

Spring 2019

RESCUE

Mooloolaba



The Official Magazine of QF6 Coast Guard Mooloolaba



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For advertising enquiries, please contact the Editor.

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FROM THE EDITOR

with **Richard Choroszewski** - *Editor*

I've not been back in Australia a full week and already it feels action-packed and without a minute to take a breath. After doing 10 weeks holiday cover back in the UK, it's good to come back to some great boating weather and warm up a little as Cornwall - even in the northern hemisphere's summer - can be wet, overcast and a bit chilly. It's been hectic even by my standards with 2 assists and radio watches to squeeze in between a SunReef presentation to 20 odd students and 2 crew days to wet my whistle. All this while being pressed to get a rather belated *Recue* magazine issue out as soon as possible with our readership going cold turkey.

A big thank you to all our advertisers that regularly support this great magazine and I ask that all our readers continue to support these businesses enthusiastically. If there are firms out there that would like to help QF6 by advertising in our magazine, please give me a call or send me an email. We distribute the hard copies of the magazine to various local establishments, so if you would like some for your own customers to read and feel a connection to water-based activities in general and Coast Guard's activities in particular, then do get in contact.

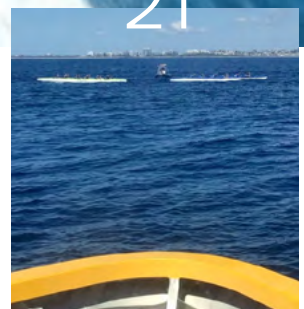
Our Facebook Page, *Coast Guard Mooloolaba QF6*, continues to grow in popularity, especially the videos taken of our regular activities, so have a look and LIKE us. If my first 2 assists this week are anything to go by, it looks like there are going to be some very exciting posts (and hopefully with mostly happy outcomes) for you to be viewing in the coming months.

I'm sure that you will enjoy this Spring edition, either the hard copy black and white version, or check out the colour version at <https://coastguard.com.au/flotilla/qf6-mooloolaba/> and at the bottom of the page select the issue you would like to view.

Joyful and safe boating to you all.

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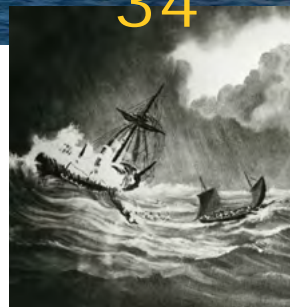
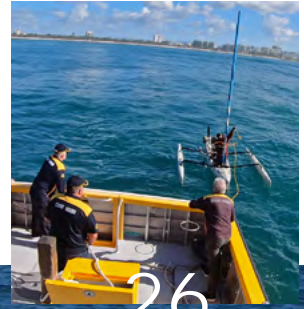
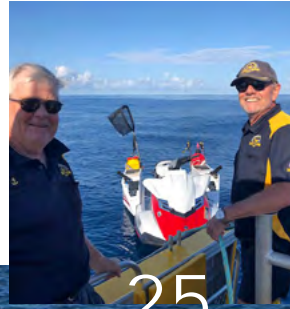
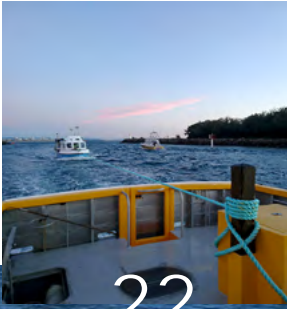
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COMMANDER'S CALL

with **Ian Hunt** - *Commander*

Welcome to the spring edition of the *Mooloolaba Rescue* magazine, my first after being elected again as the Commander of QF6. As you will read, Rod Ashlin was also elected again as the Deputy Commander, which was a great outcome. Apologies for the delay in getting this edition to print, as our Editor has been overseas for two months, but I'm sure the wait will be worth it. QF6 has been very busy over the past 4 months, as you will read in the Operations Report, with an almost 50% increase in callouts for various reasons. Why, we are not sure, but it's a warning perhaps to boaties to pay more attention to vessel maintenance. We can't prevent mechanical failures happening for no apparent reason, but calls for assistance due to going out in bad weather, running out of fuel, flat batteries or blocked filters are surely preventable.

The winter edition of this magazine was the first for QF6 going it alone and from all indications it was well received. Of course, continuation of our magazine relies on relevant and interesting articles, preferably marine-based, so if any of our readers have something you would like to submit for consideration, please forward it to operations.qf6@coastguard.com.au.

Our Marine Assist Supporters and boaties wishing to join QF6 as a Supporter will notice some changes to the joining and renewal procedures. For the past 9 years, we have been using Supporter Application Forms for new applicants and a vessel logging system which was developed by one of our volunteers. However, our National Board has directed that all Flotillas nation-wide use a system called Trip Watch to perform the vessel logging role. Of course, this means training our radio operators before we cutover to Trip Watch, which we expect to happen in November this year. The introduction of Trip Watch has also meant the demise of our hard-copy Marine Assist Application Forms, with all new applicants using either the online method at home or the laptop at QF6 to fill in their relevant details and pay the applicable fee. The online address is <https://coastguard.com.au/marine-assist/>.

In implementing Trip Watch, QF6 has also introduced a new fee structure to cover boaties who own more than one boat, with reductions in the annual fee of \$25 for the second and \$50 for the third boat, which I'm sure will be appreciated. Once we implement Trip Watch full-time, there may be some delays in responding to calls, or getting your information into the system, so please be patient if this happens.

Flotilla membership continues to grow, with 13 new members joining at the September meeting. If you are interested in joining us, our next Recruit Night is on Wednesday the 23rd of October at 1900. Please contact QF6 by email or phone for further information if you are interested. New Boat Crew and Radio Operators are needed, particularly Radio Operators at the moment, to ensure that we maintain our 24/7, 365 days a year operations.

Don't forget to check out WIN News every Friday after the Surf Report for Bill Asher's weekend Boating Conditions Report and for my weekly Boating Report and safety tip on FM104.9 every Friday around 1630. Our Facebook page continues, so have a look at Coast Guard Mooloolaba QF6 to see what's been happening around QF6.

Until next time – safe boating and please remember - "If in doubt, don't go out."



FROM THE DFC

with **Rod Ashlin** - *Deputy Commander*

Spring is here and there is no greater place to be than the Sunshine Coast of Queensland. My special thanks to outgoing Deputy Commander Steve Bellamy and to outgoing Commander Bill Asher for guiding the Flotilla through the last 2 years during a sometimes challenging period - they have done a great job.

Thanks also to the office bearers and Members for ensuring that QF6 has continued to flourish and is now in a stronger position than ever to service the needs of the boating public.

Our vessels have taken part in more calls for assistance than ever before over the last few months, including several calls from the Water Police for SAR activations, which unfortunately saw the loss of some people at sea. However, on the plus side, we were instrumental in the saving of 3 people, including a seven year old boy from waters some 10 miles SE of Pt Cartwright in the middle of the night when their vessel sank quickly. The young boy was only minutes from death when rescued and all three owe their lives to the fact that QF6 Mooloolaba run a reliable communications service 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, which requires a big effort from a lot of people and has done so for at least 25 years. The only person that heard the brief emergency call around 2AM in the morning was our Night Watch Operator and all the correct procedures were then set in motion to ensure the best chance of rescue, which was just in the nick of time.

Our primary vessel *Mooloolaba Rotary Rescue* was slipped in July for a hull clean and anti-foul painting. The topsides were given a good cut and polish, with the maintenance crew then doing all the superstructure so she is looking pretty good for a vessel that is now 7 years old and receives a lot of work. Our three vessels are all in good order and have been kept very busy.

Our fundraising efforts have been hampered a little by fewer BBQ opportunities, but there are many organisations vying for much-needed funds and we realise these opportunities must be shared. Our raffle selling teams have continued to do a good job and we thank the public for their continued support. It is very heartening to hear the comments of support for our organisation from people when buying raffle tickets or giving a donation. The winners of the Commander's Awards for Fundraising in the previous quarter went to the Red BBQ Team and the Gold Sunday crew for raffles, closely followed by the Blue Sunday crew for the raffle award.

Through our Grants Officer Kevin Farrell, we continue to explore a number of avenues for grants with planned upgrades to our security cameras and help establishing a dedicated camera to overlook the river entrance, as well as establishing better radio coverage by placing a VHF radio and antenna on Pt Cartwright for our Working Channel 73. These are just some areas we would like to have help with. We have also applied for a dollar-for-dollar grant through the Federal Member for Fisher, Andrew Wallace, to replace the 3 suspension seats on *Mooloolaba Rotary Rescue*, which are now showing their age through constant use. We are hopeful this will be successful.

Our crew used our defibrillator on *Mooloolaba Rotary Rescue* in an attempt to save a heart attack victim during the recent Outrigger Canoe titles. They were commended for their prompt and professional response. but unfortunately the person could not be saved. We realised it would be prudent to have a defibrillator on our secondary vessel as well, so the Buderim Foundation were approached and we have received \$2,760.00 to purchase this potential life-saving equipment. Thanks to the Buderim Foundation and please see the article and photo of the cheque handover in this edition.

When being interviewed by the media recently and explaining that our calls for assistance have almost doubled in the last 3 years, they asked if we had the capability to handle the increased workload into the future and I replied that I was confident that we would handle whatever was asked of us.

The Blue Water Review currently being undertaken by Queensland Fire and Emergency Services at the request of Minister Craig Crawford is recognizing areas of reform and improvement, as well as acknowledging that increased funding will be required from the State Government to ensure a professional service can be maintained into the future. Some increased financial help has already been given with the signing of the Interim Service Agreement and we look forward to the implementation of the Review's recommendations.

Enjoy the great boating area we have and remember to keep safety a priority.



with **Lee Campbell** - *Operations Manager*

Beacon Disposal: Disposing of unwanted distress beacons (EPIRBs)

Please do not throw your expired beacon in the bin. Beacons can inadvertently activate if they are not correctly disposed, which often occurs when beacons are thrown in the rubbish and end up in tips.

Every year, thousands of dollars are spent in Australia searching for beacons in rubbish dumps. Search personnel and assets which are tasked to look for beacons that have been inadvertently activated are then unavailable for a real emergency. Beacon batteries are hazardous items which should be disposed of in an environmentally friendly way.

Contact your local Volunteer Marine Rescue station. They provide a disposal service free of charge.

After disposing of your unwanted beacon please advise the Australia Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) by updating your online registration account or by phoning **1800 406 406**.

Looking after your beacon

Store your beacon safely and secure. Make sure you keep your beacon dry and store it appropriately.

Keeping your registration details up to date assists search and rescue organisations to locate your beacon in the event of an emergency. Please keep your registration details up to date and ensure you renew your registration every two (2) years before it expires. Updating your registration is free and can be done online through the registration system.

If you've bought or sold a boat, you can update your details on the registration system, or contact AMSA to provide new or changed details of your beacon and vessel.

To report a lost, sold or stolen beacon, call the Beacon registration help line immediately on 1800 406 406.

What are my options for when my battery is due to expire?

406 MHz beacons have their battery expiry date printed on the beacons label. Beacon batteries last for approximately 5 -10 years. Before your battery reaches its expiry date, you should consider the options to ensure that the beacon will transmit properly in an emergency situation.

Option 1: Buy a new, preferably GPS - equipped beacon.

Note: If you decide to buy a new beacon, make sure you **dispose of the old one properly**.

Service your beacon after activation

If you have used your beacon in a distress situation, contact the manufacturer or a certified servicing agent to replace the beacon battery and discuss your servicing options. This is because the battery may be depleted and the beacon may have been damaged during use. Therefore, the beacon will not be guaranteed to function correctly in another emergency situation.

Test your beacon

Every beacon has a self-test switch. Please ensure you follow the manufacturer's guidelines on how to perform a self-test and how often. Some manufacturers recommend that you self-test the beacon periodically, either once a month, or prior to a planned trip.

Note: Over testing can drain the battery.

