The TK Foundation gives IMRF $450,000 to support African SAR development

The International Maritime Rescue Federation (IMRF) has been awarded $450,000 USD by The TK Foundation to support its work building vital maritime search and rescue (SAR) capability in Africa.

The funding will be spread over three years and will support the IMRF’s Global SAR Development (GSD) project, to help improve SAR capability across 29 countries in Africa, with a focus on building the capability of Rescue Coordination Centres (RCCs), Rescue Sub-Centres (RSCs) and SAR Mission Coordinators.

We have regularly reported the SAR development activity in Africa in previous editions of Lifeline as over the last four years, IMRF has run 19 courses, training 261 SAR personnel, establishing a local network of trainers, who can deliver courses in their own countries and regions.

The TK Foundation funding will enable IMRF to train a further 500 SAR personnel and facilitate the Regional SAR Meetings between 2017 and 2019. The IMRF has also received confirmation of an additional €67k provided by the German Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Development, which will be provided through the International Maritime Organization Technical Cooperation Committee.

The early work was done by current IMRF chairman, Captain Udo Fox, and past IMRF Trustee, Hamish McDonald, that laid the foundations for the Africa SAR development work. The strong relationship they built with Mr Mohammed Drissi of Morocco, has been the key to success.

Mr Drissi’s commitment and drive has been instrumental to the achievements in Africa.

Mohammed Drissi, says: “We have managed to build momentum through our regular training and regional meetings. As a result, we now have a pool of well-trained SAR coordinators and managers in most of the countries’ Rescue Coordination Centres (RCC) across the region.”

-- Read More on Page 11 --
Editorial

This edition of LIFE LINE is, as always, full of SAR stories from across the globe and, to add an extra element of excitement, in the midst of editor duties my pager went off! Our financial controller, Jill Greenlees, gave me a lift to the lifeboat station (as her car was closest to IMRF HQ). The next thing I know, I am heading out of Stonehaven Harbour at the helm of an Atlantic 75 to do a coastal search.

For all the onlookers at the harbour there were three crew members onboard, however, as our H.E.R.O. article on page 10 explains: behind the scenes there was a whole network enabling us to head out to sea and perform our duties. They may not be on the boat with us, but without them we would not have been able to go out on a shout.

For the past few editions of LIFE LINE the SAR ecosystem has been discussed and on page 5 the importance of this invisible support network is discussed again.

According to RNLI statistics 6 out of 10 launches would not be possible without legacy funding in the UK! Fundraising in general is a huge part of that support network and we would like to congratulate our Cross-Continental Swimmers, Keith and Jenny Esdon, who have now completed their 4-mile open water swim from Asia to Europe in Istanbul, Turkey. In aid of the IMRF they joined over 1500 other swimmers from all around the world in this famous event, which sees one of the busiest shipping lanes in the world, the Bosphorus strait in Istanbul, temporarily closed to traffic. You can read more about Keith and Jenny’s swim at: https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/keithjennyesdon.

This month also sees the start of a fundraising journey by Tani Hargreaves. Tani will be kayaking around the Italian Island of Sardinia to raise funds for the IMRF. You can support Tani on her expedition here: https://www.justgiving.com/teams/solo-sardinia.

Thank you to Keith, Jenny, Tani and all our other IMRF fundraisers for raising much needed funds to support our work in preventing loss of life in the world’s waters. If you are inspired by their stories to raise money for us, there are many ways you can get involved in a way that suits you. You could take part in an organised event such as a 10K run, hold a coffee morning, or even do a sponsored beard shave. If you plan to raise funds for us, please make sure your event is safe and legal, and don’t forget to let us know in advance what you have planned. For more information and to get involved please contact Caroline at c.jupe@imrf.org.uk.

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Dates for the Diary

IMRF Crew Exchange
23-30 September 2017

World Maritime Day
28 September 2017, IMO Headquarters, London

World Maritime Day-Parallel Event
1-3 October 2017, Panama City

ICAO/IMO Joint Working Group on SAR
2-6 October 2017, Wellington, New Zealand.

