



14 February 2022

Pete Wishart MP
Chair
Scottish Affairs Committee
House of Commons
LONDON
SW1A 0AA

Castle House
6 Castle Drive
Carnegie Campus
Dunfermline
KY11 8GG

W: www.scottishwater.co.uk

Dear Mr Wishart

Impact of Storm Malik

Thank you for the opportunity to write to you following the recent evidence session about Storm Arwen to outline the effects which the subsequent Storm, Malik had on Scottish Water operations, how we responded to this further storm and any lessons learnt from Storm Arwen that assisted in our response.

Firstly, I would like to highlight the resilience shown by our customers, particularly in North East Scotland, in response to the three storms they endured within a short period of time. Storm Arwen was one of the most significant weather events we have experienced in decades and, unfortunately, the impact on Scottish Water's infrastructure was very significant and widespread due to the loss of normal power supply to a substantial number of our sites as well as challenging conditions which caused delays and difficulty accessing some areas.

As part of previous emergency contingency planning prior to Storm Arwen and as explained to the Committee during the recent evidence session, we were able to protect the water supply for the majority of the 1.5 million customers being supplied by assets in the areas affected by power outages. However, there were still many customers throughout the North East who lost their water supply for a period of time, with a small number of customers enduring a prolonged period of disruption.

In terms of Storm Malik which was quickly followed by Storm Corrie, we were able to mobilise our emergency response more quickly and had a full understanding of the challenges in the network as well as where water supplies might be lost as the impact of this storm was in the same area as Storm Arwen. Our previous experience with Storm Arwen also enabled us to quickly link with SSE to provide bottled water to their welfare facilities.

As a summary of the impact of Storm Malik:

- In excess of 70 generators were used to protect supplies to nearly 1 million customers (~30 deployed reactively)
- Overall, 6000 properties were affected by intermittent supplies / low pressure
- Estimated circa 200 properties were out of water for more than 24 hrs

- We delivered bottled water to 380 properties (310 proactively by SW and 70 on request from customers)
- Over 38,000 litres of water were distributed; this included bulk quantities to SSE welfare facilities
- A fleet of 17 water tankers were also deployed from depots across Scotland; Aberdeen, Inverness and Central Belt to maintain supplies to customers

Unfortunately, Storm Malik occurred before we have been fully able to implement all appropriate learning points from Storm Arwen and we are continuing to build on our resilience and our contingency measures. We utilise a variety of strategies for emergency response, both as part of the decisions we take in the planning and design of our assets and long-term services as well as our reactive response during incidents.

Whilst continuing to deliver and improve our day-to-day operations, Scottish Water spends significant time and effort in the background to plan and prepare for significant events and to understand how we can continue to deliver services to customers affected by these and minimise the impact felt in customer homes and businesses. In addition to our customers, we also need to take account of and focus on ensuring the safety of our workforce, who may have to work in difficult circumstances for long hours.

We are continuing to identify learnings and review our operations during Storm Arwen, although in view of the extended power outage experienced by this storm, one of our learnings is the need to review our emergency generator contingency plans, particularly in relation to pumping stations. This work is underway to determine where improvements to the provision of both permanent and emergency generation capability is needed and establish the right level of investment required to protect customers in the future. Another area identified for improvement includes the provision of a resilient telecommunications system to allow us to better direct our emergency response and ensure our teams are safe and this is an area of improvement we are also actively taking forward.

I hope the committee has found this information helpful and if I can provide any more information or address any further queries, I would be more than happy to help.

Yours sincerely

Peter Farrer
Chief Operating Officer