Emergency Call Handler Policy

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Emergency Call Handlers (ECH) are temporary who have been employed and trained by HM Coastguard in response to an overwhelming influx of 999 calls in the region of the Dover Straits (Zone 14).

Related Links

[Emergency Call Handlers - Migrant Calls SOP](#)

[Emergency Call Handlers - Non Migrant Calls SOP](#)

[Emergency Call Handlers - Op Detail](#)

[Emergency Call Handler - Policy](#)

Mandate

HM Coastguard conduct search and rescue activities in accordance with the following:
- International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue 1979*
- International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea 1974
- IAMSAR Volumes I, II and III*
- Civil Contingencies Act 2004
- The Code of Practice for the Public Emergency Call Service

*Emergency Call Handlers are not classified RCC personnel as outlined in these conventions or documents.

Scope

This policy applies to:
- Full-time HMCG Maritime Operations Staff
- HMCG Technical Trainers
- HMCG Emergency Call Handlers

- HMCG Emergency Call Handlers

Policy Statements

It is the policy of HM Coastguard that:
- Emergency Call Handlers will be employed to specifically handle 999 inbound telephony in the geographic area associated with a high number of small boat crossings. This area is defined as Zone 14 as published on the Coastguard Information Portal (CIP).
- Emergency Call Handlers will be trained using a role specific syllabus developed by the Technical Training department to ensure competences in the functions they undertake.
- Emergency Call Handlers will operate restricted user profiles in the HMCG incident management system (ViSION), which allows them only to create incidents. All resources management and additional functionality are removed.
- Emergency Call Handlers will operate restricted user profiles in the HMCG integrated communications system (ICCS), which allows them only to answer Z14 999 calls which have originated through the BT system, make outbound calls and operate the connect call feature for telephony.
- Emergency Call Handlers will conduct questioning during call collection in accordance with the LINP Questioning Procedure and Emergency Telephone Call Handling SOP as published on CIP, HMCG Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), and ViSION second forms.
- Emergency Call Handlers will choose the most appropriate ViSION incident type, according to the information that is presented by the caller.
- Emergency Call Handlers will create ViSION incidents in the Information Gathering (I) phase only.
- Emergency Call Handlers will assign a sequential alphanumerical identifier to migrant incidents and inform the caller before call termination of the identifier assigned to their incident.
- Emergency Call Handlers will on creation of an incident, inform a qualified Mission Coordinator (MC) of the incident and of any alphanumerical identifiers assigned.
- MCs must appropriately assess the information within the incident, apply an emergency phase and make a narrative entry into the ViSION incident

  confirming that maritime search and rescue action has commenced in accordance with the HMCG Mission Conduct process.

- HM Coastguard will ensure that a MC is available within the MRCC to support Emergency Call Handlers during call collection or incident creation if requested. Emergency Call Handlers will also be able to receive network support via ICCS, using a hot key.
- Emergency Call Handlers will have access to the Maritime and Coastguard Agency's TRiM pathways as outlined in the [Traumatic Risk Management Policy.](#)
- Emergency Call Handlers must conduct a minimum of 6 hours operational activity per calendar month to ensure maintenance of competence.

Responsibilities

Role	Responsible and Accountable For
Chief Coastguard	Responsible and accountable for strategy, and for its compliance with international c
Assistant Chief Coastguard	Responsible and accountable for providing ensure compliance with international conv
Maritime Policy Lead	Responsible for the development, impleme the activities outlined above, ensuring con
Migrant Tactical Commander	Responsible for the recruitment and onboa maintaining minimum CPD requirements, Responsible for the line management of Er
Head of Technical Training	Responsible and accountable for the devel accordance with the requirements outlined
Maritime Operations Team Leaders	Responsible for providing operational over with the policy statements above and supp Responsible for providing Emergency Call maintain the minimum competence levels May assume the duties of a SMC.
Search and Rescue Mission Coordinators	Responsible and accountable for maintaini area of responsibility.

	Accountable for actions taken as the SMC convention.
Maritime Operations Officers and Senior Maritime Operations Officers	Responsible and accountable for the effec under the direction of the SMC, in accorda
Emergency Call Handlers	Responsible for undertaking call handling supporting material as published on CIP. Responsible for maintaining minimum CPD