Emergency response organisations are the main responders to a variety of weather-related incidents. As severe weather events become more frequent in the UK, it’s essential for emergency responders to consider the impacts of climate change as part of their strategic planning.

Working with the Met Office to carry out the Climate Impacts and Risk assessment Framework (CIRF) will give you a more detailed understanding of the impacts of current weather and climate on your operations. It will also identify the key risks that are likely to result from climate change.

Importantly, adopting CIRF recommendations and implementing appropriate adaptation measures can help your organisation to be more resilient to the risks of climate change.
What is the Climate Impacts and Risk assessment Framework?

The Climate Impacts and Risk assessment Framework (CIRF) guides the assessment of and adaptation to weather and climate change risks. The service is tailored to specific geographical areas and considers issues that are relevant to individual organisations and/or systems.

The CIRF has two strands of analysis:

1. Baseline weather and climate risk assessment
   - Research and analysis to understand the sensitivity of the organisation or system to current weather and climate, and how underlying vulnerabilities contribute to the overall risk.

2. Climate change risk analysis
   - Research and analysis to understand how changes in the climate may alter the risk to the organisation or system.

The results

The results will enable your organisation to integrate weather and climate change risks in planning and risk assessment procedures. The process will help you to assess future potential demand on resources and identify high risk areas and plan appropriate and cost effective risk reduction measures.

We can help your organisation to be more:
- Effective in the short term by re-directing resources appropriately;
- Effective in the mid-long term by planning for the future and by making more appropriate decisions;
- Confident in decision making and demonstrate a robust approach to planning.

Significantly, the CIRF will also help position yourselves as a forward thinking, innovative and an effective operator and help you to be considered as a community leader by the Local Strategic Partnership.

Case study – West Midlands Fire Service

In 2006, a report by the Department for Communities and Local Government examining the ‘Effects of Climate Change on Fire and Rescue Services in the UK’ recommended that Fire and Rescue services improve their awareness of climate change research.

To address this recommendation, the West Midlands Fire Service (WMFS) decided to consider the impacts of climate change on its operations within its Integrated Risk Management Planning (IRMP) process.

WMFS asked the Met Office to focus on two key risks – surface water flooding and secondary fires. The project developed an understanding of the weather and climate conditions and vulnerability factors that contributed to these risks, by establishing historical patterns of variability and extremes, and assessing geographical trends in vulnerability.

Using our gridded daily observation dataset, and the UK Climate Projections 2009 (UKCP09), the key sensitivities to weather were identified and analysed to understand how these risks could change in the future.

“Weast Midlands Fire Service will benefit greatly from the project conducted recently with the Met Office... Part of the beauty of this study, is its focus on the West Midlands uniquely... the conclusions that we drew were absolutely relevant to our local communities and reflect demand in our area.

We are now able to ensure that we have appropriate resources in place to prevent emergencies where possible and respond when necessary.’

Rory Campbell, Integrated Risk Management Manager,
West Midlands Fire Service
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