



# THE WORLD CONFERENCE ON DROWNING PREVENTION, VIETNAM, 2011



## DUBLIN FIRE BRIGADE WATER RESCUE UNIT

Dublin Fire Brigade was founded in 1862; in 1898 an emergency ambulance service was introduced, and in 2000 a Water Rescue Unit was added.

All fire tenders are crewed by water rescue trained firefighters and carry water rescue equipment.

### RESCUES

Dublin Fire Brigade personnel have safely attended over 2000 water related incidents since 2000.

#### Drowning Rescues 2006-2009

YEAR	NUMBER
2006	92
2007	84
2008	84
2009	62
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>322</b>

#### 2010 WATER RESCUE TRAINED HUMAN RESOURCES

Dublin Fire Brigade currently has the following water trained personnel;

1000	Water Awareness trained personnel
150	First Responders
350	Swift Water Rescue Technicians (SRT 1)
60	Advanced Swift Water Rescue Technicians (SRT 2)
24	Swift Water Rescue Instructors
70	Rescue Powerboat Coxswains
12	Rescue Powerboat Instructors

All DFB water rescue training courses are nationally and internationally accredited by the following organisations;

- Dublin Fire Brigade Training Centre
- The National Fire Protection Association (USA)
- Rescue 3 International (USA)
- The Irish Sailing Association
- The Royal Yachting Association
- Irish Communications Regulator

The following water rescue qualifications are awarded to DFB fire fighters;

1. **Water Awareness** – a one day course concentrating on personal water safety. Holders of this qualification play a very limited role at water incidents. This is a non 'go rescuer' award
2. **First Responder** – a three day course dealing with rescue situations in still water or slow moving water situations. Holders of this qualification can be a 'go rescuer' in such situations
3. **Swift Water Rescue Technician (SRT 1)** – a five day course dealing with rescue situations in fast moving water. A lot of time is spent practicing technical skills appropriate for swift water situations. Holders of this qualification are 'go rescuer' in such situations.
4. **Swift Water Rescue Technician Advanced (SRT 2)** – a five day advanced course for holders of SRT 1 qualifications. Participants practice rescue skills in different types of swift water.
5. **Swift Water Rescue Technician Instructor** – this ten day course trains holders of the SRT 2 qualification as SRT instructors.
6. **Irish Sailing Association / National Powerboat Handling Award** – this five day course trains participants as powerboat helmsmen. In the majority of situations all water rescue training is undertaken on a voluntary basis outside of shift time.

### EQUIPMENT

1. 6.5 metre Redbay Storm Force rigid inflatable boat powered by twin 60 horse power engines, with a crew of three fire fighters.
2. 4.0 metre Avon inflatable with a 15 horse power engine and a crew of two
3. A tender with a 33 metre Turntable Ladder with a depressible cage
4. A Jason's Cradle for the buoyant support and horizontal removal of a casualty from water.
5. Six lengths of inflatable pathway to form a 5 to 30 metre inflatable bridge
6. Inflatable fire hoses which can be connected together to form a long floating boom.
7. A variety of ropes and technical equipment

### PERSONAL EQUIPMENT

All 'go rescuer' fire fighters are provided with the following equipment in water rescue situations;

1. Dry suit – all fire tenders carry two dry suits.
2. Thermal protection (Woolly Bear undergarments)
3. Personal Floatation Device (PFD)
4. Footwear
5. Gloves
6. Safety helmets
7. Latex swim cap
8. Knife
9. Communication whistle

Dublin Fire Brigade has received many awards and honours for its Water Rescue Unit, including the 2009 Ireland Medal.

### FLOODING

The fire brigade has a major role to play in flooding. Fire fighters are faced with the following flood hazards;

1. Manholes – water pressure may lift and open manholes.
2. Chemicals in water – water may be contaminated by household or industrial chemicals.
3. Fuel in water – water may be contaminated by fuel from vehicles or storage tanks.
4. Surface change – underwater and unseen walking surfaces are covered with hidden objects.
5. Electricity – the possibility that electricity may be conducted through water. Debris – flood debris may become a safety hazard.
6. Pollution – water may be polluted by sewerage.
7. Contaminants – water may be contaminated by unknown contaminants.
8. Viral / Bacterial Infection – rescuers may be infected by pollutants

### VEHICLES IN WATER

Vehicles pose particular dangers in flood situations.

- Sharp edges, vehicle electrics failing, air bags deploying
- Vehicles are likely to be moved by water pressure
- Partially submerged vehicles should be approached downstream
- Before entering a vehicle an escape route and method must be agreed



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