

COAST GUARD

SPRING/SUMMER 2018



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COAST GUARD

The National Magazine of the Australian
Volunteer Coast Guard Association

SPRING/SUMMER 2018

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Photo: Harvey Shore.





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THE SUCCESSFUL ENTRIES FROM QF2, QF9 AND SAF1 WHICH WON BINOCULARS FROM EXTRAVISION IN OUR COMPETITION



Phil Smith in QF2's radio room, with the old pair of Bushnell binoculars to his right.

FIVE "VERY LARGE GENTS" IN A TINNIE SAVED BY AN OLD PAIR OF BINOCULARS

WHEN QF2's 'B' Roster assembled for duty on an overcast May day in 2018, they didn't expect a real Mayday to crop up so quickly.

The weather forecast wasn't looking good, and strong winds were forecast.

Forty-year Coast Guard veteran **Phil Smith** scanned Manly Boat Harbour with the old pair of Bushnell binoculars as he began duty in QF2's radio room and couldn't see any boats getting ready to put to sea.

Then he noticed five "very large gentlemen" loading rods and eskies into a very small tinnie at the nearby boat ramp.

He watched them crowd aboard and head into Moreton Bay.

Through his binoculars, Phil continued watching them as they motored some three nautical miles offshore and dropped anchor.

He drew the attention of his roster mates to the tinnie's low freeboard and predicted trouble ahead if the wind got worse.

Winner One from Harvey Shore at QF2 Brisbane



Over the next hour, the wind did get worse, and the sea grew choppy. Phil used his bins to check on the tinnie from time to time, and noted it was being pitched around. The fishermen weren't having much fun out there.

Another half-hour passed and, as the wind strength grew, Phil saw the fishermen haul in their anchor and start heading back

to Manly.

A few minutes later, Phil checked them again, and they were making progress through choppy seas towards Manly.

A few minutes later Phil checked again... and they were still making progress but the chop was getting worse.

A few minutes later, Phil lifted his bins to check their progress...and the fishermen's tinnie had disappeared!

Phil realised immediately the overloaded tinnie had been swamped in the worsening seas. A careful sweep with the bins revealed the overturned hull and people in the water.

Phil alerted the duty roster, who immediately sent a rescue boat to the spot. All five fishermen were rescued and brought ashore. Their overturned tinnie was also recovered.

So, all's well that ends well and the lives of five fishermen were saved that day thanks to Phil Smith and an old pair of binoculars.

Continued next page



WHERE'S THE VESSEL? HAVEN'T THE FOGGIEST

WINNING entry two was from South Australia's **Jack Djaic** who could have used a good pair of binoculars to see his rescue vessel. He says that on a **SAF1 North Haven** crew day, after lunch, the weather decided to stage one of its own plays, a phenomenon known as the sea fog.

"We were standing on the balcony of the radio room observing the launching ramp below and what was happening there when a thick, dense wall of fog started closing in from the sea towards the shore and as wide as the eye could see left and right.

"Within minutes our building was enveloped, we could feel the slight sting of moisture on our cheeks, while observing the volumes of moist air rushing onwards.

"The visibility reduced to less than a hundred metres, so much so that we could hardly see our *Nautic Star* at its mooring just in front of us. This is one of the times you need a good pair of binoculars!

The fog remained for about an hour and a half before clearing in the north-easterly direction only to promptly return and envelop us again for another couple of hours. The sun was courageously trying to penetrate through this fog but without success until eventually the fog decided to disperse on its own.

This sea fog phenomenon happens to be a rare but exotic natural occurrence worth experiencing – but from the safety of the shore, I would say.



AND THIS SHOE-IN FROM QF9 CAIRNS IS WINNER NO. THREE

FINALLY, a cheeky entry from **QF9 Commander Terry Spurrier**, along the lines of "a picture is worth a thousand words" won the third pair of binoculars.

Terry confided that he was sure this wasn't a good entry for the free binoculars "but I am sure the Harbour Master could have used a good pair of binoculars to see this vessel coming into port.

"The picture was sent to me from an old Merchant Navy colleague (now an Ocean Master) who was navigating into the Port of Scheveningen (The Hague) on the cable ship CS Sovereign after completing a repair of a submarine fibre-optic telecommunications cable."

THE prizes in our competition are the top of the line models with a close focusing range of 30m.

They were provided by Coast Guard supporter Extravision, a retail, wholesale importer and distributor of optical products and associated accessories. The company sells and repairs binoculars, telescopes, microscopes, rifle scopes, night vision, underwater cameras and more.

Hundreds of products are available on Extravision's website extravision.com.au and through their resellers.



NOW MARINE RESCUE IN QUEENSLAND GOES UNDER REVIEW BY THE STATE GOVERNMENT

IT'S BEEN a long time coming but the Queensland Government finally has announced a review of marine rescue services in the State in a move that has been welcomed by the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard.

The review was unveiled at the end of July by the **Minister for Fire and Emergency Services, Craig Crawford**, who said he had asked **QFES Commissioner Katarina Carroll** to review the operations of the state's marine rescue organisations.

AVCGA State Council Chairman Mike Vosti said Coast Guard has supported the establishment of a review of marine rescue services in Queensland since it was first mooted at a meeting of the Queensland Volunteer Marine Rescue Committee during 2017.

Even earlier, in 2012, Coast Guard and Volunteer Marine Rescue Queensland called for candidates in the State election to come to their rescue because they had been "abandoned."



Qld. State Council Chairman Mike Vosti.

A letter at the time, signed by **VMR president John Jacobsen** and Mike Vosti said government funding remained the same as in 1998 and units were finding it harder to cover increasing costs.

"Without financial assistance in the near future rescue bases will become unsustainable and be forced to close. As a result, lives will be lost and the police service will be required to increase their rescue capabilities," said the letter which



Qld. Minister for Fire and Emergency Services, Craig Crawford visiting QF11.

went on to say that neither of the two groups was recognised as an emergency service and no government body accepted responsibility for them, "but since 1998 there has been a continual imposition of government requirements on all aspects of our operations, resulting in increased costs and volunteers' time".

Commodore Vosti said "as yet we have seen no Terms of Reference for the review but have had an opportunity to comment and make suggestions on a Draft Terms of Reference. Other than that we have received no other information regarding the issues the review will examine nor the format it will take."

"Hopefully the review will be wide-ranging and will examine the chronic under-funding of the services, the confusion within government circles with the number of departments, both Commonwealth and Queensland who control and/or regulate our activities; the ever increasing administrative burden placed on our organisation by these regulators; and opportunities for AVCGA and VMRAQ to become involved in wider areas of disaster response and recovery."

Mr Crawford said the volunteers themselves were not under review and the focus of the review would be funding and how the services operate.

He said the government would consider boosting funding, based on the outcome of the review.

"What we want to look at is how can government best ensure Queenslanders remain safe," the minister said.

"Some of the main issues that we've found are the ownership of the assets, the ownership of the bank accounts, and also the buildings that they're in."

"Along with Queensland Fire and

Emergency Services, I value the contribution of the thousands of volunteers in the marine rescue environment, and I am committed to supporting the people who provide these valuable services to the community," Mr Crawford said.

"I have visited marine rescue bases up and down the coast, and volunteers have raised some very complex issues affecting service delivery in these locations.

"These issues have also been identified by both Australian Volunteer Coast Guard Association and Volunteer Marine Rescue Association Queensland.

"The Queensland Volunteer Marine Rescue Committee recently identified the potential need for a review of marine rescue in Queensland.

"Given those issues, I am of the view that there is scope for enhanced efficiency and effectiveness in the Queensland marine rescue environment.

"I want to ensure funding provided for blue water rescue services is delivering value to the Queensland community, and Commissioner Carroll shares my view that it's now time for an across-the-board review.

"I believe the most critical aspect of this state-wide review, will be for QFES to speak with volunteers in these marine rescue units, and get a real feel for what is going on," he said.



QFES Commissioner Katarina Carroll.

QFES supports Coast Guard and Volunteer Marine Rescue Association Queensland (VMRAQ) through service level agreements, which are due to expire on June 30, 2019.

Under these agreements, QFES annually provides AVCGA with \$1.5 million, and VMRAQ with \$1.7 million. There are 21 Coast Guard, and 26 VMR locations across Queensland.

"The review of marine rescue services will be completed prior to negotiations for new service agreements (June next year)," Mr Crawford said.

"I want to reiterate how much this Government values the services provided by marine rescue volunteers, from

Continued from previous page

Coolangatta to Cape York.

"Their contribution is very much appreciated, and we look forward to continuing to support them in their crucial role of protecting Queenslanders," he said.

Within days of announcing the review, the Minister and Commissioner Katarina Carroll announced that the review into the State's volunteer marine rescue organisations will be led by retired RAN **Commodore Campbell Darby** DSC AM who also is a retired Director-General of Emergency Management Australia.

Mr Crawford said Mr Darby "brought with him a wealth of knowledge" in relation to maritime safety, as well as significant experience in emergency management operational activities.

"Commissioner Carroll and I are extremely pleased that Mr Darby will oversee the review of volunteer marine rescue operations in Queensland waters," Mr Crawford said.

"The aim of the review is to ensure Queenslanders continue receiving the best service possible."

The wide-ranging review got underway at the end of September with Mr Crawford

saying the "first stage...will identify key policies impacting service delivery and search and rescue capability."

"Importantly, his review will involve regional stakeholder visits to help Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) better understand what is happening at a local, tactical level.

Commissioner Carroll said "Our thousands of volunteers who make up our marine rescue groups in Queensland, do an amazing job in ensuring our boats and those participating in various marine activities are kept safe and receive a helping hand if they do get into trouble."

"Queensland has the longest coast line within Australia that is actually serviced by our volunteer marine rescue groups, as they provide their blue water safety net up and down the coast, from Mornington Island right down to Coolangatta.

"As you can appreciate this is a vast area to cover and if we can identify through this review enhanced efficiencies and effectiveness on how our marine rescue groups in Queensland operate — we will be able to not only ensure our volunteers are better supported but the people of Queensland have a modernised and

improved emergency services capability on the water."

Meanwhile the *Cairns Post* reported that the Emergency Services Minister has not ruled out uniting Queensland's two separate marine rescue organisations under the same umbrella.

Mr Crawford said his department was looking at several options for the organisations and expected a decision would be made soon.

He said one option could include having marine rescue under the one umbrella, similar to the arrangement in New South Wales.

In 2009 the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard Association, RVCP and NSW Volunteer Rescue Association were combined as Marine Rescue NSW.

"So that is always the potential option," Mr Crawford told the newspaper. "Having two groups operating does create some confusion."

Mr Crawford said "Generally what I've found out there so far is the volunteers out there love what they do. They're not passionate about what the badge is on their shoulder."

THE MAN HEADING THE REVIEW

CAMPBELL Darby was raised on a wheat and cattle farm near Quirindi in Northern NSW and joined the Royal Australian Navy in 1973.

He undertook a variety of junior sea postings including time in New Guinea, in the UK for warfare officer training and in Royal Navy sea exchanges, and seagoing warfare jobs in HMAS ships.

Sea commands have included the Patrol Boat HMAS Ipswich, the Frigate HMAS Sydney and the Guided Missile Destroyer, HMAS Brisbane.

Senior staff positions included the director responsible for all junior officers' career management, Commander Sea Training responsible for operational standards at sea, and as a Captain in Maritime Headquarters responsible for all the RAN's fleet and aviation activities.

During 2002 he attended the Defence and Strategic Studies Course and was promoted to Commodore and appointed as Commandant of the Australian Command and Staff College on completion.

From November 2003 until June 2004 he commanded all Australian Forces in the Middle East area of operations from his headquarters based in Baghdad.

He was Commander Northern Command, and Deputy Commander, Border Protection Command before transferring to the Naval Reserves in 2007.

Upon leaving the Navy he retired briefly before taking up a position as Executive Director, Security and

Government Services, in the Northern Territory Department of the Chief Minister in July 2007.

He was responsible for managing security and emergency management strategic policy and coordination,



management of emergency recovery as the Territory Recovery Coordinator, as well as managing the protocol and Government House business units. He was also the Director of the NT Major Events Company.

He was invested as a Member of the Order of Australia in 2001, and in 2005 honoured with the award of a Distinguished Service Cross for his service in Iraq.

He joined the Federal Attorney-

General's Department in 2010 as Director General Emergency Management Australia.

In that role he was responsible for the coordination of Australia's response to crises, including natural disasters and to terrorist or security related incidents both domestically and internationally.

He managed the operational delivery and policy development of the natural disaster relief and recovery arrangements, and coordinated the delivery of protective security to Australia's holders of high office, events of special significance and to the diplomatic community within Australia.

He resigned as Director General in 2012.

Now semi-retired he seeks to share his experiences in national security and crises across the broad national security and disaster management communities so as to improve understanding, planning and preparedness in these areas.

His consulting work has involved him in national security and crisis management exercise facilitation, lecturing, mentoring and course development at the National Security College and undertaking reviews commissioned by a wide range of government departments (Attorney-Generals, Health, Infrastructure and Prime Minister and Cabinet).

