



HUMBERSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

# Emergency Response

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## Marine Incidents Policy

<b>Owner</b>	<b>Executive Director of Service Delivery</b>
<b>Responsible Person</b>	<b>Head of Emergency Preparedness</b>
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What we must  
do well



How we support our  
communities



We value and support  
the people we employ



We efficiently manage  
the Service

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this policy is to specify procedures relating to the operational readiness, response and administration required to be considered and implemented to conduct a safe and effective response to a marine incident.

This policy is directed at all Humberside Fire & Rescue Service (HFRS) personnel who may be required to attend marine incidents in any authorised capacity whether as an alongside response or as part of a fire and rescue marine assessment team. **The Fire Services Act 2004 Section 7** states that a fire and rescue authority must make provision for the purpose of extinguishing fires in its area and protecting life and property in the event of fires in its area.

**Section 72 of the Local Government Act 1972** confirms that the area of responsibility for Fire Authorities in England, Wales and Northern Ireland generally extends to the mean low water mark (MLWM) at ordinary tide. That may include estuarial waters up to a prominent watermark.

Whilst the duty of the Fire Authority to make provision for firefighting purposes normally relates to the Authority's area, there is nothing to prevent a Fire Authority from employing its fire and rescue service to respond to an incident aboard a ship at sea and outside its area.

### **Core Code of Ethics**

HFRS has adopted the Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services. The Service is committed to the ethical principles of the Code and strives to apply them in all we do, therefore, those principles are reflected in this Policy

### **National Guidance**

Any National Guidance which has been adopted by HFRS will be reflected in this Policy.

## **2. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION**

HFRS has a legal responsibility under the Equality Act 2010, and a commitment, to ensure it does not discriminate either directly or indirectly in any of its functions and services or in its treatment of staff, in relation to race, sex, disability, sexual orientation, age, pregnancy and maternity, religion and belief, gender reassignment or marriage and civil partnership. It also has a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled applicants, employees and service users.

## **3. AIM AND OBJECTIVES**

### **Aim**

The aim of this policy is to ensure HFRS operational personnel are provided with the appropriate information, training and support to ensure they are fully conversant and competent to work safely, effectively and efficiently in marine incidents.

## **Objectives**

The Marine Incidents policy seeks to provide full compliance with statutory obligations.

The provision of procedures and guidance relating to operational readiness, including any necessary administration, to conduct a safe and effective response to marine incidents.

The regular review of procedures and guidance to comply with identified current best practices, both within and external to HFRS.

The identification of training and equipment requirements.

## **4. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS**

- [Equality Impact Assessment](#)
- Legal References
  - Human Rights Act 1998
  - Civil Contingencies Act (2004)
  - Fire and Rescue Services Act (2004)
  - Health and Safety at Work Act etc. 20/2/2018 (03/1974)
  - Section 72 of the Local Government Act 1972
- National Operational Guidance Fire on Board Vessels
- National Guidance

## **5. POLICY STATEMENT**

HFRS will provide operational personnel with the appropriate training and support and ensure they have sufficient information to safely respond to all identifiable marine incidents within the Humber Estuary. North East Lincolnshire District will adopt 'Marine Response' as a specialism coordinating the training and response.

## **6. MONITORING AND REVIEW**

Regular monitoring and assurance of operational procedures must be undertaken and is the responsibility of Emergency Preparedness. This ensures the validity and currency of information and compliance with statutory obligations including National Operational Guidance, legislation and learning through National or Joint Operational Learning.

## **7. GUIDANCE/PROCEDURES/FURTHER INFORMATION**

### **Response to Marine Incidents**

A duty National Interagency Liaison Officer (NILO) must be informed in all instances whenever assistance to a vessel in distress 'within the Humber Estuary' is requested. HFRS does not currently have a response capability beyond the Humber Estuary. The NILO will decide on what attendance will be committed, if any, on a risk basis from the information received from HM Coastguard or via the FRMR Coordination Centre.