H.E.R.O. Award Ceremony
2 November 2017

IMRF European Regional Meeting 2017
2-4 November 2017

IMRF Future Technology Panel
November, Oslo (TBC)

World Maritime Rescue Congress (WMRC) 2019
16-19 June 2019, Vancouver, Canada.

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.
Coordination and communication again proved some of the biggest problems. Managing and accounting for large groups of distressed and injured people quickly and efficiently proved almost too hard in the exercise – which was the way it was designed to be. Seeing and trying to deal with a problem yourself, out on the water, in a coordination centre or at a landing site, is more powerful than only talking about it in a conference auditorium.”

Monday and Tuesday of the conference were dedicated to lessons learned, using real case studies to enable delegates and specialist panellists to discuss key areas of mass rescue operations, focusing on the conference themes of Rescue, Coordination, Communication and Planning. The case studies were presented by people involved in the actual events, which provided the delegates with first-hand accounts. Key points raised in the discussions arising from the case studies will be added to the IMRF online resource library at www.imrfmro.org.

Other keynote speakers at the conference included Mr Wang Zhenliang, Director-General of China Rescue and Salvage, and Alexandros Liamos, Operations Manager of the Hellenic Rescue Team, who described the support given to his organisation by the IMRF in the face of the Aegean migrant crisis. Fredrik Forsman brought the ‘human element’ to the discussions as he provided delegates with his personal experience in the Aegean, as part of the Swedish Yellow Boat Project. Fredrik helped rescue hundreds of people but had to accept that not all those in distress could be saved. The presentation reminded all in the room that rescues are made by people, and that the impact on rescuers themselves must not be overlooked.

The MRO Project manager David Jardine-Smith explains:

"Mass rescue operations, as defined by the International Maritime Organization, are beyond normal SAR capability. They are therefore of vital interest to anyone with a role in SAR planning and response. They are rare, at least in the developed world, but extremely challenging, which is why it’s so important to plan and train and to build relationships with the right people before a response is needed. Because it’s not ‘if’, but ‘when’; and the better prepared the responders are, the more lives they will save.”

Bruce Reid adds: “The feedback from the delegates has been very positive and we are extremely grateful to all of our partners who have come together to make an event of this scale a possibility.”
"We have come to the end of an exceptional operation. With some extraordinary people, and most importantly, we have accomplished some extraordinary things. RS are proud to have been part of this operation, and of what we have achieved together."

6300 lives

At the end of this two-year long mission, the Norwegian rescue vessel has saved more than 6300 lives. The day before their last mission Solvik and his crew picked up 57 people from a small boat in the Mediterranean, among them 22 children.

"We want to say a wholehearted and sincere thank you, to Frontex and Hellenic Coast Guard for inviting us on board, and to our dear brothers and sisters in Hellenic Rescue Team: We cherish our partnership. And last, but not least, to the Norwegian Police for a fruitful and constructive collaboration," says Lind.

"This operation enabled us to do something about it. Together!"

An Exceptional Operation

It is June 2015. In the headquarters of the Norwegian Society for Sea Rescue (RS) there is a hectic activity. A buzzing sound of excitement and anticipation.

Even if RS have no experience with international operations at this point, Frontex have entrusted them with a great opportunity to participate in operation Poseidon, in the Mediterranean. For the first time in the 125 year long history of RS one of their rescue vessels will operate in foreign waters.

It was very special

Two years on, Captain Lars Solvik is standing in the harbour of Mytilene. He, and the crew on the rescue vessel Peter Henry von Koss, has just completed their last mission as a part of the Frontex-operation Poseidon. Almost 700 days after his first arrival to the capital of Lesbos.

"I had some experience from sailing in international waters, but this was something that none of us had ever experienced before. When we finally arrived for the first time it was very special. It was extreme. We were prepared. And there were a lot of things we knew, but even more things we didn’t know. As an NGO from Norway, this international operation represented many firsts for the Norwegian Society of Sea Rescue. The key to success lies in exceptional team work."

An extraordinary collaboration

With the lack of experience of RS in mind, it was necessary for the organisation to go into the operation under joint management.

With Frontex in charge, the Norwegian Police took operational responsibility and the RS held maritime responsibility. An extraordinary collaboration, that had some challenging moments in the making.

Today, General Secretary, Rikke Lind, is a hundred percent sure that they made the right decision back in 2015.

