

LIAISON AGREEMENT BETWEEN

THE IRISH COAST GUARD (IRCG)

AND THE DUBLIN FIRE BRIGADE

ON THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR A

FIRE BRIGADE MARINE EMERGENCY

RESPONSE ON VESSELS AT SEA

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The purpose of this Agreement is to codify the arrangements between the IRCG and the Dublin Fire Brigade to establish a Fire Brigade Marine Emergency Response, for saving of life, fire-fighting and chemical hazard response, as a Declared Facility to the IRCG. The Agreement does not create any contractual relationship.

1.2 Declared Facilities are facilities which are designated as being available according to a specific standard or set criteria. Each authority declaring facilities is responsible for:

- a.** Declaring the standard of capability and availability for each facility;
- b.** Maintaining each facility to the declared standard;
- c.** Informing the IRCG when there is any change in the declared standard of availability for each facility;
- d.** Informing the IRCG of any reason for not making available any facility which is declared and which has been requested by IRCG.

- 1.3** Notwithstanding the above, the Dublin Fire Brigade involvement will be at the discretion of the Chief Fire Officer.
- 1.4** A vessel at sea includes those which are afloat, aground or at anchor in tidal waterways or on the shore, but excludes those alongside established docks or jetties, and those for which provision is made within harbour, port, or river emergency or contingency plans.
- 1.5** Regardless of the operational criteria for which this Agreement is established, the arrangements set out herein may be invoked by mutual agreement for any case where there is risk to life or high environmental risk for which a Fire Brigade Marine Emergency Response may be required.

2. MARINE RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 Fire Brigade

2.1.1 Under the Fire Services Act 1981, Fire Authorities have no statutory responsibility to engage in Fire Brigade Marine Emergency Response at sea, beyond the Fire Authority boundary (generally the mean low water mark). Fire Services, however, have certain powers which enable them to use their resources outside their boundaries.

2.2 Department of Transport

2.2.1 The Department of Transport (DOT) through the Irish Coast Guard (IRCG) has the main responsibility for exercising Central Government's responsibility for

- Marine Search and Rescue (SAR) in the Irish Search and Rescue Region (SRR) (Annex A)
- Marine Pollution or threat of Pollution Response
- Marine Casualty/Salvage Response, and
- Marine Safety Awareness.

2.2.2 The Department of Transport by mutual arrangement with Telecom Eireann provides and maintains through the Irish Coast Guard, a Marine Public Correspondence Radio Service.

2.2.3 As part of its responsibility for safety of navigation the Department of Transport, through the Irish Coast Guard (IRCG) provides information, weather and marine radio navigational warning (RNW) broadcasts to Mariners.

3. JURISDICTION

3.1 Dublin Fire Service

3.1.1 Section 10(2)(a) of the Fire Services Act, 1981 obliges every Fire Authority in Ireland to make provision for fire-fighting purposes in their area. The areas of responsibility for Fire Authorities in Ireland generally extend to Mean Low Water Mark (MLW) at ordinary tides, but may include estuarial waters up to a prominent water mark or a centreline in a river.

3.1.2 The Dublin Fire Brigade jurisdiction does not extend to any vessel at sea. This is the responsibility of the Master of the vessel, or salvor or any other person in charge of the vessel, **normally by whose invitation they may board the stricken vessel**. Fire-fighting and rescue teams when on board are under the direct command of the Senior Fire Brigade Officer, who will take recognisance of whoever is in command of the vessel. When the IRCG On-Scene Commander is on board the vessel Section 7.3 applies.

3.2 Irish Coast Guard (IRCG)

3.2.1 As stated in Section 2.2.1, IRCG's area of responsibility is defined as the Irish SRR which is shown in the chartlet at Annex A to this Agreement.

Nevertheless, from time to time, IRCG is called upon to initiate and co-ordinate SAR incidents outside of this area. IRCG is responsible for counter pollution operations within Irish waters when the coastline or related interests are threatened but may become involved anywhere within Europe in support of existing international agreements and elsewhere under the OPRC Convention.

4. RESOURCES

4.1 Dublin Fire Brigade

4.1.1 Because circumstances and risks will vary in different parts of the country, the Dublin Fire Brigade will consider which items of equipment should be designated for Fire Brigade Marine Emergency Response on vessels at sea. Similarly the complement of fire-fighters required to operate the equipment may also differ. In both these connections, careful consideration will be given to the type and capability of the available means of transportation and the required speed of response. The safety and welfare of fire-fighters and rescue teams despatched to vessels at sea, in a variety of weather conditions, will be a prime consideration.

