



MIDLAND RESPONDER

Newsletter of MROC 4x4 Response

October 2016

Working together – Saving lives, reducing harm

Issue No 3

WELCOME to the third edition of Midland Responder.

The newsletter can be a source of group interaction so please feel at liberty to send in any items that you would like to contribute and share.

Website: Our website contains lots of useful info such as Midlands flood alerts, photo albums, handy links, newsletters and a shop page: www.mroc4x4response.co.uk

Facebook : Our Facebook page has been up and running for a while now and is there to be used by any of you for general chit-chat and discussion; set up as a closed group so posts can only be read by members and not the whole world.

The page can be found at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1493898804198499/>

SURVEY: during February I asked you all to complete a survey for the purpose of assessing your opinions on a variety of matters; this information has been helpful in determining how we should progress the group in the future and your help is greatly appreciated. The survey method also seemed popular and may again be used in the future when the need arises.

Your opinions and thoughts on any matter regarding response & the group are always welcome and remember that any such thoughts can always be discussed between yourselves on the Facebook page.

THEORY TRAINING DAY: Held in April, our refresher this year was held at Coleshill Fire Station for the first time and with the cost again picked up by the Local Authority. Well attended and Phil Ackroyd once again gave up his time for us to deliver the theory refresher utilising media and equipment he uses at work, by kind permission of LRE. The course had been varied somewhat from previous years and was well received by all. After lunch we discussed Exercise Cape, the new radio system, the survey results and Peter & Glyn explained and gave practical demonstrations on splicing ropes. All seemed happy with the 'new' venue and it may be that early next year we will return.

EXERCISE CAPE: As you will probably all remember the exercise took place way back in March of this year, the scenario being a train crash at Bentley Heath crossing in Dorridge. This was reported in the MROC journal and also in the 4x4 Response UK newsletter so no need for any more detail here except to say that those taking part or observing will all have learnt something from the day, not least the interoperability of various emergency services and agencies and how they can work together as a team. A news item can be found on the website as can photos from the day.

CSW RESILIENCE CONFERENCE - was also held in April, the theme being **'PLAN, RESPOND, RECOVER, REPEAT'**, and we were offered a small number of free places enabling four of us to attend. The conference had a variety of speakers with a vast amount of experience in the resilience field both at home and abroad and covered the following topics: Lead on Risk Assessment, London Fire Brigade, The Government Decontamination Service, Disaster Action and finally an extremely experienced and well appointed Solicitor Advocate talking about 'liability' – a scary chat on what we do, how it can go wrong and who the finger may be pointed at if it does (us).

Liability - On this subject, earlier in the year I was speaking with a member who said they missed the days when we just got a call and went out to drive, sweet & simple . . . well those early days of response are now long gone as everything we do has to have accountability and a paper trail - that takes effort from everyone - the controllers to create traceability on call outs and despatch, from drivers to ensure that mileage records are kept and incident forms completed, and for the management team to debrief and sort invoices and other paperwork. On top of which there is a constant effort going on behind the scenes to keep the group relevant, current and operating legally, regular refresher training for instance to comply with insurance requirements.

TRAINING GROUND UPDATE: As you are all aware, the training ground work is still ongoing; to date we have cleared a lot of undergrowth, fabricated some obstacles, forged a driving track through part of the woods and erected some new fencing where the old fencing had ceased to exist as a fence. The Local Authority are more than happy so far with that work but we have more to do.

More severe obstacles need to be put in place for experienced drivers and this will take a fair amount of work with a large excavator, once again courtesy of John Chesters, and hopefully this will happen sometime during October.

We also need to make headway into the rest of the wooded area to provide two stream crossings and another circular route; the stream crossings will require some thought as we cannot allow permanent damage to the banks or stream bed so may have to construct a means of achieving this, and another day of clearing undergrowth will also be necessary for the new woodland track. A day for this may also be arranged for October.

Remember that the work we put in now, and any further work and regular annual maintenance to keep the area useable gives our group free use of the land as and when we require.

EXERCISE SAHARA: Announced at a recent CSWEVC (Emergency Volunteers Committee) was a planned live emergency exercise for March 19th & 20th. This will be run in the south of the region, possibly using Draycote Reservoir, the scenario being based on a flooding/reservoir inundation and will have 3 live elements around the reservoir, a road traffic collision and a rest centre. Plans may change a little but as they stand, Monday 20th will have live play and a physical presence with the RTC on a bridge, leading to civilians requiring rescue and support, all during a county wide flooding event.

RESPONSE UK AGM: This (24th September) was the inaugural AGM of the new CIO and was concerned mainly with the appointment of new Trustees. In an effort to counteract the failings of the 'old' charity and to progress the organisation into becoming a governing body (within a 5 year timeline) a Council has been formed to give every member group direct involvement in the future running of the organisation and that Council will

make any necessary decisions. To that end, I have been co-opted onto the Council and will be the spokesperson for MROC4x4R unless there are any objections.

I will continue to keep you updated with national matters as and when need be but personally I wish more of you would register on the forum and get involved in the many varying topics that arise from members of all 31 UK groups – it really can be an interesting learning curve.

Registration is easy at <http://www.4x4response.info/>

RECOVERY TRAINING: There are presently a small number of you that haven't yet completed the Off Road Recovery course and unfortunately this has dragged on a little longer than I would have hoped. The good news is that you will all have the opportunity to do so in the not too distant future. More news on this soon.

SHOP: Available now and soon to go onto the 'shop' page on the website are the new magnetic vehicle signs. These are 300mm x 300mm in size, cost £4 each and are intended for use when we are called out.



For those that cannot use magnetic we have the same sign in laminated format that can be stuck to internal windows and these are £2 each.

These signs cannot be posted!

NEW MEMBER: We welcome Jeffrey Way who has joined this month.

Edited by John Kesterton