Source: *Maritime Safety Queensland*



A summary of our operations over the last three months is as follows:

June 2019

Received 16 calls for assistance, 2 Search & Rescue activations; 1 Community Task and 1 Medical Evacuation; assisting 47 people on board and saved \$809,000.00 of community boating assets:

- A 4.7m vessel requested assistance after experiencing electrical issues. *Rotary III (RIII)* towed the vessel 5 Nm from NNE of Pt Cartwright.
- Relocated a 10.6m yacht from the TMR moorings to the Mooloolaba Marina.
- Assisted a 5.5m vessel with engine issues from the Kawana Canal to the CG ramp.
- A 15m yacht became grounded near the East Cardinal Mark in the Mooloolah River. *Mooloolaba Rotary Rescue (MRR)* freed the vessel and assisted in its anchoring.
- A Mayday call was received by CG Mooloolaba from a vessel sinking at Caloundra 9 mile. *MRR* was dispatched to search for the vessel and 3 personnel. After 6 hours, 2 males and a child were found and immediately transferred to hospital.
- An additional RV was requested to assist in the search for a vessel sinking at Caloundra 9 mile. *RIII* was dispatched to assist in the search for the sinking vessel and 3 personnel. After 6 hours, 2 males and a child were found and immediately transferred to hospital.
- A 9m party pontoon requested assistance in the Kawana Canal. *MRR* responded and towed vessel to a private mooring.
- A 5.5m vessel experiencing electrical issues requested assistance. *RIII* responded and towed the vessel 6 Nm back to the CG ramp.
- A 4.5m vessel with engine problems requested assistance into the Maroochy River. Tidal conditions prevented *RIII* from doing this and the vessel was towed 3 Nm to the CG ramp.
- A 19m commercial trawler having engine issues requested assistance from 16 Nm SE of Pt Cartwright. *MRR* attended and towed the vessel back to the trawler wharf.
- A 3m Hobie Cat became demasted and ran into difficulties near the Mooloolah River entrance. Reported to *MRR* by dredge operator. *MRR* towed the vessel back to the CG ramp.

WHAT A WONDERFUL WAY TO HAVE A LASTING MEMORIAL TO THOSE SOULS WHO HAVE GONE TO THEIR ALLOTTED PLACE IN HEAVEN

Sure, their Ashes are Scattered at Sea (or somewhere else), but their name can live on forever, by putting a Named Plaque on the QF6 Mooloolaba Coast Guard Memorial wall. The plaques are made of brass and will be engraved and highlighted with black enamel. Plaques have the option of either 4 or 5 lines of text, to display the requested tribute.

QF6 Memorial Wall



This lasting Memorial will be maintained by QF6 Members in perpetuity, so that all souls who have gone before will be honoured and remembered.

Enquiries: 5444 3222 during office hours OR QF6 Memorial Wall Officer Sue Clarke - 5444 3222

- *RIII* assisted a 9.6m vessel experiencing engine problems from Arkwright Shoal back to Jessica Haven.
- A 5.2m vessel with engine problems requested assistance and was towed from 2 Nm NE of Pt Cartwright to the CG ramp.
- *MRR* towed a 6.5m RIB with engine problems from the HMAS *Brisbane* Dive site 5 Nm NE of Pt Cartwright to the public pontoon.
- *MRR* escorted a 6.8m vessel having engine issues from 4Nm North of Pt Cartwright until its engine gave out and then towed the vessel to the CG ramp.
- A 5.2 m vessel requested assistance having engine issues. *MRR* towed the vessel from 2 Nm East of Pt Cartwright to the CG ramp.
- An EPIRB was activated by a 9.1m yacht with a sole sailor disabled by sickness in heavy seas. *MRR* was activated by the Water Police to rescue the sailor and if possible the vessel. Both were successfully rescued and brought into the Mooloolaba harbour.

July 2019

Received 22 calls for assistance, 2 Search & Rescue activations; assisting 67 people on board and saved \$1,657,000.00 of community boating assets:

- The Mooloolaba Harbour Controller requested assistance to remove a dangerous large tree from the trawler bays. *MRR* towed the tree to the CG ramp for removal.
- Towed a 3m jet ski from 2Nm North of Pt Cartwright to the CG ramp.
- *MRR* towed a 22m vessel with engine issues from 16Nm NE of Pt Cartwright to the Mooloolaba Marina.
- *MRR* towed a 4.6m vessel with engine issues from 8 Nm SE of Pt Cartwright to the CG ramp.
- A 6.4m vessel with engine failure was towed 24 Nm back to the CG ramp.
- *MRR* searched and found a disabled 11m trawler 26 Nm east of Pt Cartwright, which was towed back to the Mooloolaba fishing wharf.
- A 16.7m Commercial vessel with electrical issues requested assistance and was towed 25.5 Nm back to the public pontoon.
- *MRR* was activated to search for a missing diver.
- *RIII* was activated to search for a missing diver.
- *RIII* assisted a 5.6m vessel with engine issues from Pt Arkwright to the La Balsa ramp.
- A 5.2m vessel with insufficient fuel requested assistance from 3 Nm E of Pt Cartwright and was towed back to the CG ramp.
- A 4.4m vessel requested assistance with battery issues. *MRR* towed the vessel from Currimundi to the CG ramp.
- A 13m yacht with engine failure near the Mooloolah River entrance requested assistance. *MRR* towed vessel to Lawrie's Marina.
- 4.5m vessel with gearbox failure was towed 4Nm from Murphy's reef to La Balsa ramp.
- A jet ski with rope entangled in its impeller requested assistance from OWI. *MRR* responded from the Gneering Shoal. However, the jet ski cancelled the request after receiving assistance from another vessel.

LONG RANGE OPERATORS CERTIFICATE of PROFICIENCY COURSE



Coast Guard Mooloolaba, 65 Parkyn Parade,
conducts LROCP courses for Coast Guard Supporters and Members of the Public.
The next 3 week course commences on the 11th of November at 1900hrs.
All Boat Owners who have MF/HF & VHF Radios must have an operating license.
Unlicensed users can be prosecuted under the
Radio Communications Act.

FOR DETAILS AND COSTS TELEPHONE 5444 3222

- A 6m vessel which ran out of fuel 4 Nm North of the harbour entrance was towed back to the CG ramp.
- An 8m yacht heading to Mooloolaba from the South requested assistance after running out of fuel. *MRR* towed vessel 6 Nm to a private mooring.
- A 13.7m commercial vessel required a tow back from 17 Nm by *MRR* to the trawler wharf.
- A 6m vessel with engine issues was towed 5 Nm to the La Balsa ramp.
- An 8.5m vessel with oil filter issues was towed from the harbour entrance to the public pontoon.

August 2019

Received 18 calls for assistance, involving 5 Community Tasks and 1 Medical Evacuation; assisting 45 people on board and saved \$973,500.00 of community boating assets:

- A 4.1m vessel with fuel issues needed assistance from 1 Nm of the harbour entrance to McKenzie's ramp.
- A 5.5m vessel with insufficient fuel was towed from the Wharf area to the CG ramp.
- A 7.2m vessel experiencing engine issues at the Southern Barwon Banks requested assistance and was towed 21 Nm back to the La Balsa Ramp.
- *MRR* assisted a 9m vessel experiencing engine issues from 40 Nm NE of Pt Cartwright to the La Balsa ramp.
- Received a call to assist a yachtsman who had broken his leg on board an anchored yacht in the harbour and transferred him to a waiting QAS ambulance at the public pontoon.
- A 5m vessel with engine issues was towed from the harbour entrance to the CG pontoon.
- A 9m yacht with engine issues requested assistance from 6 Nm S of Pt Cartwright and was towed to the Duck Pond area in the harbour and anchored.
- A 4.2m vessel with engine issues was towed by *RIII* from the Maroochy River entrance to CG ramp.
- A 5m vessel with fuel line issues was towed from 10 Nm East of Pt Cartwright to the CG ramp.
- A 5m vessel with engine failure was towed to the La Balsa ramp.
- *MRR* towed a 7.2m vessel 3 Nm from NE of Pt Cartwright to the La Balsa ramp.
- A 12m yacht taking on water with bilge pumps feared to fail before entering harbour. *MRR* provided a pump and escorted the vessel until moored safely on the Public Pontoon.
- Relocated the DV (12m yacht) to the MBA Marina emergency pontoon.
- A 9m vessel listing to port was assisted by *RIII* from the MBA Marina and taken to La Balsa ramp for lift out.
- A 5.5m vessel with engine issues at the ex-HMAS *Brisbane* dive site was towed 5 Nm back to the CG ramp.
- A 5.3m vessel with engine issues was towed by *RIII* from 10 Nm from SE of Pt Cartwright to the La Balsa ramp.
- *RIII* towed a 3m jet ski from the Barwon Banks after it was abandoned by the rider owing to electrical issues and rider illness. The jet ski was returned to the owner at the CG ramp.
- A 6.5m vessel with engine issues 22Nm E of Pt Cartwright requested assistance and was towed back to Mooloolaba.

Australian Waters Qualification (AWQ) Course



Coast Guard Mooloolaba, 65 Parkyn Parade, will be conducting the new AWQ course for Coast Guard Supporters and Members of the Public.

This is a 3 hour (1830 – 2130) course for VHF radio operations up to 12 NM from shore.

The next course for 2019 is on the 7th of November.

All Boat Owners who have VHF Radios must have an operating license.

Unlicensed users can be prosecuted under the
Radio Communications Act.

FOR DETAILS AND COSTS TELEPHONE 5444 3222



VALE – CHARLIE THURGOOD

Following a long battle with cancer, our long-time member Charlie Thurgood passed away on the 4th of August. Charlie's funeral was held on the 9th of August and was attended by 75 Coast Guard members, which was an indication of the high esteem in which Charlie was held.

Charlie joined Coast Guard Mooloolaba QF6 on the 8th of October 2008 and commenced boat crew training on the White Saturday crew. Charlie progressed through the ratings of Competent Crew and Advanced Crew and he achieved Restricted Coxswain in October 2014. Charlie received the Operational Service Award for 100 Activations to assist vessels in distress in November 2018 and recorded almost 800 sea time hours.

Apart from his boat crew duties, Charlie was appointed as the QF6 Administration Officer on the 1st of July 2009, a position he held until the 30th of June 2015, which is, as far as can be determined, a record. For his dedication to the position, Charlie was awarded the Association Meritorious Service – Administration Award in 2012, one that he thoroughly deserved.

So then Charlie had some time on his hands, so what else to do but to volunteer to help out the Sunshine Coast Squadron and his good mate Bob Truman. Charlie was appointed as the Squadron Finance Officer in February 2016, but finance was not his cup of tea, and he gave up this position in October 2016; but Charlie being Charlie, straight away volunteered for and was appointed as the Squadron Assistant Administration Officer in November 2016, a position he held right up to the end. Charlie also recently decided that his boat crew days were coming to an end and so started training to be one of our Base Station Radio Operators – he just couldn't stop.

Charlie was an extremely popular and well-liked member of the Flotilla, always willing to help, always willing to provide advice on a range of issues, always conscientious, always concerned for others before himself. This was no more evident than when I visited him when he first went into hospital. After saying hello, the first thing he said to me was, "you're going to have to find another Welfare Officer" – typical Charlie. His dedication to the Flotilla resulted in Charlie being awarded the annual Peter Mulder Award in 2014, which is awarded to the Flotilla Officer who enthusiastically executes their duties to the highest standards – that was also typical Charlie.

Coast Guard Mooloolaba offers our sincere condolences to Charlie's wife Anne and the rest of Charlie's family. Charlie had many struggles over the past few years, but he was a fighter and always came back ready to serve the community some more. What a guy.

Charlie you will be sorely missed but never forgotten. Rest in Peace.

Ian Hunt, Commander QF6



VALE - ERNST PRUEGL

Ernst joined the Coast Guard Flotilla NF3 at Kuring-gai New South Wales, as an Associate Member in 1974, before he went to the USA, where he completed the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary Boating Safety and Seamanship Course in December 1975.

On returning to Australia, Ernst joined the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard Association Kuring-gai Flotilla NF3 as a Volunteer in June 1977. Ernst attained the Seaman 1 Rating in June 1979, Quartermaster in June 1982 and Coxswain in August 1984. During his time at NF3, Ernst also completed the Radio and Depth Sounder Course in 1978 and the Navigation Course in 1981.

Ernst also became a Base Station Radio Operator after completing the Radio Operator Grade 3 course in 1982.

During his Service with NF3 Ernst was awarded with an Association Service Award for "Outstanding Seamanship during the rescue of a capsized vessel at Patonga NSW in 1978".

In 1985 Ernst transferred to Coast Guard Mooloolaba where he held the position of Public Relations and Publicity Officer, as well as being on boat crew stand-by and performing fundraising duties. Unfortunately, due to his wife's illness, Ernst was not able to continue permanent rostered duties, but attended Flotilla Meetings when possible.

In recent years, Ernst spent about half of each year in Austria, but always made a point of attending Flotilla meetings when he was here and telling of his involvement with the Coast Guard equivalent in Austria.

In total, Ernst was a Coast Guard member for 42 years and we thank Ernst for his valuable service to the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard Association and to the boating public wherever he served.

Rest in Peace.



QF6 RAFFLE RESULTS

The QF6 Raffle winners for the raffles drawn during the winter period were:

Raffle Number 4 of 2019 - Drawn: 6 August 2019

1st prize - \$500 Coles/Myer Gift Card - Ticket Number: 39104, Mr F of Wurtulla QLD
2nd prize - \$300 Coles/Myer Gift Card - Ticket Number: 39408, Mr B of Mt. Coolool QLD
3rd prize - \$200 Coles/Myer Gift Card - Ticket Number: 40115, Ms K of Mooloolaba QLD.

