

**National Flood Forecasting and Warning Service (NFFWS) - Steering Group Meeting –
Action Points and Notes of Meeting**

Subject:	National Flood Forecasting and Warning Service
Date	10 October 2023
Time:	2.00pm
Venue:	OPW 1GQ Dublin Office

Attendees:			
Chairman - Robert Mooney (RM)	OPW	Sarah O'Reilly (SOR) for Eoin Moran (EM)	Met Éireann
Ciaran Conroy (CC)	OPW	Eoin Sherlock (ES)	Met Éireann
Oliver Nicholson (ON)	OPW	Ciaran Broderick (CB)	Met Éireann
Mark Adamson (MA)	OPW	Susan Fitzgerald (SF)	DHLGH
Bryan Sheehan (BS)	OPW	Dara McGowan (DMcG) via Microsoft Teams	CCMA
Apologies:			
Robert Leonard (RL)	DAFM		

Agenda Item:	Description:	Follow Up Action By:
1.	Action Points and Notes of Previous Meeting (19 April 2023)	
	<p>The chair opened by welcoming everybody to the meeting. SOR informed the Group that she was filling in for EM and would be working with the Group going forward.</p> <p>The chair went through the draft action points from the last meeting of 9 April 2023.</p> <p>Proposed amendments from MÉ were tabled and following discussion and clarification, the draft action points and notes of the meeting as circulated by the secretariat were agreed.</p> <p>The chair noted that the programmed meetings agreed on 9 April had not taken place due to non-availability of certain members of the Steering Group and that accordingly, the October target for the completion of Stage I will not be achieved.</p>	
2.	Stage I Implementation Plan - Update	
2.1.	Review of Progress update provided by MÉ and the OPW	
2.1.1.	Stage I overview of progress to date and key tasks outstanding	
	<p>CB gave an update on this agenda item by way of 2 presentations.</p> <p>The Key points of the first presentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development and calibration of 36 catchment flood forecasting models - complete. 	

Agenda Item:	Description:	Follow Up Action By:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Templates for the alerts are awaiting formal sign off of the draft Communications Strategy. • The pre-operational trials have been completed. • OPW have provided rating curves for more gauging stations. • Development of the national and catchment scale flood forecasting models is complete. <p>The chair noted that some events had developed since the paper was compiled.</p> <p>The chair also made reference to the letter from M^É Sec Gen to the OPW Chairman confirming that M^É have now taken over issuing the HTAs.</p> <p>CB gave an update on key tasks outstanding by way of a presentation which was circulated to the Group prior to the meeting.</p> <p>The Key points of the presentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limerick Thresholds - M^É advised that they would be happy if technical advice could be provided by the OPW on the relevant threshold to be used. MA noted that at present, the levels provided from the ICWWS can be used, and that the OPW will issue updates on thresholds as they arise. SOR added that there will never be exact threshold values and that these may fluctuate from year to year. • Development of IFICS is now at an advanced stage which is depending on sign off of the draft Communications Strategy. <p>DMcG queried the target date for the completion of Stage I. The chair noted that the agreed programmed meetings, and anticipated sign-offs, had not taken place ,and as a result the October target would not be met. It was agreed that every effort would be made to complete the Stage I report by the end of the year and that further work would proceed on the Stage II plan.</p>	
2.1.2.	Progress on Flood Forecasting Centre and staffing/training (M^É)	
	<p>CB gave an update on this item by way of a presentation which was circulated to the Group prior to the meeting.</p> <p>The Key points of the presentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M^É staff have received further training on the Flood Early Warning System (Delft FEWS). • Staff have also received training in Python which was provided by UCD. • Training has also taken place on the HYPE model. • CB was promoted to Chief Hydrometeorologist. • M^É is currently in the process of hiring a new hydrometeorologist. 	
2.1.3	Progress on operationalising the national scale Tide and Storm Surge Forecasting Service within M^É	

Agenda Item:	Description:	Follow Up Action By:
	<p>CB gave an update on this item by way of a presentation which was circulated to the Group prior to the meeting.</p> <p>CB noted that this is straight forward as all tasks have been completed.</p> <p>Key points included</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The TSSF has been implemented on the ECMWF environment. • Documentation has been developed. • TSSF outputs are now accessible via IFICS. • SWFLM Workshop has been held to introduce IFICS. • Training manuals have been developed for end users. • Limerick thresholds being looked at (already discussed at 2.1.1.) • HTA product has been developed. • Dissemination list received from the OPW. • MÉ has been in contact with NFDEM regarding MEM framework to show that MÉ have taken over TSSF. <p>MA noted in relation to the dissemination list that there were a small number of emails that bounced back as notified to MÉ, and CB noted that these may have been out of date addresses and that MÉ had since addressed each one.</p> <p>The chair then referred to the MEM framework and its current status. SF advised that the framework is under review, and once the work is completed, the areas in relation to Flood Forecasting will be looked at. It is not expected to be ready until Q1 2024. The chair asked that OPW and MÉ should be given the opportunity to provide comments/feedback on the new framework.</p> <p>SOR referred to the resourcing issues contained in the letter from the MÉ Sec Gen. MA confirmed that details of the resources that OPW had required to monitor the TSSF and provide HTAs had been communicated to MÉ early in 2023. The chair noted that this issue had been previously discussed as being dealt with in the Memo in relation to Stage II. SOR stated that the appropriate mechanism to secure the resources required needed to be identified.</p>	
2.2	Proposed actions towards finalising Stage I by MÉ and OPW	
	<p>CB gave an update on this item by way of a presentation which was circulated to the Group prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Key Action points included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fluvial thresholds were provided by OPW to MÉ. • The OPW can provide technical guidance on coastal thresholds for adoption by the FCC (already discussed at 2.1.1.). • Plan for the operationalisation of the TSSF by MÉ has been completed. 	

