

Emergency

Services Ireland

**IAA TAKES ON REMIT FOR CIVIL
AVIATION SECURITY**

**EMERGENCY RESPONSE
PERSON OF THE YEAR**

**IRISH TOP EU DRUGS TABLE
SEEKING 'LEGAL HIGHS'**

**'IRELAND'S SEARCH
AND RESCUE'
AUTUMN TV LIFT-OFF**

***MEDIA PARTNER OF 'SEARCH AND RESCUE EUROPE 2013'
(19-20 MARCH, PORTSMOUTH, UK)***

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NATIONAL HEALTHCARE CONFERENCE 2013

This year's National Healthcare Conference on 19 and 20 March at Dublin's Convention Centre will include speakers from the International Monetary Fund, LAYA Healthcare and the Department of Health.

Minister for Health Dr James Reilly will officially open the National Healthcare Conference 2013 on 20 March @ 9am. Other speakers include:

- Benedict Clements, Healthcare Division Chief for the Expenditure Policy, Division of the Fiscal Affairs Department, International Monetary Fund (IMF);
- Dónal Clancy Managing Director, Laya Healthcare;

- Dr Ambrose McLoughlin, Secretary General of the Department of Health & Children

*For further information visit www.nationalhealthcare.ie



'CLIMB 4 CONCERN' CAMPAIGN KICKS OFF IN MAYO!

As part of this year's 'Climb 4 Concern' Mweelrea Mountain in County Mayo is the first of four highest peak challenges that takes place on Saturday 2 March.

Concern is looking for people to climb the highest peaks in all four provinces. The climb is open to people of all fitness levels, who can choose from one of the highest points in Leinster, Munster, Connacht or Ulster – or set new limits and climb all four mountains.

2 March:	Connacht's Mweelrea (814 metres)
13 April:	Ulster's Sliabh Donard (850 metres)
25 May:	Leinster's Lugnaquilla (925 metres)
6 July:	Munster's Carruntuohil (1,038 metres)

Each event requires a €25 deposit plus a minimum fundraising target of €50 for Mweelrea, Sliabh Donard or Lugnaquilla. With Carruntuohill, there's a minimum fundraising target of €100, due to the difficulty associated with the highest mountain in Ireland.

Starting with the first highest peak challenge in Mayo, an early afternoon bus departs on Friday 1 March from Mullingar

(via Dublin) to bring climbers to Westport.

For details on all four 'Climb 4 Concern' challenges contact Zoe Holvoak at 01-4178028, email zoe.holyoak@concern.net or visit www.ShowYourConcern.net.



FOUR-PEAK CHALLENGE FOR CHARITY IN APRIL

If you're up for a challenge and you're peak rather than peaky, then 'The Irelander' – a four-peak weekend adventure challenge in April – may just be for you!

Starting in County Wicklow on Friday 5 April and ending in County Down on Sunday 7 April, the 48-hour challenge will entail climbing four summits day and night. Participants will compete in teams of five to seven (to include two designated drivers) with team categories for walkers, runners and emergency services personnel.

Teams may raise funds for Mountain Rescue Ireland or for any other voluntary emergency service. Each team member (not including designated drivers) is requested to raise €500 sponsorship. There will be overall prizes for the winning team in each category.

For information pack email fundraising@mountainrescue.ie or visit www.eventelephant.com/irelander



12% INCREASE IN CALLS TO CRIME VICTIMS HELPLINE

The number of calls and other contacts to the National Crime Victims Helpline has increased by 12 per cent, when compared to 2010. According to the Helpline's Annual Report for 2011 there were 3,253 contacts – 2868 by phone and 385 by email, text and fax. The report also shows a gender breakdown on calls: 67 per cent from females and 33 per cent from males.

As in previous years the crime which led to most calls being made was assault (36%), followed by sexual violence (17%), and robbery and burglary (14%).

Maeve Ryan, helpline co-ordinator, said that coupled with the 3,325 incoming contacts they also made over 3,000

support calls, as follow-up to calls received.

"The main reason people called our helpline was for emotional support and to seek information on a range of issues.

"For people who have experienced crime we firstly advise them to contact the Gardaí, as the information they provide may not just solve their crime but also provide information that can assist in resolving other crimes or ensure that some further crime does not occur."

* Freephone 116 006; Text 085-1337711; The helpline can also be contacted on call-save 1850 21 14 07

MAYO LAUNCHES WELL-BEING CAMPAIGN

A well-being campaign has been launched by the Mayo Suicide Prevention Alliance, a group that is comprised of a wide range of organisations and groups working in the area of mental health and suicide prevention in the county.

Dr John Connolly, secretary of the Irish Association of Suicidology, officially launched the campaign on 14 January at the Mayo County Council offices.

The Mayo Suicide Prevention Alliance, which was first formed in Mayo in 2009, recognised the importance of drawing together groups and services that support mental health, to share ideas and to work in partnership.

Speaking on behalf of the Mayo Suicide Prevention Alliance, Mary O'Sullivan, HSE West, said; "This project would not have been possible without the very generous

funding received from Mayo County Council.

"We are also very grateful for a further donation from the Living Links Mayo Tri Fundraising

Group. It shows the huge goodwill, community spirit and value placed on promoting positive mental health and well-being within the county."



Pictured (l-r): Dr John Connolly, Secretary, Irish Association of Suicidology, Cllr Cyril Burke, chairman of Mayo County Council, and Mary O'Sullivan, HSE and chair of Mayo Suicide Prevention Alliance.

GARDAI ROLL OUT NEW SEGWAYS IN DUBLIN

Segways, which will be used by specially trained Gardaí to patrol areas of Dublin City centre, were donated by the Dublin City Business Association at the end of 2012.

Assistant Garda Commissioner, John Twomey said: "These segways add another arm to our portfolio in terms of dynamic and effective urban policing by maximising the areas we can monitor that are not typically accessible for other vehicles.

"Dublin has an impeccable safety record by European standards and we can assure members of the public that these Segways will be used to uphold and maintain this benchmark in the city centre districts of Dublin 1 and 2."



Gardaí pictured on Segways on Grafton Street, donated to the force by Dublin City Business Association.

LOWDOWN ON RESUS 2013 IN LIMERICK

Working Smarter Not Harder' is the theme of RESUS 2013, which takes place at Limerick Race Course, Greenmount Park in Patrickswell on Saturday 27 April.

Following a welcome address by Dr Cathal O'Donnell, RESUS conference co-chair, and the official opening by Tom Mooney, chairperson of the Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council, keynote speakers will include the following:

- Prof Bryan McNally, Emory University, Georgia and
- Head of CARE (Cardiac Arrest Registry to Enhance Survival);
- Dr Anne Weaver, London's Air Ambulance;
- John Burnham, Head of Education Scottish Ambulance Service;
- Martin Flaherty, Deputy CEO, London's Ambulance Service;



RESUS 2013

INTERNATIONAL RESUSCITATION
CONFERENCE & SKILLS SHOWCASE



- Dr John McCarthy, Medical Director, Lehigh Valley Medevac, Pennsylvania;
- Mary Rose Cassar, Malta Resuscitation Council
- Air Ambulance Trauma Demo, Irish Air Corps and National Ambulance Service

Call for Abstracts: The Scientific Committee of RESUS invites submissions for research presentations in the fields of resuscitation science, emergency medicine and pre-hospital care.

For more information visit www.resus.ie

COAST GUARD IS CRITICAL OF GOVERNMENT REPORT

The Irish Coast Guard has severely criticised the first draft of the 'Value for Money' report on the Coast Guard service.

Senior IRCG management berated the work of the consultants Fisher Associates who were commissioned by Transport Minister Leo Varadkar to undertake the studies on the Coast Guard and the Marine Survey Office.

In their observation of the report's first draft, they cite "uninformed or poor analysis; lack of dialogue on matters surfaced; lack of understanding of where the IRCG has competency or control on particular matters and departmental competencies; laziness in fact finding; ignorance of how coast guards function and failure to recognise command and control issues".

They also slated "sloppiness" in the report's incorrect spelling of the service as the 'Irish Coastguard', arguing that it "reflects very, very poorly on Fisher's ability or competence in these areas".



DEFENCE FORCES APPOINTS NEW OMBUDSMAN

Tony McCourt succeeds Paulyn Marrinan-Quinn as Ombudsman for the Defence Forces, following his appointment by President Michael D. Higgins late last year.

McCourt, who was called to the Bar in 1980, has been working as a practicing barrister since his retirement from the Defence Forces in 2010.

He joined the Defence Forces in 1963 as a cadet. Following a full and varied career in the military he was appointed to the position of Judge Advocate for the Defence Forces in 2001. He remained in that position until his appointment as military judge for the Defence Forces in 2007 where he presided over all courts martial until his retirement in 2010.

As military judge, McCourt's powers were similar to those of a judge of the ordinary civilian criminal courts and he acted independent of the military chain of command.



'JUST IN TIME' RESCUERS REWARDED

Thirty six lives were saved in a number of dramatic near-death incidents during 2012 through the brave actions of rescuers who were recognised at the Irish Water Safety's National Awards Ceremony.

The 'SEIKO Just in Time Rescue Awards' were presented to 22 rescuers in appreciation for saving so many lives. In making each presentation, John Perry, Minister of State at the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, pointed out that 140 drownings occur in Ireland every year. "The figure would be higher but for the dramatic efforts of these individuals who saved others from drowning and ongoing work of volunteers teaching swimming and rescue skills."

Award recipient Monaghan's Garda John Callahan received the award for saving a young girl from drowning during an incident on 30 August 2010 when he responded to a call at Lough Muckno, Castleblaney, Co Monaghan. He observed a young girl in distress in the water.

Without hesitation, Garda Callahan swam to her aid but as he approached the girl, she disappeared under water. He dived under water

and brought her to the surface and safely back to shore. The girl made a full recovery.

Service awards were also presented in recognition of 795 years of personal service of 43 Irish Water Safety volunteers nationwide for teaching swimming, rescue and water survival skills.



Monaghan's Garda John Callahan (one of 22 rescuers rewarded) pictured with John Perry, Minister of State at the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, and Breda Collins, chairman of Irish Water Safety at Dublin City Hall. (Pic: David Branigan, Oceansport)

SUICIDE PREVENTION CHARITY TO OPEN CENTRE IN LONDON

An Irish suicide prevention and bereavement charity is due a new centre in Westminster, London, in the next few weeks at the invitation of the UK authorities.

Console's CEO and founder Paul Kelly pictured right was contacted by the Met Police and the UK's Department of Health after outlining his charity's services at a conference in London.

"Our premises in Carlisle Square in Westminster is ready to open and we will be providing the counselling, support and helpline services which already work so well here in Ireland." Console hopes to initially

meet the needs of clients in London through the provision of information, resources, training and education for relevant groups.

"Suicide rates have increased significantly in the UK, with some 6,045 taking their own lives in 2011, an increase of 437 since 2010. These figures can sometimes be much higher in reality."

The charity currently has full-time centres in Dublin, Cork, Wexford, Limerick, and Galway and also offers services into Mayo, Kildare, and other areas in Dublin such as Tallaght and Clondalkin. Freephone 1800 201 890 or visit www.console.ie



IRISH SUICIDE RATE IS ONE OF HIGHEST IN EUROPE

Across-border report on suicide shows the rate among young people on the island of Ireland is one of the highest in Europe.

An estimated 165 teenagers and young men took their own lives in the Republic in 2011, and 72 teenagers and young men took their own lives in Northern Ireland during the same year.

The jointly funded cross-border report found the high numbers in both jurisdictions coincide with the economic downturn and rising levels of unemployment. The Young Men and Suicide Project shows that over the past ten years men have been five times more likely to take their own lives than

women.

Dr Noel Richardson, lead author of the report, said there can be no quick-fix solutions to tackling the very grave statistics. "But neither is there any place for inertia or ambivalence. There is both a public health and a moral requirement to act. There needs to be a concerted effort to engage more effectively, and in a more sustained way, with young men, and to plan services and programmes with young men in mind," he noted.

The study was funded by the Public Health Agency in Northern Ireland and the National Office for Suicide Prevention in the Republic of Ireland.

HEART FOUNDATION ROADSHOW CHECKS BLOOD PRESSURE

The Irish Heart Foundation is urging a healthy start to 2013 by getting your blood pressure checked, after its roadshow visited more than 50 locations nationwide, advising as many as 30 per cent of adults to see their GP for medical attention.

The national charity launched the 'Down with Blood Pressure' roadshow in late 2012 which was supported by the sons of late comedian Dermot Morgan, to deliver free blood pressure checks by Irish Heart Foundation (IHF) nurses to almost 4,500 adults nationwide. Of those checked, almost one third were advised to see their local doctor after receiving a high blood pressure reading.

Dr Angie Brown, IHF medical director, said that 1,200 adults have now been alerted that they may have hypertension which they need to manage with their doctor using a combination of lifestyle changes and possibly medication. "Although high blood pressure is very common, many adults don't realise that leaving it unchecked and unmanaged can be dangerous and even life threatening, carrying a serious risk of stroke and heart attack."

During the 'Down with Blood Pressure' campaign, all 4,500 people seen by the IHF nurses received important heart health information including a dedicated free blood pressure leaflet providing practical advice.

For a free blood pressure leaflet contact the National Heart & Stroke Helpline Lo-Call 1890 432 787 or download it free online at www.irishheart.ie



Dermot Morgan's three sons pictured at the launch of 'Down with Blood Pressure' campaign last September.

OVER 1,000 PEOPLE BROUGHT TO SAFETY IN IRELAND

Over 1,000 people were rescued by the RNLI last year, according to figures released for 2012, following returns of service from all 44 lifeboat stations in Ireland.

Dun Laoghaire RNLI brought the highest number of people to safety with 76 individuals rescued by their volunteer lifeboat crews during 46 callouts. They were followed by Kilmore Quay RNLI in Wexford, who brought 71 people to safety on 29 callouts.

The busiest RNLI lifeboat station in Ireland last year was Bangor in County Down, which launched 53 times and rescued 53 people. Other busy stations include Crosshaven RNLI in Cork where lifeboat crews launched their inshore lifeboat 42 times and rescued 31 people. Baltimore RNLI – who, along with Kilmore Quay RNLI, operate Ireland's two Tamar class lifeboats, the most technologically advanced lifeboat in the Irish fleet – launched their two lifeboats 41 times, rescuing 41 people.

The second Dublin all weather lifeboat station in Howth launched 40 times and rescued 48 people. The RNLI's newest lifeboat station at Coosan Point, Athlone on Lough Ree, which is currently on a one-year trial from last June, had a busy first six months

launching 14 times and bringing 18 people to safety.

The charity's lifeboat crews had 122 callouts to people classed as 'ashore'. This figure incorporates launches to people who are ill or injured on an island, cliff or the shoreline, where access by lifeboat is the fastest or safest way to reach the casualty.

In comparison with the 2011 statistics, 2012 saw a slight drop in lifeboat launches from 983 to 939 but a rise in people rescued from 906 to 1,041, an increase of 135 in the 12-month period.



FURTHER CAPITAL INVESTMENT IN NATIONAL AMBULANCE SERVICE

The National Ambulance Service (NAS) has almost completed its new vehicle programme, which will see 33 additional vehicles commissioned into service to include emergency ambulances, intermediate care vehicles and rapid response vehicles.

The new vehicles will be rolled out over the coming months across the fleet nationally.

In recent years a particular emphasis has been placed on the introduction of intermediate care services, which focuses primarily on the transport of patients between health facilities, and is designed to support the reconfiguration of acute hospital services.

The new intermediate care vehicles will be used to replace four existing vehicles that are due to be decommissioned in NAS North Leinster and to replace one existing vehicle in NAS West. The additional four new vehicles will be targeted at the continued introduction of an intermediate care service in NAS West.

Twelve additional rapid response vehicles will be commissioned to allow for further expansion of this tier of service to further improve response times to 999 emergency calls from the public. These vehicles are staffed by

paramedic or advanced paramedic staff who can respond as solo responders to reach the scene of an incident as quickly as possible.

Two Rapid Response Vehicles will be commissioned into NAS North Leinster to replace decommissioned vehicles with four vehicles to be commissioned into NAS West for the same reason. Six vehicles will be commissioned into NAS South to replace decommissioned vehicles and to support in particular the new model of service delivery being rolled out in the Cork/Kerry of NAS South.

An additional 12 emergency ambulances will be commissioned over the coming months to replace decommissioned vehicles – eight ambulances will be located in NAS South, three in NAS North Leinster and one to NAS West.

The ongoing programme to introduce new technology into all ambulance service vehicles will see all vehicles fitted with systems that will allow for the monitoring of vehicles. This will enable real-time diagnostic functionality of the NAS fleet, and associated identified equipment, and provide an alert facility where identified parameters are breached in relation to vehicle functionality or behaviour.

NEW PROCEDURES TO INVESTIGATE PRISONER COMPLAINTS

Amendments to the Prison Rules to support and give effect to robust new procedures for the investigation of prisoner complaints has been announced by the Minister for Justice, Equality and Defence, Alan Shatter,

The Minister said "Prisoners are in a particularly vulnerable position and they must have access to a credible complaints system that deals with genuine complaints in an open, transparent, and independent way." The amendments to the Prison Rules which came into operation on 14 January 2013 is a major step forward, he added.

The Minister had asked the Inspector of Prisons to advise on a suitable prisoner complaints model and the

Inspector submitted a detailed report on the matter which was published last August. While the intention is to put in place a comprehensive complaints system, this will take time and the first priority is to address those categories of complaints which have given rise to most concern.

The Director General of the Irish Prison Service will introduce procedures for dealing with the most serious of complaints as an immediate priority. In the main, the amendments to the Prison Rules provide that prisoner complaints will be examined by investigators from outside the prison service to ensure an effective and impartial investigation.

WATCHDOG WARNS OVER MENTAL HEALTH CARE REFORM DELAYS

The State's watchdog on mental health has warned there is no longer any independent monitoring body examining whether the Government is delivering on its pledges to modernise psychiatric services.

A 'Vision for Change' – the government blueprint on developing mental health services – was published seven years ago. Each year an independent monitoring group, including mental health experts and service users, has reported on progress by health authorities in delivering the seven-year policy. The group dissolved last summer after it reached the end of its lifespan.

John Saunders, chairman of the Mental Health Commission, said it was important to ensure there was ongoing independent monitoring of the Government's

implementation of the blueprint. "There is currently no public plan to review the implementation of A Vision for Change in 2013 as envisaged by the Vision for Change document, which is a matter that needs to be addressed," Saunders said.

He said the policy – to move away from Victorian-era institutions towards community-based services – was widely supported.

But he noted that previous reports by the independent monitoring group had revealed insufficient community services were in place.

In the years since 'A Vision for Change' was published in 2006, the proportion of spending on mental health services had decreased from 7.2 to 5.3 per cent.

SMARTPHONE LEADS TO SUCCESSFUL GALWAY MOUNTAIN RESCUE

An innovative new method of rescue technology was recently used for the first time by Galway Mountain Rescue when the team pinpointed the location of a trapped group of tourists using a smartphone.

Galway Mountain Rescue was contacted in relation to the incident by Gardaí in Clifden who informed them that a group of hillwalkers were trapped on Tully Mountain near Letterfrack.

Three tourists had been walking on the mountain since lunchtime and had become trapped by deteriorating weather conditions.

The team responded immediately and were able to pinpoint the location of the group using the smartphone-based SARLOC system.

Rescuers were dispatched to the location near the summit of the mountain and the stranded hillwalkers were treated at

the scene for hypothermia before being evacuated by foot. Conditions in the area were poor with high winds and heavy showers.

The SARLOC system, created by Russ Hore of the Ogwen Valley Mountain Rescue Team in Wales, works with all popular brands of phone that have a built-in GPS and an active 3G data connection, which no requirement for a pre-installed app.

The rescue team sends a link via text message, which interrogates the hillwalker's phone and relays its position directly back to the team's live asset tracking software.

In the right conditions, this allows the team to pinpoint the location of the lost walker before leaving base. However, as it does rely on having 3G mobile phone coverage, its use can be limited by terrain.

GARDA STATION CLOSURES TO CONSOLIDATE 2013 PROGRAMME

The closure of 100 Garda stations this year on a phased basis forms part of An Garda Síochána's Policing Plan 2013, that sets out the details of the Garda station closures approved by the Minister for Justice and Equality.

The Garda District and Station Consolidation programme is one of the current strategic organisation development programmes being undertaken by An Garda Síochána, and seeks to build on the efficiencies that have been achieved to date.

The Garda District and Station Consolidation Programme provides for:

- * The amalgamation of twenty eight (28) Garda districts to fourteen (14) enlarged Garda districts.
- * The consequential realignment of an additional fourteen (14) Garda district boundaries.
- * The consolidation of one hundred Garda stations arising from the review of district structures.

* The revised opening hours of the Garda station at Dublin Airport and six (6) Garda stations in the Cork City division.

An Garda Síochána has said that the revised structures "will continue to support our community policing philosophy through the clustering of services at policing hubs.

The centralisation of services will facilitate the introduction of an enhanced grid patrolling system that will be operational and intelligence led".

This ongoing patrol system throughout the country will ensure that a high visibility and community oriented policing service.

It will increased mobility and flexibility within an area resulting in an improved policing service to the public, in addition to enhanced co-ordination of Garda activity resulting in a greater visibility and presence in the communities.

Details of the 95 Garda stations that closed on 31 January 2013 and the sub-districts to deliver the policing service to the area can be found on www.garda.ie

WINNER OF DUNBOYNE HOTEL & SPA BREAK

Congratulations to Declan Power. Laois County Fire & Rescue Service, who was the winner of our recent competition, offering readers a spa break at the four-star Dunboyne Castle Hotel and Spa.

His prize is a deluxe overnight break for two adults, three-course dinner at the hotel's Ivy Brasserie, luxury spa treatments in the hotel's award-winning Seoid Spa, and complimentary access to the spa's extensive thermal treatment facilities with outdoor jacuzzi.



GATHERING OF EMS PERSONNEL DURING HEROES WEEK 2013

Heroes Week' is being planned as a 'Gathering' of overseas police, fire service and other emergency personnel with Irish heritage in Tralee, Co. Kerry in June.

The week-long event – 13 to 17 June – will see Kerry

Gardaí, members of the fire service, Irish Red Cross and RNLI reach out to colleagues abroad with whom they will link up with during their visit.

*For more information visit www.facebook.com/TraleeHeroesWeek2013

TraleeHeroesWeek2013

CIVIL DEFENCE VOLUNTEER WINS INAUGURAL AWARD

DUBLIN CIVIL DEFENCE VOLUNTEER ANDREW CONNOLLY HOPES THAT HIS SUCCESS IN WINNING THE INAUGURAL 'EMERGENCY RESPONSE PERSON OF THE YEAR' AWARD WILL ENCOURAGE OTHERS IN CIVIL DEFENCE TO ENTER THE AWARDS SCHEME IN THE FUTURE. REPORT BY GRACE HENEGHAN.

Since joining Dublin Civil Defence ten years ago, Andrew Connolly has attended many incidents in and around the capital and has been involved in a number of heroic rescues. Connolly, who is based with Swords AFS and Malahide Water Rescue, says the reason he was nominated for the award in the first place was due to the fact that he went "above and beyond the call of duty" during a number of rescue missions.

The first such incident involved the successful rescue of two people from the River Liffey some years ago. "It was around the time of the opening of the Port Tunnel, and we were on duty around that time and were first on the scene to rescue the two casualties, carrying out CPR and so on until the arrival of Dublin Fire Brigade."

The second incident took place during the freak severe flooding in Dublin in October 2011 which claimed the life of a Filipino nurse who was unable to escape as her basement apartment flooded.

Connolly, who was an SRT (Swift water Rescue Technician) tasked with Dublin Fire Brigade, recalls "we tried to get into the apartment as best they could but there was just too much water" and sadly they were unable to rescue the nurse from her flooded apartment on time.

GREAT RECOGNITION

Connolly, who was one of three award finalists on the night, had been nominated by Bill Powderly, Assistant Civil Defence Officer with responsibility for Fingal Area. "I knew I had been nominated but I was totally surprised and shocked to get the award, and I actually thought the RNLI was going to win it because it's such a big



Pictured at the award presentation (l-r): LAMA's Cllr Pat Crimmins; James McConnell, Civil Defence Officer; TETRA Ireland's CEO Pat Kelly, award winner Andrew Connolly and Cllr Hugh McElvaney, LAMA chairman.



Pictured following the award presentation (l-r): James McConnell, Civil Defence Officer, award winner Andrew Connolly and Bill Powderly, Assistant Civil Defence Officer.

organisation."

Some of his Civil Defence colleagues from Swords AFS, who are also part of Dublin Fire Brigade, were at the LAMA awards ceremony in the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Santry, to celebrate his win.

"It was a very good night overall," he says, adding that it's great for Civil Defence to get some recognition and publicity to have won the award. "It will push people on in Civil Defence to go for the award and hopefully we will nominate others in the future."

Andrew Connolly works full-time with Eircom Phonewatch, but says he would love to have a career in the fire service, but due to a downturn in recruitment, this has not been possible. However, if the opportunity presented itself he says he would definitely enlist in the fire service. "I had planned on applying to Swords Fire Service, which has been a retained service for years, but was told that it would be disbanded. And now it's a full-time fire service!"

Having successfully completed a number of courses with Dublin Fire Brigade, he now has a number of qualifications under his belt to date; he is an SRT (Swift water Rescue Technician), in addition to completing a pump operators course and the Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) programme. He is ready, willing and able for a call to full-time service and says he hopes to have an opportunity to apply in the near future.

PROTECTING THE COMMUNITY

The 'Emergency Response Person of the Year' category was one of eight new categories in the 2013 Local Authority Members' Association (LAMA) awards. Now in the seventh year of the awards scheme, national recognition was again given to community and council projects that enhanced local areas for the good of the community.

Pat Kelly, CEO of TETRA Ireland (award sponsors) said this category was created "to recognise the extraordinary people we rely on in times of crisis who have shown courage, commitment and dedication to public safety during an incident, or have dedicated a lifetime of service to protecting the community, whether on a voluntary basis or whilst on duty".

He says the award is a great fit for TETRA Ireland, in light of the fact that they run the National Digital Radio Service



LAMA AWARDS 2013

Celebrating councils and communities TOGETHER

LAMA AWARD WINNERS FOR 2013

The LAMA Awards 2013 included eight new categories to acknowledge the important role that business, communications and tourism play on a local and national level in conjunction with local authorities nationwide.

- *Best Civil Engineering Project: Tipperary Decentralisation Project*
- *Best Community Based Initiative: Fleadh Cheol na hÉireann*
- *Best Community Sports Club: Parnells GAA Club 'The Chanel Sports and Hospitality Venue'*
- *Best Eco Friendly Initiative: SMILE Resource Exchange*
- *Best Economic Partnership: MEET WEST*
- *Best Educational Building: Engineering Building NUI Galway*
- *Best Energy Efficient Project: UCC Implementation of Energy Management Standard ISO 50001*
- *Best Green Authority: Cork County Council*
- *Best Healthcare Building: LauraLynn House – Ireland's Children's Hospice*
- *Best Heritage Project: Enniscorthy Castle*
- *Best Irish Business Working with the Community: Supermac's Ireland – Road Safety Colouring Competition*
- *Best Managed Water Project: Ballycroy, Killeen, Kilmeena Group Water Schemes*
- *Best Public Building: Solstice Arts Centre*
- *Best Public Park: Camcor Park Riverside Walk*
- *Best Social Housing Project: Cuan Aoibhinn Achill Sheltered Housing Association*
- *Best Use of IT: Parking Tag*
- *Community Volunteer of the Year: Joe Byrne*
- *Council of the Year: South Dublin County Council*
- *Emergency Response Person of the Year: Andrew Connolly, Civil Defence*
- *Local Educational Initiative of the Year: Ready2Read*
- *Most Innovative Authority: Mayo County Council*
- *National Impact Award: Volvo Ocean Race Finale Galway*
- *Grand Prix: Laura Lynn House -Ireland's Children's Hospice*

(NDRS) for the emergency services. The NDRS is a nationwide, secure and totally resilient network already in use by An Garda Síochána, the Naval Service, the Irish Prison Service, Coast Guard and HSE Ambulance Service, local authorities, in addition to agencies such as Mountain Rescue Ireland and Inland Fisheries.

"We work with the emergency services on a daily basis and we are proud to be associated with frontline personnel who show tremendous courage and bravery in dealing with life threatening situations on a frequent basis, and provide security and comfort to the wider community."



JOINING FORCES FOR SEARCH AND RESCUE

'EMERGENCY SERVICES IRELAND' IS THE MEDIA PARTNER FOR SEARCH AND RESCUE EUROPE 2013, WHICH TAKES PLACE THIS YEAR IN THE UK FROM 19 TO 21 MARCH, WHEN RAF, ARCTIC COMMAND AND HM COASTGUARD WILL DISCUSS SAR OPERATION STRATEGIES AND CASE STUDIES.

Over 100 SAR representatives from 14 nations will come together at Search and Rescue Europe 2013.

They will share insight into enhancing SAR capabilities, increasing interoperability across SAR resources and carrying out best practice life saving techniques.

Taking place at Action Stations in Portsmouth, UK from Tuesday 19 to Thursday 21 March, this unique SAR programme will share lessons learned from major rescue operations, outline how agencies and organisations have responded and developed in response and provide an understanding of the best methods and technologies being used around the world by the SAR community.

Key Presentation Highlights:

- Squadron Leader Jonathan Heald, OC

ARCC, Royal Air Force will share the latest updates on European SAR co-operation.

- Roly Mckie, Staff Officer SAR Operations, MCA will share insight into the UK's experiences in wind farm and offshore renewable energy SAR matters.
- On-scene commanders from Oslo police will share first hand insight into the multi-agency search and rescue activities after the 2011 Norwegian terrorist attacks.
- The Mass Rescue Focus Day, led by the IMRF, will explore international efforts to improve mass rescue response.

This diverse and interactive event will allow organisations to hear the latest international SAR developments and case studies to help them develop practical

strategies to improve their Search and Rescue operations.

Current Registered Attendees:

- Directorate Air Requirements, Royal Canadian Air Force
- Chief of Operations, Icelandic Coast Guard
- Acting Chief Coastguard, Maritime & Coastguard Agency
- Head of Search and Rescue, Slovakia
- Senior Staff Officer, Royal Netherlands Air Force
- Head of Search and Rescue, Swedish Maritime Administration
- Senior Staff Officer, Royal Navy

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit www.sar-europe.com/esi, call +44 (0)20 7036 1300 or email enquire@iqpc.co.uk.

SEARCH AND RESCUE ON RTE'S AUTUMN SCHEDULE

FOLLOWING THE SUCCESS OF RTE'S 'IRELAND'S SEARCH AND RESCUE' SERIES, THE FOURTH INSTALMENT OF THIS POPULAR SIX-PART SERIES IS SCHEDULED TO BE SCREENED IN THE AUTUMN, WHEN AN EVEN GREATER FOCUS WILL BE ON THE ROLE PLAYED BY THE VOLUNTARY AGENCIES. REPORT BY FINTAN DEERE.

RTE's recent six-part series told the story of search and rescue missions across the country, from Kerry to Donegal, Doolin to Dublin, working with all four Irish Coast Guard helicopter bases in Dublin, Waterford, Shannon and Sligo. In addition to zooming in on RNLI stations and mountain rescue teams nationwide, the third series also highlighted the work of Cork City Fire Brigade and volunteer Coast Guard units such as Doolin and Howth.

As well as showing rescue footage, the programme profiled individual groups and showed how many agencies work together in dangerous environments to save lives. It also highlighted the important role played by volunteers in search and rescue missions across Ireland, as builders, fisherman, nurses, engineers and doctors give up their spare time to organisations like the RNLI, Mountain Rescue and the Irish Coast Guard units.