In the IMRF our mantra is that when it comes to maritime SAR the only competition is with the sea! Cooperation and collaboration, locally, nationally and internationally is the key. IMRF CEO Bruce Reid stated “Operation Poseidon has been a great example of this IMRF mantra. The RS response to the humanitarian crisis was swift, decisive and because of this more lives were saved. We can’t commend highly enough the work done by the men and women of RS.”
IMRF Collaborations Hosted by KNRM: 3rd Meeting of the IMRF Future Technology Panel and IMRF Fundraising/Communication ‘Skill-Share’

The necessity of IMRF members collaborating in developments which are thought to become important in the next era was identified during a regional IMRF meeting in 2015 and on March 28th the third meeting of the future technology panel was hosted by the Royal Netherlands Sea Rescue Institution (KNRM).

In May 2016, the formal start of the Future Technology Panel was hosted by the RNLI. The following objectives of the panel were defined:

- To collate more with fellow IMRF members in areas of mutual interest
- To share the financial and risk-based burden of learning about new and emerging technologies
- To create and maintain a collective network with industry and academia
- Share knowledge through new and existing channels to IMRF members
- To identify opportunities to participate in joint trials/demonstrations of new technologies
- To represent a ‘united front’ when engaging industry on topics of interest and to give a coherent ‘one voice’ of the SAR and prevention community
- To link subject matter experts together from our organisations and facilitate relationship building and technical partnering
- To test new ways of working as a collaborative group

Representatives met in a lifeboat station near KNRM headquarters and a representative from Dalhousie university (Nova Scotia) joined in on the meeting via Skype.

Several topics were discussed, it was decided that two new sub panels, one addressing electronic chart systems, the other addressing Whole Body Vibration and repeated shock would be initiated in addition to the sub panel on UAV’s which already exists. Within these sub panels, subject matter experts on a specific topic aim to join forces. Results achieved in a sub panel will be fed back to the Future Technology Panel.

There was a mutual agreement that the Future Technology Panel is in need of a platform where the results can be shared, ideas can be posted, etc. In this way organisations not able to join in on a meeting can share results and add their remarks and findings to the various sub panels. The IMRF are developing a format where research and development can be shared and collaboration can be facilitated. Existing documents can be accessed at https://www.international-maritime-rescue.org/future-technology-panel-2016.

The next meeting will be held in November in Oslo, and all IMRF Member organisations are encouraged to participate. For more information please contact Hans Van der Molen at H.Molen@knrm.nl.

The first morning covered ‘How to manage your reputation in a multimedia world’ by Tony Roddam, formerly of the RNLI, who now runs the consultancy ‘Flying Colours’. This session gave each delegate something to think about as Tony Roddam challenged us to take a fresh and honest look at our most valuable asset, our reputation, in the era of fake news and alternative facts. This was followed by a discussion on ‘How to get our staff and volunteers to say the right thing at the right time’. In the afternoon, we looked at prevention campaigns, with messages from KNRM, RS and RNLI, who each spoke about their activities and campaigns on the topic. We also heard from Marcelo Ulysséa, who spoke about his organisation, ‘Sea Angels Brazil Institute’, a volunteer SAR service he runs in Brazil. The afternoon was finished by 2 workshops looking at online marketing and social media.

The second day started off with a case study of the successful branding campaign of the Swedish Sea Rescue Society, where in 14 years membership has grown from 30,000 members to 107,000 members. This was followed by an in-depth look at how ICE-SAR raises its funds. The other two sessions in the morning focused on a ‘Fundraising Best Practices’ workshop led by Jolan van den Broek and Darinka Boulonois, which provided a platform for the delegates to swap tips in this area. The RNLI then discussed legacy fundraising - 6 out of 10 launches would not be possible without a gift in a will - and concluded with a short talk on their move to an opt-in-only system of communication. From this a brief discussion on the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) followed.

The afternoon sessions focused on volunteers, where 2 workshops were delivered on ‘How a social intranet can build a community between volunteers and employees’ by Tanja Krangnes, Norwegian Society for Sea Rescue and ‘Campaigning for recruiting new volunteers’ by Emma Valham, Swedish Sea Rescue Society.

