

## **R&D Technical Summary FD2010**

# **Guide to the Management of Floodplains to Reduce Flood Risks. Stage 1: Development Draft**

### **Background to R&D project**

Floodplains are areas of special concern because they are often highly developed but they are at risk of suffering from a severe natural hazard (i.e. flooding). However the management of floodplains and the associated flood risks is fragmented and not carried out as a single co-ordinated activity:

- Development of floodplains is carried out within the framework of the statutory land use planning system which is the responsibility of local planning authorities;
- Flood defence and other flood management activities are carried out by “operating authorities”, principally the Environment Agency but also Internal Drainage Boards (in drainage districts) and local authorities (Ordinary Watercourses and coasts). Powers for flood defence are permissive and not statutory;
- The response to flood emergencies is led by the police but also involves the Environment Agency, local authorities and the emergency services;
- Flood-prone communities have no formal ownership of any of the above activities although they are able to consult on land use planning. They are also provided with information on flood warning by the Environment Agency and on flood emergency arrangements by some local authorities.

The purpose of the project is to provide guidance on how to reduce flood risks on floodplains. This includes raising awareness of floodplain management issues, providing guidance on how to manage floodplains within the present legislative context for land use planning, and providing guidance on flood emergency planning.

### **Results of R&D project**

The project identified some good examples where some local authorities have incorporated flooding issues into local land use planning and/or have developed flood emergency plans. The approaches adopted by these local authorities were used together with information on floodplain management in Australia and other relevant information on flood management policy and planning in England and Wales to provide the following:

- Suggestions for raising the awareness and involvement of the public and other stakeholders in flood risk and floodplain management, and disseminating this information;
- Guidance on how to take account of flood risks on floodplains within the statutory land use planning system;
- Guidance on the outputs required from Shoreline Management Plans (SMPs), Catchment Management Plans (CFMPs) and associated Strategy Plans for floodplain planning and management purposes; and
- Guidance on how to prepare Flood Emergency Plans within the overall emergency planning framework.

It is recommended that the proposed guidance is applied to pilot areas under Stage 2 of the project in order to refine the guidance, produce recommended procedures for floodplain management, and produce brochures and other dissemination material including refined versions of the stakeholder sheets contained in the Stage 1 report.

## R&D Outputs and their Use

The project produced an R&D Technical Report, a Final Project Report (CSG15), and an R&D Technical Summary. The R&D Technical Report contains the results of the project and proposals for Stage 2 of the project, and is primarily intended to set the scene for the Stage 2 research. However the following outputs contained in the Stage 1 Report provide preliminary guidance to local authorities and others involved in floodplain management:

- A summary of Best Practice principles for the management of floodplains to reduce flood risks, based on present knowledge;
- Guidance on information on flood risk that should be included in statutory land use plans;
- Guidance of the outputs required from CFMPs, SMPs and Strategy Plans for planning of land use in the floodplain;
- Guidance to local authorities on flood emergency planning; and
- Stakeholder sheets that provide specific information about flooding for particular stakeholders.

One of the main purposes of Stage 2 is to refine the guidance based on a pilot application of the guidance.

Stakeholder sheets are provided for the following groups:

- Those who live and/or work on floodplains;
- Farmers and other landowners who own land in flood risk areas;
- Land use planners;
- River and coast managers (Environment Agency, Local Authority engineers, IDBs);
- Emergency services;
- Those involved with conservation and environmental enhancement;
- Those who have assets on floodplains (transport, utilities);
- Business interests (developers, insurance); and
- General information for the general public who use floodplains, the media, politicians, etc

This R&D Technical Summary is intended to be used to inform people of the work carried out to date. At the time of publication the proposed Stage 2 has not been commissioned and Defra would welcome comments on the recommendations or suggested case study locations. These should be addressed to Matt Crossman (Tel. 020 7238 5955 or email [matthew.crossman@defra.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:matthew.crossman@defra.gsi.gov.uk)).

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This R&D Technical Summary relates to R&D Project FD2010 and the following R&D outputs:

- **R&D Technical Report - *Guide to the Management of Floodplains to Reduce Flood Risks. Stage 1: Development Draft.*** Produced February 2003, Published July 2004

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The above outputs are available on the Defra website ([www.defra.gov.uk/enviro/fcd/research/RandDProjects](http://www.defra.gov.uk/enviro/fcd/research/RandDProjects)). Copies are held by all EA Regional Information Centres and are available from: The Environment Agency's National Customer Contact Centre by emailing [enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk) or by telephoning 08708 506506.

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