

# It's no game of drones!



## Hi tech eye in the sky to boost Civil Defence searches

**DRONES FLYING HUNDREDS** of metres in the sky over mountains and rough terrain are about to become the latest tool used in major search and rescue operations in Kerry.

BY AIDAN O'CONNOR

Along with sniffer dogs and high-powered flood vehicles, drones carrying high-tech cameras will be available to the Civil Defence in Kerry in major operations and severe weather management.

Senior gardai, as well as representatives from coast guard and dog agencies, all attended the training exercise in Valentia on Saturday.

The Civil Defence in Kerry headed up a major training exercise which brought together several agencies who work together in times of crisis and major community events. They're currently awaiting the arrival of two drones to Kerry for use in search and rescue operations.

Head of the Civil Defence in Kerry, Tom Brosnan, is a pioneer in the use of drones which can scan huge areas of terrain from hundreds of metres overhead.

While the Civil Defence are best known for their

presence at major community events like Puck Fair, the Rose of Tralee and the Munster Final - they also have a much broader role.

They are the agency best trained to use drones in search and rescue operations and also have access to sniffer and diver dogs.

"The Civil Defence volunteer now is very different to

Taking part in the Table Top Inter Agency Emergency Service Exercises on Valentia at the weekend were l-r: John Draper (Divisional Controller Valentia Radio Station), Tom Brosnan (CDO Kerry) and Annemarie Lynch (Cahersiveen CDU) pictured here with some of the Drones being used by the Civil Defence to aid in search operations.

years ago. All of them have to be qualified and certified in different areas, from driving professionals to swift water responders, manual handling and first aid," Tom Brosnan said.

Civil Defence are a statutory agency and come under the remit of Kerry County Council. They continue to recruit and train more volunteers every year.



Helen Moynihan,



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