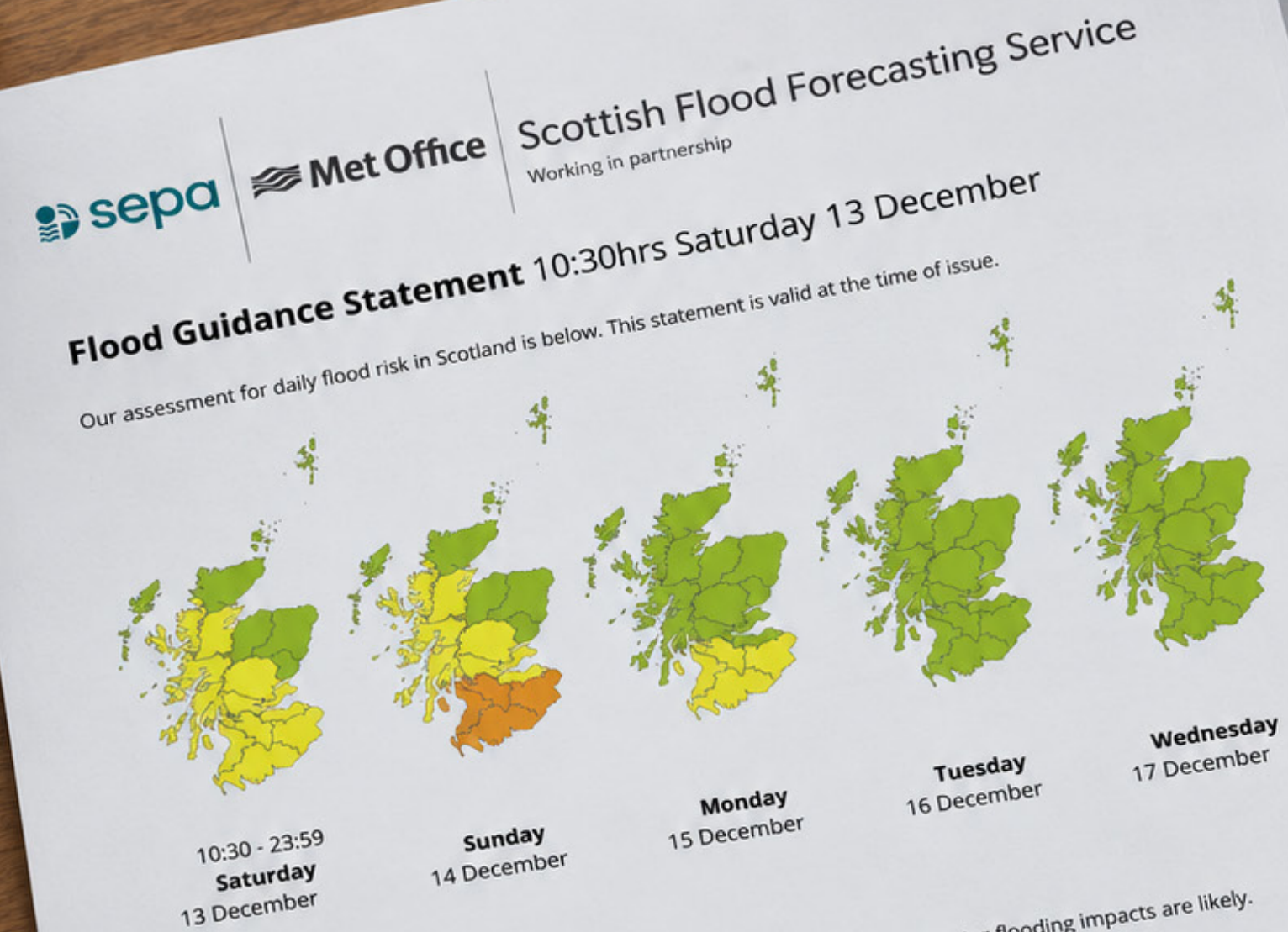


Your guide to the Flood Guidance Statement



General Overview of Flood Risk

The flood risk for Scotland is **MEDIUM** on Sunday. Significant river and surface water flooding impacts are likely.

