

**States Members Briefing Paper – Update on Search and Rescue Provision Jersey**

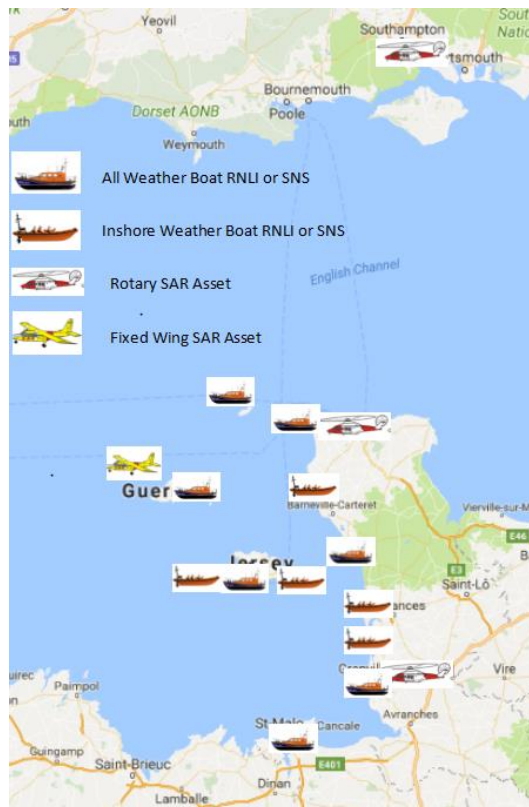
**Background to Search and Rescue in Jersey**

Through the Territorial Sea Act 1987 (Jersey) Order 1997 Jersey has a twelve mile territorial sea (TTW) and as a result has a number of obligations it must fulfill internationally as a Coastal State, this includes the requirement “to ensure that necessary arrangements are made for distress communication and coordinating in their area of responsibility and for the rescue of person in distress at sea and around its coast” (1974 Safety of Life at Sea Convention).

The responsibility for coordinating maritime search and rescue within Jersey TTW is delegated to the Harbour Authority under the Harbours (Administration) (Jersey) Law 1961 and as a Public Service Obligation in the Air and Sea Ports (Incorporation) (Jersey) Law 2015. Practically the role is undertaken by Jersey Coastguard from their dedicated Marine Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) at Maritime House.

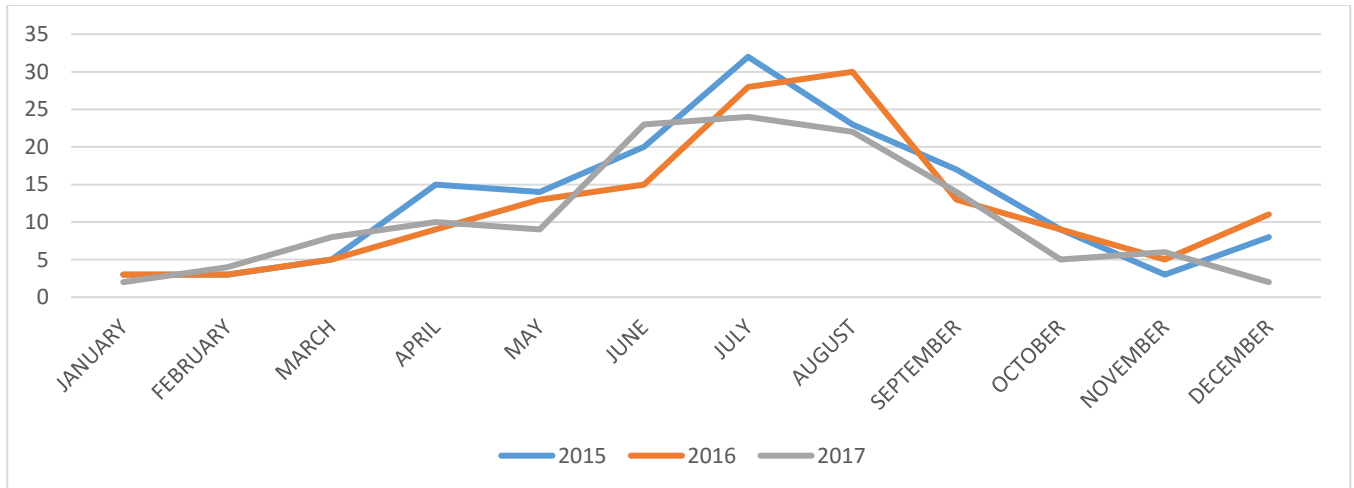
The MRCC at Maritime House is fully recognised internationally by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) but also regionally through the Manche Plan.

