

2017 Annual Report



MRCC - COLOMBO

MARITIME RESCUE CO-ORDINATION CENTRE - COLOMBO

MARITIME RESCUE COORDINATION CENTRE COLOMBO

ANNUAL REPORT 2017

1. Sri Lanka Navy being the responsible authority for conducting Search And Rescue (SAR) operations in Sri Lankan SAR region which is 27 times larger than its land mass, Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) Colombo is manned around the clock by trained staff at Naval Head Quarters Operations Room under supervision of Director General Operations and Director Naval Operations to assist vessels in distress by all possible means.

2. During the year 2017, 165 distress incidents were reported and all the incidents have been handled swiftly by the staff of MRCC Colombo with proven standard operation procedure. Among those incidents, 148 incidents were related to the Sri Lankan Fishing Vessels (SLFVSL) which is 90% from the total of 165 incidents reported to MRCC and 14 Merchant vessels were assisted by the MRCC Colombo during year 2017.

MRCC Colombo Operations

3. On receipt of distress alerts to MRCC, following procedure is adopted to ensure prompt and accurate response to the distress situation.

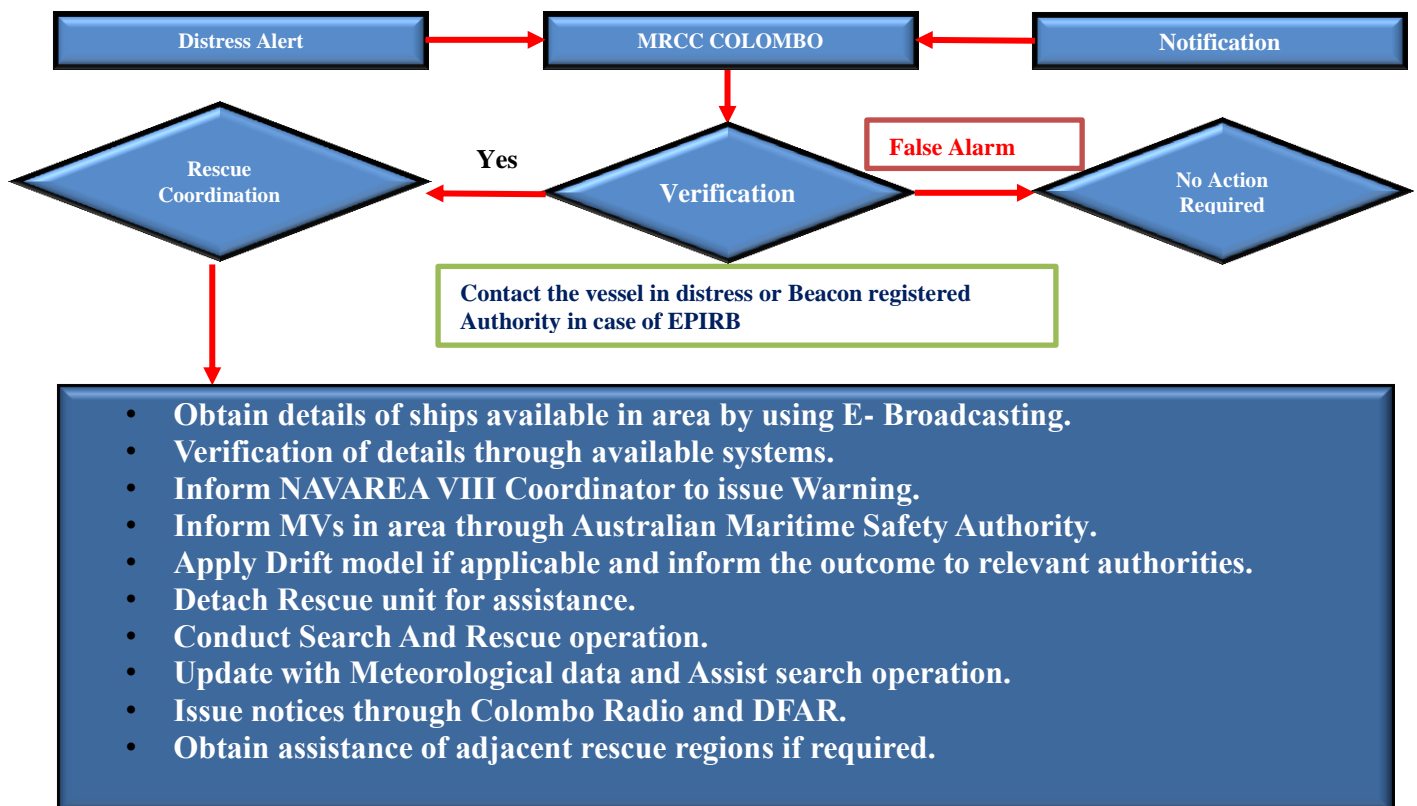


Diagram – I : Action Plan on MRCC Operations

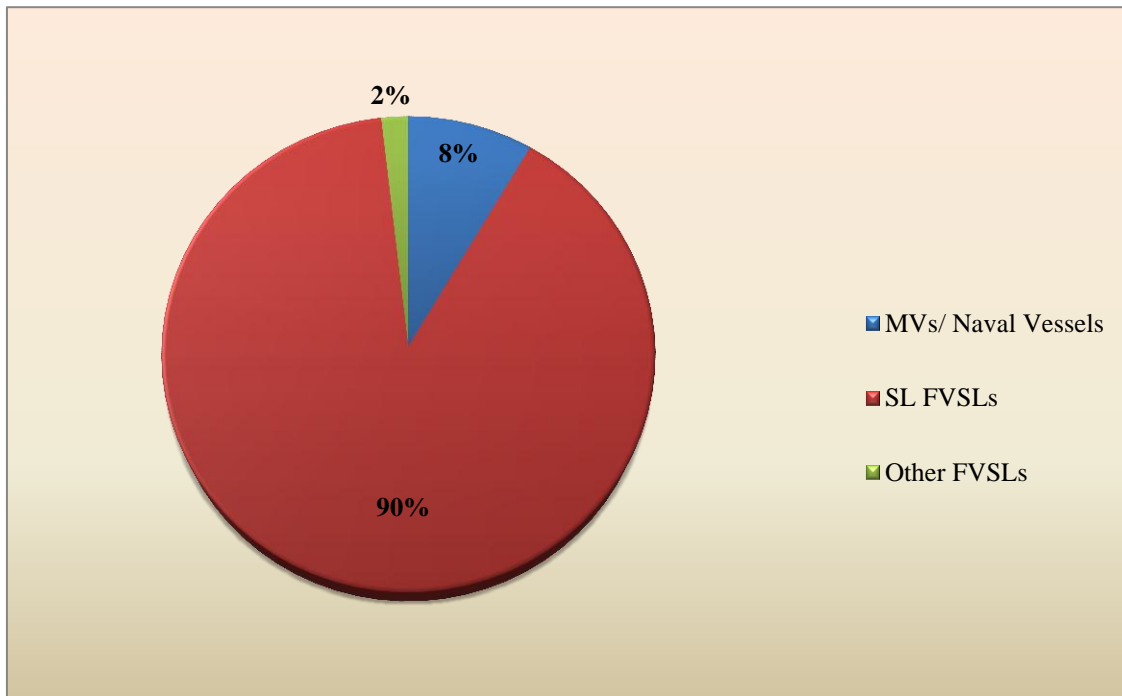
4. **Logs/ Registers maintained at MRCC Colombo.**

- a. MRCC Register – List of incidents reported to MRCC Colombo.
- b. MRCC Log – Detailed report on incidents reported.
- c. MRCC Diary – Daily update of all events until the completion of SAR operation.

