

FIRESWIFT RIVER RESCUE COMES ON STREAM IN LIMERICK

The fastest emergency response on the River Shannon can now be launched within three minutes of an emergency callout, thanks to a new custom-made power boat specifically designed for use on the river.

Limerick recently got its own powerful 4.6m RIB (rigid inflatable boat), which will be docked at the pontoon in the city's Steamboat Quay.

FIRESWIFT can be launched in less than one minute as it is permanently moored on a floating pontoon.

This is one of only two boats of this type in use by fire brigades in the country, the other being utilised in Dublin on the River Liffey.

The fastest emergency response on the river, FIRESWIFT can be mobilised within three minutes from the time an emergency call is made, and it will be used by Limerick Fire and Rescue Service in conjunction with inflatable rescue sleds.

MULTIPLE SKILLSET

Limerick's Chief Fire Officer Michael Ryan said that the delivery of the new craft is the culmination of 18 months' work, involving the training of 47 Swift



Representing the Irish Coast Guard (Shannon R115) at the launch (l-r): Micheal O'Toole, Joe Doolin and Damien Madden pictured at the pontoon in Steamboat Quay.



More than 160 school children had taken part in a competition to name the boat; Ellie Mae Rooney (11), a fifth class pupil from the Salesian Primary School, who received an iPad, (sponsored by local company Amber Fire for her winning entry), is pictured here with the Mayor of Limerick City and County, Cllr Kevin Sheahan, and Limerick's Chief Fire Officer Michael Ryan.

Water Rescue Technicians (SWRTs) as rescue boat operators, as well as the RIB's design and acquisition.

"The multiple skillset of our highly trained firefighters means that we are now well placed to respond to a variety of incidents, including fires and rescues," Ryan said.

"Interestingly and importantly for river rescues, the boat uses a water jet outboard so it does not have a propeller which reduces the risk for those involved in rescue operations. Its modern design and spec is a source of confidence for everyone who uses it."

Inland Inflatable Services Ltd in Sligo worked with Limerick Fire and Rescue Service to design a boat which, according to Michael Ryan, caters for the "unique characteristics" of the River Shannon.

"Limerick Fire and Rescue Service is now fully equipped for river rescues. A total of 37 such rescues took place last year and with 12 already in 2015, I know that this is a craft which is going to be in demand," noted Mayor of Limerick City and County, Cllr Kevin Sheahan when he officially launching the new RIB in April.

"I would like to wish the teams that operate FIRESWIFT a safe, swift and successful passage with each use," added the Mayor.

NATIONWIDE STANDARD

Limerick's Chief Fire Officer also acknowledged Dublin Fire Brigade and Shannon Sailing Ltd, who worked with them to design a specific rescue boat operator's course.

This is now being trialled as a nationwide standard for rescue boat operators in conjunction with the Irish

Sailing Association, he added.

The fire chief also acknowledged the work of all services who respond to river-based incidents in Limerick. These include An Garda Síochána, the National Ambulance Service, the Coast Guard Helicopter (R115) from Shannon, and the volunteers from Limerick Marine Search and Rescue.



Seafood Protection from Tide to Table

The Irish seafood industry makes an invaluable contribution to the Irish economy and our coastal communities. Managing the use of our natural resource will provide a long-term economic benefit in the years to come.

The aim of the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA) is to work in partnership with fishermen and seafood processors to ensure that the marine resources in Irish waters are exploited sustainably and consumed safely. Irish seafood is renowned for its quality. The SFPA works to ensure that these high standards are maintained and that consumers can be assured that Irish seafood adheres to the highest seafood safety standards.

The SFPA is dedicated to providing this assurance through the implementation of an effective, strong and fair control system across the seafood chain. Good governance and management frameworks safeguards jobs, secures fish stocks for the future and help to protect the marine environment.

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