin, Clive Elphick and Lynne Frostick sent apologies.

Item 2  Declarations of Interest

2.1 There were no declarations of interest.
Item 3 Minutes of the Board meeting on 23 March 2017 and matters arising

3.1 The minutes of the Board meeting held on 23 March 2017 were agreed.

3.2 The Board noted the action list and completed actions.

Item 4 EU Update

4.1 Tony Grayling and Andy Croxford gave an update on preparations for leaving the European Union.

4.2 The Board was asked to note developments on the UK’s withdrawal from the EU and discussed possible future roles for the Environment Agency after the UK has left the EU.

Item 5 Chief Executive’s Update

5.1 James Bevan updated the Board on the forthcoming general election and the restrictions of the pre-election period. He informed the Board of the effect this will have on the Strategic Review of Charges and Board recruitment.

Item 6 Water Resources Update

6.1 Pete Fox updated the Board on the current situation following a dry winter and spring.

6.2 The Board noted the proactive approach to share monitoring information with stakeholders and partners, and the collaborative working with water companies, the National Farmers Union, environmental non-governmental organisations, the Defra Group and others on communications.

Item 7 Staff Survey

7.1 Joanne Reilly updated the Board on the results of the ‘Your place, your views’ staff survey.

Item 8 Corporate Services changes

8.1 The Board welcomed Betsy Bassis who updated the Board on the harmonising of processes, policies and systems across the Defra Group.

8.2 The Board welcomed Betsy’s plans to meet all 2000 Corporate Service staff affected by the transfer to the Defra Group.

8.3 The Board enquired as to whether feedback had been gathered from those who had already transferred to the Defra Group? Betsy Bassis said she would share the questions that had been asked with the Board.

Action: John Leyland/Betsy Bassis
Item 9   Any other business and date of next meeting

Items 9.1 and 9.2 were taken following item 5.1 in order that Richard Macdonald and Maria Adebowale-Schwarte be present for its approval.

9.1 Peter Kellett asked the Board to approve an amendment to the Non-Financial Scheme of Delegation moving the delegated powers for flood risk self-permitting to the Flood and Coastal Risk Management Directorate.

9.2 The Board approved the amendment.

9.3 Emma Howard Boyd reminded the Board of the pre-election guidelines issued by the Cabinet Office.

9.4 The next meeting was confirmed as 23 May 2017 in Ergon House, London.

Item 10  Review of the meeting

10.1 Emma Howard Boyd asked the Board to review the meeting.

10.2 The Board felt the EU exit discussions were too extensive for one meeting and requested the discussion be bought to future meetings.
Sponsor: Chief Executive

Subject: Chief Executive’s Update

FOR NOTING

Recommendations

The Board is asked to note the update on key topics since the last meeting.

1.0 New rod licence service

1.1 Our new “Get a Fishing Licence” service went live on 13 February 2017 having passed our Government Digital Services (GDS) standards assessment earlier that month. In March we were awarded a Defra Corporate Services Award within the “make it simpler” category. Sales for the new licence year are going well and we have received positive feedback about the new service and the new licence structure and charges (including free licences for juniors).

2.0 Salmon 5 Point Approach - Wider consideration of our salmon net and rod fisheries

2.1 This summer, we will be consulting and asking for views on how we manage our salmon stocks. This will include all net fisheries in England as well as our recreational anglers. Undoubtedly this will generate a considerable response from across the country and we are working closely with colleagues in operational teams to ensure we do this efficiently.

2.2 At the same time, we will be asking for views on our existing spring salmon byelaws that were due to be reviewed in 2018. Running this alongside the wider salmon consultation will mean that we are only consulting once for both purposes and ensuring that the whole picture can be seen to get useful and informative feedback for us to consider.

2.3 The outcome from this exercise will be used to either implement further legislation or, voluntary measures and/or more targeted management requirements as appropriate.

3.0 Environmental Incidents Week: 22 – 26 May

3.1 We are highlighting the great work that teams across the Environment Agency do to manage environmental incidents every day, that range from; dry weather to animal disease and chemical spills to shipping disasters. Events will be held in offices around the country and on-line to enable as many people as possible to get involved and, for some, to volunteer to support
incident response in the future. From WebExs covering our work on dry weather, our partnership with the Animal and Plant Health Agency or how we manage radiation incidents, to a tour of the National Incident Room for people, including our colleagues in other Defra bodies working in Horizon House. For those in Solihull, there will be a chance to meet the Fire Officers who use the Environment Protection Units and pollution control equipment we help provide. Other events are being organised and we will be promoted via our Easinet page and using #TeamEA, Meet a Colleague and Easinet highlights during the week itself.

4.0 Energy Efficiency and Greenhouse gas Emissions Trading Schemes compliance

4.1 Over 3000 of our Climate Change Agreement customers have successfully submitted reports covering their energy use during the years 2015 and 2016. Just over half met their targets for improving energy efficiency thus reducing carbon dioxide emissions. The 31 customers that failed to report on time are likely to lose their entitlement to a reduced rate of Climate Change Levy on 1 July. Customers that failed to meet their targets may also lose their entitlement to a reduced rate of Climate Change Levy unless they pay a fee to cover the cost of the carbon dioxide associated with their excess energy consumption.

4.2 We have record levels of compliance by participants in the European Union Emissions Trading Scheme (EU ETS) which include industries and international airlines based in England. Only 3 out of around 850 participating organisations failed to comply with the requirement to surrender enough allowances to cover all their emissions during 2016.

5.0 Working with Government to Improve Regulation

5.1 Two senior staff have been seconded to Defra. One to support the work on waste exemptions and the other to focus on proposals to amend operator competence requirements in relation to site management plans, financial provision, operator performance and technical competence.

Fire prevention plans.

