

Annex C – Glossary of terms and abbreviations

Adaptation – changing our behaviour to respond to the impacts of climate change. Adaptation to climate change involves making decisions that are sustainable, made at the right time, maximising the benefits and minimising the costs. Adaptation needs to be built into planning and risk management now to ensure the continued and improved success of businesses, Government policies and social operations.

Aquifer – a permeable geological formation of rock, mud or gravel containing or conducting water.

Building Regulations – the UK Building Regulations are rules of a statutory nature to set standards for the design and construction of buildings, primarily to ensure the safety and health for people in or around those buildings, but also for purposes of energy conservation and access to and about other buildings.

Catchment – an area that serves a river with rainwater, that is every part of land where the rainfall drains to a single watercourse is in the same catchment.

Category 1 responder – a person or body listed in Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Civil Contingencies Act (CCA) 2004. These bodies will be at the core of the response to most emergencies. As such, they are subject to the full range of civil protection duties in the CCA.

Category 2 responder – a person or body listed in Part 3 of Schedule 1 to the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. These are Cooperating responders who are less likely to be involved at the heart of multi-agency planning work across the board, but will be heavily involved in preparing for incidents affecting their sectors. The CCA requires them to cooperate and share information with other Category 1 and 2 responders.

Civil Contingencies Act (CCA) 2004 – legislation that aims to deliver a single framework for civil protection in the United Kingdom. The CCA is separated into two substantive parts: local arrangements for civil protection (Part 1) and emergency powers (Part 2).

Coastal erosion – the wearing away of coastline, usually by wind and/or wave action.

Coastal flooding – occurs when coastal defences are unable to contain the normal predicted high tides that can cause flooding, usually when a high tide combines with a storm surge (created by high winds or a deep depression).

Community Infrastructure Levy – powers introduced by The Planning Act 2008 for a new charge under which local authorities in England and Wales will be empowered, but not required, to introduce a charge on most types of new development in their area to fund local and sub-regional infrastructure.

Community resilience – the ability of a local community to prepare for emergencies and to respond and recover from them.

Consequence – the outcome of an event. This can be expressed qualitatively or quantitatively to direct or indirect losses and gains.

Controlled Waters – under section 104 of the Water Resources Act 1991 controlled waters include all inland waters (other than enclosed ponds) and ground waters.

Cost-benefit analysis – a decision-making technique that analyses and evaluates the implications of alternative courses of action by assigning a quantified monetary value for each Positive criterion (benefits) and negative criterion (costs).

Culvert – a covered structure under road, embankment etc, to direct the flow of water.

Climate change – the change in average conditions of the atmosphere near the Earth's surface over a long period of time.

Dams – a barrier constructed across flowing water that obstructs, directs or Slows down the flow, often creating a reservoir.

Draft Bill – a Bill published in draft before Introduction.

Emergency (in the UK) – an event or situation that threatens serious damage to human welfare in a place in the UK or to the environment of a place in the UK, or war or terrorism that threatens serious damage to the security of the UK.

Emergency management – the process to deal with the initial or acute phase of an emergency.

Emergency planning – development and maintenance of agreed procedures to prevent, reduce, control, mitigate and take other actions in the event of an emergency.

Environment Agency Coastal Strategic Overview – the Strategic Overview was introduced in April 2008 as a result of Making space for water and is a way of working between Government, the Environment Agency, Local Authorities and coastal flooding groups to improve the sustainability, prioritisation and management of all work on the coast. Whilst the Environment Agency has the overview, close collaborative working with Local Authorities on the coast is essential to ensure vital skills and expertise is used effectively for communities in need.

European Commission – an institution of the European Union, located in Brussels with 27 members (Commissioners). It is responsible for proposing new policies, implementing existing policies, and ensuring that EU rules are obeyed by Member States.

Flash flooding – a rapid increase in water levels, leading to flooding, occurs when excessive rain falls over a short period of time.

Flood – temporary covering by water of land not normally covered with water.

Flood risk – product of the probability of Flooding occurring and its consequences of happening.

Fluvial flooding – same as river Flooding.

Floodplain – low-lying area adjacent to a watercourse and prone to flooding.

Generic plan – a single plan designed to cope with a wide range of emergencies.

Geographic Information System (GIS) – a mapping system to display geographic information.

Government Offices – 9 offices represent 11 Whitehall departments in English regions.

Green roof – a roof purposely covered in vegetation to reduce and treat water run-off.

Greenhouse gas – a gas that absorbs infrared radiation in the atmosphere.

Home Information Pack (HIP) – a pack containing a set of documents that aims to provide house buyers with some of the information that they need to make an informed choice about a property they wish to buy.

Hive down – a well established mechanism that involves the transfer of a viable part of a business to a wholly-owned subsidiary of the insolvent company.

Hydrology – the scientific study of water, including its properties, movement and effects on the Earth's Surface, underground and in the atmosphere.

Impact Assessment – is both a Continuous process to help the policy-maker fully think through and understand the consequences of possible and actual Government interventions in the public, private and third sectors; and a tool to enable the Government to weigh and present the negative effects of such interventions, including by reviewing the impact of policies after they have been implemented.

Infrastructure Service Provider – specialist third party owning and financing a large project and delivering the service provided by the new infrastructure to the water companies or companies.

Inset Appointment – allows one or company to replace another as the statutory water and/or sewerage undertaker for a specific geographic area.

Internal Drainage Board (IDB) – independent statutory bodies responsible for land drainage in areas of special drainage need that extends to 1.2 million hectares of lowland England. They are long established bodies operating predominantly under the Land Drainage Act 1991 and have permissive powers to undertake work to secure drainage and water level management of their districts.

Inundation – the flooding of an area with water.

Land management – this includes the way land is drained, used and farmed in the rural environment.

