



NATIONAL RIVERS AUTHORITY

SOUTHERN REGION

ANNUAL REPORT 1989/90

SOUTHERN REGIONAL REVIEW

ANNUAL REPORT 1989/90 - REGIONAL REVIEW

1. FOREWORD BY REGIONAL GENERAL MANAGER

The twelve months since 1 April 1989 have seen the effective establishment of the National Rivers Authority - Southern Region. The first five months saw the completion of the setting up of an independent rivers unit within the then Southern Water Authority organisation, and the development of comprehensive plans for our eventual separation. This was accomplished on 1 September 1989 when we joined the nine similar regional bodies and the new national head office to form a true National Rivers Authority.

While no NRA Region can claim to be unique, the Southern Region does have strongly distinguishing aspects. Among these are pressures for development in all its forms, heavy reliance on groundwater for the Region's supplies and relatively small margins between demand for water and its availability. Seven separate water companies operate over the Region, making the NRA's co-ordination function more onerous than in those Regions where one supplier predominates. Finally, the people of the Region are in general articulate and have high expectations, and their voices have been strongly heard. The pressures resulting from conflicting demands on the water environment for abstraction, effluent discharge, recreation and conservation have been as acute in the South as anywhere in the country.

Although the foundations were laid before April 1989, it was during the last twelve months, and more especially the latter seven, that the main work of establishing the Regional organisation was done. During this period we have built a widely-dispersed staff complement into an effective team to serve a new identity and culture. This process has placed heavy demands on staff, some of whom have had the added disadvantage of temporary accommodation. Nevertheless we have through effective public relations made use of the natural events of the period, drought followed by storm and flood, to place that identity and culture in the forefront of the public mind. We have also established effective liaison with other public authorities, and have in particular made known to them and to specialist bodies our heightened interest in conservation and the environment. The Southern Region has played its part in the process of welding together a national identity from the ten disparate units, and has contributed fully to the NRA's first Corporate Plan.

We inherited from our predecessor a significant programme of capital expenditure on Flood Defence. This has been maintained with the completion of the first phase of a major fluvial flood relief facility at Ashford and the start of a major sea defence scheme near Lymington. The Region has also marshalled its forces to cope with two major reservoir proposals by water service companies.

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY



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National Rivers Authority	Information	Head Office
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At the outset of this year I expressed the view that the NRA would be judged by the capability it showed when facing its first major natural threat. I am happy now to report that two quite different threats, a severe drought in the summer and autumn of 1989, and repeated onslaughts of wind, tide and rainfall during the winter of 1989/90, have been successfully coped with in the Southern Region. This success is largely due to the superb response of the entire workforce of Southern Region. To all of them I express my admiration and gratitude.

2. SUMMARY OF KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

During the earlier part of the year, while the NRA unit remained part of the Southern Water Authority, activity consisted mainly of planning and preparation for independence. During this period it was necessary to complete the assimilation of staff into their new posts while maintaining operational services. The Scheme of Transfer of Water Authority assets was finalised, and necessary building and conversion works were initiated. The work of separating financial systems was accomplished, together with the groundwork for new client/contractor relationship with Southern Water in such matters as computer services and engineering design. Steps were taken to make known to other organisations and to the public at large what the NRA would be and what it would do. These efforts culminated in the award of first prize for the best trade stand and overall champions at the South of England Show in June 1989.

An early decision was taken that the Region should have its own 24 hour emergency control centre and plans were put into effect for its realisation later in 1990.

During this period the onset of drought conditions helped the Region to establish the separate identity and role of the NRA. The start of work in April on a major capital scheme for fluvial flood defence at Ashford was also turned to this purpose.

Most of the processes of assumption of external responsibilities were completed well before 31 August 1989. Progress with the new organisation since then has consisted of the completion of outstanding matters. All external services are now provided directly by the Region, except for emergency response in Kent, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. These must await the completion of the new Regional Emergency Control System.

Until the end of the year the Region was obliged to continue sharing its head office building in Worthing with Southern Water PLC. They have now completed a new office building and have started to vacate the present one, which will ultimately be solely for NRA use.

Externally the Southern Region has taken since 1 September 1989 further measures via the media to establish its identity and purpose in the public mind. Following on from its high-profile approach to the 1989 drought, the Region was obliged to respond to three successive onslaughts of wind, tide and rainfall in December, January and February. In December a tide/surge combination of estimated 100-year severity resulted in the multiple breaching of sea defences near Lymington, Hampshire, and extensive flooding in the town. The events of January and February assaulted sea defences all along the south coast, and NRA personnel were well to the fore in efforts, largely successful, to prevent flooding and minimise damage. The flood detention storage facility, started in Ashford in April, was put to effective use in December, and was appreciated by householders who would previously have been flooded.

While there has been no comparable onslaught on the Environmental front, the vigorous institution of enforcement procedures has made known to dischargers that the NRA is to be taken seriously in its determination to effect a continuing improvement in river water quality. The number of prosecutions has increased, and the average fine imposed has more than trebled. In addition there have been two successful prosecutions for water abstraction in excess of licensed quantities, the first such prosecutions for over ten years.

In Fisheries, the Southern Region has re-established the former reputation of its Dunks Green fish hatchery for the successful breeding of Chinese Grass Carp. Fisheries staff were also active in late 1989 in organising successful fish rescue operations necessitated by the extremely low water levels.

In Hampshire considerable success has been achieved in detecting salmon poaching.

The NRA's stronger role in conservation has been pursued, and the first of annual conservation liaison meetings has been held with county council officers and representatives of the recognised conservation bodies.

The NRA Southern Region has established cordial relations with the Agence de l'Eau Artois Picardie. Three senior officers of the Agence visited Worthing in the summer of 1989, and this visit was returned to Lille in November. Agreement has been reached on a twinning arrangement to be formalized in May 1990.