Raffle Number 5 of 2019 - Drawn: 25 September 2019

1st prize - \$500 Coles/Myer Gift Card - Ticket Number: 41594, Mr C of Ningi QLD
2nd prize - \$300 Coles/Myer Gift Card - Ticket Number: 41953, Mr F of Maroochydore QLD
3rd prize - \$200 Coles/Myer Gift Card - Ticket Number: 42571, Mr W of Toowoomba QLD.
Congratulations to the winners and thanks to all those who bought a ticket.

Rod Ashlin, Deputy Commander, QF6

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TRAINING THE COAST GUARD WAY: A PERSONAL VIEW, WARTS AND ALL - PART 2

Part 1 of Doug's story appeared in the Winter edition. (QF6 Editor)

In between the 3 week crew days we also had meetings, boat maintenance, and administration, First Aid and CPR, Charting, Radio, ColRegs and Wheelhouse equipment courses and many other training sessions often run by in-house skilled Flotilla members. Some of the training sessions such as Radio Licencing are open to the general boating public. Also between crew days trainings there is a chance to practise things like knots, throwing heaving lines, and completion of MAR theory components for the motivated (which all trainees should be). But at this early stage, I was only ready to enjoy and commit my time to a single day out every three weeks rostered crew days. The next two crew training days were of a similar tempo with some crew coming back after a break or leaving for a break. My point here is that they had become competent crew, and for them to an extent, the pressure was off, while for us trainees the focus was on commitment, regular attendance and attainment of competent crew status in the shortest possible time. Even short breaks in crew's initial training is not conducive to attaining and retaining the skills needed.

Three crew days later, I was still floating along not really exercising or demonstrating any potential for becoming a competent crew member and a valued addition to the team. In fact, at that time I was genuinely unsure whether Coast Guard was for me. This period coincided with my going on a three month (pre-approved) leave of absence for my long planned overseas retirement trip. This is something I should have considered and maybe applied to join Coast Guard after returning and not having such a long break in between, because during this trip my consideration for all things Coast Guard was non-existent. Meanwhile, these stalwart crew regulars continued on as they have done without me, in fact most probably forgetting/discounting me altogether.

On returning to Oz, I again asked myself if this Coast Guard gig was for me. I said to myself, "Give it another go" as I had bought all the uniforms and paid my membership fee. People may say that I was really not a good fit for this organisation with this sort of attitude, but it was how I felt at the time. In hindsight, I would have had to agree with them 100% at that time.

Arriving back at the crew training day and introducing myself to all again, I felt I was treated with reserve due to my initial lack of interest shown in my first training days and then three months leave. I would repeat that if any potential Coast Guard training is being considered, do try to avoid long-term absence during your initial training. I did two more crew training days and only spent time catching up from what I forgot from my earlier training! So it's no surprise that I stumbled through three more crew days of training before taking off for other pre-booked tours and events. Surprise, surprise ... for nearly two more months, no more training with Coast Guard.

Now after nearly 10 months of being in Coast Guard and cruising along at my tortoise pace I have returned again for a rostered crew day with a background of approx. six crew days behind me. What should I expect from my fellow crew members who are so much more committed to the cause? I sheepishly attempted round three of my crew training and was quick to establish that I need to brush up, pull my head in and make a decision on my Coast Guard future. Perhaps I'm being over sensitive, but I was picking up the vibe that my commitment was not considered serious. While the crew made no comment and appeared happy to continue to persevere with me, I knew this had to be crunch time.

I realised that a complete turnaround in my attitude was necessary and that I was not going to be acknowledged by my crewmates until I proved myself as being serious and committed. So, with no more excuses, I began to put my best foot forward. Kym from my crew remained supportive throughout, Skipper Bill and John had shown a lot of perseverance with me, and the bulk of the remaining crew - Tony, Myles, Charley, Ringo, Miranda and new comer Glenn - again supported and encouraged me in this.

I also joined the Thursday morning maintenance team to upgrade my boat equipment servicing skills. Skilled Coast Guard engineering members work hard to ensure our rescue boats are seaworthy and remain well-maintained and ready for action at all hours. A high degree of commitment is required by them to make a difference and it is great to see how willingly they are prepared to share their skills

and work as a team. The skills from previous or existing professional careers (many ex-military) of these maintenance volunteers assist in alleviating the paying of thousands of dollars to outside marine service providers. Their example and my weekly attendance has allowed me to change my ways and I now turn up regularly with a far more positive attitude.

After my attitude change and four further training days which saw me honing my boat skills, practising knots at home, reading training manuals and referring to QF6 SMS procedures, and completing all the training required for competent crew. Duncan, Richard and Robert from other crews have also provided me with a supportive attitude and friendship. Coast Guard's camaraderie is something that I enjoy and find invaluable.

If you are considering your future in Coast Guard I remind you of our catch cry, "It is not what Coast Guard can do for you, but what you can do for Coast Guard."

The first and utmost priority is to join Coast Guard for all the right reasons. Do not be like me and initially use it as a time filler, because until you become a competent crew member, you really will remain a bit of a liability to your fellow crewmates.

I have now become competent crew in a period spanning 12 months. In hindsight, I am not proud of this. Establish you have the right reasons for joining Coast Guard and that, in particular, you can provide your time in training avoiding prolonged absences/interruptions which may delay your progress. If you have any doubts contact Robert Jeffries our personnel officer or other Coast Guard members to discuss your training options. Don't ignore other opportunities if boat crew does not suit you. Coast Guard volunteers are needed for a variety of other tasks, such as becoming Radio Operators, working in Admin, Fundraising and others.

Since completing my initial training, I have had a call out as competent crew and now understand what Coast Guard Mooloolaba QF6 flotilla is all about 24 hrs a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. This volunteer group of some 176+ committed, highly-skilled members provide a community assistance expected as boat crew, radio operators, fundraisers and admin staff (all non-paid). I have come to understand that so many boaties within Sunshine Coast are not taking advantage of the \$75 annual supporter's fee which provides them with reassurance that they are being looked after in case of need. Even more surprising is that many boaties put out to sea without bothering to log on with Coast Guard, providing brief information of how many POB (people on board), destination, ETR (estimated time of return) and mobile number. This is not a sales pitch, but a reminder of what price we put on our members, supporters and members of the public's lives and property to know Coast Guard is only a call away.

In closing, the above is certainly not the norm in Coast Guard boat crew training. If you bring in a proper attitude, successful competent crew rating can be achieved in relatively short order. My new-found crew friend, Glenn keeps reminding me of this as he completed his competent crew in only a few months, and is therefore a better example of what can be done. Lest anyone get the wrong idea about this article, I was asked to write a warts- and- all article and be open about the experiences and feelings I went through after joining up. Throughout, the doubts and concerns were in my head rather than anything negative from my colleagues or hierarchy.

Doug Golder, White Saturday Crew, QF6

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* McNair Ingenuity Survey 2012

UNSUNG HERO – KEN WILLIAMS

If you think being blown to bits is dangerous, it is, but to have pieces of shrapnel continuing to surface on your skin for ever after is another matter. And to have suffered from perhaps Agent Orange at the same time ... then you are looking at a brave man in Ken Williams, as he keeps it well hidden and doesn't complain. Well, not about that anyway!

Ken has served as a volunteer at QF6 for at least 15 years doing all sorts of meaningful jobs, including boat crew for 8 years, and currently as an early morning Radio Operator and Fundraising Officer. We sometimes refer to something as a "Ken thing" as he is very well known in the ranks for doing it "his way" and that is fine. If we had had a cannon shell go off at close range when in Vietnam we'd probably do our 'own thing' too. His gunner mate wasn't so fortunate and was a quadriplegic after that incident. But Ken soldiered on with life after his Army service and married Margaret and raised two sons. His surviving son, Grant, whom he is proud of, works overseas.

Widowed now, he can look back at a life well lived. Born in Manly, Sydney by the sea, he's returned to his nautical roots in retirement as the salt must be in his blood.

He's also had a country upbringing in places like Springsure on a cattle station near Emerald, schooled in Emerald and worked as a Stock Agent and then for Golden Fleece Petroleum for many years.

Now in retirement, Ken has friends in his village, who he likes to socialise with weekly and contributes there as well. He enjoys reading and says all he wants on his brass plaque on the Memorial Wall is - "I go to a better place."

Well, not yet Ken. We still have lots of work for you to do, but keeping it simple and no fuss is what you say you like best. So, thank you Ken for your service, jobs well done and we know they will continue to be just that. Well Done!

Sue Clarke, QF6



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2019 / 2020

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OCTOBER				NOVEMBER				DECEMBER				JANUARY			
Time	m	Time	m	Time	m	Time	m	Time	m	Time	m	Time	m	Time	m
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TU 0946 1.79		WE 0921 1.67		FR 1100 1.76		SA 1025 1.80		SU 1119 1.72		MO 1103 1.90		WE 1207 1.61		TH 0555 0.43	
TU 1556 0.21		WE 1528 0.38		FR 1739 0.50		SA 1652 0.47		SU 1808 0.54		MO 1742 0.43		WE 1853 0.56		TH 1226 1.80	
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WE 1035 1.75		TH 0958 1.67		SA 1151 1.65		SU 1114 1.75		MO 1206 1.62		TU 1155 1.84		TH 0614 0.66		FR 0702 0.56	
WE 1649 0.36		TH 1609 0.44		SA 1847 0.57		SU 1751 0.51		MO 1904 0.57		TU 1842 0.44		TH 1251 1.52		FR 1320 1.65	
2238 1.43		2154 1.33		2353 1.05		2318 1.13						1944 0.57		2001 0.41	
3 0444 0.24		18 0402 0.28		3 0537 0.49		18 0513 0.40		3 0023 1.07		18 0021 1.22		3 0146 1.20		18 0229 1.45	
TH 1127 1.67		FR 1039 1.64		SA 1252 1.55		MO 1211 1.70		TU 0559 0.59		WE 0608 0.44		FR 0718 0.74		SA 0823 0.66	
TH 1751 0.50		FR 1654 0.51		SU 2001 0.60		MO 1903 0.53		TU 1259 1.54		WE 1254 1.77		FR 1343 1.44		SA 1421 1.51	
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FR 1226 1.58		SA 1127 1.60		MO 0643 0.59		TU 0619 0.48		WE 0706 0.67		TH 0721 0.53		SA 0836 0.79		SU 0950 0.70	
FR 1913 0.61		SA 1751 0.58		MO 1402 1.49		TU 1318 1.67		WE 1358 1.48		TH 1355 1.69		SA 1441 1.38		SU 1528 1.41	
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SA 0620 0.47		TU 1226 1.56		MO 0808 0.64		WE 0741 0.52		TH 0825 0.71		FR 0841 0.57		SU 0957 0.79		MO 1108 0.67	
SA 1339 1.51		SU 1908 0.62		TU 1509 1.46		WE 1429 1.66		TH 1459 1.44		FR 1457 1.62		SU 1541 1.34		MO 1635 1.34	
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SU 0732 0.55		MO 0633 0.49		WE 0930 0.64		TH 0904 0.50		FR 0940 0.70		SA 0959 0.57		MO 1106 0.75		TU 1212 0.60	
SU 1458 1.48		MO 1341 1.55		WE 1606 1.47		TH 1533 1.68		FR 1554 1.43		SA 1557 1.56		MO 1637 1.32		TU 1736 1.32	
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MO 0900 0.58		TH 0758 0.51		TH 1034 0.59		FR 1017 0.45		SA 1044 0.67		SU 1109 0.54		TU 1202 0.67		WE 1304 0.54	
MO 1604 1.50		TU 1500 1.60		TH 1654 1.49		FR 1630 1.69		SA 1642 1.42		SU 1654 1.51		TU 1729 1.32		WE 1831 1.33	
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TU 1016 0.54		WE 0924 0.45		FR 1124 0.53		SA 1120 0.38		SU 1137 0.62		MO 1211 0.49		WE 1250 0.59		TH 0720 1.92	
TU 1656 1.53		WE 1605 1.68		FR 1734 1.52		SA 1722 1.69		SU 1725 1.42		MO 1748 1.46		WE 1817 1.33		TH 1348 0.48	
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WE 1739 1.58		TH 1701 1.77		SA 1207 0.48		SU 1810 1.66		MO 1805 1.41		TU 1839 1.42		TH 1333 0.50		FR 1427 0.45	
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TH 0600 1.31		FR 1135 0.25		SA 0643 1.56		MO 0657 1.85		MO 0651 1.72		WE 0730 1.95		FR 0749 1.98		SA 0836 1.95	
TH 1156 0.41		FR 1751 1.83		SU 1246 0.43		MO 1309 0.29		TU 1305 0.50		WE 1355 0.41		FR 1417 0.43		SA 1503 0.43	
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FR 0636 1.41		SA 0625 1.62		MO 0716 1.65		TH 0742 1.93		WE 0728 1.82		TH 0813 1.98		SA 0832 2.05		FR 0912 1.92	
FR 1234 0.36		SA 1228 0.17		MO 1323 0.40		TU 1359 0.29		WE 1346 0.45		TH 1441 0.40		SA 1500 0.37		SU 1537 0.44	
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SA 0740 1.56		MO 0756 1.86		TH 0824 1.79		FR 0909 1.96		FR 0846 1.94		SA 0933 1.93		MO 1001 2.08		TH 1017 1.81	
SU 1342 0.30		MO 1407 0.14		WE 1438 0.38		TH 1537 0.36		FR 1511 0.40		SA 1605 0.43		MO 1632 0.33		TU 1643 0.47	
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2050 1.51		2129 1.44		2138 1.28		2236 1.16		2219 1.26		2254 1.23				2348 1.34	
		31 0330 0.14								31 0437 0.45				31 0534 0.64	
		TH 1013 1.85								TU 1126 1.70				FR 1158 1.54	
		TH 1639 0.40								TU 1807 0.54				FR 1834 0.55	
		2212 1.29								2340 1.20					

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Datum of Predictions is Lowest Astronomical Tide

Moon Phase Symbols ● New Moon ☾ First Quarter ○ Full Moon ☾ Last Quarter



COMMUNITY NEWS

BLUE WATER REVIEW UPDATE

As mentioned previously, the Minister for Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES), the Honourable Craig Crawford MP, announced last year that a Blue Water Review Working Group (BWR WG) would be formed to review Blue Water rescue services in Queensland. There have been many meetings between the BWR WG and members of both AVCGA and VMR throughout Queensland, with the latest being held in Cairns in August.

