

Spotlight on...

Flooding Resources

What the need was and how we identified it:

The widespread floods in many parts of England during 2007 provided a stern test for a range of organisations, particularly the Fire and Rescue Service. Following the floods the Government commissioned the Pitt Report (2007) which made a number of recommendations, specifically:

‘The Government should urgently put in place a fully funded national capability for flood rescue, with Fire and Rescue Authorities playing a leading role underpinned as necessary by a ‘statutory duty’.

There is no statutory requirement for WYFRS to deal with flooding however we recognise that our communities expect us to send appliances to deal with humanitarian or life-risk incidents related to floods.

What we did:

As a result of this recommendation, and with the support of the fire authority, we identified four fire stations as flood response stations: Leeds, Brighouse, Wakefield, and Bingley. We bought: four 4x4 vehicles, two powered boats (Brighouse and Bingley) and six non-powered lead-out boats to complement the existing Swift Water Rescue Teams (SWRT).

We provided high level training for all the crews and maintain their skill levels with regular in-house training.

Outcomes:

- We attended special services calls in the recent floods in Hebden Bridge and Allerton Bywater.
- A greater knowledge and understanding of all water rescue capabilities.
- training has taken place with the Yorkshire & Humber Rescue Group and other WYFRS water rescue stations.
- The outcomes from these training sessions have led to the creation of more realistic rescue scenarios and greater understanding of other FRS capabilities.
- A number of exercises have been completed to measure the performance of flood response equipment including Exercise ‘Watermark’ and Exercise ‘Overflow’ (wide area flooding in Wakefield). These exercises have allowed the direction of more specific training to ensure a safe resilient response.



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Keys to our success:

- Using the knowledge of our Swift Water Rescue Teams assisted in the procurement process
- The enthusiasm and dedication of operational personnel
- Partnerships with external training organisations and the Yorkshire & Humber Rescue Group
- The close working relationship with Yorkshire Ambulance Service HART team has enabled us to provide an enhanced multi-agency response when dealing with flood rescue.

What next:

Missing Persons' Protocol - from 1 July 2012 when a request is made from West Yorkshire Police, support may be given to search for missing people. This will include water searches where WYFRS boats can search rivers, canals and open water, further improving partnership working arrangements between WYFRS & WYP.

This 'spotlight on' contributes to...



DELIVER A PROFESSIONAL AND RESILIENT EMERGENCY RESPONSE SERVICE



LEADERSHIP, PARTNERSHIP AND ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT
INDICATOR: 1.4

EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
INDICATOR: 3.16



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