Protecting our Seas and Shores in the 21st Century

Consultation on proposals for modernising the Coastguard 2010

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Forewords

Foreword from Mike Penning
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport

As Transport Minister with responsibility for the maritime sector, I am immensely proud of our Coastguard – who include the dedicated men and women who co-ordinate our search and rescue services around the clock.

But like many in the industry, I also recognise that the Coastguard needs urgent modernisation to keep pace with changing demands, changing technologies, and our changing economy.

For many the image of the Coastguard is of a seasoned mariner with powerful binoculars scanning the horizon forever on the look out for something amiss on the open sea. The reality is very different. Coastguards now come from a variety of backgrounds and are experienced in using computers to assist them in managing the emergency response for critical situations where people's lives may be at risk.

But much of the computer and radio technology that was cutting edge a few years ago is now outdated, and there is huge potential to improve the service and make it more efficient. This gives us a real opportunity to modernise the service that was last reviewed in the mid-1970s.

So that is why we are launching this consultation.

We are proposing a fully integrated network that can be much more resilient and far more capable of managing a major incident, with the flexibility to allow for fewer staff having to work at night when there is often little to do.

What will *not* change is the organisation's commitment to deliver search and rescue duties to the highest standards. Maritime safety is always our overwhelming priority,

As the nature of the service and the jobs it provides evolve, our proposals will ensure that staff are properly deployed and better remunerated for their work.

We know that change is often difficult, and rarely popular. Maybe that is why successive governments and Shipping Ministers have ducked the question of reform. But in doing so, they have held back the Coastguard – and that is not something we are prepared to see happen any longer.

The UK has more than 10,500 miles of coastline that is enjoyed by 200 million visitors a year. Our industries, shops and services depend on ships for 95 per cent of visible trade by weight, and the shipping industry contributes about £1m every hour to our economy.

The proposals in this consultation document show that we are committed to positive change that will benefit the Coastguard, the maritime industry and the public. Ultimately, I am confident a more effective, efficient Coastguard will emerge, ready to meet the challenges of the decades ahead.

Mike Penning
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport

Foreword from Vice-Admiral Sir Alan Massey
Chief Executive of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency

I am very proud to be Chief Executive of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, leading the Agency at a time of profound change to establish ourselves as the world's best maritime safety organisation.

The maritime world has changed markedly in recent years, with better communications and navigation aids, new reporting and routeing systems for ships, and smarter ways to monitor, track and guide vessel traffic. At the same time, we have improved safety by regulating and inspecting ships and seafarers more effectively. But the sea and coast remain potentially hostile places, and we must be able to respond quickly when things go wrong. Her Majesty's Coastguard plays a unique role in managing our Search and Rescue response to maritime emergencies.

The proud history of the Coastguard over the past two centuries has seen regular change and modernisation. Today's Coastguard rescue coordination infrastructure has served seafarers and the general public well. But the power of our technology and the capacity of our people give us an unmissable opportunity to adapt further for the future. We have therefore prepared proposals to re-structure the current arrangement of Maritime Rescue Coordination Centres throughout the UK, while maintaining or improving the coordination service that they provide. We are also taking this opportunity to reinforce the leadership and support of the 3,500 volunteers of the Coastguard Rescue Service around the UK, who selflessly and repeatedly rescue the public from perils on or near our coasts.

This consultation document proposes a modernised Coastguard service that:

- responds to changes in the wider maritime world;
- exploits the potential of our technology with a networked national service;
- gives our people more satisfying jobs with new skills, more opportunities to use them, and better pay and career structures;
- introduces greater flexibility in working arrangements;
- establishes a national rescue coordination service in fewer locations; and
- improves the leadership of our volunteer Coastguard Rescue Officers - the heart of our coastal rescue capability and the bedrock of our local knowledge.

Colleagues in HM Coastguard have for many years recognised the need for modernisation. I am convinced that we must grasp this unique opportunity to improve our capacity and resilience as a service, and give our staff new, more fulfilling careers. For many individuals these changes would be challenging. We will do everything possible to support all our people through the change process.

I hope that my colleagues, our emergency service partners and all those with an interest in what we do and how we do it will take this opportunity to consider our proposals in detail and to engage positively with this consultation process.

Vice Admiral Sir Alan Massey
Chief Executive

Executive Summary

For two centuries, the Coastguard has been helping to manage the use of our seas and protect those who use them. The sea is vital to our economy, while millions use it for recreational purposes. However, we are changing the way we use our waters and our shores. This is making our coastline far busier than ever before. We are building much larger ships that are less manoeuvrable and drilling rigs and increasing numbers of wind farms pepper the seas around the UK. As a result our seas are becoming much more congested. Weather conditions are also becoming more extreme, with significant weather events becoming more frequent and severe, making work at sea more perilous and increasing the risk of coastal flooding. However, updated technologies and systems, including automated systems to track ships wherever they might be, offer real opportunities to manage better what is going on around our coasts and to deal with incidents when they arise. At the same time, current economic conditions mean there is an imperative to deliver efficiencies and reduce costs.

The current arrangement of the Coastguard dates back forty years and is not well placed to respond to these challenges. Eighteen Maritime Rescue Coordination Centres are spread across the UK, together with a small centre in London. Each centre's systems are 'paired' with a neighbour allowing them to work together when necessary, but beyond these pairings the stations are not interoperable. This means that the system suffers from a fundamental lack of resilience. In the event of a problem affecting both centres in a pair, it is not possible for an incident to be managed from another centre. It is also impossible to spread workloads across the system; so staff in one centre may be struggling to cope with call volumes while workloads in another may be low. In addition both emergency and non-emergency demand varies widely by geographical location, the time of day, and the time of year. Analysis shows that the busiest centres handle over five times as many incidents as the quietest with 30% of all incidents happening in July and August and 70% of all incidents occurring between 9am and 7pm. These uneven workloads lessen resilience, hamper staff development and lead to higher than necessary staff costs.

The latest technology means the Coastguard can be completely reconfigured to deliver a more integrated and improved level of service, at lower cost, with better-rewarded staff taking on increased responsibilities and with enhanced career opportunities.

This consultation document sets out proposals which would enable fewer Coastguard centres to monitor and communicate with ships anywhere around the UK coastline, as well as delivering complete integration between stations. This will allow greater flexibility and improved resilience when responding to calls, particularly at peak times. In turn, these proposals would mean enhanced roles and responsibilities for a smaller number of officers, matched by improvements in remuneration.

These proposals include:

Establishing two nationally networked Maritime Operations Centres, capable of managing maritime incidents wherever they occur and with improved systems to monitor ships and manage incidents. One would be located in Aberdeen, the other in the Portsmouth/Southampton area.

Establish six sub-centres, fully integrated into the national network around the coast operating during daylight hours only with exception of Dover that would continue to operate around the clock. On the basis of an evaluation of the existing sites and the facilities available at them, it is proposed four of these should be located at Dover, Falmouth, Humber and Swansea. We also require sub-centres at either Belfast or Liverpool and either Stornoway or Shetland. The case for selection between these locations is more marginal. We are therefore inviting comments and information about factors that should influence the choice of sites for these two sub-centres. The 24/7 small centre at London would remain unchanged.

Providing high quality and demanding jobs for our Coastguards, with the job weight and pay reflecting the increased demands placed upon them in line with Civil Service pay guidelines.

Strengthening the leadership and support provided to our volunteer Coastguards in the Coastguard Rescue Service who serve their local communities by providing an effective, knowledgeable and responsive local rescue service.

These proposals would reduce staff numbers. Coastguards stationed in the centres would fall from 491 today to 248, while the number of regular Coastguards supporting the volunteers in the Coastguard Rescue Service would increase from 80 to 105 to improve its operational leadership. Headquarters staff would fall from 25 to 17. Overall staffing numbers would fall from 596 today to 370 over a four-year period with higher quality and better paid jobs for those remaining. All existing staff would be given opportunities to apply for posts within the new structure. Staff leaving the service would be eligible for compensation for early exits in line with the terms of the Civil Service Compensation Scheme.

The consultation proposes that the transition to the new service would begin in 2011/12 and take place over a four-year period. This would allow time for the new Maritime Operations Centres to be set up and a phased programme changing existing Maritime Rescue Centres into sub-centres.

Subject to the outcome of the consultation it is likely that this could lead to redundancies. Should this be the case, we would follow the Cabinet Office protocols for handling surplus staff situations and engage with the Trade

Union Side as early as possible to ensure that best efforts are made to avoid compulsory redundancies.

Overall, we believe that implementing these proposals will result in a Coastguard service fit to meet the challenges of the 21st century and capable of delivering an improved service to mariners and the general public.

