HM Government

The UK Government Resilience Action Plan

The UK's strategic approach to resilience

July 2025

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Foreword from the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster

We are living through a period of profound change. In a matter of years we have experienced a pandemic that resulted in lockdowns all over the world, and war on the continent of Europe that catalysed the largest rearmament of European powers since World War II. In 2025 alone, tariffs have reset the global economic order, and cyber gangs are targeting our businesses and institutions. The whole of the UK's national resilience - our economy, defences and biosecurity is being tested like never before.

The devastating impact of COVID-19 showed no country was fully prepared for a large-scale infectious disease outbreak. It was a painful lesson in what can happen if we collectively fail to recognise, or plan for, the risks that come with the way we live our lives today.

Technological advances have helped to make us the most interconnected and mobile we have ever been. But they have made us all reliant on technologies and systems that have vulnerabilities. And this has created significant risks like national power outages or cyber attacks on our institutions, on top of the longstanding threats we face, including pandemics and flooding.

The pandemic reinforced just how important it is that we take resilience seriously and better coordinate our preparations across society. It is impossible to prepare for every risk, but it is in our gift to close many of the gaps in our vulnerabilities and work together to make the UK a more resilient, more secure country. That ambition is at the core of this Resilience Action Plan.

This document not only builds on the huge amount of work that has taken place since the pandemic to improve our readiness for different challenges. It considers our resilience in the short term, medium term and long term.

The Action Plan brings together policies and programmes, across-government, that strengthen our foundations and help us identify, and mitigate the risks the UK faces. Crises and emergencies do not respect borders and this Action Plan reinforces our commitment to working in partnership with the devolved governments to effectively plan for, and respond to risks, wherever they exist.

And it is honest about the fact that the state cannot do it alone. Resilience has to be a shared responsibility between individuals, communities, businesses, local, devolved and national government, and public services across the UK.

To build a truly resilient country, ready for whatever the future holds, we need to move the conversation onto how we all elevate our own readiness. If you run a business, it might mean upgrading your cyber defences. For an employee in local government, it could involve planning for a wider range of adverse weather events. And for the average person, it may involve looking out for vulnerable neighbours and stocking up on some basics like bottled water and a torch.

This blueprint recognises that the UK government has an essential role to play in raising levels of resilience in our economy, public sector institutions, national infrastructure and security. So, as we ask more of all parts of society, the state is stepping up and playing its part to increase our readiness for all kinds of crises.

It prepares us for a wide possible range of risks and includes a number of new significant investments, from £4.2bn for flood defences to build and maintain flood defences, protecting communities across England from the dangers of flooding and over £1bn that will fund high containment laboratories.

These measures are on top of initiatives like the Stronger Local Resilience Forum Trailblazers launched in five local areas to explore models of stronger leadership and local accountability to more effectively build the resilience of their area. The UK Resilience Academy also opened earlier this year, transforming the training available to up to 4,000 people in the public and private sector each year. Or the Risk Vulnerability Tool, which we've developed with the Office for National Statistics, to help public servants better protect vulnerable people when managing our readiness for the long term risks confronting the UK.

In these uncertain times, no government can stop every risk from materialising. But, if we can foster a culture where resilience is part of our daily lives, the UK will be better prepared for the challenges of the future. That work has already begun and I am confident the Resilience Action Plan will make a strong contribution in the years to come.

The Rt Hon. Pat McFadden MP | Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster

Picture: Emergency medical responders, Home Office

Introduction

Context

1. The risks that the UK faces are volatile, varied and interconnected. The UK government's National Security Strategy[1] (NSS) published on 24 June describes an outlook for the UK of geopolitical uncertainty, greater exposure to economic shocks, rapid technological changes and persistent transnational risks such as climate change. "Security at home", including domestic resilience, which this action plan focuses on, is a fundamental element of our National Security Strategy.

2. This action plan sets out further detail on our plan to strengthen our domestic resilience and how the UK government is investing to protect the nation, defining our objectives and the actions we will take to become more resilient. It is underpinned by the UK government's recognition that these era-defining challenges create risks that, ultimately, can impact our everyday lives. They can disrupt our public services, our infrastructure, our health, our communities, our national defence, the environment and the economy. Furthermore, these consequences do not fall evenly across our society, so assessing and planning for people who are vulnerable in different types of emergencies is also core to our action plan.

3. The UK relies on the extraordinary commitment and professionalism of thousands of planners and responders to deliver our system of civil protection. Empowering and supporting this network of organisations to operate at their best is fundamental to our approach, and this action plan focuses on where we can maximise their efforts, including through the use of science and technology.

4. However, lessons from crises at home and abroad show how everybody across society can contribute to protecting a nation against disruptive events. This might include individuals and households being prepared to keep themselves and others safe in the event of a major power outage,[2] businesses delivering critical services being ready to respond to supply chain disruption caused by global events,[3] or voluntary, community and faith groups being able to effectively engage and coordinate with responders to support the groups they work with.[4] This action plan sets out steps the UK government will take to drive this type of action across society, creating a collective response to a collective challenge.

5. The action plan reflects the conclusions of UK government's review of resilience, which it made in response to COVID-19 Inquiry Module 1[5] and the Grenfell Tower Inquiry.[6] The UK government was not as prepared as it should have been for the COVID-19 pandemic. We are committed to learning lessons from these Inquiries and more broadly. Our proposals build on recent work to learn from past events, and push us further.

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[1] UK National Security Strategy
[2] For example, the power outages caused by Storm Éowyn in 2024 and the 2025 power outage in the Iberian Peninsula.
[3] For example, the impact of the war in Ukraine on the supply chains of a variety of goods and materials, including food, and the security of energy supplies across Europe.
[4] For example, during the Covid-19 pandemic, within 24 hours of a governmental call for citizens to join the NHS volunteers, 500,000 people had signed up. By early April of that year, over 750,000 had signed up and started undertaking tasks such as delivering medication from pharmacies, driving patients to appointments, or making regular phone calls to isolated individuals
[5] UK Government Response to the Covid-19 Inquiry Module 1 Report
[6] Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 2 Report: Government response

UK Government's work on resilience

6. This action plan defines 'resilience' as the ability to anticipate, assess, prevent, mitigate, respond to, and recover from natural hazards, deliberate attacks, geopolitical instability, disease outbreaks, and other disruptive events, civil emergencies or threats to our way of life.

7. The UK government plans, through the relevant Lead Government Department (LGD)[7] for every risk in the National Security Risk Assessment (NSRA). This is a very wide range of risks - from a pandemic, to a terrorist attack, to flooding. For the most serious risks that have the potential to impact the whole of society, the Cabinet Office takes on a leadership role, alongside the LGD, to coordinate action across the UK government, working with the devolved governments as required. The work done to prevent, mitigate, respond to and recover from these sorts of events focuses on how to deal with the particular challenges that would arise in those crises.

8. However, we cannot perfectly predict how risks will unfold, and across all risks we need some common systems and tools to respond. For this reason, the UK government also works to improve the general resilience of the nation to all risks - the 'all hazards' approach. This is consistent with the approach in the recently published Strategic Defence Review, which highlights our new 'NATO First' ambition and the widening of whole of society participation in resilience. It is part of our work to develop National Resilience Goals, in line with NATO's 7 Baseline Requirements for Resilience and the Alliance-wide Resilience Objectives.

9. While this action plan focuses on work to build resilience to all risks, the UK government's investment in responding to specific risks is integral to our resilience. Examples of risk-specific investment and activity - such as £4.2 billion for flood and coastal erosion resilience and up to £520 million for the Life Sciences Innovative Manufacturing Fund, are explained throughout the action plan. The UK government also regularly publishes other work relating to specific risk areas including the implementation report on our Biological Security Strategy which is published alongside this action plan, addressing our work to address the range of biological threats including pandemics.

10. Finally, the UK government's Plan for Change[8] is essential to how well prepared the UK is for a difficult situation. For example, a strong healthcare system and secure energy supply, key objectives of the Plan for Change, mean that the UK is better able to respond and recover from shocks and crises. Recent publications such as the Industrial Strategy[9] - which contains measures to improve the resilience of our supply chains - and the 10 Year Infrastructure Strategy[10] - which sets out our commitment to build resilience infrastructure such as flood defences - are part of a wider picture of how the UK will be stronger against the risks we face. Resilience is not achieved without a strong economy and effective public services.

[7] The UK government department leading on the management of a risk
[8] Plan for Change - Milestones for Mission-Led Government
[9] The UK's Modern Industrial Strategy
[10] UK Infrastructure: A 10 Year Strategy

The Resilience Action Plan's objectives

11. Citizens in the UK should live in a society that is as resilient as anywhere else in the world. The Resilience Action Plan will deliver against three objectives in this Parliament to:

    1. **continuously assess how resilient the UK is** to target interventions and resources effectively
    2. **enable the whole of society to take action** to increase their resilience
    3. **strengthen the core public sector** resilience system

12. All four nations of the United Kingdom share the common objective of protecting citizens from crises, with resilience encompassing both reserved and devolved matters. The action plan focuses on actions primarily for England, UK government departments and in areas where responsibilities in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are reserved to the UK government. While significant aspects of resilience are wholly the responsibility of the devolved governments, the UK government is committed to working in partnership to align policies and facilitate closer cooperation for the benefit of all our citizens. For example, the UK government is delivering a secure database mapping the UK's critical national infrastructure (CNI), but this requires working closely with devolved governments who are responsible for a number of CNI sectors.

13. Resilience structures and processes vary among the devolved governments, and include a combination of both reserved and devolved competencies and responsibilities. Following lessons identified from the COVID-19 pandemic, Scotland is working on improvements to its resilience landscape based on commitments outlined in the response to Module 1 of the COVID-19 Inquiry and Northern Ireland completed its review of resilience arrangements and published the new NI Civil Contingencies Framework in 2021. The NI Civil Contingencies Framework undergoes annual review, with a substantive review scheduled for 2025/2026. Having undertaken a review of civil contingencies in conjunction with the responder community, the Welsh Government has published the Wales Resilience Framework and a supporting Delivery Plan. The First Minister has also taken steps to strengthen Wales' resilience governance and oversight structures. The UK government continues to collaborate with the devolved governments and has established a Four Nations Ministerial group to address and align resilience issues. An update on resilience arrangements for each nation will be provided in due course.

