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Inter-professional communication of risk during a simulated storm surge and resulting extreme flood

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Complex weather, storm surge and flood water inundation models and their resultant visualisation tools are becoming important sources of risk communication informing emergency managers' decisions both in planning and response. The following paper reports on an exploratory exercise with emergency managers during a 4-day, real-time simulation of a storm surge in the Thames estuary close to London, England. The study evaluated the differing needs in time and with particular emergency management responsibilities during the extreme event. A number of visualisation tools were tested some such as ensemble visualisations were new to the managers. In addition to revealing the technical needs of managers the study revealed dimensions of trust that lay beyond the technology in which the communication was grounded. It was also revealed that uncertainty in visualisations was not unwelcome by this professional group.