'Ireland's Search and Rescue' programme, presented by Clare Byrne on RTE, had an average viewership of 342,000 equating to an average audience share of 23 per cent, during its six-week run, which started on 18 November 2012.

Following the success of the first two series – 'Rescue 115' featuring the Irish Coast Guard base in Waterford and 'Rescue 117' in Shannon – the third series was a year-long production, involving up to 100 cameras used by rescue teams across the country to capture the work they do.

The programme's team includes an executive producer, a series producer, an assistant producer and a researcher/project co-ordinator, all working out of RTE's Cork studios.



A lot of work is offshore or in remote areas and the public do not have the opportunity to see that work, according to Chris Reynolds, Director of the Irish Coast Guard.

GROUND-BREAKING SERIES

Executive producer Janet Frawley says the series was ground-breaking at the start and was made possible by advances in small discreet, user-friendly cameras, which capture footage unobtrusively while the rescue teams get on with their job.

The programme has evolved naturally, according to Frawley, from the initial focus on the Irish Coast Guard to the other agencies, and to the volunteer aspect of the services which will be highlighted strongly in the next series in the autumn.

"Part of the reason it's an exciting series to work on is that it is a slice of social history in the making which we will now have in the archives – new camera technology and new Sikorsky helicopters, with greater increase in range, have changed both jobs and work practices," she notes.

The series captures people in real trouble and no-one's time of crisis is shown without their permission. "While the public is interested in watching real-life distress stories, it is not a public interest requirement to show them, so permission is a big issue," says Frawley.

"We are a feature-based programme, not a news one and that's fortunate because we can let the dust settle, and give people time to



RTE's Clare Byrne, who presented the latest series on 'Ireland's Search and Rescue', pictured with Coast Guard crew members.



"We wanted to impress on people that they have to call us early, wear lifejackets and stay alive until we get there. We wanted to change a culture of lack of compliance with people not having lifejackets and rescue beacons." – Chris Reynolds, Director of Irish Coast Guard.

recover and think about whether or not they would like to participate."

The programmes were screened on Sunday evenings at 6.30pm. She says this time-slot is ideal and is one when families sit down to view TV. "We are mindful of that; the programme is one people can appreciate together and it's semi-educational."

She says the feedback from viewers has been very positive. "In the third series we included additional agencies and we intend to include more voluntary bodies such as the Civil Defence, in the next one."

"It's been quite an experience from my point of view and we have covered great tragedies and losses but when the rescue comes off, we all feel a sigh of relief. The level of co-ordination and planning and the way lessons are learned has been a real eye-opener."

CHANGING PUBLIC MINDSET

Chris Reynolds, Director of the Irish Coast Guard, said that from the start, his organisation has been happy to be involved in the programme. "RTE approached us about a fly-on-the wall documentary on the Coast Guard helicopter in Waterford and we engaged for a number of reasons," he explained.

"A lot of work is offshore or in remote areas and the public do not have the opportunity to see that work." Reynolds had found that some people who went to sea were not fully aware of the Coast Guard service and often they were calling too late into a crisis for assistance.

"We wanted to impress on people that they have to call us early and wear lifejackets and stay alive until we get there. We wanted to change a culture of lack of compliance and people not having lifejackets and rescue beacons."

"The fact is that you can stay alive in the water for up to an hour and that if you are within any distance of the coast, we can get there and you can survive."

When RTE wanted a second series, the Coast Guard was keen to change location and show a different side of its work.

"In Waterford, you have people lost in the Comeragh Mountains, small boats in difficulty, surfers and people on the shoreline – standard snatch-and-grab work. Shannon was, for example, much more offshore, foreign fishing vessels, language issues and the ambulance service for the west coast islands."

'IRELAND'S SEARCH AND RESCUE' HIGHLIGHTS

Highlights from RTE's recent six-part 'Ireland's Search and Rescue' series.

- **Episode 1:** *There's a search and rescue mission for the crew of the fishing vessel the 'Tit Bonhomme' in Cork, followed by the multi-agency rescue in Portmarnock, when a local mother accidentally drove her car over a cliff with six children inside.*
- **Episode 2:** *Dublin's Coast Guard Helicopter 'Rescue 116' answers a call to a young man who had fallen 60 feet from a cliff in Killiney; a difficult rescue as live Dart cables surround the area. Bonfire night in Cork and Cork City Fire Brigade has one of their longest nights of the year as terrified neighbours reported bonfires burning outside their front doors. A terrified climber is rooted to the spot with Vertigo 600m up Donegal's Muckish Mountain.*
- **Episode 3:** *A boat bursts into flames in Cork Harbour. Stranded on rocks and hanging over an incoming tide, a Cork teenager needs the help of Crosshaven RNLI. Doolin Coast Guard race to save a climber who has fallen from the sheer heights of its Mirror wall. Dublin-Wicklow Mountain Rescue respond to a hunter who is immobilised on wet ground – hypothermia is the big fear.*
- **Episode 4:** *A dual-agency rescue of a sinking trawler, off the coast of Howth Co. Dublin. Cork City Fire Brigade takes no chances when a tumble dryer goes on fire.*
- **Episode 5:** *A dual agency rescue when a woman has a serious fall on her way down a cliff side in Howth. The Cork Airplane Crash – an aviation nightmare. Donegal Mountain Rescue Team comes to the aid of a couple lost in the fog on Muckish Mountain.*
- **Episode 6:** *A hunter stranded on the wet, exposed Wicklow Mountains needs the help of Dublin-Wicklow Mountain Rescue Team. A fisherman has his chest crushed miles out to sea; Shannon Coastguard Helicopter 'Rescue 116' is his only chance of making it to hospital. A special Christmas rescue in Waterford, as a large cuddly man in red needs something much faster than a reindeer!*



SPIRIT OF VOLUNTEERISM

Now Reynolds sees a need to go further and highlight the spirit of volunteerism behind so many of the services. "On the stormiest bleakest night, we ask them to go to sea or search cliffs, and I know no other country with that level of volunteer involvement," he remarks.

"In Ireland we don't have a tradition of saying 'well done'. It is time that volunteers got credit and this is a way that RTE as a state broadcaster can show all the good that's going on." The feedback to and from staff of the Coast Guard about the programmes is positive, he says.

"We had a scene in the last episode before Christmas where we rescued Santa Claus and brought him to the children's hospital, and we got loads of Facebook messages and letters to thank us!"

The Coast Guard director agrees with Janet Frawley that the Sunday evening slot of the broadcasts makes it family viewing, adding that this constrains showing some aspects of the work.

"We do some more serious rescues but it's not suitable for showing at 6.30 pm, because it would be too intense, so it's preferable to show some of the lighter stuff."

CHALLENGING CONDITIONS

Niamh Stephenson, RNLI's Public Relations Manager, says her organisation was involved because it had previously featured on some episodes during the first 'Rescue 117' series.

"The RNLI was delighted to participate because we're a charity and rely on the generosity of the public. We were rolling out the installation of cameras on lifeboats and helmet cameras for training purposes so we had footage," she explains.

"The RNLI crews are so modest and humble and they might describe a rescue as very straightforward, but the visual image is great because when you see the footage you see how challenging the conditions can be."

The series has been, she says "extremely popular with crews and supporters" and "it doesn't hurt to have been seen on TV when you're shaking a bucket for donations".

Stephenson says cameras are now operational at most RNLI stations around the country, and the crew can edit the footage themselves. She likes the fact that the TV series has had a good geographical spread.



Chief pilot Captain Dara Fitzpatrick and her Coast Guard crew from the Waterford base, who took part in the first series 'Rescue 115'.



Many volunteers give up their spare time to organisations such as the RNLI, mountain rescue and the Irish Coast Guard units..



RTE intends to include additional voluntary agencies in the next series, such as the Civil Defence.

NEW SMARTPHONE APPLICATION FOR IRISH COAST GUARD

THE IRISH COAST GUARD HAS DEVELOPED A NEW APP WITH THE POTENTIAL TO SAVE LIVES AT SEA, WHICH IS EXPECTED TO COME INTO USE IN EARLY 2013. THE SMARTPHONE APP WILL BE AVAILABLE TO BOTH IPHONE AND ANDROID USERS.

Chris Reynolds, Director of the Irish Coast Guard, said the new Smartphone App is the first of its kind anywhere in the world.

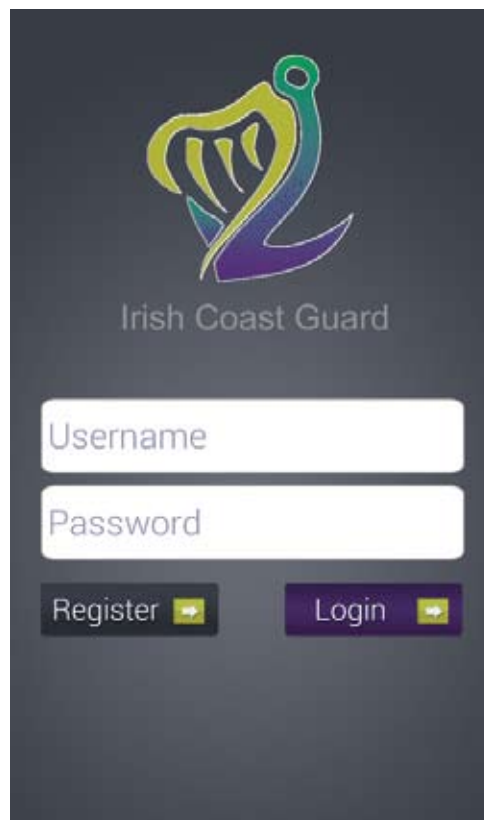
"Its purpose is to further encourage anyone going out to sea, particularly small leisure craft users, jetskis, kayakers, dive boats, yachts and the like, to let the Coast Guard know where you are, who and how many are onboard and how long you are overdue should you get in difficulty.

"Knowing a boat is overdue, getting to casualties early and taking the search out of search and rescue is the key for a successful rescue. It has the potential to get our resources on-scene as quickly as possible, which will in turn save lives."

The new Smartphone App, which was in development and testing for over six months, was trialled by a cross-section of people across Ireland.

The test group, which included sailors, divers, fishermen, powerboat users and pleasure-craft water users from every corner of Ireland, was asked to test the App in a variety of situations, including diverse weather conditions. Their feedback and experience has been invaluable to the development of the final App.

"The new App is very easy to use and is being extensively tested at present. It



requires you to input some basic details before heading out on the water and it will track your movements and trigger an alert if you have not returned as expected. Our experience shows that even wearing a life jacket, your life may be at risk if you are in the water for prolonged periods, in dangerous currents or poor weather conditions," Reynolds added.

"The quicker we know what, where and who; the quicker you are rescued; and the more likely your survival." However, the Coast Guard stresses that this App does not lessen the need for



seafarers to carry the right lifejackets and take basic safety precautions.

INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGY

He noted that Coast Guards from the UK, Sweden, Malta and Portugal see the value of using this innovative technology with coast guard organisations in Australia and New Zealand already trialling the system in their own jurisdictions.

"Around the world, experience shows that getting to casualties early is the key for search and rescue units. While we are trialling this new technology, remember

that it is not being developed as an alternative to VHF radio or emergency beacons," the ICG director pointed out.

The new App is being developed by the Irish Coast Guard in conjunction with DeCare Systems Ireland, a Cork-based company. It is expected that the App will be available in early 2013, for a small fee (yet to be determined) when it is ready for full release.

GREATER AWARENESS

Derek Flanagan, District Controller of the Malin Head Coast Guard, believes the new technology will cause sea goers to become more conscious of alerting the Coast Guard to their movements. He also says that it will improve the general awareness of those who go to sea to take responsibility for their own safety and that of their crew.

The system would involve sailors to input a range of details before setting off. If the vessel fails to return on time, an alert will automatically be sent to a number of emergency contacts ashore, who can investigate why a boat is overdue. If the emergency contacts cannot ascertain the whereabouts of the boat, then the Coast Guard will be notified and the necessary action initiated.



"The whole idea is to encourage mariners to inform us when they are going out to sea. When and where they plan to go, when they plan to return and how many are going," he said.

"It's very important to get to people early. What can happen when we don't

know people are missing is they are left dealing with a range of issues in the water. Even with life jackets, they are fighting hypothermia, currents and tides. There are lots of factors involved and it is crucial to get to them early. It greatly increases their chances of survival," Flanagan concluded.



WEXFORD'S QUAY VOLUNTEERS HELP TO KEEP WATCH

THE EMERGENCY SERVICES IN WEXFORD TOWN HAVE JOINED FORCES TO SET UP A NEW VOLUNTARY ORGANISATION IN ROLLING OUT WATCH PATROLS IN RESPONSE TO THE RISING TIDE OF TRAGIC SUICIDES IN WEXFORD HARBOUR AND SURROUNDING AREAS OVER THE LAST 12 MONTHS.

Wexford Marine Watch is a new voluntary organisation to hit the shores of the south east harbour town in a bid to combat a rising suicide epidemic in the last 12 months, especially around Wexford Bridge and the Quay region.

For the first time ever both the state and voluntary emergency services have joined forces to establish the organisation in the town. Wexford Marine Watch was set up earlier this year, following a meeting in December 2012 attended by representatives from An Garda Síochána, RNLI, the Coast Guard, HSE National Ambulance Service, Order of Malta, Red Cross, Wexford Civil Defence, Wexford Local Authorities and Wexford Fire Service.

According to Conor Barry, secretary of Wexford Marine Watch, the unit is looking to train volunteers and provide them with the necessary skills to carry out their responsibilities and to co-ordinate with other emergency services to provide support for victims in need.

Each volunteer will be required to undergo Garda vetting before they receive the appropriate and officially recognised training, such as courses in first aid, suicide awareness and water awareness.

"They will be shown the best approach and support to offer those in difficulty by a team of professionals who will guide them in the best practices for the work they will carry out. They will also be supported by the emergency services and the voluntary organisations in Wexford and will be afforded as much help and assistance as is needed," he told 'Emergency Services Ireland'.

He added that the committee is currently gathering equipment such as a vehicle (crew-cab van), all-weather suits,



EMS personnel pictured at Wexford Harbour (l-r): Frank Flanagan, chairman; Nick Bowie, Wexford RNLI; Cllr George Lawlor, Wexford County Council, Michael Hanton, Order of Malta; Garda Neil Murphy; Ger Carthy, Ambulance Service; Garda Sgt. Denis Whelan; Conor Barry, Civil Defence; John Maher, Wexford Fire Service; and Peter O'Connor, Civil Defence; (Pic: Jim Campbell)

communications equipment (i.e. mobile phone service and provider), personal safety flotation devices, life rings, throw ropes and bags.

SUICIDE PREVENTION PATROLS

"Wexford Marine Watch has been established primarily to try and combat an increasing epidemic of suicides off Wexford Bridge – one of the longest bridges in Ireland today. Most of these individuals are not recovered in time and get swept away by the very strong tidal flows in the harbour. This can result in drawn-out lengthy searches for weeks, with no sign of closure for the families affected. It is distressing for the community, the rescuers and the families involved."

Wexford Marine Watch will provide the harbour area with 'Suicide Prevention Patrols' – operated on various nights each week by trained volunteers who will work on a rota-basis each month, to help save lives and make people aware of the dangers of the water.

All volunteers will also monitor lifesaving equipment in the area to ensure all are intact and function correctly and

effectively. Each three-member team will have a supervisor who is responsible for liaising with the emergency services including the Coast Guard.

PUBLIC DONATIONS NEEDED

He added that each member is asked to volunteer "just one night of their time per month, usually from 10pm to 3am". Volunteer teams will be in constant contact with the Coast Guard and Gardaí.

Barry said that Wexford Marine Watch is 100 per cent funded by donations from the general public and the generosity of local businesses and individuals to help with organising fundraising events in the community.

"Each volunteer requires a certain degree of training, in addition to the provision of all-weather safety clothing, lifejackets, radios, searchlights, throw-bags, not to mention insurance, all which costs money. Without this fundraising support, the scheme cannot operate."

*For further information email wexfordmarinewatch@gmail.com or visit www.wexfordmarinewatch.ie



CIVIL AVIATION SECURITY LANDS AT DOOR OF THE IAA

WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR CIVIL AVIATION SECURITY NOW TRANSFERRED TO THE IRISH AVIATION AUTHORITY, INTERNATIONAL SECURITY CONSULTANT NOEL G. WHELAN SAYS IT IS GOOD NEWS FOR IRELAND, IN LIGHT OF THE NEED TO MEET THE RAPIDLY CHANGING THREATS FROM INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM HEAD ON AND MITIGATE THE RISKS.

The decision by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport to charge the Irish Aviation Authority (IAA) with responsibility for the co-ordination and monitoring of the implementation of its national aviation security programme is a better move technically, tactically and strategically in protecting our aviation infrastructure.

At the same time it contributes to the international aviation security environment, and is a much better option than the Government rolling out a multi-agency approach to secure our airports and airlines.

"Security at the State and Regional

airports has been significantly enhanced following the terrorist incidents of September 2001 in the US. A wide range of extra security measures have been implemented at all Irish airports. These measures are under continuous review by the National Civil Aviation Security Committee (NCASC).

The precise details of the new security arrangements are not disclosed on security grounds but appropriate measures are being taken to safeguard civil aviation in Ireland." (Source: Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, 2013)

This would suggest that threats to Irish

aviation are very real and that securing our airports and protecting our airspace from terrorist attacks is a very high priority to our government.

A RIGHT TO SAFETY

Security and aviation are vital to each other and the travelling passengers who surrender their security requirements and trust to Irish airports staff, security infrastructure and procedures before and during their flight.

Travelling passengers have an absolute right to safety while travelling on aircraft as international terrorists still have an obsession with using aircraft to

commit even more spectacular attacks internationally since the attacks of 9/11. This can be seen via the many security restrictions for boarding an aircraft i.e. the 100ml liquid limitation and having to remove footwear for inspection that are still in place.

However, for most travelling passengers, their first-ever real contact with aviation security begins when they arrive at the airport and enter the search area. Although passengers are asked the standard check-in security questions while checking in online or at the actual check-in desk by airline staff, in reality some passengers never think ahead about their own or others security; they just take it for granted.

PROFESSIONAL SECURITY SCREENING

Travelling by air for many years I am always prepared well in advance of any journey; security is and always has been very high on my list of priorities.

I always have enjoyed travelling through Dublin and other Irish airports because the security screening staff and the passport control authorities are always professional and offer the travelling public a much-needed smile. Nobody likes being searched or asked pointed questions!

I have witnessed Irish aviation security personnel always remain calm and professional. I believe this cannot be said for many other international airports where the authorities take your passport and visually scan you from head to toe while eyeballing your passport details and picture for a number of minutes.

This makes innocent travellers feel like a criminal and they become frightened for no reason other than a lack of training on behalf of foreign authorities in passive observation and questioning of travellers. I have always found this passive method the most effective for getting the information and gathering intelligence.

The contrast between some international airports' security measures is also very worrying.

For example, searching staff can be seen talking and laughing continually with the operator who is supposed to be observing the x-ray monitor for dangerous goods being transported: Observation and intervention skills are crucial to aviation security.

Thankfully I have not witnessed such

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Noel G. Whelan has 17 years experience in training, operations, lecturing and regularly speaks to the international media on national and international terrorism, crime and security issues.

Awarded a Masters Degree in Terrorism and Security in 2007, his work has taken him to many parts of the globe, from Russia, Kazakhstan and the Baltic States to South America. He has lectured and trained many international community armies, police forces and security organisations including US Government personnel at the Center of Homeland Security in Beaumont, Texas, as well as SWAT teams and federal agencies.

Whelan offers advanced security studies and training in counter

insurgency, technical, tactical and strategic responses to terrorism, protecting the state, people, property, infrastructure and national security. To contact him email info.greyknight@gmail.com; website: www.greyknight.eu; phone +353-85-1094271



complacent activities on behalf of the security staff at Irish airports and I would bitterly complain if I did.

Realistically security in Ireland's civil aviation sector begins long before the passenger arrives at the security screening area, as the security search area is only one cog in a big wheel of security measures and multi-deterrence layers in protecting our airlines, travelling public and the aircraft flying through our airspace.

As international threats to aviation change and remain in a state of continual flux from terrorism, smuggling of drugs and trafficking of people, so should our state's systems and procedures to protect and deter.

TERRORIST ATTACKS

EU Regulation 300/2008 to which Ireland is a signatory requires member states to formally designate an appropriate authority and charge it with responsibility for the co-ordination and monitoring of the implementation of its National Aviation Security Programme.

On 1 January 2013, the IAA became the appropriate authority for the oversight of civil aviation security in Ireland. Security oversight will involve inspections and

audits of airports, air carriers, cargo companies, airport suppliers and suppliers of in-flight services. Following a review of its activities, the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport decided that the IAA should become the "appropriate authority for airport security oversight on the basis that it constitutes a good synergy with the role it already plays in safety oversight".

The IAA already undertakes safety audits on many of the companies in question, so security oversight is a logical expansion of that remit.

Since the IAA was founded in 1994, it has been responsible for the management of Irish controlled airspace and the safety regulation of Irish civil aviation, licensing pilots, air traffic control, flight crew, registering aircraft in Ireland and undertaking ramp inspections of foreign aircraft. Those roles and responsibilities will now extend to airside shops, fuel suppliers, restaurants, maintenance companies, cargo exporters, monitoring, and compliance of security aviation legislation.

The Authority also carries out a range of operational and regulatory functions and services on behalf of the state relating to the safety and technical aspects of civil aviation. The IAA ensures that Irish

civil aviation operates to international and European safety standards and systems in accordance with the following international agreements.

- Air Traffic Management;
- Safety Regulation;
- Role of the National Supervisory Authority;
- Single European Sky;
- Legislation;
- Commercial Services;
- College Ireland;
- Training in ATM;
- Aviation and the Environment;
- Safety Assessment of Foreign Aircraft;
- Policy on Consultation by Planning Authorities;
- Non-Aviation Activities Impacting Airspace.

NO SECURITY GUARANTEES

Millions of people travel through our airports and airspace every year. There is no such thing as one hundred per cent guarantee in any form of security. The public are very much a part of the strategy to protect our airlines and airports, with the IAA as the appropriately-appointed body by the minister, could get the Irish travelling public to sign up socially to and really understand why it's so important to prepare for travelling by air, then the outcome will be successful now and into the future.

Although Ireland is a welcoming nation, well known for relaxation,

fun, with great pubs, people and entertainment, it must, however, remain absolutely clear to the observing eyes of would-be international terrorists or smugglers that although our search area security, customs, border control personnel and the police smile at passengers while doing their job, this professional kindness must never be

mistaken for weakness in our critical security infrastructure.

IAA's priorities must be to maintain standards, increase our professional security deterrent passively to meet threats to our airlines and airports head on, while at the same time offering that welcoming charm as the first and last point of contact with our nation.

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INTER-AGENCY NETWORKING ON HAZARD RESPONSE

JOIN OTHER PROFESSIONALS IN DISASTER AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE IN DUBLIN ON 16 AND 17 APRIL AT 'ALL HAZARD RESPONSE' A CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION TO FOCUS ON HOW AGENCIES FROM AROUND THE WORLD PREPARE AND RESPOND TO COMPLEX CATASTROPHES.

International participants from the fields of hazmat, disaster medicine, CBRNE and emergency management will gather for this two-day event at the CityWest Hotel in Dublin to learn how they can broaden their skills

into other fields which is an increasing requirement throughout the world.

Expert speakers from Ireland, the USA, Japan, France, Austria, Switzerland, Germany, Italy and the UK will make presentations on best practice and

lessons learned. Incorporated into the programme will be training demonstrations from Irish, UK, French and German-based units on their response mechanisms to a high-profile complex incident. For further information contact +44-1403-246985

DAY ONE

9.00 – 9.10

Senior Irish Minister – TBC

9.10 – 9.30

Col. Iwakuma – Cmdr. CNBC, Japanese Ground Self Defence Force

9.30 – 10.00

Matt Scullion – Biofire Diagnostics

10.00 – 10.30

Tristan Simonart – D.G. Enterprise, EC

10.30 – 11.00 – Coffee break

11.00 – 12.00 **Exercise Part One**

Multi Agency – Irish Response Agencies

12.00 – 12.30 **Exercise Part One AAR**

12.30 – 13.30 – Lunch

13.30 – 15.00 **Stream A
HazMat+**

Greg Noll – Program Manager, South Central PA Regional Task Force

Eric Damiens – Proengin

Armando Bevelacqua – Chief of Special Operations (ret.), Orlando

**Stream B
Explosives+**

Nick Vent – Environmental Health Specialist, San Diego

Industry – TBC

Commandant Ray Lane – Ordnance Corps, Irish Defence Forces

15.00 – 15.30 – Coffee break

15.30 – 16.30 **Exercise Part Two**

773rd CST

16.30 – 17.00 **Exercise Part Two AAR**

17.00 – 17.30

Peter Daly, Irish Office of Emergency Management

DAY TWO

Mass Casualty+

9.00 – 9.30

Dr Catherine Bertrand – Director of Emergency Medicine Teaching Centre, SAMU, France

9.30 – 10.00

Stefano Miorotti – Cristanini

10.00 – 10.30

Dr Karl Harrison – Lecturer in Forensic Archaeology, Cranfield University

10.30 – 11.00 – Coffee break

11.00 – 12.00 **Exercise Part Three**

HART GWAS – (Hazardous Area Response Team, Great Western Ambulance Service, UK)

12.00 – 12.30 **Exercise Part Three AAR**

12.30 – 13.30 – Lunch

13.30 – 15.00 **Stream C
Environmental+**

Erica Canzler – Director CBRN CMAT, Office of Emergency Management, EPA

Industry – TBC

TBC – TBC

15.00 – 15.30 – Coffee break

15.30 – 16.30 **Exercise Part Four**

Sapeur Pompier de Paris

16.30 – 17.00 **Exercise Part Four AAR**

17.00 – 17.30

Gerry Sheridan, Suffolk County Police Department, New York, USA

NETWORK IS CRITICAL TO SUCCESS OF STRESS MANAGEMENT

THE RELAUNCH OF IRELAND'S CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS MANAGEMENT (CISM) NETWORK AT NUI MAYNOOTH HAS SEEN A GROWING AWARENESS OF AND IMPROVED RESOURCES THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY FOR CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS MANAGEMENT. REPORT BY JOHN WALSH.

Ireland's approach to critical incident stress management for emergency services personnel coupled with a lack of resources was heavily criticised for many years by the Director of Personnel Support Services with the Defence Forces.

However, the relaunch of the Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Network within the last three years has proved a tremendous success, according to Lt Col Ollie Barbour, PRO of CISM Network.

Alongside the growth of the CISM Network, resources are also improving. "Certain agencies and organisations are still lacking, but we have seen a number of state and private agencies joining the CISM network and sharing their experiences.

"Our conferences have increased in number as well. So, there is a greater awareness of CISM and greater facilities put in place within organisations."

EXCHANGE OF BEST PRACTICE

The CISM Network was originally set up in 2000 by senior social workers from some of Dublin's major hospitals to provide psychological support to emergency services personnel who experienced stress and trauma following a major critical incident or accident.

The network lay dormant between 2006 and 2009 but the last three years have seen a dramatic relaunch with extremely positive results.

Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Network Ireland provides a forum for the promotion and exchange of best

practice information on CISM and information on standards, availability and provision of training for CISM.

The CISM Network is run by an inter-agency National Steering Committee (NSC) comprising a wide range of representatives from the north and south of Ireland, including statutory, voluntary, emergency, military and other agencies.

This network is the first of its kind in Ireland and is the leading group to provide advice, work with, and support the emergency services in implementing CISM in Ireland

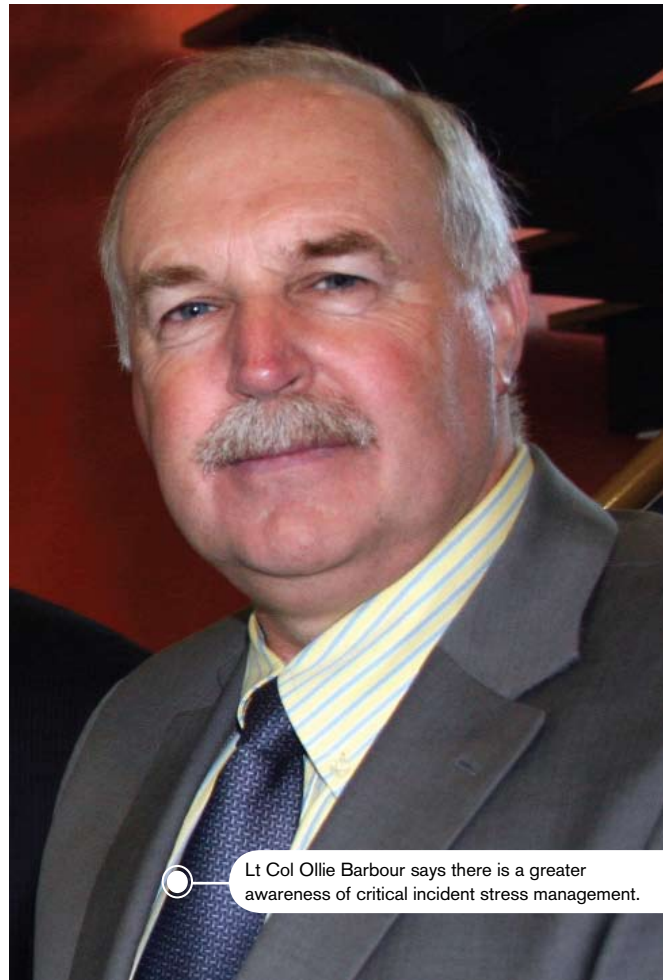
NETWORK MEMBERSHIP

"We've now got our roots firmly established in the Department of Psychology at the National University of Ireland in Maynooth," explains Barbour, a registered psychotherapist who specialises in trauma management.

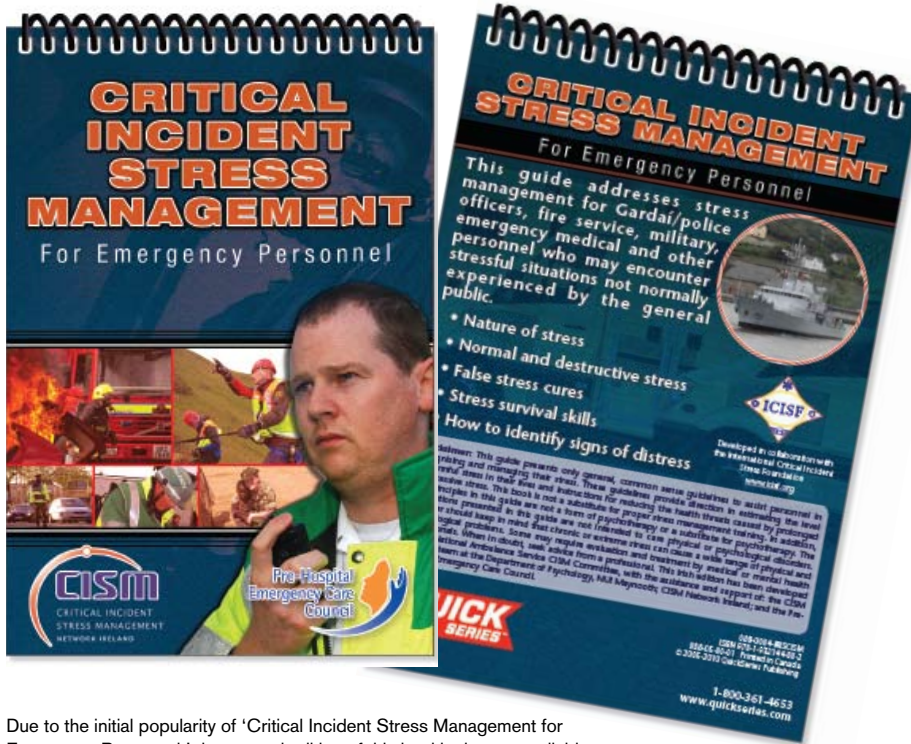
"That has given us a great foundation,

and as a result of that foundation, we have grown, with the addition of a number of different organisations to our membership."

