

Volunteers saving lives on the water

# SOUNDINGS



Quarterly Journal of Marine Rescue NSW | Issue 36, Spring 2018

## SEA POWER

Three new vessels  
boost fleet on coast

## Lives at risk

Crews rush to rescue

## Courage honoured

Bravery in face of danger



**PLUS:** Leaders in spotlight | Building on our record | Mayday mystery

"ON THE WATER  
NOTHING  
IS FASTER  
THAN DISASTER"

# SOS MARINE

RESCUE-READY EQUIPMENT YOU MAY NOT LIVE WITHOUT

S.O.S.  
MARINE

## WATERFRONT LIFE JACKET VEST

**S.O.S Waterfront Life jackets** provide a new approach to improve the working capabilities of marine professionals



## LOAD BEARING EQUIPMENT VEST

We are serious about our designs



- » Local Councils
- » SES
- » Parking Inspectors
- » Police
- » First Response
- » Parks & Wildlife
- » Mining
- » Security
- » Engineers
- » Emergency Response

## DAN BUOY

"When time is of the essence the SOS Dan Buoy is the answer"

Philip Thompson  
America's Cup  
Challenger Skipper



## ReeLSLING

For the Reel Rescue  
Man overboard equipment  
-Rescue Ready



Easy to use rescue system for retrieving  
a person who falls overboard

## 2 & 4 PERSON LIFE RAFT



For inshore & coastal boaters

- » JUST THROW- Automatically inflates
- » Easy to handle for most age groups
- » Much smaller servicing costs
- » Packed in valise

## RECOVERY/RESCUE LADDER



HOW DO I GET  
BACK ON BOARD?

Two-in-one  
recovery using just one product

- » Use rungs as a ladder or
- » Use entire shape to horizontally lift victim

## S.O.S SOCK



- » For short-handed crews - the SOS Recovery Ladder now has its own 'sock' for attachment to the toe rail, ready to be deployed at a moment's notice.

## RESCUE LASER FLARES

- » Detects reflective material on life jackets, channel marker etc
- » 40 hours continuous signalling on one battery



- » Penetrates smoke and haze
- » A worthy addition to pyrotechnic kits
- » Allows search & rescue to continue when darkness limits search

## LIFE RAFTS FOR HIRE

E ron@sosmarine.com.au

## LIFE JACKETS SERVICE AVAILABLE

[www.sosmarine.com](http://www.sosmarine.com)

T 02 97000233

F 02 97000277

E sales@sosmarine.com

Australian Manufacturer

**SOS Marine's safety equipment is easy to use and ready-to-go**

SOS Marine's 30 years expertise has led the field with **international award winning, innovative safety equipment** to save lives at sea. SOS Marine supplies equipment to 13 National Defence Forces, leisure boats and ocean vessels worldwide.

# SOUNDINGS

Quarterly Journal of Marine Rescue NSW

## Cover Image

One of three new rescue vessels joining the Marine Rescue NSW fleet, *Central Coast 30* powers home to the Marine Rescue Central Coast base following its debut at the Sydney International Boat Show in early August.

*Photo: Brendan Trembath.*

## Publisher

Marine Rescue NSW  
202 Nicholson Parade  
Cronulla NSW 2230

## Contact

Kate Woods  
Phone: 02 8071 4848  
Email: [soundings@marinerescuensw.com.au](mailto:soundings@marinerescuensw.com.au)

## Design and Layout

Nicole Brown

## Advertising

Graham Joss  
Email: [graham.joss@marinerescuensw.com.au](mailto:graham.joss@marinerescuensw.com.au)  
Phone: 0419 492 836

## Printing

Ligare Book Printers  
Head office: 138-152 Bonds Road, Riverwood NSW 2210

Marine Rescue NSW is pleased to acknowledge the invaluable support of our *Soundings* advertisers.

© Copyright Volunteer Marine Rescue New South Wales. Reproduction in whole or in part prohibited without permission of the publisher.

Marine Rescue NSW encourages the use of *Soundings* articles on boating safety. Permission to use and supply of relevant images can be obtained from the publisher.



## MARINE RESCUE NSW

*Volunteers saving lives on the water*

Volunteer Marine Rescue New South Wales

ABN 98 138 078 092

PO Box 579

Cronulla NSW 2230

Phone: 02 8071 4848 Fax: 02 9969 5214

Email: [info@marinerescuensw.com.au](mailto:info@marinerescuensw.com.au)

## THE HELM

- 2 • Commissioner's report
- 4 • Chair's report

## ON THE RADAR

- 3 • Four Directors to be elected in online poll
- 3 • New leaders take the helm at coastal units
- 4 • Minister to retire from Parliament at election
- 5 • Bravery award recognises unflinching crew
- 5 • Training success earns place in State awards
- 6 • 'Brilliant' launch for new leadership training
- 7 • Finance chief brings community focus to role
- 7 • Units sign up for recycling scheme donations
- 12 • Lucky survivor promises to wear a lifejacket
- 13 • Volunteers fly flag at international boat show
- 14 • Radio operator recalls Mayday mystery
- 14 • VHF provides superior reach and safety
- 16 • Common challenges facing national sector

## FEATURE

- 10-11 • Building a rescue vessel

## IN THEIR OWN WORDS

- 9 • MR Woolgoolga Deputy Unit Commander Mitch Harvey

## MAKING WAVES

- |       |                                  |                       |                 |
|-------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| 19-22 | <b>Northern Rivers News</b>      |                       |                 |
|       | • Night rescue                   | • Brunswick           | • Evans Head    |
|       | • Point Danger                   | • Wooli               | • Shark nets    |
|       | • Ballina                        | • Cape Byron          |                 |
| 23-26 | <b>Mid North Coast News</b>      |                       |                 |
|       | • Woolgoolga                     | • Trial Bay           | • Coffs Harbour |
|       | • Port Macquarie                 | • Forster-Tuncurry    | • Camden Haven  |
|       | • Crowdy Harrington              |                       |                 |
| 27-30 | <b>Hunter/Central Coast News</b> |                       |                 |
|       | • Norah Head                     | • Port Stephens       | • Central Coast |
|       | • Container spill                | • Lake Macquarie      | • Newcastle     |
|       | • Tuggerah Lakes                 | • Lemon Tree Passage  |                 |
| 31-34 | <b>Greater Sydney News</b>       |                       |                 |
|       | • Cottage Point                  | • Hawkesbury          | • Broken Bay    |
|       | • Terrey Hills                   | • Botany Port Hacking | • Port Jackson  |
| 35-37 | <b>Illawarra News</b>            |                       |                 |
|       | • Jervis Bay                     | • Shellharbour        | • Ulladulla     |
|       | • Kioloa                         | • Shoalhaven          | • Port Kembla   |
| 38-41 | <b>Monaro News</b>               |                       |                 |
|       | • Merimbula                      | • Awards              | • Bermagui      |
|       | • Alpine Lakes                   | • Batemans Bay        | • Eden          |
|       | • Narooma                        | • Tuross              |                 |

## PICTURE GALLERY

- 17, 42 • What we've been up to

## IN MEMORIAM & FEEDBACK

- 43-44 • Tributes to valued members
- 43-44 • Letters & correspondence

# From the Commissioner

New boats, facilities and training add to our record of progress.



Commissioner  
Stacey Tannos ESM

**A**s a young and growing organisation, Marine Rescue NSW has spent almost a decade on a trajectory of continual improvement.

This edition of *Soundings* is testament to our record of ongoing innovation and development.

The stand out markers of our progress, as always, are our vessels, including the new *Central Coast 30*, *Norah Head 20* and *Tuross 12*.

Our Fleet Modernisation Program has been the centrepiece of our renewal, delivering 83 boats worth more than \$19 million to date.

The safety of our volunteers is our highest priority and our most fundamental responsibility is to provide them with modern, safe and fit-for-purpose vessels for their work.

I know that the Forster-Tuncurry, Port Jackson and Lake Macquarie units are impatient to get their new vessels on the water. These and others are on the way.

Our facilities are also continuing to improve. MR Woolgoolga is relocating to new premises at nearby Arrawarra. The new base is located in a former University of New England building that has been extensively redeveloped by Coffs Harbour City Council to meet

the unit's operational, training and administrative requirements.

MR Port Jackson has moved into its new, larger and well fitted-out base, MR Camden Haven has extended its radio room and as MR Trial Bay Unit Commander Phil Hartley says, the unit's new training and storage facility will make things easier in every way.

Our major communications projects are continuing on the North and Mid North Coasts and equipment upgrades will boost radio operations at Port Kembla, Lake Macquarie, Narooma and Cape Byron. These works have a triple benefit in boosting radio coverage in these areas, supporting our radio

course starting in the Northern Rivers Region in August.

The feedback was positive and I am sure unit leaders in other regions will find the new course similarly helpful.

I am not, of course, saying that we do not still have much to do. For units keenly awaiting a new boat, I can assure you they are being delivered as quickly as build schedules allow. Too many units are operating in ageing, cramped facilities not suited to modern emergency service operations. We are committed to searching out potential opportunities to fund major capital works to redress this.

I am keenly aware that much

**While we strive for the new, our most valuable asset is our most enduring ... our members.**

operators in their duties and also improving our emergency response capabilities.

At last September's MRNSW Leadership Conference, our Unit Commanders and Deputy Unit Commanders specifically asked us for additional training to support them in these demanding roles.

We have now delivered on the commitment we gave, with the roll out of our new leadership training

of the work to upgrade our units has been funded through grants programs, external bodies and our members' committed fundraising efforts. My thanks go to the organisations that have assisted us and all the units that have put a great deal of effort into applying for grants and conducting a range of fundraising activities to bolster our limited budget and enable this work to be undertaken.

But while we strive for the new, our most valuable asset is our most enduring - and that is the commitment, skill and service of our members.

This was most notably recognised in the Commendation for Brave Conduct awarded to a crew from MR Lake Macquarie and the presentation of the Emergency Services Medal to members Peter May and Mick Kelly.

My congratulations and thanks to these quiet achievers and all who answer the call to save lives on the water.

**Stacey Tannos ESM**  
**Commissioner**



Commissioner Stacey Tannos joins MR Shellharbour Deputy Unit Commander Peter May, his daughter Belinda Haines, who travelled from Adelaide, his wife Jill and son Christopher following the Government House investiture ceremony at which Mr May was presented with the Emergency Services Medal.

# Four Directors to be elected in online poll

Electronic voting will streamline process and reduce costs.

Members will elect four Directors to the MRNSW Board at the Annual General Meeting at the State Headquarters on November 24.

In the ninth Board elections since the formation of MRNSW, members will have the opportunity to vote for a General Director and the Greater Sydney, Illawarra and Monaro Regional Directors.

This will be the first MRNSW Board election conducted online.

The General Director will be elected for a three-year term. This position is currently vacant following the resignation of former Director Mark McKenzie.

The three Regional Directors will be elected for two years.

The Greater Sydney position is also vacant due to the resignation of former Director David White. The incumbent Illawarra Regional Director is Keven Marshall, who was elected in 2017 for the remaining

year of former Director Bill Carter's two-year term.

The Monaro Director's position is held by Glenn Felkin.

Chair Jim Glissan encouraged members to nominate for a Board position and to ensure they voted in the elections.

"The ongoing strength of our organisation depends on an engaged membership and strong leadership based on solid knowledge and experience," he said.

"I urge any of our members who want to contribute in this capacity to step up for election."

Volunteers nominating for election must have been an active member for at least two years, possess knowledge and experience of MRNSW and bring relevant external skill sets such as professional qualifications or board, governance, fundraising or management experience.



Members of the MRNSW Board after the 2017 elections.

Candidate nominations open on September 24 and close on October 17. Regular and Life Members are eligible to vote in Board elections but not Provisional Members.

Mr Glissan said the new online voting system would streamline the election process, replacing the organisation's outdated and

cumbersome paper-based voting, and reduce costs.

"Voting online will be quick and simple. If they have not already done so, members need to make sure that their current personal email address is listed on the Otter system to ensure they receive their voting materials expeditiously," he said.

# New leaders take the helm at coastal units

Six women and youngest executive spearhead a changing of the guard.

A new generation of leaders has taken the helm at 21 MRNSW units along the coastline.

Thirty-two new Unit Commanders and Deputy Unit Commanders were elected at their mid-year Annual General Meetings.

The new leadership teams include the youngest unit executive, MR Woolgoolga DUC Mitch Harvey, 23 at the time of his election.

Six women have been newly-elected: MR Evans Head UC and DUC Kira Hartland and Karin Brown, MR Crowdys Harrington UC Rebekha Brown, MR Norah Head DUC Julie Rostron, MR Ulladulla DUC Gabrielle Boermans and MR Bermagui UC Caron Parfitt.

Commissioner Stacey Tannos congratulated the new leaders on their new positions.

"The workload of our Unit Commanders and Deputies is immensely time-consuming and often challenging and I commend all our new leaders for accepting this responsibility," he said.

"Thanks must also go to our outgoing unit leaders who have devoted countless hours to serving their units and communities."

MR Bermagui UC Caron Parfitt said her passion and respect for the role of MRNSW and the Bermagui unit to save lives on the water had continued to grow while serving as Deputy Unit Commander for the past two years.

"The opportunity to continue to make a difference inspired me to run for the UC position and I look forward to leading the team in a seamless transition and continuing



One of six new women in executive roles, MR Bermagui Unit Commander Caron Parfitt.

the focus on developing our capabilities and diversity through a strong focus on equality and respect," she said.

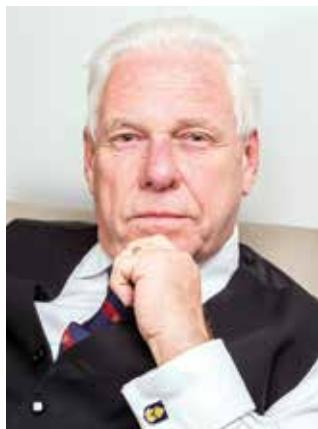
"Taking on a leadership position within Marine Rescue can be very

rewarding and I would certainly encourage other women to nominate for leadership positions in this dynamic volunteer organisation."

Meet Woolgoolga's Mitch Harvey in *In their own words* on Page 9.

## From the Chair

Favourable conditions forecast for our annual Board elections.



Chair  
James Glissan ESM, QC

After the chop and churn in our national political arena in recent weeks, it is refreshing to know that calm waters and favourable conditions are forecast for our own exercise in democracy over coming months.

The process of electing the Board of Marine Rescue NSW is unfailingly one of civility and constructive engagement and I am confident that this year's elections will be no different.

Over the past nine years, our members have stepped forward as candidates for election to the Board, offering their skill, energy and commitment for the good of the organisation without rancour or overt competitiveness.

In the months ahead we will welcome at least two new faces to the Board table.

The positions of one of our three General Directors and the Greater Sydney Regional Director are currently vacant as a result of resignations from the Board over the past year. Elections will be held for these roles, along with those of the Illawarra and Monaro Regional Directors, at the November Annual General Meeting.

As always, I encourage members to nominate for election by their peers and for eligible members to

exercise their power to determine who represents their interests in the corporate governance of the organisation that belongs equally to us all.

As you know, this will be our first online poll. I again remind members to ensure their email contact information is up to date on the Otter system and that they have opted to receive email correspondence.

This will make the voting system as seamless as possible for you.

As we approach the Annual General Meeting and elections, I would like to commend and thank our retiring Chief Financial Officer and Company Secretary Alan Skelley for his contribution over the past seven years.

The organisation of the AGM and elections, along with the annual audit of our finances, dominates the second half of the corporate year and the Board has valued Alan's coordination in ensuring these processes have run smoothly.

As CFO, Alan has consistently furnished us with the information required to monitor our financial performance and inform our capital and recurrent investment decisions.

Alan advised the Board earlier this year of his plans to retire and we wish him and his wife Kari Pettersen

every happiness as they traverse the world and its golf courses in the years ahead.

We welcome incoming Chief Financial Officer Todd Andrews and look forward to working as productively with him.

As we have come to expect, our members have continued to attract acclaim and respect.