Since Vesting Day on 1 September 1990, NRA activity has taken on an increasingly national character. The Southern Region has played its part in drawing together the separate regional threads into a national whole, both by participation in national working groups and by its input to the preparation of the NRA's first Corporate Plan. Extreme shortage of key staff resources has however inhibited this participation to some extent. Southern Region involvement in the development of the Information Systems Strategy and in the steering of research and development has been less than might otherwise have been wished.

3. REGIONAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

(a) Regional Advisory Board

The Board held its inaugural meeting on 24 August 1989. It began by discussing the frequency of meetings for all the Southern Region's Committees. A calendar of meetings was drawn up facilitating the progression of Minutes of local committees through regional committees the Regional Advisory Board and Headquarters meetings. It was decided that initially the Board should meet on a monthly basis apart from August and December.

The memberships of the other Regional Committees were put to the Board and where there were vacancies to be filled the Board approved the recommendations that were submitted.

Reports have been dealt with under the headings of Reports by Chairman and Regional General Manager, Committee, Policy and Report items.

Principal matters considered during the first year of the Board's existence were:

- (i) Admission of Public and Press to Committees
- (ii) Rivers Darent and Cray
- (iii) Flood Defence Committees Conservation Interests
- (iv) Corporate Planning
- (v) Oil Spill in Southampton Water
- (vi) River Catchment Management Plan
- (vii) Environment Bill: Relationships between HMIP and NRA
- (viii) Laboratory Services
- (ix) Water Resource Development in Kent
- (x) Broad Oak Reservoir
- (xi) Medway Navigation - Charges Consultation Meeting

Regular reports on effluent quality, capital programme position and river water quality are received. Each meeting would receive a report by the Regional General Manager on progress achieved during the preceding month.

Meetings of the Board have been peripatetic allowing the Board to become familiar with the Region's District Offices. So far meetings have been held at the offices in Winchester, Pevensey and Rye, as well as Worthing.

(b) Regional Rivers Advisory Committee

The inaugural meeting of the Committee was held on 21 November 1989. The nineteen Members were appointed following a rigorous selection process in order to achieve a balanced representation to cover all aspects of rivers interests in the Region. The Chairman of the NRA Lord Crickhowell attended the inaugural meeting.

This meeting was largely concerned with acquainting Members with the aims of the Committee as well as to provide basic information on the operation of the NRA. In this context the Committee received reports on the role of the Regional Advisory Board, elements of corporate planning, future charging and enforcement policies and proposed river catchment management plans (RCMPs). A seminar was held on the same day to provide background information for the Committee Members.

The Committee also determined that the Minutes of the Harbour of Rye Advisory Committee should be channelled initially through them. Recommendations falling within the day-to-day operational running of the Harbour (such as urgent removal of wrecks, damage to structures etc.) would continue to be dealt with by the Harbour Master or District Engineer.

The second meeting of the Committee was held on 13 March 1990 which began with a presentation given by the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Harbour of Rye Advisory Committee (Mr. R.K. Breeds and Mr. D.G. Bentley). This provided Members of the Rivers Committee with the basic details of the Harbour and how it was run by the Authority and the scope of its operations. Amongst the other reports considered by the Committee at this meeting, were the following:-

- Bathing Water Compliance with EC Directive 1989
- Toxic Tips
- Water Pollution from Farm Waste 1989
- River Water Quality 1989
- Effluent Discharge Quality 1989
- Abstraction Charges
- Action on Disappearing Rivers

The Committee also received a note of the proceedings of a consultation meeting on charges to users of the River Medway which takes place annually in order to afford the organisations and local authorities concerned with boating on the river an opportunity to comment on the charges the Authority propose to introduce in the following financial year.

It was agreed that the Committee's next meeting in June should be in conjunction with a visit to the River Medway so that Members can see for themselves the improvements that have taken place there in opening it up for the recreational use of the public.

(c) Regional Fisheries Advisory Committee

During the year under review this Committee met on four occasions, as follows:-

- 18 May 1989
- 28 September 1989
- 26 October 1989
- 18 January 1990

The meeting in September was held at Stockbridge in Hampshire and entailed an inspection of the main rivers in that County. There was concern amongst Hampshire anglers that catches in some rivers had dramatically diminished.

The Regional Committee has three local fisheries committees reporting to it. The membership of these local committees predominantly represent grass roots anglers having personal knowledge of the many miles of riverbank within the Region.

Of particular interest during the year has been the decision to transfer the Darent and Cray area to Southern Region. In fisheries terms this represents a significant increase in the level of responsibility in Kent.

The Committee in the past year has forged closer links with the Sea Fisheries Committees. Not only is there a Sea Fisheries Committee representative on the Regional Committee, but each of the Chairmen of the three County Fisheries Advisory Committees represent the Authority on the respective Sea Fisheries Committee for the area.

The year saw the following reports being presented to the Committee:-

Corporate Plan: Levels of Service Indicators for Fisheries
Rivers Darent and Cray
River Catchment Management Plans
Fisheries Capital Programme
Fisheries Byelaws
Relationship NRA/Sea Fisheries Committees

(d) Regional Flood Defence Committee

Three meetings of the Committee were held during the twelve months under review, as follows:-

17 May 1989
25 October 1989
17 January 1990

In conjunction with the May meeting the Committee received a brief presentation on the setting up of an emergency control system (RECS). This meeting was attended by Dr. J.R. Park from MAFF.

The Committee received as a regular practice the Minutes of the four Local Flood Defence Committees.

Reports received by the Committee during this period included:-

Medium Term Plan 1990/91 - 1994/95
Capital Expenditure 1988/89
Aquatic Weed Research Unit
MAFF Conference on River and Coastal Engineers
Local Government Finance Act 1988 - Flood Defence Levies
Grant Earning Ceilings
Internal Drainage Districts - Recommended Rates and Levies
1990/91
Flooding: 13-17 December 1989

The two major topics discussed by the Committee were the serious flooding that occurred during the winter together with the severe damage that was caused to many sea defences especially along the Kent coastline, and the new system of levying on local authorities based on population figures.

