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Friday, 30 November 2007 Ref: **115/07**

Insurers Call For 25-Year Flood Management Strategy

EMBARGOED UNTIL 00.01HRS, TUESDAY 4 DECEMBER

Public Backs Overhaul of Drainage as Top Priority and Expect Floods to Return

The ABI (Association of British Insurers) today called on the Government to develop a 25-year strategy to manage Britain's growing flood risk. The recommendation comes in the ABI's report, [Summer Floods 2007: Learning the Lessons](#). The ABI wants to see a 25-year national flood strategy, based on:

- An investment programme that reflects climate change and the real flood risks from rivers, coasts and drainage.
- Improved national leadership and coordination with national targets for reducing flood risk. A single national body should be responsible for flood management strategy to replace the current piecemeal approach.
- Stronger planning controls to ensure that new developments are not built in high flood-risk areas wherever possible.

Stephen Hadrill, Director General of the ABI, said:

"This summer's devastating floods highlight the urgent need for a long-term strategy based around more investment, national coordination and better land use planning.

"Insurers want to continue to provide flood insurance. The right decisions from the Government will ensure that flood insurance remains widely available and affordable in the UK."

The ABI is also publishing today the results of an exclusive opinion survey by Populus in the areas affected by the summer flooding (Yorkshire and Humberside, Gloucestershire and Worcestershire).

- Residents of the flooded areas say that an overhaul of drainage systems is the most

urgent measure now needed to reduce the risk of future flooding.

- Nearly two thirds (61%) think it likely that their areas will be affected by flooding again on the same scale as this summer.
- Residents have a positive view of the response of their local authority and insurance company to the floods. Asked to rate a number of bodies on a scale of 1-5 (where 1 means a very bad job and 5 means a very good job), residents rated their local authority 3.28, their insurance company 3.26, the Environment Agency 3.13 and national government 2.64.
- Disruption of travel was the major impact of the floods, with 67% of residents saying they were affected. Others were power cuts (26%), disruption to water supplies (22%) and the closure of places of work (21%). 15% of residents report that their property sustained flood damage.

ENDS

Notes

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Attached is [a copy of the ABI report](#), embargoed until 00.01hrs 4 December.

2. Populus interviewed a random sample of 1,003 adults aged 18+ by telephone between November 16 and 21 2007. Interviews were conducted in areas particularly badly affected by the summer flooding in Yorkshire and Humberside and Gloucestershire and Worcester.

Populus asked residents what measures they now support in order to reduce the risk of future flooding in their area.

On a scale of 1-5, with 5 being the most urgent and 1 being the least urgent, what measures do you think most need to be taken to reduce the risk of future flooding in your area?

	All
Overhaul of drainage systems	4.27
Increased Government spending on flood defences	4.18
No new building on floodplains	4.16

3. The ABI is the trade association for Britain's insurance industry. Its nearly 400 member companies provide over 94% of the insurance business in the UK. It represents insurance companies to the Government, and to the regulatory and other agencies, and is an influential voice on public policy and financial services issues. ABI member companies hold up to a sixth of all investments traded on the London Stock Exchange, on behalf of millions of pensioners and savers.

External attachments

[Summer Floods 2007: Learning the Lessons](#)