

Coastal Notes

Maritime Rescue Institute

After a hectic month's work, both Maritime Rescue Institute's (MRI's) rescue craft have been refitted and successfully completed their operational trials. This could not have been done in the time without the wholehearted support of the SAR team, who gave up so much time to help with the refit.

HM Coastguard has called both vessels into service in the past week: MRI 24 has been out 3 times and MRI 42 once. In the first incident a canoeist got into difficulty in the surf at the rocks near Dunnottar Castle. He was rescued safely, suffering cuts and bruising after being washed up onto the rock foot. The following day there was a report of a body washed ashore amongst the rocks at Kirkie Shore: thankfully, this turned out to be a survival suit, which from the distance certainly had all the appearance of a body in the water. In the third incident, MRI was asked to assist in the removal of a dead bull that had fallen over the cliffs onto rocks at Thornyhive. This was not a simple exercise as the animal was large, heavy and completely uncooperative!

MRI 42's turn came on Sunday, when members of the public dialled 999 to report red distress signals east of Inverbervie. It later turned out that these had also been spotted as far apart as Montrose and Newtonhill. MRI 42 went down to conduct a search, but was recalled by HM Coastguard when it transpired that the 'distress signals' had actually been fired from the land near Inverbervie. It is reassuring to the sea going fraternity that people do notice and dial 999 to report distress signals. While understanding that there was no malicious intent, this incident does point out the need to have due thought before setting off anything that could be interpreted as a distress signal.

Since their appearance at last year's fund raising event in August, MRI has kept close contact with the Trossachs Search and Rescue Dogs. They have come up to Stonehaven and carried out joint exercises in cliff searches, while some of the SAR team has visited them at Stirling. These are beautifully trained collie dogs that are used mainly in hill searches to find lost or injured walkers. MRI is really pleased that they have agreed to come back to demonstrate their skills at the MRI Harbour Festival on August 30th.

For further information, to offer help, to join the SAR team, or to join the local committee contact: 01569 765768 or email enquiry@maritime-rescue-institute.org