In summary, at the Cairns meeting the BWR WG focused on the current capability and risk to the sector. A number of matters were considered, including:

- **Capability Analysis and Risk Assessment**
 - The WG undertook a pilot capability analysis workshop with the “knowledge in the room” considering the sector as it is currently.
 - An issue discussed was the importance of foundation and ongoing training, and equal access to training services for frontline volunteers.
 - The WG also heard a short, high-level talk about risks, hazards and mitigation practices with the QFES Hazard and Risk Unit. A process to further assess risk will be progressed.
- **The Far Northern Region**
 - The WG welcomed Cairns Harbour Master Mr Michael Barnett who presented on the Torres Strait Marine Safety Program that is facilitated by Maritime Safety Queensland (MSQ). Mr Barnett detailed the program’s primary focus: improving and promoting boating safety in the region and how MSQ seeks to ensure safety in the Torres Strait.
 - The WG held a listening session with members of the Gulf, Cape and Island community units. Access to training was again raised as a primary issue facing remote units.

The latest BWR WG meeting was held in Brisbane from the 27 - 29 September 2019. In facilitating the sixth volunteer session in Cairns, the WG has now sought engagement with all Squadrons and Flotillas across Queensland. This now concludes the engagement session schedule. The WG thanks all volunteers who, in some instances, travelled great distances to engage with the BWR WG. For additional information on the activities of the BWR WG please visit the QFES website or email the WG via BlueWaterReview@qfes.qld.gov.au.

MAROOCHY RSL TRAINING UPGRADE GRANT

As Coast Guard is a Registered Training Organisation (RTO), our trainers and assessors are required to hold relevant training qualification. Recently, the qualification requirements were upgraded, meaning that QF6 trainers and assessors had to do additional training to comply. The cost to upgrade 16 of our members was \$9,600. However, Maroochy RSL came to our assistance by providing us with a grant of \$3,600 to meet some of the cost, which was greatly appreciated. Our 16 members attended training sessions on two Tuesday nights with FC Education and are now qualified to train and assess the marine training course.

Bill Asher, Training Officer, QF6

BUDERIM FOUNDATION SUPPORTS QF6

Coast Guard Mooloolaba recently supported the Australian Titles of the Offshore Canoe Racing Association, with *Mooloolaba Rotary Rescue* and *Rotary III* acting as safety vessels. Unfortunately, a competitor had a heart attack, which required the *Mooloolaba Rotary Rescue* crew to use the onboard defibrillator. This unfortunate incident highlighted the fact that we did not have a defibrillator on *Rotary III*, so a grant submission was made to the Buderim Foundation for the purchase of a defibrillator.

The Buderim Foundation recently advised that our Grant Application had been successful and we were invited to the community cheque presentation ceremony on the 14th of September, where Deputy Commander Rod Ashlin and Grants Officer Kevin Farrell were presented with a cheque for \$2,760.

QF6 thanks the Buderim Foundation for their generous support, which will enhance our emergency response capability.

Ian Hunt, Commander QF6



LEFT: Rod Ashlin and Kevin Farrell with Russell Stitz, Buderim Foundation President, and Rebecca Ramsay, Buderim Foundation Grants Committee Member.

SUNREEF VISIT QF6

QF6 always welcomes visits from community groups to see our facilities and vessels, to hear about who we are and what we do, and about boating safety. So when the Sunreef Queensland Marine Training Services leader George Hughston-Roberts rang to ask if their group could visit, we were happy to oblige.

On Saturday the 28th of September at 0830, some 20 students arrived. They are on a 1 week SCUBA training course and their visit to Coast Guard is by way of seeing how marine rescue services operate with a short presentation in addition to recent video footage on rescuing runaway boats, heavy weather assists and Search and Rescue Operations. These students were highly motivated and asked many questions about radio operations, rescuing disabled vessels and working with Water Police and rescue helicopters.

The 20-strong group split into 2 with Richard Choroszewski conducting them around the facility showing the Radio Room, lecture rooms, boat storage and workshop areas, while David Nielsen, skipper with Gold Saturday's crew, conducted a tour of our 3 rescue vessels and safety equipment.

On completion of the tour, the group thanked Coast Guard with a round of applause. The subsequent feedback from their leader was that they had a great time and now knew more about boating safety and about what Coast Guard does.

Following on from this, Sunreef are planning to repeat the exercise on a regular basis with the next visit scheduled for October.

Richard Choroszewski, Editor, QF6



ABOVE: Classroom presentation to the Sunreef group.

CALTEX CONTINUES FUEL CARDS SUPPORT FOR QF6

The cost of fuel continues to be a major expense for QF6, so it was with much pleasure that we accepted a further donation of \$500 worth of fuel cards from one of our members, Glenn Douglas, on behalf of Caltex Australia. This is on top of the original donation from him earlier this year which was presented to Bill Asher, our former Commander.

QF6 greatly appreciates this support from Caltex.

Ian Hunt, Commander QF6



CALTEX



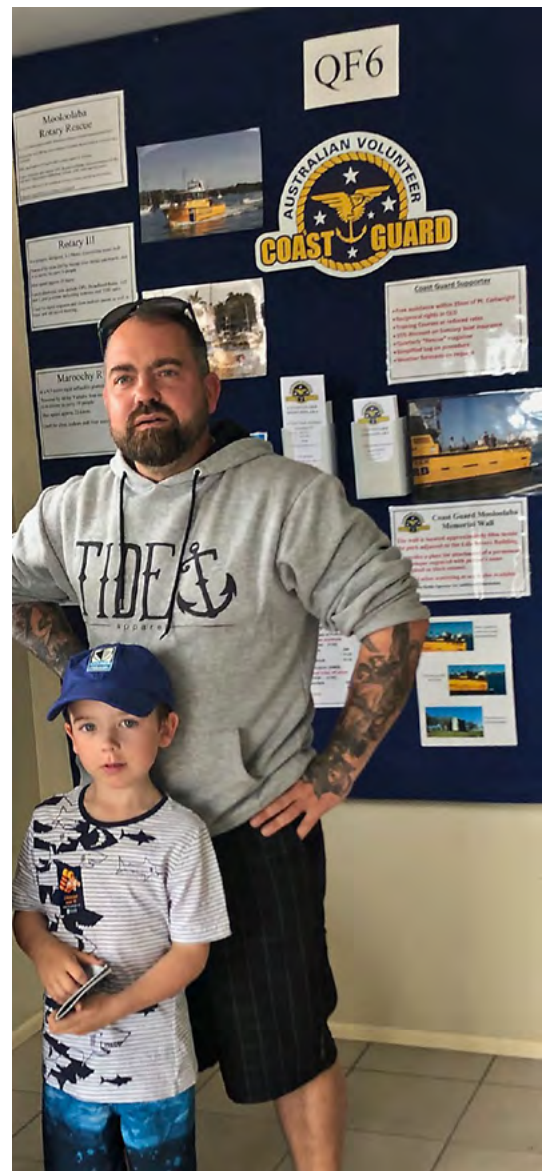
ABOVE: Glen Douglas making the presentation to Bill Asher.

MAIKE AND JULIAN VISIT QF6

What a delightful visit it was when the much-talked-about-in-the-media folk who were rescued after 6-plus-hours in the water off Mooloolaba – the little 7-year-old boy who desperately clung to a bucket and his dad who trod water all that time – popped in to Coast Guard Head Quarters again for a visit. Maike and his son are avid fishermen and as a supporter with an MBA number, Maike always logged on with our radio operators when he went to sea. And thank goodness they did on that almost fateful night, or we would have had little chance of finding them.

Of course, now without a boat, they have to pop in to have a chat with us. It is always delightful when any of our supporters do that, as long as we have time and are not in the middle of an assist or other important business the Coast Guards do.

At the time, our Chaplain Sue was out on an ashes scattering service and sometimes she has an unveiling of a brass plaque on our Memorial Wall to attend to, but fortunately for this family they don't need either, although it was a very close call. So they are grateful, we are happy and it is a delightful ending to a very intense search and rescue that seemed impossible at the time.






RIGHT: Julian and Maike visit QF6 after the dramatic search and rescue that saved their lives.

IVF WORLD DISTANCE CHAMPIONSHIPS

The International Va'a Federation (IVF) held the World Distance Championships at Mooloolaba from the 12th to the 16th of August. As QF6 had helped the Australian Offshore Canoe Racing Association (AOCRA) during the recent Australian Championships by providing a safety boat, AOCRA approached QF6 to support the World Distance Championships. The event scheduled races every day and all day, and we were asked to provide both our primary rescue vessel *Mooloolaba Rotary Rescue* and our secondary rescue vessel *Rotary III* to assist placing and retrieving the race markers and to be safety vessels each day. Thanks to all our skippers and crews who volunteered to operate our vessels for the week.

Coast Guard Mooloolaba was happy to support the World Titles, which went off without a major hitch. The weather was generally good for the week and luckily there were no calls for assistance during the racing. As you can see from the medal tally table from the IVF website, Tahiti came out the overall winners at the end of the week.

Ian Hunt, Commander QF6

Final Medal Tally

Country	Gold	Silver	Bronze
Tahiti	12	4	3
Australia	8	5	2
Hawaii	4	1	4
New Zealand	2	8	8
California	1	4	2
Brazil	1	1	1
Canada	3	2	1
New Caledonia	1	1	1
Germany	1	1	1
Rapa Nui	1	1	1
Cook Islands	1	1	1

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IT'S LIVE! in Mooloolaba



TOP: The end of competition saw Tahiti on top of the medal tally.

CENTRE: Offshore outriggers rounding the first mark.

RIGHT: Retrieving the race course markers.



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ASSIST STORIES



STARTED EASY ... GREW FROM THERE

WORDS ROD ASHLIN

Friday the 12th July was a beautiful winter's day that makes the Sunshine Coast such a great place to live.

I went to QF6 headquarters at 0730 to do some of the administrative work that is always required and made allowances to bring our primary rescue vessel back from Lawrie's slipway at 1200, where she had been getting a bottom clean and anti-fouling repaint.

Around 1200, we received a call for assistance from one of our Supporter members with a 6.7 metre runabout who could not start his motor and was 25 miles out to sea at the Barwon Banks. As I was the Skipper on duty, we hurriedly returned *Mooloolaba Rotary Rescue* from the slipway and then transferred to our secondary 8.5 metre vessel *Rotary III* for the trip out in the light SE conditions. Frank Perrone and I were able to maintain 25 knots out, saw plenty of whales and found the vessel in the position he had given with 3 on board plus some nice fish. We were then able to maintain a good speed on the tow home.

I arrived back at my home around 4.30 pm and received another call from the Radio Operator at 8pm to say that a 4.6 metre vessel with 3 on board was asking for assistance and was 9 miles SE of Pt Cartwright. This time I decided to take our primary rescue vessel with a crew of 4, which was a good decision, as by now there was a fresh North Easterly blowing and a lumpy sea, which had probably caused some anxiety for the people in the small vessel. We were in radio contact and had little trouble

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finding the vessel who flashed a light as we got close. We towed this vessel back at a careful speed to ensure their safety and deposited them at the ramp adjacent to our headquarters.

