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Circular: **2020HOC0604MW**

4 November 2020

TO: **ALL MEMBERS**

Dear Brother / Sister,

**MARINE ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION BRANCH REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS – RIVER CLEDDAU – 17 SEPTEMBER 2019**

Today the Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB) Report on the investigation of the collision between two fire and rescue service boats, resulting in the death of Bro. Josh Gardener in the River Cleddau on 17 September 2019, was published.

Bro. Gardener's death was an avoidable tragedy. Our thoughts today are first and foremost with his family and the FBU will continue to provide as much support to them as possible.

Although we are still considering the full content and implications of the report, we broadly welcome it and the recommendations contained within.

The recommendations are summarised below:

***The Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service is recommended to:***

- ***2020/130 Undertake a review of the crewing and staff qualification requirements for boats within MWWFRS to determine appropriate levels for familiarisation, training and emergency operations status and include the requirement within revised procedures and guidance.***
- ***2020/131 Introduce a method of recording time spent as helmsman of its boats and implement a minimum number of hours required as helmsman to maintain competency.***
- ***2020/132 Include reference to its boats within the internal audit and inspection report process.***

***The National Fire Chief's Council is recommended to:***

- ***2020/133 Consult with the Maritime and Coastguard Agency and the UK Harbour Master's Association to introduce a standard code for the operation of all fire and rescue service craft when in categorised or non-categorised waters.***

2.

On too many occasions in the UK we have experienced fatal and/or near fatal incidents involving firefighters during training on inland waterways and now, with the incident in the River Cleddau, in tidal waters.

It is imperative that all four recommendations are implemented as speedily as possible but without undue haste and the progress should be closely monitored and overseen by the MAIB, alongside monitoring by the FBU.

The key objectives must now be to ensure:

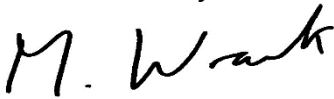
- a. That the lessons are learned and that measures are put in place to ensure that all fire and rescue services can take the necessary steps to ensure that such an incident never occurs again;
- b. That individual firefighters are not scapegoated to take the blame for the systemic organisational and procedural shortcomings identified by MAIB.

The full report and FBU press release can be found here:

<https://www.fbu.org.uk/news/2020/11/04/fire-brigades-union-responds-report-avoid-tragedy-cleddau-estuary>

Best wishes.

Yours fraternally

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Wrack', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**MATT WRACK**  
**General Secretary**

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