The Presentations from the Skill-Share are available on the IMRF website now.

Thank you again to KNRM for hosting both of these fantastic events.
United Arab Emirates (UAE) National Search and Rescue Center joins the IMRF

The NSRC (National Search and Rescue Center) is responsible for all civilian Search and Rescue (SAR) operations within the UAE’s Air and Maritime SAR Region. His Excellency Major General Staff Pilot Stephen Toumajan, the General Manager of NSRC said “Our objective is saving lives in all of the UAE” His Excellency also added that “joining the IMRF will certainly enhance learning from experience and exchanging perspectives and knowledge among SAR practitioners”. Here NSRC explain more about their organisation:

The NSRC was established for many necessary reasons. One being the vision of becoming an authority with the highest standards of efficiency in performing and conducting search and rescue missions in all UAE’s region in both aeronautical and maritime sectors. The mission of NSRC is strengthen and consolidate capabilities, communications and coordination of efforts in providing search and rescue services in the UAE’s land, maritime and air territory with the concerned authorities and respond quickly to the event within a maximum of one hour (Golden Hour) to ensure the safety of life and property in accordance with the highest international safety standards for SAR.

Changes in the environment and the increase in maritime movements in UAE waters will need an improvement in the SAR capability to ensure the preparedness of NSRC for all incidents. The NSRC aims to provide search and rescue services and manage related operations as well as the implementation of the general policy of SAR procedures related to the management and organisation of SAR operations.

NSRC has strategic objectives established and developed for a unified system to provide SAR services at the national level in cooperation with the concerned authorities.

To support crisis management, emergency response, recovery and recovery activities, the NSRC is developing an advanced SAR system infrastructure in accordance with international standards. In addition to developing training programs and exercises that strengthen national staff of the United Arab Emirates and increase the operational capacity of the NSRC. At the same time, it is needed to spread the culture of search and rescue at the national level and strengthen the UAE’s position at the regional and international levels in the fields of SAR.

The NSRC has signed a radio communications system strategic project that provides GMDSS communication services in the maritime environment. This will enhance the safety capability in aeronautical and maritime sectors, including the coordination of SAR missions and operations on land, at sea and in the air. It will also allow for the effective coordination of aeronautical and maritime SAR operations, the broadcast of Maritime Safety Information and other general maritime radio communications services in support of all other maritime safety activities. Additionally, it allows for meeting distress alerting, coordination, Incident Management/Command and Control requirements in coastal, territorial seas and other sea areas. These are areas over which the UAE has jurisdiction and responsibilities enshrined within the International Conventions which the UAE has ratified. It allows the UAE government to respond to all crisis operations in the aeronautical, maritime and land environments and provide sufficient voice channel and data communications capacity to support multiple operations as and when required.

An important value of the Coast Radio Station is to allow the operators from the RCC to support radio communications between ships in Emirati waters, as defined by GMDSS Sea Area and associated coastal areas.
Finnish Border Guard promote cooperation and sharing at European Maritime Day

As part of the 10th European Maritime Day Conference held in Poole, UK on 18th and 19th May 2017 a delegation from the Finnish Border Guard and Finnish Lifeboat Institution presented a workshop on preparedness at sea and specifically developing and sharing practices for vessels during emergencies at sea. IMRF Major Incident Response Group (MIRG) Project Leader, Dave Sheppard, explains more:

The European Maritime Day Conference celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2017 and was supported by the European Commission, the UK Government and the Borough of Poole. It brings together Europe’s maritime community to exchange ideas and forge partnerships needed to build the ‘blue economy’ with the theme for 2017 being ‘the future of our seas’ with an emphasis on:

- Innovation and growth
- People and skills
- Sustainability and governance
- Safety and security

The Finnish Border Guard workshop was developed to support the safety and security theme and looked specifically at the following objectives:

Assessing and communicating the safety status of a vessel (Vessel Triage)

Joint coordination between maritime response teams and other authorities (Baltic Sea MIRG)

Cooperation in maritime rescue operations involving hazardous and noxious substances (ChemSAR)

Educational cooperation in the field of coast guard functions (ECGF Training Network)

The workshop consisted of individual presentations on each the themes, which were led by a specialist advisor from each area. They were then concluded with a panel discussion on current themes and development of the best practices which was moderated by Dave Sheppard the IMRF MIRG Project Leader.