CISM Network's membership now includes a wide range of organisations - the Defence Forces, Dublin Fire Brigade, the National Ambulance Service, the HSE,



Lt Col Ollie Barbour says there is a greater awareness of critical incident stress management.



Due to the initial popularity of 'Critical Incident Stress Management for Emergency Personnel,' the second edition of this booklet is now available. For further information visit www.cismnetworkireland.ie

the Office of Emergency Management, the Irish Aviation Authority, the Coast Guard, the Prison Service, the Red Cross and more recently the State Claims Agency.

"As a result of our conferences and workshops, awareness has improved. The network itself has been engaged with a number of agencies, including the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH). We have given talks on CISM, which has led to a subsequent increase in hits on our website," notes Barbour.

CONFERENCES & WORKSHOPS

Workshops, conferences and training courses organised by the CISM Network have proved very popular. The network organises two major conferences and an AGM each year.

March 2012 saw a conference geared towards managers of organisations and agencies who have a responsibility for overseeing critical incidents.

"The idea behind that was to introduce CISM, at a HR level within organisations and to teach HR managers their legal requirements and their moral obligations, in relation to CISM," Barbour explains.

Their autumn 2012 conference was developed for frontline staff; delegates were presented with the fictitious scenario of an aircraft crash on the M50.

They were walked through that

exercise, then divided up into different groups and each agency was asked the actions they would take for their personnel who were involved in such an incident.

"So, we found out how agencies can come together and support each other, should we have a major disaster."

PEER SUPPORT PROGRAMME

This year's events include a CISM Peer Support workshop at NUI Maynooth on 20-23 March, while the autumn will see a presentation from Dr John Durkin, a UK psychologist specialising in post-traumatic growth.

"Not everybody suffers distress as a result of critical incidents," he explains.

"Some people go into critical incidents and come out feeling a lot better as a result of their experience.

For example, if somebody is involved in an accident where a child is seriously injured, they might go home and appreciate their own child, so sometimes people grow from the whole area of disaster.

"There is little research into this area – there is a lot of research into distress – so what Dr Durkin hopes to do is to show that some people grow as a result of tragedy."

POST-GRADUATE COURSE

Barbour is also hopeful that the autumn



NUI MAYNOOTH

Ollscoil na hÉireann Má Nuad

PEER SUPPORT TRAINING IN CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS

CISM Network Ireland is organising a post-grad course on peer support for critical incident stress management. It will be hosted by The Mental Health and Social Research Unit, Department of Psychology at NUI Maynooth from 20 to 23 March.

The reduced course fee for CISM Network members is €450 and €500 for non-members, which includes individual and group interventions. A limited number of places are available.

For more information contact Sharon Gallagher @ 01-7086659 or email Sharon.Gallagher@nuim.ie

will see the introduction of a part-time post-graduate course in NUI Maynooth. Ollie Barbour and Sharon Gallagher, principal investigator, CISM, NUI Maynooth, made a joint presentation in February to the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation's World Congress in Baltimore, Maryland, USA.

Their presentation focussed on the evolution of CISM in Ireland at a national level and the development of a best practice model.

"There has been huge progress in terms of the number of organisations who have joined the CISM Network and the awareness of CISM.

"Even from a legal point of view, organisations now realise that there is a requirement to have a policy in place should a critical incident occur," Barbour concludes.



Barrie Rooney, a lab scientist from Co. Leitrim, specialises in diagnosing the tropical disease, Sleeping Sickness (Human African Trypanosomiasis). This photo was taken of her in Central Africa Republic in 2012 – she was a part of a mobile team travelling around remote areas by canoe and landcruisers to find and cure people with the disease. (Pic: Sebastien Bolesch)

DOCTORS IN THE DANGER ZONE

MÉDECINS SANS FRONTIÈRES WILL HOST ITS FIRST STUDENT HUMANITARIAN CHALLENGE IN DUBLIN THIS AUTUMN TO HIGHLIGHT THE COMPLEXITIES FACED BY ORGANISATIONS IN PROVIDING MEDICAL AID TO CONFLICT ZONES AROUND THE WORLD. JANE-ANN MCKENNA, HEAD OF MSF IRELAND, TALKS TO JOHN WALSHE.

Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) Ireland is supporting the first student MSF Ireland Humanitarian

Challenge in Dublin this autumn. Teams of students from Ireland and Northern Ireland will face a real-life humanitarian challenge, as encountered by MSF teams in the field.

The student organisers are currently looking for corporate sponsorship to cover the “modest costs” of the event, which will test their teamwork, project management skills, as well as basic medical and logistical knowledge.

“It is important for us to engage with students who are interested in MSF,” explains Jane-Ann McKenna, head of MSF Ireland. “We have Friends of MSF Societies in the majority of universities in Ireland now. We want to ensure their level of interest and engage with them on our

work and how they can contribute to that.”

The purpose of the humanitarian challenge is to give students an idea of the practicalities of working with MSF, McKenna stresses. “They will be broken up into groups and given challenges based on real-life examples of what we have faced in the field, such as trying to set up a hospital in a remote setting and the different factors to consider, such as the practicalities of water availability, negotiations, linking in with local stakeholders etc.

“It’s really about trying to put all the pieces together and give the students an opportunity to think through all the different elements you need to consider when you are setting up a clinic in such highly politicised circumstances or in a conflict area. It will give them a real insight into MSF’s work and the challenges we

face on a day-to-day basis.”

The teams will present their solutions to a judging panel made up of experienced Irish MSF volunteers, who have recently returned home from missions abroad.

RANGE OF SKILLS

The student challenge is being organised by the Friends of MSF Student Society, which has groups in UCC, UCD, RCSI, Trinity, Queens Belfast and NUI Galway.

Crucially, the teams must have a mixed range of skills in order to compete, including medical, nursing, engineering and business, as MSF Ireland is keen to highlight that it recruits professionals from a variety of backgrounds.

“We obviously recruit for a large number of medical roles, but are also always looking for non-medics, particularly logisticians, either from a construction or

administration background, who can make a huge difference in terms of supporting our projects," McKenna says.

"There is a wide range of roles within MSF and we recruit for all of those roles from our Irish office. We're always looking for people who have very practical skills. For example, if you're a logistician in the middle of Sudan, you're not only responsible for ensuring supplies come in on time, but also for communications, construction activity, and so on."

MSF Ireland has a steady group of volunteers on board at the moment, but is always looking to add to its skills base. "Every year, we send out about 25 volunteers to the field and want to maintain that level. We are always looking for people with the experience and professional background to be able to really make a contribution to our work."

HIGH CALIBRE VOLUNTEERS

Ireland has, she claims, "a reputation for sending very high calibre volunteers to the field. Within Ireland, there is an inherent spirit of volunteerism in our culture, and we want to continue that reputation. It's important for us to invest in that, to make people aware of what we're doing, why our work is important and how they can get involved."

So, just how relevant is the work of MSF in 2013? "It's hugely relevant," she avows. "We've been around for 40 years and we're finding that the work of MSF is becoming more relevant than ever, due to the highly politicised nature of aid at the moment. Our position is completely neutral, independent and impartial in delivering humanitarian assistance on the ground, and it is becoming a lot more challenging to do that now than it was 40 years ago, but it remains one of our core principles."

"A lot of other organisations have similar principles and beliefs but it remains fundamental to what we do at ground level, in trying to protect that level of independence and impartiality when negotiating with all stakeholders, in order to be able to deliver medical assistance to those who need it most, on all sides of a conflict."

THE SYRIAN CONFLICT

This impartiality would seem to be particularly relevant in conflicts such as the current civil war waging in Syria?

"Syria is an interesting case, because



Dr John Morris, from Galway, worked in Chad where he was responsible for the HIV/TB clinic of the hospital. (Pic: MSF)



Sharon Mealy, from Co. Kilkenny is a logistician currently working in Goma, in Democratic Republic of Congo. She is responsible for ensuring a smooth supply chain of everything MSF needs for its projects in the region, ranging from medicine, therapeutic food for malnourished children to vital life-saving equipment. (Pic: MSF)

we don't necessarily have a fully impartial view on the situation," she admits. "We're actually only working on the opposition side; we haven't got permission to work in government-held areas. At the moment, we have three hospitals in Syria, three makeshift hospitals that we've set up.

"We have embedded ourselves amongst the Syrian population in certain areas in the north and north-west of Syria, but we're not able to work on the government side of the conflict."

It is, McKenna acknowledges, a difficult position for MSF to be in: "We can speak out and we have, in a number of press releases, about the huge targeting of civilians, because this is what we are witnessing on the ground, but we're only really able to speak about one side of the conflict because this is what we are seeing."

SPEAKING OUT

A big component of MSF is, she contends, "speaking out on behalf of those who don't have any voice and witnessing on behalf of those who are suffering... We always try to get a very impartial view of the situation before doing that. But the situation in Syria is so catastrophic that we feel the necessity to speak out, even if we haven't got a full idea of what is happening on the other side."

Syria is just one of the world's trouble-spots where MSF operates. The organisation has ongoing operations in other conflict zones like Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Mali and the Central African Republic. Delivering medical assistance to civilians in these areas is becoming more difficult, however, with staff security a major concern: some MSF volunteers had to be extracted from DRC recently due to security concerns.

"Our priority is to ascertain the risks, to evaluate how soon we can go back in to be able to really treat the people who are caught up in the conflict who need medical assistance," McKenna reveals. "We are operating throughout north and south Kivu [a volatile region of DRC]: we are still on high alert, due to the ongoing situation there with the rebels, but we are there to treat those who are directly impacted."

THE IRISH IMPACT

So, when it comes to a huge, global organisation like MSF, how big an impact



Dr Mark Campbell, from Co. Tyrone is an anaesthetist and worked in Afghanistan and Pakistan, supporting local staff to deliver high-quality emergency and surgical care, free of charge. (Pic: MSF)

FACTFILE - JANE-ANN McKENNA

Jane-Ann McKenna was appointed Head of MSF Ireland in July 2011. A graduate of the Smurfit Business School, UCD, and a qualified accountant (ACCA), McKenna first joined MSF in 2008 and was assigned to the role of Finance and Human Resources Co-ordinator in Darfur, North Sudan.

In 2009 she moved to Sri Lanka to take up the position of finance co-ordinator based in the capital, Colombo. Midway through this mission she transferred to the north of the island to manage MSF's post civil war surgical and rehabilitation project.

In 2010 McKenna spent three months in Kyrgyzstan managing MSF's mental health programme in the south of the country, following an outbreak of ethnic violence in the region. Most recently, she worked as project co-ordinator for a 120-bed hospital, delivering both primary and secondary healthcare in a remote region of Central African Republic.

Prior to her career in humanitarian aid, McKenna worked in the international corporate banking sector in Ireland for three years. Jane-Ann is from Dublin.



(Photograph by Alan Rowlette)

does Ireland have? It's sizeable, according to McKenna. Since the office opened in Dublin in 2006 by Irish volunteers who had worked with MSF overseas, Irish professionals from medical and non-medical backgrounds have completed more than 100 missions from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe.

"They decided that it was important to set up an office here, not only to recruit new volunteers to go overseas, but also in terms of having a voice here in the humanitarian sector," McKenna notes.

"We are working in certain contexts where other organisations may not be present or may not have the capacity to respond. It's important for MSF Ireland to link in with different stakeholders, whether it's the government, Irish Aid or other organisations, about what is happening on the ground in certain situations."

She cites Syria as a good example. MSF Ireland recently brought over MSF UK surgeon Dr Paul McMaster, who spent six weeks as a surgeon in Syria in November 2012, to make a presentation to a wide audience.

They also presented their findings to a foreign affairs committee in the Dáil "to try to inform them of the reality of the emergency over there at a ground level. One of the key things that MSF Ireland can do is to raise awareness of these crises at public, press and Government level."

FUNDRAISING TASKS

McKenna admits that one of MSF Ireland's biggest tasks is fundraising and she is quick to acknowledge the generosity of the Irish public.

"Despite the economic downturn, the Irish public and our Irish donors have remained extremely generous. People recognise that when there are severe humanitarian crises occurring, it's important to respond."

The Haitian Earthquake in January 2010 is a perfect example: "But we got a huge response to the earthquake from Ireland. Although we are part of a large network, the funds raised in Ireland have directly supported our work in Haiti during the emergency."

She says that fundraising in an environment where people have had to make cutbacks in their own lives is more difficult. "MSF Ireland is trying to focus as much as we can on regular givers, so that we can predict the amount of funding



MSF volunteers pictured with President Michael D. Higgins during MSF Ireland Week in September 2012.

we will receive, which allows us to plan in terms of programming, budgets and what interventions we can do. That is a big priority for us at the moment."

MSF IRELAND WEEK

The very first MSF Ireland Week was rolled out last September, with a host of free events highlighting the work of MSF's Irish office and Irish volunteers.

"It was a celebration of the contribution that Irish people have made to MSF's work, either through volunteering with us, through supporting us financially or through other means," McKenna notes.

Events included a photography exhibition in Dublin's Powerscourt Centre, a cholera tent roadshow, as well as two high profile film screenings: the Oscar-nominated documentary 'Living In Emergency', and 'Access To The Danger Zone'. The latter is a new documentary, narrated by Daniel Day-Lewis, which examines "the complexities of trying to deliver humanitarian aid in today's world, where there are a lot of political agendas, and how we try to maintain our neutrality", explains McKenna.

MSF Ireland was delighted that the latter screening was attended by President Michael D. Higgins and Joe Costello, Minister of State at the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade with responsibility for Trade and Development.

"Having them present at an MSF event was great, particularly in terms of engaging with us on understanding the

complexities MSF faces in delivering humanitarian assistance," McKenna notes. 'Access To The Danger Zone' goes on a nationwide tour this spring.

INSTITUTIONAL FUNDING

One benefit of working with MSF Ireland is that the organisation receives funding from Irish Aid, the official state overseas development programme working to reduce global poverty and hunger.

This is something of a rarity for MSF internationally, however, which is generally dependent on private donors for funding.

"As a rule, MSF doesn't accept more than 15 per cent institutional funding globally," McKenna reveals.

"We are quite careful about which governments we will accept money from: there are very few, but Irish Aid is one of them.

In certain, highly politicised conflict areas, such as Syria, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Somalia, we don't use any institutional funding, so we won't accept any funding from any governments for those countries, which goes back to our principle of remaining independent and impartial.

"That allows us to go and work in these areas and we can stand over the fact that there is no other agenda," she concludes, "apart from wanting to deliver health care to the civilians who are being caught up in the conflict."

For more information on MSF Ireland, visit www.msf.ie

LOCATION! LOCATION! LOCATION!

THE INTRODUCTION OF NEW TECHNOLOGY AND NEW POST CODES COULD DRAMATICALLY IMPROVE LOCATION MAPPING SERVICES FOR PARAMEDICS WHO NEED TO FIND HOMES OR ACCIDENT SCENES QUICKLY. REPORT BY LINDA DALY.

For paramedics, particularly in rural Ireland, locating homes and the scenes of accidents can sometimes be an onerous task. In some situations, the delay in getting to the scene can have fatal consequences.

In November 2011, Dublin coroner Dr Brian Farrell called for a review of emergency services in the south-east to ensure that ambulances were directed properly to homes.

The recommendation came in the wake of the inquest into the death of five-year-old Áine Kennedy of Gorey, County Wexford.

The inquest heard that the family had to travel to Gorey Ambulance Centre after a triage nurse had trouble directing the ambulance service to their home. Áine later died at Our Lady's Hospital in Crumlin as a result of multi-organ failure with clinical features suggestive of septicaemia.

Áine's death was tragic, but the delay in getting her into an ambulance was not unique. The National Ambulance Service (NAS) often meets delays in trying to find homes.

In Áine's case, the triage nurse had difficulties in communicating where the house was located. Sometimes 999 callers have communication difficulties, may hang up or may be hysterical.

PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT

One of the biggest issues facing the ambulance service in the past decade has been the rapid growth in property developments. Despite the slowdown in recent years, many of the developments have not been translated into up-to-date mapping for use by emergency services.

Robert Morton, director with the NAS, said the most significant issue facing staff



"Until infrastructural deficits are addressed, the full benefits of any potential technologies cannot be realised," according to Robert Morton, NAS director.

is the ongoing failure of some property owners and developers to properly number and label estates, properties and houses in a way that can be easily seen both day and night.

At present, the NAS uses a number of systems to find homes quickly, the dominant one being GeoDirectory, produced by An Post. This is a database of addresses in Ireland, which, when provided with information by the 999 caller, can identify the correct address and plot a course on a map. Control centre staff will provide directions to the ambulance services.

GeoDirectory is not a new technology but it is continuously developed and enhanced. However, Morton said the technology has a number of limitations.

In some cases, the database will not have an address so verbal directions must be elicited from the 999 caller.

CALLER LINE IDENTIFICATION

"Additionally, Caller Line Identification (CLI) has not been available to emergency services in Ireland, although, this is going to change," said Morton. CLI has the ability to shave valuable seconds from the overall response time.

Using the technology, a landline number can flash against a database such as GeoDirectory, find matching data and automatically enter the computer-aided dispatch system and mapping system.

The awarding of the Emergency Call Answering Service (ECAS) to BT in 2010 has opened the door for the introduction of CLI to Ireland. The technology promises to identify the location of callers from both fixed and mobile phones.

"Until these infrastructural deficits are addressed, the full benefits of any potential technologies cannot be realised," said Morton.

PERIPHERAL TECHNOLOGIES

Despite the flaws in the system, Morton said that in 2013 and 2014, the NAS will be working towards implementation of peripheral technologies.

Such technologies include mobile data terminals and web-based SatNav systems. These will enable full optimisation of future developments in the area, he added.

The likes of Google maps or off-the-shelf solutions would not do the job, said Morton: "ICT for an emergency service is complex, generally bespoke and above all, integrated. In this context, simple off-the-shelf, stand alone solutions are unsuitable." Indeed, off-the-shelf SatNavs are portable and so pose a security risk in unattended ambulances.

"The fact that you have 500 stand alone devices all unconnected to any network means that whenever there's an update, somebody has to go around to every vehicle and physically update every device. Costs would be extraordinary," said Morton.

ROADSIDE ACCIDENTS

Of course, not all accidents happen in homes of office buildings, with many occurring on roads and reported by mobile phones.

Outside Ireland, mobile phone operators provide emergency services with data arising from the triangulation of mobile phone signals. In Ireland, such triangulation tends only to be used in criminal cases.

Automatic crash notification (ACN) is another technology that could go some way to speeding up the rescue process. ACN technology emits a satellite signal in the event of an incident, which shows the location of the car, and in advanced cases, information about the crash, such as direction, deployment of airbags and severity of impact.

Some car manufacturers are now fitting ACN technology to their vehicles but the infrastructure is not yet available to the emergency services in Ireland.

IRISH POST CODE SYSTEM

Also, the lack of a post code system in Ireland means that latitude and longitude data is not routinely available or suitable for system integration, according to Morton.

In 2009, the Fianna Fáil/ Green Party government announced that it would approve the introduction of a post



Gary Delaney hopes to work with the National Roads Authority to put Loc8 codes on emergency phones on motorways around Ireland.

code system in Ireland. This came after four years of recommendations and reports. The post codes have yet to be implemented but the present government has indicated that consultations will get underway again this year.

Under the current recommendations, the system will be a six-digit alpha numerical model. The country will be divided into 200 post towns, and within each post town, there will be groups of 40 to 50 properties. The first three characters of the code will represent the post town, with the second three representing the group of properties within which a building is located.

Morton said post codes would strengthen the current system substantially. "Once you have post codes, it then means we can introduce a new technology called Mobile Data, where you project the imagery that's on the control centres direct to the emergency services. The devices in the vehicles will be fixed so they can't be removed. It's web-based, so not only is the device basically being

updated automatically, it's being driven by web-based mapping."

INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY CODES

Gary Delaney, managing director and developer of Loc8 Code, an All-Ireland digital address code system which was launched in July 2010, said post codes with 50 addresses will not be good enough for emergency services.

Morton said that he would recommend that each property be given an individual post code. Loc8 codes can precisely pinpoint accident or incident locations using Ordnance Survey Ireland mapping and Land & Property Services in Northern Ireland.

The codes, which have eight characters, as the name suggests, can pinpoint a location within six metres.

The Cork-based firm has collaborated with Garmin Europe, and all Garmin devices sold in Ireland have Loc8 code capability. The company spent over two years testing the codes, and Delaney said he wanted to protect against any mistakes

in entering the codes, so added extra capability to them.

One digit within the code self-checks the remaining digits and prompts a solution if the code has been inputted incorrectly.

Last year, the company teamed up with local organisations in Bantry and Kinsale in Cork, including the Gardaí and local credit unions, to provide vulnerable and elderly people with Loc8 codes. Loc8 codes are now placed beside phones in a number of homes and can be read out to emergency services.

LOCATION DETERMINED

Delaney says he would recommend using Loc8 codes rather than the six-digit post codes, as they extend beyond finding just home addresses to access points, traffic control points and so on.

Loc8 Code has worked with Limerick County Council and Irish Water Safety to place codes on the water life buoys around Limerick. The firm is also working with the HSE in Laois to have Loc8 codes placed on defibrillators.

John Leech, chief executive of Irish Water Safety, said he is hoping someone's life will be saved in Limerick as a result of the codes. He anticipates that the codes will be placed in the waters in Cork by the end of the year.

PROTOTYPE PROJECT

"We've implemented a full pilot programme in Limerick and are now



looking at doing it in Cork. It's a prototype project but the Loc8 code is a very accurate and very easy way of getting a very precise location," Leech noted.

"There's manual work involved with placing the codes on the buoys but the cost is insignificant."

Meanwhile, Delaney is looking to tackle another area of the emergency services' work – road accidents. He hopes to work with the National Roads Authority to put Loc8 codes on emergency phones on motorways around Ireland.

Every house within Ireland can have a Loc8 code but the difficulty arises in promoting awareness about the codes. That said, some 250,000 people have now entered the firm's site and retrieved their own Loc8 code.

Delaney said the company is too small to improve awareness of this but it is involved in the tender process for the new post code, which would be one way to grow awareness. Alternatively, the task could be undertaken by life assurance companies or the HSE.



The Cork-based firm has collaborated with Garmin Europe, and all Garmin devices sold in Ireland have Loc8 code capability. The company spent over two years testing the codes, and Delaney said he wanted to protect against any mistakes in entering the codes, so added extra capability to them.



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LAW UNDER SCRUTINY

As Women's Aid continues to call on the Government to start the comprehensive review of domestic violence legislation as promised, Director Margaret Martin spoke to Sheila Ryan about her organisation's recommendations to protect women and children.

We know the legislation can be very effective so that's why we were very pleased about this commitment from the Government to do a comprehensive review of the domestic violence legislation," said Margaret Martin, director of Women's Aid.

"With all of the pressures on the Government we are just really keen to make sure that it doesn't fall off the agenda."

The national organisation has also made detailed legal recommendations that would make women safer from domestic abuse. The women left unprotected under the current law include those in need of out-of-hours emergency help and those in dating relationships but not living with their partners.

Women's Aid also called for funding for domestic violence services to be protected in Budget 2013.

IMPACT OF LEGISLATION

The impact of legislation was demonstrated in 2011 when a small change to the legislation gave greater coverage to women in need of protection.

"It extended the law to couples who were not living together but who had a child in common, and a number of other categories including people in homosexual relationships," said Martin. "We saw an immediate impact from that so we know that when legislation changes it significantly improves the safety of women and children."

Women in these family situations previously were not eligible for a Safety Order, but were still vulnerable to abuse. For example, non-cohabiting couples with

a child in common are obliged to have a certain amount of contact.

"That point of contact very often was used to continue to abuse," said Martin. "Sometimes that would be physical abuse, which the child may or may not see. Sometimes it would be emotional abuse, but they would be continually living with the fear and the dread of this all the time."

When these groups of women were brought under the law Women's Aid saw an immediate increase in the number of women using its support and referral service in Dolphin House. The Family Law Court at Dolphin House also saw an immediate increase in cases.

INTERNATIONAL BEST PRACTICE

The Women's Aid recommendations are based on a piece of research that identified gaps in the protection available to women and looked for solutions drawing on international best practice in a

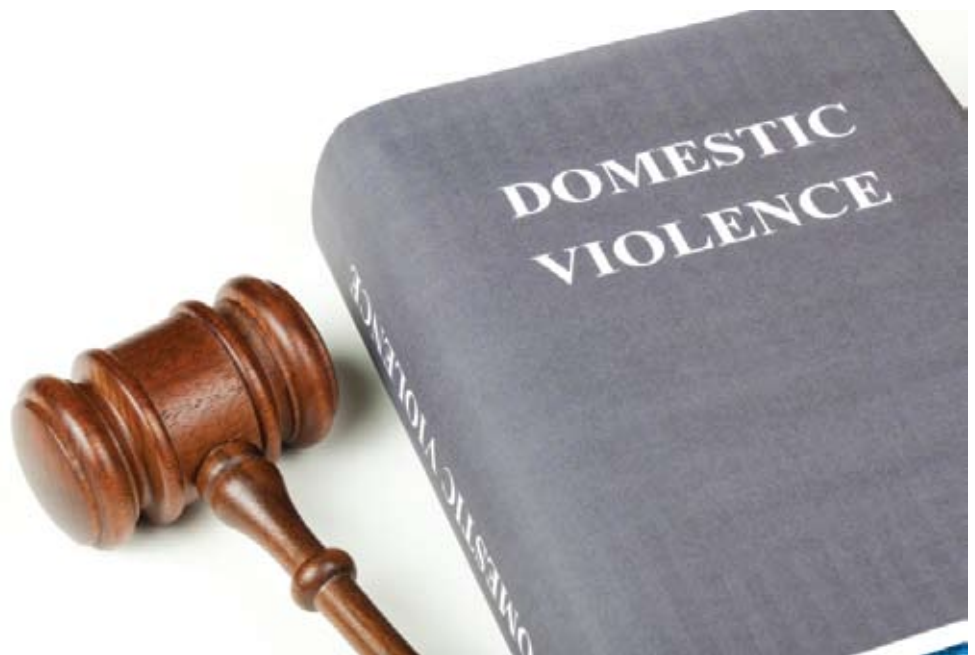
wide range of jurisdictions.

Of the jurisdictions included in the study, Martin was particularly impressed by the UK, which has a very well-resourced national strategy.

"A lot of things changed at the same time in the UK, so they have built up an infrastructure to deal with the issue of domestic violence, gender-based violence, rape, honour killings; a whole range of different things," she said.

The strategy in the UK includes police training, providing independent advocates to go with women to the courts and a multi-agency risk assessment process that pulls together information from social workers, housing authorities and other organisations.

Women identified as being at high risk from domestic violence may then be offered practical solutions such as improving security in their homes or moving.



"We have a national strategy but unfortunately it came into being at the time when all the cutbacks happened," said Martin.

BUDGET CUTBACKS

The reality of our economic situation is never far from Martin's mind, and the Women's Aid submission is calling on the Government to make no further cuts to services for women who are suffering domestic violence.

She is deeply worried about the impact of Budget 2013 and said protecting the vulnerable in the recession must include protecting women and children from domestic violence.

"Like a lot of services, we're at a point where there have been cuts of almost 20 per cent over the last five years," Martin said. "The whole sector is struggling with those cuts and you can't keep paring back and paring back."

Women's Aid has made every effort to keep up its services. Its National Freephone Helpline answered more than 11,000 calls in 2011 and offers an interpretation service covering 170 languages.

However, Martin worries about the impact of any further cuts.

"Domestic violence is ongoing, all the time, 24/7 so we have to continually do what we can with the resources we have," said Martin.

LEGAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations being made by Women's Aid to the Government include improving eligibility for both Safety Orders and Barring Orders, more consistency on the granting of orders and better legislation on stalking.

Although the Non-Fatal Offences Against the Person Act currently covers stalking, Martin said this piece of legislation is complex and very rarely used, and that the offence is difficult to prove.

"One of the things we want to see is that stalking itself would be recognised, that a specific offence of stalking be introduced," she said. Martin added that stalking is surprisingly common, particularly when a woman ends a relationship, and that new technology plays a role.

"We would certainly see over the last number of years how new technology is used to stalk and harass women, particularly when women leave a

relationship," she said. "It very often escalates it or begins it."

The Women's Aid study found that an offence of stalking exists in Scotland and Australia. Even though it remains difficult to gather enough evidence to secure a conviction, having an offence of stalking would give judges the option to put in place a protective measure such as a Barring Order or Safety Order.

EMERGENCY PROTECTION

The Government's review should also address the lack of emergency protection when the Courts are not sitting, according to Martin.

"A very big concern for us is that we know that barring orders can be very effective, but the problem with barring orders is they are only available when the court is in session," she said.

A woman who is assaulted on a Monday can get a barring order the next day, but if she is assaulted on a Friday she has to wait all weekend for the court to open.

With women's refuges running at capacity, this often leaves women vulnerable to further attacks, and the gardaí have limited powers to help them.

"If that woman has a Barring Order, it's much clearer what their response is and what they can do," said Martin. Women's Aid recommends a system of "on call" judges who can grant an emergency Safety Order or Barring Order to protect a woman until the courts re-open. "We have all of these things here, but it's just extending it," she added.

CHILDREN AT RISK

Another issue that Women's Aid wants

"We have a national strategy but unfortunately it came into being at the time when all the cutbacks happened," noted Margaret Martin, director of Women's Aid.



the Government to address is child safety. "There's a huge overlap between child abuse and domestic violence," said Martin.

According to Women's Aid, when granting a Barring Order, the Court should consider the safety and well-being of any children of the relationship and take interim measures for their protection while custody and access proceedings are pending.

The organisation also wants the Government to introduce a rebuttable presumption so that custody and unsupervised access would not be granted to a parent who is a perpetrator of domestic violence. That is unless the Court is wholly satisfied that the child would be safe from abuse, including emotional abuse.

16 DAYS OF ACTION

Women's Aid recently completed its annual '16 Days of Action' campaign, opposing violence against women. Research indicates that one in five women experience domestic violence at some

point in their lives, and that one third of those abused never speak to anybody about it. The 16 days of action aim to raise awareness of the prevalence of abuse and reach out to women who are suffering.

"During the 16 days it's a time when we want to connect to women who are maybe feeling very isolated," said Martin. The campaign tends to increase the number of women who contact the Women's Aid helpline, and this gives them the opportunity to put women in touch with services available across the country and take their first steps out of their abusive situations.

Women's Aid also has also produced a 'One in Five Women' video, available on www.womensaid.ie/oneinfivewomen to help educate people on the issue.

THREAT OF CRIMINAL CHARGES

Martin compares the task of combatting domestic violence with that of road safety where education is combined with an effective deterrent in the form of penalty points. While education plays an important role in protecting women from violence, the threat of criminal charges for the perpetrators is crucial.

"Domestic violence is so prevalent. It cuts across all strata of society, whether it's class, age, ethnicity, culture," Martin said. "So you're talking about men from all those cohorts as well. For some women they would be involved with men who would be involved in criminal activity and they would have very low regard for the law, but a significant number of men would be very fearful that this could affect their career or future travel plans."

While the Minister for Justice and Equality, Alan Shatter, had yet to commit to a date for the promised review, Martin said that because he comes from a background that gives him an understanding of family law, she is optimistic that the Government will deliver a genuinely comprehensive review.