4.1.2 The establishment of the Dublin Fire Brigade Marine Emergency Response Team and reinforcement capabilities, is declared to the IRCG at Annex B.

4.1.3 A Dublin Fire Brigade Liaison Officer(s) shall be nominated for operational liaison duties at the IRCG MRCC Dublin or other operations rescue centre nominated for the incident. The officer(s) will be of sufficient rank to make tactical decisions on behalf of the Brigade in support of IRCG operations. The IRCG Rescue Centre will provide suitable facilities for such a role (see paragraph 4.2.2). The nature of maritime incidents renders for the most part the Strategic, Tactical and Operational structure impotent since during the initial SAR phase of a maritime incident, Strategic and Tactical Levels are sited at the appropriate IRCG Rescue Centre, and the Operational Level, which may be

conducted by a wide range of Declared and other facilities, can be at the incident scene and/or at a range of land-based landing sites (airfields/ports).

4.2 Irish Coast Guard (IRCG)

4.2.1 IRCG initiates and co-ordinates Maritime Search and Rescue incidents from any of its three Rescue Centres. Each Centre is the operational and administrative headquarters of a division of the Irish SRR. Dublin is the Marine Rescue Co-ordination Centre (MRCC), the Centres at Malin Head and Valentia are subordinate (although similarly equipment fitted) Marine Rescue Co-ordinate Sub-Centres (MRSC). The chartlet at Annex A to this Agreement shows the locations of MRCC and MRSCs. Rescue Centres are staffed 24 hours per day all year round and host a wide range of sophisticated communications equipment, including direct links into United Kingdom Rescue Co-ordination Centre at Swansea.

4.2.2 The IRCG Rescue Centres will make provision for the Dublin Fire Brigade Liaison Officers, in consultation with such officers. The basic provisions will be:

- Location suitable to the operational liaison role (normally in the Marine Emergency Room (MER) at the Rescue Centre);
- 24 hour chair and desk;
- 1 PSTN (X-directory if possible) telephone;

- Access to “monitor” logs and radio communications from the scene;
- Resident storage space for retention of “ready-use” equipment.

4.3.3 The Dublin Fire Brigade Liaison Officers will normally provide their own stationery/proformae and inter-Fire Brigade radio communications equipment.

5. TRANSPORTATION

5.1 Helicopters

- 5.1.1** The IRCG has operational and contractual control of the Department of Transport S61N Sikorsky Helicopters at Dublin and Shannon.
- 5.1.2** The IRCG has an Agreement with the Department of Defence for the provision of Search and Rescue (SAR) services, including the provision of military helicopters as Declared Facilities.
- 5.1.3** The IRCG Rescue Centre will arrange, under normal operational provision, helicopter transport through either the Air Corps for military helicopters or the IRCG contract helicopter bases for the S61N SAR aircraft.
- 5.1.4** The priority for use of SAR helicopters will ultimately be decided upon by the IRCG Rescue Centre. However, and as dictated by the circumstances, the views of the Dublin Fire Brigade may also be taken into account. In exceptional circumstances, and only in agreement with the IRCG Rescue Centre, Dublin Fire Brigade may make their own provision for use of commercial helicopters. In such exceptional cases the IRCG Rescue Centre is to be advised immediately to ensure that transport is not inhibited by air Temporary Danger Areas (TDA). It is essential that commercial helicopters have common radio communications with SAR aircraft and wherever possible with the IRCG Rescue Centre.

5.2 Surface Craft

- 5.2.1** Bulk and weight of equipment and personnel will be the main criteria for deciding the most suitable vessel for transportation to the incident scene. Dublin Fire Brigade will agree suitable contingency arrangements with the IRCG for the transportation of personnel by sea. The co-ordination of all vessels to and from the incident scene remains the responsibility of the IRCG.
- 5.2.2** In all cases the master of any vessel used to transport Dublin Fire Brigade Marine Emergency Response Teams is responsible for the vessel and all those on board.
- 5.2.3** Arrangements for any vessel to transport Dublin Fire Brigade Marine Emergency Response Teams to vessels at sea should provide for retention of the vessel on scene to support the teams, act as an operating base, and to provide a safe means of egress in the event of evacuation of the stricken vessel.
- 5.2.4** If for any reason the vessel transporting the teams to the scene cannot remain in support of operations, or teams are transported by helicopter, the IRCG Rescue Centre should make every effort to nominate a suitable vessel in the vicinity of the incident.

