



## **Lessons Learned Report 2017-1**

### **Incident:**

An RCMSAR station, while at a community event, saw a plume of smoke nearby, boarded their FRC and transited towards the location of smoke. 3 crew on the vessel noted a nearby wharf on fire. The Coxswain made the decision to use their de-watering pump to cool nearby fishing vessels in hopes of preventing a possible explosion. Before the crew engaged, the fire flashed over the corner, and underside of the wharf, which erupted into flames. The crew updated MCTS/JRCC and Fire Rescue was requested.

Fire Rescue arrived on-scene and by request of said Agency, two Firefighters were put on the RCMSAR FRC to engage the fire. The RCMSAR crew advised MCTS.

JRCC requested the RCMSAR crew to off-load the Firefighters and to get away from the fire, they were not tasked to assist.

The RCMSAR crew returned to their Station to switch out a de-watering pump and then returned to the fire to provide the Firefighters with an additional de-watering pump without any additional communication to MCTS or JRCC.

The On-scene Fire Commander called the RCMSAR Station and directed them to pump water on the fire under the wharf.

The Coxswain made the decision to engage the fire with their crew under the direction of the Fire Commander. The RCMSAR crew used their de-watering pumps to assist resources on-scene until the fire was knocked out.

### **Issues Surrounding the Incident:**

- 1) JRCC did not task the RCMSAR Station to engage, it was not an authorized activity
- 2) JRCC was not aware the RCMSAR station proceeded to engage in the fire. There were no communications sent between RCMSAR and JRCC
- 3) RCMSAR crews did not have insurance coverage around this activity as no incident number was provided by JRCC
- 4) RCMSAR crews are not trained in fire fighting
- 5) RCMSAR crews do not have proper safety gear for fighting fires



### **Incident Factors:**

There were three main factors that contributed to the incident:

- 1) Two of the RCMSAR crew members on the FRC are “trained firefighters”, according to the duty Coxswain. Regardless of outside experience or level of training, firefighting is **not** an RCMSAR authorized activity.
- 2) JRCC did not task the RCMSAR Station to engage in the fire, therefore the crew were not protected by the RCMSAR insurance policy, putting members and equipment at risk.
- 3) The On-scene fire commander requested the RCMSAR crew to engage. Outside agencies, unless directed by JRCC, do not have the authority to direct RCMSAR crew to engage.
- 4) An improper risk assessment was completed and the potential for injury and health implications to crew, both in the short and long term, was not adequately considered.

### **Lessons to be learned:**

- In accordance to the CCGA Contribution Agreement, Schedule “A” Authorized Activities, Fire fighting to save lives is listed. Engaging fires to save property is not authorized.
- If JRCC does not task an RCMSAR station to an event, the station does not have insurance coverage and **will not** engage in the activity.
- JRCC/CCG is our only tasking authority.
- Safety of our crew and vessels are the priority at all times.
- Consider the short and long-term risks when assessing the situation on the best course of action.