Picture: Environment Agency employees, Environment Agency

Objective 1: Continuously assess how resilient the UK is, to target interventions and resources

14. To become more resilient as a nation we must continuously assess our risks and vulnerabilities, particularly as these can change rapidly. Having a robust, current, understanding informs how the UK government should prioritise and target interventions, and allows us to assess and improve our approach and capabilities.

15. The UK has significant existing strengths in this area, with effective tools and processes which draw insights about the risks facing us and our ability to prevent, mitigate, respond and recover. This has been a major area of transformation since the COVID-19 pandemic. We will use the breadth of the UK's science expertise and capabilities to better understand our exposure to risks and the effectiveness of the interventions we make. We will continue to be as transparent as possible with our data, in keeping with our aim to support wider society to be part of efforts to build resilience.

16. We will do this, on a dynamic basis, by:

    a. **assessing risks**, including the contexts in which they materialise

    b. **assuring our resilience system** to identify problems and make improvements in our planning

    c. **developing a comprehensive assessment of the UK's resilience**, so that we can consider system-wide interventions

Summary of actions to support vulnerable people: Objective 1

Through the NSRA Expert Advisory Programme, an independent expert panel has been stood up to improve our understanding of how risks impact vulnerable people and create new vulnerabilities.

We have developed a Risk Vulnerability Tool (RVT) so that we can analyse what particular challenges different crisis scenarios might create for vulnerable people, so we can mitigate them both before and during a crisis response. The UK government is building more and more risk scenarios into this tool.

The UK government will commission experts in Social and Behavioural Science to examine how different risk scenarios could make people more vulnerable, or exacerbate existing vulnerabilities. This will inform new guidance and establish a more comprehensive approach to how vulnerabilities are assessed within the NSRA.

Assessing risk

17. For more than two decades, the UK has developed and improved its approach to assessing the risks that are facing us, to better understand what action is appropriate. The NSRA is the UK government's single, authoritative articulation of the most serious acute risks facing the UK and its interests overseas.

18. In recent years, to keep pace with the rapidly changing global risk landscape, the most extensive reforms since its inception have been made to the NSRA. It now operates on a dynamic model, updated in regular cycles several times a year. Risks are reassessed as often as necessary, based on new evidence or lessons from real-world experience. 'Groupthink' and conventional wisdom are challenged through the refreshed Expert Advisory Programme.

19. This challenge function is provided by eight standing advisory panels of academic, technical and scientific experts, each led by an independent chairperson. The National Risk Register (NRR) is our public facing articulation of the risks facing us, with the last update published in January 2025. A world-leading "transparent by default" approach has been adopted, declassifying and sharing information from the NSRA except in a small number of highly sensitive areas. Lead Government Departments also apply scrutiny of their own.

20. However, the scale of the challenges means we must go further. It is not enough to attempt to prevent and prepare for a defined set of emergencies. Instead we need to expand our approach, to: understand drivers and risk interdependencies; increase sharing of our risk data to help policymakers understand and plan for different scenarios; and refocus our assessments on the underlying factors that make some people vulnerable to emergencies. This represents a further fundamental step change in our approach to risk assessment.

Expanding our understanding of chronic risks

21. To respond to risks, we need to better understand their long-term drivers and systemic interdependencies. A key step is mapping our chronic risks, which are risks that pose continuous challenges, generally over a longer timeframe, that gradually erode our economy, community, way of life, and/or national security. While chronic risks also require robust government-led responses, these tend to be developed through strategic, operational or policy changes rather than emergency civil contingency responses allowing the UK government to intervene upstream of risks materialising. Chronic risks can make acute risks - i.e. those that may require an emergency response - more likely and serious, and their impacts can be far reaching. For example, climate change (a chronic risk) can lead to an increase in the frequency and severity of weather conditions that cause floods and wildfires (acute risks). Similarly, increasing competition for critical minerals (chronic risk) could lead to conflict at regional and international levels, raising the likelihood of an attack on a UK ally or partner outside NATO (acute risk) occurring.

22. For the first time, the UK government will:

    a. **publish a version of the Chronic Risks Analysis, alongside this action plan.** The Chronic Risks Analysis is an account of the most critical medium to long term challenges, based on evidence, futures and foresight techniques. Publishing a version of this internal, classified document will help build businesses' and organisations' understanding and support their planning and preparations.

    b. **include, within the Chronic Risks Analysis, accompanying guidance on how policymakers, resilience practitioners and businesses could approach chronic risks,** based on the UK Government Office for Science Futures Toolkit.[11] This guidance will support users to understand the interconnected nature of chronic risks and help policy makers build resilience thinking in their work.

    c. **develop guidance for the use of the Chronic Risks Analysis in local risk assessment,** to support the local tier to implement thinking on chronic risks within their governance and risk management.

Case Study: flood and coastal erosion investment programme

The Environment Agency's new National Flood Risk Assessment shows that 6.3 million properties in England are in areas at risk of flooding. With climate change, the total number could increase to 8 million by the middle of the century – or around one in four properties. To strengthen long-term resilience to flooding and coastal erosion, the UK government will commence a new 10-year flood and coastal erosion investment programme – launching in April 2026 – aligned with the Infrastructure Strategy. This builds on the UK government's £2.65 billion total investment for 2024/25 and 2025/26, which is better protecting over 52,000 properties across England through new or improved flood defences.

Over its first three years, £4.2 billion will be invested in flood and coastal erosion resilience – which will be used to build new and maintain our existing assets, supporting the resilience of communities across the country.

Sharing risk data to support planning and response

23. Having a clear understanding of the risk landscape amongst those who need to respond is essential for preparing for and dealing with emergencies. It enables more effective decision-making, better communication and coordination, and more efficient resource allocation.

24. Within the UK government, the National Situation Centre, established in 2021, provides situational awareness for crisis response and national resilience. The Situation Centre is highly regarded internationally and can produce short-notice analysis for risks, drawing on over 700 anonymised and aggregated data sets.

[11] Futures toolkit for policymakers and analysts

25. At the local tier, risk assessment is the starting point for local partners to understand the risks their communities face. The UK government shares the NSRA and National Resilience Planning Assumptions, along with guidance on applying and using national products to a local context, with devolved governments and categorised responders, including Local Resilience Forums (LRFs), in England.

26. The UK government will build on this by:

    a. **requiring public bodies to share, by default, anonymised and aggregated data when requested by the National Situation Centre** to support the UK government's response to crises

    b. **identifying opportunities to share more data** between the National Situation Centre, devolved governments and local partners where appropriate, to support crisis preparedness and local response

Putting vulnerable people at the centre of our risk assessment

27. The impact of emergencies can affect anyone. However, they are not felt equally across society and some people and communities can experience more significant and disproportionate impacts when emergencies happen. Understanding these disparities is critical to increasing national resilience and reducing the impact of emergencies.

28. Vulnerability is not a fixed characteristic; it is shaped by a complex interplay of individual, community, digital, systemic, and environmental factors, which are intersectional and interconnected. These factors can be temporary or long-lasting, and their significance may differ based on the specific context of the emergency. Furthermore, emergencies can create new vulnerabilities and exacerbate existing ones. Therefore it can be difficult to assess who is most "at risk" during an emergency.

29. By enhancing the assessment and understanding of who might be a vulnerable person in the risk scenarios set out in the NSRA and its public-facing counterpart, the NRR, we can provide policymakers and operational leaders with a more thorough understanding of vulnerability at both national and local levels. This will improve the efficiency, equity, and proactive nature of emergency planning and response. The UK government has already acted to embed better understanding of vulnerable people in planning for emergencies, offering better support to those most "at risk" during an emergency. In the past year it has:

    a. **developed a Risk Vulnerability Tool (RVT) to quickly identify areas with high numbers of people that may need more support in a crisis situation**. This tool is accessible to UK and devolved governments, through a secure platform

    b. **published new guidance** to improve consideration of the disproportionate impacts that risks may have on different people across a broad spectrum of vulnerability by UK government and resilience professionals, to enable better plans to support them

    c. **created a specific, independent, panel focussed on Vulnerable People as one of the NSRA Expert Panels,** building on work to include a specific category requiring teams to consider the impact of the risk they are assessing on vulnerable people

30. The UK government will build on this by:

    a. commissioning the Social and Behavioural Science for Emergencies group, run by the Government Office for Science, to **produce new guidance for UK government departments to help identify people who may become vulnerable in a crisis.** A weakness that can occur in preparing for crises is in limiting planning to groups who are already known to be vulnerable or at risk. However, crisis scenarios can create disproportionate impacts on people who might not be considered vulnerable in everyday scenarios. With, for example, weather related risks, this could be somebody who does not have their own car to leave an area at risk of flooding, or who lives in a flat that would become extremely hot in a long heatwave. This guidance will help departments better identify these individuals and communities and strengthen UK government planning.

    b. **reviewing the methodology of the NSRA to take a more holistic approach to the assessment of vulnerabilities,** considering how different factors of vulnerability can interplay and compound. We will, alongside academics and experts, explore a more effective assessment of vulnerability during crises to make it more accessible to policy-makers and operational leaders undertaking planning and preparedness activities.

    c. **further improve the RVT by adding further data sources, adding more NSRA risks into the RVT and rolling it out to the local tier.** This will allow us to target efforts more effectively, directing them to where they are most needed to enhance preparedness and response efforts, and improve data sharing with the local tier so that national and local responders have a shared understanding.

Assuring our resilience system

31. Understanding our capabilities and how prepared we are to address risk is core to understanding our resilience. We achieve this through assurance, aligned with the Orange Book - UK government's handbook for the management of risk.[12] This follows the industry standard model for assurance, comprising three tiers that incorporate self-assurance, assurance by system leaders and then internal auditing.

32. The UK government model currently addresses the first two tiers and begins to address the third. First, Lead Government Departments (LGDs) are responsible for conducting their own internal planning, exercising and monitoring of their capabilities, and understanding how their risks interact with other government departments and impact across society. The Cabinet Office supports LGDs in planning for cross-system impacts, in particular for catastrophic risks. On top of this, the Cabinet Office provides scrutiny of response capabilities across the UK government through the regular National Capabilities Assessment. These are supplemented by regular check-ins and assessments of risk plans by the Cabinet Office, informed by the near-term risk profile. The National Exercising Programme, discussed in Objective 2, also supports the testing of our capabilities.

