



MASS RESCUE OPERATION: A RECENT EXPERIENCE IN
NIGERIAN
PRESENTED BY
ENGR. IBRAHEEM SHETTIMA

DEFINITION OF MASS RESCUE

- The IMO define rescue as the “operation to retrieve persons in distress, provide for their initial medical or other needs and deliver them to a place of safety,” and a mass rescue operation (MRO) as “characterized by the need for immediate response to large numbers of persons in distress such that the capabilities normally available to the search and rescue [SAR] authorities are inadequate.”

Cont.....

- It is important to be clear what we are talking about – and to note that the definition of an MRO does not specify any particular cause for the accident. The main consideration is that there are so many people to rescue that there is a “capability gap” - “the capabilities normally available to the SAR authorities are inadequate”.

NIGERIAN SAR



Nigeria is a signatory to all the major Maritime SAR Conventions and during the 2000 SAR conference in Florence, Italy, Nigeria was designated as one of the Five (5) Regional Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre's (RMRCC) in Africa, the others are headed by Morocco, Kenya, Liberia and South Africa.

CONT....

The Regional Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (RMRCC) is entrusted with the responsibility of rendering Search and Rescue services to vessels and mariners in distress within Nigerian territorial waters. This responsibility is also extended beyond Nigeria by virtue of Nigeria's designation as the head of the West and Central African Search and Rescue Region.



CONFIGURATION OF THE NIGERIA'S SAR SYSTEM

- RMRCC, JRCC and RSCs in Nigeria
- 24Hour Watch keeping
- SAR Boats
- SAR Marshalls
- The National Maritime SAR Committee
- The Regional Technical Maritime SAR Committee
- Maritime Safety Awareness Campaign
- Coordination and Communication of Maritime SAR information within the Nigerian SRR



MRCC and RSCs in Nigeria:

Established RMRCC, JRCC and RSCs:

- RMRCC Lagos
- JRCC Lagos
- RSC Oron
- RSC Lokoja

Yet to be established RSCs:

- RSC Escravos
- RSC Bonny





FUNCTIONAL EQUIPMENT INSTALLED AT THE RESCUE CENTRES

The Lagos RMRCC and all the four (4) RSCs at Bonny, Escravos, Oron and Lokoja are equipped with computer controlled GMDSS VHF radios, Mini- M Satellite phones and Inmarsat- C transceivers for communication with Ships at sea. In addition to this, the Lagos MRCC also has a NAVTEX transmitter for dissemination of Maritime Safety Information (MSI) to mariners. However, some system upgrade is being done at the moment, so for the time being, the MRCC is using VHF, HF SSB, Telephone and email for communications.



Nigeria's SAR Assets

- The RMRCC and the RSCs maintain a 24-hour watch-keeping;
- And Nigeria has several SAR boats.
- Established MoU with the Nigerian Navy.
- Established MoU with the Nigerian Airforce
- Established SAR Marshalls
- Established SAR Clinic
- NMSAR Committee
- Regional Technical SAR Committee



Nigeria's SAR Assets cont'd

- National Maritime SAR Committee
- Regional Technical SAR Committee
- Maritime Safety Awareness Campaign



SAR Boats



SAR Marshal from the Riverine



SAR Marshal from the Riverine



SAR MEDICAL CLINIC:

The Lagos RMRCC is also equipped with a SAR medical clinic also manned on 24 hours basis by Medical doctors and professional nurses with an ambulance and other medical equipments for quick emergency responses/medivac.



MASS RESCUE OPERATION UNDERTAKING IN NIGERIA

RESCUE OF MV AL SALAM

Date: 1st January 2009

Incident:

- A Gabonese registered vessel sailed from Libreville bound for Cotonou, Republic of Benin
- More than 100 nationals from Nigeria, Republic of Benin, Cameroun, Liberia, Ghana and Gabon were onboard
- Vessel drifted for more than 11 days off the coast of Nigeria
- The Lagos MRCC later got to know about it and it coordinated its towing to Calabar port in the South Eastern part of Nigeria



Continue



- Passengers on board were given medical treatment, food, water and shelter
- Nigerian Immigration and police were called in to help
- After 3 days when all the passengers have been properly taken care of, NIMASA chartered buses that took nationals of other west African countries to the boarder of their counties
- Summary: this was the first time the Lagos MRCC would coordinate the rescue and treatment of this many number of people and it was a challenge. In the end, there was no casualty and the distressed passengers were successfully evacuated to
- their respective countries.

RESCUE OF MV ANGEL GABRIEL

Date: 26th January 2009

Incident:

- A Cameroonian registered passenger/cargo boat loaded in Calabar, Nigeria and bound for Cameroon
- The boat became distressed in the calabar fairway bouy with 151 passengers on board

Summary:

- The Lagos RMRCC coordinated the rescue and all the 151 passengers were successfully rescue with no casualties

Cause of accidents

Most marine accidents in Nigerian are caused by:

- Equipment malfunction/maintenance failure
- Environmental & weather
- Human error

CONCLUSION:

Search and rescue operations is everyone's business. Hence, there is need to have efficient coordination of SAR resources to achieve this goal, and this is done through the Lagos RMRCC. The Nigerian Maritime and Safety Agency (NIMASA) is constantly working with stakeholders to ensure that SAR emergency are properly and timely attended to within our SRR when they occur.

RMRCC LAGOS



● **THANK YOU FOR LISTENING**

