

Search and Rescue Framework for the  
United Kingdom of Great Britain  
and Northern Ireland

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and Northern Ireland

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# FOREWORD

Search and Rescue is the activity of locating and recovering persons either in distress, potential distress or missing and delivering them to a place of safety.

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (UK) provides a comprehensive search and rescue service for those reported in trouble either on land, on water or in the air and for those reported missing. The fully integrated organisation of search and rescue co-ordinators and search and rescue units using a comprehensive communications infrastructure provides a well-developed search and rescue model.

The purpose of this Framework Document is to describe, in Part 1, the background, scope and responsibilities of UK search and rescue and its strategic and operational management. Part 2 describes more fully those authorities and organisations who provide a significant role in the provision of search and rescue within the UK.



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# **PART 1**

## **UK Search and Rescue Strategic Overview**





# 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The organisation for Search and Rescue (SAR) in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (UK) is an amalgam of separate Government Departments, the emergency services and other organisations. A number of charities and voluntary organisations dedicated to SAR also play a significant role.
- 1.2 These authorities and organisations are committed to a cohesive and co-operative partnership, the aim of which is the continued provision of an effective national SAR capability.
- 1.3 The purpose of this document, therefore, is to provide a management framework within which the responsible parties can work together to meet this aim.
- 1.4 Some SAR incidents may require a fully integrated emergency response under the guidelines provided in the Home Office publication *Dealing with Disaster* and the Scottish Office publication *Dealing with Disaster Together*.
- 1.5 A more detailed description of the participants and resources for UK SAR is found in Part 2 of this document.

# 2. International obligations

- 2.1 The UK organisation for civil maritime and civil aviation search and rescue is derived from the UK Government's adherence to the Convention on the High Seas (1958), the Convention on Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) (1974), the Maritime Search and Rescue Convention (1979) and the Convention on International Civil Aviation (Chicago 1944).
- 2.2 The UK responsibility for SAR measures for ships, aircraft and persons, whether civilian or military, covers the UK SAR Region (UKSRR). (See Annex A.)

# 3. Scope of UK SAR

- 3.1 The key functions of UK SAR are to co-ordinate :
  - a) maritime SAR in offshore, inshore and shoreline areas
  - b) aeronautical SAR over land and sea
  - c) inland SAR
- 3.2 These functions are undertaken through the ability of the various authorities and organisations to :
  - a) receive details of persons, vessels and aircraft in distress
  - b) communicate between SAR units and the co-ordinating authority
  - c) communicate between SAR units

- d) communicate between co-ordinating authorities
- e) maintain declared SAR units as appropriate to :
  - i) provide assistance to persons, vessels and aircraft in distress
  - ii) deliver survivors to a place of safety or where further assistance can be rendered

## 4. Division of UK SAR responsibility

- 4.1 Responsibility for civil aeronautical and maritime SAR policy rests with the Department for Transport, (DfT). As such, the DfT is responsible, through the UK SAR Strategic Committee, for assessing the adequacy of UK civil aeronautical and maritime SAR resources, response and co-ordination.
- 4.2 The responsibility for the co-ordination of land-based and inland waters SAR rests with the Police Service and is derived from their duty to protect life and property.

## 5. Government departments with responsibility for national SAR

- 5.1 Department for Transport, (DfT)
  - 5.1.1 The Agencies and Branches of the DfT carry out broad responsibilities in maritime and aeronautical safety.
  - 5.1.2 The Maritime & Coastguard Agency (MCA) provides a response and co-ordination service for maritime SAR, counter pollution and salvage. The SAR role is undertaken by HM Coastguard, which is responsible for the initiation and co-ordination of civil maritime SAR. This includes the mobilisation, organisation and tasking of adequate resources to respond to persons either in distress at sea or to persons at risk of injury or death on the cliffs and shoreline of the UK. As part of its response, the MCA provides Auxiliary Coastguard Rescue Teams for cliff and shoreline search and rescue purposes.
  - 5.1.3 The Civil Aviation Division (CAD) has overall responsibility for UK civil aviation SAR and assigns appropriate SAR functions to the MoD and MCA.
- 5.2 Ministry of Defence (MoD)
  - 5.2.1 The MoD has responsibility for providing SAR facilities for military operations, exercises and training within the UK and, by agreement, exercises responsibility for civil aeronautical SAR on behalf of the DfT. Where the coverage provided by military SAR assets meets the civil SAR coverage requirements, they will be made available for civil maritime and land-based SAR operations. The MoD also establishes and maintains an Aeronautical Rescue Co-ordination Centre (ARCC) for the operation and co-ordination of civil and military aeronautical SAR.

5.3 Cabinet Office/Scottish Executive/National Assembly for Wales

5.3.1 These Offices have a role in ensuring the quality of preparedness for civil disaster at the local government level and across central government.

## 6. Authorities and organisations with responsibility for, or significant involvement in, national SAR

6.1 Police Service

6.1.1 The Police Service, through its command infrastructure, co-ordinates land based and inland waters SAR operations including those that originate at sea or in the air and provide co-ordination of all emergency services and other authorities where appropriate.

6.2 Fire Service

6.2.1 Fire Services in the UK have a statutory responsibility to deal with fires. Each Fire Authority has the power to use the resources primarily provided for fire fighting to deal with non-fire incidents. These may include maritime, aeronautical and land based SAR operations. It is for each Fire Authority to set its own policy with regard to SAR operations and these will vary around the UK.

6.3 Ambulance Service

6.3.1 The Ambulance Service in the UK has a statutory responsibility to respond to traumatic and medical emergencies. Land Ambulances may in some areas be complimented by Helicopter Emergency Medical Service (HEMS) assets which may assist in SAR tasks in circumstances compatible with the type and operating limitations of the aircraft.

6.4 Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI)

6.4.1 The RNLI is a voluntary organisation incorporated by Royal Charter for the purpose of saving lives and promoting safety at sea and, in the future, on the inland waters of the UK, Channel Islands, Isle of Man and Republic of Ireland. This it does by providing and maintaining a fleet of Inshore and All Weather Lifeboats located at strategic points as determined by the Institution's Committee of Management. The RNLI reserves the right to direct its own assets, co-ordinated by the responsible authority.

6.5 Voluntary Inland SAR Organisations

6.5.1 The Voluntary Inland SAR Teams are organisations formed to provide SAR services on land. Operationally, each team is responsible to, and works under the authority of, the Police Service. Though each Team is independent, their common interests are represented by the following bodies :

- a) Mountain Rescue Council of England and Wales (MRC)
- b) Mountain Rescue Committee of Scotland (MRC of S)

- c) British Cave Rescue Council (BCRC)
- d) Association of Lowland Search and Rescue (ALSAR)

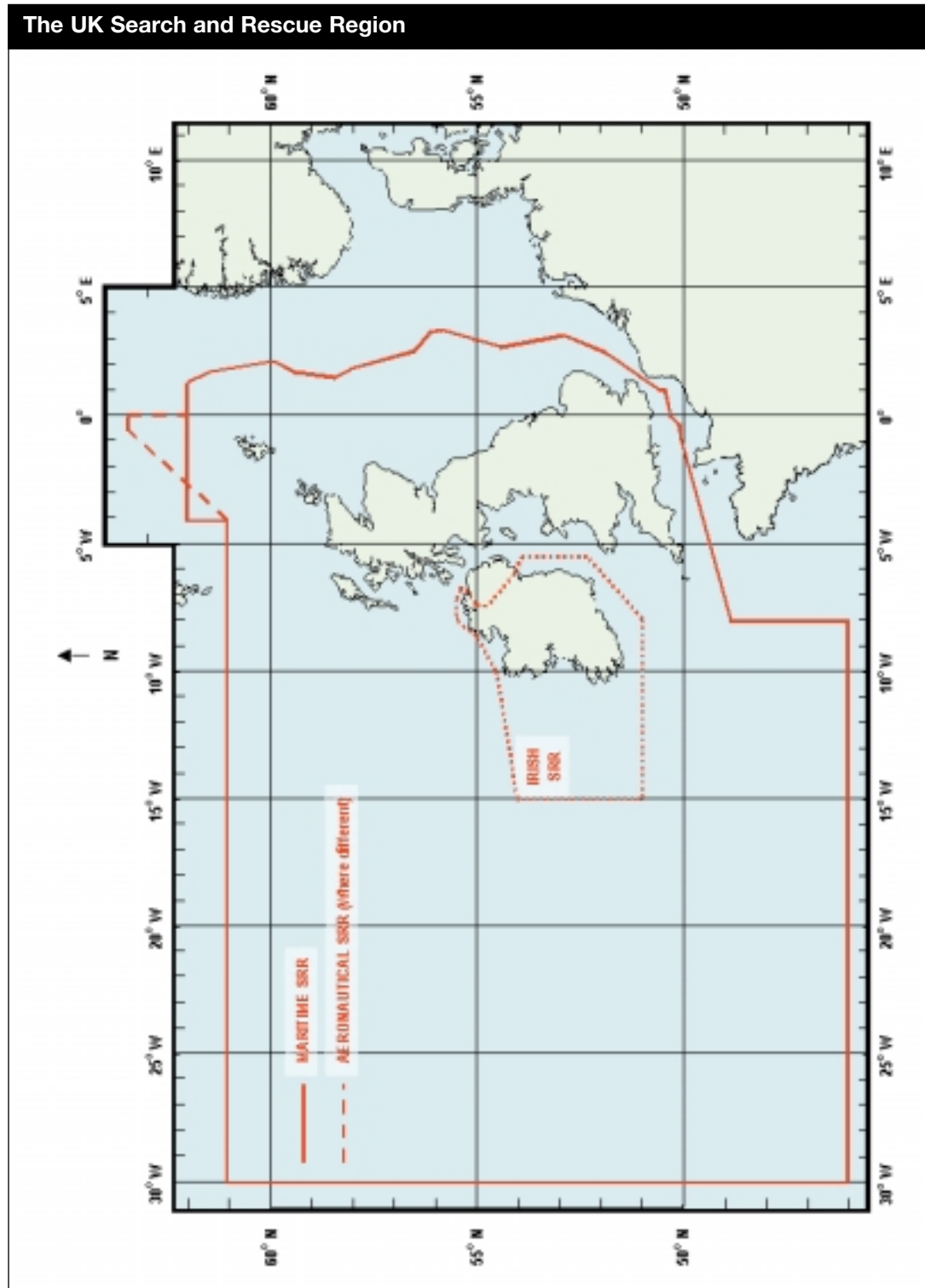
## 7. UK SAR Committee structure

- 7.1 The organisation of UK SAR is defined by the UK SAR Strategic Committee as supported by the UK SAR Operators Group. The structure is shown at Annex C.
- 7.2 UK SAR Strategic Committee - Terms of Reference
  - 7.2.1 The UK SAR Strategic Committee (UKSARSC) is an inter-Agency national forum with responsibility for advising on the structure, scope and framework of the organisation of UK SAR. Its objectives are :
    - a) To develop criteria for the coverage, responsiveness and availability of SAR resources, consulting the UK SAR Operators Group as required;
    - b) To offer views to Ministers on improving SAR capability, effectiveness and co-operation;
    - c) To promote effective and efficient co-operation between the various Government Departments, the emergency services and other organisations including voluntary agencies for the provision of an effective SAR service at national and, where appropriate, international levels;
    - d) To establish the framework for UK SAR as described in this document;
    - e) To provide Terms of Reference for the UK SAR Operators Group.
  - 7.2.2 The Committee shall meet at least twice per year.
  - 7.2.3 Membership of the Committee shall be confined to those with strategic and policy responsibilities within those organisations which contribute significantly to UK SAR. The Committee shall consist of members from the following organisations :
    - a) DfT - Chair & Secretariat
    - b) Ministry of Defence - Vice Chair
    - c) Home Office
    - d) Maritime & Coastguard Agency (MCA)
    - e) Association of Chief Police Officers England, Wales & NI (ACPO)
    - f) Association of Chief Police Officers Scotland (ACPO(S))
    - g) Chief and Assistant Chief Fire Officers Association (CACFOA)

