

# Humberside Coastguard Search and Rescue Helicopters

Captain Jonathan Stanley, Deputy Chief Pilot



Hi folks,

Well, I think it's fair to say that everything seems to have become rather surreal since last month's update. I sincerely hope that none of you are significantly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic but, if you are unwell, I wish you a speedy recovery.

You probably won't be surprised to hear that, here at the SAR base, we have had to make some significant temporary changes to our normal routine to try to minimise the risk of our staff becoming infected by the coronavirus, so that we can provide a consistent level of service throughout this pandemic. You will continue to see us operating and carrying out our training alongside any rescue tasking, as it is essential that we keep our skills honed across the breadth of our capabilities. For the present, though, we will be limiting our direct contact with the personnel of other emergency agencies to the minimum extent necessary. Hopefully we will all be able to return to something approaching our normal regime soon, but we recognise the importance of the current measures in assisting in reaching this goal.

In order to minimise the risk of the SAR helicopter service being restricted by staff contracting the coronavirus, our company has provided a number of specially-modified helicopters to meet a very short-notice government requirement. These helicopters operate from Aberdeen and Norwich airports exclusively to transport people displaying the COVID-19 symptoms but with no other life-threatening injury or illness, from offshore gas and oil platforms back to mainland hospitals. This provision 'frees up' our dedicated rescue helicopters to remain available for lifesaving search and rescue tasks.

One of the local effects of the nationally-adopted distancing measures is that the planned public presentation about our work that I have mentioned previously has been postponed. Once it is safe and appropriate to do so, I will make an arrangement with the parish council to provide a firm date for your diaries and publicise it through my monthly updates.

While the number of SAR tasks for March remained reasonably low, there was a much wider variety than last month in terms of both the locations (from the Lake District to Norfolk) and type of task (searches both successful and unsuccessful, fallers, maritime

rescues). This variety is the reason why we need to continue to carry out our normal training flights, as I mentioned above. I expect that the restrictions on public movement will keep our rescue callouts down below seasonal norms during April, as people simply won't be going to the hills and seaside, but I've been wrong before...!

Please continue to keep yourselves and your families safe in spite of the frustrations that will inevitably arise from the restrictions, and I hope that by the time I write next month's update we will be able to start to see a return to something like normality.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Times</b>	<b>Tasking</b>
2 March	1156 - 1449	Cliff faller at Seaham, near Sunderland. HART paramedic and casualty winched and taken to James Cook hospital, Middlesbrough.
5 March	1851 – 2052	Yacht aground with 1 person on board on sandbar at Brancaster, north Norfolk. As yachtsman's English was poor, initial thermal search carried out to confirm that no other casualties were present. Rescue 912 landed on the sandbank and yachtsman was walked to the aircraft and left safely on shore with the local coastguard team.
8 March	1606 - 1831	Search of fields, cliffs and shoreline for missing suicidal person near Whitby. Nothing found, so stood down.
9 March	2355 – 0238	Sick crewman evacuated from gas platform 112 nautical miles east of Kirmington. Taken to Hull Royal Infirmary.
10 March	0936 – 1033	Cliff faller at Hunstanton, Norfolk. Air ambulance arrived first, so Rescue 912 orbited overhead until stood down.
10 March	1255 – 1431	Search for person believed to have jumped from a bridge into the River Hull at Hull. Nothing found so stood down.
20 March	1624 - 2020	Diverted from training at Ravenscar to fallen walker with dislocated kneecap near Grisedale Tarn, Lake District. Refuelled at Teesside airport before proceeding. Casualty had been prepared in a stretcher by mountain rescue team. Winch paramedic lowered to assess casualty and suitability of the terrain for landing. Rescue 912 landed (carefully!) and casualty carried aboard. Casualty taken to James Cook hospital at Middlesbrough due to lack of Lake District refuel options.
23 March	2008 – 2130	Diverted from training to search for male collapsed on beach while walking dog near Skipsea, East Yorkshire. Located using thermal camera, aircraft landed on beach and crewmen deployed. While on scene, tasked to further search for a female reportedly stuck on cliffs nearby, so first casualty left with ambulance paramedic who had arrived on scene. Second casualty located using thermal camera. Rescue 912 landed on the clifftop and casualty was walked to aircraft for shelter until collected by Coastguard Rescue Team personnel.
24 March	1526 – 1652	Search for male threatening suicide near Laceby. Nearby woods and fields searched both visually and with thermal camera; nothing found so stood down.
26 March	1739 – 1749	Tasked to person with head injury on Skegness beach. Stood down en route when air ambulance arrived on scene, so reverted to training.
26 March	1806 - 2035	Retasked to Skegness for head injury. Landed on beach, then air ambulance doctor and paramedic plus casualty taken to Nottingham Queen's hospital.