United States Coast Guard honours IMRF staff member

We are very pleased to announce that the United States Coast Guard have presented a Meritorious Public Service Award to David Jardine-Smith, a member of the IMRF secretariat for 9 years and currently our Mass Rescue Operations (MRO) project manager. The award was presented at the recent meeting of the ICAO / IMO Joint Working Group on SAR, which David has often attended, and was accepted on his behalf by Stein Solberg of JRCC Stavanger, Norway, who – as well as being his country’s maritime member of the Joint Working Group – represented the IMRF at this year’s meeting. We are delighted that Stein was similarly honoured by the Coast Guard, in recognition of his years of expert SAR service.

David’s award citation noted his work at the Joint Working Group, for the IMRF and, earlier, as the UK’s maritime member, and also his work on MROs. He has, reads the citation, “advocated tirelessly to increase international awareness of the urgent need to plan for these low probability, high consequence and often deadly events”. His “dedication and devotion to duty are most heartily commended and are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard”.

David says “It was a great surprise – in both senses of that phrase – to learn that the United States Coast Guard have given me this award. I am honoured, of course; but also humbled. My friends and colleagues in SAR all know that we do what we do because we have to. We are in the deeply fortunate position of being able to do something, even if it’s only a little, to help save lives. It’s a humanitarian necessity. It’s also a great privilege. Part of that privilege, for me, has been that of working with SAR people from around the world. This work has shown me that there is always hope for humanity – because there are people who will reach out a hand to those in distress, whoever they are; who will devote their lives to making things better; not for rewards but because it is in their very nature. It is simply a huge privilege to be a part of this global SAR family, with whom I would like to share this prestigious award.”
Editorial

Time flies when you are having fun, or so they say! It feels like most of my editorials should start like that with the amount that happens at the IMRF in just 3 short months. No wonder people are shocked when they find out that there are just 6 of us that officially work within the Secretariat!

So since we last published LIFE LINE we have been busy across the world. The biggest IMRF highlight has been our IMRF Awards ceremony which was held in Norway earlier this month. The awards are now in their 3rd year and they continue to grow. This year we told many stories of excellence in SAR and you can read all about them on Page 6 onwards.

For the first time ever the awards were also live streamed so if you missed all the action you can still watch the highlights at https://youtu.be/7woHdztJIdA

The awards were inspirational as always but for me a personal highlight over the past few months was being able to attend the IMO World Maritime Day in London. An IMRF delegation of friends and supporters attended this event in September, the theme of which was "IMO 70: Our Heritage – Better Shipping for a Better Future".

This event provided the opportunity to take stock and look back, but also to look forward, addressing current and future challenges for maritime transport to maintain a continued and strengthened contribution towards sustainable growth for all. It also gave delegates who may not be able to attend the IMO as part of their role a chance to have a tour and more importantly meet IMO Secretary-General Mr. Kitack Lim so I had to take up the opportunity to have my photo taken with him and his wife.

Contents

United States Coast Guard honours IMRF staff member 1
Editorial 2
Second IMRF course in mass rescue operations planning held in Sweden 3
IMRF to update the IMO 4
Nominations open for IMO Award for Exceptional Bravery at Sea 5
Captain Song announced as first IMRF Ambassador 5
IMRF Awards 2018 7
European Regional Meeting 2018 10
IMRF Trustee Nominations 10
ICAO / IMO Joint Working Group on SAR 11
IMRF and The Nautical Institute sign MOU 12
Fundraising Challenges 12

Dates for the Diary 2019

- Ferry Safety and Technology Conference
  20-22 February, Bangkok http://ferrysafetyconference.squarespace.com/
- Singapore Maritime Week
  6-12 April 2019, Singapore
- The 2019 Australian & New Zealand Disaster & Emergency Management (ANZDMC)/Australian & New Zealand Search & Rescue (ANZSAR) Conferences
- IMRF Awards 2019
  10 September 2019, London
- IMRF Fundraising Skillshare
  25-27 September 2019 TBC

For details of these events, and more, please go to www.international-maritime-rescue.org/events. If you are planning a SAR event of international interest please send the details to news@imrf.org.uk.

Submit an Article for LIFE LINE

If you have a maritime SAR story that you would like included in future editions of LIFE LINE email us at news@imrf.org.uk.
Second IMRF course in mass rescue operations planning held in Sweden

On 4-6 September 2018 the IMRF held its second ‘subject-matter expert’ course in maritime mass rescue operations, at Chalmers University of Technology in Gothenburg, Sweden. There were 26 participants from around the world – from Australia, Canada, Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Malta, Morocco, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Russia, Sweden and the UK.

The course considered, in some depth, issues common to such events – especially how to fill the SAR ‘capability gap’ implicit in the International Maritime Organization’s definition of an MRO, which is “characterised by the need for immediate response to large numbers of persons in distress, such that the capabilities normally available to the search and rescue authorities are inadequate”.

Participants discussed details of such operations and their coordination, the need for effective communications in what are complex and stressful circumstances, and the necessary training and testing regimes.