CAMPAIGNS TO PROTECT WOMEN AGAINST DOMESTIC ABUSE

- *Women's Aid launched its annual 'One in Five Women' campaign in November 2012, as part of the global '16 Days of Action' opposing violence against women*
- *In 2011, the Women's Aid National Freephone Helpline answered over 11,000 calls;*
- *The 'International 16 Days of Action' (25 Nov to 10 Dec 2012) highlighted the link between violence against women and human rights.*
- *The '16 Days of Action' campaign started in 1991. Since then, over 4,100 organisations in over 170 countries have taken part; 100 groups take part in Ireland each year.*



FURTHER INFORMATION

National Freephone Helpline

1800 341 900

www.womensaid.ie

www.facebook.com/womensaid.ie

www.twitter.com/@womens_aid

www.twitter.com/@womens_aid



The launch of Women's Aid 'One in Five Women' campaign outside the Dáil in November 2012 coincided with its calls on the Government to review domestic violence legislation.



— An RNLI lifeguard giving training in Bangladesh (Pic: RNLI/Mike Lavis)

RNLI STRATEGY SORTS OUT INTERNATIONAL DROWNING EPIDEMIC

MORE THAN ONE MILLION PEOPLE DIE FROM DROWNING EACH YEAR, MOST OF THEM IN THE POOREST COUNTRIES ON THE PLANET. THE RNLI HAS DEVELOPED AN INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY TO COMBAT THE PROBLEM, WITH IMMEDIATE RESULTS. SHEILA RYAN REPORTS.

The Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) has launched an international strategy to combat the global drowning epidemic. Around 1.2 million people die from drowning each year, most of them in the world's poorest countries.

"We started to better understand the global drowning epidemic and realised that with our 200 years of experience, we could use some of that knowledge to help others less fortunate and less resourced than we are," said Steve Wills, international development manager with the RNLI.

Despite the scale of the problem, drowning is barely recognised and little is being done to tackle it in developing countries. According to the RNLI, drowning kills more people than malaria, and in some countries, particularly in some parts of Asia, Africa and South America, it is the leading cause of child death.

Most global drownings happen at the coast, in large bodies of water or in floods, all environments in which the RNLI has expertise in drowning prevention and can offer help. While the agency has always done some 'ad hoc' work

overseas, two years ago it began to develop a robust international strategy which it hopes will reduce the numbers of deaths by drowning.

BANGLADESH EXPERIENCE

One of the countries assisted by the RNLI in 2012 was Bangladesh, where it helped to establish the country's first lifesaving club. Drowning claims 18,000 lives per year in Bangladesh, and is the leading cause of child death, bigger than infectious disease or malnutrition. The RNLI hopes its work there could lead to hundreds of lives being saved each year.

"We were approached by a local NGO trying to tackle the drowning problems in Bangladesh and they asked if we could help," said Wills. "So, I went over to Bangladesh to scope and do an analysis of what we could and couldn't do and who we could work with."

The RNLI cannot set up rescue services in all the countries in need, but it aims to help people set up their own services and give them the skills to maintain and develop them.

In March 2012, two RNLI lifeguard trainers spent two weeks at Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, delivering a comprehensive lifeguard training programme to 15 Bangladeshi volunteer lifeguards, including the country's first female lifeguard.

The Bangladeshi volunteer lifeguards had no formal training, but have now learned essentials such as setting up a patrol, beach surveillance, risk assessments, recognising when a person is in distress, using rescue equipment, the effects of wind, waves and currents and rescuing, assessing and treating a casualty.

TRAINING PROGRAMMES ADAPTED

Within days of completing their training, with a lifeguard service in its infancy but fully operational, the Bangladeshi lifeguard volunteers saved their first life.

The RNLI trainers had to adapt their usual course content and training aids to the needs and environment of the Bangladeshi lifeguards. This goes beyond extreme weather and regular power outages.

"There are some moral dilemmas, such as when do you stop CPR because there is no ambulance service, so therefore there is nothing coming," said Wills. "Then there's the cultural issue of whether a man is allowed to resuscitate a female."

The RNLI wants the fledgling lifesaving clubs it assists to be self-sustaining and to develop in order to meet the needs of their communities. The newly trained lifeguards all received a "train the trainer" course, so that they can pass on their skills to others.

FUTURE LIFESAVING LEADERS

In August 2012, two of the 15 were invited to the UK to attend the RNLI's 'Future Leaders in Lifesaving' course. They joined a group of 14 representatives

from lifesaving organisations around the world and learned how to manage and develop their own lifesaving organisations.

The course went beyond lifeguarding to cover communications, fundraising, writing training programmes and how to run safety education initiatives. It was also an opportunity for the trainees to meet their counterparts from other countries facing similar challenges and share ideas.

"The idea of that course is not for us to impart the RNLI model but to give them the chance to learn between themselves," Wills said.

For the newly-trained lifeguards, coming to the UK can be a life-changing experience. "Most of them have never left their community, let alone their country," said Wills. "It's a mind-blowing experience to come to the UK and the RNLI."

The two RNLI trainers returned to Bangladesh in October. Working with the original 15 Bangladeshi lifeguards, they trained 60 more lifeguards using a manual developed specifically for use in low- and middle-income countries where specialist equipment is not available.

Finally, they helped the Bangladeshi lifeguards develop a coastal safety education programme for schools, and taught them how to deliver it. Wills said that while half of Bangladesh can be underwater during the monsoon, most people cannot swim.

"Obviously if you can't swim, you can't survive in a flood or if you fall in the water unintentionally, so teaching a child to swim



Steve Wills, international development manager, RNLI, says that in some of these countries they also change lives.

could be classed as a vaccine against drowning," he said. "We're not talking about competitive swimming; we're talking about survival swimming: to be able to get out of the water or help a friend if someone's in trouble, and we can start to hopefully have an impact on those terrible drowning figures."

SUSTAINABLE RESCUE SERVICES

The model used in Bangladesh is replicated in other countries where the RNLI identifies the need, always with the aim of getting local organisations to a level where they can keep rescue services going independently.

"What we don't want is to be a one-hit wonder, and then leave them in a position that might make them worse off than when we started," said Wills. "The normal route is a scoping visit, an initial visit to get everybody up to a certain level, and then further visits depending on what's going on to make them sustainable."

As the RNLI trainers develop solutions to individual countries' needs, Wills is



Lifeguard training in Bangladesh (Pic: RNLI/Mike Lavis)

looking at creating a basic programme that can be applied across different situations.

"We are trying to come up with core solutions, so we don't have to reinvent the wheel when we go to different countries," he said.

Above all, the RNLI aims to keep everything as simple and uncomplicated as possible, given the limited resources of the countries in the programme.

"We're so keen to say that the RNLI is not where you need to be," said Wills. "It's taken us two centuries to get to this point. It's not all about big boats, helicopters and the latest technology. It's the basics they need to get right first and then build on that: and 95per cent of lifesaving is the basic stuff. We're just fortunate in this country that we're trying to tackle the small number of drownings that are left. We're looking to innovate and do that, but in these countries where they have tens of thousands of drownings, they need to start at the most basic level."

THE FUNDING ISSUE

To embark on a new project at a time when charities are under increasing

financial pressure seems ambitious. The RNLI funds its overseas development through a few different streams, one of which is charging commercial fees for the work it does in wealthier countries such as Canada and some parts of the Caribbean.

"It's like a Robin Hood strategy; we're trying to give something back from the countries that can afford it," said Wills.

"The RNLI is unique in that it designs, builds and operates a lifeboat service. We're looked at around the world as one of the most progressive rescue services. People are interested in our boats, our designs, how we train and how we operate, so there's a lot of scope for us to sell our services commercially to those countries that can afford it."

The charity is also looking at other international fundraising opportunities and Government grants that may be available.

EXPANDING INTERNATIONAL REACH

In 2013, the RNLI aims to expand its reach around the world with 12 international programmes across Africa, Asia and South America. Another 'Future Leaders in Lifesaving' course will run

in the UK, and will again include RNLI-trained lifeguards from Bangladesh and other countries.

The UK trainers who travel to deliver the RNLI courses also benefit from the experience. "It's always a two-way process," he said. "Our trainers get as much out of it as they put in. They learn new skills; they learn how to think on their feet; they learn about adapting to different cultures and religions; they learn new techniques. There's always something to learn. They come back much more motivated and with new skills they can use in training back in this country."

Strong emotional bonds often grow between the UK trainers and the candidates they teach, and the experience goes beyond lifeguarding. In countries where opportunities for education and employment are few, the chance to participate in an RNLI lifeguarding programme can be a life-changing experience.

"In the UK and Ireland, we save lives, which is the main thing," said Wills, "but in some of these countries we also change lives."

DUBLIN CONTINUES TO WEATHER THE STORM

CHANGES IN WEATHER SYSTEMS ARE PRESENTING CHALLENGES FOR IRELAND'S LOCAL AUTHORITIES, BUT DUBLIN CITY COUNCIL IS MEETING THEM HEAD ON, TOM LEAHY, EXECUTIVE MANAGER OF DUBLIN CITY COUNCIL'S ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT, TELLS LINDA DALY.

In the past decade Dublin has identified a flood risk reduction strategy, and delivered a significant programme of action through the Dublin Flood Initiative (DFI).

Throughout the 20th century flood events in Ireland were rather infrequent. Coastal flooding was not seen as a big risk and global warming was a prediction that lay well off into the future.

Then 2002 arrived, and it brought with it four major floods and a wake-up call for Dublin, according to Tom Leahy, executive manager of Dublin City Council's engineering department.

At the time Leahy was moving into the area of strategic planning and emergency management with Dublin City Council. He said the local authority realised it was time to examine the city's major flood risks and determine if it had the correct strategy in place.

FLOOD RISK METHODOLOGY

"The methodology of dealing with flood risk is quite simple. You look at flood hazard information, match that with the available infrastructure on the ground, and link it with community self help.

"Spatial planning is also one of the most important tools to deal with flood risk management," added Leahy.

Dublin City Council identified five major flood risks within the city: coastal flood risk, flood risk from rivers, dam failure, pluvial flooding, which Leahy christened as "monster rain", and infrastructure failure.

With the Irish Sea sitting on Dublin's doorstep, the authority examined its strategies and how they matched with international best practice.

'SAFER' MANAGEMENT

It developed the 'Strategies and Action for Flood Energy Risk' (SAFER) management project, and made an application to the EU for funding through its INTERREG III programme, joining forces with



public bodies in Germany, the UK and Switzerland,

"We took immediate action, and promoted integrated flood risk management based on spatial planning, infrastructural defences and flood emergency response," said Leahy.

"We focused on the coastal flooding threat, mapped all our coastal zones, identified areas of risk, and put in a high tide warning system," he added.

The resulting tidal forecasting and monitoring system has been accurate to plus or minus two inches since its introduction.

The local authority completed a flood defence project on the River Tolka, in addition to a series of flood defence works on the lower Dodder River. It is now starting studies on the River Liffey, as well as examining the 60 smaller rivers around Dublin. Total investment in flood defence in the Dublin Flood Initiative has been over €120 million in the last decade.

CO-ORDINATING INITIATIVES

While Dublin City Council has responsibility for its own catchment area, it often co-ordinates initiatives between the capital's four local authorities and has responsibility for the dams at Bohernabreena.

The ESB has ownership of the dams

on the River Liffey, and the council works closely with the company to time the release of water in the event of heavy rainfall and avoid release at high tides.

The fourth flood risk, pluvial flooding or exceptionally intense rainfall in a short space of time, is a concern for Dublin City Council – there has been an extreme weather event every year for the past 10 years.

To address this the authority has put together a Flood Resilient City formula, which brings together government, professionals and the public. "We have set up five pilot areas in Dublin, and over the next 12 months will be working with communities in each of those areas to see what can be done to reduce the pluvial flood risk," said Leahy.

"In the long-term we will look to use sustainable urban systems to replicate the way nature deals with rain," he added.

One example could be to use park areas to control the overflow during monster rain events. "Floods are inevitable and cannot be controlled by infrastructural defences alone. They require an integrated approach. It's up to us to mobilise all those involved in flood defence and to work in a co-ordinated manner to combat our changing weather systems," concluded Leahy.

RISK ASSESSMENT PLANS COME FLOODING IN

THE OFFICE OF PUBLIC WORKS AIMS TO REVOLUTIONISE FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT IN IRELAND VIA THE CATCHMENT FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME. TONY SMYTH, OPW'S DIRECTOR OF ENGINEERING SERVICES AND CHIEF ENGINEER, TALKS JOHN WALSHE THROUGH THEIR PLANS.

The Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) programme – the key initiative to meet the requirements of the 2007 EU Floods Directive – has been described as “very ambitious” by Tony Smyth, Director of Engineering Services and Chief Engineer with the Office of Public Works (OPW).

“CFRAM is a new approach to identifying flood risk systematically and mapping it,” Smyth explains. “One of the biggest benefits of that is it should lead to better planning and development decisions because we will have better information on the areas that are at risk from flooding.

“There are also advantages for emergency response planning, because local authorities and the public will know what areas are liable to flood, what areas will flood first and how the flood will progress.

“The information coming from CFRAM will hopefully lead to a much enhanced awareness of flood risk for local authorities and for individuals at risk from flooding.”

EU FLOODS DIRECTIVE

There are three main reporting stages required under the EU Floods Directive: preliminary flood risk assessment, which was completed in 2011, flood hazard mapping, which is currently underway and due for completion this year, and the establishment of catchment flood



risk management plans, which are to be completed by 2015.

The CFRAM programme will deliver on these goals.

The EU Water Framework Directive divides the country into six river basin districts, and the OPW has appointed engineering consultants to each district to develop a flood plan for every river in the country where there is a significant risk of flooding.

"The programme is structured so that the OPW, the consultants and Local Authority representatives are on the project steering group for each of these projects," Smyth explains.

"We want the local authorities to be able to keep their elected members up to date on progress and we want them to bring to the steering group the various local issues that need to be addressed in a plan of this nature. We want to keep communication channels open between the OPW and local authorities right through the project."

When CFRAM is complete, there will be benefits for local authorities, according to Smyth: "They will have systematically mapped the areas that are at risk from flooding.

This will then help to inform development plans and local area plans so that we get better planning decisions and we're not building projects in areas that are at risk from flooding. CFRAM will effectively help to contain the level of risk for future development plans.

"From a local authority's perspective, knowing what is at risk, how frequently and how intensely it is likely to flood will help them to develop emergency response plans," he continues. "Knowing what areas will flood first and what way a flood will propagate will be a big advantage, in terms of dealing with people who will be affected first. It will enable them to deliver a better flood response plan and then to improve the operation of the emergency response when a flood actually happens."

CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAMME

Of course, CFRAM is not the only strand of the OPW's flood relief strategy, which also includes extensive capital works, with investments of €18 million in the last decade. While CFRAM deals with "the long term future for flood risk management in Ireland", the capital works programmes deal with "the legacy issues".

According to Smyth, the ongoing

FLOOD RISK PROGRAMME

- *The purpose of the flood risk programme is threefold:*
- *To assess and map existing and potential future flood risk, through the identification of flood hazard areas and the associated impacts of flooding;*
- *To identify viable structural and non-structural measures and options for managing the flood risks for localised high-risk areas and within the catchment as a whole;*
- *To prepare a strategic Catchment Flood Risk Management Plan (CFRMP) and associated Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) that set out the measures and policies that should be pursued by the OPW, local authorities and other stakeholders to achieve the most cost effective and sustainable management of flood risk within the catchment area.*



Claregalway, Co Galway is one of a number of towns where good progress is being made. (Pic: Courtesy of OPW)

major capital works throughout the country are vital because “mistakes were made in the past through not having sufficient information on areas at risk from flooding”.

However, he also cites weather changes as a fundamental factor: “There weren’t very many flood events through the 1970s and ‘80s, particularly. But since the 1990s, we are getting weather as wet as it was back in the 1940s and ‘50s, and areas that we didn’t realise were at risk of flooding have been built on in the meantime.

So, now we must go back and protect those areas by building flood schemes, which is very costly, but the works are progressing.”

He cites a number of examples of major flood management works, including Clonmel, Ennis, Fermoy, Mallow, Carlow, Waterford and Claregalway: “There is good progress being made in a number of towns and we will continue to move on those projects, subject to the availability of Exchequer funding.”

ECONOMIC BENEFITS

Smyth warns, however, that with most works of this nature, they are more costly if they’re not done: “We don’t progress a project unless there is an economic benefit in terms of balancing the total cost of the scheme against assessing the damage that is prevented from occurring with the scheme in place over a 50-year life cycle.”

Full environmental impact assessments are carried out on every project, with the engineering and environmental consultants working “hand-in-glove right from project inception”. Like with the CFRAM programme, each project has a steering committee involving the OPW, the consultants and the local authority.

One third of the OPW’s strategy covers minor mitigation works/coastal protection, whereby the OPW provides direct funding to local authorities for smaller projects.

“If the local area engineer can identify a project, such as small containment works or embankment works, which can have a very real impact, such as protecting a group of houses, for a relatively small amount of money, we can fund it directly,” explains Smyth, who reveals that some of these minor works have budgets of up to €300,000.

CATCHMENT FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT STUDY

The pilot CFRAM Study on the River Lee in Cork included the following:

- The production of over 1,100 flood maps showing flood extents, flood depths and velocities.
- Some 250km of channel surveys and over 275 square km of detailed 3D floodplain models.
- Development of nine detailed hydraulic computer models of the river and its tributaries.
- Production of an inception report, Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) scoping and final reports, hydrology report and hydraulics report.



Civil Defence volunteers were involved in the rescue operations during major flooding in the town in November 2009. (Pic: Courtesy of Carlow County Council)

WARNING FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES

One area where Smyth feels local authorities may need to be more careful is in terms of using the OPW’s draft Preliminary Flood Risk Assessments (PFRAs) as the sole basis for refusing planning permission. He points out that whilst this data is perfectly valid at a strategic level to identify areas of potential flooding, it is not valid at individual site level.

“The information is available to people and is useful in terms of giving them notice of a potential flooding problem, but we’re

anxious that it be used properly and not misused,” Smyth warns.

“If somebody is looking for planning permission within one of the 300 PFRA areas, they should be advised that there may be a flood risk and it needs further examination, instead of simply being refused planning permission solely on the basis of the PFRA.”

In general terms, however, Tony Smyth feels the co-operation between the OPW and local authorities is “hugely important for the continued improvement of flood relief management in Ireland”.

GUARDIANS OF THE STATE CELEBRATE 90TH ANNIVERSARY

SINCE ITS ESTABLISHMENT IN 1922 AS A NEW POLICE FORCE FOR A NEW IRELAND, AN GARDA SÍOCHÁNA HAS BEEN PLAYING A FUNDAMENTAL ROLE IN THE MOST CRITICAL MOMENTS IN IRISH HISTORY OVER THE LAST 90 YEARS, WRITES CONOR WILLIAM O'BRIEN.

An Garda Síochána will succeed not by force of arms or numbers, but by their moral authority, as servants of the people."

Thus was the prediction of the very first Garda Commissioner, Michael Staines, about the future of the fledgling police force he had been charged with.

Over its 90-year history, that same force has gone on to play a pivotal role both in the daily lives of the Irish people as well as some of the most critical changes in the history of the State whose laws it is entrusted to enforce.

An Garda Síochána emerged at a combustible period in the pantheon of Irish history. The country itself was at a turning point, the thrill of independence sallied by a bloody and divisive Civil War costing more lives than the freedom strife that preceded it. A secondary antagonist in that struggle for sovereignty was the Royal Irish Constabulary, Ireland's primary police force at the time (with the urban areas of Dublin, Derry and Belfast maintaining their own constabularies).

Established in 1822, this armed police force was the sole mechanism of law enforcement throughout most of what would become the Irish Free State. Dublin possessed its own unarmed, independent counterpart – the Dublin Metropolitan Police – founded in 1836. During the War of Independence, the rulings of Sinn Féin courts and basic law and order were maintained and enforced by a self-appointed 'Irish Republican Police.'

NEW FORCE, NEW NATION

Following the foundation of the Free State, the toxic perception of the RIC ensured that a new police force would need to be established for a new nation. This led to the formation of the



The last 90 years have seen phenomenal changes to An Garda Síochána.

Civic Guards on 22 February 1922, later to be renamed An Garda Síochána na hÉireann ('Guardians of the Peace in Ireland.') This new force grew to encapsulate the Dublin Metropolitan Police in 1925 and in doing so become the sole police force in the Irish Free State.

An Garda Síochána borrowed much of its initial customs from its predecessor the RIC, although in a move that sought to contrast the bloodshed and gun running of recent years opted to go unarmed.

The tentative years of the force were turbulent. First Commissioner Michael Staines tendered his resignation after less than a year in office, citing the infamous Kildare Mutiny – whereby new recruits denied the authority of their ex-RIC commanders – as justification for doing so.

He was replaced by Eoin O'Duffy, a figure who would go on to attain a certain infamy in Irish history for his role as leader of the Blueshirts before and during the Spanish Civil War. O'Duffy held the post for over a decade, being dismissed in 1933 due to his involvement with the Blueshirts, and continued where Staines had left off by attempting to imbue this new unarmed force with a sense of obligation to all sections of Irish society, an ethos it has maintained to the present day.

PREVENTION NOT REPRESSION

Prevention rather than repression was to be the name of the game from here on in. Impartiality, sobriety and courtesy were paramount. O'Duffy's stewardship saw the western seaboard disproportionately represented in the fledgling force, owing in part to his preference of rural recruits.

The next Garda Commissioner would also achieve fame for external activities, although in this case they occurred previous to his involvement with the force. Eamon 'Ned' Broy had previously worked as a double agent for Michael Collins

during the War of Independence, and brought extensive policing experience to the position.

His time as commissioner is most notable for the formation of an armed auxiliary squad known as the 'Broy Harriers' to provide security for Government ministers and counter the Blueshirts under O'Duffy. Despite this, the Harriers would find themselves embroiled in a number of controversies that would taint their standing with the Irish public.

DEFINING MOMENTS

Broy's replacement Michael Kinnane

would lead the Gardaí through one of the defining moments of the 20th century – the Second World War. Eager to demonstrate its independence, Ireland opted to remain neutral throughout the conflict, which saw widespread rationing of fuel and food across the country in what became known as 'the Emergency'.

The Gardaí played a pivotal role during this period, and under the Emergency Powers Act 1939 were afforded heightened authority in the interest of maintaining public safety during the course of the war.

The latter half of the twentieth century



The force has had to adapt in order to deal with the rising level of criminality through the last nine decades.



Since CAB was set up 1996, it has facilitated the Gardaí with the means to pursue those at the pinnacle of the drugs trade.

AN GARDA COMMISSIONERS (1922 – PRESENT)

- *Michael Staines,*
February – September 1922
- *Eoin O'Duffy,*
September 1922 – February 1933
- *Eamon Broy,*
February 1933 – June 1938
- *Michael Kinnane,*
June 1938 – July 1952
- *Daniel Costigan,*
July 1952 – February 1965
- *William P. Quinn,*
February 1965 – March 1967
- *Patrick Carroll BL,*
March 1967 – September 1968
- *Michael Wymes,*
September 1968 – January 1973
- *Patrick Malone,*
January 1973 – September 1975
- *Edward Garvey,*
September 1975 – January 1978
- *Patrick Mc Loughlin,*
January 1978 – January 1983
- *Lawrence Wren,*
February 1983 – November 1987
- *Eamon Doherty,*
November 1987 – December 1988
- *Eugene Crowley,*
December 1988 – January 1991
- *Patrick J Culligan MSc,*
January 1991 – July 1996
- *Patrick Byrne,*
July 1996 – July 2003
- *Noel Conroy,*
July 2003 – November 2007
- *Fachtna Murphy,*
November 2007 – December 2010
- *Martin Callinan,*
December 2010 – Present



also saw the Ireland rocked by its most bloody and divisive conflict since the civil war, the 'Troubles' when nationalist and loyalist tensions beyond the border finally boiled over, incurring several decades of death and despair across Ireland and Britain that would only end with the signing of the Good Friday Agreement in 1994.

During this period, the Gardaí played a critical role in curtailing dissident republican activity south of the border and as a result helped minimise the effect of the 'Troubles' in the Republic.

BOXING CLEVER

As with any police force, the principle duty of An Garda Síochána since inception has been to fight crime. Over the last 90 years the force has had to adapt in order to deal with the varying criminal threats it has opposed through the decades.

Among the first organised criminal gangs to terrorise the streets of Dublin were a group known as the Animals, a violent youth movement that has its roots in the 1930's and continued for several decades thereafter it finally met its match in the form of the formidable Sergeant James 'Lugs' Brannigan, one of the most famous figures to pass through the ranks of An Garda Síochána. A former heavyweight boxer, Brannigan took a tough (if controversial) approach to apprehending crime which has seen him become somewhat of a cult hero to Gardaí and civilians alike.

However, during more recent decades a far greater menace arrived en masse into the country – narcotics, such as heroin and cannabis and the crime that accompanies them wherever they go in the world.

DEALING WITH DRUGS

In Ireland, substances such as drugs, in particular, have seized a foothold which has for years ignited and fuelled a wave of crime by addicts and a much larger and more sinister struggle for control of this lucrative trade. This trade has seen many of Ireland's most infamous gangsters pass through the annals of An Garda Síochána over the last 40 years.

The force has remained tireless in its efforts to combat what is now commonly recognised as one of the most urgent social issues in modern Ireland. Since the Criminal Assets Bureau was set up in 1996, it has facilitated the Gardaí with the means to pursue those at the pinnacle of the drug trade who continue to ruin countless lives across the country.

The last 90 years have seen phenomenal changes to An Garda Síochána that first emerged from the ashes of The Civil War. What resulted was a police force that throughout its long history has sought to deliver justice to the people of Ireland, forever adapting to handle whatever threats it may face and remain a potent and impartial mechanism for fair law enforcement in our nation.

LEARNING FROM FRANCE AT THE FRONTLINE

IRELAND CAN LEARN A LOT FROM FRANCE WHEN IT COMES TO MANAGING EMERGENCY RESPONSE SYSTEMS, ACCORDING TO DR SUSANNE O'REILLY AND ADVANCED PARAMEDIC GAVIN LYLE, WHO ARE BOTH STUDENTS ON THE MSc IN EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME IN UCD.

Understanding emergency response systems at home and abroad forms a major part of UCD's MSc in Emergency Management programme. It is only by studying other systems and what parts of them work well and not so well that we can make tweaks, or indeed major changes, to our own.

When we compared the French emergency response system with our own system here in Ireland, the results proved extremely interesting and could form the basis for an overhaul of our EMS and pre-hospital service.

FRENCH SYSTEM

The French system, known as SAMU (Service d'Aide Médicale d'Urgence) is based upon six foundation principles, which are applicable to all emergency systems, both pre-hospital and in-hospital. The principles are important rules by which to practice.

- (1) Emergency medical assistance is a healthcare activity: everything relating to patient care is encompassed in this (bystanders, police, fire and ambulance services, first responders);
- (2) Interventions in the field must be speedy, efficient and use suitable, proportionate resources;
- (3) The approach to each individual case is simultaneously medical, operational and human;
- (4) The responsibilities and detailed arrangements for coordination between the persons involved must be regulated by a set of working rules;
- (5) Results depend in large measure upon the skill of those involved;
- (6) Preventive action must complement emergency action.

10 MILLION CALLS PER YEAR

There are 100 call centres throughout



The emergency medical services in Ireland use a dispatch system known as Advanced Medical Priority Dispatch System (AMPDS).

France, with each receiving calls from between 200,000 and two million people, depending on the region. There is a regulator doctor, a GP or emergency physician, at each call centre, who triages the calls and sends the appropriate service to the scene. On average, 10 million calls are taken per year.

In 30 per cent of cases, advice is given over the phone; 30 per cent have a GP sent to the scene; 30 per cent require an ambulance while 10 per cent need on-scene ICU treatment.

Most commonly, the fire brigade, which is run at local level, is dispatched. Most firefighters are trained in advanced first aid, which is equivalent to a cross between our Emergency First Responder and EMT levels.

They do not have the different skill grades that we have in Ireland, so it is difficult to make a direct comparison between the two on this score. Instead of having advanced paramedics, they mostly use anaesthetic and emergency nurses and physicians.

There is a doctor and or nurse (depending on the size) at each fire station, and they are typically sent to the scene with the first fire brigade responders.

There is also a car service, usually requested by GPs after house calls. The drivers are trained in first aid.

The HMICU is a mobile intensive care unit. It is run by anaesthetists, cardiologists and emergency physicians. It allows more advanced care on scene and faster stabilisation of the patient.

A huge advantage of this is that it enables the patient to be taken to the most appropriate centre for their care, as



opposed to being brought to the nearest hospital.

While the French system is operated with physician, ambulance and fire service cooperation and seems to work quite well, the Irish system is operated by the fire and ambulance services. Regional doctor on-call services offer back-up assistance if required.

THE IRISH ANGLE

Ireland's emergency medical service is

controlled by the Health Service Executive (HSE), Dublin Fire Brigade (DFB), and county councils throughout the country. The Health Boards Act 1970 allowed each of the eight health boards to introduce an ambulance into their respective areas.

Today, one National Ambulance Service (NAS) is divided into three operational regions: NAS North Leinster, NAS South, and NAS West. The service is provided by 1,401 operational staff, covering an area of 68,317 sq/km with a

population of 5.01 million (2011 census).

There are currently nine control centres and 86 ambulance stations, not including the 10 DFB stations that provide the emergency ambulance service in the Dublin area.

However, the long-term plan is to reduce the number of control centres to two, with one being the central control and command centre for the entire country. Out-of-hours GP services are provided between the hours of 6pm-8am, Monday-Friday, and 24 hours, Saturday and Sunday.

DEVELOPMENT OF AMPDS

The emergency medical services in Ireland use a dispatch system known as Advanced Medical Priority Dispatch System (AMPDS). AMPDS was first rolled out in Ireland 10 years ago, when it was first introduced to control centres in both Wexford and Tullamore. This system automatically prioritises calls according to the answers given to standard pre-set questions.

The system enables Emergency Medical Controllers (EMCs) to prioritise the appropriate response level. For example, advanced paramedics are dispatched to life-threatening calls which are the highest priority code.

Codes can be summarised as follows:

- **Echo:** Cardiac or Respiratory Arrest
- **Delta:** Chest Pain/Convulsions/Diabetic problems
- **Charlie:** Headache/Overdose
- **Bravo:** Collapse community alert
- **Alpha:** Sick person no priority symptoms
- **Omega:** Non-priority complaints, such as sleeplessness, ear ache, sore throat.

* Echo and Delta are the highest priority and are considered life threatening.

* Charlie and Bravo are level two and are considered serious but not life threatening.

* Alpha and Omega are level three and are considered not serious or not life threatening.

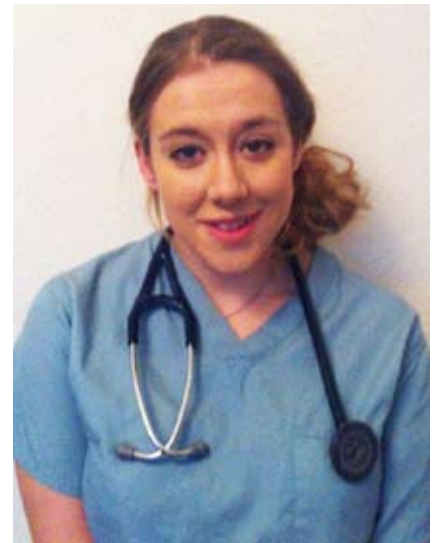
Six different levels within the pre-hospital setting in Ireland:

- Cardiac First Responder
- Occupational First Responder
- Emergency First Responder (EFR)
- Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Dr Susanne O'Reilly is originally from Dublin. She graduated in medicine from UCD in 2011 and worked as an intern in Tallaght Hospital. She is now doing a basic specialist training scheme in medicine under the auspices of Royal College of Physicians in Ireland (RCPI). Susanne is currently working in St Vincent's University Hospital..