5.2.5 The Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) – Carriage of Fire Fighting Equipment in Lifeboats

Instances where the **only** chance of saving life from a vessel on fire is to embark fire service personnel and equipment on a lifeboat, thereby delaying the launch, will be extremely rare. A lifeboat must, therefore, launch without delay when called to a vessel on fire in order to save life and must not delay her sailing to embark fire-fighting personnel and equipment. If, on reaching the stricken vessel, it is found the fire-fighting equipment and personnel are required to save life, they should be taken out by other craft, by helicopter, or in exceptional circumstances by a flank (adjacent) lifeboat. Any special arrangements for embarking fire-fighting personnel and equipment at particular stations must be made in agreement with the Divisional Inspector of Lifeboats (Ireland). The carriage of fire-fighting personnel and equipment are restricted to all-weather life-boats only. Under no circumstances are more than 12 fire-fighters to be embarked in any lifeboat. Lifeboats will normally remain on station at the scene of an incident during a Marine Emergency Response whilst there is a continuing risk to crew, passengers or fire-fighters.

5.2.6 In addition to 5.2.5 the carriage of Dublin Fire Brigade personnel, complete with their personal equipment, is permitted in all weather lifeboats occasionally for exercise purposes. The carriage of Dublin Fire Brigade personnel and equipment for use in the salvage of property is prohibited.

6. CHEMICAL INCIDENT

- 6.1** The IRCG recognise the threat to Irish interests arising from an incident to a vessel carrying chemicals. A vast range of chemicals of differing properties is carried by sea either in bulk in specialist vessels, or in packages as part of mixed cargoes. Unlike the transport of oil by sea there is no overall pattern to the carriage of chemicals and each incident involves a differing mix of chemicals. The response to an incident has, therefore, to be tailored to the individual circumstances and will, if necessary, extend to the salvage of the vessel and/or lost chemical package.
- 6.2** Overall control will be exercised from the IRCG MRCC Dublin. An IRCG On-Scene Commander (not to be confused with any designation SAR On-Scene Commander) may be despatched to the scene of the incident to take control of the counter pollution operation. This operation may involve the salvage of the vessel or the transfer of the cargo and bunkers (vessel's fuel).
- 6.3** The MRCC Dublin is equipped with databases on chemicals and their associated hazards to both humans and environment. In addition, computer systems are available which model surface spillages or gas clouds.

7. IRISH COAST GUARD AND DUBLIN FIRE BRIGADE INTERFACE

7.1 The IRCG and Dublin Fire Brigade may be able to offer each other mutual assistance during incidents. It is envisaged that both may provide, upon request, advice, personnel and equipment as dictated by the circumstances of the incident.

7.2 The IRCG core maritime knowledge and the other Services they can consult can actively support the Fire Brigade when they are engaged in dealing with maritime incidents. Conversely, the Fire Brigade with their professional knowledge and expertise may be able to support the IRCG in counter pollution operations. Whereas the IRCG is familiar with the bulk carriage of chemicals at sea, Fire Brigade may have more experience in dealing with the wider range of chemicals carried in packages.

7.3 Whilst each incident involving IRCG and Fire Brigade may be different, there must always be a lead agency to ensure that the command and control responsibilities are clear and recognised by all concerned. If the IRCG are involved they will normally take the lead at sea since they represent the Minister for the Marine and Natural Resources who has powers and responsibilities for dealing with marine emergencies.

8. SALVAGE

- 8.1** Any salvage issues arising out of the Dublin Fire Brigade Marine Emergency Response on vessels at sea are to be resolved between the parties concerned, excluding the IRCG or Dublin Fire Brigade. Neither Dublin Fire Brigade or the IRCG would normally become involved in, nor make claim, to salvage.

9. HANDLING FOLLOW-UP REQUESTS FOR ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

- 9.1** Reinforcement and relief arrangements will be the subject of the contingency planning between the Dublin Fire Brigade and the IRCG. Requests for additional support to the Dublin Fire Brigade Marine Emergency Response Teams should be made direct to the IRCG Rescue Centre. The IRCG will coordinate the despatch of assets to the scene in concert with the Dublin Fire Brigade Liaison Officer(s) at the Rescue Centre : it is important that the Dublin Fire Brigade does not act independently.

