

# COAST GUARD

AUTUMN/WINTER 2017



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# COAST GUARD

The National Magazine of the Australian  
Volunteer Coast Guard Association

AUTUMN/WINTER 2017

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Soldiers at the Redcliffe dawn service last year while QF3 Redcliffe's rescue vessels standby offshore.

# COAST GUARD FLOTILLAS TURN OUT IN GROWING NUMBERS FOR ANZAC DAY DAWN SERVICES AND MARCHES

ANZAC Day is proving to be one of the busiest days of the year for Coast Guard flotillas with increasing numbers taking part in Anzac Day marches as well as dawn services.

Attendance was given a fillip with the 100th anniversary of the start of the First World War followed by the 100th anniversary of the Gallipoli battle in 1915.

Last year QF3 Redcliffe volunteers marched in their very first Anzac Day parade, representing their flotilla, in a parade that is very well known in the Moreton Bay area for drawing very large audience numbers.

The flotilla already had an annual tradition of active involvement with the dawn service and QF3's two largest rescue vessels, *Redcliffe Leagues 2* and *RSL Redcliffe*, were anchored just offshore during the dawn service ready for wreath-laying.

Members who have been on the vessels all report that it is a very humbling experience.

Similarly, amongst other flotillas, QF4 Caloundra, QF6 Mooloolaba, QF17 Tin Can Bay and QF21 Sandy Straits, also have been involved with Anzac Day com-

QF3 Redcliffe flotilla members join the Anzac Day march down the main street.



Continued next page





Defence force personnel join Coast Guard crew in the dawn service salute off Redcliffe.

memorations and marches for many years.

QF4 Caloundra has been regularly involved with laying a wreath at sea at the dawn service to honour servicemen and nurses who lost their lives at sea.

In 2015 the ceremony was televised with *Caloundra Rescue* taking up station off Kings Beach, before being surrounded by surf boats with crews dressed in army fatigues, raising their oars in salute as the wreath was placed in the water.

Of course there are long-standing connections between the defence forces and Coast Guard and, recently, moves to increase that connection.

QF11 Yeppoon was visited recently by **Zach Rodda**, an RSL Veteran Services Officer, to discuss the opportunity for Defence Force veterans to transition to a volunteer role in Coast Guard on their retirement from active service.

He met Coast Guard members **Michael Montanari**, **Phil Scheffe** and **Chris Newlyn** who are all former members of Australia's defence forces.

After they described their role as Coast Guard volunteers, he was given a tour of the Coast Guard base at Rosslyn Bay and the rescue vessels.

Flotilla Commander **Arthur Hunt** expressed his appreciation for the contribution of these three members and their capacity to undertake the sometimes arduous role of a rescue volunteer at short notice.

Coast Guard membership provides a number of benefits to former service personnel including the appreciation expressed by rescued boaties and the fact that Coast Guard operations are **Australian Volunteer Coast Guard** 6



Above: QF6 members form up for the 2015 march.

Below: Phil Scheffe, Zach Rodda, Michael Montanari in front of *Gormans Removals Rescue*.



almost always successful and free from trauma.

Michael Montanari said that he appreciated the opportunity to belong to a rescue service as it provides a positive experience and sense of satisfaction after leaving military service.

Zach Rodda agreed that returning veterans would have a useful role in Coast Guard and offered to recommend Coast Guard membership to former members of the Defence Forces who return to the Capricorn region.





QF19 Rockhampton's *Fitzroy Two* crewed by Steve Rye and Martin Nuojua Senior save the paddle-less fishermen from the croc.

## OFF TO A (C)ROCKY START TO THE YEAR FOR TWO UP A CROC CREEK WITHOUT PADDLES

**H**ONORS for the first Coast Guard rescue of this year probably go to one of the smallest flotillas and one of the smallest rescue vessels.

Two boaties who were stranded in a dinghy near a known crocodile hot spot were relieved to be rescued by **QF19 Rockhampton Coast Guard** when 2017 was barely hours old.

The pair decided to kick off the year with a fishing trip but the motor on their 10ft dinghy failed, leaving them stuck up Gavial Creek with no paddles.

At 0432 hours on New Year's Day Coast Guard Rockhampton received a call out from Police Communications in Rockhampton to go to their rescue.

Stranded at the end of City Reach, the keen fishermen faced a nervous wait for the Coast Guard to rescue them, knowing full well they shared the water with the renowned 4m resident croc.

Flotilla members **Steve Rye** and **Martin Nuojua Senior** launched *Fitzroy Two* from the Coast Guard base at Rockhampton and went to the two men's aid.

The crew towed the vessel back to the Quay Street boat ramp and away from the

resident croc at Gavial Creek.

Skipper Steve Rye said the two boaties "were very happy to see them".

Nearby flotillas **QF11 Yeppoon** and **QF20 Keppel Sands** also were active over the New Year holiday period with four more assists.

At 1245 hrs on Friday December 30, Coast Guard Yeppoon received a phone call from

**Meanwhile, the feared 4m crocodile is still there.**

two people who were stranded near Mother McGregor Island, off Keppel Sands, after their engine malfunctioned. Keppel Sands launched **CHSS2**, towed the boat to Zilzie Beach and returned to Coorooman Creek.

Coast Guard Yeppoon was called upon for assistance twice on Saturday 31 December, with two broken down vessels requiring a tow.







*RMH Rescue* tows the catamaran back to harbour from Divided Island.

## SEARCH FOR DAD AND KIDS ON CATAMARAN ENDS WELL

**T**WO children and their father paddled their stricken and sinking catamaran by hand all night in a bid to reach safety.

The 46 year-old, his 12 year-old daughter and 14 year-old son left from Mulambin Beach on the Capricorn Coast for a few hours' sailing without drinking water or a signalling device.

But their 14 ft catamaran had become unstable when it developed a leak in one hull. It capsized and was righted again several times but eventually a mast stay became disconnected and the mast fell down.

Although the children had life jackets, there was no signalling equipment on board so the family tried to paddle the partly submerged boat to land or an island during the night without success.

The wind and incoming and outgoing tides and flood from the Fitzroy River pushed them in various directions during the night and the searching boats and helicopter had passed them on a number of occasions without sighting them.

Just on first light they approached Divided Island and were able to paddle ashore, but landed amongst rocks.

Half-an-hour later they were spotted by a searching **AMSA Dornier** aircraft on the eastern side of Divided Island, 6 nm SE of Emu Park and 10nm SE of Mulambin Beach.

The **Capricorn Rescue Helicopter** was then diverted from its search area further south, landed on the island and evacuated the family back to Rockhampton Base

Hospital to be treated for cuts, scratches and dehydration.

The crew on **RMH Rescue** retrieved the catamaran and towed it back to Rosslyn Bay Harbour.

It was a happy end to a major search that began just before the **QF11 Yepoon Coast Guard** Centre at Rosslyn Bay closed at 1800 hrs the previous evening.

A woman called to report that her husband and two teenage children were overdue after sailing their 14' catamaran from Mulambin Beach in the direction of Humpy Island.

Police were contacted and crews from **QF11** and **QF20 Keppel Sands** were called in to commence a search. Before daylight faded, community members, Coast Guard members and Police were tasked with searching along the shore and out to sea from Zilzie north to Mulambin Beach, as well as on Great Keppel Island and Humpy Island.

**Gormans Removals Rescue** joined the

*RMH Rescue* on the scene to retrieve the semi-submerged catamaran photographed from the **AMSA Dornier**.





search at 1845 hours and *CHSS Rescue* joined the search from Keppel Sands a little later.

*RMH Rescue* interrupted a tow back to Rosslyn Bay Harbour to investigate an object sighted from Great Keppel Island in the water north of Half Tide Rocks, north of Middle Island, before returning to Rosslyn Bay.

Once darkness fell, the strong winds, rough seas and overcast conditions made the search on water very difficult.

The Capricorn Rescue Helicopter was tasked to assist the search but take-off was delayed by storms over Rockhampton.

The helicopter was launched at 2200hrs and searched the islands and water from Keppel Sands north to Great Keppel Island.

At 2330hrs the official search was abandoned for the night and the two Coast Guard vessels returned to Rosslyn Bay Harbour and the rescue helicopter returned

to Rockhampton.

However a number of community members from Great Keppel Island continued



*RMH Rescue* finally gets the stricken catamaran back to Rosslyn Bay Harbor and alongside the pontoon.

searching during the night.

The official search was resumed at 0500hrs when the rescue helicopter took off from Rockhampton while *CHSS Rescue* and *RMH Rescue* departed Rosslyn Bay Harbour to search to the south.

Earlier the Dornier aircraft from Cairns had been tasked by AMSA Search and Rescue to join the search soon after first light.

SES members assembled at Rosslyn Bay to commence a search along the coast.

QF11 Commander **Arthur Hunt** said the man and his children had seen the helicopter during the night and the Coast Guard vessels had passed close to their position in the water but without signalling equipment they were unable to attract their attention.

“The boat was still afloat but they were lying on top of a boat that couldn’t sail anywhere,” said Arthur.

“They were floating and trying to paddle to reach shore... any shore.”

Arthur praised the community and emergency services’ combined efforts and was pleased the mission ended

with the family in good health.

He said Great Keppel Island and Humpy Island residents search until after midnight and the State Emergency Service, Queensland Police Service, rescue helicopter, Dornier and Coast Guard all assisted.

## YANMAR TO THE RESCUE AGAIN & AGAIN & AGAIN.....



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**Alan Steber**  
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## MAN INJURED WHEN BOAT COLLIDES WITH A TREE

IT was not a happy start to the new year for a man in his twenties who sustained major leg injuries when the 14ft fishing boat he was in rammed into a tree on the bank of the Logan River at Tanah Merah on New Year's Eve.

The Coast Guard was called but the rescue operation was baffled when the injured man and his brother were unable to give medics their GPS location, reported Quest Newspapers' **Judith Kerr**.

Water Police Redland Bay officers Senior Constables **Justin Dunn** and **Steve Middleton** were alerted at 1630 hrs on a Saturday and they notified the Coast Guard **QF7 Redland Bay**.

Redland Bay Deputy Flotilla Commander **Jason Boon** said initial reports were that the injured man crashed his vessel into trees somewhere along the Logan River but no exact location was given.

Initial reports said the men were on the Logan River at Waterford West but that location was later changed to Tansley Drive at Tanah

Merah.

Coast Guard Redland Bay, firies, QAS and police all met at Tanah Merah before the Coast Guard took all emergency services crew to the scene where the man was stabilised before being taken to hospital.

When rescue crews arrived, the 14ft Swift Craft boat was lodged into trees about 5m from the waterline.



"As he was not sure of his location and there was significant injuries involved, contact was made immediately with QAS and QPS through 000," Mr Boon said.

"The patient was transported back to the Coast Guard vessel and returned to the awaiting ambulance and transported to the Logan Hospital.

"Considering the uncertainty of the location and the seriousness of the incident it only took a total of 50 minutes

for Coast Guard to deliver emergency services to the scene and render assistance to the victim."

The Coast Guard urged all boaties and anglers to learn to read GPS co-ordinates from their smart phones to make any rescue faster and easier.

## A father and son rescued on Barron River sandbar after dinghy sinks

A FATHER and son stranded after their dinghy capsized at the mouth of the Barron River got back on dry land after some delicate manoeuvring from rescuers, reported *The Cairns Post* **Chris Calcino**.

Volunteer Coast Guards on-board **QF9 Cairns'** rescue vessel *Sir Bob* were performing training exercises at False Cape when they received a radio call on a Saturday afternoon alerting them to a dinghy taking on water.

It took rescuers about five minutes to reach the mouth of the Barron River, where they found a man in his 30s and his young son stranded on a sandbar.

Crewman **Barrie Lamb** said the boat was submerged in about a metre of water when they arrived.

"One wave hit them, and as they went down in the trough behind it, the next wave came straight over the top of them," he said.

"Fortunately they had all the right safety equipment on board, with life jackets and a charged phone, so they called 000 as soon as they realised the situation.

"It was a freak accident, but they were prepared for it."

QF9 flotilla commander **Greg Summers** made some difficult manoeuvres to get *Sir Bob* close enough to the sandbar to launch a smaller rescue boat to the duo.

The crew then towed the dinghy back to shore.

"Another 10 minutes and the boat would probably have washed into deeper water behind the bar," Mr Lamb said.



Above: Cairns Coast Guards launch an inshore rescue boat from *Sir Bob* after a father and son were stranded at the mouth of the Barron River.

Below: Crew return to *Sir Bob* with the flooded dinghy.



## NOT LOST... ...JUST NOT QUITE SURE WHERE WE REALLY ARE

AT 1818 hours on a Wednesday night, Gladstone Police requested assistance for a disabled vessel with 2POB in the vicinity of Port Alma.

After checking the coordinates provided, it was determined that the vessel was in the vicinity of Hummocky Island, north of Cape Capricorn.

Coast Guard **QF20 Keppel Sands** launched **CHSS Rescue** at 2000 hrs.

After the boat skipper provided a number of erroneous positions, Gladstone Vessel Traffic Service (VTS) used the AIS signal to provide the correct position and the vessel, a 10m flybridge cruiser with a rope tangled in the propellers, was located about 3nm NW of Boat Rock, near Keppel Rocks off Curtis Island.

The vessel was taken in tow towards Rosslyn Bay Harbour at 2300 hrs but during the night, the vessel lost its tender.

The vessel was towed into harbour at about 0530 hrs.

Later that morning the tender was located by a professional fisherman who went to a lot of trouble to contact the owner through some advertising tags on a knife in the tender.



# PRIME MINISTER DROPS IN TO RELAUNCH QF3 REDCLIFFE'S VESSEL

PRIME Minister **Malcolm Turnbull** was on hand for the "re-launch" of **QF3 Redcliffe's** primary rescue vessel after six months of solid negotiations and pure hard work by the QF3 boat committee.

**CG32, RSL Redcliffe,** was fully refurbished and back on the water looking brand new and ready to provide another 10 years' service to the boating community in and around Moreton Bay.

The Prime Minister paid tribute to the volunteers of Coast Guard Redcliffe.

Mr Turnbull acknowledged that raising funds for this complete \$200,000 refurbishment represented "a community pulling together to support this wonderful organisation of Coast Guard, whose members have a love and passion of community spirit to help others."

He thanked each and every volunteer in Coast Guard for their dedication and for the thousands of hours they give to their community.

QF3 Commander **Lee McCarthy** told the guests who also included Federal MP **Luke Howarth**, Queensland State MP **Yvette D'Ath** and Councillor **Alan Sutherland**, Mayor Moreton Bay Regional Council, along with members of Police, Fire and Ambulance, that Coast Guard Redcliffe had been in service in the Moreton Bay region for an amazing 43 years.

