

IRISH FIREFIGHTERS RISE TO WORLD RESCUE CHALLENGE

CARLOW FIRE & RESCUE TEAM FINISHED SECOND OVERALL AT THIS YEAR'S WORLD RESCUE CHALLENGE IN ENGLAND, WHILE FIRE RESCUE TEAMS FROM MEATH, LAOIS AND WICKLOW FINISHED IN THE TOP TEN, WHICH WAS THE BEST OVERALL PERFORMANCE BY IRISH TEAMS AT THIS EVENT TO DATE, WRITES PÁDRAIG Ó LONGAIGH, SECRETARY OF THE RESCUE ORGANISATION IRELAND.

Irish firefighters performed very well at the World Rescue Challenge (WRC) 2014 at the Fire Service College, Moreton-in-Marsh, England on 9-12 October, which gathered 55 teams from 24 different countries around the world – Europe, Australia, North America, South America and Africa.

Rescue Organisation Ireland (ROI) teams from Meath, Carlow, Laois and Wicklow all performed brilliantly, at the event with each fire crew finishing in the top ten. Carlow came second overall.

The event consisted of two separate challenges, the 'Rescue Challenge' and the 'Trauma Challenge'. The aim of the challenges is to expand the know-how for fire and rescue services personnel when dealing with people in accident and emergency situations.

The 'Rescue Challenge' comprises six-person firefighter teams rescuing casualties (played by medical students) from cars involved in road traffic collision scenarios. The teams are assessed by international assessors during the three-



Irish team members finished in the top ten at the World Rescue Challenge 2014 at the Fire Service College, Moreton-in-Marsh, UK on 9-12 October.



Members of the Carlow Team who came second overall in WRC 2014 – pictured (l-r): Anthony Kirwan, Alan Owens, John Comerford IC, Andrew Fisher, Paul Curran and Darren Somers.

day even – every team must undertake a different scenario each day.

'Rapid' is a one-casualty 10-minute scenario; 'Limited' is a one-casualty 20-minute scenario (but with limited tools available, such as no hydraulics tools or pumps); while 'Complex' is a 30-minute two-casualty scenario, in which one casualty is 'time critical' and has to be safely extricated ideally within the first 10 minutes.

The 'Trauma Challenge' gives a team of two medically-trained firefighters different scenarios such as serious domestic, industrial or workplace emergency incidents. These include a nasty fall, fire burns, electrocution or accidents involving machinery, with all incidents involving one or two casualties.

The team has a 10-minute window in which to fully examine and treat the casualties and were again assessed to specific evaluation criteria by international assessors.

BEST PERFORMANCE TO DATE

Meath Rescue Team came second in the 'Complex' scenario, Carlow came joint first overall (second on a count-back), while the Wicklow Trauma Team finished in sixth spot overall, a very credible performance at their first world event.

ROI teams have been taking part in this annual event for the past number of years and this was the best overall performance to date. It reflects the great efforts of the firefighters who trained for this event, mainly in their own time and shows their dedication when it comes to dealing with emergencies on our roads, in our homes and in our workplaces.

In addition to the Irish teams who competed, ROI assessors Mick Gahan, Declan Cassidy and Bill Denny were also WRC 2014 assessors.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY FOR 2015:

- National RTC/Trauma Challenge takes place in Cork on Saturday 18 April, 2015.
- The 17th World Rescue Challenge takes place in Lisbon on 14-18 October 2015.

For more information email Pádraig Ó Longaigh at polongaigh@meathcoco.ie or visit www.rescue-org-ireland.com