In particular, MR Lake Macquarie member Jim Stringfellow, former member Barry Bonning and the late John Nissen, who have been awarded the Commendation for Brave Conduct for their courage in an arduous rescue operation in 2013.

In an example of the very best of the typical Australian volunteer, who will almost unfailingly protest "I was just doing my job" in the face of praise, these quiet achievers had drawn no attention to their efforts.

They had risked their safety to save others in danger, without seeking a spotlight, recognition or recompense.

The presentation of these awards is our affirmation as a nation that their skill and bravery has not gone unnoticed.

Nor should it pass without our thanks.

*Good sailing  
Jim Glissan*

## Minister to retire from Parliament at election

Police and Emergency Services Minister Troy Grant will retire from the NSW Parliament at the March State election.

Mr Grant announced his decision on July 12.

"After almost 30 years in combined public service as a NSW police officer and parliamentarian, I have made the decision not to contest the 2019 state election for the seat of Dubbo," he said.

"Running for Parliament in 2019 is not the right decision for my family or me. To serve your community as a regional local member you need to make enormous sacrifices and put your heart and soul into the role, and I can no longer give this role my all after the next election."

MRNSW Commissioner Stacey Tannos thanked the Minister for his commitment to the emergency

services and especially to MRNSW.

"The Minister has been a steadfast supporter of our volunteers and our work to assist and protect the community," he said.

"He has always taken every opportunity he can to get to know our members and learn more about their roles. We thank him for this dedication and wish him well for his future following his departure from the political sphere."



Retiring ... Minister Troy Grant.

# Bravery award recognises unflinching crew

Lake Macquarie rescuers commended for mission in severe conditions.

The courage demonstrated by a Marine Rescue Lake Macquarie crew on a 2013 rescue mission to save three boaters stranded in severe conditions has been recognised with a national bravery award.

Governor General Sir Peter Cosgrove announced MR Lake Macquarie member Jim Stringfellow, former member Barry Bonning and the late John Nissen had been awarded the Commendation for Brave Conduct in August.

The citation for the awards tells of the trio's courage in the rescue operation.

About 7pm on February 10, 2013, the crew went to the rescue of a vessel in distress, *South Pacific*, with three people on board off Bird Island. The boat was taking on water and its bilge pumps were unable to keep up. The Westpac Rescue Helicopter was called, winching one person off the boat.

The crew on board *Lake*

*Macquarie 21* located the stricken vessel and transferred replacement pump equipment on board using ropes as it was too dangerous to raft alongside.

As *LM 21* led the way back to Lake Macquarie, *South Pacific* had engine difficulties and needed to be towed. Hampered by the dangerous sea and wind, Mr Nissen manoeuvred *LM 21* close enough for a tow rope to be secured.

Mr Stringfellow remained on deck ready to cut the towline should the troubled vessel begin to sink.

"I stood in the rain and wind and the squall, hanging onto the tow rope in case the vessel did flounder," he told the *Newcastle Herald*.

"In that case, I would have had to cut the rope. We made them aware that any sign of the vessel going down would mean they'd have to abandon their vessel and we'd have to pick them up."

Both Mr Stringfellow and Mr Bonning paid tribute to Mr Nissen's



Commended for his bravery ... MR Lake Macquarie member Jim Stringfellow. Photo: Marina Neil, *The Newcastle Herald*.

skill as the skipper in the operation.

"If it wasn't for John's experience and knowledge, the outcome could have been very much different," Mr Bonning said. "I don't think many other skippers could have handled the situation the way John did."

Commissioner Stacey Tannos said the Commendation was richly-deserved national recognition of the crew's courage, skill and professionalism.

"This operation is testament to these men's commitment to serving their community and to our mission of saving lives on the water," he said.

"It required great bravery to head out into the large seas, rain squalls and strong winds to locate the distressed vessel and return it to safety but the crew was unflinching in the face of the danger they faced."

# Training success earns place in State awards

Marine Rescue only volunteer agency named among large employers.

In a major achievement for a volunteer agency, Marine Rescue NSW has been named among the top vocational training organisations in the State.

MRNSW was the only volunteer organisation recognised as a finalist in the Large Employer of the Year category of the NSW Training Awards, announced at Sydney Town Hall on September 12.

The annual awards are conducted by Training Services NSW to recognise outstanding achievement in the vocational education and training sector.

MRNSW Assistant Director Training and Education Chris Butler said being named as a finalist in the organisation's first entry in the

awards was tremendous recognition.

"This is due to the work and commitment of our volunteers and our whole training team," Mr Butler said.

"It is also welcome confirmation of the professionalism of our training curriculum and resources."

The winner in the Large Employer category was Sydney's International Convention Centre. Taronga Zoo was the other finalist.

"Being considered in the same class as these large, well-resourced employers was an indication of our success as a small agency with a volunteer workforce," Mr Butler said.

MRNSW is a Registered Training Organisation, developing and delivering its members' training.



Training for success .... Headquarters team Jane Shirriff, Dean Storey, Stuart Massey, Chris Butler, Dave Brown and Rodney Page at the NSW Training Awards.

# 'Brilliant' launch for new leadership training

Course developed in response to request from unit executives.

A new volunteer leadership program tailor-made for MRNSW was launched in the Northern Rivers Region in mid-August.

The new course is the result of feedback from unit executives at the 2017 MRNSW Leadership Conference, at which Unit Commanders and Deputy Unit Commanders asked for additional training support to assist them in their roles at the head of their local units.

Thirteen unit executives and senior members attended the first program, staged at Ballina over the weekend of August 18 and 19. Courses will be held in each of the MRNSW operational regions before the end of the year. The weekend was led by Assistant Director



Leaders from the Northern Rivers Region gather at Ballina in mid-August for the pilot leadership training program developed for unit executives.

Training and Education Chris Butler, Member Services Manager Mat Smith and facilitator Archie Aspinall.

Mr Butler said the course had been a brilliant success, with the participants motivated and engaged.

"Our leaders told us that they were looking for this additional support to give them knowledge and advice on handling not just the operational duties but also the human resources responsibilities that their roles brought," he said.

"We have worked hard on developing a course specifically for our people over the past year and we think we hit the target. The feedback was very positive from the participants, who included both new and more experienced leaders," he said.

"The first day focused on two of the most challenging areas of leadership in any organisation, large or small: leading outstanding teams and managing member performance and behaviour.

"The second day concentrated on emergency management arrangements, unit executive teams,

and management and support. We asked everyone 'what do you need to manage, daily, weekly, annually and where do you get support for that?' This included discussion on the need to appoint the right people to your executive and succession planning."

The weekend was marked by a real-time demonstration of operational leadership, with the Evans Head, Ballina and Iluka Yamba leaders and Regional Operations Manager John Murray coordinating the response to a boat that capsized offshore with three men on board.

Feedback included a comment that it had been a very concentrated course over two demanding days: "It was good to have training of a completely different nature and at a new level. It highlighted the huge demands on UCs as volunteers and personally."



**Barrenjoey Marine Electrics** has been a proud supporter of Marine Rescue NSW since its establishment.

BME has provided complete sales, service & refit solutions for units from Eden to Point Danger and on inland waterways.

To celebrate the strength of this relationship, BME would like to offer Marine Rescue NSW members significant discounts towards any of the following marine electronics products:

- Raymarine
- Furuno
- Simrad
- Garmin
- Icom
- Fusion

**Please call our office on 9997 6822  
or send enquiries to [sales@bme.net.au](mailto:sales@bme.net.au)**



**Unit 1 Rowell Marina,  
End of Queens Parade West, Newport, NSW 2106  
[www.bme.net.au](http://www.bme.net.au)**



Assistant Director Education and Training Chris Butler takes members through a session of the first MRNSW leadership course.

# Finance chief brings community focus to role

Retiring CFO praises unit treasurers, colleagues for their dedication.

The new Chief Financial Officer of MRNSW has considerable experience in managing finances for community focused groups.

Todd Andrews has spent the past seven-and-a-half years as the CFO and Company Secretary of Community Assets & Infrastructure, a private group that designs and builds community assets and infrastructure such as public libraries, aquatic centres and playgrounds.

In his own time he serves as voluntary treasurer of Helensburgh-Stanwell Park Junior Surf Life Saving Club.

Mr Andrews, who joined the Headquarters team on September 10, is replacing long-time CFO and Company Secretary Alan Skelley.

"The thing that appeals to me about the MRNSW job is that it's a community focused job," Mr Andrews said. "It has a mission of volunteers saving lives on the water, which I'm very interested in."

Mr Andrews said he aimed to be an effective manager of the organisation's finances, working closely with Commissioner Stacey Tannos and Deputy Commissioner

Dean Storey.

"I want to continue the good work that Stacey, Dean and Alan are doing at the moment," he said.

He also hoped to be of "great assistance" to unit treasurers.

Early in his career Mr Andrews had accounting and auditing roles with the well-known firms PKF and Deloitte Australia.

Mr Skelley will remain for an extended hand-over period.

"It's been very interesting and a lot of hard work but very rewarding," he said. "I've loved working for Marine Rescue NSW and in particular all of the people here."

Mr Skelley praised the dedication of his finance team colleagues Sharon Williams and Jenny Zuo and the MRNSW unit treasurers.

"I have deep respect for all the treasurers," he said.

"They are a unique little group of people within the organisation. They all work extremely hard. They come from various backgrounds, sometimes it can be fully qualified professional people but often they have had no previous experience."

Mr Skelley said the biggest achievement in his seven years at



Retiring Chief Financial Officer Alan Skelley welcomes Todd Andrews to MRNSW Headquarters in September.

MRNSW was the introduction of the business management software system NetSuite.

"It's excellent because we can now see every transaction for the past two years by location or on a group basis so it provides immediate balance sheet and profit and loss information," he said.

Commissioner Stacey Tannos wished Mr Skelley well in his retirement.

"Alan was instrumental in the efficient and responsible

management of MRNSW finances. I thank him for his hard work and professionalism," he said.

Mr Skelley said he hoped to devote more time to his golf game.

"I haven't done much over the last couple of years. My handicap's blown out from 15 to 19 and I'd like to get it back down to 15," he said.

More travel is also on the horizon with his wife Kari, with trips planned to Vanuatu, Europe and the Maldives.

*Brendan Trembath*

## Units sign up for recycling scheme donations

Marine Rescue NSW units are helping reduce litter in our waterways and raising funds at the same time.

The State Government's Return and Earn recycling scheme enables people to recycle certain drink containers through a network of Reverse Vending Machines and over-the-counter collection points.

Every eligible item returned is worth 10 cents. People recycling via the vending machines have the option to donate their refund to nominated national and local charities.

Community organisations like MRNSW can benefit by collecting drink containers to recycle at local collection points, organising fundraising opportunities with a local return point or applying to become a local donation partner.

A donation partner is featured on a local Reverse Vending Machine for a three-month period as one of the charities to which people can directly donate their refund.

MR Lake Macquarie and Forster-Tuncurry have already become donation partners for the period from September to November.

MR Forster-Tuncurry Unit Commander David Gibson said the unit was collecting bottles to recycle at one of the collection points in the coastal town.

"We are currently featured as a donation partner on the Reverse Vending Machine," he said.

"At the two local reverse recycling centres, people can mention Marine Rescue and direct deposit their refund to us."

"It's a good fundraiser."

TOMRA Cleanaway is the network operator for the Return and Earn container deposit scheme in NSW.

TOMRA Charity Partnerships Assistant Remi Duracher said the MR Hawkesbury, Port Macquarie, Shoalhaven and Bermagui units also had applied to become donation partners in their respective communities.

"We're trying to decrease litter in NSW and the ocean is one place that litter ends up so there's definitely a strong connection with Marine Rescue," he said.

For details on the recycling scheme and fundraising opportunities, visit <https://returnandearn.org.au/>



COMMERCIAL  
WARRANTY  
AVAILABLE



# DF325A

JOIN THE REVOLUTION

## THE ULTIMATE DUAL TECHNOLOGIES

- SUZUKI DUAL PROP SYSTEM
- SUZUKI DUAL LOUVER SYSTEM
- DUAL INJECTOR
- DUAL WATER INLET



SUZUKIMARINE.COM.AU

The outboard motor shown in this ad is an image,  
the actual outboard motor does not show the engine inside.

THE  
**ULTIMATE™**  
4-STROKE OUTBOARD

# Mitch Harvey

Deputy Unit Commander, Marine Rescue Woolgoolga



Passionate about training ... Marine Rescue Woolgoolga Deputy Unit Commander Mitch Harvey on an exercise with the MR Wooli unit and fishing for higher bids at the Australian Freediving Competition auction, the proceeds of which are donated to the Woolgoolga unit.

**M**itch Harvey was elected the Deputy Unit Commander of Marine Rescue Woolgoolga in June. At just 23, he became the youngest unit executive in our organisation. Mitch is also the Training Officer of the Mid North Coast unit, which has 31 volunteer members.

**I joined Marine Rescue in March 2011, when I was just 16.** I have been a fisherman around the Woolgoolga area since I was two-years-old and had always seen the then Woolgoolga Sea Rescue Squadron running barbecues, at its monthly markets and out training on its rescue vessel. I knew from a very young age that I wanted to join the unit. Being exposed to the unit at such a young age increased my anticipation over the years as I grew up, until I finally signed the membership papers when I had turned 16 in 2011.

**What I enjoy the most is the comradery within the organisation and the close friends I have made within it.** Not just within my own unit, but statewide. Some of the people I work with I consider to be family, and I don't think I'd be the person I am now without them.

**I have always aspired to be a leader.** I was a School Prefect and an anti-bullying Mentor in high school and was appointed to the Academic Board of the University of New England during my studies in Armidale. Within the unit, I have held the positions of Radio Base Operations Officer and Training Officer since October 2015. I think standing for election as the Deputy Unit Commander was just a natural progression from there.

**Young people generally do not have the life experience of**

#### **people who are their seniors.**

I certainly do not have the life experience. Because of this, I have had to listen to and learn consistently from everyone I work with and have moulded myself and my leadership strategies around little bits of each person.

**Where to from here? I will continue my work with Marine Rescue far into the foreseeable future.** My immediate goals are to attain my Marine Rescue Masters rating and to ensure a smooth and efficient transfer from our old base in Woolgoolga to our new base in nearby Arrawarra.

**I will continue as Training Officer because this is my passion.** I love training and I believe there is no better feeling than seeing the joy on a person's face when you have taught them something new.

**I am also working towards a strategy to not only get more young people into the organisation but retain them and make it enjoyable for them throughout their whole experience.** School excursions, open days and careers days are just some of the avenues we could utilise for young volunteer recruitment. A school in our local area runs a Maritime component of its Marine Science subject, in which I am heavily involved. From the class of 30 students, Marine Rescue has gained four to five dedicated and keen young volunteers. Other volunteer groups have a large presence within schools. With volunteering being a big part of students' senior schooling, I believe Marine Rescue can start a recruitment campaign for these young people.

## ON THE RADAR

Building a rescue vessel

# We wanted to ensure we delivered a great,

Unit Commander delighted with new vessel's agility and performance.

The newest search and rescue boat in the Marine Rescue NSW fleet won hearts and minds during its first test drive by volunteers, debut at the Sydney International Boat Show and delivery to its unit.

*Central Coast 30*, a 10 metre Naiad, was built in eight weeks by Yamba Welding & Engineering (YW&E).

Sea trials of the rigid hulled inflatable boat (RHIB) took place off Yamba on the NSW North Coast on July 26.

MR Central Coast Unit Commander Roger Palmer was the first volunteer to take the wheel.

He was delighted by the boat's agility.

He put the boat through a series of tight turns in a stretch of open

water clear of other vessels.

"The boat's performance was absolutely amazing," he said.

"She performed like no other boat I've ever been on."