10. INFORMATION REQUIRED FOR DUBLIN FIRE BRIGADE

RESPONSE

10.1 When making a request for Dublin Fire Brigade assistance, the IRCG Rescue Centre should provide the following information:

- A positive identification of the Co-ordinating Rescue Centre;
- Confirmation of communications arrangements;
- Nature of the emergency (e.g. extent of location of fire on vessel, trapped persons, etc.);
- Location (direction and distance from a prominent point of land);
- Type of vessel cargo and tonnage;
- Any problems which might hamper fire-fighting and rescue efforts;
- Availability and type of transport to the scene, including pick up point (if not pre-planned);
- Nationality of crew and need for an interpreter;
- Whether or not vessel is under power;
- Sea state/weather conditions, including forecast;
- Whether or not all crew/passengers are accounted for; how many missing/dead;
- What fire-fighting action of fixed installations operated;
- Any other relevant information, such as known hazardous substances.

10.2 Following the request, the Dublin Fire Brigade is to advise the IRCG Rescue Centre of Estimated Time of Arrival (ETA) at the pick up point, equipment

loads, crewing and team “staff-numbers” if used. The Dublin Fire Brigade Liaison Officer(s) is to be despatched to the IRCG Rescue Centre in all cases.

11. COMMUNICATIONS

- 11.1** IRCG need to maintain effective co-ordination of every incident. To do so the IRCG Rescue Centre needs to be aware of all events at, and in the vicinity of, the scene or likely to affect the incident in any way. Particularly important is the ingress and egress of personnel.

12. NOTIFICATION TO GARDA SIOCHANA

- 12.1** Where a fatality has occurred as a result of a fire on a vessel at sea or where, following a Fire Officer's investigations, the fire appears to be of doubtful origin or appears to have originated in suspicious circumstances, the Garda Siochana will be informed without delay. The IRCG will inform the Garda Siochana in the case of fatalities, and will decide in consultation with the Dublin Fire Brigade who is best placed to brief the Garda Siochana on uncertain or suspicious circumstances.

13. INDEMNITY

13.1 The IRCG has no liability with regard to Dublin Fire Brigade Marine Emergency Response Teams. The decision to despatch such teams rests with the Chief Fire Officer. In so doing he accepts all risk in the knowledge that the IRCG Rescue Centre may not have to hand all the information when such initial requests are made, or that such information may be flawed.

14. COSTS

14.1 In general, costs associated with the implementation of the arrangements set out in this Agreement lie where they fall. Neither party shall be liable for the costs of the other unless as otherwise agreed for the transport of the Dublin Fire Brigade Marine Emergency Response Teams.

DUBLIN FIRE BRIGADE RESOURCE DECLARATION

- * The Response Team shall be known as the Dublin Fire Brigade Emergency Response Team.

- * The Team will be available on a 24-hour basis to respond at the request from IRCG as detailed in the Liaison Agreement.

- * Requests for assistance will be received via the 999/112 system and should include all of the agreed information as detailed in the Liaison Agreement if available to IRCG.

- * The response times will be as follows:

10 personnel at the pick up point	30 mins
Additional 10 personnel at the pick up point	60 mins

- * The most senior member of the first group committed to any incident will assume command and will remain in command until relieved due to the length of the incident regardless of the eventual presence of more senior personnel.

- * The agreed pick up points for Helicopters will be:
 - The Dublin Fire Brigade Training Centre, Marino (Grid Ref 0 179 371)
 - Dublin Airport (as Secondary Point) (Grid Ref 0 165 433)

- * Transport to the pick up points will be the responsibility of Dublin Fire Brigade and communications for the duration of incidents will be as detailed in the Liaison Agreement.