I joked with the Radio Operator that I wanted no further calls that night and left for home. As I drove into my garage around 11.30pm, my mobile phone rang again.

Sure enough it was the Radio Operator who apologetically said that a triple zero call had been transferred to Police Communications from a vessel at sea urgently requiring assistance. The only details given was that it was an 11-metre commercial fishing vessel with no motor power and was somewhere south of the Barwon Banks on approximately the 100 metre depth contour and drifting south. I drove back to the base and tried to get further details, but whilst the Radio Operator had been in brief contact with the distressed vessel by phone, he now could not be contacted by phone or radio and had not given any specific position. Police Comms apologised, but said they had no additional information and could not contact the person who had rung in.

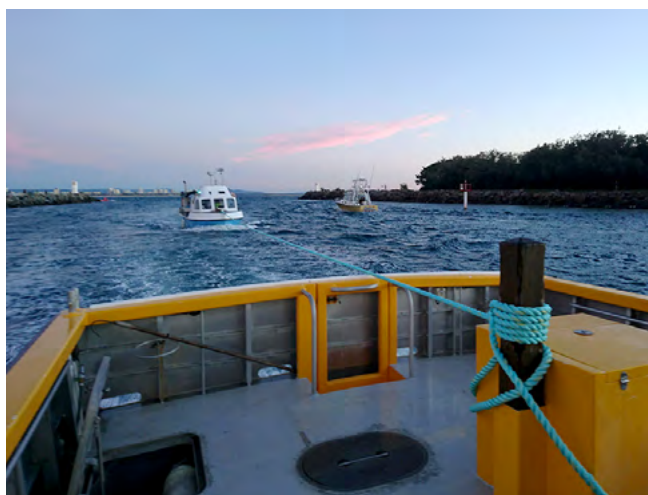
This was looking like a possible search procedure that would drag on into the next day so I called a backup skipper in – Bill Asher – and with Glen Pollard and Hector Giroire, we left our berth at 0030 and proceeded to a position that was my best estimate of where to start looking, which was 28 miles ENE of Pt Cartwright and 5 miles south of the southern end of the Barwon Banks on the 100 metre depth contour line.

When we reached this position there were several commercial fishing vessels in the area and a rough sea whipped up by the 20-25 knot North Easterly wind. We activated our flashing amber lights and tried again to get a phone connection and called repeatedly on emergency channel 16, but received no response. I was hoping the vessel in distress would see us and let off a flare or activate his EPIRB, but again no response. Off to the south we could see some white lights and an AIS signal from an 18-metre fishing vessel, so we ran down the 100 metre contour toward them with the idea of commencing a large rectangular search pattern. As we got closer, one of the lights appeared to be flashing on and off at times, so we proceeded towards this vessel.

To our relief and no doubt theirs, this was in fact the vessel we were looking for. It took a few attempts to get our heavy towline aboard and secured and we then started the long tow home. By the time we had the vessel secured at the emergency berth of the Mooloolaba Marina, it was around 0700 Saturday morning. There did not seem to be any reasonable explanation offered when the vessel's owner was questioned as to why their radio seemed to be inoperable or why they were unable to give a GPS position.

I reminded the 3 men aboard that they were extremely fortunate to be found with the information we had and the 2 hour search we had made to find them may well have developed into a much larger search involving ourselves and Police, with all assets available during the next day. No doubt the moral of the story is that if you are venturing well offshore in any vessel, make sure that all equipment is in good working order and make every effort to ensure that if the unexpected happens you have given yourself the best chance to be rescued.

This was a long night for the crew, but satisfying to see a good outcome, which could have ended quite differently in other circumstances. Always treat the sea and Mother Nature with respect.



STORM RESCUE – JUNE 2019

WORDS BILL ASHER | *White Saturday Skipper*

On a wet and windy winter morning at 0500 hrs, Coast Guard Mooloolaba received a Search and Rescue request from the Mooloolaba Water Police to an activated EPIRB 5nm off Point Arkwright. The details from the EPIRB registration showed it to be a 9m sloop called *Clipper*. The White Saturday duty crew were called in and prepared the primary rescue vessel *Mooloolaba Rotary Rescue (MRR)* for departure. The radio room tried to raise the vessel on the radio but received no replies, therefore no details of the sloop's predicament were known.

In the dark before the oncoming winter's dawn, *MRR* left the river mouth into gale force winds of 30-40 knots and 3-4 metre seas. A mile from the estimated position of the distressed yacht, we received a radio call from the rescue helicopter that he had sighted the yacht at the known position but due to an incoming squall he had to move into an area where he could still see the ocean.

At 0630 hrs we came upon the yacht anchored above the Arkwright Shoal in 20 metres of water pitching up and down about 45 degrees, with a figure in wet weather gear huddled in the cockpit.

In the heaving seas, we came as close as we could alongside and found that the yachtie was the only person on board and was debilitated with severe sea sickness and had not been able to continue sailing. There was still a small amount of sail on the main mast and also a shredded foresail on the forestay.

We asked the yachtie to go up to the bow and pull up the anchor, but after half an hour of trying, he could not pull it up. We came in as close as we could and threw a heaving line with our heavy tow line attached.

With the tow attached, but the anchor cable still down, we slowly pulled the yacht off the shoal. The yachtie was so tired after the effort he stayed crouched down in the lee of the shortened headsail as we punched back into a 4-metre swell.

The 2 hour trip back at 4 knots was punctuated by several heavy squalls coming through at up to 50 knots and occasional swells of up to 5 metres.

We came into the lee of Point Cartwright and were able to shorten the tow and get the anchor cable in, finding that the anchor had apparently detached at Arkwright Shoal.

By the time we had entered the Mooloolah River and rafted up, the yachtie had perked up and was able to attach a line to the MSQ mooring buoy up in the Duck Pond and put a new anchor onto his anchor chain.



TOP: Vessel found.

CENTRE: Throwing the heaving line.

RIGHT: The tow home.

LONG RANGE JET SKI RESCUE

WORDS NEV WATT | *White Sunday Skipper*

Our duty Radio Operator received a call from a vessel at the Barwon Banks that a jet ski needed assistance.

The skipper ran out of battery power as he was using a depth sounder for some time and not running his engine. He became ill and only had a mobile phone which was of no use 22.5 miles out to sea. He became so ill, he was forced to set off 2 flares which brought a vessel to his assistance. They took him on board and advised us of the circumstances by radio.

We located the vessel 1/2 mile further east and 1 mile further south from the advised position, due to the drift rate, and brought it back to base as requested by the owner.

Hopefully, the Jet Ski skipper learnt a few lessons from his experience, such as logging on, having a VHF radio and not relying on a mobile phone, being aware of battery usage, having a dual or spare battery, and not going such a long way out by himself.



ABOVE: Jet Ski found.



ABOVE: Jet Ski heading home.



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CATASTROPHE AVERTED BY INCHES

WORDS RICHARD CHOROSZEWSKI | *Editor*

It was a relatively uneventful day for the crew of Blue Sunday in late June this year. The forecast indicated swells of up to 3 metres which meant that our inshore rescue vessels, the RIB *Maroochy RSL* and *Rotary III* would be operating in the rivers and creeks of Mooloolaba with only *Mooloolaba Rotary Rescue*, our blue water flagship vessel, likely to venture out into the ocean on this day.

First thing we launched the RIB from the Coast Guard pontoon and introduced our new recruits to this craft, how she handles, berthing, docking and maneuvering, followed by a recce of the river and creeks.

Meanwhile, lead skipper Ian Hunt with Duncan Slaven on helm and Andrew Wallis as crew took *Rotary III* up the river to explore the narrower and shallower sections. This was a perfect opportunity to give Duncan the training he is keen to complete in order to secure his Operational Restricted Coxswain status.

Mooloolaba Rotary Rescue departed the harbour and the 2m swells were contributing to some challenging moments across the bar requiring our vessel to power up and time its exit carefully to avoid broaching. This is a pretty routine exercise for our most experienced skippers, but on this day our entries and exits were even more difficult with a significant part of the problem being the large number of small recreational craft that were occupying the harbour entrance. They are attracted by the fact that in these conditions the seas break at the entrance and creates some exciting moments for the surfers, paddle boarders, jet skis, canoes, outriggers and other similar small water craft. All this extra traffic occupying an area where larger vessels need to funnel through.

Adding to the difficulty, these craft can be pretty unstable and are prone to have their occupants flipped into the water at critical moments. For a large vessel bearing down, the master may well be faced with the daunting decision of whether to press on and risk the life of the person in their path or risking the lives of his own crew and potential loss of control and damage of their craft if they have to stop and turn just as the seas break over.



TOP: Launching Maroochy RSL. **ABOVE:** Rotary III



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On this day our vessel was skippered by Steve Doulgeris and in the afternoon we got a call for assistance from a single POB in charge of a Hobie Adventure Tandem Island. This craft is a 2-seater canoe-type trimaran sail boat with paddle, sail and peddle power. The skipper had departed in relatively benign conditions, but on his return, had taken the view that the rising swells and falling tide made the return bar crossing too risky to undertake on his own.

We located him some 300 metres north of Point Cartwright beach and rather closer in to the shallows and breaking seas than we would have liked. So Steve manoeuvred our boat in close and had part of the crew prepare for the tow, while others were directed to warn him of any swells that might be approaching that could have broken and caused difficulty.

The Hobie's strongest towing point was the foot of the mast, so we directed her skipper to secure the tow line around this. We then circled around with the casualty in tow avoiding the worst of the breakers until we were 300 metres off the entrance. Here it was time to take stock, observe the breaking seas and estimate when there was a partial easing of the waves enabling a lunge back into harbour.

Timed right, an experienced skipper like Steve would have little difficulty, but today the regular traffic that can be relied upon to enter and depart in a seamanlike way and taking sensible precaution to collision avoidance rules of the road was augmented by the large numbers of small craft blocking the entrance. They appeared to have little regard for the fact that towing a small boat behind us at a safe speed was going to prejudice our ability to get into harbour safely.

Twice Steve's approach had to be aborted as the potential for collision and/or broaching arose. On the third occasion, all looked good until moments before safe entry, a wave started to form and break about 100 metres behind the towed casualty. Too late to abort, Steve accelerated to a speed that he felt the Hobie could still cope with and it was a close run thing as this small craft got pulled clear from a roller that would surely have turned her over. Seat of the pants kind of a ride, but not one that any of us will forget in a hurry. The whole scene was recorded on video and posted to both our Facebook and YouTube pages, and this clip is one of the most popular that the public have been clicking on.



TOP: Passing the heaving line across to the Hobie.

ABOVE: Hobie Tandem Adventure Island escaped a wipe out by inches.

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YOU CAN'T ALWAYS WIN

WORDS DAVID SPENCER ORC | Gold Saturday Crew, QF6

David Spencer is Operational Restricted Coxswain with the QF6 Gold Saturday Crew and has been a member at QF6 for 2 years. He served 5 years with Victoria Water Police and 2.5 years attached to the Australian Federal Police Maritime Unit. His qualifications include Master V unrestricted, MED 2 and National SAR Coordination. Below is just one of many incidents packed into an exciting career that now continues with Coast Guard Mooloolaba. In the second of his articles on his work in the Solomon's, the incident described below occurred in August 2012. Note: Some people may find the content distressing.

Background

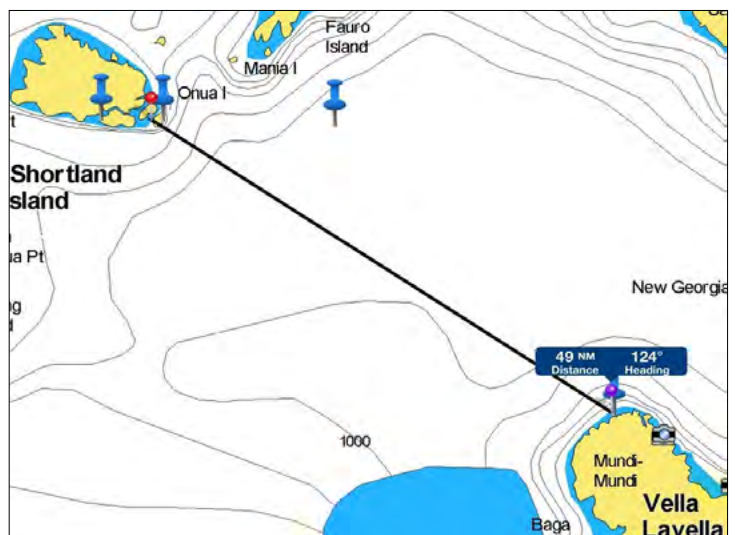
The Solomon Islands are an archipelago of over a thousand islands. Most are uninhabited with the population based on six larger islands. The region is just over 28,000 square km. Located in "the ring of fire", the area is extremely volcanic and subject to regular earthquakes and other volcanic activity. Most islands are surrounded by uncharted coral reefs with few navigational aids. In most cases the reefs are in 1 to 10 metres of water with depths dropping off rapidly to 200 m or more. The Solomon trench passes through the area with depths recorded over 9 km. Weather conditions are quite stable, with seasonal developed SE trade winds 10-20 knots. Cyclone activity is rare.