- h) Ambulance Service Association (ASA)
  - i) Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI)
- 7.3 UK SAR Operators Group - Terms of Reference
- 7.3.1 Acting under the aegis of the UK SAR Strategic Committee, the objectives of the UK SAR Operators Group are :
- a) To develop a programme of work to implement the tasks set by the UKSARSC;
  - b) To consider reports and recommendations from associated SAR working Groups;
  - c) To consider the views of the UK Maritime & Aviation SAR, and Inland SAR Consultative Committees;
  - d) To advise and make recommendations to the UKSARSC on a National SAR Framework to ensure efficient and effective co-operation between SAR agencies and those concerned with civil SAR;
  - e) To determine the terms of reference and issue other guidance as appropriate to SAR Working Groups and Consultative Committees.
- 7.3.2 The Group shall meet up to four times per year.
- 7.3.3 Membership of the Operators Group shall be confined to those organisations, which have a substantial national focus and membership except where they can, and are content, to be represented by another member organisation. The Operators group shall comprise, as standing members, representatives from :
- a) DfT - Maritime & Coastguard Agency (MCA) - Chair & Secretariat
  - b) Ministry of Defence (RAF) - Vice Chair
  - c) Home Office
  - d) Association of Chief Police Officers England, Wales & NI (ACPO)
  - e) Association of Chief Police Officers Scotland (ACPO(S))
  - f) Chief and Assistant Chief Fire Officers Association (CACFOA)
  - g) Ambulance Service Association (ASA)
  - h) Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI)
  - i) Royal Life Saving Society (RLSS)
  - j) Mountain Rescue Council of England and Wales (MRC)
  - k) Mountain Rescue Committee of Scotland (MRC of S)

- l) British Cave Rescue Council (BCRC)
  - m) Association of Lowland Search and Rescue (ALSAR)
- 7.3.4 Other members may be co-opted from time to time as determined by the Group.
- 7.3.5 The terms of reference and existence of the Operators Group may be reviewed by the UKSARSC as required by them.
- 7.4 Local Search and Rescue Committees (LSARC)
- 7.4.1 To encourage liaison at a local level it is recommended that SAR committees, such as those coastal Local SAR Committees already established, are convened to monitor arrangements for search and rescue. The jurisdiction of local committees should align as far as is possible with Police Force boundaries. Representatives from emergency services, appropriate statutory agencies and voluntary organisations should be invited to attend.

# ANNEX A





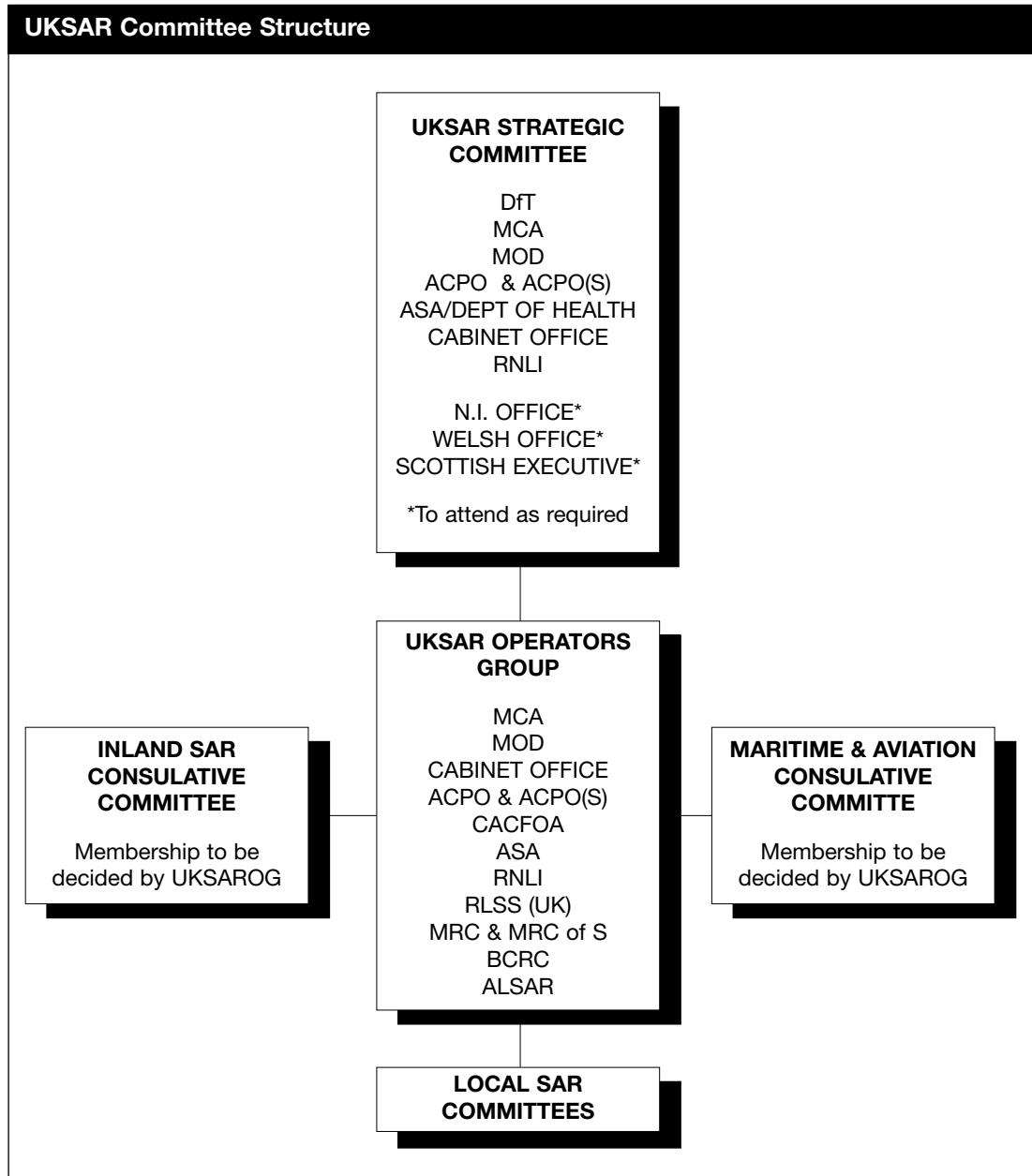
# ANNEX B

Co-ordinates of UK Search and Rescue Region								
AERONAUTICAL SRR			MARITIME SRR			IRISH SRR		
61° 00' 00" N	030° 00' 00" W		62° 00' 00" N	001° 22' 23" E		54° 00' 00" N	015° 00' 00" W	
61° 00' 00" N	004° 00' 00" W		62° 00' 00" N	004° 00' 00" W		54° 34' 00" N	010° 00' 00" W	
63° 28' 33" N	000° 46' 22" W		61° 00' 00" N	004° 00' 00" W		54° 45' 00" N	009° 00' 00" W	
63° 28' 33" N	000° 00' 00"		61° 00' 00" N	30° 00' 00" W		55° 20' 00" N	008° 15' 00" W	
62° 00' 00" N	000° 00' 00"		45° 00' 00" N	30° 00' 00" W		55° 25' 00" N	007° 20' 00" W	
62° 00' 00" N	001° 22' 22" E		45° 00' 00" N	08° 00' 00" W		55° 20' 00" N	006° 55' 00" W	
61° 44' 10" N	001° 33' 29" E		48° 50' 00" N	08° 00' 00" W		54° 25' 00" N	008° 10' 00" W	
61° 21' 22" N	001° 47' 18" E		49° 00' 30" N	06° 56' 00" W		53° 55' 00" N	005° 30' 00" W	
59° 53' 46" N	002° 04' 30" E		49° 30' 00" N	04° 06' 30" W		52° 20' 00" N	005° 30' 00" W	
59° 17' 22" N	001° 42' 36" E		49° 54' 24" N	02° 53' 42" W		51° 00' 00" N	008° 00' 00" W	
58° 25' 46" N	001° 28' 54" E		49° 58' 54" N	02° 28' 54" W		51° 00' 00" N	015° 00' 00" W	
57° 41' 16" N	001° 57' 48" E		50° 05' 54" N	01° 48' 18" W		54° 00' 00" N	015° 00' 00" W	
56° 35' 40" N	002° 36' 42" E		50° 12' 24" N	01° 12' 24" W				
56° 05' 10" N	003° 14' 55" E		50° 18' 18" N	00° 36' 06" W				
55° 54' 58" N	003° 20' 55" E		50° 24' 30" N	00° 00' 00"				
55° 50' 00" N	003° 23' 55" E		50° 32' 48" N	00° 57' 48" E				
55° 45' 52" N	003° 22' 08" E		50° 48' 54" N	01° 16' 30" E				
54° 37' 15" N	002° 53' 49" E		50° 57' 00" N	01° 21' 24" E				
54° 22' 45" N	002° 45' 43" E		51° 02' 18" N	01° 32' 54" E				
53° 18' 03" N	003° 03' 19" E		51° 06' 00" N	01° 43' 30" E				
52° 46' 57" N	003° 12' 13" E		51° 12' 00" N	01° 53' 18" E				
52° 37' 15" N	003° 10' 55" E		51° 14' 24" N	01° 57' 18" E				
52° 24' 57" N	003° 03' 25" E		51° 20' 12" N	02° 02' 18" E				
52° 17' 21" N	002° 55' 55" E		51° 30' 12" N	02° 07' 18" E				
52° 05' 57" N	002° 42' 49" E		51° 32' 00" N	02° 11' 12" E				
51° 58' 57" N	002° 37' 31" E		51° 48' 18" N	02° 28' 54" E				
51° 48' 15" N	002° 28' 49" E		51° 59' 00" N	02° 37' 36" E				
51° 30' 00" N	002° 00' 00" E		52° 01' 00" N	02° 39' 30" E				
51° 07' 00" N	002° 00' 00" E		52° 05' 18" N	02° 42' 12" E				
51° 00' 00" N	001° 28' 00" E		52° 06' 00" N	02° 42' 54" E				
50° 04' 00" N	001° 28' 00" E		52° 12' 24" N	02° 50' 24" E				
50° 00' 00" N	000° 15' 00" W		52° 17' 24" N	02° 56' 00" E				
50° 00' 00" N	002° 00' 00" W		52° 25' 00" N	03° 03' 30" E				
48° 50' 00" N	008° 00' 00" W		52° 37' 18" N	03° 11' 00" E				
45° 00' 00" N	008° 00' 00" W		52° 47' 00" N	03° 18' 18" E				
45° 00' 00" N	030° 00' 00" W		52° 53' 00" N	03° 10' 30" E				
61° 00' 00" N	030° 00' 00" W		53° 18' 06" N	03° 03' 24" E				