However, before any changes are made, we are conducting a 14-week consultation. This document sets out the background to the proposed changes, the main effects, and provides some questions to assist you when submitting your response. In developing these proposals, the Maritime and Coastguard Agency would welcome comments and information about factors that should influence the choice of sites for both Maritime Operations Centres and for sub-centres. Responses will be accepted, either on the electronic form provided, or in writing, up until 5pm on March 24, 2011.

Electronic copies of the consultation document, and response questionnaire may be downloaded from the Maritime and Coastguard Agency's website, at http://www.mcga.gov.uk

How to Respond

The consultation period began on 16 December 2010 and will run until 24 March 2011; please ensure that your response reaches us by 5pm on that date

To ensure all views are accurately and consistently recorded, the consultation response form is the required form of response.

To make the response process as accessible as possible, responses are invited electronically by the completion of the online questionnaire

Alternatively, you can download and complete the consultation response form provided on our web site http://www.mcga.gov.uk and return by e-mail to: Coastguard.consultation@mcga.gov.uk

Written response forms can be sent to:

HM Coastguard Modernisation Consultation
Maritime and Coastguard Agency
Spring Place
Bay 2/13
105 Commercial Road
Southampton
SO15 1EG

When responding, please state whether you are doing so as an individual or representing the views of an organisation. If responding on behalf of a larger organisation, please make it clear who is being represented and where applicable, how the views of members were assembled.

To ensure that all those who respond to the consultation are able to do so with the same access to information regarding the proposals, we will not be responding to individual questions. If you have a query, please ensure that you record it on the consultation response form. Answers to frequently raised queries will be posted on our website http://www.mcga.gov.uk for clarification, during the course of the consultation, if necessary.

During the consultation period there will also be a number of public consultation events. Details of dates and locations for these will be published on our website and advertised locally.

If you would like a paper copy of this consultation document, it can be ordered at the address shown above, or by telephoning our message line on 02380 839 587.

This document is available in a variety of formats, including a Welsh language version.

Freedom of Information

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be subject to publication or disclosure in accordance with the access to information regimes (primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004).

If you would like information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, under the FOIA, there is a statutory Code of Practice with which public authorities must comply and which deals, amongst other things, with obligations of confidence. In view of this it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the MCA.

The MCA will process your personal data in accordance with the DPA.

Chapter 1: Protecting our Seas and Shores in the 21st century

For almost 200 years the Coastguard has helped to manage the seas around the United Kingdom, providing information and assistance to mariners, responding to accidents and emergencies at sea and around our coastline, and helping to save lives and prevent pollution. The modern Coastguard is part of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency which is responsible throughout the UK for implementing the Government's maritime safety policy. This is summed up in the motto *Safer Lives, Safer Ships, Cleaner Seas*.

The importance of our seas has not changed in those two centuries. Shipping remains vital to our economy with 95% of our trade by weight carried by sea. But the way we use our seas and shores has changed, presenting new problems and challenges.

Our seas are becoming more congested. The volume of shipping is increasing in many areas. We have many more large ships confined to deeper water in restricted channels. Large numbers of offshore renewable energy installations are being developed around our coasts restricting the areas available to shipping.

Ships are getting larger. Today's ultra large crude carriers carry up to 500,000 tons of oil, some five times the capacity of the *Torrey Canyon* which sank off Cornwall in 1967. The largest container ships are 1,000ft long and can carry more than 11,000 containers. So, while shipping has generally become safer, the increasing number of very large vessels means if an incident occurs the consequences may be much more serious, affecting more people, causing more pollution and disrupting critical supply chains.

Our coastline is getting busier. The UK has more than 10,500 miles of outstandingly beautiful coastline. Today millions of people use our seas, coasts and beaches for an increasingly wide variety of recreational purposes, often in areas that are also well used by commercial shipping.

Weather conditions are becoming more extreme. More frequent and more intense storms have been occurring increasing the risks to ships.There is therefore an increasing requirement for the Coastguard to be able to provide navigational advice to mariners in the most congested areas.

As a result, the number of incidents to which the Coastguard has to respond has been rising and is likely to continue to rise. In 2005, for example, there were 16,516 reported incidents, and 18,614 in 2007. So far in 2010, Coastguard Coordination Centres have handled 20,544 incidents, including the *Yeoman Bontrup*, a Bahamas registered cargo vessel that caught fire when moored at Glensanda Quarry, Scotland and *The Lord Rank*, an Ocean Youth Trust ketch that ran aground on Carrickmannon Rock, just off Northern Ireland. Coastguard Rescue Service volunteers were called out on search and rescue tasks 8,737 times, MCA and MOD Search and Rescue helicopters

responded to 1,537 incidents while RNLI and other lifeboats were called out 7,043 times.

Unsurprisingly, this is putting increasing pressure on a Coastguard system which evolved in the early 1970s when a network of radio aerials was established to enable the Coastguard to monitor events at sea outside visual range.

As it has done before in its history, the Coastguard needs to adapt by exploiting new equipment and flexing existing technology to rise to new challenges. The Government has just announced the modernisation of the UK's Search and Rescue helicopter fleet over the next few years. We need also to modernise the way we tackle the increased complexity of managing crowded seas filled with a wide variety of users in order to minimise incidents and to ensure we can respond rapidly in an emergency.

Refreshing the technology will be crucial to provide more and better information, more quickly. Modern communications and information technology, including electronic mapping systems and satellite data, have the potential to gather information from many sources and locations to produce an integrated picture of what is happening and speed decision making. Today, ships carry the Automatic Identification System which provides precise real time data up to about 30 miles from the coast, not only on their location, but also about their cargo and destination. In the coming years the development of Long Range Identification and Tracking (LRIT) will mean that ships can be tracked over much longer distances, allowing potential problems to be spotted and tackled much earlier. Already we have agreed with other European coastal states to increase our monitoring of ship movements and to share information through the new Consolidated European Reporting System so that we can identify higher risk vessels earlier and take effective measure to manage the risks.

Forty years ago radio and radar enabled us to move beyond the era in which we had to rely on what could be seen by observers all round our coast. We now have the opportunity to make what may turn out to be an even bigger step change.

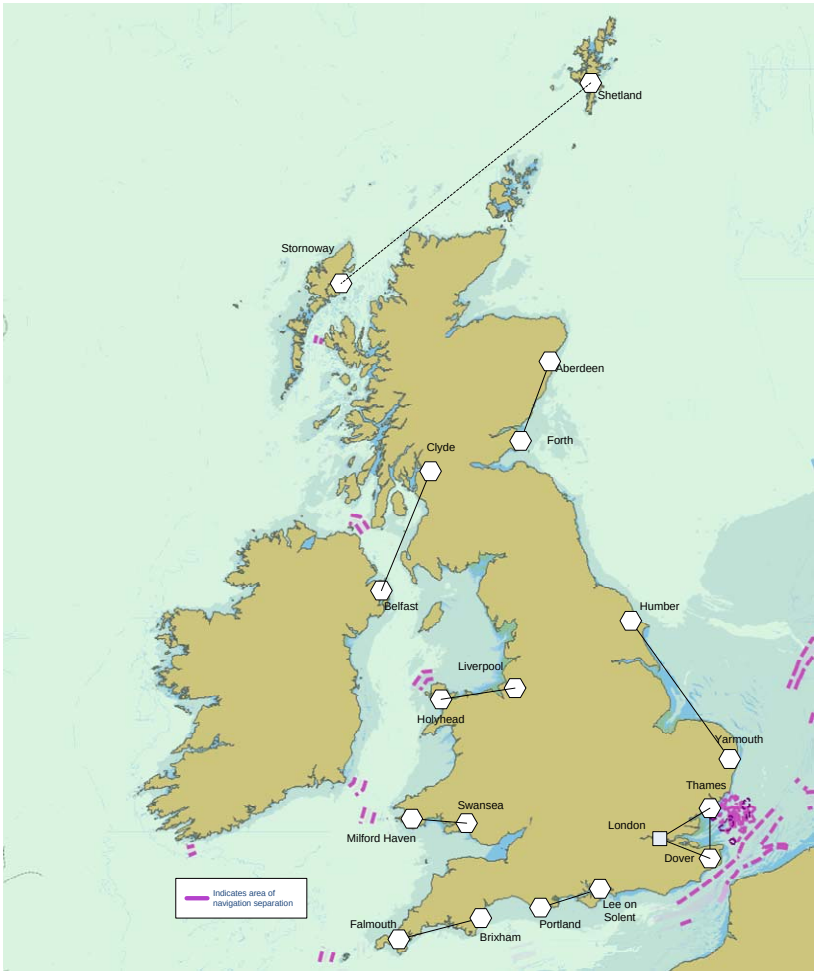
Question 1: We have set out the changes that would affect the way the Coastguard needs to operate. Are there any other changes and pressures that should be taken into account in our plans for a modernised Coastguard service? Please provide supporting evidence for your comments.