He said "The refurbishment project for **RSL Redcliffe** was identified in early 2016 as the vessel was approaching 10 years of age."

"Some of the subsystems on the vessel were a concern for the continued reliable and safety of the vessel, so we started planning for the project to begin sometime in 2017."

During a regular phone conversation Lee

**The refurbished vessel tries out her sea legs in Moreton Bay.**



By **John Osberg**



**Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull goes aboard RSL Redcliffe for a quick cruise.**

had with our Federal member Mr Luke Howarth, the Commander mentioned the upcoming refurbishment of the vessel and the costs surrounding the project.

Mr Howarth told the Commander, he would see what he could do to assist us.

We had recently received a grant from the Moreton Bay Regional Council of \$27,500.

Two weeks passed and the Commander received a call to advise that the Federal Government would commit funding of \$99,000 plus GST toward the refurbishment programme.

We were delighted with this news, as this commitment along with the fundraising programme that was well-supported by

suppliers, local business and the general public meant the full funding would be covered.

Once all that funding was secure, QF3 went into full speed on the programme.

Firm quotes were obtained from our build contractors and the work commenced to refurbish **CG32**. The total cost without replacing the engines was \$140,000.

Lee said "at this point things accelerated very quickly". "We commenced at the

beginning of September 2016 with a finish time of 63 days."

Four weeks into the project the Commander received a call from State member for Redcliffe, Ms Yvette D'Ath, advising that QF3 was successful in our application for a Community Gambling Grant to the value of \$35,000 to be used for new motors for **CG32**.

This was very welcome news. An order was soon placed for two new Mercury Verado 300 HP engines.

This was great news and right on schedule a brand new **RSL Redcliffe** was back on the water ready to go anywhere, at any time and as the Commander concluded his speech, "ready to save lives".

Moreton Bay Regional Council Mayor Alan Sutherland, a keen boatie for 50 years, knows how important it is to have a good reliable Coast Guard.

He said "Moreton Bay was one of the most dangerous pocket bays in Australia.

"We can have hundreds of families enjoying a weekend afternoon on the water and a storm can change the calm 5 knot breeze into a 35 knot storm in less than 30 minutes."

He went on to say "What amazes me is that all these volunteers who spend thousands of hours keeping our waters safe and looking after others, have to spend even more time selling raffle tickets and sausages to scratch together an existence to maintain and service these vessels.

**Continued next page**



He said “There were over 2000 volunteers in the region, but there are very few who put their lives on the line”.

“When the flare or beacon goes off or call comes in, it’s not, oh it’s a bit rough, or it’s late, or the wind is too strong. It’s where are they and do we have a location”.

Sometimes in horrendous conditions, these volunteers with families of their own jump into these boats like good Australians do to help others who are in deep need of help.

Mayor Sutherland highlighted “It is important for all forms of government, Federal, State and Local to band together to help fund great organisations like this one.”

State Member Ms Yvette D’Ath MP was extremely humble in her praise of Coast Guard Redcliffe.



Coast Guard members and guests listen to the speeches.



Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull (above) and local State member Ms Yvette D’Ath (below) praise Coast Guard.



She completely agreed with Mayor Alan Sutherland that the Coast Guard does it tough and so much of their work is done at night or in the middle of the bay and as a result goes unnoticed.

More funding needs to be provided. She concluded “Today is a day we can recognise what you do, and to thank you all for the work you do.”

*John Osberg says “I have to say from a personal point of view, this day was the proudest day of my 10 plus years at Coast Guard Redcliffe. To see and hear our leaders from all levels of government genuinely express their appreciation of the work our Coast Guard volunteers do was overwhelming.”*



## REDCLIFFE SHOWS HOW TO RAISE A BIT OF EXTRA CASH WITH A NOVEL WAY

**Q** F3 Redcliffe raised around \$7,000 for the refurbishment of their primary rescue vessel by selling “sponsorship spots” to businesses and the public.

Hatch covers went for \$500 and the cost for the public to have their names across the rear transom was \$20 a time.

It was a novel approach to fund-raising and the flotilla is convinced that it could have raised a lot more money given more time but it



was difficult to get the message out to the public with no major event like a boat show falling during the fund-raising window.

But everyone agrees it was a success and it looks good on the boat. It probably also is an idea that other flotillas can copy to advantage.

The pitch to businesses was aimed at offering one of eleven hatch covers to be dressed with the businesses’ names etc on the prime real estate on the rear deck with a “get in quick/first in, best dressed” spiel.

For the public the sales pitch was help to save live by getting your name in a prominent position on the stern of the aft deck for only \$20 per name, fully tax-deductible.

Supporters also were offered a photo of the vessel once refurbishment was complete with their name on the photo thanking their for their contribution and support.





The flotilla stressed that the vessel was now getting old, has served the community well over the years and has certainly brought home thousands of vessels.

But to ensure **RSL Redcliffe** was kept in operational condition she needed refurbishment to ensure the flotilla can continue to respond to those people who need her most, the boating community of Redcliffe, Moreton Bay and surrounds.

QF3 also stressed that it was a not-for-profit organisation, members worked hard to fund-raise the majority of the operating costs and this meant they need to sell a lot of sausages and raffle tickets even without spending money on vessels.

The flotilla's **Amyee Rhodes** took a crowd-funding approach on social media, saying that the flotilla is always looking for ways to raise much needed funds and liked



to think outside of the box a little so was going to the local community with the hope they may be able to help.

"A \$20 tax deductible donation which goes directly towards the refurbishment will not only help us to save lives but also means that we will continue to safely and effectively deliver a service to our community," she said.

"It will give you satisfaction knowing every time we save a life or bring a vessel home safe, your donation has directly supported us to achieve this."



## Bottle buoys put to test in trial rescue

**A** RESCUE exercise has been staged to test the use of plastic bottles as lifesaving devices.

Bottle buoys were cast into the sea off Cromer Pier during a trial of the innovative flotation aid.

Three swimmers used the buoys to try to stay afloat as part of an exercise carried out by the RNLI.

It is hoped the device, which consists of three bottles around a central core, can help to reduce deaths from drowning in developing countries.

**Stuart Thompson**, from the RNLI's International Development team, had previously taken part in tests of the bottle buoys in Bangladesh earlier this year.



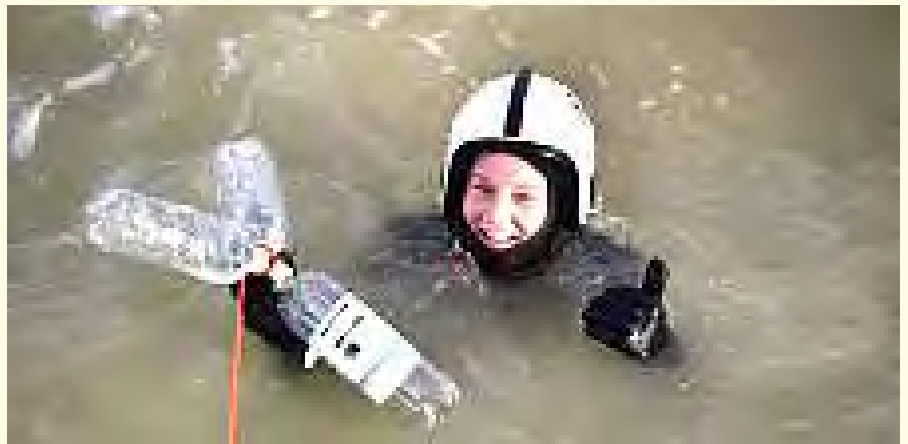
Mr Thompson (centre, above, with RNLI engineer **Rob Debbage** and Cromer RNLI mechanic **Paul Watling**) said: "The trial went really well – we had some empty bottles thrown in and others filled with water.

"This would not be something we would be using in the UK with our fairly sophisticated search and rescue services."

Lifesaving resources vary from country to country, but in some there are no rescue services at all.

He added: "The RNLI International Department is working with a number of different solutions to tackle that problem."

The trial aimed to check the durability of the device in sea conditions when thrown from various distances.



If further tests prove successful the bottle buoys could be in use within a year.

Cromer Lifeboat Station mechanic **Paul Watling** said: "The bottle buoys were very good. I would not have thought it possible for such a simple piece of equipment to work so well."

The bottle buoy was thought up by student **James Benson**, who came up with the idea, built a prototype, and entered an International Maritime Rescue Federation (IMRF) competition.










# SHOCKWAVE

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# AN RSL GIFT HELPS FLOAT THE BOAT FOR QF 21 SANDY STRAITS

THE champagne flowed as *Maryborough RSL Rescue* was blessed at the Coast Guard QF21 Sandy Straits naming ceremony, held in the Maryborough RSL Club's car park, reported the *Fraser Coast Chronicle's Boni Holmes*.

It was a long time coming for the vessel and an added bonus when the Maryborough RSL donated \$5000 to the Coast Guard volunteers.

QF21 commander **Don Archer** said the organisation would not survive without sponsors like the RSL.

"We were very excited to receive this donation," he said.

"We have had the vessel for about 18 months and financial restraints stopped us from getting it to the condition it is now.

"These things don't come cheap. The vessel had to be stripped back and brought up to maritime standards and commercial specifications.

"The \$5000 will go to fuel — it is our biggest expense — along with insurance."

Other sponsors include **Freedom Fishing Supplies, Boaties Warehouse and Kingston Panel Beaters and Spray Painters**.

Coast Guard volunteers, RSL members and dignitaries attended the naming ceremony and blessing of *Maryborough*

Maryborough RSL sub branch president **Jukka Manttari** and Coast Guard Sandy Straits commander **Don Archer** at the naming ceremony of the *Maryborough RSL Rescue*.

*RSL Rescue*.

Maryborough RSL Club president **Jukka Manttari** said he was aware of the Coast Guard's struggle and knew the \$5000 was needed.

"I am also a volunteer and skipper with the Coast Guard," Jukka said. "The Coast Guard is a great organisation to support.

"Along with the other community organisations and not-for-profit charities that we support throughout the year through the sub-branch, the Coast Guard is just one of many."

Jukka also mentioned it was great to have the vessel serving the community.

"The Coast Guard managed to get one community item, which was already paid for by the taxpayers of this community, and rather than being destroyed or being sent somewhere else, it will continue serving the community at no further cost to the taxpayers," Jukka said.

"Through some negotiations with council, QF21 managed to get the transfer of the vessel from being an obsolete SES vessel for Tiara.

"And through their raffles efforts and co-ordinated work to raise funds, they managed to get it up to a survey level and get it out on the water to become a surveyed rescue vessel.

"Within its first week, the *Maryborough RSL Rescue* was already out doing a rescue."

Commander **Don Archer** who has 40 years at sea and more than 30 years in Coast Guard under his belt, said the service badly needed members.

"Membership is a big thing — it's all voluntary," Don said.

"To become a member you need absolutely nothing. You don't need any qualifications, no skills.

"We provide all the training free of charge. We do first aid certificate, radio operator certificate and volunteers are training all the time."

Deputy commander **Dale Green** said becoming a member was very rewarding.

"Especially when you go out and rescue people — you see the look of relief on their face when you turn up," Dale said.

"You get called out at all hours of the night. There is a roster to alternate shifts."

Don also mentioned for boaties to let them know their whereabouts when on the water.

"Please let us know by radio or phone that you are going out, what area you are going to and when you expect to return," he said.

"If only they could get it into their heads it's for their own good. It's not this 'it won't happen to us' — it does happen.

"If you don't have a radio, then use the mobile telephone."

He advised boaties to add the Coast Guard number to their phone contacts.

The organisation now has three top-class vessels at its disposal: the *Pride of Maryborough, Jupiter One* and its newest addition the *Maryborough RSL Rescue*.

Straits commander **Don Archer** at the







Members of the Central Queensland flotillas gather for their major search and rescue exercise.

# Ferry Down! Fire! Injuries! Collision! Explosion! Central Queensland goes into action

By Elle Butler

**W**HILE we hope that the worst never happens, it is important that our Search and Rescue personnel train for such scenarios.

That is exactly what happened in early March when the Central Queensland Squadron held Search and Rescue Exercise 2017.

An introduction by Sergeant **Shaun Halson** (Water Police) outlining some possible situations that might be encountered was followed by a First Aid briefing by Coast Guard's National Training Commodore **Robin Hood** to refresh everyone about the potential injuries and conditions that may be experienced.

The local flotillas from **Keppel Sands QF20**, **Rockhampton QF19** and **Yeppoon QF11** were then given the scenario of a collision in Keppel Bay between a recreational vessel and a commercial ferry.

Meanwhile, with the assistance of **Freedom Fast Cats**, **CoalTrain** and **Keppel Barges**, a number of role players from the **SES** and the general community were briefed about their roles as the passengers of the ferry or the recreational vessel.

They were transported to the exercise location and the scene was set. **Qld Police Service** (Water Police, including Divers) were at hand to ensure *#SafetyByAllMeans*.

Life-rafts were in the water and the setting of flares had been pre-arranged to signal the start of the simulation.

The Coast Guard rescue vessels were deployed and all casualties were rescued with constant monitoring through the Satellite Command Centre.

The crews and radio operators were challenged and rose admirably to the occasion as everyone was rescued and the

appropriate First Aid measures were implemented.

An excellent day all round, with some stand out procedures by the crews.

**VMR Gladstone** rendered assistance as observers and provided quality feedback during the debrief following the exercise.

With the attendance of Senior Search and Rescue Coordinator (Qld Police Service) **Snr Sergeant Jim Whitehead** and State Chairman Commodore **AVCGA Mike Vosti**, along with local Coast Guard office holders, the Capricornia region can be confident that their SAR personnel are well trained and ready to assist in the case of an off-shore emergency.

Ahead of the exercise, as part of getting pre-publicity in the local media, as QF20s media liaison officer I took the opportunity to sit with **Alan** and **Barbara Barsby** to sneak a peek behind the scenes of life as a local Coast Guard volunteer.

Alan is the Deputy Squadron Commodore for the CQ Squadron, which includes **QF 24 Thirsty Sound** as well as QF 20, QF19 and QF 11.

We asked about his experiences and highlights over the years and asked Barbara what it is like to be a spouse of an active Coast Guard volunteer.

**QF20:** How long have you been in the Coast Guard and why did you join?

**Alan:** I first joined in 1977 when the Yeppoon Flotilla was located in a tin shed near the kiosk at Rosslyn Bay, but I took two short breaks in the early years. This time I have been back for 13 years.

I decided to join because my neighbour suggested it when we moved to the area.

**QF20:** What has been your favourite

moment?

