Written Question

Sarah Wollaston (Totnes, Conservative)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many rescue boats operating in the UK are not operated by the Royal National Lifeboat Institution but have the Maritime and Coastguard Agency as their launching authority.

Michael Penning (Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Roads & Motoring) Transport)

Independent lifeboats are rescue boats which are declared facilities according to a specific standard or set criteria as agreed with the MCA.

There are 52 independent lifeboats in the UK that are declared for Search and Rescue (SAR) to the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA). The MCA will request their attendance for search and rescue purposes as part of its role in the co-ordination of UK SAR activities. Authority to launch following a request from the MCA rests with the operators of the boat concerned.