4. FUNCTIONAL REVIEWS

(a) Water Resources

Inheritance

The Resources Department was established by Southern Water to carry out only those functions currently undertaken at that time by Southern Water Authority. A number of key Resources staff transferred to the Plc, leaving 25% vacancies in the NRA Resources Department and the need for extensive training. Staff had to move into seven separate new offices throughout the Region.

The NRA assumed ownership of the Candover and Further Itchen River Augmentation Scheme, which pumps groundwater to the headwaters of the River Itchen to support low river flows. The Medina-Yar Groundwater Scheme on the Isle of Wight was retained by Southern Water Services Limited. Bewl Water and Weir Wood Reservoirs were retained by Southern Water, but Ardingly Reservoir was transferred to the NRA for subsequent sale to the Mid Sussex Water Company. Reservoir Operating Agreements were entered into for both Bewl Water and Ardingly. Southern Water Services have provided a two year contract on the Isle of Wight to provide hydrometric services to the NRA. The NRA Regional responsibility for the Darent and Cray Catchment was debated during the year and a public meeting was held to explain the proposal to transfer the Resources and Environmental Protection functions from Thames to the Southern Region.

1989/90 Drought

As a result of the exceptionally dry period November 1988 - January 1989 (the driest in a hundred years of record at Canterbury) the NRA urged Southern Water to apply for a Drought Order on the River Medway in connection with the operation of Bewl Water. This was a first Drought Order of very many in what became the well known drought of 1989. A total of 9 hosepipe bans, 10 Drought Orders relaxing licence conditions and 5 Drought Order restrictions on non-essential water use have been in operation during the year. In a number of cases the NRA made representations to DoE. In one case the NRA was asked to arbitrate between two Water Companies objecting to each others Drought Orders. After Vesting Day the Department of Environment gave the NRA some discretionary powers in particular Drought Orders. The Southern Region adopted the policy that it would not agree to Drought Orders relaxing licence conditions protecting the aquatic environment in the summer unless hosepipe bans, or other restrictions on water use by customers, were in force. This policy was subsequently adopted throughout the NRA.

In Hampshire the Candover Scheme was used to augment river flows in the Itchen. The Further Itchen River Augmentation Scheme was test pumped in a major drought situation, so that river flows and quality were well maintained throughout the drought.

The drought was most severe in Kent and Sussex and the NRA arranged drought co-ordination meetings for all the water companies involved. The main purpose was to agree the order and timing for the introduction of water restrictions and to co-ordinate public relations. Resources Staff featured in national and local TV, radio and newspaper coverage of the drought. Routine reports on the drought situation in the Region were prepared for NRA HQ, the DoE and, as the drought worsened, for the Cabinet Office.

Hydrometry

The restructuring of Resources into seven Districts was particularly disruptive for hydrometric data processing, where a number of mainframe systems had to be modified. A number of staff also had to be trained in the use of computer systems. The drought caused an additional workload on field staff monitoring groundwater and low river flow conditions.

Water Resources

The NRA inherited from Southern Water a regional role in preparing demand forecasts for the seven Water Companies. In April 1989 an updated forecast was prepared for Water Companies in Kent and in January - March 1990 a full Regional Forecast was prepared. A new analysis was made of domestic water consumption at 80 locations in the Region and reported back to Water Companies.

The NRA has been working with Southern Water and Eastbourne Water Company regarding the promotion of an enlargement of the existing Darwell Reservoir in East Sussex. The Mid-Kent, Southern Water and Folkestone Water Companies announced in November 1989 their intention to promote the Broad Oak Reservoir in East Kent.

In the Southern Region six catchment have been identified as requiring investigation into the possibility of "over-abstraction" as part of national study of 40 such catchments. The River Darent and Wallop Brook will be studied first, followed by the Bourne Rivulet, the Meon, Hamble and Nailbourne Stream.

Abstraction Licensing

During the year the backlog of outstanding licences was reduced by a third. The NRA made representations against Southern Water's application to itself to regularise 15 public water supply licences on the Isle of Wight. The objections were withdrawn when satisfactory conditions were agreed. One applicant appealed against the NRA's refusal of increased summer abstraction from the River Itchen, but subsequently withdrew a few weeks before the Public Inquiry.

There were two successful prosecutions of abstractors on a total of 6 offences and a licence was unilaterally revoked by the NRA. A number of warning letters were also issued and the NRA's determination to be an effective regulator was made widely known.

The Water Act 1989 makes fish farming for the table, watercress, domestic and agricultural abstractions over 20m³/day licensable from 1st September 1990. A consultant was employed to survey fish farms which will become licensable. A regional abstraction licence database was established.

Aquifer Protection

A review was made of some aspects of the Aquifer Protection Policy inherited from Southern Water. A Regional database for tip sites was developed for use in aquifer protection and licensing.

Overseas Visits

Resources Staff visited the Agence de L'Eau Artois-Picardie near Lille in France, with particular interests in nitrates, aquifer protection and leakage control in distribution systems. A European Demand Forecasting Workshop in Basle was attended on behalf of the NRA nationally.

(b) Pollution Control Including Laboratory Services

Water Quality

All sampling and analysis requirements have been harmonized into Regional Programmes and sampling practice has been standardized for greater efficiency. All requirements for quality returns to DOE for EC Directives, Red List surveys and Paris Commission have been met and the task of Biological Assessment for the 1990 River Quality Survey has begun with work being carried out at 400 sites. Regional staff have been active on national working groups considering the future quality management of all controlled waters. This work has involved the production of guidelines for the 1990 national water quality survey of rivers and estuaries and the development of use-related environmental quality objectives and standards for adoption by 1992.

