



CIVIL DEFENCE

Cosaint Shibhialta **Review**

2014



www.civildefence.ie



Director General, Bill Smith

Welcome to the Civil Defence Review of 2014. The year started off with several weeks of severe weather. Civil Defence volunteers throughout Ireland responded to numerous callouts to support frontline services in January and February. At New Year huge seas caused severe damage right along the west coast. February brought serious flooding to Limerick City. This was quickly followed by Storm Darwin which caused even more damage across much of Munster and south Leinster. Civil Defence Volunteers gave great service to their communities with a range of responses including sandbagging, pumping flood waters, evacuating homes and clearing up debris. Volunteers were also involved in monitoring river and tide levels and keeping members of the public away from flood waters.

As usual, Civil Defence supported many high profile events. We assisted with the Giro D'Italia cycle race. Our communications capabilities were deployed to monitor the race from Louth

right through to Dublin City Centre. Other high profile events included the Fleadh Ceoil in Sligo, the Electric Picnic in Laois and many large sporting events including horseracing at the Curragh and Listowel and also soccer and rugby matches at the Aviva Stadium and Thomond Park. Civil Defence assisted with hundreds of other sporting and community events, large and small in every county in Ireland.

Missing person searches are an ongoing feature of our operational activities. On average Civil Defence support the Gardaí in one search per week. This is hugely important work. As well as our well trained Volunteers, we offer the Garda Search Manager a range of assets including boats, communications vehicles, 4-wheel drive vehicles, search dogs and welfare units. In 2014 we added to these supports with the acquisition of a number of UAV's (unmanned aerial vehicles). These 'drones' are capable of rapidly scanning large areas while feeding live pictures back to the base Unit.

In November Civil Defence honoured many of our longest serving members at a ceremony in Dublin Castle. This was one of the largest gatherings of Civil Defence volunteers in many years. Paul Kehoe TD, Minister of State at the Department of Defence presented Thirty, Forty and Fifty year medals to 270 volunteers. More of these medals will be presented at local events to those volunteers who couldn't make the Dublin Castle event.

Civil Defence ran an extensive training programme in 2014, both at the College in Roscrea and locally. Swiftwater training was a big feature in 2014, but there was also extensive training in other areas including casualty, communications, welfare and CISM. Regional exercises again provided an opportunity to showcase our skills. In 2014 these were hosted by Cork South, Limerick County, Waterford County and Wicklow.

This magazine gives a flavour of some of the Civil Defence activities in 2014.

Severe Weather Relief Efforts

Civil Defence was deployed to assist the Primary Response Agencies in a total of 35 severe weather relief operations during the course of the year.



Transporting 'Social Services', Sligo



Flood Relief – Road Traffic Control, Waterford



Evacuation of flooded homeowners, Limerick City



Clearing Debris in Tipperary following Hurricane Darwin

January & February 2014 Efforts:

20 Civil Defence Units were deployed during the course of a sustained 21-day period of severe weather in February 2014. A total of 522 Volunteers were deployed with an average of 14 assisting in an area at any given time.

The tasks undertaken were diverse and numerous, namely, evacuation of people from flooded homes, transportation of evacuees (in 4x4's), water pumping, filling & deployment of sandbags, traffic control, transportation of children to schools, flood barrier erection/ flood defence construction, monitoring of water levels, delivery of safety notices, manning of Command & Control Units, transportation of home help to elderly, transportation of patients from Nursing Homes, removal of fallen trees and debris from roads, delivery of essentials to homes without power, supplying clean water to residents without power, attending Crisis Management Team Meetings and bringing animal feed to isolated elderly farmers.



Moving animals to safety, Castleisland Animal Shelter



John Martin

John Martin

John Martin who served as the Longford Civil Defence Officer from 1995 to 2014 sadly passed away in July following a short illness.

Since John's passing Seamus Kiernan, a long standing member of Longford Civil Defence has taken over the Civil Defence Officer reins in an acting capacity.

Liam Griffin

Liam Griffin who served as Clare Civil Defence Officer from 1996 to 2014 retired from his post in April.

Noel Carmody, who served as an Instructor with Clare Civil Defence for many years and worked as a Paramedic with the HSE took up the vacant position on 3rd June.



