

Interactive comment on “New insights into flood warning and emergency response from the perspective of affected parties” by H. Kreibich et al.

Anonymous Referee #1

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This paper compares the August 2002 and June 2013 floods in Germany in regard to improvements related to early warning and protective actions taken by private households and businesses. This is highly informative study regarding improvements in flood early warning in Germany in recent years and offers a significant contribution to disaster risk research where temporal, comparative research is sparse. The author conducted telephone surveys with about 1700 households and 400-500 businesses. The reported results are largely descriptive (x% of respondents did y). There is a lack of more advanced statistics (e.g., ANOVA, cluster analysis) that would identify differences between groups or spatial differences. Perhaps the authors have conducted such analysis but without significant results. If so, it is highly recommended to state that. Overall,

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the methodology section should be expanded to discuss sampling strategy, analytical steps (e.g., number of complete surveys, imputation of missing values, etc.) and most importantly provide a confidence interval. There is also no mentioning if questions were largely open-ended or closed. For readers unfamiliar with the history of both flood events, it is highly recommended to include more background information on both flood events (e.g., location, duration, number of affected, EU damage, etc.) given that the authors frequently refer the hydrological differences between both events. Perhaps a study area section would improve the manuscript. Furthermore, it is recommended to expand and update the literature review section with more recent research as well as general risk communication/warning research (e.g., Mileti) beyond flood early warning since many of the issues highlighted by the authors apply to other hazards as well. The manuscript needs editing to remove awkward phrasing (e.g., “long known” instead of “long time known”; “direct tangible” change to “direct” or “tangible”).

Specific comments: The first two paragraphs of the introduction read like a literature review. It is recommended to move these paragraphs into a separate literature review/background section. The introduction should be shortened and more clearly (and earlier) communicate the key points of the study (problem, objectives, importance, etc.) – could start directly at line 56. 63: did DWD add more gauges or upgrade the gauges – what exactly were those gauge improvements? 64: why were centers restructured? What did they fail to do or what was the purpose of restructuring?

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