In this capacity Jersey Coastguard does not operate any dedicated Search and Rescue (SAR) assets but does coordinate the most appropriate asset available for any given event. These assets include, but are not limited to, RNLI lifeboats, Fire and Rescue inshore rescue boats, SNS French Lifeboats, vessels in the vicinity, Channel Islands Air Search, and French or UK SAR helicopters.



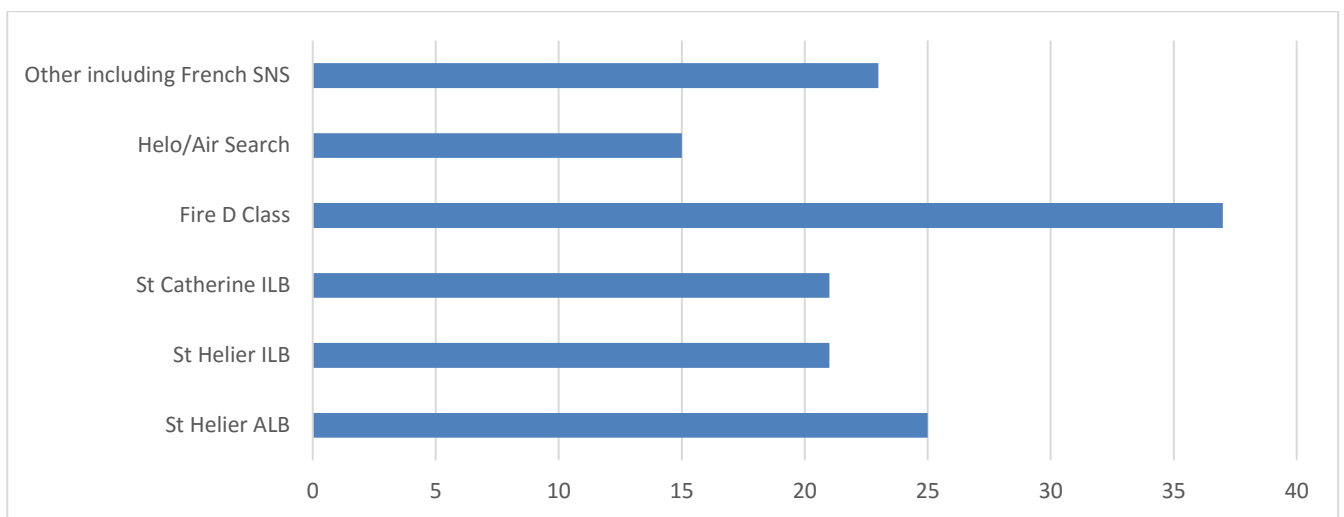
The Manche Plan, a formal Maritime Contingency Plan for the English Channel, including the Channel Islands, allows neighboring states to request and mobilise each others SAR assets provided that it is done through a designated MRCC and each MRCC keeps the others informed on asset availability.

Jersey Coastguard coordinates around 150 incidents annually. The nature of these incidents is wide ranging, from the most serious involving an immediate threat to life to less serious occurrences such as the coordination and recovery of broken down vessels.



SAR Incidents 15/16/17

In just under a third of these incidents an RNLI asset from St Helier was deployed, whether that be the Tamar Class all weather boat (ALB) or the B Class Atlantic inshore boat.



Asset Deployment

General Principles of SAR Allocation;

- In order of urgency, Jersey Coastguard prioritises safety of life, the protection of the marine environment and then the protection of maritime property (safe recovery of vessels).



