

Chief names new police launches

Report by Norman Hicks Photographs by Paul Kemp and Neil Parry



MOD Director Civilian Personnel Alison French, representatives of the Fleet Protection Group Royal Marines, Strathclyde Police, RNAD Coulport and MDP Scotland Divisional HQ personnel.

Said Mr Love:

"Historically, we have been provided with second-hand launches, or launches built for

us, but without our direct involvement in the process. However, over the last three years we have been working very closely with our partner teams within MOD and the contractors, Holyhead Marine Services, in developing a new state-of-the-art class of launch that will specifically meet our demanding requirements."

He recalled that the first of the new island class launches to come into service was 'Gigha' in late 2007 (see TalkThrough 134 January 2008).

"That launch has been extensively evaluated by our highly experienced Marine Unit staff and, following intensive use and feedback, we are about to bring the second of the class, 'Jura', into service.

"These first two launches will be named after Hebridean islands off the western coast of Scotland and I would particularly like to welcome Mr John Martin, who is representing the Isle of Gigha Heritage Trust and who has travelled over to the mainland specially to be with us today," said Mr Love.

Mr Love also thanked the Captain of HMS Neptune, Peter Merriman, for use of the Naval Base facilities to host the event, before paying tribute to all those involved in the project.

FROM THE MOD:
Equipment Capability Above Water Effect – Lt Cdr Karen Fyfe, who holds the budget for the new craft



and who sanctioned the contract for the two launches and a further four yet to be built.

"Her team is working on our behalf to secure the necessary funding for an additional ten launches over the coming years," said Mr Love.

Boats and Sea Survival (BASS) – Andrew Avison, who as team leader has overall control for the procurement of small boats and sea survival equipment; and **Paul Wakely**,

the project manager for the boat build. "Paul had significant input into the contract, design and build of the launches."

Holyhead Marine Services (HMS) – Nick Colin York, Managing Director and the lead in the actual build of the launches. "Nick has provided a first class professional service throughout the build phase of both boats and has gone out of his way to accommodate changes to specification."

■ *At a ceremony at HM Naval Base Clyde the culmination of more than three years' planning, designing, testing and evaluation of MDP's new hi-tech police launch came when Chief Constable Steve Love named the first two vessels to go into service 'Gigha' and 'Jura'.*

The 15 metre twin-engined, water jet propelled launches mark a major new departure for the Force's marine fleet, Mr Love told assembled guests at the ceremony, including those directly involved in the project,



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Mr Love also thanked **Peter Byrne**, from HMS, who was project manager on launch 'Jura'. "He has provided an excellent service and has facilitated all the design changes required on the second launch." Also thanked was **Sion Scudamore**, HMS production manager and hands-on lead for the launch build.

FROM THE MDP PROJECT TEAM:

Supt Tom McClenaghan, MDP lead on both launch builds.

Paul Kidby, Boats Manager and day-to-day link between BASS, HMS and the MDP. "Paul has worked tirelessly to ensure that our requirements have been met during the building of both launches," said Mr Love.

"His knowledge, experience and commitment to the task have ensured excellent liaison between all the key stakeholders. This liaison has been instrumental in our taking delivery of two fit for purpose, state-of-the-art police launches."

Sergt Colin Faulds, Clyde Marine Unit (CMU) and Force Marine Training Officer, who has been



involved with the input on launch 'Jura' and also led on the familiarisation training on this new class of launch.

Sergt Dave Adshead, Portsmouth Marine Unit, and **Sergt Paul Cawrse**, who have each brought invaluable marine experience to the party during the build of both police launches.

Also thanked for his input to the project was **Sergt Bobby Chappory**, of Gibraltar Services Police. **Inspr Christine Cameron**, CMU, was thanked for organising the ceremony and **Inspr Jock Mackay**, also CMU,

for piping the guests aboard the floating jetty in the police launch berthing area of HMNB Clyde, at the start of the ceremony.

Mr Love then invited Royal Navy Chaplains, the Rev Tommy Goodwin and Fr Michael Maloney, to lead the assembled company in prayer and bless both vessels.

He then performed the traditional boat naming ceremony, in which the Chief called for fair winds, safe passage and good fortune to all who sail on the two vessels, finally pouring champagne over their bows to complete a successful occasion.



Cypriot Officers on the Clyde



Back row (left to right) – PC Andreas Constantinou, PC Thrasyvoulos Antoniou, PC Michalis Nickolaou, PS Miklakis Loukaidis and PC Giannoulla Papagianni; front row – PC John Colman, PC Alistair Stewart and PC Andy Benson

■ *Earlier this year, the Clyde Marine Unit played hosts to officers from the Sovereign Base Areas (SBA) Marine Police in Cyprus, whilst they took part in training to Royal Yachting Association (RYA) standards.*

MOD Police sponsored the formation of the SBA marine unit, arranging provision of two twin-

engined RIBs and the necessary training to operate the craft safely.

The craft were provided through the Boats and Small Ships IPT at Abbey Wood and it is planned eventually that the new marine unit will be provided with launches to enhance their policing capability for all seaward protection around the Sovereign Base Areas.

Before this could be implemented, SBA officers needed further training. Sergt Colin Faulds, the MDP's Marine Police Training Officer

and his trainer, PC Andrew Benson, both based at HMNB Clyde, arranged for two two-week courses to be held there, to provide training to RYA 'Day Skipper' level for a total of ten SBA officers.

Chief Insp Glyn Rolling, head of CMU, told Talk Through: "The first of the SBA officers had quite a surprise, arriving in the snow and ice in February, after leaving sunny Cyprus!"

Pictured during their stay are some of the SBA officers, with their MDP trainers.