

By: Assistant Director, Resilience  
To: Planning and Performance Committee - 27 April 2015  
Subject: DFDS FERRY FIRE AND MARINE FIREFIGHTING UPDATE  
Classification: Unrestricted

## **FOR DECISION**

### **SUMMARY**

This report provides Members with an update on the investigations into the fire on the DFDS ferry, MS Dieppe Seaways, which occurred on 1 May 2014 at Dover Eastern Docks. It sets out the recommendations following the Authority's own investigation and the latest position regarding the external investigation by the Marine Accident Investigation Branch.

The report also provides an update on the Authority's involvement in the second Marine Incident Response Group EU project and the proposed exercise for 2016.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members are requested to:

1. Approve the actions arising from the Authority's internal investigation (paragraphs 4 to 8 and **Appendix 1** refer).
2. Note the position in relation to the Marine Accident Investigations Branch report (paragraph 9 refers).
3. Note the latest developments on the MIRG EU project (paragraphs 10 to 12 refer).

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BACKGROUND PAPERS: None

## COMMENTS

### Background

1. On 1 May 2014 the Authority's crews attended a fire on board the MS Dieppe Seaways car ferry which was berthed at Dover's Eastern Docks. The Authority was informed that the fire had been suppressed and contained by the ship's crew at sea.
2. With the Authority's crews in attendance and working with the ship's firefighting crew a compartment door leading to the portside boiler (which was the source of the fire) was opened. This resulted in a phenomenon known as a backdraft, which caused injury to four Authority firefighters and six members of the ship's crew.
3. The injured personnel were escorted off the ship and went straight to a first aid point located on the dockside. After being treated by South East Coast Ambulance Service, they were removed to hospital, with the most serious being treated at the specialist burns unit at East Grinstead. Following treatment and rehabilitation all staff have now returned to work. The incident continued for a further eleven hours.

### Investigation Process

4. **Internal investigation** - Following the incident, the Authority's Significant Safety Event (SSE) procedure was activated in accordance with the Health and Safety Framework. This decision was made due to the injuries to Authority and DFDS personnel.
5. The SSE team met with the Department of Transport's Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB) and Health and Safety Executive (HSE) representatives at Dover Docks and also offered the Authority's Fire Investigation and Research Team to support the MAIB investigation.
6. The investigation was conducted in a very transparent and open manner involving the MAIB, HSE, Maritime and Coastguard Agency as well as local and national Fire Brigades Union representatives. East Sussex Fire and Rescue Authority, which has extensive marine firefighting experience, was brought in to peer-review the investigation and response.
7. The SSE investigation team has met with the HSE and MAIB on several occasions to share information and update them on progress and provide recommendations from the Authority's internal investigation.
8. The HSE has no statutory responsibility for incidents on board ships but has been involved throughout to guide and assist the investigation. It has focused on the Authority's actions alongside the ship and is satisfied with the internal investigation

and the Action Plan that is being followed. The Action Plan is attached at **Appendix 1** for Members' approval.

9. **External investigation** - The MAIB has investigated all aspects of the incident by interviewing DFDS personnel and the Authority's firefighters. The MAIB consultation report was expected in March 2015, but has not yet been received. Members will be updated on developments at a future meeting.

### **Maritime Incident Response Group EU**

10. Members will be aware of the Authority's role in the MIRG EU project in developing and delivering a suite of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for use by the project members in the UK, France, Belgium and the Netherlands. These SOPs are now being adopted across the EU by those countries providing a maritime firefighting capability. The Authority continues to play a leading role in the project and has taken responsibility on its behalf for the continued management and updating of the SOPs.
11. Following on from the validation exercise in 2014, a further large scale multi-national exercise is currently being planned for September 2016 which will be led by colleagues from the Netherlands. It is an EU-funded exercise and the Authority will be involved in its planning and delivery as well as providing crews for the exercise itself.
12. The UK national guidance for marine firefighting incidents is due for updating and it is intended that the Authority will take on this role and use the work completed in developing the MIRG EU SOPs to deliver the revised national guidance.