Chapter 2: The Coastguard Today

The Coastguard is a vital national emergency service. It exists to prevent incidents and to respond to them by:

- Monitoring our seas and providing information and advice to mariners.
- Operating Vessel Traffic Monitoring Schemes at key points, including the Channel Navigation Information Service and the Sunk Vessel Traffic Service in the southern North Sea and the approaches to the River Thames.
- Coordinating all national maritime and coastal Search and Rescue activity, including police, fire and other services as well volunteer rescue organisations such as the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI).
- Providing its own emergency capability through Search and Rescue helicopters operated from four bases in England and Scotland and some 3,500 volunteer Coastguard Rescue Officers, organised into 368 teams around the coast. These teams are equipped and trained to provide a local search capability and to carry out cliff and mud rescue.
- Supporting the counter-pollution teams within the Maritime and Coastguard Agency in responding to pollution incidents.

At the heart of the Coastguard operations is a maritime coordination service operated through 18 Maritime Rescue Coordination Centres (MRCCs), grouped into nine pairs, with an additional small centre, colocated with the Port of London Authority, to cover the tidal Thames.



All Centres (with the exception of London) operate on a 24 hour basis with a team of between three and eight (but typically four) watchkeepers working 12 hour shifts under a watch manager; a total of some 491 Coastguard coordination staff. Managing an incident at sea is a considerable responsibility and requires substantial experience and knowledge, including an understanding of tides and weather, radiocommunications protocols, the theory and practice of search planning, an ability to assess risks, and decision-making skills. Over time, Coastguards in Coordination Centres study for and acquire specialist, professional qualifications covering search planning, radiocommunications and how to act in the role of a Search Mission Coordinator. In addition, staff managing Vessel Traffic Services require specific qualifications recognised by the International Association of Lighthouse Authorities (IALA) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO). The London centre is a unique 24 hour operation with a single Coastguard stationed in the Port of London Authority operations centre.

Current weaknesses

The limitations of a system which is some forty years old are, however, becoming increasingly apparent under the volume and variety of today's calls on the Coastguard. Above all, it is not a truly integrated national system and each MRCC operates as the Coordination Centre for a defined geographical

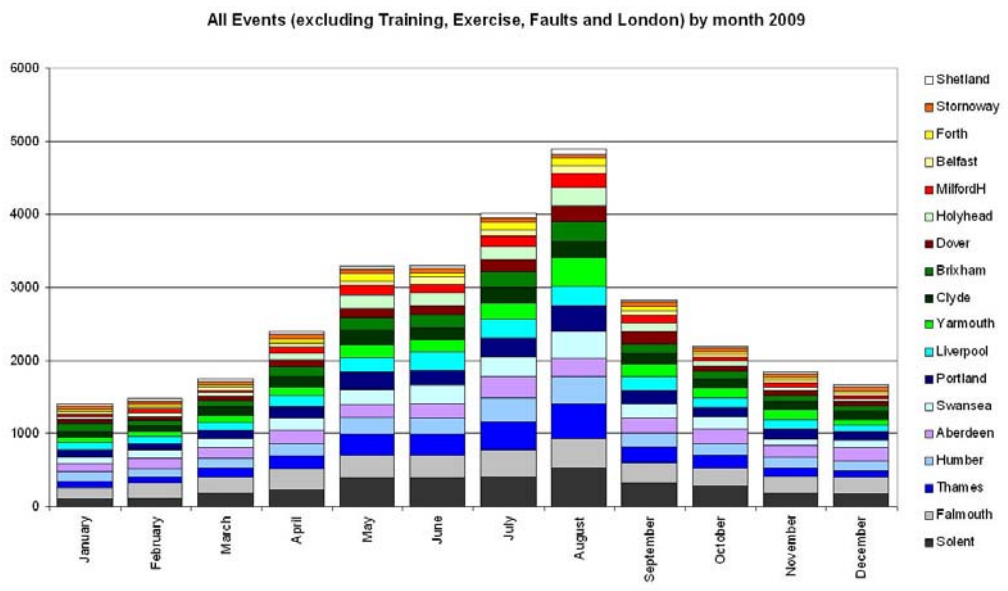
area. Moreover, existing Coastguard systems such as the Integrated Coastguard Communication System (ICCS) need updating and expanding if they are to handle the increasing number of incidents effectively. We are also likely to need more ships' routeing schemes, for example to accommodate new offshore renewable energy installations.

This lack of a genuinely national system has several significant weaknesses:

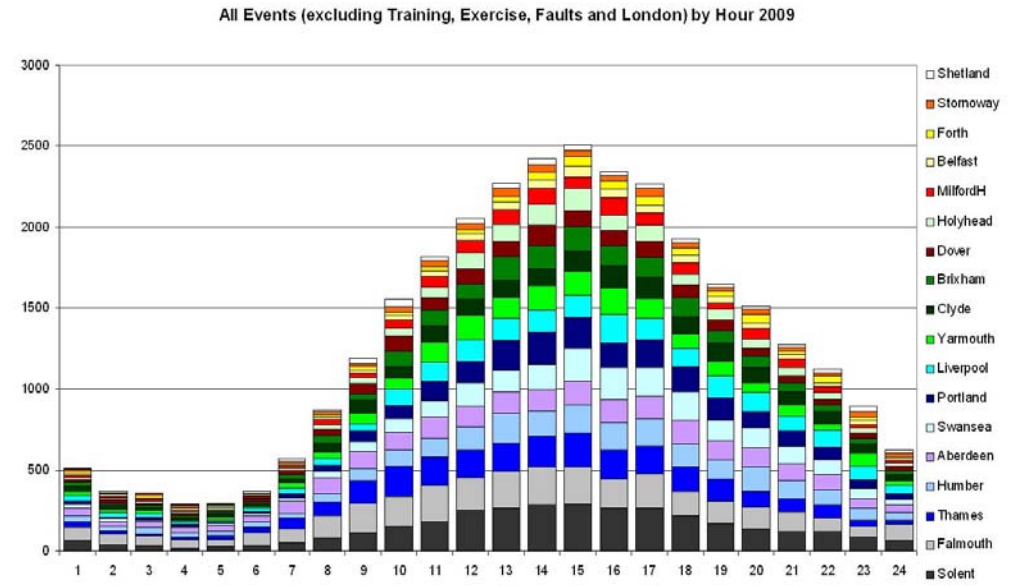
- **Limited Resilience**. Some resilience is provided because the Centres in each pair are interoperable, apart from Shetland and Stornoway where current telecommunications provide only a limited capability. But there is no interoperability between pairs, or nationally. So in the event of a problem affecting both Centres in a given pair, it is not possible for radio aerial links and other information sources to be transferred to another centre to allow the incident to be managed from there.

- **Loading**. Both emergency and non-emergency demand varies widely by geographical location, the time of day, and the time of year. Analysis (see below) shows:
    - 30% of all incidents happen in July and August;
    - 70% occur between 0900 and 1900;
    - The busiest Centres handle over five times as many incidents as the quietest.

Typical pattern of demand by month



Typical pattern of demand by time



Again the limited interoperability within the current infrastructure means that this workload, given these diurnal, seasonal and geographical surges, peaks and troughs, cannot be effectively distributed, or shared more widely than within the pairings described earlier and can create particular difficulty in handling peak demands.

- **Professional Standards and skills.** Disparities in loading and the type of incidents experienced in different MRCCs means that individual Coastguard officers can have very different opportunities to practise and develop their skills. As a result it is difficult to sustain common professional standards and skills across the service, or offer the development and promotion opportunities that many Coastguard officers would relish. Variable workloads and the concentration of some skills – such as those needed for operating Vessel Traffic Services – in particular locations have also limited pay opportunities for many staff and affected morale within the Coastguard service. There is a need to offer individuals the opportunity to take more responsibility for handling more incidents over a wider area and take on more tasks, with pay levels reflecting these increased responsibilities.

- **Costs.** Meeting peak loadings within the current structure with a very limited ability to share workloads between MRCCs means that the structure is labour intensive and inefficient, adding to costs. Peak periods at the busiest stations are over 20 times as busy as the quietest stations at periods of lowest activity, yet the latter will have the same number of officers on duty. The large number of individual Centres also means that overheads, including rent, maintenance and utilities are relatively high. Current economic circumstances reinforce

the need therefore to identify ways to minimise costs while still delivering high levels of service to seafarers and the public.

In addition, as noted above, current information and communication systems need to be updated and it would be wasteful and unaffordable simply to re-equip all 18 existing Centres. We intend to take the opportunity of refreshing our technology to move to a genuinely integrated and flexible national network.