Agenda Item:	Description:	Follow Up Action By:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SLA on the sharing of hydrological and meteorological data was drawn up one year ago and it may be time to review it. <p>ON spoke about discussion on business continuity measures regarding real-time data supply to Met Éireann. He noted that OPW Hydrometrics Section were happy to send info directly from OPW gauges to MÉ. This should take weeks rather than months, and could start by trialling the arrangement at up to five gauging stations. CB noted it would be useful to know the systems that are being used so they can prepare for the receipt of the data. The chair noted that this is in hand.</p>	
2.3	Update on draft report on Stage I Implementation	
	<p>MA advised that the Group had previously prepared a draft report ahead of the proposed June meeting, which had been circulated for comments. Comments were received from MÉ, SF and DMcG. MA advised that he felt that the comments received could be addressed in the next draft.</p> <p>Going forward MA proposed to set up the next sub-group meeting to go through the comments, and prepare a draft final report for the consideration of the SG, and then to have a final report, which would be adopted by the SG.</p> <p>MA also commented that there is a lot of technical detail in the draft report which may need to be thinned down and put in Appendices or with links to the documents. The recommendations they may also need to be reviewed to avoid duplicating the Stage II proposals.</p> <p>The Chair noted that there was an important piece on framing improvements that could be made, which is important in terms of messaging.</p> <p>ES added that MÉ would look at the draft report again.</p>	
3.	Report from the Technical Subgroup	
3.1	Progress update (MÉ)	
	<p>CB gave an update on this item and a paper was circulated to the Group prior to the meeting.</p> <p>CB advised that Hydrometric gauging information continues to be shared. Handover of the TSSF model and archive had taken place. MÉ to provide a representative to sit on the FEMI Steering Group.</p> <p>The chair noted that a discussion on threshold values had been held earlier in the meeting.</p>	
4.	Communications	

Agenda Item:	Description:	Follow Up Action By:
	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	
6.	Governance	
6.1	Financial Arrangements 2023	
	<p>CC gave an update on the current financial arrangements. The balance of the funding to MÉ through the OPW for the establishment of the Flood Forecasting Centre is currently at €41,362.28. MÉ was asked to provide an update on any requirement for these funds.</p> <p>MÉ indicated that they have earmarked something for the outstanding funding and that Josephine Prendergast would be in touch on this.</p>	MÉ to provide an update on any requirement for these funds.
6.2	Reporting Requirements	
	<p>CC gave an update on the reporting requirements.</p> <p>Earlier in the year, the OPW wrote to Secretaries General relevant to the work of the Interdepartmental Flood Policy Coordination Group requesting updates on their work and any proposals concerning managing flood risk for individuals and communities. Most responses have been received, and the report is currently being compiled and it is hoped to have it sent to Government before the end of the year.</p>	
7.	Risk Register	
7.1	Review of risk register	
	<p>RM opened up this agenda item, referring to an update received from MÉ on the register.</p> <p>CB gave a brief update on the return from MÉ.</p> <p>The Chair then spoke about progress on Stages I and II and the target date of October for the report to Government, but as we</p>	BS to circulate updated Risk Register for any observations

Agenda Item:	Description:	Follow Up Action By:
	<p>have gone past this date, the risk has now gone up, so it is proposed to change this item on the Register to medium.</p>	
8.	AOB	
	<p>RM spoke about papers that came in late on Friday evening before the meeting on Monday. Due to other priorities the Chair was unable to review the papers at such a late stage and did not want to circulate them on the morning of the meeting, as people would not have had time to review.</p> <p>The Chair then spoke about the intention of the papers, in which CB confirmed it was just to tee up everything for when we go to operational phase, and to give a summary for everyone. The Chair then commented that given the direction so far and the minutes so far that this has all been covered off. It was agreed that everything is in order and that was no need for another paper to endorse something that has already been agreed.</p>	
9.	Further Meeting Dates in 2023	
	<p>Following a discussion the following meeting dates were agreed:</p> <p><u>Main Group</u> Wednesday 8th November @2pm Wednesday 13th December @2pm</p> <p><u>Sub Groups on Stages I and II</u> Friday 27th October @2pm In Person Meeting Friday 10th November @2pm Microsoft Teams Friday 24th November @2pm Microsoft Teams</p>	<p>Dates to be circulated to Group by BS</p>