"I am interested in acute medicine, both pre- and in-hospital. I hope to use the MSc in EMS to further my understanding of integration in EMS, and equip me to deal with immediate care issues that arise on a daily basis," she says.



Gavin Lyle is originally from Dublin. He has been in the ambulance service for 12 years. He moved to the north east region in 2004 and is currently based in Navan Ambulance Station. Gavin qualified as an advanced paramedic in 2009.

He describes the MSc Immediate Care course as very interesting and personally rewarding. "It challenges your ideas and views of EMS in Ireland. But at the same time it gives an insight into the other professions within the structure of EMS, not just pre-hospital services."



- Paramedic
- Advanced Paramedic

WEIGHING UP THE SYSTEMS

It appears that the French system has several advantages. By having a 'regulator' doctor at the call centre, a significant number of ambulance call-outs are reduced. Almost one third of people calling SAMU require no more than advice over the phone; if a similar system could be used in Ireland, it would remove a significant amount of the strain on our services.

The formal incorporation of GPs into the emergency system is also of great use. Many GPs in Ireland would willingly go to the scene of an emergency if they were informed of it. At present, no formal notification of GPs takes place, no matter how close they are.

This would be of particular use in rural areas, where the GP could often make it to the scene in advance of the ambulance service.

The HMICU system works very well in France, and indeed other countries globally.

However, given Ireland's small size and relatively small number of major traumas per year, we can learn more from the other aspects of the system to begin with.

As a group, we have found that through our conversations both inside and outside the classroom, that integration is key to delivering a first class pre-hospital service.

The authors wish to thank Damien Gaumont and Dr Helene Rigot for information on the French EMS.

GP INTEREST IN THE BASICS OF IMMEDIATE CARE IN IRELAND

A QUESTIONNAIRE TO GAUGE THE LEVEL OF GP INTEREST IN PRE-HOSPITAL CARE FOUND THAT 65 PER CENT OF MEDICS AT A RECENT IRISH COLLEGE OF GENERAL PRACTITIONERS MEETING WERE WILLING TO PARTICIPATE IN A STRUCTURED IMMEDIATE CARE SCHEME, SIMILAR TO BASICS PROGRAMMES IN THE UK, ACCORDING TO BRIAN CARLIN.

Immediate care schemes are well established in the UK through organisations such as BASICS UK and BASICS Scotland. The backbone to the success of these schemes is the involvement and goodwill of healthcare professional that have both an interest and are appropriately trained in immediate care. One key group that are actively involved and manage such schemes are GPs.

These GPs and immediate care doctors are specialists who support ambulance services and are trained to provide medical support at the scene of an accident or major medical emergency, or while patients are in transit to hospital. They also provide medical support at mass gatherings.

The involvement of medical practitioners in pre-hospital care also brings the benefits of an integrated approach to this area of health care. There is much evidence available of the benefits of an integrated health structure to patients and systems. Integration has multiple meanings, the World Health Organisation (WHO) offer six main usages of 'integrated health services' (WHO, Technical brief No.1 2008).

INTEGRATION ACROSS SECTORS

Integration can mean working across sectors. It occurs when there are institutionalised mechanisms to enable cross-sectoral funding, regulation or service delivery. In industrialized countries, this concept is frequently applied to the co-ordination of health and social services, such as for long term care for the elderly.

It may refer to work with education services to develop effective school health promotion campaigns. The key issue here is to identify the most appropriate

sector(s) to deal with a particular health issue and establish linkages between them

The idea of integrated health services formed a basis for the focus on primary health care in the 1980s. Integrated services is the most logical way to organise a health system – indeed the only way that does not compromise universal access to a broad range of services. The challenge is to be specific about what integrated services look like – what are the key functions which need to be delivered?

I have been involved with NHS Education (Scotland) and BASICS (Scotland) in developing immediate care schemes that include GPs who work in semi-remote and rural areas of Scotland.

There are many well established schemes that are regarded now as an 'enhanced service' by the associated NHS Trusts and this recognition allows funding provision for training and equipment.

ENTHUSIASM OF CANDIDATES

To move from the concept of immediate care schemes that met patient unmet needs (PUNs) to the service embedded in health care, there was a need for a different approach and an expansion of curriculum content and teaching methods (academic integration), as well as enhancement of collegial support and resources.

I have been involved with GP immediate care training in Ireland through the Centre for Emergency Medical Science (CEMS), which currently offers trauma, cardiac and paediatric courses for GPs and other healthcare professionals working in the community.

I have always been impressed both with the enthusiasm of the course candidates and their willingness to become involved more with immediate care cases in their practice area.

However, the immediate care schemes in Ireland are at best sporadic and based



Advanced paramedic Declan O'Farrell (far right) outlined paediatric BLS techniques to delegates attending the Irish College of General Practitioners annual winter meeting in Athlone.

on local relationships and arrangements.

I would like to evolve this enthusiasm, experience and eagerness of GPs into a more structured scheme that fits into the larger needs of the HSE and National Ambulance Service in order to complement the care offered by paramedics and advanced paramedics.

TRAINING & WORKSHOPS

Irish College of General Practitioners (ICGP) held its annual winter meeting in Athlone. Along with a multi-disciplinary group of colleagues who have either recently completed or are currently taking the MSc EMS (Immediate Care) through CEMS in UCD from nursing (Brigid Sinnott), medicine (Seamus Clarke and Tomas Barry) and advanced paramedics (Jason Kennedy and Declan O'Farrell), I delivered some immediate care training and workshops to interested conference delegates.

The sessions included a series of

topics that were viewed as relevant to general practice and reflected the training needs indicated by the ICGP.

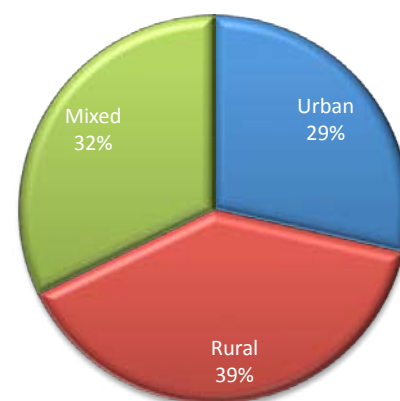
As part of the evaluation of the training sessions the delegates were asked to complete a questionnaire that would allow us to gauge their level of interest in immediate care similar to the BASICS schemes presently running in the UK.

Six key questions:

- What type of practice do you work in?
- Do you ever respond to calls from the ambulance service to assist them?
- What type of calls are you prepared to attend if requested?
- If 'NO', please give reasons why you would not feel able to attend?
- What up-skilling would you require to effectively support the ambulance service in the pre-hospital environment?
- Would you be interested in becoming a GP member of a structured and

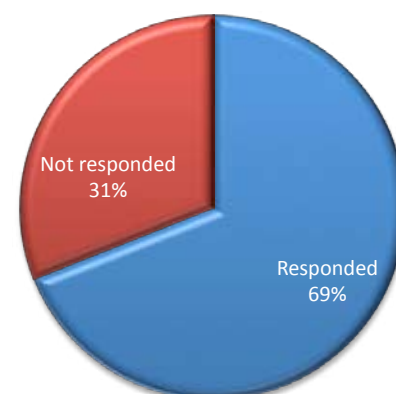
supported pre-hospital medical support scheme for the ambulance service in Ireland, similar to that in the UK?

Practice type



A total of 31 physicians attended the session, 29 who responded to the survey request worked in a variety of clinical settings – urban: 8/29 (27.5%), rural; 11/29 (37.9%), mixed; 9/31 (31%) with one physician not working clinically.

Responders



20/29 physicians indicated they had responded to calls from the NAS for assistance with nine indicating they did not or had never been asked; 19 physicians indicated the types of calls they feel comfortable responding to. These included not only common medical emergencies but also, cardiac arrests and road traffic collisions (RTCs)

BARRIERS AND CHALLENGES

Seven GPs who completed the questionnaire form indicated they would not respond at this time to assist the NAS, either due to a perceived skills deficit or lack of cover in their surgeries for their absence.



Airway Management



Concussion



BLS/AED



IV fluid administration



Anaphylactic Rash



Paediatric care



This is more beneficial in remote and rural areas when there may be longer response times and availability of ambulances and/or advanced paramedics. This was certainly one of the reasons for the development of BASICS (Scotland).

The reasons for developing immediate care systems in Ireland are similar to Scotland. If you consider the comparisons of both countries from a population and geographical aspect, the similarities can be identified.

RESPONSE-TIME INDICATORS

In 2010, the Health Information & Quality Authority (HIQA) produced a report on 'Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Key Performance Indicators for Emergency Response Times'. Based on the evidence and experience from other jurisdictions, it recommended the need and importance of the implementation of response-time indicators and associated targets for driving changes in the quality and safety of pre-hospital emergency care in Ireland.

This report has identified not only the importance of response timeframes, but it also mentions 'associated targets' within the report. This is a key point for me, as it allows the NAS to think about other approaches to be considered for implementing these Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). There are 'alternative approaches' such as the development of a structured GP immediate care scheme.

Also from the HIQA report: "Pre-hospital emergency care is the emergency care provided to a patient before transfer to a hospital or appropriate healthcare facility. Safe, high quality outcomes for patients in this care setting depends upon the most appropriately trained person

A total of 20 physicians indicated the range of up-skilling they felt would be required to effectively support NAS with emergency calls. This list is not exhaustive but points out the areas that would have to be covered to improve the confidence and competence of the GP to safely and effectively practice in pre-hospital care.

This would be another opportunity to encourage academic integration with the development of an immediate care module for GPs that is aligned with the NAS Training and Education Curriculum. This could be delivered through an academic institution such as the Centre of Emergency Medical Science (CEMS) at UCD.

These findings mirror the training needs analysis (TNA) that was conducted during the establishment of BASICS UK and BASICS Scotland. These schemes are now widely accepted systems that support the NHS and have evolved into supporting GPs with a special interest (GPwSI) in pre-hospital care.

Many ambulance services in the UK now incorporate BASICS doctors into their systems of the provision of care.

An example of this can be found in the Yorkshire Ambulance Service under their 'alternative responses' options. This list includes:

- Emergency Care Practitioners
- Air Ambulance Service
- Community First Responders

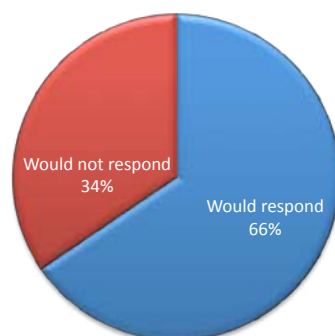
Yorkshire Ambulance Service now has 44 appropriately trained BASICS doctors who provide support to ambulance crews

across their region; 25 are trained in emergency driving courses to improve the safety of their response.

WILLINGNESS TO PARTICIPATE

The most encouraging aspect of the findings from the questionnaire was that 19/29 GPs (65 per cent) indicated willingness to participate in a structured immediate care scheme.

GP's willingness to respond



Apart from the clinical expertise one other benefit of immediate care schemes is to increase the number of available responders in any locality.



Advanced paramedic Jason Kennedy gave a resuscitation training session to ICGP conference delegates during their annual winter meeting in Athlone.

with the necessary equipment attending the emergency incident within an acceptable timeframe”

This statement again, reinforces the fact that it is not only time that is a significant factor, but also the most appropriate clinical response. Time indicators should not be used in isolation but coupled also with clinical outcome indicators for patients in conjunction with the HSE's clinical care programme for emergency medicine.

This aspect can be achieved with the utilisation of immediate care physicians.

Indeed the 'National Standards for Safer Better Healthcare' set out the principles of a competent workforce providing a high quality safe service, including a timely and clinically appropriate response.

From the NAS aspect this relates mainly to the strategic deployment of advanced paramedics. But this is also a great opportunity to include physicians in a formal process.

INNOVATIVE APPROACHES

In order to meet the challenges of achieving the KPIs, this is likely to require significant changes in the organisation and deployment of ambulance services in Ireland.

This will take time and adopting innovative approaches will be required to achieve the targets set.

Already the AMPDS and data collection systems have improved within the NAS and it would be sensible to include a BASICS type component into this, where a dedicated controller would be responsible for the deployment and communication with immediate care doctors nationally.

There are many benefits to a well structured and governed immediate care scheme involving GPs as well as the wider range of healthcare professionals. There are also several good examples of how these schemes are integrated into ambulance services and health trusts.

With the NAS in Ireland in an extensive transitional and evolutionary phase perhaps greater consideration should be given to the development of immediate care schemes to help achieve the targets set out by HIQA for the benefit of the ill and injured.

If we look at the comments from delegates at the ICGP conference there are many GPs who are waiting to be called.

Brian Carlin wishes to thank Dr Mick Molloy for his assistance with the GP questionnaire.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Brian Carlin is lecturer at UCD's School of Medicine & Medical Science. He is the director for the MSc EMS (Immediate Care) programme and has an input into the GradDipEMS Advanced Paramedic and DipEMS Paramedic programmes.



RTC between Aviemore and Inverness was attended by local BASICS doctor and ambulance crews from Aviemore. The professional relationships are key for the different people to work as a team.





Mountain Rescue Ireland's training course on leadership had been something of a challenge to the established evaluative, didactic, operational courses. (Pic: Valerie O'Sullivan)

TALKING THE LEAD ON MOUNTAIN RESCUE TRAINING

MOUNTAIN RESCUE IRELAND'S PAT HOLLAND EVALUATES THE LESSONS LEARNED FROM COACHING MRI'S COURSE ON LEADERSHIP FOR VOLUNTARY EMERGENCY SERVICES, THE NEXT INSTALMENT OF WHICH TAKES PLACE ON 27 AND 28 APRIL IN TIPPERARY.

Until recently, mountain rescue training in Ireland concentrated on teaching specific skills with very definite guidelines as to how to do the task, and clear evaluation by the course tutors. However, since 2009, Mountain Rescue Ireland (MRI) has rolled out a course which aims to provide senior members of voluntary emergency services with an opportunity to learn, to discuss and to decide the leadership of their units.

It is based on a coaching ethos. For example, information is provided but it is up to the participants to decide what they think is important. The course also uses models from transactional analysis, a practical psychology based on how people relate to each other.

The aims of the course are to provide senior emergency service and community leaders with appropriate leadership knowledge, skills and self-awareness. Attendees are drawn from a variety of statutory and volunteer organisations, both

nationally and locally.

The mix of persons from many organisations is proving to be a strength of the course, with aspects of commonality and difference being examined in a spirit of respect. As always, the informal discussions, both within and outside the course room, are as valuable as the official learning topics.

If for nothing else, the creation of this neutral inter-agency discussion and learning space would be a useful result of the course. This inter-agency focus will continue in the course, having the additional benefit of keeping course numbers up to the level required in a difficult time, economically, for MR teams.

KEY LEADERSHIP TRAITS

The leadership course deliberately does not focus on technical mountain rescue techniques (there is a separate MRI operations command course), but rather upon relevant human interaction aspects and techniques useful in leading

emergency teams, in mostly non-operational aspects.

Topics focus on those key leadership traits of particular value to emergency services leaders, where the delivery of the unit mission is so critically dependant upon the integrity and leadership qualities of the leader.

The course modules are delivered as taught leadership theory; facilitated sessions on various human interaction topics; discussion periods for learner groups, and practical scenarios. Attendance at this course is recommended for experienced team members who are trained to party leader level and who have an ambition to go further.

The latest run of the course (May 2012) was with Exmoor Search and Rescue Team, where the course was very well received by the members of the three participating teams from Exmoor, Cornwall and Wasdale.

"The balance between information,

coaching and self-driven activities, along with time to reflect on your own leadership roles, made for a powerful mix," noted Exmoor's team training officer, following the course.

As trainers, we were very interested in seeing would there be any differences between participants in Ireland and those on this course. The only one we could see was that initially, some participants were a bit reluctant to get involved in role play. However, once in it they invested a lot of time discussing it and the questions that were raised. We must thank Exmoor for their great hospitality.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

While the course is now mature, there is always room for improvement. Recently, we carried out a survey to get the viewpoints from all those who have attended the course, now that some time, years in some cases, has passed.

There are some interesting points from the data. Presenting concepts, transactional analysis theories and group discussions were now seen as the most important aspects of the course. This is in contrast to the evaluation taken at the course, where the scenarios and the guest speaker seem to have more impact. Perhaps the passage of time has made changes.

The most interesting result for me is that 60 per cent of respondents to the question 'Have you made changes to your leadership style/methods since the course?' answered 'Yes'. When asked how they had changed their methods/styles, some mentioned general ways, such as a better awareness of people, while others mentioned specific models, such as the 'Leadership Triangle', the 'Drama Triangle', 'Working Styles' or the 'Parent Adult Child Model'.

These models clearly have been useful. Another question on a follow-up day revealed conditional support for this idea, depending on time, location and contents.

We also asked what topics participants would favour on that follow-up day. Group discussions were very high on the list, followed by additional learning about models and, interestingly, more scenarios.

It seems as if scenarios are appreciated and enjoyed on the day but that practical and effective models help to create lasting value. Maybe the scenarios



The leadership course deliberately does not focus on technical mountain rescue techniques (there is a separate MRI operations command course), but rather upon relevant human interaction aspects and techniques useful in leading emergency teams, in mostly non-operational aspects. (Pic: Courtesy of Kerry Mountain Rescue Team)

help embed the models in the learning. While the coaching ethos in the course was appreciated as a teaching method, it is clear that most participants did not want one-to-one coaching work afterwards. There was also strong support for some sort of certified (longer) training course.

DEVELOPMENTS FOR 2013

This survey, together with the earlier end-of-course evaluations, has allowed us to further refine the model for 2013. We will add to the Inter-Agency Small Group's learning and discussion format by heightening the focus on 'Task', to match 'Process' and 'Relationship', by using different models, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and coaching on similar problems to show different approaches to leadership.

We will add more demonstrations of the 'Drama Triangle' and other models, and also give a greater discussion of the value, to each of us, of the contract. Another area of note will be the emerging evidence of the disruptive effect of too much media interest and the need to recharge yourself as much as your smartphone.

WALKING THE WALK

One of the great pleasures and unexpected benefits of this course, for the leaders, has been the mutual learning as we move forward with the course, towards our vision of leaders who, equipped with a number of useful models and self-awareness, can modulate their style and methods to be appropriate for the moment

without compromising the 'Task' mission.

The power of words, of simple metaphors and concepts, of 'less is more', has been a core learning point for the course team.

Personally, the evaluations have been a vindication of the coaching ethos of the course, though the need to 'walk the walk': to be a coach in being a course leader has been a strong and good challenge. There are lessons too in terms of finding a niche in which to coach.

Fired up with enthusiasm after my course, I wanted to coach the world. Now I realise that the first space, the first niche, is the one you are in already. Work within that, with a clear vision and strategy, and that niche will first enrich and then grow.

CHALLENGING THE ESTABLISHMENT Mountain Rescue Ireland's training course on leadership had been something of a challenge to the established evaluative, didactic, operational courses.

However, it fundamentally aims to show that leadership is not an 'add water and stir' operation, with clear and precise methods and styles. It is, rather, an internal journey aimed at several targets, the care of the casualty being the primary target but not the only one.

You may or may not want to be a leader, but if you do, you can learn to do it in different and perhaps better ways.

The next leadership course takes place on 27-28 April in the Horse and Jockey Hotel, near Thurles, Co. Tipperary. For more information email: pathollandchange@gmail.com

IRISH TOP EU TABLE SEEKING 'LEGAL HIGHS'

A NEW EU REPORT SHOWS WORRYING NEW TRENDS IN COKE, CANNABIS, CRIME AND CONSUMPTION, AND THE SURGE IN NEW DRUGS IS A PARTICULAR PROBLEM IN IRELAND, WHICH RECENTLY TOPPED THE EUROPEAN LEAGUE TABLE FOR USE OF 'LEGAL HIGHS'.

Drug trafficking is a highly profitable commercial activity and remains a core business for organised crime groups across Europe today.

While cocaine, ecstasy and amphetamines continue to be the main substances of choice for those taking stimulants across Europe, they are now competing with a growing number of emerging synthetic drugs.

The surge in new drugs is a particular problem in Ireland which recently topped the European league table for use of 'legal highs' with 16 per cent of 15-24 year olds recorded as having used these substances. This was more than three times higher than the EU average of five per cent.

This is according to the first joint report published by Europol and the EU's drugs agency – the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) – which takes a stark look at the state of the illicit drugs market in Europe.

The first state-of-the-art strategic analysis shows a huge increase in new drugs with a record 73 new substances, commonly known as 'legal highs' detected in 2012, driven by an explosion in the number of online retailers in Europe.

The report also reveals the 'changing face of organised crime in Europe'.

While, historically, the EU drug market has focused on specific drugs trafficked by specialised operators along well-defined routes, today's market is more 'fluid', with new routes and multi-substance consignments becoming more common.

The analysis offered by the report is unique, combining insights from the EMCDDA's monitoring and data analysis of Europe's drug phenomenon in the global context with Europol's operational understanding of trends in organised crime



Police uncover a smuggling network in Spain. (Pic: Europol)



Pictured at the press conference to launch the report (l-r) Wolfgang Götz, Director of the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), Cecilia Malmström, European Commissioner for Home Affairs, and Rob Wainwright, Director of Europol.

DRUG TRAFFICKING DIVERSIFIED

The reality of the European drug market requires a holistic approach, following the economic chain from production, via trafficking, to consumption, noted EU Commissioner for Home Affairs, Cecilia Malmström, on presenting the findings at the launch in Brussels.

The report shows that international drug trafficking remains the core business for most organised crime groups across Europe today. It warns that crime gangs are changing smuggling methods and routes to evade law enforcement and taking advantage of internet technologies to push sales.

"The increasingly joined-up nature of the modern European drug market is one of the most complex and invasive criminal phenomena of our times. Drug trafficking is also diversifying, both in terms of the complexity of the routes chosen and the drug types moved along them. This all calls for increased co-operation at EU level; national measures are simply insufficient, no matter how robust they are," added the EU Commissioner Malmström.

Also detailed in the report is Europe's role as a key global source of the precursor chemical used to manufacture heroin (acetic anhydride) and as an important player in the packaging, marketing and promotion of products containing new psychoactive substances.

Europol Director Rob Wainwright explains: "International drug trafficking remains the principal activity of most organised crime groups. They are adapting to new criminal opportunities and changing smuggling methods and routes to evade law enforcement, and we have noticed an increase in the exploitation of legitimate commercial transportation options, such as containers, aircraft, couriers and postal services.

"This allows drugs to be moved through multiple transit points making them harder to intercept. Internet technology has also emerged as an important facilitator and is commonly used in the marketing and sale of drugs."

"For synthetic drugs, and increasingly cannabis, the EU remains an important drug-producing region," according to EMCDDA Director Wolfgang Götz.

"The trend for producing illicit drugs close to their intended consumer markets, where they are less likely to be intercepted, is a growing one. We are

now paying an increasing cost for this development in terms of community safety, public health and the burden placed on already stretched police resources."

IMPACT OF THE INTERNET

Globalisation is an important driver of developments, with more countries now used as transit, storage or production points, the report reveals. Furthermore, the internet is having a profound impact, both as a communication tool and online marketplace. But innovation is also seen in the area of production: the EU is cited as a key 'source of expertise and know how' regarding intensive cannabis cultivation, synthetic drug production and cocaine concealment.

Other findings include the connections between cocaine and cannabis resin trafficking networks, the increasing

importance of Africa as a transit and storage area, and how crime gangs based in North-West Europe play a pivotal role in the distribution of virtually all types of drug across the EU.

Among the action points proposed are that law-enforcement officials, to a larger extent, should prioritise intelligence gathering on high-value individuals and high-profile criminal groups. Also, the speed of developments in the area of synthetic drugs means that Europe needs to scale up its early-warning capacity for new substances on the market.

The report highlights how co-ordinated actions at EU level can make a difference. Adopting an approach which is both pragmatic and applied, the agencies identify key conclusions and learning points to inform future policies and actions.



A barrel containing cocaine diluted in palm oil, seized as part of a massive haul of nearly one tonne of cocaine (Pic: Europol)



An officer from Europol inspects a drugs lab. (Pic: Europol)



SPREADING KNOWLEDGE LIKE WILDFIRE

AS THE TWO-YEAR EUROPEAN FOREST FIRE NETWORKS (EUFOFINET) PROJECT NEARS COMPLETION, DR ROBERT STACEY, PROJECT OFFICER WITH NORTHUMBERLAND FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE (ONE OF 13 INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS ON THE PROJECT) OUTLINES THE SUCCESS OF THE ACTION PLANS FOR IMPROVING RESPONSE TO AND PREPARATION FOR WILDFIRES IN EUROPE.

The European Forest Fire Networks Project (EUFOFINET) saw 13 international partners pool their resources for an ambitious project to improve the prevention and suppression of wildfires and forest fires throughout Europe.

The principal aim of EUFOFINET, which was launched in October 2010, was to improve and enhance regional and local approaches to wildfire prevention and suppression through European co-operation, collaboration and exchange of good practice.

The project partners organised and

delivered a range of events and activities, which were designed to address five key themes related to wildfires and forest fires. These included detection and prevention of wildfires; wildfire suppression strategies; mapping risks and hazards; training and simulation strategies; and restoration of land burned by wildfire.

The key activities delivered during the event included eight technical workshops; five technical guides addressing the five project themes; three staff exchange workshops; the European Glossary for Wildfires and Forest Fires; an international conference; and 13 action plans detailing

the implementation of good practice within all of the partner regions.

TECHNICAL WORKSHOPS

Technical workshops during the project enabled partners and external experts from around the world to present and discuss good practice and innovation with regards to wildfires and forest fires.

All workshops involved both lecture room-based presentations and discussions, alongside practical field-based visits to observe demonstrations of equipment and procedures. The workshops were hosted by eight of the

partner organisations and were held in France (May 2011), Denmark (September 2011), France (November 2011), Greece (January 2012), Spain (February 2012), UK (March 2012), Slovak Republic (May 2012) and Italy (October 2012).

The UK's Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) hosted a workshop focused on good practice in fighting and suppressing wildfires on 19-23 March 2012. Countries represented at the event included Greece, France, Italy, Spain, Poland, Denmark, Slovak Republic, Portugal, the Netherlands and the USA.

During the workshop, officers from Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service discussed a number of suppression tools and techniques that have been developed in the county. One of these is the innovative Northumberland Wildfire Prediction System (WPS).

WPS is an important management and health and safety tool, which allows both firefighters and fire officers to predict likely behaviour and spread of a wildfire. In addition to explaining WPS, NFRS also discussed other health and safety systems adopted by NFRS at wildfire incidents and Northumberland's Wildfire Incident Command System. Many of the



Live burn demonstrations by Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service.

tools and techniques presented by NFRS were developed in the county and are now being adopted by other fire and rescue services around the UK.

FIELD DEMONSTRATIONS

Another key part of the Northumberland workshop programme was the organisation of two field demonstrations within the Northumberland countryside.

On Wednesday 21 March 2012, a live burn exercise took place on a section of New Moor, near Longframlington. Northumberland's wildfire support officers demonstrated how fire can be used in a controlled manner as an effective technique for fighting wildfires.

The next day NFRS co-ordinated a multi-agency exercise near the village of Linhope in the Northumberland National



Park. The exercise demonstrated the practical use of a specially designed wildfire water resource pond – which included the use of a high volume pump unit, a mobile command unit and multi-agency partnership working on wildfire issues within Northumberland.

This exercise was delivered in co-operation with Northumberland National Park Authority, the Cheviot Futures Project and the North of Tyne and Northumberland National Park Mountain Rescue Teams.

Both field exercises provided practitioners with interesting opportunities for observing theory being put into practice and for further discussion and debate.

Following the completion of the technical workshops, synthesis documents were produced to provide a summary of the presentations delivered, good practices discussed, and conclusions and recommendations formulated during the workshops. The end result is the publication of a series of five technical guides, each of which addresses one of the five project themes.



Foam demonstration during the workshop by the National Forest Centre in Slovakia

innovative real-time simulator to deliver wildfire incident command training to fire officers at different levels. Officers from Northumberland, Denmark, Slovak Republic and France used the simulator in a number of different ways to respond to incidents, using the different incident command systems from the four represented countries.

Upon returning to the UK, the four Northumberland officers wrote a report critically evaluating the simulator and

training delivered.

The report's recommendations have informed the service's plans for developing the training delivered to specialist wildfire officers. NFRS is now liaising with ENTENTE regarding the potential for tailor-making and delivering wildfire incident command training to NFRS specialists in the future.

A COMMON LANGUAGE

For effective collaboration across national

TRAINING WORKSHOPS

During the second technical workshop in France in November 2011, some project partners identified the significant potential benefits of providing additional opportunities for partners to exchange knowledge and good practice on training-related issues.

The partners decided to organise three additional staff exchange training workshops which the partners could opt to attend. The three staff exchange workshops were held in Aix-en-Provence (France), Galicia (Spain), and Tuscany (Italy) during September, November and December 2012 and were attended by a number of specialists and trainers.

NFRS opted to send four specialist wildfire officers to attend the staff exchange workshop in Aix-en-Provence, which was coordinated and hosted by Entente pour la Forêt Méditerranéenne. The event focused on the use of Entente's

BACKGROUND TO EUFOFINET PROJECT

An INTERREG IVC Capitalisation Project co-financed through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the full title of the EUFOFINET Project is 'European Forest Fire Networks'.

It is anticipated that the website will become an important information resource for wildfire and forest fire stakeholders and practitioners in Europe.

The Interregional Cooperation Programme INTERREG IVC, financed by the European Union's Regional Development Fund, helps Regions of Europe work together to share experience and good practice in the areas of innovation, the knowledge economy, the environment and risk prevention. €302 million is available for project funding but, more than that, a wealth of knowledge and potential solutions are also on hand for regional policy-makers.

For further information visit www.eufofinet.eu which will remain live for the next five years.



borders on any technical or emergency issue, the establishment of a common language is crucial. During the early stages of the project the EUFOFINET partners identified a lack of a European glossary of terminology for wildfires and forest fires and, therefore, no common language for the partners to use.

This situation posed a problem to the partnership in terms of establishing a common understanding around technical and practical issues related to wildfires and forest fires.

The EUFOFINET partners subsequently decided to set themselves the very important task of creating a European glossary of terminology that could be used across the whole of Europe, both during and after the project. The development of the glossary was led and co-ordinated by Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service, with the assistance and contributions of all EUFOFINET partners and a number of external experts across the world.

The end result has been an impressive English language glossary of more than 800 terms and associated definitions arranged within 13 thematic chapters.

The glossary has significant potential to improve cross-border work before, during and after wildfire and forest fire incidents and will be a very useful tool for maintaining and improving health and safety for suppression teams composed of individuals of multiple nationalities.

All EUFOFINET partners are currently working to implement the glossary within their own countries and to promote the adoption of the glossary across Europe. A number of partners will translate the entire glossary document into their native language (including French, Italian, Greek, Slovak and Gallego) during early 2013, which will further improve its accessibility and usability.

Within the UK, NFRS has started to promote the adoption of the glossary to local and national audiences. NFRS has already worked with the Scottish Government to harmonise and integrate the glossary within the new National Operational Guidance Manual for Wildfire Suppression.

NFRS has also begun promoting the glossary through key local and national wildfire stakeholder groups, including the CFA Wildfire Operations Group, the England and Wales Wildfire Forum and the Northumberland Fire Group.