Analysis of Incidents Reported to MRCC During 2017

5. **Types of vessels reported in distress during year 2017.**

- a. Merchant Vessels - 14
- b. Sri Lankan Fishing Vessels - 148
- c. Other Vessels - 3

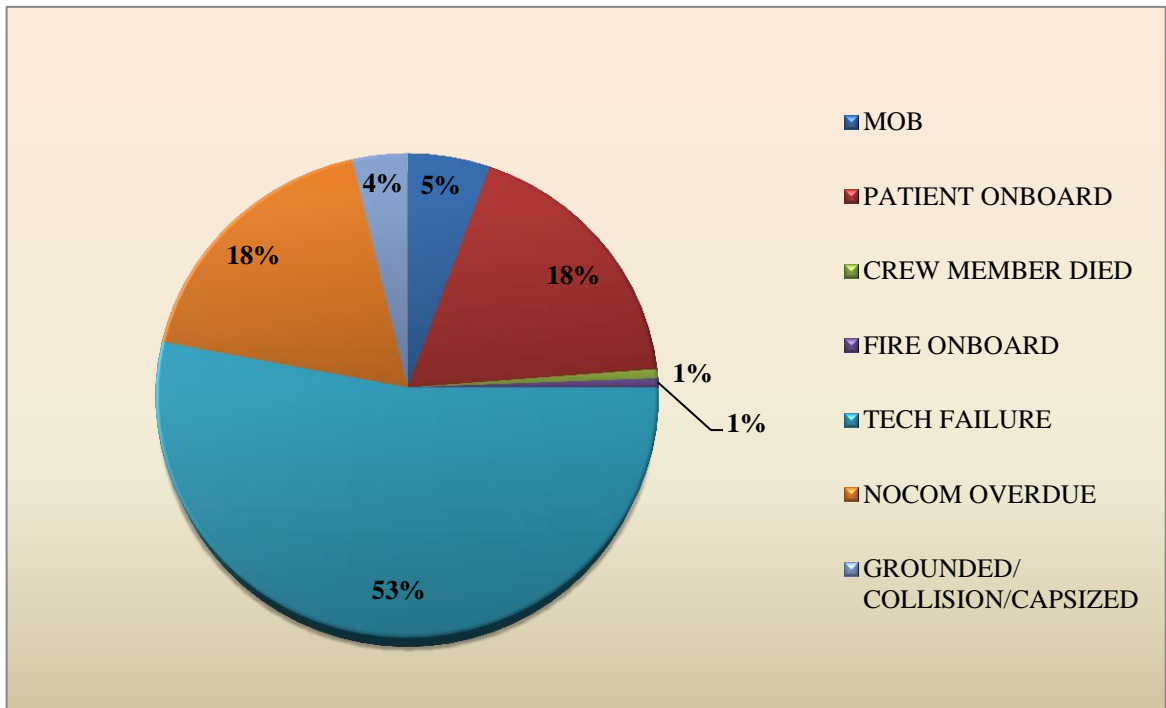


Graph – I : Types of Vessels Reported in Distress

6. According to the reports in Department of Fisheries and Aquatic Recourses, 4500 Sri Lankan Multi day fishing vessels are sailing in international waters, hence it is obvious that 90% of assistance had been provided to Sri Lankan fishing vessels. 14 merchant Vessels were assisted by the MRCC Colombo with the help of the Sri Lanka Navy as a country situated in a busiest sea lane of the world where over 2000 ships are passing across the Southern seas of Sri Lanka.

