

Flood emergency planning and exercising

Combining our specialist expertise, Capita Symonds and VectorCommand help clients plan for flood emergencies and develop the exercises needed to test emergency response.



Capita Symonds' flood risk management skills combined with VectorCommand's expertise in emergency exercising enables us to provide a world class service in planning for flood emergencies and exercising emergency response. Flooding is a major issue in the UK and its impacts can be devastating. Preparing effective plans, developing training and testing tactical responses is crucial to ensuring that communities are safe during flood emergencies.

Capita Symonds working with sub-consultant VectorCommand, led the planning, delivery and review of Exercise Watermark in March 2011 – the largest national emergency exercise undertaken in the UK to date. The Exercise tested the national response to widespread catastrophic flooding in England and Wales on a scale not seen since 1953.

We specialise in the following:

- Exercise planning, operation and review
- Exercise scenario development
- Multi-agency flood plans
- Site-specific emergency plans and business continuity plans

We have a range of other supporting skills:

- Asset inspection and flood resilience advice
- Flood risk and hazard mapping
- Flood visualisation to interpret flood data
- Flood warning, including review and update of warning procedures
- Post-flood event analysis
- Socio-economic impact analysis
- Specialist modelling of pollutants
- Training

Exercise Watermark - scenario development

We are experienced in the generation of realistic scenarios to test emergency flood response. Exercise Watermark tested response to flooding from many different sources – rivers, coastal, surface water and reservoirs, through an unfolding scenario that lasted over four days. The scenario was realistic, based on hazards drawn from the National Risk Register with impacts as per UK planning assumptions. For Exercise Watermark, tens of thousands of pre-prepared injects (individual pieces of information) were fired into the exercise and many hundreds more were written live during the exercise. Injects took the form of email, text message, phone calls and online web content. Scenarios can be provided for use in exercises of all scales in formats ranging from paper to all electronic forms.



Exercise Watermark - delivery and review

VectorCommand's Training and Exercise System (TES) software was used to run the exercise. It automated the process, firing thousands of injects into the developing scenario and, even more impressively, adapting subsequent injects based on player decisions. It was therefore able to replicate real behaviour in decision processes more accurately than more conventional ways of exercising, using fewer staff on the day. Following the exercise, lessons for all those involved were reported and discussed at debrief conference. The success of Exercise Watermark demonstrates our capability in emergency exercising, but it is important to note that we are also able to run smaller scale exercises, tailor made for specific purposes, either with or without TES for delivery.

Emergency Flood and Evacuation Plan Colgate Palmolive site, Salford Quays

Capita Symonds developed an emergency flood and evacuation plan for the proposed redevelopment of the site. It is designed for use by those responsible for co-ordinating the evacuation of occupants and sets out roles, responsibilities and actions when different levels of flood warnings are received.



Business continuity planning - Lea Interchange Bus Depot Emergency Flood Plan

Capita Symonds prepared a Flood Risk Assessment in support of a planning application for the relocation of the bus depot in East London. A key component was an Emergency Plan to keep employees safe, allow relocation of buses to alternative sites and maintain business continuity during an extreme flood event. Capita Symonds worked with site operators, the local authority and the Environment Agency in the development of the Plan.

Emergency planning - Maesteg Market Flood Event Management Plan

Although a full Flood Consequence Assessment was not necessary, the Environment Agency requested a Flood Event Management Plan to support the proposed planning application. Capita Symonds prepared the Plan on behalf of the developer, to provide guidance to business owners and occupiers of the markets regarding the procedures and actions to be implemented in the event of flooding. It covers flood risk awareness; the provision of flood warnings; safe occupancy; and safe access to and egress from the site.



Emergency planning training courses

Flood warning and emergency planning is becoming increasingly important as a result of more widespread urban flooding, as witnessed in summer 2007, and the prediction of worse to come under climate change. There is increasing pressure for emergency planners to consider flood risk in a more co-ordinated way. Capita Symonds offers tailored training courses for those involved in emergency planning and response to increase understanding of flood processes and the data upon which critical decisions are made.

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Emergency planning and exercising is a bespoke service we offer, no matter the scale or source of flooding and the type of exercise required. We are always pleased to discuss individual requirements so that we can provide exactly what you need.