A 24 hour standby system for dealing with pollution emergencies has been implemented on the mainland and arrangements to cover the Isle of Wight are being concluded. A computer-based system has been introduced with success throughout the Region for streamlining the management and operation of routine fieldwork.

The severity of drought condition in the Region affected the quality of rivers to a varying degree. The Hampshire chalk streams maintained quality extremely well but the tertiary streams in East Sussex and Kent suffered as flows provided lower dilution of effluents than normal. Overall compliance of river lengths with quality objectives was 70% compared with 79% in 1988. The general maintenance of quality in the face of such conditions is evidence of the good health and management of our watercourses.

All 65 Bathing Water Sites were sampled on 20 occasions as required by the EC Directive, 45 met the standards required by the UK government. This improvement over the 27 beaches complying in 1988 is principally due to the dry weather and prolonged sunshine but planned improvements to coastal sewage disposal will enable the 1989 result to be bettered under adverse weather conditions by 1993 and all beaches should comply by 1995.

The decreasing trend of farm pollution in the Region has continued with 13 serious incidents recorded against 17 in 1988. Five of these were the subject of prosecution, all of which were successful.

Oil has been the principle source of concern over incidental pollution. Three incidents of oil spillage during transshipment activities at the Fawley Refinery have led to a review of precautionary practices used by Esso Ltd at the instigation of NRA. Serious contamination of groundwater resulting from oil spillage at a water company site has been investigated and legal proceedings are under way.

Press allegations of risk posed to public water supplies by toxic tips in Kent and Sussex were investigated and found to be without foundation. To ensure security of water supplies, all tip sites in the Region current or past have been listed on computer and plotted on groundwater maps. Quality data has been checked at all sources in the vicinity of these sites.

Residual levels of certain pesticide materials is increasing in ground and surface waters across the Region. As a preliminary to the application of national NRA policy, Regional staff have begun discussions with principle users of these materials to reduce and control their application.

Laboratory Services

The two biological laboratory groups established to serve Southern Region were fully operational throughout the year, meeting with success all demands made upon them. Currently located in Southern Water premises, they will move to their new NRA locations at Canterbury and Waterlooville in 1990 and 1991 respectively.

A contract for chemical analysis is operated with the Southern Water PLC. In general terms it is successful but difficulties with data transfer and priority for NRA work has caused problems for the Region.

The NRA laboratory complex at Waterlooville and Portsmouth will house the chemistry facility and one biology group. The building will be constructed as a single tender, pending agreement with the Architects the building works should commence in June 1990. The laboratory should be fully completed by June 1991.

(c) Flood Defence (including Planning)

The Flood Defence Department has the largest operational establishment and also carries out much the greater part of the Region's capital investment. In addition, planning services (encompassing the co-ordination of development planning liaison and corporate planning) are provided for the Region as a whole within the Department.

Operations

In the earlier part of the year before vesting, activity consisted mainly of the consolidation of the preparations for independence already in hand before 1 April 1989, together with the necessary maintenance of continuity of operations. New or refurbished accommodation was provided for district offices at Winchester and Canterbury, with minor work being needed at Chichester, Pevensey and Rye. Preparations were put in hand for building a new office on an NRA site at Leigh to replace temporary accommodation in Tonbridge.

An early decision was taken to provide a new regional emergency control system, and Flood Defence has led the planning for this (£1.8M). Meanwhile the existing arrangements, based partly on contracts with Southern Water PLC and partly in-house, have been maintained and were severely tested in the storms of the winter of 1989/90.

Health and Safety was originally seen as primarily a Flood Defence responsibility, but will now, following Head Office direction, be transferred to the Personnel Section. A Safety Officer was appointed and has taken the lead in developing the Region's response to the COSHH regulations.

The Region inherited a number of differences in pay structure, travelling allowances and bonus systems, reflecting the relative autonomy of the former Southern Water Authority divisions. Management Services officers have worked to align these to some extent, although national policies are expected ultimately to supersede. Purchasing and supplies have also been put on a Regional basis and new operating procedures developed to reflect the thinly dispersed nature of NRA activity.

The 1988 Scheme of organisation allowed for NRA operations on the Isle of Wight, principally Flood Defence, to be carried out by Southern Water PLC under contract. After protracted negotiation a contract has now been signed and put into effect.

The whole of the Region's Flood Defence management and workforce were put to severe test by storms during the winter of 1989/90. The events of 15-17 December 1989, 25 and 26 January 1990 and 26-28 February 1990 affected the whole of the Region's south coast sea defences, although the most severe effects moved progressively eastwards with each event. The December storm, distinguished by a tidal surge of one metre above an already high astronomical tide, caused multiple breaches in the Pennington Sea Wall and severe flooding in the town of Lyminster, including 50 properties. The storm in late January saw high tides accompanied by storm force winds. The most severe effects were felt on West Sussex frontages, where reliance is placed on maintaining full shingle beaches as sea defences.

The storm of late February saw another high spring tide accompanied by westerly gales, with the worst damage being experienced on frontages in East Sussex and Kent between Hastings and Hythe, and in the Medway Estuary.

Throughout these three events, each in itself remarkable, NRA staff and workmen, together with a substantial contract plant fleet, were engaged round-the-clock on minimising damage and flooding and in effecting emergency repairs. Further remedial work has continued and urgent appraisals are being made of the need for still more capital work in the short to medium term.

The events of 1989/90 have highlighted some weaknesses in procedures for flood forecasting and warning and for emergency control, and these will be reviewed as a matter of urgency.

Corporate and Development Planning

The Flood Defence Department has both made its own contribution to the NRA's first national Corporate Plan for 1990/91, and co-ordinated input from the Region as a whole. Initial preparations have also been made in conjunction with the other operating departments to start the process of integrated River Catchment Management Plans in the Southern Region.

An early start had been made before 1 April 1989 in bringing to the attention of county and district councils, the role of the NRA and how this would affect planning liaison. In spite of this there was hesitancy on the part of some councils to consult the NRA separately from Southern Water PLC, but by mid-1989 most problems had been ironed out. Although the Region is subject to sustained pressure for development in all its aspects, the biggest single impact has been the Channel Tunnel Rail Link proposals.