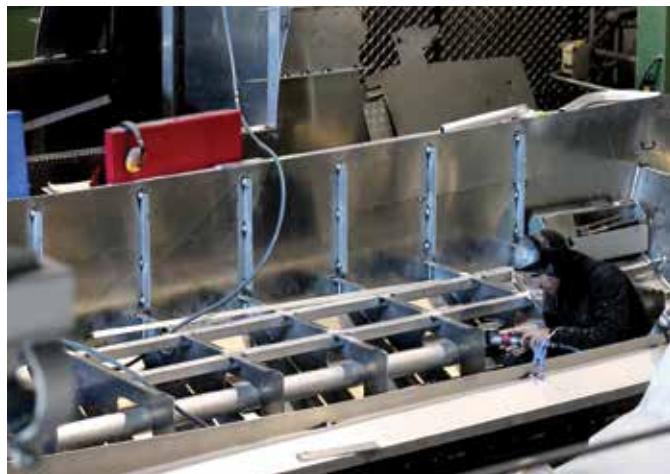
But he did tell YW&E founder Bill Collingburn of one issue.

"I told him I didn't want that one, I wanted two of them," he quipped.

"Yamba was probably one of the most exciting days of my life with Marine Rescue."

Deputy Unit Commander Shaun Smith and Leading Crew member Bob Sullivan also took to the helm to familiarise themselves with *CC 30*, which will operate up to 30 nautical miles offshore.

YW&E Production Manager Peter Sanderson, who supervised the boat's construction under a tight



The bare bones of *Central Coast 30* exposed during its construction at Yamba Welding & Engineering. Photos: Brendan Trembath.

deadline, said it was an exciting day.

"Marine Rescue being one of our favourite customers, we wanted to ensure we delivered a great vessel for them, a high quality, high performing vessel," he said.

A week after the sea trials the boat travelled to Sydney for the 51st

Sydney International Boat Show and moored in the David Lockwood Marina on Cockle Bay. Many people came on board for a look, including one woman who already knew the boat inside and out.

Dana-jo Radanovic, a first year apprentice at YW&E, worked on the



## Your Waterfront Development Partner

Copley Marine Consulting Group is a specialist in domestic waterfront developments and your partner in the Planning Approvals of Jetties, Pontoons, Mooring Pens and Seawalls.

### We specialise in providing:

- Concept Designs • Planning Approvals -
- Landowners Consent and Development Applications
- Engineering • Computer Aided Design (CAD)



**COPLEY MARINE**  
CONSULTING GROUP

Tel: 02 8935 9695 [www.cm-consulting.com.au](http://www.cm-consulting.com.au)



MR Central Coast members Raymond and Jane Lewis and Ian Leafe on board the unit's new pride and joy, *Central Coast 30*, at the Sydney International Boat Show.

## high quality boat for the volunteers: builders

fit out of the new vessel.

She chatted with Central Coast volunteers about their new boat, asking what they thought of the access along the sides.

Mr Smith said there was more room than they were used to, which made it easier for the crew to move forward and aft.

After the five-day boat show Mr Collingburn delivered *CC 30* to the Central Coast unit, in a voyage taking in Sydney Harbour, the northern beaches and Broken Bay.

Ms Radanovic, who was part of the delivery team, enjoyed the scenery on her first visit to Sydney and the Central Coast.

"It was an amazing journey," she said.

The four tonne boat, powered by twin Suzuki 250hp engines, cut through the moderate seas with ease.

"It was such an impressive vessel to be on," Ms Radanovic said.

At Broken Bay near Lion Island the delivery crew was joined by a small fleet for the last leg to the Point Clare base.

Robert Smith, operating as a crew member on *CC 21*, said the new



Coming home ... *Central Coast 30* on its delivery voyage to the MR Central Coast base. Leading Crew member Bob Sullivan, Hunter/Central Coast Regional Operations Manager Steve Raymond, Unit Commander Roger Palmer and Deputy Shaun Smith (below) at Yamba for the vessel's sea trials.

search and rescue vessel gave the unit a big advantage.

"It's got capacity for crew on board and a good turn on speed so we can get to rescues quickly," he said.

"It cuts down the response time to places like The Haven by half," Rescue Water Craft operator Geoff Hawes, on *CC 11*, said. "It looks very comfortable, very safe in the water."

*Brendan Trembath*



## Apprentice sees project through to end

One of the Yamba Welding & Engineering workers who helped make *Central Coast 30* a reality was first year apprentice Dana-jo Radanovic.

Over eight weeks she saw the transformation from a few pieces of aluminium to an advanced vessel with radar, sonar and shock absorbing seats.

"It was pretty amazing to see the whole process," she said.

Ms Radanovic was involved in the boat's fit out, which included mechanical work, painting and soft furnishings.

YW&E apprentices work in either vessel fit out or fabrication.

Company founder and Managing Director Bill Collingburn said the workforce had grown to meet an increase in orders from various agencies.

"With the influx of work, including Marine Rescue, we've been able to increase our staff from about 20 to about 35," he said.

"In that 35 we have 10 young apprentices."

Ms Radanovic, 19, was chuffed to be chosen to help represent YW&E at the Sydney International Boat Show.

She praised her boss for creating a thriving business in the northern NSW coastal town.



YW&E apprentice Dana-jo Radanovic takes in the view during *CC 30*'s delivery voyage to its unit after the Sydney International Boat Show.

"It brings a lot of work to the area," she said.

Ms Radanovic started with YW&E

in January as a Trades Assistant and began an apprenticeship in Marine Craft Construction at TAFE in July.

# Lucky survivor promises to wear a lifejacket

World Health Organisation collaborates on project to save lives.

Ann O'Brien says she should have been wearing a lifejacket when she was hit by a boom of a sailing boat and knocked overboard unconscious.

The Sydney school teacher considers herself lucky that two fellow crew members taking part in the March 15 twilight race on Middle Harbour dived in to save her.

"They struggled to keep me afloat because I didn't have a lifejacket on," she said. "Then the next lucky thing was this little RHIB (Rigid Hullled Inflatable Boat) came by and heard the commotion because there were dozens of boats still on the start line and they were able to haul me into the RHIB and begin CPR."

Ms O'Brien told her survival story during a lifejacket forum held during the 2018 Sydney International

Boat Show. It was organised by the Centre for Maritime Safety in collaboration with the World Health Organisation to discuss the challenges and opportunities to drive innovation in lifejackets.

In the forum participants discussed how to improve the form, function and affordability of lifejackets to help achieve the NSW Government Maritime Safety Plan goal of zero preventable drownings by 2056.

Ann O'Brien could easily have drowned if she had not been rescued quickly and given first aid.

"It was at least five minutes that witnesses say that I didn't breathe," she said.

"The CPR basically kept my brain going.

"It's just a terribly lucky story



Ann O'Brien wearing a lifejacket while sailing on Pittwater.

where other people are extremely traumatised by it but I'm just really grateful that they knew CPR, the right boat was there and the ambulances got there quickly."

She promises from now on to

always wear a lifejacket.

After the forum she visited the MRNSW stand and chatted with the volunteers.

"I'm very grateful for the work they do," she said.

## THE WORLD'S HARDEST WORKING RIBS



Recognised and operated by coast guards, police forces and commercial users around the world. Whatever the conditions, you can rely on Naiad's supreme ride and strength to get you home safely.

PILOT BOATS      RESCUE  
MILITARY      PATROL  
SUPERYACHT TENDERS      TOURISM  
RECREATIONAL      DIVING

TO FIND OUT MORE PHONE +64 3 573 7246  
[WWW.NAIAD.CO.NZ](http://WWW.NAIAD.CO.NZ)



YAMBA WELDING & ENGINEERING P/L  
4 Angourie Rd, Yamba, NSW 2464, AUS  
T: +61 2 6646 2421  
[WWW.YWE.COM.AU](http://WWW.YWE.COM.AU)

**naiad**

# Volunteers fly flag at international boat show

We join thousands of visitors to talk fun and safety on the water.

**M**arine Rescue NSW dropped anchor in bustling Darling Harbour in early August for the 51st Sydney International Boat Show.

Forty-five enthusiastic volunteers from 10 units joined exhibitors and visitors at Australia's biggest showcase of all that is new and breathtaking in the boating industry.

Members came to the show from MR Botany Port Hacking, Central Coast, Evans Head, Jervis Bay, Lake Macquarie, Middle Harbour, Port Jackson, Port Macquarie, Port Stephens and Terrey Hills. They answered questions about diverse topics from rescues and recruitment to marine radio coverage and courses, also demonstrating how to Log On and Log Off with the free *MarineRescue* app.

The volunteers met appreciative boaters such as Gaby Yacoub, who Logs On before fishing trips off the Sydney Coast.

"We Log On just in case we get stuck and need some help," he said.

"It's always good to make sure someone knows where you are when you are out there."

MR Central Coast sent the biggest contingent to the show as the unit's new \$472,000 10m search and rescue boat was on display in the marina. *Central Coast 30* was a major attraction, with many visitors taking the opportunity

to have a tour. Our workhorse sat alongside luxury cruisers, speed boats and the yacht that Lisa Blair sailed solo around Antarctica.

About 100 vessels, worth nearly \$1 billion, were tied up on the purpose-built marina, named after the late boating reporter David Lockwood. More boats and water craft were on display inside in the International Convention Centre's exhibit halls.

Visitors were keen to try bumper boats and a selection of stand up paddle boards and kayaks on two large pools set up on an outdoor deck overlooking the city skyline.

SIBS is organised by the Boating Industry Association. Event Manager Domenic Genua said the show had hosted 59,764 visitors.

"Visitors to the show enjoyed an exceptional opportunity to satisfy their expectations and to help make their time on the water safer and more fun. Overall, a positive result for everyone," Mr Genua said.

MRNSW took up its regular spot in the Boating Safety Zone with water safety partners including the NSW Police Force Marine Area Command, Roads and Maritime Services and Surf Life Saving NSW.

A lot of visitors left the show with MRNSW raffle tickets. First and second prizes were outboard motors and third was a VHF marine radio.



MR Central Coast members Geoff Hawes and Bob Sullivan welcome Lucy, Mitchell and Peter Galloway aboard CC 30, a drawcard for Sydney International Boat Show visitors. Photos: Brendan Trembath.

Thanks go to our preferred suppliers Suzuki Marine and Raymarine for generously donating the prizes.

MRNSW Commissioner Stacey Tannos drew the raffle at State Headquarters on August 8.

He thanked all the MRNSW

volunteers who gave their time to take part in SIBS.

"Our members are always enthusiastic advocates for our organisation and particularly for boating safety," he said.

Brendan Trembath



On deck in the Boating Safety Zone ... Kristy Jones and Cara Pacitti from MR Jervis Bay and and MR Central Coast member Chris Hartcher.



Brian West from the Australian National Maritime Museum drops by the MRNSW stand, meeting MR Jervis Bay's Ron Hanson and MR Terrey Hills members Patrick Kearney and Henry Stratton.



You've got to be in it to win it ... MR Port Stephens Watch Officer Jenny Fitzsimons selling tickets in the MRNSW raffle on the SIBS marina.

# Radio operator recalls Mayday mystery

'Dodgy' call for help from boat smuggling children out of Australia.

**R**adio operator Richard Osborne has received many Mayday calls as a Marine Rescue volunteer but none as odd as an urgent request for help from a boat off Indonesia in July 1992.

Mr Osborne was on duty at the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard radio base at Lemon Tree Passage.

A skipper, calling on the 27MHz distress frequency 27.88, reported his 30 foot cruiser had engine failure off Irian Jaya.

Under certain atmospheric conditions some 27MHz radio waves can travel over hundreds or thousands of kilometres.

The skipper said five people were on board and they were out of food.

Mr Osborne alerted the Rescue Coordination Centre in Canberra, which advised that an Australian warship would divert to the vessel in distress.

"I told him the *Dubbo* was coming," Mr Osborne said.

"He didn't want to know us then. He said 'everything is alright'.

"He said he had managed to start his motor and he was ok."

It turned out that the skipper, Bryan Wickham, had just facilitated one of Australia's most notorious abductions.

On board were Jacqueline

Gillespie's two children and her ex-husband, a Malaysian prince.

"I'm not sure who the fifth person was," Mr Osborne said.

His memory of the incident was stirred by a recent report that UK-born Wickham, now 80, was seeking Australian citizenship. The ex-prisoner told *A Current Affair*, "I'm not a terrorist. I'm not going to bomb people. I'm not going to do anything. I am just an old man."

Mr Osborne said there were actually two Mayday calls from Wickham. In the first, he gave no position or vessel description. The signal was weak and contact was lost. The second Mayday two days later was more elaborate but a key detail had changed.

"The first time round he said one person on board and when he got into international waters it was five people on board," Mr Osborne said. "I thought something was a bit dodgy."

Wickham was eventually arrested in the United States and extradited to Australia, where he received an 18-month jail sentence in 1993 for his role in the abduction. Ms Gillespie was not reunited with her son Iddin and daughter Shahira for 14 years.

Mr Osborne carried on with his



MR Lemon Tree Passage radio operator Richard Osborne recalls receiving two Mayday calls from the skipper of the boat on which the Gillespie children were smuggled out of Australia.

voluntary work. In 2008 he received the Medal of the Order of Australia for service with the Coast Guard and Rural Fire Service.

In 2012 he became a member of the newly formed Marine Rescue NSW and two years later was

elected the Lemon Tree Passage Unit Commander. His term ended in June.

"I will still be doing my radio shifts," Mr Osborne said. "I like what I'm doing."

*Brendan Trembath*



The Lemon Tree Passage base radio room around the time of the 1992 Mayday calls.

## VHF provides superior reach and safety

**M**arine Rescue NSW strongly recommends the use of VHF marine radio for its superior communication and safety capabilities.

While MRNSW radio bases monitor both VHF and 27MHz marine radio channels along the NSW coastline, a VHF set will provide you with better range and higher quality communication.

The effective range of a VHF radio is up to 20 nautical miles and often

much further, depending on the elevation of land-based receiving stations.

A VHF radio equipped with Digital Selective Calling (DSC) can send a distress signal with a single push of a button.

A GPS-equipped model also sends the location of the vessel.

A 27MHz radio is a basic entry-level marine radio with an effective range of 10-15 nautical miles, usually limited to "line of sight".

While under some conditions transmissions can be heard from a large distance, boaters cannot rely on this as the frequency is highly susceptible to static and has significantly reduced radio coverage compared to VHF.

Designed for offshore and overseas cruising, the more costly MF/HF radio has an effective range of up to 200 nautical miles for "local" communications but can reach considerably further

depending on conditions, antennas and frequencies used. MF/HF distress frequencies are monitored by a commercial contractor, Kordia, engaged by NSW Roads and Maritime Services.

If you're unsure about using a marine radio, you can contact your local MRNSW unit.

Some units also hold public courses on radio use and protocols.

Visit [mrnsw.com.au//Portholes//Public Training Courses](http://mrnsw.com.au//Portholes//Public Training Courses) for details.



The **proven** choice for Government and Professional applications around the world  
**AirBerth Boat Lifts**



## Optimise vessel performance today by storing your boat out of the water

- ✓ Increase speed and fuel efficiency by eliminating anti-foul paints on the hull
- ✓ Launch and retrieve your vessel in minutes
- ✓ Maximise days on water; minimise maintenance time

## The AirBerth features:

- ▶ Quick, safe and easy to launch for quick deployment
- ▶ 9 different models suit vessels up to 15 metric tonnes
- ▶ UV stable Heavy Duty HDPE construction ensures AirBerth is environmentally friendly and maintenance free
- ▶ Vessel retrieval equally as fast so less time on dock post-rescue
- ▶ No submerged metal parts
- ▶ Isolates air and water for added safety

Proud member of:



AirBerth Boat Lifts  
+61 7 5587 7888  
info@airberth.com  
[www.airberth.com](http://www.airberth.com)

# Common challenges facing national sector

Our members share their experience with volunteer colleagues.

Eleven members of nine MRNSW units joined their volunteer colleagues from around Australia at the National Volunteering Conference in Sydney in late June.

Hosted by Volunteering Australia, the conference this year featured dedicated emergency management sessions for the first time.

Members Andy Adams (Evans Head), Andrea Danvers and David Parkinson (Brunswick), Emma Elliott (Eden), Mitch Harvey (Woolgoolga), David Hytche (Hawkesbury), Kristy Jones and Alex Ross (Jervis Bay), Bill Smith (Shoalhaven), John Harris (Terrey Hills) and Elizabeth Van Homrigh (Newcastle) attended the three-day event.