“The course is intended for people who have, or will soon have, complex incident planning responsibilities,” says David Jardine-Smith, the IMRF’s MRO Project manager. “However well-resourced you are, there will be some incidents that are simply too big to be dealt with by an ‘ordinary’ SAR response. MROs are usually very rare – which adds to the difficulty of preparing for them – but that doesn’t mean they shouldn’t be planned for. The reverse is true. Response organisations need to think through the issues, discuss them with fellow stakeholders, and find ways of filling that capability gap. They have to be prepared to be unprepared, to expect the unexpected!”

The IMRF’s course uses breakout sessions during which the participants discuss the various issues in small, mixed groups, and then report back. “Hearing from SAR colleagues from around the world is a very useful way of examining your own understanding of the problems,” says David, “And it helps you to find solutions to those problems. Like any course we have teachers and students – but on this course we are all both teachers AND students. We all learn from each other; and that includes the project team, who seek to include the participants’ expert analyses in the guidance we share with SAR people globally.”

You can find out more at www.imrfmro.org.

“This was an extremely good course, very much related to reality,” Allan Schmidt, a SAR instructor with the Royal Danish Navy

“Through good discussions in work groups and class, we achieved a better knowledge by comparing our own and other students’ experiences.”

Captain Asuako-Owiredu William Kweku, Deputy Director in charge of SAR at the Ghana Maritime Authority, also noted the open and frank discussions. “Listening to different opinions on the issues afforded us an insight, and general conclusions were agreed on at the end of every discussion.” All SAR professionals, said William, must endeavour to acquire knowledge of MROs and how best to conduct them.

The Gothenburg course was not all classroom work, however. IMRF Members the Swedish Sea Rescue Society hosted the participants aboard two of their rescue cruisers and at their headquarters one evening; and at the end of the next day course members were to be seen teetering on wooden pallets and trying to construct a bridge between them using planks of wood that were just too short. This, according to Chalmers University’s Fredrik Forsman, was a practical exercise in coordination and communication. It was also a clever demonstration of a ‘capability gap’; and we are happy to report that, after some trial and error, a solution was eventually found!

The IMRF records our gratitude to Fredrik and his colleague Lars Axvi at Chalmers; to Matthew Fader and Mikael Hinnerson at SSRS, and especially the volunteer crew members who made the course welcome aboard their cruisers; and to Paulo Falé and Stein Solberg, who came from Madeira and Norway respectively to help run the event.
IMRF to update the IMO

The IMRF attends meetings of the International Maritime Organization’s Sub-Committee on Safety of Navigation, Communications and Search and Rescue (NCSR), the Technical Cooperation Committee and other Committees and Sub-Committees as appropriate, and contributes to the work of NCSR’s SAR Working Group. The IMRF is also represented as an observer at the meetings of the ICAO / IMO Joint Working Group on SAR, where it has played an active role in developing SAR guidance and in the revision of the IAMSAR Manual in particular. Here we look at some of the work.

The next meeting of the NCSR will take place in London on 16-25 January. This is the lead technical meeting on SAR internationally – but its agenda ranges much more widely and is very full, as is indicated by the meeting being scheduled for eight days instead of the usual five.

The IMRF will attend the Sub-Committee meeting, and will present a paper detailing some of our work in recent years. It’s only when we sit down to summarise our activities that we realise how much we manage to get done!

The paper will mention our global SAR development projects, particularly in Africa, where we have been working in close cooperation with the IMO’s Technical Cooperation Division. Since 2012 we have assisted with 14 regional SAR development meetings and 29 training courses in various aspects of SAR, with a total of 425 trainees attending. Two further development meetings and three training events (for a total of 43 people) are currently planned.

The paper will also mention our recent work at the IMO itself, where we have played an active role in developing SAR guidance, particularly in the revision of the International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue (IAMSAR) Manual.

For example, we have helped with:

- improved distribution of IMO guidance, including a library of relevant IMO Circulars – see www.international-maritime-rescue.org/homeimo.
- revision of IMO’s guidelines for preparing plans for cooperation between SAR services and passenger ships
- work on the modernisation of the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) with a view to ensuring that it is as inclusive as practicable
- sharing SAR lessons identified and other information of value to the SAR community; the IMRF’s website is currently being revised with this service in mind
- assisting the review of IMO’s Model Course on SAR Mission Coordination
- supporting efforts to address the ‘non-responsive SPOC’ problem: SAR Points of Contact are used to alert SAR services to emergency beacon alerts, but some are unreliable
- encouraging States to enter and maintain SAR service information on IMO’s Global Integrated Shipping Information System (GISIS)
- review of the IMO’s guidance on recovery techniques
- amendment of the IAMSAR Volume II material on cold water search time considerations
- amendments to IAMSAR’s 2016 & 2019 editions stemming from IMRF’s mass rescue operations (MRO) project
- reorganisation of IAMSAR Volume III to improve its user-friendliness
- consideration of the definitions of the phases of emergency in the IAMSAR Manual
- in support of the International Committee of the Red Cross, revision of the IAMSAR text on the Second Geneva Convention.