Capital Investment

At the beginning of the year activity on capital investment consisted mainly of carrying forward schemes already initiated by the Southern Water Authority. A number of new initiatives have been taken during the year however, and the NRA reorientation has been accelerated by the storm events of the recent winter.

On the Isle of Wight, a decision was taken to promote a joint scheme with the Isle of Wight County Council to reconstruct a road bridge over the River Yar at Bembridge to incorporate a new tidal sluice (£345,000 NRA contribution). A consultants' report has been received. In Hampshire a start on the first phase of the 9 km Pennington Sea Wall scheme (£4.3M) was delayed by the December flooding but work is now well under way. A formal ceremony took place on 22 March when work was initiated by Mr. R.T. Millard, Chairman of the Hampshire Local Flood Defence Committee.

In Sussex design work was started on an improvement scheme for the Scrase Bridge Stream through Haywards Heath (£830,000). This will be promoted concurrently with a Mid Sussex District Council scheme for work on the non main river section. The NRA has been obliged to act to discharge an inherited responsibility for the South Stoke Bridge over the River Arun, which is a Victorian wrought iron structure and was in danger of collapse. Emergency remedial work has been carried out but ultimately a new bridge will be needed. In the Pevensey area a programme of shingle renourishment of the exposed Beachlands frontage (£150,000) was carried through before the winter storms, and this frontage was one of the few on the south coast to require minimal attention later in the year.

Two major consultancy studies have been started in the year. One is for the investigation by Dobbie and Partners of all aspects; waves, currents, condition of existing defences, benefits and costs of the frontage between Eastbourne and Cooden near Bexhill (£220,000). The second is for the study and formulation of policy both in relation to development and NRA capital investment of the River Adur. This is being done by W.S. Atkins & Partners (£80,000).

In Kent the major landmarks were the start and completion of the first phase of the Ashford Flood Relief Scheme (£4.0M). The first sod at the site of the Aldington flood storage area was turned on 24 April 1989 by Mr. C.D. Neame, Chairman of the Kent Local Flood Defence Committee. Substantial completion was achieved in December, in time for the storage to be used in earnest to prevent local flooding in Mersham. Work was also completed on the penultimate phase of the River Cray Improvement Scheme (£3.8M) along with preparations for the final phase. There has been considerable local opposition to the scheme on amenity and conservation grounds, and Flood Defence staff, along with consultants' staff and the Conservation Officer, have played a large part in a campaign of public information.

The Southern Region has had some involvement with the steering of the national research and development programme for Flood Defence, although critical staff shortages have prevented a full involvement. Membership has also been maintained of the Standing Conference on Problems Associated with the Coastline (SCOPAC), an association of sea defence, coast protection and allied authorities covering the western half of the Region. A successful site viewing for MPs was held on 23 February 1990, in which the NRA's Pennington frontage was included. Efforts are now in hand to institute similar liaison arrangements in East Sussex and Kent.

(d) Fisheries

The fisheries service transferred from the Water Authority with fewer changes than were experienced in other functions. The continuity was fortuitous since the dry weather and high temperatures throughout the year entailed heavy demands upon staff for fish rescue and transfer operations. This activity reached a peak following the brief but heavy rainstorms in October. Then operations stimulated great interest from local and national media, producing a most favourable public image for the Authority.

Anti-poaching activity has been maintained with some 400 patrols being mounted on land and water. Effective patrolling coupled with poor salmon runs made this a fairly quiet year but a type of poacher new to Southern Region appeared in the shape of sub-aqua fishermen apprehended in the lower reaches of the River Itchen.

Low runs of salmon and sea trout reflected the depletion of river flow and catches in the upper parts of rivers were especially affected. By contrast, lower reaches generally did well and the brief October rains induced a late run of fish which continued through November. The Region has continued this year with its salmon restocking programme. Native fish and stock of Scottish origin have been introduced at a slowly increasing level over the previous years and it is planned substantially to increase this activity next year. Sea trout reared at the Bewl Hatchery will be restocked to upper reaches of runs in Sussex and Kent.

~~Fish-passes-completed-in-the-year-included-two-on-the-Lower-Test-at Nursling and Romsey and one on River Stour at Barnet Mill.~~

The Regional Fish Farm has enjoyed an excellent year with highly successful spawnings of chubb and Grass, Mirror and Koi Carp. The quality of trout reared at the farm has improved and these, together with all stocks held in the farm have been in great demand for club stocking and restocking after pollution incidents.

(e)&(f) Recreation and Conservation

Regional conservation guidelines have been prepared based upon the conservation duties imposed by the Water Act and incorporating the National Code of Practice for Recreation, Access and Conservation. Liaison arrangements with Conservation Interests have been established both for all Flood Defence maintenance works and for the Regional Capital Works Programme. These have formed a most valuable point of contact and have ensured that NRA is viewed with favour amongst conservationists in Southern Region.

Work has begun on the creation of a Conservation Database collated from the results of river corridor surveys. Coverage this year included all rivers programmed for dredging within SSSI's.

Conservation developments have included creation of Conservation Areas on lands owned by the Authority at Ashford and within the area of Rye Harbour.

Negotiations are under way with the planning authorities for the development of Parkwood in Sussex for recreational activity commensurate with conservation interest.

Working in partnership with local authorities and conservation groups has enabled the input of NRA technical expertise to give practical assistance to the furtherance of conservation.

The Medway River Project is the major example of such partnership activity in the Region. ~~Aimed at management of the river for the benefit of recreation and wildlife the project now extends over 20 miles of the River Medway and has succeeded in bringing about an increase in river recreation, coupled with preservation and enhancement of habitat and landscape.~~ Consideration is being given to promotion of similar schemes elsewhere in the Region.