**Co-ordinates of UK Search and Rescue Region (continued)****AERONAUTICAL SRR****MARITIME SRR****IRISH SRR**

	53° 28' 12" N	03° 01' 00" E
	53° 35' 06" N	02° 59' 18" E
	53° 40' 06" N	02° 57' 24" E
	53° 57' 48" N	02° 52' 00" E
	54° 22' 48" N	02° 45' 48" E
	54° 37' 18" N	02° 53' 54" E
	55° 45' 54" N	03° 22' 13" E
	55° 50' 06" N	03° 24' 00" E
	55° 55' 09" N	03° 21' 00" E
	56° 05' 12" N	03° 15' 00" E
	56° 35' 42" N	02° 36' 48" E
	57° 54' 18" N	01° 57' 54" E
	58° 25' 48" N	01° 29' 00" E
	59° 17' 24" N	01° 42' 42" E
	59° 53' 48" N	02° 04' 36" E
	61° 21' 24" N	01° 47' 24" E
	61° 44' 12" N	01° 33' 36" E
	61° 44' 12" N	01° 33' 14" E
	62° 00' 00" N	01° 22' 23" E

# ANNEX C



## **PART 2**

# **Organisation of UK Search and Rescue**



# CHAPTER 1

## Maritime & Coastguard Agency

### 1.1 Responsibility

- 1.1.1 The Maritime & Coastguard Agency is responsible for developing, promoting and enforcing high standards of marine safety; minimising loss of life amongst seafarers and coastal users; responding to maritime emergencies 24 hours a day; minimising the risk of pollution of the marine environment from ships, and where pollution occurs, minimising the impact on UK interests.
- 1.1.2 The MCA's response to maritime emergencies is undertaken by Her Majesty's Coastguard (HMCG) which is the authority responsible for the initiation and co-ordination of civil maritime search and rescue within the United Kingdom Search & Rescue Region (UKSRR). This includes the mobilisation, organisation and tasking of adequate resources to respond to persons either in distress at sea, or to persons at risk of injury or death on the cliffs or shoreline of the United Kingdom.
- 1.1.3 As a SAR co-ordinator, HMCG is responsible for requesting and tasking its own SAR assets and those made available by other emergency services, authorities and organisations and co-ordinating the subsequent SAR operations unless the operations are formally handed over or delegated to another SAR co-ordinator. Close liaison is maintained with the Aeronautical Rescue Co-ordination Centre at RAF Kinloss, other emergency services and rescue organisations including adjacent foreign SAR organisations.

### 1.2 Organisation and readiness

- 1.2.1 HMCG is organised into three Coastguard Search and Rescue Regions (SRR). Each Coastguard SRR contains Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centres (MRCC) and Maritime Rescue Sub Centres (MRSC). MRCCs and MRSCs are each centred on a District under the management of a District Controller. Within each District are 2 or more Sectors under the management of Sector Managers and each Sector contains 2 or more Coastguard Rescue Teams (CRT). These teams of volunteers specialise in cliff and mud rescue, coastal searching techniques and surveillance.
- 1.2.2 The organisation is based upon a continuous communications watch on VHF, VHF/DSC, MF and MF/DSC radio at 19 MRCC/MRSCs, which provide radio coverage of UK coastal and offshore waters out to 150 nautical miles. Satellite communications extend that coverage throughout the UKSRR and worldwide. This communications watch includes a distress watch on the international VHF distress frequency.

- 1.2.3 In addition to radio and satellite communications, MRCC/MRSCs keep a constant emergency telephone watch and have a VHF Direction Finding (DF) capability. Telex and Fax complete this extensive communications fit.
- 1.2.4 SAR Operations are supported by a computerised command & control system, which provides incident management and recording; resource selection and alerting; logging and databases. A computerised system provides the facility to predict the movement of drifting targets at sea; produce search areas and optimum search coverage plans for search units.

## 1.3 Maritime Safety Information

- 1.3.1 Each MRCC/MRSC broadcasts Maritime Safety Information (MSI) on VHF and, in some cases, MF radio in accordance with published schedules. MSI includes navigational warnings as issued by the UK Hydrographic Office; Gale Warnings, Shipping Forecasts, Local Inshore Forecasts, Strong Wind Warnings and Storm Tide Warnings as issued by the Meteorological Office; and Subfacts and Gunfacts as issued by the Ministry of Defence. HM Coastguard is also responsible for NAVTEX broadcasts, which contain the same information.

## 1.4 Provision of medical link calls

- 1.4.1 HM Coastguard also provides the UK Radio Medical Advice Service whereby vessels making calls on either VHF or MF radio, or telephone call requiring medical advice or assistance are provided with a radio/telephone link to the appropriate medical authorities. If medical advice requires the casualty to be taken off the vessel then the MRCC/MRSC providing the link will arrange for the casualty to be transported from the vessel to a hospital.

## 1.5 Channel Navigation Information Service

- 1.5.1 In addition to its search and rescue co-ordination responsibilities, MRCC Dover operates the Channel Navigation Information Service (CNIS). This service, which is operated in conjunction with the French, provides continuous radar surveillance of the Straits of Dover to ensure vessels transiting the Straits do so in accordance with the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea, 1972. Vessels failing to comply with these regulations are identified either by other vessels or MCA's own aircraft and a plot of the contravention is available from the radar tracking system at MRCC Dover. A prosecution normally follows a contravention. As part of the CNIS, MRCC Dover makes regular safety broadcasts, which include weather conditions and other occurrences within the traffic separation scheme to assist vessels in their passage planning through this busy waterway. A mandatory reporting system is also in place whereby all vessels over 300 Gross Registered Tonnes (GRT) are required to report, to MRCC Dover or MRCC Gris Nez (France), their intended passage through the Straits of Dover traffic separation scheme. This reporting system also assists in identifying those ships which contravene the regulations.
- 1.5.2 Elsewhere in UK territorial waters, vessels may also make voluntary Position and Intended Movement reports to HMCG when transiting the Fair Isle Channel, the Pentland Firth, the Minches, Kyle of Lochalsh, and traffic separation schemes around the Isles of Scilly.

## 1.6 Global Maritime Distress and Safety System - special responsibilities

- 1.6.1 In addition to its normal search and rescue co-ordination role, MRCC Falmouth is also the UK's Global Maritime Distress & Safety System (GMDSS) Centre. MRCC Falmouth is linked directly to the Coast Earth Station at Goonhilly whereby distress, urgency or safety messages received via the Inmarsat satellite systems are routed automatically to MRCC Falmouth for SAR action. Any distress alerts received from vessels outside the UKSRR, then MRCC Falmouth will pass details to the appropriate foreign RCC. Where this is not possible, then MRCC Falmouth will co-ordinate the necessary SAR action regardless of location worldwide.
- 1.6.2 MRCC Falmouth also possess an Operational Control Centre for the COSPAS/ Sarsat satellite distress alerting system which is linked direct to the MCA's Satellite Local User Terminals at its Combe Martin Radio Site. The OCC operates in support of the COSPAS/SARSAT UK Mission Control Centre (MCC) at the Air Rescue Co-ordination Centre at RAF Kinloss described in Chapter 2.
- 1.6.3 All NAVTEX broadcasts originate from MRCC Falmouth for both the 518 kHz and 490 kHz services.
- 1.6.4 The National Maritime Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB) Registry is also located at MRCC Falmouth and provides the necessary identification of vessels following distress alerts from EPIRBs.

## 1.7 Auxiliary Coastguard Service

- 1.7.1 The Auxiliary Coastguard Service is an organisation of Coastguard Rescue Teams (CRTs) situated at strategic locations around the coast which are equipped to deal with incidents appropriate to the risks associated with local coastal terrain and local shoreline activities and conditions. Each CRT has an initial response capability for investigation, surveillance and reporting (to MRCC/SC) purposes and in some locations where no CRT exists but the operational requirement exists, small teams known as Initial Response Teams (IRT) have been established to provide this initial response.
- 1.7.2 All CRTs have a search capability and in addition, many have a cliff and/or mud rescue capability, whereas IRTs are usually equipped with portable radios for reporting purposes only.
- 1.7.3 Members of both CRTs and IRTs are volunteers. Reporting Auxiliaries Ashore are non-uniformed, unpaid volunteers who generally live in a prominent position overlooking the coast. They may report by telephone to their local MRCC/MRSC at their own discretion if they observe a situation developing or witness an incident. Generally, it will be the MRCC/MRSC that contacts them to verify any report of an incident that may be visible from the proximity of the Member's home. They may be capable of providing initial substantiating information relating to a report well in advance of the arrival of an IRT or CRT. Reporting Auxiliaries Afloat are non-uniformed, unpaid volunteers who are experienced boat users and wish to be associated with the work of HM Coastguard while at sea in their craft. As such, they are prepared to maintain radio contact with HM Coastguard whenever practicable, and provide HMCG with maritime intelligence.



## 1.8 Coastguard contract SAR helicopters

- 1.8.1 HMCG operates four SAR helicopter units providing suitably equipped helicopters and facilities at Sumburgh Airport (Shetland), Stornoway (Isle of Lewis), Portland and Lee-on-Solent. The helicopters provided have a full night/all weather capability (although some limitations exist with regard to freezing conditions) for civil maritime and civil aviation SAR and medical evacuation from ships and offshore installations. These aircraft can also be made available for military rescue should the need arise. The Stornoway helicopter also has a secondary role in support of land rescue. Helicopters and crews at Sumburgh, Stornoway and Lee on Solent maintain a 15 minutes readiness state from 0730 to 2100 local time and 45 minutes readiness state outside these times, 24 hours a day throughout the year. At Portland, the aircraft and crew maintain a 15 minutes readiness state from 09:00 to 21:00 local time.
- 1.8.2 The current HMCG aircraft is the Sikorsky S61N. It has an endurance of approximately 4 hours. Allowing 30 minutes for winching up to 20 personnel on scene and retaining 30 minutes minimum landing fuel on completion of the task, the aircraft has a radius of action of around 180 miles. However, at Stornoway the aircraft is fitted with overload fuel tanks and, making similar allowances, offers a radius of action of 240 miles and in excess of 5 hours endurance. Range or time on scene can be extended by re-fuelling at a forward base or on offshore platforms.

## 1.9 Emergency Towing Vessels

- 1.9.1 MCA charts four Emergency Towing Vessels (ETVs) to provide emergency towing cover in high risk shipping areas.
- 1.9.2 ETVs are based in the Strait of Dover, the Minches, the Fair Isle Area and the South Western Approaches respectively and operate under the control of the District Controllers responsible for those areas. The ETV which patrols the Strait of Dover is provided jointly by the UK and French Authorities who share Operational Control of the vessel.

# ANNEX A



## CHAPTER 2

# Ministry of Defence

### 2.1 Responsibility

- 2.1.1 The MoD provides declared SAR facilities to cover military operations, exercises and training within the UK SRR. Although these resources are established for military purposes, it is MoD policy to render assistance whenever possible to other persons, aircraft or vessels in distress. Where the coverage provided by military SAR assets meets the civil SAR requirement, they will be made available for civil aeronautical, maritime and land-based SAR operations.

