

86th Meeting of the Anglo-French Accident Technical Group (AFATG)

Thursday, 08 October 2020 at 08:00 UTC

Venue

Microsoft Teams

Attendees:

Maritime and Coastguard Agency / Her Majesty's Coastguard

| | |
|---------------|--|
| Claire Hughes | Director of HM Coastguard, HMCG (Chair) |
| Name | Head of International Liaison, HMCG (Secretariat) |
| Paul Campbell | Head of Specialist Operations, HMCG |
| Name | Controller CGOC Dover, HMCG |
| Name | Staff Officer Vessel Traffic Management, HMCG |
| Name | Secretary of State's Representative for Maritime Salvage and Intervention, MCA |

Maritime Prefecture

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Admiral Philippe Dutrieux | Préfet maritime de la Manche et de la mer du Nord |
| 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 Office |
| Name | Deputy Head of ORSEC office |
| Name | Director Gris-Nez MRCC |
| Name | VTS Manager Gris-Nez MRCC |

Channel Islands

| | |
|------|---|
| Name | Harbour Master, Guernsey Harbours |
| Name | Assistant Harbour Master, Guernsey Harbours |
| Name | Coastguard / VTS Manager, Ports of Jersey |

Ireland

| | |
|------|----------------------------|
| Name | Director Irish Coast Guard |
|------|----------------------------|

Belgium

| | |
|------|-------------------------------|
| Name | Director (acting) MRCC Ostend |
|------|-------------------------------|

Apologies:

| | |
|------|---|
| Name | Head of Counter Pollution and Salvage, HMCG |
| Name | Director Jobourg MRCC |
| Name | VTS Manager Jobourg MRCC |
| Name | Operations Centre Manager, Ports of Jersey |
| Name | Harbour Master, States of Alderney |

- Welcome and Introductions (Chair)

The meeting was opened by the Director of Her Majesty's Coastguard, Claire Hughes, welcoming all attendees to the meeting which, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, was held virtually on this occasion. The Director thanked Admiral Philippe Dutrieux, Maritime Prefect for the North Sea and the Channel, for hosting the previous meeting in Cherbourg in February and emphasized the importance of maintaining the meeting schedule to ensure continuous collaboration and further bolster the excellent working relationships that have been established over the years.

- Previous Minutes and Actions

No comments were received, and the minutes of the previous meeting were agreed. No actions remained outstanding from the previous meeting.

Agenda Items

1. Accidents and Incidents since AFATG 85

- MV Reggedijk towage through Abeille Liberte
Stephan Hennig provided a summary of the incident involving MV Reggedijk, a small coastal cargo ship drifting offshore and unable to anchor in the prevailing conditions on 25 August 2020. The Abeille Liberte towed the vessel to Cherbourg for repairs under commercial contract, arranged by vessels insurers / owners. Referring to agenda item 4, he highlighted the fact that the provision of towage in the channel remains an ongoing issue, and that it was great to have the assistance of the Abeille Liberte on this occasion.

2. Environmental and Counter Pollution

No submissions were received under this agenda item.

3. Search and Rescue

- Status of search and rescue agreements in connection with the Mandatory IMO member State Audit
Name stated that the UK is due for a mandatory IMO member state audit, which was originally scheduled for September 2020 but has now been postponed until 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The audit, which looks at the Member State's compliance with relevant conventions, also covers the Coastal State responsibilities including Search and Rescue. As part of the audit preparations, HM Coastguard carried out a review of its existing Search and Rescue agreements which led to the renewal of existing or establishment of new agreements with some of its search and rescue neighbours. A new agreement has recently been signed with the Netherlands Coastguard and work is ongoing with Belgium (MRCC Ostend) and Jersey (Jersey Coastguard) to enter into mutual search and rescue agreements. Once these have been finalized and signed, the agreements will be shared with the AFATG attendees.

Name requested clarification whether the MANCHEPLAN constitutes a SAR agreement including the Channel Islands.

Name confirmed that this was the case, but if there were any additional or specific requirements outside the MANCHEPLAN than this could be dealt with in a separate SAR agreement.