Specific Areas of Concern

River and surface water Flood Risk Saturday 13 and Sunday 14 December

In Area A, significant river and surface water flooding impacts are likely on Sunday. Impacts may include flooding of land, roads and transport routes. Of concern are flooding affecting communities such as at or near Dumfries and Newcarron. Likely worst of the impacts will be later on Sunday, expect travel disruption.



In Area B, moderate flooding impacts are likely due to river and surface water flooding. Impacts may include localized flooding of land and roads and disruption to travel. Impacts are likely across North West Highlands and extending south across the central belt.



In Area C, moderate river and surface water flooding impacts are possible quite widely, although these are likely to be isolated in nature with some travel disruption.



Introduction

The Scottish Flood Forecasting Service (SFFS) is a partnership between the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) and the Met Office. SEPA hydrologists and Met Office meteorologists collaborate to combine weather forecasts with hydrological and oceanographic conditions to determine flood risk across Scotland.

The partnership provides an assessment of the Overall Flood Risk and considers the risk of flooding from river, coastal and surface water sources. This risk is communicated with category 1 and 2 responders through the production of the Flood Guidance Statement.

This document is intended to help users interpret the different elements of the Flood Guidance Statement and provide guidance to the responder community on how to use it.

The Flood Guidance Statement:

- Is designed for Category 1 and 2 responders and emergency partners
- Considers the risk for a five-day period
- Presents risk at a regional level, focusing on potential impacts and disruption
- Supports tactical planning and decision making
- Issued each day by 10:30, with additional updates during periods of heightened flood risk

Understanding the Flood Risk Matrix and Overall Flood Risk

Flood risk is assessed by combining **likelihood** and **potential impact** within a risk matrix. This matrix uses four levels of impact to determine the **Overall Flood Risk**, which is expressed by colour.

- **Likelihood** reflects the level of confidence in the meteorological and hydrological forecasts and is categorised as Low, Medium, High, Very High.
- **Potential impact** reflects the possible consequences of flooding, taking account of factors such as the vulnerability of communities, property and infrastructure. Impact levels are categorised as Minor, Moderate, Significant, Extreme.
- **Overall Flood Risk** is determined by the combination of likelihood and potential impact. The Overall Flood Risk level is shown in the Flood Guidance Statement and represented by the corresponding colour on the matrix.

Flood Risk Matrix Definitions

Likelihood	Very High (>75%)				
	High (50-75%)				
	Medium (25-50%)				
	Low (10-25%)				
		Minor	Moderate	Significant	Extreme
		Impacts			

Overall Flood Risk

Very low	Low	Medium	High

Assessing the risk

To inform the assessment of **Overall Flood Risk** for each region for the five-day forecast period a range of factors are considered:

1. Forecast characteristics

Rainfall amount and intensity, wind speed, location, duration and forecast confidence.

2. Forecast location

The vulnerability of the area at risk, including how urban or rural a community is, transport routes, location of key infrastructure and known history of flooding.

3. Recent weather conditions

Recent rainfall, snowmelt, severe weather or other conditions that may increase flood risk.

4. Catchment conditions

The current state of the catchments in areas at risk, including how saturated the ground is, river levels, and the susceptibility of rivers to respond to additional rainfall.

5. Coastal conditions

Interaction of weather driven influences, such as storm surges and large waves with high or spring tides. These can increase the risk of coastal flooding and restrict river and surface water drainage into the sea.

