

National Infrastructure Resilience Council (NIRC)
Sector Interaction and Information Flow Questionnaire

This questionnaire is designed to help NIRC gain an understanding of infrastructure owners' and operators' engagement and interaction when preparing for, and responding to, emergencies. The Cabinet Office will collate the responses to the questionnaire and share them with NIRC ahead of its next meeting in April.

Please can the following the organisations complete the questionnaire for their sectors and return it to jamie.graham@cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk by 10th March 2017:

- E3C
- EC-RRG
- Water UK
- Network Rail
- Highways England.

Information can be provided either in text form and/or using diagrams. Please aim for a maximum of six sides in total.

Note: Water UK represents all water and sewerage undertakers in the UK. This response however is England and Wales focussed. If Cabinet Office requires more specific information on the arrangements in Scotland and Northern Ireland, I will be happy to arrange this.

Sector (e.g. telecoms):

Water and wastewater

Organisation (e.g. EC-RRG):

Water UK

Contact Details (in case Cabinet Office has any queries):

Jim Marshall,
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1. How do the owners/operators in your sector interact between themselves in preparing for, and responding to, emergencies (e.g. widespread flooding)?

Planning: Communication in planning between water companies is through emergency planning and security networks hosted by Water UK directly. In addition, one to one relationships developed off the back of the more formal liaison.

Periodically Defra host a National Emergency & Security Working Group to disseminate information and provide a platform for sharing, however this has not been convened for some time. CPNI facilitate security information exchanges



The products used are face to face meetings and Resilience Direct both of which are useful. Teleconference has been used occasionally in the planning phase but doesn't work as well as discussion is not easy.

Water companies liaise directly with their near neighbours when looking at resilience planning for example by sharing best practise. This has been particularly evident in the purchase of demountable flood barriers that match neighbouring water companies.

In incidents: The main mechanism in response is one on one liaison between effected water companies, primarily around mutual aid. In major incidents the formal mutual aid coordination would occur under the auspices of Water UK arrangements.

2. How do owners/operators in your sector engage with owners/operators in other sectors in preparing for, and responding to, emergencies?

Planning: The main mechanism is via Local Resilience Forum either at the LRF Exec or in subsidiary groups such as flooding or utilities working groups. Typically, this face to face meetings. Some one on one planning takes place outside of the LRF structure, mainly through relationships developed by virtue of the LRF arrangements or through commercial relationships.

Response: Typically, through individual agency participation in SCG or TCG. This can be problematic when LRF boundaries do not coincide with the total extent of the incident and owner/operators have to support multiple TCGs/SCGs which is inefficient and ineffective for them.

3. How do owners/operators in your sector engage with local responders in preparing for, and responding to, emergencies?

Planning: The main mechanism is via Local Resilience Forum either at the LRF Exec or in subsidiary groups such as flooding or utilities working groups. Typically, these are face to face meetings. Also participate in multi-agency exercises which provide opportunities to work together within TCG and SCG.

Response: Typically, through individual agency participation in SCG or TCG. This can be problematic when LRF boundaries do not coincide with the total extent of the incident and owner/operators have to support multiple TCGs/SCGs which is inefficient and ineffective for them.

4. How do owners/operators in your sector engage with central government in preparing for, and responding to, emergencies?

Planning: Periodically Defra host a National Emergency & Security Working Group to disseminate information and provide a platform for sharing. Ad hoc liaison is now more typical given the absence of a structured interaction. It is felt that this has lessened the effectiveness of sector engagement with central government.

In addition, CPNI facilitate security information exchanges which are effective and Water UK engages with central government on behalf of the sector

Recent engagement with the Cabinet Office Re: Resilience Direct Mapping has shown a discord with our lead government department (Defra)

Response: Defra may host conference calls to facilitate cross government liaison. However, in larger incidents call discipline is difficult to maintain with multiple teams and departments wanting or feeling they need to be involved.

Water UK have hosted working groups to consider Mutual Aid availability during flooding events in the past.

Resilience Direct is an effective way of sharing information

5. What issues do you experience with engagement both while preparing for and responding to emergencies? What recommendations, if any, do you have for resolving these issues?

Planning: Works well at LRF level however greater two-way engagement with Defra on agenda setting would be beneficial.

Cat 2 Meetings have been beneficial in the past and should be conducted on a Regional basis experience is that these have been ad-hoc and often the LRF meeting agendas are not relevant. Trying to cover so many LRF's and gain benefit from the meetings is difficult.

Response: As a Cat 2 responder, having to support multiple SCGs/TCGs for wide area incidents. Poor quality of teleconferencing facilities means ineffective participation unless physically present.