When not consulting Campbell manages his beef cattle property and sails his cruising catamaran with his wife.



One man died while two swam for shore and one remained with the overturned boat.

ONE MAN DIES AND TWO HAVE LUCKY ESCAPE AFTER ABANDONING LIFE JACKETS

ONE fisherman died trapped under an overturned boat while his two mates almost lost their lives too after they abandoned their life jackets in a bid to swim to shore in Portland harbour in September.

The Standard's **Andrew Thomson** reported that **VF17 Portland** Coast Guard media officer **Stephen Brown**, who was on the rescue vessel during the event, said another fisherman who stayed with the overturned catamaran was crucial in the rescue.

He said the four men had enough time to put on their life jackets and call emergency services before the boat overturned after going down by the stern.

"It was an outstanding result to save three people," he said.

"It goes to show in a situation like that, that having a life jacket on and staying with the boat are the best options.

"They started with their life jackets on and two men took them off to try and swim to shore.

"They got 100 metres away from the boat and were fatigued."

Mr Brown said the 61-year-old man was unfortunately found entangled in the hull.

"He was trapped underneath the hull. All indications are he lost his life very early on, we think almost immediately," he said.

"That will only come out in the Coroner's court. The full information will come out in the autopsy and water police investigation."

Mr Brown said the fisherman who decided to stay with the overturned catamaran had provided invaluable assistance.

"We asked the person on the vessel were there any sounds or noises like banging on the hull. He said 'No'," he said.

"He was wet and hypothermic but was

able to keep tabs on the two in the water and also kept an eye out for the missing person.

"Once it was established there was a missing man and there had been no sounds, our priority was the other two people in the water."

Mr Brown said the fisherman with the boat knew where the two men were when the Coast Guard arrived.

"One was recovered in a very serious condition. We had the expertise of the ambulance officer who came out with us and another was dropped by the HEMS 4," he said.

"They were kept extremely busy dealing with the survivors. They were not stable

A paramedic is winched down from the HEMS 4 to check on the status of three people who were rescued from the water at Portland.



and water police made the decision to return to berth," he said.

The 18-foot catamaran overturned at popular fishing spot Dutton Way soon after 1130 hours.

Portland police Acting Senior Sergeant **Gavin Slade** said the deceased man was found under the boat at 1620 hrs.

There was a suggestion the missing man was under the catamaran early in the rescue operation.

"We don't work on suspicion. It was a theory. We didn't have right assets or people there to confirm that," Acting Senior Sergeant Slade said

"We confirmed that about five minutes after police divers went into the water. That's why they were brought in by the air wing.

"I had confirmation at 1620 hrs. That's the tyranny of distance," he said.

A water police spokesman said it took time for the divers to arrive at Portland.

"They were dispatched from Melbourne, there are no police divers in Port Fairy, Warrnambool or anywhere other than Williamstown," he said.

"They needed to be dispatched, need to get to the scene and then get out onto the water. That all took time," he said.

Acting Senior Sergeant Slade said the efforts of the Portland Coast Guard and Port Fairy Marine Rescue were outstanding.

Acting Senior Sergeant Slade said police, the HEMS 4 helicopter, ambulance, search and rescue police, police divers and water police were involved in the rescue.

"Unfortunately we still seem to be having marine incidents," he said.

"We encourage every person, on a calm or slightly rough day, to ensure they have a good communications system, that their boat is seaworthy, someone knows where they are going and they have all their safety equipment.

"People going out need to understand how the safety equipment works and where it is.



FIRST up a double tow for QF11's *Gormans Removals Rescue*.

WHEN THEY'RE QUEUING UP FOR A RESCUE IT'S TIME TO DOUBLE-UP OR EVEN TRIPLE

PRISTINE winter conditions off Queensland's Capricorn Coast resulted in some busy days and weekends for QF11 Yeppoon.

The flotilla was kept on their toes with lots of vessel rescues...some at the same time.

One Saturday afternoon, two vessels needed assistance within minutes of the other.

Rescuers arrived at Flat Island around 1535 hours to assist a 7m boat which had an engine break down.

At the same time a call was received to assist another broken down boat around 12nm south of Flat Island (which is nearly 50km from Great Keppel Island and sits around 20km north-east of Five Rocks.)

A nearby fisherman stood-by the second

vessel and even attempted to tow it, but was unable to reach a fast enough speed.

Gormans Removals Rescue reached the second vessel around 1647hrs and set up a dual tow line attached to the port and starboard sides.

One rope was kept longer than the other to keep the vessels apart.

All three boats arrived safely at Rosslyn Bay Harbour at 1846hrs after a long, slow tow at 9 knots.

The double tow was outdone on a Friday morning when a Marine Assist contributor in a 6m power boat with 3 POB requested assistance due to a breakdown 400m SE of Flat Island.

Gormans Removals Rescue (Skipper: **James Fleming**) departed Rosslyn Bay

Harbour at 1020 hrs, heading north at 20 knots.

However at 1140 hrs a call was received from another Marine Assist contributor in a 5m power boat with 1 POB which had broken down 500m NW of Perforated Island which is 6nm further north than the original destination.

Gormans was diverted and the second vessel was taken in tow at 1216 hrs.

The rescue vessel then headed back to Flat Island and took the first caller in tow at 1251 hrs.

Both boats were then towed back towards Rosslyn Bay Harbour at 11 knots.

Before this task was completed, a third call was received from a fisherman with 3 POB in a 5m boat that had run out of oil at a location NW of North Keppel Island.

As this was on the route home, when *Gormans* reached this vessel at 1430 hrs, it was rafted up alongside the rescue vessel, travelling at 9 knots for the remainder of the trip which was completed at 1600 hrs, after an operation lasting 5 hours and 40 minutes.

Next, a quad. with a double tow and a raft each side of the rescue vessel?

THEN....a triple with a double tow and a rafting.



\$500 online yacht purchase by totally inexperienced wannabe goes straight onto the mudflats

A YOUNG man with no idea how to sail his new yacht or any experience on the ocean was rescued from a Moreton Bay island, sparking a warning from Coast Guard.

The *Wynnum Herald's* **Damian Bathersby** reported that the man, aged in his early 20s, was rescued after his 7.5m vessel ran aground on mudflats on the south side of Fisherman's Island, just outside the mouth of the Brisbane River.

He had bought the "unregistered and almost derelict" vessel online for \$500 and was attempting to sail it to his Gold Coast home with no sailing skills, licence or maritime knowledge.

QF2 Brisbane Coast Guard spokesman, **Harvey Shore**, said running aground so close to land was the best outcome for the novice sailor, whose life was in danger from the moment he set sail.

Had he continued heading out to sea as he planned, he would have been a serious danger to himself and other sailors.

"He had no idea what he was doing—he just sailed out of the river and turned



The "almost derelict" yacht sits in Manly Boat Harbour after its young owner became stranded in Moreton Bay.

south," Mr Shore said.

"The motor conked out and the southeast winds blew him onto the shallow mudbanks."

But with no radio or navigational equipment, the young man had to rely on his mobile phone to call for help.

"He rang 000, who put him onto the Water Police but when they asked him where he was, he said he had no idea," Mr Shore said.

"So they got a rough triangulation on his phone and alerted us.

"We went looking for him and eventually found him and towed him back to shore.

"He had absolutely no idea what he was doing, so he was very lucky that things turned out the way they did."

Mr Shore said the young man didn't know all vessels with engines over 3 kilowatts or four horsepower had to be registered and all skippers who operate vessels with engine power over 4.5 kilowatts, or six horsepower, needed a marine licence.

"He didn't know that small vessels like his need basic equipment to operate even

in smooth waters when less than half a nautical mile from shore and that skippers

are responsible for ensuring their vessels are safe, properly equipped and maintained and operated in a safe manner."

QF2 Commander Steve Fleming said it was an important lesson for any young people who loved boats.

"Before you buy a boat and go to sea, get a marine survey and a boat licence," he said. "You'll end up saving money, and maybe even your life."

NO RADIO; OUT OF DATE EPIRB WITH A FLAT BATTERY...AND THE TINNY'S SINKING

OUR crew had just settled in for the morning briefing when we received a shout from the radio room that a vessel was sinking with 2 POB, reports **QF6 Mooloolaba's Nev Collins**.

We quickly put to sea with only a vague description of its location of 11 nautical miles south east of Point Cartwright. The target vessel was a 4.2 metre aluminium tinny, which had no radio and only a mobile phone for communication.

A small boat to locate in a large ocean, but he was said to be slowly making his way back towards Mooloolaba while bailing at the same time.

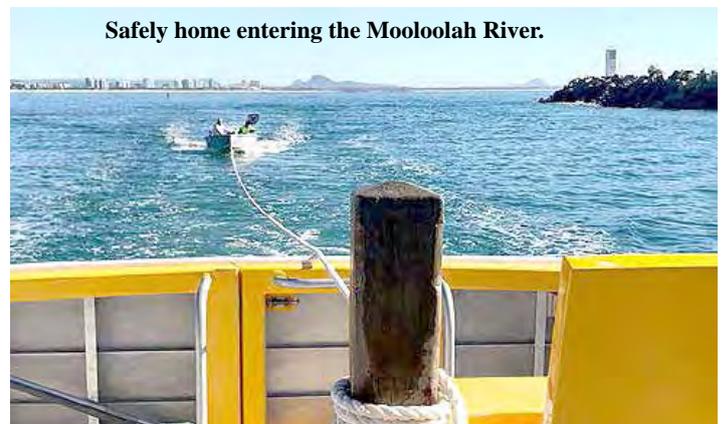
While proceeding at best speed to the area, we had all available crew on lookout, as well as using the radar to locate any sign of the vessel.

Our efforts to contact him by phone were met with "please leave a message". We now did not know if we were looking for a boat or if it had sunk and we were looking for two persons floating in the water.

A radio message came through that the police had been able to contact them and that they had been told to activate their EPIRB. Ah that was good news, for we have a radio direction finder on our boat and now we would be able to go straight to them using the EPIRB's transmission.

However, this effort proved futile as no signal was being received by us. As it later turned out, no signal was being received by AMSA in Canberra either, even though there were satellites overhead at the time. We continued on our original course.

Sometime later, an orange distress flare was seen at some distance away on our port side. We quickly altered course and made straight for it. The vessel was soon located still afloat much



Safely home entering the Mooloolah River.

to the relief of both crews.

We passed over a bilge pump to help keep them afloat and secured a tow line to start the trip home. The bilge pump was more than able to keep up with the inflow of water and the return trip was uneventful.

During the time that both vessels were side by side, we noted that their EPIRB aerial had not been deployed and that it had not been floating in the water. It needs the water to act as a signal reflector to the satellite to be wholly effective.

However, we subsequently found out a further reason for no signal was that the EPIRB was two years out of date and had a flat battery.

Well, there were a couple of lessons there. Check all your gear for serviceability. Electronic equipment on the water needs special attention. If your mobile phone is your only form of communication, install a free App. that gives your Latitude and Longitude. Should you be the one that needs our assistance, it can make our job so much easier to find you knowing your exact position.

Before proceeding to sea all skippers should check their equipment serviceability, and ensure that all relevant safety equipment such as EPIRBs, flares and inflatable lifejackets are within their expiry dates.



QF2's Allan Tennent inspects the wrecked Bay Cruiser after the storm.

JUST ANOTHER BOAT IN THE WALL IN BRISBANE

It was a classic dark and stormy night.

The wind was howling over 30 knots (55kph), whipping the sea into a frenzy.

QF2 Brisbane radio watchkeepers **Mark Sherwood** and **Robert Garnham** were nearing the end of an uneventful night shift when their phone suddenly rang.

On the line was a very frightened man,

By Harvey Shore

claiming his Bay Cruiser had broken down and was being blown towards the rocks.

Its anchor wasn't holding and, with three women aboard, he feared for their lives.

He didn't know exactly where he was, but he gave a hurried GPS location.

QF2 crewmen pull the Elliott clear of Manly's rock wall.



The watchkeepers contacted QF2 Training Officer **Allan Tennent**, who checked the GPS location and realised it was wrong. When Allan tried calling the distressed vessel back, the skipper's phone didn't answer.

With 35 years Search and Rescue experience, Allan quickly estimated the cruiser's most likely location, and raced there in a rescue boat.

His estimate proved accurate, but the cruiser had already struck the Port of Brisbane rock wall and began sinking.

Luckily, all aboard managed to scramble ashore with only minor injuries. The boat, however, was a total loss.

Another QF2 crew had better luck when an Elliott 6-metre yacht was also caught in strong winds and blown towards Manly Boat Harbour's rocky entrance.

The Elliott's skipper had two inexperienced adults and two young children aboard.

They were helpless to prevent a collision when the wind suddenly pushed them towards the rocks.

Luckily, their unfolding drama was spotted by QF2 skipper **Paul Burchell**, whose duty crew raced to assist.

Paul's crew managed to secure a line to the yacht before just before it struck the rocks and were able to drag the Elliott clear of danger, and bring her crew safely ashore.