[12] The Orange Book, Management of Risk – Principles and Concepts

33. The UK government will go further, bolstering the third tier (internal audit) through increased 'red teaming'[13] by building a dedicated capability in the Government Office for Science. It will:

    a. **red team the next National Capabilities Assessment**, providing structured critique of how suitable our capabilities for responding to crisis situations are to address the risks we are faced with

    b. **offer a red teaming tool to test planning for specific risks,** which will add an additional layer of challenge and assurance from experts both within and beyond the UK government

    c. **introduce a new peer review protocol for LRFs**[14] to assess their planning, response and recovery activities, including training. This will help both UK government and local partnerships understand where their strengths and weaknesses are, support knowledge and best practice sharing, and inform decision-making and improvements. This will build on formal reporting to better understand preparedness and an assessment of local capabilities. The critical work of the LRFs in England is covered in further detail in Objective 3

34. Module 1 of the Covid Inquiry recommended the creation of "a UK-wide independent statutory body for whole-system civil emergency preparedness and resilience" to assess preparedness and resilience for whole-system civil emergencies.

35. The UK government agrees that further independent scrutiny in this area is required in order to introduce new ideas and perspectives on our work to plan for the risks we face and to mitigate the risk of groupthink. This is especially the case for the most complex, whole-system risks that touch on the work of every area of government and whose impacts would be felt in every area of society and across every sector of the UK economy.

36. However, the UK government must maintain responsibility for the delivery of our response plans and preparations and can not outsource this role to an external body. We are committed to enhancing the provision of independent advice and challenge to the UK government on our preparedness. To do so, we will incorporate perspectives of the UK's leading experts on various complex risks into our work.

37. To do so, the Cabinet Office will instruct the UK Resilience Academy, by the end of 2025, to convene a number of panels per year of relevant experts to scrutinise plans and preparedness for whole-system civil emergencies across the UK. These panels will be chaired by a figure from outside government who will be selected for their expertise and experience in the risk under consideration. They will scrutinise our planning via document reviews and interviews with key officials. They will offer recommendations on improvements that can be made to the Cabinet Office as well as the Lead Government Department for the specific risk they are considering.

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[13] Red teaming is defined as: the independent application of a range of structured, creative and critical thinking techniques to assist the end user make a better-informed decision or produce a more robust product - Joint Doctrine Publication (JDP) 0-01.1, UK Terminology Supplement to NATOTerm

[14] The multi-agency work across planning, preparation, response and recovery at the local level will continue to be the building block of the UK's resilience. All risks and emergencies and their impacts are local; only some are regional or national. The 38 Local Resilience Forums (LRFs) in England, the four LRFs in Wales, three Regional Resilience Partnerships (RRPs) in Scotland and Emergency Preparedness Groups (EPGs) in Northern Ireland play a critical role in bringing local responders, such as the emergency services, together to plan and prepare for emergencies.

These panels will work in a systemic and programmed way across the most significant risks in the classified NSRA. This approach will supplement other existing routes for independent advice and external scrutiny, including the National Audit Office (NAO), the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) and NSRA expert panels. The work will be done in consultation with the devolved Governments to reflect the fact that the impacts of these risks are felt across the UK.

Developing a comprehensive assessment of the UK's resilience

Measuring resilience

38. There is currently no common methodology for measuring overall national resilience. Having a benchmark from which to assess whether the UK is ready to absorb and adapt to threats and risks would allow us to measure the effectiveness of our Resilience Action Plan and make informed decisions on the trade-offs between investing and intervening in different risk areas.

39. Consequently, the UK government will develop:

    a. **a consolidated, data-driven picture of our resilience baseline.** The measure will be UK wide and consider a variety of individual, household, local and national resilience indicators (for example, training and exercising, community capacity and capabilities or organisational resilience). It will also address some of the challenges raised by the COVID-19 Module 1 Inquiry report[15]. It will be developed in collaboration with the UK Resilience Academy, who will convene relevant experts from across society to inform it.

    b. **a new Cyber Resilience Index (CRI)** to target the specific concern of Critical National Infrastructure (CNI) being vulnerable to cyber attack, which creates significant risk of disruption to services, loss of sensitive data and cost to the economy. The CRI will build on existing measures of cyber resilience to provide a cross-sector, holistic overview of cyber resilience for UK CNI to target resilience building efforts. It will also tackle the fact that the cyber resilience of our CNI is not keeping pace with the evolving threat. To address this the UK government has announced the upcoming Cyber Security and Resilience Bill which will ensure that critical infrastructure and the digital services that UK citizens and businesses rely on are secure.

[15] In particular, recommendations 2 and 3 of Module 1 of the COVID-19 Inquiry, which called for improved whole systems leadership and a better approach to risk assessment respectively, A measure of resilience will support a more holistic understanding across the system, supporting leadership and risk assessment.

International approaches to measuring resilience

Internationally, there are few examples of overarching resilience measures. Some countries measure specific components of resilience, such as the USA, which uses the National Health Security Preparedness Index, measuring resilience to risks against health and well-being and the Sendai Framework - a UN initiative, which the UK is signed up to. It provides a framework for action to reduce the risk of disasters and their impacts on society.

However, there is some successful precedent. A country-level resilience matrix, informed by expert judgement, has been developed by RAND for the Dutch resilience context. It enables a holistic assessment of a system's resilience by assessing phases of the resilience cycle. Relevant experts assess the phases of 'preparing', 'absorbing', 'recovery' and 'adaptation', against 'physical', 'information', 'cognitive' and 'social' risks, to reach a judgement of resilience. RAND's threat-agnostic design can be adapted for use across different contexts, risks and countries. Through expert judgement, specific gaps and actions can be identified across the resilience landscape even within differing contexts. To address resilience, a data-driven, replicable, and holistic measure such as this is a valuable and accessible method to support evidence-based government decision making.

In addition, the State Resilience Index, a global measure of resilience, was developed by the Fund for Peace. This aims to provide a comparable evidence-based measure of resilience capacities and capabilities between nations.

Case Study: cyber resilience threat picture

The cyber threat in the UK is increasing, with cyber actors' capabilities becoming increasingly wide-ranging and sophisticated. Last year the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) reported that they received almost 2,000 reports of cyber attacks – including UK government and private sector – of which 90 were deemed significant, and 12 at the top end of severity. This is three times as many as the previous year (2023). The cyber resilience of our Critical National Infrastructure (CNI) is not keeping pace with this evolving threat, and is becoming an increasing target of cyber incidents as a result. As the UK's CNI becomes increasingly interconnected, the potential impacts of these vulnerabilities also continue to grow.

There are significant implications for the whole of society. The NRR contains over 60 risks that directly relate to CNI, including on CNI cyber and supply chains. The risks to the economy, and UK citizens in particular, are considerable given the cost of cyber crime to UK businesses and the potential reputational damage to the UK as an investment destination should our cyber resilience levels be considered too low.

For example, recent cyber attacks on British businesses demonstrated the disruptive impact they can have on UK CNI sectors and UK CNI's vulnerability to future attacks. This emphasises the necessity of cybersecurity and the importance of the new Cyber Resilience Index.

Picture: Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster visiting Cleveland Fire Brigade HQ, Cabinet Office.

Objective 2: Enable the whole of society to take action to increase their resilience

40. The world we live in is interconnected. Our lives are increasingly dependent on technology; a globally connected economy and services and infrastructure that are intertwined between public and private sectors. This offers us huge benefits - but it also means that when something goes wrong there may be far reaching disruption to our daily lives and the solutions can be complex.

41. The first responsibility of any government is the safety of its citizens, and the UK government is taking extensive action to build resilience to the risks we face - that is the purpose of this Resilience Action Plan. However, whilst action by the UK government and public sector responders in a crisis will always be essential, the most impactful mitigations might be the actions others take for themselves. The steps that individuals, businesses and civil society can take in an emergency might be lifesaving and, collectively, their ability to do so is critical to our overall national resilience.

42. Delivering enhanced resilience across society will require a profound cultural and behavioural shift and needs to be informed by robust social and behavioural science evidence. We will need to go further and ask all parts of society to play an active role to strengthen our resilience. To do this, we need to be clear what the UK government is asking of different groups and how it will enable them to respond. We will:

    a. **ask and support the public to take action**, if they are able to do so, to prepare for emergencies as set out on the GOV.UK/Prepare website. This will allow urgent support to be directed towards those who need it most

    b. **better integrate the offer services offer from voluntary, community and faith services** to planning and response

    c. **improve the resilience of Critical National Infrastructure** through targeted interventions based on comprehensive data

    d. **provide the right tools to work with the private sector** on risk and resilience planning

    e. **bring together organisations** from across the whole-of-society to enhance our approach to training, exercising and governance

Summary of actions to support vulnerable people: Objective 2

As evidenced during the COVID-19 pandemic, voluntary, community and faith sector (VCFS) groups can play a key role in communicating key resilience messages to diverse and potentially left-out communities The UK government will work with VCFS groups to ask members of the public, with particular consideration of these communities, to take steps to prepare for emergencies, where they can. The Prepare website will be expanded to include specific guidance aimed at supporting the needs of individuals most at risk of being disproportionately impacted, co-produced with the VCFS where possible.

The UK government will better embed the VCFS in planning and crisis response. This will increase awareness and engagement with organisations who provide services for those likely to be disproportionately impacted. Work will include a data collaboration between VCFS leaders and the National Situation Centre; and a consultation launched alongside this action plan to consider ways to strengthen partnership working between emergency responders and voluntary, community, and faith-based organisations.

The UK government will use the National Exercising Programme to test how well vulnerable people are being planned for and supported in an emergency.

Asking and supporting the public to take action

43. As set out in the National Security Strategy, driving a conversation on risk and preparedness with the public is vitally important. The UK government will build on work across the whole of the UK to increase transparency with the general public on the risks that we face, through GOV.UK/Prepare, Ready Scotland, Foreign Travel Advice and the deployment of Emergency Alerts in the UK.

44. Building a truly resilient society requires a fundamental, cultural shift in the way emergency preparedness is thought about. To support us to do this we must do more to provide households with preparedness information.

