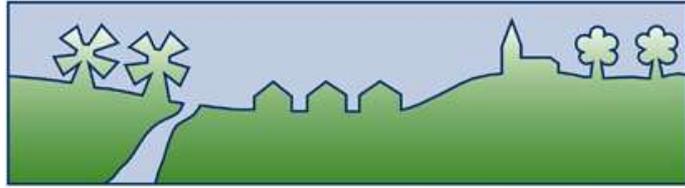
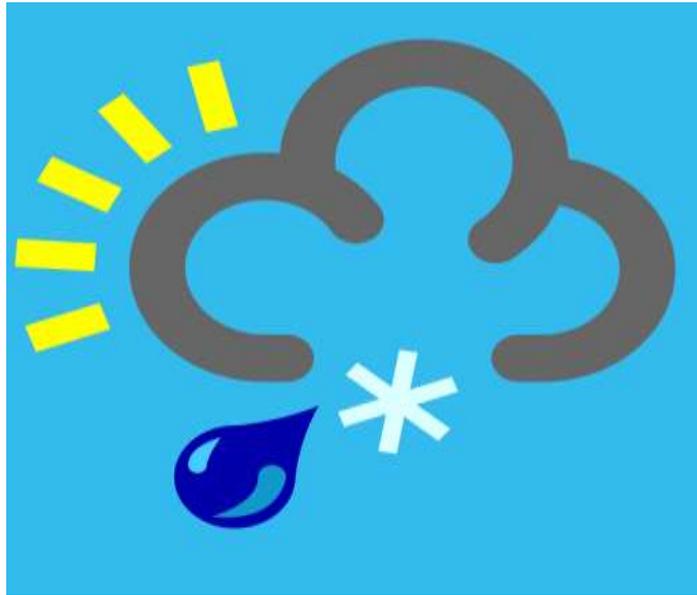


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MID SUSSEX
DISTRICT COUNCIL



Adverse Weather Plan

Not Protectively Marked

VERSION CONTROL

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INTERDEPENDENCIES

This plan links to other SRF documents and should be read alongside them at the relevant points:

Other MSDC document/plan	Cited at
MSDC Emergency Plan	Page 7
MSDC Business Continuity Plan(s)	

DOCUMENT CHANGES

Change	Requested by	Amended by	Page/Section

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1 INTRODUCTION

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 places a statutory duty on the District Council to prepare and plan for incidents that may have an adverse effect in the community. The District Council's Emergency Plan provides additional information regarding the response to large-scale incidents in Mid Sussex.

It is accepted that Mid Sussex will periodically be hit by adverse or severe weather events, which can threaten lives, damage property and cause disruption. The District has previously seen disruptive winter snowfall and some areas have also been affected by localised flooding.

Whilst such incidents are quite rare, climate change experts warn to expect more extreme weather in the years to come. The UK's climate is becoming wetter and the results have been seen by experiencing more frequent extreme rain events leading to disruptive surface water flooding incidents as well as more widespread flooding.

More accurate forecasting and better communication provides the opportunity to be better prepared for adverse/severe weather. Prompt action helps to minimise the impact the incident has on the community and maximise the effectiveness of the responding organisations, shortening the recovery process.

Mid Sussex District Council is committed to working with its local partners to prepare for, respond to and recover from adverse weather events. The Council is an active participant in the Sussex Resilience Forum, which enables joined-up emergency planning among all the main responders, utility providers and voluntary organisations.

This Adverse Weather Plan specifies how the District Council will respond to adverse weather events in Mid Sussex.

1.1 Aim

The aim of this plan is to ensure that Mid Sussex District Council can respond to a local adverse weather event, whilst complementing the roles of other agencies and continuing to deliver the councils essential services.

This plan will be reviewed annually, each October, by the council's Emergency Planning Manager in preparation for the onset of winter.

2 Preparedness & Response

2.1 MSDC Adverse Weather Preparedness

The Mid Sussex Emergency Planning Liaison Group (EPLG) meets twice a year and reviews the planning and preparation for adverse weather events as an agenda item at each meeting. This group includes emergency responders, the relevant District Council departments and representatives from local Town and Parish Councils.

