

Observations on the boundary between high and lower risk reservoirs

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SYNOPSIS. The 2010 Flood and Water Management Act makes provision for amendment of the Reservoirs Act 1975 in particular to distinguish between reservoirs that are “high-risk” and others. Definition of this boundary is critical to deciding which dams are classified as lower risk, and which will therefore be exempt from Panel Engineer overview and other regulatory processes. The paper examines the categorization of risk for dams and also in other industries in the UK such as chemical, illustrating the options for the position of this boundary with reference to data from quantitative risk assessment of UK reservoirs. The paper concludes by suggesting key issues which need to be considered in defining the position of the boundary, if public confidence in the regulatory system is to be retained.