The first presentation was delivered by Jori Nordström who is the Project Manager of the Vessel Triage project and the Head of Operations at the Finnish Lifeboat Institution. The vessel triage project is a method for assessing and communicating the safety status of vessels in maritime distress and accidents. The method is intended for use by both vessels and maritime search and rescue agencies.

It is used to form a common understanding of the nature of the incident or accident and thereby determine the safety status of the vessel. The focus of the method is on the level of safety aboard a distress vessel for persons aboard and more details are available at www.raja.fi/vesseltriage.

The second presentation was delivered by Juho Kurttio, who is the former deputy project manager of the Baltic Sea MIRG project, who works as an advisor at the Finnish Border Guard Headquarters. The Baltic Sea Maritime Incident Response Group (Baltic Sea MIRG) Project was established by the Finnish Border Guard as the responsible maritime search and rescue authority in cooperation with Finland’s Emergency Rescue Services. The project has sought to create joint MIRG coordination models and operational guidelines for the Baltic Sea region and support the harmonisation of MIRG services in Europe. More details are available at www.raja.fi/mirg.

Thirdly was a presentation from Teemu Niemelä, who is the Work Package Leader of the ChemSAR project and an adviser in the Maritime Safety and SAR Unit at the Finnish Border Guard Headquarters. The project will create the operational plans and standard operational procedures needed in SAR operations of hazardous and noxious substance (HNS) incidents. By creating plans for the rescue operations related to maritime HNS incidents the project will close a gap around a current lack of operational procedures and by developing e-learning material for the different international agencies in the rescue operations the project will enhance and harmonise the level of knowledge to ensure safe rescue operations. Further details are available at https://blogit.utu.fi/ChemSAR.

Finally Johanna Terva, Project Implementation Team member at the Finnish Border Guard Headquarters gave a presentation on the European Coast Guard Functions (ECGF) Training Network and European Coastguard Functions Academy Network II project. The Network is a voluntary association of educational institutions providing education in the field of Coastguard functions in the member states of the forum. Membership is open to all officially recognised educational institutions involved in teaching, training and researching Coastguard functions in the member states and intends to:

Publish, through the ECGF Training Portal, information on training courses that are open to participants from other members of the Network

Contribute to developing a Coastguard Functions sectoral qualifications Framework (CGFSQF)

Be open to participating in exchange programmes

Contribute to developing international education programmes according to their interests and expertise.

Further information is available at www.ecgff-trainingportal.eu.

The panel discussion following the presentations invited a number of questions from the conference floor, which focused on how the results from the various projects could be used in the future to enhance cooperation, knowledge and understanding.

The panel were unanimous in their views that all of the outputs from the work are and will be available for others to access and contribute to.
Preparing for the Unprepared

First maritime mass rescue operations course, involving senior emergency planning officers from around the world, sells out

What’s the worst that can happen at sea? A passenger ferry capsizing? A cruise ship on fire? An airliner ditching? An oil rig explosion?

Any incident that requires the rescue of large numbers of people at sea will be immensely challenging – and is likely to be beyond normal response capabilities. What can be done about that? How can we prepare for such events?

The IMRF has held a maritime mass rescue operations subject-matter expert course – believed to be the first of its kind – at Chalmers University of Technology in Gothenburg, Sweden, on 14-16 June. The event attracted 40 senior personnel with emergency planning responsibilities from a total of 18 countries: Australia, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Canada, Finland, France, Hong Kong, Iceland, Malaysia, the Maldives, Malta, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Portugal, Sweden, the United Kingdom, Uruguay and the USA.

The IMRF’s CEO, Bruce Reid said:

“This course has brought senior emergency planners together to discuss common challenges and highlight important issues relating to maritime mass rescue operations. Working together, we can share our experiences and ideas. While we cannot stop accidents occurring, we do have the capacity, by working with SAR services around the world, to improve preparedness and save more lives.”