5.2 The fire prevention plans (FPP) project concluded at the end of March. We have now received FPPs from 448 sites (and assessed 1080 FPPs in total, including resubmissions). 48% have been approved. The project provided:

- An interim central panel made up of a rotating number of Area and NPS staff (a virtual group is now in place to maintain expertise and best practice)
- Technical training to the wider operational business;
- Advice to trade bodies, CIWM and CFOA to ensure FPP requirements are understood.

5.3 Funding has also been secured to work with trade bodies to develop waste-stream specific FPP templates for industry for wood, tyres, refuse-derived fuel (RDF) and plastics. This initiative has been welcomed by the respective trade bodies.
6.0 ESA Waste Crime report

6.1 Eunomia (working for the Environmental Services Association) have produced a follow up to their 2014 report “Waste Crime: Tackling Britain’s Dirty Secret” called, “Re-thinking Waste Crime” which looks at the impact and cost of waste crime on the economy and provides recommendations for actions to tackle it.

6.2 Many of the recommendations by Eunomia, mirror issues and solutions the Environment Agency had identified ourselves and were already seeking to improve or are working with the Government to explore changes to law through the second waste crime consultation. Six of the recommendations are directed at improving the performance of the Environment Agency and local authorities which the report acknowledges is very much dependent upon increased and secure funding, the regulatory framework and previous initiatives to minimise the impact of regulation on industry. They are;

Modernising the regulatory regime
- Reforming the waste carrier, broker and dealer registration process;
- Mandating the use of Electronic Waste Transfer Notes;
- Reforming the waste exemption regime to focus on genuinely low risk activities.

Improving enforcement efforts
- Enforcing failures in Duty of Care by waste producers / Enforcing failures in Duty of Care by waste carriers and brokers;
- A Banning repeat and serious offenders to make it more difficult for convicted waste criminals to re-enter the sector;
- Increasing the timeliness of enforcement interventions by setting a shorter target for stopping illegal activity;
- Enhancing understanding of waste market and price dynamics to enable the regulator to react more rapidly to changes in the market.

Developing secure sources of enforcement funding through -
- Imposing landfill tax on illegal waste sites to provide an additional deterrent and;
- Ring-fencing landfill tax revenue for enforcement.

Improving cross-regulatory cooperation and raising awareness
- Increasing resource flexibility and co-ordination between enforcement bodies to ensure that resources are focused on areas where they are needed most;
- Funding awareness campaigns to encouraging waste producers to fulfil their legal obligations;
- Placing an obligation on local authorities to identify legal operators for managing construction and demolition waste;
- Placing an obligation for local authorities to provide end destination reports and ensure that none of their waste is ever sent to poorly performing or illegal sites.

6.3 We recognise the value of reports such as this which highlight the challenges the Environment Agency face in tackling waste crime and we recognise that the regulated and the regulator need to continue to work collaboratively and effectively to reduce waste crime.
7.0 Sustainable Abstraction Programme

7.1 Over the next 5 years, Government expects the Environment Agency to address those unsustainable abstractions that are causing environmental damage. This will require targeted measures in about 120 water bodies. It is expected that these will help improve about 800km of river by 2021. Licence changes may also be needed to prevent environmental deterioration due to abstraction.

7.2 The largest volumes of water are abstracted by the water industry for public water supply. All water companies have reviewed the risks posed by each licence. They have set out where action or investigation is needed to protect the environment. These measures have been included in the PR19 Water Industry National Environment Programme.

7.3 Engagement has commenced with approximately 5,000 water abstractors. Approximately 80 licences have been handed back so far, removing the risk of abstraction of approximately 5.5 million cubic metres of water. This will reduce the risk of deterioration in some catchments and make water available in others. The Environment Agency will also use the renewal of time limited licences on new terms to help achieve environmental objectives as necessary.

8.0 Dry Weather

8.1 This year it was the driest April across England since 2011. England received just 34% of the monthly rainfall average for April, with south east England only receiving 19%. The lack of rainfall means soils are as dry as we would expect in June.

8.2 Rainfall data for the 7 month period from October 2016 to April 2017 shows that rainfall has been significantly lower than average across southern and south east England. As a result of the prolonged dry weather and recent dry weeks many rivers are now notably low or lower for the this time of year.

8.3 Groundwater levels decreased during the month with levels being below normal or lower at just over half of our monitoring sites. Below normal groundwater levels are recorded across Buckinghamshire, Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and the North Downs in Kent.

8.4 Recent rainfall is welcome but is unlikely to be sufficient to change the current outlook. In response to the continued dry weather we have received increased media interest with local and national articles both on television and newspapers.

8.5 The Met Office 30 day forecast suggests that a north-west/south-east split is likely to prevail across the UK during the rest of May, with wetter weather more likely in the north-west of the UK and drier weather more likely in the south-east. Outbreaks of rain are possible at times throughout the next 30 days, including in the south-east. In early June, it appears more likely that high pressure will dominate, bringing dry and warmer weather.
8.6 The situation continues to be monitored closely both nationally and in affected areas. Our Area teams covering Thames, Kent & and South London, Herts & and North London, Cambridgeshire and Bedfordshire and Cumbria and Lancashire are following their dry weather plans.

8.7 Engagement continues with abstractors and representative groups, including agriculture to keep them informed of the situation.

8.8 Monitoring and assessment work for environmental impacts of Environment Agency partners has been stepped up and operational teams are prepared to respond to environmental incidents if they are reported.

9.0 Price Review 2019 (PR19)

9.1 The 2019 Price Review (PR19) is the seventh review of water company prices since privatisation in 1989. It is key to us achieving our strategic priorities. Our involvement in PR14 secured environmental investment of at least £3.5bn which will enhance more than 3000km of rivers.

9.2 PR19 presents a significant opportunity to mobilise additional funding to secure wider benefits for customers and the environment. This includes contributing to reduced flood risk and better protecting people and properties. We are at a critical stage of the process with Government and regulators producing strategic advice and water companies starting to engage with customers and developing their plans. There are three themes emerging for this price review – resilience, environmental enhancement and affordability.