- * Details of equipment packaging and weights are as follows:

EQUIPMENT LOADS

BAG NO. 1	CONTENTS	WEIGHT
1 st Response Firefighting Party	2 BA – 1 with Comms c/w Cylinders	15kg (33lbs)
	BA Control Board Complete	5kg (11lbs)
	1 Thermal Image Camera	8kg (18lbs)
	Box of Spare Batteries & Allen Keys	5kg (11lbs)
	3 Torches (Wolflite)	4kg (9lbs)
	2 Hose – 45mm x 15mm	18kg (40 lbs)
	2 Radio Pack Sets & Waterproof Covers	1kg (2lbs)
	1 Bulkhead Thermometer	1kg (2lbs)
	1 Wheel Valve Spanner	1kg (2lbs)
	Total Weight:	58kg (128lbs)

BAG NO. 2	CONTENTS	WEIGHT
1 st Response Firefighting Party	2 BA sets c/w Cylinders	15kg (33lbs)
	1 Guide Line	2kg (5lbs)
	1 30m Line	6kg (13lbs)
	2 Hose 45mm x 15m	18kg (40lbs)
	3 Wolflites	5kg (11lbs)
	1 Large Axe	3kg (7lbs)
	1 Branch	3kg (7lbs)
	1 First Aid Bag	14kg (30lbs)
	1 Boarding Control Board	3kg (7lbs)
	Total Weight:	69kg (153lbs)

BAG NO. 3	CONTENTS	WEIGHT
	2 BA sets c/w Cylinders	15kg (33lbs)
	4 Spare BA Cylinders	16kg (35lbs)
	2 25m x 45mm Hose	18kg (40lbs)
	1 3-way dividing breeching	4kg (9lbs)
	4 Wolfrite Torches	7kg (16lbs)
	Total Weight:	60kg (135lbs)

BAG NO. 4	CONTENTS	WEIGHT
	2 BA sets c/w Cylinders	15kg (33lbs)
	4 Spare BA Cylinders	16kg (35lbs)
	2 Hose 45mm	18kg (40lbs)
	2 Branches (Elkhart)	5kg (11lbs)
	1 15m Line	3kg (7lbs)
	Total Weight:	57kg (126lbs)

BAG NO. 5	CONTENTS	WEIGHT
	1 Stability Board	4kg (9lbs)
	1 Ship's Log	1kg (2lbs)
	1 Guide Line	2kg (5lbs)
	4 Cylinders	16kg (35lbs)
	1 Shifter Wrench	1kg (2lbs)
	2 Food Boxes	14kg (30lbs)
	1 Box of Rags	12kg (27lbs)
	10 Spare Overalls	10kg (22lbs)
	10 PVC Coats	12kg (27lbs)
	Total Weight:	72kg (159lbs)

BAG NO. 6	CONTENTS	WEIGHT
	2 Large Axes	5kg (11lbs)
	1 15m Line	3kg (7lbs)
	1 30m Line	6kg (13lbs)
	Gloves	12kg (27lbs)
	4 Cans of Fresh Water	23kg (51lbs)
	4 Branches	8kg (18lbs)
	Torches (Wolflite)	1kg (2lbs)
	1 Snatch Block (Small)	4kg (9lbs)
	1 Wrecking Bar	4kg (9lbs)
	Total Weight:	66kg (219lbs)

EQUIPMENT
INDIVIDUAL WEIGHT LIST

<u>Qty.</u>	<u>Equipment</u>	<u>kg</u>	<u>lbs</u>
1	B.A. Cylinder	4.0	9
6	B.A. Cylinder in Cradle	25.0	56
1	Bag	5.6	12
1	B.A. Guideline	2.0	4
1	C.A.B.A. Set with Torch	7.5	15
1	7lbs CO2 Extinguisher	14.0	31
1	20lbs Dry Powder Extinguisher	14.0	31
1	Diffuser Branch	1.0	2
1	Dividing Breech	4.7	11
1	Firefighter plus full F/F Kit	90.0	200
1	First Aid Kit	2.7	6
2	Gals. Petrol	10	22
1	GP Line 50' and bag	2.7	6
1	Hi-Ex Foam Generator	55.0	121
1	Hand Controlled Branch	2.0	4
1	5 Gal. Foam Hi-Ex Foam Compound	30.0	66
4	Handlamps	3.2	7
4	Helmets	4.0	9
1	GP Equipment Box	21	46
1	Lifejacket	1.1	3
4	45mm Hose	30.6	66
3	Suction Hose with Slings	42.0	92
1	Portable Pump	124.0	273
1	Metal Suction Strainer	2.8	7
2	Suction Wrenches	2.2	4
1	Stage II B.A. Control Board	4.0	9
1	Sling	1.5	3
2	Hand Portable Radios	1.0	2

Signed: _____
Director
Irish Coast Guard

Signed: _____
Chief Fire Officer
Dublin Fire Brigade

Date: _____

Date: _____