

# Exercise Watermark

Steve Merrett

Environment Agency

[stephen.merrett@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:stephen.merrett@environment-agency.gov.uk)



“A national flooding exercise should take place at the earliest opportunity in order to test the new arrangements which central government departments are putting into place to deal with flooding and infrastructure emergencies”

*Pitt Review, recommendation 49*

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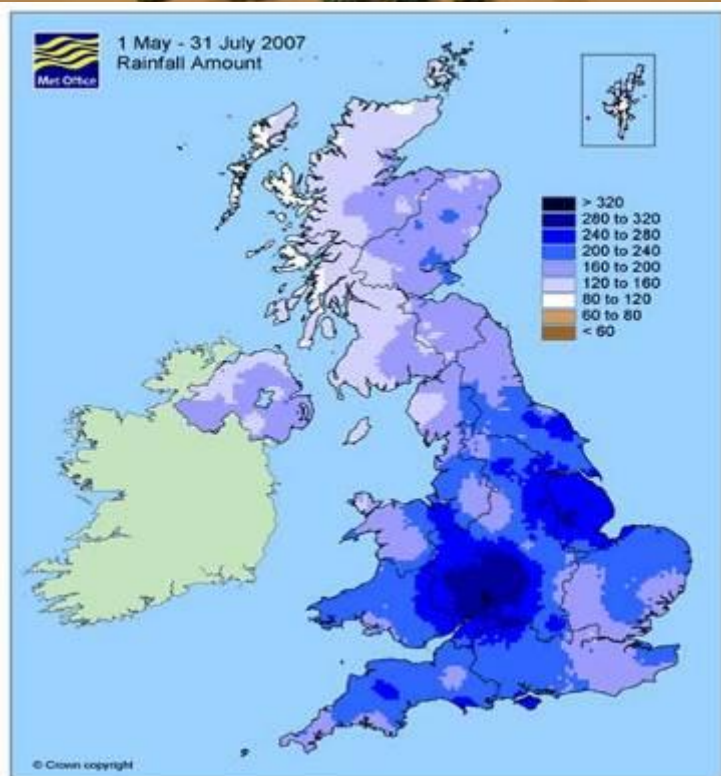
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## National objectives

- Test the response to a wide-area flooding emergency from **COBR down to multi-agency gold** level
- Test **National Flood Rescue** arrangements
- Test **plan activation** arrangements
- Test **communication arrangements** at all levels
- Test **media management** at all levels
- Test **business continuity** of essential service providers
- Test **mutual aid** across Local Resilience Forum/DA boundaries
- Test **mass evacuation** and sheltering arrangements
- Test implementation of **other relevant Pitt recommendations**
- ....against *real* conditions

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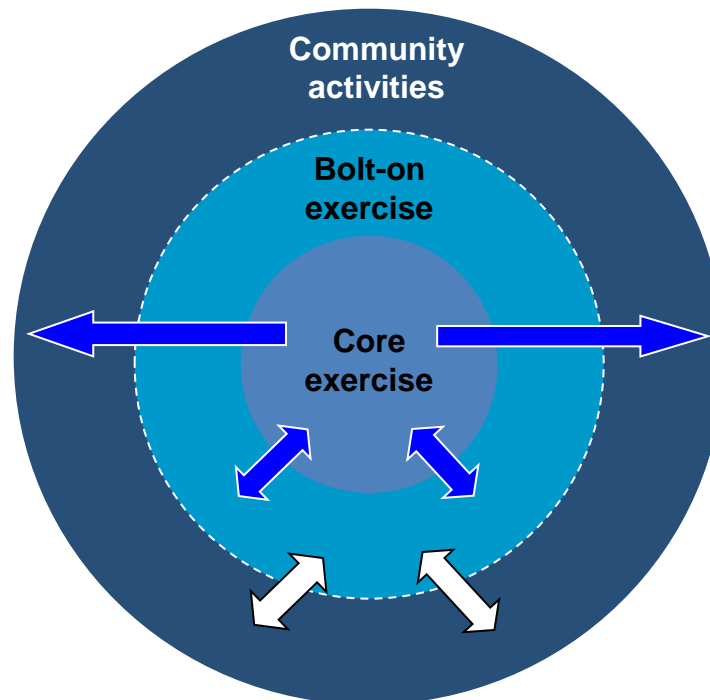
GETTY IMAGES / HULTON ARCHIVE

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# Framework

## Core component

- Command post style exercise
- “live” interaction
- COBR and Gov Depts
- SCG/GOLD
- Pseudo media
- Multi-agency players
- Central co-ordination and direction to manage exercise
- IT services to support



## Bolt-on exercises

- Live and table-top exercises organised by Cat 1 and 2 responders
- Optional live interface with the core
- Exercise local Multi Agency Flood Plan arrangements
- Locally planned and managed using branded material