A major flood defence scheme at Pennington Marsh in Hampshire received final approval this year after prolonged challenge by Conservationists which had extended over several years previously. A major factor in approval for this sensitive scheme was the provision of an Environmental Impact Assessment, one of the first to be prepared in Southern Region under the new legislation.

(g) Navigation

River Medway

The Region has continued to operate the Medway Navigation and to participate, along with Kent County Council and local district councils, in the Medway Project. During the year action was taken, now virtually complete, to rectify the malfunctioning of Oak Weir Sluice. The gates at Hampstead Lock were renewed.

Rye Harbour

Discussion has continued with the Department of Transport on the possible impacts on harbour use of the various alternative routes proposed for the Rye Bypass. Interest by ARC Limited in constructing a marine dredged aggregate handling facility has been sustained and this is now likely to proceed.

5. CROSS FUNCTIONAL AND SUPPORT SERVICES REVIEWS

(a) Administration

It has been necessary to accommodate Regional HQ staff in two locations, Guildbourne House and West Worthing. Portakabins were provided for 36 people at West Worthing.

This has meant looking after and providing support services in both locations with one set of staff. However, with excellent co-operation from all people concerned, there have been very few problems.

Apart from furniture and other fittings, the plc vacated Guildbourne House itself on the very last day of the year, ie 31 March 1990. This has resulted in everyone having to endure the cramped conditions for longer than anticipated. Although this has been very inconvenient, all staff have co-operated magnificently.

The celebration commemorating the birth of the NRA was a complete success with many past Rivers members and staff attending to drink a toast to the NRA Southern Region.

(b) Legal Services

Most activity has been concentrated on prosecution and conveyancing. There were six prosecutions for offences arising out of pollution (an increase of one from last year) -- total fines were £5,150 and costs amounted to £1,874. The average fine has risen now from £260 to £860. This year saw the first two abstraction prosecutions for the last ten years. Fines totalled £3,050 and costs of £400. There were 106 prosecutions arising out of fishing licence offences resulting in fines totalling £3,325 and £2,535 costs. There were also two offences of fishing with illegal instruments which resulted in the defendants receiving suspended jail sentences of nine months and costs of £400. There was a rise of 21% in the number of fishery prosecutions over last year.

The NRA had to defend its activities in the Court of Appeal against an application for a judicial review brought by a Hampshire landowner. This was successfully done and costs were awarded to the Authority.

Southern Region is also appealing, on behalf of the Residuary Authority, against the decision of the IOW Magistrates in favour of the Nature Conservancy Council in a case relating to Flood Defence operations, in view of the implications of the decision for future consultative arrangements with the NCC.

Conveyancing tended to be concerned largely with Ardingly Reservoir and the Ashford Flood Alleviation Scheme, where notices have now been served to enable the Hothfield Flood Barriers to be constructed. Negotiations have also been conducted in an effort to mitigate the effects of the Aldington Barrier by exchanging land amongst local farmers to aid their continued viability.

The Legal Department were also involved in the preparation of the transfer scheme which devolved the property of the Southern Water Authority upon its two successor bodies.

(c) Estates Management

It has been a very active year for the Estates Department. The year started with considerable involvement in the Transfer Scheme. Prolonged negotiations took place to ensure that the Authority received all the properties due to it under the rules laid down by the Department of the Environment.

Phase I of the Ashford Flood Alleviation Scheme at Aldington was completed.

Negotiations commenced for land acquisitions for Phase II at Hothfield. Terms were agreed for the purchase of Paddocks Farm, Hothfield; £160,000 being paid for 83 acres.

Many rent reviews took place with substantial increases in rent being achieved. Terms were finally agreed by the letting of an area at Rye Harbour for the creation of 120 moorings. A new lease was agreed with Ashford Angling Society for the Royal Military Canal with the rent going up by 650% for a reduced length of the canal.

Recommendations made by the Estates Department for the computerisation of the Estates Terrier were approved and a system is to be installed.

The 1990 Rating Revaluation has resulted in large increases in rateable values of NRA properties. Valuations have been carried out by the Estates Department and appeals will be submitted.

(d) Public Relations

The NRA began functioning as an independent unit at a time when the South East was experiencing one of the most prolonged dry spells this century. The drought attracted continuing media interest and focused attention on an aspect of the NRA activities which normally escapes public notice. The extreme events of the winter provided an ironic contrast with tidal and fluvial flooding events drawing attention to NRA provisions for flood defence. The recently completed flood detention scheme above Ashford enabled the Region to promote the positive aspects of flood protection.

Southern Region exhibited at three County shows providing a useful opportunity for the public to meet and talk to NRA officers. The NRA received the trophy for best trade stand and overall champion at the South of England Show.

Press receptions were held to launch the NRA and subsequently in connection with the start of the Ashford Scheme and the scheme for the reconstruction of the Pennington Sea Wall.

A Regional Brochure was prepared for the launch to supplement the Guide to Southern Region. Other items of Regional literature have been produced to meet the urgent needs in dealing with educational and user enquiries.

The high level of the public and press interest confirms that in the first twelve months the NRA has become established in this region as an independent and professional organisation which operates openly and sets high standards in all aspects of its activities.

(e) Planning

See 4 (c) Flood

(f) Research and Development

The work that has been undertaken as part of the National Programme reflects ~~some of the particular areas of interest and concern in~~ Southern Region.

Topics include Ecotoxicology and Hydrometry. Specific projects are aimed at development of standards for waters, epidemiology studies in coastal waters and classification of estuaries and coastal waters. Southern staff head projects on the development of an automated hydrometric data system, on fish pass design and the practice of beach feeding.

Topic investment appraisals are complete in Southern. Regionally funded projects include the establishment of cress farm control parameters, restoration of grazing marsh and the quality implications of recharge of sewage effluent to chalk aquifers.

