

Maritime Coastguard Agency Sponsorship Board

Meeting Note and Actions

9 December 2021

Attendees:

DfT: Petra Wilkinson (Chair),

Name

MCA: Brian Johnson, Christopher Rodrigues,

Name

Transport Scotland:

Name

Paper 1.1: September Meeting Minutes

The Board agreed the minutes of the September 2021 SB.

Paper 1.2: Outstanding Actions

Only Action 2 remains open from the September 2021 meeting which relates to a deep dive into De-carbonisation. This was listed on the agenda for today, however it was removed to allow time for the discussions at the De-carbonisation Board taking place on 10 December 2021.

Paper 2.1: Chief Executive Commentary

Spending Review

DfT have this week engaged with MCA. SMART Plus funding remains an issue.

Vessel Innovation

There is an increasing amount of work coming into the Agency in this area. The biggest issue is that companies expect to get regulated/authorised after the vessel is built. The Agency is trying to encourage early engagement in this area.

Migrant Boat Activity

Following the recent migrant fatalities (27) in an accident, MCA have been:

1. carrying out good joint working with Border Force.
2. involved in a tabletop exercise with stakeholders. This has achieved a lot in the way of learning.
3. conducting a review. Julie-Ann Wood's review may prove good preparation for an inquiry in the future.
4. notified that a French murder inquiry is to start. This will include those involved from the French side.

MCA are looking at what will be used in response to air borne and water borne capabilities. RNLI are currently stretched, and Border Force are in a similar fate. Illona Blue has been involved in discussions which have been helpful. This will need to go through the usual project approvals process within DfT. The action remains with MCA to take it forward.

Police assets are not being tasked and MCA are therefore trying to ascertain resources for the benefit of the work of the Agency. The costs will be about £30m with an ongoing annual sum of £9-

10m. From DfT's point of view it is right to get Ministerial sanction before going to the Home Office, especially as there are political sensitivities which come into play.

Action No.1: Ministerial submission informed by [Name] note. Owner: Brian Johnson

To note the recess box dates. Gareth's closes at 4pm on 13th December, Ministers at 4pm on 14th December.

Grandfather Rights

The information in the Chief Executive Summary is current. The SoS is keen to move this forward. A letter from No.10 to Ministers is awaited on next steps. SB noted that the funding issue may be pushed back. [Name] is engaged. Creative initiative must be used to write to No.10 on the back of the e-mail received. The funding issue must be covered in the correspondence.

It appears that most of the boats that are under threat are currently furloughed. However, this time of year is viewed as a party season and if anything should go wrong, it will attract the headlines.

Action No.2: A (creative) letter (to include funding) to be drafted and sent to No.10 and PBL on the back of the e-mail on what the next steps could be. Ministers must be sighted in parallel. Owner:

[Name]

Paper 2.1 Annex A Finance Summary

The SB are asked to take the Finance Summary as stated. The Agency is in a good place. Monies to be returned in the Supplementary Estimates have been agreed. The only anomaly is that the Government Property Services decided not to purchase Spring Place at the eleventh hour. It has made some extra work for our colleagues, but the budgets have to be adjusted. SB should note that this makes no difference to the budget or organisation.

Paper 2.1 Annex B Performance against Indicators

Seafarer Certification is our headline. It is in a much better place. Seafarers medication is back in. Distress beacons are now online and therefore removed. There are no further significant changes to the rest of the report.

Fishing Vessel Safety

The Fishing Vessel Code has now been published. Vessel Inspection Campaigns have been used to publicise the new Code around the UK. There are about 35-40% of boats not compliant. This is the case in Scotland too! The Inspection Campaigns are having an impact. MCA have secured a prosecution on a corporate vessel.

MCA are starting the consultation on enforcing spot fines in the next month or two. This will hit fishermen's pockets in an immediate way. Petra has engaged with [Name] (UK Shipping, previously at Shell) who is happy to help, perhaps on the culture side which is hardest for MCA/DfT to do. Scottish Ministers are also interested as this will affect their area too. [Name] would like to share the consultation documents with Scottish Ministers. MCA are struggling on other powers which may be used and some engagement with Marine Scotland may give fresh ideas which may be included in the consultation.