Question 2: We have explained the current Coastguard structure and the potential weakness in that structure in the face of increasing demand. Are there other strengths or weaknesses in the current arrangements that we should be taking into account? Please provide supporting reasons for your comments.

Chapter 3: Modernising Structures and Systems

A Nationally Networked System

The latest technologies and systems offer the opportunity to modernise Coastguard structures to deliver a more integrated and better service, at lower cost, with better rewarded staff taking on increased responsibilities and with enhanced career opportunities.

At the heart of our proposals is a move away from regional centres each looking after a geographically limited area with a limited pairing capability, to a nationally networked system with Maritime Operations Centres equipped to manage all incidents wherever they might occur.

Maritime Operations Centres

Maritime Operations Centres would be:

- Linked directly to all Coastguard aerial sites and capable of receiving radio communications from ships anywhere around the coast of the UK;
- Able to handle 999 calls made to the Coastguard from any location;
- Equipped to monitor all ships' routeing schemes for which the Coastguard is responsible;
- Staffed to cope with peak national demand during the day and at night; and
- Equipped with the latest technology to integrate data allowing faster and better decision making.

These Centres would also provide:

- More balanced loading allowing greater flexibility to manage training, leave and sickness absence;
- Enhanced roles and responsibilities for watch officers;
- Greater opportunities to develop skills and experience in handling a wide variety of incidents; and
- Greater opportunities for staff to undertake additional tasks such as Vessel Traffic Monitoring.

The Centres would additionally have strong links to the volunteer Coastguards in the Coastguard Rescue Service and with the RNLI who both provide information on local issues relevant to a specific incident. Proposals to strengthen the leadership and support of the Coastguard Rescue Service are set out at Chapter 5 of this consultation.

Maritime Operations Centres and Sub-centres

In theory, a national networked system could be run from a single site but we judge that this would make the entire system dangerously vulnerable both to infrastructure damage and to wider events such as pandemic flu or poor weather. Accordingly, it is proposed that Maritime Operations Centres should be established at two widely geographically dispersed sites, one in the north and one on the south coast, each of which would be capable of managing the network independently.

We are proposing that these Maritime Operations Centres should be complemented by a small number of sub-centres carrying out a range of supporting functions. The reasons for these include:

- Specific operational issues that require particular capabilities to be tied to certain geographical locations, either for technical reasons or because of specific local liaison requirements.

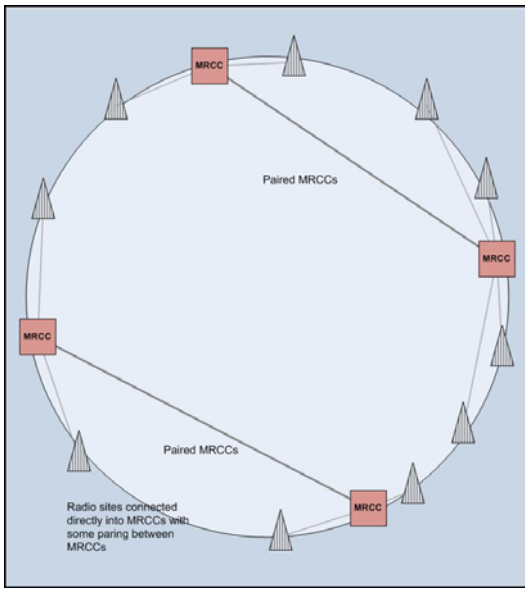
- Helping the Coastguard maintain and develop its links with regional civil resilience forums and civil contingency planning.

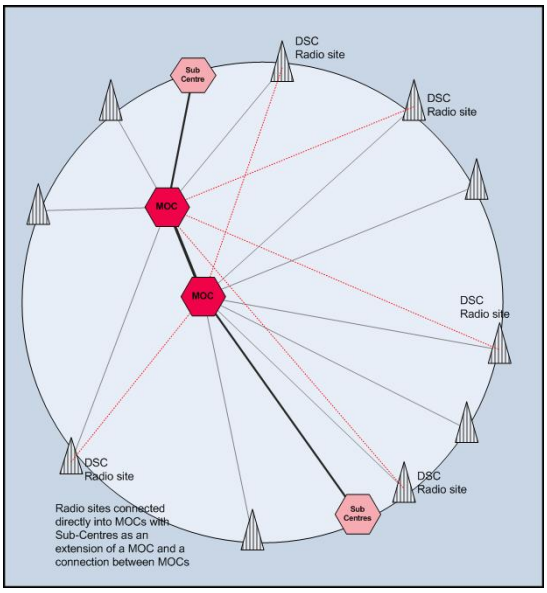
- The desirability of sustaining a regional presence for the regular Coastguard, maintaining strong linkages between the Coastguard Rescue Service and the communities it serves.

- Preserving regional expertise while widening the geographical pool for recruiting future Coastguard Officers.

These regional sub-centres would be part of an integrated network linked directly to the Maritime Operations Centres. The Coastguard Officers needed to manage the national workload of incidents and routine tasks could then be spread between the Maritime Operations Centres and sub-centres without adding to overheads. With the exception of Dover, sub-centres would be staffed only during day-light hours, when activity levels are much higher than at night. This arrangement would also further add to the resilience of the system. We believe that five day-time only satellite sub-centres, in addition to a 24/7 centre at Dover and the 24/7 small centre at London, offers the optimum balance between the advantages they offer, and value for money.

This illustration shows a schematic comparison between the current situation of isolated local pairs and a national network consisting of two linked MOCs and sub-centres.





Question 3: Under our proposals we would establish two Maritime Operations Centres handling emergency messages 24 hours a day, supported by a number of sub-centres operating at times of peak demand linked by a national network of radio connections and information sources. In your view, does this provide an appropriate and effective approach to Search and Rescue coordination response? Please provide supporting reasons for your comments.

Chapter 4: The Proposed Structure

Maritime Operations Centres

The two inter-linked Maritime Operations Centres (MOCs) would form the core of the new Coastguard structure.

The sites for these centres would need to be large enough to accommodate the necessary numbers of staff and equipment and utilise existing Coastguard or government infrastructure where possible to minimise costs.

The existing MRCC at Aberdeen is the only Coastguard station in the north that is large enough to accommodate a Maritime Operations Centre. Accordingly, it is proposed that the MRCC at Aberdeen should be converted to a Maritime Operations Centre.

There is no existing Coastguard facility on the south coast suitable for conversion into a MOC, and alternative options would need to be considered. The MCA has land at the Daedalus site at Lee on Solent which would be suitable for a new-build centre. The Portsmouth/Southampton area in any case provides an ideal location for such a centre having good travel links to the rest of the country and a large maritime sector. We therefore propose to look further at both a new build at Lee on Solent but also at other government buildings in the area which might offer a suitable alternative home for a Maritime Operations Centre.

Sub-centres

As outlined in Chapter 4, there are two specific cases which it would not be sensible to relocate to the new Maritime Operations Centres and which would require a continuing Coastguard presence at specific locations. These are:

- Dover, which would continue to be required as a 24 hour sub-centre due to its unique function in operating the Channel Navigation Information Services (CNIS) maintaining the safety of vessel traffic in the congested Dover Strait, Thames Estuary and their approaches. This capability is critically important for safe navigation. The CNIS uses active radar monitoring and the radar links cannot easily or cost-effectively be relayed to other locations.
- London, where Search and Rescue operations on the tidal Thames are managed by the Coastguard in cooperation with the Port of London Authority.

There is a wider choice of locations for the other five proposed sub-centres and, as integral elements of the national networked system with direct access to the same information feeds as Maritime Operations Centres, there are no compelling operational reasons for preferring one geographical location to another.

Nevertheless, it would make sense for these centres to be evenly spread across the regions and to be located on the coast. This would facilitate contacts between Coastguard Centres and the volunteers of the Coastguard Rescue Service, and contacts with other Search and Rescue partners and with regional resilience forums. Sub-centres would also sensibly be located in areas with good communications, with a reasonably large population and with good job markets to facilitate future recruitment.

In addition, to reduce costs it is intended that sub-centres should be based within the existing coastguard estate utilising in particular buildings which also house MCA facilities such as Marine Offices or radio masts or where the Maritime and Coastguard Agency holds freehold or which are on long leases, avoiding the need to build or lease new infrastructure. Utilising the existing estate would also minimise disruption to the provision of the Search and Rescue co-ordination service during the transition period to the new Coastguard structure.

