

AGENDA ITEM:

REPORT TO:	MERSEYSIDE FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY MEETING
DATE:	16TH DECEMBER 2010
REPORT NO.	CFO/209/10
REPORTING OFFICER:	ASSISTANT CHIEF FIRE OFFICER
CONTACT OFFICER:	ASSISTANT CHIEF FIRE OFFICER
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	JANET HENSHAW CLERK TO THE AUTHORITY EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM
SUBJECT:	OUTCOMES OF DIALOGUE WITH THE MARITIME AND COASTGUARD AGENCY (MCA) RELATING TO THE NON MOBILISATION OF MFRS ASSETS

THERE ARE NO APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT

***There is a Glossary of Terms at the end of this report for your reference**

Outcomes

1. Following a period of positive dialogue with national representatives from the Maritime Coastguard Agency (MCA) a set of principles which will secure the arrangements for assets being mobilised to emergency incidents occurring on or in the vicinity of the River Mersey have been agreed with the MCA.

Purpose of Report

2. To advise Members of the outcomes of dialogue with national representatives from the MCA as a result of letter from the Chair of the Authority in relation to the tasking of Authority assets to emergency incidents occurring on or in the vicinity of the River Mersey.

Recommendation

3. That Members approve the set of principles agreed with the MCA and detailed within this report at paragraph 6.

Introduction & Background

4. Concerns over the tasking of Authority assets to emergency incidents occurring on or in the vicinity of the River Mersey by the MCA were reported to Members at the Authority meeting of 30th September within report CFO/169/10.

5. Consequently the Chair of the Authority wrote to the MCA requesting a meeting with Officers from the MCA to review the Memorandums of Understanding (MOU's) agreed between the two organisations in relation to this matter.
6. As a result the Assistant Chief Fire Officer has engaged in a period of positive dialogue with national representatives from the MCA. On 26th November the MCA proposed a set of principles detailed below that are recommended to the Authority:
 - MFRS seek assurance from the MCA that the declared facility, i.e. the 10 meter RHIB "Marine Fire 1" (MF1), will be tasked by the SMC to incidents, occurring on the River Mersey, when the SMC determines it is the most appropriate resource.
 - The SMC will task MF1 to incidents occurring on the River Mersey when he/she determines it is the most appropriate resource. In the case where the SMC deems MF1 not to be the most appropriate resource they will however, upon receipt of the call, still inform MFRS of the incident. The decision to send MF1 to the incident in this case will be at the discretion of MFRS (self tasking) however they will inform the SMC of the outcome of that decision at the time of MFRS being informed of the incident. In the case where MF1 have self tasked then it should be recognised by MF1 that they will still need to be guided by the SMC in charge of the incident.
 - In line with the National MOU, MFRS will be informed, upon receipt of the call by the SMC, of all incidents, within the relevant areas, that require a mud rescue response. MFRS to acknowledge that their own resources will only be tasked at the behest of the SMC unless the originating call is received by MFRS in the first instance. Should this occur then MFRS are free to task their own resources, whilst informing the SMC at MRCC Liverpool immediately that they have done so.
 - Actively encourage more cross training between respective teams to gain better understanding of methods used and work cultures with a view to establishing closer working relationships between the respective team members. This may include having some of the relevant members of the MFRS team come into the MRCC Ops Room with a view to getting a fuller understanding of the duties and responsibilities of the SMC.
7. Members are advised that the operation of these principles will address their previous concerns. Members may also want to acknowledge the positive way recent discussions have taken place.
8. Their outcome represents a shared commitment from MFRS and the MCA to undertaking joint training to develop a strong working relationship. Officers from both organisations have also committed to a 6 month review to ensure good progress is being made.

Equality & Diversity Implications

9. Speed of response in relation to water or mud rescue is extremely important especially if a person with a disability is involved. The principles contained within this report will ensure that a high standard of response to incidents occurring in or in the vicinity of the River Mersey is achieved.

Financial Implications & Value for Money

10. None contained within this report.

Health & Safety and Environmental Implications

11. All MFRS staff working on or in the vicinity of the River Mersey are appropriately trained and equipped to carry out their role. The Authority has made significant investment in water rescue related assets.

Contribution to Achieving Our Purpose:

“To Make Merseyside a Safer, Stronger, Healthier Community”

12. A fast, professional, joint response from MFRS and the MCA enhances the safety of visitors to, and the communities of. Merseyside.

***Glossary of Terms**

MF1 – Marine Fire One (Marine Rescue Team 10.5m jet boat call sign)
MRCC – Maritime Resource Coordination Centre
SMC – Search Mission Coordinator