Terms of Reference

UK Flood Hydrology Roadmap Scientific and Technical Advisory Group

0. Document history

Draft ToR: Published via BHS website on 29 June 2022 as part of the call for applications to STAG.

Revision 1, June 2023: Amended section 2, 4th bullet (to refine scope of approval of communications), and section 4 (to introduce rotation of Chair).

1. Background of the Flood Hydrology Roadmap

The flood hydrology roadmap (the "Roadmap") sets out a 25-year vision for food hydrology in the UK which has been developed by and for the UK flood hydrology community. This vision will be realised through 31 actions grouped into 4 thematic work areas covering:

a) ways of working;
b) data;
c) methods; and
d) scientific understanding.

The vision for UK flood hydrology is that during the next 25-years society will have improved hydrological information and understanding to manage flood hazard more effectively in a changing world; and flood hydrology and whole-system process understanding will be underpinned by excellent evidence with quantified uncertainty. Leadership and collaboration are key to achievement of this vision.

Through development of the Roadmap, the project has consulted hundreds of professionals across the UK including representatives from academia, industry and government to define the vision and set out the programme of work required to achieve it.

The Roadmap Programme is designed to accelerate the process from initiation of flood hydrology research to implementation by the end user, which is especially valuable in the context of climate change.

The Scientific and Technical Advisory Group (STAG) will provide specialist support to the implementation of the vision for flood hydrology over the next 25 years as part of the Roadmap Programme and Action Plan.

2. Roles and Responsibilities of the STAG

The STAG will:

- Update and agree Terms of Reference for the STAG
- Provide strategic direction and oversight to ensure that the Roadmap Programme remains fit for purpose, agreeing priority work areas and items for the forthcoming years
- Horizon scan for technological opportunities and monitor changes in flood hydrology. Identify opportunities, emerging risk and uncertainty and recommend changes to the Roadmap Programme and its priority projects or activities to address these

- Consider and approve (where able) correspondence and publications produced by the STAG or Roadmap Board in respect of the Roadmap Programme.
- Identify opportunities for the sharing of knowledge, skills, and expertise within the Wider Hydrology Community[1], and facilitate such exchanges
- Facilitate broader consultation and engagement with hydrology end users and stakeholders within the flood risk industry
- Identify opportunities for research associated with the Roadmap and potential funding routes to advise the Board for decision.
- Assist in promoting new hydrology tools and methods and development of guidance as part of the implementation of the Roadmap Programme

3. Membership of the STAG

The STAG will champion and apply the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) to ensure diversity of thought and background so that discussions and decisions are informed by a diverse range of perspectives, including perspectives from underrepresented groups.

The STAG shall be comprised of:

- At least two representatives from the UK regulators (Department for Infrastructure Rivers, Environment Agency, Natural Resources Wales, Scottish Environment Protection Agency
- One meteorological expert
- One representative from a Lead Local Flood Authority
- One representative from the water industry
- At least one representative of a Consultancy / Practitioner
- Up to 4 representatives from Academia
- At least 1 Early Career representative (less than 7 years academic/industry experience excluding career breaks)
- A further 1-5 members who may have a background in the above represented organisations, environmental organisations/charities, landowner/business organisations, infrastructure providers, navigations authorities, reservoir operators, insurance providers, emergency responders, practitioners, etc.

The process for selecting STAG Members, shall comprise:

- Members will initially be chosen through a public nomination process managed by the UK Flood Hydrology Roadmap Board
- All applicants will be notified of their standing once nominees have been reviewed by the Roadmap Board

Initial STAG membership will be for a period of 2 + 1 years and can be extend as required to ensure continuity of the STAG. Any future nominations process for the duration of the programme will be undertaken by the established STAG and the process will be communicated to the Wider Hydrology Community.

Any changes to the required balance of member representation of the STAG to meet the Roadmap Programme outcomes shall be identified and the Terms of Reference updated as required.

[1] Wider Hydrology Community refers to any regulator, practitioner, water company, local authority, university, research body, environmental organisation/charity, landowner/business organisation, infrastructure provider, navigations authority, reservoir operator, insurance provider, emergency responder, etc who are involved in application or development of hydrological understanding, methods and data within the flood risk industry.

4. Role of Individual STAG Members

The role of the individual members of the STAG is to commit to:

- Participate in at least 4 meetings per year
- Actively contributing to the STAG's work both during and between meetings

The STAG members will elect officers at the first meeting for Chair and Secretary. The Secretariate role will be for a period of 2 years and funded through a collaborative agreement between the UK devolved nations. The role of Chair will be rotated every 2 meetings to minimise the burden on any one STAG member.

