

The Marine Safety Working Group

The Marine Safety Working Group, which has responsibility for the promotion of marine and inland water safety awareness under the Department of Transport Marine Safety Initiative, produces Booklets and Posters entitled "Safety on the Water".

The booklets provide basic safety guidelines and advice for recreational craft users, fishermen, divers etc who take to the waters of Ireland.

The Marine Safety Working Group was established following on from an inquiry into the tragic canoe accident in Dunmore East, Co. Waterford. The Working Group brings together representatives of various organisations, many of which already play an active role in promoting safety awareness throughout the country within their sphere of activities.

Participating within the Marine Safety Working Group are representative from the following; Government Departments of Transport and Environment, Heritage and Local Government. The core rescue and safety organisations within the Group are the Irish Coast Guard (IRCG), Maritime Safety Directorate (MSD), Irish Water Safety (IWS), Waterways Ireland, the Health and Safety Authority (HSA), the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI), Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM), MET Éireann (MET) and the Irish Sailing Association (ISA). Representatives from marine industries and marine recreational organisations are invited to join the Group when booklets or pamphlets about their particular occupation or sport are been considered. The Group is chaired by SAR Ops Manager IRCG.

The aim and objectives of the Marine Safety Working Group are:

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To use its collective expertise and experience to create and communicate marine safety information and messages to endeavour to reduce accidents and to prevent the loss of life in Irish Waters.

Objectives

To establish strong working relationships with other National and Local Organisations to create/promote accident prevention programmes

To establish cause and trends in accidents at sea

To develop accident prevention programmes

To measure effectiveness of prevention programmes

To provide a coordinated approach to the dissemination of safety information in response to individual enquiries

The Department of the Transport has linked up with the International RNLI database of sea related emergencies (SEAREM). Currently all organisations involved in water search and rescue in Ireland maintain separate statistics. The system has gone live and allows the collating of statistics of water incidents by area and cause. This, in turn, ensures that valuable search and rescue resources are put to the best possible use and future marine safety awareness campaigns are targeted more effectively.

Copies of the "Safety on the Water" booklets and posters are provided free of charge by contacting any of the member organisations.