They were joined by Deputy Commissioner Dean Storey, Member Services Manager Mat Smith and

State Training Manager Dave Brown.

Mr Smith said the conference had highlighted the challenges facing the volunteering sector.

"The most common challenge faced by the sector today is retaining volunteers," he said. "Increasingly, individuals are seeking flexibility in the time and commitment they dedicate to their volunteer duties but at the same time, an organisation's requirements often necessitate a more rigorous, structured approach. Finding a way to balance these competing needs is vital to reducing volunteer turn-over."

Director of Emergency Management Australia, Joe Buffone, told the conference volunteer participation in community and emergency services was falling, with only 11 per cent of the volunteer



MRNSW personnel assemble for the National Volunteering Conference in Sydney in June.

pool now engaged in the emergency services. However, he pointed to the emergence of new self-deploying volunteers and organisations moving in to fill what they perceived as gaps in the emergency services landscape, creating the need to manage their participation.

Mr Smith said the MRNSW delegates had learnt about a range

of initiatives that might prove helpful in their own units.

"The conference validated the volunteer participation trends we have identified," he said. "It also confirmed that the steps we are taking, like our new leadership training, will help create a positive environment so people will want to remain with us for a long time."



**BE PREPARED**  
BEFORE YOU LEAVE SHORE

**SAFETY GEAR**  
**COMMUNICATION**  
**NAVIGATION / FISHFINDERS**  
+ 1000'S OF CHANDLERY PRODUCTS!

**VISIT YOUR LOCAL SUPERSTORE!**



**NEW SOUTH WALES**

CARINGBAH	188 Taren Point Rd	(02) 9540 9865
DEE WHY	818 Pittwater Rd	(02) 9984 0019
GATESHEAD	21 Pacific Hwy	(02) 4920 6820
GRANVILLE	1 Parramatta Rd	(02) 9897 7387
MCGRATHS HILL	3 Curtis Rd	(02) 4577 8088
PENRITH	81-83 Batt St	(02) 4722 4555

**1300 964 264**  
[www.roadtechmarine.com.au](http://www.roadtechmarine.com.au)

**PERMANENT LOW PRICES - EVERYDAY!**

16 MARINE RESCUE NSW | SOUNDINGS

## What we've been up to



Honouring those who serve our community ... Governor of NSW General David Hurley and Mrs Linda Hurley host a formal dinner at NSW Government House for leaders and senior representatives of the NSW emergency services and Australian Defence Force, including MRNSW Deputy Commissioner Dean Storey and Kelle Storey (second row, on left).



Sign of support ... Toll General Manager of Express Parcels Michael Rugendyke joins MR Lake Macquarie Deputy Mal Wardrop and Unit Commander Neil Grieves to announce sponsorship for the unit.



Welcome ... MR Wooli UC Richard Taffs briefs State Emergency Service Commissioner Mark Smethurst (second from right) and local and regional SES personnel on the unit's operations.



Lucky winner ... MR Evans Head's Ian Murray, UC Kira Hartland and DUC Karin Brown congratulate Shane Johnston on winning a kayak, first prize in the raffle at the Evans Head Fishing Classic.



Milestone ... MR Newcastle Unit Commander Ron Calman and Hunter/Central Coast Regional Operations Manager Steve Raymond present Deputy Ian Morrow with his 10 year Long Service Medal.

# Karera

Radio  
Communication  
Solutions



- ◆ Marine Radios (HF, VHF and UHF)
- ◆ Antennas and accessories
- ◆ Navigation, GPS and Vessel Tracking
- ◆ EPIRBs and Safety Beacons
- ◆ Eflares ◆ Equipment Servicing

With years of marine radio experience, we can help you choose the right equipment for your situation and provide through-life maintenance for reliable, dependable operation.

If you need practical advice, quality workmanship and excellent service, you can rely on Karera.

- ◆ Fully equipped workshop and experienced technical staff for radio servicing & repairs.
- ◆ Engineering staff to help you create solutions specific to your needs.
- ◆ Trusted suppliers to Marine Rescue NSW.

Homeward journey turns into a rescue mission for stranded boater.

 **02 4355 1599**  
2 / 49 Gavenlock Road TUGGERAH NSW 2259



[www.karera.com](http://www.karera.com) Visit our new website!  
Or email us for a quote. [sales@karera.com](mailto:sales@karera.com)

**PROUD TO SUPPORT MARINE RESCUE NEW SOUTH WALES**

# Crews rush to save men overboard in dark

Trio in 'terrible situation' as small boat capsizes off northern NSW coastline.

An 83-year-old man was transported to hospital after a small boat overturned off the northern NSW coastline 2.5nm south of Evans Head on August 18, throwing three men on board into the water in the dark.

The boaters activated their emergency beacon just before 7.20pm.

Four MRNSW units took part in the emergency response operation.

Volunteer crews from Marine Rescue Evans Head, Ballina and Iluka Yamba were immediately activated and the Westpac Rescue Helicopter was deployed to the boat's last known position.

The helicopter stood overhead, illuminating the scene while the crew of rescue vessel *Evans 30* located the upturned 6m centre console boat.

Crew members Scott Mohr, Lance Fountain and Bradley Burgess rescued the three boaters from the

open water and provided first aid treatment while transporting the trio back to shore, where a waiting NSW Ambulance transferred the elderly man to hospital for treatment.

All three were suffering from hypothermia.

The crew of rescue vessel *Ballina 30*, Glenn Sanders, Bill Ewen, Gary Baker and Phil Causley, recovered gear from the water, righted the capsized boat and took it under tow to the Evans Head boat ramp, where it was returned to its trailer.

The crew of *Iluka Yamba 30* was Peter Richards, Doug Luckie, Michael Fitzgerald, Ian McGuigan and Adrian Burley.

Communications support throughout the rescue operation was provided by teams from Marine Rescue Evans Head, Iluka Yamba and Terrey Hills.

MRNSW Northern Rivers Regional Operations Manager John Murray congratulated the rescuers on the



*Ballina 30* returns a 6m boat to the Evans Head boat ramp after it capsized offshore, throwing the three men on board into the water. They were rescued by *Evans 30*.

swift and effective response.

"These boaters found themselves in a terrible situation, thrown into the water in the dark," he said.

"There is no doubt three lives were saved tonight through the tremendous work of everyone involved in this operation.

"This response again demonstrates the value of MRNSW volunteers' professional training

and state-of-the-art rescue vessels and equipment and the cooperation and coordination between our emergency services."

The emergency occurred as the Northern Rivers Region's Unit Commanders and Deputy Unit Commanders were attending the inaugural MRNSW leadership training course with Headquarters personnel at Ballina.

# Brunswick vessel returns from major facelift

Homeward journey turns into a rescue mission for stranded boater.

The members of MR Brunswick have welcomed the return of their rescue vessel, *Brunswick 30*, after a major refit.

The 9.5m Naiad is back in the Brunswick Boat Harbour after time off the water at Yamba Welding & Engineering, its original builder.

Our members would like to thank the crews from MR Point Danger and MR Ballina for covering our local waters while *BR 30* was out of action.

The centrepiece of the six-year-old boat's refit was the replacement of the original air-filled sponsons with hard memory foam.

A new M Series stabilised FLIR thermal image camera and high power remote-controlled searchlight also were installed to support

advanced night navigation and search and rescue operations.

The vessel returned from Yamba on Saturday, August 4, with skipper Bill Spicer, crew members Brian Peachey and Dave Warren and newly-elected Unit Commander David Parkinson and Deputy Jonathan Wilcock on board.

The crew had planned to rendezvous with members of MR Evans Head for a joint training exercise while on the voyage north up the coast.

This plan was quickly abandoned when *BR 30* was instead tasked to respond to an incident south of Ballina.

A small fishing boat had broken down and called for help.

The crew took the boat under



*Brunswick 30* passes the MR Brunswick radio base as it crosses the bar on its return from a major refit.

tow, returning it and its passengers safely to Ballina.

The rescue vessel is now ready to assist the boating community and the people of the Byron coastline.

The unit has thanked outgoing

UC Andrea Danvers and DUC Owen Danvers, who stood down at this year's unit elections, for their tireless work and contribution to our unit and the boating community.

*Jonathan Wilcock*

# Hundreds of boats Log On for Fishing Classic

Evans Head crews called to just three incidents during week-long event.

Increased safety awareness and perfect weather resulted in MR Evans Head being called to respond to just three incidents during the annual Evans Head Fishing Classic, from July 6 to 13.

The event again proved a valuable opportunity to promote boating safety, Logging On and the *MarineRescue* app.

In all, 363 boats with 1,018 people on board Logged On with the radio base and our members recorded 727 duty hours.

*Evans 30* had only been called to attend to one flat battery before responding to two incidents on July 12, the first involving a vessel with fuel problems 17nm offshore.

Bumpy conditions made for a long run for skipper Tony McNally and crew Bill Bates, Ian Murray and Jason Brierly to return the boat to safety.

Not so fortunate was a vessel that foundered on the southern side of Snapper Headland. The father and son crew made it safely to shore before being taken to Lismore Base



*Evans 30* returns a competitor in the Evans Head Fishing Classic safely across the Evans bar after the small runabout experienced fuel problems 17 nautical miles offshore. Photo: Sue Kennedy.

Hospital for observation.

A raffle run by the unit and Evans Head Casino Surf Life Saving Club during the event raised \$4,318.

With the Classic behind us, we returned to business as usual.

The unit holds regular training on Tuesday nights so the crew was already at the rescue vessel on July 17 when we received a call to help a radio club member with a broken steering cable perilously close to the Evans Head breakwalls. Skipper

Scott Mohr and crew Kira Hartland, Bill Bates and Joe Medina headed straight out and took the vessel under tow, returning the solo boater safely to the boat ramp within 32 minutes of the call for help.

Our next operation corresponded with our Saturday morning vessel training schedule.

On August 11, skipper Scott Mohr and crew Robert Foster, Ian Murray, Kerry Turpin, Andy Adams, Jason Brierley and Karin Brown were

preparing to leave the Evans River at 10.20am, when radio operator Bill Bates received a call from a charter fishing vessel with a medical emergency on board 14 nm north-east of the bar.

*Evans 30* proceeded at best speed, arriving at the vessel at 10.43am and transferring the patient on board for transportation to shore, reaching a waiting ambulance at Ballina by 11.13am.

*Bill Bates*

# Vandals jeopardise Tweed boaters' safety

Senseless vandals placed the safety of Tweed River boaters in jeopardy when they damaged the local bar camera less than a year after its installation.

The camera was installed last December to cover a black spot inside the bar's northern wall.

MR Point Danger Unit Commander Glenda Ashby condemned the vandals, who smashed the solar panel that powers the device.

She said this had blocked the unit radio operators' view of vessels crossing the bar, potentially delaying a rescue response in an emergency.

The camera has now been repaired.

In a demonstration of cross-border cooperation, *Point Danger 30* joined a South East Queensland Search and Rescue Exercise on September 8. The unit responded to a spate of stranded vessels offshore and on the river and Terranora Inlet in August, including a runabout with broken steering between Cook Island and Fingal Head and another with engine failure 2km off the river mouth.

On August 20, three humpback whales entered the river on the incoming tide. The trio swam 350m upstream, delighting tourists, locals and unit volunteers, putting on a great display of breaching and just generally having a whale of a time



A humpback whale frolics in the Tweed River. Photo: John Bullock.

for about 90 minutes before heading back out to sea.

The previous week, we farewelled former member, Karen (Kaz) Henderson, the sister of UC Ashby

and our Treasurer Dianne Henriksen.

A rainbow flag was flown from *PD 30* in Kaz's memory as her ashes were scattered at sea.

*Dale Leo*

# No sign of missing man after major search

Logging On compulsory for Wooli Snapper Competition entrants.

In August the MR Wooli unit again provided radio coverage and rescue vessel assistance for the annual Wooli Snapper Competition.

This is a week-long catch and release fishing competition that attracts a loyal following to Wooli each year.

Logging On and Logging Off with MR Wooli was compulsory for all competitors and our unit took the opportunity to promote the use of VHF Channel 16 marine radio and the free *MarineRescue* app.

With some competitors forgetting to Log Off or notify the radio base they were extending their time on the water, there were some dilemmas with boats being flagged as overdue - one involving a rescue vessel activation - but no serious incidents.

Far more serious, however, was the still unsolved disappearance of a visitor to Sandon village in June.

Sandon, an idyllic but isolated hideaway village 13nm to the north

of Wooli, is a popular launch site for offshore fishing and MR Wooli regularly assists vessels in the area.

Access is either by boat or four wheel drive up the beach from Minnie Water, although a camp ground on the northern side has road access from Brooms Head.

An elderly man was reported missing by his host when he did not return from fishing at night on June 14. His dinghy was tied to the bank but his fishing gear was missing.

An initial land and river search by the State Emergency Service and rescue helicopter was then expanded to an offshore search involving the Police launch *Fearless*, *Wooli 30*, Yamba Surf Life Saving and police divers. The crews of *Wooli 30* and *Fearless* worked together over two days on shoreline and parallel track searches out to 3nm.

The offshore search from Minnie Water to Brooms Head on day one was subsequently extended on day



The isolated fishing village of Sandon on the NSW North Coast ... centre of a major search for a missing man in June.

two to cover the coast from Wooli to Shelly Beach Headland, a track length of 22nm.

How grateful we were to have calm conditions for the search, conducted with 0.25 track spacings.

We had four crew and a Watch Officer in the base for each day, some doubling up to put their entire

weekend into the search. Nothing was located then or since.

Crew and operators involved were Jackie Taffs, Marten Hutchings, Nic Firth, Kath Farrar, Rodney May and Richard Taffs. Unit members appreciated the thanks received from a Sandon resident (see P44).

*Richard Taffs*

# Shark nets to be pulled from North Coast

State Government responds to community opposition: Minister.

The NSW Government has announced it will remove shark nets from the NSW North Coast this summer following two trials and community feedback.

Primary Industries Minister Niall Blair said he believed the decision provided a good balance for the community.

"We have taken on board the concerns of local residents and the local beach going community who have said loud and clear – they do not support another trial of shark nets on the North Coast," Mr Blair said. "The recent net trials have shown that SMART drumlines have significantly less impact on marine life than the nets and are more effective at catching target sharks.

"Up to 35 SMART drumlines will continue to be trialed daily between Lennox Head and Evans Head, weather permitting, until mid-2020.

"Aerial surveillance will continue every weekend and during the school holidays. We are also working with Surf Life Saving on extending the drone trials beyond just the North Coast."

The Minister will be able to direct the nets' return at any time if there is sufficient evidence of an increase in shark activity or a change in community sentiment.

The Government developed a \$16 million Shark Management Strategy in response to a spate of shark attacks on the NSW coastline.

Teenagers Thomas Harper and



A shark loiters close to *Evans 30* in October 2016. Photo: Mark Flaherty, MJ Visual Media.

Jae Waters received Australian Bravery Awards for rescuing their mate Cooper Allen when a Great White Shark grabbed him and his board while the three were surfing

at Lighthouse Beach at Ballina in September 2016. The shark got tangled in Cooper's leg rope, enabling his friends, then 16, to get him to safety on the beach.

# Ballina bar, sandbank claim winter victims

Welcome increases in boaters using VHF radio and Logging On via app.

A sinking boat and overturned kayak on the notorious Ballina bar and a yacht stranded on a Richmond River sandbank were among the vessels assisted by rescue crews from MR Ballina over a busy winter.

A number of boats adrift with engine failure also were rescued by our well-trained crew aboard rescue vessel *Ballina 30*, supported by our equally efficient radio operators and watch officers.

Many recent assists have been at night, including the coordinated response by MR Ballina, Evans Head and Iluka Yamba when a small boat overturned, throwing three men into open waters offshore south of Evans Head in the dark on August 18.

We have seen welcome increases lately in the use of the *MarineRescue* smartphone app to Log On and Log Off and in boaters using the superior VHF marine radio, rather than 27MHz.