During an adverse weather event, a special meeting of the EPLG may be convened to discuss the situation, as necessary. Adverse weather preparedness advice is also included on the Council's website and in publications such as Mid Sussex Matters.

Mid Sussex District Council subscribes to the National Adverse weather Warning Service provided by the Met Office. Adverse weather warning emails are received by the Council prior to an anticipated event. These adverse weather email warnings are then automatically forwarded to key officers and members, local partners who may be involved in the response in the wider community.

In line with the Sussex Resilience Forum's Adverse Weather Plan, the Emergency Planning Manager (or their representative) will call in to an Adverse Weather Teleconference (AWT) if significant weather impacts are forecast. The AWT will provide Sussex Resilience Forum (SRF) partners with the latest weather information. The key messages from the AWT will be shared with the Council's adverse weather email group. The triggers and responses to adverse weather warnings are specified in the SRF Adverse Weather Plan. [See Appendix 3](#)

When adverse weather is expected in Mid Sussex, key officers will communicate and liaise with local partners to identify any particularly vulnerable locations. Where possible these areas will be given priority during the response to help mitigate the impact of the adverse weather.

3 Activation of this Plan

This plan will be activated in the following circumstances:

- An Amber or Red Weather Warning covering Mid Sussex is issued by the Met Office
- A Flood Warning is issued by the Environment Agency in Mid Sussex
- A Yellow Weather Warning and/or Flood Alert has been issued and officers believe that it is likely to have a significant impact in Mid Sussex
- A local weather related incident develops so that a multi-agency response is required to protect life, property or infrastructure, or threatens the continuity of MSDC services

In these circumstances, key officers will be notified using the cascade system specified in the Council's Emergency Plan.

3.1 MSDC Adverse weather Response

Once this plan is activated, the Emergency Planning Manager (or the Duty Incident Liaison Officer) will liaise with the Head of Corporate Resources regarding the Council's initial response.

The Adverse weather Response Team will meet to determine how MSDC responds, including the implementation of business continuity plans as appropriate. This officer group will decide on the allocation of MSDC resources to support the community, based on the perceived impact of the adverse weather event across the District. [See Appendix 1.](#)

The Council's Customer Services and Communications Team will be briefed to inform local partners and the wider community at appropriate intervals throughout the adverse weather event.

3.2 Initial Actions and Business Continuity

- Assess conditions at key assets (such as the Oaklands Campus, town centre parks and car parks, trash screens etc.) and act to protect life
- Assess the initial impact upon the Council's services and across the District as a whole. Assess front-line staffing levels for essential services
- Contact local responders, (including Town and Parish Councils) to share information, agree priorities and inform them of action to be taken by MSDC
- Consider activating the Council's Emergency Plan if a major incident is anticipated
- Identify and secure additional resources that may be required to affect the response
- Consider re-deploying contractors (e.g. grounds maintenance and cleansing) to undertake emergency duties (e.g. snow clearance instead of street cleansing)
- Consider re-deploying staff to work with local partners to avoid unnecessary journeys and provide assistance to communities close to their homes
- Prepare rest centre(s) if emergency shelter is likely to be required
- Consider offering resources to other Districts or Boroughs who may be more severely affected, in accordance with the relevant Mutual Aid Agreements
- **Consider activation of individual Business Unit Business Continuity Plans** in the event of staff being unable to get to their normal place of work

4 Responding to different types of Adverse weather

4.1 Winter Weather (Snow & Ice)

When cold weather, ice and heavy snowfall affect the District, the Council will assess the impact and contact the relevant partner agencies. West Sussex County Council will initially clear snow from primary roads whilst other local routes and pavements may be treated by Town or Parish Councils, as part of their own Winter Management Plans. In more extreme cases, the District Council will identify any gaps in the response and provide support to any untreated high priority areas as they arise. [See Appendix 2](#) for more information.

4.2 Flooding

As it has no coastline or major rivers, the Mid Sussex District is considered relatively low risk in terms of flooding. However, it is acknowledged that surface water flooding can occur anywhere following heavy localised rain.

