

UNITED KINGDOM SEARCH AND RESCUE (UKSAR) OPERATORS GROUP

MARITIME AND AVIATION CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

REPORT OF MEETING OF 13 JUNE 2003

1. The minutes of the meeting of 26 November 2002 were agreed.
2. The Committee were given an update on the progress with the Health and Safety Executive and were provided with a copy of the recent presentation by the HSE to the Operators Group.
3. The Committee were provided with an update on the progress of the Inland SAR Database (INREM), a go live date had not been finalised.
4. Five duplex VHF radio channels had been added to the MCA's radio licence for the use by inland SAR. The MCA were responsible for ensuring that the use of the channels were in accordance with its licence. The Implementation and Control Document for inland SAR communications was in the process of being re-drafted to take account of the new channels.
5. The Committee were provided with an update on the SAR helicopter Harmonisation project.
6. The Minister for Shipping has announced that the SAR helicopter based at Portland would be retained.
7. The Committee were briefed on the concerns with regard to offshore windfarms. A draft generic procedure for dealing with SAR incidents within windfarms had been agreed.
8. The Committee were briefed on the developments of the firefighting at sea project. It was noted that the project was still in its early phase.
9. The MoD and MCA were in discussions to look at establishing a Joint Rescue Co-ordination Centre as part of the helicopter harmonisation process.
10. The use of mobile phones had again be raised at the Operators meeting, a number of suggestions had been put forward to look at educating the public in the appropriate use of mobile phones to alert the emergency services both on land and at sea.
11. The UKSAR website had been established and a test site had been set up. All members of the Committee were asked to provide ideas on what they would like to see on the site.
12. Following the establishment of the new arrangements for SAR on the River Thames and SAR methodology had been produced. It was planned to "Beta Test" the methodology on the River Mersey following an invitation from

Merseyside council.

13. The MCA's prevention manager provided the Committee with an update on the MCAs prevention strategy. One issue which was being looked at was identify the root cause of incidents.
14. The MCA had been delegated the responsibility of inspecting ship security plans, a security branch had been established to discharge this responsibility. All ship security plans will need to be in place and approved by 1 July 2004 to comply with the code. It was recognised that this was a challenging deadline, but the MCA were confident they would meet the requirement.