Interpreting the Flood Guidance Statement

Flood Risk Maps

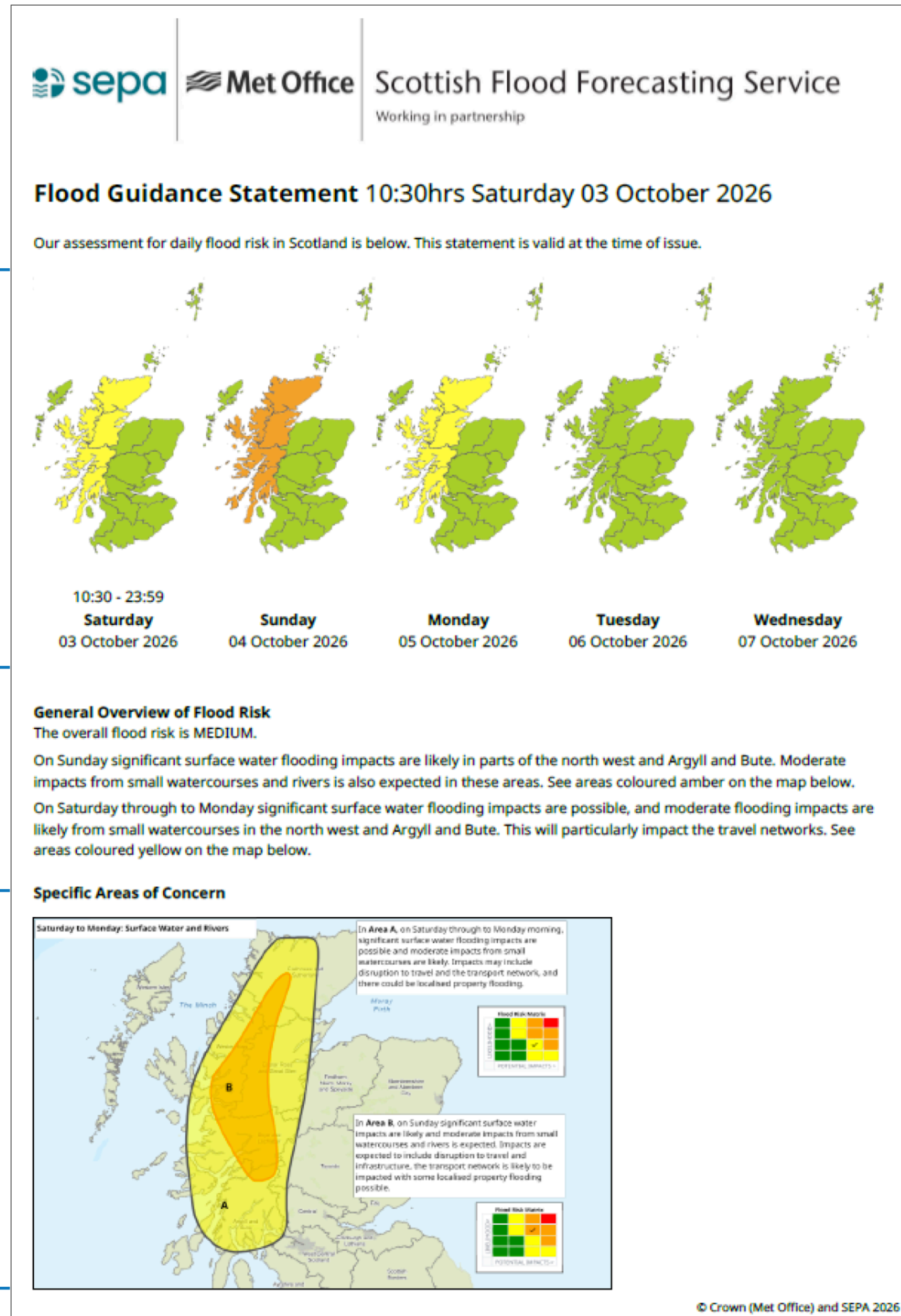
The five-day maps show the highest **Overall Flood Risk** in each of the 19 Flood Alert Areas.

Even if all areas are coloured green, there could be the potential for minor/moderate impacts despite an overall VERY LOW risk status.

Specific Areas of Concern

When there is a need to provide further detail, an **Area of Concern** map will be included that highlights the main areas of risk, including matrices to indicate how the risk has been derived.

Area of Concern maps may be included when the risk is VERY LOW (green) as there may still be impacts to be communicated.



The images should always be read in conjunction with the text.

General Overview of Flood Risk

Provides a descriptive overview of flood risk for the five-day forecast period and explains how flood risk status has been assigned to different areas.

The text will refer to **potential impact** (moderate, significant etc) and **likelihood** (possible, likely etc) as well as the **Overall Flood Risk**.

Weather Summary

Expected weather conditions over the five-day forecast period and provides context for the flood risk maps when read together with the ‘General Overview of Flood Risk’.

Flood Risk

The risk from each source of flooding – rivers, coastal and surface water. These paragraphs are ordered by severity and/or priority of flood risk.

Next statement due

Normally this is by 10:30 the following day, however, if an event is ongoing, or the risk changes, an updated FGS may be issued later the same day.

Warnings and Alerts in Force

The number of Flood Alerts, Flood Warnings, Severe Flood Warnings and National Severe Weather Warning Service warnings in force when the statement is issued.