The Environment Agency has identified 'wet spots' in the Districts three main towns, Burgess Hill, Haywards Heath and East Grinstead. These areas can be susceptible to surface water flooding following intense periods of heavy rain. Such weather is difficult to predict, and it may not be possible to forewarn people in specific locations. During flooding incidents of this kind, the Council will work with the relevant partners to support the response and recovery.

It is noted that some properties in Lindfield, Ardingly, Copthorne and Hassocks have occasionally been affected by flooding from nearby rivers and streams. Local Parish Councils have been notified and, in some cases, property owners have been given advice as to how to prepare for flooding and protect their homes.

When there is a heightened risk of flooding in Mid Sussex, contractors will be mobilised to monitor and clear Council-owned trash screens. Contractors will be on-call when significant rainfall or flood alerts are in force and screens will be treated in priority order (Appendix 3).

If more severe flooding is expected in an area of the District, additional resources will be mobilised and deployed to support the community and protect critical infrastructure. These emergency actions will be co-ordinated and authorised by the Adverse weather Response Team. However, the District Council will not supply sandbags or other equipment to protect individual properties from flooding, as this responsibility lies with the owner.

4.3 Wind Storms

High winds may bring down trees and/or power lines and can also cause serious structural damage to property. Trees which have fallen on District Council owned land will be inspected and prioritised for clearance by approved contractors.

Should any adverse weather incident result in the need to evacuate properties, the District Council will activate the Emergency Plan and provide emergency shelter for people who are displaced. In all such cases, vulnerable people requiring support will be given priority.

4.4 Drought

Whilst the onset of drought and the associated impacts are slower than other adverse weather events, the impacts can be severe and prolonged. Droughts occur naturally because of a lack of rainfall - often this is prolonged over a period of several months or even years. The response to drought uses the same framework as other events. The level of response will be based on the drought stage declared by the Environment Agency which in turn will trigger a Sussex Resilience Forum multi agency response contained within the SRF Adverse Weather Plan.

5 Command & Control

The majority of adverse weather incidents do not require more than a normal operational response from the agencies involved - for example, the District Council's contracted gritting or trash screen clearance arrangements.

However, if the prevailing or expected conditions are likely to cause significant disruption to the community, SRF partners will consider activating the Adverse Weather Office to enable tactical co-ordination, in accordance with the Sussex Adverse Weather Framework. The Adverse Weather Office team will be made up of specialist officers from the Met Office and Environment Agency, supported by Emergency Planners from other responders. During a major incident, key officers will be mobilised, and rest centres activated as stipulated in the Council's Emergency Plan. Officers will refer to the MSDC Emergency Contacts Directory and call-out procedures to initiate action.

When widespread, severe disruption is expected with the possibility of a threat to life or property, a Red Weather Warning will be received and a Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG) will be convened. The SCG will normally meet at Sussex Police Headquarters in Lewes, but alternative venues or teleconference facilities may be considered appropriate as determined by the weather conditions. The SCG will include senior officers from the emergency services, local authorities, the Met Office, Environment Agency, Health Authorities, Utilities and Telecoms companies, voluntary groups and possibly, the military. When requested, the District Council will provide a member of Senior Management Team to take part in the SCG meetings.

6 Warning & Informing

The Council's Customer Service & Communications Team will provide accurate information relating to a local adverse weather event for officers, members and the public.

6.1 Action to be taken by the District Council:

- to provide accurate and timely information via the Council's website and social media.
- to inform Members, local partners and business groups about the Council's response.
- to co-ordinate press releases with other agencies and liaise with local media.
- to brief Members and/or Officers in advance of press conferences or interviews.

6.2 Key messages to the public:

- Listen to weather warnings; take action to protect your property but don't risk your life.
- Prepare an emergency kit for your home containing vital supplies for your family.
- Avoid non-essential journeys and be aware of local road closures, school closures and disruption to public transport.
- If travelling by car, let others know of your plans, take warm/waterproofed clothes, a sleeping bag, some hot drink and food.
- Your business should be prepared for weather-related disruption, make sure you have a plan and have shared it with your staff, suppliers and other key stakeholders.