Paul Burchell said, "Saving the boat AND her crew is always the best outcome for all Coast Guard volunteers."

WE THANK YOU

To the Australian Volunteer Coast Guards, we thank you. For the important role in the safety of mariners around our great coastline. Century Batteries is grateful to each and every one of you.



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CE123-2553



CALL THAT A RESCUE VESSEL? THIS IS A RESCUE VESSEL... AND A TROOP TRANSPORT AND IT'S A FIRE FIGHTING BOAT TOO

OUR latest acquisition, value approx \$300,000, is up and operational and clocking-up the hours.

We first set our sights on this vessel about three years ago when I became Commander of VF22 Paynesville.

It was owned by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning

**By Jeffrey J Williams
Commander VF22 Paynesville**

at Bairnsdale and was virtually lying dormant in the Paynesville Marina, going out maybe a couple of times a year to check the nesting colonies of Little Terns near



Ocean Grange as well as the rare spot of water testing for algae blooms.

It was designed as a fire-fighting and troop transport vessel, powered by a Yanmar diesel turbo coupled to a Hamilton Jet and was originally located on the Dartmouth Dam.

A far sighted DELWP man by the name of Kevin Giblin saw the possibilities for it on the Gippsland Lakes and set about getting it.

It was supposed to be a multi-agency support vessel for whatever emergency service needed it but it never really happened.

Anyway, we set about getting it and we got a lot of understanding smiles and nods and "Oh yes we must do that," but nothing happened.

After a boat fire at Paynesville burnt a 35 foot timber vessel to the water line, I by-passed everybody and went to the Minister which yielded immediate results in getting us the use of the vessel, but I didn't endear myself to the DELWP all that much.

We were out one night going to a moored sinking vessel at Duck Arm and half-way across the lake it staggered to a stop.

Smoke and steam issuing from the engine room but no alarms went off anywhere. (I know, I was at the helm!!!)

The end result was a tow back in from CG22 and a seized motor. We smiled at DELWP and handed them their boat back (not happy).

All of a sudden there was renewed impetus from DELWP for us to have the vessel and we applied for a grant to replace the motor and got it.

The vessel was transferred to us, we put in a new motor \$45,000, sign-writer commissioned and voila, CG222 is born.

Oh by the way, a MOU in place between us and DELWP says that it must remain at Paynesville so no-one can pinch it or re-assign it.

Please feel free to come and visit or even come down for a running of the Marley Point Overnight Yacht Race on a Labor Day weekend. We will get you a shift or two on our rescue flotilla. Or you could come down for the Paynesville Wooden Boat Festival the first weekend in March and stay for the Marley Point Race.

I would have loved to have had it finished in time for the blessing of the fleet at Frankston. (I can imagine all the, "what the hell is that?") Maybe next year?

Best wishes to you from all here at Coast Guard Paynesville.

P.S. They gave me a lovely Spirit of CFA award for inter-departmental co-operation for stealing this boat. Hehe!

NOW QF8 IMPROVES ITS SMALLER RESCUE VESSEL'S SEA SAFETY

QF8 TOWNSVILLE'S primary rescue vessel *Rotary Rescue* had the Raymarine Life Tag man-over-board alarm system installed when the vessel was built in 2010.

Two and a half years ago, when it came time to replace the Life Tag system, QF8 approached **Seabourne Electronics**, a local marine electronics company, for a solution.

Seabourne Electronics recommended the **Marine Rescue Technologies** sMRT SOLAS 150N Personal Floatation Device (PFD) fitted with the sMRT V100 Personal Location Beacon (PLB).

After successful trials, QF8 ordered 10 complete PFD fitted with the PLB to be carried on *Rotary Rescue*.

These twin chambered SOLAS PFDs automatically inflate within 2 seconds after immersion.

The submersion in water or inflation of the vest activates the V100 PLB within 2 seconds and begins transmission within 10 seconds, a 20-candela strobe light starts flashing to attract attention.

The V100 PLB initially transmits a Digital Selective Calling (DSC) alarm including a Global Positioning System (GPS) location that is received by all DSC capable VHF marine radios within a 15nm radius on the sea surface.

At the same time, it places an Automatic Identification System (AIS) target on AI- capable GPS plotter screens.

Acquiring these PFDs and PLBs significantly enhanced crew safety on *Rotary Rescue*.

In August 2017 QF8 enjoyed a visit from **Ryan Pettit** and **James Garbutt** from Marine Rescue Technologies in England.

QF8's Deputy Flotilla Commander **John Wratten** and Vessel's Quartermaster **Kevin Sloane** hosted the visit from Ryan and



James.

During the visit, QF8 was informed of a new PFD which still accommodates the V100 PLB but would be more suited to use on board QF8's smaller inshore rescue vessel *Aurora Xstrata* (Above).

This new PFD is the sMRT 150N Compact PFD and as mentioned it still accommodates the V100 PLB but in a compact design which makes storage in tight spaces easier.

QF8 Townsville ordered 5 of these PFDs for use on board *Aurora Xstrata* and to our delight, Marine Rescue Technologies has donated them.

QF8 highly recommends the equipment from Marine Rescue Technologies to significantly enhance the safety of rescue vessel crews.

Ryan Pettit has made available more units for donation to Australian Volunteer Coast Guard flotillas on the same basis as QF8 and would welcome any enquiries.

Initial contact regarding the Marine Rescue Technologies equipment can be made directly to Ryan Pettit, Chief Operations Officer.

Email: ryanp@mrtsos.com

Phone: +61 (0) 8 9315 3511

We take the SEARCH out of Search and Rescue



Manufacturer and distributor of tailor made solutions for Australian Coast Guard Flotillas



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For more details contact Ryan Pettit:

Tel: +61 (0)8 9315 3511

Australian Volunteer Coast Guard

15



Up on the hard in the middle of the night.

VF15 GETS PORT AND STARBOARD BACK ONTO THE OCEAN AFTER A TIMELY TUG

AT 0200 hours on a Saturday morning **VF15 Mallacoota** received a distress call from the 38 ft yacht *Swags*.

In the dark she had tried to enter Mallacoota Port and had inevitably run up on the beach, the entrance having been closed for the previous six months.

She had set out from Hastings and having

Afloat again thanks to VF15 Mallacoota.

rounded Wilsons Prom, had proceeded up the coast until her 72-year old skipper made the fateful decision to try to enter our lake system.

Surf Life Saving were contacted and their all terrain vehicle was made available should transport along the beach be required.

Meanwhile one of the chaps had walked along the beach to the stricken yacht where he came upon the rather damp and distressed skipper.

While chatting, a mobile phone ring seemed to emanate from his person.

“Oh that’s my crew,” said the skipper and, opening his coat, revealed two parrots, one red the other green.

Their names were of course **Port** and **Starboard**.

Arriving at Bastion Point the SLS Medical Officer gave the skipper a quick check up.

He was then taken to the Coast Guard radio base at Melaleuca Grove and treated to a hot shower, dry clothes, a tot of rum and a good bed.

A cage was even found for his parrots.

During this time a crew for our rescue vessel *Dick York* was being scrambled and dispatched at first light to assess the situation and see if there was any hope of refloating *Swags*.

At 38 foot and 12 ton the job was best suited to a tug from Eden however with a 1.6 meter high tide due at 0700 hours and a favorable sea VF15 considered themselves a

chance to refloat her.

And so it turned out, as *Dick York* with great finesse, patience and timely power surges managed to coax the wayward *Swags* off the sand into deep water, the Surf Life Saving inflatable having first been invaluable in attaching tow ropes.

The usual scenario in such a situation is the total loss of the vessel and without doubt the easy co-operation between our emergency services was a key factor in such a successful outcome.

By 0900 hours amazingly, *Swags* was reunited with her skipper and parrot crew and headed for Eden.

Port and Starbord recover from their ordeal.



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WHEN QUALITY AND RELIABILITY COUNTS**

NAIAD DESIGN BOATS – 4WD OF THE SEA

Yamba Welding obtained an exclusive licence from Naiad to build in New South Wales, Queensland and Northern Territory as well as Pacific Islands in November 2010.

The vessels features

Aluminium plate construction

Deep Vee Performance hull with variable deadrise

Air filled or Foam filled buoyancy tubes with heavy duty Polyurethane outer cover

10 times the strength of hypalon

Pontoons are mechanically attached for easy maintenance

Utilising the new NMSC approved buoyancy foam under floor compartments to give Level Flotation; and full compliance for Survey

Extensively used by police, defence, rescue authorities, marine research and commercial operators

Noted for soft and comfortable riding and capability of maintaining high cruising speeds in rough conditions.



9.0m Naiad - AVCG Noosa QF5



11.3m Naiad - VMR Bribie Island

PATROL BOATS – MONO HULL AND CAT HULL

Specialising in Aluminium Patrol Boats designed & built to suit Australian Conditions
Working with Naval Architects to customise for clients requirements



10.2m Naiad - AVCG Caloundra QF4



6.8m Ocean Cylinder® - Marine Rescue NSW



**PROUDLY SUPPORTING
VOLUNTEERS IN THE MARINE
RESCUE ORGANISATIONS.**



YWE has been building for **Queensland Police, Queensland National Parks, NSW RMS and Marine Rescue NSW.**

Yamba Welding also has contracted with the **Australian Federal Police** to build a 9.5m Naiad.

YWE then has a large patrol vessel to build with another organisation... so they are running out of room to build.

Great Keppel Island is powered by three 350hp Yamaha outboards giving it a maximum speed of over 50 knots.

NAIADs are known for their smooth handling in rough conditions, making them ideal for law enforcement operations.

Peter Dutton, Federal Minister for Home Affairs and Border Protection, noted that Australian Border Force vessels have already seized large quantities of cocaine and methamphetamine from yachts and fishing vessels in the last 12 months.

“Our maritime capability is doing a great job,” he said, “but we continue to see organised crime syndicates using our waterways in their attempts to bring dangerous drugs across our border.”

So, in addition to stationing the new vessels in ports and harbours around Australia, the ABF has also created ‘Border Watch’, a group similar to Crime Stoppers.

ABF staff say nothing beats local knowledge and local eyes, and they’re hoping regular waterways users like Coast Guard volunteers will assist them by watching for suspicious activity.

Border Force comes alongside with its new Yamba-built boat

THE Australian Border Force (ABF) is now working alongside **QF2 Brisbane** in Manly Boat Harbour, reports **Harvey Shore**.

The ABF Marine Unit has stationed one of its new NAIAD 12m Patrol Boats next to QF2’s 10m Rescue Vessel *CG-20*, by the harbour mouth.

ABF technicians have installed cameras at QF2 to keep watch on the new vessel.

The new NAIAD, named *Great Keppel Island*, was built earlier this year by

Coast Guard sponsor **Yamba Welding & Engineering**, whose CEO **Bill Collingburn** said his company won a multi-million-dollar Federal Government contract to build eight NAIAD RIBS (four 12-metre boats and four 5.4-metre boats worth \$5.4m.) over the next two years.

QF4 Caloundra and **QF5 Noosa** were way ahead of them in buying Yamba-built Naiads, not to mention other marine rescue organisations that have ordered **Naiad** design boats in either mono hull or cat hull.

While the Men in Black prove you’re gonna need a bigger boat...or just a faster one

MEANWHILE **QF17 Tin Can Bay’s Julie Hartwig** reports the flotilla received a visit from the “Men in Black”, aka, the new police boat from Brisbane Water Police.

The weekend duty crew were invited on board for a look around and were impressed with what they saw.

Valued at over \$1 million, the sinister-looking black RIB (devoid of Police markings) looks like something out of a James Bond movie.

Needless to say, technical details were a bit thin on the ground, but there were three 350hp outboards hanging off the back of the 40ft vessel and it was tricked out with an impressive array of electronic gadgetry.

It would appear that if you’re going to stray into the murky side of life on the water, you’re going to need a bigger boat to get away from these guys!





The overturned tinny at the foot of cliffs after drifting there during the night with the two men clinging to it.

LUCKY ESCAPE FOR TWO MEN AFTER THEIR BOAT CAPSIZES IN AN UNKNOWN POSITION

TWO fishermen had a lucky escape on Queensland's Capricornia Coast after their boat capsized in an unknown location.

Rescue authorities were alerted after the men made a brief call by mobile phone to a friend in Mount Isa.

When the boat capsized their mobile phone was lost and they had no other means of communication.

QF24 Thirsty Sound conducted a night-time search on water for the two fishermen but were unable to find them as the location provided was incorrect.

The initial search was terminated by the police and the men were eventually located the next morning at the northern end of Quail Island after an extensive search by the Capricorn Helicopter Rescue Service after clinging to their overturned boat all night.

Crews winched both men off the island near Stanage Bay and airlifted them to Rockhampton Hospital for more treatment.

Ironically they were at the location searched the previous night by the Coast Guard but the fishermen had drifted there later from a more southerly location during the night.

Thirsty Sound Flotilla Commander **Barry Williams** said that if he had been provided with a more precise location, the overnight ordeal for the men could possibly have been avoided.

