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Preface

The present volume contains the papers presented at the first International Conference on Flood Recovery Innovation and Response (FRIAR) held at the headquarters of the Institution of Civil Engineers in London, UK, July 2-3, 2008. The conference is jointly organised by the University of Wolverhampton and Wessex Institute of Technology, UK and is sponsored by WIT Transactions on Ecology and the Environment. The conference is endorsed by the UK based Flood Repair Network, the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS), and the Chartered Institute of Loss Adjusters (CILA).

Flooding is of course a global phenomenon that each year claims around 25,000 lives worldwide. Additionally, many more people must endure the homelessness, disease and crop failures that are left in the wake of the floods. The increased frequency of flooding in the last ten years, coupled with climate change predictions and urban development, suggest that these statistics are set to worsen in future. When flooding occurs in populated areas it can cause substantial damage to property as well as threatening human life. In central Europe for example, recent flooding has reached unprecedented levels; around a hundred people have lost their lives, the socio-economic infrastructure of entire regions has been disrupted and natural and cultural heritage damaged. Estimated damage amounted to 15 billion euro in Germany, 2 billion in Austria, between 2 and 3 billion in the Czech Republic and up to 35 million in Slovakia. Five million people live in flood risk areas in England and Wales alone; the estimated cost of damage caused by the summer floods in the UK was 4 billion Euros (£3 billion) and the cost of household insurance has already risen significantly as a direct result.

Apart from the physical damage to buildings, contents and loss of life, which are the most obvious impacts of floods upon households, other more indirect losses, are often overlooked. These intangible impacts are generally associated with disruption to normal life as well as longer-term health issues including stress-related illness.

This conference provides a forum for researchers, academics and practitioners actively involved in improving the repair, reinstatement and resilience of flood damaged property. The conference aims to bring together engineers, scientists and

damaged property. The conference aims to bring together engineers, scientists and other professionals from all countries, involved in research and development activities in a wide range of technical and management topics related to flooding and its devastating effects.

The scientific topics presented at Flood Recovery Innovation and Response 2008 conference included:

- Flood Risk Analysis and Vulnerability Assessment
- Flood Risk Management
- Flood Defence Methods
- Rehabilitation and Restoration
- Urban Flood Management - Innovation in Building Resilience
- Coping Strategies
- Financial and Insuring Issues

The editors would like to thank all the authors for their contribution, as well as the members of the International Scientific Advisory Committee for their invaluable help in reviewing the papers.

The Editors,
London, UK
2008

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