The Winners of the Second Annual IMRF H.E.R.O Awards Are

Anton Tasanen, the first mate of a dry bulk carrier, who won the individual award, for jumping into rough seas to rescue an unconscious crewmate using the vessel's mooring winch.

MOAS (the Migrant Offshore Aid Station) won the team award, for the crew of vessel the Phoenix, who prevented the mass drownings of more than 1,800 people in the Mediterranean over just one weekend.

The UK’s RNLI Future Leaders Project Team 2016 won the Innovation & Technology Award for their international programme working with new and developing SAR organisations. The team helps them to build leadership skills, implement processes and enhance training, leading drowning prevention in countries where it’s a major cause of death.

The Association of Maritime and River Rescue in Uruguay (ADES) won the Vladimir Maksimov H.E.R.O. Award for Lifetime Achievement, with special recognition for two volunteers Captain Ramón Sagüés and Engineer Otto Vicente Muzzio who established and built the organisation into the esteemed institution it is today.

The IMRF would like to thank the lead sponsor Orolia/McMurdo, and the sponsors Inmarsat, Pole Star, 8 West Consulting/SafeTrx, Navigate PR, and the host Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) for their wonderful support at the H.E.R.O. Awards 2017.

Read more about the H.E.R.O. Awards 2017 on page 6 & 7
Editorial

There are times at the IMRF Secretariat where the sound of keyboards clicking is deafening as we respond to member requests and prepare for events. The 3 months since the August edition of LIFE LINE have been a perfect example: rush hour at the Secretariat.

At the beginning of November we held a successful European Regional Development meeting, which was hosted by the RNLI, and this also included the IMRF Honouring Excellence in Rescue Operations (H.E.R.O.) Awards 2017.

The lead up to the IMRF H.E.R.O. Awards 2017 has been exciting and the buzz around these awards was even more deafening than our office activity! This was the first year that we have run the People’s Choice Award, which allowed you all the chance to vote for your favourite finalist via social media. It was a very close race and the winners of this award, Association of Maritime and River Rescue in Uruguay, had over 2000 reactions on Facebook. Through the H.E.R.O. Awards we want to highlight the work that you are all doing, to improve the global maritime SAR framework and we thank you all for your dedication.

At the height of the promotion for the H.E.R.O. Awards we had a reach of over 120,000 people on Social Media, which is an achievement in its own right. That means that there are thousands of people across the globe, who took a moment to read about Maritime Search and Rescue excellence and, for some of them, this may have been the first time that they had realised just how important maritime SAR is to the world.

For more details about all of the winners, finalists and nominees of these awards please see pages 6-7.

In the midst of all this hard work we also took time to say goodbye to our outgoing CEO, Bruce Reid, as he headed off to new adventures in his homeland of New Zealand. Many of you sent in messages and ‘Brucies’ that we complied into ‘The Big Book of Brucies’. and all of us at the Secretariat wish him the best of luck with his new adventures and thank him for all of the hard work and dedication to the IMRF.

With change comes excitement and we are delighted to be able to welcome our new CEO, Theresa Crossley, into the IMRF SAR Family and we look forward to what the future holds for the IMRF.

Content

The Winners of the Second Annual IMRF H.E.R.O Awards Are

Dates for the Diary

Introducing the New CEO of the IMRF, Theresa Crossley

Learning Lessons

Member Focus - Caister Volunteer Lifeboat Service

Hellenic Rescue Team (HRT) Rescue Boats Zeta and Chiara Handover Ceremony Held in Kos

The International Maritime Rescue Federation (IMRF) H.E.R.O. Awards 2017

Roll of Honour for All Those Nominated for an IMRF H.E.R.O. Award 2017

International Joint Working Group Meets to Improve SAR

APRC Board & IMRF Trustee Meetings Held in Shanghai

International Safety and SAR Design Competitions

The European Regional Development Meeting 2017

IMO Award for Exceptional Bravery At Sea

Going Round in Circles

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.
Introducing the New CEO of the IMRF: Theresa Crossley

Theresa Crossley, CEO IMRF, writes:

It is with great pleasure that I write my first contribution to Lifeline as the new CEO of the International Maritime Rescue Federation (IMRF). I have already met some of you at the European Regional Development Meeting in Poole earlier this month and I hope to meet many more of our members and supporters over the coming months.

I want to start by paying tribute to my predecessor, Bruce Reid, who has decided to return to New Zealand after 5 years at the helm of IMRF. Anyone who has met Bruce will know that his dedication to IMRF was total and his enthusiasm for improving global SAR was infectious. He has left some big shoes for me to fill.

