

Humberside Coastguard Search and Rescue Helicopters

Captain Jonathan Stanley, Deputy Chief Pilot



Breydon Water, 21 September. Photos: Gorleston Lifeboat.

September brought us the usual variety of tasking, with some moments of entertainment to balance the unfortunate (but sadly inevitable) serious injuries and fatalities. Many of the callouts occurred at times that best described as 'antisocial'; apologies again if you have been disturbed by the sound of the aircraft, but a glance at the summary below will show the reasons for this. Please be assured that we are very much aware of the noise that the S-92 makes and do what we can to avoid overflying the villages, especially at nighttime.

On occasion we are tasked to casualties reportedly in difficulties in water, often at a quite a distance from Kirmington. Normally these casualties either make their own way to shore or are rescued by other agencies while the aircraft is still en route, resulting in the crew being stood down from the task; when life is genuinely at stake, however, it is entirely reasonable to task both lifeboats and helicopter as the incident on 22 September demonstrates – lifeboats need to go to shore to transfer casualties to land ambulances, whereas the helicopter can obviously take the casualty straight to hospital if circumstances demand it.

If you haven't already seen it, a new documentary series on More4 started in September focussing on the work of mountain rescue teams, coastguard rescue teams and the Search and Rescue helicopters from a number of the UK's bases, including Humberside. Bearing the snappy series title of '*Emergency Rescue – Air, Land and Sea*', episodes are shown on Sunday evenings at 9pm, repeated on Saturdays at 8pm and are all available via catch-up TV. Unfortunately the scheduling wasn't advised until just after last month's update was published on the parish council website, but it might be of interest to see your local SAR aircraft 'in action' as well as seeing some of the people on the Humberside team (I got my 15 minutes of fame in Episode 1...).

Date	Times	Tasking
4 Sep	15:21 – 16:55	64 year old female cliff faller with suspected spinal injuries at Hornsea. Aircraft landed, casualty stretchered aboard and taken to Hull RI.
5 Sep	12:13 – 15:21	42 year old male who had collapsed on the Ravenspurn North gas platform, 60 miles north east of Kirmington. Aircraft landed on the helideck, casualty carried aboard and taken to Hull RI.
7 - 8 Sep	23:59 – 00:06	Tasked to search for person in the water at Cleethorpes but stood down en route.
9 Sep	21:53 – 23:01	Tasked to evacuate a person from a small vessel aground on sandbanks in The Wash and running out of supplies. Person winched and left safe and well with coastguard team on shore.
10 - 11 Sep	21:35 – 01:30	57 year old female faller with broken femur on Holy Island, Northumberland. Aircraft landed nearby, casualty stretchered aboard and taken to Newcastle Royal Victoria Infirmary.
14 Sep	20:42 – 22:42	Search following report of person in the water off Redcar. Extensive thermal and night-vision search carried out in conjunction with coastguard teams and lifeboat, but nothing found. Suspect false alarm.
15 Sep	13:21 – 17:29	30 year old male with severe leg trauma after contact with motor cruiser propeller. Aircraft landed at the scene near to air ambulance. Casualty had been recovered from the water but had suffered traumatic cardiac arrest then been resuscitated; casualty and air ambulance medics taken to James Paget hospital at Great Yarmouth.
19 Sep	11:36 – 14:00	Crewman with head injury aboard cable-laying vessel 'Ile de Brehat', 115 miles east north east of Kirmington. Casualty winched and taken to Hull Royal Infirmary.
19 Sep	14:18 – 14:31	Tasked to report of 3 people in the water at Sunderland; stood down en route.
19 Sep	15:56 – 16:18	Tasked to report of 2 people in the water at Winterton on Sea, Norfolk; stood down en route.
21 Sep	17:45 – 21:38	Tasked to a vessel that had run aground and stuck on mudflats at Breydon Water, Great Yarmouth, with 4 adults, 2 young children and 2 dogs aboard and in distress. All the people and one dog were winched to the aircraft; the second dog elected not to be winched, jumped onto the mudflat instead and was later rescued by Gorleston lifeboat. The aircraft was landed nearby and the group was handed over safe and well to the local coastguard team. Alcohol may have been a factor...
22 Sep	15:50 – 17:29	Diverted from training to a person overboard from a small fishing vessel at Hornsea. Casualty was recovered from the water by the Hornsea Inshore Rescue lifeboat and CPR commenced. Casualty was then winched from the lifeboat and CPR continued in the aircraft en route to Hull Royal Infirmary. Resuscitation efforts continued at the hospital until casualty was declared deceased.
22 – 23 Sep	23:41 – 00:41	Tasked to a 45 year old male stabbing victim with CPR in progress in Skegness. Aircraft landed at Skegness cricket ground and rearcrew taken to scene nearby by coastguard vehicle where the casualty had just been declared deceased by on-scene NHS medical personnel.
25 Sep	06:18 – 08:10	Search of beach, sea and inland areas between Skegness and Sutton-on-Sea for 24 year old despondent missing person at Chapel St Leonards. Nothing found so stood down.
30 Sep	19:18 – 22:31	Two people in the water from a jetski at Lowestoft. Recovered from the water by a nearby survey vessel but reportedly possibly hypothermic. En route, the aircraft crew was informed that both people were wanted by the UK Border Force. Both casualties winched and taken to hospital at Great Yarmouth where they were met by friendly police officers.