- Where there is no danger to life but a risk to property Jersey Coastguard will make best efforts to assist with delivering that vessel to a safe place of refuge.
- Jersey Coastguard will allocate the most appropriate available to asset to an incident prioritising as above.
- Jersey Coastguard will make available Jersey based assets to neighbouring coastal states on request.

### **St Helier RNLI Statutes (26/02/18)**

Following the standing down of the St Helier crew on the 17<sup>th</sup> of November 2017 the RNLI worked very closely with Jersey Coastguard and the Emergency Planning Officer to implement contingency plans which resulted in the St Helier ILB been fully declared on the 4<sup>th</sup> of December 2017.

The crew of the St Helier ILB is made up of a combination of locally trained volunteers from St Catherine's and RNLI trained members of Jersey Fire and Rescue Service. This initiative has proved very successful and the boat has been tasked on several occasions and the interoperability benefits of joint working are being noticed.

In an effort to get the ALB declared a core of experienced local Jersey volunteers underwent intensive training in early December to allow them to act as support crew. This resulted in the ALB being returned to the island on the 5<sup>th</sup> of December and then on the 13<sup>th</sup> of December 2017 been made available for service with a UK Staff Coxswain, Navigator and Engineer support by Jersey volunteers outside the operating parameters of the ILB (as described above).

In practice the boat has been available more often than not even when the environmental conditions remain within the limits of the B-Class Boats. As training of the new crew increases it is anticipated that the boat will be available and declared throughout the summer months.

Just before Christmas the RNLI undertook a number of open days at St Helier, these went very well and a due to a significant number of applications (84), far exceeding positions available (19) a formal recruitment process was conducted. This resulted in nineteen, including those with substantial local maritime knowledge and experience, and also members of the stood down crew, been selected for training.

Training of this group is now well underway and over the last 14 days the ALB has spent 52 hours at sea engaged in different exercises, including joint training with the St Catherine's crew.

On the whole, the training is likely to take between six and nine months in order to ensure that St Helier Station is self-sustaining for the future.



New Recruits Training with Y-Boat and St Catherine's Crew at the Rocquemin Beacon (St Aubin's Bay)

### **Current Search and Rescue Provision (26/02/18)**

Whilst the cause in November was unprecedented, the loss of a Jersey based asset was not. All Jersey based assets, including the ALB, have at some point over the previous three years been declared off-service and Jersey Coastguard has routine contingency plans in place to deal with these events.

Due to the original crew walkout in spring 2017 and the potential risk of further disruption throughout the autumn of last year these routine contingency plans were subject to a number of reviews with other SAR Partners throughout 2017.

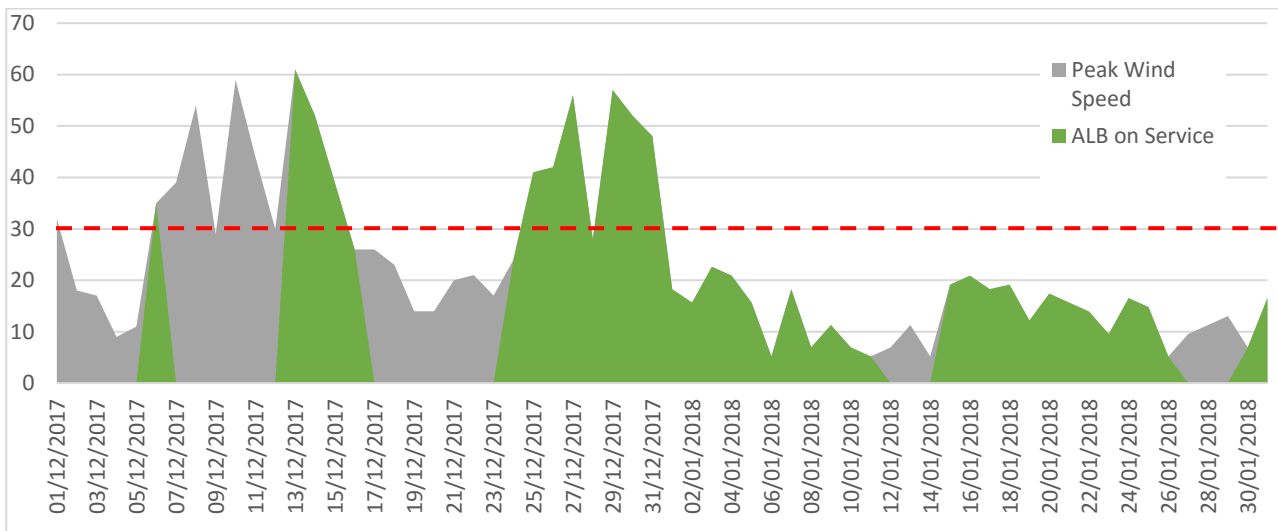
The Bay of St Malo is well served by SAR assets and formal exchange of assets through the Manche Plan allows for flanking stations to provide all weather cover either by sea or air.

