

Participant Information Sheet

Investigators: Louise Arnal, Professor Hannah Cloke & Dr Elisabeth Stephens

Contact details: Louise Arnal

l.l.s.arnal@pgr.reading.ac.uk

Event: Change in operational forecast production and its impact on the Environment Agency (EA) monitoring and forecasting duty officers (MFDOs) & flood warning duty officers (FWDOs)? – Interviews with EA MFDOs & FWDOs

*Undertaken as part of the EU Horizon 2020 IMPREX Project (<http://www.imprex.eu/>) (641811).
This event is being co-organised with the Environment Agency (EA) and with support provided by the EA and the University of Reading.*

Thank you for your interest in taking part in this series of interviews held in July to August 2018.

Your contribution to this interview is entirely voluntary and you have the right to withdraw from the interview at any time, without needing to provide a reason. You can do this by contacting me using the details above now, or at any time in the future.

Please note that if you choose to withdraw after the interviews have taken place, you will need to inform Louise Arnal before 18th August 2018 to ensure that all the information you provided is removed from any output. After this date, it may not be possible to guarantee that your information is removed.

Aims of the interviews

The Environment Agency (EA) has been using a single flood forecast scenario for nation-wide incident planning. However, the EA is currently changing their practice in-house to using two flood forecast scenarios (a best estimate and a reasonable worst case scenario), thereby communicating uncertainty in the flood forecasts. To support the use of these scenarios in operational decision-making, the EA would like to investigate the challenges faced by their MFDOs & FWDOs during this transition period, as well as the opportunities in making use of uncertainty information.

The main objectives of this research are:

- To understand how the transition to two flood forecast scenarios affects the EA MFDOs & FWDOs in their day-to-day job (opportunities vs challenges).
- To find ways to support EA MFDOs & FWDOs through this transition and future ones at the EA.
- To draw general guidelines from this case study, which could be used to support MFDOs & FWDOs in other institutes across the world during similar transitions.

How we have selected people to participate

We have invited up to 10 participants who work as MFDOs or FWDOs at different EA centres and who have all worked with single flood forecast scenarios in the past. The interviews are done with pairs of MFDOs & FWDOs, to have a more complete picture of the flow of information between those 2 roles.

On the day

The semi-structured interviews will be held throughout July and August 2018 and one interview should take approximately 1-2 hours.

All interviews will be recorded by Louise Arnal.

About the information you supply

The outputs from the interviews will be used to generate a short report, and for a published scientific journal article. Outputs may also form part of a PhD thesis, conference presentation and other output delivered as part of the IMPREX project.

All information will be treated in the strictest confidence. Verbal communication data recorded by Louise Arnal shall be subsequently anonymised (using codes to identify participants).

All the information shall be securely stored (see below) by the research lead (Louise Arnal) and may be shared with co-researchers (Professor Hannah Cloke, Dr Elisabeth Stephens and the EA commissioning team) as required.

To protect participant confidentiality, the University of Reading will keep any information you supply in a password protected secure system and in a separate place to any typed transcripts or hand-written notes until December 2019, when it will be destroyed.

All published output will include a disclosure statement that the information provided has been collated based on informal interviews and personal opinion and must not be taken as being representative of the views or practice of a particular organisation or institution.

We please ask that participants do not discuss the content of the discussion outside of the interview (i.e. Chatham House Rules).

This project has been subject to ethical review by the School of Archaeology, Geography and Environment Science and has been given a favourable ethical opinion for conduct. The research will be carried out by the Investigators listed above.

If you would like to know more about the information you provide or have any questions about the interview, please contact Louise Arnal using the details above.

Yours faithfully,

Louise Arnal