

85th ANGLO FRENCH ACCIDENT TECHNICAL GROUP

Thursday 06 February 2020 at 1000

Venue

Résidence du Préfet maritime
10 rue des Bastions
50100 Cherbourg-en-Cotentin

Attendees

MCA

Claire Hughes – Director of Her Majesty’s Coastguard, MCA;

Name – Head of Branch Counter Pollution and Salvage, MCA;

Name – SOSREP for maritime salvage and intervention;

Name – HM Coastguard Controller for Dover.

Maritime Prefecture

Admiral Philippe Dutrieux – Préfet maritime de la Manche et de la mer du Nord (MMDN)

Name – Deputy for State Action at Sea;

Name – Deputy for the operational control of the Channel and North Sea

area:

Name – Head of Division State Action at Sea;

Name – Head of ORSEC (crisis management organisation) Office;

Name – Deputy Head of ORSEC (crisis management organisation) Office;

Name – Office for renewable energy and maritime public state property;

Name – Director, Gris-Nez MRCC;

Name – Deputy director, Gris-Nez MRCC;

Name – VTS manager, Gris-Nez MRCC;

Name – Director, Jobourg MRCC;

Name – VTS manager, Jobourg MRCC;

Channel Islands

Name – Jersey Coast Guard & St Helier VTS Manager, Jersey;

Name – Jersey Maritime Operations Centre Manager, Jersey;

Eire

Name – Director, Irish Coastguard;

Apologies

Name – Guernesey Harbour Master;

Name – Nautical Director, MRCC Oostende;

➤ Welcome and Introduction

The meeting was opened by the Préfet maritime, Philippe Dutrieux, who thanked everyone for coming to the 85th AFATG meeting. The Admiral welcomed Mrs. Hughes as new director of Her Majesty Coastguard and then emphasized the mutual need to work together and begin well for the first bilateral event in the Channel and North Sea area after the Brexit came into force. Claire Hughes underlined she and the MCA look forward to working with French authorities in the near future.

➤ Previous Minutes and Actions

The Minutes of the previous meeting were accepted.

No actions remained outstanding from previous meeting.

➤ Agenda Items

1. Environment and counter pollution

- UK aerial dispersant spraying capability update
 - S. Woznicki described the long acquisition process of planes able to spray aerial dispersant and the characteristics of those the UK plans to acquire: 2 Boeings 737-400 (8 hours notice from alert to on task). This counter pollution capability will be available for the Bonn Agreement members, as long as it is not needed on the national level.
- Oil spill responder organisations standards
 - Name explained these standards were established on a framework created to guarantee the consistency of the organization: the goal of these standards is to make sure the responders themselves do the right job fighting a pollution. The responders are regularly audited to identify dysfunctionalities. It is a fully official ordered process that must be reaccredited every 3 years. However, the ports' practice will also need to be included in this process and demonstrate they have the capability to deal with the pollution risk.
- Irish national oil spill contingency plan
 - Name presented the Irish national oil spill contingency plan which involves setting up a response centre near the incident. This response centre consists of three units: at sea pollution response, shoreline response and marine casualty or salvage response. The response centre and each of the units are under the direction and coordination of the Coast Guard. More details on this plan can be found under the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WjqMsimyNLc>.

- Presentation of the OSRV ARGONAUTE

- [Name] gave a presentation of the OSRV ARGONAUTE, based in Cherbourg since the beginning of January. This OSRV can be deployed to fight a pollution with a Navy counter pollution team aboard. It also has heating tanks able to stock up to 1500 cubic meters of hydrocarbons (6 hours from alert to departure).

2. SAR

- French organisation in case of aerial accident at sea

- [Name] described the French crisis management organisation in case of a plane crash at sea. In these cases, the air traffic service works in close relationship with the ARCC Lyon Mont Verdun, the ARSC (Cherbourg for our maritime area of responsibility) and Jobourg MRCC for the search and rescue of potential survivors. Admiral Dutrieux enhanced the importance of working good and fast: "What is important is to lose no time. We have to train to master our organisation".

- Irish National SAR Plan: SAR SRU Register and SAR Assurance

- [Name] explained how the Irish national SAR plan is rooted in IAMSAR. He then described how Ireland tried to create a JRCC. Unfortunately, the MRCC is at one end of the country and the ARCC at the other end. The goal is now to harmonize the legislation and make sure the equipment used is certified.