45. The UK government will do this through:

    a. **communicating the actions recommended for individuals, households, communities and businesses to increase their own preparedness and resilience, as set out on** GOV.UK/Prepare**.** This is especially important in scenarios such as widespread power and water outages where the authorities may not be able to reach everyone who needs support in the first few hours or days. This will draw from international examples, including other nations in Europe[16]. We will encourage those who have the capability to take action to improve their own resilience and support those within their communities who are less able to do so. A consistent, joined up, approach between national, local and voluntary sector partners and the private sector will be vital to ensuring messages are perceived by the public as credible and reach all segments of society.

[16] EU preparedness union strategy

b. publishing the results of the first **annual public survey of risk perception, resilience and preparedness** which collected data earlier this year to evaluate the impact of public communications, allowing future messaging to be amended accordingly.

c. **continuing to regularly update** GOV.UK/Prepare **based on the best available evidence**. We will refresh our advice as needed, learning lessons from real incidents both in the UK and across the world, whilst exploring options for improving the content in terms of accessibility and personalisation. We will also develop specific advice aimed at supporting the needs of individuals most at risk of being disproportionately impacted, co-produced where possible.

International approaches to public communications

The need to drive a public conversation on risk and preparedness is not unique to the UK. Some countries, such as Japan, take the approach of continual education on potential dangers through reminders, public service announcements, and within formal education. Due to the high risk of natural hazards, schools frequently educate on the best practices during a crisis, including the safest places to go, and how best to reduce risk in the home. This is often reinforced in the media, to enable a general understanding of how best to respond to natural hazards across society.

Whereas others, such as Sweden's 'Total Defence' programme expect a mass mobilisation in times of crisis, placing a more active role on the population to address the crisis itself. This whole of society approach is aimed to increase resilience through preparation at the employee, employer, and public office level

Emergency Alerts

46. The Emergency Alerts system is one of many public warning and informing capabilities that the UK government, devolved governments and Category 1 responders have at their disposal. It is an integral part of keeping the public safe as it allows for quick sharing of life-saving information.

47. Since the launch of Emergency Alerts in 2023, the system has been activated five times, in conjunction with other local warning methods, during emergencies to minimise risk to life. For example, Emergency Alerts were issued to assist with evacuations during acute flooding on the River Soar (Jan 2025) and Rivers Roe and Ive (May 2024). The system has been used successfully across all Four Nations and alerts are sent in consultation with local responders, relevant devolved governments, UK government departments and / or agencies.

48. Through regular testing of the Emergency Alerts system, which is done monthly via non-public operator tests, we ensure that when crises arise, the response is swift and effective. **The second public national test of the Emergency Alerts system will take place on 7 September.** As with the first test in April 2023, this test message will be sent to every compatible phone nationwide.

Better integrating the offer from voluntary, community and faith services

49. Civil society plays an important role in the UK's resilience. National and local governments work with many formal VCFS organisations that contribute to national and community-level resilience and emergency planning activity. In an emergency, informal and self-organised community response groups understand and quickly work to support their communities.

50. The sector is able to quickly mobilise volunteers, provide capacity, essential services, and offer emotional and practical support to people and communities affected by emergencies. Their deep understanding of local needs, ability to build trust within communities, and specialist capabilities make them an essential partner in emergency planning, response and recovery.

51. Across national and local government, there is already a recognition of the value and expertise that the sector brings. However, the COVID-19 and Grenfell Tower Inquiries showed there is more we can do to work effectively with these organisations and their volunteers, improving our understanding of their abilities to both maximise their contribution.

52. Voluntary, community and faith organisations face their own financial pressures and challenges. The UK government's aim is to make better use of the work already undertaken by this sector, rather than add further demands. We will support civil society to engage with the resilience effort through improved collaboration and partnership, better integrating the perspectives of civil society organisations in national and local resilience policy and planning.

53. We are already taking action to understand the emergency preparedness and response services they offer, ensuring the UK government has the right information available to support engagement with the sector. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) provides investment and support to the Voluntary and Communities Sector Emergencies Partnership through an existing grant for 2025/26. This includes training, networking and sharing insights for organisations to play their role in resilience.

54. In early 2025, MHCLG launched the Community Cohesion & Resilience Programme (CCRP). This programme provides funding to VCFS organisations in local areas to deliver projects that build community relationships and work to prevent and combat harmful narratives.

55. Furthermore, MHCLG in conjunction with the Local Government Association, has commissioned the Belong Network[17] to produce detailed, comprehensive guidance for all local authorities to develop long-term, effective cohesion strategies, including highlighting current best practice examples and specific approaches to tensions monitoring. This includes also running two pilots in Bradford and Leicester, supporting them to develop their own cohesion strategies.

[17] Belong: The Cohesion and Integration Network

56. To further enhance our work with the VCFS sectors, the UK government will:

    a. **develop guidance** for UK government departments to work better with the VCFS. This guidance will set expectations for how departments should work with relevant VCFS partners to prepare, respond and recover from national emergencies

    b. **involve VCFS in the National Exercising Programme, and wider UK government exercises,** to explore the impact of emergencies on vulnerable people and test capabilities to respond to those impacts

    c. **consult on whether to strengthen the legal requirement for emergency responders to engage with VCFS in their communities and identify how best to embed the valuable role the VCFS can play in resilience.** This will consider whether additional legislation would improve partnership working between emergency responders and VCFS. It will also identify and promote good practice for working together to help communities to prepare, respond and recover from emergencies. This consultation has been published alongside this action plan

    d. **collaborate with VCFS organisations to explore how their data can be integrated into the Risk Vulnerability Tool.** This will enhance UK government's understanding of societal vulnerabilities. It will provide decision makers to build a better understanding of the availability of local voluntary capabilities and how they link to vulnerabilities. This will lead to improved outcomes in a crisis as these capabilities will be more readily deployed to those who need enhanced support

Improving the resilience of Critical National Infrastructure

57. The resilience of the UK's CNI is of central importance to ensuring that the essential services the public rely on continue to operate. Given the fundamental and connected nature of these services, failure has the potential to cause cascading and catastrophic consequences. This could be, for example, power outages impacting other essential functions, like transport or water provision, or a failure in the telecoms or data infrastructure sectors impacting the energy sector - across all four nations.

58. Incidents such as the North Hyde Substation fire, which resulted in the closure of Heathrow airport in March 2025, demonstrate the fundamental importance of resilience across our CNI. The National Energy System Operator's report into the incident highlighted lessons for UK government policy on resilience, in the energy sector and other CNI sectors, which align with the steps set out in the Resilience Action Plan.

59. To address this the UK government will:

    a. **deliver the development of CNI Knowledge Base, the UK government's world-leading tool which creates an interactive map of all CNI in the UK.** In particular, this helps the UK government understand vulnerabilities *between* the 13 CNI sectors[18], not just

[18] National Protective Security Authority: Critical National Infrastructure. The UK government definition of Critical National Infrastructure is also used across all four nations.

within them - for example, if a key piece of infrastructure like a data centre or transport hub is dependent on a single power source. This information will enable LGDs, supported by National Technical Authorities (NTAs), and a dedicated central team in the Cabinet Office, to identify areas of UK CNI vulnerability and interdependency and target interventions to address the risks.

b. **map and fully use the complex network of reserved and devolved standards for CNI sectors,** which are fundamental in holding industry to account and assuring the resilience of UK CNI. This will allow the UK government to target the issues exposed by the Knowledge Base tool by ensuring regulations for different sectors are being fully utilised to address issues that sit within and between sectors. As well as making sure that CNI sectors are meeting existing requirements, the UK government will use this mapping to identify and address any gaps in standards across the CNI landscape.

c. **raise resilience by using UK government resources, including the expertise of our NTAs,** who provide world-leading advice on security and resilience best practice directly to businesses. This will help businesses strengthen their resilience to all threats and hazards. We will also engage with key parts of industry, including through targeted cross-sector roundtables to better understand the challenges in building resilience across critical systems and to support industry to proactively address this.

Case Study: example of investment in resilient infrastructure

The UK government is also investing in quality infrastructure. This includes the Department for Science, Industry and Technology's £370m commitment to better secure the UK's telecommunications networks through research and investment in new technology and infrastructure, including the UK Telecoms Lab (UKTL). The UKTL is a government-funded security lab focused on supporting operators and vendors to improve the security of telecommunications technologies deployed in the UK. Telecoms is part of our CNI and underpins many, if not all, economic sectors. The UKTL works in close cooperation with the Department for Science Innovation and Technology (DSIT), NCSC and Ofcom to enhance the ability of both government and industry to understand, manage and respond to security risks and issues with these technologies, thus making the UK a harder target. The testing conducted by the lab is done in close collaboration with Mobile Network Operators and the NCSC and findings, where appropriate, are responsibly disclosed to equipment providers to enable improvement in accordance with established UK government policy. The UKTL work programme is based on NCSC security analysis and ensures the highest risk areas of telecoms networks are tested. In addition to the direct research and testing of technologies the lab is collaborating with DSIT to build a pipeline of skilled telecoms cyber security professionals and to help shape international standards so that security considerations remain central to the development of advanced connectivity technologies.

Providing the right tools to the private sector on resilience

60. Beyond the specific CNI sectors, the private sector has access to a wide range of levers which support their own resilience and that of the public overall. A lack of resilience in a business or its supply chain can lead to huge disruption and impacts to both a business's finances and its reputation, with knock on impacts for the citizen. It is important that resilience is considered a strategic matter for management boards, supported by their risk professionals and business continuity leads.