On duty in the MR Ballina radio base, Trish Begley watched this huge crane barge cross the Ballina bar on its way upstream to the construction site for the new Broadwater Bridge on the Pacific Highway.

Our radio operators are rostered on three shifts a day during winter. This includes some watches for our neighbours at MR Brunswick, Cape Byron and Evans Head.

At night, VHF marine radio calls to the unit are monitored online by MR Terrey Hills. To ensure we maintain an around-the-clock response capability, an overnight duty officer is on call as the unit's primary point of contact.

In the event of an overnight call for help, the duty officer is called by the Regional Operations Manager, who will also mobilise our rescue vessel crew.

The duty officer will then head to the communications room at the base, along with the rostered watch officer, who also is called in.

The duty officers, therefore, assume an additional level of responsibility and their skill and

commitment allow the crew, watch officer and Regional Operations Manager to concentrate on achieving the best operational outcomes.

Despite a number of our grey nomad members heading to warmer climates in winter, our membership numbers remain at good levels and we look forward to welcoming our travellers back home for summer.

*Doug Hunter*

# Long-awaited radio base refit set to start

Cape Byron project bolsters North Coast communications network.

Marine Rescue Cape Byron will undergo a major refit of its radio base in the lighthouse precinct in early October.

The radio base will be totally stripped of all its current fixtures and rewired with electrical, internet and communications cabling.

The room will then be replastered and painted before new desks and cabinetry are installed.

The current antennas will also be removed and the tower rebuilt before new aerials are installed.

The radio base is set in a small building behind one of the assistant lighthouse keepers' cottages atop Cape Byron.

This work is well overdue and will see the base continue to operate for many years to come. The project is

expected to take up to two weeks, at a cost of about \$50,000.

The unit has raised the money locally through the support of the community and members are looking forward to the new amenities as the building has not been updated for many years.

The lighthouse precinct where the radio base is located is managed by the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, which is fully supportive of the refit, as is the local heritage group, which supports the volunteers' work.

The radio base is an integral part of the communications network on the Northern Rivers. Its high location on the eastern-most point on the Australian mainland allows the unit to communicate effectively and



Ready for work to start ...the MR Cape Byron radio base in the lighthouse precinct is about to undergo a major refit.

efficiently with offshore vessels.

Members are keenly awaiting the start of the project and its

completion before the start of the summer boating season.

*John Murray*

# Woolgoolga set to make \$1.3 million move

Unit boasts extremely impressive new home on Arrawarra Headland.

**M**arine Rescue Woolgoolga is on the move to a new base.

After six-and-a-half years of negotiations, consultation, planning and now construction, our new home on the nearby Arrawarra Headland is nearing completion.

The former University of New England Marine Science Research Station has undergone an enormous refurbishment, resulting in an extremely impressive facility.

The original building was gutted, extended and transformed into a fully functional purpose-built base.

The relocation, costing about \$1.3 million, has been made possible by the generosity of Coffs Harbour City Council injecting some \$1.1 million into the unit through various grants and capital funding. Funding also has been provided by UNE, our unit and MRNSW. Woolgoolga Surf Life Saving Club will move on to our existing beachfront site once we vacate.

The new base boasts a large radio room equipped with the latest in communications technology



Radio room with a view ... work is nearing completion on the new \$1.3 million MR Woolgoolga base overlooking Arrawarra Bay.

and an office, both overlooking the panoramic views of Arrawarra Bay, a large training room, adjacent kitchen, crew ready room and a magnificent boat shed, some 22m long, 6m wide and 7m high.

The boat shed includes a 4m mezzanine for storage with full bathroom facilities underneath.

The shed will house our vessel

*Woolgoolga 30* on its \$30,000 trailer built by Yamba Welding & Engineering and a purpose-built barbecue trailer, along with a work bench and boatswain's store. A 6kW solar system has been installed at a cost of \$5,400, \$2,700 of which came from the Council's Community Infrastructure Grants Program.

Karera has completed the

communications installation, including a 23m tower and aerials.

The move to Arrawarra is exciting and will greatly improve not only our efficiency in radio communications and incident response but also the morale and culture of the unit and our connection and presence within the wider boating community.

*Tony Skalla*

# Centre to make things 'easier in every way'

**M**embers of MR Trial Bay are keenly anticipating the completion of their dedicated new training and storage centre.

The new facility comprises two sheds on a site near the unit's rescue vessel berth on the banks of the Macleay River.

Unit Commander Phil Hartley said the larger of the two sheds had been purpose-designed as a training and meeting facility, with two separate rooms.

The smaller shed houses gear including the unit's fuel storage trailer, Rescue Water Craft trailer and other vital search and rescue equipment.

Mr Hartley said the project should

be finished early in 2019.

"It's a great new facility. It will certainly make things a lot easier in every way," Mr Hartley said.

"At the moment, our training mostly happens in our radio room, which means you have a radio operator on duty and then six or seven other people in there at the same time doing their training."

"It's very crowded. The radio room also doubles as our storage so it's great to be able to move things like returned uniforms out of there."

The tarmac for the driveway and car parking was laid in front of the two buildings in the last week of August and the unit hopes to start work on the internal fit-out in



MR Trial Bay's dedicated new training and storage facility, expected to be completed early next year.

October.

The unit received a \$26,000 Community Building Partnerships grant towards the fit-out and a further \$25,293 from the Emergency Volunteer Support

Scheme grant for training equipment.

Mr Hartley said with the signage erected, he was sure the buildings would now attract the interest of potential new recruits to the unit.

# Coffs competition drives radio traffic to base

Watch keeper earns citation for late night vigilance and professionalism.

**R**adio operators at MR Coffs Harbour were geared up for another busy weekend for the annual Dave Irvine Fishing Classic in August.

Logging On with the base is compulsory for competitors in the classic, which this year attracted a field of 90 vessels.

On day one of competition, August 11, our radio base completed more than 200 radio transmissions, including both fishing competitors and local and transiting vessels.

The day started early, with the first vessel Logging On at 3.35am, and progressed smoothly with no incidents.

Unfortunately, competition had to be cancelled on the second day due to a strong wind warning. Rules of the competition stipulate that competition must be called off under

these conditions.

The organisers kindly donated two fishing rods and reels for the unit to raffle in recognition of the support MR Coffs Harbour gives the Classic every year. Thanks to both the organisers and all the Classic entrants at the awards presentation for their generous support for this fundraising activity.

The unit has responded to a number of serious incidents at night.

Watch keeper Peter Kent has been presented with a Unit Commander's Citation in recognition of his efforts to support a Mayday operation in the dead of night.

At 1.30am on July 25, Peter received a Mayday from a sailing vessel that had run aground and was taking on water just south of Coffs Harbour and needed immediate help. Peter quickly activated the required response



MR Coffs Harbour Unit Commander Russell Shelton presents Peter Kent with a citation for his response to a Mayday emergency.

protocols and with NSW Police undertaking the rescue, maintained vigilance throughout the early hours to ensure the rescue effort was supported efficiently and professionally.

On completing his incident report, Peter then received his first vessel Log On for the day and proceeded

into the morning dealing with the significant maritime traffic that comes to a unit maintaining a 24/7 service to the boating community.

The Unit Commander's Citation recognises Peter's skill and commitment as a valued member of MR Coffs Harbour

*Russell Shelton*

# Medical escort helps yacht across bar in dark

Crew ensures ill sailor reaches safe waters and waiting ambulance.

A racing yacht with an ill crew member on board called for a late night escort across the unfamiliar Port Macquarie bar on August 3.

The crew of *Port Macquarie 30* was placed on standby to assist the yacht, which was heading north up the coastline.

The crew reported to the unit's boat shed on the Hastings River at 9pm before being tasked to head out at 11pm.

*PM 30* stood by off the bar to await the yacht's arrival and escort it into the river in the dark.

The MRNSW crew had organised a NSW Ambulance to assist the yachtsman, thought to be suffering a significant abdominal problem.

*PM 30* returned to the shed, with the crew's shutdown procedures completed by 1.30am.

The unit has concentrated on intensive training recently, staging training activities on 30 days.

Up to 15 volunteers a day took part, including both new members undertaking their crew training and existing members working on their ongoing skills development.

Congratulations to the unit's two new skippers, Ray Angel and Dave Bigeni, who have obtained their Coxswain qualifications and can now help share the duty load with our existing skippers.

Our Search and Rescue Coordination Centre on Town Beach continues to provide a much valued 24/7 service to our boating community.

This is only made possible through the dedication of more than 45 members who also attend training to keep their radio



Rob Breskal at the helm of *Port Macquarie 30*, towing a boat down the Hastings River. Photo: Alex McNaught.

communications skills current.

Our fundraising raffle was drawn in time for Father's Day.

The success of this effort is entirely due to the dedication of our fundraising members, who visit our

local shopping centres and other key locations in any weather to help increase our revenue and make sure that Marine Rescue is visible and well presented to the public.

*Alex McNaught*

# New vessel ready for peak summer season

Forster-Tuncurry welcomes leader with raft of communications industry skills.

**M**arine Rescue Forster-Tuncurry is ringing in the changes in 2018, with a new leader in place and a new rescue vessel due to be delivered in coming weeks.

David Gibson has been elected Unit Commander after working his way through the ranks as a radio operator, watch officer and operations officer and a time as Deputy Unit Commander while Fran Breen was our Acting UC earlier this year.

A resident of the Great Lakes region for 27 years, David brings a raft of skills from his successful career in the telecommunications industry to the position.

He said stepping into the UC's role had been a steep learning curve.

Fran has now resumed her role as Deputy Unit Commander.

Our new rescue vessel, *Forster 20*, is expected to be delivered before the peak of the summer boating season.

Members have elected to name the 6.8m Ocean Cylinder, being built by Yamba Welding & Engineering, *Wallis Lake*.

With the unit responding to few emergencies recently, it seems the members of the boating community who took to the water over winter heeded our safety messages.

In mid-July the unit joined in a Search and Rescue Exercise with our neighbours, MR Camden Haven and Crowdy Harrington.

The crews spent nine hours on the water, locating and rescuing two search targets.

Unit boating officer Bryce Nicholls said the aim of the exercise had been to enhance members' skills in



Myall Lakes MP Stephen Bromhead presents MR Forster-Tuncurry Unit Commander David Gibson with a new State flag.

navigation, setting search patterns, communication and working in tandem with other units and rescue agencies.

Mid North Coast Regional Operations Manager Randall Gawne

has presented 10 year Long Service Medals to our members Lynn Lambert, Denise Parker, Sue Welch and Ray Marlin. Congratulations to all four for their dedication.

*Wendy Borchers*

# Services' record haul from fish auction

Camden Haven unit thanks club and anglers for generous donation.

**M**embers of two Mid North Coast emergency services are celebrating the success of the 2018 Lake Cathie Amateur Fishing Club Fish Charity Auction.

This year's auction, held at the Lake Cathie Bowling and Recreation Club on June 17, attracted a crowd of more than 100 people, raising a record \$10,800.

The proceeds of the annual event are shared between Marine Rescue Camden Haven and the Lake Cathie Rural Fire Brigade, thanks to the remarkable generosity of the club and Mid North Coast fishing community.

Each service received a most welcome cheque for \$5,400 at the Fishing Club's presentation night in July.

The club, which is already working to attract sponsors for the 2019 event, has to be congratulated

for the support it gives to both our organisations each year.

This year's auction, running from noon to 5pm, drew the highest attendance yet from local anglers and the community.

It is great to see the fishers head out to catch a large haul of fish and then later bid to buy them back at the auction in order to raise funds for their local emergency services.

Our unit has taken part in and benefited from the auction for several years.

While the RFS members usually cook sausage and steak sandwiches for the crowd, the MRNSW members sell tickets in the raffle, which offers many prizes donated by local businesses.

One of the items donated this year was a NSW State of Origin jersey and hat signed by victorious NSW coach Brad Fittler, which



Neville Adams, Terry Duff, Ray Downes and Unit Commander Ken Rutledge sell raffle tickets at the annual Lake Cathie Amateur Fishing Club Fish Charity Auction.

raised \$700 at auction.

We would like to sincerely thank the Fishing Club, the members of the local fishing community and all the sponsors of this year's event for their support.

We are also grateful for the community's support for our fundraising activities to upgrade

our base. The radio room has been extended and refitted to provide our radio operators with additional space, improved facilities and technology and clearer sightlines both up and down the river.

The work was completed in August at a cost of \$52,000.

*Ken Rutledge*

# Cruiser in a tangle off Crowdy coastline

Operation to remove navigation hazard proves a drag for rescue crew.

A large entangled ball of rope that would have posed a hazard to boaters and marine life was safely removed from local waters by a crew from MR Crowdy Harrington on the unit's busiest day of winter.

The first call of the day was from a 5.5m cuddy cabin suffering a mechanical breakdown. *Crowdy 30* with Keith Richardson, Aaron Orton, Morry Agius and Bruce Hayward on board, towed the boat back to Crowdy Harbour.

While this tow was under way, the unit's radio base received a call from the public reporting that a 4.2m runabout had overturned near Harrington Breakwall, with two people in the water. A nearby boater had helped the boaters, including an elderly man, out of the water and was towing the vessel back to

the Harrington boat ramp. With the rescue crew occupied, a member's husband assisted in this incident.

*CB 30* next met up with a 15m flybridge cruiser en route to Port Macquarie that called for help to remove a large ball of rope with which it had become entangled.

Finding the rope ball created too much drag to tow back to shore and not wanting to leave it adrift to become a hazard, the crew dragged the rope on to the deck of *CB 30* for transportation.

In mid-July, Taree Police tasked *CB 20* to conduct a body retrieval from the river.

At the unit's Annual General Meeting, Rebekha (Bek) Brown and Leon Elelman were elected unopposed as Unit Commander and Deputy. Our retiring leaders,



Former Deputy Kevin Nicholls and Unit Commander Karen Farrell (left and right) with ROM Randall Gawne and new UC Bek Brown and DUC Leon Elelman at the MR Crowdy Harrington AGM.

Karen Farrell and Kevin Nicholls, will thankfully remain with our unit.

Recent training activities have included another SAREX with MR Camden Haven and Forster-Tuncurry and a vessel training day with MR Camden Haven to practice towing

manoeuvres and other procedures.

Congratulations to Peter Ward and Colin Watts, who passed their Radio Operator assessments and Morry Agius, who has received his five-year long service pin.

*Mary Thomas*



## Value for you. Support for us.



Visit the Marine Rescue NSW e-shop to show your support for our volunteers' work to save lives on the water.

MRNSW provides a vital safety net for our boating community but we need your help. When you shop with us, you'll not only get great value but you'll know you're also helping maintain our world-class emergency service.

You'll find a range of MRNSW merchandise - coffee mugs, water bottles, floating key rings, USB sticks and supporter caps and slouch hats - so you can join our life-saving mission.

You can shop for safety equipment and some useful boating and fishing gear, too. Discounts apply for MRNSW volunteers and Radio Club members. Show your support today!

**Shop at the MRNSW e-shop**  
**[shopmrnsw.com.au](http://shopmrnsw.com.au)**

# New Norah Head rescue boat on duty

Excited volunteers assemble for debut voyage on local waters.

One of the two new additions to the MRNSW fleet in the Hunter/Central Coast Region, *Norah Head 20*, undertook its maiden voyage on local waters on a hazy Saturday morning in late July.

After about two years of anticipation for members, the unit's brand new rescue vessel was finally launched on July 28.

With a good crowd of volunteers watching on, tractor driver Adrian Greenfield drove the vessel on to the sand and into the water.

The \$272,000 6.8m Ocean Cylinder ventured out to sea for a few hours, accompanied by vessel *X-Ray 22*, to perform its local sea trials and inductions.

Skipper Peter Langdon was at the helm for the maiden voyage, accompanied by Hunter/Central

Coast Regional Operations Manager Steve Raymond and crew members Tom Johnson, Colin Berry, Ray Mantle and Chris Cargill. Skipper Jason Richards and members from nearby MR Lake Macquarie, John Hatton and Roland Bennett, also came on board to assist with crews swapping between the two vessels during the training.