I have worked in and around the maritime sector for more than 20 years, first for the UK Government, then for the European Maritime Safety Agency in Lisbon and, most recently, for the trade association that represents the UK’s major ports. During that time, sadly, I have been involved in the response to a number of maritime incidents and accidents and I have seen for myself how necessary it is for those responding to maritime incidents to be well organised, adequately equipped and properly trained.

That is why I was delighted to be able to participate in the IMRF H.E.R.O Awards 2017 evening, kindly hosted by the RNLI on 2 November 2017. It was a great honour to meet so many committed individuals and representatives of organisations from around the world.

Please take a moment to read the winners’ stories on page 6 & 7. We send our congratulations to all those who were nominated or shortlisted and, of course, to our worthy winners.

Although I formally took up my post on 30 October 2017, earlier that month I joined the IMRF Trustees for their meeting in the APRC offices in Shanghai. The meeting was arranged to coincide with the APRC’s own Board meeting, which gave an opportunity for the Board members of both organisations to exchange views on topics of common interest, such as training and regional cooperation. We were made to feel very welcome by the APRC secretariat and by the Donghai Rescue Bureau, China Rescue & Salvage, and the Chinese Ministry of Transport.

IMRF aims to add value to the work done by individual members, by facilitating the sharing of SAR operational excellence around the globe. Looking ahead, there are many training sessions and other events planned for the coming year, and we are already gearing up for the next World Maritime Rescue Congress in Vancouver in June 2019. It’s an exciting time to be joining IMRF, and there is certainly plenty to do.

I’m looking forward to working with you all.

Learning Lessons

Everyone agrees that there is great value in sharing SAR information as widely as possible, including lessons identified in SAR incidents, accidents, exercises and drills, so that SAR service personnel can take opportunities to learn from others’ experience and improve their own preparedness.

‘Lessons learned’, by the way, or ‘lessons identified’? It is important to be clear about the meaning of the commonly-used phrase ‘lessons learned’. Lessons from SAR events are first identified by SAR authorities, responders, investigators, authorities and others involved. These lessons are then analysed and decisions made about what actions may be required as a result. Once actions are agreed, effort, resource and time are required to implement them. Only when the actions have been fully implemented can the lessons be said to have been ‘learned’.

It is up to individuals and organisations to apply lessons identified, but this cannot happen unless information is shared. However, attempts at establishing such a process internationally have had little success in the past. A system has to be set up that is capable of receiving and publishing the data, and data has to be actually submitted. In practice this means that the lead organisation has to proactively encourage submission. People and organisations can be understandably shy about sharing things that went wrong. Perhaps more surprisingly, successes are not always shared either.

According to our Articles of Association the IMRF’s objects are “to prevent loss of life, to promote safety and to provide relief from disaster at sea and on inland waters throughout the world by [...]”:

• promoting cooperation, exchange of information, research and development, advice and consultancy between maritime search and rescue services of the world;
• encouraging and promoting the formation and development of maritime search and rescue services throughout the world; and
• promoting public education and awareness regarding safety on water.”

Sharing lessons identified and other information of use to the SAR community is thus a primary purpose and function of the IMRF. We achieve this function by circulating information to our members, directly and in our newsletters, and by placing information on our websites. The great majority of this information is made available on an open-source basis, funded by the IMRF’s member organisations and by charitable grants and donations. The primary website (to which subsidiary sites are linked) is at www.international-maritime-rescue.org.

As noted in our report of the recent ICAO/IMO Joint Working Group on SAR (see pages 8-9), the IMRF’s contact details will be added to the next edition of the IAMSAR Manual, with readers encouraged to share SAR lessons and other useful information with us, so that we can pass them on. We will be reviewing our processes to ensure that this sharing service is clear and easy to use before the 2019 edition is published.

But you don’t need to wait until 2019!

If you have something to share – innovative equipment or procedures, or lessons identified as you prepare for or practice SAR – do please let us know!

You can contact us at info@imrf.org.uk. We look forward to hearing from you.
Member Focus - Caister Volunteer Lifeboat Service

Caister Volunteer Lifeboat Service explains the historic importance of independent lifeboat stations in the UK and also how Caister is making strides in developing technology that will improve Search and Rescue.

The IMRF have many members, some big, and some small like Caister Volunteer Lifeboat Service (CVLS). CVLS are a search and rescue (SAR) organisation situated on the Norfolk coast of the UK and we operate in the North Sea.

Currently Caister Lifeboat operates a Dutch-built Valentijn 2000 11M all-weather lifeboat, we also have an 8M Alloy, single Hamilton Jet RHIB in production, which is being built just five miles from the station by Alicat Workboat. Both boats have their own fully marinised beach launching systems.

Caister Lifeboat is always looking at ways of moving forward and improving its SAR capabilities and we have found that the IMRF has been a great tool for networking. As well as producing informative articles there are also various panels that the IMRF have set up worldwide that are accessible to all members.