6.3 Isolated Communities & Vulnerable People

6.3.1 Isolated Communities

Adverse weather can cause roads to become impassable and this can be particularly challenging in the more rural areas of the District. In many cases, local communities can cope with such disruption without the need for external assistance, but it helps if their arrangements are shared with other agencies, so that their capabilities are known.

During the response phase of a adverse weather event, local Town or Parish Councils should report any concerns to the MSDC Adverse weather Response Team. Upon receipt of such reports, the District Council will endeavour to provide support to any isolated communities as requested, in conjunction with West Sussex County Council.

6.3.2 Vulnerable People

Vulnerable members of the community will be given priority for assistance, as they are less likely to be able to help themselves during an incident. All responders should work together to identify those most at risk and prioritise response work to

meet those in urgent need of support. The District Council will share information and local knowledge to help locate those deemed to be vulnerable.

7 Activities undertaken by Volunteers

Local partners may deploy volunteers to support those identified as vulnerable in their communities during adverse weather incidents. The following tasks have been undertaken:

- Snow clearance and salt spreading of footpaths in key locations
- Door-knocking - volunteers deployed to visit the most vulnerable residents as identified by partners
- Leaflet or letter drops to provide information
- Communicating via business associations, community or residents groups
- Liaising with other voluntary sector organisations during the response

When notified of such activities, the District Council will liaise with partners to share information and agree priorities.

8 Mutual Aid

Local authorities in Sussex have entered in to a mutual aid agreement to provide support to one another during emergencies.

As a result of this, Chief Executives may request emergency resources from another local authority (should the need arise) and there is an expectation that they will be provided, unless that authority is experiencing similar difficulties.

For example, the Districts of Lewes and Wealden to the East have a higher risk of flooding than Mid Sussex and it is feasible that they may request support from the District Council in the event of a major incident within their boundaries.

9 Recovery

Under the Civil Contingencies Act, Local Authorities assume the lead role during the recovery phase from a major incident. Mid Sussex District Council will work with the relevant multi-agency partners to initiate community recovery, in accordance with the Sussex Resilience Forum Recovery Plan.

This could include providing specialist officers (as requested) to support the activities of the:

- Recovery Coordinating Group (RCG)
- Health & Welfare Sub-group
- Business & Economic Recovery Sub-group
- Housing & Homelessness Sub-group

- Environment & Site Clearance Sub-group
- Infrastructure Sub-group
- Finance & Legal Sub-group
- Scientific & Technical Advice Cell (STAC)

During the recovery phase from a adverse weather event, local Councils (led by WSCC) will consider providing a Humanitarian Assistance Centre (HAC) to support people in the affected community. The intention of a HAC is to:

- provide accurate information from the relevant agencies throughout the recovery process
- enable community-led recovery
- provide advice on welfare issues (e.g. food and water supplies)
- gather information from insurance and utility companies, benefits, council tax etc.