QF11 Yeppoon Deputy Commander **John Tait** said that on a previous occasion, a kayaker had been able to transmit the

latitude and longitude of her position after her craft was swamped, using SMS from a mobile phone in a plastic bag.

This made a successful rescue possible as it was difficult to spot such a small target in rough seas.



The rescue helicopter's search track.

He said that calls direct to the emergency services were much more effective because they avoid the possibility of delays and errors in transmission.

Unfortunately there are many cases when the Coast Guard receives calls from friends or relatives to request a rescue, which

often makes the location of the emergency difficult to determine.

Barry Williams said that it was disappointing that boaties head out without making use of the free trip monitoring service provided by the Coast Guard.

A single phone or radio call is all that is required to dramatically improve the chances of a successful rescue.

He urged boaties to take the following precautions before leaving shore:

- Find out what rescue services operate in your area

- Store the phone numbers for 000 and Coast Guard or Volunteer Marine Rescue in your mobile phone.

- Place your mobile phone in a waterproof bag.

- Check the VHF radio channels that are used in your area – Emergency Channel 16 plus a local working channel.

- Download the Emergency + app on your mobile phone – this free Government app will enable you to give your latitude and longitude to the 000 operator or Police.

- Ensure that your distress beacon is current and registered – mandatory in open waters and advisable elsewhere.

- Check that your flares are current and in a container that will float.

- Call the local Coast Guard or Volunteer Marine Rescue unit and provide your trip details so that they know where to search for you and what to look for in case of an emergency.

The Emergency + app is strongly recommended for travellers on sea or land as it enables the person needing help to provide an accurate location to the 000 operator or Police in the event of an emergency.

<http://emergencyapp.triplezero.gov.au/>



NEW PONTOON PROVES TO BE A SAFE PLATFORM FOR ASSISTS AS WELL AS BERTHING VESSELS

PONTOON extensions at Weinam Creek have enabled **QF7 Redland Bay** to dispatch rescue boats quicker and bring assists home much safer.

The \$60,000 upgrades were finished earlier in the year but the pontoon's official opening was celebrated alongside the base's radio room upgrades, reported the *Redland City Bulletin*.

Coast Guard volunteer **Keith Neven** said ergonomic furniture was installed in the room to ensure operators did not risk back strains during their 11 hour shifts.

More radio equipment was also purchased thanks to \$3000 given to the group by Redland City mayor **Karen Williams** at the opening.

Mr Neven said new radio gear would help the group tap into another channel for clearer communication between the base and rescue boats.

He said other frequencies could sometimes become clogged by users, which stopped talk between the group's members.

The pontoon's extension secured more than \$20,000 in federal funding about two years ago via Bowman MP **Andrew Laming's** Shark Tank grants initiative.

The remainder of the cost was taken from money raised by Coast Guard.

Australian Volunteer Coast Guard 20

The lengthened pontoon has space for Redland Bay Coast Guard's three boats, which means ramp launches are no longer required.

Mr Laming helped to cut the pontoon's ribbon during the ceremony. (Photo above.)



The damaged vessel on the new pontoon behind the rescue vessel.

Other special guests included marine rescue volunteers, personnel from Queensland Fire and Emergency Services and Queensland Police and Redlands MP **Kim Richards**, who delivered a speech

praising the group.

The lengthened pontoon proved its worth after a woman was taken to hospital with a suspected broken nose after the boat she was travelling in hit a beacon.

It is understood the woman was flung forward and hit her face during impact, which happened about 2000 hours near the mouth of the Logan River.

The woman was treated by paramedics on a Redland Bay Coast Guard vessel before the boat was towed to Weinam Creek marina.

A Queensland Ambulance Service spokesperson said she was later transported to Mater Hospital in a stable condition.

Redland Bay Coast Guard operations officer **Warren Francis**, who co-ordinated the rescue from ashore, said crew worked quickly to get paramedics to the damaged boat, with fears it may have been sinking.

He said one of the damaged boat's four occupants contacted Coast Guard with reports that impact with the beacon may have caused a hole.

"The vessel suffered significant damage and was monitored for the return trip home," Mr Francis said.

"The upgraded pontoon (at Weinam Creek) proved very useful and a much safer platform in providing this assistance."

CLUB MARINE WINNING EVEN MORE ACCOLADES & AWARDS

COAST Guard sponsor and insurer **Club Marine**, Australia's largest provider of boat and pleasure craft insurance, continues to win accolades.

Club Marine was a finalist in the 15th **Australian Insurance Industry Awards** in the 2018 Underwriting Agency of the Year category, also won the **Auscontact Association Excellence – Change Innovation & Improvements Victoria** award, and is a finalist for **People Champion Victoria and Best Talent Victoria**.

To top it off, Club Marine made the *Australian Financial Review's* **2018 Most Innovative Companies List**, which ranks the most innovative organisations in Australia and New Zealand and is the only national cross-industry list of its kind.

Administered by The Australian and New Zealand Institute of Insurance and Finance (ANZIIF), the Underwriting Agency of the Year award recognises an Australian underwriting agency that has demonstrated excellent technical skills, strong underwriting results and outstanding client service between January 1 and December 31, 2017.

Submissions were judged against the following criteria: structure, strategy and objectives, members, products and what uniqueness, claims management support for customers, including response to Cyclone Debbie, customer satisfaction measured by Net Promoter Score (NPS), complaints monitoring and customer reviews, financial results, employee engagement, learning & development, industry, customer and philanthropic support evidenced through Club Marine's significant contribution to the industry, sponsorships and events.

Club Marine CEO **Simon McLean** said: "Being accepted as a finalist is a great accolade for the entire Club Marine team. Their dedication to improving the services we offer to our members and partners has been instrumental in putting Club Marine in the strong position we are in today.

"Our passion is boating and every day we strive to offer the best possible 'Club Marine experience' to our members and business partners when they need us the most. A lot of focus and hard work has gone into continually improving our core



Club Marine CEO Simon McLean. services, while also providing ways to make boating safer and more enjoyable for our members."

The Auscontact Association awards recognise outstanding achievements across a number of categories in Australia's professional customer-contact industry. Club Marine is a state finalist in two categories and scored the top accolade in



Alyna Underwood, Miriam McLean, Trent Harper, Nora Watkins, Tim Wiles, and Daniel Harrison of Oracle Corporation Australia_2000

one:

Change Innovation & Improvements, Victoria (Winner) – Club Marine Insurance

People Champion Victoria (Finalist) – Alyna Underwood

Best Talent Victoria (Finalist) – Club Marine Insurance

Mr McLean says the accolades confirm the business's commitment to ensuring a high-quality customer experience across all customer touchpoints is a success.

"As an insurer, it's vital that we're in a strong position to assist our members when they need us the most," says McLean. "It's equally important that the member experience is easy and enjoyable from the first point of contact onward – which is why we made several significant changes to our Sales and Service Contact Centre in October 2017.

"I am delighted the team has been recognised for their hard work and achievements, and am pleased this new part of our organisation has added a valuable service that has been eagerly received by our members and the boating public."

Club Marine was ranked within the top 100 most innovative companies from over 1000 nominated organisations across Australia and New Zealand.

According to the judges, companies on the list have earned their position as leading innovators within their respective industries.

"Improving the member experience and value we deliver is always top of mind, so having the right people and processes in place to identify and implement change is key," said Club Marine CEO Simon McLean.

"Making the Top 100 Most Innovative Companies List means that we are performing well above the industry average, particularly within the insurance category."

"Recognising and celebrating innovation at Club Marine is an important part of our culture and good ideas come from all parts of the business.

"Focussing on the implementation of quality ideas that realise benefits for members and staff is at the heart of what we do and all members of staff are encouraged to contribute.

"On behalf of everyone at Club Marine, I'm proud that we've been recognised for the many new initiatives we've implemented as we continually focus on improving our membership

experience," said McLean.

The AFR's announcement coincided with the launch of Club Marine's Member Rewards Program, which delivers exclusive benefits to members via special discounts and offers provided by a number of prominent marine businesses.

Introduced to the boating public at the Sydney International Boat Show, the Member Rewards Program is a first for a marine insurer in Australia in terms of the size and scope of the program.

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Above and below: *Coast Guard 2* tows the Caloundra Cruise vessel and twelve passengers back to its pontoon..

DISABLED CRUISE BOAT AND PASSENGERS RESCUED

AT 1600 hours QF4 Caloundra received a call to assist a Caloundra Cruise vessel that had become entangled with mooring lines attached to a dredge vessel moored off Golden Beach, close to the permanent mooring of a local vessel.

The cruise vessel had no steerage as the dredge lines had wrapped around their propeller.

They had deployed an anchor from their stern, and were holding the stern into a strong outgoing tide. The vessel had been in this position for some time until the call was made to QF4 for assistance.

The call went out to the duty crew, Echo, and they assembled at base. The crew consisted of **Alan Hingston, Glen Wall, Kay Kirwan, Maree Lynch and Trevor Lynch.**

As it was the bottom of the tide, the decision was taken to launch *Coast Guard 2*, as it was the most suitable vessel to assist the cruise boat back to its berth at Pelican Waters Tavern.

On arriving on scene, the cruise boat was found to contain its crew and approximately

**Words Alan Hingston
Photos Joe Allen**

12 paying passengers, who were happy to see *Coast Guard 2* coming to help them.

With a strong outgoing tide flowing and the vessel moored stern into this tide, the decision was made to come alongside with *Coast Guard 2's* bow into the strong tide.

When moored alongside, the tow rope was attached, and with lines still attached, the rescue vessel moved forward to allow the crew on the cruise boat to let go their buoyed anchor.

As our vessel moved forward, the cruise boat fell astern attached to a short tow line. This tow line was required, due to the close proximity of both the anchored dredge and a permanently moored vessel.

With the tow underway, the decision was made to put the disabled vessel in a beam tow when we reached the vicinity of the Power Boat Club and the crew made lines ready for this.

Unfortunately, when we approached the entrance to the canal, the wind proved too

strong to control the disabled vessel, which has a very large cabin with a viewing deck on top that creates a large windage area.

A decision was taken to proceed with the short tow into the canal and under the road bridge.

When reaching the open area in the canal, a beam tow was effected. This operation was difficult to undertake as the wind was still very strong, making it difficult to control the disabled vessel.

The lack of suitable cleats onboard the cruise vessel also made it difficult for the crew on *Coast Guard 2* to tie off.

After some excellent work by our crew, the distressed vessel was eventually manoeuvred under the second road bridge and with instructions from our crew, the distressed vessel was returned to its pontoon at the Tavern and safely moored.

After being verbally thanked by both passengers and crew we returned to our base, and our vessel was retrieved, washed down and rehooused ready for service again.

“As the skipper of *Coast Guard 2*, I would like to congratulate all the crew and the radio operator who took part in this assist for their performance and the professional way in which they presented themselves during a very difficult assist; a credit to QF4. All the training has paid off.”





The *Faysea G* waits patiently with broken steering.



Arriving at the *Seadar Bay*, 35nm at sea, ahead of a six hour tow.

TWO LARGE TRAWLER ASSISTS IN JUST THREE DAYS AT QF6 MOOLOOLABA

By Ian Hunt

WITH a large fishing fleet at Mooloolaba, QF6 often will get a call for assistance from a trawler.

However, getting two in three days is a bit unusual.

On a winter Sunday crew day we had the vessels open and were preparing our training program for the day—or so we thought.

At 0730 hours we got a call from the radio operator that a trawler had nets tangled around its propellers and needs assistance from 35 nautical miles North East of Mooloolaba.

Well an actual assist is better than doing training assists with the smaller rescue vessel *Rotary III*, so we got ready with extra supplies and departed at 0810 hrs for an expected 10 hour assist.

About three hours later we arrived at the vessel *Seadar Bay*, threw them our heaving line with the towline attached and then proceeded the slow tow back to Mooloolaba at 6 knots.

Six hours later we arrived back at Mooloolaba and realised that we would have to raft up *Seadar Bay* in the bay outside the river to safely get it back to its berth.

With **Ray Rahn** on the helm and **Steve Doulgeris** as the deck supervisor, this was quickly done, before entering the Mooloolah River and docking at the trawler berth.

At 1730 hrs we docked and closed down *Mooloolaba Rotary Rescue* after a long but satisfying assist.

Three days later, on Wednesday, I got a call that the 20 metre trawler *Faysea G* was anchored in the bay and unable to return to its berth due to broken steering.

A crew was called and we Australian Volunteer Coast Guard

assembled at QF6 for the second trawler assist in three days.

However, two slight complications. We have to wait a while until high water due to *Faysea G*'s draft and there is another trawler at the refuelling dock where they want to put *Faysea G*.

Eventually we arrived at the trawler and this time with **Steve Doulgeris** on the helm and **Ray Rahn** acting as deck supervisor we set up a short tow, entered the river until adjacent to QF6 and rafted *Faysea G* to *Mooloolaba Rotary Rescue*, ready to berth the trawler at the allocated time the fuelling dock would be free.