This year for the first time Caister Lifeboat has taken part in the IMRF Crew exchange. Adam Pimble, our Inshore Lifeboat Helmsman, headed over to the Swedish Sea Rescue Service (SSRS) along with other crew from Ireland, Germany, Norway, Finland, Denmark, Estonia, and the Netherlands. He trained at the SSRS training school and covered many areas of Search and Rescue including: Familiarisation in the use of different Swedish rescue crafts; Travel to island rescue stations; Insight into a SAR Helicopter; Mock Rescue with the Swedish rescue dog team.

Adam, 32, said: “I thoroughly enjoyed the whole IMRF crew exchange experience and have brought many new training ideas home. My highlight was participating in a real shout, helping the SSRS team to rescue a gentleman in a small fishing boat stuck on a remote island with engine failure whilst being hit against rocks. The outcome was good and after retrieving him from the rocks and fixing his engine we sent him safely on his way.”

The week was finished off by sailing a traditional rescue vessel back to SSRS HQ in Gothenburg for a debrief.

CVLS are also hoping to join, and take part in discussions with the IMRF future technologies panel, particularly the discussions around drone technology for SAR capabilities, like many organisations CVLS are looking at the potential of Drones for SAR use.

Caister Lifeboat was recently asked to help trial open source drone technology, during the developmental stages, working with the Direct Line Insurance, which follows on from the advancement of their Street Light technology, adapted for SAR activities. For more details, see [https://www.directline.com/fleetlights](https://www.directline.com/fleetlights) and watch how the trials have progressed.

The Caister Lifeboat service is unique in many ways, in particular for being the first independent lifeboat service working outside of the RNLI (Royal National Lifeboat Institution), saving lives at sea on beaches and on the coast.

Caister has had a long standing history when it comes to SAR at sea with it first being documented in 1791 as the Caister Beach Company, with the men of the company going out in any weather to save the crews and ships that had become grounded, wrecked or in trouble among the sand banks offshore from Caister. As payment they would claim a salvage fee, and in the early days there was more motivation from salvage and profit, than from lifesaving.

These men continued this work up to 1845 when they were issued there first dedicated lifeboat for saving lives with no fees and was soon absorbed into the RNLI.

The RNLI held the station up to October 1969 when the discussion was made to close it. The RNLI Committee stated that with the Great Yarmouth and Gorleston lifeboat station receiving a 44ft Waveney class lifeboat, deemed fast enough to cover the Caister area, the Caister station would become surplus to requirement and savings could be made. The crew at the time appealed the RNLI’s decision, but that appeal was lost and the station closed and the lifeboat taken away; but the very next day the facilities were taken over by a new charity, the Caister Volunteer Rescue Service.

When the RNLI pulled out of Caister the station had saved an outstanding 1812 lives, the highest lifesaving total achieved by any lifeboat station in the country, a record, which is still held by Caister today. As a new charity, with very limited resources, a fishing boat was loaned to the station by Joseph (Skipper) Woodhouse, the ex RNLI mechanic at Caister, and it was only a few short months before the towns people of Caister decided to back that a lifeboat and the history of saving lives at sea should stay.

The charity was formally set up by the end of 1969 and the first inshore lifeboat came on service in March 1970, thus beginning the brave decision to set up the Caister Independent Lifeboat service, making it the first fully declared lifeboat service within the UK that was independent of the RNLI.

It’s now the oldest independent station, with our 50th anniversary due in two year’s time, and in that time we have saved an additional 356 lives, taking the total at Caister to 2,168 lives. It is now among approximately 70 other independent lifeboat (mostly inshore lifeboat only) services across the UK, which all work closely and uniformly with the UK’s Maritime & Coastguard Agency, RNLI and other services involved in SAR activities.
Hellenic Rescue Team (HRT) Rescue Boats Zeta and Chiara Handover Ceremony Held in Kos

Rescue boats Zeta and Chiara were officially delivered from DGzRS (German Maritime Search and Rescue Service) to HRT in a beautiful ceremony held in Kos, Greece, on Sunday, 12 November 2017.

The two vessels were donated to HRT in June and November 2016 – Chiara arrived first and Zeta followed. Since then they have been operated in Kos by the HRT volunteers on the island, supporting the Hellenic Coastguard. Zeta and Chiara arrived in Kos in a time when HRT’s rescue station did not have any means to deliver search and rescue missions at sea, in order to save the refugees who were trying to cross the Aegean.

Since then, the small, but enthusiastic, group of HRT volunteers have performed 17 rescue missions, under the command of the Coastguard, and have helped more than 200 people to reach the shore safely.