### 2.2 Organisation

- 2.2.1 MoD declared SAR resources consist mainly of RAF and RN SAR helicopters and maritime patrol aircraft (MPA), supplemented by other aircraft and surface vessels as necessary. On land, the MoD has specialist RAF Mountain Rescue Teams (MRTs). In the event of large-scale disasters, additional military resources can be made available through the Military Aid to the Civil Authorities(MACA) route.

### 2.3 Aeronautical Rescue Co-ordination Centre (ARCC)

- 2.3.1 MoD SAR assets are co-ordinated by the ARCC at RAF Kinloss. The ARCC operates 24 hours a day and co-ordinates the use of military SAR assets within the UK SRR in incidents involving civil or military aircraft in distress, irrespective of nationality. It also controls the military contribution to SAR operations requested by UK SAR authorities or neighbouring RCCs, including operations by military or civil aircraft, whether national or foreign.
- 2.3.2 To fulfil its responsibilities the ARCC has extensive communications links with other SAR authorities, including a considerable network of exclusive voice, fax and data circuits for communication with neighbouring RCCs, backed up by normal military operational links. Other SAR authorities are to request military SAR helicopter, MRTs or MPA assistance for civil maritime or land SAR operations from the ARCC. Exceptionally, if military SAR helicopter assistance is necessary for immediate lifesaving, provision has been made for the MCA and the Police to make direct contact with the nearest helicopter unit and request assistance. In this instance, the requesting authority is to inform the ARCC as soon as possible afterwards.

## 2.4 The United Kingdom Cospas-Sarsat Mission Control Centre (UKMCC)

- 2.4.1 The Cospas-Sarsat system is an international organisation that uses satellite technology to detect active radio distress beacons anywhere on Earth and to ensure that the distress alert data is passed quickly to the appropriate RCC. The ground segment of the system comprises 2 elements; the Local User Terminal (LUT) and the Mission Control Centre (MCC). The task of the MCC is to receive distress data from the LUT and foreign MCCs before passing this information to the appropriate RCC. The MCA is responsible for the maintenance and operation of the LUT while the MoD is responsible for the maintenance, manning and operation of the UKMCC. The UKMCC is co-located with the ARCC at RAF Kinloss. At present, the Cospas-Sarsat system is capable of processing beacon alerts on 121.5 MHz, 243 MHz and 406 MHz.

## 2.5. Distress and Diversion (D&D) Cells

- 2.5.1 Throughout their flights, most aircraft remain in two-way radio contact with the Air Traffic Control Centre (ATCC) appropriate to the area in which they are operating. The UK centres are the London ATCC (located at West Drayton) and the Scottish and Oceanic ATCC (located at Prestwick) which provide alerting services in the London, Scottish and Shanwick Oceanic Flight/Upper Information Regions (F/UIRs). Usually, an aircraft with an emergency transmits its distress message in the first instance on the frequency (whether VHF, UHF or HF) in use at the time. It may also transmit on one or more of the dedicated VHF, UHF or HF distress frequencies. The transmission will be actioned by an ATCC which will, in turn, alert its D&D cell. D&D personnel will, again in turn, alert the ARCC which will then direct the SAR activity. Although a new ATCC (located at Swanwick) is scheduled to become operational in 2002, the existing D&D cells at West Drayton and Prestwick will continue to provide emergency services for the whole of the airspace for which the UK has responsibility.

## 2.6 Fixed Wing Aircraft

- 2.6.1 The RAF maintains one Nimrod MPA at 60 minutes readiness, 24 hours a day, at RAF Kinloss for SAR duties. The Nimrod can fly at high speed to a distance of approximately 800 nautical miles from base and then search for a period of 5 hours. Range can be extended at the expense of search time, or both may be extended by the use of in-flight refuelling. The Nimrod can be deployed to other bases to provide SAR cover when weather limits preclude operations at RAF Kinloss. The aircraft has a comprehensive suite of search sensors, most important of which is a radar optimised for over-water searches. A limited number of aircraft may also be fitted with an Infra Red (IR) capability. The Nimrod boasts a variety of communications equipment including UHF, VHF, HF and FM radios, and the combination of a powerful radar, long endurance and excellent communications, make the aircraft the platform of choice for directing activities at the scene. The aircraft itself can drop liferafts and survival equipment to persons in distress but is more frequently employed in vectoring shipping and helicopters to the scene.

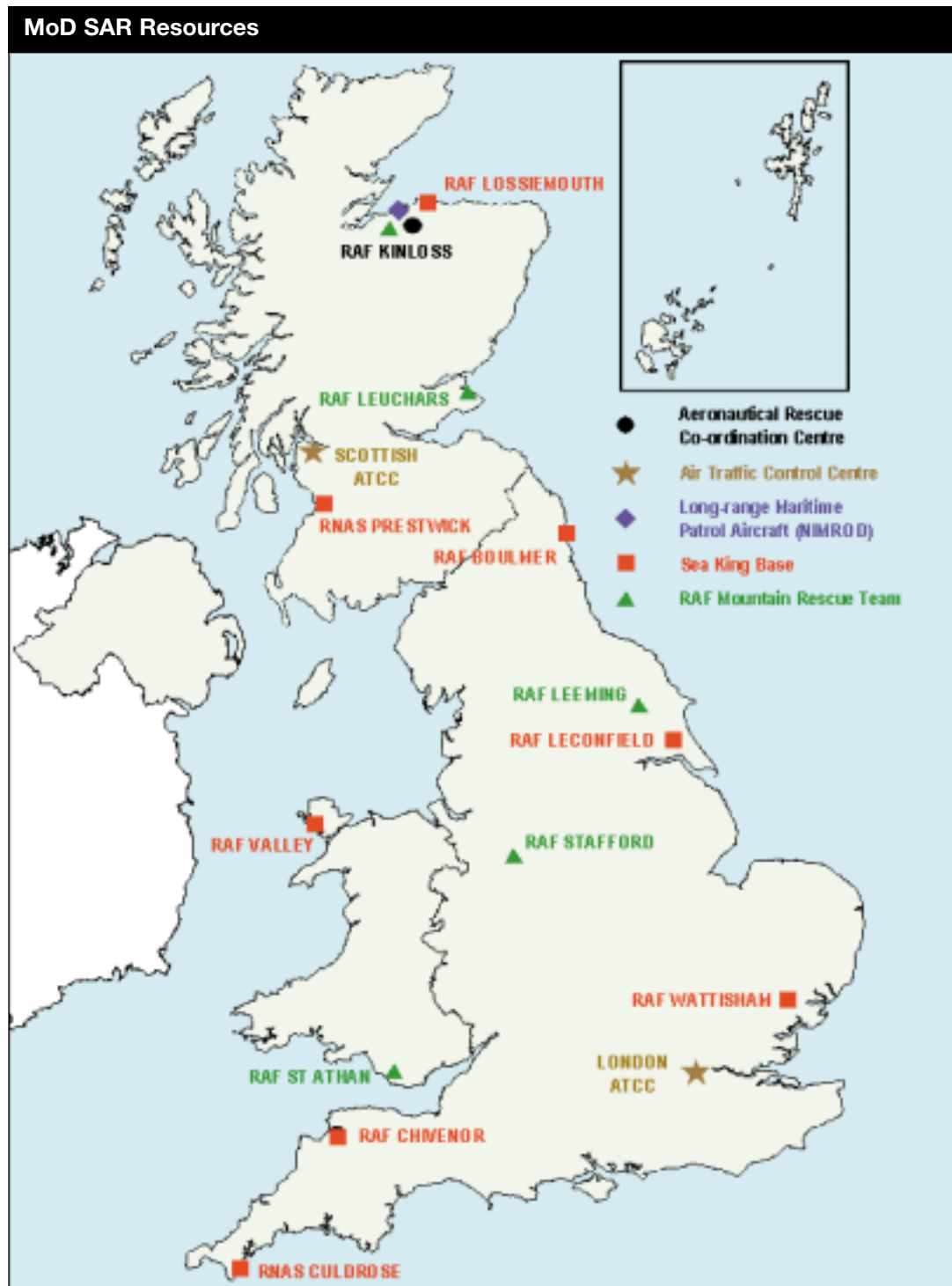
## 2.7 Helicopters

- 2.7.1 The RAF Sea King helicopters at Boulmer, Chivenor, Leconfield, Lossiemouth, Valley and Wattisham have a maximum endurance of 6 hours. This gives a radius of action of approximately 300 nautical miles from base. This can be extended by refuelling from forward bases, oil platforms or suitably equipped RN ships. At each location, one helicopter is available at 15 minutes readiness between 0800 and 2200 hours with another available at 60 minutes readiness between 0800 hours and evening civil twilight (ECT). Between 2200 and 0800 hours, one helicopter is held at 45 minutes readiness. All RAF SAR helicopters are equipped for full day/night all weather operations over land and sea (some limitations exist with regard to freezing conditions, but in general terms the helicopters are all weather capable) and have a full night vision goggle (NVG) capability. Crews are well practised in NVG operations which, in itself, is a major enhancement to search capability. In addition, all RAF SAR helicopter rear crew are medically trained, with the winchman trained up to paramedic standard. Up to 18 persons can be carried, however this is dependant on weather conditions and the distance of the incident from the helicopter's operating base. All RAF SAR helicopters are equipped with VHF (Marine and Air Band), UHF, HF and Mountain Rescue radios. They are also capable of homing to all international distress frequencies.
- 2.7.2 The RN Sea Kings at Culdrose and Prestwick have an endurance of 5.5 hours, which gives a radius of action of approximately 250 nautical miles from base. These helicopters are held at similar readiness to the RAF SAR helicopters and are available for military and civilian tasking through the ARCC.
- 2.7.3 Other RAF and RN helicopters can be used on SAR missions when available. Requests for such assistance should be made through the ARCC.

## 2.8 RAF Mountain Rescue Teams (MRTs)

- 2.8.1 The RAF has 5 MRTs based at Kinloss, Leuchars, Leeming, Stafford and St Athan. Each MRT is available at one hours notice and is operationally controlled by the ARCC at RAF Kinloss. The teams are fully equipped with their own vehicles and have a comprehensive communications suite which includes VHF, UHF and HF radios as well as a Satcom capability. The teams work closely with the military SAR helicopters and can provide a rapid response to both military and civilian incidents in all areas of inhospitable terrain. RAF MRTs maintain a close liaison with the Police and civil mountain rescue organisations.

# ANNEX A



## CHAPTER 3

# Land based Search and Rescue

### 3.1 General

- 3.1.1 The term search and rescue describes two separate functions. Search can require the use of modern investigative techniques, e.g. relating to human behaviour to locate a person and rescue often also requires a high degree of technical skill. Land based search and rescue can cover a wide variety of circumstances involving emergency services, other statutory agencies and voluntary organisations.