The paper notes the IMRF’s work with the IMO in helping to meet key Sustainable Development Goals by providing learning opportunities (SDG 4); contributing to the building of resilient infrastructure and fostering innovation (SDG 9); and strengthening the means of implementation (SDG17). For the future, the IMRF will particularly encourage the participation of women in its SAR training and events. This is in line with SDG 5 (empowering women and girls), which will also be a focus for IMO in 2019.

Our other projects are also mentioned: rescue boat guidance and training; the Crew Exchange project; our panels on fundraising and public communication, and on future technology; and the mass rescue operations project. To date we have held four international MRO conferences, ten national or regional MRO workshops designed to assist local planning, and two subject-matter expert courses, intended primarily for MRO planners. We have also published MRO guidance (see www.imrfrmro.org) and amendments we proposed have been accepted for the IAMSAR Manual.

Finally, the paper reminds IMO Member States and NGOs of the IMRF’s information-sharing function, and the necessity of information being submitted so that we can share it. Our website is currently being revised to better facilitate this service.
Canada discusses maritime mass rescue operations

On 2 September 1998 Swissair flight 111, en route from New York to Geneva with 229 people aboard, crashed into St Margaret’s Bay in Nova Scotia, on Canada’s east coast. There were no survivors. The nature of the crash meant that there could be none. But the SAR response, involving many surface and air SAR units, as well as local fishermen, who were among the first on the dreadful scene, was as for a mass rescue operation. Which needs careful planning.

Canada is a huge country, and very sparsely populated away from its southern cities and towns. Yet its beautiful east and west coasts, its Great Lakes, and now, as the ice recedes, its distant Arctic waters too, are very popular with cruise ships, and there are also many ferries and a constant stream of passenger aircraft on local and intercontinental routes. The Canadian SAR authorities are keenly aware of the need for MRO planning and preparation.

In October the Canadian Coast Guard hosted a major gathering of response organisations in the city of Halifax, just around the corner from St Margaret’s Bay. The IMRF’s MRO project manager, David Jardine-Smith, was invited to attend – and he found the event to be a great success, principally because people came ready to consider the challenges an MRO presents and to discuss, openly and honestly, how those challenges may be met.

The workshop extended over three days and was based on three scenarios previously worked up by the Coast Guard – one for each of three regions; the west and east coasts, and central and Arctic Canada. Attendees spent the majority of their time in breakout groups, with attendees from each of the three regions discussing the problems thrown up by the scenario most relevant to them.

Responders talking to each other before an MRO is required is a vital step toward efficient planning – and that planning is essential to effective response. Nothing will ever make an MRO easy, and no MRO plan can cover every eventuality: there will always be a need for flexibility within a generic plan. But, so long as that plan and their own part in it is understood by all likely responders, an MRO will proceed much better than a make-shift operation ever could.

People cannot be saved in every disaster: Swissair 111 is a reminder of that hard fact. But events such as the Coast Guard’s Halifax workshop are a hugely important part of preparing to save lives in highly complex cases where lives can be saved if we, the responders, are ready.

IMO Award for Exceptional Bravery at Sea

Nominations are now being accepted by IMO for the 2019 IMO Award for Exceptional Bravery at Sea. According to the IMO website this annual Award was established "to provide international recognition for those who, at the risk of losing their own life, perform acts of exceptional bravery, displaying outstanding courage in attempting to save life at sea or in attempting to prevent or mitigate damage to the marine environment".

To assess the nominations an Assessment Panel is constructed of members from non governmental organisations in consultative status with IMO, under the chairmanship of the Secretary-General. This panel scrutinises the submissions and subsequently a panel of judges (made up of the Chairs of several IMO bodies) meets to consider the recommendations of the Assessment Panel and to select the recipients.

Nominations for the Award should be made by United Nations Member States, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations.

Such nominations should be addressed to the Secretary-General and should provide a full description of the circumstances and events giving rise to the nomination. The Secretary-General would be most grateful if nominations of candidates to be considered for the 2019 Award (for actions performed during the period 1 March 2018 to 28 February 2019) could be sent as soon as possible in order to reach IMO by no later than 15 April 2019.

For more details of how to nominate someone for the 2019 Award please email ero@imo.org

Captain Song announced as first IMRF Ambassador

The IMRF is pleased to announce the appointment of the first IMRF Honorary Ambassador. Captain Song Jiahiu was presented with his certificate of appointment on 15 November in Beijing, during the recent APRC Board Meeting.

The presentation was made by Michael Vlasto, former IMRF Chairman and Vice Chair of the APRC Board. Captain Song was appointed in recognition of his work in the field of maritime SAR and his ongoing commitment to the work of the IMRF.
Roll of Honour for All Those Nominated for an IMRF Award 2018

The IMRF Award for Outstanding Individual Contribution to a Maritime SAR Operation
- Captain Siddarth Sharma - Winner
- Mr Alexander Menzel - Finalist
- Mr Carlos Santos
- Captain Alok Kumar