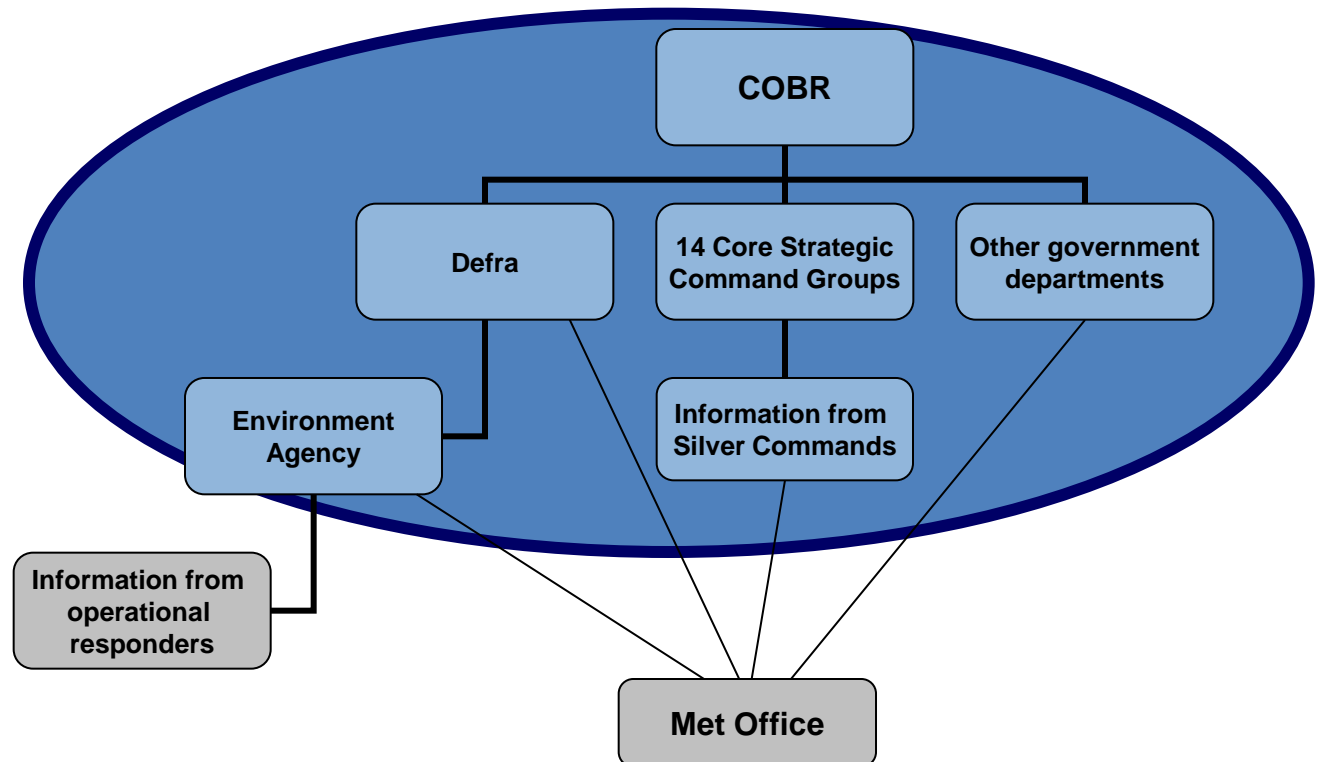
## Community activities

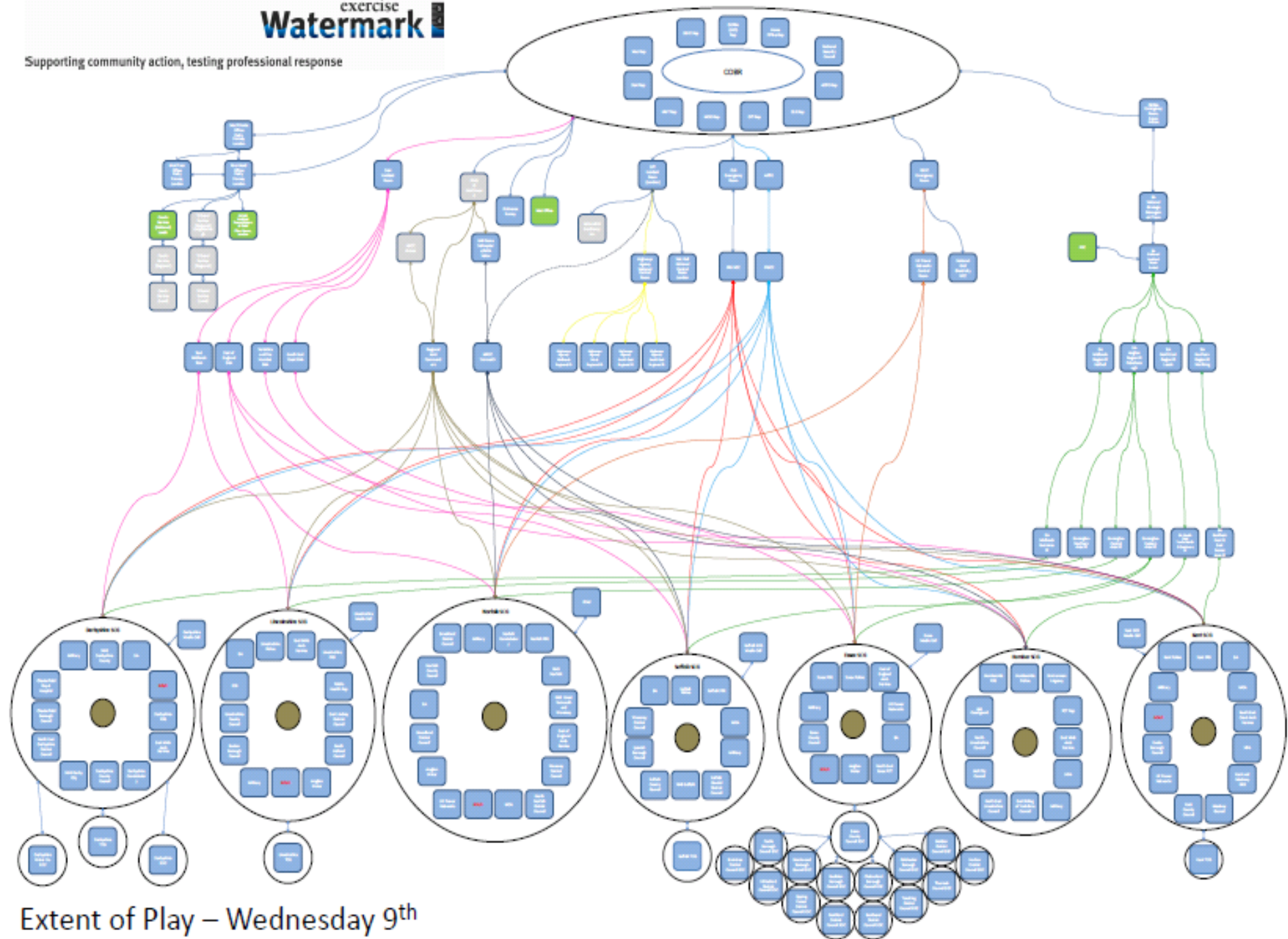
- Participation by businesses, community groups, schools etc.
- Advice, presentations and scenarios available via Information Packs
- No interactive play with the core exercise

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## Who was in the bubble?

- Injects and snippets of information formed a picture of the impact and response to initiate exercise





Extent of Play – Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup>

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**Live Evacuation Exercise**

**Testing of  
local flood  
plans**

**Door  
knocking and  
leaflet  
distribution**

**Flood  
exhibitions**

**Media  
Awareness  
day**

**Flood  
Warning  
Siren testing**

**Flood  
Awareness  
displays in  
Libraries**

**Community  
ditch clearing  
day**

**Table top  
exercise to  
test business  
continuity  
plans**

**Community  
Flood Plan  
preparation**



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## We practiced response to:

- Over **200,000** flooded properties
- **½ million people flooded** out of homes
- **400,000** people self-evacuated
- **135,000** people requiring assisted evacuation
- Over **17,000 people needing water rescue**
- **18,000 people sheltering** above flood waters
- Over **3,000 casualties**
- **391 fatalities**

## Exercise reports (on Defra website)

- **Exercise Watermark final report** - contains lessons identified by those who took part in the exercise
- **Exercise Watermark planning, delivery and review** - this report describes the planning, delivery and review of the exercise and the lessons that can be learnt for exercise planners
- **Exercise Watermark a summary for communities** - this summary report shares relevant findings for interested communities

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## **Our successes from the exercise include:**

- We exercised the Flood Forecasting Centre with National Partners for the first time
- We used our new Flood Warning Codes, and tested our partners' understanding of them
- We provided support to Defra and COBR (Cabinet Office Briefing Room), and to local partners and communities
- We are more pro-active in our work with the media
- We resourced all our incident rooms and supported all requirements of the multi-agency (external) groups

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## My key recommendations...

- Prepare data now – so we have it ready for an incident;
- Improve our flood visualisation abilities;
- Better use of technology for information sharing and reporting data;
- Improve skills and confidence in incident response;
- Continue to promote our flood warning arrangements to our partners;
- Continue to promote awareness of flood risk to individuals and communities.

## Summary

- Good incident response depends on many factors
- Watermark measured our progress..
- ..and signals the next steps in our journey