3. Assistance to ships in distress

- New aerial surveillance in service and trials update

- [Name] gave a presentation of the surveillance assets: 2 Beechcraft King Air 200s and 2 Piper Navajo "Panthers". King Air aircrafts are used for a wide range of missions from pollution detection and border surveillance to environmental surveys and law enforcement for example. Pipers are mainly used in SAR missions (average of 2.5 hours on task after transiting): they are fitted with pinpoint detection capabilities able to spot a man in the water from up to 12 to 15nm even if there are clouds. For both kinds of aircrafts, data is recorded on the plane and downloaded post-flight. Claire Hughes highlighted that the Piper Navajos are "increasingly involved in land search".

- Places of Refuge – EU paper submitted to NSCR

- [Name] explained that the main change of the EU paper consists in the cooperation coordination concerning each country: for the UK, the SOSREP is in charge, for Ireland, [Name] is in charge, and for France, the Environment Ministry is in charge of coordination.

4. Maritime safety

- Manche Vagues Project
 - [Name] reminded everybody of this project's nature, but he also explained that it is very unlikely to be completed due to major concerns regarding safety of this Channel's part. This illustrates how maritime safety needs to be permanently reasserted.
- CNIS Statistics
 - [Name] and [Name] presented 2019 CNIS statistics for the northern TSS. The headlines figures were 96112 ship reports received (93125 in 2018), 79 contraventions (66 in 2018) and 131 DEFREPs. Migrants in small crafts still represent a significant problem. Conflicts or tensions may occur in the TSS and need to be managed carefully (N. Hoarau took the example of an obstruction by fishing vessels). That is why both our MRCCs need to have a daily preparation and a fluent dialog.
- UK maritime drone trials
 - [Name] presented the drone trials currently ongoing in the UK. These drones are supposed to be used in different kinds of missions: lifesaving and other CG functions, SAR coastal operations, SAR offshore operations, counter pollution, SOx and NOx emissions control, maritime surveillance and security, coastal physical change monitoring, wildlife habitat monitoring, flood monitoring. Several stakeholders take part in this project (MCA, RNLI, industry teams, Cardiff Airport ATC, Welsh Government & St Athan Airfield). The phase 1 of this challenge consists in showing how deconfliction of 24/7 operations would be possible. In the phase 2, Essex Police will know if it is possible to coordinate those drones with MCA (Essex Police/MCA/RNLI). The main purpose of this drone project is to enhance the situational awareness especially in difficult to access areas. For the next steps, the RNLI will make recommendations to UK SAR strategical committee to drive strategy on behalf of wider SAR community. It is also planned that artificial intelligence should be used to upgrade what the UK already has and to make it cleverer. MCA intends to buy teams and not drones, which means MCA will lease the drones and their pilots. [Name] intervened to let everybody know that Gris-Nez drone project should be resumed at the 2020 summer. As for Ireland [Name] explained it has 5 teams of drones pilots working with the Government.

5. RETEX and planned exercises

- [Name] explained the French 2019 counter pollution exercise took place. He enhanced the importance of mobilizing environmental experts for such questions. [Name] then presented about the Maritime SAR exercise planned on May 19th, 2020 and also about the counter pollution exercise planned offshore the northern part of France in week 40/2020 (28 Sept.-02 Oct. 2020).
Admiral Dutrieux emphasized that these kinds of exercises are “very good opportunities to combine the different assets and services involved so that we are more efficient”.
- [Name] told the persons attending the 85th AFATG meeting that no major exercise is planned in Jersey in 2020.
Jersey is willing to take part in the French SAMAR MANCHE exercise on May 19th (observers and assets if needed).
- [Name] explained that exercises with Shell and BP on offshore platforms are planned in March 2020.
The national counter pollution exercise will happen in South Wales on June 04th-05th, observers are very welcome. France said it will try to send 1 observer from the Maritime prefecture.

6. Date of Next Meeting

The next AFATG meeting will be organized in the UK in October or at the beginning of November. The date shall be chosen before summer.

AOB

- Brexit: there is no impact of Brexit that [Name] or C. Hughes are aware of.
- MANCHEGRID: the Maritime Prefecture is currently working to have a MANCHEGRID that can be used efficiently.