The IMRF Award for Outstanding Team Contribution to a Maritime SAR Operation
- KNRM Station Terschelling - Winner
- Canadian Coast Guard Rescue Specialists - Finalist
- Crew onboard M/T Silver Stacie
- Crew onboard M/V Rotterdam Bridge
- Estonian Police & Border Guard motorboats and Helo BRAVO SAR
- Crew of M/Y Iuventa
- Coastguard Auckland
- MRSC Malin Watch Officers and Crew of Rescue Helicopter R118
- Virgin Islands Search and Rescue
- USCG OPFAC201261
- Kiyi Emniyeti

The IMRF Awards for Innovation and Technology in Maritime Search and Rescue
- NSRI’s Pink Rescue Buoys - Winner
- RescueNET - Finalist
- Reach & Rescue, Long Reach Telescopic Rescue Pole System

The IMRF Vladimir Maksmov Award for Lifetime Achievement in the Maritime SAR sector
- Captain Nikifor Guercie - Winner
- Mr Johannes Martinus Kooijman - Winner
- Mr Ian Coard
- Mr Rodney Bracefield
- Mr Clay Evans
- Mr Bruce Falkins

IMRF Award Winners 2018

The winners of the IMRF Awards 2018 have been announced at a formal dinner and award ceremony attended by shortlisted finalists from around the world. Theresa Crossley, CEO IMRF says; "The winners of this year’s IMRF Awards include some outstanding individuals and exceptional organisations and companies who really set the ‘gold standard’ for maritime search and rescue around the world.” We would like to thank all those who submitted nominations. We congratulate all those who were shortlisted and the runners up in each category, but most of all we celebrate this year’s winners. They really are remarkable and act as an inspiration to all those working and volunteering all around the world to prevent loss of life in the world’s waters. We would also like to thank all of the IMRF Award sponsors who make this global recognition and celebration of maritime SAR excellence possible, and, of course, Redningsselskapet, the Norwegian Society for Sea Rescue Norwegian Society for Sea Rescue (RS), who so generously hosted this year’s Awards ceremony.

The Winners’ Stories

The winner of the IMRF Award 2018 for Outstanding Individual Contribution to a Maritime SAR Operation is Captain Siddarth Sharma, a ship’s master from Mumbai, India.
Captain Siddarth Sharma was nominated for his actions in saving two French fishermen, who had been drifting for three days on a sinking fishing boat.

He was the master of ITB ASTAL-LORIDA, employed by Trinitas Ship Management and based in India, and he says that he simply did what every seafarer should do – to save anyone in distress at sea.

The rescue took place on 11 January 2018 about midday. Captain Siddarth Sharma was on the bridge and spotted the boat about 2.5 kilometres away. He immediately decided to take action - calling on all of the crew to help. The fishermen had been drifting for three days in very rough weather, strong winds and heavy rain. Their food and water had been washed away, the boat’s engine had failed and they had lost the anchor in the severe weather conditions.

It took three arduous attempts over three hours in lashing winds and strong swells to bring the weak and starving fishermen onboard Captain Siddarth’s ship. They used the pilot ladder on the port side along with lifejackets, lifebuoys and fired the line throwing apparatus three times to try and reach them until they were eventually successful.

The rescued fishermen were handed over to the French navy at Mayotte, which was a diversion from the ship’s planned passage and had to be agreed with the ship’s owners and company first.

Captain Siddarth Sharma says that; “It is every seafarer’s and Master’s solemn duty to save souls in distress at sea. I just did what any seafarer should do. Yes, it was an instant decision, but not without assessing the risks involved. I just did my duty.”

The winner of the IMRF Award 2018 for Outstanding Team Contribution to a Maritime SAR Operation is the crew of KNRM Station Terschelling Paal 8, from Friesland, Netherlands.

The KNRM Terschelling Paal 8 team was shortlisted based on its actions in two particularly challenging SAR operations. The first was on 29 October 2017 when they helped the guard vessel Drifa. The ship’s engine had failed and the windows on the bridge had been lost. There were four people onboard the vessel as it drifted in appalling weather, with force eight north westerly winds and waves six to ten meters high. The crew of the KNRM lifeboat guided a coastguard vessel to the stricken Drifa, staying with the ship and seafarers until it was safe.

The second rescue took place on 1 March, when a fishing vessel the ZK 80 Linquendaal ran aground between the islands of Schiermonnikoog and Ameland in the Waddenzee. The wind was Force 8 from the east and the temperature was -8 degrees centigrade, with a wind chill factor of -22 degrees. Very few lifeboats (they are mainly waterjet driven vessels) were on duty in the area because of the exceptionally heavy ice conditions. The Frans Hoogewind managed to reach the grounded fishing boat and, in the course of the rescue, the lifeboat’s own air intake channels became blocked with ice, and one of the VHF antennae broke because of heavy ice on the mast.

Nevertheless, the crew of the Frans Hoogewind were able to rescue three crew members from the grounded fishing vessel, one of whom already had frostbite. On both occasions, the lifeboat crew demonstrated excellent seamanship, enormous courage and an exceptional knowledge of the sea.

The winner of the IMRF Award 2018 for Innovation and Technology in Maritime Search and Rescue was the Pink Rescue Buoy, developed by the National Sea Rescue Institute (NSRI) in South Africa.

NSRI’s Pink Rescue Buoys, developed by NSRI, SAR Professionals, Western Cape, South Africa were nominated in the Innovation and Technology category.