With *NR 20* now in full service, thanks must go to Unit Commander Bill Hignett for his tireless efforts to secure such a high-quality vessel.

We are still awaiting approval for our development application for a new boat shed to ensure *NR 20* can be stored out of the weather.

Two representatives of Australian Border Force addressed a meeting of unit volunteers on June 27.

*Lee Deacon*



*Norah Head 20* tests the waters on its first voyage. Photo: Lee Deacon.

# Port Stephens sitting on the dock of the bay

Sponsors thanked for their support for \$140,000 building project.

Marine Rescue Port Stephens opened its new dock facility at Nelson Bay in mid-August, thanking the sponsors who made the \$140,000 project possible.

The new pontoon facility is designed to help crews respond more quickly to emergencies on the water and provide an undercover area for equipment storage and the maintenance and management of the unit's rescue vessels.

Until now, our crews have been exposed to the elements while preparing for rescue operations and during briefings and debriefings.

The new facility will prevent a repeat of incidents such as in 2015, when crew members injured during an operation needed to be treated in the open on return to the dock. It also provides storage for crews' foul weather gear at the boat dock ready for crew to use.

The pontoon was built by the Varley Group, at Tomago. Varley builds a range of military installations, so as unit patron and Varley employee Bob Baldwin said, the construction is to military standards and will serve us for many years to come.

At the opening, Unit Commander Colin Foote thanked the sponsors for their generous donations to make the project possible and the Varley Group for producing such a high quality building.

On August 31, Catherine Cusack MLC visited the unit to present a State Government grant for \$10,000 to help cover the final project costs.

The opening followed the return of *Port Stephens 31* to full operations after repairs to storm damage sustained earlier this year.

Our unit's vessels were tasked to respond to 53 incidents in the first



Members of MR Port Stephens thank the sponsors who helped make the unit's new dock facility a reality.

six months of the year and our radio base made 7,900 radio calls.

Recent events have included a busy start to August when our radio base was involved in the responses to a vessel sinking at its mooring and subsequently breaking up and a marina fire with two vessels sinking and a third badly damaged. On July 29, we supported the 2018 Bottle

Nose Dolphin Census.

The unit has acknowledged the contribution of its retiring leaders, UC Lee Uebergang and DUC Neil Hansford. New Deputy Unit Commander Peter Merlino has thanked the Salamander Shores Fishing and Golf Club for its generous donation of \$1,000.

*Iain Blackadder*

# Crews help stranded boaters on their way

Central Coast team welcomes new rescue vessel to its home waters.

**S**kippers and crew members at MR Central Coast are busy familiarising themselves with our new rescue vessel, *Central Coast 21*, delivered on August 7.

The 10m *Naiad* will be stationed at our Terrigal Haven base, ready to respond up to 30nm offshore and on local enclosed waters.

Thank you to MR Newcastle Deputy Unit Commander Ian Morrow, who spent the first two weekends of September based at our unit to support our crew inductions on the new vessel.

The unit has been kept busy throughout August and early September responding to a range of incidents, including a vessel adrift, a false alarm of a boat fire and other boats stranded in mud and shallows.

On August 12, the crew of *Central Coast 21* was activated when the radio base received a call for help from the skipper of a yacht that had

run aground on the northern side of the Rip Bridge.

Instead of taking the main channel of Brisbane Water, the skipper had navigated between the main channel and the Blackwall channel, ending up in about 1.4m of water.

*CC 21* slowly manoeuvred through the shallows to attach a towline to pull the boat off the mud, pointing the skipper in the right direction to make his way to Gosford.

After proceeding to Little Box Head to check bar conditions and progress on emergency dredging works, *CC 21* was returning to base when the crew noticed a yacht on the wrong side of the starboard markers in Paddys Channel.

As they approached, they realised it was the same yacht they had pulled off the mud. *CC 21* was again manoeuvred close enough to attach



*Central Coast 21* crew member Mitch Giles passes a tow rope to the skipper of a yacht stranded in the shallows.

a towline and pull the yacht off the sand, before leading the skipper safely out of the channel.

The following week, the skipper of a 9m *Bayliner* called for help, needing to be pulled from mud into deep water before the boat could be restarted and continue under way.

Members also have been busy

with fundraising and recruiting activities.

Almost 30 people attended a recent information evening, resulting in five new members.

Fundraising activities have included Bunnings barbecues and our traditional winter raffle.

*Mitch Giles*

# Missing containers pose continuing risk

Maintain caution in wake of June cargo spill off Newcastle coastline.

**M**ariners have been warned to remain on the lookout for navigational hazards off the Central Coast until all the containers that fell overboard from a cargo ship off the Central Coast on June 1 have been located.

A total of 81 containers were lost from the Liberian-flagged *YM Efficiency* in heavy weather about 30nm south-east of Newcastle in the early hours of Friday, June 1. As many as 42 of the containers remained missing two months later.

The spill sparked a major clean-up operation as piles of debris began washing up along the coastline between Coffs Harbour and North Stockton.

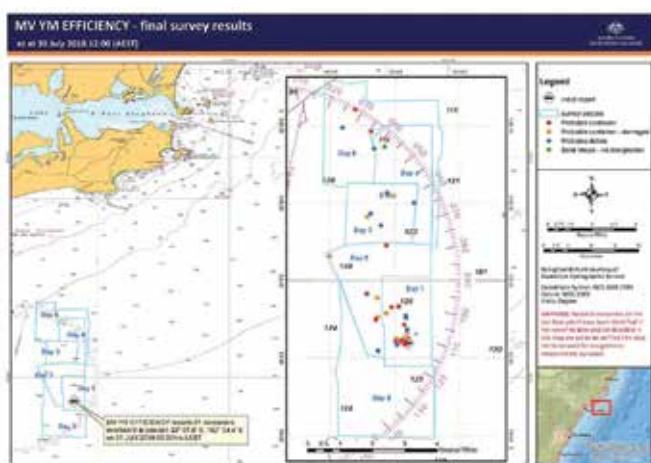
An update from the Australian Maritime Safety Authority on August 1 advised that an initial

sub-sea search for missing shipping containers from the *YM Efficiency* had identified a total of 37 probable containers and what appeared to be associated debris on the sea floor off the coast of Newcastle.

The search was conducted over six days by the Port of Newcastle surveying vessel *JT Gowlland* on behalf of the *YM Efficiency*'s insurer, Aus Ship, and owner, Yang Ming.

The locations of the identified containers and debris were provided to local fishers.

The AMSA update said Aus Ship and Yang Ming had agreed to continue survey operations to locate the remaining containers: "Once the remaining containers are located, AMSA will be able to assess the risk they present to trawling operations in the area."



The locations of identified containers and debris from the *YM Efficiency* have been charted. Visit [amsa.gov.au](http://amsa.gov.au) for details.

NSW Roads and Maritime Services issued a navigation warning for offshore waters from Newcastle to Yamba, advising boaters to navigate with extreme

caution as containers might not be visible on the surface of the water.

Any sightings of debris or shipping containers should be reported to RMS on 13 12 36.

# Major funding boosts for Lake Macquarie

Unit to benefit from infrastructure grant and Toll sponsorship.

**M**arine Rescue Lake Macquarie has benefited from two major funding injections worth more than \$170,000 in recent weeks.

Parliamentary Secretary for the Hunter Scot MacDonald said the unit's Swansea Heads radio base would benefit from new radio systems and back-up generators thanks to a \$152,498 grant from the State Government's Infrastructure Grants program.

"The project will make it easier for Marine Rescue to keep watch on vessels and other users of local waterways in Lake Macquarie and as far south as Terrigal and north to Stockton Bight," Mr MacDonald said.

The grant also includes a contribution towards planning for a replacement radio base.

Deputy Commander Mal Wardrop said the current base had provided almost 40 years of safety communications to the boating public but now was in urgent need of replacement.

"This generous grant will be the strong foundation on which we will

build a new, fully accessible Search and Rescue Coordination Centre," he said.

The unit also has announced a funding support agreement with Toll.

The major logistics company's logo is now prominently displayed on the MR Lake Macquarie radio base, boat shed and rescue vessels to acknowledge its generous support.

Unit Commander Neil Grieves said Toll's support would help keep unit's boats on the water and radios on air.

Toll's General Manager of Express Parcels Michael Rugendyke visited the unit to announce the agreement on August 1.

"Toll has hundreds of staff and thousands of customers who would be very happy with Toll supporting such a great volunteer organisation," he said.

Members have applauded the award of a Commendation for Brave Conduct to member Jim Stringfellow, former member Barry Bonning and the late John Nissen for their courage in a 2013 rescue



Parliamentary Secretary for the Hunter Scot MacDonald announces a \$152,000 grant with MR Lake Macquarie member Lee Baines, Hunter/Central Coast Director Jim Wright and DUC Mal Wardrop.

mission to save three men stranded offshore in severe conditions.

The unit recently farewelled its Sailfish catamaran, *Lake Macquarie 21*, which has been sold to make way for the delivery of its new vessel in coming months.

Originally a Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol vessel, it started life as *Hunter Lifeboat 1* in 2008, changing to its new name with the unit's transition to the new MRNSW.

"Many of our crew members

will have fond memories of the hours spent in this excellent vessel, although I am told that at times she could be a bit cantankerous, usually at a time when she really needed to be good," Mr Wardrop said. "One of the joys of getting her ready for sea on a cold, wet morning was the fight to re-install the oil reservoirs, not an easy task with cold, numb fingers."

The unit's annual Open Day will be held on Sunday, October 28.

*Garry Luxton*

# Flat battery? Switch to paddle power

Hunter River rescue takes Newcastle crew far upstream.

**T**he majority of MR Newcastle's operations take place either in Newcastle Harbour or offshore but the unit also responds to incidents on the Hunter River.

On the night of July 12, skipper Ron Calman and Mick Quill, on board *Newcastle 30*, were tasked to assist a 5.5m runabout with a flat battery near Morpeth, more than 20nm upriver from the harbour.

The crew of the disabled boat reported that it was safely tied to a tree 1-2km from the Morpeth Bridge but by the time *NC 30* was on approach, they had managed to paddle to a nearby boat ramp. *NC 30* made its way back down the

river, reaching its Newcastle Cruising Yacht Club mooring by 10.20pm.

With training always a big feature on the unit's calendar, firefighting and sea survival courses were staged on July 14 and 15. Thanks must go to the Cameron Park Rural Fire Brigade for its assistance.

Under the guidance of Deputy Unit Commander Ian Morrow, members Steve Randell, Stuart Lawson and Michael Quill passed the firefighting course. The next day, with DUC Morrow and MR Central Coast's Geoff Hawes in control, Mick, Stuart, Alistair Harding and Warren Bramble passed their sea survival course, which included flare



MR Newcastle members Mick Quill and Stuart Lawson take part in a firefighting course at the Cameron Park Rural Fire Brigade.

use and activation, operating and gaining access to an inflatable life raft and a 50m swim fully clothed.

Congratulations also are in order

for DUC Morrow, who was presented with his MRNSW 10 Year Long Service Medal in August.

*Terry Reynolds*

# Boaters' confusion adds to rescue challenge

Tuggerah Lakes unit launches first Coxswain training course.

**W**ith the cooler weather keeping most boaters indoors and subsequently few incidents on the water, members of MR Tuggerah Lakes have taken the opportunity to focus on building their seamanship skills throughout winter.

The unit's training activities have included our first Coxswain course, with six trainees taking part and acquiring new skills.

The unit has had only three call-outs over the past three months, the latest at 4pm on a Sunday afternoon as the Watch had begun its closing-down procedures after a busy weekend of training.

The crew was tasked to locate a broken down cuddy cabin with four people on board, supposedly near The Entrance Bridge. TL 20 set off with skipper John Dare, Graeme

Cartwright, Bob Blue and Bob Sutton on board. Before they reached the bridge it was ascertained that the stranded vessel was aground further away, south-west of Picnic Point.

After battling a cold 40km/h wind and with little room to manoeuvre, the crew used a heaving line and lots of muscle to haul the boat into deeper water. Although the crew had expected to tow the boat to its supposed departure point at Budgewoi, it emerged that the visiting Sydney boaters had mistaken the Gorokan ramp for Budgewoi, so fortunately it was a much shorter tow.

Long-time volunteers Jim Davidson and Lorraine and Ken Lawry have been presented with Unit Commander's Commendations recognising their untiring work.



Regional Operations Manager Steve Raymond presents MR Tuggerah Lakes skipper Ian Likely with his 10 Year Long Service Medal.

As Training Officer for a number of years, Jim has enhanced our radio training to a fantastic level. In addition to their respective roles as Deputy Unit Commander and Stores Officer, Ken and Lorraine have raised thousands of dollars for

the unit. In the presence of Hunter/Central Coast Director Jim Wright, Regional Operations Manager Steve Raymond presented skipper Ian Likely with his 10 Year Long Service Medal at our August meeting.

*Sue Younglove*

Marmong Point Marina

A LIFESTYLE LIKE NO OTHER

Discover the tranquil waters of Lake Macquarie's most scenic and protected bays from Marmong Point Marina. The lake offers 110sq km of pristine waterway and is Australia's largest coastal saltwater lake. There is 178km's of unspoiled shoreline with vast expanses of bush land, beaches and sandy islands waiting to explore. 245 berths for vessels up to 30m and dry storage facilities up to 30' all with power and water.

Full service boatyard and large hardstand area.

Love the Lake

1 NANDA STREET, MARMONG POINT NSW • (02) 4958 3333  
MARMONGPOINTMARINA.COM.AU

## Crews stand by for bushfire evacuations

Rescue crew members at MR Lemon Tree Passage were placed on standby to evacuate trapped residents by water when gale force winds fanned a bushfire south-west of the community, cutting off a major exit route, on August 19.

Unit Commander Rick Tyler said a volunteer crew was ready to respond.

"They were at home waiting for a call," he said.

Crews from MR Port Stephens also were on standby to assist if necessary.

The fire was between Salt Ash on the coast and Lemon Tree Passage at the end of the Tilligerry Peninsula.

"It kept crossing Lemon Tree Passage Road," Mr Tyler said.

"The road was closed."

"There was no exit from Lemon Tree Passage to Salt Ash and the people from Salt Ash couldn't get to

Lemon Tree Passage," he said.

"It went from Salt Ash, followed Tilligerry Creek on Sunday and went down towards the caravan park at Lemon Tree Passage.

"A caravan was damaged."

Mr Tyler said Rural Fire Service firefighters did well to contain the fire.

"It went through the golf course but then they managed to get it under control once it got to the caravan park," he said.

Mr Tyler said fortunately the MR Lemon Tree Passage base was not in immediate danger.

"Our base is up on the hill," he said.

He thanked the crew of the rescue vessel *Lemon Tree 30*, who were ready to take to the water if the RFS volunteers required assistance. Joe Blakiston was the coxswain and Ian Jones and Dennis Coyne the crew.

# Cold bites in marathon offshore operation

Cottage Point crew in seven-hour voyage to save drifting cruiser.

A marathon operation to retrieve a disabled 32 foot flybridge cruiser led a crew from MR Cottage Point on a seven-hour, 50nm voyage late on July 22.

With its motors refusing to start, the cruiser was adrift 9nm due east of Forrester's Beach off the Central Coast.

*Cottage Point 30* was deployed just after 4pm. While the sea conditions were favourable, the mercury plummeted as night took hold and Troy Howell, John Aitken, Paul Dewberry and Majida Abboud strapped in for a long night.

Accurate GPS coordinates and regular radio communications helped *CP 30* to locate the vessel and take it under tow. A change in the weather whipped up a biting breeze, making for an uncomfortable

return trip to a marina in Pittwater.

In near pitch black conditions and an unfamiliar location, with no clear path to the wharf and moored vessels swinging in the breeze, a Police Marine Area Command vessel safely guided *CP 30* and the tug-tied vessel on to the wharf.

By contrast, boaters who needed help but could not read their onboard GPS demonstrated the importance of knowing how to use your vessel's safety equipment.

The boaters incorrectly gave their location as 7nm off Barrenjoey when they were actually on the opposite side of Broken Bay, almost on the rocks off McMasters Beach.