Southern have been active in promoting via FWR investigation into the production of very high quality sewage effluent for discharge to rivers offering very low dilution. The Region is continuing with the major project for automatic counting of migratory salmon. Based on electronic recording counters mounted in fish passes in the lower ends of the Rivers Test and Itchen, the project aims to determine the minimum flows required for fish movement.

(g) Information Systems

During 1989/90 the main task has been the extension and provision of 15 facilities at all the new temporary and permanent office buildings in the Region - a total of 12 sites. This has required the provision of voice and data cabling networks, each designed with a view to their ultimate as well as interim situations. At the same time the contract for mainframe services with IT Southern (the IS subsidiary of Southern Water plc) has been formulated and managed. A contribution to the national IS strategy formulation has been made and an interim regional strategy developed. User training for PCs, peripherals and software has been provided.

(h) Personnel

The prime task during the year has been to fill vacant posts in the approved establishment. By Vesting Day, we were 12 posts short of our target.

On the Industrial Relations side, Interim Regional Joint Committees have been set up for both Blue and Green Book Staff. In addition, Local Industrial Relations Meetings are held in each District.

There has been national involvement through the Personnel Advisory Committee, the Training Committee and various working groups.

During this time, "normal" personnel practices have continued such as welfare, sickness monitoring, centralising personnel records, retirement presentations, and research into a new personnel data system which will commence early 1990/91.

Lack of personnel has prevented a detailed implementation of Training Policies, although responses have been made on initiatives such as Graduate Recruitment. This position will be eased with the appointment of a Training Officer under the Corporate Plan proposals.

(i) Finance

The Region's capital works programme of £9.9M was made up of £8.1M for flood defence schemes, £1.1M for schemes associated with re-organisation, and the balance of £0.7M for water resources, navigation and fisheries.

The revenue budget of £16.5M is allocated £8.2M to flood defence, £3.1M for environmental protection, £1.3M for water resources, the balance of £3.9M covers central support services and accommodation.

The Region holds £3.9M reserves on behalf of its four local flood defence committees. The reserves represent surplus income over expenditure and receipts from property sales. The reserves are used to finance emergency works and alleviate increases in flood defence levies.

APPENDIX A

REGIONAL COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN AND MEMBERS

(the nominating organisation where appropriate is given after each name)

1. REGIONAL ADVISORY BOARD

Mrs Karen Morgan	Chairman
Mr M A C Drummond	
Mr H J L Harris	
Mr A Humbert	
Mr G L Davies	Regional General Manager

2. REGIONAL RIVERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Mr M A C Drummond	Chairman
Mr H J L Harris	Ex-officio - NRA
Mr A Humbert	Ex-officio - NRA
Mr D W Gibson	Deputy Chairman - CLA
Mr C I Dempster	CCPR
Mr B Tarling	CBI
Mr C G Saunders-Davies	NFU
Mrs S F Whitley	County Councils
Mrs E Haselden	District Councils
Dr M Clarke	RSPB
Ms P Edwards	NCC
Mr M Lockhart	Sports Council
Mr B A O Hewett	Southern Water plc
Mr E J Pipe	Solent Protection
Mr H T Barnhoorn	Water Companies Association
Mr D S Martin	British Field Sports Association
Major I G Duffin	Ramblers Association
Ms L Leeson	Countryside Commission
Mr B C Williams	British Paper and Board Industry Federation

3. REGIONAL FLOOD DEFENCE COMMITTEE

Mr H J L Harris	Chairman - MAFF
Mr A Humbert	Deputy Chairman - NRA
Mr M A C Drummond	Ex-officio - NRA
Mr I R F Hammond	MAFF
Lt Col G H Hart	East Sussex County Council
Major T T Holden	Kent County Council
Mr S Leyland	Hampshire County Council
Mr R T Millard	Hampshire County Council
Mr D G L Monnington	MAFF appointee
Mr C D Neame	MAFF appointee

3 REGIONAL FLOOD DEFENCE COMMITTEE (continued)

Mr M F Odling	Kent County Council
Mr H J Richards	MAFF appointee
Mr L G S Shirley	Kent County Council
Mr T J Sobey	MAFF appointee
Mr C L Tandy	London Boroughs
Mr C Whaley	Isle of Wight County Council
Mr D W Whyberd	West Sussex County Council

4 ISLE OF WIGHT LOCAL FLOOD DEFENCE COMMITTEE

Mr H J Richards	Chairman
Mr M S Boswell	} Regional Flood Defence Committee
Mr J S Osman	
Mr E Taylor	
Mr J Cleaver	
Mrs J E Augustus	} Isle of Wight County Council
Mr B H Drake	
Mr K Guy	
Mr P H Leyton	
Mr P G Taylor	
Mr G Wilson	

5 HAMPSHIRE LOCAL FLOOD DEFENCE COMMITTEE

Mr R T Millard	Chairman
Major B W Jepson-Turner	} Regional Flood Defence Committee
Mr G Russell	
Mr R K Ockenden	
Mr I R F Hammond	
Mr W R Allee	} Hampshire County Council
Mr A E J Shotter	
Mr J M A Gibson	
Mr S Leyland	
Cdr K F Rogerson	
Mr P R C Russell	

6 SUSSEX LOCAL FLOOD DEFENCE COMMITTEE

Mr D G L Monnington	Chairman
Mr D W Passmore	} Regional Flood Defence Committee
Mr J C Allen	
Mr C J Davies-Gilbert	
Mr D Greenwood	

6 SUSSEX LOCAL FLOOD DEFENCE COMMITTEE (continued)

Mr G Collinson	}	
Mr D W Whyberd	}	West Sussex County Council
Major F W Wilson	}	
Mr W N Williams	}	
Lt Col G H Hart	}	East Sussex County Council
Mr P Wallis	}	