**Alan:** Completing rescues is definitely a highlight, especially when everything goes smoothly.

**QF20:** What have been the scariest moments?

**Alan:** About 4 or 5 years ago we received a call to advise that someone was stranded on a sand bar at Corio Bay.

We confirmed that they were in a small boat and stranded on the beach. The tide was rising, so we were confident they would float off safely.

We had to attend to another rescue and Corio Bay was on the way, so we called in to check everything was okay only to discover that the fellow was not in a boat and had walked across to fish with his 3-year-old son and been trapped by the tide, still rising.

He was standing neck deep with his son on his shoulders. Fortunately, everyone was fine and we helped them back to safety before continuing on our way.

Another time was just recently when we were searching for a missing person near Middle Percy. (see story Page 38).

We were out for 3 days in 2m-3m seas and 40-45 knot winds. Fortunately with our training, everyone on the crew knew the safety procedures to take.

**QF20:** Barbara, we know that the support of the spouse for the volunteers is very important. How do you feel when Alan is out on rescues?

**Barbara:** Obviously, there is always some concern when they are out at sea, but I know that he knows how to stay safe. It is always good to see him home for a cuppa after a rescue though. I feel very proud of his commitment to volunteer work. It is terrific to be able to help the community.

**QF20:** What other areas does Alan volunteer in?

**Barbara:** As well as being an office holder for Coast Guard for 17 years, he is also a trainer and assessor and First Aid trainer. He is also a Senior Officer in the Rural Fire Service.





Central Queensland flotillas' rescue vessels on the scene of the incident.

Alan and Barbara Barsby

**QF20:** What is the best thing about Alan being in the Coast Guard from your point of view, Barbara?

**Barbara:** It is the sense of pride about being able to offer a volunteer service to the community.

**QF20:** Do you need special skills to be involved in the Coast Guard?

**Alan:** We are just normal people from a farming background with a family. The Coast Guard is open to everyone (18+yrs) and all training is included.

Not everyone is involved in the crew on the boat, we also have radio operators, fund raisers and administrative members.

**Barbara:** In fact, Alan also calls Bingo for both the Keppel Sands and the Yeppoon flotillas, which are always fun mornings.

Thank you to our sponsors, without whom SAREX 17 would not have been possible.

**CoalTrain** – coaltrain.com.au - Their drone took aerial footage of the exercise and members were involved as role players in the exercise.

**Freedom Fast Cats** - freedomfastcats.com - Assisting with personnel and transportation.



Above: CHSS Rescue standing-by to pick-up survivors in the water. Below: QF19 Rockhampton's Bluefin Sports Rescue looks after other "survivors".







QF6's Mooloolaba Rotary Rescue finally underway with the tow after battling through big seas and winds for hours to reach the target vessel.

# 15 HOURS IN TERRIBLE CONDITIONS TO ASSIST A LARGE VESSEL ON WHAT TURNS OUT TO BE A THANKLESS TASK

By John Burge

## Assist Crew and a QF6 Skipper

**A** CREW was called and began assembling from about 1400 hrs. Pre-departure checks were undertaken and a briefing was conducted by the skipper.

The briefing indicated that the assist target, *Akama*, was a trawler of about 55 feet, which had encountered engine problems and was unable to make way under its own power.

The trawler, with one person on board, had sought shelter on the northern side of Double Island Point and was seeking assistance to come to Mooloolaba for engine repairs.

Weather at the time was about 20 to 25 knots south-east with about 2 metres of swell.

*Mooloolaba Rotary Rescue* departed its berth at approximately 1430hrs and headed north for the 50 nm mile journey to the location of the target vessel.

The trawler skipper had anchored his vessel to the north of Double Island Point in the lee of the Coloured Sand Cliffs and about 150 metres off the beach.

The journey north was difficult for the five crew on board.

A large and confused sea was running with most swells estimated to be in the 2 to 3 metre range, interspersed quite regularly, with significantly larger swells, which

## THE CALL

At about 1330 hrs on Wednesday the 4th of January I was on duty at **QF6 Mooloolaba** when a call came to the radio operator about a 55 foot trawler requiring assistance near Double Island Point enroute to Mooloolaba. The nearest flotilla, **QF17 Tin Can Bay**, had advised that they could not help due to their larger vessel being out of action and so I contacted the Commander at **QF5 Noosa** to see if they could assist the vessel south, so we could pick up the tow closer to Mooloolaba. The discussions resulted in a decision being made that due to the size of the vessel and the sea state that it would be preferable for QF6 to do the whole job. After discussing the task with Squadron Commodore **Andris Zalite** the decision was made for us to go and assist the trawler and the radio operator was tasked to call out a crew.

**Ian Hunt**  
Commander, QF6

capped and broke at their peaks.

Any thought of using the auto-helm was abandoned in the conditions, so the vessel was hand-steered for the full northern journey.

The sea was arriving on the starboard stern quarter, lifting the stern and pitching the vessel down into the trough, frequently pouring water in through the anchor hawser hole.

As it was propelled into the trough, *Mooloolaba Rotary Rescue* rolled significantly to port.

At the bottom of the trough it lifted its bow and climbed up the next swell at a goodly angle of climb, at the same time it compensated for its port roll with a significant starboard roll.

This corkscrewing action lasted 3 ½ hours

until we rounded Double Island Point and the seas became less confused and were following, rather than the stern-quartering sea we had been experiencing.

Crew took turns at the helm, usually about 20 to 30 minutes was enough, as extreme concentration on the task was necessary.

A lot of corrective helming was required when sliding down into the trough and this was accompanied by some throttle adjustment.

The helming technique that seemed to work was to ease the throttle at the top of the swell before plunging into the trough and applying corrective helm, then apply some power to climb out of the trough while centring the helm back to mid-ships, followed by a teetering at the top of the next swell before repeating the whole process.



To add to these difficult circumstances, we passed through a couple of rain squalls on the way north, which thoroughly confused the sea and significantly reduced visibility, because of the driving rain and spray.

The breeze also increased under these squalls. Gusts peaked at about 35 knots as measured by our anemometer.

As we were attempting to reach the target before we lost the light, to make the hook-up process visible and easier, we were attempting to push the vessel at the maximum safe speed for the conditions.

As it turned out we did reach the target with light available, but great concentration was needed by all helmsmen to achieve that goal. We had averaged about 14 to 15 knots.

On reaching our target at about 1815 hrs we did a couple of passes and determined that while the skipper had indicated he had made up a bridle to join to our tow line and showed it as we passed, our crew believed that the bridle he had made was far too light and would not survive the homeward bound conditions that we knew existed.

We 'guestimated' his converted trawler, modified into a private vessel, would displace maybe 20 to 30 tons, so we provided him with another heavier line from *MRR* and asked that he make up another bridle.

The weight of his vessel was also compounded by modifications to extend the cabin and enclose the deck, which increased the top hamper and consequent effect of wind—of which there was plenty, even in the lee of the sand cliffs.

After passing the line for the heavier bridle, we waited for the new apparatus to be made up and when ready, we passed the tow line, which he secured to the bridle.

Fortunately his anchor winch was still operative and we were able to take pressure on the tow line to assist him to raise his anchor.

These activities were not easy, as his radio was the only source of communication and he needed to receive our instructions,

then, as he was on his own, go out to the foredeck and do his best to carry them out single-handed.

We got underway at about 1830hrs in the last of the light, and proceeded to round Double Island Point between Wolf Rock

squall, one side of the bridle parted, causing our tow to skew and be driven to windward.

Some communication with the skipper of the tow followed, which indicated that there may be some chance of the tow being



**Yet another squall on the way to the assist before the long tow back to Mooloolaba.**

and the Point.

At that time in the tide and with the significant swell, there was just enough light to see the big waves breaking heavily on Wolf Rock and the Point cliffs, with white water and spray flying metres into the air.

This was just to remind us of the forthcoming long punch south into the sea.

Having given as long a tow length as possible to ensure that some part of the line stayed in the water at all times, we made our way south into the South East gale and 3 metre swell.

We were able to make about 6 to 7 knots at first and despite the exceptionally lumpy conditions and significant pitching and rolling we were able to negotiate another squall, with the now predictable increase in wind speed and swell height.

At a point about halfway down Teewah Beach, following the effects of a passing

resumed with a readjusted bridle position.

As we had been forced to reduce power, our towline jumped over our starboard stern bit and had to be relocated to the centre and then very slowly taking the strain again we were relieved to find that our tow, ever so slowly, resumed its position in our wake, assisted greatly by the lone skipper working the tow's helm.

In these circumstances we again reduced speed to about 5 knots and hoped that the single bridle rein would hold.

There is little shelter between Double Island Point and Mooloolaba and we knew that the Noosa River bar was out of the question.

We determined that there may be some shelter in Laguna Bay in the lee of Noosa Head to do an assessment, make an adjustment, possibly make a repair, or at the worst, anchor up and wait for daylight.

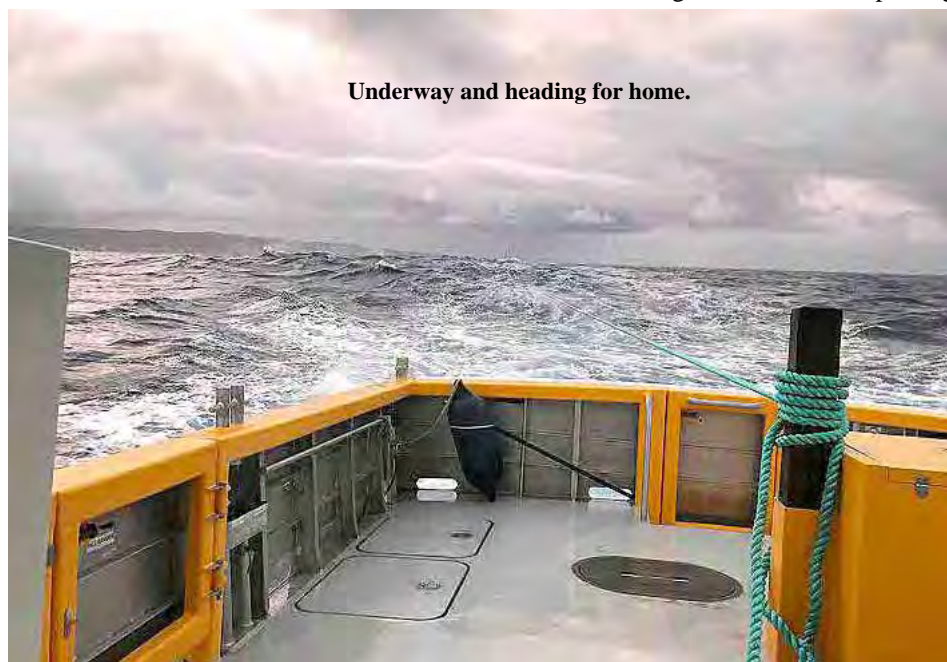
Then followed several excruciating hours while we slowly worked our way towards Laguna Bay, all the while expecting the tenuous bridle attachment to give way, with the tow being swept towards the beach.

Should this happen our chances of re-attachment would be very slim in the prevailing conditions.

We continued to hand steer for 30-40 minute sessions in the difficult conditions, also maintaining a continuous and concentrated watch on the tow from the rear deck.

Eventually, we did make it to the lee of Noosa Head in Laguna Bay and provided our tow with some slack line to make a repair or adjustment if possible.

After about 10 minutes, or what seemed like an eternity holding *MRR* into the sea and the wind, the skipper reported that he had made a "bodgie" repair, which he hoped would work, and that he was happy



**Underway and heading for home.**

**Continued next page**





Battling the seas and the weather with the tow on the line. Now you see it, above...now you don't...below.



to continue.

We pulled out of the Bay, cleared Noosa Head and proceeded south again at about 5 to 6 knots into the same old south-east conditions and big seas.

When we were abeam of Sunshine Beach we were again in the grip of a passing squall, this time not as much wind, but increased seas.

We began to see the reflection of the Point Cartwright light under the clouds and could determine its flash pattern—this view was very heartening.

Some hours later the overcast conditions

began to clear and we could determine the horizon and the Point Cartwright light quite clearly.

At about 0430 hrs Thursday morning we were preparing to shorten the tow off the mouth of the Mooloolah River and first light of that new day was going to assist us in our close-quarters manoeuvring in the river, although the south-easter was still piping in at 20-25 knots making life difficult.

With some difficulty, due to the breeze and the size and weight of the vessel, we managed to get our tow rafted and then

alongside the public pontoon—it was about 0500 hrs when we had our assist secured and we returned to our pontoon to close down.

The whole activity had taken about 15 hours and a vessel and its owner/skipper had been brought to a safe haven.

I think it is fair to say that our crew

Double Island Point and the seas calm a little.



were 'zonked' and pretty beaten up by the conditions but very glad to have got back without a major incident.

**Personal Observations by John Burge**

*I would like to say thanks to my fellow crew members for making the assist 'work' when it had many chances to do otherwise. They were great.*

*It was a difficult and extremely rough passage. On the way up, the boat produced every movement that a boat is capable of, and repeated them for 4 hours.*

*The trip back was also very onerous for three reasons; first it was long and slow (11 hours); second it was very rough with no relief from the conditions and third there was continuous anxiety about the security of the tow and the possibility of losing the tow and then the likelihood of not being able to regain the tow.*

*I have been continuously involved in volunteer marine rescue activities for 32 years. I have been on hundreds of assists in that time and been responsible for skippering many of them.*

*There is only one other assist that I would say was as tough as this one. It had the very rough seas, gale force winds and was conducted at night with storms overhead, however, it was not as difficult as this recent assist, as it only lasted about 6 hours and once connected, we were always confident of the security of the tow.*

**POSTSCRIPT**

David, the owner/skipper of the converted trawler, was out of Brisbane, and had recently been spending time in the Keppel Islands. He had anchored behind Waddy Point on Fraser Island the night before on his way home. Earlier on that day he called for assistance. While travelling down the east coast of Fraser Island, he had a fire on board causing engine problems and limped to shelter in the bay at Double Island Point.

The Mooloolaba locals may have seen this vessel moored at the public pontoon for the next five days. With insufficient effort to move on for repairs, the boat caused considerable difficulty to the many recreational, fishing and charter vessels wanting to berth at the public pontoon. This happened despite the best efforts of the Harbour Controller.

As the skipper in distress was to be towed through three flotillas' areas, he was asked if he wanted to stay where he was and be towed into Tin Can Bay when the weather calmed, however, he said no, he wanted to be towed to Mooloolaba. We discussed ahead of time what such a long assist would approximately cost us and he offered to make a donation based on the estimate.

Have we been given a donation towards our operational costs of this Assist? To this point – No.