On this basis the following sites have been identified as preferred sub-centres within the national network:

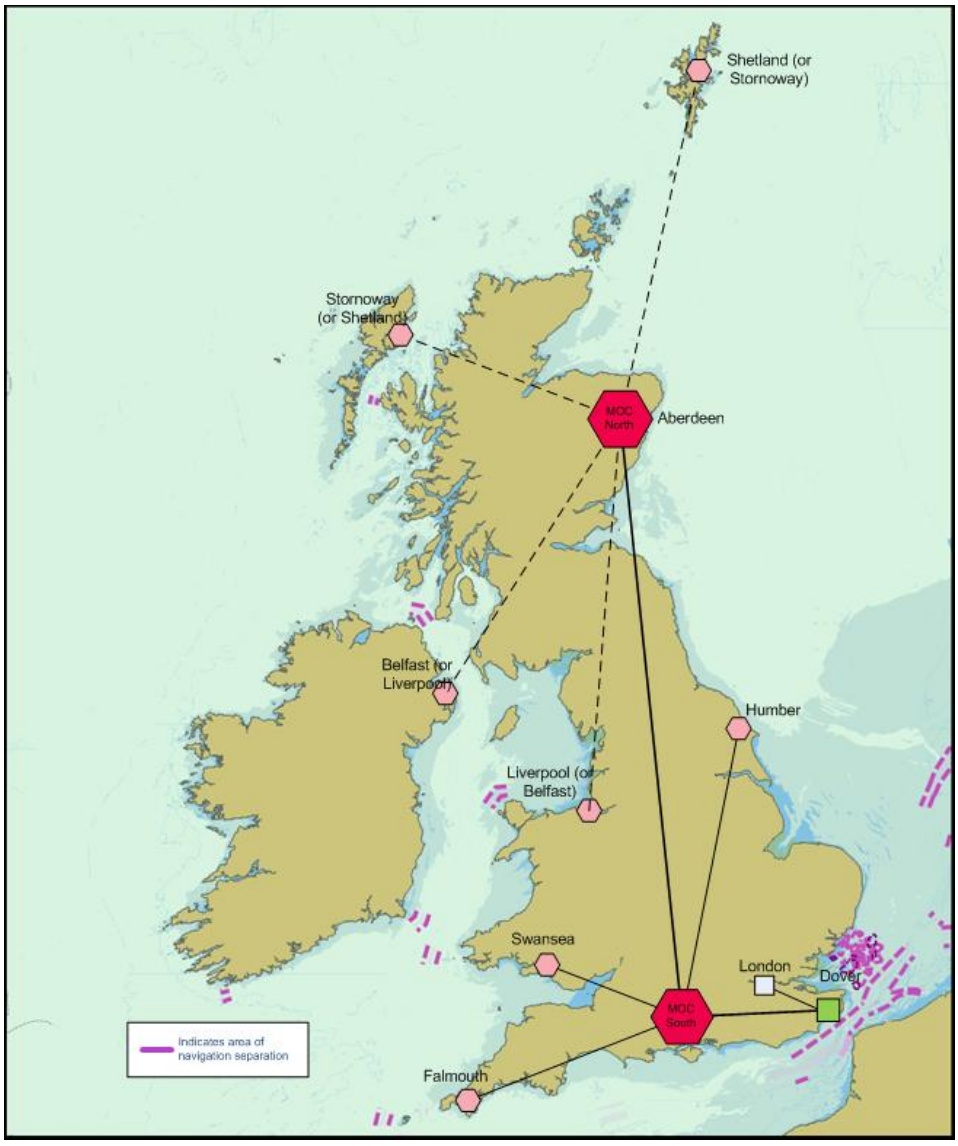
- Falmouth
- Swansea
- Humber

We are also require sub-centres at either:

- Belfast or Liverpool; and,
- Stornoway or Shetland.

The case for selection between these locations is more marginal. We are therefore inviting comments and information on the factors that should influence the choice of sites for these two sub-centres.

This complete proposed structure for the future Coastguard, including both Maritime Operations Centres and sub-centres, is set out below:



Geographical Region	MCA Location
Scotland mainland	MOC North (Aberdeen)
Scottish islands	Stornoway or Shetland
North East England	Humber
North West England and Northern Ireland	Belfast or Liverpool
Wales	Swansea
South Coast of England	MOC South (Southampton/Portsmouth)
South West England	Falmouth
South East England	Dover

Question 4: Our proposals for Maritime Operations Centres and sub-centres locates these around the UK coastline and makes use of the MCA current estate. What is your opinion on the proposals for the location of these Centres and sub-centres? Please provide supporting reasons for your comments. Do you have particular comments or information about factors that should influence the choice of sites for sub-centres in either Belfast or Liverpool, or either Stornoway and Shetland?

Staffing and Operations

Watch Levels

An analysis of current workload, including foreseeable peak incident activity periods, has shown that with a nationally networked structure across which work can be effectively distributed, the maximum number of Coastguard officers needed on duty to meet all anticipated requirements, including emergency response, routine and secondary tasks, is between 35 and 48 during the day depending on predicted activity levels, reducing to 20-32 at night.

Maritime Operations Centres, as the two hubs of the system, would operate on a 24 hour basis. The sub-centres at Dover and London would also need to maintain operations by day and night given the special nature of the activities they undertake in their locality.

The other sub-centres would only be required in daytime when loading across the networked system would be at its highest and most routine contact with regional stakeholders would also take place. On this basis, it is envisaged that these sub-centres would be active during the day, with hours being seasonally adjusted. The watch at these sub-centres would normally comprise four officers. The roles and skills of watch officers in these centres would be the same as those of their counterparts in the MOCs ensuring that work could be distributed across the networked system in the most effective manner at any time.

Shift Patterns

The Coastguard currently operates a 12-hour, four-watch system with each watch completing two day and two night watches in an eight day cycle. This system is rigid and offers few opportunities in the way of flexible working and a better work-life balance for staff, or for maximising effectiveness and efficiency. It is therefore our intention to consult with staff and the Trade Union with a view to introducing modern staffing rosters including options such as flexible working and annualised hours.

Future Size of the Coastguard Service

The following table sets out the existing staff levels and the future proposed staffing levels for Coastguard staff working primarily on coordinating Search and Rescue activity in MOCs and sub-centres.

Existing	Proposed
SAR Coordination • MRCCs: 465 • Specialist (CNIS, Offshore): 2 • London: 6 • Admin: 18 **Total:** 491	**SAR Coordination** • MOCs: 160 (*96 South;64 North))* • Sub-centres: 78 *(28 Dover & 10 at each of the other 5 centres)* • London: 6 • Admin: 4 **Total:** 248

Numbers are based on the assumption of a more flexible shift pattern and may vary slightly depending on arrangements agreed with staff and Trades Unions.

In addition to these staff, there are also currently some 80 regular Coastguard Officers leading and supporting the volunteer Coastguard Rescue Service. Proposals to strengthen this component of the Coastguard Service are set out in Chapter 5.

New Roles

Within the new structure, staff working in the new Maritime Operations Centres and the sub-centres would have new and enhanced roles and responsibilities. Summaries of the job roles and responsibilities are set out below. The full role profile would be developed through consultation with the Trades Unions.

Operations Officers

The future watch keeping function would be carried out by Operations Officers. They would have an expanded role compared with current Watch Officers. This post would represent approximately 75% of the future Coastguard service. There would be two levels of Operations Officers:

Operations Officer 1

Including trainees during their probationary period, this group would form (following successful completion of training and qualification) the foundation level for all Coastguard staff.

The role would encompass all of the functions currently carried out by Watch Officers, but with more depth in areas such as nautical knowledge and in the following key areas:

- Operating Systems**:** to address the advent of upgraded technology being introduced including C-Scope, AIS, CERS/SVD, BOSS, DSC, INMARSAT,TETRA and SafeSeaNet.
- Emergency Planning: knowledge, skills and behaviours required to deliver the Coastguard's responsibilities as a Category 1 responder including multi-agency capability mapping and cooperative working, business continuity planning and major incident response.
- Vessel Traffic Monitoring: including an in depth understanding of the International Regulations for Prevention of Collision at Sea and their application to safe navigation within a Vessel Traffic Services Scheme. Operations Officers would also need to have knowledge of commercial ship types including cargo types and navigation/control systems, propulsion systems, handling characteristics and the function of the wider shipping services.

Operations Officer 2

These officers would be responsible for the supervisory management of a number of Level 1 officers.

In addition to the Level 1 requirements, these officers would be expected to hold a Vessel Traffic Monitoring qualification and have an enhanced knowledge of commercial fishing and leisure industry operations. Required nautical knowledge would also embrace an understanding of the factors affecting vessels in a damaged condition. Operations Officer 2 staff would additionally have to hold a SAR Mission Coordinator (SMC) qualification.

Team Leader

This would be a shift working role leading several teams of typically three or more operations officers. Team Leaders would need to be qualified and experienced operations officers holding qualifications as SAR Mission Coordinators (SMC), in VTS Operation and in the operational functions of partner organisations within the Civil Contingencies structure.

