

Freeze Thaw - Executive Follow-up

For Ofwat

May 2018

Version 1.0

Private and Confidential

Author: Richard Sands (SEW) & Andrew Ball (Independent)

Reviewed and approved: David Hinton – Asset and Regulation Director

South East Water
Rocfort Road
Snodland
Kent
ME6 5AH
0333 000 2244

In the period leading up to the freeze and thaw, can you please explain in more detail how your Executive and, where appropriate, your Board:

1. Were involved in the planning or preparation, or approved any planning and preparation, for exceptional winter weather events. Please also detail when this occurred.

As stated in Section B2 of our original response, the role of the Executive in any major incident is clearly set out in our Emergency Plan and was followed in this incident.

The pre-planning for a winter weather event commenced on the 21st February, led by the Head of Networks. The Operations Director was informally updated on progress until the 26th February, when the Head of Networks requested the set-up of a cold weather impact and response incident. This request followed the Met Office issuing its initial amber weather warning notification on the afternoon of the 25th February.

The Operations Director briefed the rest of the Executive on the 26th and the approval was given to categorise the event as an incident. The plans that had been prepared were then enacted with the first incident response meeting with the regional operational teams held the same day.

2. Were notified of each applicable weather status update (amber alert, red alert) and the earliest point which this occurred.

Each day a weather warning was issued by the Met Office, the Head of Health, Safety and Quality forwarded this to a distribution list that includes the Director of Asset and Regulation, the Director of Operations and the Director of Customer Service.

The table shows the Met Office amber weather warnings for our region. There were no red weather warnings issued.

Issued	Warning from	Warning to	Snow	Ice	Wind	Impact	L'hood	Area Covered
25/2	27/2 02:00	27/2 12:00	X			High	High	Kent, E & W Sussex, Surrey
26/2	27/2 02:00	27/2 12:00	X			High	High	Kent, E Sussex
27/2	28/2 00:30	28/2 10:00	X			High	High	Kent
27/2	01/3 14:00	02/3 08:00	X	X		High	Low	Hampshire, Berkshire
28/2	01/3 12:00	02/3 08:00	X	X		High	High	Hampshire, Berkshire
01/3	01/3 18:05	02/3 08:00	X		X	High	High	E & W Sussex, Surrey

The cold weather impact and response plans were enacted on the 26th as a result of the Amber weather warning issued on the afternoon of the 25th February.

3. Were involved in any planning or preparation in advance of the freeze and thaw event, following the amber or red alert notification. Please exclude any “business as usual” winter preparedness planning, unless the planning specifically considered the freeze and thaw event.

The Operations Director attended the incident meetings and was also included on the daily communications from the Head of Networks to the regional operational teams regarding the outstanding leakage position, the cold weather position and risk response matrix, and on the outcomes/ actions from the incident conference call. The Operations Director kept the rest of the Executive updated during this period.

On Thursday 1st March, the Head of Networks and the Operations Director also reviewed and agreed the senior duty manager plan for the weekend incident period.

4. Had the freeze and thaw event escalated to them, such that they were aware of the full scale and severity of the event.

On the 2nd March, as a result of the increased demand and reducing water levels in the reservoirs, the Executive authorised a level 4 incident process and a Gold Team was established, which contained the Operations, and Assets and Regulation Director.

As well as providing strategic direction of the incident, and ensuring resources were made available, these two Directors also took on specific roles. The Director of Asset and Regulation took responsibility for representing the Company on the Gold Command

Team (formed of the Resilience Forums, Local Councils, and Police etc.). The Operations Director took a lead in communicating with customers and stakeholders, including videos shared on Social Media and TV and radio interviews.

As part of the level 4 incident process the incident meetings were increased to four meetings a day.

From the 3rd of March the Operations Director and Asset and Regulation Director were in full attendance in the incident room, with the rest of the Executive dialling into the incident meetings. .

The Executive received the notes and actions from each of these incident meetings. The Executive and Board received a daily situation report, which provided the latest positions, actions and outcomes.

The Board received a full briefing on the incident at a Board meeting on 7 March and also approved the compensation package to customers.

The Chairman attended the incident room on the 7th March, to support staff and get a direct report from the Silver incident team.

Contact Us

South East Water
Rocfort Road
Snodland
Kent
ME6 5AH
Tel: 0333 000 2244

southeastwater.co.uk

Follow us