**Bryan Beck Assist Skipper and Operations Officer QF6**



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RESCUE ORGANISATIONS.**





Participating boats and crews line-up on the beach awaiting directions while QF7's primary rescue vessel waits offshore.

# ASSISTS INTERRUPT A JOINT SAR EXERCISE

**Q**F7 REDLAND Bay's vessels *Coast Guard 71* and *73* participated with the Brisbane SES and Gold Coast Water Police in a SAR training exercise.

The exercise involved six SES flood boats, two Coast Guard vessels and two Incident Management Teams located at Cabbage Tree Point and Slipping Sands on North Stradbroke Island.

Coast Guard volunteers worked in conjunction with SES volunteers to execute two simulated missing vessel/person scenarios including recovering persons from the water and transferring a

By Jason L. Boon

patient on a stretcher from a flood boat to primary rescue vessel *Coast Guard 71* for transfer to the mainland.

Part of the exercise was to include the *Rotary Aircraft Rescue 500*, however this was cancelled due to other operational needs.

During the second part of the exercise *Coast Guard 71* spotted a 27ft Monterey disabled in shallow waters and had to break away to assist the vessel which identified itself as a **QF1 Southport Marine Assist**

Member.

After securing the vessel's safety, communication was established with QF1 and the tow was commenced towards the Gold Coast.

As soon as a QF1 vessel was available, QF7 passed the vessel over to *Coast Guard 1* from QF1 for the remainder of the tow.



Back to assisting!

Immediately after, *Coast Guard 71* came across a 26ft yacht with a disabled engine in the middle of a channel intersection near Jacobs Well.

The yacht had been sailing from Macleay Island to Runaway Bay.

After contacting QF1 which had all its vessels tasked to other work, *Coast Guard 71* took the vessel in tow.

Once safely back into port, the owner promptly joined the QF1 Marine Assist Programme.

The skipper **Stuart Bernardin** and his crew from *Coast Guard 73* remained on duty after their roster to assist with the skipper **Jason Boon** and his crew with washing down and securing *Coast Guard 71*.

However on return to base after 11 hours on the water, another call was received for an unmanned jetski that came adrift from the stern of a vessel off St Helena Island.

Communication was then made with QF2 to assist this vessel and after confirming that QF2 had taken this job, QF7 crews were finally stood down.





# JETTING INTO GROWING PROBLEMS WITH THE SKIS

By Harvey Shore

THE tragic death of a 9-year-old boy, struck by a jet ski on Queensland's Lake Moonderra in October 2016, highlights the rising challenge Coast Guard volunteers face with the increase in Personal Water Craft (PWC) ownership in recent years.

The skipper of that PWC was later charged with manslaughter, and the tragedy is that the 9-year-old boy he allegedly struck and killed was his son, who was standing on the water's edge watching his father and older brother approach.

Queensland Police Superintendent **Key Guteridge** said, "We believe that PWC was being ridden at very high speed."

**Steve Fleming, QF2 Brisbane** Commander said his volunteers had noticed a significant increase in the number of jet skis operating in Moreton Bay this year, and the consequent rise in the number of PWC skippers who appeared to know very little about the care and safe operation of their vessel, or who operated it in a manner which appeared to be unsafe.

"That's a concern to our Coast Guard volunteers, who are increasingly being called out to help PWC operators who sometimes don't even know if a tow tap is fitted to their jet ski."

"There are over 250,000 recreational vessels registered in Queensland," Commander Fleming said, "and a rising percentage of them are PWCs."

"The regulations for PWC operators in Queensland are quite clear. All PWCs must be registered, and their skippers must be over 16, must hold a boat licence first, and must then obtain a compulsory PWC licence."

**BELOW: Their wake suggests they may be exceeding 6 knots in harbour.**



**ABOVE: Jet skis in Manly Boat Harbour.**

**BELOW: QF2 tows another PWC back to Manly Boat Harbour.**



"Some states (NSW and Victoria) issue restricted PWC licences to children, but these are not accepted in Queensland."

"All PWC riders and passengers must wear a life jacket at all times, and must know the specific safety distances and speeds applying to PWCs."

"It's this last requirement which causes the most PWC accidents and tragedies. PWCs cannot exceed 6

knots within sixty metres of people in the water, or from anchored or moored boats, or in harbours, or from the shoreline or jetties and pontoons."

Commander Fleming said anyone travelling at 6 knots would merely annoy someone if they hit them. But faster speeds can easily kill.

He said, "There were some horrific accidents, and several deaths in Queensland last year, from Cairns to the Gold Coast, caused by PWCs. That may not seem a large number, but when compared to the total of 12 deaths in Queensland waters in 2015, it's a high percentage. And it appears to be growing."

"That's the most alarming aspect of PWC incidents," Commander Fleming said.

"Coast Guard's primary concern is safety at sea, and the rising number of call-outs for marine incidents involving PWCs puts extra demands on all Flotillas, and thus affects us all."





## UNDER THE BRIDGE FOR QF7 AHEAD OF BRISSIE RIVER FIRE

**U**RBAN Descent, the event organisers for the *Goodwill Swing to Save* event contacted **QF7 Redland Bay** to assist them with a water safety vessel for a charity event they held to raise funds for not-for-profits, a day before the *River Fire Festival* in Brisbane City, writes **Jason L. Boon**.

QF7 assisted the same event hosted by the Save the Children foundation in 2014 to provide assistance for important charitable work.

A coxswain and crew held position under the Goodwill Bridge (**right, see dangling man**) in the Brisbane River immediately between Southbank and the CBD, retrieving participants and working closely with a Marine Safety Officer from MSQ, Maritime Museum and the Bridge and Swing Controllers.

The event was a hit and went off without any issue thanks to the comprehensive planning and risk assessment by both the organisers and the Coast Guard coxswain.

The event organisers were very pleased with the service and professionalism displayed by the Coast Guard Volunteers.

Credit goes to the **Brisbane Water Police** who assisted QF7 with a berth at their station at Whyte Island for the two evenings leading up to *River Fire*.

QF7 then provided two vessels in addition to other Coast Guard and VMR vessels in the river to provide assistance for the *River Fire* event.

Thanks to efforts from Water Police and crews from Coast Guard units, a medical emergency upon one of the barges and a disabled vessel were handled professionally and the river activities went off without a hitch.





# HIER BIN ICH AUF BRISBANE

**C**HRISTIAN Hager arrived in Australia ten years ago, from Germany, and settled in Brisbane, writes **Harvey Shore**.

Back home in the Saarland, he'd been a member of the German Life Saving Association (the DLRG—Deutsche Lebens-Rettungs-Gesellschaft)—the largest volunteer lifesaving organisation in the world, with 1.4 million members.

Christian was keen to join a similar organisation in Australia, but the only volunteer lifesaving group he could find near his new home town was **QF2 Brisbane Coast Guard**.

So, in 2008, Christian applied to become a Coast Guard volunteer at QF2.

He spoke passable English, and had already applied for Australian citizenship, so he satisfied the requirements in Chapter 10 of our Members Handbook, which says: “any ‘bona fide’ Australian resident of good character who is eighteen years of age or older and having satisfied a delegated interviewer” can join our Association.

Christian's rather thick German accent at first drew a few “say again” requests from his flotilla colleagues.

But he passed his ESS Course without any problems, and was assigned to QF2's ‘H’ Roster, whose duty skipper, **Allan Tennent**, is QF2's Training Officer.

Under Allan's gentle guidance, Christian very quickly learnt the Australian vernacular, increased his sea hours and



**Dirk Hager and Verena Sommer with QF2's Christian Hager (centre) at Brisbane Coast Guard's base in Manly Boat Harbour.**

moved up to competent crew status.

He is now a valued and experienced member of QF2, and is well on his way to gaining coxswain qualifications.

Early this year, Christian's parents arrived from Germany to see how their son was progressing in his new land and his Coast Guard career.

With them came Christian's brother, **Dirk Hager**, and Dirk's girlfriend **Verena Sommer**, who are both still active DLRG volunteers in Germany.

Dirk and Verena were keen to compare the

DLRG organisation with our own Coast Guard Association.

After touring QF2's facilities in Manly Boat Harbour, inspecting its boats and equipment, and spending the day with Christian's roster shipmates at QF2, Dirk gave his brother's choice the thumbs up.

“It's impressive at QF2,” Dirk said. “The volunteers are well trained and friendly, the boats seem in great shape, the safety equipment looks well-maintained, and of course the location is beautiful. If we lived here, we'd join too”.

## Coast Guard top of the pops for Triple M radio DJ

**A**BRISBANE Radio DJ is singing Coast Guard's praises after they rescued him from a jetski jaunt gone wrong, reported *Quest Newspapers'* **Ellen-Maree Elliot**.

**Greg “Marto” Martin** from *Triple M* had taken his son and his son's friend on a study break surfing trip to Moreton Island on his jetski.

“We had a surf, slept over there, had another surf and then came back across the bay,” he said.

Martin said the trouble started when they were about 6km off the Brisbane River.

“We broke down, and broke down again,” he said.

“I've never broken down before and we decided we'd try to limp home.”

The oil reservoir had eroded and sprayed oil into the engine and it was cutting out because it was overheating.

Then a boat from Coast Guard **QF3 Redcliffe**, on a job to rescue someone at Stradbroke Island, came by and gave Martin his co-ordinates and the number for the Coast Guard **QF2 Brisbane** base.

“Within about an hour they towed us in,” he said.

He said one of the volunteers even drove him to his car at Doboy Creek.

“It was a humiliating experience personally but it was uplifting and I joined Marine Assist,” he said.

Marto says anyone heading out on the water should be a member of Coast Guard's Marine Assist program.

Marine Assist provides members with 24-hour marine rescue



**Triple M's Greg ‘Marto’ Martin is grateful to the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard for rescuing him on his jetski in between Moreton Island and Brisbane. Picture RENAE DROOP.**

assistance, and helps the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard fund itself.

“I'd recommend them to anyone. They saved the day,” he said.

Coast Guard's Marine Assist program provides 24-hour a day marine rescue assistance for all emergency and breakdown situations.





## A NEW RACE-HORSE TO THE RESCUE IN FREMANTLE SEAS

**H**ORSES for courses, said **Cam Macmillan** the president of **Fremantle Sea Rescue** when asked about the group's choice of this big cat (above).

"Our area features the sort of short, steep seas that cats eat. We need size and mass because most of the boats we tow are bigger than this one."

The boat, unnamed as yet, has much in common with the 8.2 metre **Shockwave** recently delivered to **Cockburn Sea Rescue**.

It has more length—it is a full nine metres—and has other major and minor differences Fremantle specified to suit their local conditions and their long experience.

A key feature is the wheelhouse. Cockburn's has a narrowish house allowing full walk around, always useful when setting up a tow.

Fremantle put a higher priority on width of dash, and this shows to advantage in the supremely logical layout of displays, controls, switches and so on. Ergonomic enough for a perfectionist.

The walk around facility still exists, of course, on narrower side decks that require a small climb to reach from the cockpit; itself the result of years of evolution.

Its main feature, besides the massive Shockwave tow post, being plenty of clear working room.

It took a good many years of that evolution before stowing the tow line on a drum instead of coiling it became the default system.

There was still the odd

**Specifications**

**Moulded length** 9.0m  
**Beam** 3.0m  
**Fuel capacity** 800 litres  
**Motors** 2x Volvo sterndrives @ 300hp ea

**Builder: Shockwave Power Cats**

problem. The main one probably being the line's habit of over-running and fouling up when being deployed.

Fremantle solved this by fitting a variable clutch to put controllable friction into the system. They topped off this by using a standard yacht winch handle to power it.

This has three key features: it floats, it is cheap and, if it is lost, they can buy another without waiting several weeks for a new one to be specially manufactured.

The wheelhouse interior (below) including the mullions, gelcoat and other surfaces, is finished in satin dark grey and black. This really works: even the photographic flash could barely score a response.

Those maddening stray bits of light will

never bug anyone. The lighting system throughout is switchable between red and white to similarly pamper night vision. At the other extreme the searchlight produces an impressive 600,000 candle power.

Major electronics are by Raymarine, with 4kW radar, plotter, sounder, FLIR and all the rest duplicated for coxswain's and navigator's screens in the usual way.

An outstanding feature of the dash is the shortage of stray cables between those two front positions. Just a single cable makes the trip. The FLIR, which has an exceptionally high refresh rate, has been mounted near the top of the mast for maximum effectiveness.

A small but important feature of the dash is the abundance of sockets for power supply and USB.

The screens have touch control, which Cam says is very convenient when alongside. In any sort of seaway, though, control reverts to the seat arm—the location where several other key controls are located.

The wheelhouse deck is coated with the Seadek system. As well as being tough this is impervious to all the fluids that recovered casualties, for instance, can deposit on it. Its thickness and resilience are sufficient to also give it fatigue-reducing qualities.

The four suspension seats are appropriately called Shockwave, sourced from Australian distributors **Stem 2 Stern Marine**. These are beauties, with the variable length, lowering footrests being the item forgotten by some other manufacturers. Based on experience, Fremantle specified the rear seats be raised, cinema style, to give their occupants a view ahead.

The volume under one of those seats has been used to house a small drawer fridge, mainly for water bottles. The more usual portable style fridge was ruled out on the basis of unhappy experience.

A pair of Volvo D4s rated at 300hp each power the Shockwave via sterndrive legs. Pessimists might describe this output as adequate; realists would be more than satisfied with an effortless 38 knots—achieved with propellers conservatively pitched for heavy tows.

This is the model of motor that features both turbo and supercharging; their supply and installation was by **RMP Service**.

**Northport Marine** was responsible for deck hardware and railings. All were to commercial survey standards, which goes without saying, and also to power yacht aesthetic standards.

Northport installed the plumbing as well, possibly with less aesthetic consideration. The toilet is located under the foredeck, needing a certain agility to reach. But as Cam says, the rest of the interior takes second place to a wheelhouse that reaches for perfection.





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# Special award for QF2 from Water Police for help and support in search and rescue

A SPECIAL Search And Rescue (SAR) Award presented to QF2 Brisbane by Brisbane Water Police in February brought back memories of another police presentation 43 years earlier, writes Harvey Shore.

QF2's Flotilla Commander Steve Fleming received February's award from Water Police Inspector Greg Ringuet in a special ceremony at Brisbane Water Police headquarters.

The new SAR Award now hangs in QF2's foyer, alongside another Water Police plaque presented 43 years ago.

The earlier plaque was presented to QF2 within a year of its founding, for SAR Operations conducted during the disastrous 1974 Brisbane floods.

