Welcome from Theresa Crossley, CEO IMRF

In the last four months, our lives have been changed by COVID-19, including at IMRF. We have had to postpone or cancel some of our events planned for later this year, including the IMRF Awards 2020. The good news is that the IMRF Awards will be back in 2021, with a longer qualifying period. Any nominations already submitted for the 2020 Awards will be rolled over to next year. For more details, visit the IMRF website.

Even the production of Lifeline has been affected by the impact of COVID-19, with planned changes to the format being delayed by the current situation. Look out for the next edition later this year, with its new, easier to read format.

In this edition, you will find a thought-provoking - and very honest - interview with Enrico Menezies of NSRI in South Africa on the subject of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), which throws light on an aspect of SAR that is very rarely spoken about, but which deserves more attention. There are also many other news items and articles, which we hope you will find interesting and useful – and if you have any comments or suggestions for future articles, please do get in touch through communications@imrf.org.uk.

In the meantime, please keep safe and well at this most difficult time. I hope your are finding ways to cope with the challenges posed by COVID-19, and thank you all, for everything you continue to do to save lives.
COVID-19

In times like this, our links to each other and to the international maritime SAR community matter more than ever. In true IMRF tradition, members have come together to share their thoughts on the challenges presented by the virus, to develop best practice and share ideas as the situation evolves.

As a result, you will find a new COVID-19 area under the resources part of the IMRF website, with lots of useful information, including a COVID-19 planning checklist and guidance on continuing to provide an effective SAR in these testing times.

These resources will be updated as the situation changes, so remember to check the website for the latest information.

Go to COVID-19 in SAR

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in Maritime SAR

Search and rescue workers often face stresses that are not present in many other fields of work.

A job that requires a person to put themselves in harm’s way repeatedly carries a high risk to their physical and mental health.

But first responders rarely seek help, because of concerns about appearing weak or what their fellow SAR colleagues will think, or because they think they can handle it.

Read More ...
Meet the IMRF Chairman

Dean Lawrence was appointed IMRF Chairman, in June last year at the World Maritime Rescue Congress in Vancouver.

Here we ask him to tell us a bit more about himself and the challenges facing the sector.

Like many Kiwi’s, I spent my childhood in and out of boats, but when I bought my first boat I thought I should do a training course to understand the maritime rules and increase my competence.

Antarctica2020 Successfully Marks First Sighting of Continent 200 Years Ago

The S/Y Admiral Bellingshausen, a 24-meter Dutch built Estonian yacht has completed the last leg of its journey to celebrate 200 years since the discovery of Antarctica by Fabian Gottlieb von Bellingshausen who was born in Saaremaa, Estonia.

The project began on 11 July 2019 when the expedition left Kronstadt, Estonia and culminated on 28 January 2020 at Maxwell Bay, Antarctica, marking the date when Bellingshausen first sighted the frozen continent in 1820.
Members Assisting Members: DGzRS Share Fundraising Expertise

IMRF Members work together for many purposes, not just at sea and on exercises.

Last year, Chris Hartmann from the Deutsche Gesellschaft zur Rettung Schiffbrüchiger (DGzRS) or German Maritime Search and Rescue Association traveled to Estonia for three days to work with the Estonia Volunteer Rescue Organisation, sharing and discussing successful approaches to fundraising, based on DGzRS’s experience.

IMRF Global SAR Development Programme Supports Benin Upgrade to MRCC

The IMRF’s programme to support global SAR development has helped the Benin Maritime Prefecture upgrade its headquarters in Cotonou, from Maritime Rescue Sub-Centre (MRSC) to full national Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC).

Cotonou is the largest city in Benin and the port is one of the largest in West Africa, the country occupies an important strategic position with heavy water traffic water, which means the upgrade will benefit a significant number of people.
The IMRF's Global SAR Development Programme in Africa

The World Health Organization (WHO) Global Health estimates that 320,000 people drown every year.

Furthermore, Africa and Asia-Pacific account for almost 90% of drowning deaths, with the highest rates being in the WHO Africa Region - 20 times higher than in the United Kingdom.

Africa is a continent of great cultural diversity and very different levels of economic development.

Establishing MEDEVAC Procedures for COVID-19 Cruise Ship Passengers

Jorge Diena, one of the IMRF Trustees, explains what happened, when the Uruguayan Navy received a distress call from a cruise ship, which needed assistance for a passenger with respiratory failure.

On 1 March 2020, the MRCC in Montevideo received a distress call from the GREG MORTIMER, a cruise ship anchored 11 nautical miles (approximately one-hour's sailing) from the port of Montevideo.