6 – 10 Day Outlook

Longer-range weather which may result in flooding impacts.

Risk Matrix and Definition

Make sure you know where we are on the risk matrix – the same colour can refer to different levels of potential impact, with different likelihood.

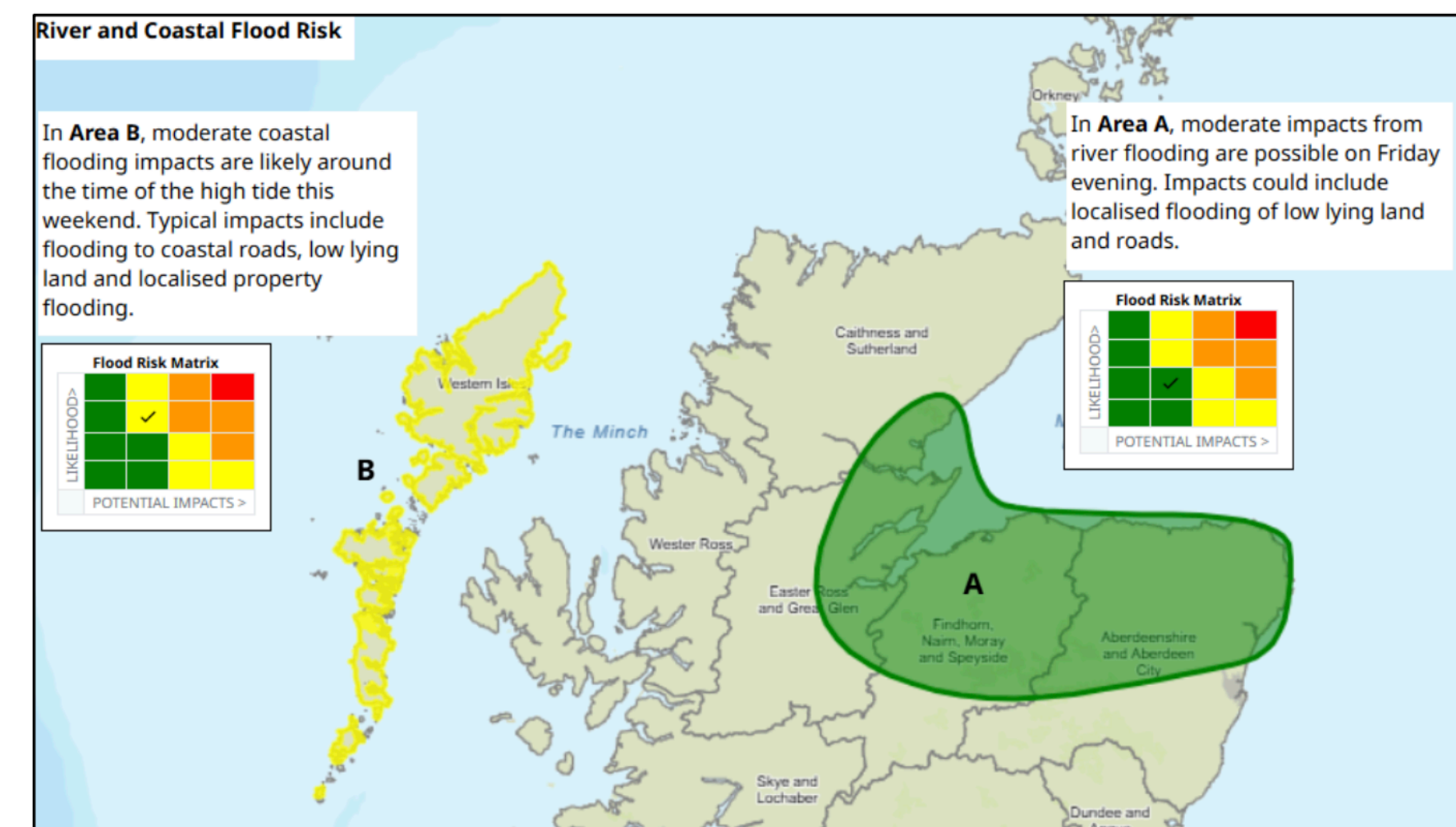
Weather Summary	
Periods of rain through the weekend, persistent and frequently heavy or very heavy across the north west on Sunday. Patchy rain early on Monday focused in the west clearing to a showery westerly flow from later on Monday which persists into Tuesday. Further bands of rain cross from the north west on Wednesday.	
Warnings and Alerts in force in Scotland at 10:30	
Flood (click here)	
0 Severe Flood Warnings / 0 Flood Warnings / 5 Flood Alerts	
Severe Weather (relevant to flood risk) (click here)	
Warnings - Yes	
Surface Water Flood Risk	
The surface water flood risk is MEDIUM.	
On Sunday, significant surface water flooding impacts are likely in the north west and Argyll and Bute. On Saturday through to early Monday morning significant impacts are possible. Disruption to travel and infrastructure is expected and localised property flooding is possible. The transport network is likely to be affected.	
Rivers Flood Risk	
The river flood risk is LOW.	
On Sunday, moderate impacts are expected from rivers and from small watercourses. Moderate impacts are likely from small watercourses on Saturday through to early Monday morning as well. Disruption to travel and infrastructure and property flooding is possible in the north west and Argyll and Bute.	
Coastal / Tidal Flood Risk	
The coastal flood risk is VERY LOW for the next five days.	
6 to 10 Day Outlook	
Weather will remain changeable with periods of frontal rainfall and the potential for some coastal storm surge and large waves.	
Flood Risk Matrix Definitions	
Likelihood	
Very High (> 75%)	
High (50-75%)	
Medium (25-50%)	
Low (10-25%)	