By a curious coincidence, this 1974 plaque was presented to

Commander Steve Fleming's father, **Bruce Fleming**, a founding member of QF2 who still serves as a volunteer with the flotilla.

The award—a timber plaque overlaid with Perspex—bears the Queensland Water Police crest and this dedication: "In appreciation of the ongoing contribution and support your staff provide in assisting with Search and Rescue Operations."

Commander Fleming accepted the plaque on behalf of all Brisbane Coast Guard volunteers. He noted that QF2's members had racked up 26,640 staff-hours and nearly 1,000 engine hours in the last year, responding to 361 calls

for assistance in Moreton Bay and up to 50 nautical miles offshore, and using 29,000 litres of fuel in the process.

He said his volunteers had also put in hundreds of hours of fund-raising work to cover the fuel and maintenance costs involved in that work.

"All Coast Guard flotillas have to do this...it's not exceptional," he said. "But what is exceptional is the excellent working relationship we have



Steve Fleming (right) receives the special award from Water Police Inspector Greg Ringuet.

built-up over the years with our local Water Police.

"They know our volunteers regularly attend SAR Courses, both Coast Guard's own training courses and higher-level police-sponsored SAR courses. They know our professionalism matches their own when it comes to SAR Operations.

"So, they've come to trust our ability to assist them whenever a SAR occurs, and that trust saves lives."

QF2 volunteers responded to 14 police activation requests, and conducted 21 major Search and Rescue operations in the last 12 months.



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**T**HE volunteer crew of the Sheerness RNLI all-weather lifeboat were deployed to a boat on fire on the Thames Estuary by the UK Coastguard which had received reports that a vessel was alight close to the Princess No. 5 light buoy in the busy shipping lane.

But, while en route to the call, the lifeboat crew were told that it was not a boat on fire but the actual light buoy (**above**) itself.

On arrival, the volunteers on board *The George and Ivy Swanson* found the solar-powered buoy well alight.

They used the onboard fire hose to put out the flames, which took the crew around 20 minutes.

The Sheerness RNLI lifeboat coxswain, **Robin Castle**, said: "In all my years at sea and as lifeboat coxswain this was one of the most unusual calls I have ever attended."

"I have never heard of a buoy catching light before and can only assume that it was caused by an electrical problem which is also strange as the light buoys are solar powered," he added.

**If it happens in Victoria the Coast Guard will be well prepared. While it might look like the VF18 Lakes Entrance crew below is giving the shipping buoy a good wash they are actually practicing their marine fire fighting skills.**

**The buoys make great target practice for the firefighter and allow the skipper to practice close manoeuvrings and holding position.**

**All Coast Guard flotillas in Victoria are CFA (Country Fire Authority) Brigades ready to respond to marine fire 24/7 with many members specially trained in marine fire fighting alongside their search and rescue skills.**



**O**n Christmas Day 2015, the volunteers rostered at **QF2 Brisbane** were called out to assist a boat in trouble on Moreton Bay.

By sheer good luck, on the way to that distressed vessel, they came across two people struggling in the water after their boat foundered minutes earlier. The QF2 crew were able to rescue both people.

On Christmas Day 2016, the volunteer roster at QF2 were wondering if serendipity would strike twice...and it did!

That afternoon, they were called to a job in the Brisbane River. On the way, they came across a yacht which had just sunk (*photo above: Kristy Shereb*).

QF2 members are now taking bets on a possible trifecta for Christmas Day 2017.



**Navy Cadets from all round Far North Queensland are learning the ropes with the QF9 Cairns Coast Guard. Petty Officer Cadet Lydia Dodds, Leading Seaman Cadet Jordan Ismalun and Cairns Coast Guard training officer and skipper Peter Graham. Picture: Josh Woning.**

**A**N annual continuous training camp for navy cadets in Cairns in January offered some youngsters their first glimpse of a naval base and the sea.

Forty cadets from Cairns, Thursday Island, Darwin, Gove, Mackay, Airlie Beach and Townsville were spending the week honing skills and learning just what marine authorities do.

Cairns Coast Guard training officer and skipper **Peter Graham** spent Monday afternoon showing the cadets the organisation's vessels.

"It's very important to welcome these kids. They're the next in line coming through," he said. "If we pinch some from the navy it'll be good. They're always welcome."





Off the vessel and into the brine! No swimming pool for new volunteers at QF2 Brisbane as they take the plunge as part of their 4S Course.

## THEY'RE LEAPING INTO THE 4S COURSES AS NEW MEMBERS FLARE TO LIFE

By Harvey Shore

**B**EFORE any new volunteer can serve as crew on a Coast Guard vessel, they must complete one important course.

In previous years it was called the Elements of Shipboard Safety (ESS) course.

But when the new MAR package was introduced in 2015, this course had a name-change. It's now called the Shipboard Safety Skill Set Course.

**Allan Tennent**, QF2 Brisbane's training officer, says it's still basically the same course, overloaded with alliteration. So for simplicity, he calls it the "4S Course".

At the end of 2015, Allan and his training team took the 4S Course for its shakedown cruise.

A dozen new recruits had their applications to join the flotilla that year approved, and all of them were successfully put through both the theory and practical elements of the 4S Course without problems.

Last year, three times that number of people had applied to join QF2. HR Officer **Kerri Williams** eventually selected twenty of them to sit for the Induction Test, and then to progress to the 4S Course.

Australian Volunteer Coast Guard 30





Last December, those 20 began the classroom component of the 4S, followed by the fun elements...letting off flares, setting fire to stuff and using extinguishers to put the fires out.

After a morning in QF2's yard, playing with pyrotechnics, the new recruits were taken onto Moreton Bay for the more challenging elements of the course—jumping off boats, donning life jackets in the water, remaining afloat for extended periods, and using life rafts.

Allan Tennent, **Kerri Williams** and assistant training officer **Geoff Stanhope** conducted the course, but Flotilla Commander **Steve Fleming**, Deputy Flotilla Commander **Craig Bowen** and several dozen other members of QF2 joined them to help ferry the new recruits across Moreton Bay to the training area and to assist with each element in the course.

“We only hold this course once a year,” Allan Tennent said, “and it’s always a great example of team spirit and teamwork—essential qualities for Coast Guard volunteers who must learn to venture out in all weathers and work as a team to save lives at sea.”

In the middle of last December’s 4S Course, QF2 received a call for help from a nearby jet-ski which had struck trouble.

So, in addition to their 4S Course, QF2’s new recruits also had a practical demonstration of a PWC rescue and recovery.

Allan Tennent said he was pleased by the energy and enthusiasm of the new recruits, who all passed their 4S Course with flying colours and have now been assigned to one or other of QF2’s eight duty rosters.

*QF2 photos by Harvey Shore and Ian Williams.*



Above from left: QF2’s Geoff Stanhope, Allan Tennent and Kerri Williams with 2016 new recruits. Below: Learning The Huddle, during the 4S Course



Below: New QF11 Yeppoon members training to use a life raft as part of 4S. Left: Firefighting during the 4S Course







## CRUISES, FISHING GEAR AND A BOAT & TRAILER IN CLUB MARINE GIVEAWAY

**C**OAST Guard supporter **Club Marine**, Australia's market leader in recreational boat insurance, is giving away more than \$250,000 worth of prizes in its *Boatloads of Fun* promotion.

All participants need to do to be in the running for *Boatloads of Fun* is have a Club Marine Pleasure Craft insurance policy and a *Club Marine Magazine* subscription in either Australia or New Zealand at the time of each of the six draws over the coming year.

The prize-giving began with the launch of *Boatloads of Fun* in the *Club Marine Magazine* February/March edition with a cruise for two on iconic adventure cruise ship *True North* for a Coral Atoll cruise to the spectacular Rowley Shoals off the north-west coast of Western Australia.

There's also a chance to win the first of six premium-quality Shimano fishing packs valued at \$5000 each—including rods, reels and enough tackle and other gear to keep any family of fishos happy.

But wait—there's more!

Throughout the year, Club Marine will also give away a *True North* Southern Safari cruise to Kangaroo Island in South Australia, and a *True North* Kimberley Barra Bonanza cruise for the ultimate Australian coastal exploration experience to the remote and wild Kimberley region in Western Australia.

Each cruise is for two people and includes return flights from the winner's closest capital city.

As if that wasn't enough fun, there also are two great Falcon F360H tenders from BRIG to be won.

And just when you might have thought Club Marine had exhausted the prize pool, the premium prize package to be won—in association with **Northbank Fibreglass Boats** and **Isuzu Australia**—is a sensational car and boat package to make the most of the incredible Australasian boating lifestyle.

One lucky Club Marine policyholder and magazine subscriber will be presented by Northbank with a feature-packed 600C family cruiser, powered by a 150hp Mercury FourStroke outboard and carried on a robust and dependable Mackay trailer—while towing the whole package is a 2017-model Isuzu D-MAX LS-T automatic ute.



“This year, we're very focussed on members and giving them even more reason to choose Club Marine to protect their boating lifestyles,” said Club Marine CEO **Simon McLean**.

“With a total of 12 spectacular prizes up for grabs, in a prize pool valued at over \$250,000, *Boatloads of Fun* is our biggest and most exciting promotion ever.

“We encourage all members to become involved by making sure their insurance and magazine subscriptions are up to date throughout 2017.

“We also look forward to welcoming new members to enjoy all the benefits of Club Marine.”

Full details of *Boatloads of Fun*, can be found on the opening pages of the February/March *Club Marine Magazine*, or visit: [www.clubmarine.com.au](http://www.clubmarine.com.au) or [www.clubmarine.co.nz](http://www.clubmarine.co.nz).

Or you can pop in for a chat at any of the major boat shows and other events that Club Marine will attend across Australia and New Zealand over the coming year.

*Boatloads of Fun* winners will be announced in the next Club Marine Magazine following each prize draw.

## AMAZING!!! MORE THAN 1 MILLION PEOPLE SAW THIS

**I**S this a Coast Guard Facebook page record?

**QF3 Redcliffe** posted a warning on their Facebook page about a fisherman finding a blue-ringed octopus (right) only centimetres from his foot while retrieving his boat at the ramp.

Very quickly, 1,152,334 people viewed the post with 2,800 adding a comment.

QF3 naturally was delighted with this response, saying “The power to warn all these people so quickly is incredible.”

Now the page has 4641 likes so QF3 is

getting its message out to thousands of people every week via a Facebook page designed to help, advise, inform and share with all their followers what is happening with their Coast Guard and what QF3 has been doing to keep those thousands of boaties safe in and around beautiful Moreton Bay.

Meanwhile, at neighboring flotilla **QF2 Brisbane** they were warning that Irukandji (a local box jellyfish with potentially-deadly sting) have been found in Manly Boat Harbour.

Normal jellyfish stings are just painful marine toxins and can be treated with hot water. But Irukandji stings are worse, and can affect the heart and breathing.

QF2 warned that if stung, CALL OOO immediately, and flood the sting with vinegar.







The QF6 Mooloolaba crew tried to tow the submerged boat.

## A “CHAIN” OF VESSELS ON PASSES ALERT TO QF6

TWO men had a lucky escape after their catamaran sank more than 35km off the Sunshine Coast near the Barwon Banks

The men were sailing a 5.6m catamaran offshore of Mooloolaba when their boat began taking on water.

After water got into the bilge, the crew attempted to empty it, however the pump couldn't keep up with the water running in. The crew then attempted to head back to the harbour, hoping that the forward movement of the vessel would stop the water coming in. However, by the time they had decided this the engines were low enough to be flooded by water and it was down from there.

They were able to signal a nearby boat, who plucked them from the sinking vessel. As the boat was too far offshore for radio signal to reach the coast guard, a chain of other vessels sent the message on.

**QF6 Mooloolaba** Coast Guard received the call at about 1100 hrs, and senior skipper **Rod Ashlin** said it took the crew about an hour and a half to reach the site.

“It was fortunate there was a boat they were able to alert,” Mr Ashlin said.

The crew did the right thing by alerting nearby vessels they were in trouble from the very beginning. Other vessels stood by as they went through the various means of stopping the flow.

In the end the crew had to be transferred to another vessel as their own began to sink.

The coast guard crew attempted to tow the sinking catamaran back to shore, but the boat had taken on so much water that all the tow points—usually the strongest parts of the boat - kept breaking. few recreational vessels have the strong points necessary to stand the strain required to tow a submerged vessel.

The crew was forced to abandon the vessel and were returned to Mooloolaba. They were physically unharmed. The rescue skipper made the decision to drop the tow, marking the submerged vessel with an orange tear drop fender. Meanwhile the crew had family waiting at base, (**below**) eager and relieved to see them home safe.



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# SafeTrx vessel tracking service gains yet more support in both Australia and overseas

**T**HE Finnish Lifeboat Institute (Meripelastusseura) has become the latest international marine rescue organisation to swing behind the SafeTrx vessel tracking service.

A SafeTrx app went live on the Finnish Google Play and Apple App Store in recent months branded as 'Trossi SMPS' for the local market.

The Finnish Lifeboat Institute SafeTrx app contains a number of localised features including Electronic Nautical Chart (ENC) from the Finnish Transport Agency's OpenGIS Web Map Tile Service (WTMS), integration with the Finnish Lifeboat Institute's Trossi membership system and location based weather information through the Finnish Meteorological Institute weather service.

The Finnish Lifeboat Institute rolled out the app to their volunteers and members first before a full public launch in 2017.

The Finnish Lifeboat Institution is the umbrella organisation for voluntary maritime rescue associations in Finland.

The organisation provides search and rescue services to people in distress at sea and on inland waters with 2,000 sea rescue volunteers, 130 rescue vessels and over 2,000 members.

More than 1600 search and rescue missions are conducted annually and the outfit assists over 3000 people in waters under its watch every year.

Meanwhile, DeCare Systems Ireland (DSI), the developers of SafeTrx, and Drone SAR announced a Strategic Partnership to integrate SafeTrx and DroneSAR's app.

The partnership will combine SafeTrx's mobile maritime safety platform with DroneSAR's search and rescue drone platform to deliver a highly integrated Search And Rescue (SAR) solution.

Together DSI and DroneSAR are co-innovating in automated incident response and drone dispatch to provide an integrated high quality digital automated interface between distress messages triggered by SafeTrx to DroneSAR's flight planning software.

**John Murphy**, General Manager of the Dublin-based DSI commented "As we enter the new era of the Internet of Things (IOT), companies must co-operate and co-innovate to solve the really tough problems.

"Partnering with DroneSAR allows us to explore the potential for autonomous

drone dispatch to the location of a SafeTrx distress call. We have some great ideas on how our combined solutions can help our customers around the world".