A waterborne assessment team will be mobilised to assess and gather intelligence to enable the formulation of an operational plan for when the vessel is brought alongside. The assessment team is tasked with informing the NILO and dockside managers on the resource level needed and not to advise the ship's officers about their duties, procedures or responsibilities.

The team size will be a minimum of 2 people and a maximum of 3 including a Level 2 commander, a Level 1 commander as command support and a Level 1 commander with specialist marine knowledge.

HFRS will not advise or decide as to the suitability of the vessel to be brought into the harbour or alongside. This is a matter for the relevant harbour master, however, HFRS may advise on the conditions that they find to inform the decisions of other agencies.

### **Responsibilities at Marine Incidents**

- For ships away from shore, in dock, or moored alongside, the captain retains overall responsibility for the safety of his ship, including those occasions when his ship is undergoing repair or refit.
- In a fire scenario, the captain normally transfers the responsibility for firefighting to the senior local fire authority officer present.
- For His Majesty's ships the commanding officer retains overall responsibility for the safety of the ship, including all fire-fighting measures taken and will require fire service officers to advise him on the amount of water being used or considered safe to use during fire-fighting operations. The captain may delegate the control of fire-fighting operations to the senior fire service officer on board.
- It has been agreed between Associated British Ports (ABP) and the government departments concerned that the responsibility and control of firefighting operations will be in accordance with a notice, which has been issued to all dock and harbour authorities.
- The Fire Service Officer in Charge of operations shall, for so long as any Service resources are made available to the port authority for those operations, have full control over them and how they are used.
- The Master, or in the Master's absence the Officer in Charge of the vessel, shall be responsible for bringing to the notice of the fire service officer any special circumstances affecting the safety of the ship or the conduct of the firefighting operations. In respect of the Master or Officer in Charge bringing such special circumstances to the notice of the fire service officer, the latter

shall be responsible for establishing whether any such special circumstances hold importance and arrange that any appropriate steps for the ship's safety be taken.

- Ship stability is a technical and specialist area of expertise which at all times will be the responsibility of the Master and Ship's Officers. Fire Officers must be aware of the potential repercussions of their actions on board a casualty vessel and remain in close liaison with the Ship's Officers.
- The Port Authority shall be responsible for bringing to the notice of the Fire Service Officer any special circumstances affecting the safety of port installations and for arranging, in conjunction with the Fire Service Officer, appropriate steps for the safety and efficient working of the installations.
- In the event of disagreement between the Fire Service Officer in charge of the operations and the Port Authority, the decision of the Harbour Master, Secretary of State Representative (SOSREP) or other responsible officer of the Port Authority on the following matters shall prevail:
  - Whether the ship is to be moved, beached or scuttled and if so, the place to which the ship is to be moved, or where it is to be beached or scuttled.
  - Whether the pumping of water into the ship is to cease to prevent capsizing or damage to the port installations.
  - Otherwise the decision of the Fire Service Officer in any matter affecting the fire-fighting operations shall prevail.

## **Health & Safety**

Attending Marine Incidents is a high-risk activity due to the high fire temperatures, confined spaces and the limited amount of resources and support should an incident occur at sea. Therefore, all personnel who are likely to attend these types of incidents must be equipped and trained for the role as per this policy and have knowledge and understanding of the risk assessments and safe systems of work for all equipment and activities and be provided with the appropriate personal protective equipment.

## **8. MARINE RESPONSE CAPABILITY**

### **Operational Personnel**

All HFRS operational personnel will receive information, training and support to attend marine incidents. Further specific training will be provided to marine response stations and assessment team members to enable them to safely perform their roles.

### **Marine Response Stations**

Personnel from marine response stations will form part of the pre-determined attendance (PDA) to all marine incidents 'alongside' regardless of location. For HFRS purposes the definition of an incident alongside will be **"any incident that does not involve boarding any form of transportation to access the vessel"**.

The PDA for marine incidents is three appliances with two of the appliances coming from marine response stations. This will ensure that the following tasks can be undertaken safely and effectively.