61. The UK government believes resilience is a topic that Boards should be discussing frequently and working to embed within their organisations. Whilst aimed at commercial organisations, these tools will also be useful for non-profit and VCFS organisations. To support businesses to do this we will provide the following tools:

    a. **publishing information on impacts alongside the publicly available NRR,** and engaging businesses and business networks on the need for **further guidance,** including for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

    b. **expanding the UK government's Prepare website to include a dedicated section for businesses,** with relevant guidance and resources, including signposting to updates of organisational resilience standards

    c. **increasing training opportunities for private sector employees through the UKRA.** This will be supported by raising the quality of training standards for resilience professionals in any sector

    d. **raising awareness within industry of risks affecting the resilience of key sectors** and how these risks are changing, such as the transport hazard summaries launched by the Department for Transport and Met Office in May 2025. The summaries are helping UK transport infrastructure operators plan for future threats and hazards, supporting their risk identification and assessment progress, to target resilience interventions in an evidence based way[19]

62. Alongside these measures to support the private sector in appraising their risk and building resilience, the UK government needs to have tools to understand and engage in matters of national resilience owned in the private sector. We will do this by:

    a. **establishing a new Supply Chain Centre,** as announced in the Industrial Strategy,[20] which will work with businesses and our international allies to diagnose acute vulnerabilities and threats, develop policy and targeted interventions to improve our ability to withstand future disruptions and bolster the UK's overall resilience

[19] Transport Hazard Summaries
[20] The UK's Modern Industrial Strategy

b. **launching the Economic Security Advisory Service,** as announced in the Trade Strategy,[21] which will streamline the UK government's approach to partnering with industry on economic security issues. The Service will offer advice, guidance, and support to business to protect UK capabilities and competitiveness against economic security risks and threats

c. **publishing a Critical Minerals Strategy** which will set out the UK's long-term ambition for securing critical minerals and diversifying their supply chains. The strategy will set out how the UK government will achieve this by optimising the UK's approach to domestic production, and better harnessing partnerships with key international partners

d. **bringing the most critical third party suppliers to the financial sector under the oversight of the financial regulators**. Third parties often provide financial institutions with specialist services such as cloud computing, data storage and IT infrastructure that they may not have in-house. An increasing dependence on a small number of third party suppliers carries the risk that failure or disruption could have system-wide impacts

Legislation

63. Private businesses are broadly free, regulation permitting, to act in their own commercial interests. This is essential for growth, and supports societal resilience. However, it carries the risk that in some circumstances companies may behave in ways consistent with the interests of their stakeholders and balance sheets, but without recognition of the fact that the UK's CNI sectors, as well as wider essential services, and the public at large are wholly dependent on their operations. This risk is often amplified by wider factors such as global supply chain issues, as seen in the aftermath of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, or the absence of alternative products or services.

64. At present heavily-regulated sectors have some legislation (e.g., the Energy Act 1976[22]) available which allows for a degree of intervention in some sector operations to preserve national security and mitigate the impacts of an emergency. More widely, the UK government currently has few legislative means through which to deliver rapid, non-consensual interventions in the case of company behaviour which may give rise to an emergency.

65. The Cabinet Office will consider, as part of the Civil Contingencies Act Review - see paragraph 90, whether additional options for intervention in cases of emergency (as defined in the Act), set out in legislation, might be a beneficial extension of the Act.

[21] UK Trade Strategy
[22] UK legislation: Energy Act (1976)

Case Study: protecting the whole of society from cyber threat

Criminals are more brazen, interconnected and technology-enabled than ever before. With 50% of crime taking place online, we need to build a system that is fit for the future threat.

The UK government will take a new proactive approach, where action is taken before online crime reaches members of the public, to break the criminal business model and make the UK a less attractive target to criminals. This will be underpinned by effective data and intelligence sharing, and technology.

The UK government is also working to more effectively counter specific cyber threats directly. For example, the Home Office is progressing a package of world-leading counter ransomware legislation to address our most significant cyber threat. These measures are the first of their kind and seek to harden the UK as a target. They will protect economic growth through greater reporting and oversight of the ransomware incident and payment landscapes, and reduce the attractiveness of our most critical services. The three measures that will be consulted on are:

- a targeted ban on ransomware payments for regulated-CNI and the public sector
- a ransomware payment prevention regime
- a mandatory incident reporting regime.

Training, exercising and governance to bring together organisations across society

66. As well as focussing on the individual sectors that build our resilience, it is essential that they are able to work together in preparing for, responding to and recovering from crises. Through training, exercising and appropriate governance, the UK government will drive whole of society collaboration on resilience.

UK Resilience Academy

67. The UK Resilience Academy (UKRA) was launched in April 2025 to improve the resilience learning offer and build the skills needed across the whole of society. It will provide enhanced learning opportunities available to everyone in the UK. It will reach multiple sectors including central and devolved government; local government, LRFs, NHS, and emergency responders; VCFS organisations; private sector organisations (including CNI); Higher Education Institutions (HEIs); and wider society including individuals, households and communities.

68. In its first year it will equip over 4,000 individuals with the resources, skills, knowledge and behaviours required to contribute to national and local resilience, increasing its capability and capacity annually. Courses include resilience leadership and learning programmes to support the integration of resilience practices into organisational culture.

69. The UKRA also acts as a convener across partnerships and networks. It brings together organisations from across the UK with common interests in resilience learning, education and communities of practice. These new partnerships amplify best practice by sharing expertise, resources and information that help to continuously improve the development of skills that enable resilience across society.

National Exercising Programme (NEP)

70. Exercises are a simulation of a crisis designed to test the UK government's, and other relevant groups', capability to manage incidents and emergencies. They seek to ensure that training and plans work when applied and provide an opportunity to learn lessons. The UK government regularly exercises all of its plans via various types of exercises, ranging from 'tabletop' exercises where participants walk through and discuss a scenario, through to full simulations of a crisis tested at a national scale. Exercises test people in their roles to develop confidence and skills in delivering response plans and arrangements.

71. The UK government has committed to a new National Exercising Programme that will deliver annual national exercises, on a wide range of risks, involving actors from across society to test our real world resilience. The national exercise for 2025 will be a pandemic preparedness exercise. It will be the first of its kind in nearly a decade and is set to be the biggest in UK history. It will aim to test our ability to respond to a pandemic arising from a novel infectious disease, involving all regions and nations of the UK and thousands of participants. It will bring together the Cabinet and every UK government department.

72. To enable individuals, the private sector and the VCFS to increase resilience, we will involve them in every phase of exercising. This includes ensuring that they are included throughout the planning of exercises to ensure their needs are considered when setting the objectives.

73. Exercises are only valuable if they help individuals and organisations deliver on the lessons we learn from them. We have published best practice guidance on exercising and on managing lessons, and the publicly available Lessons Digest synthesises and shares lessons learned from exercises and emergency responses.

Greater engagement, governance and transparency on resilience

74. Making the UK more resilient relies on the actions of many groups both inside and outside of government. Bringing these groups together through governance structures is an important part of our whole of society approach. Establishing trust, understanding and relationships ahead of time supports our response when a crisis hits. To do this we will:

    a. **establish a strategic resilience forum** to bring together the UK government, devolved governments, the local tier, the VCFS and businesses to build relationships and work together to strengthen the UK's resilience. This forum will have access to a range of external advice, including via the UK Resilience Academy that can inform the broadest approach to resilience and support all areas of society. It will focus on the implementation of this action plan's three objectives.

b. **deliver more effective collaboration across the four nations** given that emergencies do not respect geographical boundaries. Regular official level engagement on risk and resilience will be further supported by the establishment of a Four National Ministerial group, which will convene twice yearly to discuss and align resilience matters across the UK.

c. **continue to make an annual statement to Parliament on risk and resilience** to engage Parliamentarians in the overview of the current risk picture; performance on resilience and current state of preparedness and what the UK government will do to respond. The publication of this action plan alongside the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster's statement to the House serves as the UK government's annual statement to Parliament. The devolved governments will update their legislatures in due course.

Picture: CM Darcy with Vesper, MFRS

Objective 3: Strengthening the public sector resilience system

75. There are thousands of individuals and organisations that make up the public sector resilience system. They work on the frontline of resilience and crisis management across the UK. Local responders are often the first on the scene when crises occur and are the cornerstone of the UK's approach to resilience.

76. The UK's model for responding to risks ensures that the responsibility and oversight sits with those that have the greatest understanding, networks and capabilities to identify, respond, recover from and address risks. This is the principle of subsidiarity, where decisions are taken at the lowest appropriate level with coordination at the highest necessary level.

77. To get maximum benefit from these dispersed organisations with a huge range of experience, they need to work effectively as a system. Each part of the system needs to understand its accountabilities, the expectations of it and how to connect between local, regional and national levels in an escalating crisis. This requires clear and up-to-date guidance.

78. The digital systems that the UK government has, such as ResilienceDirect[23], enables the system to work better and more effectively together. Further improving these digital tools and data-sharing will further increase our resilience. The deployment of science and technology support at the local level can further improve the quality of what this system is producing.

79. To get the best out of the public sector resilience system the UK government will:

    a. **improve clarity of roles and responsibilities in the public sector resilience system** through enhanced guidance and legislation across all stages of the risk life cycle

    b. **better connect the public sector resilience system** by upgrading digital tools and more effectively sharing up-to-date, timely data with partners, supporting them to take better decisions

    c. **improve the quality of work in the public sector resilience system**, including via Stronger LRF Trailblazers; training opportunities; and scientific and technological advice mechanisms and capabilities

[23] ResilienceDirect: The UK's secure web platform for exercising, planning, response and recovery

Summary of actions to support vulnerable people: Objective 3

Increasing access to data sharing tools such as the Risk Vulnerability Tool, RaIN, ResilienceDirect and the National Situation centre will enable policy makers and responders to better identify and support vulnerable and at-risk communities.

The UK government's Amber Book (Central Government's Concept of Operations for Emergency Response and Recovery) sets out the importance of humanitarian considerations in national emergency responses. The UK government has also published updated guidance on identifying and supporting groups who may be disproportionately impacted during an emergency.

The UK government will publish expectations for Lead Government Departments, by providing clear roles and responsibilities with a greater emphasis on social vulnerabilities, we can ensure their needs are at the forefront of planning.

Clarity of roles and responsibilities in the public sector resilience system

80. In preparing for crises, it is essential that all parts of the public sector resilience system understand their roles and responsibilities, and that there is a culture of accountability and transparency. Guidance, standards and legislation play a crucial role in driving accountability and building capability within the system.

81. The UK government's approach to resilience is built on the principle of subsidiarity. All emergencies happen in a place and most preparedness activities and incident responses are handled within the capabilities of local agencies and responders, without central government involvement.

The Lead Government Department Model

82. The UK government operates a Lead Government Department (LGD) model, for risks within the NSRA, whereby risks are primarily owned and managed by LGDs. LGDs work closely with a range of other departments and regulators to make sure risks are well understood, managed and prepared for across the risk life cycle. This model is the best way to ensure that the responsibility and oversight sits with the organisation that has the greatest understanding, relationships and mechanisms for delivery to identify and address risks. Secretaries of State and Accounting Officers are accountable - including to Parliament - for their department's actions and performance.