Liam Griffin

Regional Exercises

Four Regional Exercises were held in the spring of 2014. Cork South hosted the first Exercise at Little Island won by the Cork West team, Limerick County hosted the second Exercise at Annacotty Business Park won by Tipperary North, Waterford County hosted the third Exercise at Tramore won by Waterford City and Wicklow hosted the fourth Exercise, which was non-competitive, at Greystones.

Each Exercise tested and showcased the capabilities and skills of the participants in a wide range of disciplines under differing weather conditions.



Regional Exercise, Cork South (Search & Recovery)



Regional Exercise Cork South (Water Pumping)



Regional Exercise, Limerick (Casualty)



Regional Exercise, Limerick (Casualty)



Regional Exercise, Waterford (Footdrill)

Unmanned Aerial Vehicles in Civil Defence

In 2014 Civil Defence Branch developed an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) or RPAS (Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems) capability to support search operations. These are 'mini-helicopters' fitted with cameras which transmit live pictures back to the operator. They can be used to quickly search large areas, especially where access is difficult or unsafe.

Civil Defence now has four UAVs, based at the Phoenix Training Centre in Dublin, but available to support Civil Defence search operations across Ireland.

All operators of Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems must be licensed by the Irish Aviation Authority. Following aeronautical ground school training and a flight test, permissions were issued by the IAA to both Civil Defence Branch operators and the service became fully operational in September 2014.

The operating skills are being honed on an ongoing basis. As operational experience is gained, the next step will be to establish a number of RPAS units at strategic locations around the country. This roll-out will depend on the demand for the service across the country and also how successful it is in supporting search operations.

A more detailed article about our UAVs is available on the Civil Defence website.





Training/New Courses delivered in 2014

Catering: During 2014 Civil Defence re-engaged with the Defence Forces to deliver a catering course. Volunteers who completed this training are now equipped to prepare a selection of hot and cold food for large numbers in the event of Missing Person Searches and for other large exercises and events.

Manual Handling: Quality Qualifications Ireland (QQI - formerly known as FETAC) has revised the Manual Handling Instructor and the People Handling Instructor qualification. Civil Defence volunteers received training in both Manual Handling and People Handling during 2014, which qualifies them to instruct to the new QQI standards.

Swiftwater and Flood First Response: The Swiftwater and Flood First Response Instructors course continued during 2014 and instructors began to deliver training to volunteers.

Missing Person Searches: Further training in the area of searches for missing persons was delivered during 2014. A very interesting and informative training exercise was held in conjunction with the Gardaí and other agencies from Cork, in late 2014.



Details of Civil Defence Courses delivered and certificates issued during 2014

| | |
|---------------------|-------|
| Courses/Exercises | 738 |
| Numbers Attended | 4,518 |
| Certificates Issued | 3,694 |



Cavan Medal Recipients

Long Service Medal Presentation Ceremony

On Friday 21st November, Paul Kehoe T.D., Minister of State at the Department of Defence presented new long service medals to almost 300 Civil Defence Volunteers from across Ireland at Dublin Castle. The medals were presented in recognition of 30, 40 and 50 years service in Civil Defence.

The new medals have been struck to honour decades of voluntary service given by these individuals to their communities. Both serving and retired members of Civil Defence with the appropriate service are eligible for these medals.



Joe & PJ Graham, Tipperary



Discussing times past at the Ceremony



Vincent Miller, Kildare - 50 Year Medal Recipient



Harry Ledwith, Longford - 50 Year Medal Recipient



Westmeath Medal Recipients



Roscommon Medal Recipients



A Family Affair - Wafer brothers, Donal and John, their wives Helen and Anne, who are both sisters, and brother-in-law Peter Earle with CDO Gabrielle Willis and Minister Paul Kehoe.



30, 40 and 50 Year Medals



Darkness into Light for Pieta House - Donegal

Civil Defence 2014 in numbers

There were 4,234 active volunteers organised in 29 Civil Defence Units across Ireland.

