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Adding Value, How the Flood Forecasting Centre assesses Flood Risk: A case study of the Cornwall floods of 21 and 22 March 2013

K. Fenwick, S. Ramsdale, and C. Pilling
United Kingdom (charlie.pilling@metoffice.gov.uk)

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Authors

K. Fenwick
Flood Forecasting Centre, Exeter, United Kingdom

S. Ramsdale
Flood Forecasting Centre, Exeter, United Kingdom

C. Pilling
Flood Forecasting Centre, Exeter, United Kingdom

The Flood Forecasting Centre (FFC) is a partnership between the UK Met Office and the Environment Agency, established in 2009, to give an overview of flood risk across England and Wales. It was set up following the summer 2007 floods in England and Wales, and the subsequent recommendations of the Pitt review, to provide longer lead times for flooding.

Based at the Met Office in Exeter, the FFC combines cutting edge science in both me-teorology and hydrology to provide an assessment of flood risk across England and Wales, primarily for the emergency response community. This incorporates the human element in translating raw model output into typical flood impacts and communicating this concisely in our flagship product, the Flood Guidance Statement (FGS).

This presentation focuses on a recent flood event in Cornwall during March 2013. This includes the original assessment of impacts and probabilities, followed by the decision making of when to increase the flood risk to provide the best forecast at the most ap-propriate time. Positive feedback from customers of the FGS was received for this forecast highlighting the benefits of the flood risk assessment in targeted mobilisation and deployment of staff.

Whilst the FFC continues to utilise latest science in the operational environment, part of the hydrometeorologist role is to engage with upcoming developments at an early stage. This allows the FFC to exploit improvements within areas such as high resolu-tion deterministic and probabilistic NWP and enables the FFC to influence the direction of future research.