



Scarborough Fire Department

Scarborough, Maine



Standard Operating Procedures

Book:	Organization
Chapter:	Dispatch
Subject:	1630 – Marine Rescue Dispatch Policy
Revision Date:	05/15/08 revised 07/31/15; 01/23/17; 4/12/19
Approved by:	<i>B. Michael Thurlow</i>

PURPOSE

To outline dispatch policies and procedures for the prompt and appropriate dispatch of our Marine Rescue Team to rescue individuals and vessels in distress on the inland waterways and ponds as well as the coastal and intertidal waters of the Town of Scarborough.

POLICY

The Scarborough Fire Department has procured boats, equipment, and trained personnel in Marine Rescue operations to assist residents and visitors to the community who are involved in marine related situations requiring assistance. The need for assistance can be from a variety of factors listed below under definitions.

It is the policy of the Scarborough Fire Department to work collaboratively with the Scarborough Marine Resource Officer / Harbor Master, United States Coast Guard, Inland Fish & Wildlife, Marine Patrol, Secret Service and our mutual aid partners to provide Marine Rescue Operations in a safe and effective manner as required.

DEFINITIONS

- A. Disabled Vessel – A vessel that is having mechanical, fuel, or other problems where the crew and occupants are not in any imminent danger and the vessel is in no immediate danger of damage, sinking, or running aground.
- B. Vessel in Distress – A vessel that is experiencing a condition that requires prompt action to mitigate, but does not reflect an immediate danger to the vessel or crew. Examples of a vessel in distress include: taking on water while pumps are still operating, vessels stranded on sand bars or drifting towards shoal water or dangerous conditions, flare sightings, and non-emergent medical conditions of crew members or passengers.
- C. Vessel or individuals in immediate danger – includes vessels on fire, vessels that are sinking, vessels on or in danger of contacting rocks or ledges, drownings, search and rescue missions, individuals requiring immediate emergency medical assistance, and any situation that is an immediate threat to life or property.
- D. Marine 1 - 18' Avon rigid/inflatable stationed at Pine Point station
- E. Marine 3 – 14' aluminum boat stationed at the Police Department Storage Building at Public Works.

- F. Marine 4 - 21' Boston Whaler stationed at the Pine Point Dock (in season)
- G. Marine 5 - 10' inflatable stationed at North Scarborough station
- H. MRO – Marine Resource Officer / Harbormaster
- I. PFD – Personal Floatation Device

PROCEDURE

- A. Information to gather from the reporting party:
 - a. Location of the incident (general physical location, obtain GPS coordinates if possible).
 - b. Number of souls on board (instruct them to don PFDs if they are not already wearing one and to deploy the vessel's anchor if they are able to based on the location or depth)
 - c. Nature of the problem
 - d. Description of the vessel & vessel name
 - e. Contact information (cell phone or VHF radio frequency they are monitoring. If they have a marine radio have them contact the rescue boats on Channel 81)
 - f. Any other pertinent information that could be helpful such as sea and weather conditions, direction of drift and any medical issues (see attached flow chart)
 - g. If not at sea obtain location of complainant or direct them to meet the IC. If possible keep the caller on the phone until responders make contact.
- B. General Dispatch Procedures – Follow the attached Dispatch Decision Flow Chart
 - a. Calls for disabled vessels that are not in distress or danger
 - i. Identify the specific assistance the mariner requests
 - ii. Assist the mariner with making contact with the desired assistance (Sea Tow, marina, yacht club, friend, etc.)
 - iii. Notify the MRO
 - iv. Consider turning the call over to the Coast Guard to monitor, issue a notice to mariners broadcast, and assist with arranging assistance.
 - v. Monitor the situation or make arrangements to communicate with the disabled vessel periodically until the incident is resolved.
 - b. Calls for vessels in distress
 - i. Dispatch Box 814 for the appropriate marine units based on location as noted below
 - ii. Do not send an ambulance unless requested by the Incident Commander
 - iii. Notify the MRO.
 - c. Calls for vessels or individuals in immediate danger
 - i. Dispatch Box 814 for the appropriate marine units based on location as noted below
 - ii. Dispatch an ambulance to the Co-Op to stand by unless otherwise directed by the Incident Commander
 - iii. Notify the MRO.
 - iv. Notify Cape Elizabeth for their WET team, Saco for their boats as needed, or the Coast Guard, Marine Patrol, or IFW wardens when requested by the Incident Commander.