Additionally this role would be responsible for:

- the line management of a number of Operations Officers 2;
- a defined geographical section of the UK Search and Rescue Region; and/or

- the discharge of a specific function (e.g. emergency call handling, Search Planning cell, CERS information processing).

Team Leaders would also require a sound working knowledge of maritime regulations such as MARPOL and the ISM Code, and be competent in operational risk assessment.

Shift Leader

This would also be a shift working role with the Shift Leader having responsibility during her/his period of duty for the total network of a MOC and sub-centres. Duties would include:

- monitoring and acting as referral point for SMCs;
- planning and monitoring the integrity of the network operation;
- taking overall charge of major incidents unless or until relieved;
- invoking national response as and when required; and
- acting as line manager for a number of Team Leaders.

This would be a senior operational post with a UK-wide remit. The Shift Manager would be the focal point for operational decisions in partnership with his/her flank MOC officer and act as principal point of contact for other organisations undertaking cooperative operations.

These roles would be evaluated under the job evaluation and grading methodology which is used throughout the public sector. Subject to the outcome of this consultation exercise detailed negotiations would need to take place with representative bodies before appropriate rates of pay for these new roles can be agreed.

Question 5: In your view, are the new roles and responsibilities for Coastguard officers at different levels in the proposed structure appropriate to the tasks that need to be delivered? Please provide supporting reasons for your comments.

Effect on our people

Subject to the outcome of the consultation it is likely that this could lead to redundancies. Should this be the case, we would follow the Cabinet Office protocols for handling surplus staff situations and engage with the Trade Union Side as early as possible to ensure that best efforts are made to avoid compulsory redundancies.

Where current Coastguard officers wish to take up a position in the future Coastguard organisation, there would be an opportunity to declare their interest in any of the new roles. Where the new role is at the same pay band as the old, an alignment process would be conducted to compare the individual's competencies against the new role profile. Selection would be

competitive if there are more suitable applicants than there are positions. In cases where an individual's current role does not align with one of the new roles, staff would have opportunities to apply for other positions (including at a higher pay band) within the new organisation.

There would be a comprehensive training and development programme to address all points of entry into the new structure, whether by transition or for future new entries.

The following table outlines the opportunities that would be available to individuals currently deployed in MRCCs, subject to the outcome of this consultation and wider discussions with representative bodies.

Proposed Change	Potential Options and Opportunities
Current MRCC is closed.	o Opportunity to apply for possible vacancy at a MOC or sub-centre. o Opportunity to apply for possible vacancy in the wider Coastguard or MCA. o Opportunity to apply for vacancies in the wider Civil Service. o Redundancy.
Current MRCC becomes a sub-centre.	o Opportunity to apply for position at current sub-centre or apply for possible vacancy at a MOC or another sub -centre. o Opportunity to apply for possible vacancy in the wider Coastguard or MCA. o Opportunity to apply for vacancies in the wider Civil Service. o Redundancy.
Current MRCC becomes MOC.	o Opportunity to apply for position at current location in the new MOC or apply for possible vacancy at the other MOC or sub-centre. o Opportunity to apply for possible vacancy in the wider Coastguard or MCA. o Opportunity to apply for vacancies in the wider Civil Service. o Redundancy.

Coastguard officers not currently deployed in MRCCs (for example those serving in HQ roles, or as Sector Managers) would be able to apply for posts in the new structure under similar terms to those outlined above.

Anticipated Process

If appropriate, all staff affected by the outcome of this consultation will be asked to take part in an “expressions of interest“ exercise. This would be a non-binding survey. This would enable us and the Trade Unions to start planning for the future.

Detached Duty

There may be opportunities for individuals to carry out periods of detached duty at various stations around the coast to cover vacancies and to assist with training as MRCCs transition into the new MOCs. These would be advertised as and when they arise.

Training

The Agency recognises that there would be a significant requirement for new training to enhance current skills and to develop new capabilities across the whole organisation. Training needs would, of course, vary from individual to individual. A full range of new training provision - technical, operational, management and professional - would be developed to meet the requirement.

Other Opportunities

Other opportunities to be discussed with staff would include relocation to other stations and positions within the MCA, opportunities in other Government Departments, or early departure packages. The Agency would seek to carry out the proposed reorganisation without the need for compulsory redundancies.

Relocation

The Agency would draw up a relocation package with the aim of assisting employees who wish to relocate with their families to do so with the minimum of disruption. Full financial details of the package offered would be made available to staff to inform their decision making.

Timescales

Subject to the outcome of this consultation, transition to the new Coastguard structure would begin in financial year 2011/12. The table below provides an illustrative outline of the envisaged transition timeline.

Development type	Year 1 (FY11/12)	Year 2 (FY12/13)	Year 3 (FY13/14)	Year 4 (FY14/15)
Establishment of Maritime Operations Centres.	Aberdeen MOC(S)			
Transition from MRCC to sub-centre			Liverpool or Belfast Stornoway or Shetland Swansea	Falmouth Humber
Closure of MRCC and transfer of function to Maritime Operations Centre	Forth Solent	Clyde Brixham Milford Haven Yarmouth Portland	Stornoway or Shetland Thames	Liverpool or Belfast Holyhead

NOTE: No view has yet been taken on when Dover would move to become a sub-centre.

Once the new infrastructure was in place, Coastguard technical training currently undertaken at Highcliffe could transfer to a MOC and HQ. All other training would become part of a wider Government wide solution.

Chapter 5: Strengthening the Coastguard Rescue Service

Coastguard Rescue Service

The Coastguard Rescue Service (CRS) provides the front-line rescue capability of the Coastguard with local volunteers supporting their community in a range of functions. The CRS carries out four different kinds of mission:

- coastal search – search and rescue for lost or missing persons;
- line rescue – cliff face incidents;
- mud rescue – people trapped in soft ground; and
- water entry – for persons caught in river, flood or other water hazards.

The CRS, as part of the MCA's obligations as a Category 1 responder under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, also responds to multi-agency incidents within the coastal area.

Existing Management

The CRS consists of approximately 3,500 volunteers based around the UK in coastal communities. Individual teams are made up of about 10 members and are headed by a voluntary team leader and deputy. Teams are organised into sectors, each containing an average of six teams.

64 regular Coastguard officers are currently employed as Sector Managers to manage and train volunteers within their sector. Sector Managers act autonomously, although they cooperate on an ad hoc basis as circumstances demand. Outside of duty hours, there is currently no on-call provision from the Sector Managers.

Sector Managers report to nine Coastal Safety Managers (CSM) who each have strategic responsibility for an area of the UK. Each CSM area encompasses seven sectors and two MRCCs.

Additionally, there are three Civil Resilience Managers in the MCA who manage MCA's contact with partners in accordance with the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

This management structure is currently overstretched, especially at the CSM level, where they are frequently challenged by the competing demands of their wide-ranging responsibilities.

Proposed Changes

We propose to reform the management structure of the CRS so that regular Coastguard officers can focus on leading and supporting volunteers to deliver a more effective, efficient and resilient service. This would involve expanding the management structure of the CRS from 80 to 105 regular Coastguard

officers. The work of the Civil Resilience Managers would be moved into this part of our organisation, as would the Counter Pollution and Salvage Officers who attend pollution and salvage incidents.

Operational Management

We believe strongly in the modern Coastguard ethos of teamwork and mutual support. By removing administrative boundaries and managing teams on a wider area basis, coastal operations would be managed more effectively by teams of Coastguard officers. This would allow much more flexibility in the management and training of our volunteers, provide a robust 24 hour on-call regime where required and help to remove the current uneven distribution of rescue teams between managers.

Senior Management

This operational arrangement would free up the senior management team to focus on strategic management of the CRS, including managing the relationship with key partners such as the police. Three senior managers would focus specifically on management of counter pollution measures maintaining our ability to deal with any emergency at sea that causes pollution, or threatens to cause pollution.

