



# SEARCH AND RESCUE DOG ASSOCIATION IRELAND NORTH ANNUAL REPORT 23/24

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# 1 : Chair Report 2024

As Chair, I wish to pay tribute to the following members for their unstinting support of SARDA IN:

**Raph** – TO- who has driven up search dog standards and through his expertise and energy has been instrumental in raising our qualified dog's number to 12 with 5 more in training. He has

- secured SARDA IN place on the international stage with our USAR dogs and their acceptance by SARAID, the lead international voluntary USAR team in the UK.
- consolidated our position within NIFRS SRT
- been instrumental in our being invited to participate in a UK wide search dog consortium as proposed by SARDA Scotland
- secured additional funding for radios.
- been a lead contact with Waddell Productions in securing suitable film coverage for their proposed BBC project highlighting SARDA IN.
- being a lead in securing mountain skills training for members.

**Clair** – PR – for an amazing job in extending public awareness of SARDA IN through social media and elsewhere including:

- brokering all dealings with Waddell Productions which have sometimes been challenging.
- constantly updating or social media platforms and ultimately securing a 9.5k following.
- Continuing to negotiate with Easy Jet to secure in cabin transportation rights for our USAR dogs if called on to deploy internationally.
- Helping to secure several free passages by Stena Line for our dogs, handlers and vehicles to attend training events in the UK.
- Helping Kamil to secure additional fundings for SARDA IN.

**Davy** – Secretary/EO – for:

- his extensive work in ensuring the credibility of SARDA IN search dogs is maintained and developed in N Ireland and further afield, challenging as required and where necessary.
- his unstinting efforts to secure the best deals when ordering equipment for SARDA IN to enhance our public image when attending callouts or other public engagements.
- his work in being the front for all communications with public bodies.
- helping to set up an improved callout system.

**Dugald** – Treasurer for:

- his untiring efforts in securing compliance and accountability of SARDA IN accounts
- guiding our spending aspirations
- promptly responding when asked to settle bills.
- negotiation with DOJ on our behalf on matters pertaining to finance applications.

**Kamil** – Fund raiser for:

- organising flag/collection days
- fund raising events which are in addition to the above.
- the website design and improvement scheme

**Stevie Synott** - First Aid lead – for conducting and assessing our REC 3 courses and for advising and securing additional first aid supplies.

I would also pay tribute to

**Trustees, Kate, Trevor, and Gerry** for their enthusiastic support as Trustees of SARDA IN and throwing in wise counsel during our meetings.

**Rosie** for taking responsibility for our vehicle maintenance and compliance.

**David Gamble** for fixing the floor of the container and installing shelving.

**John McGibbon** for tidying and repainting the two container fronts at TNOEC.

**Michael McCamley** for organising our USAR training venue at the Bank Newry.

**All our wonderful volunteer bodies** for their time to help us train our dogs.

**Our dedicated team of handlers and dogs** who are the reason for us existing and who frequently respond to callouts at all hours when tasked to do so by the PSNI.

Thank you for allowing me to occupy the role as Chair of SARDA IN which has truly been a privilege and a joy.

**Neil Powell**

**Chairman SARDA IN**      24/05/2024

## **2 : Secretary Report**

Voluntary organisations like SARDA IN do not just exist, there is a team of committed and dedicated people who work very hard behind the scenes to ensure we grow, develop and maintain the high standards which we are rightly recognised for by the PSNI, NIFRS and other VSAR groups. From “bodies” to Trustees everyone plays an important role, so thank you **ALL**.

Over the last 12 months some of what we have achieved is detailed below.

Updated policies and procedures (ongoing), updated our Constitution, created several sardain@gmail email addresses with branding, arranged blue light training, completed licence checks, monthly Trustee meetings and minutes, updated the Charity Commission, successfully applied for a 2 year UKSAR training grant ( this is funding our 1<sup>st</sup> aid training and Mountain Skills training), setup contactless payment system for fundraising, arranged boat permits, Access NI, held negotiations with Media organisations about filming protocols.

These are just some examples of the administrative works undertaken and is by no means exhaustive, alongside this there are the regular reports submitted to DoJ/NISAR and communications with many external agencies.