9.3 The Water Industry National Environment Programme (WINEP) is the programme of enhancements that water companies need to include in their business plans to meet environmental requirements. This is our biggest contribution to the price review. On 31 March we issued the first release (WINEP1) to water companies. This includes the latest information on sustainability changes needed to resolve low flow issues and proposed water quality improvement schemes and measures to meet eels, biodiversity and invasive species obligations.

9.4 Defra has asked the Environment Agency and Natural England to work with the Drinking Water Inspectorate to provide a steer to water companies on strategic priorities for the next PR19. This replaces the Statement of Obligations, traditionally published by Defra. We have drafted a joint document titled Water Industry Strategic Environmental Requirements (WISER) with Natural England.

9.5 WISER highlights 3 outcomes we want water companies to achieve during PR19 - delivering excellent performance, enhancing the environment and improving resilience. The document sets out our expectations of water companies and their legal obligations relating to enhanced river catchments, secure and sustainable water use, improved raw drinking water, cleaner and healthier seas, flood protection and controlling emissions. In achieving these outcomes we want companies to share and adopt best practice and seek new ways of meeting performance commitments and the needs of their customers. Companies are being asked to value the environment, embrace innovation and seek partnerships.
9.6 The draft WISER has been circulated to water companies, Defra leads, Ofwat, the Consumer Council for Water and Blueprint as part of an informal consultation in early April. Responses indicate widespread support for the document with positive feedback on the strategic objectives, content and approach. WISER will be published post-election at the end of June.

10.0 Bathing Water Monitoring Review

10.1 The outcomes of the bathing water monitoring review have been successfully implemented, which confirmed that at some bathing waters the quality is so consistent that less than the usual 20 samples are enough to determine a robust classification. For this bathing water season, the number of samples taken at each bathing water will now be either 5, 10, 15 or 20, with a total reduction of 20% of samples. At over 65% of bathing waters we will continue to take 20 samples. The monitoring programme commenced on 1 May with all bathing waters scheduled to be sampled at the frequencies determined by the review. This has been communicated with key partners offering reassurance and answering any points of clarification.

James Bevan
Chief Executive

May 2017
Sponsor: Secretariat

Subject: Board Committee Meetings

FOR NOTING

Recommendations

The Board is asked to note:

1. Substantive agenda items discussed at Remuneration, Audit and Risk Assurance, Pensions, Investment Sub Committee, FCRM and E&B Committee meetings since March 2017.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This paper provides a summary of substantive agenda items that have been discussed at Committee meetings since the last full Board meeting on 7 February 2017.

2.0 Remuneration Committee

2.1 The Remuneration Committee met on 21 March and 23 May. Substantive items discussed were:

- Expense Briefing Note, Jan 17
- Voluntary Early Release Scheme payments
- Pension Fund Actuarial Valuation and Employee Contribution rates
- CEO Objectives for the forthcoming performance year
- Pensionable payments
- Performance ratings and PRP for EDT
- Succession Planning for EDT and EM2’s
- Performance ratings and PRP for CEO

3.0 Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

3.1 The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee met on 7 March in Bristol. Substantive items discussed were:

- Health, Safety and Wellbeing update report – including working with our suppliers, contractors and safety standards
- Financial position and strategy (including the Finance report)
- Corporate risk update (inc draft Governance Statement), Annual Fraud Report with a Fraud Risk presentation and the Annual whistleblowing report
- Update on NAO including value for money and financial audit 2016-17 update
- Defra migration to GIAA update
• Organisational change risks and an update on service base lining
• Internal Audit (IA) Progress Report and Internal Audit Plan 2017/18

4.0 Pensions Committee

4.1 The Pensions Committee and Pensions Board met on 23 March, substantive items discussed were:
• Risk management
• Brunel Pension Partnership update
• Report by the Investment Sub Committee
• Funding and Investment Strategy Statements
• Benefits administration, change management and communications update
• EAPF 2017-18 Business Plan, budget and forward look

5.0 Investment Sub Committee

5.1 The Investment Sub Committee met on 28 February, substantive items discussed were:
• Risk management
• Investment Strategy review
• Policy reviews (Investment Strategy Statement and Responsible Investment policy)
• Responsible investment; update on the Transition Pathway Initiative
• Active Fund Managers Performance
• Project Brunel asset pooling update

6.0 Flood and Coastal Risk Management Committee

6.1 The FCRM Committee met on 4 April. Substantive items discussed were:
• Oxford Alleviation Scheme- the committee approved the business case for escalation to Exco
• Long Term Strategy
• The National Flood Resilience Review

7.0 Environment and Business Committee

7.1 The Environment and Business Committee met on 3 May, substantive items discussed were:
• Strategic Review of charges
• Water Resources
• Nuclear Update- further to the Boards visit in March 2017
• Periodic review

Faithful Conteh
Board and Executive Secretariat Officer

May 2017
Appendix 1: Review of communications activities from April 2016 - March 2017

**Sponsor:** Chief of Staff

**Subject:** Communications update

**Recommendations:**
The Board is asked to note:
- Communications activity for April 2016 – March 2017

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<th>Key points for information</th>
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<tr>
<td>- Detailed communications updates is attached as appendix. A shorter, top-line version will be presented by Mark Funnell, Deputy Director of Communications at the meeting.</td>
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**Governance**
**Reviewed and approved by:**
- John Leyland, Chief of Staff – 17 May 2017
- Mark Funnell, Deputy Director of Communications – 10 May 2017

**Are there any risks associated with the evidence and analysis in the paper?**
N/A

**How will the key messages/decisions be communicated?**

**No legal annex is required**

Form completed by: Jonathan Fitzgerald
Date: 17 May 2017
1.0 Background

1.1 This paper provides a review of communications activities from April 2016 to the end of March 2017, with more detailed evaluation set out in Appendix 2.

