

**IRISH MARITIME ADMINISTRATION
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT, TOURISM & SPORT**

**AWARDS SCHEME FOR
(i) MARINE GALLANTRY; AND (ii) MERITORIOUS SERVICE**

**National Marine Gallantry and Meritorious Service Awards Committee
Membership, remit and procedures**

1. Composition of the Committee:
 - a. The National Marine Gallantry and Meritorious Service Awards Committee shall be composed of one Chairperson and up to eight ordinary members appointed by the Department of Transport Tourism and Sport.
 - b. The Assistant Secretary, Irish Maritime Administration (IMA), Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport (with responsibility for the Irish Coast Guard - IRCG) , the Director of the IRCG, and the Chief Surveyor of the Marine Survey Office will be permanent standing members. The Assistant Secretary shall be the Deputy Chairperson.
 - c. The remaining ordinary members and the Chairperson shall be chosen on the basis of their involvement in the commercial (shipping, fishing & offshore), leisure, safety and rescue sectors of Ireland's maritime community. They shall be appointed on an *ex officio* basis. A quorum of 50% of the Committee is required so that decisions may be reached.
 - d. The Chairperson and all Committee members shall adjudicate on a maximum of two sets of Awards (i.e. an average of four years' service on the Committee in total), excluding the standing members who shall remain for the duration of their respective appointments.
 - e. The Deputy Director (Chief of Operations) of the IRCG (or his nominated alternate) will be the Technical Advisor to the Committee. The Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport will provide the Secretariat to the Committee.
2. The Marine Awards Committee is the responsible body for adjudicating and agreeing upon all recommendations for the granting of two types of Awards relating to (i) Marine Gallantry; and (ii) Meritorious Service. The Committee will meet to discuss recommendations for Awards submitted to it. The Committee's decisions are final and are not open to appeal or review. Awards agreement will be by a simple majority of all Committee members; the

Chairperson also has a vote. In the event of a tie (there being only an even number of numbers present), the Chairperson (or, in his/her absence, the Deputy Chairperson) shall have the casting vote.

3. The Awards shall be made in principle every 2 years. The Committee will meet to decide on Awards in respect of the last two year period
5. Categories of Awards are set out in the following paragraphs. In exceptional circumstances, these Awards can be made to groups rather than individuals. It is open to any agency, organisation, service, or individual to make nominations for Marine Gallantry and Meritorious Awards. The IMA's Maritime Services Division will invite nominations and collate relevant information, insofar as is reasonably practicable, for submission. The material will be submitted to the Technical Advisor in the first instance for his recommendation, and then to the Committee. A person cannot nominate themselves. Decisions shall be based on the nomination and supporting evidence only.

Marine Gallantry Awards

6. Persons responding to, or assisting in, a marine emergency incident in the following circumstances are eligible for consideration for a Marine Gallantry Award:
 - i) an incident within the State and its emergency response responsibility zones;
 - ii) any Irish person responding to or assisting in a marine emergency response anywhere in the world; and,
 - ii) relating to an Irish vessel anywhere in the world.
7. This Award is presented in the form of a medal (called the *Michael Heffernan Medal for Marine Gallantry*, in memory of an individual who lost his life during a marine incident a number of years ago). Three levels of medals may be awarded, based on the level of gallantry involved. The criteria are set out below.
8. A Gold Medal may be awarded for a rescue or act of a singular exceptional and outstanding nature in the saving of life, where it can be demonstrated clearly that the rescuer acted with courage, heroism, skill and initiative of the highest order and in perilous circumstances. Consideration may be given to the degree of peril in which the rescuer committed themselves to, the level of danger of the rescued person(s) and to the selflessness of the actions.

9. A Silver Medal may be awarded for an act of gallantry for a rescue or act of an outstanding nature where it can be demonstrated that the rescuer acted with courage, heroism, skill and initiative of a very high order. Consideration may be given to the peril in which the rescuer found himself/herself and to the selflessness of the actions.
10. A Bronze Medal may be awarded for an act of gallantry of a very high order where it can be demonstrated that the rescuer acted with courage, skill and initiative of a very high order.

Meritorious Service Awards

11. Any person who has given meritorious service to the Irish State in the execution of its marine emergency management remit, is eligible for consideration for a Meritorious Service Award.
12. Meritorious Service Awards shall normally be confined to IRCG volunteers and members of declared resources (i.e. resources which are available for immediate tasking by the IRCG, by virtue of a prior agreement, as distinct from those which may be requested). However, the Committee may make this Award to any person where it considers such an award is justified.
13. This Award is presented in the form of either a medal or a letter, depending on the degree of merit involved. The criteria are set out below.
14. The highest level of this Award is the Marine Meritorious Service Medal. This medal may be awarded where outstanding meritorious service has been provided to, or within the remit of, the IRCG. The person must have demonstrated exceptional dedication to duty, coupled with skill and initiative, in the execution of the service being provided.
15. The Marine Ministerial Letter of Appreciation may be awarded for meritorious service where outstanding dedication to duty over a career of service can be demonstrated, or for an act of particularly meritorious dedication, showing skill and initiative, but which is not of an order for receipt of a Meritorious Service Medal.

Irish Maritime Administration
Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport
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