

The Flood Forecasting Centre (FFC) in the UK

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The Met Office and the Environment Agency in the UK have set up a joint Flood Forecasting Centre (FFC), based at the London offices of the Met Office. This partnership will improve the UK's ability to respond to flooding events by providing an earlier national forecasting and alert service to central and local government departments so as to give them more time to prepare for floods and reduce the risk of loss of life and damage to property.

The creation of the centre is in response to a key recommendation of Sir Michael Pitt's Review following the summer 2007 floods over the UK. For the first time, the FFC combines the Environment Agency's expertise in flood risk management and the Met Office's expertise in weather forecasting under one roof.

My presentation will describe the benefits it will bring to the emergency responder community. It will also cover the tools available to the centre such as the new generation of high resolution weather models now coming on line. As a result, flood forecasting and warning systems, (which historically have been based on the lack of sufficiently fine scale rainfall information), need to be revisited in the light of the new meteorological modelling capabilities. This is particularly true for surface water flooding, where these new capabilities offer, for the first time, the possibility of providing credible alerts.