Functions of marine response station personnel:

- Carry out immediate, known location rescues.
- Offensive firefighting operations.
- Reconnaissance and liaison with ship personnel.
- Establishing a command and control system.
- Establishing boarding control and safety procedures for additional response teams.
- Preventing further escalation of the incident.
- Mitigating damage to the vessel and environment.
- Due to the specialist nature of these incidents any actions undertaken by marine response stations will be determined by the number of suitably trained personnel in attendance.

Each appliance on the identified marine response stations is required to stow and maintain the following equipment:

- Boarding board.
- Boarding control tabard.

Stortz couplings:

- International ship-to-shore adaptor.
- Door ropes.
- Transit line.
- Marine response equipment bag.

Marine response station personnel are trained at a level that ensures interoperability with the assessment team should both resources be required to support an incident.

### **Fire and Rescue Assessment Team**

The Assessment team is formed from existing on-duty personnel.

- Level 2 commander
- Level 1 Commander (command support)
- Level 1 Commander (Specialist Knowledge Officer/HFRS Tactical Advisor)

Upon a decision by the duty NILO and assessment team will be deployed to the RVP as detailed by the carrying agency for embarkation to the vessel in distress.

## **9. PROCEDURE FOR MARINE INCIDENTS ALONGSIDE**

Calls to respond to an incident will normally originate from the Port Authorities and/or the ship's crew.

Fire Control will mobilise the PDA for incidents alongside this will include assessment team qualified officers and FDS. Additional advice will be available from HFRS Marine Tactical Advisors contactable through Fire Control.

## **10. PROCEDURES FOR INCIDENTS OFF-SHORE**

### **Mobilising Procedure for Marine Incidents Offshore**

Calls to respond to an incident 'in the Humber Estuary' will normally originate from HM Coastguard, they may also come through the FRMR Co-ordination Centre. If a call comes from another source Fire Control will ensure that the information is routed to HM Coastguard at the Maritime Rescue Control Centre (MRCC) in Bridlington before any further action is taken.

Under normal circumstances, HM Coastguard will contact Fire Control with a pre-alert whilst further information is being requested from the casualty vessel. Before receiving confirmation that HFRS assistance is required Fire Control will seek permission from the duty NILO to mobilise resources.

Specific details regarding mobilising and notification are contained within the Control Operating Procedures for Marine Incidents, which are available from Fire Control.

Where a response is being made to an incident in the 'Humber Estuary via waterborne transportation, only trained assessment team personnel will be used and will be mobilised.

The mobilising of personnel and resources will be in accordance with current Service Policies and following a request for assistance from HM Coastguard via the FRMR Co-ordination Centre. Fire Control will commence mobilising arrangements as follows:

The duty NILO will be informed and a decision made on what type of response is to be committed.

To assist the duty NILO in determining whether a response needs to be made, a Tasking Form ([Appendix A](#)) will be completed by MCA staff and e-mailed to Fire Control. This Tasking Form contains relevant information regarding the incident to allow the duty NILO to conduct a risk assessment, enabling an informed judgement to be made as to the appropriate level of response required.

Depending on the type of incident, one or more of the four parts of the Tasking Form will be completed and sent to Fire Control. This form will indicate risk-specific details on incidents of fire/explosion, chemical or industrial accident.

Once a decision is made to send an assessment team, the duty NILO will contact the Force Incident manager (FIM) in Humberside Police to request transportation to the vessel under an Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) established between the



agencies. RNLI and Humber Pilots are available as fallback transportation mechanisms subject to police unavailability.

Fire Control will then mobilise the appropriate team members to the embarkation point for transportation to the vessel, collecting the assessment team kit en route.

### **Embarkation Procedures**

Fire Control will mobilise a suitably trained assessment team to the allocated embarkation point determined by the Police or agency contacted for transport to vessel. In addition, a suitably trained FDS Officer to the Coastguard Station at Bridlington to act as the Fire Liaison Officer (FLO).