10 Review & De-brief

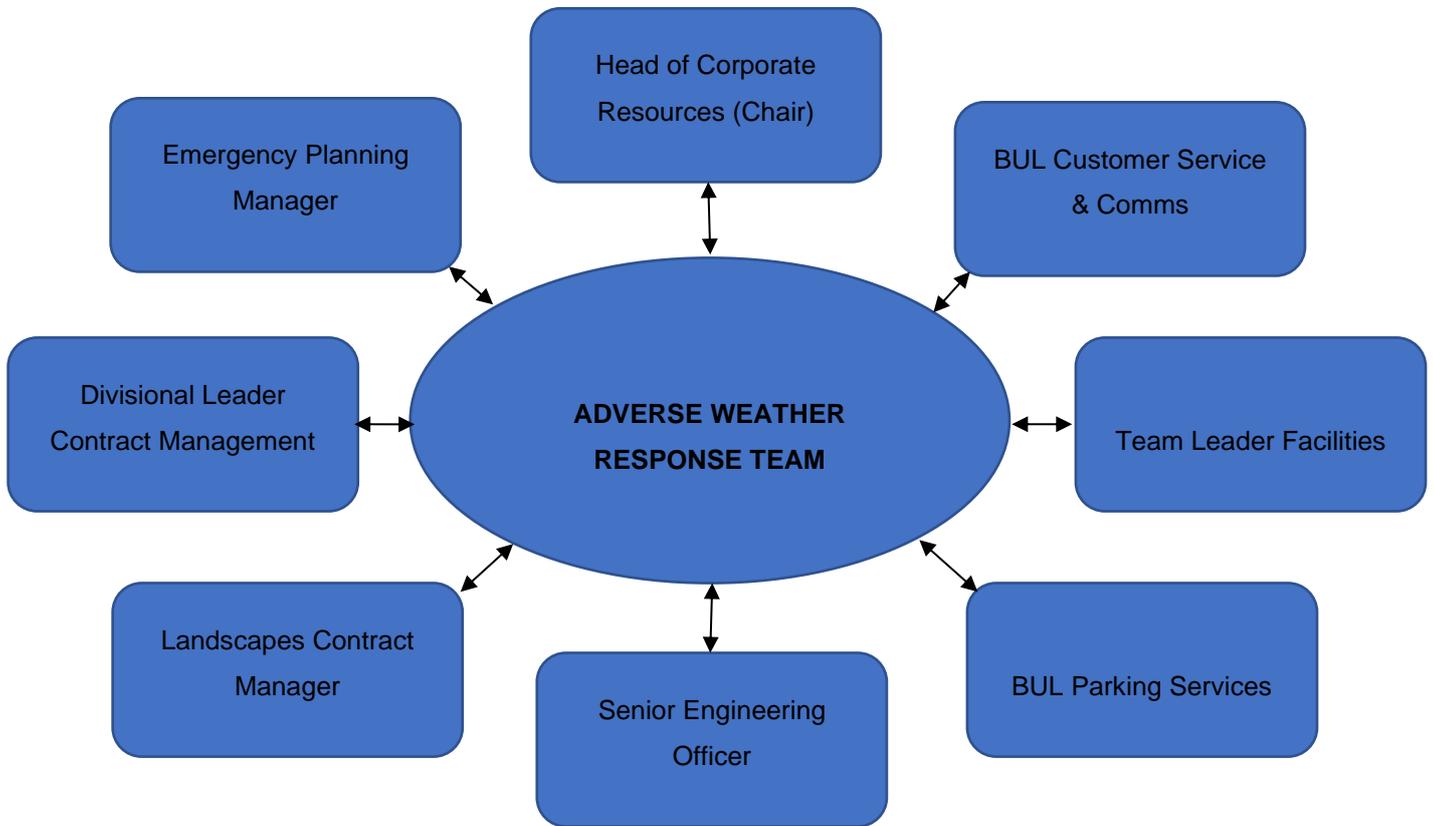
Following a adverse weather event in Mid Sussex and the activation of this plan, the Council will convene a meeting of officers, members and partner organisations, to review these arrangements and identify any lessons that can reasonably be learned.

The Sussex Resilience Forum will also hold a multi-agency de-brief if there has been severe disruption to lives, property or the environment across the County.

Once this process is complete, the Emergency Planning Manager will provide a de-brief report and make recommendations for improvements to the District Council's adverse weather arrangements.

In the absence of any incident which may trigger the activation of this Adverse weather Plan, these arrangements will be reviewed annually by the council's Emergency Planning Manager.

Appendix 1 - MSDC Adverse weather Response Structure



Weather warning status

Status	Impact	Response	Action
Green	No significant disruption or damage reported	Business as Usual Normal operational response	Pro-active and reactive works as contracted. No additional resources. Complement others.
Amber	Significant disruption and some damage to property	Adverse weather Response Tactical Management by specialist officers	Adverse weather Plan activated. Additional resources required, and costs incurred to support the community and promote business continuity
Red	Severe disruption and significant damage to property Threat to life	Emergency Response Strategic Management by senior officers	Emergency Plans activated. Additional resources deployed to support critical infrastructure. Mutual aid may be requested. Prepare for recovery phase.

Appendix 2 - PRIORITY AREAS FOR SNOW CLEARANCE

West Sussex County Council assumes overall responsibility for the clearance of snow and ice on the public highway.