The majority of fatal and non-fatal drownings on South African beaches are as a result of rip currents, and they are most likely to happen when the lifeguard is not on duty. As a result, the first rescue service on the scene is likely to be the sea rescue and too often they find that there’s more one person in trouble in the water, because an untrained bystander has attempted a rescue.

The Pink Rescue Buoy is designed to be used by bystanders to provide an emergency flotation device to someone in danger of drowning, before the emergency services or lifeguard arrives.

It is high visibility bright pink, so easy to spot in the water and it comes with a harness attached, should the rescuer decide to enter the water, providing both the rescuer and victim with a greater chance of survival.
It hangs from a bracket on a specially designed sign which displays the local NSRI emergency number or the closest emergency services together with a location number, so the rescue services know exactly where to respond to. Graphics on the sign also show the bystander how to throw the buoy to the victim in the water.

In the nine months since the start of the project, NSRI has installed 249 Pink rescue Buoys around the coast of South Africa, with the aim of positioning one in every high-risk water area.

The first 150 were placed around the East Coast of South Africa targeting the rip currents on the famous ‘Garden Route’ where approximately 80 per cent of the drownings are as a result of rip currents, and at the time of the award submission, the Pink Rescue Buoys had already saved 11 lives, 4 of which were children.

Exceptionally, there were two winners of the IMRF Vladimir Maksimov Award for Lifetime Achievement in the Maritime SAR Sector, with both finalists being presented with awards. The judges agreed that both Johannes Kooijman, who founded CITRO (Curacao Sea Rescue Organisation) and Captain Nikifor Guerchev, Chairman and founder of BULSAR, the Bulgarian National Volunteer Maritime Safety Society had both made outstanding contributions to maritime safety. Captain Toma Tomov was present to take the Award on behalf of Captain Guerchev.

Captain Nikifor Guerchev, Chairman of BULSAR, the Bulgarian maritime volunteers’ organisation was nominated in the Lifetime Achievement category, for his lifelong contribution to national safety at sea.

He joined the maritime section of the governmental voluntary organisation for defence aged just 14. Followed by the Navy and a post graduate qualification in marine radar and radio communications systems, he became the commanding officer of a Bulgarian navy coastal radio-technical post. He was released from the Navy for political reasons, but following political changes, in 1996 by order of the Ministry of Defence was promoted to Lieutenant Captain of the reserve, for his contribution to the modernisation of the navy communication system and social support of the navy.

In intervening years, he was the navigating officer of a SAR and Salvage vessel; becoming master on merchant vessels, the technical fleet and ocean fishing vessels. Captain Guerchev was also the Head of Bulgarian State SAR & Salvage department; (1975 -1978), Deputy Director General of the Maritime State Shipping Corporation, with responsibility for safety at sea (1978-1988) and for eight years the Bulgarian representative on the Inmarsat Council. He was the Bulgarian representative for the satellite ‘Cospas-Sarsat’ system and head of Bulgarian part of ‘Bulgaria-Romania High Commission ensuring the safety of navigation in the common area of Danube.

In 1994, he founded BULSAR, the Bulgarian national volunteer maritime safety society and is currently its Chairman.

With extensive experience and knowledge of complex marine wreck removal work, submerged technical and divers’ emergency operations, he has been personally involved in more than 25 major marine disasters along the Bulgarian sea coast and the Danube, including the removal of sunken vessels in Ilchevsk- USSR, Latakia-Syria and others. Many of the rescues have been extremely complicated and difficult and its estimated that he has directly and indirectly contributed to the saving over 250 human lives in different accidents and calamities at sea.

He has initiated and organised international drills, including state marine drill ‘SOS-1978’ which involved Bulgaria, Romania and the USSR; International Volunteer drills ‘Mayday’ (2008), with the participation of (Bulsar, DAK/SAR (Turkey), SNS (Italy); Voluntary Mass rescue Drill ‘Mayday’ 2010 (Bulsar, SNS-Italy).

He has contributed towards the purchase and installation of the first two space communication terminals in the Inmarsat system for the Bulgarian Navy, and he initiated and organised NAVTEX in the Black sea countries. Capt. Guerchev has helped shape modern legislation for SAR, salvage, and wreck removal, he’s taken part in research with Inmarsat, and helped establish the Inmarsat terminal for SAR in the MRCC Varna. He has contributed to numerous publications and papers on maritime safety and safety culture, SAR, salvage and wreck removal.

He’s also led many maritime SAR initiatives, working with the Bulgarian naval academy on the computerisation of maritime SAR processes and contributed towards the SAR-79 international convention. He worked to introduce the free 3-digit mobile number (161) which is used to alert the rescue services to people in distress at sea along the Bulgarian coast and created software to connect a call directly to a Bulsar member in the areas of distress.

Last but not least, Capt. Guerchev has authored many reports, organised international round tables on the problems of SAR, Salvage, and protection of the sea from oil pollution, developed patents for salvage equipment e.g. ‘Electromagnetic patch’ and acted as consultant for the National Investigation Service (NIS) for maritime incidents and accidents.