“When we first came to Greece two years ago, we saw ordinary people doing something extraordinary”, said Udo Fox, Chairman of the IMRF and CEO of DGzRS. He continued:

We saw a country suffering from an economic crisis, facing a humanitarian crisis of such a dimension. Nobody would think this could happen in Europe. Reading the news, or watching TV, is one thing. Being personally involved is a totally different story. We were impressed by the altruistic attitude that Greece widely showed.

With regard to DGzRS and HRT cooperation he also said: “HRT has undergone an impressive transition, achieved a lot, but still it is only at the beginning of a long and laborious journey. Today we are happy to officially hand over two sturdy rescue boats to HRT, and we are proud of what has been achieved jointly by HRT and our organization. But the story is not yet over. In 2018 we plan to invite HCG and HRT to our simulator training center in Bremen for state of the art training on SAR operations planning, coordination and conduct in compliance with international standards of the International Maritime Organisation and the International Maritime Rescue Federation.”

Closing his speech, Udo Fox wished HRT good luck in the future and expressed his hope to see the organisation growing up and becoming a professional volunteer organization recognized by civil society and the Government as valued guardian angels for all sea farers in these waters.

Nikolaus Stadeler, CEO of DGzRS, also attended the ceremony and greetings were addressed by the HRT President, Danai-Foteini Mavroudi and Nektarios Chatzidakis, Head of HRT Water Rescue Department. The mayor of Kos, the president of Kos marina, local authorities and volunteers from other organisations, amongst which members of the Turkish Rescue Team Muğla 911, were also present. Of course, all the HRT Kos volunteers and crews were there to welcome the guests and present the rescue boats to the people of Kos.

The donation of Chiara and Zeta was followed by a six-month training programme provided by DGzRS trainers, who visited Kos once a month and provided three day training sessions on boat operation, navigation, towing and more.

Since 2015, when the refugee crisis reached its peak in Greece, HRT has been offered 13 rescue boats and 2 rescue runners from IMRF members in Europe (RS, SSRS, KNRM, RNLI and DGzRS) to enhance its operating capability at sea. However, the assistance was not limited to boats.

IMRF Members have been providing training courses, rescue equipment and mentoring to the volunteers and staff of HRT, transforming the Hellenic Rescue Team into a new and professional maritime SAR organisation.

The journey is still long and full of challenges, but HRT is grateful to all the organisations and to the people working there, who have been putting so much effort in supporting the Hellenic Rescue Team and Greece.
The International Maritime Rescue Federation (IMRF) H.E.R.O. Awards 2017

The IMRF H.E.R.O. Awards have now been presented to a selection of exceptional individuals and organisations, who have demonstrated outstanding bravery, professional expertise and innovation in the world of maritime search and rescue (SAR).

The winners, from around the world, were announced on Thursday, 2 November 2017, at a presentation ceremony held at the RNLI headquarters in Poole, United Kingdom.

Last, but not least, for the first time the IMRF awarded a People’s Choice H.E.R.O. Award to the finalist with the most ‘likes’ on the IMRF’s Facebook page. The Award had been actively promoted through social media to the organisation’s members, stakeholders, friends and families. The successful winner was the Association of Maritime and River Rescue Uruguay (ADES), who gathered the most ‘likes’ from around the world, before the closing deadline.

Theresa Crossley, CEO IMRF, said: “We have been able to recognise and applaud some exceptional SAR professionals in this year’s IMRF H.E.R.O. Awards. The level of selfless bravery and commitment to saving lives at sea demonstrated by our winners and runners up, is both humbling and awe inspiring.”

She added: “There are more and more organisations around the world, that are dedicated to preventing loss of life at sea and in inland waters, and the IMRF H.E.R.O. Awards seek to raise awareness of this work and to encourage countries around the world to create and improve their own SAR resources to reduce the number of drowning deaths.”

The Winners’ Stories

Mr Anton Tasanen, winner of the IMRF H.E.R.O. Award for Outstanding Individual Contribution to Maritime SAR. When the merchant ship Prima Donna’s crew were alerted by the man overboard alarm, First Mate Anton Tasanen took charge of the rescue operation on the deck. When he realised that the man overboard was unconscious and the situation was life-threatening, Anton told the crew that he would jump into the sea. In the water he managed to wrap a rope around himself and the man overboard, allowing the crew to use the vessel’s mooring winch to pull them both back onto the ship. In the process of saving the man’s life, he fractured seven of his ribs and broke two more.

MOAS (Migrant Offshore Aid Station) won the IMRF H.E.R.O. Award for Outstanding Team Contribution to Maritime SAR. Over the course of just one weekend in April, MOAS boat the Phoenix and its crew worked tirelessly in rough seas in the Mediterranean to rescue 1,800 desperate people in woefully inadequate boats, preventing many mass drownings and conveying them to safety.

