



Association of Drainage Authorities

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Press Information

EFRA Future Flood Prevention Report

ADA values the publication of the EFRA Committee's report on Future Flood Prevention. The ideas it contains must be used to challenge England's water and flood risk management industry to find better solutions to how we address the significant risks to people, our economy and environment from flood and drought.

Some of the governance changes suggested, however, need very careful consideration to avoid the risks of additional red tape and reduction in parliamentary accountability. Whilst ADA supports the need for change, there are many opportunities to execute those changes effectively from within the existing structures, maximising the skills and resources available for future water resource and flood risk management.

Innes Thomson, ADA's Chief Executive comments, "*Along with the Government's National Flood Resilience Report published in September, EFRA's recommendations are another clear steer that England needs to make some improvements to the way we manage water. Catchment management and effective local decision making and delivery are very much at the heart of those changes we need to embrace*"

ADA has been working closely with England's flood risk management authorities to build the communication and collaboration that is needed to enable efficient local delivery solutions. ADA is pleased that the report supports closer working arrangements between Internal Drainage Boards, Local Authorities, Water Utility companies and the Environment Agency. It is however key that the correct balances of responsibility are found involving all of those authorities.

Taking a total catchment management approach to our river networks from source to sea can unlock innovative and better ways of managing water. New ways of slowing the flow and retaining water upstream should be tested and applied more widely. ADA supports the report's call to work much more closely with farmers and land managers to encourage and incentivise them to provide flood storage where this can offer a wider public benefit. ADA also supports a much more robust approach to SuDS to drive future good development and planning practice. Critically, best governance arrangements need to be put in place to ensure that SuDS can continue to operate to their design standards for the duration of their operational life.

At the same time, maintenance of watercourses and systems will continue to play a vital role in future flood risk management. ADA is pleased that the report highlights the need for adequate provision for river channel maintenance, and this should equally apply to other essential systems and equipment such as surface water systems, pumping stations, barriers and tidal sluices.

Concluding ADA's comments on EFRA's work, ADA's Chairman, Henry Cator added "*It is time that we took a long term approach to investment in our rivers, coasts and drainage systems and their ongoing maintenance. The only way to achieve this is by increasing routine investment administered at a local level*".

ENDS

Notes to Editors

The membership body for water level management

Member of the European Union of Water Management Associations

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ADA is the membership organisation for water level management (WLM) authorities in the UK and is also the recognised national representative for Internal Drainage Boards (IDBs) in England and Wales.

Established in 1937, today ADA represents over 230 members and associate members at a national and parliamentary level, including Regional Flood & Coastal Committees (RFCCs) as well as contractors, consultants and suppliers to the industry.

Both Innes Thomson, ADA chief executive, and Ian Moodie, ADA technical officer are available for further comment or discussion.

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