### 3.2 Statutory organisations involved in land based search and rescue

#### 3.2.1 Police

- 3.2.1.1 It is a basic requirement of the police service to be involved in the saving of life and this includes investigating reports of missing persons. Whilst police forces do not maintain declared assets for search and rescue purposes the police have primary responsibility for co-ordinating the role of other agencies including specialist support provided by voluntary organisations.
- 3.2.1.2 The police are also responsible for overseeing any criminal investigation. They facilitate enquiries carried out by the responsible accident investigation body, eg Health and Safety Executive, Air or Marine Accident Investigation Branch. It is also the responsibility of the police on behalf of HM Coroner in England and Wales (Lord Advocate through his office of Procurator Fiscal in Scotland) to investigate any sudden or unexpected death.
- 3.2.1.3 Search and rescue incidents have the potential to develop into major incident requiring the implementation of special arrangements by the police or other emergency services supported by other statutory agencies and voluntary organisations. In such circumstances the police co-ordinate the activities of those responding and will have responsibility for processing casualty information and identifying and arranging for the removal of the dead. A national structure has been agreed and adopted which ensures that all involved parties understand their role in the combined response. The management of the response is normally divided into three levels; operational, tactical and strategic. The requirement to implement one or more of these management levels will be very dependent on the nature of the incident, but normally incidents will be handled at the operational level, only moving on to the tactical and finally the strategic level should this prove necessary.
- 3.2.1.4 In its planning, each agency will need to recognise the three management levels, operational, tactical and strategic, and the functions to be undertaken. This will allow the integration of management processes across agency boundaries. It is not intended that the management levels necessarily predetermine the rank or seniority of the individual discharging the functions. If any one agency activates its major incident plans then it may

be necessary for others to start to activate their own plans in order to facilitate liaison.

3.2.1.5 Details of the various police forces in Great Britain are set out in Annex A to this chapter. Each police force is a separate independent authority with the Chief Constable having operational independence.

### 3.2.2 Fire and Rescue Service

3.2.2.1 The Fire Service in the UK is controlled at local level. The statutory responsibility of Fire Authorities are detailed in the Fire Services Act 1947, or equivalent legislation, e.g. the Fire Services (Northern Ireland) Orders. Each Fire Authority is required to make provision for firefighting within its area. This necessitates securing the services of a fire brigade. Currently, within the UKSRR, they are organised into 62 separate fire brigades - see Annex B to this chapter

3.2.2.2 In addition to fire fighting within their area of responsibility they may use their resources for other purposes which currently can include those incidents involving chemicals, road traffic accidents, rescue etc. It also may include incidents at sea beyond the local authority, or international boundaries.

3.2.2.3 These discretionary powers are used in a range of ways by individual Fire Authorities and no single model can be assumed. For instance, not every Fire Authority with a coast operates an ability to mount an operation at sea.

3.2.2.4 Although each Fire Authority sets its own policies they will have operational agreements with neighbouring authorities. They will also have plans to operate with other agencies and services. These are used regularly at a variety of incidents throughout the UK, and often involve voluntary agencies.

3.2.2.5 Fire Brigades have the ability to mobilise personnel and equipment quickly to almost any part of the UK mainland and generally receive calls for assistance through the public service communications network. They operate communications systems to control their own operations and have efficient arrangements to communicate with other services. Inter-service wide area communication is generally achieved using public networks. However some capability will be available on a local incident basis to communicate between some services. It is by no means a universal provision due to frequency capacities, allocation etc.

### 3.2.3 Ambulance Service

3.2.3.1 The United Kingdom Ambulance Service is divided into 38 separate authorities in England, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Wales and the Channel Islands as shown in Annex C to this chapter. Each Service is required to meet pre-determined response times.

3.2.3.2 Activation of Ambulance Service assets is by radio or data from command and communications centres specific to the Service involved which determines the nearest available asset to be deployed. Inter-Ambulance Service communication on FM radio is nationally available by use of an Emergency Reserve Channel (ERC) enabling vehicles from other Services to communicate with a local control facility.

3.2.3.3 Training for Paramedics and Ambulance Technicians is to a nationally agreed standard based upon a Manual compiled by the Institute of Health Care Development in collaboration with the relevant Ambulance Services and the Royal College of Nursing.



- 3.2.3.4 Paramedic staff are trained to use a wide range of skills, techniques and drug protocols in order to preserve life and maximise treatment options within the Golden Hour which is particularly important in time critical patients with multi system trauma.
- 3.2.3.5 It should be noted however that in the SAR environment support for other agencies would, in general, be limited to light rescue extrication. The Ambulance Service does not train in technical rescue onshore or offshore and is not equipped to do so. However, some Ambulance Services have developed procedures and skills for more technical involvement and based upon risk assessment by the Service at the time of the incident may operate with other agencies in hazardous or irrespirable atmospheres and chemical, public order and maritime incidents. The core role of the Ambulance Service remains that of patient/casualty treatment and transport.
- 3.2.3.6 In addition to normal Ambulance Service assets, Helicopter Emergency Medical Service (HEMS) provision is being developed both rurally and in urban areas to complement ambulance based operations. HEMS aircraft are required to land on scene or in close proximity to any incident as they do not have a winching capability.

#### 3.2.4 Ministry of Defence

- 3.2.4.1 See Chapter 2.

### 3.3 Voluntary organisations involved in land based search and rescue

- 3.3.1 Voluntary teams are available at any time throughout the year. They are normally accessed through the Police who have overall responsibility for land based search and rescue. Teams have detailed knowledge of their primary areas of operation but are able to work elsewhere as required. It is emphasised that whilst teams are volunteers their standards are high and the service provided is professional and as such is an invaluable addition to the Police role in their response to search and rescue and major disasters.
- 3.3.2 The great majority of voluntary teams have their own robust communications systems that may be set up whenever and wherever required for a particular operation. In general the communications system tends to be a single frequency, all informed net. In addition to the frequencies shown in Appendix 1, some teams have additional private mobile radio (PMR) frequencies.
- 3.3.3 Mountain Rescue Council for England and Wales (MRC)
  - 3.3.3.1 A total of 47 operational Mountain Rescue Teams (MRTs), each of which is an independent unit, come together for liaison and co-operation purposes under the auspices of the MRC. The operational teams are grouped into 8 regional associations as follows:

	<b>No of Teams</b>
Lake District Search and Mountain Rescue Association	11
Mid-Pennine Search and Rescue Organisation	5
North East Search and Rescue Association	6
North Wales Mountain Rescue Association	8
Peak District Mountain Rescue Organisation	7
South Wales Search and Rescue Association	4
South West England Rescue Association	5
Yorkshire Dales Rescue Panel	1

N.B. In England and Wales the MoD (see Chapter 2) is a member of the MRC.

### 3.3.4 Mountain Rescue Committee of Scotland (MRC of S)

- 3.3.4.1 Mountain rescue in Scotland is structured in the following manner. There are 22 civilian teams affiliated to the MRC of S. There is no regional structure as exists in England and Wales.

#### **Civilian MRTs**

ABERDEEN MRT	GLENMORE LODGE MRT
ARRAN MRT	KILLIN MRT
ARROCHAR MRT	KINTAIL MRT
ASSYNT MRT	LOCHABER MRT
BORDERS SAR UNIT	LOMOND MRT
BRAEMAR MRA	MOFFAT MRT
CAIRNGORM MRT	OCHILS MRT
DUNDONNELL MRT	SKYE MRT
GALLOWAY MRT	TAYSIDE MRT
GLENCOE MRT	TORRIDON MRT
GLENELG MRT	TWEED VALLEY MRT

N.B. In Scotland, the Strathclyde, Tayside and Grampian Police Forces maintain MRTs. In addition the MoD has 2 RAF MRTs at Kinloss and Leuchars. These Police and RAF teams are members of the Mountain Rescue Committee of Scotland.

### 3.3.5 Association of Lowland Search and Rescue (ALSAR)

- 3.3.5.1 Five teams come together in the Association of Lowland Search and Rescue which was established with the primary purpose of developing, co-ordinating and promoting the activities of lowland search and rescue teams. It covers areas not served by the MRC or MRC of S.

3.3.6 Northern Ireland Mountain, Cave and Cliff Rescue Co-ordinating Committee (NIMCCRCC)

3.3.6.1 Three teams provide search and rescue cover in Northern Ireland and come together for co-ordination and other purposes in the Northern Ireland Mountain Cave and Cliff Rescue Co-ordinating Committee. There is close co-operation between NIMCCRCC and the Irish Mountain Rescue Association (IMRA).

3.3.7 Search and Rescue Dog Association (SARDA)

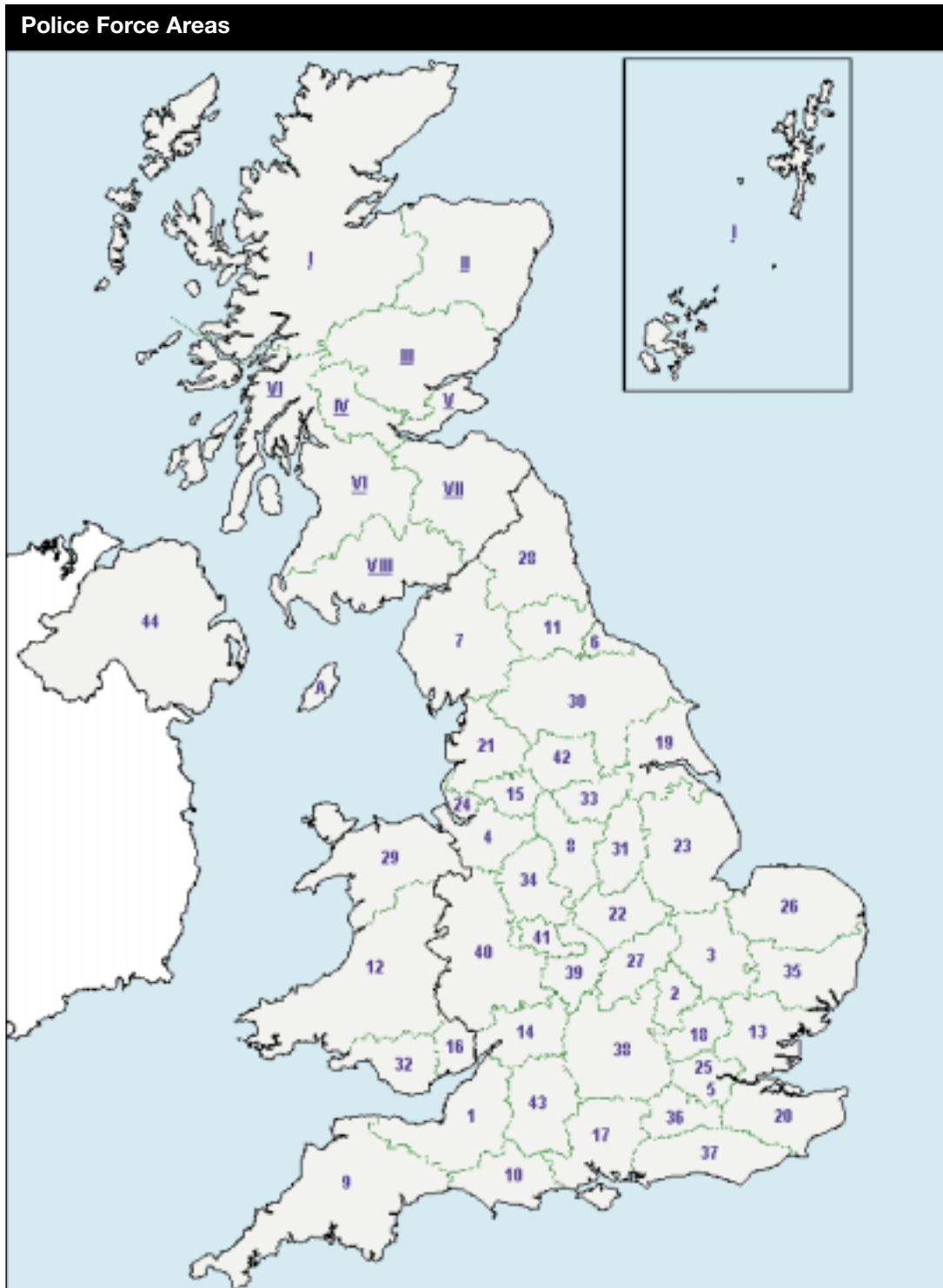
3.3.7.1 SARDA is a voluntary organisation dedicated to the training and use of dogs in searches. The members are commonly drawn from mountain rescue teams. SARDA is affiliated to every region of the MRC and MRC of S. There is a SARDA in the Republic of Ireland.