Land use planning – branch of public policy encompassing various disciplines seeking to order and regulate the use of land.

Lead responder – a Category 1 responder charged with carrying out a duty under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 on behalf of a number of responder organisations, so as to coordinate its delivery and to avoid unnecessary duplication. by the Secretary of State. Through these, different localities can channel public resources towards the priorities of their own areas, alongside national outcomes and targets.

Local Area Agreement (LAA) – are three-year agreements, developed by local councils with their partners in a local strategic partnership (LSP). Each LAA is negotiated with the Government Office for the region, before being agreed and signed off.

Local Government Association (LGA) – voluntary lobbying organisation to promote the interest of English and Welsh local authorities.

Local Resilience Forums (LRF) – a forum for bringing together all of the Category 1 and 2 responders within a facilitating cooperation in fulfilment of their duties under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

Local Planning Authority – the statutory authority (usually the local council) whose duty it is to carry out the planning function of its area.

Main river – is a watercourse shown as such on a main river map and for which Environment Agency has responsibility.

Ordinary Watercourse – all Watercourses that do not form part of a main river, and which are the responsibility of local authorities or, Where they exist, internal drainage boards.

Operating authorities – is a term we use to describe the Environment Agency, local authorities and Internal Drainage Boards (IDBs) who have powers to carry out flood risk management and land drainage works.

Planning Policy Statement 25 (PPS25) – government policy planning statement relating to development and flood risk.

Pluvial flooding – same as surface water.

Precipitation – for example, rain, snow, hail and sleet.

Primary legislation – the general term used to describe the main laws passed by the legislative bodies of the UK, for example Acts of the UK Parliament. These types of legislation are sometimes referred to as 'statutes'.

Probability – a relative measure of the likelihood or chance that something is the case or will happen, typically expressed as a number between zero and one or as a percentage.

Permeable – allowing liquids or gasses to pass through.

Permissive powers – the statutory granting of impact, authority (not a duty).

Phosphorus pollution – phosphorus is a nutrient that is used by plants. If it is present in the environment in excessive amounts it can lead to rapid undesirable plant growth which is called eutrophication. This can lead to disturbance of the ecological balance and, in severe cases, a reduction of oxygen in the water which could cause fish kills.

Recharge period – a period of time during which groundwater is absorbed into geological formations below the surface.

Recovery – the process of rebuilding, restoring and rehabilitating the community following an emergency.

Reservoir – a natural or artificial lake where water is collected and stored until needed. Reservoirs can be used for irrigation, recreation, providing water supply for municipal needs, hydroelectric power or controlling water flow.

Resilience – the ability of the community, services, area or infrastructure to withstand the consequences of an incident.

Resilience measures – resilience Measures aim to reduce the consequence of flooding by, for example, facilitating the early recovery of buildings, infrastructure or other vulnerable sites following a flooding event or by ensuring that key infrastructure such as power distribution centres, telecommunication control centres and key emergency access routes have enhanced levels of protection or other mitigation measures.

Resistance measures – are designed to keep out, or at least minimise, the amount of water that accommodation of evacuees from an incident enters a building, or other area of adverse in times of flood.

Return period – this is the measure of the rarity of a flood event and is the average time interval between occurrences of a flood event of a similar magnitude.

Riparian ownership – owning shoreline land or land on the boundary of a river or watercourse.

Risk – measures the significance of a potential event in terms of likelihood and Impact. In the context of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, the events in question are emergencies.

Risk assessment – a structured and auditable process of identifying potentially significant events, assessing their likelihood and impacts, and then combining these to provide an overall assessment of risk, as a basis for further decisions and action.

River flooding – occurs when water levels in a channel overwhelms the capacity of the channel.

River Basin Management Plans – plans for the integrated management of whole body water systems, from areas of surface run-off through to estuaries and the sea. It is designed to provide a detailed account of the objectives that have been set for the water bodies within the river basin district, and explain how these are to be achieved. The Water Framework Directive places a duty on EU Member States to ensure that a comprehensive plan is produced, and updated every six years, for each river basin district.

Runoff – water that is not absorbed into the ground and drains or flows off the land, often appearing in surface water bodies.

Secondary legislation (also called ‘subordinate legislation’) – is delegated legislation made by a person or body under authority contained in primary legislation for example statutory instruments. Typically, powers to make secondary legislation may be conferred on ministers, on the Crown, or on public bodies.

Spatial – relating to relative locations on the ground surface.

Standards of Protection – the flood event return period above which significant damage and possible failure of the flood defences could occur.

Statutory duty – an action required by law.

Storm surge – abnormal rise in sea level along the shore, usually caused by strong winds and/or reduced atmospheric pressure, often resulting from storms.

Strategic Coordination Group (SCG) – a multi-agency group that sets the policy and strategic framework for emergency response at local level (see also Gold command).

Surface run-off – occurs when the level of rainfall overwhelms the capacity of the drainage system to cope.

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) – help to deal with excesses of water by mimicking natural drainage patterns.

Swales – shallow, trough-like depressions that carry water.

Voluntary sector – self-governing organisations, some being registered charities, some incorporated non-profit organisations. They deliver work for the Public benefit using volunteers.

Trunk main – large-diameter water pipe.

Undertaker – a company licensed to provide water supplies under Chapter 1 or 1A of the Water Industry Act 1991 (as amended).

Utilities – companies providing essential services, for example water, energy and telecommunications.

Vulnerability – the susceptibility of an individual, community, service or infrastructure to damage or harm.

Water table – the upper surface of groundwater; the boundary between Saturated and unsaturated soil conditions.

Watercourse – is any river, stream, ditch, drain, cut culvert, dyke, sluice, sewer and passage through which water flows, except a public sewer.