Johannes Kooijman, (shown here with his wife, Julia) was nominated in the Lifetime Achievement category, Mr Kooijman is a lifelong SAR volunteer and founded CITRO (the Curacao Sea Rescue Organization) in South America.
the Caribbean more than 40 years ago. CITRO was only the 2nd voluntary sea rescue organisation to be founded in the Caribbean, and it has not been an easy journey.

For the first 14 years CITRO relied on yacht owners in the area to help with search and rescue missions. Mr. Kooijman established the organisation using yacht and small plane owners as volunteers, but it took too long to respond to any emergency call-out and not all the yachts were seaworthy enough to give help at any time. In addition, not all the yacht owners had the necessary know-how to handle a successful operation.

It wasn’t until 2001 that CITRO was able to purchase its first rescue boat. In the early years, Mr Kooijman acted as president of CITRO, while working hard to share his knowledge with the yacht owners. He established close working relationships with the KNRM (Royal Netherlands Sea Rescue Organisation), today KNRM is still part of the CITRO advisory board.

After 25 years as president of CITRO, Mr Kooijman stepped down, leaving in place a very professional and growing organisation with a solid team of dedicated volunteers who complete training locally and in Scotland, in partnership with the KNRM. Today there are more than 40 volunteers, a support team for fundraising, a marketing and PR team, a technical team and many sea going volunteers. CITRO now has two very professional sea rescue vessels, two seadoo’s, a boathouse, and a 24/7 response service, and a signed MOU agreement with the coastguard.

Mr. Kooijman was also founder and editor of the Antillean Navigator, a monthly newspaper covering maritime and air news. He was co-founder of the Royal Association of Shipping chapter in the Antilles. He was instrumental in providing steadfast and invaluable support to the Caribbean Initiative, known as “CSAR”. This was an initiative of the United States Southern Command, the Coast Guard, and the Auxiliary, all working together to enhance the safety of life in the waters of the Caribbean by strengthening and establishing volunteer search and rescue units across the region. His efforts ensured the full participation and active support in the CSAR of all of the volunteer search and rescue units in the six major islands in the Netherlands Antilles: Aruba, Bonaire, Curacao, Saba, Sint Martin, and Saint Eustatius.

Finally, the winner of the IMRF 2018 People’s Choice Award was the Canadian Coast Guard Rescue Specialists who are based in Ottawa, Canada.

Every year they receive hundreds of requests for medical assistance at sea in the Pacific, Arctic and Atlantic Oceans. The service offers training and skills to shipboard navigation, engineering and logistics crew helping them to provide advanced pre-hospital care to the sick and injured at sea.

Recent rescues include a medical evacuation from a vessel where an explosion had torn a hole in the ship, causing it to sink in less than 20 minutes. The crew managed to abandon ship to the lifeboat but eight of the 22 had no immersion suits on, jumping into North Atlantic waters in little more than sweat pants and t-shirts. The Canadian Coast Guard Volunteer Rescue treated the Spanish crew for their multiple injuries including smoke inhalation and hypothermia, transferring some to a helicopter and taking the rest to hospital onshore.

The crew conducted search and rescue operations to locate three missing powerboat fishermen. After conducting a comprehensive search the Canadian Coast Guard Volunteer Rescue Specialists, found the men, treated them for hypothermia before bringing them ashore.

The team responded to a grounding on Vancouver Island when a pleasure boat operator misjudged his distance from shore and hit rocks at high speed. He was thrown from the boat sustaining severe head and spinal injuries and massive lacerations to his body. The rescue specialists attended to his wounds and completed a full c-spine immobilisation, enabling his safe transport to hospital.

The team also responded to a capsized trimaran which was taking part in an ocean sailing race from Quebec to France. The boat capsized in the North Atlantic and 10 hours later the trimaran crew were picked up by a passing tanker, but their injuries required advanced intervention. The Canadian Coast Guard Volunteer Rescue Specialists responded, four of the trimaran crew could be taken ashore by the coastguard vessel but one had suffered bad head and neck injuries and required more extensive care. The Rescue Specialists remained aboard the tanker with the casualty for 18hrs providing care until he could be safely airlifted to hospital.

RS also presented Local Hero Awards to two exceptional SAR teams from Norway. Coxswain Espen Johan Hole along with crew members Kristian Lundemo and Magnus Hafslund were given a Local Hero Award for their part in a high-profile rescue saving three people. A second Award was presented to Frode Rostad and Stein Erik Aannerud, recognising their tireless volunteering, saving lives at sea over the last 20 years.