A large part of this role this year has been devoted to ensuring all SAR dog groups maintain the high standard we have set; this work is ongoing, and I would like to thank the Trustee's for their support in this pursuit.

**Davy Fraser**

**Secretary SARDA IN**

# 3 : Treasurer Report

## Search And Rescue Dogs Association Ireland North    Treasurer's Report 2024

Date Range:    1 April 2023 - 31 March 2024

Opening Balance	18,759.58	Expenditure	42,456.62
Closing Balance	33,151.02	Income	56,848.06
Difference	14,391.44	Difference	14,391.44

Item	INCOME
Donations <sup>1</sup>	38,279.98
Social media <sup>2</sup>	2,054.79
Award from Halifax Foundation <sup>3</sup>	9,350.00
Dept of Justice payments <sup>4</sup>	9,163.29
Total	56,848.06
Item	EXPENDITURE
Fuel and other vehicle costs <sup>5</sup>	9,054.59
Equipment/Health and Safety <sup>6</sup>	17,185.40
Training and Assessment <sup>7</sup>	3,218.45
Administration <sup>8</sup>	9,054.59
Reserve accounts <sup>9</sup>	10,000.00
Total	42,456.62

Dugald McCullough, Treasurer  
May 2024

<sup>1</sup> Includes donations by individuals, families and organisations, membership donations and street collections.

<sup>2</sup> Income from Amazon/Facebook/Paypal websites

<sup>3</sup> Grant for hi-spec Simoco radios

<sup>4</sup> The Department of Justice NISAR funding scheme covers 100% of agreed outlays in relation to some training, administration, health and safety equipment, and response vehicle costs.

<sup>5</sup> Includes costs of vehicle MOTs, repairs and recurrent fuel costs (mostly repaid by DoJ, as per note 4)

<sup>6</sup> Includes range of protective clothing, radio equipment; drone; and vet bills

<sup>7</sup> Includes training in partnership with SARDA Scotland, and training overseas for international deployment.

<sup>8</sup> Includes postage, stationery, insurance, accountancy, printing, fundraising materials, zoom, and IRO membership fees

<sup>9</sup> Two reserve accounts created: £5,000 Business Reserve Account; £5,000 International Deployment Account

## 4 : Training Officer Report

### ***Current Qualified Search Dogs:***

4 x USAR search dogs – Floss, Bodhi, Buzz and Meg

5 x Mountain search dogs–Floss, Tess, Bodhi, Dexter & Bella

3 x Cadaver- Nelly, Bee & Luna

2 x Trailing-Magnus & Fen

**TOTAL OF 12 Search dogs**

*We currently have six trainee search dogs:*

**Trailing** -Boriche, Harley, Nova.

**Mountain-** Lyra & Buttercup. **USAR-**Boriche.

**Cadaver-**Rosie

### **Update**

The monthly training calendar for 2023/24 was planned with numerous joint training events planned and all delivered as scheduled in the past 12 months. Our training schedule this year had a concerted effort to ensure new trainees dogs/handler build on all our success and develop skills to ensure every dog is operationally robust.

We completed USAR search dog joint Multi agency exercises with SARDA IN & SARAID and @Fire (German USAR Team) September in Paris

Over 50 emergency personnel and helpers as well as nine rescue dogs from Germany and Great Britain have demonstrated their skills as an international search and rescue team near Paris in the past few days. The result: 13 people were rescued from the rubble.

On Wednesday afternoon, the fictitious country of Lutetia was shaken by a severe earthquake measuring 7.2 on the Richter scale, causing considerable destruction to buildings and infrastructure. Due to the strength of the quake, hundreds of dead and missing persons are reported.



Following the request for assistance from Lutetia on Wednesday evening, SARDA IN immediately mobilised its USAR Search dogs x 3 team to conduct its annual search and rescue exercise. The sister organisation SARAID & @Fire also deployed its USAR team, at the exercise site in Villejust, southwest of Paris.

Other joint exercises occurred with CSR and NIF&RS with specific search dog training exercises at Belfast and Lisburn. And joint operations continue other search Teams on all 'call outs' we attend.

We have agreed a new MOU with SARAID (International USAR volunteer Team) to ensure deployment Internationally with our USAR search dogs. We are looking at a time later this year to sign the agreement.

