

Mobile Centre of Coordination and Pre-hospital Care: better working conditions, greater productivity, and increased efficiency of assistance

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The role of lifeguards, well-recognized as a priority, includes assessing environments intended for beach use, assisting beachgoers at risk, and deterring beachgoers from acts that pose serious risks to their health or physical integrity. But working conditions in which they perform their duties, aren't always the best, and there're still many gaps in Occupational Hygiene, Health and Safety, namely: prolonged sun exposure, lack of appropriate place for breaks and meals, lack of appropriate location for treatment of victims and lack of hygienic conditions regarding the use of toilets and personal property protection.

This is an innovative concept in Portugal, developed in order to improve the working conditions of the professionals involved in the assistance of beachgoers, enforcing the Portuguese and European Union law and regulations of OHS and at the same time provide better assistance to beachgoers, nautical sports and recreational boating.

We propose the creation of a Mobile Centre of Coordination and Pre-hospital Care meeting the legal and regulatory requirements in terms of working conditions, providing facilities with climate control systems with extraction and supply air, natural and artificial light, toilets, dining and changing rooms with showers and hot water.

Only lifesaving professionals will use the facilities, in particular lifeguards and team coordinators, which will never need to use the public facilities.

With the creation of this centre, we intend to further improve the service conditions for beachgoers equipping the facilities not only with an appropriate Medical Office with first aid materials and specific BLS for the most common occurrences at beaches, but also with an Advanced System of Fixed and Mobile Communications, which will facilitate communication and operational consistency among professionals working at the beach and others involved in the operational and emergency plans.

We propose a compact design and easily transportable infrastructure that can take three different formats, considering the characteristics of the deployment location.

Linear format - size 15 - A single module with 15m² area. The interior consists of a Help Desk equipped with a medical office appropriate for the assistance to be provided; a Communication Desk equipped with an advanced system of fixed and mobile communications, including maritime VHF portable radios and telephones; one Dining Room equipped with a small kitchen for quick meal and drinking water; and Sanitary private Facilities, equipped with changing rooms with hot showers and individual lockers.

Linear format - size 22 - A single module with 22m² area. The interior has the same features of the linear format - size 15, with larger areas.

T-shaped - Consists of a module of linear format (Size 15 or 22), plus another module with 6 m², made of glass and coupled to the first. In this solution the Communication Desk is installed in the coupled module, which will also serve as beach lookout station, equipped with telescoping tower with long range and high definition video surveillance, with all the remaining features on the linear format module.

This centre will achieve; "Better working conditions, greater productivity, and increased efficiency of assistance" With the implementation of this project we expect to improve the professional working conditions, improving their wellbeing and, consequently, their productivity and efficiency in their duties and responsibilities towards assistance of beachgoers.

The planned implementation of such infrastructures, that consider the optimization of lifeguards' OHS, will minimize distractions, reduce the periods of absence from working and increase the feeling of security of beachgoers and water sports practitioners.