5. Role of Chair

The Chair is responsible for facilitating the STAG to achieve its Terms of Reference, including:

- Approving meeting agenda
- Ensuring that the time in meetings is used effectively and that discussion on agenda items in STAG meetings is focussed, succinct and evidence-based
- Facilitate open and constructive communications amongst STAG members and encourage their contribution in or out of session
- Facilitate meetings to achieve consensus wherever possible, where consensus means encouraging STAG members to develop, and agree to support, a position on advice in the best interest of the delivery of the Programme
- Guide and summarise STAG discussions, rather than participate in the detail of those discussions
- Manage day to day differences between members, escalating them for resolution in accordance with the disagreement resolution process contained in Annex A, as necessary
- Represent the STAG at Governance Board meetings

6. Role of Secretary

The Secretary will support the STAG in terms of:

- Liaising with the Chair on the preparation of meeting agenda
- Preparing and distributing meeting agenda papers to the STAG members at least five working days prior to the scheduled meeting
- Arranging meeting venues and associated logistics
- Recording meeting outcomes and provide minutes and action items to STAG members no later than five working days after the meeting

7. Meetings

- Meetings will be on a quarterly basis including an Annual General Meeting, with any further interim meetings as agreed by all members
- All meetings will be conducted according to an agenda approved by the Chair
- STAG members may request that items relevant to the STAG's Terms of Reference be placed on the agenda. Such requests must be forwarded to the Secretary at least 10 days prior to a scheduled meeting
- The Chair shall approve the agenda at least five working days prior to a scheduled meeting
- The decision of the Chair on the agenda will be final
- A quorum will be half the regular membership plus one

8. Working Groups

The STAG may agree to establish a limited purpose Working Group to assist in efficiently and effectively progressing specific issues relevant to the STAG's Terms of Reference and approved Roadmap Programme. A Working Group does not have any decision making role.

If the STAG establishes a Working Group, it must determine:

- A Terms of Reference and specific project plan for its operations
- The membership of the working group from the Wider Hydrology Community (which must include at least one member of the STAG)

Working Groups must report to the STAG in accordance with their Terms of Reference and approved project plan. The timelines in the approved project plan for a Working Group must enable the STAG to achieve the outcomes of the Roadmap Programme.

Working Groups must:

- Be convened by the STAG Chair
- Operate according to an agenda approved by the STAG Chair
- Operate on the basis of consensus wherever possible, where consensus means Working Group members develop, and agree to support, a position on advice to the STAG in the best interest of the project outcomes.

If, in the opinion of the STAG Chair, a Working Group is not operating within or unable to complete its Terms of Reference or Project Plan, the Chair may disband the Working Group. In such cases, The Terms of Reference for the Working Group revert back to the STAG.

9. Ways of Working

The STAG shall be responsible in its approach to meetings. It shall seek to promote EDI ensuring all members have equal opportunity to input. For example, the STAG will provide papers in alternative formats where required and take a flexible approach to meetings e.g. to accommodate childcare requirements.

The STAG will also seek to minimise environmental harm including though, but not limited to, the use of virtual meetings, minimising the use of printed materials and encouraging public transport where meetings are required in person.

Through effective collaboration the STAG has the opportunity to enhance the natural environment and promote EDI across their respective organisations.

Annex A – Disagreements Resolution

The objective of this policy is to ensure that disagreements on issues relevant to the STAG Terms of Reference are handled consistently, efficiently and fairly and that, where possible, consensus is achieved.

1. Principles

The STAG may need to contend with situations where members have material disagreements on matters relevant to its Terms of Reference.

In seeking to resolve such disagreements the Chair will apply the principles of fairness and impartiality, having specific regard to the following:

- all STAG members involved shall be afforded fair treatment in the process of resolving the disagreement
- the disagreements will be handled fairly and in good faith
- all STAG members involved in the disagreement will have the opportunity to state their view and the underlying evidence that supports that view
- Resolution of disagreements will be via an open and structured process that encourages consensus

2. Information Required

To resolve a disagreement, the Chair will rely on information provided by the relevant STAG members about the disagreement.

To help the Chair resolve a disagreement quickly and efficiently, the relevant STAG members will be requested to provide information on their view on the issue in question and the underlying evidence that supports that view.

3. Resolving Disagreements

Broadly, the disagreement management process involves the following steps outlined in Table 1.

Table 1 - Steps in disagreements management process

Acknowledge	Acknowledge to the relevant STAG members that a material disagreement exists in relation to an issue that requires some resolution.
Develop Discussion Paper	The Chair will liaise with each of the relevant parties to clearly document their views on the issue and the evidence that supports that view. The Chair will review the different views and develop and document feasible options for resolving the disagreement amicably and in good faith. The Chair will then develop a brief Discussion Paper on the issue and distribute to the parties.
Discuss and resolution	The Chair will convene discussions on the issue between the relevant STAG members, with the discussion to be informed by the Discussion Paper. The Chair will use its best endeavours to help the relevant STAG members achieve a consensus resolution on the issue within 10 business days of the initial discussion. Where a consensus resolution is not able to be achieved within 10 business days, the Chair will either: • Specify a date when the discussion and resolution period must be concluded. • Conclude that resolution of the disagreement is not possible and refer the matter to the Roadmap Board or a mediating body acceptable to all members for final resolution.

	For the avoidance of doubt, a disagreement will only be “resolved” in accordance with this Annex where all members in disagreement agree that it has been resolved.
Record	The Chair will record the outcome on the disagreement within an Issues Register.