### **2023-24 Total Callout is 33.**

Completed Training events 23/24.

- 8 x members completed their REC3 First aid training.
- 4 new trainee commenced official SARDA training with their dogs having all completed their canine obedience/stock test.
- New members and new bodies are working to complete the navigation course TNOC in Sept.
- 2 Assessors attend the SARDA Scotland Assessment in April
- A new training schedule focus on different disciplines each month and all handlers are reminding again to complete logbooks between training sessions.

**Successes:** We received funding from the Halifax Foundation totalling £10K for new GPS Radios for handlers and Vehicles.

#### **Summary:**

We continue to give a big thank to our bodies who continue attend training in all weathers, without your support the training of search dogs could not continue to be successful.

Internationally we continue with our partnerships with SARAID UK which have positioned us in a strong place to attend International USAR responses worldwide. A matrix has been completed for all members training progression and search dog training to ensure accountability and accurate record keeping of progression. SARDA IN is in a very strong position with our qualified search dogs, and we wish to ensure this progression continues in the future.

**Raph O' Connor**  
**Training Officer 21.5.24**

## 5 : Comms/P.R. Officer Report

### Callouts

2023	2024
29 <sup>th</sup> May – PSNI misper Magherafelt	7 <sup>th</sup> Jan – PSNI Misper Mid Ulster
4 <sup>th</sup> June – PSNI misper Craigavon	17 <sup>th</sup> Jan – PSNI Misper Belfast
8 <sup>th</sup> June – PSNI misper Malone Road Belfast	4 <sup>th</sup> March – PSNI Misper Strabane
14 <sup>th</sup> June – PSNI misper Portadown – found by PSNI Dog	6 <sup>th</sup> March – PSNI Misper Lisburn
9.7.23, 10.7.23, 11.7.23 & 12.7.23 deployed by the Gardaí to assist the Sligo Leitrim Mountain Rescue Team and NWMRT - Misper in Sligo.	10 <sup>th</sup> March – Redeployed Lisburn
15.7.23 Deployed by Police Causeway Coast & Glens, to assist the CRS and PSNI Air Support for Misper Ballymena. Misper located safe and well.	17 <sup>th</sup> March – redeployed PSNI Misper Lisburn
18.8.23 Tasked by the PSNI Derry City and Strabane for Misper last seen at 02:00 on the 17.8.23. Multiagency response with CRS, Foyle S&R and PSNI.	1 <sup>st</sup> April – Redeployed to misper Lisburn
23.8.23 PSNI for Misper Mid Ulster. Misper located safe and well.	2 <sup>nd</sup> April – PSNI missing teenager Randalstown
11.9.23 <a href="#">Police Newry, Mourne &amp; Down</a> misper Newcastle area. At around 21:00 the misper contacted a friend and as a result was found safe and well.	20 <sup>th</sup> April – PSNI Misper Murlough Beach
12.9.23 PSNI and stood down as a body had been located.	<b>Total = 33</b>
22.9.23 PSNI for a misper Carrickfergus. Stood down prior to arrival as the misper located.	
3.10.23 PSNI for Misper last seen at approx. 21:45 on 2.10.23. Missing person located safe and well.	
24.10.23 <a href="#">Police Newry, Mourne &amp; Down</a> for misper walker in the Mourne Mountains last night.	

2023	2024
27.10.23 <a href="#">Police Derry City &amp; Strabane</a> for Misper in the <a href="#">Derry/Londonderry</a> . Search resumed again on 28.10.23 with CRS, Foyle S&R and the PSNI.	
6.11.23 Redeployed, with <a href="#">Police Derry City &amp; Strabane</a> , <a href="#">Community Rescue Service Belfast District</a> and <a href="#">Foyle Search and Rescue</a> .	
6.12.23 <a href="#">Police Fermanagh &amp; Omagh</a> for Misper . Misper presented himself to hospital.	
16.12.23 <a href="#">Mourne Mountain Rescue Team</a> and <a href="#">Police Newry, Mourne &amp; Down</a> Misper in the Mourne. Located by MR dog safe and well.	
19.12.23 <a href="#">Police Derry City &amp; Strabane</a> for Misper in the <a href="#">Strabane</a> area with CRS. After several hours of searching, our Dog Teams have stood down for the night.	
25.12.23 Police Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon, for Misper in the Armagh area. They were located safe and well a short time later.	
29.12.23 Police Antrim & Newtownabbey ongoing search for a Misper in Antrim area alongside <a href="#">Lough Neagh Rescue</a> , <a href="#">Police Antrim &amp; Newtownabbey</a> and CRS. Stood down at approximately 18:00.	
30.12.23 <a href="#">Police Lisburn &amp; Castlereagh</a> to assist in a search for a high risk misper in the <a href="#">Lisburn</a> area.	