All personnel who are to be engaged in operations in the 'Humber Estuary' must first be adequately briefed as to the type of incident and casualty vessel they will be transported out to. This brief will take place between duty NILO and assessment team Level 2 commander. This can take place through Microsoft Teams or phone, before physically embarking on the transportation.

Upon embarkation, Fire Control should be advised of those leaving, for recording purposes. Team members should be appropriately dressed in Transit PPE (TPPE) and follow the direction of the coxswain of the transportation.

Members are advised to take seasickness tablets (not provided) as soon as possible before embarkation or should wear the "Sea Bands" (anti-nausea wrist bands) provided.

Engines used as part of a marine incident PDA will be backfilled through Fire Fire Control under the usual control operating procedures to maintain fire cover throughout the Service are.

### **Waterborne Transportation Arrangements**

Transportation of the assessment team will be by the following arrangements:

- Police Marine Respond boat
- RNLI rescue boat
- In consultation with HM Coastguard and Humber Harbour master for the use of either a pilot's boat, tug or similar vessel.

On a routine basis, the designated embarkation points for response will be as directed by the organisation that is tasked with transportation. The current recognised embarkation point list is not exhaustive and may vary:

- Grimsby Docks, Grimsby.
- Queens Steps, Immingham Docks.
- King George Dock
- Hull Marina

### **Welfare Arrangements**

The welfare of personnel operating in the 'Humber Estuary' is most important due to the restricted access they will have to 'normal' facilities. It will therefore be necessary to consider dry clothing and hot refreshments. These are provided in the assessment team equipment packs. Due to possible inclement weather conditions, it will also be necessary to provide waterproof clothing when not required to wear their TPPE.

### **Marine Incidents Involving Hazardous Materials/CBRN/Terrorist Threats**

Where initial information indicates, or the Incident Commander requests it, a Hazmat Officer, will be mobilised to the MRCC in the event of an incident off-shore, or to the incident in the event of it being alongside or in dock. This functional officer will advise the Incident Commander/Assessment team on issues relating to hazardous substances, contamination, decontamination or environmental concerns.

**NB.** For hazmat incidents in the 'Humber Estuary' a HazMat Advisor at Level 2 and assessment team officer will be mobilised as part of the initial assessment team, if available.

Where initial information indicates potential terrorism, a NILO should be requested to liaise with other agencies as directed in the MTA policy.

### **Equipment**

All items of equipment and TPPE/PPE, which will be used specifically during marine incidents will be stored at Peaks Lane Station in the Water Rescue Hub. Other than the TPPE, which is supplied with a separate service contract, all items will be tested and maintained by station personnel and Emergency Services Fleet Management (ESFM).

### **Communications**

HM Coastguard is responsible for co-ordinating all information received by any means, from any source. It has access to all marine channels, including those used by harbour launches, pilot boats, tugs, Customs launches, HM Coastguard vessels, ships at sea and rescue helicopters. It is imperative, therefore that those messages between vessels, units and shore authorities should be passed via the Coastguard communications network by a qualified operator.

For any incident where fire service personnel are operating in the 'Humber Estuary', a suitably trained FDS Officer will be appointed to attend HM Coastguard MRCC, Bridlington to act as FLO.

When aboard the casualty vessel, or being transferred out to it, there are a number of different communication links open to the assessment team. These links are as follows:

### **Marine Band Radio**

**All messages** should be passed through HM Coastguard using a marine radio on the transport vessel or vessel requiring assistance, via Channel O or other working channel designated by HM Coastguard during the incident. Marine Band Radio is only permitted to be used in the presence a licensed Marine Band Operator.

### **Other Means of Communication**

**Mobile phone:** Mobile phones will provide good coverage in all areas of the Humber Estuary and up to 1 mile off the coastline.

**NB. The use of Apps such as WhatsApp can be used to pass information such as messages, photographs and videos to inform shore-based resources of the incident.**

**Airwave:** The Airwave system can be used for marine incidents, however; it must be borne in mind that Airwave is not guaranteed to work at sea and has a working distance of around 10 kilometres offshore.