Carriageways

The objective is to keep as much of the road network as safe and free flowing as possible. If conditions deteriorate to the extent that the entire network cannot be kept open, a reduced network shall be adopted based on the following priorities:

Priority 1 - Primary and emergency access routes

Priority 2 - County Distributors, District Distributors

Priority 3 - Other carriageways according to the Area Office Divisional Manager

Priority 1& 2 routes are published on the [WSCC website](#) and the general expectation is that these will be cleared before the morning rush hour and monitored throughout the day. Priority 3 routes will be cleared subject to a 'Daily Decision' and this will be communicated via the WSCC website and twitter feed.

Footways and Cycle-ways

WSCC Area Office Divisional Managers (or their authorised representatives) will instruct the contractor to clear snow from selected footways, pedestrian precincts and cycle-ways starting with those most heavily trafficked.

Once the clearance programme for these routes is known, District, Town & Parish Councils will agree the local priority areas for clearance and combine their resources accordingly, whilst also having considered their own assets and business continuity requirements.

Local Arrangements in Mid Sussex

Parish & Town Councils will be primarily responsible for providing salt bins within their boundaries. Prior to each winter, WSCC will inspect these and ensure they are filled with salt.

Parish & Town Councils are advised to formulate a Winter Management Plan in conjunction with WSCC to specify the provision of local salt supplies and the distribution method during the winter months. Completed Winter Management Plans should be shared with the District Council, so that local capabilities and requirements are known.

Should the above arrangements come under pressure during any incident involving severe winter weather; the District Council will work with local partners to assist in the clearance of snow and ice in high priority areas, as they arise.

From the outset of any severe weather incident, the District Council may request a brief situation report from local Parish and Town Councils to help prioritise the response efforts.

Email WSCC at active.communities@westsussex.gov.uk for any issues or questions regarding WSCC winter preparedness

Useful links

<https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/fire-emergencies-and-crime/dealing-with-extreme-weather/> - advice on what to do

<https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/warnings-and-advice/weatherready> - advice on what to do

<https://www.midsussex.gov.uk/environment/flooding-and-drainage/> - advice on what to do

<https://www.midsussex.gov.uk/environment/emergency-planning/> - Community risk booklet & Community Resilience Resources and Tools

Appendix 3 – SRF ADVERSE WEATHER TRIGGERS

SUMMARY DIAGRAMS – USE WHEN RESPONDING

The initial default method for multi-agency communications during a weather/flooding event is a teleconference of the Tactical Advisory Group (TAG) Guidance Triggers for Sussex Adverse Weather Arrangements

Response Level	Trigger	Actual or forecast impact	Response Considerations																																							
No or Very Low / Minimal Impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No National Severe Weather Warning Service (NSWWS) Warnings and Flood warnings or Alerts issued and the Flood Guidance Statement is Green Level-1 - Heat-Health Watch or Cold Weather Alerts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> overall, day to day activities not affected but a few places may see small scale impacts occur A few transport routes affected. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No specific response. Awareness of potential impacts 																																							
Low / Minor Impacts	<table border="1"> <tr> <td rowspan="4">Likelihood</td> <td>High</td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Medium</td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Low</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Very Low</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>FGS</td> <td>Minimal</td> <td>Minor</td> <td>Significant</td> <td>Severe</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>NSWWS</td> <td>Very Low</td> <td>Low</td> <td>Medium</td> <td>High</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="6" style="text-align: center;">Potential Impacts</td> </tr> </table>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flood Alerts Issued Low / Minor Impacts reported Level-2 Heat-Health Watch or Cold Weather Alerts 	Likelihood	High		✓			Medium		✓			Low					Very Low						FGS	Minimal	Minor	Significant	Severe		NSWWS	Very Low	Low	Medium	High	Potential Impacts						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some short lived disruption to day to day routines in affected areas Incidents dealt with under 'business as usual' response by emergency services Some transport routes and travel services affected. Some journeys require longer travel times. Localised flooding affecting individual properties. Localised disruption to key sites on floodplains. Individual properties in coastal locations affected by spray and/or wave overtopping. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trigger a TAG Teleconference for Low Impact Snow Warning. * Consider initiating a TAG Teleconference to ascertain potential impacts for other warnings. Individual responders to consider standby, preparatory and response procedures. Warn and inform the public appropriately Consider voluntary sector support
Likelihood	High			✓																																						
	Medium			✓																																						
	Low																																									
	Very Low																																									
	FGS	Minimal	Minor	Significant	Severe																																					
	NSWWS	Very Low	Low	Medium	High																																					
Potential Impacts																																										

