

A short-wave radio operator's account of a transmission between two search and rescue aircraft on the day a fire broke out on HMCS Chicoutimi obtained by CBC News.

05/10/04 TUE

5.680

17.04 Kinloss warship Montrose e/r to incident, [tug mentioned]. maintaining listening watch. Montrose then called Anglian Prince [kinloss then told Montrose Anglian Prince will not be on this net and to try 303???)

17.54 Kinloss R51 ask if any steerage and are they water tight. inform them R177 is e/r

18.04 Kinloss R51 our eta on scene min 45

18.52 Kin R51 position 5526.2n 91114.5w time 13.15Z no drift rate, surface 293 at 23 knots, we have located vessel and they have requested R177 bring more oxygen

18.57 kin R177 R51 is in contact with vessel now and requesting you drop spare oxygen, your oxygen pick is Aldergrove. we have 5 bottles will that be sufficient stand by. they will need more

19.02 kin R177 do you have Hf and VHF radios on board. we have a clandestine radio station transmitting, they will clear in 5 mins, can you swop 3.945

3.945 -----

19.05 kin R177 understand you have radios on board. go back to 5.680 in 5 mins

5.680 -----

19.11 kin R51 sit-rep from 18.00z A position 5517.2n 01110.4w vessel dead in water B they have 9 casualties 2 serious. they have 10 fully charged VHF radios

19.14 kin R177 intend to land on and keep rotors running due to poor vis. negative, go direct to scene to pick up 2 serious casualties, R122 will pick up oxygen. R177 confirm our tasking is to proceed direct to scene and pick up the 2 serious casualties .confirm

19.19 kin R51 R177 is e/r to Donegal eta 20.00 then out to pick up the 2 serious casualties

19.20 kin R177 req R177 find out if casualties are in stretchers, course of vessel, size of swell and motion of vessel

19.23 kin R51 we require confirmation that 2 casualties require airlifting to hospital as we are getting conflicting information from the commander in chief that the 2 casualties do not require evacuation

19.30 kin R51 from the C O of vessel, all casualties suffering from smoke inhalation. 7 are fully recovered, the 2 serious casualties are returning to normal, the C O does not wish any casualties to be airlifted off , he is happy for them to stay on vessel, and he does not need any more oxygen

19.35 kin R51 request you ask the C O what the current requirement is for R177

19.36 kin R51 vessel requires no assistance from R177

19.37 kin R122 no requirement for you to pick up oxygen

20.00 kin R51 req latest position of vessel and wx. position 5514.4n 01111.0w. wx currently , vis 5nm. cloud base 1000ft. wave height 5 m. sea state 6. wind 260 35knots. drift of vessel south south west at 2 knots

20.13 kin R177 landing Donegal

20.19 kin R51 vessel has had a second fire in his W S C compartment, fire now reported as extinguished no casualties.

20.24 kin R51 1 merchant vessel the Sulstis 2 in the vicinity

20.32 kin R51 Malin Head C/G has confirmed they have asked the Sulstis 2 to remain on scene until the warship arrives, eta 06.30z, 2nd fishing vessel Western Endeavour has also been tasked to the scene eta 22.15z

20.37 kin R11 [sea king?] lifted from floating c/s at Stornaway

20.56 kin R11 message from your C O you are now have clearance to operate ??????? SFI 04 04 although ADS no RIPS allowed, be advised R122 is also night stopping at Ballykelly

21.01 kin R51 preparing R52 to replace you. launch will be 23.45z

21.32 kin R51 change 3.023

3.023 -----

22.10 kin R51 position report 5511.1n 01113.1 w drifting 180 2 knots

22.18 kin R11 req freqs for Aldergrove. 120.900 / 241.825 / ATC 128.500

22.32 kin R11 now on finals to Aldergrove

22.35 kin R11 cant contact Aldergrove, cant see any where open. contact K3U. how many pob. 7 pob no 8 pob.

22.39 kin R11 Aldergrove are now aware you are landing

22.46 kin R11 can you contact Ballykelly by land line, we only have 2 kilos of fuel left, we have tried all freqs but cant contact them

22.48 kin R51 req you call MKL on ARCN 111 [3.936] they have RATT

message for you.

23.08 kin R51 relay to Northwood i am not able to read their RATT .

