

## Flood heroes return for training

**Two Italian hovercraft pilots who came to Gloucestershire's aid during the 2007 floods will return to train the county's hovercraft rescue team.**

The instructors are from the Venice Fire Service and CFUSCN, which operates the Italian Government's civil protection.

The new 10-strong team in Gloucestershire will specialise in rescues on unstable surfaces.

Training will take place at Frampton sewage works next week.

### 'Releasing resources'

Terry Standing, Chief Fire Officer, said: "Many of our pilots are already experienced power boat and water rescue instructors, but having the skills to pilot hovercrafts will give the people of Gloucestershire added protection."

Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service owns two hovercraft bought in 2008 under the Community Recovery Fund set up by Severn Trent Water, following the 2007 floods.

The hovercraft support facilities and six fire and rescue pilots were sent to help the emergency teams working in flood-hit Cumbria on Friday.

They were not used in any rescues and the decision to send them back to Gloucestershire was taken by Cumbria Fire Brigade.

Geoff Sallis of GFRS said: "Cumbria is handling the incident well and they feel they have enough resources locally in place to manage the rescue.

"They are releasing all resources they consider spare back to their home brigades, allowing them to deploy should they be needed locally.

"It was important that we got the hovercrafts to Cumbria as quickly as possible to be ready should they be needed.

"If we had waited until we got the call to say they were definitely needed before sending the crews to Cumbria it might have been too late."

Story from BBC NEWS:  
[http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/uk\\_news/england/gloucestershire/8371951.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/uk_news/england/gloucestershire/8371951.stm)

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