**Oisín McGrath**, CEO, DroneSAR commented "Using the most advanced drone technology, our rescue software and the SafeTrx app we can now enable these machines to fly autonomously to a distress signal.

"Reducing search time and risk to personnel is key and if one life is saved, that is mission success for us. We are very excited about bringing this partnership forward".

Designed in close co-operation with Coast Guard and sea rescue organisations, SafeTrx is a proven maritime safety platform that helps reduce the risk of maritime accidents and the loss of human lives at sea.

It is the world's leading maritime search



Eamonn Franklin and John Murphy, joint CEOs of 8 West Consulting.

and rescue application with over 500,000 recorded hours of use around the world.

DroneSAR, Ireland's most exciting tech start-up, is revolutionising the search and rescue industry with a new drone software that enables DJI drones with a range of rescue functions.

The DroneSAR team is composed of military flight instructors, an award winning app designer and a mountain rescue team leader.

Together they have developed this ground-breaking software which will reduce risk, save time and increase the operational effectiveness of rescue teams worldwide.

The plan is to develop systems whereby if ships or yachts are in trouble, or don't reach a particular rendezvous point, drones will be automatically dispatched to find the vessels, record in 4K and even deliver medical supplies.

Last year, **Marine Rescue Queensland**

joined the **Coast Guard** to provide the SafeTrx mobile app vessel tracking service in Australia and the app is booming overseas.

In Spain, more than 7,500 people already use the app implemented by **Salvamento Marítimo**, Spain's national maritime rescue organisation, two years ago.

The cooperation in Queensland saw both organisations offering a single joint co-branded vessel tracking and monitoring solution to the boating public.

The agreement saw MRQ joining AVCG in using the Coast Guard SafeTrx app to promote safe, responsible recreational boating in Australian territorial waters and inland waterways.

AVCG was one of the first Search and Rescue (SAR) organisations to participate in the initial sea trials of SafeTrx in 2012 and helped shape the technical and operational aspects of the software.

Following the sea trials, the Coast Guard was the first to launch the application in February 2013.

In the new version of the co-branded SafeTrx application, boaters no longer needed to purchase credit to commence a trip. Journeys will continue to be monitored by the AVCG 24 hours a day, every day of the year.

Meanwhile, DeCare Systems Ireland is emerging from a management buyout from former parent company **Anthem** and is to be rebranded as **8 West Consulting**.

In November, Siliconrepublic.com reported that the management team at DeCare Systems Ireland, led by **John Murphy** and **Eamonn Franklin**, were leading a management buyout (MBO) from parent company Anthem.

It is understood that the MBO was entirely self-funded and no venture capital investment was involved. The transaction became official on 1 January.

"With over 200 experienced software professionals working for 8 West, I am very confident we will continue to deliver on this vision," said joint CEO Eamonn Franklin.

The move is designed to secure the future of the operation, which employs 200 people as an independent technology start-up in charge of its own destiny, aiming to focus on innovative drone and Internet of Things products.

DeCare began as an IDA-backed investment in Cork in 1998. Over the years, it has evolved into a software development hub, specialising in insurance software, e-commerce systems and more recently, search and rescue apps and IoT products.

The newly branded 8 West will continue to provide software development services to all its existing clients, including Anthem Inc.





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*RMH Rescue crew (left to right) – Michael Montanari, Kingsley Bartle and Graham Dawson.*

## “MY FIRST MAJOR RESCUE” PUTTING THE TRAINING INTO PRACTICE FOR REAL

RECEIVING the rescue activation phone call from **QF11 Yeppoon** Flotilla Commander **Arthur Hunt** at 0530 hours was met with excitement and enthusiasm.

This was to be my first major rescue since gaining my Competent Crew status after six months of training and practice.

The vessel needing assistance was located 54 NM North East of the QF11 Yeppoon base on the Central Queensland coast.

The stricken vessel had contacted QF11 for assistance at 0300hrs.

However with the weather favourable and the professional fishing vessel at anchor and in no immediate risk, the rescue was activated for first daylight. This rescue could be a 10 hour round trip.

After my 40 minute drive from home in Rockhampton to QF11, the crew of Skipper **Kingsley Bartle** and crew members **Michael Montanari** and **Graham Dawson** readied the vessel **RMH Rescue** including filling the fuel tanks to maximum.

Upon request of the fishermen we also loaded 40 kgs of ice bound for the valuable load of fish on board the commercial fishing vessel.

My first major task allocated by the skipper on departing the pontoon was to enter the fishing vessel’s location coordinates into the GPS system, confirm the distance and heading and calculate a run time at approximately 27 knots.

With a confirming nod of the head from the skipper I had successfully completed this first task—those hours spent training

**By Graham Dawson**

on the vessel instrumentation had paid off, so far.

Front of mind as we travelled north was the ever-present hazard of migrating humpback whales, with approximately 22,000 whales expected to make the annual migration up the east Australian coast in 2016.

This proved to be a prudent call as numerous whales were spotted on the run north, with one pod of approximately six whales identified directly ahead.

After slowing *RMH Rescue* considerably as we approached the whales, we quickly realised that the pod was constantly adjusting their course as if to intercept our vessel, we would change course... they would change course and each time

directly toward us.

At one stage the whales were appearing to increase speed on the surface, with one particularly large whale leading the way.

The skipper determined the whales may be perceiving the vessel as a threat, possibly protecting young calves. With the whales quickly closing to within 40 metres of our stern we powered away from the pod, leaving them to their travels and getting back on course with our task at hand, with an exciting whale story to tell supported by great photos.

Another lesson learned; whales are beautiful creatures, but it is worth remembering they are wild animals, perhaps protective and at times feeling threatened and it is best to keep a respectful and safe distance even if they appear to be willingly coming closer to your boat.

After reaching the stricken vessel and waking the two fishermen from their bunks, the monkey fist was thrown, the tow line transferred, bargee hitch secured and the vessel was taken under tow.

With the favourable weather continuing we steadied the vessels at an optimal tow speed of 8 knots. Considering speed, engine revs, engine trim, distance to run and fuel consumption, the 6 to 7 hour run home commenced.

As the tow continued back towards home base, we continued to spot numerous whales, thankfully a safe distance away, many showing off their considerable aerial skills with spectacular breaches, tail slaps and flute waves.

These encounters with nature were highlighted when *RMH Rescue* received an escort by six dolphins, who seemed quite content to lead our boat on our journey home for approximately an hour, before silently swimming away to continue their own sea travels.

Fuel consumption was a critical factor for this particularly long operation and I was very keen to watch and observe the skipper constantly fine tuning the operation of

*RMH Rescue* (left) back on the pontoon at QF11 Yeppoon on the central Queensland coast with *Gormans Removal Rescue*.







TracPlus showing the 110 nm return journey by *RMH Rescue* for this activation. Most of the rescues for QF11 are in the vicinity of The Keppels, so this rescue was a significant increase in distance from that normally covered.

the vessel to optimise our fuel, adjusting engine revs, engine trim and speed.

As we closed to within 2 nm of home base at Rosslyn Bay Harbour, even with fuel being closely monitored, the crew determined the prudent course of action was to call out the sister vessel at QF11, *Gormans Removal Rescue*.

We transferred the tow to that vessel to enter the harbour and put the fishing vessel safely on the pontoon.

With the fishing vessel secured, both rescue vessels returned to our home pontoon where they were secured and closed up, with numerous stories and photos from the day being shared between both crews.

Finally, with operational debriefings and storytelling completed, it was time to head home; grateful that everyone involved was off the water and the families of all those involved would be welcoming their family members back home safe and sound.

Although I had been involved with previous smaller scale rescues, this major rescue was to reinforce to me how serious and professional our services need to be conducted, it certainly is an isolated feeling being that far out to sea.

I wait with anticipation for my next major rescue to again assist someone at sea having a bad day but realising the next rescue might be significantly more challenging, that the urgency of the situation, location, bad weather and night time operations might significantly raise the stakes.

My training, learning and sea-time experience therefore needs to continue—to ensure I am a “safe set of hands” as a competent crew member, regardless of the challenges we might face when next putting out to sea.



Humpback whale with Peaked Island in the background.

## MORE CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE WHALE KIND FOR QF11

As whale numbers increase each year, Coast Guard QF11 *Yeppoon* is finding that they are creating more frequent hazards to navigation during the migration season.

This became obvious during a lengthy operation during the past week (see story left) after an 0300 hours phone call from the wife of a commercial fisherman whose 6 tonne boat with 2 POB and a load of fish had broken down 20nm ENE of Island Head Creek and 54nm NNE of Rosslyn Bay Harbour.

As the boat was anchored and in no danger, Flotilla Commander **Arthur Hunt** waited until 0530 to call out a crew.

Due to the size of the boat in trouble and the distance involved, the fuel tanks on *RMH Rescue* were topped up and some bags of ice were also taken on board for the fishing vessel.

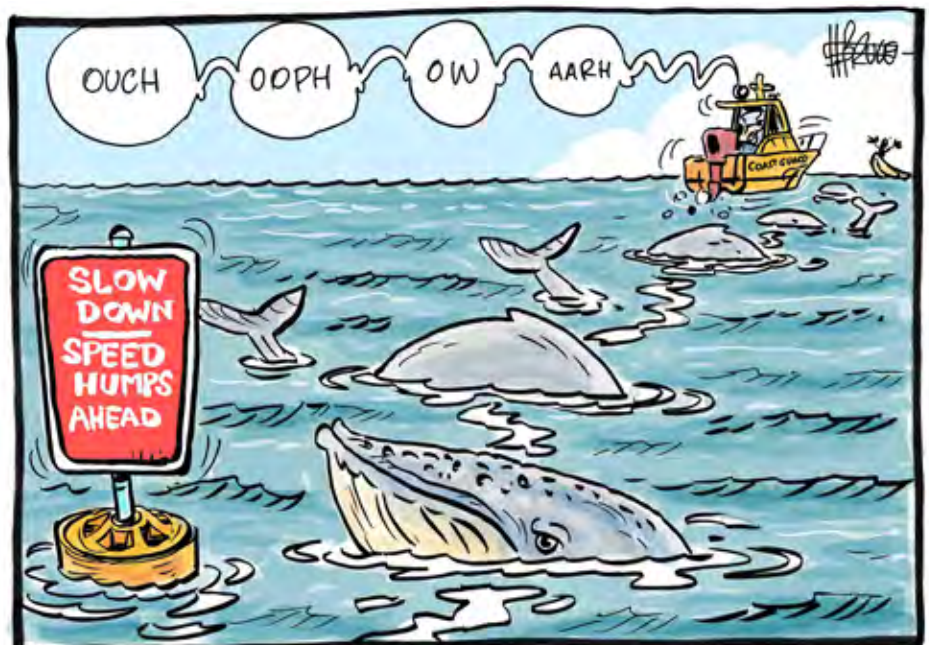
It was necessary for the rescue vessel to vary both course and speed to avoid the numerous whales that were spotted during the trip.

At one point a large whale at least 20m in length charged at the boat which had to accelerate away to avoid contact.

The nine-hour task was completed when the fishing vessel tied up alongside the Rosslyn Bay Fishermans’ Market and was able to finally unload its catch. The fisherman later made a substantial donation to the Coast Guard to cover costs.

But the encounter with whales again inspired the local newspaper *The Rockhampton Bulletin*’s cartoonist **Harry Bruce**, whose previous cartoon about QF11’s close encounters with whales appeared in the previous issue of *Coast Guard*.

On that occasion something big unexpectedly crashed into the flotilla’s primary rescue vessel...which survived unscathed but with a startled crew.







*Gormans Removals Rescue* crew on return to Rosslyn Bay Harbour - Darryl Prizeman, Graham Dawson, Michael Montanari, Allan Barsby.

# MASSIVE FOUR-DAY AIR AND SEA SEARCH FAILS TO FIND MISSING YACHTIE

There was a massive four-day air and sea search after sailor **Trent Anstee** disappeared from the vessel *Predator*, moored near Middle Percy Island, 70 nautical miles south-east of Mackay.

Coast Guard vessels from **QF24 Thirsty Sound** and **QF11 Yeppoon** took part in the extensive search along with Police, the RACQ CQ Rescue helicopter, divers, four fixed wing aircraft and a VMR vessel.

*Thirsty Sound Rescue* was one of the first vessels on the scene and spent most of the first day searching.

QF11's *Gormans Removals Rescue*, departed Yeppoon at 1515 hrs on the first day, arrived at Stanage at 2000 hrs after a 110 nautical mile voyage north, refuelled then departed Stanage at 2320 hrs, arrived on scene at 0135 hrs the next day and joined the search around Middle Percy Island.



**Trent Anstee**

Thirty-nine-old **Trent**

**Anstee** was reported missing at 0630 hours on a Monday, when others on aboard his yacht *Predator*, moored near Middle Percy Island, woke to find him gone. They were sailing south when they stopped at the island to wait out bad weather.

The search, which is being co-ordinated by the Queensland Police Service, was focussed on the area around Middle Percy Island, 70 nautical miles south-east of Mackay.

The RACQ Rescue helicopter searched the western side of the island but a crew member said due to the strong currents, Australian Volunteer Coast Guard

the man could now be miles away. The helicopter crew reported strong currents, strong winds and rough conditions.

The search for missing man was scaled back on the Thursday afternoon before being suspended at 1500 hrs. There was a final aerial sweep on Friday morning.

Mr Anstee, from Minyama on the Sunshine Coast, was a member of the Mooloolaba Yacht Club and an experienced sailor.

The club's media manager **Tracey Johnstone** said he had been a sailor for most of his life and was well-liked in sailing circles.

"He learnt with his father and since his father's death he has sailed the family boat, the 40-foot *Predator*, actively racing with Mooloolaba Yacht Club every chance

he got," she said.

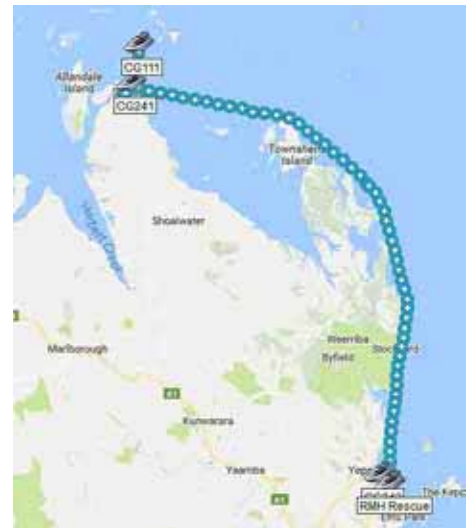
"He was always willing to take visiting sailors on the fast catamaran.

"His many sailing friends have always appreciated his skills as a sailor and a good mate."