Staffing Numbers

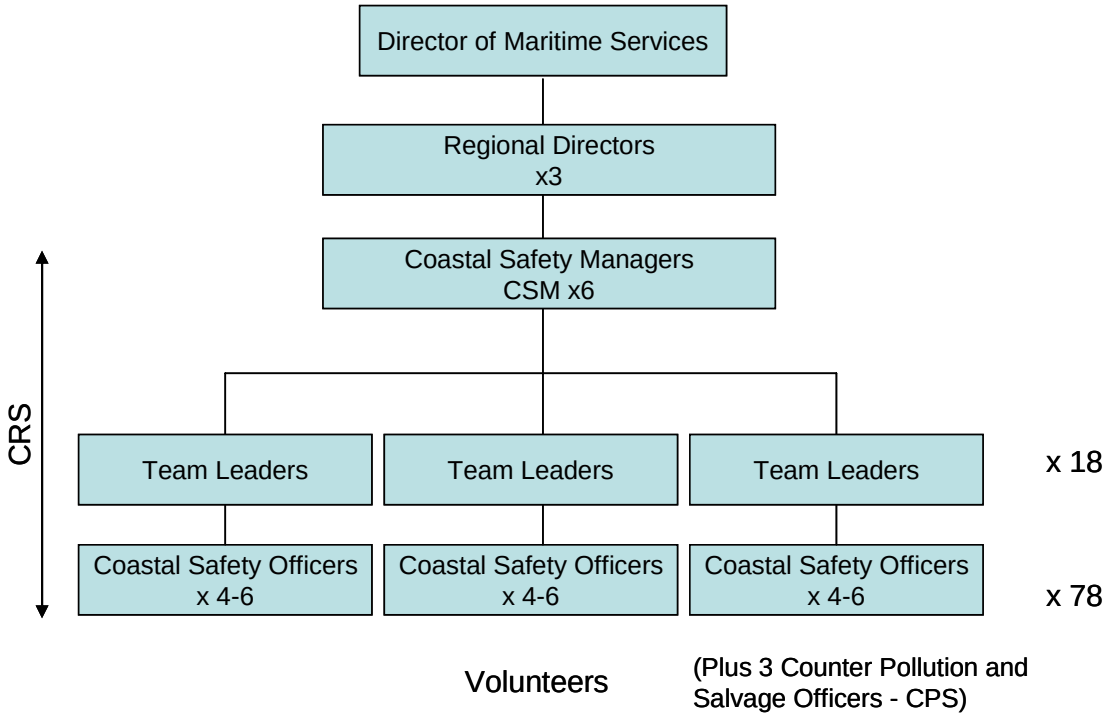
Under this proposal CRS management staffing would be increased to a total of 105, consisting of:

6 Coastal Safety Managers
3 Counter Pollution Officers who would also form part of the coastal response
18 Team Leaders
78 Coastal Safety Officers
(all titles for new positions are for descriptive purposes only)

Team Leaders would be responsible for assurance of standards of competence and safety, and for the development and consistency of the CRS managers.

The Coastal Safety Officers would be grouped into 18 teams, typically of between four and six, under a Team Leader. Whilst not necessarily co-located, they would operate around a team hub and provide a 24/7 on-call provision of operational leadership and localised knowledge for their area and the community they serve. In the future it is also intended that the Coastguard Rescue Service, led by this management structure, would deliver the coordination function for land based incidents in alignment with other partners in the emergency services.

Each team would be responsible for the management of approximately 20 Coastguard Rescue Service operational units. The distribution of CRS management (in terms of both management teams' size and number of CRS units) would vary based on geographical factors, workload and operational risk considerations.



Question 6: Under these proposals the regular Coastguard working in Maritime Operations Centres and sub-centres will draw more heavily on the local knowledge of geography, community and coastal risk provided by the network of local volunteer HM Coastguard Rescue Teams and increased liaison with partner SAR organisations. Do you agree that this is the best way to ensure the availability of such knowledge. Please provide supporting reasons for your statement.

New Roles

Coastal Safety Officers

These officers would be responsible for:

- the training and performance standards of the volunteer Coastguard Rescue Service teams; and
- assurance of maintenance and inspection of rescue equipment.

Additionally, they would be part of a 24/7 on call team to meet SAR response requirements and the provision of local intelligence.

Coastal Safety Team Leader

These officers would:

- each manage and lead a team of Coastal Safety Officers and be responsible for their performance assessment and continuous professional development;
- be accountable for the operational capability, readiness and safe operations of CRS teams managed by Coastal Safety Officers; and
- be responsible for managing effective operational relationships with flank teams and other emergency services.

Coastal Safety Manager

These officers would:

- manage a number of Coastal Safety Team Leaders;
- as part of the regional management team, formulate the business plan and deliver commitments for their area of responsibility;
- ensure consistency and quality within the regional CRS organisation; and
- act as the MCA lead on civil contingencies matters within their area.

These roles would be evaluated under the job evaluation and grading methodology (JEGs) which is used throughout the public sector. Subject to the outcome of this consultation exercise detailed negotiations would need to take place with representative bodies before appropriate rates of pay for these new roles could be agreed.

Senior Coastguard Managers and Headquarters Officers

Current Situation

HM Coastguard's operational doctrine, standards monitoring, cross government and international relations are managed by a team of senior officers based principally at the MCA headquarters, who report to the Chief Coastguard.

With the exception of Counter Pollution staff (who respond directly to a pollution incident anywhere in the UK), headquarters teams are involved in policy, administration and support functions rather than day-to-day operations. But most of the Counter Pollution operational management at tactical and strategic level is provided by the HQ team of professional officers, including the Chief Coastguard, using an on-call rota system.

Technical training is provided by a cadre of regular Coastguards who are embedded in the Corporate Support Directorate at the MCA Training Centre.

Proposed Structure

The future Coastguard would discharge all of its operational management functions up to the strategic level from within the MOCs, making sure that decisions were made rapidly by regular officers who were familiar with the situation as it develops.

All senior officers who are not part of this 24/7 structure would have jobs that, to some extent, contain a proportion of direct involvement with frontline operations. This senior staff would be smaller, reflecting our determination to minimise managerial overheads and focus our effort on frontline operations.

Existing and Future Staff Levels

Existing	Proposed
Coastal Operations • Sector Manager: 64 • Coastal Safety Manager: 9 • Resilience Manager: 3 • Counter Pollution: 3 • London Manager: 1 **Total:** 80 **Headquarters Staff** • 25 (including Trainers)	**Coastal Operations** • Coastal Safety Officers: 78 • Team Leaders: 18 • Coastal Safety Managers: 6 • Counter Pollution: 3 **Total:** 105 **Headquarters Staff** • 17 (including Trainers)

Question 7: In your opinion, will the proposed strengthening of management for the Coastguard Rescue Service organisation, including the introduction of 24/7 on-call Coastal Safety Officers, provide a more resilient response service to those in need in UK coastal areas? Please provide supporting reasons for your comments.

Chapter 6: Improving Efficiency and Value for Money

The Coastguard service currently costs some £35M a year to run with a further £6m of capital expenditure to support the existing infrastructure. These figures exclude non-cash costs, the cost of Search and Rescue helicopters and costs associated with the Coastguard volunteers.

Maintaining the current structure and organisation with 18 MRCCs would, however, cost considerably more, both in the near term and in the future because of the need to replace and upgrade older equipment and maintain these systems.

The minimum capital cost of sustaining the current structure with essential upgrades for obsolescence and compliance is estimated to be £35M over the next four years and in the region of £130M over 25 years.

The Present Value of the total cash cost of maintaining this structure over 25 years is therefore estimated as being approximately £640M. This investment and level of expenditure is unaffordable with the Department for Transport's forward expenditure plans.

The proposals set out within this consultation document to move to a new structure for the Coastguard would reduce both long term running costs and capital expenditure and generate a total saving, in Net Present Value terms, of some £120M over 25 years. These figures include early exit costs for some staff and the relocation, training and other costs associated with moving to the new structure.

Costs and savings would vary slightly depending on whether a new build for the South Coast Maritime Operations centre is necessary or the centre could be located in a suitable alternative government building, and on the numbers of existing staff who wish to move into the new structure.

More detailed information on costs is set out in the table below

Cost of options £M	Cash costs Years 1 – 4 (2011/12 – 2014/15)	Total cash cost (25 years)	Net Present value of total cash costs (25 years)
Upgrade current 18 MRCCs	138	863	555
Running costs	35	131	84
Capital costs			
Total cost	**173**	**994**	**639**
Preferred Option of 2 MOCs and satellites with Daedalus as a MOC	139	710	467
Running costs	14	74	49
Capital costs			
Total cost	**153**	**784**	**516**
Savings generated by preferred option	20	210	123

Consultation Questions

The following questions have been suggested in the text to highlight the key themes on which we invite your comments:

Q1. Chapter 1. We have set out the changes that would affect the way the Coastguard needs to operate. Are there any other changes and pressures that should be taken into account in our plans for a modernised Coastguard service? Please provide supporting evidence for your comments.

Q2. Chapter 2. We have explained the current Coastguard structure and the potential weakness in that structure in the face of increasing demand. Are there other strengths or weaknesses in the current arrangements that we should be taking into account? Please provide supporting reasons for your comments.

Q3. Chapter 3. Under our proposals we would establish two Maritime Operations Centres handling emergency messages 24 hours a day, supported by a number of sub-centres operating at times of peak demand linked by a national network of radio connections and information sources. In your view, does this provide an appropriate and effective approach to Search and Rescue coordination response? Please provide supporting reasons for your comments.