3.3.8 British Cave Rescue Council (BCRC)

3.3.8.1 Cave rescues in the British Isles are carried out by 15 cave rescue organisations, each with its own equipment, administration and geographical area of operation. The BCRC is the representative body for all bona fide teams in the British Isles. Its functions are to represent and support members. It is affiliated to the MRC.



# ANNEX A



## Police Forces

### SCOTLAND

- |                            |                                       |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| I Northern Constabulary    | V Fife Constabulary                   |
| II Grampian Police         | VI Strathclyde Police                 |
| III Tayside Police         | VII Lothians and Borders Police       |
| IV Central Scotland Police | VIII Dumfries & Galloway Constabulary |

### ENGLAND and WALES

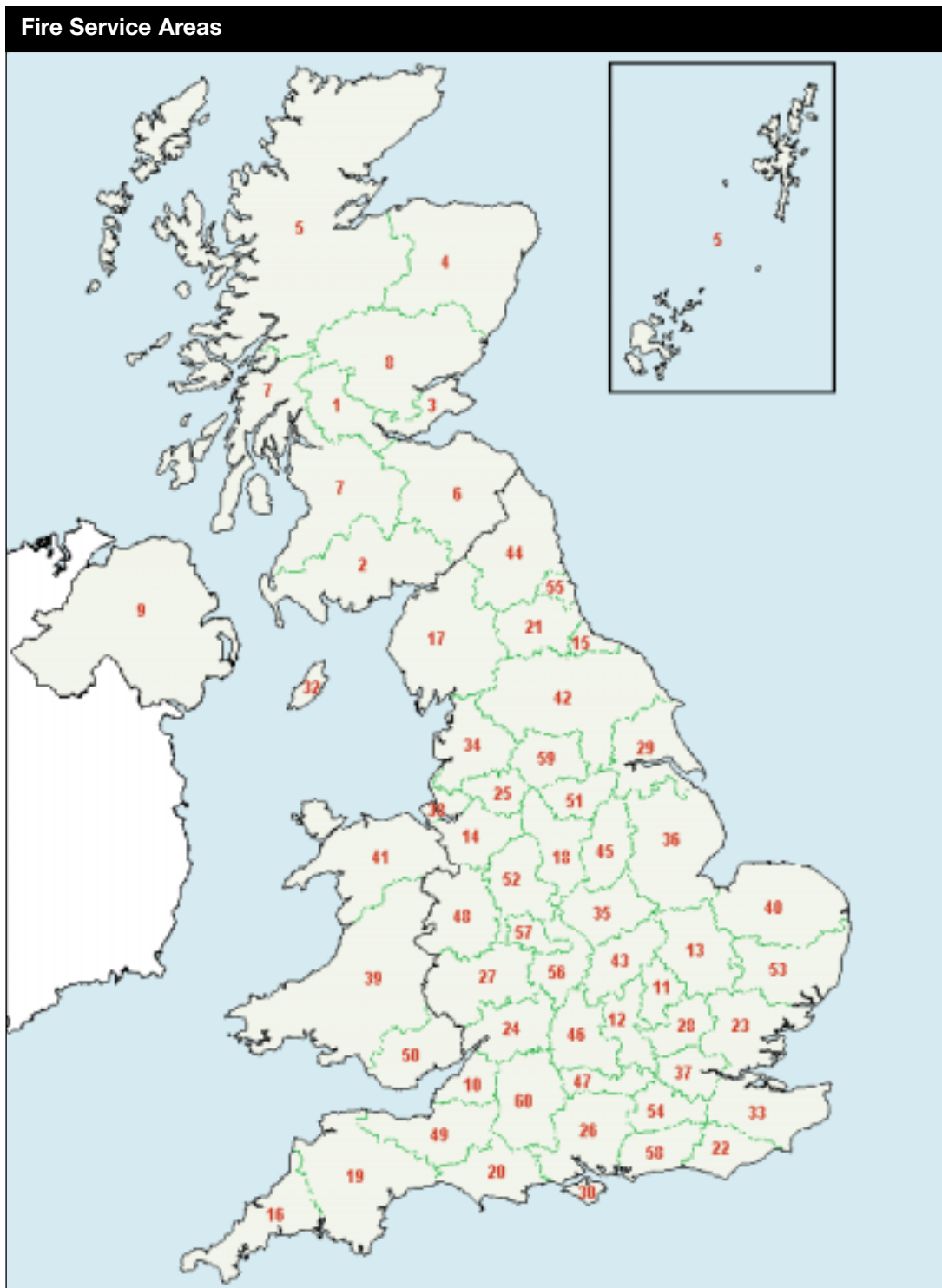
(Forces are identified by their NRC number)

- |                                   |                              |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 Avon and Somerset Constabulary  | 23 Lincolnshire Police       |
| 2 Bedfordshire Police             | 24 Merseyside Police         |
| 3 Cambridgeshire Constabulary     | 25 Metropolitan Police       |
| 4 Cheshire Constabulary           | 26 Norfolk Constabulary      |
| 5 City of London Police           | 27 Northamptonshire Police   |
| 6 Cleveland Police                | 28 Northumbria Police        |
| 7 Cumbria Constabulary            | 29 North Wales Police        |
| 8 Derbyshire Constabulary         | 30 North Yorkshire Police    |
| 9 Devon and Cornwall Constabulary | 31 Nottinghamshire Police    |
| 10 Dorset Police                  | 32 South Wales Police        |
| 11 Durham Constabulary            | 33 South Yorkshire Police    |
| 12 Dyfed-Powys Police             | 34 Staffordshire Police      |
| 13 Essex Police                   | 35 Suffolk Constabulary      |
| 14 Gloucestershire Constabulary   | 36 Surrey Police             |
| 15 Greater Manchester Police      | 37 Sussex Police             |
| 16 Gwent Police                   | 38 Thames Valley Police      |
| 17 Hampshire Constabulary         | 39 Warwickshire Constabulary |
| 18 Hertfordshire Constabulary     | 40 West Mercia Constabulary  |
| 19 Humberside Police              | 41 West Midlands Police      |
| 20 Kent Constabulary              | 42 West Yorkshire Police     |
| 21 Lancashire Constabulary        | 43 Wiltshire Constabulary    |
| 22 Leicestershire Constabulary    | 44 Royal Ulster Constabulary |

### ISLE of MAN

- |                            |
|----------------------------|
| A Isle of Man Constabulary |
|----------------------------|