- Medical assistance to windfarm workers (PREMAR)
Paul Campbell stated that the UK has no current specific requirements for security however each new development is assessed on a case by case basis, considering elements such as SAR but also any perceived security risk. Most new windfarms are required to provide HMCG VHF DSC and RT plus AIS feeds, and options include requesting radar and CCTV, though to date these are not normally included. In relation to the security of their property (including substations), this is the developer's responsibility and we do not engage in these elements.

For medical assistance at sea, HM Coastguard often facilitate with the use of Tele Medical Advice Services, however some developers now have commercial agreements in place for telemedicine. SAR options would always be considered when required however again, most occasions are handled by the windfarm resources. For any medical emergency beyond the capability of the operator, HM Coastguard will provide a SAR response.

Name asked how HM Coastguard balances between the operator's and the State's responsibility for medical assistance and if these were clearly defined. France is looking to impose specific obligations on operators, but the State remains ultimately responsible for medical assistance. If such specific obligations were imposed, the State would only intervene in severe cases or under difficult conditions.

Paul Campbell confirmed that this would reflect the framework in place for the UK. Commercial operators and constructors have an obligation to carry out a risk analysis and ensure an appropriate response during construction and maintenance. The responsibilities are defined cross-departmental in cooperation with other government departments. **Name**

Name added that the Health Safety Executive, which looks at safety in the workplace, would have input.

Name added that in Ireland, the process is led by the Commission for Regulations on Energy, which is in charge of planning for offshore windfarms.

Action 1: MCA / HM Coastguard to provide further details on framework in place regarding wind farm SAR assistance.

Note: Action closed, email with further details and point of contact has been sent to **Name**
Name

4. Maritime Assistance Services

- Tug availability and assistance - shipping risk and towage study **Name**
Name stated that the UK conducted an independent review of the risks to shipping within the UK's Exclusive Economic Zone which has been published in September ([UK EEZ Shipping Risk and Emergency Towing Provision Study](#)). Referring to agenda item 1, the study identified the potential requirements to look at the tug provision in the South West Approaches, Saint Georges Channel, Northern Scotland and the Dover Straits. The MCA currently has one Emergency Towing Vehicle (ETV) based in Northern Scotland, which is contracted until the end 2021 with work ongoing to look at the recommendations of the study to provide options to the minister for decision.

Name asked how quickly the MCA can tender for a tug in case of an incident or if contracts were already in place.

Name explained that the only government provided tug is based in Northern Scotland and has been used a few times as standby vessel and for towage to a Port of Refuge this year. In more general terms, there is no government tug provision and the onus is on ship's owner / insurer. SOSREP can use powers to issue a direction to arrange towage in a set time frame if required. In the incident discussed under agenda item 1 this was not necessary as the master and insurer of vessel were aware of their responsibilities and arranged a tug accordingly.

- Place of Refuge – IMO Res. 949(23), EU operations guidelines and UK position

Name stated that the Working Group under the IMO NCSR concluded its work and agreed an update on the guidance available in IMO resolutions to make them more practical and specific. This will now go through the Secretariat and various stages (IMO Legal, MSC) and at earliest be put before assembly next year.

Name added that Ireland had updated its Place of Refuge guidelines and offered to share this with the group.

Action 2: **Name** to send updated Place of Refuge guidelines to **Name** for distribution.

Note: Action closed, [SOP 006-2019 "Places of Refuge Decision-Making"](#) as well as a link to the full [National Maritime Oil & HNS Spill Contingency Plan \(NMOSCP\)](#) has been sent to AFATG members.

- Salvage plan – Relationship of the MCA with salvage masters, P&I and industry

Name explained that France is looking to start some networking to try and get better knowledge of P&I and the industry as this is a small community that can intervene in case of crisis. Beyond that, they are trying to examine the prerequisites for a good salvage plan.

Action 3: **Name** and **Name** to arrange a separate meeting to discuss salvage plan / networking with P&I and industry.

