

## Fire crews given flood hovercraft

**Specialist hovercraft are to be used to help Gloucestershire fire and rescue crews deal with flood emergencies.**

Two vessels are being bought for the service with £110,000 from Severn Trent Water's flood recovery fund.

During last July's deluge, an Italian rescue crew used a hovercraft to locate the body of a missing teenager in flood water in Tewkesbury.

Gloucester fire station commander Tally Giampa said the operation demonstrated how effective the craft could be.

He added: "It's something that we probably never would have considered until last July when hovercraft came into our county.

"I think the significant thing with hovercrafts is that they can go over land and water... over areas with varying degrees of depth.

"Traditional keeled boats, like the ones we use, are fine on the river, but when you're actually operating off river, as we were last July, flooded fields, in amongst trees, we need something that operates regardless of what lies beneath the water."

Mr Giampa is one of a group of firefighters being trained to pilot the hovercraft, which are expected to begin service in July - a year after the floods.

Story from BBC NEWS:

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/uk\\_news/england/gloucestershire/7402594.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/uk_news/england/gloucestershire/7402594.stm)

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