Well Murphy's Law struck and the departing trawler was behind schedule, so we sat in the river for almost half-an-hour until we were able to dock the

Alongside *Seadar Bay*. Large trawlers bring a whole new meaning to rafting.



Faysea G under short tow.

trawler.

After three hours we were back at QF6 closing down after another successful trawler mission. Well done to the crews who took part in both of these assists.



DOCKING WITH A CRUISE SHIP AT NIGHT

ABOUT 2130 hours on a Friday night the Water Police informed QF6 Mooloolaba that the cruise ship *Pacific Aria* had a severely ill person on board and wanted QF6 to medivac the person from the ship to hospital.

The ship had left Brisbane earlier in the evening and had now turned back and would meet with us off Mooloolaba around 2300 hours.

A crew was organised, which also included two ambulance officers who would accompany us.

Having been involved with two prior evacuations at night from large ships, my immediate thought was that this would not be an easy job.

Apart from the solid 20 knot South Easterly blowing, there was a large left-over swell from a cyclone that had only just started to move away from the area.

With ambulance personnel aboard, who were not enjoying the conditions, we made a rendezvous with the ship five nautical miles East of Point Cartwright.

The ship asked us to move close down their side in order to assess our gunwale height and ascertain which was the best docking port to use for the attempted evacuation.

I asked the captain to steer 220 degrees at 4 to 5 knots to provide some lee but eventually they opted for a docking port on their port side and so directed their vessel on a reciprocal course, but advised us that their regulations did not allow the ship to be moving when the selected port was opened and so they held the heading with the ship stationary.

The docking station was only approximately 3 metres long at our gunwale height with two posts that extended to water level at each end.

We managed to come alongside and get a bow and stern line from the ship to us, but we were crashing heavily into the posts of the dock, particularly before the lines were made taut to hold us in position.

The language barrier of the Filipino crew who took instructions from their boss, who in turn spoke with the ship's officers and then to us, did not make this process any easier and certainly not quicker.

Once secured, but still crashing heavily against

By Rod Ashlin

the portal, there was a long delay in getting the patient down to the evacuation area and I reminded the officers present that this was causing considerable damage to our vessel.

Eventually the female patient, who was a suspected stroke victim, was passed down to us in a stretcher and this was followed by her husband and their luggage.

With some difficulty, we were able to draw away from the ship's side, received the thanks of the Captain and applause from the passengers who had a ringside seat for this added entertainment, and we headed back to Mooloolaba with the ship continuing on its originally intended course.

Back on our dock, the patient was taken off and placed in the waiting ambulance and taken to hospital.

We were not informed, but we believe there was a good outcome for the patient and her husband was very grateful for the service we were able to provide.

In the light of day we could assess the damage, which amounted to a section of our gunwale fendering being torn away and the cracking of several welds securing our



Approaching the *Pacific Aria*.

bulwarks to the deck.

When a person's life is at stake you do the job and deal with any potential damage afterwards, but I have made a mental note that in conditions any worse than we encountered, I would not agree to put our vessel and the considerable risk to our crew at stake.

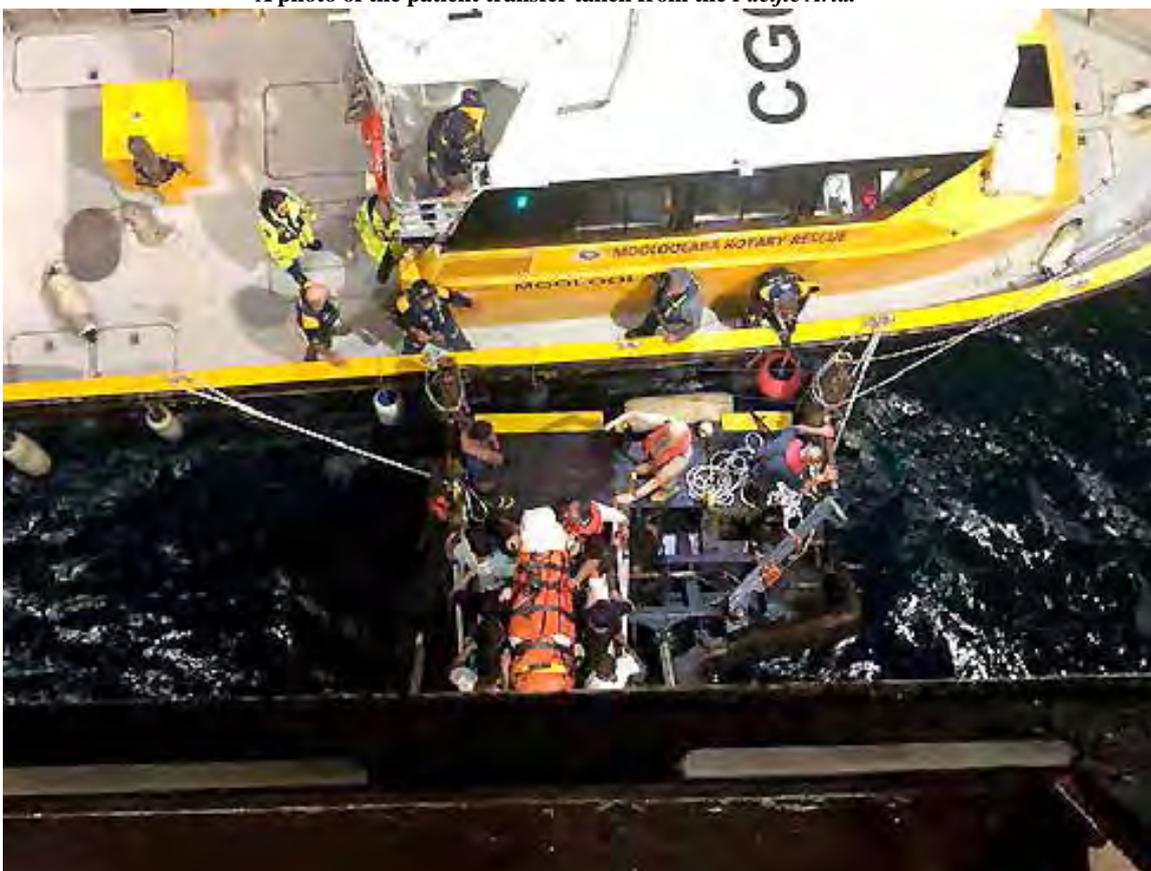
Should this happen, the alternatives are to move further into the shelter of Moreton Bay or the ship to reberth in Brisbane.

In extreme cases a helicopter evacuation may be possible, but I believe there is a reluctance to activate helicopters for rescues over water at night.

There is obviously considerable risk and expense in deploying helicopters, so they are only deployed if absolutely necessary.

In this case, a good outcome was achieved and the crew did a great job.

A photo of the patient transfer taken from the *Pacific Aria*.



THE SEA EAGLE HAS LANDED...BUT IT'S ON A SANDBANK AND IT HAS RUN AGROUND

By Kingsley Bartle

AT 2100 hours the commander of **QF11 Yeppoon** received a call from a Marine Assist member (**Gordon**) advising of a problem.

He had been holidaying at Yellow Patch and advised that five days earlier a 50ft ketch (*Sea Eagle*), which drew 2.7m and had no engines, had run aground on a sand bar.

He had been entering Yellow Patch under sail via the narrow channel and strayed off course.

As there were around 20 other vessels moored inside Yellow Patch they all joined forces to assist, having up to five vessels trying to pull him off at the one time.

They did this on several occasions but to no avail, his keel was well and truly stuck. Gordon asked if we could assist *Sea Eagle* somehow.

The flotilla commander then called me and gave me the above details, as well as the mobile number of George who had called.

I checked tide times for when he had run aground and the next high tide which was at 0910 hours the next day (4.7 m.).

Seeing that the tide height at the time of running aground was 4.9 m. and there was not another high greater than this for weeks, I decided to try now, knowing that it was not going to be straight-forward and that we may not succeed with the task.

I called George and told him we would be there tomorrow morning prior to 0900 hrs and to pass this message onto *Sea Eagle*.

I called and arranged crew to be at Coast Guard the following morning at 0600 hrs. As the winds were coming from the South/East and were around 15 knots, I was allowing for a slower trip for the 30 nautical miles.

We departed Rosslyn Bay at 0600 hrs with **M. Montinari, A. Sleeman** and **C. Rogers** as crew however the conditions were a lot worse than expected (20 knots +) and we were forced to travel at much slower speeds punching into the 2m seas.

The tow gets underway after a lot of rudder movement from the rescue vessel.



Sea Eagle stuck hard at the side of the channel.

We tacked all the way to Yellow Patch using the many islands to protect us as possible, covering many more nautical miles than originally thought.

We entered the passageway of Yellow Patch until we reached the stricken vessel and came alongside at 0900 hrs, leaving us 10 minutes to spare as I needed as much water as possible under *Sea Eagle*.

We passed *Sea Eagle* our tow rope and had him attach it to his bow, took up the slack of the tow rope and tried to move forward using every bit of the 600 hp available but no movement was seen.

I then started to move my rudder left to right over and over again, trying to move the sand from his keel as the power was increased to maximum.

The vessel then started to move slowly forward. I reduced some of my power (but not enough to stop my progress and not enough to take off suddenly) as there were other vessels around me I wanted to avoid.

As I was facing out to sea, I continued forward following the channel out of Yellow Patch with him steering in my path.

Once we were clear from the channel we stopped and asked if we could be of further assistance.

He asked to be taken to a safe anchorage West of Cape Capricorn (2 nautical miles away) so we continued the tow.

Once we were in the bay and had calm waters he dropped his anchor, disconnected the tow line and we departed for home.

The trip from Rosslyn Bay to Yellow Patch that had taken 3 hours in heavy seas only took 90 minutes to return due to following seas.

On our return journey to Rosslyn Bay we received many VHS radio calls from onlookers inside of Yellow Patch praising us for our achievements, telling us that they did not think the task was possible, not to mention the gratitude that *Sea Eagle* expressed.



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ROAM THEN HOME

WHEN a rescue crew from Australia Zoo was called out to rescue a wet young female kangaroo seen wandering in the vicinity of the Caloundra Caravan Park, it was decided that it should be returned to Bribie Island, reports **John Gasparotto**.

After catching the kangaroo and wrapping her in a blanket to avoid stressing the animal further, the crew from Australia Zoo were faced with a predicament: How were they going to transport the kangaroo back to Bribie Island quickly?

A quick phone call to **QF4 Caloundra** saw their volunteer on-duty crew prepare *Coast Guard 2* for immediate departure.

The Australia Zoo team plus one kangaroo were on the water a short time later and soon the animal was released back to its home on Bribie Island.

This is not the first time Coast Guard Caloundra has been called on to assist in rescuing injured wildlife or returning them back to Bribie Island.



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Brisbane swings like a pendulum do...but needs Coast Guard to retrieve jumpers

By Harvey Shore

FIFTY-FOUR people recently jumped off Brisbane's Goodwill Bridge.

A team from **QF2 Brisbane** calmly watched them fall, one at a time, towards the Brisbane River; then moved in to rescue them.

It was, of course, a staged charity fundraiser – and QF2 provided the safety and recovery boats.

The event was organised by a Canberra-based company called **Urban Descent**, which uses former military personnel to stage similar fund-raising events for charity around Australia.

Their so-called *Bridge Swing* urges people to find sponsors who would pay them to jump off a bridge wearing rappelling gear.

When the event was held in Brisbane, Urban Descent staff negotiated approval from Brisbane City Council and the Queensland Police Service, then contacted QF2 and arranged a fee for the flotilla to provide safety and recovery vessels.

The Bridge Swing was staged over two days. At the appointed hour, jumpers gathered on the Goodwill Bridge to be fitted with a rappelling harness and given a safety briefing.

Then – one at a time – they edged over the safety rails, took a deep breath, and hurled themselves into space.

Some wore normal clothes. Some wore fancy dress ... superhero costumes or fairy wings. One of them, a butcher shop owner, wore a cow costume for his jump!

Reaching the end of their safety line, each jumper swung like a pendulum for several minutes just above the water.

Then QF2 volunteers **Geoff Stanhope** and **Kevin Franklin** manoeuvred a Coast Guard RIB beneath them, unhooked their harness and ferried them safely ashore.



Coast Guard skipper **Allan Tennent** said, "Most jumpers screamed in panic as they plummeted towards the water one hundred metres below; but none were hurt, and they raised over \$50,000 for several charities."

Organisers say the *Bridge Swing* will become an annual event in Brisbane.

Rob Vickers, Events Manager for Urban Descent, said, "Our company is keen to help more charities raise funds. So, if any local charities are interested in being part of our next *Bridge Swing*, they're welcome to email us." <https://urbandescent.org.au/signup/>

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THE BUCK GETS PASSED FOR DOLPHINS, DOGS AND A LUMP OF PONTOON

WINTER in South Australia was marked by a couple of peculiar rescues in the local waters of Semaphore and Outer Harbor for **SAFI North Haven**.

After information that a lost, actually more disorientated at night than lost, vessel was stranded in the shallows of Silt Grounds just north of Outer Harbor break waters about 2300hrs.

