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Policy paper

UK Resilience Forum second meeting: 3 May 2022

Updated 17 March 2023



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Meeting held in-person and by video conference - Tuesday 03 May 2022

Representatives from the following organisations were in attendance:

- National Emergencies Trust
- Maritime and Coastguard Agency
- National Rail
- Voluntary and Community Sector Emergencies Partnership
- National Police Chief's Council
- Citizens Advice
- Ministry of Defence
- Government Office for Science
- National Fire Chief's Council
- Environment Agency
- NHS England
- Northern Ireland Executive

Invited organisations unable to attend:

- Scottish Government
- Welsh Government
- Electronic Communications Resilience and Response Group
- Energy Networks Association
- Confederation of British Industry
- Equality and Human Rights Commission
- SOLACE
- Thames Water

The Minister for Cabinet Office, the Rt. Hon. Michael Ellis QC MP (Chair) welcomed attendees to the second meeting of the UK Resilience Forum (UKRF).

The Chair reiterated the purpose of the forum as an important advisory body to improve the UK's resilience through strengthened relationships and increased collaboration; to act as a conduit for raising awareness around risk; to inform policy development; and align efforts.

The Cabinet Office Civil Contingencies Secretariat (CCS) presented a Risk Horizon Scan, highlighting risks for the coming months including; ongoing impacts of COVID-19 and emerging hepatitis cases; protest activity; potential disruption at borders; industrial action or commercial failure; and the possibility of severe weather.

The Cabinet Office Civil Contingencies Secretariat then presented an update on policy developments, including the Civil Contingencies Act Review, the Resilience Strategy and the National Security Risk Assessment. The Director of CCS thanked the many organisations present at the UKRF for their sustained support to the ongoing work.

The Cabinet Office Civil Contingencies Secretariat then presented an item on Public Engagement on Resilience, within the context of the Resilience Strategy's core principle of achieving a whole of society approach to resilience. The following factors have been identified:

- A more sophisticated approach to risk communication that ensures stronger public awareness and debate through personalised and targeted tools that enable individuals and businesses to plan effectively for their own circumstances;
- Improved clarity around responsibilities for resilience and greater public accountability;
- Further support for the integration of voluntary and community capabilities into local emergency management.;
- Improved provision of tools for both private and community organisations to play their part to invest in their own resilience.

Attendees were invited to share their views on how national government can work better with local institutions and networks to engage the public on risk. A number of points were made in discussion, including the following:

- Risk communication should be consistent, comprehensible and clear to facilitate easier understanding and prevent the spread of misinformation.
- Community-focussed groups can support in communicating key community safety messaging.
- The role of trusted voices and champions within community groups and organisations to connect with individuals through shared experiences, and to combat disinformation is critical. Narratives and stories from those who have been affected by emergencies can help improve the recognition of risks.
- It is important for the public to understand where ownership and accountability sits for emergency preparedness, response and recovery.
- The importance of a continuum across national and local communication. Taking the opportunity to develop a single narrative nationally wherever relevant, then joining up national messaging, digital conduits and local presence to help people and businesses understand the risks most relevant to them and how to take action to be more resilient against those risks.

The Minister for Cabinet Office, the Rt. Hon Michael Ellis QC MP finished the meeting by acknowledging the excellent partnerships between government and UKRF members and underlined the government's commitment to continue engaging with stakeholders and the public on resilience matters. He thanked members for their attendance.

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