

## **UNITED KINGDOM SEARCH AND RESCUE (UKSAR) OPERATORS GROUP**

### **REPORT OF MEETING OF 9 October 2003**

1. The minutes of the meeting of 23 April 2003 were agreed.
2. The MCA and MoD were in the process of looking to establish a Joint Rescue Co-ordination Centre (JRCC) and were looking at the possibilities of seconding staff between the two organisations to learn each others operating procedures.
3. The Chairman again urged members of the Group to submit items for inclusion on the UKSAR website.
4. A report was provided on the work of the SAR communications Working Group. A major revision of the Implementation and Control Document had been produced and was submitted to the Operators Group for approval. The Operators Group approved the document and agreed that it would be up loaded on to the UKSAR website as a PDF file. The Group had agreed the format for the application form for the use of the VHF High Band Channels, the form would also be made available via the website. A release date of 1 November 2003 was agreed for the application and use of the new channels. The Chairman of the Comms Working Group thanked both the MCA and Radiocommunications Agency for their help on securing the use of the additional channels.
5. The MCA Firefighting at Sea project group had met with all the UK fire brigades to discuss the various issues involved with fire fighting in the marine environment. The main concern raised had been the issue of insurance for teams to go offshore. The project team were in the process of reviewing the possible positioning of teams around the Coast. The project team were also in the process of looking at the training issues.
6. The Resource Tasking Working Group was in the process of selecting a new Chairman following the resignation of their Chairman. The Operators Group agreed the proposed nominee for the Chair who was then appointed. It was agreed that the Resource Working group would look at producing educational material with regard to the tasking of SAR assets.
7. The Inland Consultative had met and had discussed the proposed Memorandum of Understanding between the Association of Chief Police Officers and the Scottish Ambulance Service in respect to the handling of emergency calls from remote or hazardous areas. The Group had also discussed the draft Working at Heights Directive. The Group again discussed their concerns with regard to insurance premiums.
8. The Maritime and Aviation Consultative Committee had met and had been provided with briefs on the provision of Inland SAR channels and the Firefighting at Sea project. The Committee again raised their concerns over the use of mobile phones.

9. The Group were informed that a Confidential Hazardous Incident Reporting Programme (CHIRP) scheme had been launched for maritime safety.
10. The UKSAR Framework document was due for revision in 2004.
11. The Group were informed that tasking of Mountain Rescue Teams in Northern Ireland had been delegated to MCA via HM Coastguard.
12. The Group were concerned about the proposals to reform the law on involuntary manslaughter and what effect this may have on SAR services within the UK, particularly with regard to voluntary teams. It was agreed that the MCA would seek guidance from the Home Office on the possible implications of the changes.