Understanding the Area of Concern maps

The Flood Guidance Statement may include one or more **Areas of Concern** (AOC) per map (or there may be more than one map) to highlight where flooding impacts are forecast. These maps may be included even when the Overall Flood Risk is assessed as very low as they raise awareness of locations where impacts could occur if forecast confidence increases.

The Flood Risk Maps on the Flood Guidance Statement present the Overall Flood Risk level across each Flood Alert Area, with the entire area coloured according to the assigned risk category. To complement these, the **Area of Concern** maps provide a refined boundary, or section of coastline, indicating where flooding impacts are most likely to occur.

The colour of the area is determined by the Overall Flood Risk level assessed via the Flood Risk Matrix.



Each area, or section of coastline, is:

- Coloured based on Overall Flood Risk and identified by a letter e.g. Area A.
- Supported by text describing the timing, source of flood risk, likelihood and potential impacts.
- Accompanied by a Flood Risk Matrix.

Understanding the Area of Concern Maps (continued)

Overlapping areas

Sometimes, more than one Area of Concern may overlap, showing that different risk levels are forecast within the same location.

This helps illustrate how flood risk can:

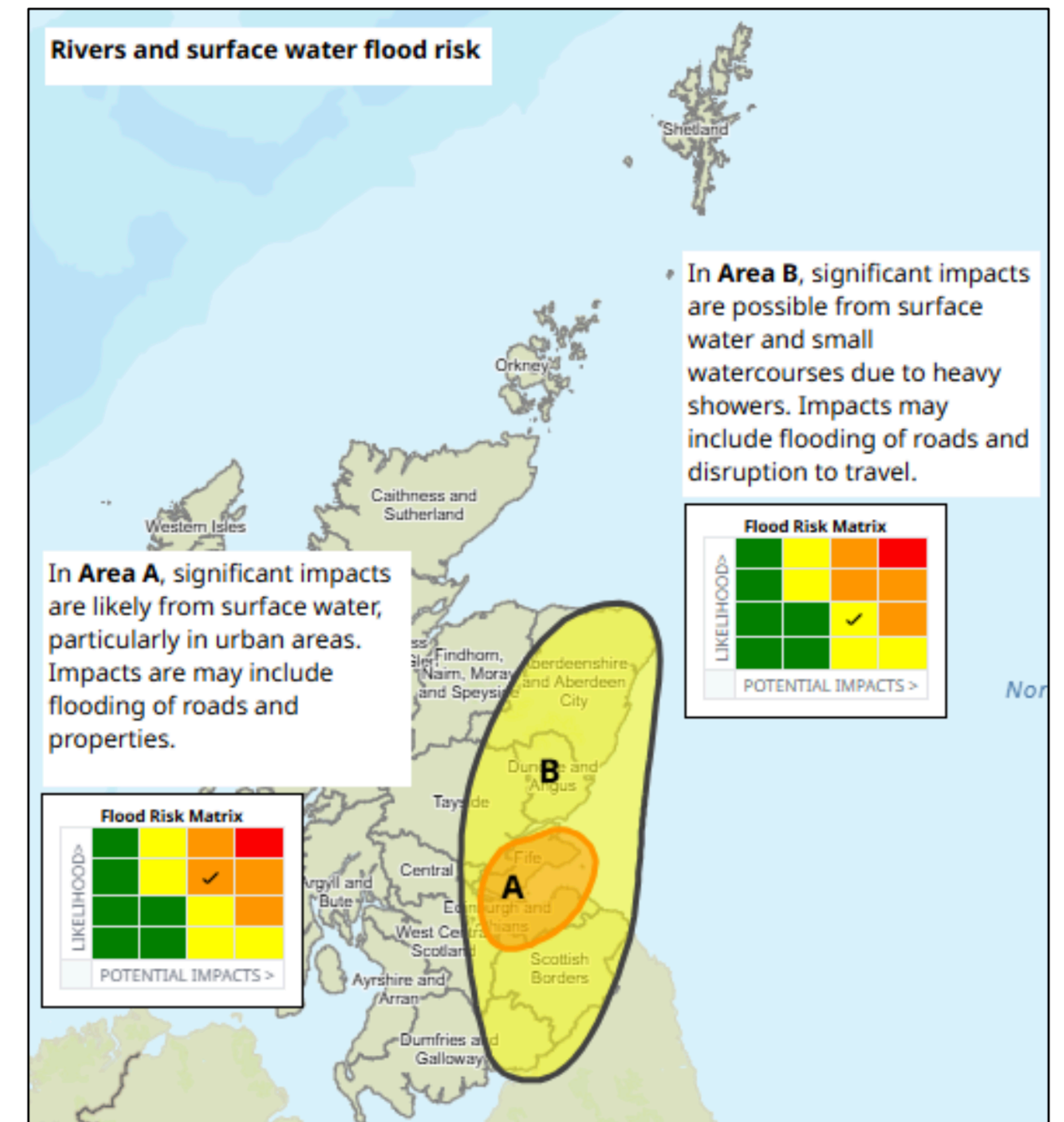
- Change over time during the forecast period.
- Vary across short distances due to local conditions and vulnerability of the area at risk.

For example, a larger yellow (low risk) area overlapped with a smaller amber (medium risk) area may indicate:

- Flooding is possible across the wider area over several days.
- More localised impacts are likely at specific times (e.g. following peak rainfall).

Similarly, a larger green (very low risk) with an embedded yellow area (low risk) area may indicate:

- Uncertainty in rainfall location.
- A clearer signal of where impacts are most likely to occur.



