

MIRG AT THE FIRST "EMERGENCY SERVICES SHOW"

The MCA recently promoted the Maritime Incident Response Group at the first multi agency "Emergency Services Show", held at the Royal Horticultural Halls in central London. The show and conference, held between the 19th and 20th October 2006, was a unique event focusing on the sharing of information between all Category 1 & 2 Responders and non-governmental organisations, with the goals of improved co-responding and increased public safety.



The Emergency Services Show, Royal Horticultural Halls in London



Mervyn Kettle (National Project Manager), Derek Smith (MCA) and Nigel Bruty (MIRG Training Officer) (L to R):

The show provided an opportunity for the MCA to explain to visitors and exhibitors from all services, the work carried out between the UK's Fire & Rescue Services and the Maritime & Coastguard Agency. Over the two days there were many visitors to the stand from a wide spectrum of organisations, interested to know more about the collaboration of

this project between the MCA and the UK's coastal Fire and Rescue Services.

Also exhibiting at the show were some of the companies that had supplied the MIRG teams with the transportation protective equipment they are now using, including "Fourth Element - Thermodynamic Systems" (MIRG Layers 1 & 2), "Cosalt Ltd" (MIRG Lifejackets) and "Applied Satellite Technology (AST)" (Iridium Satellite Communications).

Running in conjunction with the Emergency Services Show, also at the same venue, was a conference entitled "Improving Emergency Response". Mervyn Kettle and Derek Smith gave a presentation on "The Introduction of the United Kingdom Fire & Rescue Services' Maritime Incident Response Group (MIRG)"

NEW "TASKING" PRESENTATION

The MCA Project Team has now produced a presentation on MIRG "Tasking". This presentation has been produced in three formats. An interactive "Breeze" presentation aimed specifically at HM Coastguard personnel working at the 19 Maritime Response Coordinating Centres around the coast of the British Isles. This will be placed on the MCA's MNet. A version has been written as a PowerPoint presentation for FRS personnel and has been issued on CD-Rom. A third version is now being produced aimed at the Principal Officers of MIRG Fire & Rescue Services, looking at "Tasking" from a more strategic angle.

MIRG MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM

At the last MIRG meeting Mervyn Kettle introduced a draft "MIRG Management Information System" (MIS). The master document will be held centrally in electronic format which will allow amendments to be made and promulgated by email to all MIRG teams. The purpose of the MIS is to provide a "one stop shop" for all MIRG personnel to access and will contain information such as Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), Schemes of Safe Work (SSW), Training Presentation Index, etc.

EQUIPMENT

The Project Team are currently carrying out audit visits to each of the 15 MIRG teams. It has been heartening to see the progress that each FRS has made in ensuring that their members are fully

trained and equipped in accordance with the protocols put in place by the MCA and the Project Team.

Many of the MIRG FRSS have shown their support to the MCA and commitment to the national strategy by providing equipment and facilities specifically for MIRG, over and above that provided and financed by the MCA. Some examples seen are as follows:

Hampshire: Currently have a dedicated Helicopter Support Unit trailer, pulled by a Land Rover. This is shortly to be replaced with a panel lorry with tail lift for use as a MIRG support unit and flood response vehicle. This vehicle is in the process of being fitted out, sprayed and marked with Hampshire Fire & Rescue Service, MIRG and MCA decals and will carry all the MIRG TPE and additional MIRG equipment as well as an inflatable "tent" for use in inclement weather.



Hampshire's MIRG Helicopter Support Unit

Strathclyde: A dedicated MIRG building providing an office, drying room, muster bay and storage room for hanging the MIRG Layers 2, 3 and 4. This building provides a convenient location which can be used as a Holding Point/Embarkation Point (the helicopter landing site is 10-15 minutes by road), briefing area and a dry place for team members to dress in MIRG Transportation Protective Equipment (TPE).



The dedicated MIRG building provided by Strathclyde Fire & Rescue Service



Inside Strathclyde's MIRG building

Kent: A dedicated Helicopter Support Unit. This is a demountable pod unit that carries all the MIRG TPE, lifejackets, etc., as well as helicopter load bags and other specialised ship firefighting equipment. Kent has also provided a Land Rover/trailer unit for use as a Seaborne Support Unit. Both of Kent's vehicles have been marked with Kent Fire & Rescue Service, MIRG and MCA decals to show "partnership working".



Kent's MIRG Helicopter Support Unit



Kent's MIRG Seaborne Response Unit

MARITIME INCIDENT RESPONSE GROUP (MIRG) MEETING

The next meeting for MIRG lead officers will be held on the 7th & 8th February 2007 at the Fire Service College, Moreton-in-Marsh.