83. To date the UK government has:

    a. re-established a single ministerial committee, chaired by the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, **the National Security Council sub-committee on Resilience (NSC(R)). The NSC(R) is capable of making collective decisions across government on our** strategic choices to build medium and long-term resilience and preparedness against the range of risks, informed by regular assessment and horizon scanning

b. **updated the Amber Book**[24], which provides a framework for how UK central government collectively responds to crises which require co-ordinated action across UK government. This updated framework establishes clear roles and responsibilities, as well as defining arrangements and corresponding activities required to manage a crisis across its lifecycle. It acts as a foundational document for crisis management in government, informing risk-specific planning and is the basis for training staff. The Amber Book has also codified the leadership role the Cabinet Office plays for responding to whole-of-system emergencies. For this category of risks, the Cabinet Office supports the planning phase with the LGD which owns the risk

84. **To go further, the Government will:**

a. **publish Lead Government Department Expectations**, setting out the role of Cabinet Office and other UK government departments in planning, preparing, responding to and recovering for emergencies including whole-system risks. It will set clear roles, responsibilities and articulate what 'good' looks like. A greater emphasis will also be placed on ensuring the needs of vulnerable people are at the forefront of planning. LGDs will be required to explain how they are managing risks and meeting their responsibilities in their Annual Report and Accounts

Central leadership for whole-of-system crises

85. The COVID-19 pandemic has taught us that some events can have catastrophic and cascading consequences which impact all elements of UK government, wider society and daily life. These events are known as whole-of-system crises. By their nature, such events require a truly collective response, bringing together expertise and capabilities across the whole of society.

86. For whole-of-system crises, such as national power outages or pandemics, the Cabinet Office will facilitate the rapid coordination of response activities and effective decision-making, working closely with the LGD.

[24] The Amber Book: Managing crisis in central government

Case Study: Cabinet Office leadership in a National Power Outage

The Cabinet Office is working jointly with UK government departments to assess and plan for catastrophic risks - this includes the risk of a National Power Outage (NPO). The scale and complexity of such events can have catastrophic and cascading consequences which require clear leadership from the centre.

In the case of a National Power Outage (NPO), the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) as the LGD for this risk would be focused on working with the National Energy System Operator (NESO) to ensure that power restoration is achieved as quickly as possible. All government departments would be focused on responding to the impacts to their individual sectors, e.g. the health service or the education sector.

The Cabinet Office would provide oversight of the overall response by bringing all of these efforts together, amplifying their impacts, and coordinating a collective response. In practice this would be through providing:

- **Coordination** - Cabinet Office would ensure that individual departments were able to coordinate the provision of available resources in an effective and timely manner.
- **Decision Making** - Cabinet Office would provide the structures necessary to facilitate decision making by Ministers and Senior Officials, which would be crucial for effectively responding to and recovering from the incident.
- **Situational Awareness** - Cabinet Office would provide Ministers, and Senior Officials with regular updates on the evolving situation across all sectors. This intelligence would then inform their decision making.
- **Public Communications** - Cabinet Office would immediately activate the Emergency Alerts service to inform the public that an NPO has likely occurred and that they should tune into Radio 2 and Radio 4 for further information. Then, in conjunction with the BBC and DHSC, the Cabinet Office would ensure that regular public information messages were released to provide advice on how people can remain safe and well during the incident.

Readiness for whole-of-system crises and catastrophic risks

87. We have already taken steps to enhance our readiness for the highest impact whole-of-system crises, called catastrophic risks, through:

    a. **explicitly embedding the leadership role of the Cabinet Office** within our central crisis management doctrine, the Amber Book, as well as our risk-specific planning. The Cabinet Office will also support preparedness in conjunction with each LGD, acknowledging their ability to leverage relationships with their sectors, alongside having vital policy expertise, capabilities, and resources

    b. **stronger governance to drive forward progress on risk planning.** The Cabinet Office co-chairs a number of catastrophic risk boards with LGDs, which have been strengthened through increased meeting regularity and undertaking more in-depth reviews of individual sector plans. Issues are then escalated for collective decision through the NSC(R)

c. **clearly setting out indicative thresholds for when the Cabinet Office will lead the response in catastrophic emergencies in planning documents.** These are scalable and adaptable, clarify roles and responsibilities (of UK government departments, agencies and devolved governments), and set out triggers and thresholds for moving to a central response structure. These risk-specific planning documents will be iterated, enabling greater agility in the face of the changing risk landscape.

d. **ensuring a true whole-of-government response by mapping key cascading impacts of catastrophic risks.** This work will support all UK government departments in their planning and response and will ensure a more developed approach to risk planning. Crucially this includes identifying gaps where further work is required (i.e., new capabilities), which can be escalated and addressed through refreshed governance structures.

88. A new **Home Defence Programme** will, in line with our partners and allies, be the means through which the UK Government, led by the Cabinet Office, ensures coordination across departments and agencies in the event of major conflict impacting the UK. It will ensure joined up and collective preparedness for a whole of society endeavour. This will include communicating, empowering and engaging with all tiers of resilience actors to ensure that all sectors are prepared for and able to respond to the most catastrophic of risks. Improving our collective preparedness for these threats will also contribute to a more resilient society across the wider spectrum of risks and support the UK's NATO First Approach and NATO resilience commitments at the NATO Vilnius, Washington and Hague Summits.

Case Study: UK Biological Security Strategy

Biosecurity risks are amongst the most significant national security risks facing the UK. They are becoming more likely, diverse and intersecting in new ways. The UK Biological Security Strategy sets out the vision, mission and plans to respond to these risks, and the publication of the first implementation report this year - alongside this action plan - affirms that pandemic preparedness and other biosecurity risks remain a top priority for the government. For example, we have:

- Strengthened our approach to pandemic preparedness and will publish a new **pandemic preparedness strategy in the next 12 months.**
- Created an integrated, cross-government **Biothreats Radar** to strengthen early warning and coordinate monitoring and responses to emerging biothreats, bringing together data and analysis on threats to human, animal and plant health.
- Delivered a series of UK wide **exercises** to test our preparedness against a range of biological threats, and will be carrying out a Tier 1 national pandemic exercise later this year.
- Established the UK Microbial Forensics Consortium - providing a new layer to the alert system for the UK to identify the misuse of biological materials irrespective of the sector targeted.
- Published the UK's revised 5-year National Action Plan to progress towards the 20-year vision that **Antimicrobial Resistance** is contained, controlled and mitigated.
- Committed up to £520m for the Life Sciences Innovative Manufacturing Fund to back companies who invest in **life sciences manufacturing projects** to build UK resilience for future health emergencies, by providing access to diagnostic, therapeutics and vaccines products.
- Committed to establish a network of National Biosecurity Centres with investment of over £1bn to bolster the UK's defences against biological incidents, attacks and accidents. This includes facilities at the Animal and Plant Health Agency site at Weybridge, the UK Health Security Agency and the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory, providing capabilities that are essential for identifying, characterising, and carrying out surveillance of the pathogens that cause animal, plant, and human disease outbreaks.

The risk landscape continues to shift and the threats we face have continued to evolve and grow in complexity, driven by a range of global factors, including the rapid development of advanced technologies such as AI-enabled scientific tools. The activities we have undertaken since publication of the BSS have therefore been influenced by our understanding of the changing risk picture. To get ahead of future threats, we will continue to evolve our capabilities and innovate to understand, prevent, detect and respond effectively.

Improved local guidance and standards

89. It is essential that central government - the UK government and devolved governments - is able to work seamlessly with local partners to identify and manage issues between them. The UK government has been working to help local partners prepare in a more efficient and consistent way, based on minimum standards and good practice, supported by training and upskilling. This work includes:

    a. **publishing updated guidance on identifying and supporting persons who are vulnerable in an emergency.** This provides responders with a common approach and set of principles to plan for and support groups who may be vulnerable in an emergency.

    b. **launching the UKRA and publishing the National Occupational Standards for resilience and emergencies**[25]. The UKRA will provide a training curriculum based on the new occupational standards and will set the expectation for the quality and frequency of training in the National Resilience Standards for LRFs.

90. The UK government can and will continue to go further in this area by:

    a. **reviewing of the Civil Contingencies Act (CCA) and its supporting regulations**, liaising with the devolved governments, culminating in the publication of a Post Implementation Review by 2027. This will take forward our commitments against the Grenfell Tower Inquiry[26]. It will ensure the CCA aligns with and makes the most of wider work on English Devolution and the role of strategic authorities and mayors, and local government transformation. It will also consider whether further changes, such as a requirement for annual reporting, can support greater accountability, or whether to include demographics in Community Risk Registers to help focus on vulnerable people.

    b. **updating National Resilience Standards for LRFs in England**[27] to provide consistency and standardisation across LRFs, whilst also accounting for different demographics, geographies and risk profiles in local areas. This will fulfil the Grenfell Tower Inquiry recommendations 47 and 48[28].

    c. **undertaking a wider review of guidance, working with local partners, to ensure that it is fit for purpose** and presented in the best possible way.

    d. **identifying opportunities to improve the training support** available to Local Authorities, focussing on developing content for resilience and emergencies professionals, senior leaders, all local government staff and elected members. This will include a process to report on the quality of training they undertake.

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[25] The Workforce Development Trust: National Occupational Standards for Resilience and Emergencies.
[26] i) review statutory interventions powers, in consultation with other UK government departments to ensure Secretaries of state are able to intervene in a local response when necessary and ii) carefully consider and consult on placing a statutory duty on Category 1 emergency responders to build and maintain relationships and engage with the Voluntary Community and Faith sectors (VCFS), or to build and improve on those relationships through other means.
[27] The multi-agency work across planning, preparation, response and recovery at the local level will continue to be the building block of the UK's resilience. All risks and emergencies and their impacts are local; only some are regional or national. The 38 Local Resilience Forums (LRFs) in England, the four LRFs in Wales, three Regional Resilience Partnerships (RRPs) in Scotland and Emergency Preparedness Groups (EPGs) in Northern Ireland play a critical role in bringing local responders, such as the emergency services, together to plan and prepare for emergencies.
[28] Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 2 Report: Government response

Better connecting the public sector resilience system

91. Data plays a critical role in all stages of the risk life cycle and in better connecting the public sector resilience system. The risk landscape and geopolitical context is more dynamic than ever. The data sources and the tools we are using to respond to this landscape must also be dynamic and responsive.