Brian Robinson, Terry Langford and Ian White sailed out with *Nautic Star* to look for the vessel.

The information about the location of the vessel was only brief and incomplete but luckily there were no other boats in the area of search and with the help of some moonlight reflecting off the surface of the water the crew recognised a silhouette of something that resembled a vessel.

In the span of a few minutes the crew approached a 12-foot tinny with no provision for navigation lights, and two people on board who were totally disorientated having no idea which way to turn.

Nautic Star was at the limit of her draft so the tinny had to make its own way to join the rescue vessel in deeper water and then follow her to the ramp at North Haven.

The two mariners were left to their own resources to work out how to bring their vehicle from St. Kilda ramp to North Haven for the retrieval of their boat.

It was also suggested a navigation course was in order to secure safe boating and protection of own lives in the future.

THE BUCK STOPS HERE

It's funny how the chain of information (or passing the buck) stretches from one public agency to the other until the work finishes with the 'small' people to get the job done.

About 1600hrs someone reported to the police a large floating object just off Semaphore foreshore; it appears that the police reported the matter to the Department of Transport for action who in turn called upon our Operations Captain for assistance.

Nautic Star operated by **Geoff Wilkinson, Steve Impett and Vince Atanasov** was dispatched to investigate and take action as appropriate.

In the expanse of Semaphore inshore waters they found nothing less than a large section of a broken-off mooring pontoon, a great danger to safe navigation especially

By **Jack Djaic**

at night.

Towing the object to shore and removing it from the water was easier said than done.

Pontoons are not designed to be towed around, do not provide an array of hooks and cleats, and are not of water (aero) shape.



Largs Bay jetty...not a dog or dolphin in sight.

A protrusion was the only place to fasten a line so the long, slow haul of a few miles to North Haven got underway across a decently calm sea.

The crew were able to complete the job successfully and even remove the pontoon from the water.

It appeared to have spent some



considerably long time drifting around and subjecting itself to the sea growth.

The object was left as far away from the ramp as the means of transport allowed and reported to the local council for their further action.

THE DOG STOPS HERE

I had a very competent and able crew to skipper—**Tim Mahoney and Martin O'Donnell**—and after starting training we

received a radio call from our duty radio operator **Steve Impett** that a dog was chasing a pod of dolphins in the vicinity of Largs Jetty...some 4 miles away from our position and in the southerly direction once we cleared the Port River break water.

The 7-knots speed limit through which we had to pass did nothing to help this seeming urgency.

As 'the gods of assists' would have it the original message of 'the dog-chasing-the-dolphins' came to the police from a member of the public, the police in turn passed the message on to the Sea Rescue Squadron at West Beach who did not happen to have

a vessel in the water at the time so they asked us if we would be able to attend to this disturbance, Largs Bay jetty being closer to our base speaking in geographical terms.

Once we passed the Port River break waters we opened up the throttles on the *Nautic Star's* engines trying to get to the scene as quickly as possible.

We were approaching the area within minutes and started observing the situation even from a distance while closing in nearer and nearer the jetty.

Once there we sailed all around the structure only to find an undisturbed peace,

or rather an undisturbed tranquillity in the surrounding waters with no dog or dolphins in sight but only a few disinterested people hardly paying any attention to our presence.

As a good crew would do we made a detailed plan of action while approaching the scene taking in to account whether the scene was going to be wild, subdued

or whether the dog was small, large, dangerous or drowning.

We made up our minds that the dolphins were not likely to be in need of any help which left us with the problem of plucking the dog, looking for any injuries and possibly preventing it from going in to hypothermia.

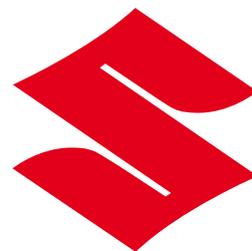
We even thought what to

do if the animal happened to be aggressive, something that was rather unlikely due to the dogs possible exhaustion.

In the end it turned out to be the case of 'chasing the goo... sorry, chasing the dog' and a non-event.

On the way back to North Haven we did see a few dolphins that were happily going about their daily business and not caring a bit about the three coast guards who had nothing else to do but act as peacemakers in the animal world.

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SEA MAIL GOES THE LONG WAY AROUND FOR TEN YEARS BUT ANSWER COMES IN A DAY

By Bob King

IMAGINE chucking a bottle containing a message into the sea, wondering where it might ever turn up, and then forgetting all about it over the ensuing years.

Ten-and-a-half years later, up pops an email to tell you that someone has found your bottle, well over a thousand nautical miles away—and in the wrong direction!

In March this year, **QF14 Ingham** member **Geoff Beatts** walked along the shore to a favourite fishing spot at Taylor's Beach in the hope of catching a nice barramundi for tea.

On the way back to his ute (sadly, barra-less) he noticed a transparent green bottle lying at the water's edge.

The bottle was firmly corked but some water had leaked inside, partially damaging a slip of paper that appeared to carry a message.

Unwilling to open the bottle and cause further damage to the paper, Geoff contacted a friend.

Between them, they managed to decipher most of the message, which read: "Hello – My name is Karl Van Ryzin and I threw this bottle out to sea in October 2007 from Birdlings Flat, New Zealand, 43o 49' 38.66" S, 172o 42' 25.00" E. This is bottle number "6". Please let me know that you found this bottle!! ...email is karlvanzryzin@gmail.com "

A check of the place name and its mapping co-ordinates verified that Birdlings Flat is located close to Christchurch on the east coast of New Zealand's South Island.

An email was sent to Mr. Van Ryzin next day in the hope that he still retained the same email address after so long a time.

Less than 24 hours later, a reply was received:

"Hi! Yes I threw that bottle out into the ocean years ago with my wife. I still remember it floating away and I was convinced that it was going to just wash back to shore a mile or so down the beach. Yes, it was at Birdlings Flat near Christchurch, New Zealand.

"I am very excited that it has been found! I wrote the message on acid free cotton paper and sealed the top with epoxy, but it appears (sic) that water still leaked in. I was told that acid free cotton paper was a good option.

"I can't remember how many bottles I threw out into the ocean but I am guessing it was less than 10 total in my lifetime. In fact I think I threw a total of 6 or 7 bottles out to sea when I threw the one out that you guys found. It was a short lived hobby of mine and I gave up on it a few years ago thinking that the bottles would never be found.

"To my knowledge, this is the first time
Australian Volunteer Coast Guard 32

anyone has found any of my bottles. As you may guess, I am very excited to know that one has been found!!—Karl

Probably the most remarkable thing about Geoff's discovery is that the bottle must have travelled well over 10,000nm before coming to rest safely and undamaged at Geoff's fishing spot.

A study of South Pacific wind and ocean currents suggests that it floated east toward South America, then north on the Peru Current after which it enjoyed a nice ride westwards on the South Pacific Equatorial Current and entered the Coral Sea via the East Australian Current, finally arriving at

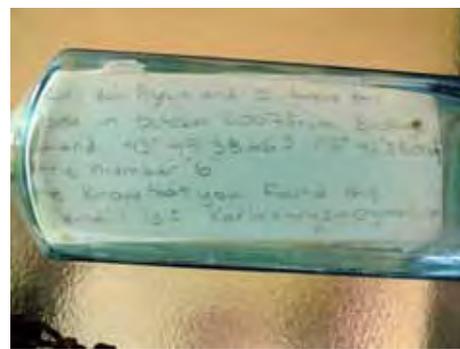


Geoff Beatts at the spot he found the bottle.

Taylor's Beach.

The story of Geoff's bottle bears a remarkable parallel to the similar discovery in October 1985 of a bottle found on Pelorus Island, only 9nm to the north-east of Taylor's Beach. This message was in Spanish.

Translated, it read: **HOMAGE TO THE MONTH OF THE SEA. The sea has no frontiers; day by day, it gives us the most beautiful lesson of generosity and union. During the month of May, the Chilean students**



The message in the bottle.
celebrate the Month of the Sea. For this, the students of School GN-261 of Robinson Crusoe Island, Chile, greet all of the students of the world in this manner. If you recover this message, please take it to a school to get a reply which gives testimony to student unity.

Write to: 'Students of School GN-261, Robinson Crusoe Island, Juan Fernandez Archipelago, Chile.

The bottle had been cast adrift by school students on Robinson Crusoe Island, off the west coast of Chile.

Badly scorched by the sun, the paper was very fragile. There was no date on the message which may have been many years old when it was discovered.

A reply was sent during turbulent times in Chile and it's possible that it never reached its destination. No response was ever received.

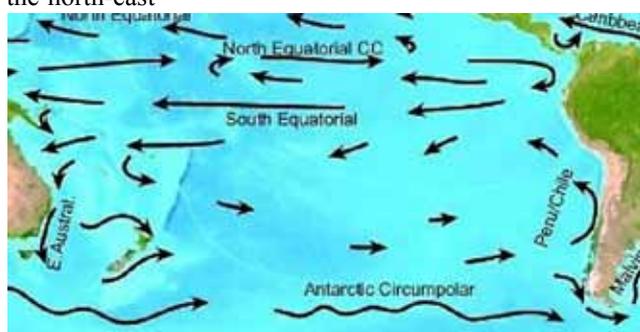
Geoff's well-travelled bottle now rests on display in the Halifax Museum, about 9km from its landfall at Taylor's Beach, near Ingham.

Note 1: Geoff Beatts is an AVCGA Life Member and dedicated angler. Somewhat of a fishing purist, he never uses bait; lures only.

Note 2: The proposition that the bottle may have travelled so far on its South Pacific odyssey has been supported by **Craig Steinberg**, a physical oceanographer at the Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS) in Townsville, North Queensland.

Note 3: Readers may remember that the southward flow of the East Australian Current was featured in the adventures of a small clownfish (*percula ocellaris*) in Disney's animated movie, *Finding Nemo*.

Note 4: Robinson Crusoe Island really does exist! It's one of the Juan Fernandez Group off the west coast of Chile. There's also an Alexander Selkirk Island in the same group. Selkirk's adventures inspired the story of *Robinson Crusoe* by Daniel Defoe.





Dave Dann, General Manager Operations Onshore at INpex presents the new PFDs to Flotilla Commander Fiona Villaflor and Deputy Commander Dean Breward.

SPONSORS BOOST FULL SPEED AHEAD IN DARWIN

NTF1 Darwin has been extremely busy this year with a crew of dedicated volunteers maintaining intensive training and assisting with an increasing number of recoveries and emergency responses.

The flotilla is working closely with Northern Territory Water Police and NT Emergency Services to assist with keeping the community safe while the Marine Assist program is growing every year and NTF1 is looking forward to being able to strengthen its safety campaign and educational courses within the next year.

Strong sponsorship is supporting the flotilla. Flotilla Commander **Fiona Villaflor** says “Our partnership with **Darwin Trailer Boat Club (DTBC)** and the in-kind support we receive from the club has helped provide the volunteers with a home base, training room and HQ for operations.

“This year we have had the opportunity to place our radio communication room at the front entrance to the DTBC, giving us greater exposure to the trailer park guests and members.

“This stand-alone facility will provide the silence and operational room for radio operators to provide safety coverage to recreational boaters and support expansion of our radio operations.

“The new demountable will now be the administration HQ and provide administration and a public entrance for new and existing members to visit.

The Darwin Trailer Boat Club has been home to the Coast Guard in Darwin since,

2010 with the former president of the club, **Tony Butler**, initiating the formation of the flotilla. Now in 2018 the partnership continues with the new demountable and radio operation room being provided by the Club.

The Trailer Boat Club is Darwin’s oldest seaside club. From its humble origins in 1958, trading from a modified caravan, the club has grown to become a Darwin



Left to right: **Richard Boulton**, North Queensland Squadron Training Commodore, **Cher A Barron**, NQ Squadron Commodore with NTF1’s **Fiona Villaflor** and **Dean Breward**.

institution forging strong links with the boating and fishing community over the past sixty years.

Fiona Villaflor says “We are enormously appreciative of this partnership and would like to thank the Club and its members for

their on-going support of the Coast Guard.”

Similarly, the safety of boaties on the waters around Darwin has been boosted with a donation from the **INPEX**-operated **Ichthys LNG Project** which has supported NTF1 since 2011.

The company now has donated sixteen high-quality personal flotation devices (PFDs) to NTF1 Darwin and Fiona Villaflor said the new PFDs would be used to replace the flotilla’s older models.

“These vests have their own personal location beacons, so they will be a great help to our crews in recovery situations,” Ms Villaflor said.

“The donation will also help our volunteers, who currently bear the cost of buying their own PFD.”

Coast Guard Darwin patrols seaward to North Gutter, West to the Peron Islands and East to Cape Hotham and assists NT Police in marine search and rescues.

They support community events including the Beer Can Regatta and run training programs in small boat operations.

INPEX General Manager Operations Onshore **Dave Dann** said, “Like INPEX and Ichthys LNG, Coast Guard Darwin has safety as the focus of all its activities.”

“We are proud to support this important community organisation.”

“The contribution INPEX and the Project has made to the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard here in the Northern Territory has been fantastic,” said Ms Villaflor.