Note: Action ongoing, **Name** and **Name** have started engagement on this action.

5. Maritime Safety

- CNIS statistics **Name**

Name provided an overview of the CNIS statistics between 12 February and 30 September 2020. The statistics are contained in the annex to the minutes. The figures were obtained from the new VTS system in use which replaced the previous Kongsberg system on 12 February 2020.

Name asked how the offences were prosecuted and if any feedback regarding the legal process were received.

Name state that this depends on the Flag State, some of which are very proactive and provide good and swift feedback, such as a summary and documentation which can be fed back to the VTS operators. Other states do not reply any replies and require chasing up which got slightly easier due to moving from post to email. If no response is received, the initial findings and report are passed to the MCA's Maritime Investigation Team.

- Swimmer crossing between France and Jersey (CROSS Jobourg)

Name explained that swims between Jersey and France are not regulated and do not require permits. However, there is only a very small group of vessels involved and there is a good relationship between them and the coastguard. Swims are reported 24 hours in advance through an online form ([Coastguard Long Distance Swimming Form](#)) on their [website](#) containing the names of the organisers, start time, type of swim (solo/relay), number of swimmers, name of skipper, vessel, and emergency contacts. A guide is published online ([Long Distance Swimming](#)) for those undertaking swims and the guard vessel. Swims should report to both Jersey Coastguard and CROSS Jobourg at designated reporting points (leaving Jersey, median line, arrival).

Name raised that on occasions advice on swims were only received on a Sunday afternoon for a Monday morning start, which is very short notice as in addition to the guard vessel there may be a need to reducing stand by times for the SAR helicopter.

Name acknowledged the issue, stating that he had been unaware of this and that this was likely the same for the vessel operators.

Action 4: **Name** to inform the vessel operators involved and remind them on the importance of early notification of swims.

6. Training and Exercises

Name informed the group that PREMAR is still planning to initiate a mass rescue evacuation exercise in the first quarter of 2021 and to renew the counter pollution exercise in the second quarter of 2021. Further details and information will be shared with the group when available.

- **Any Other Business**

Name informed the group that newest version of the emergency maritime response plane has been published.

Name briefed on an incident coordinated by CROSS Jobourg involving a vessel possibly being on fire on 30 August 2020. There was confusion about the position of the vessel (it initially seemed to be near the TSS but subsequently turned out to be South of Alderney in the Guernsey SRR). Although the incident was in the distress phase, all communications were handled on Channel 68 instead of 16 which did not allow for the use of direction finding (DF). Guernsey suggested to move the communications to Channel 16 to enable the use of DF, but this was declined by CROSS Jobourg. He raised the questions why Channel 68 was used instead of Channel 16 which would have enabled DF.

Name stated that CROSS Jobourg had been unable to connect to the meeting and requested to contact CROSS Jobourg via email to discuss.

Action 5: **Name** to contact CROSS Jobourg per email regarding the incident and question raised (Channel 16 / DF)

Name informed the group that the Channel Island Air Search had taken delivery of a new aircraft which is more capable, including a forward looking infrared sensor, high resolution video and a Channel 16 relay capability, and asked that anyone who would like further details to contact him.

Name informed the group that Guernsey was implementing the local discretionary part of SOLAS Chapter 5, largely following the UK lead. None of these were contentious,

but as the territorial waters had been extended to 12 nautical miles, these are not covered by Guernsey laws. The consultative process is underway, once completed this will be shared with the group.