Mass rescue operations are, by international definition, beyond normal search and rescue (SAR) capability: there are more people in distress than there are SAR units available to save them. How many people this will be depends on the circumstances – location, weather and sea conditions, the availability of rescue craft locally – but mass rescue operations are a global concern, in developed as well as developing States. Emergency response organisations need to ‘be prepared for the unprepared’, ready to respond to emergencies of a scale they are not resourced for – which may be rare, but are extremely challenging.

The aim of the course was to study in depth the generic issues identified by the IMRF’s mass rescue operations project, enabling the participants to develop subject-matter expertise. Focus on the issues enables the review and development of detailed plans to fill the ‘capability gap’ back home. The participants worked in facilitated breakout sessions to discuss the issues in turn, coming together again to present their results. There was also a lively tabletop exercise delivered by specialists from the United States Coast Guard, which allowed some of the mass rescue challenges to be demonstrated in an example scenario, based on a passenger ferry fire.

Ahmed Mujuthaba Mohamed, Commanding Officer of MNDF Coast Guard Ship Ghazee said:

“This has been the best brain-drain session on SAR that I have attended in my 18-year career. It was beneficial in every aspect of mass rescue operations and maritime SAR, with so much experience and knowledge shared passionately among colleagues from all corners. I am sincerely grateful to the IMRF for opening this avenue for the Maldives and its SAR community, where this experience will be utilised in the best way possible.”

The IMRF’s mass rescue operations project manager, David Jardine-Smith, says: “The commitment and enthusiasm of all involved in this course was great to see. The participants are well aware that they or their organisations may have to conduct a mass rescue operation one day, and they are determined to be as ready as they can. They know it’s not ‘if’ but ‘when’...”

As the article on Page 3 of this edition of LIFE LINE explains the IMRF ran a conference on mass rescue operations in Gothenburg immediately before the course. Both events sold out, so the desire to work on these issues is clear. We also offer a workshop package, designed to bring local response organisations together so that they can talk through the issues with the partners they will work with when such an operation is required. The workshop enables better mutual understanding and communication – before a response is needed, at the planning stage, as well as during the operation itself.

The course was run with the support of the EU Picasso Project, which aims to achieve modern and well-developed maritime transport, with a well-trained and up-to-date work force, that enables the sector to become greener, safer and more efficient and sustainable.
For more information on the Picasso Project see [www.picassoproject.eu/project](http://www.picassoproject.eu/project), and on the course hosts, Chalmers University of Technology, [www.lindholmen.se](http://www.lindholmen.se).

Funding from Trinity House ([www.trinityhouse.co.uk](http://www.trinityhouse.co.uk)) allowed scholarship places to be offered to delegates from developing countries. The course was also generously supported by the Swedish Sea Rescue Society ([www.ssr.se](http://www.ssr.se)), the Swedish Maritime Administration ([www.sjofartsverket.se](http://www.sjofartsverket.se)), and Orolia McMurdo ([www.mcmurdogroup.com](http://www.mcmurdogroup.com)).

We will now be following up with the participants for their thoughts on this first course, and will offer it elsewhere as resources become available. We also want to hear what the effects of the course have been – how it has helped the participants prepare for mass rescue.

More information about the IMRF’s work on mass rescue operations can be found on the project website, [www.imrfmro.org](http://www.imrfmro.org).

**IMRF Global SAR Development Project-**

**Africa SAR Regional Development Meetings**

From 29 June-1 July, Casablanca, Morocco was the venue for the annual meetings of the North and West Africa and West Africa Regional SAR Committees.

The three days of meetings provided an opportunity for the countries involved to discuss the developments since the 2016 meeting. Mr Mohammed Drissi of Morocco, chairman of the North and West Committee and coordinator of the IMRF Global SAR Development (GSD) project in Africa, provided an overview of the regional achievements 2015-2016 with 10 Regional SAR Development Meetings, 19 SAR Training courses and 210 people trained.

“We have managed to continue the momentum of SAR training and Regional meetings provided through the support of the IMRF and the IMO Technical Cooperation Committee (IMO TCC). We have developed African SAR trainers, run regional SAR exercises (SAREX) and most importantly have extended the development activity to all 5 African Regions” said Mr Drissi. “We have also heard today of the work being done by the 14 countries attending this meeting to improve their SAR coordination structures and capabilities. We are seeing more countries establishing SAR committees and adopting national SAR Plans which augurs well for the future of Africa SAR services.”