13 INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS

- Association of Municipalities and Town Councils of Attica – lead partner and project co-ordinator (Greece)
- Region of Tuscany (Italy)
- Entente pour la Forêt Méditerranéenne (France)
- Office National des Forêts (ONF) (France)
- National Forest Centre (Slovakia)
- Region of the North Aegean (Greece)
- Galician Public Safety Academy (Spain)
- Frederikssund-Halsnæs Fire and Rescue Department (Denmark)
- Forest Research Institute (Poland)
- Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service (United Kingdom)
- Castilla y Leon Wood and Forest Service Centre (Spain)
- Region of Thessaly (Greece)
- Region of Epirus (Greece)



INDIVIDUAL ACTION PLANS

The development of individual action plans outline how partners will integrate and implement good practices exchanged during the project within their own localities and regions. These action plans have been designed to have a positive impact on local, regional and national policies and procedures related to wildfires.

The NFRS action plan contains six key actions for implementation over the next three to five years. To provide some specific examples, NFRS is currently investigating opportunities for organising Wildfire Incident Command Training and Wildfire Investigation Training for officers within NFRS and other UK fire and rescue services.

This wildfire-specific training will provide an opportunity for NFRS and other organisations in the UK to further develop the knowledge and skills of the service's officer so that they can prepare for and react more effectively when responding to wildfire incidents.

The NFRS action plan has been formulated to ensure that EUFOFINET has a long-lasting positive impact within Northumberland and the UK as a whole. In order to ensure that this action plan is integrated into NFRS' existing operational programme, formal support in principle has been sought and obtained from the chief fire officer of Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service and the executive member for health and public protection at Northumberland County Council.

FINAL CONFERENCE

Following completion of all eight workshops, an international conference was held in Brussels on 12 November 2012. The event focused on the topic of wildfire risk and the improvement of regional action plans to address wildfire challenges in Europe.

The event was organised to enable the EUFOFINET partners to present some of the key deliverables of the project, including partners' action plans and the glossary.

The event was also organised to provide a forum for round-table discussions and debate between more than 80 practitioners and stakeholders within the European wildfire community.

All EUFOFINET partners contributed to the event, delivering either a presentation covering one of the technical workshops or a synoptic presentation concerning the content of their action plan, while NFRS also introduced delegates to the final publication of the glossary.

FUTURE COLLABORATION

The EUFOFINET project has enabled a number of officers from NFRS to develop their technical knowledge and understanding of wildfire through numerous constructive and instructive exchanges. EUFOFINET has also enabled NFRS to collaborate with a large number of experts and practitioners engaged in wildfire suppression and prevention activities around the world.

A number of specific good practices have been included within the NFRS action plan. But it should also be noted that the exchanges that occurred during the project will positively influence and contribute to future developments and improvements within the Service for many years to come.

Alex Bennett, NFRS chief fire officer, has said that Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service's involvement in the highly successful EUFOFINET project has been extremely rewarding.

"Working with international partners during the last two years has allowed us to review our practices, hone our skills and share expertise to ensure that we are equipped and trained to tackle wildfires in the best possible way in Northumberland," he added.

"This additional knowledge and

understanding, coupled with the establishment of a new network of contacts across Europe, will help us to further improve how we protect life, property and the environment within our county over the coming years."

Paul Hedley, NFRS assistant chief fire officer, and chair of the Chief Fire Officers' Association Wildfire Group noted that the benefits of the project will also reach beyond the borders of the county of Northumberland.

"Knowledge exchanged during the EUFOFINET project is already being discussed and debated by the Chief Fire Officers' Association's Wildfire Group, with a view to developing and improving training and response to wildfires across the UK.

"A number of national and local stakeholders have been involved in activities organised throughout the project, reflecting the commitment from NFRS to work with a range of stakeholders to ensure a safe and effective response to wildfires in Northumberland and the rest of the UK."

Now that EUFOFINET is nearly complete, the partners are exploring ways to collaborate further in the future. In particular, a number of EUFOFINET partners are assisting one another with the implementation of individual action



Dr Robert Stacey, Project Officer with Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service.

plans while some partners are actively developing new collaborative projects on topics related to wildfires/forest fires.

Certain partners, including NFRS, have been involved in submitting an application for additional external grant funding to finance the creation of a European network of experts on wildfire prevention issues.

If the application is successful, this network will represent another important legacy by extending the exchange of knowledge and good practice far beyond the life and partnership of the initial project.



A number of EUFOFINET partners are assisting one another with the implementation of individual action plans and some of the partners are also actively developing new collaborative projects on topics related to wildfires/forest fires.

TIME TO BITE THE BULLET ON EUROPEAN DEFENCE

EUROPEAN COUNTRIES COULD BARELY AFFORD DUPLICATING EXPENSIVE MILITARY PROGRAMMES PRIOR TO THE ECONOMIC CRISIS AND THEY DEFINITELY CANNOT AFFORD IT NOW, WRITES CLARA MARINA O'DONNELL, SENIOR RESEARCH FELLOW AT THE CENTRE FOR EUROPEAN REFORM. SHE CLAIMS THAT GREATER EU DEFENCE CO-OPERATION IS NOW NEEDED.

Europe's military spending is in free fall. EU member states combined have reduced defence spending from €200 billion to €170 billion since the start of the economic crisis in 2008.

In response, governments have signed up to a variety of new bilateral and multilateral initiatives. These are designed to limit the impact of budget cuts on their armed forces.

However, so far, the savings incurred pale in comparison. Estimates put them at €200 million to €300 million. Many sensitivities relating to national security make it hard for governments to implement collaborative defence efforts.

But at a time when Europe's neighbourhood is replete with instability and the United States is scaling back its own armed forces, Europeans need to do more to stem the damage to their militaries.

Notwithstanding their budget cuts, taken together EU states are still the second largest defence spenders in the world.

Not all European countries are reducing the level of funding to their armed forces. According to a 2011 study for the European Parliament, Finland and Denmark have maintained military spending steady in recent years. Poland and Sweden have increased it.

However, prior to the economic crisis, most European countries spent less than two per cent of their gross domestic product on defence – even though North Atlantic Treaty Organisation members are, in theory, committed to devoting at least that much to their militaries.



DEFENCE SPENDING CUTS

A European Parliament study has found that most middle-sized European countries have cut their defence spending by 10 to 15 per cent since 2009. Smaller states, including Latvia and Lithuania, have cut spending by more than 20 per cent. Britain is reducing its military budget by 7.5 per cent over four years.

According to Dr Andrew Dorman from Chatham House (an independent think-tank) the actual reduction is nearly 25 per cent because the Ministry of Defence has many unfunded liabilities and has to unexpectedly pay for the replacement of the UK's nuclear deterrent.

France is expected to scale back its military once it announces its new defence

priorities this year. As a result, American officials warn that Europeans will soon be incapable of deploying a mission like the one they sent to Libya in 2011.

European governments have acknowledged that closer co-operation between their armed forces could offset the impact of such large spending cuts. They have introduced some welcome measures. For example, last year, 14 countries agreed to buy surveillance drones for a joint NATO-run squadron. Some 18 states now take part in the EU network to facilitate maritime surveillance through information exchanges.

In April 2012, Belgium and the Netherlands decided to co-operate in helicopter maintenance. Last September,

Bulgaria and Romania agreed terms to make it easier to police each other's airspace. Britain and France are now training together to develop a new joint expeditionary force. And the UK and other Europeans are providing logistical support to France's deployment in Mali.

POOLING CAPABILITIES

Governments remain wary of pooling military capabilities. They still fear that their partners may block their access to shared equipment if they disapprove of a particular operation.

States also disagree on the best way to develop new military technologies. For example, Britain wants to acquire defence equipment with France bilaterally.

Since French President François Hollande has been in office, France has become increasingly keen to allow other European countries to take part in Franco-British procurement projects. Many countries are averse to committing to ambitious initiatives because they know that these can be costly in the short term.

Last year, Britain notably abandoned its plans to adapt its aircraft carrier so that French planes could land on the carrier, after realising how expensive the adjustments would be. Several states are loath to integrate their defence companies with those of other countries, as Germany illustrated when it refused to support the merger between BAE and EADS.

Finally, governments do not want their defence firms to lose out on contracts. Many in France worry that several of the cost-saving projects proposed by NATO, including missile defence and the joint purchases of surveillance drones, favour US defence companies.

AVERSION TO CO-OPERATION

Europeans need to overcome some of these continued aversions to co-operation. Even though governments would prefer to avoid using military force, they might not have a choice.

Several conflicts risk undermining stability in Europe's southern periphery over the next few years – not least the partial take-over of Mali by Islamist militants, where French forces have already felt compelled to intervene, the civil war in Syria and a possible standoff with Iran.

And Washington, struggling with its own budgetary constraints, wants its allies across the world to take more

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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O'Donnell focuses on European defence co-operation, defence industrial matters and the Middle East.

*She also writes articles in peer-reviewed journals, such as *International Affairs*, and opinions pieces in newspapers, including *European Voice* and *Jane's Defence Weekly*. She speaks at international conferences and provides commentary to the media, including BBC's *Newsnight*, *The Financial Times*, *The New York Times* and *El País*.*

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responsibility for their regional security.

President Hollande's government can allay some of the French concerns about the lack of European industrial participation within NATO cost-saving initiatives.

To do so, Paris could suggest projects to the alliance which involve equipment made in Europe. Berlin, London, Paris or Rome could sell some of their old fighter jets to countries in Central Europe which want to strengthen their arsenals cheaply. Europeans should buy cutting edge military capabilities only when it is necessary.

Over the last few decades, the cost of defence equipment has grown exponentially. Even when their economies are stronger, governments will increasingly struggle to arm their militaries. In some cases, national security will require governments to continue acquiring the most technologically sophisticated capabilities. But for less sensitive tasks, governments should explore cheaper equipment options and a greater use of civilian suppliers, for example in communications.

PROBLEMS WITH DUPLICATION

Finally, European governments must ensure that they do not duplicate their efforts to build the next generation of drones. European governments have long

argued that it has been very inefficient for Europe to have three-manned fighter jets programmes – Rafale, Eurofighter and Gripen.

The duplication has prevented the various programmes from benefiting from economies of scale, it has curtailed interoperability amongst European armed forces and it has led Europeans to compete against each other in export markets.

Over the next few years, Europeans will decide how to develop unmanned combat aircraft and other sophisticated drones. It is still unclear how governments will proceed. France and Britain have announced plans to develop next generation drones bilaterally. Lately, EADS and Finmeccanica – Italy's largest defence company – have floated intentions to do the same.

And France has also agreed to work on unmanned aircraft with Germany. Under current spending trends, there is insufficient demand in Europe to support several competitive next generation large unmanned aircraft programmes.

So, Europeans must avoid several unco-ordinated efforts taking place simultaneously. European countries could barely afford duplicating expensive aerospace programmes prior to the economic crisis. They definitely cannot afford it now.

A DECADE OF LISTENING IN IRISH PRISONS

THE SAMARITANS LISTENER SERVICE RECENTLY CELEBRATED ITS FIRST DECADE IN OPERATION IN DUBLIN'S PRISONS. MICHAEL DONNELLAN, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE IRISH PRISON SERVICE, AND PIO FENTON, NATIONAL CHAIRMAN OF THE SAMARITANS, TALK TO JOHN WALSHE, ABOUT THE SUCCESS OF THE PROGRAMME WHICH COULD BE INTRODUCED TO MOST PRISONS BY THE END OF 2013.

The Samaritans recently marked

10 years of its Listener Service in Irish prisons, when President Michael D. Higgins visited Dublin's Cloverhill Prison, to meet those prisoners who act as 'Listeners'.

The Prison Listener Service provides an important infrastructure for people who need emotional support in a prison setting. "Prison can be a very daunting experience," admits Michael Donnellan, Director General of the Irish Prison Service.

"For new admissions, in particular, prison can be a very frightening place. Having the possibility of talking to somebody who in some ways is a peer can be very supportive.

"The Listeners have done fantastic work over the last 10 years in saving people's lives and easing people's pain. It allows people to feel that there is someone at their own level who will talk to them and, more importantly, listen to them."

Is the fact that they are seen as a peer and not an authority figure a factor? Absolutely, according to Donnellan. "We have professional services, from psychologists to probation officers, doctors and nurses, but prisoners often

find it difficult to open up.

"However, if they can speak with somebody who may have had the same or similar types of experience to their own, it can really make a difference."

A MACHO ENVIRONMENT

National Chairman of the Samaritans, Pio Fenton, describes prison as "a very tough environment" adding that it is very challenging one in a number of respects – people are cut off from families, from support mechanisms.

The Samaritans have been working with the Irish Prison Service for a long time, and the Prison Listener Service was developed as an initiative to allow prisoners to support one another.

"The fact that it has grown from one or two prisons to almost all of them is a sign of its success. Prison can be a very

macho environment," Donnellan notes.

"Yet, here is a scheme that breaks through all those barriers in allowing men to talk to other men and women to talk to other women. The Listener Service is about empowering prisoners to look after each other and create a safe environment."

Donnellan also feels that it is empowering for the Listeners, who learn to "empathise with other people's problems and pains and to respect that". But he is keen to stress that they get no monetary gain, no early release, nothing extra. "The only benefit they get is their own personal growth."

Fenton agrees and says that most Listeners take great pride in the work. "Many would cite greater levels of self-confidence and self-control as impacts of the training and subsequent work. We



President Michael D. Higgins pictured during his visit to Dublin's Cloverhill Prison, to meet those prisoners who act as 'listeners'. (Pic: Maxwell Photography).

also have evidence to suggest that some of our Listeners – upon release – have reduced reconviction levels and go on to further education or training.”

VOLUNTEER TRAINING

The Samaritans’ National Chairman believes “the persistence of our volunteers and the support of the prison service” has allowed the Listener Service to prove so successful. The fact that there is no shortage of volunteers is a further sign of its success.

“We spend time training them, going through various aspects of what they could encounter and what would be the appropriate way of dealing with it,” Fenton reveals.

“Essentially, it’s about active listening, being non-judgemental and confidentiality, which is particularly vital in a prison setting. In the 10 years that it has been running, there has never been a breach of confidentiality, which I think is a reflection of the prisoners who participate in it and the respect that it has across the prison service.

“We’re glad to give that contribution to prisoners and the prison service, because we know its value: we know that when people avail of it, that it does reduce their distress and that’s the highest compliment you could pay it.”

REDUCING THE INCIDENCE OF SUICIDE

The Irish Prison Service plays its part in helping to reducing the incidence of suicide in prisons. “Suicide is a big issue in Ireland at the moment and that is reflected in prison, which reflects the community,” Donnellan notes. “Anything we can do to keep the lifeline open is going to be a benefit.”

“If somebody is feeling depressed at 3am, they can ring their bell,” he explains. “The prison officer will respond and if they want to speak to a Listener, the prison officer will arrange for the Listener to go to their cell, lock the door and leave the two of them there until the bell rings again.”

Last year the Samaritans recorded 1,100 formal contacts within the six prisons in its Listener Service, a phenomenal increase of 83 per cent on the previous year, which Fenton attributes to the extension of the service, an increase in training for new Listeners and increased awareness of the programme across the prison service.

“We’re looking at making sure that as prisoners come into the prison, they are made aware of the Listener Service on the first day. We think that will have a positive impact over the coming months and years,” Fenton reveals.

Pio Fenton says the teams of Listeners “deserve to be commended for their commitment and professionalism”. He acknowledges that those who become Listeners take on a large responsibility:

“They undergo substantial training in the first instance; then they become known within the prison as Listeners because they wear a branded shirt so that inmates can approach them in

the yard or other open setting; and – most remarkably – they listen.”

The Listeners themselves receive strong support from the Samaritans, which goes way beyond their initial



training. "If somebody has spoken to you for two hours about how they might want to kill themselves, that can be very intense, so the Listener has access to a phone 24/7, whereby they can ring the Samaritans and talk it through themselves," Donnellan explains.

STRONG WORKING RELATIONSHIP

The Samaritans and the Irish Prison Service have enjoyed a strong working relationship over the duration of the programme.

In more recent years, the Samaritans have rolled out training days to prison staff so that they become familiar with the operation of the service.

In addition, the Samaritans have an input into the formal training of prison officers, and sit on a number of the suicide awareness committees of the country's prisons.

"The Samaritans are a fantastic operation and they have been so supportive of the prison service," Donnellan enthuses. "They were brave enough to bring this programme into prisons 10 years ago, when it wouldn't have been a popular move. They get nothing out of it apart from satisfying their mandate of offering a listening ear."

"The support we have received from prison governors, staff and the Irish Prison Service are really what allows the scheme to be such a success, because without their support it would not be possible," Fenton notes.

"Over the 10 years since the programme was introduced, we have proven that it is valuable and something that can ultimately reduce tensions within prisons."

EXPANDING THE SERVICE

"The Listener Service has proven itself to be an effective and necessary infrastructure in a prison setting. It is another example of prisoners taking responsibility for their own healthcare and the needs of those who may be vulnerable in their community. Prison Governors have observed the positive impact which it has on both the prisoner in emotional distress and the Listener," summarises Donnellan.

Indeed, the Director General of the Irish Prison Service is so happy with the Listener Service that he'd like to see it expand to every prison in the country: "At the moment, it's operating in the Dublin prisons, and our ambition is to expand this



The Samaritans and the Irish Prison Service have enjoyed a strong working relationship over the duration of the programme. In more recent years, the Samaritans have rolled out training days to prison staff so that they become familiar with the operation of the service.

to all of our 14 prisons, so that it becomes the norm.

"So, if a prisoner or a Listener is transferred from a Dublin prison to a Cork prison, a Limerick prison or an open prison, they will be able to avail of the same programme or to become a Listener

in that other prison."

In conclusion, Donnellan remarks that a lot of progress has been made. "My ambition would be that the end of 2013 the Listener programme would be introduced to most of the prisons in Ireland."

IRISH COAST GUARD TAKES NEW SIKORSKY S-92 ON BOARD

THE NEW SIKORSKY S-92 HELICOPTER, MARKS A HUGE LEAP FORWARD IN TECHNOLOGY AT ALL FOUR IRISH COAST GUARD HELICOPTER RESCUE AREAS, ACCORDING TO JIM O'NEILL, AIRCREW TRAINER WITH CHC IRELAND.

The new service is being supplied to the Irish Coast Guard by CHC Ireland – the world's largest operator of the Sikorsky S-92, with a long distinguished pedigree in SAR operations, coupled with the strict safety culture of Civil SAR.

This state-of-the-art twin-engine aircraft is specially equipped for SAR operations (as opposed to SAR equipped utility helicopters).

As well as a longer range and improved cruising speeds, the S-92s is equipped with enhanced rescue mission technology including infra-red and low light cameras. It has a Nightsun searchlight, a satellite communications system featuring a Flight Following tracking facility, and high speed dual hoists.

The S-92 is also the first helicopter in Ireland to be granted HEMS approval. The aircraft is designed to operate in severe weather conditions and is EASA certified to fly in icing conditions. The S92 has extra icing protection on the Main and Tail Rotors and standard icing protection for the engine inlets, windshields and Air Data Systems. This allows IMC (Instrument Meteorological Conditions) flights to take place throughout the year.

This provides the Irish Coast Guard with the capability to position a helicopter, direct track to an incident anywhere that an IMC letdown is possible, such as, for example, an offshore incident.

This capability will allow faster on-scene times, faster patient recovery times, greater year-round capability and the ability to position all helicopters direct to the scene of a major incident.



TRAINING PROGRAMME

Pilot, aircrew and engineer training commenced in mid-2011. All pilots, trained to date, have carried out their simulator training in Farnborough. The initial pilot trainers and pilots then operated from one of CHC's UK SAR bases at Stornoway, where they completed their SAR Operational Conversion Course.

Aircrew trainers carried out their conversion training simultaneously at CHC's SAR base in Sumburgh, as both winch operators and as winchmen. The engineers completed the first part of their training in Ireland and then went on to gain experience 'on type' within CHC's operations in Denmark, Norway and Scotland.

In January 2012 the first of the five Irish registered S-92s started training from the Shannon base, with the crews and engineers already in place. Between January and the launch date on 1 July 2012, an intensive training programme was carried out with a view to all three disciplines increasing their experience and skills level.

The conversion of CHC staff from other bases commenced as part of the delivery plan and also training for outside agencies. This phase is still ongoing and will see the rest of the aircraft and the other bases 'going live' during 2013.

BREAKING ALL RECORDS

To date, the S-92 has broken all previous records for the number of missions at the Shannon base, which is down to the combination of SAR and HEMS call-outs. This is due to the increased capability of the aircraft, combined with its availability for HEMS call-outs when requested by an ambulance service paramedic at the scene of an incident.

This is available when requested from the regional control centre who will then contact the National Aero-Medical Co-ordination Centre, who in turn interfaces with the Irish Coast Guard.

As the S-92 programme continues to move forward, it's likely that the number of taskings will rise, in line with the increased capability and improved technology.

SOME FACTS AND FIGURES ON SIKORSKY S-92

- *Range – 265 NM;*
- *Speed – 152 knots;*
- *Seating capacity – 22;*
- *Dual AC Hoists (enhanced safety standard for SAR Operations);*
- *PHECC Registered Paramedic Winch Crew (for advance patient care);*
- *Vertical Take Off/Landing Profile;*
- *Search capable avionics;*
- *Forward Looking Infra-Red (FLIR) enables aircrew to detect, identify and search for missing persons or vessels;*
- *SAR Search Lights;*
- *Multiple communications systems FM, VHF, HF, Tetra and satellite communications;*
- *Active vibration control to provide better patient care, reduce crew fatigue and improve component life;*
- *Composite blades that deliver optimised cruise and hover performance;*
- *Modern Cockpit Display System to maximize situational awareness;*
- *4-Axis Automatic Flight Control System (AFCS) with flight director and auto hover capability, providing automated search patterns and pinpoint transitions to and from the hover regardless of day, night or weather conditions;*
- *7-Foot (2.13m) wide rear cargo ramp, which facilitates fast and easy stretcher, passenger and cargo loading;*
- *Enhanced Ground Proximity Warning System (EGPWS), providing greater safety and situational awareness, especially at night and in poor visibility operations;*
- *Traffic Collision Avoidance System (TCAS), providing awareness of other transponder equipped aircraft;*
- *Deployable life-rafts and Emergency Locator Transmitters (ELTs), for increased survivability in the unlikely event of an aircraft ditching;*
- *A dedicated winch crew operating station that enables crew to search from an optimal ergonomic position with superb visibility;*
- *A stand-up cabin, to enable aircrew to easily and safely handle heavy items such as stretcher casualties and provide a professional level of care to casualties;*
- *Auxiliary fuel tanks can be fitted as part of the standard fit to allow long range missions;*
- *A CHC configuration usually will feature an additional 1400lbs of fuel;*
- *Under-slung load system, highly useful for all roles;*
- *Capability to deploy equipment to remote area.*



LIMERICK CELEBRATES 70 YEARS OF FIREFIGHTING

THE ORIGINS OF LIMERICK COUNTY FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE, WHICH DATE BACK TO DECEMBER 1942, WERE RECENTLY CELEBRATED WITH THE UNVEILING OF A PLAQUE IN THE MID-WEST COUNTY'S FIRST FIRE STATION IN RATHKEALE.

Among those gathered in

Rathkeale to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Limerick County Fire & Rescue Service were family members of the late John Doyle (the first 'Captain' of the fire service) and the late Paddy O'Sullivan (the county's first chief fire officer).

At the unveiling ceremony in Rathkeale,

Josephine Cotter Coughlan, Limerick County Council's Director of Services with responsibility for the emergency services, acknowledged the key figures involved with the development of the local fire service during the last seven decades.

These included the late Dick Haslam who as county manager between 1970 and 1988 oversaw the construction of six fire stations. During this time, the organisation was also well served by chief fire officer Joe McGrath and assistant chief fire officer Frank Dennison, who was a member of Limerick County Fire and Rescue Service for 37 years.

She added: "Limerick County Fire and Rescue Service is now one of the best trained and equipped services in the country. The service fleet and facilities are continually being upgraded and expanded, while staff regularly undergo training to further enhance their combined ability to respond to and deal with emergency incidents."



Limerick County Council's Carmel Kirby, Chief Fire Officer, and Josephine Cotter Coughlan Director of Services for Emergency Services, pictured with John Lyons, Station Officer Rathkeale Fire Brigade at the unveiling of a plaque to commemorate the 70th Anniversary of Limerick County Fire and Rescue Service (1942-2012) by Jerome Scanlan Cathaoirleach Limerick County Council. (Pic: Dave Gaynor)

FIRE BRIGADES ACT

There was no obligation in Ireland to have any public firefighting system before 1940, the year in which aerial bombardment of Britain got underway. Fearful of the consequences of Ireland being drawn into World War Two, the Fire Brigades Act was passed in 1940.

In December 1942, three men representing Limerick County Council, John Doyle, John King and county manager Patrick J. Meghan went to Dublin and purchased one Sultzter Fire Engine, which was based in Rathkeale.

John Doyle was appointed 'Captain' of the new county service and was based in Rathkeale with his five-man crew. They remained somewhat unique for a number of years in County Limerick. The rest of the county had to rely on small portable pumps which had to be hauled in trailers. It wasn't until 1962 that the first new appliance arrived in Rathkeale.

STRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

In the intervening period, there were some considerable structural and infrastructural developments for the fire service in Limerick. In 1943, plans were finalised for the new fire station in Rathkeale.

In 1947, the county was divided into four areas, resulting in the establishment of new fire crews and stations in Newcastle West and Kilmallock, as well as the city.

The Newcastle and Kilmallock crews were given a small allowance for their services. This would turn out to be the beginnings of the local fire service.

Abbeyfeale was later established in 1968 and Cappamore in 1969, following a complete review of the county fire service needs. The last full crew was established in Foynes in 1982.

Limerick County Fire and Rescue Service now boasts a complement of 19 appliances in six modern stations.

TACKLING THE GLOBAL DROWNING EPIDEMIC

A CONFERENCE ON THE PREVENTION OF DROWNING WILL BE HOSTED BY THE LIFESAVING FOUNDATION IN GORMANSTOWN, CO. MEATH IN APRIL, WITH THE PRIMARY AIM TO PROMOTE RESEARCH INTO ALL ASPECTS OF THE GLOBAL DROWNING EPIDEMIC.

The Lifesaving Foundation's Drowning Prevention Conference in City North Hotel, Co. Meath, from 24 to 27 April will feature international experts on water safety and risk management.

"Our four-day annual conference provides an opportunity for all to meet and share their collective knowledge and experiences," explains John Connolly, honorary chief executive of the Lifesaving Foundation. A new feature of the 2013 conference will be DVDs containing presentations, powerpoint slides and papers/presentation notes for delegates.

Conference themes will include beach safety, holiday drownings, suicide by drowning and survival swimming.

Key participants include:

- Dr Tom Griffiths, founder of Aquatic Safety Research Group, who provides innovative water safety and risk management programmes to a wide range of clients throughout the US and internationally.
- Gerald Dworkin, Aquatics Safety and Water Rescue Consultant and founder of Lifesaving Resources.
- Peter George, chief operations officer of the Surf Life Saving Association Australia and chair of its Lifesaving Management Committee, and lifesaving commissioner for the International Life Saving Federation.
- Niall Ferns, coastal unit sector manager with the Irish Coast Guard.
- Dr Robert Stallman, Norwegian School of Sports Science, and Torill Hindmarch, pre-school teacher and a consultant with the Norwegian Lifesaving Society.
- Christina Fonfe, founder of the Sri Lanka Women's Swimming Project.



FOUNDATION BACKGROUND

The Lifesaving Foundation is an independent organisation with no connection to any lifesaving agency in Ireland. It began as a sub-committee of The Royal Life Saving Society in Ireland (RLSS Ireland) before its incorporation as an Irish charity.

It is based in Ireland, but has an international membership that supports the development of lifesaving in over six countries in Africa and Asia and promotes research into drowning.

It aims to reduce the number of drowning deaths worldwide by conducting drowning related research, organising an annual research conference, publishing safety information and financially supporting water safety related projects.

It includes a number of international university professors and world leading medical doctors, along with members of small community organisations with few formal qualifications but a lot of practical experience.

The Foundation was born when the Royal Life Saving Society Branch in Ireland received a request to provide financial and technical support to a small lifesaving organization based in Mombasa, Kenya, back in 1999.

It was early 2002 by the time two pool lifeguard trainers travelled to Kenya to train a group of pool and beach lifeguards for employment in local hotels.

An internationally recognised lifeguard qualification would not only enable the individuals concerned to gain employment

but would also boost the local tourism industry. The project was so successful that further requests followed.

RLSS Ireland was not in a position to financially support a long-term project but a small group of members were interested in continuing so a new independent organisation was formed. It was incorporated as The Irish Lifesaving Foundation and registered as an independent charity in 2003.

WORLDWIDE PROJECTS

During the past decade the Foundation has run projects in Lesotho, Sri Lanka, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Gambia, South Africa, Kenya and India. It has also supplied clothing and equipment to lifesavers in Antigua, Barbados, Botswana, Gambia, India, Kenya, Lesotho, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, St Lucia, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

One of their most successful projects is the Sri Lanka Women's Swimming Project, founded in the aftermath of the 2004 Asian tsunami.

In many countries, for cultural reasons, females are not taught to swim and during the tsunami the majority of those who died were females or children, consisting of up to 80 per cent of all casualties in some regions.

This project aims to reduce drowning deaths by using female swimming teachers to teach women and teenage girls to swim and then show them how they, in turn, can teach their own children and families to swim. The project is now incorporated as a charity in the UK.

DROWNING RESEARCH

The Foundation has tried to encourage local drowning research in developing countries with a view to the creation of water safety programmes targeted to local problems.

Unfortunately, it has had little real success with this project due to the low level of official reporting on drowning deaths in developing countries where it has a low priority.

"Our involvement in the 'Can You Swim' project aims to figure out why people known to be able to swim drown within a short distance from safety (accidental and suicidal casualties). "Meanwhile, our involvement with the International Open Water Drowning

Prevention Task Force aims to distil all available drowning prevention advice into a small number of universal phrases," according to Connolly.

Here in Ireland, the Foundation works with Irish search and rescue organisations on specific projects, such as Foyle Search and Rescue, Dublin Fire Brigade and Waterford City Fire Service on how to successfully deal with suicide by drowning.

IRELAND MEDAL

The Ireland Medal was introduced in 2004 as a joint project between the Irish Lifesaving Foundation and RLSS Ireland to mark the centenary of the RLSS branch and the birth of The Foundation.

A gilded sterling silver medal is awarded annually "to an Irish person or organisation or to a person of Irish descent in recognition of an exceptional contribution to saving lives from drowning".

Awarded nine times to date, the medal generates valuable publicity for lifesaving, and it frequently draws attention to hidden aspects of drowning.

For example, a study entitled 'The Success of Foyle Search and Rescue – Suicide Prevention and Rescue in the City of Derry, Ireland' (Wilson, Smyth & Connolly, 2010) showed that by reducing the number of annual drowning deaths in the Foyle River from over 30 to three, the local search and rescue team successfully prevented suicide by drowning.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Lifesaving Foundation
www.lifesavingfoundation.ie
- Conference Programme
www.lifesavingfoundation.ie/conference/index.php/program/preliminary/



SPECIFIC LIFESAVING PROJECTS OVERSEAS

A key aspect of the Lifesaving Foundation's specific projects is the applicability and transferability of what is taught or researched across national boundaries.

These projects include the following:

1. **Personal Swimming Survival**

***Skills:** The Foundation will support research into why persons who can swim drown, and what is lacking in their experience, knowledge or training that prevents them from swimming to safety.*

***2. Suicide by Drowning:** Suicide by drowning is present in every community and becoming a major challenge in the 21st century.*

3. **Female Swimming Instruction:**

The Foundation will build on the work of the Sri Lanka Women's Swimming Project, with the aim of promoting female swimming instruction worldwide.