7 KENT LOCAL FLOOD DEFENCE COMMITTEE

Mr C D Neame		Chairman
Mr T J Sobey	}	Deputy Chairman
Mr P F Clubb	}	
Mr I F Goodhew	}	Regional Flood Defence Committee
Mr A R A Mackay	}	
Mr M Tapp	}	
Mr R Bezant	}	
Mr K E Horton	}	
Major T T Holden	}	
Mr M E Odling	}	Kent County Council
Mr L G S Shirley	}	
Mr S K Ranger	}	
Mrs A H Moore		East Sussex and Surrey County Councils
Mr C L Tandy		London Boroughs of Bexley, Bromley and Greenwich

8 REGIONAL FISHERIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Mr A Humbert	Chairman - NRA
Mr H J L Harris	Deputy Chairman - NRA
Mr M A C Drummond	Ex-officio - NRA
Mr B E Aldrich	Hampshire Water Keepers Association
Mr D N Brunwin	Kent Fisheries Chairman
Mr A L Costen	Southern Counties Federation of Angling Clubs
Dr J L Cotton	Salmon and Trout Association
Mr I P E Gay	NFU - Trout Farmers Association
Dr B I Lindsey	Sussex Fisheries Chairman
Mr J Parkman	Commercial Trout Fishery
Mr J W Potter	Hampshire Fisheries Chairman
Mr F Reader	National Federation of Anglers
Mr B Stott	Institute of Fisheries Management
Major J L Thomas	Sea Fisheries Committees

9 HAMPSHIRE FISHERIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Mr J W Potter	Chairman - Test and Itchen Fishing Association
Mr P W Bishop	Deputy Chairman - Romsey and District Angling Society
Mr W M M Baron	IOW and Hampshire Naturalists Trust
Mr R Stacey	PSFFA
Mr M Lunn	Fish Keepers - Houghton Club
Mr D Owen	Leckford Estates
Lt Cdr P Jeffreys	Brockenhurst Angling Club
Mr A E J Shotter	Hants LFOC & Southern Sea Fisheries Committee
Mr I N de Gruchy	IOW Fisheries
Mr R Cook	Coarse Anglers
Mr J Branford	Sparsholt College
Mr I G Veal	Commercial Fishery Management

10 KENT FISHERIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Mr D N Brunwin	Chairman - Kent Anglers
Mr A E Hodges	Deputy Chairman - Kent ACA
Mr B J Turner	Kent Anglers Consultative Association
Mr T H Brown	Sea Fisheries
Mr C R Davis	Commercial Fisheries
Mr J W Martin	Game Fishery
Mr C D Neame	Kent Local Flood Defence Committee
Mr R McGregor	Cinque Ports AD
Mr R Meares	Kentish Stour Conservation Group
Mr R Ledwidge	Edenbridge AS
Mr P Bolas	Kent Trust for Nature Conservation
Vacancy	

11 SUSSEX FISHERIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Dr B I Lindsey	Chairman - Brighton Centre for Advanced Biology
Mr A R F Barnard	Sussex Anglers
Dr J L Cotton	Ouse Preservation Society
Mr R W Page	Sea Fisheries
Mr D H Harvey	Nature Conservancy Council
Mr W N Williams	Sussex Local Flood Defence Committee
Mr K Wilson	Crowborough and District Angling Society
Mr A W Bates	London & SE Federation of Anglers
Mr P J Ellis	Sussex Anglers
Mr J Greenhalf	Clive Vale Anglers
Mr J Stone	Seaford Angling Club
Vacancy	

12 HARBOUR OF RYE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Mr R K Breeds	Chairman - Rye Town Council
Mr D G Bentley	Deputy Chairman - Commercial Interests
Mr W J Alsford	Commercial Interests
Mr W J Bulpitt	Commercial Interests
Mr D J Phillips	Commercial Interests
Lt Cdr J C Royle	Commercial Interests
Mr N Varley	Commercial Interests
Mr M A Alford	Icklesham Parish Council
Mr E H Brooker	Rother District Council
Mr R Pulford	Rother District Council
Mr C F Durell	Nature Conservancy Council
Mr A R A Mackay	Kent Local Flood Defence Committee
Mr J A Collard	Royal Yachting Association
Mr A C Miller	Royal Yachting Association
Mr C Harvey	Royal Yachting Association
Mr P W Pemble	Sussex Sea Fisheries Committee
Mr J M Wall	Rye Fisheries Society
Mrs J G Yates	East Sussex County Council

APPENDIX B

SENIOR OFFICERS AND PROFESSIONAL ADVISERS

Regional General Manager	:	G L Davies
Environmental Manager	:	M J Beard
Principal Scientific Officer	:	J R Wharfe
Principal Water Quality Officer	:	I S Gascoine
Regional Fisheries Officer	:	J Chandler
Flood Defence Manager	:	G W Robinson
Regional Planning Engineer	:	D J Martin
Regional Operations Engineer	:	A J Branch
Resources Manager	:	P W Herbertson
Principal Resources Officer (Catchment Management)	:	G D Warren
Principal Resources Officer (Data and Modelling)	:	G A Burrow
Finance Manager	:	K B Hodgson
Principal Accountant	:	J W Spendlove
Information Systems Officer	:	P Stafford
Secretary	:	T M King
Principal Solicitor	:	M J Davies
Personnel Manager	:	V G Smith
Regional Administration Manager	:	R A Leng
Public Relations Officer	:	Dr B Buckley

APPENDIX C

REGIONAL PUBLICATIONS AND PUBLICITY MATERIAL

Regional Brochure

A Guide to Southern Region

Agricultural Pollution - a series of Advisory Leaflets

On Silage, Sheep Dip, Oil, Slurry Storage and Slurry Disposal

User Guides: Fishing in the South, Boating on the Medway Navigation, Pond
Packs

Capital Schemes: The Ashford Flood Relief Scheme

Information Sheets: Flooding, how it occurs and what is done about it.

Longshore Drift - The Beaches are on the move

In-house Booklets: Office Safety

Staff News Sheet: On-Stream