The IMRF Awards were created three years ago to recognise and reward the selfless efforts of search and rescue operators around the world, who make many sacrifices to save lives at sea. Nominations for 2019 will open very soon. Find out more at www.imrfaawards.org.
European Regional Meeting 2018

In conjunction with the IMRF Awards a very successful European Regional Meeting was held. The topics were varied but the changing climate and environmental crisis were topics that we kept coming back to. The full meeting notes will be uploaded to our website in the New Year, but the discussions were as follows:

Annual Reports from Panels and Projects
- IMRF Future Technology Panel
- IMRF Fundraising Skillshare
- IMRF Lifeboat Crew Exchange

Session 1: The Environment and SAR
- Key Note Speech by Vidar Helgeson - Special Advisor to the United Nations
- Energy Efficiency and Future Propulsion Alternatives
- SAR and the plastic crisis

Session 2: International Work
- IMRF Work in Africa
- RS International Work
- MCA Work in British Overseas Territories
- Member Experiences
- WMRC 2019

Session 3: SAR Challenges:
- Starting a new SAR service from scratch
- Cooperation between organisations to ensure effective SAR Coverage
- The Drowning Chain

Session 4: One Challenge - One Solution: Short talks by delegates on the things that matter to their organisations
- Udo Fox - IMRF Trustee/DGZRS
- John Leech - Irish Water Safety
- Andrew Ingram - National Sea Rescue Institute of South Africa
- Nicola Stalla SOS Mediterranee - France

The European meetings are not just a great way to meet colleagues in Europe, they are also a forum for discussion of the things that matter to our members. If you would like to host a regional meeting in the future you can contact us at info@imrf.org.uk.

IMRF Trustee Nominations

With the next World Maritime Rescue Congress (WMRC) rapidly approaching, it is also time to consider the forthcoming IMRF Quadrennial General Meeting (QGM). The QGM will be held on Tuesday 18 June 2019, immediately following the WMRC 2019 in Vancouver (15 – 17 June 2019). The QGM agenda will include a report of IMRF’s activities and financial performance since the last QGM in Bremerhaven in 2015, as well as a presentation of future plans for the organisation. The QGM, which is only open to IMRF members, will also include the election of the IMRF Board of Trustees for the next four years.

A formal notice of the meeting has been issued (please message info@imrf.org.uk if you have not received it) and a call for nominations for Trustees will be issued early next year. All the details of how to submit nominations will also be made available at that time, but, in the meantime, please begin to consider if there is anyone who you might wish to nominate. Please note that only organisations who are fully paid up full members of the IMRF are permitted to nominate, and vote for, Trustees.

Trustees play a very important role in the governance of the IMRF. They are there to ensure that IMRF is carrying out its established aims, that the organisation’s resources are being managed responsibly and that we always comply with the law, as well as our own rules and regulations. Becoming a Trustee is a serious commitment and our Trustees need to devote time to IMRF business, in order to exercise their legal responsibilities properly. But, by supporting us as they do, our Trustees make a real contribution to the IMRF’s work on prevention of loss of life in the world’s waters. Please consider whether you, or someone else from your organisation, could help the IMRF continue this important work by becoming a Trustee.

Jill Greenlees
IMRF Company Secretary

IMRF Membership Fee Increase

As you know, IMRF is a registered charity and depends on the subscriptions paid by members to cover its operating costs. Inevitably, these costs have increased significantly over the past few years and so, at their meeting in October, the Trustees reluctantly decided that membership fees would need to be increased.

Whilst they understand that a price rise may prove difficult for some members they feel that it is necessary to cover increases in operating costs due to inflation.

This is the first membership fee increase in six years and will take effect from 1st January 2019. Fees will increase by approximately 5% as shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Membership Category</th>
<th>Full Member Large Organisation</th>
<th>Full Member Medium Organisation</th>
<th>Full Member Small Organisation</th>
<th>Associate Member</th>
<th>Affiliate Member</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current Fee</td>
<td>Fee from 1/1/19</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>€ 4,200</td>
<td>€ 4,400</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>€ 1,900</td>
<td>€ 2,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>€ 420</td>
<td>€ 440</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Current Fee                         | Fee from 1/1/19                 |                                 |                                 |                  |                  |
| € 1,200                             | € 1,300                         |                                 |                                 |                  |                  |
| € 120                               | € 125                           |                                 |                                 |                  |                  |
ICAO / IMO Joint Working Group on SAR

Each year the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) – the relevant technical bodies of the United Nations – arrange a meeting of a Joint Working Group (JWG) on SAR. The JWG comprises eight maritime and eight aeronautical SAR experts drawn from member States, and includes observers from other States and from non-Governmental organisations. The IMRF has long played an active part in the Group’s work, as the world’s leading NGO representing the SAR community.

This year the JWG met in Seattle, USA, from 17-21 September. The IMRF was represented by Stein Solberg, from JRCC Stavanger in Norway (an IMRF member organisation). A full report of the week’s work will be prepared by the JWG secretariat for consideration by ICAO and IMO – in the latter’s case at the next meeting of the Sub-Committee on Safety of Navigation, Communications and SAR (NCSR) in January. Here we present some of the main maritime SAR points discussed by the JWG at this year’s meeting.

The Mediterranean migrant crisis has caused terrible loss of life over the last few years. It has also caused real strains in the maritime SAR system, often driven by border control concerns. The IMRF takes the view that this is a crisis that can only be solved on land, and that the maritime SAR regulations work well if not impeded or overruled. Some people, however, have expressed concerns about the legal detail of maritime SAR; definitions in particular.