Full time designated on island capability remains in the form of the RNLI B-Class inshore station at St Catherine's and St Helier and the Fire Service trailer launched D-Class boats. Although classified as an inshore boats the B-Class Atlantic 85 is a very capable vessel and can operate in Force 7 wind conditions and transit at speeds up to 35 knots and, dependant on weather and tidal height, could reach the extreme SW coast in under 30 minutes.



RNLi Atlantic 85

When conditions are outside the environmental operational window of the B-Class boat the RNLi are providing experienced employed staff crew in the form of a Coxswain, Navigator and Engineer who are then working with trained local RNLi volunteers to provide an all-weather service using the ALB (George Sullivan.)



Wind Speed vs ALB Availability

Since the 13<sup>th</sup> of December the ALB has been fully declared whenever the wind exceeds 30 knots but in practice the boat has been available outside these times and is operating at a rolling 89.8% availability average.

Close inshore capability for “splash and grab” incidents remains very good through the Fire Service D-Class boats; these can generally reach anywhere on the island in less 20 minutes (and much quicker for high risk areas such as the South East corner).

Whilst not optimal, PoJ assets in the form of Marine Services vessels can provide some all-weather capability for towage operations.

This means overall the ability of Jersey Coastguard to allocate an appropriate asset to an incident is not impacted, although there is the potential for an increased transit time dependent on weather and tidal conditions, and the possibility that protection of property can't always be prioritised.

Whilst this does marginally elevate the level of risk, this is mostly in relation to the protection of maritime property. This is manageable for a period of time until an all-weather capability is permanently established back in St Helier, taking the following factors into account.

- Dedicated on island declared capabilities remain strong through both the B-Class boats stationed at St Catherines and St Helier Stations and the trailer launched D-Class boats operated by the SoJ Fire and Rescue Service.
- The St Helier ALB is available outside the environmental operating parameters of the B-Class boats. It is worth noting that practically the ALB is also being made increasingly available inside these times due to the training been undertaken with the new volunteers.
- The Bay of St Malo is populated with a diverse and well-resourced number of SAR assets, both sea and air.
- This includes significant all weather capabilities.
- Regional SAR coordination is internationally recognised and well organised.
- Whilst not optimal there is some offshore capability amongst PoJ vessels when available.
- In some circumstances, it may be only be possible to prioritise the safety of life and not recover property.

Little or no impact	Increased Impact – tolerable	Greatest Impact
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	Safety of Life	Protection of Property < 10metres	Protection of Property > 10metres
Near Inshore			
E Coast			
SE Coast			
S Coast			
SW Coast			
Extreme SW Coast			
North Coast			



### **Independent Search and Rescue Facilities**

The use of Independent Search and Facilities in the United Kingdom is quite common place - there are currently over 60 which are formally declared to Her Majesty's Coastguard (HMCG). These range in size and scale from Severn Area Rescue Association (SARA) which run a number of Lifeboat Stations and land based assets in the Severn Estuary, to The Birling Gap Safety Boat Association in Suffolk who have one small inshore boat and operate only specific days.