# ANNEX B

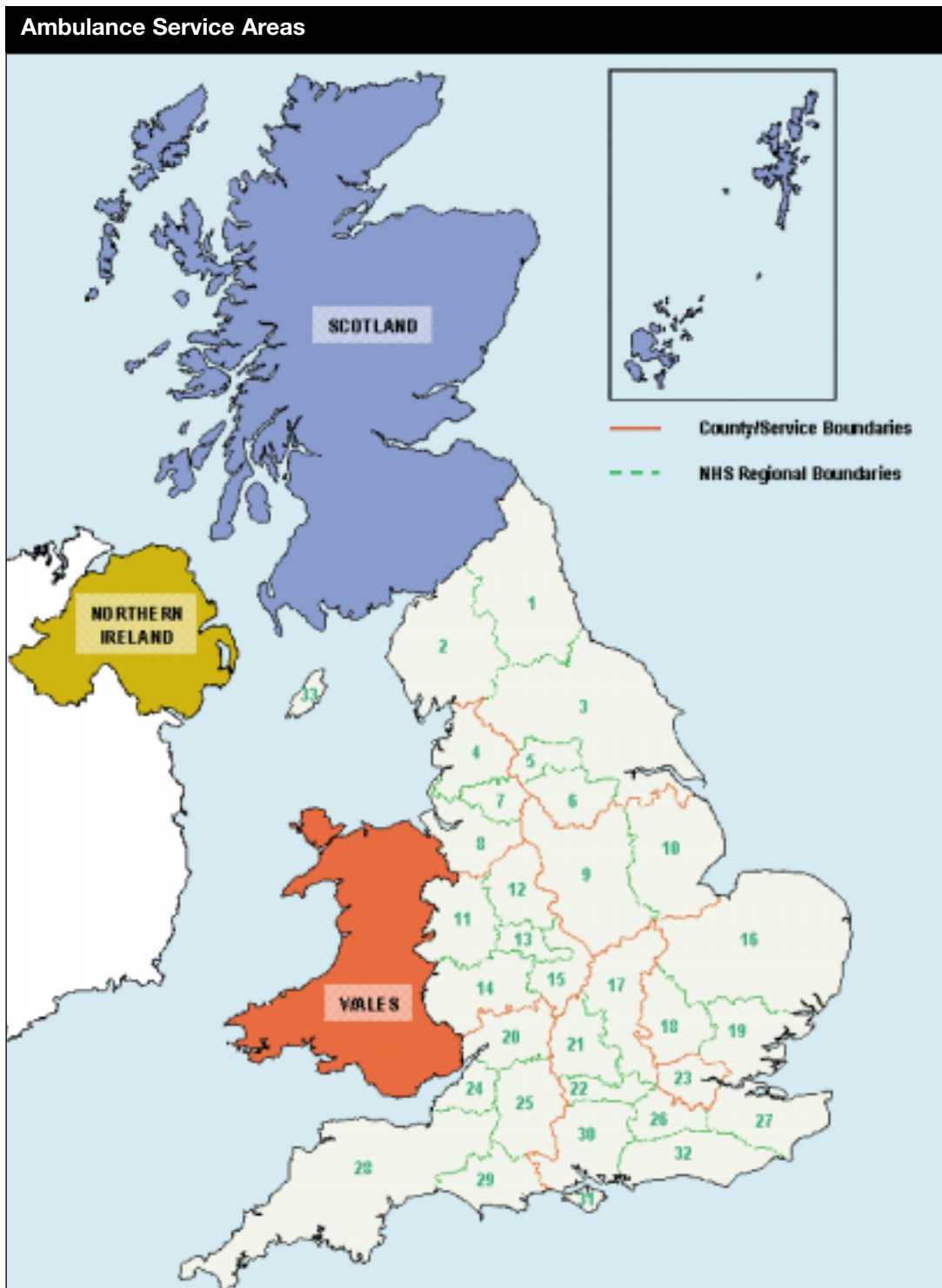


**Fire Services**

1 Central Scotland Fire Brigade	32 Isle of Man Fire & Rescue Service
2 Dumfries & Galloway Fire Brigade	33 Kent Fire Brigade
3 Fife Fire & Rescue Service	34 Lancashire Fire & Rescue Service
4 Grampian Fire Brigade	35 Leicestershire Fire & Rescue Service
5 Highland & Islands Fire Brigade	36 Lincolnshire Fire & Rescue Service
6 Lothian & Borders Fire Brigade	37 London Fire Brigade
7 Strathclyde Fire Brigade	38 Merseyside Fire Brigade
8 Tayside Fire Brigade	39 Mid & West Wales Fire Brigade
9 Northern Ireland Fire Brigade	40 Norfolk Fire Service
10 Avon Fire Brigade	41 North Wales Fire Service
11 Bedfordshire & Luton Fire & Rescue Service	42 North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service
12 Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service	43 Northamptonshire Fire & Rescue Service
13 Cambridge Fire & Rescue Service	44 Northumberland Fire & Rescue Service
14 Cheshire Fire Brigade	45 Nottinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service
15 Cleveland Fire Brigade	46 Oxfordshire Fire Service
16 Cornwall County Fire Brigade	47 Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue Service
17 Cumbria County Fire Service	48 Shropshire Fire & Rescue Service
18 Derbyshire Fire & Rescue Service	49 Somerset Fire Brigade
19 Devon Fire & Rescue Service	50 South Wales Fire Service
20 Dorset Fire & Rescue Service	51 South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service
21 County Durham & Darlington Fire & Rescue Brigade	52 Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Service
22 East Sussex Fire Brigade	53 Suffolk County Fire Service
23 Essex County Fire & Rescue Service	54 Surrey Fire & Rescue Service
24 Gloucestershire Fire & Rescue Service	55 Tyne & Wear Metropolitan Fire Brigade
25 Greater Manchester County Fire Service	56 Warwickshire Fire & Rescue Service
26 Hampshire Fire & Rescue Service	57 West Midlands Fire Service
27 Hereford & Worcester Fire Brigade	58 West Sussex Fire Brigade
28 Hertfordshire Fire & Rescue Service	59 West Yorkshire Fire Service
29 Humberside Fire Brigade	60 Wiltshire Fire Brigade
30 Isle of Wight Fire & Rescue Service	
<b>Not Shown</b>	
31 Isles of Scilly Fire Brigade	61 Guernsey Fire Brigade
	62 Jersey Fire Service



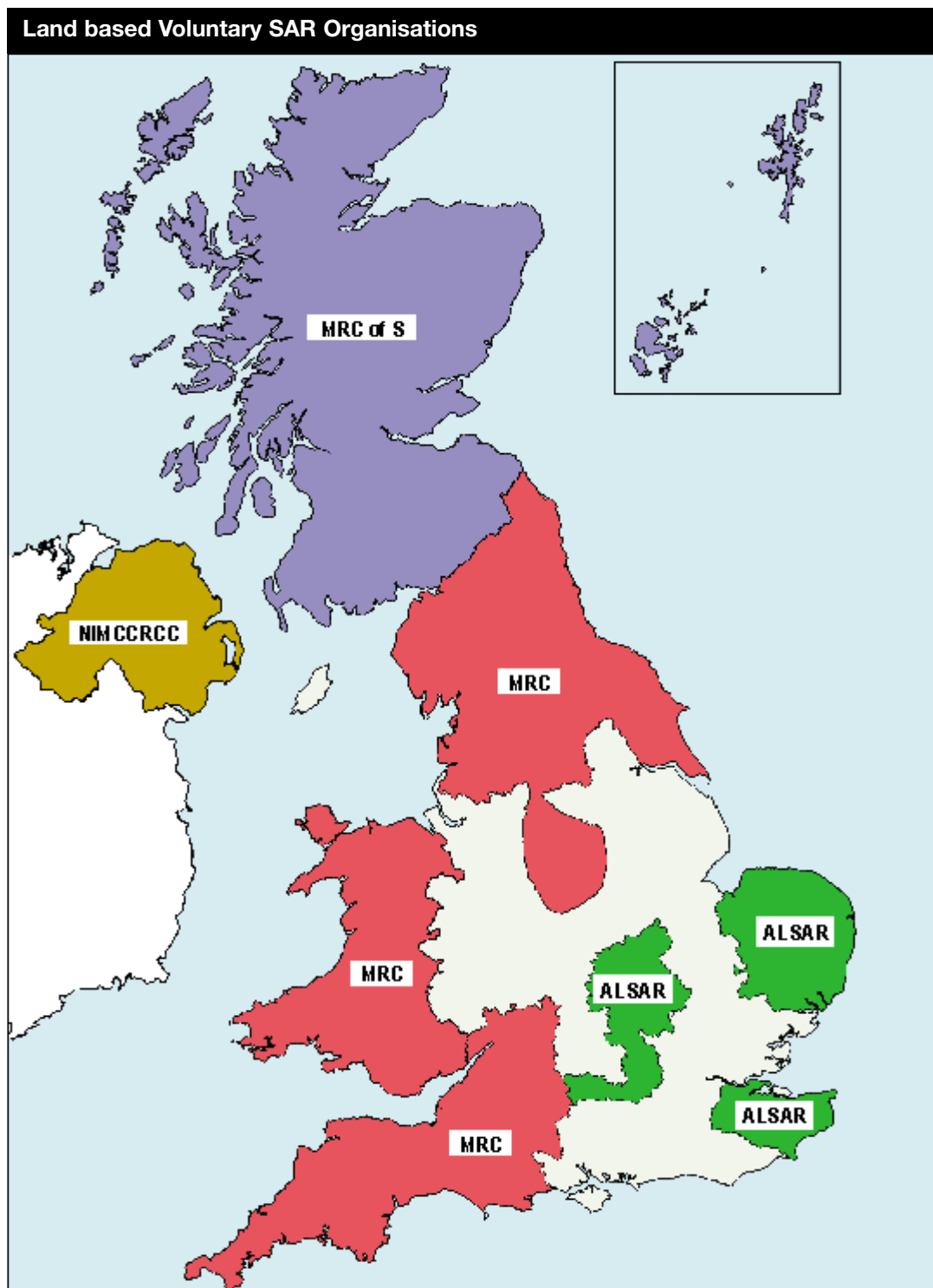
# ANNEX C



**Ambulance Services**

1	North East	18	Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire
2	Cumbria	19	Essex
3	Tees, East & North Yorkshire	20	Gloucestershire
4	Lancashire	21	Oxfordshire
5	West Yorkshire	22	Royal Berkshire
6	South Yorkshire	23	London
7	Greater Manchester	24	Avon
8	Mersey	25	Wiltshire
9	East Midlands	26	Surrey
10	Lincolnshire	27	Kent
11	Shropshire	28	West Country
12	Staffordshire	29	Dorset
13	West Midlands	30	Hampshire
14	Hereford & Worcester	31	Isle of Wight
15	Warwickshire	32	Sussex
16	East Anglia	33	Isle of Man
17	Two Shires		

# ANNEX D



MRC	Mountain Rescue Council for England and Wales
MRC of S	Mountain Rescue Committee of Scotland
ALSAR	Association of Lowland Search and Rescue
NIMCCRCC	Northern Ireland Mountain, Cove and Cliff Rescue Co-ordinating Committee

## CHAPTER 4

# Royal National Lifeboat Institution

### 4.1 General

- 4.1.1 The Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) is a voluntary organisation incorporated by Royal Charter for the purpose of saving lives and promoting safety on water in the United Kingdom, Northern Ireland, the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man and the Republic of Ireland.

### 4.2 Organisation

- 4.2.1 The RNLI is organised in six divisions for the operation and administration of lifeboats, with each division under the authority of an Inspector of Lifeboats. There are 229 lifeboat stations of which 130 operate lifeboats over 10 metres in length (all weather lifeboats) including 68 at which an Inshore Lifeboat is also available. In addition there are 98 stations at which there are Inshore Lifeboats only. A large relief fleet of lifeboats is maintained so that boats may be replaced at short notice in the event of damage or when withdrawn for refit without diminishing the cover available. The location of lifeboat stations is given in the Annex to this chapter.

### 4.3 Level of cover

- 4.3.1 The RNLI's fleet of purpose-built lifeboats are strategically located on inland waters and around the coast of the UK. The lifeboats have different capabilities and speeds, and range in size from the 4.9 metre (16 foot) inflatable Inshore Lifeboats to the 17 metre (56 foot) Severn Class All-weather Lifeboats. All lifeboats under 10 metres in length (Inshore lifeboats) are subject to clearly defined launching restrictions. RNLI lifeboats are available as "declared facilities" with ALB's capable of reaching 50 nautical miles from the coast of the UK and the Republic of Ireland, including the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man within 2.5 hours. Crews and lifeboats are available on a 24-hour basis throughout the year with the exception of a few isolated D Class Inshore Lifeboat stations, which are withdrawn between November and Easter.

### 4.4 Co-ordination of RNLI SAR services in the Channel Islands

- 4.4.1 SAR operations involving lifeboats in the Channel Islands are co-ordinated by the RNLI launching authorities of either Guernsey, Jersey or Alderney depending on location of the incident.

## 4.5 Authority to launch

- 4.5.1 Each lifeboat station is controlled by a Station Honorary Secretary (SHS) appointed by the Committee of Management of the RNLI. The SHS authorises the launching of a lifeboat. The SHS is supported by one or more Deputy Launching Authorities who can act in his absence. Whilst the SAR co-ordinators are responsible for requesting the launch of a lifeboat, the final decision to launch in the weather and sea or water conditions prevailing, rests with the Launching Authority and the Coxswain or Helmsman.

## 4.6 RNLI Central Operations and Information Room (COIR)

- 4.6.1 The COIR at RNLI Headquarters, Poole, Dorset is staffed continuously and enables a responsible officer to be fully and quickly informed of lifeboat operations. The COIR also ensures that there is adequate liaison between RNLI staff and Lifeboat Station officials and provides advice and guidance where necessary. It also provides a central point of contact for other SAR authorities wishing to contact the RNLI.

## 4.7 Communication with lifeboats

- 4.7.1 All lifeboats are fitted with VHF (FM) radio operating in the 156-174 MHz band. All-weather lifeboats are also fitted with MF radiotelephone equipment and the Severn and Trent class lifeboats have an HF capability. Where a special requirement exists a few are also fitted with transceivers on 121.5 MHz (International Aeronautical Distress) and 123.1MHz. Special arrangements are being developed to facilitate communications with lifeboats operating on inland waters.
- 4.7.2 All-weather lifeboats are also fitted with MF and VHF Digital Selective Calling (DSC).

## 4.8 Aids to navigation

- 4.8.1 All lifeboats carry Global Positioning System (GPS) receivers. All-weather lifeboats are fitted with GPS, integrated to an electronic chart system operating ARCs (Admiralty Raster Chart System). All B Class inshore lifeboats are fitted with electronic vector chart systems.
- 4.8.2 All lifeboats over 10 metres in length are also fitted with VHF/DF Equipment which operates on the marine band and also on 121.5 MHz.