RNL Future Leaders Project Team 2016 won the Award for Innovation & Technology in Maritime SAR. The programme works with new and developing search and rescue organisations to support and train individuals as future leaders of their organisations, helping them to improve organisational practices and behaviour, leading drowning prevention in countries where it is a major cause of death. The course is split into three core themes: individual and organisational leadership, operational service implementation and development, and organisational development, giving the delegates the knowledge and skills required to lead individuals and teams within their organisation. The topics include everything from how to set up and manage an operational SAR station, to delivering appropriate training through to fundraising, financial management, working with stakeholders, marketing and media skills. The structured sessions are facilitated by RNLI subject matter experts and followed by a 12-month mentoring programme.

The Vladimir Maksimov H.E.R.O. Award for Lifetime Achievement was awarded to the ADES, Association of Maritime and River Rescue Uruguay, particularly in recognition of two individuals who had been integral to its establishment and development, Captain Ramón Sagüés and Engineer Otto Vicente Muzzio. Captain Sagüés was an invaluable member of the team, serving on multiple lifesaving missions, becoming an effective international ambassador and leading the development of South American maritime search and rescue. Engineer Otto Vicente Muzzio took it upon himself to create an exemplary maritime search and rescue institution, through his passion for the sea and a dedication to lifesaving. Together they have worked to help ADES to become the successful, highly effective and valued organisation that it is today.

MOAS boat the Phoenix and its crew worked tirelessly in rough seas in the Mediterranean to rescue 1,800 desperate people in woefully inadequate boats, preventing many mass drownings and conveying them to safety.

The People’s Choice H.E.R.O. Award was given to ADES, Association of Maritime and River Rescue Uruguay. The organisation had secured the most Facebook ‘likes’ by 1700 hrs GMT on Thursday, 2 November 2017, thereby becoming the People’s Choice H.E.R.O. Award 2017.
The RNLI also nominated three Local H.E.R.O.s recognising the outstanding contribution of three long service lifeboat volunteers. **Richard Tollett**, Rye Harbour RNLI Lifeboat Operations Manager retired on Friday 21 July at the age 70, after almost 50 years of service. During this time he was involved with 1,130 launches, rescuing a record 932 people and saving 189 lives.

**Meanwhile, Rod and Carole Brown** have volunteered and fundraised tirelessly for Poole Lifeboat Station, for over 24 years. Rod held the role of Lifeboat Operation Manager managing the operational activities at the lifeboat station and authorising the launch of a lifeboat while Carole worked as treasurer providing Rod with full support.

The H.E.R.O. Awards 2017 were supported by lead sponsor **Orolia/McMurdo** - global leader in emergency response and readiness - and sponsors **Inmarsat**, global satellite owner and operator, which provides mobile and fixed communications services to the maritime industry; **Pole Star**, which has been proudly serving the maritime sector by increasing safety and security at sea for 20 years; **8 West Consulting**, the company that developed **SafeTrx**, the vessel tracking smartphone application; and **Navigate PR**, who deliver professional corporate communications services to the global maritime industry.

**Roll of Honour for All Those Nominated for an IMRF H.E.R.O. Award 2017**

**Individual Award For Outstanding Individual Contribution to Maritime SAR**
- Mr Natan Brittz
- Mr Alex Evans Captain Christian Trosvig
- Mr Mohammed Drissi
- Mr Magnus Hafslund
- Mr Jeremy Watts
- Mr Martin Hanell
- Mr Anton Tasanen - **Winner**
- Mr Ray Burge - **Finalist**
- Captain Anubhav Srivastava
- Mr Markus Friberg
- Mr Joel Morgado

**Team Award For Outstanding Team Contribution to Maritime SAR**
- Hong Kong Fire Services Department, Bote Salvavidas de Valparaiso
- DA-BFAR MCS 3009 Canadian Coast Guard - Western Region
- Rescuer Sveinung Tjessem and his Sea-King crew
- **NSRI WaterWise Academy** - **Finalist**
- SRU of Estonian Police and Border Guard Board motorboat M-15
- Master and Crew of MTM TORTOLA
- HM Coastguard Belfast
- **MOAS (Migrant Offshore Aid Station)** - **Winner**

**Innovation & Technology Award For Innovation and Technology in Maritime SAR**
- Mr Jako Vernik - **Winner**
- **RNLI Future Leaders Project Team 2016** - **Winner**
- Cuerpo de Voluntarios de los Botes Salvavidas de Valparaiso
- 8 West Consultancy /SafeTrx
- ProteGear / GlobalSafe Track Systems Safety Services, Inmarsat Maritime
- Weatherdock AG
- **MAR-SimNET Project** - **Finalist**

