



## **EXPLORING THE POTENTIAL FOR PLUVIAL FLOOD WARNINGS WITH PROFESSIONAL RESPONDERS AND THE PUBLIC IN ENGLAND AND WALES**

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### **Abstract**

This presentation addresses the results of a research project completed in March 2010 and undertaken for the Environment Agency in England and Wales into the potential for developing a pluvial flood warning service.

The recent development of an Extreme Rainfall Alert service by the UK Met. Office presents a near future opportunity to develop warnings for pluvial floods. However, uncertainties concerning the probability of events, their location and their likely impact on the ground significantly complicate the risk communication and warning response process.

Interviews and workshops involving professional responders and focus groups involving members of the public were undertaken during 2009 to identify the reception such a pluvial flood warning service is likely to receive if introduced. The research provides insights into the opportunities which exist for the development of such a service as well as the significant difficulties and constraints currently associated with the concept of such a warning service. The opportunities include the possibility of providing professional responders with valuable lead time to prepare for pluvial flooding. The constraints include ones relating to available lead time, belief in the effectiveness of science, trust in authority, public perception of pluvial floods and the education of the public.

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There are also concerns that the reliability issues surrounding a new pluvial warning service might undermine the responder confidence in existing fluvial and tidal flood warning services which has taken so long to develop but which may so easily be punctured.