

Minister publishes review of the UK search and rescue helicopter service

I am delighted to publish this independently produced [post-implementation review of the UK search and rescue helicopter service](#). The service has been in place since 2015 and in that time, has been responsible for the rescue of thousands of lives. As Minister responsible for the service, I am proud of the work of our helicopter crews who routinely put their own lives at risk to rescue others.

I recognise the high expectations the public has for this service, particularly given the fact that it replaced the much respected military sea king service. I equally recognise the degree to which our stakeholders in the emergency services and the volunteer rescue organisations value our search and rescue helicopters and how critical it is to enable those services to undertake their lifesaving work.

To assure itself that the UK search and rescue helicopter service is meeting our stakeholders' needs and to evaluate the impact the service has had on the ability to respond to people in distress, the MCA commissioned this review to evaluate the work of the UK search and rescue helicopter service since it has been in operation.

The review draws upon statistical data and insight from partner rescue organisations to reach its conclusions. The general opinion of the review is that the transition to the UK search and rescue helicopter service was successful. It concludes that the anticipated benefits are either met or on track to be met. It further identifies a number of unanticipated benefits that present opportunities for the future to grow the service to be offer even greater value for money to the public.

This review will be used to inform the government's plans for the next generation search and rescue aviation capability, work on which has now started.

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