**The Vladimir Maksimov Award for Lifetime Achievement in the Maritime SAR Sector**
- ADES (Association of Maritime and River Rescue) of Uruguay with special recognition for the outstanding work undertaken by **Captain Ramón Sagüés** and **Engineer Otto Vicente Muzzio** - **Winner**
- Mr Roger Harris
- Redningselskapet
- Doolin Coast Guard Unit
- **Mr Branko Ramesa** - **Finalist**
- Stichting Opsporing Apparatuur Drenklingen

For more about the H.E.R.O. Awards 2017 and to nominate for the H.E.R.O. Awards 2018, go to **www.imrfhero.org**.
**International Joint Working Group Meets to Improve SAR**

Each year maritime and aeronautical SAR experts come together to discuss and make improvements to global SAR arrangements, in a Joint Working Group (JWG) organised by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) – the relevant technical bodies of the United Nations. The JWG comprises eight maritime and eight aeronautical SAR experts drawn from member States, and includes observers from others 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 Wellington, the bright and breezy capital of New Zealand, from 2 to 6 October 2017. David Jardine-Smith, of the secretariat, was there for the IMRF.

This was a meeting with a particularly full agenda. The JWG considers many SAR-related items passed to it by ICAO and IMO, and also acts as the editorial group for the International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue (IAMSAR) Manual; the core guide to SAR worldwide. IAMSAR is re-published every three years: the next edition will appear in mid-2019. Because of IMO’s approval structure (ICAO’s is simpler), this meeting of the JWG was the last which could contribute to the 2019 edition. This meant that there was a great deal of work to conclude at this session, much of it involving the IMRF.

A total of 38 papers were considered in Wellington, most very detailed and some requiring consideration by ‘splinter groups’ during the meeting. The IMRF presented or co-presented nine papers, chaired one splinter group and participated in others. This article reports some of the highlights of what was a very successful meeting.

**Amendments to the IAMSAR Manual – Mass Rescue Operations**

Having heard a report on our MRO project work at its session in 2015, the JWG asked the IMRF to review the MRO guidance published in IAMSAR. We proposed extensive revisions at this meeting, and final text was agreed for the Manual’s 2019 edition. We will now monitor the progress of these amendments through the IMO approval process, and will amend our own guidance (which refers to IAMSAR) in line with the publication of the 2019 edition.

**IMRF’s 2017 MRO Conference & SME Training Course**

The IMRF’s fourth mass rescue conference and our first MRO subject-matter training course were both held in Sweden in June (see the August edition of LIFE LINE, in the newsletter archive at www.international-maritime-rescue.org). We presented a short report on the two events to the JWG, noting the continuing high level of interest in the subject. We will consider running further courses and more in our series of MRO workshops, depending on demand and on funding and facilitators being available. (For more information, email info@imrf.org.uk.)

**Reorganisation of the Contents of IAMSAR Vol. III**

Volume III of the IAMSAR Manual provides the primary guidance for SAR units and ‘additional SAR facilities’: it is required to be carried on SOLAS ships. However, it has developed piecemeal over the years, and its current layout is confusing. Making it more user-friendly should improve SAR response by ‘vessels of opportunity’ in particular, and the IMRF proposed this a couple of years ago.

The JWG subsequently agreed a framework for reorganising Volume III, and our good friend Stein Solberg, the maritime JWG member for Norway, did great work intersessionally to prepare a fully reorganised draft. Other amendments to the text, proposed by other JWG members and observers, were incorporated into the reorganised draft by a splinter group led by David Jardine-Smith in Wellington, and a final text was agreed. The 2019 edition of Volume III should be easier to use!

**Definitions of the Phases of Emergency in the IAMSAR Manual**

Last year the JWG noted that the definitions of the three emergency phases in the Maritime SAR Convention and the Convention on International Civil Aviation differ – and that the definitions in the IAMSAR Manual differ again. The JWG agreed that, while it has not been tasked to work on the Convention texts, the IAMSAR definitions should be better aligned. IMRF was asked to lead an intersessional group to consider the matter.

What constitutes ‘uncertainty’, ‘alert’ and ‘distress’ is important, and the intersessional group discussed the definitions in depth. However, it was unable to agree
new ones. Consequently the JWG agreed that, while the IAMSAR definitions are less than satisfactory, they should be left as they are for now. As the Group’s primary purpose is to harmonise aeronautical and maritime SAR, however, further work on this disharmony will be done in future. (‘Defining distress’ will also be discussed in the next Edition of LIFE LINE).

SAR in Areas Remote from SAR facilities
Following work by Canada & Sweden on the responsibilities of SAR authorities, rescue coordination centres and on-scene coordinators in areas remote from SAR facilities, the JWG had previously agreed that there was a need to develop a definition for such areas and to include suitable guidance in IAMSAR. Sweden led further work on this intersessionally, to which the IMRF contributed. A definition – ‘an area within which there may be an extended SAR response time due to the incident location and/or environmental conditions’ – has now been agreed and this will appear in the next edition of the Manual, together with guidance on conducting SAR in such circumstances.