She described Mr Anstee as "a cheeky character" who enjoyed life to the full, as long as it involved sailing.

"It was his passion, just like *Predator*."

Mr Anstee's sister Kelly Layne is an Olympic level equestrian competitor, based in America. Their mother Helen is a national equestrian judge and a keen sailor.



*Gormans Removals Rescue*'s 110 nm track just to get to the refuelling stop before heading out to commence the search.



Above: *Gormans Removals Rescue*. Below: *Thirsty Sound Rescue*.





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# SOS MARINE'S LITTLE RIPPER RESCUE POD WAS FINALIST FOR AN AWARD

**C**OAST Guard supporter SOS Marine's *Little Ripper Life Saver Rescue Pod* was developed by Australian rescue specialists and was short-listed for last year's 26th Design Award METS (DAME) which was held in conjunction with the METSTRADE show in November.

METSTRADE show is the largest marine trade show in the world.

The shortlist of 67 new marine products was selected from 117 entries from 26 countries.

The Little Ripper Life Saver was short-listed in the life-saving and safety equipment category.

This is the fifth safety product in 6 years that has been accepted from SOS Marine to be accepted for the final judging.

The Little Ripper system of rescue is a world's first and could change the face of search and rescue (SAR) worldwide and therefore a worthy candidate for the 2016 Dame Design award.

It is a complete package from supply of tried and tested drones, approved pilot and observer training plus the supply of reusable rescue packages which include auto inflation platforms and a Shark Shield.

The Little Ripper provides a safer environment for surfers, distressed



swimmers and sailors that are lost at sea by providing observation and delivery of rescue packages called Rescue Pods (ULBs) via drones.

The Rescue Pods designed by SOS Marine-ULB stood for 'you little beauty' something people would say when they see



the rescue pods. They are ready-to-go for rapid deployment.

These Rescue Pods upon immersion provide enough flotation to support 3-4 persons.

They have an automatic SOLAS light for night rescue, SOLAS grade high visibility retro-reflective tape, large sea anchor and can include a Shark Shield.

The lightweight Rescue Pods are reusable.

Providing that extra little bit of help until someone comes along to rescue you including a GPS position provided by the drone.

The design mission of the Little Ripper was to create a globally-leading search and rescue (SAR) service utilising unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) to speed up the process of saving human lives.

SOS Marine develops safety and rescue equipment for 13 National Defence Forces worldwide.

## UK COASTGUARD RUNS STUDIES INTO UNMANNED AERIAL VEHICLES FOR SEARCH & RESCUE

**T**HE UK Maritime Coastguard Agency (MCA) has begun studies into introducing an unmanned aircraft to assist in search and rescue (SAR) operations by the end of 2019.

The MCA is one of several government agencies and private businesses to be selected as a Pathfinder program to prove the viability of unmanned aircraft operations in daily life.

The British government has begun several initiatives—including a public consultation at the end of last year—to explore the regulatory regime required to make use of remotely piloted and autonomous air vehicles more widely accepted.

The MCA wants any future systems to be able to perform maritime observation and assist in SAR missions, performing not only wide area search, but also simply being able to look over a cliff where it is risky for a human rescuer to go.

The systems would also monitor pollution, ship exhaust emissions and flooding, as well as perform some maritime security missions.

"It is unlikely a single solution will fit all aspects we are looking at," said Phil Hanson, the MCA's aviation technical assurance manager, speaking at a Royal Aeronautical Society conference on maritime unmanned vehicles operations.

"This is all about getting the right data to the right people at the time," he said. Studies are already underway, and Hanson says he is open to industry ideas. A series of demonstration flight trials

are planned later this year, and the program will be open to tender around the same time.

The MCA would like the capability in service by the end of 2019, and it would like to be able to operate beyond visual line of sight by 2020.

"We want the operation of this to be routine. No need to go and ask for special permissions, just go and perform the mission," Hanson said.

The MCA is timing the tenders with the renewal of some of its helicopter contracts.

The MCA currently has contracts with Bristow to provide and operate the Sikorsky S-92s, Leonardo AW139s and AW189s that provide SAR from 10 bases around the country.

Hanson said he would like to include an unmanned aircraft capability that if proved viable could be mixed in with any future contract.

The British government is eager to introduce such technologies in a bid to accelerate UAV use in the UK.

The first of a series of so-called Pathfinder projects, in partnership with the Department for Transport, is being run by internet retailer Amazon from a facility near Cambridge and has already notched its first test delivery. The company is set to broaden the trial's scope in the coming months by delivering to more homes in areas near its test site using its Prime Air UAV concept.

The government is also studying considerations for the mandatory registration of new unmanned aircraft systems such as in the U.S.; tougher penalties for illegal flying in no-fly zones such as near airports, prisons or nuclear installations; and the most challenging, making UAVs "electronically identifiable".



# AND THIS LITTLE RIPPER SHOULD GET AN AWARD

IT was a calm, warm, Monday morning on Moreton Bay when local resident, **Martin Petersen**, decided to take his 11 year-old nephew for a run across the bay.

The duo, plus **Licker**, the dog, set out on what could have been a tragic outing without the cool head of **Phillip Knight**, his young nephew.

As is fairly predictable at this time of the year a SE breeze started to kick in so Martin decided to seek some protection from the wind in the lee of Moreton Island.

During the trip home the 90 hp engine broke down. At this point Martin said he was not concerned as he had a 6 hp auxiliary on board.

I need to point out that the vessel did not have radio, GPS or food and water on board.

They had not logged on to any rescue organisation and nobody really knew where they going or when they would return.

Martin decided to have a look at the 90 hp to try to get it going.

Fortunately the breeze had not risen over 10 to 15 knots, however the rocking of the boat took its toll on Martin and he told Phillip that he was sea sick and "very crook."

He told Phillip "You are going to have to put everything I had have taught you into practice and get us home."

Martin's condition worsened very quickly. Phillip was now all alone in the middle of Moreton Bay and had to make all the decisions to save his uncle.

He tipped sea water on him to keep him cool and set off with the 6 hp engine at full speed.

He really had no idea where he was going. He just pointed the boat where he thought he should go. Then another disaster happened.

The auxiliary ran out of fuel. Phillip was now in serious trouble.

**QF3 Redcliffes** mid-week radio operator received a phone call from the boy's mother, who was very distressed that her son and his uncle were in trouble somewhere in Moreton Bay.

She knew where they left from, however, had no idea where they were going and exactly what time they were returning.

She couldn't raise them on the phone. Our midweek crew left the base with very little information to go on. Water Police were contacted and kept informed of any changes as they occurred.

Phone contact was briefly established between our crew and Phillip. He told our skipper his uncle was very sick and was on the floor of the boat and was unable to speak or assist.

Phone contact was then lost. Our crew continued to search the area for 20 minutes

By **John Osberg**

when phone contact was re established.

They asked the boy for his location and he said he was lost. Our skipper then asked him for some landmarks which Phillip pointed out. Then said a plane had just gone over the top of him.

That told our relieved skipper that they were not far from him as he was in the



The young hero Phillip.

flight path to Brisbane Airport.

He asked if he had flares onboard and did he know how to use them.

The boy said no, so our skipper told him not to use them as they can be very dangerous.

Given the information Phillip had passed on to our crew on board *Redcliffe Leagues II*, they headed toward the general direction. Soon after a flare was sighted.

**Martin, Phillip and Licker thank the crew at QF3, Ron Grundy, Paul Toonen, Shaun Guthrie and Steve Broadbent.**



Phillip knew he was in a desperate situation, his uncle was now not responding to his questions and he could not see any boats in his vicinity, so he decided to carefully read the instructions on the flare and set it off.

Within minutes Phillip's eyes were wide open and was very excited to see the Coast Guard vessel and our crew.

They immediately checked Martin's condition and were very relieved to see him open one eye.

Authorities were informed and an ambulance was called to be standing by when our crew docked at the VMR Brisbane base.

The crew of *RSL Redcliffe II* did a marvelous job to locate this vessel with almost no directions. All their training was put to the test to obtain this successful outcome.

Phillip has been recommended to receive recognition for his efforts. His brave actions may have saved his uncle's life.

We caught up with Martin, Phillip and Licker when they met the crew at QF3 base later that week.

Martin thanked the crew, **Ron Grundy, Paul Toonen, Shaun Guthrie and Steve Broadbent** and said "he was very grateful for the efforts of Coast Guard and full of praise for his young nephew's bravery."

He said "without everyone's help he might not be here today."

We did spend some time discussing the need to install a radio, GPS and to carry water and food and maps for their next adventure.

He promised to enrol in our radio course and of course, log on every time he goes on the water.

Phillip's final word was that he would also teach his uncle how to use a flare.

**FOOTNOTE. The commander of Coast Guard Redcliffe has approved for our crew to proceed with documentation to present Phillip with an award for his part in this positive outcome. Queensland Water Police have verbally agreed.**



# Some Stunning Sea Survival Stories



Ross Chapman from his Facebook page with a big fish that didn't drag him into the ocean and almost kill him.

## ON HIS OWN 30nm OUT TO SEA AND WITHOUT EVEN A LIFE JACKET

A MARLIN dragged a fisherman overboard without a life jacket and left him treading water for more than five hours off the West Australian coast.

The man was fishing about 30 nautical miles offshore when he hooked a large marlin that pulled him into the water. His boat continued on without him, leaving him stranded and treading water.

Another fisherman spotted his boat travelling at speed without a driver and alerted authorities.

A search vessel found 30-year-old **Ross Chapman** off the remote North West Cape, near Exmouth about five hours later.

Rescuers said the man, originally from Whangarei in New Zealand, but now living in Exmouth, was lucky to be alive after floating in the water for more than five hours without safety equipment.



He was taken to hospital back on the mainland (left) suffering from severe hypothermia and shock.

The commander of the Exmouth Volunteer Marine Rescue Group, **Rusty Ellis**, said the man was incredibly lucky to be alive.

"You're talking about a microscopic pin dot in the middle of nowhere."

"For somebody to find him in time was a

wonderful thing and I'm very, very grateful for the assistance of everybody, for dropping everything they were doing."

Mr Ellis says the incident serves as a warning to people about the dangers of fishing alone.

"They need to be extra careful in what they do at sea," he said.

"It's a very lonely place out there, and if you end up in the drink for whatever reason and you can't do anything about getting back to your motorboat, it can be very painful for a lot of people."

WA Police say the incident highlights why solo fishermen should wear a life vest containing an emergency locator beacon.

## A 17 HOUR FLOAT FOR DIVER TAKES HIM 18km AWAY FROM HIS BOAT

RESCUERS said a diver missing for more than 17 hours off the north Queensland coast of Australia was lucky to be alive.

**John Leslie Brierley**, 68, was found by rescuers over 18km away from his boat after he got into trouble in strong currents.

He was lucky to be rescued after forgetting to replace his radio distress beacon when he cleaned it.

"That was a tragedy because if that had gone off the helicopter would have come straight to me and they'd know exactly who I was and what was happening," he said in an interview with ABC News.

"I knew it was going to be a long night and then I was worried about sharks and that sort of thing as well."

He was diving at the *SS Yongala* wreck near Russell Island, south of Townsville, by himself but when he didn't return his friend **Jillian du Bois** notified the Coast Guard.

Police found his boat at the dive site with no-one on board.

Rescuer **Alan Griffiths** was on a helicopter that had been searching for the missing man and was about to head back to the base to refuel when the Brierley was spotted after 90 minutes.



John Leslie Brierley was found 18km away from his boat. Photo QLD Air Rescue Alan Griffiths.

"There was a sense of urgency because we were heading back for fuel, but we wouldn't have been back for an hour," he said.

Griffiths was winched down to get the diver from the water.

"He's very lucky, there is an element of luck on his side, that's for sure," he said.

Acting Inspector **Graeme Paterson** said calm conditions assisted the search and the man's ability to stay afloat and conserve energy.

"Every hour that somebody spends in the ocean their chances diminish so the fact that he's been found in the first 24 hours is amazing."

The *Yongala* is considered one of the best wreck dives in the world and is between 16 and 30 metres deep.



# MATES LEAVE WEDDING SPEECH FOR A CALL-OUT

A NEW groom was left speechless after fellow members of an RNLI lifeboat crew rushed to answer an emergency call-out - during his big speech!

Francy Burns was doing a sterling job complimenting his new wife Helen at their nuptials in Co Donegal.

But just seconds from making it a speech to remember, his and several emergency pagers went off.

Buncrana man Francy, a volunteer member with the Lough Swilly RNLI crew, initially thought it was a prank.

"I thought what 'so and so' has done that? But soon other pagers started to go off and a number of crew members had to go to the shout," revealed Francy.

As the wedding was taking place at the Inishowen Gateway Hotel, volunteers didn't have too far to go to check that their Shannon class vessel was put to sea safely.

As with all good pre-planning, arrangements had been made to ensure that enough members were on standby in case of such an emergency.

As it turned out the rescue involved a single person in a boat which had lost power and had been drifting for three hours.

Francy said there was never any question of him having to leave his new bride on their big day but admits that his speech might now go down in history.

He also said the call-out was a reminder of



The bride and groom on the Lough Swilly lifeboat...after the wedding reception.

the terrific support all RNLI volunteers get from their families.

"There I was having just married the most amazing and beautiful woman and all this drama happens in the middle of it.

"Happily we had prepared for it as we always have to.

All the crew members were sat the back of the room so they could leave with the minimum of fuss.

"We had plenty of cover arranged but they just popped out to ensure that the boat got away as quickly as possible and responded to the call," he said.

And once again he paid tribute to his stunning bride who took it all in her stride.

"Helen is used to the call-outs but that doesn't make it any easier. I was in a shop getting a few things for Sunday lunch a few weeks back and I had to answer a call. I thought it would take a few minutes but I

didn't get back to Helen for half an hour.

"We're the ones who get all the publicity and praise when we answer a call but people forget about the wives and the famous left behind wondering if we are safe.

"Without that support we could not get out quickly on shouts and do our job," he said.

Lough Swilly RNLI press officer Joe Joyce said everything went smoothly on the call-out and congratulated Francy and Helen and wished them many happy years together.

"Francy is a great character and a terrific volunteer and Helen is such great woman. We didn't think it was a big deal as we all took it in our stride but everything worked out fine.

"I don't think many people are going to forget Francy's speech too quickly," laughed Joe.

## It's Yanmar Again To The Rescue

THE exceptional demand for *Coast Guard* supporter Yanmar-powered Steber-built marine safety vessels has continued with the recent launch of a new boat for NSW Marine Rescue.

Once again, dual Yanmar 6LY3-STP engines have been selected for this vessel.