Q4. Chapter 4: Our proposals for Maritime Operations Centres and sub-centres locates these around the UK coastline and makes use of the MCA current estate. What is your opinion on the proposals for the location of these Centres and sub-centres? Please provide supporting reasons for your comments. Do you have particular comments or information about factors that should influence the choice of sites for sub-centres in either Belfast or Liverpool, or either Stornoway and Shetland?

Q5. Chapter 4. In your view, are the new roles and responsibilities for Coastguard officers at different levels in the proposed structure appropriate to the tasks that need to be delivered? Please provide supporting reasons for your comments.

Q6. Chapter 5. Under these proposals the regular Coastguard working in Maritime Operations Centres and sub-centres will draw more heavily on the local knowledge of geography, community and coastal risk provided by the network of local volunteer HM Coastguard Rescue Teams and increased liaison with partner SAR organisations. Do you agree that this is the best way to ensure the availability of such knowledge. Please provide supporting reasons for your statement.

Q7. Chapter 5. In your opinion, will the proposed strengthening of management for the Coastguard Rescue Service organisation, including the introduction of 24/7 on-call Coastal Safety Officers, provide a more resilient

response service to those in need in UK coastal areas? Please provide supporting reasons for your comments.

Equality Impact Assessment

A screening exercise has been carried out to indicate whether the proposed reorganisation of the coastguard might have any impact on the equality of service it provides, and whether an Initial Equality Impact Assessment might be required. This suggested that there would not be any impact on equality, and that a more extensive assessment would not be necessary. Further assessments on individual policies and procedures will be carried out subject to the outcome of the Consultation.

What will happen next

Publication of all comments

At the end of the consultation period a summary of responses, including next steps will be published on our consultation web site

or click on the direct hypertext link from:

http://www.mcga.gov.uk

Paper copies of this information will be available to order at Coastguard.consultation@mcga.gov.uk or by telephoning our message line on 02380 839 587, or you can write to us at the following address:

HM Coastguard Modernisation Consultation
Maritime and Coastguard Agency
Spring Place
Bay 2/13
105 Commercial Road
Southampton
SO15 1EG

When all the responses to the Consultation have been considered, the way forward will be announced and work will begin on moving towards this. Formal negotiations with the Trade Unions will then start, if appropriate.

All staff are encouraged to play a full and active part in the consultation, either through the Trade Union or as individuals. Every comment made or suggestion for ways to improve the suggested modern Coastguard will be welcome.

Staff Communication

In addition to the planned public consultation meetings, a range of staff briefings and communication events will also be taking place at all Coastguard stations, staff are actively encouraged to attend. Once the consultation period is complete, the MCA will review and consider all comments and make recommendations to Ministers. The outcome will be communicated to staff and the Trade Unions at the earliest opportunity.

Should these outcomes affect individual terms and conditions of employment, then a formal period of negotiation with the Trade Unions will take place to agree the detail.

As with the initial public consultation, formal staff briefing and individual meetings will be arranged for staff to discuss their personal options and opportunities for the future.

Annex A The Consultation Criteria

This consultation is being conducted in line with the Government's Code of Practice on Consultation. The criteria for which are listed below.

A full version of the Code of Practice on Consultation is available on the Better Regulation Executive web-site at:
http://www.bis.gov.uk/files/file47158.pdf

Criterion 1. When to consult
Formal consultation should take place at a stage when there is scope to influence the policy outcome.

Criterion 2 Duration of consultation exercises
Consultations should normally last for at least 12 weeks with consideration given to longer timescales where feasible and sensible.

Criterion 3. Clarity of scope and impact
Consultation documents should be clear about the consultation process, what is being proposed, the scope to influence and the expected costs and benefits of the proposals.

Criterion 4. Accessibility of consultation exercises
Consultation exercises should be designed to be accessible to, and clearly targeted at, those people the exercise is intended to reach.

Criterion 5.The burden of consultation
Keeping the burden of consultation to a minimum is essential if consultations are to be effective and if consultees' buy-in to the process is to be obtained.

Criterion 6. Responsiveness of consultation exercises
Consultation responses should be analysed carefully and clear feedback should be provided to participants following the consultation.

Criterion 7. Capacity to consult

Officials running consultations should seek guidance in how to run an effective consultation exercise and share what they have learned from the experience.

If you consider that this consultation does not comply with the criteria or have comments about the process please contact the Agency's Consultation Co-ordinator at consultation.coordinator@mcga.gov.uk or telephone on 02380 329 469.

Annex B : Glossary of Terms

AIS	Automatic Identification System. AIS is an automated transponder system fitted to ships that allows them to be tracked using web based applications including C-Scope. AIS information supplements marine radar when it is used for collision avoidance.
BOSS	A web based browser that can be used to interrogate the data in VISION
C-Scope	The application that HM Coastguard uses to track AIS (Automatic Identification System) movements.
CERS/SVD	Consolidated European Reporting System / Single Vessel Database. The European Union (EU), through a variety of EU directives, has placed a requirement on Member States to work with the European Commission and co-operate on data exchange by implementing a system to capture data on vessel movements, dangerous cargoes, vessel safety, security information and the disposal of waste in European waters.
CNIS	Channel Navigation Information Service
CRS	Coastguard Rescue Service
DfT	Department for Transport
DSC	Digital Selective Calling initiates ship-to-ship, ship-to-shore and shore-to-ship radiotelephone and MF/HF radiotelex calls. DSC calls can also be made to individual stations, groups of stations, or "all stations" in one's radio range.
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
GMDSS	Global Maritime Distress Safety System
HQ	MCA Headquarters in Southampton
ICCS	Integrated Coastguard Communications System
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IMO	International Maritime Organization

INMARSAT	A global satellite communications system for use by maritime and land lased units using 11 geostationary satellites. This system supports voice and data communications.
ISM Code	International Safety Management Code
MCA	Maritime and Coastguard Agency
MARPOL	The International Convention on Marine Pollution
MF	Medium Frequency Radio
MOC	Maritime Operations Centre
MOD	Ministry of Defence
MRCC	Maritime Rescue and Coordination Centre
PCS	Public and Commercial Services Union
PLA	Port of London Authority
Regular Coastguard Officers	Coastguard officers who are salaried staff employed within HM Coastguard to undertake roles relating to the initiation and co-ordination of Search and Rescue (SAR) and the management of the Volunteer Coastguard Rescue Service, civil resilience, counter pollution, salvage and national SAR policy.
SafeSeaNet	SafeSeaNet is the EU wide system that will be used to satisfy the data exchange requirements for vessel movements, dangerous cargoes, vessel safety, security information and the disposal of waste in European waters. The MCA use the CERS (Consolidated European Reporting System) to provide data for vessel reporting within Europe to SafeSeaNet.
SAR	Search and Rescue
SMC	SAR Mission Coordinator qualification
SOLAS	Safety of Life at Sea Convention 1974 (as amended)
TETRA	Terrestrial Trunked Radio - a radio system used by emergency services (called Airwave in mainland UK and Barracuda in Northern Ireland)
UKSRR	UK Search and Rescue Region
UN	United Nations
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea 1982

VHF	Very High Frequency Radio
Vision	The incident Management System by which operators use to co-ordinate and record incidents.
VTM	Vessel Traffic Monitoring (Management)
VTS	Vessel Traffic Services

Annex C: List of Consultees

British Marine Federation

British Ports Association (BPA)

Chamber of Shipping

Channel Islands Coastguard

Clarence House

Coastguard Association

Commissioners of Irish Lights

Company of Watermen & Lightermen

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)

Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC)

Fire Authorities in coastal areas

Fishing Industry Safety Group (FISG)

French Maritime Administration

Harbour Masters Association

Honorable Company of Master Mariners

Institute of Marine Engineering, Science and Technology (IMarEST)

International Chamber of Shipping

International Maritime Organization (IMO)

Irish Coastguard (IRCG)

Isle of Man Coastguard (Government Harbours Division)

Local regional resilience forums

Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB)

All Members of Parliament from coastal constituencies

Maritime Volunteer Service

Mission to Seafarers

National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers (RMT)

The Nautical Institute

Nautilus

National Coastwatch Institution (NCI)

North Atlantic Coast Guard Forum

Northern Lighthouse Board

Petrofac Training

Police Authorities in coastal areas

Port of London Authority

Red Ensign Group (REG) flag administrations

Royal Institute of Navigation

Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI)

Royal Navy

Royal Yachting Association (RYA)

Royal Air Force

Sea Safety Group

Sky Watch Civil Air Patrol

Trade Unions

Trinity House

UK Harbour Masters Association

UK Oil and Gas Industry

In addition staff employed by the MCA and voluntary Coastguard Rescue Service who would be affected by the proposals are being informed where they can find the consultation document and are encouraged to respond.