

DEVON & CORNWALL BEACH SAFETY GROUP

AGM Meeting held at 11.00am on 15th April 2008 at the RNLI Offices in Wadebridge

MINUTES

Attendees :

Rolo Deards (Chairman), Carrick D C	Richard Fedorowicz, Emergency Planning
Tracey Higgs, Teinbridge D C	Colin Ransley, Restormel B C
Sue Nicholls, (Secretariat), Penwith D C	James Ortiz, North Cornwall D C
Greg Spray, RNLI	James Instance, MCA
Steve Instance, RNLI	Philip Hill, RNLI

Apologies :

Andy Philips, East Devon D C
Richard Allen, Kerrier D C

REF:	ISSUES DISCUSSED	ACTION BY
1.	<p><u>Nominations for Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Secretariat</u></p> <p>Nominations were received from James Ortiz to remain as we were, Rolo Deards nominated Sue Nicholls as Secretariat and Sue Nicholls nominated Rolo Deards as Chairman. No other nominations were received. It was agreed that Rolo would remain as Chair, Sue would remain as Secretariat and after a discussion it was agreed with James Ortiz that North Cornwall would provide a Vice-Chair as required.</p>	
2.	<p><u>Notes of the meeting held on 22nd November 2007.</u></p> <p>The notes were agreed.</p>	Rolo Deards & Sue Nicholls
3.	<p><u>Matters Arising</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>One Cornwall</u> <p>Rolo said that at present no-one is sure where beach safety will sit within the new authority. Rolo attended a meeting 2 weeks ago to update on County situation. One Cornwall are looking at a maritime section but are currently 4 months behind. Rolo has given an overview on beach safety only. There will be 3 administration areas – North, Mid and West Cornwall. James Ortiz mentioned the workstreams in place and he sits on the Open Spaces workstream headed up by Mike East from North Cornwall, Arthur Roberts from Penwith District Council and David Owens from Cornwall County Council. James said it would probably be a while before they know where beach safety will go and best to keep going as we are until told otherwise. James offered to update at the next meeting.</p>	Rolo Deards & James Ortiz

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	<p>Tracey Higgs said that Teinbridge will go through the same changes and their decision is expected in December. Torbay and Plymouth are already a unitary authority. Each authority has to put forward proposals in June. They have had a restructure and now have a Green and Safe Team but beach safety now falls under Economic Development & Tourism. Steve Instance said that they tend to notice that they are better funded in Economic Development & Tourism.</p> <p>The RNLI are now running beach lifeguards for all Cornish authorities from this year. Rolo said that after One Cornwall takes effect that a representative could come from each of the 3 main areas and that the group could be expanded if necessary.</p>	
4.	<p><u>Public Rescue Equipment Update</u></p> <p>Rolo said that everyone has now seen the PRE guidance booklet. Rolo brought some of his PRE to the meeting, grab rope is different. There is a bag attached to the buoy to hold the rope in. Rolo said he has about 10 – 15 go missing a year. In Carrick they use Glasdon boxes and try to keep them out of sunlight. Rolo is now representing Kerrier District Council as well. He said it is possible to check whether they have been tampered with/used from a distance with the new indicator on them. Rolo is updating all of their PRE this year.</p> <p>Steve Instance commented that if the PRE is in the wrong place then it is no good and Tracey said they have this issue with some in her area. James Ortiz said they have looked at a risk matrix in their area and have 200 PRE sites. Some are going down the side of cliffs and they have a few they will be withdrawing and looking at land ownership. Any decision to withdraw them will go to Committee in the first instance. They are also liaising with Parish Councils as well. Rolo said some can be replaced with a sign. James Ortiz said he had spoken with Zurich and his Legal team regarding vicarious liability on non-landownership areas. James will update the group at next meeting.</p> <p>Colin asked about the costs of the PRE that Rolo had with him and Rolo said it costs approximately £50 to source. Grey Spray asked if it was the right one to use and Rolo said it should always be based on risk assessments. Greg asked why not have a beeline as a throw line as well and Rolo said what he has done is the most practical. The launch bag came from the beeline concept and that beelines should only be used in fast flowing water.</p>	<p>Rolo Deards</p> <p>James Ortiz</p>
5.	<p><u>NBSC/Coasteering</u></p> <p>Rolo said that coasteering was raised at the last NBSC meeting and they announced they are setting up a working group with ROSPA, RNLI and one other. There is no governing body to cover coasteering but do hope to produce a code of practice from the group. The RNLI and MCA's advice is not to do it. There are lots of different versions of coasteering ie jumping off cliffs, swim and climb out etc. There are 4 -5 different operators of this activity in North Cornwall. Jeremy Griffiths from Lusty Glaze is trying to put together a governing body but Steve Instance said that Jeremy is not leading it. One registered body is the aim and then this body could put together Best Practice so local authorities could check that groups conform to it.</p>	<p>Rolo Deards</p>