The Steber 38 has proven itself many times over as being one of the finest vessels for water police, rescue and maritime safety agencies throughout Australia and overseas.

This is an award winning hull design which is noted for its exceptional sea going qualities. The hull is renowned for its superb handling features such as high speed level planing, excellent cornering, dry soft ride and good all-round vision.

Underneath the aft cockpit floor, a pair of Yanmar 6LY3-STP engines with Yanmar's own KMH61A marine transmissions have been meticulously installed. The installation is as immaculate as any with an emphasis on ease of service and durability.

The purpose built Yanmar 6LY3-STP marine engines have a deserved reputation for low fuel consumption and are approved for light duty commercial applications. Low fuel bills and low



servicing costs together with high reliability are critical factors which help contain operating costs.

In extensive sea trials prior to official hand-over, the Yanmar engines returned exceptional performance data. At wide open throttle the Yanmar 6LY3-STP engines revved out to 3340 rpm for a top speed of 31.2 knots. This performance was achieved with a full fuel load of 1350 litres, full survey equipment and five crew members on board.

The driveline comprises the Yanmar KMH-61A transmission with 2.43:1 gear and a pair of 22.5" x 32.33" pitch prop. A comfortable and efficient cruise speed is achieved by throttling back to 2400 rpm for a speed of 21.6 knots and fuel consumption of 40.5 litres per hour per engine. At continuous engine RPM rating of 2900 rpm, the Steber achieved a top speed of almost 28 knots.

Yanmar's 6LY3-STP engine is a turbocharged, direct injected, intercooled, 24 valve, in-line 6 cylinder displacing 5813cm<sup>3</sup> to produce 440mhp (324 kW) at 3300rpm. Weighing in at only 718 kilos complete with Yanmar's purpose built marine transmission, the 6LY3-STP delivers industry leading power-to-weight Yanmar diesel performance.

The Yanmar 6LY3 features a high-technology electronic control system that governs all engine operations.





Crew 1 "masterchef" Fred Fitzsimons displays his culinary creation.



Crew 1 tuck into their Sunday brekky. Left to right, "Chef" and Coxswain Fred Fitzsimons, R/O Ilpo Ripatti, Leading Coxswain and Crew Skipper Jon Jones, R/O Neil McFarlane and Coxswain Dieter Voss. Photo by R/O Julie Hartwig.

## TIN CAN BAY KITCHEN RULES

**I**DON'T know exactly when the Sunday morning weekend crew breakfasts began, but they have quickly become something of an institution, reports **Julie Hartwig**.

They started out with just simple bacon and eggs, but in recent times, have morphed into a real gourmet experience with scrambled eggs, sausages, tomatoes and even "real" coffee on occasion.

We have four weekend duty crews at Coast Guard **QF17 Tin Can Bay** and each crew has a self-appointed "Masterchef"

(some crews are lucky to have more than one "chef" and Crew 1 actually has 4!).

The breakfast provisions are provided by the Flotilla and each Sunday morning, the crew "chef" fires up the electric frying pans, the warming oven and the toaster to cook brekky for the crew.

I can tell you, the aroma of frying bacon wafting across the car park must be tantalising to any boaties preparing to launch their boats!

It's a great way to start a Sunday morning

and is much appreciated by all who partake.

With the eating done, the "Masterchef" is allowed to "escape" while the rest of the crew pitch in to help with the washing up (many hands make light work!)

And with brekky done, the crew is ready for anything the boating public throw at them.

Special thank you to Lynn Milnes for procuring the provisions each week and to the Flotilla Executive for providing for the weekend duty crews.

## Stitching-up QF4 Caloundra: Quilters come to the rescue to help out with fundraising for the flotilla

**W**HEN **Judith Willmet**, President of the **Caloundra Quilters**, became aware that Coast Guard **QF 4 Caloundra** received only a small portion of funding from the government and that its members fundraising efforts, including sausage sizzles and raffles, raised the majority of funds needed to cover its operational costs, Judith and fellow members decided to help out by donating two quality quilts that they had created, to assist with Coast Guard Caloundra's fundraising efforts.

One quilt took members over a year to create and it features intricate hand stitching and embroidery work.

Commander **Tony Barker**, Purser **Verity Hingston** and **John Steele** recently attended a meeting of the Caloundra Quilters at the Caloundra Arts Centre Association hall in North Street Caloundra to accept the donation on behalf of Coast Guard Caloundra.

Tony gave the assembled members an in-depth talk into the role of the Coast Guard, while Verity stressed the importance of fundraising to keeping our vessels on the water looking after boaties.



Quilters with the quilts donated to Coast Guard Caloundra. Left to right: QF4 Memorial Wall Liaison Officer John Steel, Eileen McNamara, Jan Brown, QF4 Purser Verity Hingston, Cathy Richards, Barbara Haynes and QF4 Commander Tony Barker.

She thanked Judith and fellow members of Caloundra Quilters for their donation and said the quilts will be raffled to raise much-needed funds.

John Steele who is the liaison officer for the Memorial Wall on Caloundra headland, provided the audience with an insight on the refurbishment of the wall and the services offered to residents who wished to have their ashes scattered at sea and a memorial plaque placed on the Memorial Wall.

**John Gasparotto**



## Sounds familiar:

# Volunteer team all quits because of paper work for bureaucrats

UNTIL recently, the Scottish village of Durness had a seven-member volunteer coast guard unit.

No more: all of its members have resigned, citing excessive bureaucracy and insufficient training.

Over the years, the team has saved lives, performing shoreside searches, cliff rescues and staffing a helicopter landing site.

But the unit's leader, **Alex Morrison**, told UK media that the latest regulations from the Maritime and Coastguard Agency were making it too hard for the group to work and train.

Morrison says that after nearly four decades of volunteer service, he is no longer allowed to even set off a smoke flare.

"We were getting more and more paperwork and less and less practical groundwork, which is what we needed,"



Durness coast guard volunteers at a training session a few years ago.

Morrison said.

"In my opinion, we were undertrained and, in this day and age, if something goes wrong, your head is on the block."

A spokeswoman for the MCA said that the Kinlochbervie coast guard team – 12 miles away, on the other side of Cape Wrath – would be taking over the Durness area of responsibility.

She added that the agency would be meeting with the Durness volunteers to see if they could work out a solution.

"We will be working with the Durness CRT towards a resolution in this case and

would like to assure the local community that, if they call 999 and ask for the coastguard, they will receive the same life-saving service they always have," the spokeswoman told Scotland's Press and Journal.

Durness volunteer and local council chairman **Scott Macpherson** had a different take. "It is a slap in the face. They have wrecked the team with needless bureaucracy and lack of support. I don't think it can be salvaged and leaves a big hole in emergency rescue provision in the area," he told Metro UK.

## Central Queensland Squadron presents awards for long service

ON Sunday 12th March, the Central Queensland Squadron held a presentations ceremony.

The CQ Squadron includes members from all four local flotillas, **Coast Guard QF24 Thirsty Sound, Coast Guard QF19 Rockhampton, Coast Guard QF29 Keppel Sands and Coast Guard QF11 Yeppoon.**

Awards were presented by local member **Mrs Brittany Lauga MP.**

During the ceremony, National Medals were awarded to **Dennis Bryant** and **Bill Drochmann**, both members of Coast Guard Keppel Sands. Part of the Australian Honours Recognition, the National Medal recognises 15 years of service.

This occasion also announced the appointment of Mrs Lauga as patron for AVCGA – CQ Squadron. Her support is invaluable and appreciated by all volunteer members, as well as the boating community of the Keppel Bay region.

Congratulations and thank you to the recipients of Recognition of Service Awards:

40 years **John Thompson** – Coast Guard Yeppoon

30 years **Vivienne Semple** – Coast Guard Yeppoon

National Medals

**Dennis Bryant** – Coast Guard Keppel Sands



Back Row From Left: **Barry Ellis** (QF20 Dep Flotilla Commander); **Darryl Prizeman** (CQ Squadron Commodore); **Dennis Bryant** (Recipient – National Medal); **Bill Drochmann** (Recipient – National Medal); **Allan Barsby** (CQ Squadron Deputy Commodore); **Bill Reurich** (QF19 Flotilla Commander); **John Thomson** (Recognition – 40 yrs service).  
Front Row seated: **Vince Daniels** (QF20 Flotilla Commander); **Brittany Lauga MP** (Patron – AVCGA – CQ Squadron); **Arthur Hunt** (QF11 Flotilla Commander)

**Bill Drochmann** – Coast Guard Keppel Sands  
10 years

**Glen Treacy** – Coast Guard Keppel Sands

**Joan Drochmann** – Coast Guard Keppel Sands

**Cedric Loch** - Coast Guard Keppel Sands

**Arthur Hunt** – Coast Guard Yeppoon

5 years

**John Tait** – Coast Guard Yeppoon

**Bill Chapman** - Coast Guard Yeppoon

**Brigid Holmes** - Coast Guard Yeppoon

**Michael Montanari** - Coast Guard Yeppoon



# AUSTRALIAN VOLUNTEER COAST GUARD

## OPERATIONAL BASES

### QUEENSLAND

**QF25** Cape York  
Tel. 07 4069 3030 **VMR425**

**QF16** Cooktown  
Tel. 074069 5655 **VMR416**

**QF10** Mossman  
Tel. 07 4099 5392 **VMR410**

**QF9** Cairns  
Tel. 07 4051 2192 **VMR409**  
& 07 4051 2384

**QF15** Innisfail  
Tel. 07 4063 2396 **VMR415**

**QF12** Tully  
Tel. 07 4066 9300 **VMR412**

**QF23** Cardwell  
Tel. 07 4066 8792 **VMR423**

**QF14** Ingham  
Tel. 07 4777 8110 **VMR407**

**QF8** Townsville  
Tel. 07 4771 4831 **VMR408**

**QF24** Thirsty Sound  
Tel. 07 4937 3155 **VMR424**

**QF11** Yeppoon  
Tel. 07 4933 6600 **VMR411**

**QF20** Keppel Sands  
Tel. 07 4934 4906 **VMR471**

**QF19** Rockhampton  
Tel. 07 4921 2266 **VMR419**

**QF21** Sandy Straits  
Tel. 07 4129 8141 **VMR421**

**QF17** Tin Can Bay  
Tel. 07 5486 4290 **VMR417**

**QF5** Noosa  
Tel. 07 5474 3695 **VMR405**  
& 07 5449 7670

**QF6** Mooloolaba  
Tel. 07 5444 3222 **VMR406**

**QF4** Caloundra  
Tel. 07 5491 3533 **VMR404**

**QF3** Redcliffe  
Tel. 07 3203 5522 **VMR403**

**QF2** Brisbane  
Tel. 07 3396 5911 **VMR402**

**QF7** Redland Bay  
Tel. 07 3206 7777 **VMR447**

**QF1** Southport  
Tel. 07 5531 1421 **VMR440**

### NORTHERN TERRITORY

**NTF1** Darwin  
**0427180307** CG Darwin

### VICTORIA

**VF12** Sandringham  
Tel. 03 9598 9092 **VMR376**

**VF7** Carrum  
Tel. 03 9772 7638 **VMR367**

**VF1** Frankston  
Tel. 03 9781 5198

**VF6** Safety Beach  
Tel. 03 5981 4443 **VMR366**

**VF4** Hastings  
Tel. 03 5979 3322 **VMR361**

**VF9** Queenscliff  
Tel. 03 5258 2222 **VMR369**

**VF8** Geelong  
Tel. 03 5278 8440 **VMR368**

**VF10** Werribee  
Tel. 03 9742 1502 **VMR370**

**VF2** St. Kilda  
Tel. 03 9525 3714 **VMR362**

**VF5** Lake Eppalock  
Tel. 03 5439 2585 **VMR365**

**VF11** Lake Hume  
Tel.02 6026 4455 **VMR222**

**VF15** Mallacoota  
Tel. 0351580407

**VF16** Warrnambool  
Tel.03 5561 2615 **VMR817**

**VF17** Portland  
Tel. 03 5523 6111 **VMR2233**

**VF18** Lakes Entrance  
Tel. 03 5155 1601

**VF19** Port Albert  
Tel. 03 5183 2555 **VMR394**

**VF20** Port Welshpool  
Tel. 03 5688 1537 **VMR 392**

**VF21** Marlo  
Tel. 04 6708 5809

**VF22** Paynesville  
Tel. 03 5156 0106 **VMR815**

### SOUTH AUSTRALIA

**SAF10** Port Vincent  
Tel. 0419 852 382 **VMR555**

**SAF8** Port Augusta  
Tel. 0458574115 **VMR555**

**SAF6** O'Sullivan's Beach  
Tel. 08 8387 7632

**SAF1** North Haven  
Tel. 08 8248 4994

**SAF11** Kangaroo Island  
Tel. 08 8553 5135 Kingscote  
0488 933 809  
08 8553 5333 Emu Bay

Please notify any changes to:

[editor.nat@coastguard.com.au](mailto:editor.nat@coastguard.com.au)



# SEARCH AND RESCUE OPTICAL SYSTEMS

## GUIDE THERMAL IMAGING DEVICES

We have a range of Thermal Imaging products to satisfy many applications. Our hand held models are light and easy to use designed specifically for surveillance and search and rescue situations.

Thermal systems register the heat radiation from objects so what you see are true images of shapes be it people or boats etc in shades of white (hot) through to black (cold). Some models allow you to change this to black being hot and white being cold. Either way you will see an image graded from white to black depending on how much heat is being radiated from it. For example a body floating in the water would be easily seen at night providing it is alive and producing some heat. Unlike Night Vision Thermal can also be used in the daytime. It is not light sensitive as such. Another example is that a person who is completely surrounded by smoke due to a fire and cannot be seen with the naked eye will be seen with a Thermal Imager. Possible fire hazzard hot spots in boats can be detected easily and prepared for.

Prices start at \$3900  
For more information visit our web site or call us on the numbers below.  
Demonstrations can be arranged.



## PULSAR NIGHT VISION DEVICES

Unlike Thermal systems Night Vision devices are very sensitive to light. They need some light to operate be it star light, ambient light from the surroundings or a light source like an infrared torch. **THEY SHOULD NOT BE USED IN THE DAY.** They are particularly good at picking up reflections for example going into an unknown bay looking for an anchorage objects like partially submerged logs or rocks would be easily picked up providing there was some ambient light or you had an infrared light source. Most of our products have the IR light source already built in. In a Search and Rescue situation where a body was no longer alive and not producing heat a Night Vision device would be better than a Thermal device because it would pick up reflections coming from the clothes, exposed skin etc.

The optimum Search and Resuce Surveillance kit should include both Thermal amd Night Vision devices.  
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Demonstrations can be arranged.



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