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Tam McFarlane
Executive Council Member, FBU South West
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31st December 2012

Dear Mr McFarlane,

Further to my letter of 3rd December I have now received a response from Brandon Lewis MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for Communities and Local Government, which I enclose for your information.

As you can see, Mr Lewis has looked into your concerns about the lack of a statutory duty for Fire and Rescue Services to attend flood emergencies and provides information about the current framework's provisions in this area. The Minister further outlines how authorities are meant to prepare for such instances, which I hope is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

Robert Buckland MP



**Department for
Communities and
Local Government**

Mr Robert Buckland MP
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London
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Brandon Lewis MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State

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27th December 2012

Dear Robert,

LARGE SCALE FLOODS IN THE SOUTH WEST

Thank you for your letter of December 3 with attached correspondence from Tam McFarlane, Executive Member of the Fire Brigades Union in the South West. You have asked that I address his concerns, especially around the need for a statutory duty for Fire and Rescue Services to attend flood emergencies.

May I say first that I do agree with Mr McFarlane's point about the excellent work that fire and rescue authorities in the South West and across the country have provided in the recent sustained flood events. However, I cannot agree with his point about regionalisation of support, as the last set of events showed how movement of assets from a wider area was ready to support the response in the South West. Deployment that was well handled so that equipment was still on hand to attend events in North Yorkshire and beyond.

On the statutory duty to attend flooding events I do not agree that the current legislative framework does not recognise this work. Both the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 detail the roles and powers of fire and rescue authorities in respect of both emergency response and rescue in a wide range of situations, including from flooding. Fire and rescue authorities are expected to undertake integrated risk management planning, dovetailed with the community risk register overseen by the Local Resilience Forum (a multi-agency grouping of which fire and rescue authorities are key members). Integrated Risk Management Plans identifies the full range of risks that an authority's service is expected to respond to and is subject to consultation. The National Fire Framework published in July 2012 and given statutory effect in August 2012 makes this clear and we believe that fire and rescue authorities are fully competent to deliver on this

BRANDON LEWIS MP