

DART TALES

Lifeboats

NEWS FROM THE RNLI LIFEBOAT TEAM IN DARTMOUTH

TRAINING

The RNLI Dart volunteers constantly train for their roles in both the B and D class lifeboats. Capsizing the boat or being swept overboard are situations that are taken very seriously. A specially adapted 'D class capsized boat' will be at the station for the first three weeks of May. If a D class lifeboat turns completely upside down the crew immediately scramble back on board, take hold of ropes attached under the far side of the boat, lean back and pull the boat up and over once again (see photo). Once back on board the outboard engine is primed and is specially adapted to restart with a hand pull.

The crew also carry individual Personal Locator Beacons which can locate them to within a few metres for rescue services, such as other lifeboats and Coastguard helicopters, responding to the signal.

The B class lifeboat carries an inflatable balloon on the A frame over the engine which will right the lifeboat when a toggle is pulled. Six of the Dart B class helms are spending two days each at the Lifeboat College in Poole practising this in the Sea Survival Pool.

The crew also practise with other life-saving groups so that when they are called to an emergency both teams are aware of each other's capabilities. In early April an exercise was set up by the Paignton and Brixham Fire Service teams. A boat was presumed to be on fire at the Premier Marina at Noss. Two casualties were burnt and were still on the boat. Another two were thrown overboard by the blast and had to be found and brought to shore. The fire crews dealt with the casualties ashore, performed first aid and stretchered them to safety. The two lifeboat crews were tasked

by the Coastguard to search the marina, retrieve any 'bodies' and to bring them ashore to the care of the Fire teams.

COASTGUARD HELICOPTER UPDATE.

Bristow Helicopters recently introduced two of the new Augusta Westland helicopters to operate from their base at St. Athan in south Wales. This is the base that covers our area. The AW189s are outfitted in a SAR configuration and feature the red and white coastguard livery. The cost of one helicopter is £20 million. The 8 tonne aircraft is twin engined and has a retractable tri-cycle landing gear. The helicopters feature full icing protection, radar, auto hover, night vision systems and infra-red cameras, and are capable of a 165-knot max speed over four hours' endurance.

The coastguard's helicopter fleet renewal plan was established in 2015 after a £1.9 billion, 10-year investment contract from the UK government to Bristow.

Bristow was awarded the contract to deliver SAR operations for the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) in 2013. It has taken over seven out of ten civilian SAR bases from the Royal Air Force and Royal Navy.

A familiarisation and winning exercise was held for the lifeboat crews in the grounds of Britannia Royal Naval College, along with members of the Dartmouth Coastguard SAR team and Aviation cadets from the Naval College.



photo by Riki Bannister Dart Assistant Lifeboat Press Officer

STUART POPHAM, CHAIR OF THE RNLI, ANNOUNCES THE APPOINTMENT OF LOCAL MAN, MARK DOWIE, AS CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF THE RNLI.

After a lengthy and thorough recruitment process I am delighted to announce that the RNLI Board of Trustees has appointed Mark Dowie as the new Chief Executive of the RNLI. Our current Chief Executive, Paul Boissier, has been in post since 2009 and he has achieved some truly incredible things over the last 10 years, but Paul is retiring and will be handing over to Mark, on Wednesday 15 May.

Mark is currently the Lifeboat Operations Manager at Salcombe RNLI in Devon, a voluntary role that he has held proudly since 2017. In this role Mark has been responsible for all the operations of this busy lifeboat station and so he has first-hand experience of leading and volunteering within the RNLI.

Mark also brings with him significant corporate leadership experience. He was most recently Chief Executive Officer at Standard Chartered Bank. In this role he led the bank's global wholesale banking business and was responsible

for nearly 20,000 people in 62 countries around the world.

A former Royal Navy Officer, Mark served between 1982 and 1990, leaving the service at the rank of Lieutenant. During his time in the Royal Navy, Mark served on the helicopter carrier RFA Reliant and HMS Illustrious.

Mark owned and managed a successful marine services company before taking the role at Standard Chartered. He is a former Justice of the Peace, Trustee of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity and Vice Chairman and Trustee of the Britannia Association. He has also provided leadership and financial support to youth charities in south London and a school and orphanage in Kenya.

Mark is married to Hazel and they have three adult children. They live near Kingsbridge in South Devon. He is a very keen sailor, gyrocopter pilot and history buff.

'I am absolutely delighted and proud to have been appointed as the RNLI's



new Chief Executive. Having been an RNLI volunteer on the coast for the past two years, I know just what a unique and special organisation this charity is. I've seen at first-hand the dedication and commitment of the RNLI's volunteers and staff to help save lives and keep people safe. I can also clearly see how I can support the RNLI to ensure we are in good shape as we reach our 200th birthday in 2024 and to get us in even better shape for the next 200 years.'

Mark has a range of impressive attributes and experience that he will bring to the role, including valuable experience as an RNLI volunteer. He has a wealth of leadership experience and a real affinity for the sea. I for one am really looking forward to working with Mark. I am extremely confident that he will be a huge asset to the RNLI.'

News, details of launches, photographs and videos can be found on the Dart station website. www.dartlifeboat.org.uk or the station Facebook page www.facebook.com/dartnrlilifeboat

John Fenton, RNLI Dart Lifeboat Press Officer & Education Volunteer



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