1.2 Shorter, top-line versions of the above will be presented by Mark Funnell, Deputy Director of Communications at the meeting, which will focus on the communications plan for 2017/18.

2.0 Defra Transformation

2.1 We are currently in a consultation period with staff about the transfer of Corporate Service staff, including communications, which is likely to happen at the end of September 2017. We continue to provide communications support to Corporate Services and our own staff throughout the process.

2.2 Work continues to progress with development of a single Communications team for the Defra Group. This will enable us to increase our resilience during incidents, become a more efficient and effective, integrated communications service and make the most of our collective skills and strengths.

3.0 Review of communications from April 2016 to March 2017

- During 2016/17 we secured 33,200 items of broadcast, print and online coverage across local, regional and national media. More than 99% of coverage was positive or neutral.

- The most prominent event causing media coverage during 2016/17 was the tidal surge in January 2017 (2,798 items of coverage).

- We adopted proactive approaches to one-year anniversaries of Storms Desmond, Eva and Frank. This included work with Defra and briefings on our 2015 achievements and winter preparedness. Our Storm Desmond activity led to balanced and factual reporting, and 50% of media items included quotes from our Chair and the Defra Floods Minister. Coverage in traditional media had the potential to be seen by 25,262,751 people. Our Eva and Frank approach saw widespread national and regional coverage (including BBC Look North and ITV Granada).

- In both 2015-16 and 2016-17, FCRM received the most media coverage. However, there’s been a positive change in the range and amount of coverage across other business areas in 2016-17. This includes a dramatic increase to waste (1247 v 3373 items), water & land (3212 v 8069) and corporate issues (387 v 1088).

- In 2016/17 we gained 55,200 new followers across our national and regional Twitter accounts, and our Facebook page collected 8,273 likes. Our Instagram account, launched in October, collected 1,995 new followers.

- Audience growth on social media channels was strongly linked to flood incidents with the increase in November connected to the flood awareness campaign. Follower growth in 2016/17 did not recover to previous levels.
following the long pre-referendum period.

- We sent 8,000 messages on Twitter and Facebook in 2016/17. EA national and regional Twitter accounts were retweeted 40,000 times and collected 39,000 likes.

- Social media led to 48.3M impressions (number of people who saw our posts/tweets), 722,500 engagements (number of people who interacted with our posts/tweets) and 135,000 link clicks.

**Examples of Environment Agency communications include:**

**Corporate / Our culture ‘How we do things’**
- We created a new awards scheme to recognise staff; there were 1,600 staff votes for the #TeamEA winner and 7000 Easinet article views ahead of a successful event and its commissioning again for next year.

- We gave our people transferring to Defra the chance to understand, engage with and shape the process, with a range of interactive, multi-channel communications.

- Good wellbeing and empowerment to challenge were promoted through slide packs (now averaging 1,200 monthly downloads) and a Looking Out For Others campaign. A rise in both the number of ‘challenge’ examples and SHERMS reports have been seen.

- Our 20th anniversary in April 2016 was celebrated with the launch of our four-year Action Plan.

**A nation better protected against natural threats and hazards, with strong response and recovery capabilities:**

**Flood and coastal risk management**
- The annual Flood Campaign aimed to reduce the cost of flooding to the UK economy by ensuring people know when they are at risk and what action to take, with an emphasis on reaching 18-34 year-olds. There were a number of successes, including an understanding of personal risk rising 31% on the previous year, and the percentage of this age group being clear about the action required climbing 51%.

- Teams worked tirelessly warning and informing for Storm Angus and the East Coast surge, driving awareness and flood-warning sign-ups.

- Several flooding anniversaries were used to highlight our recovery work to reduce future flood risk and raise awareness of future resilience.

- Significant national and local media coverage helped profile our important upgrade work at York’s Foss Barrier as Emma Howard Boyd and Secretary of State, Andrea Leadsom carried out interviews at the site.

**A cleaner, healthier environment which benefits people and the economy:**
Water, land and biodiversity

- Our Bathing Waters campaign resulted in many partnerships (over 60 for #binit4beaches), creating widespread awareness and behaviour-change messages. This culminated in significant media coverage of the excellent results (95% positive, 5% neutral via 234 items).

- The new fishing licence campaign saw a more integrated approach and other refinements, which helped to considerably slow the decline in income. Cabinet Office approval has now been received for the 2017/18 marketing programme and for our 2017-2020 Fisheries Comms Strategy, designed to grow income by increasing participation.

Regulated industry

- Significant coverage of the £20m Thames Water prosecution (over 100 items of media coverage with no negative EA mentions), along with the Barry Kilroe prosecution and Operation Cesium raids for waste crime (tweets/retweets were seen by 20,000 people) contributed towards our objective of people having confidence and trust in our role as an efficient and effective regulator.

- We have made greater use of video to meet our objectives, including increasing the effectiveness of our messages around enforcement as a deterrent. We have had several successes, including covert fly-tipping footage becoming Wessex’s most popular Facebook post (10K+ views and a BBC Inside Out feature), the crushing of a notorious fly-tipping van in Devon, and the recent coverage of effective action on waste crime in Liverpool and the West Midlands.

- To maximise enforcement and prosecution coverage, we ran media law training courses for communications and legal teams.

Incident management

- Ensuring we’re incident-ready, through Exercises and our Major Incident Ready programme, has been key this year. We have provided training to communications and engagement staff in incident roles, and continue to build our SURGE capacity across Defra to increase our resilience for managing incidents more effectively across the Group.

During the year, we have managed our communications response to significant incidents such as Storm Angus. However, locally we continue to provide an effective daily communications service for local incidents. For example in 2016 in the West Midlands alone, we supported 65 incidents, warning and informing, and providing reassurance to the public.

6.0 Conclusion and recommendations

The Board is asked to:

- note and comment on the Communications activity for April 2016 – March 2017.