Sharing SAR Lessons
Sharing SAR ‘lessons learned’ (or, more properly, ‘lessons identified’: see ‘Learning lessons’ on page 3) has been a surprising but real problem for years. Everyone agrees the value of it, but the SAR community is not as good at it as we should be, and neither IMO nor ICAO have the capability to support a sharing platform. The JWG had previously asked the IMRF (for whom sharing such lessons is, of course, a primary activity) to take the lead on this, and to prepare text for the IAMSAR Manual advising on our service and providing contact details. The 2019 edition of the Manual will include references to IMRF accordingly, and the secretariat will review our arrangements to encourage such sharing.

Revision of IAMSAR Text on the Second Geneva Convention
The IMRF has been advising the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) on the parts of their review of the Commentaries on the Second Geneva Convention which relate to SAR in armed conflict situations: see the August edition of LIFE LINE. The JWG has now agreed to update the IAMSAR Manual accordingly.

The Lorén Turn
IAMSAR Volume III contains advice on three ship manoeuvres intended to assist in man-overboard situations. At the IMRF’s suggestion a fourth will be added to the 2019 edition: the Lorén Turn, developed as part of the Swedish FIRST Project led by Captain Jörgen Lorén, of Stena Line. See ‘Going Round in Circles’ on page 12.

Self-Assessment and International SAR Agreements
The JWG agreed a revised format for the ‘National self-assessment on search and rescue’ contained in IAMSAR Volume I, Appendix H. Such self-assessments, if honestly undertaken, are of great value, and assist in the further development of the global SAR plan. Similarly, there was discussion on whether simpler international SAR agreement processes should be developed, to encourage better cooperation across borders. Further work will be done on this.

‘Invisible’ Lighting
The problem of some LED-fitted safety and lifesaving equipment being near-invisible to night vision equipment (first raised by IMRF at last year’s JWG meeting) was again discussed. Action on this at ICAO and IMO will be slow at best. In the meantime every effort should be made to make users aware of the potential problem. See ‘In the Dark’ in the August 2016 edition of LIFE LINE, available from the newsletter archive at www.international-maritime-rescue.org, and pass the word on!

Model Courses on SAR
IMO publish ‘model courses’ to guide SAR training. The courses on SAR administration and on-scene coordination are up to date, but the SAR mission coordinators’ course has fallen behind. The US and Iran are developing a revised course, and asked the JWG for advice. Their draft will be reviewed by a group of experts once it is complete. The IMRF will continue to contribute to the review process, as these model courses are significant tools in SAR development.

APRC Board & IMRF Trustee Meetings Held in Shanghai
On the 11th October 2017, the 8th Asia Pacific Regional Center (APRC) Board Meeting was held in Shanghai. The new IMRF CEO, Theresa Crossley, attended the meeting and discussed the APRC working plan for the rest of 2017 and 2018.

Following on from this meeting the 33rd IMRF Trustee meeting was also held in the APRC office and this was the first chance for IMRF trustees and APRC board directors to meet. During the meeting, they visited Donghai Rescue Bureau, Ministry of Transport of China.

Over the course of both these meetings topics discussed were member recruitment, fundraising, international activities, Regional Development Meeting (Maritime Silk Road SAR Development Forum), regional workshop & training course, regional cooperation and exchanges, member service and cooperation, etc.
The European Regional Development Meeting 2017

The European Regional Development Meeting was hosted by the RNLI at the RNLI College in Poole, United Kingdom, on the 2nd and 3rd November this year.

The regional meetings are a chance for members to discuss the topics that affect their organisations as well as form a network of colleagues throughout Europe. The theme for this year’s meeting was Risk and Learning from Experience and the meeting was comprised of three workshops as well as summaries from IMRF projects.

IMRF Panel Updates
In past years we have received some very good suggestions for projects that can be progressed between meetings and three of these panels reported on what they had achieved over the year.

• The IMRF Future Technology Panel
• The IMRF Crew Exchange
• The IMRF Communications and Fundraising Skillshare

In future editions of LIFE LINE we will look at these panels in depth.

Workshops
Three workshops were held over the course of the 2 days and they formed an overall picture of the importance of crew welfare and how an organisation can form a dynamic safety system from recruitment all the way through to retirement.

• The Crew Welfare Puzzle

This was lead by Jori Nordström, who is our European Regional Coordinator, and featured a case study of a capsize during training. All delegates were asked to discuss how crew welfare can be established from the start of a crew member’s SAR career.
Investigations of Incidents
David Cunane and Andrew Woods of the RNLI Investigation team lead a very informative workshop on the methods of investigation that the RNLI uses after a traumatic incident has occurred.