**Microsoft Teams:** The use of Microsoft Teams can be used when connectivity permits in order to assist in the transfer of information through to the command unit when the vessel comes alongside.

**Note: Neither of the above communications methods should be used to bypass messages sent via Marine Band Radio.**

**If you require any further guidance in relation to this policy, please contact  
Emergency Preparedness**

**APPENDIX A: TASKING FORM**

<b>DATE:</b>	<b>TIME (Local):</b>
<b>MRCC:</b>	<b>MRCC PHONE NUMBER:</b>
<b>G.I.N. (MRCC to complete):</b>	<b>Call Log ref (FRS to complete):</b>

**PART ONE - KEY INFORMATION (Page 1 of 1)**  
**TO BE FAXED TO FRMR FRS**

<b>1.1 Casualty identity</b>
<i>(Name of vessel, Flag State, etc.)</i>
<b>1.2 Assistance required</b>
<i>(Does the casualty require the assistance of shore based firefighters and/or paramedics? Identify which)</i>
<b>1.3 Type and Gross Tonnage of vessel</b>
<i>(e.g., passenger ferry, oil tanker, container ship etc., or other casualty type)</i>
<b>1.4 Position</b>
<i>(Distance &amp; bearing from a well-known location)</i>
<b>1.5 Type, location on board &amp; extent of incident</b>
<i>(Type: e.g. fire / chemical release / industrial accident? On-board areas affected?)</i>
<b>1.6 Action being taken on board</b>
<i>(Firefighting or other action)</i>
<b>1.7 Persons at risk</b>
<i>(Total number of persons on board &amp; persons directly affected, e.g. by fire / fumes / trapped, etc.)</i>
<b>1.8 On scene weather &amp; sea state – actual and forecast</b>
<i>(Provide brief details)</i>

<b>DATE:</b>	<b>TIME (Local):</b>
<b>MRCC:</b>	<b>MRCC PHONE NUMBER:</b>
<b>G.I.N. (MRCC to complete):</b>	<b>Call Log ref (FRS to complete):</b>

**PART TWO - SUPPORTING INFORMATION (For Assessment team)**  
**TO BE Emailed/Faxed TO FRMR FRS**

<b>2.1 Vessel size</b>
<i>(Length / Freeboard at boarding point)</i>
<b>2.2 Cargo</b>
<i>(Including any IMDG Class / hazardous cargo on board)</i>
<b>2.3 Condition of vessel</b>
<i>(Eg, problems with main engines / steering / onboard power; listing; taking water, etc)</i>

**2.4 Type & condition of fixed firefighting installations**

*(Eg, CO<sub>2</sub> used / remaining; fire main / sprinklers / foam / other systems available / used)*

**2.5 Communications, including any communications difficulties**

*(Primary comms: VHF, MF, satcomms, mobile etc. Any problems? Good English spoken by Bridge Team?)*

**2.6 Further details of hazards that could affect FRS operations**

*(Additional info to that given at 1.5: eg, uncontrolled fire spread / adverse stability / navigational hazards, etc)*

**2.7 Further details of action being taken on board / persons at risk**

*(Additional info to that given at 1.6 and/or 1.7)*

**PART TWO - SUPPORTING INFORMATION (HMCG)**

**2.8 (MRCC:) Check with MRCC Falmouth – has casualty sent a security alert?**

**2.9 (MRCC:) Has SOSREP been alerted (via DCPSO)?**

**2.10 Contact details of owners / operators and/or agents**

**SEABORNE RESPONSE** – *FRMR FRS will usually have local seaborne support arrangements in place, but the MRCC may be requested to assist. (NB: RNLI Lifeboats cannot be used for this purpose.)*

**2.14 Surface units available**

*(Name / type of vessel; suitable embarkation point, with ETA (local time); any restrictions)*

**2.15 Additional / new information not covered above**

*(Attach additional pages if necessary – note number of additional pages here)*