As well as the meetings of the two regional committees, two workshop sessions were held by the IMRF. Jonas Olsen, the Chief Strategy Officer with Orolia/McMurdo, led discussions on the regional challenge of keeping the small scale and artisanal fishermen safe. Africa fishing fleet is an estimated 679,000 with more than 95% of these boats under 23 metre.

One of the ways to progress is to move away from a pure safety solution and align it with the national security and economic interests. These could then be linked with economic and development opportunities such as providing fishers with better information at sea and access to auctioning for their catch. We will take a closer look in a future edition of LIFE LINE.

**“The IMRF GSD Project here in Africa has real momentum.”**

“The IMRF GSD Project here in Africa has real momentum,” says IMRF CEO Bruce Reid. “The past 3 days have demonstrated the value of having a plan that is a combination of regular meetings to review progress, regional trainings developing the core skills and workshops to discuss common challenges. We are grateful to the project support we receive from the IMO TCC, the German Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Development, The TK Foundation and local sponsors. If you or your organisation would like to be involved in this project, please get in touch with Caroline at c.jupe@imrf.org.uk.”

Reports, copies of the presentations from the meetings and the white paper on Artisanal Fishing Management by Jonas Olsen can be found on-line at [www.imrfafrica.org](http://www.imrfafrica.org).
Nominations for the IMRF H.E.R.O. Awards now closed

In Maritime Search and Rescue there are no ‘lone rangers’, there is always a team behind that reaching hand.

You can see them if you look closely enough. They are the trainers who taught a rescuer how to handle the situation they are the teams in the rescue coordination centre that control the mission. They are the rescue teams who head into rough seas to find missing sailors. They are the Masters and crew of vessels who navigate for days to reach a vessel in distress. They are the fundraisers who work tirelessly to ensure that there is money for equipment. They are the young inventors who have a great idea and turn it into something that is saving lives right now!

Take a look, they are all right there, and they are all worthy of a H.E.R.O. award.

Friday 28 July 2017 was the last day to nominate these unsung maritime heroes in the International Maritime Rescue Federation H.E.R.O. (Honouring Excellence in Rescue Operations) Awards. First launched last year, we have received nominations from around the world, from friends, family and work colleagues wanting to recognise people close to them who have done something exceptional in the field of search and rescue (SAR).

This year’s nominations are as international as last year’s and include nominations for teams, individuals and technological innovations that have all saved lives over the last year. From dredging equipment and specialist expertise provided free of charge to any water related search and rescue team by Dregteam SOAD; to SafeTrx 2017 which links the technology behind SAR drones, satellite terminals, wearables, MOB devices and smartphones, allowing them all to interconnect and providing the most comprehensive SAR information possible. Nominations also included National Sea Rescue WaterWise Academy in South Africa which has been teaching disadvantaged children about water safety. Another nomination was for Mr Joel Morgado from the U.S. Coast Guard Sector San Juan, who has been nominated for his role in saving 511 lives when the cruise ship the Caribbean Fantasy caught fire. HM Coastguard Belfast have also been applauded for their professionalism, expertise, determination and refusal to give up when they instigated and conducted a seven hour search for a missing surfer who had been in the water for at least 32 hours.

Bruce Reid, IMRF CEO, says; “We have received nominations showcasing incredible examples of bravery and determination in the face of significant maritime dangers, alongside details of truly exciting and innovative new technologies which are being used to support and enhance SAR operations around the world. It is humbling to read the nominations, but we all feel incredibly glad that through the H.E.R.O. Awards these people and organisations will get just some of the recognition and thanks for their amazing actions, which they so richly deserve. People, organisations, innovations and technologies like these need to be recognised, to highlight to the world the team effort that goes into SAR at sea.

The H.E.R.O. awards 2017 are supported by IMRF lead sponsor Orolia/McMurdo – global leader in emergency response and readiness – and sponsor Inmarsat – global satellite owner and operator which provides mobile and fixed communications services to the maritime industry.

All of the submissions will now be assessed by the judges and the winners announced at an awards dinner held at the RNLI, Poole in the UK and online, 2 November, 2017.

