

## **CHIEF FIRE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION (CFOA) MARINE OPERATIONS GROUP (MOG) MEETING**

The annual 'open' meeting of the Chief Fire Officers' Association - Marine Operations Group was held at the Edinburgh Conference Centre, Heriot-Watt University, Scotland on 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> February 2005.

The meeting was opened by Lothian & Borders Firemaster, Brian Allaway. The CFOA President Alan Doig followed by Mr John Astbury the MCA Director of Operations both gave interesting and entertaining presentations to the meeting.

The meeting was attended by 100 delegates including representatives from 27 of the 39 coastal Fire & Rescue Services, national officers of the Fire Brigades' Union, MoD and MCA representatives, Irish, Belgium, Canadian and Swedish delegates also attended as well as a number of representatives from commerce and industry.

Further details from this event, will be available shortly on the CFOA 'working groups' web pages.

## **MARITIME INCIDENT RESPONSE GROUP (MIRG) MEETING**

The 5<sup>th</sup> MIRG meeting took place prior to the CFOA meeting on the 9<sup>th</sup> February 2004. Representatives from the 15 'designated' FRS attended including Northumberland who have declared an interest in becoming part of the MIRG strategy.

Minutes of the meeting, will be placed on the members area of our MCA web pages.

## **NATIONAL STRATEGY (PROPOSED WORKING AGREEMENT)**

Due to the implications of the draft Fire & Rescue Services (Emergencies) (England) Order 2004 (that has recently completed its rounds of formal consultation), the revisions to the proposed MIRG agreement will be held in abeyance until the outcomes of the Order are known.

## **EQUIPMENT**

The Nominal roll boards and training package have now been issued to all MIRG teams (see training report below).

Although designed primarily for the 'at sea' role, some coastal FRS's may find it also a useful tool to assist them when dealing with more local maritime incidents. Further details can be obtained from the Project Team.

**TRANSIT SUIT:** A sizing chart and guidance is now due to be sent out to the first 'tranche' of MIRG Fire & Rescue Services (FRS) who will be issued with the new 'Multifab' transit suit.

**LIFEJACKET:** The first batch of 'Crewsaver' lifejackets has also been ordered and should be issued towards the end of April.

**EMERGENCY BREATHING SYSTEM (PSTASS):** Produced by 'MSI Defence Systems', these are about to be issued together with harness bags. However, until maintenance and servicing courses are completed for a technician in each MIRG FRS, there will be a delay in bringing this apparatus into use.

Courses for these personnel are in the process of being arranged with the manufacturers.

Any equipment currently being developed for MIRG can be made available to other coastal FRS's should the local risk assessment determine the need.

## **SUPPORT VESSELS**

Work has now commenced on identifying 'fit for purpose vessels' around the UK for FRS use.



The type and levels of training are being identified in order to establish the training hours required to maintain the MIRG team's competency in this area of activity. It is then the intention to adopt an agreement similar to that which has just been accepted between the MCA and the helicopter providers.

## TRAINING

SAR HELICOPTERS - We are pleased to confirm that after considerable work and in close co operation with the MCA and Ministry of Defence (MoD) the arrangements with regard the provision of 'dedicated' helicopter training to MIRG teams have been agreed.



The agreement 'secures' for each MIRG team a dedicated number of annual training hours at specific SAR helicopter locations. This training will be in accordance with the criteria set down in the safe system of work and associated training critique produced by the Project Team. The training will be funded by the MCA.

SEA SURVIVAL - Following the development of the sea survival bespoke training course, which has also been accepted by the MoD, the Project Team are in the process of applying for national accreditation through ADEXCEL. The accreditation process is due to last approximately eighteen months and it is currently in its early stages.

The sea survival training will now be resubmitted to the MCA accredited training centres for them to finalise the course programmes which will then become available to FRS's - and other 'blue light agencies' in the Spring.

COMMAND & CONTROL (NOMINAL ROLL) - The nominal roll boards and associated CD ROM consisting of two PowerPoint training packages; risk assessment and a Scheme of Safe Working; will enable teams to instigate their Command & Control (Nominal Roll) training to MIRG personnel.

TRAINING PRESENTATIONS - The Authorware multimedia training package on Helicopter Transportation to Incidents at Sea is nearing its final draft and is currently being worked on by our two training officers along with the ODPM Authorware department.

This has been developed as a 'pilot' initiative between the Project team and ODPM, and on completion of this pilot we need to consider how we

will further develop the production of this type of training media.

In the meantime, we have developed a number of PowerPoint modules that will be reviewed and made available to coastal FRS's over the next three to four months. These will be replaced at a later date by the multimedia interactive versions.

The Project Team training officers have been tasked in researching the multimedia market place to secure a means of creating the interactive packages which hopefully will be done in close cooperation with the MCA's own human resources department.

PROJECT TEAM - STAFF CHANGES - John Webb will be returning to Kent FRS as from 1<sup>st</sup> April after a very active twelve months seconded to the Project Team to research and develop the training initiatives.

John will be replaced by Nigel Bruty of Hampshire FRS who will continue, with Keith Boswell, to address the training development work over the next 12 months.

## HAZARDOUS MATERIALS (HAZMATS) INCIDENTS

It is of paramount importance that with the threat of a Hazmat/CBRN incident becoming potential reality that suitable strategies, plans and protocols are firmly in place to assist with the aftermath of such an incident.

The hazard analysis and risk assessment for a range of the most likely scenarios is vital to identify the equipment and procedures required for teams initially responding to incidents at sea involving hazardous materials.

Once identified, the equipment, procedures and subsequent resilience will need to be included in the overall MIRG/MOG strategies in order to deliver a measured response by trained personnel as and when requested by the MCA.

We have now developed a 'four category' approach in relation to response protocols. There is also a 14 page risk analysis and assessment document that has been produced. Both of these require ratification and further research.

The work has been given a high priority and will be further developed with the cooperation of Hampshire Fire & Rescue Service over the next few months.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE PROJECT PLEASE SEE THE MCA AND CFOA WEB PAGES**