- d. For calls along the immediate coast and tidal waters up to the railroad trestle, dispatch the area engine co, area ambulance, and the Marine Team. If a watercraft is far from shore, Dispatch the Marine Team, and an Ambulance to the Pine Point Co-Op.
- e. For inland calls on rivers north of the railroad trestle, streams, and ponds dispatch the Marine team along with the district engine and ambulance. The IC may also request a mutual aid asset as necessary for additional support resources.
- f. For calls on the Spurwink River dispatch the Marine team and the Cape WET team
- g. For mutual aid calls East of Two Lights dispatch the Marine team to trailer or motor to the South Portland boat launch near Spring Point Marina.
- h. For mutual aid calls in poor weather conditions or reduced visibility the IC should consider having the marine unit(s) trailer and launch at an alternate location only if it is safe to do so and conditions warrant based on a risk assessment.
- i. The Fire Department has reached an agreement with the Scarborough Beach State Park (SBSP) Lifeguards to assist with emergencies in the Higgins and Scarborough Beach areas during the summer season when staffed during the day. If requested by the IC, Dispatch should contact the Lifeguards by calling the Guard Shack at 883-2416 to deploy their Jet Ski to assist with surf rescue.
- j. Old Orchard Beach Fire also has a Jet Ski that can be requested by the IC as an additional resource for surf rescue calls in the Pine Point and Western Beach sections of Scarborough.

Flare Sightings

- A. Upon notification of a flare sighting the dispatcher will consider this a vessel in distress call, dispatch the appropriate units, and notify the Coast Guard.
- B. The Marine Units will assemble and prepare but not launch until the IC has evaluated the situation and determined the need for any operations.
- C. The dispatcher shall attempt to get as much information as possible on the attached Flare Sighting Checklist from the reporting party.
- D. The IC shall attempt to make contact with the reporting party to continue gathering information about the flare sighting before deciding to commit resources:

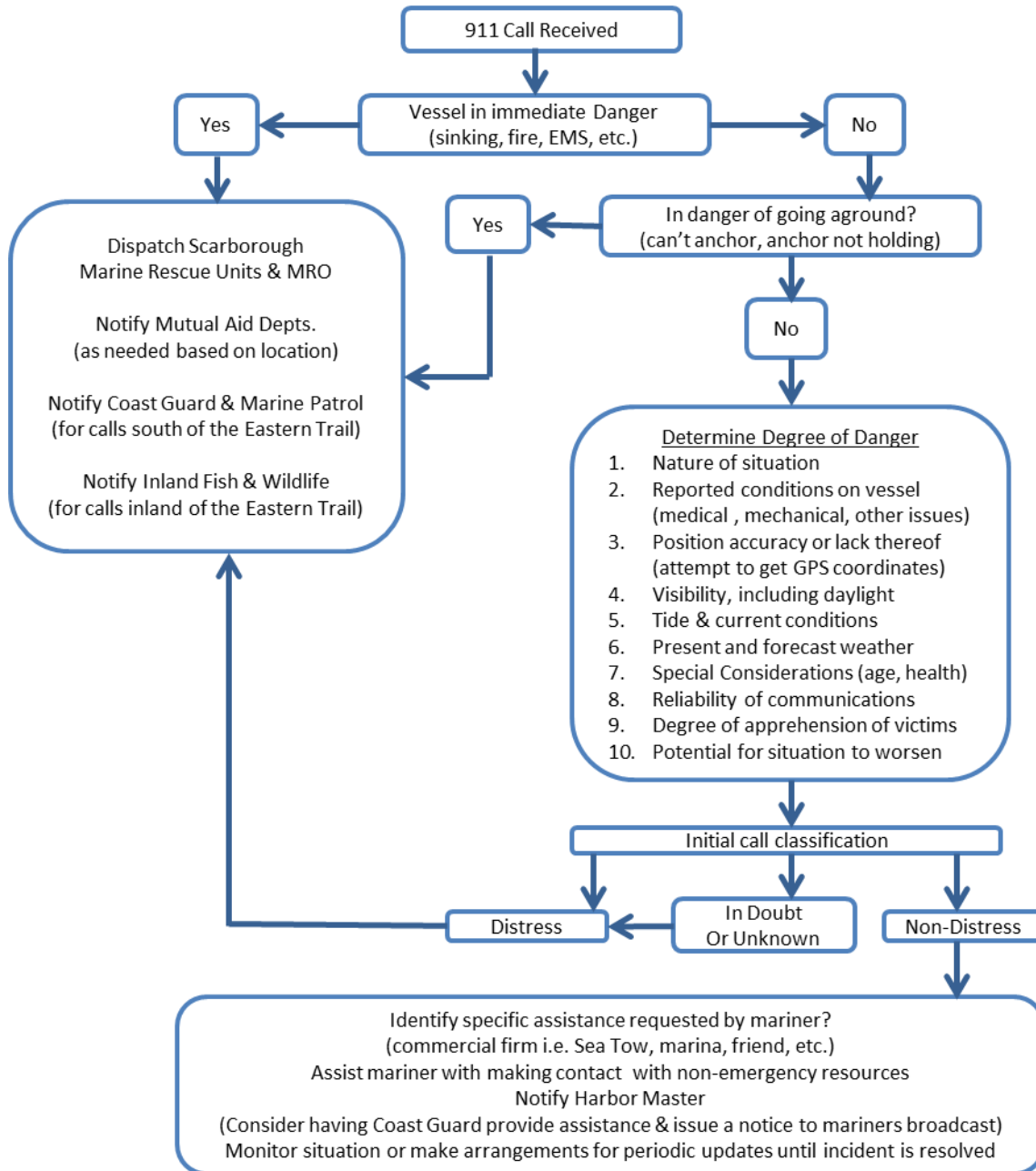
Cliff Rescues

- A. Consider asking the IC if they would like the Cape WET team, Biddeford or Portland activated for certified High Angle Rescue personnel, equipment, and assistance.

REFERENCES

- A. United State Coast Guard Check Sheets and standards
- B. SOP – 3710 – Marine Rescue Operations

Marine Rescue Dispatch Decision Flow Chart



Flare Sighting Checklist

Report Taken by: _____ Date: _____

Obtain Information from the Reporting Source

Name: First: _____ Last: _____

Position: Latitude: _____ Longitude: _____

Bearing & Range from prominent landmark: _____ Degree & Distance: _____

Current Location of Reporting Party: _____

Reporting Party Home Address: _____

Phone Numbers: Current Location: _____ Home/work/cell: _____

Height of Eye: Height of reporting source from sea level: _____
If reporting from a building, what floor #: _____

Obtain Information About The Flare Characteristics

Color (circle any that apply): RED AMBER WHITE GREEN OTHER: _____

Number of Flares: Number Observed: _____ Time of Sighting: _____

Time & Duration: Interval between flares: _____ Duration of burn: _____

Trajectory (Circle One): RISE ONLY FALL ONLY STEADY no rise or fall
RAPID RISE & FALL RAPID RISE & SLOW DESCENT

Origin: Observed: YES NO NEAR HORIZON BETWEEN SOURCE & HORIZON

Flare Origin: SURFACE AIR OTHER: _____