

GMB to represent 1000s of coastguards after landmark deal



GMB Union will represent thousands of coastguards after [signing an historic deal with the Maritime and Coastguard Agency \(MCA\)](#).

The agreement was reached this week after months of negotiations.

Now the union will negotiate on behalf of around 3,000 coastguards for pay, terms and conditions.

Coastguard Rescue Officers (CROs) carry out rescues and search for missing people around the UK's coast, including Scotland, Wales and England's south coast.

CROs are now classified as workers, rather than volunteers, after GMB won a landmark worker status case in 2024.



Nicola Savage, GMB National Officer, said:

"This is a historic deal; for the first time our life saving Coastguard Rescue Officers (CROs) will have a genuine voice to fight their corner.

"In the face of adversity, these CROs have forged something positive that will improve all their lives.

"It just goes to show what workers can accomplish when they stick together.

Virginia McVea, Chief Executive of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, said:

"This agreement marks an important milestone in our relationship with GMB and reflects our shared commitment to constructive engagement and meaningful dialogue. MCA values the role trade unions play in representing and supporting Coastguard Rescue Officers in the vital contribution they make to helping save lives, assist those in distress and protect communities around the UK's coastline.

"The Recognition Agreement sets out how we will work together on matters affecting those covered by the agreement, helping to ensure their views are represented while supporting the continued delivery of a professional and effective Coastguard Rescue Service."

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