The local people are extensive boat users, using dugout canoes for fishing and 4 m fibreglass "banana boats" powered almost exclusively by 40 hp Yamaha outboards. Fuel is often carried in semi open containers or plastic bottles. Due to the risk of theft, only the bare minimum is carried. These boats regularly travel 30 – 50 nm or more between islands ferrying people and cargo. Few vessels have any kind of safety gear. Communication is limited to sketchy mobile phone coverage. The vessels would be considered grossly overloaded by our standards, often putting to sea with less than 50 mm freeboard. The local mariners have no compasses or navigation equipment of any kind, often travelling at night. They are however, very skilled and incredibly resilient. They also need rescuing reasonably regularly.

Some things tend to go in cycles; inexplicably, Search and Rescue (SAR) seems to be one of them. For months we had nothing, then the sinking of the *Solfish 1* (see article in the Winter 2019 issue ... Ed.) and the rescue of 49 lives. From then on it had been frantic. In two weeks alone we had 5 major SAR jobs including the rescue of two yachties who needed to be winched off their 40-foot yacht after it ploughed into a marked reef off Rennel Islands. Both were asleep at the time. The yacht and all their possessions were lost; still they were pretty happy to be on dry land. If anyone wants a 40ft Bavaria cheap, I know the spot.

Capsize

We also had a run of locals getting into difficulties. 22 missing in 4 separate jobs. We got most back, but sadly lost 5. The most tragic was a Banana boat that left Gizo for the Shortland Islands 90 Nm, roughly a 5-hour trip in calm weather. 50 Nm is in open sea. The boat had twin 30 hp motors on the back, 4 lifejackets, and a dozen bags of rice (20 kg each), loads of personal stuff and two chickens. It also had 7 adults and 3 children. She was carrying the local Catholic minister and some teachers, with family to the remote village of Nila.



ABOVE: The chart showing the route from Gizo to the Shortland Islands

With bad weather all week, the trip had been delayed. It left Saturday with the aim of getting to the village that afternoon so the sermons could go ahead on Sunday. Initially, the weather was OK, so they headed off in the protected waters of Gizo bound for the nearby island of Vella La Vella. Bad weather closed in, and for unknown reasons (unofficially, the suggestion was the local solbrew beer was involved) the skipper(s) decided to press on, ignoring the usual practice of seeking shelter at Vella for the night. It was also suggested that the need to be there before Sunday was a contributing factor.

So, the boat attempted to cross in 3-metre seas, with heavy rain and thunderstorms. It didn't make it. A wave came up behind the boat and dislodged one of the motors. While attempting to tie it back on a second wave rolled the boat throwing everyone into the water. The priest and two other men had put on life jackets due to the bad weather. The remaining jacket sat unused in the bottom of the boat. They righted the boat, but it remained full of water and partly submerged. This was around 3pm on Saturday.

The SAR

We got called near midnight when the family of one of the missing men raised the alarm. We got the information in typical sketchy fashion; the locals assured us that no one would have tried to cross in the bad weather and that the boat was most likely on the large island of Vella somewhere.

With the mobile phone towers out, we had to rely on the local HF radio network used by unskilled operators. The local rescue authority had been alerted and were nominally in charge. As they had very limited resources, it was left to us to get the searchers in the field. We arranged for one of our choppers and a fixed wing to do a "first light" search of the area around Vella, then 50 Nm north to Lofung and Nila. The locals were convinced that they were OK and most likely sheltered in some bay on Vella; we were not so sure, and with 10 people missing including children, we were not about to take the risk of not doing enough.

We held off alerting AUSAR (Australia's rescue authority which helps in the region). By mid-morning we received a message from the local Gizo Bishop that one of his priests had spoke to them and they were OK on Vella and would be in Nila late afternoon. He thanked us for our help. Great news!

I put our aircraft on hold. However, never relying on second-hand information, I got the local police to check. A short time later I got the confirmation that yes, they were all ok, they were at Nila ... hang on a minute! Are they at Nila or Vella? Yes, a man had seen a white boat come in during the morning. With the conflicting stories I thought a third check might be best. Still, if you can't trust the local police and Bishop who can you trust? No one apparently. The misinformation had come across the HF network, someone had seen a boat, and everyone assumed it was the missing one. Instead, it was most likely one of our local search boats. Then of course they made the rest up and passed it on to us as "fact". I released the "hold" on the aircraft and got them back into the search area.

A possible sighting off the top of Vella proved to be a red herring ... not the fish, just the wrong boat. Still, we had to check it out.

Unknown to us, at this time the 2 children had died late evening of exposure. Even though the water here is warm, you will



TOP: The search area.

ABOVE: Google map of the boat track.

most likely still die of hypothermia within 48 hours, children a lot quicker. Basic survival skills may have increased the time, had they huddled together and conserved heat they may have made it. Two of the men decided to try to swim to shore, we estimate they were within 10 miles of Nila when the boat rolled. However, with 600 square miles of water to search and aircrews looking for a partly sunk white and grey boat rolling in 3-metre seas, the odds of a find were never good.

By afternoon, it was clear they were not, as locals had predicted, in the Vella area. Two aircraft could not effectively cover the vast distance that now needed to be searched. We asked the local rescue authority to formally ask Australia for help with the air search. As always, AUSAR immediately aided and sent 3 aircraft, AMSA's Dornier, a dedicated rescue plane, a Care flight Lear Jet and a Navy C130. They were due on scene late evening. We now had 6 aircraft in the hunt.

Meanwhile, we got the local PPF (NZ Police based in the northern island Lofung) to organise the locals to search the coast around Nila. The Net Water Movement charts from AUSAR showed the predicted drift of a banana boat in the current conditions. But without a search Datum, a start position or time, it was a huge area to cover. The good news was that the wind and currents according to the computer would put them on the beaches around Nila. So, we organised foot searches of the target coastline. The locals were keen and took to the water as well in canoes and Banana boats. In heavy seas, they continued to search. We gave them fuel and advice. The NZ Police took out our 5.5m Rigid Hull Inflatable (RHIB) as back up for the locals in case they got into trouble. Keeping your searchers safe is always an important consideration. We could track their movements 200 miles away. Rough seas finally turned them back. Meanwhile, the AUSAR aircraft conducted grid searches.

Sunday, we found a fuel can washed up on a nearby island to Nila and concentrated our assets there. The aircraft ID'd debris scattered over a large area, but no boat or survivors. With time running out and the survivability window closing, the locals found one man in a lifejacket washed up at 4am Monday morning. Over the next few hours, 5 more came ashore, all very sick, but incredibly alive after almost 3 days in the water. The remote local medical clinic was struggling to deal with them; the only nurse was ill-equipped to manage hypothermia, exhaustion and water inhalation. We arranged MEDIVAC choppers to fly 5 of them to hospitals 200 miles away in Honiara and Gizo. Without this, the likelihood of them dying from complications, including pneumonia, was very high.

The boat finally washed up a day later along with a body. Tragically three victims were never recovered.

The Aftermath

Perhaps the saddest part for me was the letter we got, painstakingly written in English, thanking us for our rescue efforts. It was from the father who raised the alarm in the first place, concerned that his son was running late. His son will always run late, his body was not recovered. As his father wrote, "my sons ... time to die inside the sea world, surrounded by god nature ... to lie in peace on the bottom of the sea world". And yet he was the only one to personally thank us.

So, while the operation was technically a success, it was not a happy ending for everyone. The teamwork was fantastic and the local police at Lofung, the NZ Police and the villagers themselves were superb. The air search by us and AUSAR aircraft ran smoothly even though we didn't find the survivors. The weather, time and distance were all against us. The team effort was recognised by our Commander and we were presented a certificate and commended at a muster on base. As moved as I was by the commander's recognition, the letter from the grieving father will always choke.



NEW ZEALAND TO TONGA ... MY FIRST OCEAN PASSAGE

WORDS KERRY TEED | *Radio Operator & Blue Sunday Crew*

Well, it sounded like a great idea at the time, but as D (departure) Day approached, all those horrible doubts started to surface - why am I doing this? What if we get caught in a storm? What if we have problems with the boat? What if I get seasick? Do I have the necessary skills? ...

Being relatively new to sailing - with only 7 years under my keel, but having read multiple books of adventurous tales as people cruised the world, my appetite had been whetted for the taste of an ocean crossing. When the opportunity arose to crew on a beautiful Passport 40 yacht travelling from Whangarei, New Zealand to Tonga with a lovely couple, I didn't hesitate to put my hand up.

What did I discover? Well, there's a whole lot of water out there! The trip took



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us 9 days and amazingly, every day we sighted mutton birds and other birds. The only other wildlife we saw were flying fish, with the odd one – unfortunately for them – landing on board and we were unable to rescue them in time. We saw no other boats and only on a couple of occasions overheard radio communications between other boats. It's the place to be to get away from it all!

It took a couple of days to settle into a routine of watches, sleeping, eating, cooking, reading, watching videos. We rotated watches of 8am to noon, noon to 4pm, 4pm to 6pm, 6pm to 8pm, 8pm to midnight, midnight to 4am and 4am to 8am. I found the hardest watch by far was midnight to 4am. Whilst on watch, setting the alarm on my phone ensured I completed a boat check, course check and lookout every 20 mins.

Did I get seasick? Yes, we all did at various times. The common cause we found was working in the galley after dark so we soon learnt to avoid this - dishes could wait until morning!

Did we get that dreaded storm? Yes, we did. We had initially planned to stop at Minerva Reef (two beautiful submerged atolls in the middle of the Pacific Ocean with abundant colourful corals and fish) for a few days before continuing onto Tonga. We were due to arrive at 9am the following day when at 3pm the weather forecast threw a spanner into the works, as a strong easterly front was coming through. Our options were to hunker down in Minerva Reef for up to a week, with no protection from the wind and surrounded by fibreglass-hungry coral just waiting for us to drag anchor. Alternatively,



TOP: Taking a sight the traditional way.

CENTRE: Off watch.

RIGHT: Still time for a smile and a wave during the storm.

we could head as far east as we could with the current and south easterly wind, then turn more to the north as the wind turned easterly. Our third option was to run for Fiji ahead of the front.

The decision was made to head east and make a run for Tonga. If we were pushed too far to the west we would miss Tonga and it would be too difficult in the conditions to gain any easting, resulting in us going to Fiji anyway, but running with the storm which would not be ideal, so we were anxious to get as far east as we could.

The 24-hour waiting game of anticipating the blow – with 20-25knots predicted with 2-3m seas – but never sure what we would get, had us all a little anxious. We prepared the boat, ensuring everything was stowed away and tightly secured. Sea anchor and lines were at the ready and we tried to get as much rest as we could.

When the storm finally hit, we reduced the mainsail to 4 reefs, no headsail and full staysail. The wind gusted over 40 knots, sustaining 36 knots for a period before varying from 20-30 knots for 36 hours. Many have experienced much fiercer storms, but for me, this was the biggest I'd ever been in. The seas continued to build and wave measuring devices in the area recorded an average of 5m seas. It made for an uncomfortable, wet, cold ride. We varied our watches to have two people up at all times, with one person rotating every hour. It was exhausting, as it meant you were two hours on and one hour off, with 10-15 minutes of this being consumed by getting wet weather gear off, then back on!

Waves were breaking over the boat, the cockpit was often ankle deep in water and one sneaky wave timed its entry into the cabin perfectly as Ben was heading below decks at the end of his shift.

The worst part, which I'd heard people say before, was the noise of the wind. It was so loud! Amazingly, when it dropped back towards 20 knots it seemed so peaceful. We became experts at predicting the wind strength from the noise level.

Was I scared? As the storm built, my concern was how much more wind will we get and how big will the seas get? But as the storm settled into a pattern of maximum winds and I became confident in the boat's ability to handle the conditions, I relaxed more. She shook those big waves off with a little shudder and continued to plough ahead. She sustained no damage and I only scored a small bump to the head from the companionway.

Below deck was a calm haven as the mayhem above was filtered out. However, moving about and getting in and out of foul-weather gear required careful manoeuvring, wedging yourself against something as best you could as *Halcyon VII* rocked and rolled. Kristen described the trip to the head as a crab crawl. The head was located right at the bow - not the ideal position as the bow skyed and dropped/crashed as the boat crested waves. Quite a ride!