- **Date and Time of next Meeting**

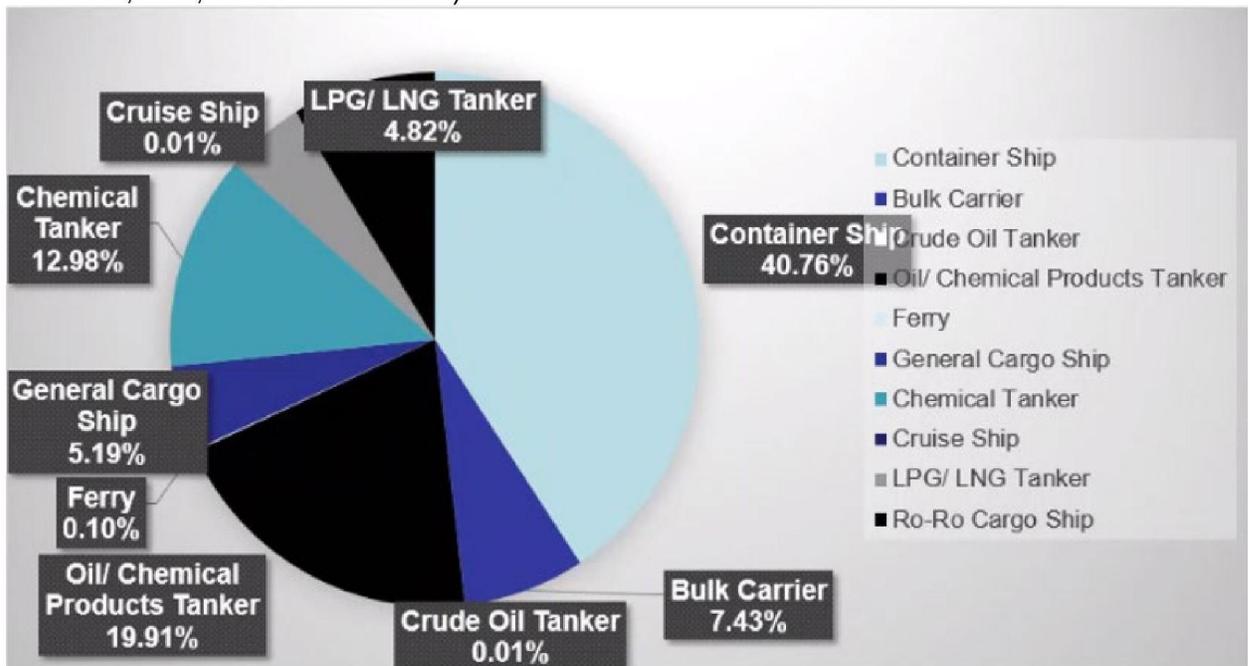
Claire Hughes proposed the week commencing 8 March 2021 for the next meeting (AFATG 87) and asked all to check their diaries and confirm availability. The UK would be delighted to host the meeting if travel restrictions were no longer in place, but otherwise Teams has proven to be an effective way of continuing the meeting schedule. She thanked everyone for their participation in the quick but productive exchange and closed the meeting.

- **Summary of Actions**

| | | Owner | Status |
|-----------------|---|----------------------------|---------|
| Action 1 | MCA / HM Coastguard to provide further details on framework in place regarding wind farm SAR assistance. | Paul Campbell | Closed |
| Action 2 | Name to send updated Place of Refuge guidelines to Name for distribution. | Name | Closed |
| Action 3 | Name and Name to arrange a separate meeting to discuss salvage plan / networking with P&I and industry. | Name Name | Ongoing |
| Action 4 | Name to inform the vessel operators involved and remind them on the importance of early notification of swims. | Name | New |
| Action 5 | Name to contact CROSS Jobourg per email regarding the incident and question raised (Channel 16 / DF). | Name | New |

Annex – CNIS Statistics (Dover Coastguard) 12 February – 30 September 2020

- Ship reports received – 31,408
- Contravening vessels – 23
- Non-reporting vessels – 11
- Special Operations:
 - Hampered by draft – 64
 - Tug and tow (Southwest Lane) – 108
 - Tug and tow (English Inshore Traffic Zone) – 13
 - Defect reports – 21
 - Unorthodox transits – 170
 - Naval transits – 62
- Vessel tonnage summary (percentages are similar to previous years with a decrease in container, bulk, and cruise vessels)