John Leyland
Chief of Staff

23 May 2017
Communications

2016/17 Highlights

Mark Funnell
Deputy Director

Appendix 1: Review of communications activities from April 2016 - March 2017
2016/17 Media...

We secured 33,200 items of broadcast, print and online coverage across local, regional and national media. More than 99% of coverage was positive or neutral.

The most prominent event causing media coverage during 2016/17 was the tidal surge in January 2017 (2,798 items of coverage).

Comparing 2015-16 & 2016-17...

The number of items of coverage was lower in 2016-17 than the previous year. However, this was expected due to the 3-month winter flood incident in 2015/16 (38,337 v 33,204). Increases across other business areas meant the drop was not as significant.

In both 15-16 & 16-17, FCRM received the most media coverage (31877 v 18599). However, there’s been a positive change in the range & amount of coverage across other business areas in 16-17. This includes dramatic increase to waste (1247 v 3373), water & land (3212 v 8069) & corporate issues (387 v 1088). In line with business priorities, ‘changing climate’ decreased, from 212 to 123 items.
2016/17 Digital...
- Gained 55,200 new Twitter followers across national & regional accounts.
- Facebook page collected 8,273 likes.
- Sent 8,000 messages on Twitter & Facebook.
  EA national & regional Twitter accounts retweeted 40,000 times & collected 39,000 likes.
- 48.3M impressions (number of people who saw our posts/tweets), 722,500 engagements (number who interacted with our posts/tweets) & 135,000 link clicks.
- Audience growth was strongly linked to flood incidents, particularly the November flood awareness campaign which also caused a peak in impressions, along with Storm Angus & Bathing Waters results.

Most Engaging Tweets...
- The top 6 most engaging tweets were on the tidal surge. The most engaging tweet of 2016-17 (above) led to 7,500 visits to check flood risk.
- The next highest topics were river conservation work leading to lamprey return (we used trending hashtag #museum101) and a 20th anniversary tweet (#20for20) on improving water quality for wildlife.

Comparing 2015-16 & 2016-17...
The number of tweets sent by @envagency (845 v 854), retweets / likes (37,800 v 37,100) & total engagements (256,000 v 245,000) are similar.
A drop in numbers seeing our tweets (16.2M to 14.6M) is, with engagement still constant, likely due to fewer visits to our page.
Suggested causes are more 2015-16 visitors due to winter floods; loss of visitors after May pre-referendum period & / or lower numbers active on Twitter in first half of 16-17.
Therefore, our resilience action for 17-18 is:
(a) using more variety of high-quality content to up engagement / new followers.
(b) strategy focus to invest more time to grow a larger Facebook audience. We also joined Instagram as the fastest-growing social platform in October to diversify our channels & reach younger audiences (especially for flood awareness), collecting 1,995 followers.
Internal Communications/Corporate

Highlights have included creating a new awards scheme to recognise staff, giving our people chance to influence the transfer process, working with the Wellbeing team to launch our Wellbeing Ambition and empowering staff to make safety challenges.

Health, Safety and Wellbeing

**Objectives:** Using powerful stories from colleagues & showcasing what we already have in place to promote good wellbeing. To encourage our people to “Look out for others and thank those who challenge you”, combined with 6 Steps to Office Safety.

**Outputs/Outcomes:** Case studies, audio stories & multi-channel comms. Resulted in marked increase in positive “challenge” behaviours logged on SHERMS. Audio stories from senior managers downloaded 1,500+ times. The monthly HSW slide pack now averaging 1,200 monthly downloads.

Looking Out For Others

**Objective:** To empower staff to spot and challenge colleagues doing something potentially dangerous - and to make this ‘challenge’ the norm.

**Outputs:** Campaign using social media meme characters Norm and Norma, and how they reacted in potentially hazardous situations.

**Outcomes:** The low-cost campaign saw over 2,000 staff download short animated films, plus a marked increase in the number of ‘challenge’ examples logged. SHERMS reports rose from 5,972 to 6,223 in 2016/17.

Corporate Services Transformation

**Objective:** To give our people transferring to Defra the chance to understand, engage with & shape the transfer process.

**Outputs:** A range of multi-channel communications with interactivity at its heart.

**Outcomes:** 98% of respondents said they were aware of the announcement
91% were satisfied with the way the message was communicated
90% of respondents said they were given the opportunity to provide feedback
89% said they knew where to go for more information
87% were satisfied with the way they were told they were in scope.
Int Comms: Spotlight on EA Awards Campaign

A brand new awards scheme was created to recognise staff and strengthen our culture. The promotions through Easinet, Buzz, direct email, senior management and other internal comms channels – and the subsequent employee participation, awards event and feedback – have seen it commissioned again for next year.

133 Individuals entered for Unsung Hero category, and 97 teams entered for #TeamEA

406 Total award nominations, with nominations received from every Area and every Directorate

1,600 Staff votes for #TeamEA winner and 7000 Easinet article views

135 Staff attended the awards event out of 140 invited, many with positive feedback

Top Digital Content...

The Environment Agency Awards 2017 ceremony
A celebration of all the great work we do to create a better place

National news
Pick your winner!
The Environment Agency Awards judging process is in full swing – and it’s soon be your time to get involved!

From 13 to 31 March, you can judge and vote for the shortlisted entries in the Environment Agency Awards category. Each of the three shortlisted entries will be in the Environment Agency Awards section on the Easinet homepage. All you’ll need to do is don your judging hat, read the article and vote for your favourite(s).

Your vote will be cast through email using the link in each article. You can vote for more than one article and you can vote more than once. Whichever article has the most votes wins! See the Environment Agency Awards rules and judging page for more information.
**Int Comms: Spotlight on EA Awards Campaign**

**Objectives:** The Environment Agency Awards are a celebration of all the great work we do to create a better place. The awards recognise staff (both teams and individuals) who have excelled in their work whilst embracing and strengthening our culture: 'How We Do Things'.