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	<p>Steve said that the British Coasteering Federation website is quite good but it is still really Newquay based. Colin said his legal people have said to tell people not to do it. Steve said the RNLI say if people are going to do it then do not do the jump.</p> <p>At this point in the meeting Rolo recapped briefly and asked Richard Fedorowicz if he had anything to add as he had arrived late for the meeting. Richard said he thinks that Emergency Planning will fall under Audit Care in the new authority and he knew that the 3 directorates had been decided upon.</p>	
6.	<p><u>RNLI Update</u></p> <p>Steve said they have had some big changes, he was now the Lifeguard Inspector for this area and John Broad now manages the Wales area. Phill Hill is the Divisional Manager for Devon and North Cornwall and Grey Spray covered the rest of Cornwall. Barry Heathfield covers Devon and Dorset. The RNLI has new areas for 2008, these being Exmouth, Penwith and Kerrier which amounted to 22 more beaches. They hope to continue beyond but in South West they hope to be mature by 2009/10. Teinbridge are considering proposals for the 2009 season. Kerrier District Council were still to sign their contract but lifeguards were put on their beaches at Easter and there was a further meeting tomorrow to sort out the final paperwork. They have just one beach in the Exmouth area but hope to expand this over next few years. Greg commented that there was a lot of work being done on lifeguard provision.</p> <p>The lifeguard full season would be from 1st May - 30th September with some local variations of 17th May – mid September, peak season would start on 5th July.</p> <p>Rolo asked about issues regarding recruitment. Steve said that about 2 weeks ago they had been short of lifeguards for the Newquay and North Cornwall area but at the time of the meeting they were only 2 staff short. In Newquay 17 experienced lifeguards had moved on.</p> <p>Tracey mentioned that during their negotiations it had shown how resilient the surf life saving clubs are and Steve said that once the RNLI begin operating in any area any concerns the clubs have go. Rolo said that the RNLI service does benefit the clubs although some perceive a loss of identity. Phill said that recruitment was ongoing to help with 2009.</p>	Steve Instance
7.	<p><u>MCA Update</u></p> <p>James Instance said that industrial action was being taken by Ops Room staff in pursuit of fair pay. There were 2 strikes with 3 days "work to rule". Resource status logs will be kept updated but during the strike only paper logs are kept which has affected the RNLI Lifeboats. The next strike was scheduled for 24th April during which time there will be an emergency response only and may be affected as local knowledge is an issue as other MCA staff who cover are not trained to same standard. This was something which was likely to continue until the issues have been resolved.</p> <p>Richard Fedorowicz asked if the strike would affect oil pollution information and James said it would as they would only receive a telephone call and there would be no paper reporting.</p>	James Instance

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	<p>James said that the Coastal Safety Manager was a new role to cover Brixham/Falmouth and partnership working will increase. The Sector Manager in Bideford had retired and although Frank Jones was still covering North Cornwall it was possible he would be retiring.</p> <p>James said the MCA had new vehicles and all cliff rescue teams had new equipment but some teams had the equipment but were not yet fully conversant with it. More people were now required to effect a cliff rescue so on some occasions 2 teams would be paged to attend an incident. There was now a greater level of safety with the new equipment compared to older equipment and all staff were receiving new training. Teams had been taking in-appropriate risks previously but some places still caused issues as it is impossible to obtain proper stakeholds etc.</p>	
8.	<p><u>Any Other Business</u></p> <p>1) Steve Instance referred James Instance to the MCA leaflet issued last May and said that it had not helped to assist with incident statistics, as types of injuries and numbers have not been recorded and has resulted in the MCA printing statistics which are not accurate and cannot be relied upon. It shows that in the entire UK there were only 54 major injuries all year. James said that nationally figures have not been recorded. The 27 minor injuries included minor cuts! James has made his feelings known to the producers of the leaflet. The NBSC has asked the MCA not to publish incorrect figures but they decided to publish what they had.</p> <p>Steve Instance wanted to Minute this groups response and suggested a letter be sent from the NBSC to MCA to show their feelings on the subject. Everyone who attended the NBSC meeting said the information was misleading when the MCA had given their presentation. Rolo said he would raise the matter at the next NBSC. It has been duly minuted that the group are disappointed the MCA went against everyone's wishes. Tracey said it doesn't help when trying to obtain funding and the rest of the group concurred with this.</p> <p>The group felt it was irresponsible to publish incorrect and misleading information and there is a need to establish who should collate statistics. The MCA and RNLI do not communicate and share information which is also an issue. The MCA feel that RNLI figures are fabricated. Rolo said that it is worrying that the 2 leading bodies are not talking to each other.</p> <p>2) Tracey said that NBSC meetings taking place on a Friday were not conducive to people attending and this was raised at the meeting 3 years ago. Rolo said the NBSC Chairman did not see any issue with it when Rolo raised it previously. Tracey said as a national group everyone should have the chance to go and Friday meetings put people off attending. The RNLI are the secretariat. The group felt that meetings should not be held during half term holidays either.</p> <p>3) Tracey raised the ENCAMS Quality Coast Award which Teinbridge went for 2 years ago. They were told not to promote submersion in water in the bucket & spade category, this has now been changed and is now ok to promote it. It caused an issue with her Members because they felt it meant they did not need lifeguards if they were not allowed to promote sea activities. Rolo felt it was un-nerving how little people knew, particularly ENCAMS.</p>	<p>Rolo Deards</p> <p>Rolo Deards</p>

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	<p>Colin said that Restormel did not apply for any of the awards and no-one said anything.</p> <p>7) Rolo ended the meeting by thanking the RNLI for providing the lunch and meeting venue.</p>	
8.	<p><u>Date of Next Meeting</u></p> <p>Richard Fedorowicz offered to provide a venue in Truro for the next meeting in November. Thereafter Tracey offered to host the following meeting of the group.</p>	<p>Rolo Deards & Sue Nicholls</p>