I did experience seasickness at the beginning of the storm, but fortunately this passed quite quickly with the assistance of regular medication. I did, however, lose my appetite and only nibbled on dry biscuits. In hindsight, I think this probably compounded my exhaustion and in future I would

make myself eat more (as well as taking seasickness medication prior to any rough weather). I was conscious of the need to keep well hydrated and made myself have regular drinks.

When land finally rolled into view, the anticipated elation was mellowed by sheer exhaustion. The seas lessened as we moved behind the reefs of Tonga, but the wind continued to howl for several days.

I enjoyed several days in the friendly Kingdom of Tonga on the main island of Tongatapu, in the capital city of Nukalufa, but that's another story. Would I do it again? Yes please - Carpe Diem!



ABOVE: Relaxing in Tonga.

WRECKED ON GEORGE III ROCK

WORDS ROD ASHLIN | *Deputy Commander*

If you are having a bad day and think life is tough, you might be heartened to know it was a lot tougher in the 1800's. This is a brief recount of how George III Rock in South East Tasmania got its name.

George III was a convict ship and one of 300 transports that brought 57,000 convicts to Tasmania, or Van Diemens Land as it was known then. She sailed from Woolwich, England on 14 December, 1834 under the command of Captain William Hall-Moxey, and carried two hundred and twenty convicts, twenty nine soldiers and thirty crew. Altogether there were three hundred and thirty three on board, including six women and eleven children, two of which were born at sea.

On 27 January, 1835 when nearing the Equator, a fire broke out below, which was extinguished with great difficulty and almost destroyed the ship. Heroic action by two convicts in removing copper kegs of gunpowder just before they blew up saved the day. The kegs were so hot the convicts were badly burned in the action.

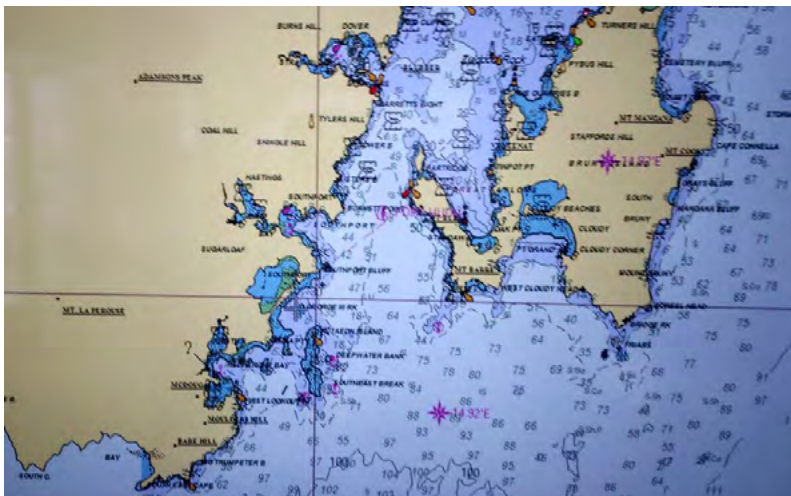
The fire also destroyed part of the ship's stores and as a result, all on board were put on reduced rations. Food was bad, and with few medical supplies available, the unbalanced diet caused an outbreak of scurvy, resulting in the deaths of sixteen convicts before the ship reached Van Diemen's Land. By the time she picked up the Tasmanian coast on 12 March, 1835, after one hundred and

eighteen days at sea, sixty more were down with scurvy.

In order to get to Hobart as soon as possible, the Master decided to follow close up the coast and enter D'Entrecasteaux Channel instead of going outside Bruny Island. It was dark, but visibility was good with bright moonlight. They shortened sail, put a leadsman in the chains with extra lookouts, and proceeded slowly up the coast.

George III Rock was uncharted then, does not break the surface and no break occurs in moderate weather. It is about a mile offshore and by the time the leadsman called four fathoms it was too late and the ship struck about 9.15pm. It was not long before her masts were over the side and the rudder driven up through the poop deck.

The convicts locked below were screaming to be let up, but a military guard was stationed at the hatch



ABOVE: Chart showing the location of *George III* Rock.

LEFT: Memorial at Southport Bluff, now quarantined and inaccessible..

with loaded muskets to prevent this. Boats were got away with considerable difficulty. The Captain was washed overboard, but was picked up by one of the boats, which then made its way to the shore, but could not find a place to land. Another of the boats continued all the way to Hobart to raise the alarm. The Captain eventually found a small beach and unloaded most aboard before setting out to return to the ship with a small crew. By this time it was breaking day and they saw a small schooner in the area, which was alerted to pick up survivors from the wreck.



Many of the sick convicts in the hold had already drowned and some convicts were shot by the guards at the hatch when they tried to break out. The long boat had been got away and the soldiers left their post to board her, allowing the prisoners to make it to the deck. The first thirty who made the deck were immediately washed over the side and drowned. In all, there were one hundred and thirty four lives lost in this sad wreck. They were all convicts with the exception of a sergeant's wife and three children.

An inquiry in Hobart followed and there was a great deal of conjecture as to how many of the convicts were shot. This led to the Coroner going to the area where many of the bodies had been buried in the sand and digging them up to ascertain how many had been shot. The bodies were now somewhat decomposed and it proved a gruesome business and eventually the inquiry could only prove that three had been shot.

Doctor McGregor, the ship's doctor, died in Hobart from the strain and exposure and I believe a headstone is still in St David's Park in his memory. There is a plaque on the Tasmanian Seafarer's Memorial at Triabunna, and in 1839 a monument was erected at Southport Bluff in memory of the one hundred and thirty four persons lost in the wreck of the transport *George III* on Friday the 12th of April 1835. However, as of 15 January, 2015, the site is quarantined and no access is allowed to the monument.

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MYC WOMEN ACHIEVE OUTSTANDING RESULTS IN KEELBOAT REGATTA

WORDS KERRY TEED | *Radio Operator and Boat Crew Member*

PHOTOS Bruno Coccozza

Coast Guard Mooloolaba member Kerry Teed has been participating in the Mooloolaba Yacht Club's (MYC) Women's Keelboat Sailing Skills Development Program for 18 months now, and was a proud member of the representative squad of two teams which achieved outstanding results at the 29th Australian Women's Keelboat Regatta (AWKR). Hosted by the Royal Melbourne Yacht Squadron, the regatta was held over the Victorian Queen's Birthday long weekend on 8-10 June on Port Phillip Bay.

While sailing is a sport where men and women compete side by side as equals, the AWKR serves as a vehicle for women to try out new crew positions, expand existing sailing and leadership skills, and become more actively involved in yacht racing.

Crews were present from every Australian state, as well as New Zealand and included Olympians and Volvo Ocean racers.

There was some hot competition, with the fortieth boat to enter being *Ocean Respect Racing*, skippered by Katie Spithill, and crewed by many of the Sydney-Hobart all-women's crew from *Wild Oats X* (6th across the line and 2nd in the IRC division) on board.

The three-day event was a combination of predominantly windward/leeward races and a bay race, with the aim to complete six races during the course of the regatta.

The Mooloolaba Yacht Club (MYC) *Merak* team placed third on a count back, with the first 3 place-getters finishing equal on 11 points in IRC and also third in the S80 class on count back, when equal 2nd on points. *Bon Vivant*, the second MYC team, was a close 2 points behind in 4th position in the S80 class, which included thirteen S80 boats.

Racing was delayed on day 3, with the final day of racing finally getting underway on Port Phillip Bay shortly after 11am. Little did anyone suspect winds would reach 25-30 knots, with gusts as much as 35 knots recorded, testing the 40 highly skilled teams.



ABOVE: The crew of Merak were all smiles.



ABOVE: Close racing ensued throughout the regatta.

The *Merak* team can laugh now, but at the time they faced a challenge. After a perfect launch of what they thought was the small spinnaker (it was in a small bag) in the last race of the event, they broached (see photo). To compound issues, the brace line managed to knot itself and could not be undone, resulting in it having to be cut free. After much teamwork heaving and winching, the spinnaker was retrieved with no injuries and the team completed the race. It turned out not to be the small spinnaker, but instead a heavier large one, with the small one hiding in the bow of the boat.

The racing was not for the faint hearted with one team member caught on the leeward side blowing bubbles and reaching for her life-jacket inflation cord, and another half overboard looking up and asking for 'a little help please'. Fortunately, both incidents ended without any MOB or injuries, though it was a chilly dip into the winter waters of Port Phillip Bay.

On the last day, one vessel was dismasted and a collision before the start resulted in *Ocean Respect Racing* being unable to compete. "We were about seven minutes from the start when the breeze increased and we altered to avoid a collision, but they lost control again and there was nothing we could do. There was damage to our port quarter and our lifeline was sheered away, so we had to retire. We have no hard feelings towards them, it's just a process you have to go through," Spithill said after the incident.

MYC Women's Sailing Skills Development Program mentor and Canadian Olympic Laser competitor Danielle Kennedy described the event as "highly competitive, of a very high skill level, whilst at the same time, racing was competed in a fun, supportive and encouraging environment".

Boat owners kindly and generously loaned their vessels to the MYC teams for the event; many thanks to Bas Huibers (*Merak*) and Russell Keays (*Bon Vivant*) for loaning their Swarbrick S80's.

The S80 is a one-design yacht designed for racing and cruising. They provide high-performance racing for inshore and limited offshore events, and Melbourne hosts a large fleet of these vessels, which compete regularly against each other.

Despite quite a few bruises, all the MYC women are looking forward to next year's event and the Women's Program is hoping to send more teams as they continue their Women's Skills Development training.

The MYC Women's Skills Development Program is designed for women of all ages to grow their sailing skills and confidence in a fun, friendly and supportive environment. If you would like more information please visit their Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/MYCWomen/>, email women@mooloolabayachtclub.com.au or phone 0409 269 964 - they would love to hear from you. The program was recently awarded the Australian Sailing - Queensland "She Sails Award" for advancement of women into sailing, and is now a finalist for the National Award.

MYC AWKR Team members included:

Merak - Tanya Kelly (helm, skipper), Kristie Hatch (main), Kristen Davidson (main and pit), Gaye Hoole (pit, headsail), Kerry Teed (mast), Abbie Glenister (foredeck).

Bon Vivant - Danielle Kennedy (helm, skipper), Kerri Smith (main), Karen Young (pit, headsail), Del Morrison (pit, headsail), Sarah Johnson (foredeck).



TOP: *Merak* broaches under the not so "small" spinnaker.



ABOVE: Close racing right to the end of the regatta.

BIG UNIT ...

A SUPPORTER'S STORY

From a satisfied Supporter of QF6 a few years ago ...

My name is Peter Stahlhut. As a local resident and fisherman living in Minyama, I am an active member of the Mooloolaba Game Fishing Club (MGFC), and a Supporter of the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard Association, Flotilla QF6 (MBA 813).

On the 7th January 2012, my crew and I were competing in a Light and Heavy Tackle Fishing Rally Day sponsored by the MGFC. We had spent the day trolling from *Big Unit*, my 52' Maritimo Game Fishing Boat, looking for a Marlin hook-up, cruising along a series long backward and forward sweeps some 60 nautical miles North East of Point Cartwright. There being no fish taken for the day, at around 1400 hours we decided to call it quits and head back home to Minyama. So it was 'All lines in', pour some fuel into the twin Cat 715's, and set a bee line for the mouth of the Mooloolah River.

With an easy 0.8 metre sea we were soon powering along comfortably at 27 knots when about 30 minutes into our home run the port engine started to surge and drop revs. There being no alarms showing on the board, I couldn't guess what the problem was, so I slowed right down to an idle and went below to check the engine room for any tell tale problems or clues. I could find nothing obvious, so I shut down the engine as a safety precaution and powered up the starboard engine, and maintained our course running at a reduced speed.

We had only covered another few miles when an engine alarm from the starboard engine activated. I immediately shut that engine down as well. We were now without power from either engine and adrift.

Back into the engine room and I could find absolutely no cause for the engine failures and loss of power. Oil checked OK, and the fuel in the sight glass indicated the tanks at about $\frac{3}{4}$ capacity, or approximately 2000 litres. There was no obvious sign of electrical burnout or wiring damage of any kind. Unable to identify or rectify the problem, I called Maritimo, but had no luck from their service department. Then I tried my local Marine Diesel specialist and several other friends who also ran Game boats ... but all to no avail. No one could offer any advice that would shed any light on the problem.