## **Donations/Sponsorship**

<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>
17 <sup>th</sup> June – Photos at Training Day by Colin King for new website	Communications via email continue with EasyJet & the CAA re: free UK flights in the event of an International Disaster – awaiting formal agreement
Donegal Assoc Dublin (Kevin Mc Fadden) 2500 euro received.	Continue to tag Stenaline for any free sailings to the mainland/Scotland for joint training
Fr John Joe Creeslough – 1500 euro received.	8 <sup>th</sup> Jan – 3000 euro Snugborough ‘Cars & Coffee’
John Mc Gee Ironday Challenge - 2000 euro received.	12 <sup>th</sup> Jan – Coffee morning Credit Union Carnglen £250
	6 <sup>th</sup> Feb - £100 Girls Brigade Hazelbank
	1 <sup>st</sup> March - KB Dog Services donation
	10 <sup>th</sup> March – Matthew Mc Callan Tractor Run (2 <sup>nd</sup> year) – still awaiting donation lodgement **NO replies from emails sent to Peter Mc Callan on 23 <sup>rd</sup> April & 15 <sup>th</sup> May**
	11 <sup>th</sup> April – refurbished HP laptop donated by the Halifax
	30 <sup>th</sup> April – Newcastle Street Collection £1032.34
	6 <sup>th</sup> May – TNOC meet up with the Halifax Foundation trustees – donation £10,000

## Events/Publicity

2023	2024
29 <sup>th</sup> May – Connor Phillips Show – live broadcast from Newcastle with Demo from Floss	8 <sup>th</sup> Jan - Emma Patterson UTV filming completed – will be televised June/July
21 <sup>st</sup> June – Equinox Joint Training (NIFRS) exercise Chorley (Raph & Trevor)	21 <sup>st</sup> Feb - NIAS Retired Personnel AGM Tullyglass Hotel – publicity only
23 <sup>rd</sup> -25 <sup>th</sup> June – USAR, Cadaver & Trailing Dog Assessment weekend for SARDA IN	Cadaver dogs Nelly & Bee filmed as part of the 'Six Silent Killings' Sky Documentary 2 part series and released **24 <sup>th</sup> March - Won the RTS Ireland Awards 2024 for best 'factual series' in April**
16 <sup>th</sup> July – Pooches in the Park event (Trevor & Davy)	The Repair Shop filming part 1 completed in May '24 – part 2 to be filmed in June/July '24 (MR Dog Pepper)
10 <sup>th</sup> Aug – Initial communication from Ally Thompson (BBC Pets Saving Lives')	SARDA IN free advertisement in the Ballymena RFC Women's Rugby Section's 7 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary book
26 <sup>th</sup> August – Newcastle Harbour Family Fun Day	24 <sup>th</sup> May – Mackle Petfood's 'Grocers' Ball 2024' @ The Culloden Hotel – for their free sponsorship of SARDA IN Search Dogs
3 <sup>rd</sup> Sept – Bright Eyes Animal Sanctuary	Changes to be made to the DOJ NISAR and Community NI websites re: SARDA IN (Inaccurate info)
11 <sup>th</sup> Sept – Retired Healthcare Group Talk (£50 donation)	Website work ongoing with KW
15 <sup>th</sup> Sept - Article in Derry Journal arranged with Neil & Davy (printed 15/9/23)	Facebook Followers – 9542 Instagram - 441 X - 438
21 <sup>st</sup> Sept – Stenaline free UK travel began and continue to tag them on any journeys	
'Bee' appeared on BBC 'Expert Witness' S3 E10 –Invoiced 'Five Mile Films Ltd', 104.39	
Continuing to tag Naturo Natural Pet Food, Quay Dog & The Animal Physio in social media posts	