## 4.9 Duration of lifeboats

- 4.9.1 All-weather lifeboats have a duration of 10 hours at full speed. Proceeding at economic or slow speed can considerably extend this duration when on scene and searching.
- 4.9.2 Inshore lifeboats have a duration of 3 hours at full speed. Proceeding at economic or slow speed can considerably extend this duration when on scene and searching.

# ANNEX A



## CHAPTER 5

# Supporting Services

### 5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 During the course of SAR co-ordination, response and information gathering, UK SAR makes use of a number of other organisations and authorities who are able to help either because of their proximity to the SAR incident, or the information they may be able to provide which could lead to a successful outcome of a SAR operation.

### 5.2 Masters of vessels at sea

- 5.2.1 Masters of vessels at sea, on receiving a distress message either direct from the vessel in trouble or as relayed by another vessel or SAR authority, are bound by the SOLAS Convention to render assistance. Guidance to Masters is given in the International Aeronautical and Maritime SAR Manual (IAMSAR) Volume 3, the Annual Summary of Admiralty Notices to Mariners and the International Radio Regulations.

### 5.3 Lighthouse and pilotage authorities

- 5.3.2 Trinity House, the Northern Lighthouse Board and the Commissioners of Irish Lights liaise closely with MCA. These authorities are constantly aware of the whereabouts and availability of their lighthouse tenders which are capable of responding to SAR incidents and communicating on all maritime distress frequencies. Their service launches are of particular value in recovering persons from the water or from pleasure craft. An operational Control Centre located at Trinity House Depot at Harwich, Essex is continuously manned and co-ordinates the operational functions of the Trinity House Lighthouse Service. Northern Lighthouse Board and Commissioners of Irish Lights have similar arrangements at their Edinburgh and Dublin bases.
- 5.3.3 Competent Harbour Authorities have fast pilot launches available and are all fitted with VHF communications and are of particular value in responding to SAR incidents either within or just outside harbour limits.

### 5.4 Lloyds of London

- 5.4.1 Lloyds Intelligence Service can provide positive confirmation of a ship's name (and previous name), call sign, MMSI, last known position, voyage details, ship details and type, and possible cargo. Such reference can be particularly important when doubtful or incomplete information makes identification difficult or where there are several ships with the same name. MCA reciprocates by providing information to Lloyds regarding casualties and data from its Channel Navigation Information Service (see chapter 1).

- 5.4.2 Lloyds Intelligence can make international enquiries if vessels are reported overdue and may ask MCA to make broadcasts and other enquiries on their behalf.

## 5.5 Local authorities and beach lifeguard

- 5.5.1 While responsibility for safety on beaches and cliffs, except where privately owned, rests with local authorities, UK SAR will respond immediately when SAR measures are required.
- 5.5.2 In various parts of the UK, Beach Lifeguard Units (BLUs) are provided to minimise the risk of injury or drowning on and around UK beaches. The BLUs are trained by either the Royal Lifesaving Society (RLSS UK) or the Surf Lifesaving Society (SLSS) and are usually volunteers operating under contract to Local Authorities and in one or two cases may be privately run.
- 5.5.3 BLUs work closely with HM Coastguard and where they have received the appropriate training in SAR communications and achieved the required standard, they have been granted declared facility status.

## 5.6 Offshore oil and gas operators

- 5.6.1 Companies operating offshore have considerable resources of ships, helicopters and equipment available for normal day-to-day operations and to deal with emergencies.
- 5.6.2 General guidance on the handling of offshore emergencies is given in the Health & Safety Executive's Offshore Emergencies Handbook. Offshore operator's emergency plans are drawn up in conjunction with MCA. HM Coastguard are advised of any offshore incident likely to cause a threat to life irrespective of whether any positive action is subsequently required. The resources at the disposal of offshore operators are generally available to assist in other SAR emergencies.

## 5.7 United States Air Force (USAF)

- 5.7.1 The 21st Special Operations Squadron, USAF, is stationed at RAF Mildenhall, Suffolk and provides SAR cover for United States military forces in Europe. Subject to military requirements, the unit can furnish assistance to UK SAR. The squadron is equipped with Sikorsky MH-53M Pave Low IV Helicopters. The helicopters are capable of in flight refuelling from HC/MC 130P airborne tankers.

## 5.8 Liaison with Foreign SAR authorities

- 5.8.1 UK SAR maintains a close liaison with neighbouring countries for SAR co-operation purposes. In most cases, Memoranda of Understanding or Agreements have been agreed between UK and these neighbouring countries which provide the SAR co-operation details. Designated UK MRCCs have permanent liaison arrangements with foreign RCCs as shown in Annex A to this chapter.



# ANNEX A

UK MRCC Liasion Responsibility	
UK MRCC	LIAISON RESPONSIBILITY
MRCC Aberdeen	Coastguard Reykjavik (Iceland) MRCC Thorshavn (Faroe Is) RCC Stavanger (Norway) RCC Bodo (Norway)
MRCC Yarmouth	RCC Aarhus (Denmark) RCC Bremen (Germany) Netherlands Coastguard
MRCC Dover	Oostende Radio (Belgium) MRCC Gris Nez (France)
MRCC Falmouth	MRCC Jobourg (France) MRCC Corsen (France) MRCC Etel (France) St Helier Harbour Master, Jersey St Peter Port Harbour Master, Guernsey Harbour Master, Alderney RCC Boston, (USA) RCC Norfolk (USA) RCC Miami (USA) RCC Halifax (Canada) International RCCs worldwide
MRSC Liverpool	Isle of Man Coastguard, Douglas
MRCC Swansea	MRCC Dublin, (Eire)
MRCC Clyde	MRCC Gronnedal, (Greenland)

# APPENDIX 1

Search and Rescue Frequencies	
Frequency	Use
<i>Distress Frequencies</i>	
457 kHz	Avalanche Rescue Beacons
2182 kHz	International maritime distress, calling and safety
2187.5 kHz	International maritime medium frequency digital selective calling
2272 kHz	Avalanche Rescue Beacons
4340 kHz	NATO combined submarine distress
8364 kHz	Survival craft
121.5 MHz	International aeronautical emergency frequency. COSPAS-SARSAT emergency position indicating radio beacons
156.525 MHz FM	International maritime VHF digital selective calling
156.8 MHz FM	International maritime distress, calling and safety
243 MHz	NATO combined distress and emergency. Submarine Distress Marker Buoy homing. COSPAS-SARSAT emergency position indicating radio beacons
406 MHz	COSPAS-SARSAT emergency position indicating radio beacons
<i>SAR Control and Scene of Search</i>	
3023 kHz	RCC to ships and/or aircraft at scene of search
5680 kHz	RCC to ships and/or aircraft at scene of search
8364 kHz	International for intercommunication between survival craft, aircraft and ships
84.3 MHz FM	Royal Air Force Mountain Rescue Teams
86.3125 MHz FM	Primary Land Search and Rescue (Low Band). NOTE: This channel is due to be withdrawn at the end of 2008.
86.3250 MHz FM	Secondary Land Search and Rescue Low Band, shared)
123.1 MHz	NATO/International combined scene of search and rescue
132.65 MHz	Counter pollution on scene operations
153.6 MHz FM	Royal Air Force Mountain Rescue Teams
156.0 MHz FM	Coastal and inshore search and rescue
156.3 MHz FM	Intership frequency for use at scene of search. Also for RCC to ships at scene of search
156.675 MHz FM	Tertiary maritime scene of search frequency
158.650 MHz FM	Primary Land Search and Rescue (High Band). NOTE: The Home Office and the Scottish Executive allocates frequencies in the 147 and 155 MHz bands for Police sponsored Land Search and Rescue Teams.
244.6 MHz	UK scene of SAR control
282.8 MHz	Combined scene of search and rescue

## APPENDIX 2

<b>Glossary of Abbreviations</b>	
ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers England, Wales & Northern Ireland
ACPO(S)	Association of Chief Police Officers Scotland
ALSAR	Association of Lowland Search and Rescue
ARCC	Aeronautical Rescue Co-ordination Centre
ARCs	Admiralty Raster Chart System
ASA	Ambulance Service Association
ATCC	Air Traffic Control Centre
AWBs	All-weather Lifeboats
BCRC	British Cave Rescue Council
BLUs	Beach Lifeguard Units
CACFOA	Chief and Assistant Chief Fire Officers Association
CAD	Civil Aviation Division
CNIS	Channel Navigation Information Service
COIR	Central Operations and Information Room
COSPAS/SARSAT	Satellite Distress Alerting System
CRT	Coastguard Rescue Team or Cave Rescue Team
D&D	Distress and Diversion
DF	Direction Finding
DSC	Digital Selective Calling
DfT	Department for Transport
ECT	Evening Civil Twilight
ETV	Emergency Towing Vessel
F/UIRs	Flight/Upper Information Regions
EPIRB	Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon
ERC	Emergency Reserve Channel
FM	Frequency Modulation
GMDSS	Global Maritime Distress and Safety System
GPS	Global Positioning System
GRT	Gross Registered Tonnes
HEMS	Helicopter Emergency Medical Service
HF	High Frequency
HMCG	Her Majesty's Coastguard
IMRA	Irish Mountain Rescue Association
IAMSAR	International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue Manual
IR	Infra Red
IRT	Initial Response Team
kHz	kilo-Hertz
LSARC	Local Search and Rescue Committees
LUT	Local User Terminal
MACA	Military Aid to the Civil Authorities

## **Glossary of Abbreviations (continued)**

MCA	Maritime and Coastguard Agency
MCC	Mission Control Centre
MF	Medium Frequency
MFDC	Medium Frequency Digital Selective Calling
MHz	Mega-Hertz
MMSI	Mobile Maritime Ship Identification
MoD	Ministry of Defence
MPA	Maritime Patrol Aircraft
MRC	Mountain Rescue Council for England and Wales
MRC of S	Mountain Rescue Committee of Scotland
MRCC	Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centre
MRSC	Maritime Rescue Sub-Centre
MRT	Mountain Rescue Team
MSI	Maritime Safety Information
NAVTEX	Navigational Safety Text
NIMCCRCC	Northern Ireland Mountain Cave and Cliff Rescue Co-ordinating Committee
NVG	Night Vision Goggle
OCC	Operations Control Centre
RAF	Royal Air Force
RCC	Rescue Co-ordination Centre
RLSS	Royal Life Saving Society
RN	Royal Navy
RNLI	Royal National Lifeboat Institution
SAR	Search and Rescue
SARDA	Search and Rescue Dog Association
SHS	Station Honorary Secretary (Royal National Lifeboat Institution)
SLSS	Surf Lifesaving Society
SOLAS	Convention on Safety of Life at Sea (1974)
SRR	Search and Rescue Region
UHF	Ultra-High Frequency
UK	United Kingdom
UKSAROG	United Kingdom Search and Rescue Operators Group
UKSARSC	United Kingdom Search and Rescue Strategic Committee
USA	United States of America
USAF	United States Air Force
VHF	Very High Frequency
VHFDC	Very High Frequency Digital Selective Calling



The organisation for Search and Rescue (SAR) in the UK is an amalgam of separate Governments Departments, the emergency services and other organisations. A number of charities and voluntary organisations dedicated to SAR also play a significant role. The purpose of this document is to provide a management framework for SAR in the UK.