<p>Medium / Significant Impacts</p>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td rowspan="4">Likelihood</td> <td>High</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Medium</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Low</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Very Low</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>FGS</td> <td>Minimal</td> <td>Minor</td> <td>Significant</td> <td>Severe</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>NSWWS</td> <td>Very Low</td> <td>Low</td> <td>Medium</td> <td>High</td> </tr> </table> <p>Potential Impacts</p>  <p>FLOOD WARNING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flood Warnings Issued Medium / Significant Impacts reported Level-3 Heat-Health Watch or Cold Weather Alerts 	Likelihood	High			✓		Medium			✓		Low			✓		Very Low			✓			FGS	Minimal	Minor	Significant	Severe		NSWWS	Very Low	Low	Medium	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Injuries with danger to life Disruption to day-to-day routines and activities. Short-term strain on emergency responder organisations. Transport routes and travel services affected. Longer journey times expected. Some vehicles and passengers stranded. Disruption to some utilities, infrastructure and services. Damage to buildings, property and structures. Some rural communities temporarily inaccessible due to deep snow or snow drifts or affected by flooding. Small-scale evacuation of properties may be required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trigger a TAG Teleconference for Medium Impact Snow and Ice Warnings.* Trigger a TAG Teleconference where likelihood for any warning is Medium/High** Consider the TAG Teleconference where likelihood is Low/Very Low** Consider the requirement to set up a TAG Office Consider the requirement for an TCG/SCG Warn and inform the public appropriately Consider Ramping up and rostering resources Consider voluntary sector support
Likelihood	High				✓																															
	Medium				✓																															
	Low				✓																															
	Very Low			✓																																
	FGS	Minimal	Minor	Significant	Severe																															
	NSWWS	Very Low	Low	Medium	High																															
<p>High / Severe Impacts</p>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td rowspan="4">Likelihood</td> <td>High</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Medium</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Low</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Very Low</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>FGS</td> <td>Minimal</td> <td>Minor</td> <td>Significant</td> <td>Severe</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>NSWWS</td> <td>Very Low</td> <td>Low</td> <td>Medium</td> <td>High</td> </tr> </table> <p>Potential Impacts</p>  <p>SEVERE FLOOD WARNING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Severe Flood Warnings Issued 	Likelihood	High				✓	Medium				✓	Low				✓	Very Low				✓		FGS	Minimal	Minor	Significant	Severe		NSWWS	Very Low	Low	Medium	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Danger to life Prolonged disruption to day to day routines and activities Prolonged strain on emergency responder organisations. Transport routes and travel services affected for a prolonged period. Long travel delays. Vehicles and passengers stranded for long periods. Disruption to utilities and services for a prolonged period. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trigger a TCG. Consider standing up an SGC Consider declaration of a major incident Speak with bordering LRFs Warn and inform the public appropriately Consider mutual and/or military aid Consider voluntary sector support Consider planning for Recovery/Standing up RCG.
Likelihood	High					✓																														
	Medium					✓																														
	Low					✓																														
	Very Low				✓																															
	FGS	Minimal	Minor	Significant	Severe																															
	NSWWS	Very Low	Low	Medium	High																															

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High / Severe Impacts reported • Level-4 Heat-Health Watch or Cold Weather Alerts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive damage to buildings, properties and structures. • Whole communities affected or cut off with possible large-scale evacuation of properties. 	
<p>Stand down and Recovery Phase</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSWWS Warnings / FGS / Flood Warnings ad Alerts downgraded, or • NSWWS warnings expired or cancelled 	Impacts reducing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider stand down of response levels as appropriate • Trigger Recovery actions in line with the SRF Recovery Plan • Maintain standby arrangements