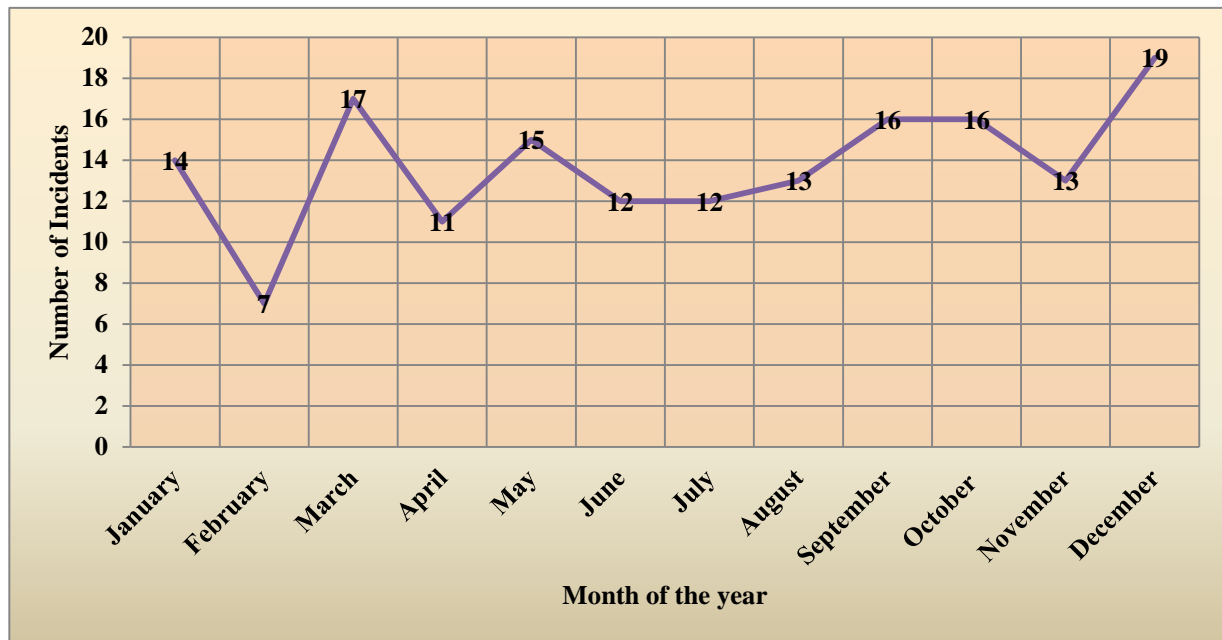
7. **Types Of Incidents Reported During Year 2017.**

a.	Fishing vessels drifting due to engine failure	- 87
b.	Fishing vessels ceased communication or overdue	- 30
c.	Patients onboard and required transfer ashore	- 31
d.	Capsizing and abandoning of vessels	- 6
e.	Fire on board	- 1
f.	Man Over Board	- 9
g.	Death of a crew member	- 1