“On behalf of NTF1, I would like to thank all our volunteers, sponsors and stakeholders for supporting the Coast Guard operations in Darwin. We look forward to our continued success.”

NO KNOWLEDGE GAPS WHEN THE SKIPPER WAS THE RESCUE BOAT BUILDER

In 2018 you can now find him with a team of 11, in an 850sqm workshop, office and design facility in a light industrial area in Bibra Lake.

With thousands of hours spent on various models of cats, Andrew has developed an intensive, first-hand experience handling

IT WAS love at first sight for teenager **Andrew Wright** when he came across a rescue cat on the Swan River.

Sixteen years later, Andrew is a dedicated sea rescue and boat building specialist. Although he now focuses on custom building vessels, he still manages to devote 40 hours a month to **Cockburn Volunteer Sea Rescue**.

With over 15 years' experience in the marine industry and a fast growing business, Andrew says he will always find time for Volunteer Sea Rescue (VSR).

"It's what I most enjoy. It's in my nature to help. Raising awareness of water safety is so important, and the rewards?"

"I just love seeing people smile when we've helped them get safely back on the water."

Andrew remembers the man who introduced him to the concept and craft of VSR – **Hugh Finn**.

"The boats looked so cool! So, when Mr Finn told me to get in touch, I pestered him until I could join Fremantle Sea Rescue as soon as I turned 18."

Starting out at Fremantle VSR, where he later progressed to Operations Officer, Andrew was spending more time volunteering than on his university studies.

There was an expectation at school for him to follow the university path, however it soon became apparent it was not his preferred route.

Within six months, he dropped out, tried a few other design professions, then took on an apprenticeship in marine electronics, followed by another in mechanics.

At the same time, on top of a 60-hour-a-week work schedule, Andrew was also devoting around 20 hours per week to



Andrew Wright at the helm of the Shockwave-built rescue vessel Fremantle VSR.

With a passion for volunteer rescue, and anything to do with machinery and engines, not surprisingly Andrew Wright started fixing boats.

He helped Cockburn VSR out with some repair issues in 2007 and as demand grew for his services, he set up **Stem2Stern** in 2008.

At the time, he assumed he would have a small business, working 9-5 in the 60 sqm backyard workshop he had built, with weekends off.

As demand quickly grew he realised that wouldn't be the case. In 2012 he took on his first employee and repeatedly outgrew workshop after workshop.

boats in all manner of conditions.

He says, "I've had some pretty hairy experiences out on the water and it's taught me a lot – what I am capable of and what the boats are capable of too."

I really enjoy thinking on my feet, solving problems, working to fix a situation and also what we learn during our debriefs."

He recalls New Year's Eve in 2014, when they responded to numerous calls including a fire, a grounding and a medivac. They covered over 200 nautical miles during that shift.

In 2015 Andrew's proposal to build a new cat for Cockburn VSR was accepted.

He set to and custom built the impressive **VMR Assure** in five months.

And so, Andrew's **Shockwave Powercat** business began.

His hands-on experience on the water informs the details in everything Andrew does.

He's a stickler for quality and smart design — not only the practicalities but all the creature comforts too—so the boat is super functional, its operation is intuitive and the crew are happy.

The **Reliance** series covers all patrol vessels in two hull sizes (8-9m and 10-12m).

He's made five boats in four variations, which have, so far, covered over 170,000 nautical miles, that's almost eight circumnavigations of the world!

The great team culture, fostered at both the Cockburn and Fremantle VSRs, is a huge part of Andrew's life and ideally complements his professional life in both the Stem2Stern and Shockwave



businesses where he greatly values collaboration in his team.

A passionate advocate of buying, installing and recruiting the best, Andrew says, "Quality doesn't cost, it pays. I've seen the repercussions when people cut corners such as buying cheap fuel or batteries.

"We have to tow them in. I don't want my clients to experience those failures.

"We install the best tech, mechanical and electrical systems.

"That goes for our Shockwave team too. I only employ people with top skills and experience.

"Australian-made tech is first-rate and I take pride in supporting other local Australian businesses and our economy."

In the last couple of years, Andrew still found time to build his own boat and loves to go on fishing trips and exploring the WA coast with family, friends and red heeler Ruby.

(Ruby is a veteran sea dog and also a media star – often featuring on the TV news after a significant rescue!)

As a natural consequence, Andrew has started to also build custom-made recreational vessels – the **Breaksea Series**.

With deep experience making patrol boats that are resilient, comfortable and sound, Andrew is motivated "to build the safest cats in Australia" for both rescue and leisure.

Each craft is fabricated from vacuum-resin-infused GRP, which makes the hull three times stronger and two times lighter than a conventionally laid-up fibreglass hull.

The savings in weight have a direct impact on reduced fuel consumption, higher cruising and maximum speeds, as well as improved handling and performance.

All the Shockwave vessels are custom made to a client's specific requirements, whether for rescue, commercial, fishing or recreational use.

Andrew invites his clients to 'take part in the journey'; in the progress of their boat being handmade at their Perth facility.

Andrew's life is all about boats and engines. Indeed, it is hard for any of his friends and family to imagine him doing anything else.

He says that if he hadn't grown up on the coast, he would probably be on a farm, fixing machinery, and exploring the bush.

In his rare down time Andrew loves to go camping in his 4WD up to Shark Bay and Tamala Station with Ruby.

A bit of a gastronome too, he loves good food and wine. "There's always a supply of fresh fish at home and I love to cook."

A self-confessed workaholic, Andrew also devotes his weekends to Cockburn Volunteer Sea Rescue. He is also available for mid-week and after hours call-outs; he's a Skipper and delivers monthly crew training.

Shockwave Powercats: 08 6223 0640
www.shockwavemarine.com.au



Bert Redstone in one of the Lake Eppalock Coast Guard's boats. Photo: Darren Howe

Thieves raid VF5 to steal five radios

THIEVES broke in and stolen thousands of dollars worth of equipment from the VF5 Lake Eppalock Coast Guard radio building at the start of winter.

The *Bendigo Advertiser* reported that offenders used bolt cutters to breach a fence, and removed two panels to gain access to the building at Randalls Cove.

Five radios were stolen: a CFA handheld radio, UHF CB radio, 27 meg marine radio, 16 meg UHF radio and a mobile radio for vehicles, stored in a distinctive yellow box.

Volunteers estimate the radios had a total value of \$4000. A donation jar was also stolen from the premises.

Deputy commander of VF5 Bob Baker, said it was a "shocking" crime against the fully-volunteer unit. "Instead of being able to put petrol in the boats, we'll have to use our funds to replace what was stolen," he said. "We can't monitor the lake without these radios."

Mr Baker said it was the first time they had been broken into during his seven years with the Coast Guard.

The Lake Eppalock Coast Guard is one of the more unique emergency services in Australia, patrolling Lake Eppalock and other central Victorian inland waterways.

SHOULD WE BE WEARING RED STRIPES?



To the Editor,
Dear Editor,

I am a retired Qantas Boeing/Airbus Repair Management Analyst.

Whilst driving along the highway in Southport recently I glanced over the Broadwater and saw one of the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard boats in the water.

And thought it odd for a safety vessel not to have a red reflective tape on it anywhere.

So, I hope you don't mind I downloaded one of the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard vessels and graphically changed the colour of the racing stripe from blue to red.

I was surprised how much better it made the boat look, and as such I thought it may be of interest to the National Magazine, and of course from a higher visibility safety perspective to the Flotilla commanders.

Yours sincerely,
Rod C. Stewart

VICTORIAN COAST GUARDERS ON THE (HEART) BEAT WITH NEW PHONE APP

VICTORIA'S nineteen Coast Guard flotillas have signed-up to a new phone application that connects heart attack victims with trained first-aiders.

Called GoodSAM the app alerts first-aid trained bystanders to people suffering from cardiac arrest.

The lifesaving application was trialled by more than 700 Ambulance Victoria staff since the start of the year and now it's not just off-duty paramedics who are signed-up to the app but firefighters, surf life savers, doctors, nurses and since August Coast Guard volunteers as well.

VF16 Warrnambool skipper **David Francis** was one of the first members to sign-up to the lifesaving app.

The Warrnambool Standard reported that he decided to sign up after an incident 12 months ago where he utilised his CPR training, gained through AVCG, to create a good outcome.

"I realised that that training was invaluable for me and we had a good outcome because of it, so I thought I may as well share the skills I've been provided with," he said.

Warrnambool Coast Guard commander **Allan Wood** said the app was a great opportunity for first aid qualified members to use their lifesaving skills to the benefit of the wider community, and not just the boating community.

"It is really positive to see that a member has already signed up, with two or three out of twenty members showing an interest too," he said.

"It's obviously quite a big commitment so joining the app has been left to the discretion of our members."

Mr Wood said that in the case of an emergency, the app would allow Ambulance Victoria to locate where Mr Francis was and get in contact with him



Warrnambool Coast Guard commander Allan Wood and skipper David Francis with the GoodSAM app. Picture: Christine Anson

straight away.

Mr Francis, who has received all his first aid training through AVCG, said the app was a great back-up to the work conducted by Ambulance Victoria.

"As awesome as our ambulance service is, it's that first three to five minutes that is provided to a patient that is essential," he said.

"It's just the ability to keep the blood pumping around the body until the ambulance arrives, which can have a massive effect on the ultimate outcome of the patient."

Ambulance Victoria chief executive **Tony Walker** said he was pleased to see Coast Guard volunteers join the initiative.

"We're so happy to have Australian Volunteer Coast Guard joining with us

in our collective efforts to continue to improve cardiac arrest response in our community," he said.

Over at **VF10 Werribee**, the *Star Weekly* reports that commander **Bruce Lawrence** said a volunteer in the immediate vicinity of a call-out who is signed up to the GoodSAM app might be the quickest available first responder.

"We carry formal marine certifications and, of course, one of those certifications is first aid and CPR," he said.

"All of our crew have that and because of that, we can assist Ambulance Victoria when we're off duty and we're around.

"In Werribee there's 30 of us running around every day doing what we do... it extends out the capabilities of a first responder for Ambulance Victoria."

GIRLS JUST WANNA HAVE FUN

THE first all-female crew in the 25-year history of **VF10 Werribee** Coast Guard took to the water in September.

Flotilla commander **Bruce Lawrence** said that during the twenty-five years the rescue vessel had never been crewed by a group made up entirely of women.

That changed on September 29, when a team of female volunteers **Claudine Keepa, Marilyn Carre, Angelique Ford, Celestine Hade** and skipper **Charmaine Meilar** did their first shift together.

Ms Ford said it was an exciting event.

"I hope this may give other women a chance to think about joining," she said.

Ms Meilar said she joined the Coast Guard because she wanted to give back to the community.

"Volunteering is great when you enjoy what you're doing, and there is a good crew and flotilla here," she said.

Ms Carre said she first contacted the Coast Guard to ask if she could do some volunteer office work, but they offered her a chance to join the boating crew.

"I knew nothing at all, but I've learned heaps," she said.

Photo right: Werribee Coast guard volunteers **Claudine Keepa, Marilyn Carre, Angelique Ford, Celestine Hade** and **Charmaine Meilar**. Photo by *Damjan Janevski*.





An ocean full of life-rafts and floating people for the Capricornia Coast's major Search and Rescue exercise.

THIRTY-SIX CASUALTIES PLUCKED FROM THE SEA

By Elle Butler

ALL thirty-six casualties of a major disaster off the coast of central Queensland were rescued either from life-rafts or from the water in a successful outcome to a major Search and Rescue training exercise for the region.

Co-ordinated by the Coast Guard's Central Queensland Squadron with vessels or attendees from **QF20 Keppel Sands**, **QF11 Yeppoon**, **QF19 Rockhampton**, **QF24 Thirsty Sound** and **VMR Gladstone**, the combined rescuers tackled a mass casualty scenario at sea to rescue 36 volunteers from local SES groups and Coal Train from waters outside Rosslyn Bay.

The simulation was a multi-vessel collision, resulting in people being thrown into the water as well as some in life rafts.

The crews experienced how swiftly life rafts can be swept by the current as well as the different effect on individual bodies in those same waters.

The volunteer "patients" were supervised by the **Qld Water Police** and the police divers, who also demonstrated the best methods for lifting someone from the water.

The **Queensland Ambulance Service** provided valuable insight into priority first aid and information required to facilitate a timely triage ambulance transfer.

Snr Sgnt **Jim Whitehead**, head of police Search & Rescue Operations Qld said: "It is exercises such as these which refine the skills of the personnel so the best care can be carried out in the event of a real emergency.

"Having multiple SAR organisations working together during SAREXCQ2018

ensures the Capricornia region is as prepared as possible."

As well as volunteers from SES, volunteers from **The Real Group** and **Freedom FastCats** also assisted with the day.

Without the support of local businesses, it would not be possible to conduct these



exercises successfully. Thank you to The Real Group, including **Keppel Barges** and CoalTrain and Freedom Fast Cats who provided vessels for the transport of the volunteers, use of premises and catering for the participants.

