

Update for 31st Dec 2024

Elimination of modern slavery and human trafficking

RNLI statement on the elimination of modern slavery and human trafficking. This statement is for the year ending 31/12/2024.

The RNLI has zero-tolerance toward slavery and human trafficking and does not accept modern slavery in any form. In our operations and supply chain, we work with partners and suppliers to ensure compliance with the **UK Modern Slavery Act 2015 (“the Act”)**.

The RNLI is the charity that saves lives at sea. We provide, on call, a 24-hour lifeboat search and rescue service around the UK and Ireland. We also provide a seasonal lifeguard service in the UK and Channel Islands, an on-demand flood rescue service in the UK and have an international team who work with global leaders, public health organisations and at-risk communities in several countries. We have a mix of full-time staff based at our support and training centre in Poole, Dorset, and around the United Kingdom and Ireland, as well as a large number of volunteers who are key to delivering our service.

We are structured in relation to governing, delivering, and supporting the operational search and rescue and drowning prevention services we provide.

Governance structure and Departments:

RNLI Governors elect the Council. The Council appoint the Trustees and advise and assist their work. The Trustees oversee and shape the work of the CEO and the Executive Team.

Empowerment of the regions has continued through increasing both fundraising and lifesaving resources and decision making closer to the communities where we operate.

Lifesaving Operations is made up of our frontline operational teams, both staff and volunteers who provide a 24/7 search and rescue lifeboat service around the UK and Ireland and a seasonal Lifeguard service.

The Engineering and Supply Department designs, builds, supplies, and supports the maintenance of the RNLI's boats, buildings, and equipment. In addition, it includes the Procurement, Logistics and Supply Chain Management functions as well as Sustainability for all departments.

Insights, Technology and Strategy includes Data, Evidence and Insights, IT and Digital Teams and facilitates the longer-term strategy development of the organisation.

Finance, Planning, and Improvement includes Financial Planning and Governance, Continuous Improvement, Business Planning and Programmes and the Legal team.

Fundraising, Marketing and Media manage activity to create income and raise the awareness of the RNLI, alongside looking after supporters and fundraisers.

People Department control the human resources and skills development functions for all staff and volunteers.

International work in partnership with lifesaving organisations around the world to raise awareness, reduce drowning and to advocate drowning prevention.

The RNLI has a varied supply chain and broad supplier base. We procure materials, services and equipment to enable the construction of high-tech lifeboats at our

manufacturing centres in Poole, Dorset and in East Cowes on the Isle of Wight. In addition, we buy and distribute lifesaving equipment, vehicles, personal protective equipment (PPE) and clothing to our Lifeguards on 240 beaches, volunteer crews and staff at 238 lifeboat stations, 6 regional bases and a number of support centres. We operate a number of shops retailing new RNLI merchandise and supply RNLI branded materials to our fundraising and education teams throughout the UK and Ireland. At our RNLI Support Centre in Poole, we have a training centre with accommodation and catering, alongside traditional office functions, warehousing, and logistics.

RNLI contracts include up-to-date clauses on modern slavery and human trafficking to ensure that our suppliers are aware of their obligations. We undertake due diligence in our supply chain tenders and as part of our corporate partnerships, associations with other organisations and international work. This due diligence includes assurance that modern slavery is not present. We are continuing to develop our supplier processes and procedures to make it easier to capture, analyse and manage data from suppliers, covering their ethical, environmental, and social practices.

Our Supplier Code of Conduct, sets out the RNLI's minimum expectations of suppliers regarding business ethics, working conditions and human rights. Through this Code, we seek to ensure that all our suppliers share our values and take a zero-tolerance approach to modern slavery. A core expectation in our selection process is that suppliers sign up to our Code, and through the introduction of a new contract management system we will be able to identify and engage further with those suppliers that have yet to signal their acceptance.

We have a Compliance Management Framework, which seeks to assure adherence to our compliance obligations. We also have a Safeguarding Policy and a Raising Organisational Concerns (Whistleblowing) Procedure.

We have a clear set of values - selfless, courageous, trustworthy, and dependable – which underpin our ethical position and the behaviours that are expected of all our volunteers and staff. This ethos is carried through into *Our Watch 2020-24*, our policies, and the way we interact with partners, suppliers, supporters, and the public.

In 2025 we will expand our supplier due diligence program to identify and mitigate modern slavery risks, particularly in sectors and countries where slavery is more prevalent. Key suppliers will be reviewed for compliance with our Supplier Code of Conduct, and our contract management system will be aligned to track adherence to modern slavery clauses across our supply chain.

Doug Sheppard, Head of Procurement, Warehouse & Logistics, on behalf of the RNLI Executive Team.