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**Created a new awards scheme from scratch.**
- Working with HR to ensure recognition fits in with policy
- Creating the awards process: categories, judging, nomination forms, rules
- Promotion: designing new, eye-catching branding and peer to peer recognition email templates. Regular stories in all channels, regular updates to senior leaders

**Outputs**
- A new, established scheme that already feels part of the organisation
- Engaged and involved judging panel made up of specialist managers
- 4 updates to EDT
- Cascades, Buzz, Ops Gateway, EM round-up, Meet a Colleague articles
- Awards ceremony – organised within (minimum) budget and on time
- Video of interviews with shortlisted nominees

**Outtakes**
- Promotional #TeamEA article (8000 views)
- Awards rules Easinet page (4000 views)
- Voting for #TeamEA winner Easinet article (7000 views)
- Feedback from judges that the process was efficient & entry-reading enjoyable
- 135 staff out of 140 invited attended, many giving positive feedback

**Outcomes**
- 406 nominations
- 97 teams entered #TeamEA Award
- 133 individuals entered Unsung Hero Award
- 1600 votes from staff to select the #TeamEA winner
- Nominations received from every Area and every Directorate
- Most viewed #TeamEA article of the year
- Most viewed Highlight of the year

**Actionable Insights... What worked well...**
The design and promotion of the scheme, the judging process and the event. **What can be improved...** The anonymity of the nominations and voting process, given access to specialist software. Also, the event could include more visual information about the shortlisted entries e.g. videos.
The annual Flood Campaign helped achieve objectives, including clear signs of campaign recall among our target audience of 18-24 year-olds and a number of other significant outcomes (see next slides). Teams worked tirelessly warning & informing for Storm Angus & the East Coast surge, driving awareness and flood-warning sign-ups.

Anniversaries helped demonstrate our work and exercises highlighted our commitment to responding and protecting.

Anniversaries
- At 100 days since Cumbria & Yorks flooding, we took the opportunity to raise awareness of future resilience & recovery work, including the Mytholmroyd Action Plan.
- We used the 10-year anniversary of the Napoli sinking to remind people that we respond to a wide range of incidents and work with our partners to respond fast and efficiently to incidents. A video about the disaster was viewed 7,000 times on Facebook.
- We adopted proactive approaches to one-year anniversaries of Storms Desmond, Eva and Frank. This included work with Defra, and briefings on our 2015 achievements and winter preparedness.

Storms
- We handled comms before, during & after November’s Storm Angus (see Incident slides), and the subsequent Storm Barbara.

Exercises
- We supported Certus with EA & Defra Comms. Widespread media & drone footage got 7.5K Facebook views.
- We supported Operations Wessex Teal and Wessex Flare, both achieving widespread media coverage showcasing how we work with the army. Over 2,000 people watched our video showing pumps in action. This supports our objective to make people trust our ability to respond to incidents & feel better protected.

- East Coast Surge: Highlighted 100+ flood warnings via national & local channels, helping drive 2,167,804 visits to flood warnings page. See Social Media slide for more.

Plus…
- Work with Defra in responding to EFRA report on strength of our FCRM work; the story quickly faded.
- Work with Defra on our response to the National Flood Resilience Review; lead national coverage.
- Longer-term flood risk information added to Gov.uk in July, helping people better understand their risk.
We carried out the 2016/17 flood action campaign from 1 to 13 November 2016. It was aimed at 18-34 year olds, as our research showed they were least likely to perceive flood risk to their area, know how to protect their properties or where to go for information. The insight also indicated that this age group were still the most receptive to messages and where we could make the biggest impact with our communications.

- **Thunderclap supporters, with an estimated social media reach of 4.49 million**
- **600**
- **45%**
- **30,794**

**Visits to the campaign page on GOV.UK (23% increase compared to 15/16 results).**

**Top Digital Content...**

- **93** Items of local, national and trade media coverage, including article on Moneysupermarket.com and guest post on Mumsnet
- **67%** Percentage of 18-34 age group who are clear about the action they need to take to help protect their homes and businesses (up from 51% in 2015/16)

**Top Media Content...**
**FCRM: Spotlight on Flood Campaign**

**Business objectives:** Better protection for people and businesses against flooding and coastal erosion; strong preparedness to respond to emergencies. (Defra theme: A nation better protected against floods, animal and plant diseases and other hazards, with strong response and recovery capabilities.)

**Campaign objectives:** Reduce the cost of flooding to the UK economy by ensuring people know when they are at risk of flooding & what action to take as a result, from 53% to 56%; increase understanding of personal risk in 18-34 age group from 31% to 40%; increase the number of young people who understand what actions they should take in event of a flood to 35% by 13 Nov 2016 (new measure); increase the number of young people who take effective action in case of flooding from 56% to 64% by 13 Nov 2016.

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**Inputs**
- Capture what you did before & during the activity
- News, trade & consumer opportunities set up & stories sold in… 3 press releases: young people, students, driving… YouGov survey… Messages /infographics on Twitter & Facebook… #floodaware twibbon… Flood game… Thunderclap launch… 9 videos: TV, Tablet, Laptop, Driving, Flood warnings, Flood risk, Case Study 1, Case Study 2, students… 7 blogs on flooding… Materials & campaign page on GOV.UK… Existing web content & online services… Partner pack updated… Content & stories added to get ready for winter… Stand at Network Rail. Sold in campaign to partners.