In another serious emergency, crews from MR Cottage Point, Hawkesbury and Central Coast and a NSW Maritime vessel rapidly



Three people were thrown into Brisbane Water when their boat overturned in rough conditions, as seen from *Hawkesbury 22*.

responded to reports that a boat had overturned in rough conditions on the entrance to Brisbane Water, throwing three people overboard, on July 14. With waves breaking above 2.5m, the three were successfully retrieved but their boat ended up on the rocks.

MR Cottage Point and Hawkesbury supported a firefighting operation at Coba Point on the Hawkesbury River from August 17 to 19, transporting Rural Fire Service firefighters, equipment and supplies from Brooklyn and Berowra.

*Tim Pike*

## FENWICKS MARINA

AN AWARD WINNING MARINA LOCATED IN BROOKLYN  
THE HEART OF THE HAWKESBURY RIVER

Try this award winning shipyard.

Nationally recognised R&M facilities using the latest equipment. Come and meet our helpful and friendly staff.



- ◆ On site Antifouling, Detailing, Travel Lift, Broker, Electrician, Mechanics, Shipwrights, Trimmers
- ◆ Scheduled maintenance work for berthing clients
- ◆ Fuel – ULP, Diesel, PULP
- ◆ CCTV & a large, secure surfaced car park with unlimited parking for you and your guests
- ◆ Unmetered power, water and TV to all berths, and 24/7 access to clean shower and toilet facilities.
- ◆ A gateway to extensive, picturesque cruising grounds
- ◆ Protection from most severe weather
- ◆ Only 2km from the M1 exit, 45 mins north of Sydney
- ◆ Staffed 7 days a week

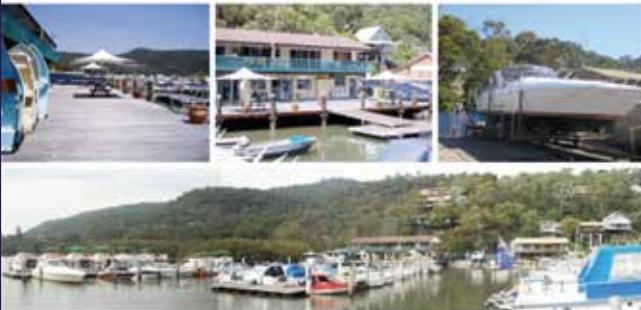


[www.fenwicksmarina.com.au](http://www.fenwicksmarina.com.au)

Phone: 02 9985 7633

Proud to support Marine Rescue NSW

## BERTH YOUR BOAT on the HAWKESBURY



- 88 berths with power and water
- 23 swing moorings (free dinghy storage)
- Boom gate access to car park
- Toilets and showers
- Slipway to 15 tonnes
- Convenience store (Brooklyn Central)
- Unleaded fuel on wharf for marina clients
- Mechanic on site



## SANDBROOK INLET MARINA

**Brooklyn 9985 5500**



**MAKING WAVES**  
Greater Sydney News

## Darkness demands extra preparation

Crews ensure night ops readiness.



Under cover of darkness ... MR Hawkesbury crews undertake intensive night operation training in readiness for the demands posed by the Hawkesbury River's isolated environment.

Marine Rescue Hawkesbury crews have been undertaking a schedule of night training exercises to ensure their readiness for the darker demands of their extended and often isolated operating environment.

The unit's area of responsibility reaches from offshore waters 50km upstream on the Hawkesbury River.

Crews face a range of hazards - exacerbated after nightfall - from the Brisbane Water bar crossing to narrow channels, shallow waters and poorly marked dark estuaries.

As well as responding to boating emergencies, the significant number of water access-only properties along the river's upper reaches mean the unit is often called to support NSW Ambulance crews in medevac operations.

In the past six months the unit has responded to several serious night incidents.

These have included recovering eight people from a vessel foundering on the Brisbane Water bar; preventing a vessel from being washed on to rocks at Box Head; retrieving a vessel from 5nm offshore at Long Reef; providing medevac transport for a cardiac

emergency in Berowra Creek and participating in several large-scale searches.

To build the unit's capabilities and enhance its safe response to such incidents, its vessel masters undergo an extensive night training program.

Further, to ensure a rapid response, the unit's boat crew members stay overnight at the base at Mooney Mooney every weekend and on public holidays.

Like most MRNSW units we have evolved into a highly functional and professional group of volunteers, one of whom is our unit Chaplain, Carmelo Sciberras.

Carmelo joined the unit in 1996 and has since been recognised for his valued services with the National Medal, MRNSW Long Service Medal and Clasp and an OAM in 2017.

Still an active and capable crew member, Carmelo recently celebrated his 80th birthday.

His fellow Hawkesbury members joined Carmelo to mark this milestone and acknowledge his ongoing commitment to MRNSW and ability to instil a sense of compassion in those he meets.

*David Stocks & Ken Edwards*

# Experienced team takes lead at Broken Bay

Duo's skills and new approaches will benefit unit and members.

Members of MR Broken Bay have elected an experienced team to head their northern Sydney unit.

Jimmy Arteaga, a much respected active member with more than eight years' dedicated service, was elected as Unit Commander at the Annual General Meeting, with Stuart Sperduti, who joined MRNSW in 2011, as Deputy Unit Commander.

Both were elected unopposed, following the decision of previous Unit Commander Vic Lawrence and Deputy Tony Hendel not to stand for re-election.

Currently one of Broken Bay's five Watch Officers, Jimmy brings a significant list of management, leadership, motivation and marine skills to the role, which will be to the benefit of the unit and its members. Under his leadership, new ideas and

approaches will develop that will freshen the way Broken Bay deals with its responsibilities.

Stuart has been the unit's Training Support Officer for a number of years and his approach to this role has seen numerous Broken Bay members advance through the Marine Rescue ratings, as well as catering for their continued training and re-validation courses.

Stuart, too, has a clear and definite direction for the advancement of the unit that has enthused the members.

Our outgoing leaders have pledged their ongoing support and assistance, if needed. Vic said while these were demanding roles, the new Commander and Deputy were up to the challenge and would make a seamless transition to the leadership.



Outgoing MR Broken Bay Unit Commander Vic Lawrence (centre) with newly-elected Unit Commander Jimmy Arteaga and Deputy Stuart Sperduti.

The unit has congratulated Vic and Tony for their outstanding leadership and applauded Jimmy and Stuart for taking the helm and charting new courses.

With the summer boating season

looming closer with every week, the Broken Bay unit is continuing to train new recruits and existing members in search and rescue, assists and all other duties.

*Chris Guy*

# Compliments abound for volunteers at show

Terrey Hills seizes opportunity to engage with boating public.

Several members of MR Terrey Hills took part in the MRNSW activities at this year's Sydney International Boat Show, reporting a positive reception for our volunteers from the boating public.

The feedback was that members of the public were extremely complimentary of the work performed by MRNSW and had expressed interest in downloading the *MarineRescue* app.

The availability of promotional materials for younger visitors was welcome and people had been happy to buy tickets in our raffle.

In good news for units, our members reported receiving a large number of inquiries about joining units' Radio Clubs and undertaking radio courses.

Our people also took the chance to liaise with other agencies in the boating safety precinct.

Overall, the experience proved an invaluable insight for the seven Terrey Hills representatives, who seized the perfect opportunity to engage with the public.

On a different tack, our unit's initial Watch Officer training course has now concluded and has been a great success.

The training model focussed on case studies and operational assessment scenarios designed to ensure course participants obtained a complete understanding of the operational requirements of our base and could complete their workbook requirements.

Feedback from presenters and students has been used to upgrade the trainer guidelines to incorporate additional case study-based scenarios and session plans.

A new version of the workbook will be released late September.



MR Terrey Hills' David Crawford meets Michelle Lee, aiming to be the first Australian woman to row solo across the Atlantic, at SIBS.

MR Terrey Hills continues to foster an ongoing relationship with the St Ives Lions Club.

Our volunteers have committed to helping the club with its Monster Garage Sale at the St Ives Showground in November.

The Lions Club has invited us to hold a fundraising sausage sizzle at

the event on Saturday, November 3.

In return, we will assist Lions Club members in sorting and collecting donations from the public the previous day.

The club also will provide our unit with a generous donation to acquire new equipment.

*Denis Comber*

# Father, son and tuna rescued off Port Botany

Crew supports expert operation to free entangled humpback whale.

Volunteers from MR Botany Port Hacking joined National Parks and Wildlife Service experts in a search and rescue operation to free an entangled humpback whale in July.

A fisherman had spotted the creature off Cape Solander travelling north at speed with two adults, trailing a line and four buoys.

A search party was formed, including the rescue vessel *Port Hacking 30* and NPWS inflatables.

NPWS spokesperson Peter Bergman said a specially trained NPWS crew had located the whale in the early afternoon about one kilometre off North Head.

"Once the whale was disentangled, the team collected the rope and continued to monitor the whale to ensure there were not any additional entanglements," he said.

"This is an excellent outcome for this whale, which is just one of around 30,000 humpback whales

migrating north along the NSW coast at this time of year."

The multi-agency response had included assistance from MRNSW, NSW Police, Port Authority, Roads and Maritime Services and ORRCA.

The unit also took part in another successful rescue that began with a distress call from a sinking fishing boat off Port Botany on July 12.

A father and son were bailing water as fast as they could. The Solander radio base heard their marine radio call for help and alerted the Police Marine Area Command.

Police and Maritime crews saved the father and son, their boat and catch of the day, several southern bluefin tuna. The rescue emphasised the essential 24/7 service provided by the unit's radio operators.

On August 17, *Botany 30*, *Port Kembla 30* and *Shellharbour 30* joined a search off Royal National Park for a missing male. Police recovered a body the following day.



The crew of *Port Hacking 30* joins NPWS experts in the search for an entangled whale heading north up the Sydney coastline in July.

A unit recruitment drive is gaining momentum as we approach the peak boating season. About 20 potential members attended an information night on August 20 organised by Di Castro and Bronwyn Daniels, expressing interest in both radio and rescue vessel operations.

Apart from operational demands, our members have kept busy with

regular base and boat maintenance and fundraising. The unit's cookbook is selling exceptionally well, thanks in part to some priceless publicity on ABC Radio. Weekend Breakfast host Simon Marnie, a respected foodie, recommended The Crew's Kitchen to his many listeners. We appreciate his support.

*Brendan Trembath*

# New home for unit in marina refurbishment

Six-year wait delivers improved facilities and technology for Port Jackson.

After six years of discussion, planning and building works, MR Port Jackson has a brand new base to call home.

Our new facility is part of the multi-million dollar refurbishment of the Birkenhead Point Marina.

Work began on the base in November, with the unit moving to temporary accommodation in a refurbished shipping container until its completion in July.

Replacing our previous smaller room, the base is just 20m from our rescue vessels and equipped with modern technology, including an electronic white board, two 42 inch televisions, two new computers and a bank of marine radios for base to boat communications.

Three radio antennas are

mounted high on the roof of the neighbouring Birkenhead Point shopping centre, providing loud and clear coverage.

The redevelopment of the marina included a well-equipped new Marina Club lounge.

We have access to this for unit meetings and for members on duty to have lunch while remaining close to the rescue vessels.

The base will be officially opened later in the year to coincide with the delivery of our new rescue vessel.

We have continued our recruitment activities, with a recent information evening at Drummoyne Sailing Club attracting 24 people, most of whom joined the unit and have undertaken their induction and boat licence courses.



Members of MR Port Jackson attend training to gain their Crew qualification.

More than 20 have enrolled in our latest Crew course, which began in July.

We have taken a new approach to training, enabling new trainees to rotate through our various duty

teams to broaden their operational experience.

Once they have completed their Crew rating, they are allocated to a specific duty team

*Greg Urand*

# Three saved in air, sea response to Mayday

RAAF jet and rescue vessels race to scene as crew abandons sinking trawler.

Three crew members who issued a Mayday when their trawler struck a submerged object and began sinking were quickly saved when two specialist air and sea rescue crews on a training exercise were able to race to their aid.

The crew of MR Jervis Bay vessel *Jervis Bay 40* was completing an air drop exercise with a Royal Australian Air Force Hercules, *Trojan 26*, in cold and stormy conditions 5nm off Point Perpendicular when the Mayday call was received by the MR Shoalhaven radio base on August 8.

The 20m trawler was taking on water and sinking in 600m of water about 20nm to the north east of the exercise location.

With the hull damaged and the pumps unable to keep up with the subsequent flooding, the trawler's three crew members were preparing to deploy their life raft and abandon ship.

*JB 40* immediately set course at maximum speed for the scene. *Trojan 26* reported that it had also monitored the Mayday call and was



*Jervis Bay 40* arrives to rescue the crew of this damaged and sinking trawler. Photo: Graham Colbeck.

diverting to the trawler's reported location. MR Shoalhaven also deployed *Shoalhaven 30* to assist.

*Trojan 26* quickly made a positive identification of the trawler and stayed on station circling the vessel until *JB 40*'s arrival. The trawler crew members, who were not injured, were quickly taken on board the rescue vessel to be returned to Greenwell Point. The skipper

reported that the trawler had most likely hit a partially sunken shipping container.

The MR Jervis Bay radio base issued a Securite navigation warning to alert other boaters and *SA 30* monitored the scene for the next couple of hours before returning to base. The trawler eventually sank.

The operation, from the time the Mayday call was received to

the rescued crew standing on the Greenwell Point Wharf, had taken just under three hours.

The efforts of MR Jervis Bay and Shoalhaven radio and rescue crew members and the crew of *Trojan 26* in a coordinated and professional emergency response resulted in a successful outcome to a potentially dangerous situation.

Ronald Hanson & Tony Dagger

## Tee off to raise funds for Shellharbour unit

Volunteers from MR Shellharbour will be swapping their blues for the greens at the unit's charity golf day on November 9.

The unit is encouraging golfers of all levels to sign up for what promises to be an enjoyable day out on the Links Shell Cove course.

The four person ambrose is open to all ages and players can either come as a team or join up with other players on the day.

Unit Commander Richard O'Connor said the event would help the unit's volunteers to meet their local community in a friendly contest and raise funds to help with the cost of maintaining the unit's Naiad rescue vessel, *Shellharbour 30*, at

peak readiness.

A barbecue lunch will be provided for all players, along with raffles and great prizes to be won on the day.

Players are asked to register by October 9.

On August 17, *SH 30* was activated to join a search for a missing person off the Royal National Park. The crew was stood down as it reached Port Kembla. A body was later recovered.

A crew also was deployed on July 16 to assist a vessel experiencing propulsion problems 8nm east of Kiama. *SH 30* was en route to take the vessel under tow when the boater reported he had been able to get under way. The crew



*Shellharbour 30* heads out in the darkness after reports of a light sending SOS signals offshore in July.

rendezvoused with the boat and escorted it back to Port Kembla.

This followed a late night operation on July 10, when a crew headed out at 10pm in response

to a report of a light sending SOS signals offshore. After a search 5nm off the coastline, no vessels or debris were found and the crew returned to base at 12.20am.

# Flares, breakdowns spark winter rush

Diver revived after crew ferries extra oxygen supplies to vessel.

Rescue missions to save a boater who set off a flare when he was stranded offshore from Mollymook and a diver in need of oxygen were among the operations that kept crews from MR Ulladulla busy over a cold and windy winter on the Illawarra coast.

Despite fewer boats being out on the water thanks to the number of strong and gale force westerly wind warnings, both the unit's rescue vessels were regularly deployed to emergencies on local waterways.

Most of the call outs were the result of vessels suffering mechanical failure, with crews undertaking several tow operations from as far south as Merry Beach and as close as Warden Head, just outside the harbour.

Crews responded to three flare sightings by members of the public. Two of these were unconfirmed but



In one of many winter response operations resulting from mechanical failures, *Ulladulla 30* returns a vessel to safety in the Ulladulla Harbour.

the third led the crew of *Ulladulla 30* to the man whose small runabout had suffered a mechanical failure close to the headland near Mollymook. The boat was towed back to safety in Ulladulla Harbour.