Activity Report

Civil Defence was called out on **2,015** occasions as follows;

| | |
|-------------------------|--------------|
| Missing person searches | 67 |
| Severe weather | 35 |
| Accidents | 4 |
| Community events | 545 |
| Sporting events | 1,005 |
| Local Authority events | 100 |
| Other | 199 |

Our Main Equipment

| | |
|----------------------------|------------|
| Ambulances | 101 |
| Fire Tenders | 47 |
| 4x4 Vehicles | 216 |
| Operation Control Vehicles | 19 |
| Minibuses | 61 |
| Mobile Canteens | 12 |
| Vans | 45 |
| Other | 5 |
| Boats | 88 |



Fire Cover at Champions League Qualifier



Reek Sunday - Mayo

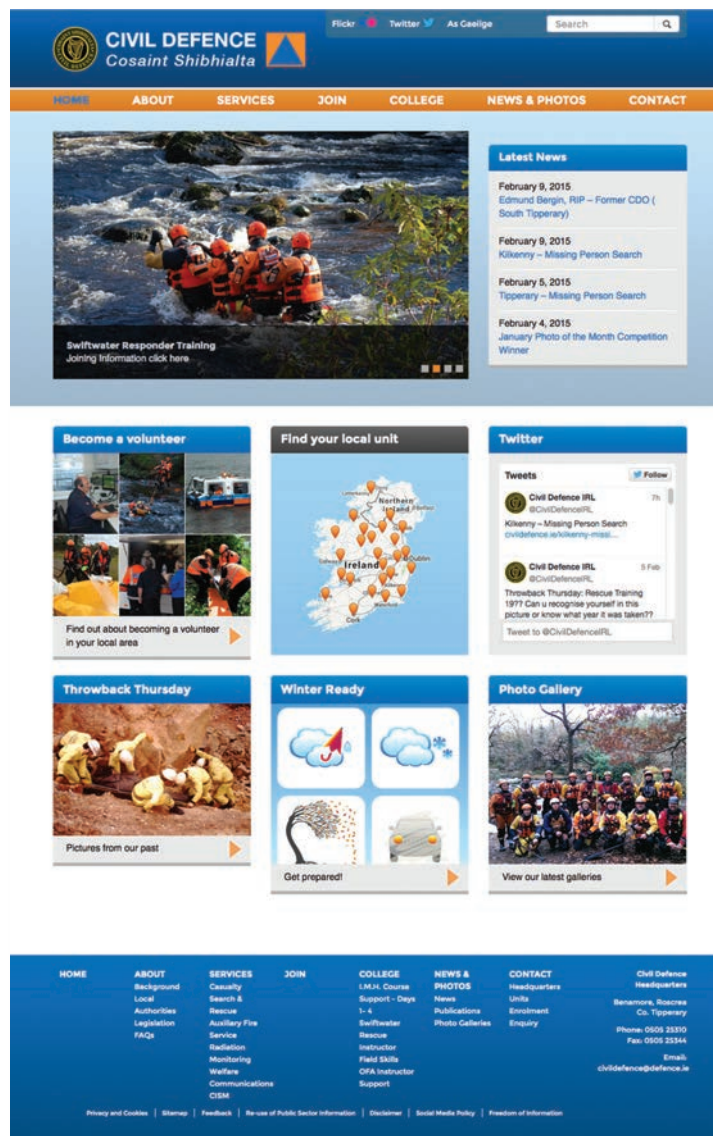
New Website and Social Media

Our new website 'www.civildefence.ie' went live in December. Features of the new website include:

- Availability of E-Learning material
- Interactive College material and accessible course presentations
- A map allowing the visitor to pinpoint any unit countrywide with a brief description of the unit and co-ordinates to direct one to the unit headquarters
- A substantial amount of the website is available 'As Gaeilge'
- The 'new' website is run from a much quicker platform meaning it can be updated via remote access

Civil Defence also went live on Twitter in 2014, using the handle @civildefenceIRL

Our followers on Twitter get regular updates on Civil Defence activities throughout Ireland.



New Members

New members are always welcome. Enrolment enquiries may be made through the Local Authority based Civil Defence Officer or via the Civil Defence Website.



Cork City Volunteers at Regional Exercise

Photo of the Month

To coincide with the launch of the new website Civil Defence launched a photo of the month competition in November 2014.

A prize of a €50 one-4-all voucher is awarded to the winner each month. The photographs are invited on any theme related to Civil Defence. The winning photographs are published on the Civil Defence website.

A healthy entry has been received for the first two months of the competition and more quality images on our website is a positive step in promoting Civil Defence.



November Winner, Andrew Fox, Roscommon CD



December Winner, Peter Losberg, Cork West CD

Produced by the Civil Defence Branch, Department of Defence