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**Outputs**
- Record what is delivered against the objectives & what audience is reached
- 93 items of local, national and trade media coverage… Partnership with the AA… Potential reach 36,164,996 from @EnvAgency tweets… 7,214 mentions of #floodaware on Twitter… Reach of Facebook posts to 160,000 people… 11,721 average impressions per tweet… 14,481 engagement with @EnvAgency… Thunderclap potential reach of over 4.4 million… Coastguard team Twitter partnership and Lego tweets… 30,794 visits to the campaign page… 24,535 visits to the campaign pack on GOV.UK… Articles included in targeted newsletters & social media: ARLA, FSB, local councils, NFF, BERG

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**Outtakes**
- Include metrics on what the target audience think, feel or do to make a decision
- All articles positive or neutral… 11,968 visits to check risk as result of campaign… 10,749 checked flood risk with 90% completion rate… 98% increase compared to 15/16 results… positive anecdotal feedback from partners on pack.

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**Outcomes**
- Track & report the result of your activity on the target audience
- Proactive media work directly contributed towards achieving a number of the campaign objectives… Media partnerships extended reach… 600 Thunder-clap supporters… 4,000 people took the #floodaware quiz… 3,976 video views… 1,095 #floodaware Twibbon followers… 11,968 visits to check risk… 27,792 visits to sign up for warnings… 24,535 visits to campaign pack… 587 downloads of campaign pack.

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**Organisational impact**
- Where relevant, note the quantifiable impact on the organisational goals/ KPIs
- Understanding of personal risk in 18-34 age group increased from 31% to 45%… 67% of 18-34 age group are clear about the action they need to take to help protect their homes and businesses (up from 51% in 2015/16) … 10,749 checked their flood risk on GOV.UK… 78,858 new flood warning registrations (655 active and 78,203 automatic)…

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**Actionable Insights...** Campaign visits increased when it was raining: we should plan future campaigns when people are more receptive to flood messages (for example, when it’s raining or flooding elsewhere, or on flood anniversaries)... Mobile adverts performed well: look at using other mobile formats... Interactive Twitter content encouraged more engagement (quiz, postcode check)... Videos with more obvious flood content performed better (bus in flood water)... Higher conversion rates at weekends... Top 3 performing domains: Unilad, The Sun, and Skype... Customer panel thought the display adverts were dull & not realistic, and the website was simple, informative & clear but dull & bland... Video on demand outperformed industry benchmarks... Facebook sponsored adverts performed better & had above industry standard CTR and CPC.
Our Bathing Water quality campaign resulted in many partnerships, creating widespread awareness and behaviour-change messages, culminating in significant coverage of the excellent results. New rod licence marketing saw an integrated approach and differences made; Cabinet Office approval has now been received for the 2017/18 marketing programme.

Reel experts buy online
The easiest way to get your licence is by visiting gov.uk/get-a-fishing-licence

Fishing Licence Marketing

Objective: To maintain, improve and develop fisheries. To stop the decline in net income from rod licence sales, and maintain this in 2016/17.

Inputs/Outputs: Personalised emails (From 306,607 emails, 150,026 renewed their licence amounting to £3,726,899); Personalised letters (From 424,517 letters, 169,249 renewed their licence amounting to £3,835,185); Google Adwords (85,789 impressions, 37,143 clicks and 18,143 conversions, resulting in an estimated £327,844 income).

Outcomes: By the end of the financial year, our comms activity has helped support the sale of 1,191,142 licences to 961,714 individual anglers, generating an income of £20,661,859. This represents a drop of £421,413 or 2.00% on the end of the previous year. The decline has slowed considerably.

Plus...
- Promoted River Avon Restoration project winning UK River Prize 2017, raising awareness of our work to improve river quality.
- Launched our Unlocking the River Severn project
- Partnership work to tell the story about helping elver populations.
- Gained approval for our 2017-2020 Fisheries Comms Strategy, designed to grow income by increasing participation.
After our campaign earlier in the year, the official bathing water statistics for England were published in November. Defra and EA published a joint press release highlighting the results, which were the best on record.

**Bathing Waters**

- **234**
  - Items of media coverage about water quality at beaches

- **60+**
  - Partners involved in #binit4beaches campaigns / % of BW staff sharing info with partners

- **95%**
  - Sentiment of positive coverage. 5% neutral, no negative

**Messages**

- **Mssg #1.** Our bathing waters are the best on record
- **Mssg #2.** 98.5% passed tough new standards this year.
- **Mssg #3.** 93% of bathing waters were rated excellent or good
Business Objective/Priority: Continue to drive improvements to bathing water quality across England & inform the public

Comms Objectives: 1. Promote local partnerships, driving community-led action. 2. Use partnerships to share and promote content on bathing waters. 3. To instil public confidence in the management of our bathing waters. 4. To communicate annual statistics for bathing waters to the widest possible audience.

Actionable Insights:

**What worked well...** Strong SoS quote carried in almost all coverage; Fundamentally strong positive message of cleanest beaches on record; Stakeholder engagement was strong

**What can be improved...** better evaluation at events, continue to look at opportunities to promote Bathing Water Data Explorer

Defra Theme: "England’s bathing waters best on record" 98.5% met the standards

Reduction in the number of poor waters
Regulated Industry: Stats & Highlights

The objective of people having confidence & trust in our role as an efficient/effective regulator has been met on numerous occasions this year, not least with the Thames Water prosecution but other comms work on waste crimes too. Training, campaigns & use of videos have also played their part in meeting RI objectives.

Waste Crimes
GMMC communications has been working with West Midlands & National comms colleagues to raise awareness of our RI work, and specifically waste crime. To maintain & increase confidence in our regulatory role, and raise awareness of our work as deterrents, the Barry Kilroe prosecution & Operation Cesium raids achieved widespread local & national positive coverage for the EA.

Inputs/Outputs/Outcomes: Stories sold in to press before court case and raid; Footage (of illegal waste disposal) & other media shared; Comms Specialist attended sentencing; Partnerships formed created higher profile and additional influential retweets; Wide-scale interviews gained; Target audiences reached and EA reputation protected/enhanced.