***4. Lifeguard Training:** The Foundation will continue to financially support the training of unemployed swimmers as lifeguards in developing countries.*

5. **Foreign Holiday Water Safety:**

Visitors are much more vulnerable to drowning than residents of any area close to water. Research into this aspect of drowning will be supported.

***6. Land-based Water Rescues:** The Foundation will promote research into land-based water rescues and the development of water safety programmes in developing countries.*

7. **School/Youth-based Water**

***Safety Instruction:** Funding will be provided in support of water safety instruction embedded into national education or training programmes in developing countries.*

FACING THE FUTURE OF FIREFIGHTING

CELEBRATING ITS 150TH ANNIVERSARY IN 2012, DUBLIN FIRE BRIGADE IS THE LARGEST FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE IN IRELAND. WITH PRESSURE ON BUDGETS INCREASING ALL THE TIME AND EVEN CALLS FOR PRIVATISATION OF FIRE SERVICES, IS IT READY TO FACE UP TO THE CHALLENGES AHEAD?

Dublin Fire Brigade is facing “very challenging times”, according to Hugh O’Neill, former DFB chief fire officer, adding that resources are not adequate with the current financial situation.

O’Neill revealed that funding for a building programme at the training centre in Marino has dried up, due to the recession, which he feels “will cause a problem in the future. The entire thrust of services in local government now is of consolidation.”

Costing the city nearly €100 million a year, Dublin Fire Brigade (DFB) is seen by some as too expensive and many are now looking for better value for money.

Language used by Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council in a tender for services from DFB caused one city councillor to suggest privatisation as a possibility.

Sinn Féin’s Councillor Mícheál MacDonncha was vehemently opposed to such a proposal. He had a motion before the council stating: “this council acknowledges the role of Dublin Fire Brigade in safeguarding the people of Dublin (including all four local authorities) and in providing integrated fire, rescue and emergency ambulance services and we affirm our opposition to any move to ‘outsource’ or privatise these vital emergency services in whole or in part.”

REVIEW OF SERVICES

In its request for “a tender leading to the appointment of a service provider”, DLR looked for a full review of services offered by DFB and the need for better value for money. DLR County Council wanted “a Service Level Agreement model of shared service provision for fire and rescue services in the county, which will ensure that fire and rescue services are delivered



in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, preferably by DFB, within a 'value for money framework that is appropriate for a modern public service'."

DLR noted in its report that 83 per cent of the Dublin Fire Brigade annual spend is pensions and pay. It also acknowledged that DFB staff members are highly trained, competent and dedicated.

"Dublin Fire Brigade has given 150 years of unequalled public service, countless lives have been saved in that time both through the hard work of fire prevention and the courageous work of rescue and firefighting," said MacDonncha.

He described his motion to DCC as "a warning shot across the bows of those who would contemplate privatising this service. We need fire and emergency services' firmly based commitment to public service. When the profit motive enters, corners can be cut and that is not acceptable."

CASE FOR PRIVATISATION

However, is privatisation all bad if it is going to deliver better value for money for Dun Laoghaire Rathdown denizens? DLR currently pays Dublin City Council €14.5 million for services each year. If the average number of call-outs is 2,000 fires and incidents each year in DLR, then each single operation costs around €7,280 to the taxpayer.

Some feel that DLR may choose to run its own fire service again, as it did before. "Everything that can be squeezed has been squeezed," according to Hugh O'Neill. "If you compare Dublin Fire Brigade to other European cities, it is still under-resourced. There is not enough to provide the level of cover you would expect in a large city."

Asked if the €600 household charge for fire call-outs should be increased to help fund services, O'Neill said that the revenue from that measure only brings in "about €500,000". Most other European cities don't levy this charge since it is "considered counter-productive, delaying the call out and so creating more dangerous fires", he added.

The organisation remains "resilient and progressive" according to O'Neill and new HETAC training of officers, delivered by Dublin City University, will "open up promotional routes for the future".

BACKGROUND TO DUBLIN FIRE BRIGADE

Dublin Fire Brigade was set up by way of the Dublin Corporation Fire Brigade Act 1862. The first 'fire station' was in Whitehorse Yard, off Winetavern Street, which had a fire engine – purchased from J & R Mallet of Ryder's Row – in place since 1854.

DFB has seen major transformations down the years, such as receiving its first steam fire engine in 1864, which was first demonstrated in the grounds of Trinity College, a venue used again in June 2012 for the 150th anniversary celebrations.

With 12 full-time stations and two retained stations, Dublin Fire Brigade is a modern fire, rescue and emergency medical services provider. It has modernised through amalgamations – hand pumps to steam fire engines – horse drawn to motorisation – basic first aid to advanced paramedics – firefighting to specialist training, such as swift water rescue and high rise rescue.



Retired and serving members of Dublin Fire Brigade attended a civil reception in Dublin Castle, hosted by Lord Mayor Cllr Andrew Montague, following the city centre parade to mark DFB's 150th anniversary. (Pics: Paul Curran, Carlow Fire Service)

150 YEARS OF FIREFIGHTING

Dublin Fire Brigade celebrated 150 years in operation last year, which saw a range of initiatives taking place throughout the year. These included a parade through

Dublin City Centre on the June Bank Holiday Weekend, from Parnell Street to a civic reception in Dublin Castle, attended by around 1,000 international fire fighters, marking the anniversary of the country's first fire service, which was established by the Dublin Corporation Fire Brigade Act of 1862. The parade proved the perfect showcase for two very special restored vehicles.

Dublin City Council joined forces with FÁS in a partnership project to provide training for 12 to 14 young people to restore a 1921 British Leyland fire engine to its original state. The fire engine, which is on loan from the National Transport Museum, was used in the funeral cortege of Michael Collins in 1922.

In addition, the FÁS trainees were also involved in the complete replication of an 1898 wooden horse-drawn ambulance in Dublin. "They learned metal bodywork, mechanics, woodwork, computers and painting, taught to FETAC qualifications," according to DFB's third officer Greg O'Dwyer, who was project officer on the 150th celebrations.

"In 1898, the first fire chief, a Captain Purcell, was a forward thinker," O'Dwyer explained. "He saw someone injured on a road one day and with open wounds, the person was just dumped onto the back of a filthy, dirty horse and cart to get to medical attention.

"Purcell knew this to be wrong, with the danger of infection, and sought to introduce a clean mode of transport where treatment could be administered en route to the hospital. The fire department had the cleanest horse-drawn carriages and a design was implemented to create an ambulance. This is the reason that the fire brigade also operates the ambulance service." The siren was a brass bell. The first ambulance was kept in the former station in Tara Street, which is now the HQ for DFB on Townsend Street.

LABOUR OF LOVE

O'Dwyer pays special tribute to Gavin Costello, their "fantastic carpenter" a foreman on secondment from Dublin City Council, for the replica horse-drawn ambulance. "He is a genius craftsman and has manufactured this from scratch with



The June Bank Holiday parade in 2012, culminating in a civic reception in Dublin Castle, proved the perfect showcase for specially-restored vehicles. (Pics: Paul Curran, Carlow Fire Service)

the help of the lads here. We sourced some original parts for the undercarriage for the horse," said O'Dwyer.

Actual timberwork and wheels were done by a wheelwright but the team had very few images to use as reference. "We had to source research from the period to be accurate in every detail, which included sparse images," O'Dwyer revealed. "Many reports in papers of the day had few pictures but they were great on written description so readers could build mental images in their own minds as to what things looked like.

"So, we have used newspaper reports, some from the Irish Independent, which go into great detail, even down to the colour schemes and the pin striping and etching on the glass. We had bits of original sketches and are satisfied it's an absolutely authentic reconstruction of the very first ambulance in Ireland."

O'Dwyer noted that between FÁS, Dublin City Council, sponsorship and volunteers, the cost of this project was inestimable, describing it as "a true labour of love."

FIRE BOXES

Tom Geraghty, a member of the 150th anniversary committee and historian of

the Dublin Fire Brigade, explained that the 1898 ambulances such as this were called out by a system of fire boxes, placed strategically around the city, at corners of major thoroughfares.

"In the event of emergency, people could break the glass on them and there were levers for fire or ambulance, which connected to a contraption in the fire station," described Geraghty.

"When a lever was pulled at the fire box, it registered as a number in the fire station, so the services would know which fire box had been activated; there were codes for James' Street, Thomas Street or Winetavern Street and so on. Whoever had broken the glass and pulled the lever was supposed to wait until the fire or ambulance carriage arrived to direct it to the emergency."

The Dublin Metropolitan Police also had keys to the fire boxes so they could open them and activate the levers without breaking the glass, he added. The levers were connected to various stations via copper wire. Alternatively, fires were spotted from fire towers attached to stations. Geraghty was a major advocate of last year's 150th celebrations, as "unfortunately, the centenary was never recognised in 1962."

SUICIDE AWARENESS CAMPAIGNER IS IRELAND'S CHARITY HERO

DUBLIN TAXI DRIVER JOHN QUINN WAS THE WINNER OF IRELAND'S CHARITY HERO AWARD 2012 FOR HIS TIRELESS WORK ON BEHALF OF PIETA HOUSE, IRELAND'S FIRST COMMUNITY-BASED CENTRE FOR THE PREVENTION OF SUICIDE AND SELF-HARM. REPORT BY JOHN WALSH.

Ireland's Charity Hero Award 2012, a national prize honouring individuals who have made an extraordinary contribution to good causes, was presented to a full-time taxi driver and suicide awareness campaigner from Dublin in December.

The award formed part of the 'Better Together' campaign, which is run by The Wheel – a leading support and representative network for the community and voluntary sector in Ireland. Supported by EBS. Better Together has just finished its third, hugely successful year, which was launched by President Michael D. Higgins in September 2012. The aim of the campaign is to make Ireland a better place to live by building support for charities, clubs and associations across the country.

"We designed Better Together and are delivering it as a direct consequence of the recession, because charities, community groups, voluntary groups, clubs and associations are having a really difficult time getting their message out," explained Deirdre Garvey, chief executive officer of The Wheel.

"They need all of the help they can get, because their funding is being squeezed on all fronts. Our creation of a campaign that allows hundreds of charities to promote themselves from one platform, using the Better Together brand, is great. The end result is a website with a quarter of a million hits over a five-week period. So, it is a phenomenally effective way of working smarter and doing more with less."

The Charity Hero Award was designed to be "a good news story, an energetic and energising, positive campaign", according to Garvey.

"We recognise that this isn't just about the organisations. Volunteers are so integral and important to these organisations, and we want to have one Charity Hero to celebrate all the amazing voluntary work that goes on.

"It is a symbolic recognition and celebration of volunteering. These are ordinary people doing extraordinary things. The Better Together campaign makes it possible for the light of others to shine."



John Quinn is pictured with Emma Hunt-Duffy, CSR and Marketing Manager, EBS, and Deirdre Garvey, CEO, The Wheel, following the award presentation in December 2012.

TIRELESS CAMPAIGNER

John Quinn was one of 55 people from across Ireland nominated for the annual award, and is, without doubt, an extremely worthy winner, doing what Garvey describes as "amazing work".

Having lost his 17-year-old son, Sean, to suicide in July 2005, Quinn took it upon himself to try to do something so that other families wouldn't have to endure the same pain.

"I wouldn't wish it on enemies," he says, simply. Since then, he has campaigned tirelessly to promote Pieta House, Ireland's first community-based centre for the prevention of suicide and self-harm.

"At Sean's funeral, I stood up on the altar and said what I felt I had to say about Sean. I said that people who felt like Sean had nowhere to go, but as and from that day, they had: they can come to me," he states.

"I didn't really know what I was letting myself in for," he smiles, "because the phone just never stopped; people walking up to me has never stopped. But I've been lucky, in that I have probably sent 300 to 400 people to Pieta House since it opened up in 2006 and nobody has died. I feel very lucky for that."

Not only has Quinn personally guided hundreds of people to Pieta House, but he has also fundraised over €100,000 in the intervening years to ensure that its doors remain open, including an annual Golf Classic, and the Sulki Drive, based around both his and his late son Sean's love of horses.

Every year, during Suicide Awareness Week, John, his wife Renee and extended family lead a very successful 'People for Pieta' fundraising initiative in their local community.

"I find it extremely difficult to talk about the money I've raised," he says. "It's all down to the generosity of people who put their hands into their pocket to give me that money in the first place."

SECRET MILLIONAIRE

September 2011 saw the taxi driver becoming one of the most recognised fundraisers in the country. He appeared on the television programme, Secret Millionaire, where he introduced businessman John Colcannon to Pieta House. Colcannon subsequently donated

BETTER TOGETHER FOR CHARITY

Better Together is a nationwide campaign that builds support for charities, clubs and associations across the country. In addition to the Charity Hero Award, other winners of the Better Together Charity Video Competition were announced.



A total of 119 charities, clubs and associations from across Ireland made short online videos to highlight their work, and the public voted for their favourite clips. Over 260,000 votes were cast on the website www.bettertogether.ie between September and November 2012, and 10 videos were subsequently shortlisted.

Three winners – Ability West, Clonakilty Macra and Progression Ireland – each received a cash prize of €3,000. For more information visit www.bettertogether.ie

€25,000 to the charity.

"I was so shocked when he handed me the €25,000 that I walked up into Sean's bedroom," recalls Quinn. "It was an absolute shock to be given the money and to find out I was involved in Secret Millionaire. I had been with this guy for three or four days and I thought he hadn't two pennies: at the end of the day, he has a firm that turns over €30-35 million a year."

John Colcannon has remained involved with Pieta House since. "He said to me that he was going to stay involved and he has done just that.

The committee he set up has now raised over €250,000 to open up a Pieta House in Tuam, which we will hopefully see very early this year.

"Thank God, there will now be a Pieta House in the west of Ireland," Quinn notes. "Pieta's dream is to have a Pieta House in every county in Ireland, but 80 per cent of the money that keeps Pieta House alive and running is raised by ordinary people, most of whom have lost somebody to suicide."

AN INSPIRATION

This extraordinary man is described as "an inspiration to us all" by the people at Pieta House who nominated him for the Charity Hero Award.

"John is a beacon of hope in his community and his overall contribution is invaluable," reads their nomination. "He is always good humoured and willing to help... and we feel that it is only right that

John be hailed for his great work as he would never acknowledge this himself."

Humble to the core, Quinn is quick to acknowledge the work of the emergency services across the country in dealing with victims of suicide. He reserves special admiration for the fire service.

"The people I feel most sorry for in all of this are firemen, who are normally on the scene before anyone else and have to deal with the situation. I don't know how they cope," he admits.

"A lad who lived around the corner from me hung himself and I ended up doing CPR on him. Unfortunately, he didn't make it. I couldn't work for two weeks after that, so I don't know how firemen do it."

THRILLED SKINNY!

So, what was it like for this unassuming taxi driver to be named Charity Hero 2012? "I'm not easily shocked or frightened, but I was shaking," he admits. "It was an honour to be put forward. It was an honour to be voted for by so many people on Facebook.

"Then, for the committee to decide that I was worthy of being called Charity Hero of the Year, I was thrilled skinny! It was an absolute honour and it's testament to all the people who voted for me and all the people who trust me."

Even better news for Pieta House is that the mighty Quinn isn't finished yet, not by a long shot: "Never is a long time, but I can't ever see myself stopping fundraising for Pieta House."

BRAVE HEROICS DURING 2012 REWARDED

PRESENTING NATIONAL BRAVERY AWARDS TO EIGHT GARDAÍ AND EIGHT MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC IN NOVEMBER 2012, SEAN BARRETT, CEANN COMHAIRLE OF THE DÁIL, SAID SUCH HEROISM TOO FREQUENTLY WENT UNACKNOWLEDGED.

Putting thoughts of their own safety to one side as they rescued others from burning buildings and swollen rivers, 16 courageous individuals received National Bravery Awards for 2012. "It is absolutely right that recipients be given medals and citations, surrounded by family members, the Garda and leading civilian figures," he added.

Barrett also expressed concern that many people were not aware of the National Bravery Awards scheme, and he has appealed for others to come forward to nominate people for awards in the future.

Barrett, who is also chairman of the National Bravery Awards Council, said: "It is important that these courageous acts of bravery are acknowledged and, with the launch of a new website, we hope that the public at large become more aware of the National Bravery Awards and heroic acts carried out by our citizens.

"We are also providing easily accessible information so that people can have all the information at hand to nominate somebody they know who has acted in a brave and selfless manner to help others," he added.

FORMULATED PLANNING

Among the recipients were Garda Tom



Members of the Comhairle na Mire Gaile - the Deeds of Bravery Council with the award recipients at the National Bravery Awards Ceremony, which was held in Farnleigh House in November 2012.



Garda James Conneely, Rory O'Connor and Garda Trevor Keating, who all received a bronze medal and certificate for bravery for rescuing a man from the Garavogue river in Sligo in September 2009.

McKenna and his colleague Garda Tommy Fay, who along with local man Sean Sharkey saved a 14-year-old boy from drowning after he fell from a motorboat at Lough Ramor near Virginia, Co Cavan.

"It is formulated planning – you don't think about it," said Garda Shaun Brosnan of the day he went into a bedroom in a burning building and helped to pull a man out, emerging just as the ceiling collapsed.

Garda Brosnan and colleagues John Hennessy and Mary Lonergan from Clonmel Garda Station were among 16 people honoured in the National Bravery Awards.

According to the citation, Garda Hennessy initially entered the burning house through a rear window with Garda Brosnan's help. In conditions of almost zero visibility, he found the bedroom, which was extremely hot, with ash falling from the ceiling, and had difficulty breathing. He found the occupant unconscious by the bed but was forced to leave to get fresh air.

Both Gardaí returned and carried the man to the window where Garda Lonergan and Noel Wall assisted the unconscious man to safety. As Garda Hennessy and Garda Brosnan were leaving the house, the ceiling began to collapse.

ACTS OF BRAVERY

Among the other 2012 recipients were Sligo-based Gardaí Trevor Keating and James Conneely, and a member of the public, Rory O'Connor, who rescued a man from the Garavogue River.

Off-duty paramedic Martin Whitmore got a silver medal and certificate of bravery for pulling a woman from the River Barrow at Graiguenamanagh, Co Kilkenny.

Seán Sharkey and Gardaí Tommy Fay and Tom McKenna were honoured for rescuing a man from Lough Ramor in Cavan. Meanwhile, Dubliner Eric Grundy and his friend Gareth Nathan got a certificate of bravery for rescuing a woman from the Grand Canal Dock.

Ceann Comhairle and Chairman of the National Bravery Awards Council, Seán Barrett, was joined by fellow council members David J. O'Callaghan, chairman of the Irish Red Cross, and Cllr Hillary Quinlan, chairman of the Association of City and County Councils, at the National Bravery Awards ceremony.



Ceann Comhairle Sean Barrett, Chairman of Comhairle na Mire Gaille, with Martin Whitmore, who received a silver medal and a certificate of bravery at the National Bravery Awards.



Noel Wall, Garda John Hennessy, Garda Shaun Brosnan and Garda Mary Lonergan, following the presentation at the National Bravery Awards ceremony.



Eric Grundy and Gareth Nathan with their awards at the National Bravery Awards ceremony.

FACEWATCH IDENTIFICATION IS A SMART MOVE

THE NEW FACEWATCHID SMART-PHONE APP IS HELPING POLICE IN PARTS OF THE UK TO IDENTIFY 'PEOPLE OF INTEREST' THROUGH CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION SUPPLIED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

The general public in Northamptonshire, UK, can now assist the police in identifying 'people of interest' from their smart-phones using the new Facewatch ID App.

The App has already shown success in London and Surrey, following its launch by the Metropolitan and Surrey Police in 2012. In fact, the Metropolitan Police have received over 180 positive IDs in just six months (June-Dec 2012).

Facewatch is available free of charge on iPhone, Blackberry and Android smart-phones through the relevant application stores and works when a user inputs their postcode into the App. The user will then see a number of CCTV images of individuals uploaded by the Northamptonshire Police CCTV team.

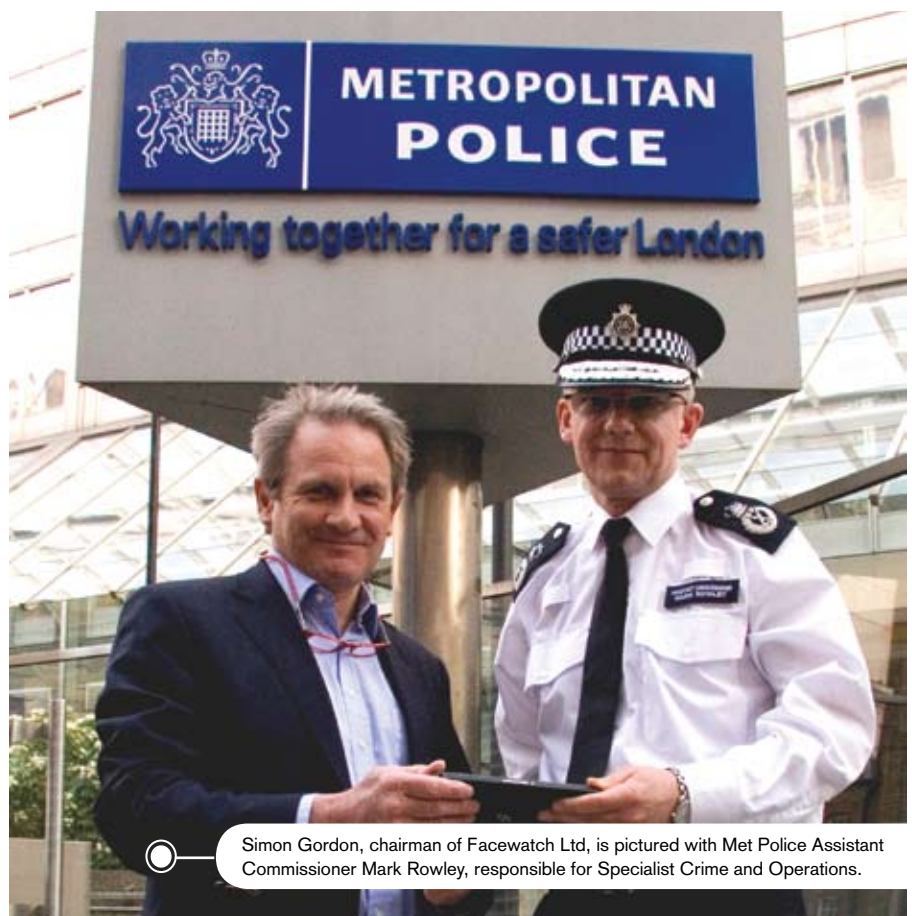
If a member of the public is able to identify a person from the image, they then have the option to confidentially upload any information they may have. For ease of use, the user is able to narrow down searches by choosing a radius around a specific postcode.

The images, which are uploaded directly by officers onto the app, are 'people of interest', meaning they are sought in connection with an incident or active investigation and the officers would like the public's help in identifying who they are.

CONFIDENTIAL SERVICE

"People can view the images by simply inputting a postcode into the screen and selecting a radius of up to five miles," explained Northamptonshire Police and Crime Commissioner Adam Simmonds.

"This will display a number of images of people connected to incidents in their selected area, with a function for providing information immediately and confidentially



Simon Gordon, chairman of Facewatch Ltd, is pictured with Met Police Assistant Commissioner Mark Rowley, responsible for Specialist Crime and Operations.

to the police. For me, victims of crime are a top priority. The aim is to keep members of the public and more specifically, victims of crime involved in the justice process."

The faces of Northamptonshire's most wanted people can still be seen online on the Northamptonshire website in the 'Most Wanted' section.

This allows the police to appeal to the public for information about certain people; officers either want to speak with in connection to an offence or are wanted on a warrant for failing to appear at court or on recall to prison.

The public will also be kept updated

with the details of court sentences which will be available to view online.

The Facewatch App will also be available on officers' BlackBerry phones, so that they can view the images while they are out and about on duty. The images can also be viewed through the police website: <http://www.northants.police.uk/justice>

MODERN TECHNOLOGY

"Mobile phone technology, social networking and real-time communications are all a part of modern life," noted Superintendent Dave Hill, head of

organisational delivery at Northamptonshire Police.

"As a force, we recognise that the demand for this must be met with modern-day policing.

This innovative application is an exciting step towards this for us and will not only help us solve more crime, but will also allow members of the public to play an active part in it. People can view the images when they like, where they like.

And if they recognise someone, they can simply send an immediate response through. In the same way, officers will be able to view this library of pictures when they are out and about, allowing for quick identification, and thereby helping to solve more crime in our county".

The new 'people of interest' section forms part of a wider focus that Northampton Police have launched, focusing on the 'justice' theme, on their website. "We want to inform and involve our communities more in the justice process," Hill explained. "This section on our website will provide members of the public with quick and easy access to people we want to identify, people who are wanted, as well as good results of people who are now behind bars."

REPORTING LOW LEVEL CRIME

Facewatch ID is produced by the same people behind the successful Facewatch system, which was launched in March 2010 for businesses wishing to simply and quickly report low level crime to the police online in the UK.

Currently operating in six of the major UK police forces, the Facewatch system is being adopted across more forces rapidly as its success in reducing costs and assisting in solving crimes is recognised.

Facewatch ID was launched in partnership with the MET and British Transport Police in June 2012 and the App is now being made available to all Police forces.

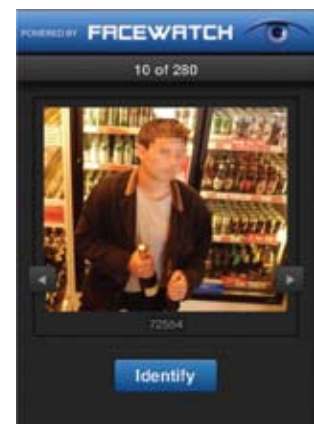
"We are extremely pleased that Northamptonshire Police has chosen Facewatch as their partner," enthused Facewatch Director, Michael O'Sullivan. "Facewatch ID has proven to be highly successful in encouraging the general public to assist the police in solving crime in London with over 100,000 downloads of the app and 8.5 million images viewed in the first five months of use during 2012. We hope the success will be repeated in Northamptonshire."

FACTS ON FACEWATCH

- *Facewatch is the first online crime reporting and communications system using social media and mobile tools to enable the public, businesses and the police to work together to beat crime.*
- *Facewatch provides a single cloud-based resource that enables suspects' images, moving CCTV evidence and paperless automated witness statements to be uploaded by businesses to the police through one simple interface via any internet connected device.*
- *This open system approach gives businesses, the public and the police an open but highly secure platform to enable faster and more effective crime management and communications.*
- *It is the only system to have been gained the 'Approved by Design' status from the Association of Chief Police Officers in the UK.*
- *Facewatch was launched in early 2010 and is fully operational in London; it has 6,000 current business premises registered or committed to register.*

Facewatch benefits include:

- *Online crime reporting using any device with an internet browser;*
- *Instant crime reference created for insurance purposes;*
- *Free immediate cancellation of victims credit and debit cards by CPP's card protection;*
- *Works with any existing CCTV system or even without CCTV for reporting only;*
- *Automatic paperless witness statements for every incident reported;*
- *Highly visible deterrent to criminals through branded signage;*
- *Strong emphasis on preventing and detecting prolific offenders;*
- *Full statistical analysis with key performance indicators showing police status and success rates in solving the crimes;*
- *Victims and businesses updated automatically online with police progress of crime investigation.*



FOCAL POINT FOR FORENSICS INDUSTRY

THE INAUGURAL FORENSICS EUROPE EXPO, TAKING PLACE ON 24 & 25 APRIL AT LONDON'S OLYMPIA VENUE, AIMS TO BE THE DEFINITIVE SOURCE OF EDUCATION, BEST PRACTICE, TRAINING AND NETWORKING FOR THE FORENSICS SECTOR AND SUPPLY CHAIN.

There is now, more than ever, a need to understand new legislation, and the impact and future challenges it will have on the availability, procurement and supply of forensic analysis and products and the future challenges facing the market, according to Philip Hunter, event director of the first Forensics Europe Expo.

The event aims to provide answers to:

- Source cost-effective forensics products and innovative solutions to reduce costs;
- Discover cutting edge technology from leading international labs, providers and manufacturers;
- Understand e-discovery and e-intelligence to prevent digital attacks;
- Network and share best practice with peers;
- View a crime scene in the live interactive demonstration area, showcasing the latest criminal capturing techniques;
- Discuss evidence collection methodologies with key members of industry;
- Gain knowledge and analysis by attending the two day Conference;
- Hear successful case studies within the free to attend show floor Workshop Programme.

CHANGING LANDSCAPE

"The landscape for the forensics industry has changed considerably in recent times. Up until March 2012, the vast majority of forensic testing in the UK was done by the Government's Forensic Science Service.

"However, since the UK Government took the decision to close the service last year, the model for the industry changed

COUNTER TERROR EXPO 2013

'Counter Terror Expo 2013', which runs in conjunction with Forensics Europe Expo, is the largest international event to mitigate threats, protect against terrorist attacks and understand current modern day risks, in a secure environment.

The event will see over 400 exhibitors showcasing their technologies, equipment and services, as well as a highly respected multi-stream conference, bringing clarity to the most critical and topical issues of concern for the counter-terrorism community.

For further information visit www.counterterrorexpocom



for good. It's now an open and free market, and the challenge is to ensure that the facilities used by people like the police and the legal sector are accredited and up to standard," Hunter added.

Forensics is the second highest expense for police forces after manpower. In an environment where they are facing austerity measures, budget cutbacks and now, a new, open market, being able to assess what's available and up to standard is imperative," he said.

Police forces need to be able to look at the different types of cost-effective services they can use, and they are also looking at ways they can maximise efficiencies in the collection of evidence itself, in terms of both costs and time, without being of detriment to their investigations.

LINKING INDUSTRY SECTORS

The point of the Forensics Europe Expo exhibition and the conference is to link the entire industry, from labs and lab equipment, through to forensic services, equipment and educators, claimed the event director. "We want to provide a focal point where everyone in the industry can meet, discuss the most important issues and the latest innovations, and plot out a course for the next 12 months and beyond."

The event is aimed at police forces, military and intelligence sectors, the legal sector, as well as all government and non-government agencies that use forensic services.

For further information visit www.forensicseuropeexpo.com



NEW CHIEF EXECUTIVE FOR LONDON AIR AMBULANCE

London's Air Ambulance has appointed a new chief executive officer at an exciting time of rapid transition for the charity and will lead the service through its next stages of development and growth. Graham Hodgkin will seek to secure additional funding to transform the scale and impact of the charity's operations including the critical acquisition of a second helicopter.

He has more than two decades of experience in the city; the former MD at Deutsche Bank led a variety of client facing businesses, as well as being heavily involved with its corporate social responsibility initiatives.

As a consultant, he was integral to the execution of Deutsche's social finance strategy, supporting the establishment of a £10 million Impact Investment Fund of Funds that seeks to provide capital to social enterprises via intermediaries with the aim of generating both positive social impact and a financial return.

Hodgkin also previously founded an independent consultancy, providing a range of business advisory, coaching, training and leadership to the financial services, social enterprise and charitable sectors.



Graham Hodgkin, London's Air Ambulance has appointed a new chief executive officer.

LONDON FIRE BRIGADE HAS SOMETHING TO TWEET ABOUT!

London Fire Brigade is investigating setting up the world's first 999 emergency twitter feed, following the recent publication of its draft Integrated Risk Management Plan.

Also known as the draft London Safety Plan, the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) sets out how the fire and rescue service in London will be delivered over the next few years. In it London Fire Brigade (LFB) has pledged to look at how best to use social media in the future, including how it would respond to people using it to report incidents.

The brigade would be the first emergency service in the UK to look into how apps, social media and micro-blogging sites, like Twitter, could be used by the public to report emergencies. It said it aims to work with the Government and other blue light services, such as the Met Police and London Ambulance Service, to establish whether the idea could become a reality and the extent to which social media might be used to report emergencies.