<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>
6 <sup>th</sup> Oct – USAR training @ NI College Fire Service Training Facility and photos with Aidan Jennings	
7 <sup>th</sup> Oct – Attended 1 <sup>st</sup> anniversary of the Creeslough Tragedy	
7 <sup>th</sup> Oct – Ballymena Tesco door Collection £776.50	
22 <sup>nd</sup> Oct – Cars & Coffee fundraiser in aid of Leona Harper	
24-28 <sup>th</sup> Oct – Joint USAR training SARAID UK	
28 <sup>th</sup> Oct – USPCA Halloween Howler Fun Day, Newry	
All qualified dogs & handlers photographs completed by Johnny Sterritt for website and social media usage	
25 <sup>th</sup> Nov – Critical Care Seminar – PR only	
Communication continues with EasyJet re: free UK connecting flights in the event of an International Disaster	

## 6 : Fundraising Officer Report

### Door collections / Donations

Location	Date	Funds Raised
Tesco Newcastle	August 2023	£1108.40
Retired healthcare group	September 2023	£200
John McGee Ironday Challenge	September 2023	£2000
Donegal Association Dublin	September 2023	€2500
Tesco Ballymena	October 2023	£776.50
Creelough Community Association	October 2023	€1500
Offset IRL Cars and coffee	October 2023	€1376
Declan Patton Seven Sevens challenge	November 2023	£540
Belfast Street Collection	December 2023	£4372
Harper Family, Leonas song	January 2024	€3000
Carn Glen Credit Union	January 2024	£250.00
Hazelbank School Ballymena	February 2024	£100.00
Newcastle collection	March 2024	£1032.34
Tesco Newcastle	March 2024	5 dog life jackets

**Total**

**£18,755.24**

## **Funds Raised Through Website**

£904.68

Website Completion & Launch September 2024

## **Promotional Events**

Pooches in the park Rainbow Rehoming Derry/LondonDerry July 2023 Newcastle

Harbour Festival August 2023

Bright eyes Animal Sanctuary September 2023

USPCA Newry October 2023

Critical Care Symposium November 2023 NIAS

Retired Personnel February 2024

## **Upcoming Events**

Tesco Dungannon Collection 15.06.24 Newcastle

Street Collection 06.07.24 Clonmany Agricultural

Show 07.08.24

Tesco Craigavon Collection 28.09.24

Website Completion & Launch Belfast

Street Collection 28.12.24 Kirton Boys

Brigade TBC

Balmoral Show 2025 TBC

## **7 : Equipment Officer Report**

During the past 12 months, we have sourced various pieces of equipment to support our SAR functions.

**USAR (Urban Search & Rescue) :** During our training with SARAID the requirement to be “deployment” ready was reinforced into our planning. We have sourced the following equipment to ensure we are ready to deploy within 24/48hrs should an international request for assistance be made.

Wheeled transport containers for mobilising a team of up to 4 members with dogs with tents, freeze dried food (4 x 7 days supply), stove, water purification, walkie talkies, heli and canine heli harnesses and all necessary equipment.

**Comms :** Halifax grant successful resulting in the ordering of Simoco radio system (new mobile radios in all vehicles and new handhelds). The aim is to remove the various radios we presently operate with and have Simoco product across the team.

**Clothing :** New molle style HV search jackets for handlers, Keela Belay jacket with team logos etc... on order, ME jackets/trousers on order for long serving bodies, trial lightweight drysuit received for DV work, various trial USAR clothing ordered and on test.

**GPS :** System setup to utilise Etrex GPS units

**VOIP:** New callout system introduced using a cloud-based phone system. Tasking authorities now have just have to dial one number and all qualified dog handlers' mobiles will ring simultaneously. This option greatly reduces the pressure and workload on Callout Officers and provides reassurance to the PSNI, etc...

**Fundraising:** Sumup contactless card readers

Finally, a thank you to Rosie for assuming the responsibility for all our vehicles (servicing, MOT's, etc...)

**Davy Fraser E.O.**