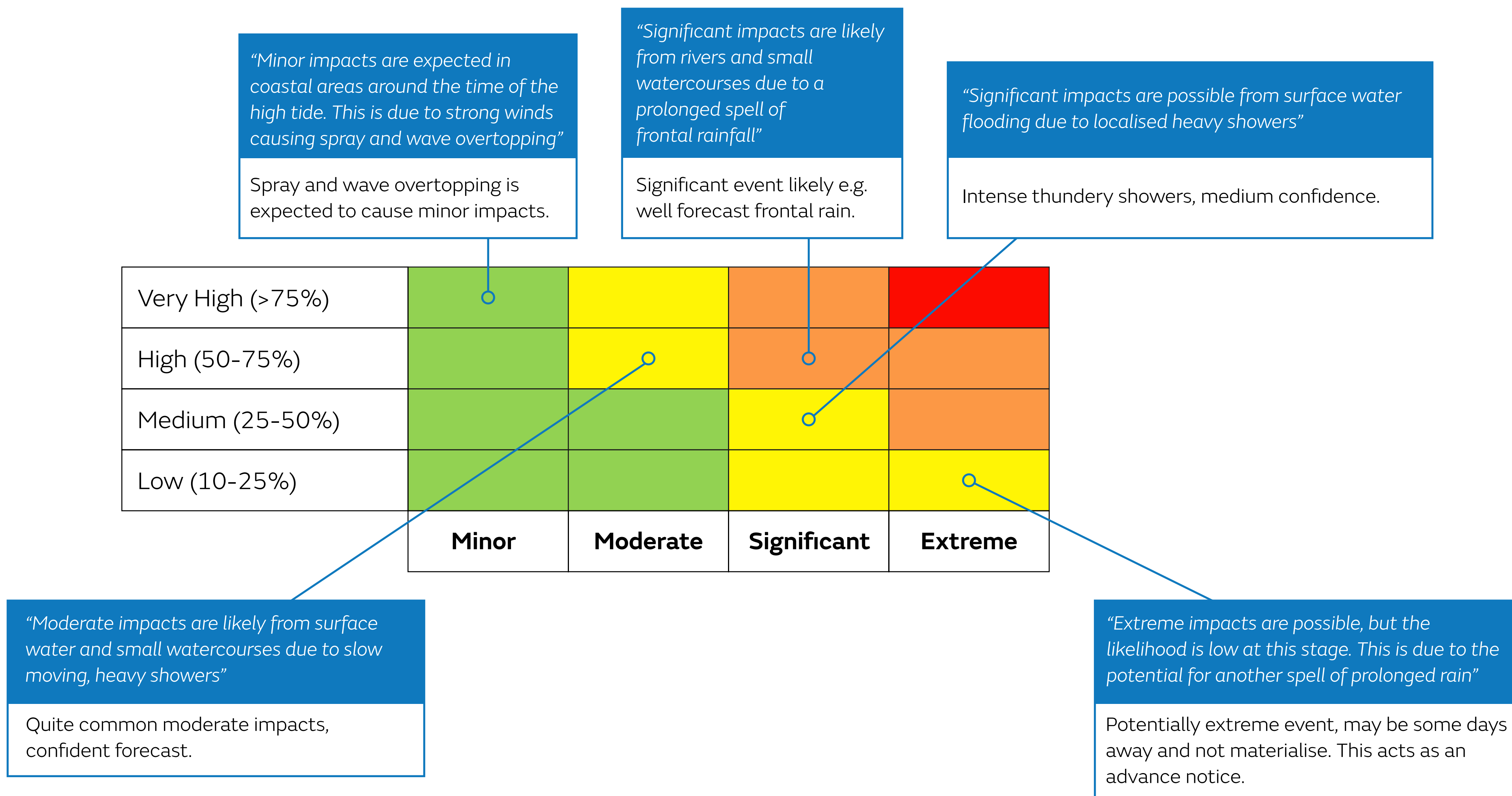
Guidance on Impacts

Impacts				
	Minor	Moderate	Significant	Extreme
Typical impacts	Generally limited impact, however there may be: - Isolated flooding of low-lying land and roads. - Isolated disruption to transport routes. - Instances of spray/wave overtopping or standing water on coastal roads and promenades.	- Localised flooding of land and roads. - Localised flooding affecting individual properties. - Localised disruption to key sites on floodplains. - Individual properties in coastal locations affected by spray and/or wave overtopping. - Local disruption to travel.	- Flooding affecting parts of communities. - Damage of buildings/structures is possible. - Possible danger to life due to fast flowing/deep water/wave overtopping/wave inundation. - Disruption to infrastructure. - Small scale evacuation of properties may be required.	- Widespread flooding affecting whole communities. - Collapse of buildings/structures is possible. - Danger to life due to fast flowing/deep water/wave overtopping/wave inundation. - Widespread disruption or loss of infrastructure. - Large scale evacuation of properties may be required.
Expected partner response level	Within normal operating parameters.	Single agency operational response.	Resilience partnership awareness likely to be needed at a tactical level. Scottish Government Resilience Room may be considered.	Resilience Partnership awareness likely to be needed at a tactical level. Mutual aid likely with perhaps national co-ordination. Scottish Government Resilience Room convened.
Implications for public	Generally, no impact; however there may be some isolated and minor flooding. Little or no disruption to travel although wet road surfaces could lead to difficult driving conditions.	Localised flooding possible. Wet road surfaces and possibility of ponding water, especially in known trouble spots. Local disruption to travel – longer journey times.	Flooding of land and roads and property is likely. Disruption to travel and infrastructure.	Widespread flooding of property. Severe disruption to travel. Loss of gas, electricity, water supplies. Significant disruption to communities.