The brigade was quick to point out that people should never tweet to report emergencies and should instead always dial 999. It said it has already experienced people tweeting it to report fires and strongly advised against this as its Twitter feed is not monitored round the clock. Fire chiefs said people should continue to dial 999 to report emergencies.

Statistics from Twitter itself show that over 2000 tweets are sent per second worldwide.

Rita Dexter, Deputy Commissioner of London Fire Brigade, said, "With over one billion people now using Facebook and half a billion using Twitter, it's quite clear that social media is here to stay.

"When it was first set up in 1935, people said that dialling 999 to report emergencies would never work. Today BT handles over 30 million emergency calls each year. It's time to look at new ways for people to report emergencies quickly and efficiently and social media could provide the answer in the future."



*For more information visit www.london-fire.gov.uk or follow LFB @LondonFire on Twitter.

WALES AIR AMBULANCE CHARITY LANDS NEW CHOPPER

Wales Air Ambulance Charity has landed its latest deal for a new Eurocopter EC135T2e, which has been especially designed and modified for Helicopter Emergency Medical Service (HEMS) operations.

This aircraft, delivered in November 2012 by Bond Air Services, joins the current line up of EC135 choppers based at Swansea and Caernarfon. It will be based at Welshpool Airfield where it replaces the current BO105 Air Ambulance helicopter.

Equipped for night vision operations, the new chopper represents a significant technological step forward for the Wales Air Ambulance Charity.

Angela Hughes, Chief Executive of Wales Air Ambulance, said the helicopter will be of great benefit to people in Wales. "Now that we have three new EC135s that are all capable of carrying incubators, we have completed our network of children's air ambulances for Wales," she noted.

Chris Greenhill, MD of Bond Air Services said, "Our partnership with the Wales Air Ambulance Charity extends

over ten years and this latest addition to the air ambulance fleet marks another significant milestone in our close and valued working relationship.

"The introduction of this new helicopter further underpins our commitment to provide mission safe, zero accident operations delivering best value whilst achieving the highest levels of customer service."



The new Eurocopter EC135T2e has been especially designed and modified for HEMS operations in Wales.

SURREY POLICE TO KEEP NOTE OF PAPERLESS POLICING

All new recruits in Surrey Police are to be issued with and trained to use the Pronto electronic notebook (e-notebook), which replaces the paper pocket book

According to Nigel Rees, managing director of Kelvin Connect (KC), an Airwave Group company, officers in Surrey will be able to electronically capture all the information they've gathered on their shift.

"The benefits to the frontline officer, the force and members of the public are that clear: information captured electronically is synchronised with relevant back-end systems allowing others across the force instant visibility of information. For example, it enhances response to events requiring multiple officers working together, such as a road traffic collision."

All shift information is available to authorised personnel and is stored and retrieved for evidential purposes. This removes the cost and inconvenience of storing and managing paper notebooks. Information can also be shared with other organisations such as coroners' offices and local authorities.

The e-notebook also facilitates an officer's search across a broad range of back-end systems, allowing the officer to complete multiple forms using the same accurate and validated information. These forms are then submitted in real-time over the air, as well as printed copies issued on the spot to member of the public.

Chief Superintendent Dave Leeney of Surrey Police said, "Not only has the device shown large cost and time-saving benefits, it is a vital tool frontline officers need to enable them to focus on their job."

"By capturing and managing accurate and validated information electronically at the start of a process, it removes significant time wasting across the organisation and drives our commitment towards paperless policing."



All new recruits in Surrey Police will be trained and issued with the electronic notebook.

CHARITY AIR AMBULANCE FOR SCOTLAND

Scotland is in line for its first and only charity-funded air ambulance helicopter, which is due to be launched early this year.

The life-saving venture has been given the green light by the Scottish Government's Health Minister and the Scottish Ambulance Service who will deploy the new aircraft when it comes into service.

Newly-formed charity Scotland's Charity Air Ambulance (SCAA) will work to raise the funds necessary to launch the country's newest fast-response medical air support.

Eighteen charitable trusts across England and Wales currently operate a total of 32 charity-funded helicopter air ambulances while in Scotland the Government funds two helicopters and two fixed wing aircraft based in Glasgow, Inverness and Aberdeen.

The SCAA proposal will see an additional helicopter air ambulance supplementing the work of the Scottish Ambulance Service in delivering an even more extensive front-line emergency response service.

SCAA chairman, Perth businessman John Bullough, said the charity had identified an opportunity to work with the SAS to enhance the life-saving capabilities of Scotland's air

ambulance resources.

He explained that around £1.5 million would be needed to fund the SCAA helicopter each year.

"We will be looking to corporations, trusts, businesses, communities and the public in general in the weeks, months and years to come to keep this additional air resource flying," he said.

"In an ideal world there would be numerous helicopter air ambulances flying hope and help across Scotland. SCAA needs everyone's support to launch the country's first and provide additional aid where it's needed most."

The new air ambulance will be based at Perth Airport at Scone and tasked by the Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS) alongside its own aircraft. SAS chief executive Pauline Howie said: "The SCAA helicopter will be crewed by Scottish Ambulance Service paramedics and tasked in exactly the same way as our own air ambulance helicopters."

"We will now move to recruit and train paramedics for the role and help the charity to develop operational protocols from its base at Perth Airport to be fit for purpose, in accordance with all aspects of clinical and operational governance."

LONDON TRAUMA CONFERENCE 2013

Booking enquiries have already started rolling in for this year's London Trauma Conference from 10-14 December, following the success of the 2012 event which attracted doctors, ambulance teams and nurses from over 20 countries worldwide.

Topics at the event in December included pre-hospital cardiac arrest, cardiac arrest in the young, sudden cardiac death, cardiac arrest in sporting events, in addition to an insight into the future of cardiac arrest for paramedics.

The air ambulance symposium, also a first at the London Trauma Conference, was hosted by the Norwegian Air Ambulance. It gave insights into important areas of the air ambulance arena today, the future of air ambulances and an overview of the dispatch of air ambulances in trauma. There was also progress update of carrying blood

on board London's Air Ambulance, since the service was first rolled out in early 2012.

During the course of London Trauma Conference 2012, there were also discussions on pre-hospital care, major incidents and trauma issues with an eponymous lecture held in honour of the contributions of Prof Douglas Chamberlain to cardiac arrest management.

The Trauma Research Forum attracted junior doctors, nurses, paramedics and medical students. Another first for the conference was the thoracotomy master class. Delegates were also treated to a thoracotomy moulage by a doctor and paramedic from London's Air Ambulance. The stand-up science evening attracted medical students who presented their research to the panel of experts and a sceptical audience.

PHONE OWNERS URGED TO ACTIVATE 'FIND MY PHONE' APP

Smart phone owners in North Wales are being encouraged to activate an application which could help police track down their phones if stolen.

The 'find my phone' app provides an accurate GPS location of the phone and gives the owner the option to instruct it to let off a loud alert even when in silent mode.

Acting Inspector Rob Rands at Bangor Police said: "Colleagues in North Wales Police were able to locate a stolen iPhone and return it to its owner using an application which gives the current location of a phone. A woman who had her phone stolen from a public house told officers she had previously activated the application. As a result officers

were able to log on to the victim's account and locate her phone on a map."

Police searched an address but were unable to find the phone until an officer activated the alert, leading them to the garden of the property where a phone was found which led to the arrest and cautioning of the offender. Equally importantly the owner's phone, containing a great deal of personal information was recovered and returned to her.

A/Inspector Rands concluded "The 'find my phone' application could help police trace your phone if it is stolen but it relies on the owner creating a simple account to activate it beforehand."

POLICE CODE OF ETHICS ON THE CARDS FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

A code of ethics similar to the document used by the PSNI could be on the cards for England and Wales in the future with the arrival of the College of Policing.

Addressing the International Conference on Leadership and Standards in the Police, Chief Constable Alex Marshall, the newly-appointed CEO of the College, said he will look at the Police Service of Northern Ireland example, which he described as impressive and needing further consideration.

Marshall pointed to the recent high profile criminal convictions, as well as misconduct cases proven against officers. He said the cases had created "a question mark" over policing in the minds of the public, which needed to be tackled both quickly and decisively.

The PSNI Code of Ethics was originally drawn up a decade ago and was revised in 2008. The creation of the document followed the setting up of a joint working group, involving members of the force and the Policing Board.

Human rights advisors were among the professionals who assisted with the process, which sets down "standards and behaviours expected of officers and how they should conduct themselves in this honourable profession".

Terry Spence, chairman of the Police Federation for Northern Ireland, said failing to comply with the code

could end in disciplinary action for an officer. He added: "The document is quite wide-ranging, and if a person fails to report a colleague committing a criminal or misconduct matter they could themselves face action."

Issues of professional integrity proved to be a key talking point among speakers and delegates at the conference, which was organised by the Home Affairs Select Committee. There were concerns that standards varied from force to force.



Chief Constable Alex Marshall, the newly-appointed CEO of the College of Policing.

VICTIMS OF ABUSE ARE FINALLY GIVEN A VOICE

A report into sexual allegations made against Jimmy Savile details the work of Operation Yewtree, based on the accounts of the hundreds of victims who have come forward since he was exposed as a sex offender in October 2012.

Following the publication of their joint report – 'Giving Victims a Voice' – The Met and the NSPCC have concluded that Savile was a prolific, predatory sex offender and the scale of his abuse is believed to be unprecedented in the UK.

It is believed Savile was able, through his celebrity status, to 'hide in plain sight' while abusing children and adults over six decades. "It paints a stark picture emphasising the tragic consequences of when vulnerability and power collide," said Commander Peter Spindler, head of the MPS Specialist Crime Investigations.

"Savile's offending footprint was vast, predatory and opportunistic. He cannot face justice today but we hope this report gives some comfort to his hundreds of victims. They have been listened to and taken seriously. We must use the learning from these shocking events to prevent other children and vulnerable adults being abused in the future. They will get a voice."

Peter Watt, NSPCC Director of Child Protection Advice and Awareness, who co-authored the report with the Detective Superintendent David Gray, Operation Yewtree's Senior Investigating Officer, said that the scale of



Savile was a prolific, predatory sex offender and the scale of his abuse is believed to be unprecedented in the UK.

Savile's abuse "simply beggared belief."

"We know from the huge increase in calls to the NSPCC helpline about sexual abuse that the problem did not die with Savile," said Watt. "Since the Savile scandal broke we have seen a surge in contacts about child abuse, both past and present, with many victims speaking out for the first time."

"Almost 800 additional children have been protected from abuse because of the publicity around this case prompted people to contact our helpline. We are optimistic that this signals a watershed moment for child protection in this country, and must seize the opportunity if we are to make a lasting change."

SECURITY AND LAW ENFORCEMENT EXHIBITION

This year's Security & Policing Exhibition in Farnborough on 12-14 March is aimed at police, law enforcement and security professionals tasked with security, civil protection and national resilience

Since its inception over 30 years ago the security and law enforcement exhibition has provided a platform for professionals from the UK and across the world to engage with the very highest level of security expertise.

The three-day security and policing event will showcase world leading products and services, taking advantage of the unique opportunity to bring together people with operational needs with companies that have the relevant solutions, all within a secure environment.

For further information visit www.securityandpolicing.co.uk/



SECURITY & POLICING
Home Office Security Exhibition

MET POLICE COMMISSIONER SETS OUT VISION AT CONFERENCE

London's Metropolitan Police Commissioner has called for an 'open, professional, healthy and trusted' relationship with the media, an enhanced partnership with universities and the potential for future police leaders to join the service from other professions.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe was a keynote speaker at the Home Affairs Select Committee International Conference on Leadership & Standards in the Police.

Addressing police leaders, MPs and academics, the Commissioner said: "Lord Justice Leveson recognised some of the positive steps the Met has taken to tackle some of the issues and perceptions, such as clear rules for gifts and hospitality, business interests and contact with the media."

In welcoming the new College of Policing the Commissioner called for the police service to build and develop from an academic base. "We're going to do our best to work with the College of Policing to get professors in policing around the country.

"There will be significant challenges in introducing university faculties, particularly in a time of recession. We are prepared to find some money to support it and to invite in universities to see whether they are prepared to part fund it."

A proposal for lateral entry into the police service – where senior leaders from other professions could become police leaders – was raised by several speakers as an innovative way to bring new talent and skills to the police service.

POLICE SETS SITE ON SEARCH FOR OVER 1,000 UNIDENTIFIED PEOPLE

The UK Missing Persons Bureau has launched a new online database to enlist the public's help to identify people, both living and dead, who are unknown to the authorities.

The website www.missingpersons.police.uk/ is the first in the UK dedicated to unidentified people.

It aims to maximise the chances of identification and bring vital closure for the families and friends of the people featured.

The Bureau currently holds around 1,000 records of unidentified individuals with some cases dating back as far as the 1950s. The site will feature details taken from case files which include images of the unidentified person or personal items related to the case which family and friends may recognise.

The majority of cases included on the site concern

unidentified bodies but it will also feature cases of living individuals, such as those suffering memory loss or those unable to identify themselves for medical reasons, when such cases occur.

Joe Apps, Bureau Manager, said that with new unidentified person cases, the bureau relies on modern forensic techniques for identification. "But on older cases we look to use every tool available and believe that case publicity is the best chance of getting images recognised. This will be the first time families of missing people have been able to search through records for themselves and it will empower families to play an active part in the search for their loved ones."

The Bureau will pass significant details to the relevant police force or coroner in charge of the case for further investigation.

NEW CHIEF EXECUTIVE JOINS LONDON AMBULANCE SERVICE

The new chief executive of the London Ambulance Service has said that one of her first big challenges is to understand the rising demand for ambulances in London.

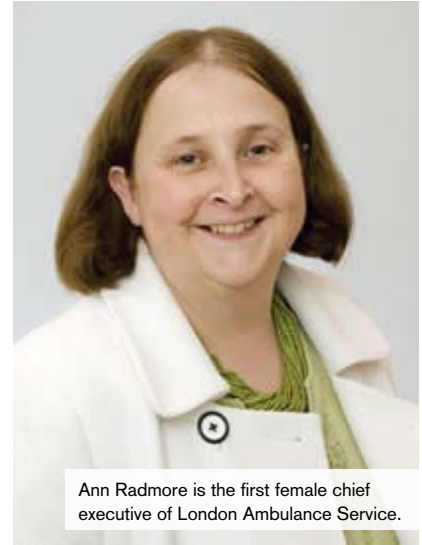
Ann Radmore, an NHS leader with over 30 years' experience, who recently became the first female chief of LAS, said she was looking forward to working with commissioners to continue providing the highest standards of patient care while responding to increasing numbers of 999 calls.

Since her appointment was announced in October 2012, Radmore has already joined ambulance crews on ride-outs as they respond to incidents in the capital. She has also spent time in the emergency control room at the LAS headquarters in Waterloo. She was previously CEO of NHS South West London and started her NHS career as a national management trainee after graduating from Cambridge University.

She was appointed sector chief executive for South West London in 2009 and was previously chief executive of NHS Wandsworth.

Ann Radmore led two major hospital redevelopments – Greenwich and Queen Mary's Roehampton. She also led the London-wide implementation of the stroke and cardiovascular models, which improved outcomes for patients through specialist units.

She replaces Peter Bradley who left the London Ambulance Service in September 2012 to become CEO of St John Ambulance in New Zealand.



Ann Radmore is the first female chief executive of London Ambulance Service.

METROPOLITAN POLICE TO ROLL OUT TASERS IN RESPONSE CARS

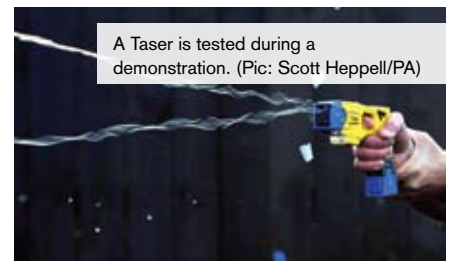
The Metropolitan Police is spending nearly €1 million a year on equipping response vehicles in London with Tasers, despite growing concern among human rights campaigners and some politicians over their use.

A question to the mayor's office for policing and crime by Jenny Jones, assembly member for the Greens, reveals the budget for the weapons will be £817,864 (€973,500) a year during the first stage of the rollout, which will eventually equip response vehicles with Tasers in each of the capital's 32 boroughs.

Met Commissioner Bernard Hogan-Howe has said he wants to see the stun guns in everyday use by response cars – a change in policy from their previous use, which was restricted to specialist firearms officers and TSG officers. The

Met will increase the number of Tasers from 800 to more than 6,500.

"Last October police in Lancashire Tasered a 61-year-old blind man after mistaking his white stick for a samurai sword," said Jones. "That case, along with many others, shows the problems of the widespread adoption of Tasers. I fear the rollout will increase the risk of mistakes happening in London, making people less safe."



A Taser is tested during a demonstration. (Pic: Scott Heppell/PA)

COMMUNITY SAFETY COLLEGE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

Full planning permission has been granted for a new community training college for the police, prison and fire and rescue services in Northern Ireland.

The Northern Ireland Community Safety College at Desertcreat is due to be completed in 2015.

Public Safety Minister Edwin Poots said the state-of-the-art facility will offer new learning and training techniques.

"This type of joint facility isn't available anywhere else in

the world," he noted.

Justice Minister David Ford said the new Community Safety College will not only provide world class academic facilities but also specialised practical training areas such as a mock city centre and police station, fire house and prison.

"Work is due to start on the College this year, which will give a welcome boost to the economy with the creation of some 1500 to 2000 construction jobs," he added.

NORTHERN IRELAND GEARS UP FOR WORLD POLICE AND FIRE GAMES

An estimated 10,000 athletes from 70 countries are expected to enter the World Police and Fire Games 2013, taking place in Northern Ireland from 1 to 10 August next.

Judith Gillespie, Deputy Chief Constable of the Police Service of Northern Ireland and chairperson of the 2013 WPFG Board, said that 40 sporting venues are ready to welcome the competitors from across the world.

"The World Police and Fire Games Federation have confirmed they are satisfied with our level of preparedness. It's exciting to think that thousands of competitors, along with their family and friends will descend on Belfast in August for what are going to be the 'friendliest' Games ever."

Deputy Chief Constable Gillespie continued, "We anticipate a high level of demand for sports such as golf, tennis, the martial arts, ice hockey, cricket and the lifting competitions. As entries are accepted on a 'first-come, first-served' regional basis we are encouraging competitors to register as early as possible."

Whilst the majority of the sports will be hosted in the Greater Belfast area, a number of events will also take place from North Antrim to Tyrone to South Down, allowing

visitors to experience the very best of Northern Ireland.

For information about all aspects of the Games visit www.2013wpfg.com



Pictured (l-r): Debbie McNeill, the first fire officer to register for the 2013 World Police and Fire Games, will participate in the 'Ultimate Fire Fighter' event; 2013 WPFG chairman Judith Gillespie; Dale Ashford, Assistant Chief Fire Officer; and 'Emergency Eddie'.

AMBULEX 2013 GETS READY TO ROLL OUT IN JULY

Ambulex 2013 – the only UK event specifically for ambulance and wheelchair-accessible vehicles – returns to the Ricoh Arena in Coventry on 10-11 July.

New to 2013 will be the inclusion of Community and Accessible Transport vehicles. Closely linked to the Patient Transfer Service (PTS) type vehicles, the association allows the service providers the opportunity to examine and compare the vehicles and equipment on offer from the industry.

Coventry's Ricoh Arena is centrally located just off the M6, at Junction 3, 15 minutes from Birmingham International Airport and 70 minutes by train from London. The event will be held in the Jaguar Exhibition Hall.



For further information visit www.ambulex.com

RED CROSS VOLUNTEERS LEARN NEW SKILLS TO FACE TOXIC TEST

British Red Cross volunteers are ready to give vital help at the site of chemical spills and radiation leaks thanks to a ground-breaking new partnership.

They have been trained to support the East of England Ambulance Service's special operations response team (SORT), which deals with emergencies involving hazardous materials.

Volunteers have learned to transport and set up decontamination and field hospital equipment, and are ready to give practical and emotional help to victims. They could be called out to incidents involving nuclear, biological

or chemical leaks that affect hundreds of people – or just a handful.

Volunteers from Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk and Cambridgeshire were SORT-trained in October and November, and became available for call outs on 1 December.

They were all Red Cross volunteers in the charity's other services before their training, but can now also be called out whenever the SORT team is needed.

The ambulance service plans to provide training to 52 Red Cross volunteers, as well as 18 from St John Ambulance, by the end of 2013.



INTERNATIONAL NEWS

POLICE TECHNOLOGY FORUM 2013

The Police Technology Forum on 14-15 March in Melbourne will address how Australia's police forces are being offered the chance to utilise new technology for use within all domains of policing.

This forum discusses the technology available to police on the roads, on the streets and at the station.

Speakers from state and territory police forces, overseas police organisations, technology providers and policing academics will discuss the benefits of advancing technology, particularly in the 21st century where technology is increasingly used for crime as well as being used to prevent it.

Australia's police forces are being offered the chance to utilise new technology for use within all domains of policing.

Application of new technologies can assist police on Australia's roads, policing Australia's towns and cities, policing the cyber environment, and ensuring police systems are efficient, secure and reliable.

Presentations will cover the following:

- Surveillance technology
- Privacy issues and civil liberties
- Recognition technologies
- Tackling the cyber environment
- Security and optimisation of police systems
- Technology procurement

For further information:

Email Jamie Burrage at jamie.burrage@informa.com.au or phone 0061-29080-4321.

BETTER PROTECTION OF CRITICAL COMMUNICATIONS DURING MAJOR DISASTERS

The US Federal Communications Commission is hosting a series of hearings nationwide to try to find ways to avoid widespread loss of communications among first-responders, emergency managers and the general public in disasters like Superstorm Sandy.

"This unprecedented storm has revealed new challenges that will require a national dialogue around ideas and actions to ensure the resilience of communications networks," said FCC chairman Julius Genachowski.

The hearings, due to begin early next year, will include ways to keep mobile towers operating after storm damage and power losses. One in four consumers in areas hit hard

by Sandy lost service because of the storm.

The hearings also will examine how to keep Wi-Fi service operating and discuss backup power sources for mobile communications. A major focus will involve speeding the recovery of service.

Genachowski said the 911 emergency communications system mostly remained in operation during Sandy, but the hearings will explore when new technologies might make the system more effective in a disaster.

He also said that once communications were restored for consumers, the service didn't return to normal quality. That will be another topic that is explored. (Source: The Associated Press)

AUSTRALIAN FIREFIGHTERS TO GAIN CANCER COMPENSATION

The South Australia Government is to provide firefighters automatic access to work cover payments for cancers including primary brain, bladder and kidney cancers.

Premier Jay Weatherill said South Australia is the first Australian state to offer such compensation, adding certain cancers would be presumed to be work-related and firefighters would not have to prove the link. Similar schemes are already in place elsewhere, including in a number of US and Canadian jurisdictions.

'It reverses the onus of proof. It makes it easier for those firefighter to get the compensation they deserve for putting themselves in harm's way,' the premier said. The firefighters'

union welcomed the promise of better support.

United Firefighters industrial officer Joe Szakacs said: 'This is possibly the greatest-ever development in the protection, advancement and recognition of the health and safety of our firefighters'. He added: 'SA will become the first state, in only the third country in the world, to recognise this occupational cancer risk and take steps to better protect firefighters and their families.'

Twelve types of primary cancers fall under the compensation scheme; brain cancer, bladder cancer, kidney cancer, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, leukaemia, breast cancer, testicular cancer, multiple myeloma, prostate cancer, ureter cancer, colorectal cancer and oesophageal cancer.



INTERNATIONAL NEWS

SWEDEN TO HOST SECURITY CONFERENCE & EXHIBITION

The 12th European Security Conference & Exhibition will take place in Gothenburg, Sweden from 14-16 April.

The three-day event will address topics in security management such as supply chain security, loss prevention, hotel security, intellectual property and maritime piracy. Also on the agenda will be terrorism, executive protection, internal theft and fraud, competitive intelligence, brand protection, physical security, cyber security, investigations, due diligence and global business issues.



For further information

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EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ADOPTS E-CALL RESOLUTION

The European Parliament adopted a resolution that calls on the European Commission and the member states to make sure that the eCall system will be installed in every new vehicle by 2015.

In case of a crash anywhere in the EU, vehicles equipped with the eCall system will automatically dial the European emergency number 112.

Even if passengers are unable to speak, a "minimum set of data," including the exact location of the crash site, is sent through this system. Shortly after the accident occurs, the emergency services know where to dispatch resources.

"The message of the European Parliament is a major step toward the complete rollout of eCall in Europe.

"The European Emergency Number Association (EENA) is committed to support the deployment of eCall that will have a significant impact on citizens' safety," said Olivier Paul-Morandini, president and founder of the EENA.

The eCall system will reduce the emergency services response time and thus save hundreds of lives in the EU every year, officials said.

eCall will be dormant most of the time and will not allow vehicle tracking outside emergencies.

US HOMELAND SECURITY PUBLIC SAFETY RADIO DEPLOYMENT DISASTER

Getting the agencies responsible for national security to communicate better was one of the main reasons the Department of Homeland Security was created following the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

However, according to a report from the department's inspector general, one aspect of this mission remains far from accomplished.

DHS has spent \$430 million over the past nine years to provide radios tuned to a common, secure channel to 123,000 employees across the country. But the problem is, no one seems to know how to use them.

Only one of 479 DHS employees surveyed by the inspector general's office was actually able to use the common channel, according to the report.

Most of those surveyed – 72 per cent – did not even know the common channel existed. Another 25 per cent knew the channel existed but weren't able to find it; three

per cent were able to find an older common channel, but not the current one.

The investigators also found that more than half the number of the radios did not have the settings for the common channel programmed into them. Only 20 per cent of radios tested had all the correct settings.

The radios are supposed to help employees of Customs and Border Patrol, the Transportation Security Administration, the Coast Guard, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Secret Service, and other agencies with DHS communicate during crises, as well as normal operations.

DHS officials did not immediately respond to questions from ProPublica about what effect the radio problems could have on how the agency handles an emergency. The \$430 million paid for radio infrastructure and maintenance as well as the actual radios.



INTERNATIONAL NEWS

INTERPOL PRESIDENT TO ADDRESS CRITICAL COMMUNICATIONS CONGRESS

The President of INTERPOL (pictured right) will deliver the keynote address at the Critical Communications World (CCW) Congress, which is taking place in Paris from 21 to 24 May.

Mireille Ballestrazzi's presentation will focus on 'Critical Communications and Co-operation – Vital Assets in Identifying Crimes and Criminals At The Global Level'. For details visit www.criticalcomms.com



US CONTINUES TO STAMP DOWN ON FRAUDULENT PASSPORTS

As the world's highest user of INTERPOL's Stolen and Lost Travel Documents (SLTD) database, the US is setting an example for other countries, according to INTERPOL's Secretary General Ronald K. Noble.

More than 220 million checks were carried out by the US in 2012 alone, resulting in some 10,500 people identified as attempting to enter the country on fraudulent passports.

"Although the saying is 'all politics is local' this adage can also be applied to policing, and INTERPOL can ensure that vital international policing information gets into the hands of local and national law enforcement when and where it is needed most," said Noble.

He was briefing a delegation of US senators and officials during their landmark visit to the world's police body's regional bureau in Buenos Aires.

The US senators, accompanied by the US Ambassador to Argentina and the head of the US National Central Bureau in Washington, were updated on INTERPOL's tools and activities which assist US law enforcement to protect the country's 315 million citizens and 50 million visitors.

The INTERPOL Regional Bureau in Buenos Aires provides support to the National Central Bureaus in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Surinam, Uruguay and Venezuela.

With the opening of its Command and Co-ordination Centre in 2011, Buenos Aires became the first regional bureau to have 24/7 police support capacity, operating in tandem with INTERPOL HQ in Lyon, France. The bureau also plays a central role in Operation Infra-SA (International Fugitive Round-Up and Arrest – South America).

OVER \$3M FEDERAL GRANT AID TO LOUISIANA FOR HURRICANE ISAAC

The Louisiana Department of Public Safety will receive up to \$3.3 million federal grant aid to reimburse the costs it incurred to provide measures to save lives and property before, during and after Hurricane Isaac, according to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

"When disasters strike, the men and women of the Department of Public Safety are on the frontlines to help protect Louisiana and its residents," said FEMA's Federal Co-ordinating Officer Gerard M. Stolar. "This grant helps reimburse the department for its efforts to protect the health, safety and property of Louisianians during Hurricane Isaac."

Between 26 August and 10 September, Hurricane Isaac produced high winds, rain and flooding throughout

the state. The department and its divisions provided emergency protective measures necessary to eliminate and reduce immediate threats to life, public health and safety, and public and private property.

FEMA's Public Assistance Grant, totalling \$3,277,030, helps reimburse the department for the costs of equipment, personnel and supplies used during the Hurricane Isaac response and recovery effort.



Volunteers assist survivors of Hurricane Isaac.



INTERNATIONAL NEWS

INTERPOL ON CROSS-BORDER POLICE CO-OPERATION MISSION

INTERPOL aims to facilitate cross-border police co-operation, in addition to supporting and assisting all organisations, authorities and services whose mission is to prevent or combat international crime.

Some 40 law enforcement and private sector representatives from 13 countries heard about these latest plans when they met at INTERPOL's General Secretariat HQ to discuss links between illicit trade and organised crime.

In particular, INTERPOL's Organised Crime Research Assessment Meeting in January served as a platform for the agency to produce a casebook illustrating the links between the manufacture and distribution of illicit goods and transnational organised crime groups, as well as any potential links to terrorism.

The casebook will rely on some 25 to 30 case studies where links to organised crime are proven beyond reasonable doubt. "We have a responsibility in ensuring that policy makers in government and chief police officers know the scale of transnational organised crime that takes place on a national, regional and worldwide basis to assist them in informed decision making.

"This applies equally to private sector entities that are threatened by organised crime especially concerning all aspects of trafficking in illicit goods," said INTERPOL Executive Director of Police Services, Jean-Michel Louboutin.

"At the very centre of this mission

is the need to work with all stakeholders to combat transnational organised crime in all its forms as INTERPOL is uniquely able to bridge the gap between all stakeholders," added Louboutin.

INTERPOL's Trafficking in Illicit Goods programme, launched in 2012 seeks to identify, disrupt and dismantle the transnational organised networks behind this crime. Its activities revolve around operations, training and development of databases to help analyse trends and better target INTERPOL's on-the-ground interventions in partnership with police, customs, regulatory bodies and the private sector.



Law enforcement representatives meet at INTERPOL's General Secretariat HQ to discuss links between illicit trade and organised crime.

'DIGNIFYING DEMENTIA' UNCOVERED

Every seven seconds someone in the US is diagnosed with some form of dementia, according to some studies; while other studies claim there will be a staggering 81.1 million by 2040.

'Dignifying Dementia' is an affecting account about caring for a husband for nine years as he deteriorated from a particularly vicious form of dementia. Elizabeth Tierney writes with directness and humour of her experience in hopes that others may avoid the many pitfalls she faced.

"Diagnosed with dementia in 1997, my husband, Jim, lived at home during his illness and died there in January 2006. 'Dignifying Dementia' is both a love story and an attempt to reach out to others who are living through or

who will live through a similar tragedy. It is written in the hope that others might benefit from what I learned as the caregiver of a dementia victim."

The diagnostic process she describes is painful and disappointing. "Caring for Jim was exhausting; perhaps someone else's might be less draining. Watching someone lose his or her mind and body is not polite. It is rude and mean-spirited," she notes..

Elizabeth P. Tierney is a writer, trainer, consultant and lecturer in Communications and Management. She was a school administrator in the US and taught at UCD and at Cesuga in Spain. She has trained and coached students and business people, spoken at conferences and is the author of seven books.