Policy Deployment and Embedding
Sigurður Ragnar Viðarsson and Jón Svanberg Hjartarson of ICE-SAR explained how new regulations and operating procedures are filtered to their volunteers.

Tours and Demonstrations
As part of the meeting all delegates had an opportunity to look around the RNLI College, All Weather Lifeboat Centre, Simulator as well as a demonstration of Sea Survival. The Sea survival was an interactive demonstration, which saw some of our delegates put through their paces in a simulated storm in the pool.

Looking Forward to 2018
Vivi Schumann of Redningsselskapet (RS) also had the opportunity to announce that the 2018 meeting will be held at the newly opened RS Noatun Horten in Norway. The dates for this 2018 European Regional Development meeting will be confirmed very soon.

The regional meetings are a fantastic opportunity for members to meet their SAR neighbours and this meeting saw 37 organisations from 19 countries come together and discuss the issues that are important to them.

All of the outcomes and notes from this meeting will be uploaded to the IMRF website over the next few weeks. If you attended the meeting and have not yet submitted feedback you can do so here: https://www.international-maritime-rescue.org/european-regional-meeting-2017-survey.

IMO Award for Exceptional Bravery at Sea
Nominations are now being accepted by IMO for the 2018 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.

The winners of the 2017 Award were two members of the Houston Pilots who averted a major tragedy. The ship they were piloting broke down and burst into flames after colliding with mooring dolphins.

The two pilots were faced with a towering wall of burning fuel for almost 90 minutes!

IMO states that: "Pilots Captain Michael G. McGee and Captain Michael C. Phillips showed decisiveness, dedication and ship-handling expertise. As a result of their courageous actions, no lives were lost, serious damage to pier structures and petro-chemical facilities were prevented and a major marine pollution incident was avoided."

Rescue of Migrants at Sea
For the 2017 awards there were also five nominations for incidents involving the rescue of migrants at sea.

The Council agreed that "all those involved in rescuing migrants at sea should be recognised by the Secretary-General for their outstanding humanitarian efforts, and that crews of merchant vessels involved should receive the commendation of the IMO Assembly through certificates of special recognition."

Nominations for 2018.
For details of how to nominate someone for the 2018 Award please go to http://www.international-maritime-rescue.org/events/europe registrations-closing-date-for-the-imo-award-for-exceptional-bravery-at-sea.
Going Round in Circles

As noted in the report on page 9 of the recent ICAO/IMO Joint Working Group on SAR, one of the amendments to be made to the IAMSAR Manual for its 2019 edition is the addition of information on the ‘Lorén Turn’.

Volume III of the Manual already includes information on three ‘standard recovery manoeuvres’ – the Williamson turn, the single or Anderson turn, and the Scharnov turn. These manoeuvres are designed to assist a ship’s crew to return to a man overboard. But, having reached the casualty, then what...?

The FIRST Project (see www.first-rescue.org), conducted by the Swedish Sea Rescue Society with the active assistance of leading ferry company Stena Line and other partners, has done much good work on the difficult question of retrieving people from small craft, including survival craft, or from the water.

The Project has included live trials, in poor sea conditions, of a manoeuvre which involves a ship circling the casualty in order to break up wave trains.

This has the effect of temporarily calming the area of sea in which the retrieval is to take place. The pictures show the Stena Line ferry Stena Jutlandica carrying out the manoeuvre.

Ship simulations using different types of vessels have also been conducted at the Chalmers University of Technology, in Gothenburg, Sweden. These indicate the same effect.

Adding the basics of the procedure to Volume III of IAMSAR will be of considerable aid to the masters of ‘ships of opportunity’ asked to attempt rescues at sea, beyond the reach or in support of dedicated SAR units.

As the FIRST Project is headed by Captain Jörgen Lorén, Stena Jutlandica’s Master at the time of the trials shown, the JWG agreed to name the manoeuvre for him in IAMSAR.

The benefits of the Lorén Turn are that it facilitates launch and recovery of a rescue boat and rescue work by other craft.

Circling calms the sea by interfering with wave patterns: the more turbulence created by the ship the better. Additional ships circling to windward will calm the sea further.

The Lorén turn procedure may be summarised as follows:
1. Head into the wind at full speed.
2. Begin the circle and reduce to slow when the wind is abeam.
3. When the wind crosses the stern to the opposite quarter, increase to half speed.
4. Continue circling as long as calmer water is needed.
5. Slow down, or stop, to launch and recover rescue boat on the leeward side, inside the circle.

It is important that masters considering this manoeuvre, or the others already included in IAMSAR, know the handling characteristics of their own vessel.

Opportunities should be taken to practice.