

Incident Report

Harbwr Aberdyfi Harbour 22nd August 2007.

On the 22nd August 2007, at approximately 14.30, the Harbourmaster for Aberdyfi; the Maritime Officer Harbours; and the Maritime Officer Beaches were on a site visit checking and inspecting the Harbour, Dinghy Park and the beach area at Aberdyfi.

At approximately 14-40pm the Aberdyfi Lifeboat had just returned to the lifeboat slipway when the crew were contacted via VHF radio by Milford Haven Coastguard.

The call alerted the crew to a reported incident that had taken place in the estuary at Aberdyfi.

The Lifeboat was re-launched, as approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ mile West from Aberdyfi Lifeboat Station, in position 52° 32.33 N 004° 03.27 W, it had been reported that a Powerboat and a Personal Watercraft had apparently been involved in a collision and that a passenger on board the Personal Watercraft was in the water with a suspected back injury.

The Lifeboat crew used the R.N.L.I. 'scoop stretcher' to recover the casualty from the water, who was then transported to the Lifeboat slipway and then transferred to the Lifeboat station. During this period, the emergency services (Ambulance) had been contacted and the casualty was receiving first aid. The casualty was also being attended to by a local Doctor, a member of the Dyfi Yacht Club. The Ambulance Service directed the Air Ambulance to the scene of the accident.

The Air Ambulance arrived on scene at approximately 15.45 hrs and the paramedic, together with the local Doctor, continued to treat the casualty. It was established that because the casualty was on an R.N.L.I. scoop stretcher the casualty could not be transported in the air ambulance due to the size of the stretcher.

The R.A.F. Sea King Rescue Helicopter was on a training flight in the vicinity and the Sea King was re-directed to Aberdyfi in order to evacuate the casualty to Ysbyty Gwynedd in Bangor.

The beach area near the R.N.L.I. station was cleared of people so that the Sea King Helicopter could land. The casualty was placed on board the Helicopter and taken to Bangor.

The Police that attended the incident took statements from both parties involved and witnesses, both vessels were impounded while the Police contacted the M.C.A.

Once it was established that no further action would be taken against either party, the vessels were released.

The following details have been obtained on the circumstances of the accident:-

The Personal Watercraft with the operator and one passenger were afloat within the jurisdiction of Aberdyfi harbour. The craft was under way and making way traveling in an Southerly direction in the approximate position of 52° 32.364N 004° 03.398 W

The powerboat, navigated by a single operator, departed from the beach approximately in position 52° 32.534 N 004° 03.409 W heading towards the middle of the estuary. The Powerboat was reported to have been increasing speed as it departed from the beach.

Possibly due to the power of the engine, as the powerboat increased speed, the bow of the vessel was rising up and thereby obscuring the powerboat driver's vision ahead.

It is understood that the powerboat continued to increase speed whilst navigating towards the middle of the estuary.

During this period, it is reported that the Personal Watercraft altered course to a Westerly direction and appeared to be on a collision course with the powerboat.

Within a very short period of time, a collision took place resulting in the passenger on the Personal Watercraft being thrown from the Personal Watercraft and ending up in the water.