Training exercises such as these hone the skills and refresh Best Practice Operations for all involved but the overall winners of the day were the boating public of the Central Qld Region, who will benefit from the commitment to excellence from all organisations.

Rescue crews received instruction in best procedures to raise people safely from the water, as well as clarification of communication procedures throughout the exercise and appropriate strategy for rescue of people on life rafts as well as in the water.

The police divers were on hand to assist with the safety of the day and reassure the volunteers who were in the water awaiting rescue.

Members from all Central Queensland flotillas attended and were involved in the organisation and radio communications on the day.

The Squadron covers the entire Keppel Bay region, including Stanage/Shoalwater Bay, which is more than 100 nm of coastline, as well as the Fitzroy River through Rockhampton.

Volunteer organisations are a great opportunity for local people to come together for company, learn skills and give back to the community.

In the lead up to SAREXCQ2018, we asked **Jim Warren**, Flotilla Commander of Coast Guard Yeppoon why he joined.

Initially, following a background in the Air Force and Farming, Jim was very keen to learn how to skipper

vessels, and saw that Coast Guard gave him the opportunity to learn this as well as a great deal more knowledge and skills. He is still learning!

Said Jim, "The Coast Guard provides a valuable service to the local community and recreational boating fraternity. With a membership that includes people from all walks of life, from holders of university doctorates to labourers, all of whom are equals, working with a team in a flotilla creates long-lasting friendships and enjoyment. Helping the community also creates a great sense of satisfaction."



Members of Broadwater Surfers Paradise Lodge hand over a cheque for \$10,000 to QF1 Southport Coast Guard, one of the recipients of Hand Heart Pocket's 2018 Grassroots Community Grants.

Local Freemasons come to QF1's rescue

RESPONDING to calls for help is what the QF1 Southport Coast Guard volunteers do every day, but they were the ones receiving a hand-up after the local Freemasons came to their rescue.

Hand Heart Pocket the charity of Freemasons Queensland, on behalf of Broadwater Surfers Paradise Lodge, has granted \$10,000 to Southport Coast Guard.

As one of 12 community initiatives across Queensland, to share in over \$110,000 as part of Hand Heart Pocket's 2018 Grassroots Community Grants round, QF1 Southport will allocate the funds towards the purchase of a new motor for its 4100 Noosa Cat rescue vessel known as *Coast Guard 2*.

It's the only vessel large enough to carry out the evacuation of injured mariners on the coast.

Broadwater Surfers Paradise Lodge representative Neil Orr said while the

initiative is expected to cost \$142,000 in total, it was a pleasure to secure the grant.

"The engines in use are a decade old and have done around 4,100 hours each, so it's time they were replaced," Neil said.

"The \$10,000 in funding will contribute to making this vital service sustainable, ensuring our waterways remain safe all the way from Jumpinpin to Tweed Heads and 20 km out to sea," he said.

Hand Heart Pocket Chief Executive Officer Gary Mark said providing sustainable support that delivers positive outcomes for other charities was its focus.

"For 50 years the Southport Coast Guard has been there for people in their time of need out on the water – contributing some 30,000-man hours each year," Gary said.

"Giving a hand up to those that encounter misfortune aligns with our values which is why we were keen to support this initiative," he said.

"By working closely with Broadwater Surfers Paradise Lodge, who identified this worthy cause, we have collectively maximised their charitable footprint in the community," he said.

As an independent charity founded by the Freemasons of Queensland, Hand Heart Pocket helps in areas of state-wide and local need that have limited access to other funding.

We work with other charities to identify and fund initiatives that have real, life-changing potential.

We also collaborate with Masonic Lodges across Queensland and help individuals in times of extreme need to get them back on their feet.

We use our funds wisely to give a hand up and to build potential.

For more information about Hand Heart Pocket, visit www.handheartpocket.org.au or to find out more about Broadwater Surfers Paradise Lodge visit www.freemasons-southport.org.au

Koreans Gippeumnida with Coast Guard

THREE of South Korea's top maritime search and rescue experts visited QF2 Brisbane earlier this year.

They came from Korea's Institute for Defence Analysis, at the Centre for Military Planning in Seoul.

In Australia to attend the 2018 Search and Rescue Conference on the Gold Coast they asked to visit a major Coast Guard base to learn how volunteers play such an important role in Australian search and rescue operations.

Team leader Kihyun Yoo said, "In Korea, we don't have a volunteer Coast Guard. Our military handles marine incidents. If they are busy, there's no-one else to call for help. We hope to learn about developing volunteer search and rescue teams from Australia's Coast Guard."

QF2 was chosen for the visit because it is one of Australia's largest Coast Guard flotillas, with a search and rescue fleet comprising ten vessels ranging in size from 3 to 13 metres, and therefore equipped to handle all types of maritime SAR operations.

The Koreans spent a day with QF2 Commander Steve Fleming, South Queensland Commodore Ian Ratcliffe and Deputy National

Commodore Peter Smith, inspecting QF2 vessels and discussing in detail Coast Guard recruitment and training.

At the end of their visit the Koreans pronounced themselves "Gippeumnida" (very happy).



Now SAF1 North Haven volunteers give their blood too

GROUPS who provide emergency services in South Australia gather once a year for the purpose of their members donating blood to help keep the State's supplies at a reasonable level, writes **Jack Djaic**.

In August the Red Cross organised all SES agencies together and hosted their many members on the breezy, but sunny, foreshore of Port Adelaide for an event that turned out to be a resounding success.

The agencies that took part in this charitable event were: State SES, SA Police, including the Water Police, Metropolitan Fire Brigade, Country Fire Services, SA Ambulance, St. John Ambulance, Aviation Rescue, Water Fire Service and, of course, Coast Guard flotilla **SAF1 North Haven**.

As the varied local hospitals often run low on blood supplies this action to keep the supplies up was recognised and appreciated greatly by the Red Cross.

Spread over all the agencies it is estimated that some one hundred members had taken part in this humanitarian activity.

SA Squadron Commodore **Terry Langford** warmly thanked members of SAF1 for their unselfish contribution to the day's proceedings.



VALE VINCE HUGH WILLIAMS

Vince joined the then Flotilla 5 in March 1983 and immediately became one of the most popular and active members, his personal popularity amongst us lasting to the end of his days.

Starting with Seamanship Public Instruction Course Vince completed with aplomb all the other courses as they progressively became available in the early and mid-1980s. From about 1985 Vince become flotilla training officer due to his prior, vast overseas marine experience. He was also taking part in the SA Squadron training activities as well in his capacity as SA's Training Commodore. For many years he conducted Seamanship Public Instruction Courses and will be remembered by many hundreds of attendees over the many years for his heartfelt dedication. The highest seamanship rating Vince achieved was the rating of Leading Coxswain. He was also honoured by the National Board with Life Membership in 2003.

Vince Williams will be remembered as a sincere and dedicated member of the Association and because of that a plaque has been placed on the Flotilla's Wall of Honour so that we who remain after him can raise a thought in his memory.



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Decade of service: Acting operations manager Andrew Turner, Mark Bainbridge, Marcus Grinblat, Sheena Grinblat, Peter Swan, Jean Brake, Bryan Phelan, and the CFA's Matthew Pond.

VF1 Frankston marks 10 years linked with the CFA

VICTORIA'S Coast Guard volunteers are celebrating 10 years of supporting their Country Fire Authority land-based firefighting counterparts.

The Coast Guard in Victoria began in 1961, with volunteers having the choice of training in marine firefighting for the past decade.

Most flotillas are now also CFA brigades, with volunteers trained and prepared to battle all water-based incidents.

Volunteers complete a marine firefighting course run by the CFA, primarily based on structural firefighting training but adapted

to fit the marine environment.

Coast Guard **VF1 Frankston** Brigade members recently recognised inaugural members with 10-year badges.

They are Squadron Commodore **Mark Bainbridge, Marcus Grinblat, Sheena Grinblat, Peter Swan, Jean Brake** and **Bryan Phelan. John Hall** and **Jim Teika** also received 10-year awards but were not at the ceremony.

Volunteers from several flotillas also received emergency service medals for the efforts during the Black Saturday fires.

Coast Guard Frankston Brigade Captain

Les Ingram said volunteers were called to a “surprisingly diverse range of incidents – and it’s getting busier every year”.

The brigades carry fire pumps and ancillary equipment on their boats, which are about to be upgraded under a new government funding program.

If needed, the Coast Guard can take CFA members to marine fires and the trained Coast Guard volunteers can also add to the CFA’s surge capacity and respond to major disasters on land.

They also take part in training with land-based CFA crews.

WORTHY AWARDS FOR TWO SAF1 MEMBERS

BRIAN Robinson (left) and **John Heffernan** (right) are long standing members of **SAF1 North Haven** and the two worthy recipients of National Awards: Brian received the rating of a Patrol Officer and John received a Distinguished Award for the services to the organisation.

Brian is this year completing 31 years of service and in his illustrious career served over the years in many and various positions drawing back on his Navy experience. As of late he successfully filled the positions of Flotilla Deputy Commander, Flotilla Commander (two terms), Stores Officer, while currently serving as SAF1 Training Officer and New Member Induction Lecturer. He is also tireless in maintaining the flotilla’s building in safe and liveable order. The membership of SAF1 is appreciative of Brian’s contributions to the flotilla.

John has been serving South Australian community for 14 years now as tireless operator of the Coast Guard Ardrossan Radio Base covering the whole of the St. Vincent Gulf from Port Wakefield in the north to Kangaroo Island in the south. His radio base operates on 27Mhz, VHF and HF frequencies 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and with the help of the Coast Guard North Haven during weekends. John receives 40 to 50

radio calls a week from various mariners who log on with him to be cared for during their voyages. In cases when an assistance needs to be provided John calls for services of nearby SAF10 Port Vincent, or the local Police. John is very well known to the South Australian boating community and his preparedness to help is widely appreciated by us all.





QF2 Brisbane members at the Volunteering Queensland Awards Ceremony.

QF2 VOLUNTEERS' AWARDS

VOLUNTEERING Queensland honoured ten members of QF2 Brisbane Coast Guard with certificates and badges earlier this year to acknowledge their contribution to the local community.

The special Awards Ceremony was held to coincide with National Volunteer Week 2018.

Prominent among those honoured at the ceremony was QF2 Flotilla Training Officer and South Queensland Deputy Commodore **Allan Tennent**, who was named Queensland Volunteer of the Year by Queensland Governor **Paul de Jersey** in 2017.

Volunteering Queensland selected nine other QF2 members for their "many years of distinguished service to the community, assisting and supporting the rescue of distressed vessels and thereby helping save the lives of people in trouble at sea."

Those other QF2 members were **Steve Creevey** (who already holds two National Bravery Awards for his Coast Guard rescues), **Craig Bowen** (Deputy Flotilla Commander at QF2 and holder of another National Bravery Award for Coast Guard rescue work), **Paul Burchell** (holder of the National Emergency Medal for Coast Guard work), **Simon Gideon**, **Kerri Williams**, **Brian Prescott**, **Geoff Stanhope**, **Lurlene Bowen** and **Brian Plunkett**.

Not all the QF2 volunteers could attend the awards ceremony.

Several were away at sea on Coast Guard duty and missed the event. They were presented with their awards at a subsequent flotilla general meeting.

By Harvey Shore

QF2 Flying Squad is down to earth

QF2 BRISBANE'S Flying Squad, brothers **Ian** and **Peter Ratcliffe**, lost an aircraft earlier this year.

The Ratcliffes are long-term QF2 members. Ian Ratcliffe is Coast Guard's South Queensland Squadron Commodore and also serves as Duty Skipper of 'F' Roster at QF2.

Peter Ratcliffe is a former QF2 Flotilla Commander who also serves on 'F' Roster.

Both brothers have served with QF2 for over 20 years. They also share a life-long passion for flying. The Flying Ratcliffes both hold pilot's licences. They also hand-build light aircraft.

In 2002, they joined with another QF2 member, **Danny Fowler**, to scratch-build a high-wing Zenith CH 701 light aircraft from a set of plans.

The Zenith STOL CH 701 is a two-place kit-built Short Take-off And Land (STOL) aircraft designed by a Canadian company.

Once the Ratcliffes had successfully completed construction of their Zenith in a shed near

QF2, they trucked it to Coominya airfield north of Brisbane, for flying tests.

They've been flying it without problems ever since...until one Saturday last June, when Danny Fowler took it for a short flight.

All appeared well through most of this flight but as the Zenith approached the airfield it suddenly lost power and dived towards the ground.

Danny managed to glide it away from homes and towards a wooded paddock.

Luckily he was unhurt, but he was unable to avoid all the trees in that paddock, and the Zenith was wrecked.

The Flying Ratcliffes plan to bring the wreckage of their Zenith back to the shed where they originally built it and over the next year they hope to restore it or salvage parts.

Meanwhile, the Flying Ratcliffes plan a quick return to the air and are already building two more Zeniths, a smaller mid-wing CH 601 and a larger CH 750.

The Flying Ratcliffes, Peter (left) and Ian, with (insert) the crashed Zenith CH 701.



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