Graph -II : Types of Incidents Reported During 2017

8. Incident reported to MRCC Colombo over the year 2017 in each month.



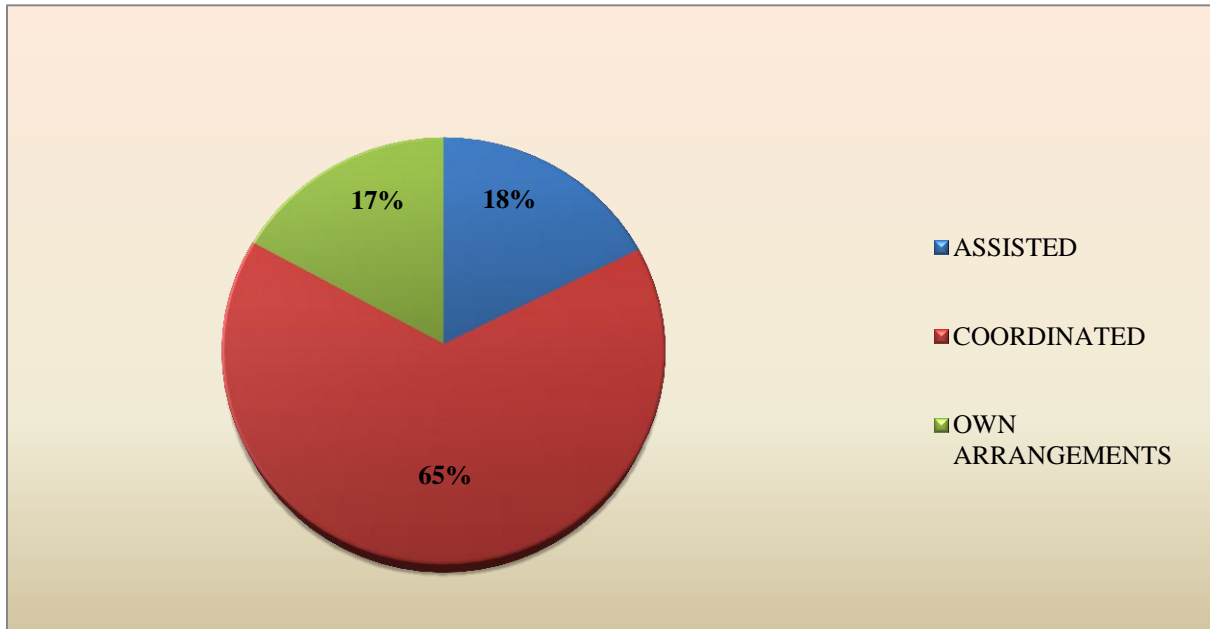
Graph – III: Incidents Reported Monthly During 2017

9. As per the analysis monthly average of 13 incidents were reported to the MRCC Colombo during the year 2017. Highest number of incidents were reported to MRCC Colombo during the month of December mainly because of the existed adverse weather condition. Nevertheless, proactive measures taken were helpful to control the number of distress situations.

10. Cyclone “Ockhi” developed near the southern coast of Sri Lanka and later shifted towards India, which affected considerably to the fishing community. MRCC Colombo was informed by the DFAR regarding the fishing vessels which were with difficulty to reach Sri Lanka due to adverse weather condition. MRCC Colombo took prompt action to monitor those vessels with Vessel Monitoring System throughout the height of cyclone till the crafts reach safely to Sri Lankan waters.

11. Furthermore, through the maritime domain awareness systems available at MRCC, it was observed that another cyclone is forming near the Sumatra Islands and the path of which would affect the fishing community. Prompt action was taken to find out the crafts which are in the area affected by the cyclone and informed those crafts to sail towards safe waters through the DFAR. This effort made was positively accepted by the fishing community where outcome was highly effective and the numbers of SLFVSLs at distress due to cyclone were very few.

12. Assistance rendered by the MRCC Colombo.



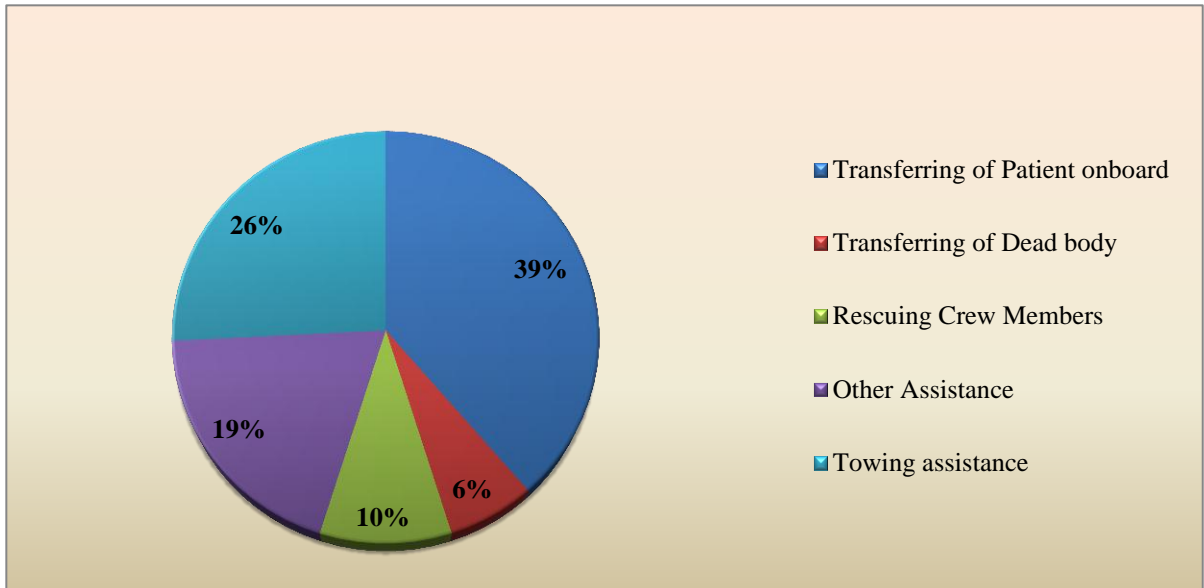
Graph – IV: Action Taken by MRCC Colombo