We were on our own and adrift with not even a (LARGE) paddle to help us on our way. Our only hope of getting home before dark was to call Coast Guard Mooloolaba (CGM) and ask if they could provide assistance. I advised CGM by mobile phone of our situation, giving our exact GPS position that placed us some 30 nautical miles East North East of Point Cartwright. The CGM Duty Officer said they would be able to assist, then he advised Bryan Beck, Deputy Flotilla Commander of QF6 (*at the time of the assist ... Ed*) and his team of volunteers aboard the CGM sea rescue boat *Rhondda Rescue* of our position and the nature of our request for a tow. Displaying our V Sheet as requested by CGM for easy vessel identification, we only waited about 30 minutes before being contacted by radio by Bryan to advise us he would be with us soon.

We soon closed together and even though it was a very calm sea, my crew and Bryan's crew on *Rhondda Rescue* took some time getting the towline in the correct position for the tow back to my pontoon at Minyama. Bryan explained that the positioning of the towline needed to be 100% correct, given the size of my boat and taking into consideration the requirements of the rescue boat as well; he would not commence the tow until I was completely happy with the way the lines were attached.

That done, we began the long haul back to Mooloolaba where we needed to re-rig the tow arrangement and raft up to the rescue boat so they could control both vessels with precision in the tight canal waterway. The whole rescue and tow operation carried out by Bryan and his crew on *Rhondda Rescue* was completed without the slightest awkward incident or danger to the crews involved, and with not so much as a rub mark left on my boat at the completion of the operation.

I think I would be safe in saying that there isn't one of us fishermen who heads offshore thinking that today something is going to happen and we are going to require the services of the Coast Guard.

Unfortunately, on the sea, as he does on land 'Murphy' rules without warning and I hate to think where *Big Unit* would have ended up if the Coast Guard had not been there to come to my assistance.

I also believe that anyone who lives locally and heads offshore to either fish or to enjoy any form of boating and is not a Marine Assist Supporter of the Coast Guard is not taking the service provided to all of us by Coast Guard with the respect that the Service deserves. The annual fee is very small and the funds received help maintain this excellent service that, quite frankly, we would be lost without.

To complete this story there are two things I would ask you all as fellow boaties and prospective Volunteer Coast Guard customers to seriously consider:

1. Coast Guard volunteers don't necessarily have the time; they just have the heart, and
2. Coast Guard volunteers don't get paid ... not because they're worthless, but because they're **priceless!**

Many thanks to the Mooloolaba Volunteer Coast Guard and to Bryan Beck and his crew for their help and assistance when we needed it.

ANCHORED TO HOPE

WORDS SUE CLARKE | *Chaplain, QF6*

It's been said no expectations, no disappointments, unfortunately diminished expectations erode hope. We all need HOPE, it's an essential in life.

It's pretty easy to be filled with hope on a bright calm beautiful day, BUT dark stormy days are on the horizon. We need coping strategies for when things fail, or when our dreams are dashed on the rocks of reality, BUT it's crucial we hold onto HOPE amid disappointments & discouraging outcomes. No matter how lost we feel, let us stay ANCHORED to HOPE.

Life will bring challenges and setbacks - the boss says the company is downsizing and we're out of a job, our child is expelled, our partner quits on the relationship, the doctor gives us staggering news - our emotions end up "all at sea".

Life is an unpredictable voyage; obstacles and hardships come upon us unexpectedly and sandblast us out of our comfort zone.

HOPE things will get better.

HOPE believes for the impossible.

HOPE helps us traverse rough times, believing that "this, too, shall pass".

HOPE is the powerful anticipation that there's something good just around the corner.

HOPE brings peace even in the midst of "stormy seas".

HOPE helps us navigate toward the buoyancy of optimism, irrespective of our choppy circumstances and leads us into calmer waters.

This week may you have a "buoyant" week and remain ANCHORED to HOPE, and if possible be a beacon of hope to others.

"Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a dream fulfilled is a tree of life."

"For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope."
Prov 13:12 & Jeremiah 29:11.





Regular Membership

QF6 Coast Guard Mooloolaba

“Join the Team”

The Australian Volunteer Coast Guard is a voluntary organisation committed to saving lives at sea by providing emergency assistance to vessels in need.

QF6's Marine Rescue Services

Each year, Coast Guard Mooloolaba's volunteers respond to numerous calls for assistance at sea. These calls include EPIRB and Mayday activations, search and rescue operations, medical evacuations, assisting sinking and grounded vessels, towing disabled vessels and escorting vessels into Mooloolaba Harbour.

Rescue Vessels & Areas of Operation

We operate three fully equipped rescue vessels to cover inshore and offshore operational areas including local rivers and generally providing assistance up to 25nm from Point Cartwright.

Rescue Boat Crew

This is the “coal face” of our operations. If you've ever had to call for assistance, these are the people you're glad to see. Rescue boat operations include deck hand duties, radio operations, navigation, helmsman duties and Search and Rescue operations.

Like all activities requiring training, you start at the bottom as a trainee and progress through the ratings starting as a Competent Crewman or woman. The sky's the limit from there, and with commitment and ongoing training, you can achieve coxswain rating, skipping rescue vessels.

Whatever the rating, our volunteers train continuously to obtain and maintain a high standard of competency, both on and off the water, day and night, in all areas of operation.

Radio Communications

This is our “bread and butter” operation; it's what we do

7 days a week, 365 days a year. A team of volunteer base radio operators maintain a “listening watch” on marine radio frequencies 24 hours a day. If a boatie calls for help, the radio operators are usually the first point of contact. Radio coverage extends to VHF, 27 MHz and phone.

Fundraising Activities

This is the “lifeblood” of our operation for, without funds, we could not continue to provide our rescue service to local boaties.

We receive very little government funding - only \$24,000 per year. The rest of our operating budget is earned through fundraising and donations, so the Fundraising Team is a vitally important part of our operations. Fundraising activities including selling raffle tickets at Cotton Tree and Fisherman's Road markets, as well as other approved locations, BBQs selling sausage sandwiches and drinks at Bunnings Maroochydore and other opportunities for fundraising that arise. It's often said that “many hands make light work” and this is especially so of fundraising.

Administration

These people are the “backbone” of our team, for without their leadership, guidance and support, the rest of the organisation would find it difficult to operate. Administration roles include general administration, operations, financial management, training, data entry, stores and provisioning, repairs and maintenance, Workplace Health and Safety, media relations and flotilla publications ... the list is not quite endless, but there are plenty of tasks for which volunteers are always required.



Are you looking for a new challenge? Would you like to help your community? Would you like to learn new skills? Do you have spare time? If the answer is YES, Coast Guard Mooloolaba needs YOU!

Being part of a team that saves lives at sea gives our volunteers an immense amount of satisfaction and a real sense of achievement. If you would like to be part of the Coast Guard Mooloolaba team, call 5444 3222 or visit our Base at 65 Parkyn Parade, Mooloolaba.



QF6 COAST GUARD MOOLOOLABA

COAST GUARD SUPPORTER SUBSCRIPTION

The Australian Volunteer Coast Guard is a voluntary organisation providing emergency and other assistance to vessels in need. In order to maintain our vessels and to continue providing this service, it is necessary for our organisation to raise the required funds by conducting fundraising events in the community.

Coast Guard Mooloolaba operates three fully equipped rescue vessels. Our Aim is to promote safety in the operation of small craft in Mooloolaba and surrounding areas by guarding our coastline in the most effective way, initially by education, example and examination and finally by search and rescue.

Each year, Coast Guard Mooloolaba volunteers make numerous rescues, including assisting sinking vessels, vessels that have run aground, towing broken down vessels and escorting vessels into Mooloolaba Harbour. Taking out a Coast Guard Supporter Subscription for an annual fee of \$75.00 (including GST), or \$50.00 (including GST) for a second vessel and \$25.00 (including GST) for a third vessel, will give you peace of mind for not only yourself, but also for your

family. Becoming a Coast Guard Supporter entitles you to the following benefits:

- A call sign (MBA number) identifying you as a Mooloolaba-based member's vessel
- Subscription benefits details and a Supporter sticker for your vessel
- Recorded details of boat/trailer/home contacts
- Radio coverage from all Coast Guard radio bases around Australia
- Support, rescue and assistance, training and information on a wide range of topics
- Opportunities to attend discounted LROCP, AWQ, First Aid and CPR courses
- Reciprocal membership with all other Queensland Coast Flotillas
- FREE assistance within 25nm of Point Cartwright or from any other Queensland Flotilla

We look forward to your valued subscription.

Please contact the Base on 5444 3222 for an Application Form and more information.

We need your support today ... you may need ours tomorrow

BECOME A COAST GUARD VOLUNTEER OR SUPPORTER

There are two options to become a QF6 Supporter:

1. Got to <https://coastguard.com.au/marine-assist/> and complete the form. OR
2. Come to QF6 headquarters to fill in the required on-line form.

Upon completing your form, you will receive your call sign (MBA number) and Supporter package in the mail.

For Volunteer Membership applications, upon returning the application form, you will be contacted to arrange a time for an interview, after which your application will be processed.

We look forward to welcoming new Volunteer Members and Coastguard Supporters to QF6 and hope it will be the start of a long and mutually satisfying association with a fully volunteer organisation providing a vital service supporting the boating public using our local waterways.

To apply to become a Volunteer Member of QF6 Coast Guard Mooloolaba, complete the enquiry form below and post to Coast Guard Mooloolaba (Attention: Commander), 65 Parkyn Parade, Mooloolaba Qld 4557 or drop it in to the Base at Parkyn Parade.

Name: _____

Address: _____

P/Code: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Coast Guard ... Join the Team





SUNSHINE COAST FLOTILLA CONTACTS

QF21 SANDY STRAIT

Base: Phone 07 4129 8141 | Fax 07 4129 8907

Email: operations.qf21@coastguard.com.au

Post: PO Box 341, Maryborough, QLD 4650

Location: 126 Eckert Rd, Boonooroo

Hours of Operation: 0700 - 1800 daily | 1800 - 0700 Duty Skipper on call

Radio Call Sign: VMR421 or Coast Guard Sandy Strait

Radio Channels Monitored: VHF 16, 80, 82 | 27MHz 88, 90

Operational Area: Great Sandy Strait south to Kauri Creek and north to McKenzie's Jetty; Mary River up to the Barrage

QF17 TIN CAN BAY

Base: Phone - 07 5486 4290 | Fax - 07 5486 4568 | Mob - 0419 798 651

Email: operations.qf17@coastguard.com.au

Post: PO Box 35, Tin Can Bay, QLD 4580

Location: In the boat ramp car park, Norman Point at 25° 54' S / 153° 00' E

Hours of Operation: 0600 - 1800 daily

Radio Call Sign: VMR417 or Coast Guard Tin Can Bay

Radio Channels Monitored: VHF 16, 67, 80, 82 | 27MHz 88, 90

Operational Area: Tin Can Inlet & adjacent creeks; Great Sandy Strait north to S38;

Offshore waters north to Indian Head, south to Double Island Point & 50nm to seaward

QF5 NOOSA

Base: Phone - 07 5474 3695 | Emergencies - 07 5449 7670

Email: fao.qf5@coastguard.com.au

Post: PO Box 274, Tewantin, QLD 4565

Location: Russell St, Munna Point in the Noosa River Caravan Park

Hours of Operation: 24/7 | 365 days

Radio Call Sign: VMR405 or Coast Guard Noosa

Radio Channels Monitored: VHF 16, 22, 80 | 27MHz 88, 91

Operational Area: The entire Noosa River and its lakes; Offshore waters north to Double Island Point, south to Point Arkwright & 50nm to seaward

QF6 MOOLOOLABA

Base: Phone - 07 5444 3222

Email: operations.qf6@coastguard.com.au

Post: 65 Parkyn Parade, Mooloolaba, QLD 4557

Location: In the boat ramp carpark, 65 Parkyn Parade at 26° 41.1' S / 153° 07.6' E

Hours of Operation: 365 days 0600 - 2200 | 2200 - 0600 Night watch (CH 16)

Administration Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Friday 0800 - 1200

Radio Call Sign: VMR406 or Coast Guard Mooloolaba

Radio Channels Monitored: VHF 16, 67, 73, 80 | 27MHz 88, 90

Operational Area: North to Point Arkwright, south to Point Cartwright & 50nm to seaward

QF4 CALOUNDRA

Base: Phone 07 5491 3533 | Fax 07 5491 7516

Email: operations.qf4@coastguard.com.au

Post: PO Box 150, Caloundra, QLD 4551

Location: Tripcony Lane, Caloundra off Maloja Avenue

Hours of Operation: Weekdays 0530 - 1200 | Weekends/Public Holidays 0530-1700

Radio Call Sign: VMR404 or Coast Guard Caloundra

Radio Channels Monitored: VHF 16, 73 | 27MHz 88, 91

Operational Area: Offshore waters north to Point Cartwright, south to approximately halfway down Bribie Island & 40nm to seaward



Paul Searell

Ph: 0427 002 908

E: paulsearell@bigpond.com

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