ExCo are also having discussions about modal cross-cutting safety issues early in the new year. Maritime are to be involved.

Action No.3: [Name] to receive the consultation paper for discussion with his ministers. Owner: Brian Johnson

Action No.4: Coordinate discussions between MCA and Marine Scotland to see if any other powers may be added to the consultation document. Owner: [Name]

Action No.5: Discussions on how to involve [Name] (UK Shipping previously at Shell) on fishing vessel safety. Owner: Petra Wilkinson and Brian Johnson

Keeping the Chief Executive Awake

The immediate resourcing of the skills gap with surveyors - engineering and specialist knowledge. One third of surveyors are technical expertise, however there is a large proportion that are more akin to the rule book. This may cause difficulties in the next three to five years. Technical knowledge is also not right within DfT Maritime. SB felt that it is an area where MCA and DfT can join together to look at what is required and how the two teams can support each other.

Action No.6: Discussion for the next Sponsorship Board agenda. Owner: [Name]

Business Planning:

This is work in progress. Over the last few years MCA have run two business plans. One is internal and very aspirational. The other is public facing, published and achievable. The internal plan is being thought about, however the top-level objectives will not bring any surprises. It is the right time to realign the two plans. SB were asked if this approach was acceptable. SB response was that it would be easier to have one document and also easier for colleagues to address any issues around the plan. COVID-19 is here to stay and the plan should look at work in light of it. A more robust copy will be put before the SB on the next agenda.

Action No.7: MCA should involve [Name] early in discussions to enable Maritime Directorate an opportunity to feed into the draft BP before it comes to the Sponsorship Board. Owner: MCA and [Name]

Action No.8: Add business planning to the agenda of the next Sponsorship Board. Owner: [Name]
[Name]

De-Carbonisation

MCA and DfT need to have their teams lined up. However, at the moment they are slightly out of sync. The money for this work has been achieved. The overall amount is [S&I] but awaiting the decision on how much DfT will receive. Petra felt that DfT might get [S&I], or perhaps a little bit more, but it will have to be shared amongst the modes.

Noel said that it would be interesting to know where the brain power is coming from on when Brian and Petra's teams are working together. It would bring clarity and ease of taking responsibility. Petra noted that it would be the first time the teams would be working in this different way. A joint programme board with joint Senior Responsible Officers is new. The Centre usually has the policy lead with the Agency having the technical knowledge. It was commented that it will be good to work on this basis. A decarbonisation Working Group led by DfT was to take place on 10 December. It was agreed to revisit this again at the next Sponsorship Board.

Action No.9: Decarbonisation to be added to the next Sponsorship Board Agenda. Owner: [Name]
[Name]

MCA/DfT Relationship

Paper 5.1: MCA Framework Document

In preparation of a HMT/CO template DfT and MCA have been working on an interim Framework Doc which will cover our relationship. It was noted that all the green highlighted text, had been confirmed save for one area on the Maritime Strategic Board. This is still being considered within DfT. This would be a working document and it may be referred to between Maritime and MCA. However, if any formal queries arise the 2017 published version will take precedent until the new HMT/CO Framework template is complete and signed off.

HMT have confirmed that the Executive Agency template for Framework Documents will not be ready any time soon. They have agreed that we can use the NDPB template, alongside the CO governance template.

NEDs

Brian and Christopher are looking at NED recruitment to replace Sarah Parker (recently resigned) and also a fourth NED. They have considered Executive Search Agencies within the DfT commercial framework to run the recruitment. MCA would like Maritime to engage on the process and also to give advice as seen fit. **N** confirmed that Maritime do not usually take part in the Board appointments for MCA unless it is the CEO or the Chair. The NED positions are not regulated however the principles of Public Appointments Commissioner (OCPA) should be followed as these remain public appointments.

Action No.10: Discussions to involve the Sponsorship Team on how to proceed on process and skills required. Owner:

| Name | Christopher Rodrigues |
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