Guidance on Likelihood

Likelihood				
Likelihood	Low	Medium	High	Very High
Language used in Flood Guidance Statement	Flooding could occur with low likelihood.	Flooding is possible.	Flooding is likely.	Flooding is expected or ongoing.
Percentage chance of occurrence	Forecast suggests between 10% and 25% chance of occurrence.	Forecast suggests between 25% and 50% chance of occurrence.	Forecast suggests between 50% and 75% chance of occurrence.	Forecast suggests greater than 75% chance of occurrence.

Examples of Flood Guidance Statement language



Flood risk products

Product	Who is responsible?	Who receives them?	Purpose	Scale	Lead time
National Severe Weather Warning Service (NSWWS)	Met Office	All recipients, including the public	Warns of potentially impactful weather that could affect people, property, transport and infrastructure, enabling timely preparedness and response actions	National	Seven days ahead
Flood Guidance Statement	Scottish Flood Forecasting Service	Category 1 and 2 responders	Provides an assessment of flood risk over the next five days to support preparedness, planning and decision making	National	Five days ahead
Scottish Flood Forecast	Scottish Flood Forecasting Service	Public	General information about the possibility of flooding to help the public prepare for a flood event	National	Three days ahead
Flood Alerts	SEPA	All registered recipients, including the public	General information about the possibility of flooding	Regional boundaries e.g. Local Authority or large hydrological catchments	2 to 48 hours ahead
Flood Warnings	SEPA	All registered recipients, including the public	Specific information about an imminent flooding event requiring action by the recipient	Localised areas that are forecast to experience flooding impacts	Generally, 3 to 6 hours ahead

Frequently Asked Questions

Questions	Answers
How often are Flood Guidance Statements issued?	Flood Guidance Statements are issued daily at the following times: ▪ Very low and low risk situations – 10:30 (local time) ▪ Medium risk situations – 10:30 and 16:00 ▪ High risk situations – 10:30, 16:00 and at other times as required
Who receives the statements?	All Category 1 and 2 responders including emergency services and local authorities can register to receive the Flood Guidance Statement.
Are the statements sent to a targeted audience?	All those registered are sent the 10:30 statement. Subsequent statements during the day may be targeted at responders for areas at risk, or where there has been a change in flood risk since the previous statement.
What are the recommended actions following receipt of a statement?	The aim of the statement is to provide an advanced, national assessment of flood risk over a five day period. In advance of a flooding event, partners should consider what actions they can take to prepare for the impact of flooding and reduce recovery time. The Scottish Flood Forecasting Service advises partners to talk to their local SEPA Flood Advisor or Met Office Civil Contingencies Advisor for a more detailed discussion about local risk.

Frequently Asked Questions

Questions	Answers
Why has the colour changed since the last FGS?	The colours on the Flood Guidance Statement relate to the Overall Flood Risk. The Overall Flood Risk, and therefore colour, would change if there was a change in the Likelihood (e.g. more certainty in the forecast meaning the assessed risk has moved up a row in the Flood Risk Matrix); or a change in Potential Impacts (e.g. higher rainfall volumes expected, meaning the assessed risk has move across a column in the matrix).
Can the same area have more than one source of risk?	Yes. Depending on the forecast characteristics and forecast location, an area could be at risk from one source of flooding or a combination of all three sources (rivers, surface water, coastal). All applicable sources of flood risk should be clear on the Flood Guidance Statement.
Can the same area have more than one risk level?	Yes. Depending on the forecast characteristics the Overall Flood Risk may change throughout the duration of an event or across a geographical area. For example, a prolonged spell of rain may warrant a widespread yellow Area of Concern, however a smaller amber Area of Concern may be required over more vulnerable communities where the impacts may be higher.
What is a Flood Alert Area?	The 19 Flood Alert Areas are shown in the flood risk maps on the Flood Guidance Statement. These are geographical areas where flooding from rivers, sea and surface water is possible. Each area includes multiple river catchments and small watercourses, as well as sections of coastline. The areas are typically aligned with local authority boundaries, however there may be more than one local authority within each Flood Alert Area.

How to register for the Flood Guidance Statement

Category 1 and 2 responders and other partners can register to receive daily Flood Guidance Statements by emailing floodengagement@sepa.org.uk

It is also available through:

Hazard Manager: <https://hazardmanager.metoffice.gov.uk>

The Flood Guidance Statement can be viewed on a computer, tablet or mobile device and can be download as a PDF if required. Account holders can also view the Met Office weather and warnings and other hazard advice and services in the same place.



Contact

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