92. Digital tools allow a complex system of organisations to function better. An enhanced digital capability better enables access to information across organisational and local and national boundaries for improved preparedness, decision making and integration of effort, informed by shared data and expert insights on all levels. This will reduce bureaucracy, increase innovation and make the UK a more resilient place to live and work. To achieve this we will:

    a. **roll-out the Risk and Insights Navigator (RaIN) to UK government departments**. This is an digital and interactive version of the NSRA which provides up-to-date information on risk assessments as well as tools that help explore linked and compounding risks. This will support coordinated work across UK government to respond to risks in a timely manner, minimising impacts and ensuring a return to normality as quickly as possible. We will also work with local partners to explore potential opportunities for further data sharing on risk with LRFs

    b. **support ResilienceDirect**, an online platform, which enables secure multi-agency information sharing across statutory responders at both local and national tier. Providing this information maximises their ability to plan for, exercise, respond to and recover from incidents and events

    c. **review the Joint Organisational Learning (JOL)**, a multi-agency learning system which identifies and shares lessons following of multi-agency incidents, training and exercising. This should be further embedded nationally, to improve our ability to learn from and act on experiences from previous crises and exercises

    d. **establish a joint LRF-UK government group to facilitate and improve data-sharing between local partners and the UK government**. This will allow us to better join up data collection on local capability and capacity, reducing the local reporting burden. The UK government will also learn from digital systems built by local partners, including those developed to help collect and share data on vulnerable people

Improving the quality of work in the public sector resilience system

93. The actions that we have set out above will improve the coherence of and better connect the public sector resilience system. Alongside this we must augment the outputs of the system by increasing its capacity and capability. We will do this through strengthening local resilience in England, investing in public sector training and development and improving our use of science and technology.

Strengthening Local Resilience in England

94. Local partners are the cornerstone for the UK's approach to crisis management and response. Across England, LRFs are critical in delivering this action plan by ensuring coordinated, place-based risk planning, emergency response, and recovery. These forums bring together key agencies, such as emergency services, local authorities, and the voluntary sector, to build resilience in partnership with communities. It is vital that local responders have the tools, capacity, and capability to prevent, plan for, respond to and recover from the full range of risks that we face. We will also work with local leaders to clarify and enhance the role of Strategic Authorities and Mayors in local resilience, including through guidance and legislation as required, with the aim of putting a more resilient and accountable system in place.

Stronger LRF Trailblazers

95. We will empower local leaders to ensure they can protect and strengthen their communities' resilience. The UK government aims to foster local resilience leaders who understand their communities' identities and strengths and can harness them effectively, and who understand and build strong plans to counter the risks relevant to their local areas.

96. One of the key ways of the UK government supporting this is through the Stronger LRF Trailblazers. It gives local areas the opportunity to test options to enhance the leadership and accountability of LRFs - they will try things that will be beneficial for their areas, whilst also providing lessons for other local areas.

97. They will:

    a. **test** different approaches to strengthening LRF leadership, including through recruiting Chief Resilience Officers

    b. **clarify new methods to strengthen accountability** to local democratically elected leaders

    c. **consider** how resilience can be more integrated into wider local policy and planning, in tandem with wider work on English devolution and local government transformation

98. Enhanced strategic resilience leadership and stronger links to elected leaders will increase our overall resilience as responses will be better tailored to geographic areas, accounting for their different demographics and political dynamics. With a strengthened legislative and guidance framework, clear funding, stronger leadership and accountability; local areas will be able to better tailor their planning, response and recovery decisions to their specific context.

99. We have launched trailblazers in five local areas (see case study), and are committed to learning rapidly from the initial two-year period (2025/26 and 2026/27), including via an independent evaluation. This will be in addition to wider lessons captured through the English Devolution White Paper (including the work around mayoral responsibility for Police and Crime Commission and Fire and Rescue responsibilities) and local government transformation.

Case Study: Local Resilience Forum Trailblazers

The UK government is investing in 'Stronger LRF trailblazers' in Northumbria, Cumbria, Greater Manchester, Suffolk and London, initially launched in April 2025 with £2.55m of funding for 25/26. Through this, Permanent Chief Resilience Officers will oversee work to 'mainstream' thinking about resilience so it becomes a natural part of local policy making.

The 'Stronger LRF trailblazers' programme will help embed best practice in resilience whilst being tailored to the priorities and needs of local areas. Through the Trailblazers programme, initial ideas include:

- In Greater Manchester, defining the role of the combined authority in resilience so thinking about risk and resilience becomes part of everyday policy design.
- In Cumbria, testing new resilience responsibilities for the Mayor and a Chief Resilience Officer.
- In Suffolk, mapping out and planning the delivery of climate adaptation to support the local Climate Change Emergency Plan.
- In Northumbria, exploring how artificial intelligence (AI) could be used to make communities more resilient.
- In London, enhancing the role of borough resilience forums, to work with local voluntary, community, faith and business sector organisations.

Sustainable funding for LRFs

100. We are facing an increasingly complex risk picture and the local tier must be equipped with the capacity and capability to prepare for, respond to and recover from a range of challenges. This work requires continuity and the long term development of those who work with and support LRFs.

101. We have heard clearly from local partners that local resilience funding can be fragmented, short-term, and fall short of requirements. This can limit the ability of LRFs to plan strategically, retain skilled personnel, and build the long-term capabilities needed to address increasingly complex and interconnected risks.

102. The UK government has already made progress to improve this by launching LRF Capacity & Capability Funding to, for example:

    a. **employ staff and support** multi-agency preparedness, response and recovery efforts
    b. **train, exercise and carry out risk-assessments**, enabling improved local capacity and readiness

103. Whilst significant progress has been made in terms of local resilience funding, we know from speaking to local partners that sustainable funding is critical for LRFs. The UK government is committed to going further and is working to determine what future funding will look like. We will also review LRF funding models, including the partner contribution model.

104. This review will be co-designed with local partners and will be informed by the findings of the Stronger LRF Trailblazer evaluations, the integration of resilience into local governance through devolution, and the standards and expectations set through updated standards and guidance.

Upskilling individuals in the public sector resilience system

105. Training and upskilling the individuals that make up the public sector resilience system to ensure they are equipped for when crises occur. This is often delivered through a combination of formal training, knowledge sharing and exercising. The UK government regularly assesses its training offering, making sure it meets national standards, learning lessons from crises, exercises and red-teaming to understand how it can be further updated and improved.

106. The UK government will continue to:

    a. **roll out crisis leadership and national security training for Ministers** following a successful pilot, to prepare them for attending meetings on crises response and for the unique role they play in a crisis

    b. **deliver its Crisis Management Excellence Programme** which will be delivered to more than 9,000 civil servants across UK and devolved governments, including Permanent Secretaries and Directors Generals over the course of this parliament. This provides appropriate crisis management training to ensure that our response is the best it can be when crises occur

    c. **support the Joint Emergency Service Interoperability Principles (JESIP)**,[29] the underpinning approach for all multi-agency (e.g., police, fire, ambulance, etc.) response working, to further bolster coordination during crises. This will include maintaining a skilled central team, refreshing governance structures and processes, and updating guidance and training products, with an initial programme of work aimed to be delivered by 2026

Better utilising science and technology

107. The UK has a world-leading research and development base, a strong culture of innovation and access to specialist skills, capabilities and facilities from which to draw upon to enhance our national resilience. These capabilities, found within and outwith government, provide the evidence to underpin scientific advice. They also directly lead to new tools that support resilience such as new vaccines, better flood defence infrastructure or more effective cybersecurity tools. The importance of scientific and technological advice and capabilities was highlighted during our response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which made use of a wide range of existing mechanisms.

[29] JESIP: Working Together - Saving Lives

108. Science advice mechanisms currently available to the UK government include the Government Chief Scientific Adviser (GCSA) and Departmental Chief Science Advisers (CSAs) who support departments in accessing and utilising scientific evidence to improve preparedness and response capabilities. During crises, the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE) brings together diverse expertise to provide coordinated scientific advice, while Science and Technical Advisory Cells (STACs) can provide this at the local level. More broadly, the UK government routinely draws on independent advice from a wide range of Science Advisory Councils (SACs) and utilises world-leading science capabilities across public sector research establishments (PSREs) to strengthen resilience and preparedness.

109. However, there is room for us to go further to better use this wealth of knowledge and expertise. To achieve this, we will:

a. **enhance the provision of science and technical advice outside of responding to emergencies to support planning and preparedness.** The Government Office for Science (GO-Science) will provide a more comprehensive and accessible science and technical advice offer to government departments. In addition, GO-Science will provide guidance to departments on the use of science and evidence in the assessment, planning, mitigation and response to risks as part of broader guidance provided by the Cabinet Office on LGD expectations outlined above.

b. **build on improvements already made to SAGE during and since the COVID-19 pandemic through a programme of continuous improvement.** GO-Science will provide guidance to departmental Chief Scientific Advisers on their role in emergencies where SAGE is activated; review the approach to SAGE expert selection and engagement and begin implementing recommendations. To further support our planning and preparedness, GO-Science will exercise SAGE on an annual basis.

c. **continue to identify and address Social and Behavioural Science (SBS)** evidence and data gaps to improve emergency preparedness and response, including developing links with key external SBS funding and research organisations. This will be led by the Social and Behavioural Science for Emergencies (SBSE) Steering Group, a cross-government network established by GO-Science following the COVID-19 pandemic.

d. **further invest in resilient telecommunications capabilities for crisis management response**. The UK government has undertaken a strategic overhaul of its approach to resilient telecommunications, which are paramount to respond to a National Power Outage and other national security risks. This has included a recent investment in ensuring our resilient voice capability, situated across the UK to enable a means of information flow across the local and national level, is fit for purpose.

Case Study: resilience through science and technology investment

Science and technology helps us to respond to specific risks that we face.

This is demonstrated by the UK government's investment in **life sciences**. Launched on 30 October 2024 as part of the Chancellor's Autumn Budget, the up to **£520m** Life Sciences Innovative Manufacturing Fund (LSIMF) will offer capital grants to incentivise investment in Life Science manufacturing. This will build resilience to future health emergencies, such as pandemics and drive economic growth. LSIMF is now open to applications from medicines, MedTech and diagnostic manufactures across the UK. It builds on the success of previous manufacturing funds, which have already unlocked well over £510m of private investment, secured over 1900 jobs and enhanced the UK's manufacturing capabilities.

