

UNITED KINGDOM SEARCH AND RESCUE (UKSAR) OPERATORS GROUP

REPORT OF MEETING OF 23 APRIL 2003

1. The minutes of the meeting of 8 January 2003 were agreed.
2. No items had been submitted for the UKSAR website, the Chairman urged the members of the Committee to provide items for inclusion to the site as a means of publicity for the work of UKSAR.
3. The Chairman thanked the Group for their input into the re-drafting of the Dealing with Disaster publication which had been much appreciated.
4. A report was received from the SAR communications Working Group which included notice that the MCA had agreed to provide 5 duplex (10 Channels) for use by inland SAR which would be included on the MCA licence and funded by the MCA. The MCA would also administer the use of the Channels. The Implementation and Control Document govern the use of all VHF High Band Channels would be amended to take account of the changes.
5. The Communications Working Group again discussed the problems with the use of mobile phones, but noted that there was little evidence of the scope of the problem. The Group were also considering a proposal to produce a nation band plan for the use of the 10 new High Band frequencies.
6. The Offshore Firefighting Project Board would meet on 23 April. A project plan had been drawn up with the aim to establish dedicated teams. It was the intention to ensure that all the teams were trained and equipped to the same standards and would work to standard operating procedures as far as was practicable. A number of the issues still needed to be agreed, detailed discussion were ongoing with a number of organisations.
7. The MCA and MoD were looking at establishing a Joint Rescue Co-ordination Centre (JRCC) in the future the details and the location were still to be finalised. As a first step the MCA were looking at seconding appropriate staff to ARCC Kinloss to exchange information.
8. The Resource Working Task had identified that further work needed to be undertaken to ensure more co-operation between police and ambulance control rooms. The Working Group had also discussed the problems with the use of mobile phones, ideas and suggestions for improvements were to be passed to the Communications Working Group. The Group were looking to produce educational material to advise on who to contact in the event of an accident.
9. The Group agreed to look at the generic inland SAR risk assessment with the aim to look to producing a similar document for maritime SAR. The MCA were looking to work closely with the Health and Safety Executive with a view to producing an underpinning document and to minimise risks to the SAR organisations.

10. The UKSAR Website domain name had been registered as www.uk-sar.org. The test website had been established. The Group discussed ideas of what they would like to see included on the site. The Chairman reminded the Group that they needed to provide appropriate material for the website.

11. The Chairman informed the Group that a Steering Group had been established to look at SAR on the River Mersey as a beta test for the SAR Risk Assessment methodology.

12. The RNLI reported that the recent established hovercraft at Morecambe had saved its first life.

13. The MCA were in the process of drawing together a risk management plan.

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