### **IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

13. The Authority regards the safety of its firefighters as extremely important and therefore will implement all appropriate recommendations contained in the internal investigations action plan as well as addressing any issues raised in the MAIB report when finalised.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

14. Members are requested to:
  - 14.1 Approve the actions arising from the Authority's internal investigation (paragraphs 4 to 8 and **Appendix 1** refer)
  - 14.2 Note the position in relation to the Marine Accident Investigations Branch report (paragraph 9 refers).
  - 14.3 Note the latest developments on the MIRG EU project (paragraphs 10 to 12 refer).

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**Recommendations of the significant safety event into the DFDS ferry fire on 1 May 2014.**

**Appendix 1  
to Item No: B3**

	Recommendation	Action
1	Consider a review of Technical Bulletin F1 (Marine Fire Fighting), providing clear instructions to crews that matches the current Fire Service Manual on Marine firefighting and/or adopt the regional Tactical Operational Guidance.	New regional Tactical Operational Guidance has been adopted.
2	Although it is not considered a contributory cause, the investigation established that the Breathing Apparatus Entry Control Board used at the Incident had not been sufficiently charged. Consideration should be given to providing guidance to operational crews on the importance of effective taking-over routines.	This has been communicated to crews and reinforced on at refresher training events and also is included in the DFDS Case Study presentation that will be part of future command training seminars.
3	A review of training should be conducted to evaluate the need for marine firefighting training. This review should identify the foreseeable risk for personnel, and who should receive marine training.	A general Marine Fire Fighting course in addition to the MIRG training course has been developed and will start training all Whole-time crews from April 2015.
4	All operational Officers and Tactical Advisors should be included in the review above. The need for refresher training should be included in the review. All relevant training courses should be reviewed to ensure that the	This has been communicated to all training instructors and included in Tactical Advisor training courses.

	need to establish an effective inner cordon, and to limit the numbers of personnel within the inner cordon, is sufficiently emphasised.	
5	All relevant operational training courses should be reviewed to ensure that the need to wear full PPE within the inner cordon as an identified risk area is sufficiently emphasised.	This has been communicated to all training instructors and included in DFDS Case Study.
6	Consideration should be given to reviewing the training for Officers conducting the Tactical Advisor role, to ensure that all officers when attending incidents establish that the inner cordon is being managed effectively and that the correct Personal Protective Equipment is being worn at all times.	This has been included in Tactical Advisors training courses.
7	A review should be undertaken to establish the appropriateness of the first attending Officer/Tactical Advisor at Marine incidents being a Fire and Rescue Marine Response (FRMR)- qualified officer.	A review has been completed and FRMR officers are now included in the primary response for Marine incidents.
8	A review should be conducted to establish the degree to which Fire and Rescue Control Centre should apply professional judgement when dealing with Ship incidents, due to the infrequency of this incident type and the nature of the risk.	Due to the small number of marine incidents professional discretion has been removed to vary the number of attending resources and FRCC will follow the standard action plan for marine incidents regardless of caller information.

9	A review should be conducted into competency-recording and establish the requirements for all operational roles regarding Marine Incidents.	KFRS has a new competency recording system, PDRpro-Advanced. This system has maintenance of competence assessments for Marine Fire Fighting for all operational crews. This means that officers and crews will evidence against this element within PDRpro.
10	A review of attendances at Marine Incidents should be considered to establish the more effective use of KFRS resources, especially those staff who have received specialist training for marine incidents.	A review of attendances has been completed. This review has changed the attendances to Marine incidents to ensure that Fire and Rescue Marine Response crews are mobilised to all Marine incidents.
11	The findings of this report should be shared with other fire and rescue authorities through the CFOA National Operations Committee.	The findings of this report have been communicated by the Director, Operations to the CFOA National Committee and to our European colleagues as part of the information-sharing process within the MIRG EU project.