The IMRF led earlier work, on behalf of the JWG, on aligning the definitions of the three phases of emergency, including the distress phase. These definitions are set out differently in the International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue (IAMSAR) Manual and in the two key IMO & ICAO Conventions. Lack of alignment can sow doubt. The JWG has a role to play here as the effective editors of the IAMSAR Manual. However, the JWG agreed with the IMRF at this year’s session that, although the present position is unsatisfactory, the current IAMSAR definitions should stand until IMO & ICAO decide to align the Convention texts – which the JWG does not have the remit to do.

The IMRF provided information to the JWG on the planning under way for the 2019 World Maritime Rescue Congress. The JWG also noted our ongoing website review, which is intended to improve ease of access to the SAR information we make available. The intention is that the revised site will be available in time for the Congress and for the publication of the 2019 edition of the IAMSAR Manual, which will refer to the IMRF as a SAR information source.

New Zealand recommended the collation of more detailed information on SAR prevention (and by inference SAR mitigation) initiatives in order to help States better understand and implement effective measures. This is in line with the third of the IMRF’s ‘objects’ as a charity: “promoting public education and awareness regarding safety on water”. It is another area in which the IMRF’s platform can be used to share information. (Please email info@imrf.org.uk if you have SAR or maritime safety information to share!)

The JWG noted that the percentage of SAR Points of Contact (SPOCs) that were non-responsive or insufficiently responsive to communication tests remains consistent. We have noted this problem before: emergency beacon signals are picked up and relayed to nominated authorities – but if no-one acts on the alert, people may die. It is essential that SPOC details are kept up to date, and that the right staff are trained in what to do if an alert is received. A Handbook on Distress Alert Messages for RCCs, SPOCs and IMO Ship Security Competent Authorities and a series of training videos are available at www.cospas-sarsat.int/en/search-and-rescue/programme-videos-en.

The JWG heard from Iridium, outlining their plans to implement Global Maritime Distress and Safety System services. (Inmarsat are currently the only GMDSS service provider.) The use of the Iridium satellite system for SAR communications would be free of charge, as with Inmarsat. Iridium are planning to issue a survey on how distress alerts are received at present and how RCCs would like to receive them in future. There would also be no need to invest in specific equipment for RCCs since communication could take place through internet services. The JWG discussed connectivity problems, but agreed that information sent electronically should be followed up with a phone call to ensure receipt.

The redevelopment of IMO’s Model Course for SAR Mission Coordinator training, to which the IMRF has contributed as part of a review group, continues. It is hoped that this work will be approved next year, and this Model Course will join its partners, in SAR Administration and On Scene Coordination. Regular review hereafter should be conducted by the JWG, as the courses are based on the IAMSAR Manual.

It was again a full week’s work for the JWG, with many more subjects discussed than we have room to report on here. Our thanks to Stein for ‘wearing the IMRF’s hat’ at this meeting!

The JWG is next scheduled to meet in Chile, 9 to 13 September 2019.
IMRF and The Nautical Institute sign MOU

The IMRF and The Nautical Institute have signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) agreeing to work together on projects that support both organisations’ shared objective to improve safety at sea.

The Nautical Institute is the international representative body for those involved in the control of seagoing ships. Theresa Crossley, CEO of IMRF, said: “I am delighted to sign this MOU with The Nautical Institute, as our organisations’ objectives are closely aligned. I am sure that there will be many opportunities to collaborate and share expertise moving forward which will benefit both organisations. Our 112 members come from 50 countries around the world and their maritime search and rescue operations save the lives of national and international mariners around the world every day, every week, every year.”

Captain John Lloyd, CEO of The Nautical Institute, said: “Safety at sea and supporting those in peril is a key component of maritime tradition and professionalism. Through this MOU we will increase awareness in shared areas of concern and be stronger at promoting best practice.”

The MOU commits both organisations to exchanging information and technical cooperation in areas of mutual interest, and to harmonise training standards and guidelines across the industry while jointly promoting issues which relate to the safety of mariners and others at sea.

Representatives from the IMRF and The Nautical Institute will also participate in each other’s workshops and seminars and will work together in the future on joint proposals and initiatives. The Nautical Institute will be represented at the IMRF’s World Maritime Rescue Congress, which will be held in Vancouver, Canada in June 2019.

Fundraising Challenges

At the end of August, Ross Greenlees who is the son of IMRF employee Jill Greenlees, completed a sponsored 1km swim as part of his Duke of Edinburgh Award. He trained at Stonehaven Outdoor Pool for several weeks and was easily able to cover the distance on the day. He raised over £760 for the IMRF.

Thank you very much Ross, from everyone in the IMRF family.

How you too can fundraise for the IMRF...

Whether you have 10 minutes, or 10 days. If you want to go it alone, or as part of a group. If your venue is your home, school or place of work. There are countless ways you can do your part in saving lives in the world’s waters

You Could ...
• Host a coffee morning;
• Have a quiz night;
• Hold a raffle;
• Run, swim, cycle or skydive;
• Ask for donations to the IMRF instead of gifts at a celebration you have coming up.

It is so easy to set up a fundraising page with Just Giving [https://www.justgiving.com/imrf](https://www.justgiving.com/imrf)
Email us direct at [fundraising@imrf.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@imrf.org.uk) for more information.