23.10 kin R51 req freq for handover for R52 282.800. position 5508.8n 01113.7w drift 190 2 knots

23.10 kin R51 i have a long message to send to Northwood from C O .para A no electric systems, battery only.para B HPA pressure 205. para C no estimate of battery life. para D ??? in spec. para E ??? BA equipment. para F no steerage or hydraulics at all. para G sub fully buoyant and water tight. H persons on board 57. para I sub has 10 fully charged VHF radios.

para J immediately prior to fire crew was conducting VP search and it was during fault finding that the fire occurred, all electric equipment was isolated and C O will not turn it back on until additional fire fighting equipment has been delivered to vessel.message complete.

23.20? [that much info being passed now i lost track of time trying to keeping up with logging] kin R51 flash 05 21 04 z from HUJ to R51 information to be relayed to HMCS Chicoutimi all rescue forces e/r R51 was then told it will be in 3 columns

assets position eta HMS Montrose Faslane 06.04 00z HMS Marlborough SCXA ? 06.16 00z RFA wave Knight Shetland 06.11 00z Anglian Prince Stornaway 05.22 00z

technical and medical support embarked in HMS montrose. Montrose will assume on scene commander on arrival

23.45 ? kin R51 [lots of technical questions now asked of sub about damage and reconnecting electric circuits]

00.02 kin R51 position 5507.0n 01113.9w drifting 190 02knots timed 23.00z

00.17 kin R51 relay flash from R51 to 8UJ captains cabin completely destroyed, electrical circuits completely destroyed, this was a very serious fire, unable to salvage many circuits, most circuits have been isolated and made safe, reconnecting electric circuits increases risk of fire .

06/10/04 WED

5.680 -----

09.16 kin R52 we have the answers to the technical questions the submarine was asked, the answers run to 4 pages so we will hand them over when we land

09.24 kin R53 update on HMCS Chicoutimi, position 5448.7n 01117.6w drifting 200 speed 2knots, we are now in good comms with 7PB they have 60nm to run

13.18 kin Montrose now on scene commander priority is oxygen for 1 casualty who seems to be serious

13.42 7PB [montrose] I6B [Argus] my unit trying to call you on ???

13.59 kin Navy 812 sea king from Culdrose e/r Ballykelly eta 15.30 11 pob

14.00 Montrose Marlborough our eta 21.00

14.13 kin Montrose position 4540.n 01116w wind 330 25knots, have sea boat in vicinity, attempting to embark medical officer, believe 1 of the casualties requires assistance. Wave Knight due on scene 15 mins

14.22 Montrose Argus request 1 to 1 with your medical officer. my medical officer is on board sub.do you require any medical equipment flown to you.
negative

14.48 kin Montrose message from Argus a helo from Argus will pick up electrical cable from Barrow, eta 18.30

16.36 kin Montrose 3 casualties need to be taken ashore for medical care, our medical officer has completed checks and believes 3 casualties are deteriorating and need to be taken off.

16.42 kin R11 is a/b from Prestwick with stores. eta on scene 19.30, can you get assessment from Montrose or Wave Knight about deck landing

17.08 kin R177 e/r scene 3 casualties require to be taken off

17.09 kin Montrose R177 is a/b and requests position n5434.6 w01114.7

17.23 Montrose R177 all 3 casualties mobile suffering from smoke inhalation

17.40 kin R177 the normal landing site at Londonderry is closed, they are using an alternate at the bottom of the hill

17.45 R177 Montrose needs casualties to be in survival gear and hard hats

17.51 Montrose R177 all 3 casualties will be in survival equipment but do not have hard hats can you supply them. affirmative, request uniform or victor freq to talk to sub on. contact sub on ch16

18.05 kin Montrose is Anglian tug on scene. negative. do you have comms with him and eta. believe eta is 18.30L

18.18 kin R177 now on scene

18.25 kin R11 a/b from Donegal e/r scene of action, time on scene 19.55 with 45min on scene

18.37 kin R11 revised time on task 35 min, request the option to refuel on wave knight if necessary

19.03 Wave Knight R11 understand your task is to disembark your stores, which is a sub harness the refuel and rtb. we also have a ??? man from prestwick on board who is to go to montrose.

19.06 Montrose R11 as our deck is out of limits due to pitch and roll. we did not intend to land on but to winch. happy for you to winch, monitoring 282.800

19.12 kin R177 have 1 unconscious casualty. go to Sligo. need ambulance to meet us.

19.19 kin R177 3 casualties on board 1 serious we need blue light ambulance to meet us. Malin Head C/G is arranging your ambulance.

19.43 kin R177 3 mins to run

20.24 kin R11 now launched from Wave Knight