



New Child Protection Guidelines launched by
ORDER OF MALTA AMBULANCE CORPS

Saturday, 18th October 2003

The Order of Malta Ambulance Corp, Ireland's largest voluntary first-aid and ambulance organisation has today launched new Child Protection Guidelines at its General Assembly in Ballina, Co. Mayo. The Guidelines address some of the major challenges facing youth organisations and in particular they deal with important and sensitive issues concerning child protection.

The guidelines offer a comprehensive framework to assist the Ambulance Corps Voluntary Leaders should issues of concern arise. They are intended to give practical and straightforward advice to Leaders at all levels. The Director of the Ambulance Corps, Commander Peadar Ward KM, stated that **“the guidelines will educate judgement so that whilst hasty or ill considered action will be discouraged, decisive action can be assured after leaders have followed clear procedures”**. He went on to say that **“the guidelines give step-by-step guidance on how to handle sensitive areas and the process of reporting suspected or actual child abuse to the appropriate authorities”**.

As the Order of Malta is a 32-county organisation the regulations reflect legislative requirements within both jurisdictions on the island.

During the course of the Ambulance's General assembly in Ballina Commander Ward will thank the members for **“the 10,000 hours plus which the organisation's volunteers worked in providing First Aid and Ambulance services to the Special Olympic World Games”**. This was in addition to the members work during the host town programme in the period prior to the Games.

BACKGROUND NOTE

The Order of Malta Ambulance Corps was founded in 1938 and owes its origin to the 900-year-old Knights of Malta. It is the largest voluntary aid society in Ireland, providing first aid, ambulance and community care, with more than 130 ambulances located in over 80 communities throughout the 32 counties. It also has an active Cadet (youth) section.

Should anyone be interested with the work or with funding, the Order of Malta Ambulance Corps can be contacted locally or through their web site at www.orderofmalta.ie.

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