LSIMF will build domestic health resilience by onshoring a broad range of manufacturing capabilities, particularly aiming to support those of strategic importance for pandemic preparedness. These include vaccine production, active pharmaceutical ingredient manufacturing and fill-finish capability. Grants will also be awarded across the UK to enhance regional resilience and support devolved administrations.

LSIMF supports mitigation of the pandemic risk, one of the most impactful and likely risks on the NRR. The fund is also a key lever in delivering Outcome 14 of the Biological Security Strategy, aiming to deploy clinical countermeasures within 100 days of a future pandemic.

It is expected that increased onshoring of Life Sciences manufacturing capabilities will also contribute to wider national security risk resilience including impacts caused by conflict and instability by reducing reliance on international supply chains.

Through Met Office science and technology, the UK government mitigates a range of **weather related** risks.

For example, the Public Weather Service provides weather information and weather-related warnings that enable the UK public and professional bodies to make informed decisions in their day-to-day activities, to optimise or mitigate against the impact of the weather, and to contribute to the protection of life, property and infrastructure. The PWS also provides research, forecast and observational data which are essential to create the underpinning national capability delivering against ~40 Critical Risks as identified by the NRR. The National Severe Weather Warning Service provides advance warnings of critical weather events such as heavy rain, thunderstorms, and extreme heat.

The Met Office also operates a 24/7 space weather centre which provides services to the government, focusing on CNI. The space weather service supports critical infrastructure resilience by reducing disruptions to communications, navigation, and power networks. Space weather can impact ground and space-borne technological systems and endanger human life and health. High risk impacts include disruption to satellite & radio communication, GNSS signals, and loss of position, navigation and timing services space object tracking, avionics, the rail network and potential damage and disruption to the power grid where severe geomagnetic storms can potentially cause blackouts.

Annexes

Annex A - Evidence and Engagement

110. This annex sets out our approach to building the evidence base of the Resilience Action Plan through the resilience review. The ambition was to consider existing practices within the government's work on resilience, where they are working and should continue, where they should be improved or stopped and where new activity should be started.

111. To achieve this, we undertook a systematic programme of engagement, analysis and challenge, at all levels, working with the public, private and voluntary sectors. We brought in a range of outside voices, who have shared their views on where to prioritise investment in resilience. Additionally, we took into account the recommendations of public inquiries, previous external reviews and extant commitments from the UK Resilience Framework.

Evidence Base

112. The resilience review looked across a range of sources, including external reports, reviews, inquiry recommendations and internal lessons identified through exercising to assess the efficacy of current policy alongside any gaps in our approach.

113. As the review has been set within the bounds of retaining what is successful, we have considered reports and reviews from the previous government. Sources included:

    a. Government reports:

        i. The Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy (2021)

        ii. National Resilience Action Plan: Call for Evidence (2021)

        iii. House of Lords Select Committee on Risk: Preparing for Extreme Risks, Building a Resilient Society (2021)

        iv. Government Response to Preparing for Extreme Risks, Building a Resilient Society (2022)

        v. Crisis Capabilities Review: Responding to Crises from the Centre of Government (2022)

        vi. The UK Resilience Framework (2022)

        vii. Civil Contingencies Act: Post-Implementation Review (2022)

        viii. Integrated Review Refresh: Responding to a more contested and volatile world (2023)

b. External reports:

   i. National Preparedness Commission: Response to Call for Evidence from the Integrated Review (2021)

   ii. National Preparedness Commission: Independent Review of the 2004 Civil Contingencies Act (2022)

   iii. Crisis preparation in the age of long emergencies: what covid-19 teaches us about the capacity, capability and coordination governments need for cross-cutting crises (2023)

   iv. National Preparedness Commission: Building Confidence In The Future (2023)

   v. National Audit Office Report: Government Resilience, Extreme Weather (2023)

   vi. National Preparedness Commission: Making it Happen, encouraging government action on preparedness and resilience (2024)

   vii. National Infrastructure Commission's Infrastructure Progress Review (2024)

c. Public inquiry reports:

   I. COVID-19 Inquiry: Module 1 Report (2024)

   ii. Grenfell Tower Inquiry: Phase 2 Report (2024)

Engagement

114. The resilience review was undertaken in engagement with other government departments and arms length bodies, the devolved governments, local leaders and responders, vulnerable people, the voluntary, community and faith sector, think tanks, Parliamentarians, private sector organisations, academia, subject matter experts and other actors from across the resilience system. Given the scope of the action plan spans widely across the resilience system, engagement needed to ensure our approach represented the characteristics of the Whole-of-Society.

115. In order to closely examine key areas of focus, a number of thematic roundtable discussions took place, including on: risk assessment and management, mitigating disproportionate impacts, representatives from combined authorities, and the role of the business sector. Additionally, subject matter experts from across the resilience system joined targeted discussions with officials and Ministers to provide detailed insight into our approach.

SR Assessment

116. For the 2025 Spending Review, the UK government developed a new approach to better understand investment in resilience activity across all UK government departments, in order to inform and coordinate decision making. Information gathered through this process has been analysed and gaps identified have been used to inform the focus of the Resilience Action Plan.

Annex B - Acronyms and Definitions

Term	Definition
Acute Risk	Time-bound, discrete events, for example a major fire or a terrorist attack. Contrast with chronic risks.
Assurance	The process of understanding and evaluating the capabilities and preparedness of the UK's resilience system to address the risks it faces.
Capabilities	The organisations, tools, data, legislation or resources required to respond to risks. There are both specific capabilities, which are needed to manage specific risks, as well as generic response ones which can be used to respond flexibly to multiple risks.
Cascading Impact	The knock-on impacts of a risk that cause further physical, social or economic disruption. For example, severe weather could cause flooding, which then causes damage to electricity infrastructure, resulting in a power outage which then disrupts communications service providers (and so on).
Catastrophic Risk	Risks which have the highest impact score within the UK government's National Security Risk Assessment and National Risk Register.
Chronic Risk	Continuous challenges which gradually erode our economy, community, way of life and/or national security (e.g. money laundering; antimicrobial resistance). Contrast with Acute risks.
Civil contingencies	Planning and preparation for events or incidents with the potential to impact ordinary citizens and their interests.
Civil Contingencies Act (CCA) 2004	Act of 2004 which established a single framework for Civil Protection in the United Kingdom. Part 1 of the Act establishes a clear set of roles and responsibilities for Local Responders; Part 2 of the Act establishes emergency powers.
Crisis	See Emergency - within the UK government, the terms emergency and crisis are used interchangeably.

Term	Definition
Critical national infrastructure (CNI)	Those critical elements of infrastructure (namely assets, facilities, systems, networks or processes and the essential workers that operate and facilitate them), the loss or compromise of which could result in: a) Major detrimental impact on the availability, integrity or delivery of essential services - including those services whose integrity, if compromised, could result in significant loss of life or casualties - taking into account significant economic or social impacts; and/or b) Significant impact on national security, national defence, or the functioning of the state.
Devolved Governments	The governments of Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. These governments have responsibilities for resilience within their respective nations, particularly in areas where responsibilities are devolved from the UK government.
Emergency	An event or situation which causes or may cause serious damage to human welfare; the environment; or War, or terrorism, which threatens serious damage to security. This definition is set out in the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.
Exercise	1. A process to train for, assess, practice, and improve performance in an organisation. 2. A simulation designed to validate organisations' capability to manage incidents and emergencies. Specifically, exercises will seek to validate training undertaken and the procedures and systems within emergency or business continuity plans.
Hazard	Accidental or naturally occurring (i.e., non-malicious) event or situation with the potential to cause death or physical or psychological harm, damage or losses to property, and/or disruption to the environment and/or to economic, social and political structures. Contrast with Threat.
Local Authority	An administrative body within a specific local area that is responsible for providing a range of public services and facilities. Local authorities work together with other entities in Local Resilience Forums (LRFs) to plan, prepare, respond, and recover from emergencies
Local Resilience Forum (LRF)	Process for bringing together all the category 1 and 2 responders within a police force area for the purpose of facilitating co-operation in fulfilment of their duties under the Civil Contingencies Act

Term	Definition
National Risk Register (NRR)	The external version of the National Security Risk Assessment (NSRA), which is the government's assessment of the most serious risks facing the UK.
National Security Risk Assessment (NSRA)	The NSRA assesses, compares and prioritises the top national level risks facing the UK, focusing on both likelihood of the risk occurring and the impact it would have, were it to happen. It is the main tool for assessing the most serious civil contingencies risks facing the UK.
Resilience	The ability to anticipate, assess, prevent, mitigate, validate, respond to, and recover and learn from natural hazards, deliberate attacks, geopolitical instability, disease outbreaks, and other disruptive events, civil emergencies or threats to our way of life.
Risk	An event, person or object which could cause loss of life or injury, damage to infrastructure, social and economic disruption or environment degradation. The severity of a risk is assessed as a combination of its potential impact and its likelihood. The UK government subdivides risks into: hazards and threats.
Risk life cycle	A conceptual model that breaks the management of a risk down into stages at which different preparatory actions can be taken. The UK government is using eight stages: anticipation, assessment, prevention, validation, preparation, response, recovery and learning. The risk life cycle is also known as the resilience cycle.
Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE)	Advisory group convened to provide independent scientific advice to support decision-making in the Cabinet Office Briefing Room (COBR) in the event of a national emergency.
Social and Behavioural Science for Emergencies Steering Group (SBSE)	The purpose of this group is to strengthen the use of social and behavioural science evidence for emergency preparedness and response across government
Subsidiarity	The principle whereby decisions are taken at the lowest appropriate level, with coordination at the highest necessary level. In practice this means that most incidents are handled within the capabilities of local agencies and responders, without central involvement.
Threat	Malicious risks such as acts of terrorism, hostile state activity and cyber crime. Contrast with Hazard.

Term	Definition
Vulnerability	The quality or state of being more prone or susceptible to the impacts of hazards or threats. Vulnerability could affect individuals, communities, assets or a whole system and may be caused by physical, social, economic and environmental factors or processes.
Vulnerable People	Individuals or communities that may experience more significant and disproportionate impacts during emergencies
Whole-of-System Crises	An event which, due to the scale and complexity, can have catastrophic and cascading consequences which require leadership from the centre and a monumental response effort from the whole of UK government and wider society for an extended period of time to manage the situation effectively.