Tweets/retweets for both Kilroe and Cesium seen by nearly 20,000 people +followers of ITV (244k), BBC North West (178k), Liverpool Echo (354k), Manchester Evening News (442K followers). 20 media articles for both cases, ranging from the Irish Post to Material Recycling World +online & local radio. Sir James Bevan was interviewed by ITV national news which featured both cases.

A large fire in Stoke was the leading driver of coverage in the Midlands in February, with the message ‘The EA is working to tackle waste crime’ reaching 18+ million people via 98% positive coverage & 158 news articles in February alone.

PLUS...

VIDEOS: Use of covert fly-tipping footage as a deterrent became Wessex’s most popular Facebook post with 10K+ views, plus a BBC Inside Out feature. The same area produced popular videos on environmental damage by a Dorset cooking oil leak & the crushing of a notorious fly-tipping van in Devon.

CAMPAIGNS: This year also saw our support for the Right Waste, Right Place and Operation Rogue Trader campaigns. Pre-work is being carried out on Strategic Review of Charges, ready for next quarter, and a toolkit for our oil & gas projects was produced.

TRAINING: To maximise enforcement & prosecution coverage, we ran media law training for comms & legal teams.
Regulated Industry: Spotlight on Thames Water Prosecution

In March 2017, the outcome of a prosecution brought by the EA, against Thames Water for huge leaks of untreated sewage, was announced. Local and national Comms teams worked to promote the EA’s role, to meet objectives including people having confidence and trust in our role as an efficient/effective regulator.

Number of negative EA mentions: 0
Twitter followers who saw our tweet: 8,374

Over 100 Items of media coverage, regional and national
Over 80% Percentage of media coverage featuring EA.

Top Digital Content...

Top Media Content...
**Regulated Industry: Spotlight Thames Water Prosecution**

**Business Objective/Priority:** Future compliance, improved investment and site-management by water companies; Promote the Sentencing Council’s environmental offences definitive guidelines – since these came into force, fines have been greater

**Comms Objectives:** Widespread coverage so people have confidence & trust in our role as an efficient/effective regulator; Champion benefit of investment in water environment; Journalists have good understanding of offences.

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**Comms/Engage Plan**
- Close, pre-trial work with journalists to secure maximum exposure
- Joint proactive media/lines by Defra &EA Press
- EA staff aware via Weekly Buzz
- #TeamEA feature on easinet showcasing great team work throughout
- Work with C&E to keep local MP informed
- EA social media teams tweeted #ThamesWater

**Outputs**
- Over 100 items of media coverage on results – Broadcast, print, online with key messages repeated
- Staff informed in Weekly Buzz and #TeamEA
- Over 8000 Twitter followers saw our tweets #ThamesWater

**Outcomes**
- The majority of articles were positive or neutral for the Environment Agency
- No negativity
- EA quote carried in over 80% of media coverage

**Anticipated desired impact on target audiences of deterrent of similar activity/future compliance, due to scale and nature of coverage.**

**Assumed public confidence & trust in our role due to 100% positivity of coverage & 80% EA mention. Increased understanding from journalists.**

**Anticipated:** Future compliance of water companies as a result of the prosecution; Better investment from water companies into assets; Better management of sites to protect freshwater environment

**Actionable Insights:**
- **What worked well...** Achieved EA key messages in all media coverage;
- Secured interviews with major broadcasters – BBC, ITV and broadsheets; Work with legal team & area/national Comms to prepare embargoed, pre-hearing media pack, without which the same level of media interest may not have been achieved.
- **What can be improved...** Unfortunate timing as the London terror attack occurred on the same day and naturally pushed this down the news agenda.
Ensuring we’re incident-ready, & providing extra training to more comms and engagement staff in incident roles, has been key this year. Comms of our response to incidents such as Storm Angus have been a highlight.

In December, an incident management communications team was established to help train & make its community resilient. Its vision is to build a resilient & confident comms response which is integral to the EA & Defra’s incident management activity - to be robust against future changes, and the results to be recognised across government as exemplary.

Major Incident Ready (MIR)

**Objective:** To improve how we plan, respond & recover from major incidents, providing effective, timely and consistent information to staff, so we can effectively work as one business.

**Outputs:** Development of trusted MIR comms cascaded through implementation managers, comms incident leads & internal comms.

**Outcomes:** 6,500 trained & incident-ready staff. We’re now able to track incident engagement with our staff better than ever.

Incident Preparation

**Objective:** To ensure the community filling communications & engagement roles were ‘resilient and brilliant’, feeling supported, had to the right tools to do the job & were empowered to help recruit for their roles / areas.

**Outputs:** July training workshop with 60+ people. New tech secured for comms staff, 31 trained in video work, 9 national media spokespeople trained & 35 in comms & engagement roles. 60 trained in new Visualisation tool from Comms/C&E.

**Outcomes:** Contributed to national objectives of 6,500 trained and incident-ready staff.

Storm Angus Incident Response

**Objective:** People have confidence/trust we’ll provide effective operational response to flood/coastal risk. To warn & inform.

**Outcomes:** Factual/positive media coverage (including CEO on R4’s Today). See next page.
Incident Management: **Spotlight**

**Storm Angus: Wessex media facts**

The first winter storm has passed, weeks after Exercise Certus and seven days after the Flood Action Campaign.

- **150**
  - New followers for @EnvAgencySW between Monday and Wednesday (the norm is 7 to 10 a day) and 87 signed up on Monday alone.

- **12**
  - Interviews for TV and radio in two days.

- **Over 3400**
  - Views of our video shot at Bradford-on-Avon's temporary defences, with 155 Likes, 55 Shares, and 2,240 minutes watch time.

- **Over 30**
  - New fans on Facebook, 21 of whom signed up on Tuesday. The norm is 2-3 a week.

- **27,000**
  - Number of people reached in a tweet about B-o-A defences. Every tweet during incident reached 4k, the norm is >1k.

- **92**
  - Briefings sent to MPs across Wessex and 600 people on the Somerset Levels and Moors.