- Contravention statistics (by rule - note: numbers are higher than contravening vessels as one vessel often contravenes multiple rules)

| CNIS Statistics for Feb - September 2020 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|----|--------|---------|----------|------|--------|------|------|----|---|---|----|----|----|-------|--------|
| Month | F3 | 10 B i | 10 B ii | 10 B iii | 10 C | 10 D i | 10 i | 10 j | 5 | 6 | 8 | 15 | 16 | 17 | Total | Events |
| Feb | | 3 | | | | | 2 | | 1 | | | | | | 6 | |
| Mar | 3 | 1 | | | 4 | | | | 2 | | | | | | 10 | |
| April | 1 | 2 | | | 2 | | 1 | | 2 | 1 | | | | | 9 | |
| May | 1 | 1 | | | 1 | 1 | | 1 | 1 | | | | | | 6 | |
| June | | 2 | | | | | | | 4 | | | | | | 6 | |
| July | | 1 | | | 2 | | | | 1 | | | | | | 4 | |
| Aug | 2 | 1 | | | 2 | | | 2 | 3 | | | | | | 10 | |
| Sept | 1 | 1 | | | | | 1 | | 1 | | | | | | 4 | |
| Totals | 8 | 12 | | | 11 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 15 | | | | | | 55 | |

- Contravention statistics (by Flag State)

| Month | France | Belgium | LUX | Liberia | Antigua & Barbuda | Russia | Latvia | Madeira | Italy | Netherlands | Hong Kong | Marshall Islands | Cayman Islands | Philippines | Spain | Panama | Kanaka | Denmark | Malta | Austria | Germany | Barbados | Bahamas | Singapore | Unidentified | Totals |
|--------|--------|---------|-----|---------|-------------------|--------|--------|---------|-------|-------------|-----------|------------------|----------------|-------------|-------|--------|--------|---------|-------|---------|---------|----------|---------|-----------|--------------|--------|
| Feb | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 3 |
| March | | 1 | | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 9 |
| April | | | 2 | | | 1 | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 8 |
| May | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | 6 |
| June | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | 4 |
| July | | | 2 | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | 1 | | | | | | 5 |
| August | | | 1 | 1 | | | | | 2 | | 1 | | | | | 1 | | | | | 1 | 1 | | | | 8 |
| Sept | 2 | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | 1 | | 5 |
| Totals | 5 | 2 | 7 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 48 |

- Non-reporting vessels

| CNIS Statistics - Zombies | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|------------|-------------|------------|----------|------|------------------|-------|
| Month | No. Report | Late Report | Radar Only | AIS Only | Both | Visual From CGOC | Other |
| Identification Method | | | | | | | |
| Feb | 0 | | | | | | |
| Mar | 3 | | | | 3 | | |
| April | 1 | | | | 1 | | |
| May | 1 | 1 | | | 2 | | |
| June | 3 | 1 | | | 4 | | |
| July | 0 | | | | | | |
| Aug | 2 | 1 | | | 3 | | |
| Sept | 1 | | | | 1 | | |
| Total | 11 | | | | | | |

- Non-reporting vessels (by Flag State)

| Zombie by Flag State | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------|---------|---------------------|-----------|--------|---------|-------|---------|------------------|---------|----------------|-----------|
| Month | Liberia | Antigua and Barbuda | Hong Kong | Panama | Madeira | Malta | Austria | Marshall Islands | Germany | Cayman Islands | Singapore |
| Feb | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Mar | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | |
| April | | | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| May | | | | 1 | 1 | | | | | | |
| June | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | |
| July | | | | | | | | | 1 | | |
| Aug | 1 | | | | | | 2 | | | | |
| Sept | | | | | | | | | | 1 | |
| Totals | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |

- Hazardous Incident Reports

| HAZREPS | | | | | |
|---------|-------------|--------|-------------------|-----|-------|
| Month | Flag States | | | | Total |
| | Russia | Panama | Antigua & Barbuda | LUX | |
| Feb | | | | | |
| March | | | | | |
| April | 1 | | | | 1 |
| May | | | | | |
| June | | | | | |
| July | | 1 | 1 | | 2 |
| Aug | | | | | |
| Sept | | | | 1 | 1 |