13. MRCC Colombo has assisted 29 incidents which is 18% out of 165 total incidents reported during the year 2017 by directly deploying naval assets at various capacities to make sure Sri Lankan SAR Region safe to the seafarers whilst commended several times by the International governments.

Table -1: Number of incidents Assisted by Deploying Naval Assets

Direct assistance rendered by deploying naval assets	Number of occasions
Transferring of Patient onboard	12
Transferring of Dead body	2
Rescuing Crew Members	3
Other Assistance	6
Towing assistance	8

14. Out of 29 incidents where MRCC Colombo directly involved by rendering assistance, 39% were transferring of patients onboard vessels. Expeditionary response on such kinds of incidents brought complacency to the MRCC Colombo and assistance were rendered by SLN up until admitting those patients to the hospitals. Most of the reported patients on board were personnel over the age of 40.



Graph – V: Direct Assistance Rendered by Deploying Naval Crafts

15. 108 incidents reported to MRCC Colombo have been coordinated in liaison with NAV AREA VIII coordinator by informing MVs in area to provide possible assistance.

16. It was revealed that through verification in 28 incidents, most of which were fishing vessels with engine failures that are not required MRCC assistance since crew onboard were able to rectify the engine failures or incidents where towing arrangements were initiated by the owners. In such incidents owners of the distressed fishing vessels were provided with real time details of the crafts operating in the same area with the help of maritime domain awareness systems available at MRCC Colombo.

Details of EPIRB alerts received.

17. EPIRB alerts generated by the vessels operated in Sri Lankan SAR Region are forwarded to MRCC Colombo through the Air Rescue Coordination Centre (ARCC) Rathmalana to provide the required assistance. Staff of the MRCC Colombo verifies the reports directly from the subjected vessel or by contacting relevant authorities with the help of maritime domain awareness systems available at MRCC Colombo. 16 Number of EPIRB alerts were reported to MRCC Colombo and out of those 05 were manually generated and 11 were reported with activation type unknown.

18. **Exercises conducted/ Activities during 2017 .**

- a. Search And Rescue Communication Exercise (SARCOMEX) 2017 with MRCC Chennai was conducted successfully and exercise report placed at MRCC Colombo for reference as per the DGO's directive.
- b. SPILLEX 17 was conducted by the Marine Environment Protection Authority (MEPA), Sri Lanka Port Authority (SLPA) and Sri Lanka Coast Guard in liaison with Sri Lanka Navy. MRCC Colombo had taken part in the exercise by simulating SAR scenario .
- c. Search And Rescue Plans of three passenger ships arrived Colombo harbor were inspected as per the IMO standards.

19. **Scheduled Activities in year 2018.**

- a. SAR signal training to be coordinated by ministry of Ports and Shipping with merchant vessels.
- b. SAREX III scheduled to be conducted in February 2018 with the participation of representatives from Australian Maritime Safety Authority.