The acceptance of any declared asset into the Jersey SAR frame work by Jersey Coastguard must be against the backdrop of Jersey's responsibility as a Coastal State under International Maritime Law and the agreements it has in place with its neighbouring Coastal States.

Jerseys Maritime Administration has formal ties to the UK Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) through membership of the Red Ensign Group (REG) - a group of British Shipping Registers and Maritime Administrations, which is the 7th largest group of registers by tonnage in the world.

Membership of this group affords Jersey many benefits, including access to UK shipping legislation and codes of practice which are recognised internationally as best practice, in fact many countries outside the group choose to use the regulations driven out of REG as standard.

Jersey Coastguard also has close links to the MCA through HMCG who recently conducted a peer review of Jersey Coastguard, and are undertaking fully assessed Search Mission Coordinator and Search Mission Conduct training with our staff to UK national standards.

In practice this means that many if not all the processes and procedures that Jersey Coastguard follow closely mirror those established by HMCG, including the use of a Vision, incident management system which allows the Coastguard Officer to assess what assets are available, their capability and call out time so they can select the most appropriate asset for any given incident.

Key to an asset been allocated to a Vison "bingo card" by HMCG is them having gone through the declared facility frame work, a process which requires the independent facility to meet not only a technical standard but also wider safety and managerial standards.



Callsign	SHILB -	Type	ILB	Status	20 - A - At Base	Base	RNLISH - St Helier RNLI S	Location	RNLISH - St Helier RNLI S														
Driver		Shift		Channel	11	Radio ID	St Helier ILB																
Link		Remarks	Type Atlantic 85 - Crew 3/4 - Max Sp 35Kn - Range @ Max 2.5hrs - Survivor capacity 20																				
Team	0 / 0	Equipment	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="background-color: #e0ffe0;">AIS</td> <td style="background-color: #e0ffe0;">DF Equipment</td> <td style="background-color: #e0ffe0;">First Aid Equipment</td> <td style="background-color: #e0ffe0;">GPS</td> <td colspan="3"></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="background-color: #e0ffe0;">Lifejackets</td> <td style="background-color: #e0ffe0;">Night Vision Equipm...</td> <td style="background-color: #e0ffe0;">Oxygen Therapy Eq...</td> <td style="background-color: #e0ffe0;">Pyrotechnics</td> <td colspan="3"></td> </tr> </table>							AIS	DF Equipment	First Aid Equipment	GPS				Lifejackets	Night Vision Equipm...	Oxygen Therapy Eq...	Pyrotechnics			
AIS	DF Equipment	First Aid Equipment	GPS																				
Lifejackets	Night Vision Equipm...	Oxygen Therapy Eq...	Pyrotechnics																				

Last update at 24/01/18 13:41:21

Not assigned to an incident

Time	Op Id	Message
24/01/2018 13:28:18	DD	Status changed from 20 - A - At Base to 10 - U - Refuelling
24/01/2018 13:41:21	DD	Status changed from 10 - U - Refuelling to 20 - A - At Base

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Update
Close

Given our formal links to the MCA through REG, the very close working relationship we have with HMCG and our international obligation as a Coastal State, it is appropriate and consistent that the standard we apply to any application for becoming a declared asset to Jersey Coastguard, is the same as that applied by the MCA and HMCG.

This standard was communicated in a letter to the Independent Life Boat Committee by the Harbour Master on 29<sup>th</sup> of December 2017. The Chief Minister, Deputy Luce, the British Registrar of Jersey Ships, Jersey Chief Surveyor and the Harbour Authority were copied in to this correspondence which included as attachments the full frame work and checklists.

**Conclusion**

The current provision of search and rescue assets is appropriate, the RNLI are on course to deliver a fully locally resourced St Helier Station in the next six to nine months. In the meantime current contingency plans mean that there is adequate cover to reduce the risk to local mariners to a level as low as reasonably practicable.

Going forward Jersey Coastguard remains happy to work with anyone who wants to become part of the greater Jersey Search and Rescue Community provided that they meet the correct standard and enhance the current frame work, likewise if a suitable case is made PoJ would help provide facilities for an Independent Facility but it would be dependent on the points above.

[END]