European Regional Development Meeting 2017

The H.E.R.O. Awards dinner will coincide with the European Regional Development Meeting 2017, and all delegates of that meeting will be able to attend the Awards Ceremony as well.

The IMRF European Regional Development Meeting is aimed at IMRF European Members and it is free to attend. This meeting is a chance for our European Members to discuss anything that is affecting them, and we are seeking Agenda Items for discussion.

For more information, to register, or to submit an agenda item go to https://international-maritime-rescue.org/european-regional-meeting-2017.
Updated Commentary on the Second Geneva Convention

Updated Commentary of the International Committee of the Red Cross on the Second Geneva Convention sheds light on the protection of maritime rescue services in times of armed conflict. Here the ICRC explains more:

On 4 May 2017, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) made available online its updated Commentary on the Second Geneva Convention of 1949 (GC II). The Commentary provides a detailed explanation of each of the provisions of GC II, seeking to reflect contemporary practice and legal interpretations. Directly relevant to coastal search and rescue (SAR) institutions and organizations, the updated Commentary sheds light on the protection maritime rescue services enjoy in times of armed conflict and the conditions they must satisfy to avail themselves of that protection.

The Convention acknowledges the important role played by coastal rescue craft in the implementation of its provisions. It thus provides that small rescue craft used by the State or by officially recognized lifeboat institutions for coastal rescue operations “shall be respected and protected so far as operational requirements permit” (Art 27(1)). To benefit from this protection, a number of conditions must be satisfied, including that the craft must be employed by a State or by officially recognised lifeboat institutions.

The requirement that the institution be “officially recognised” means that the institution must have been approved or authorised by a governmental authority or other public body to perform coastal rescue functions. Since this presupposes the existence of a legal or administrative framework in the State in which the private lifeboat institution operates to provide for its approval or authorization, it is essential that States implement the provisions of GC II already in peace time.

The scope of protection of coastal rescue craft under Article 27 extends ‘so far as operational requirements permit’. Accordingly, operational considerations by a reasonable commander may justify interference with a rescue craft by, for example, preventing them from performing their humanitarian tasks in a given sea area. However, the rules on the conduct of hostilities, as set out in Additional Protocol I, apply in parallel and an attacker would not be absolved from the fundamental obligations to target only military objectives, to take all feasible precautions and to refrain from attacks that would be indiscriminate.

The IMRF assisted ICRC in their development of this updated commentary. The full version of this article, and links to the supporting documents are available online: https://international-maritime-rescue.org/10-news/2487-updated-commentary-of-the-international-committee-of-the-red-cross-on-the-second-geneva-convention.

The TK Foundation gives IMRF $450,000 to support African SAR development

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“The goal has always been to help each country develop its own RCC capability, so less time is lost and more lives can be saved when accidents occur at sea. We have also developed trainers within the region, so we are less reliant on external trainers, but we could still be doing so much more.”

IMRF Members the German Maritime Search and Rescue Service (DGzRS), Norwegian Society for Rescue at Sea (RS), Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI), South Africa SAR Organisation (SASAR) and the Ocean Fisheries Department Morocco have all provided specialist assistance to the project.

The IMRF’s workplan, now boosted by the support from The TK Foundation, will improve maritime search and rescue coordination and help ensure that people who find themselves in distress in the water, can be saved.

"We are delighted to support the IMRF’s work developing a strong and well-resourced search and rescue capability across Africa. For too many people die in the world’s waters and this project directly supports our key maritime objectives including broadening knowledge of the maritime world while improving the safety of seafarers. We wish the IMRF every success with the project and believe that it will make a significant difference to the safety of many of those working around the coast or at sea across the region." says Susie Karlshoej, Managing Director, The TK Foundation.

The TK Foundation was established in honor of J. Torben Karlshoej, founder of the Teekay Shipping Group (now Teekay Corporation) and its grants support valuable research, health care, facilities, education and other development opportunities in its areas of focus.

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The obligation to attempt rescue of those in apparent distress at sea is absolute. We must ensure that the long-established principles that make it so are not undermined. The migration problem must be addressed by Governments in the only place it can be: ashore.