*UL 30* was rapidly deployed when a dive boat called our radio base to ask for additional oxygen supplies to treat a diver who had surfaced too

quickly. The diver recovered quickly after receiving oxygen therapy.

A local trawler skipper who was low on fuel with his motor cutting out called for help and was towed back to harbour.

On shore, David Hall was re-elected as our Unit Commander and Gabrielle Boermans elected as our new Deputy Unit Commander.

Thanks to outgoing Deputy Dave Lindley for his contribution.

Australian Border Force personnel attended a unit meeting to inform us about their functions and activities on and off our waterways.

An increase in new volunteers also has driven a significant amount of training activity.

*Raine O'Keeffe*

# Deputy supporting work to boost Kioloa

Fundraising leader recognised for 10 years' service to small unit.

A new Deputy Unit Commander has stepped into place at Marine Rescue Kioloa.

Peter White, who has been a member of MRNSW since 2004, has been appointed to the position until unit elections can be held.

Mr White transferred to MR Kioloa from the neighbouring MR Ulladulla to support the smaller unit as it works to boost its operational capabilities.

Illawarra Regional Operations Manager Bruce Mitchell is currently acting as MR Kioloa Unit Commander. Joan Noble is the unit Administration Officer and Chuck L'Heureux is fulfilling the Treasurer's duties.

Mr Mitchell recently presented unit Fundraising Organiser Carol Buckman with her 10-year Long Service Medal, officially recognising

her commitment.

Carol joined the unit in 2008 after witnessing the dedication and effort the volunteers put in to raising funds to extend their boatshed and radio room.

She turned her hand - and oven - to a lamington production and sales drive. Some 540 dozen of the sweet treats were sold to locals and holidaymakers over the following Christmas holidays, a feat the unit has not equalled since.

Carol was appointed the unit's Fundraising Organiser earlier this year and has put in place a fundraising team centred around the members' participation in the regular unit markets.

Kay and Kalman Kis are in charge of the barbecue, helped out by other members as needed.

Peter Bogg sells pre-loved bikes



Members of the fundraising team at MR Kioloa, led by Fundraising Organiser Carol Buckman (centre)

and has built up such a reputation that he has repeat customers whose kids have outgrown their original purchase and need to upgrade.

Some even donate their old bikes back to the unit to support its activities.

As well as baking, Carol also specialises in jams and condiments, while Judy Ferguson and Loraine Melis are our craft experts.

Yvonne and Harry Fog sell books and pre-loved household items.

*Joan Noble*

# Boater awash with trouble in choppy seas

Shoalhaven crew saves vessel caught in deteriorating conditions.

**C**onditions had been good when the crew of *Shoalhaven 30* set out on a navigation training exercise in light winds under sunny skies on the Crookhaven Bight on Saturday, August 18.

But with a forecast of stronger winds later in the day, skipper Mike Boadle with crew Glenn Tracy and Glenn Kolomeitz had returned to the Crookhaven River when they heard a VHF radio Pan Pan call from a 4.8m vessel taking water off Beecroft Head.

MR Shoalhaven radio operator John Eltherington immediately tasked *SA 30* to proceed to the area. The wind strengthened as *SA 30* headed south and by the time the crew arrived on scene a nasty short chop had developed.

The poor conditions had caused the distressed vessel to suffer a damaged forward hatch and the

vessel's deck was awash. Realising his predicament, the skipper motored downwind into a more protected area while he attempted to pump water from his vessel.

When *SA 30* arrived, the boater requested a tow back to Currarong, about 2nm away. The skipper hoped to have secured his boat sufficiently so that with the rescue vessel breaking the worst of the seas, his hatch would not take on more water than his bilge pump could cope with.

The wind was now blowing at 30 knots, with some stronger gusts.

After an uncomfortable 30-minute tow, *SA 30* delivered the distressed vessel to the entrance of Currarong and stood by while it motored the short distance to the boat ramp.

*SA 30* then headed back to Crookhaven, almost directly into a northwest wind gusting to 40 knots, with the 10nm journey taking two-



*Shoalhaven 30* powers through the chop to return a small runabout taking on water to safety. Photo: Glenn Kolomeitz.

and-a-half hours. Radio operator Anne Simpson monitored the return journey.

On August 8, *SA 30* assisted the crew of *Jervis Bay 40* in responding to a Mayday from a trawler that had hit a submerged object and was taking on water about 14nm east

of Currarong. *JB 40* rescued the boat's three crew, returning them to Greenwell Point.

*SA 30* confirmed the location of the sinking vessel so a navigation warning could be broadcast. The fishing boat later sank.

Bill Carter

# Generous grant funds Hill 60 radio upgrade

New equipment to boost capacity and coverage along Illawarra coastline.

**B**ig things are happening at MR Port Kembla with the unit being awarded a \$70,000 grant from the IMB Community Foundation.

This generous grant will fund the supply and installation of essential new radio equipment at the unit's 24/7 Search and Rescue Coordination Centre at Hill 60.

Unit Commander Graeme McCrudden thanked the IMB Community Foundation at a presentation ceremony in June.

"This grant is a great boost for our unit. It means we can equip our heritage-listed tower with the state of the art Reditalk digital radio system," he said. "Complimented by a re-designed radio room, it will provide the unit with increased capacity and the boating community with improved radio coverage."

The installation works are planned

to be completed by the end of October. Hill 60 takes thousands of marine radio calls and coordinates many rescues along the Illawarra coastline each summer.

On September 7, radio operator Andrew Bentley heard two garbled Mayday calls on VHF Channel 16 that were hard to understand.

"Nobody in any Marine Rescue base could actually regain contact with the vessel," Mr McCrudden said. "An offshore cargo vessel reported it had heard the Mayday and said they thought they said they were taking on water and there was six or seven people on board. Nothing was heard ever again."

"All up and down the coast Marine Rescue bases were on Ch 16 trying to contact the vessel."

"Two helicopters searched a fairly large area off Wollongong and found



IMB Community Foundation Chair Jan Swinhoe presents MR Port Kembla Unit Commander Graeme McCrudden with a welcome Foundation grant for \$70,000.

an unmanned, unmarked tinnie but other than that we never able to confirm whether there was a vessel in distress and the search was stood down."

With fewer boaters on the water over winter, the unit has focused on intensive training, resulting in a

number of members achieving new ratings, including two watch officers, two radio operators, five crew and four leading crew. Congratulations to all these volunteers, whose hard work has ensured the unit is well resourced to meet its workload.

Tom Dragutinovich

# Help quickly at hand to save boat from rocks

Merimbula makes most of quiet season for training, community engagement.

A crew from MR Merimbula was swiftly activated when a disabled vessel being pushed quickly towards rocks on the coastline south of Tathra issued a Mayday call on August 3.

*Merimbula 30* was under way in quick time after the unit was alerted to the boater's plight, with his engine disabled 800m south of Kianinny Bay.

This case again highlighted the value of using a marine radio to call for help in a boating emergency. A nearby boater heard the man's Mayday call over the VHF Ch 16 distress channel and saw his flare, quickly moving to secure a towline to keep the boat off the rocks.

*MB 30* escorted the two boats safely across the bar back to the Kianinny Bay boat ramp.

Our crew also responded to an incident 10nm north of Tathra, towing a disabled vessel to the same ramp. While MR Bermagui

would normally respond in this area, its crew was on another tasking. In a spirit of inter-unit cooperation, its crew returned the favour soon after, answering a call for help when our vessel was occupied elsewhere.

The unit made the most of the quieter, cooler months by focusing on training and community engagement activities.

A number of new members have completed their Sea Survival and Firefighting courses, discovering just how small a life raft is when it has a full complement of wet crew members aboard. All those taking part in the two courses passed.

Inclement weather and poor sea conditions saw a planned local Search and Rescue Exercise with the Eden Police Marina Area Command and Roads and Maritime Services replaced with a desktop exercise focused on calculating the drift and positions of a missing person or vessel.



A distress signal that's hard to miss ... MR Merimbula member Greg Wiley lights up the sky in a Sea Survival course. Photo: Fay Cousin.

The unit has been visited by a number of groups and societies, including Probus, Rotary, the Imlay Historical Society and U3A. Interest in our work is so great that each group visiting has 25 or more people.

The guests are shown the

workings of the radio room, learning about our operational procedures and the importance of Logging On with MRNSW.

A tour of *MB 30* gives them a feel for what it is like working on our wonderful vessel.

Fay Cousin

# Honours presented with the nation's thanks

Two members recognised for their contribution and commitment.

Two long-serving members of MRNSW were among honours recipients thanked for their contribution to the community in a ceremony at NSW Government House on September 7.

Governor of NSW, General David Hurley, presented Mick Kelly from MR Batemans Bay and Peter May from MR Shellharbour with the Emergency Services Medal at the investiture ceremony for recipients of Queen's Birthday honours.

Commissioner Stacey Tannos and Deputy Commissioner Dean Storey joined Mr May, Mr Kelly and family members at the ceremony.

Mr May, the Deputy Unit Commander of MR Shellharbour, joined the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard Association in 1994. A Master



ESM recipients Mick Kelly and Peter May (left and right) with Deputy Commissioner Dean Storey, NSW Governor David Hurley and Commissioner Stacey Tannos following their investiture ceremony.

Coxswain, he is one of the unit's more experienced rescue crew members and a tireless trainer for units in the Illawarra Region.

Mr Kelly joined the Batemans Bay

Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol in 2001, rising to the rank of Master Coxswain. He served as Deputy Unit Commander from 2012 until April this year.

As unit Operations Manager he is responsible for the unit's three vessels. He has made a wide contribution to training, especially in navigation and fleet induction.

# Trawler grounded in Mayday emergency

Crew plucked to safety from rocky coastline after abandoning ship.

**M**arine Rescue Bermagui received the first of two Mayday calls in less than a month when a large commercial trawler with four crew members on board was grounded on rocks north of Tathra early on July 7.

The trawler crew made the Mayday call and activated their distress beacon before abandoning ship when their boat began taking on water before 6.30am.

The call was relayed to MR Bermagui, with radio operators John Quirk, Sue Diamond and watch officer Lynda Bailey immediately activating the crew of rescue vessel *Bermagui 30*.

*BG 30* was under way by 7am with coxswain Caron Parfitt and crew members Ray McLeod, Alec Percival and Denise Page on board.

The trawler crew had managed to make it into their life raft and on to the beach in a nearby bay on



Aground ... the crew of this trawler was choppered to safety after abandoning ship when the vessel hit rocks on a remote stretch of the NSW coastline. Photo: Westpac Life Saver Rescue Helicopter.

the rugged coastline. They were retrieved from the beach by the Westpac Life Saver 23 Rescue and Toll Air Ambulance helicopters and transferred to an oval in Bermagui, where they were treated

by NSW Ambulance teams for mild hypothermia and released safe and well.

*BG 30* was stood down at 7.58am.

Less than a month later, the

unit's duty radio operator Jochen Adam picked up another Mayday call on August 3. A crew from MR Merimbula was activated to respond to the distressed vessel.

*Denise Page*

# Water levels on Alpine Lakes lowest for years

Boaters urged to take extra care to avoid unmarked submerged hazards.

**B**oaters and fishers have been warned of extremely low water levels on the high country lakes.

Roads and Maritime Services Maritime Principal Manager South Mike Hammond said boaters needed to navigate with extra care, particularly if they had not been boating on the Alpine Lakes in several months.

"Water levels on Lake Jindabyne and Lake Eucumbene are the lowest they have been in many, many years," he said.

Snowy Hydro reported on August 29 that Lake Eucumbene was at 18.85 per cent capacity.

Lake Jindabyne was at 63.12 per cent.

MR Alpine Lakes Unit Commander Les Threlfo said the waterline had receded a long distance on Lake

Eucumbene.

"Lake Jindabyne is very low as well and fishing runabouts are running aground on hidden sand banks," he said. "Three weeks ago, we were called to an incident where a fisherman in his tinny hit a sand bar and his vessel speared up over the sandbar, up a sandy beach and into the scrub on one of the islands."

"He went through the windshield and was conveyed to Cooma Hospital."

Mr Hammond said the dangers associated with reduced water levels included the many submerged and semi-submerged hazards in the water, such as trees, fences and rocks, which did not appear on electronic charts.

"Our concern is that many people who go fishing in our Alpine Lakes



Dry as a bone ... Lake Eucumbene is at 18.85 per cent capacity, with this ramp now 400m from the water's edge. Photo: Glenn Sullivan.

are from Sydney and surrounds and may not have been to the lakes since this time last year when the water levels and associated navigation hazards were very different," Mr Hammond said. "A lot of the navigation markers are exposed, so many of the locations to

avoid are not accurately flagged."

Anyone falling overboard on the lakes risks their lives due to the rapid onset of hypothermia.

Boaters or other water users who need help in an emergency on the Alpine Lakes should call Triple Zero (000).

# The bay's new Master and Commander

Naval veteran introduces exciting changes as he takes the helm.

Newly-elected MR Batemans Bay Unit Commander Richard Blundell is looking forward to the challenges ahead.

The 25-year naval veteran, who has been a member of the unit for nearly five years and holds the rank of Master, was elected at the unit's Annual General Meeting in June.

Former UC Mick Syrek has taken over as Deputy Unit Commander after six years at the helm, during which he put in place a sound structure from which the unit can move forward.

At the AGM, Penny Paton also was presented with her 10 year Long Service Medal. Penny has served as a boat crew member and radio operator and spent many hours fundraising and putting her nursing background to good use in managing the unit's first aid kits.

Richard began his career in the New Zealand Navy in 1975, working his way through the ranks

to become a Naval Clearance Diver, demolitions supervisor, Officer of the Watch (ship driver) and helicopter and fixed wing aircraft controller.

In 1987, he was posted to the United Kingdom to undergo Underwater Warfare Training. Three years later, he was back at sea as an Executive Officer, ahead of a posting to Canberra and an eventual return to Wellington as the Director of Naval Warfare.

Richard said he was looking forward to the challenges the unit faced as a volunteer organisation, especially in relation to fundraising and recruitment.

"Already we are seeing some exciting changes," he said.

"New night training exercises have been introduced in the last month and the boat crews are becoming familiar with equipment controls and navigation markers in the bay at night time. Like most organisations, we have a core of



Looking forward to the challenges ... new MR Batemans Bay Unit Commander Richard Blundell.

exceptionally hardworking and dedicated people and our aim will be to encourage others to participate more and help spread the load."

Liz Rankin has been appointed new Administration Officer and Beth Brunskill as Markets Coordinator.

Winter in the bay is usually a quiet time but the weather has been unseasonably warm this year and boaters have been making the most

of the idyllic conditions.

With 20 to 30 boats a day Logged On over the weekends, the radio base crews have been kept busy.

Despite the increased seasonal activity, the number of assists has generally been relatively low, aside from a Saturday in late July when the unit's vessels were called out three times in quick succession to provide assistance.

# Eden welcomes refugee families to coast

Boaters urged to check equipment before heading back out on water.

While weather conditions have kept most seafarers at home over recent months, MR Eden has hosted a number of visitors who have journeyed far to make a new home on our shores.

In July the unit, along with other local organisations such as the Sapphire Coast Marine Discovery Centre and the Eden Killer Whale Museum, hosted a visit from six refugee families from the Smithfield Primary School in Sydney.

Sapphire Coast Social Justice Advocates organised the trip south to the Bega Shire for the families, along with a number of teachers from the school, to help expand their knowledge of their new country.

For some it was the first time they had been out of Sydney. The

visit was a big success and we were pleased to be involved in such a practical and welcoming exercise.

MRNSW Emergency Systems Manager Andrew Cribb also visited to update us on the status of the MRNSW communications strategy, planned technical upgrades and benefits to Far South Coast boaters.

As the warmer weather approaches, it is timely to remind boaters of the need to check equipment including batteries, fuel, radios and EPIRBs to ensure they are ready for the new season on the water. Many of the calls for help we receive are related to failing batteries or contaminated fuel. All MRNSW equipment is scheduled for Preventative Maintenance Inspections before the season.



MR Eden hosted a visit from refugee families and teachers from Sydney's Smithfield Primary School.

In the port, work continues on the upgrade to the Breakwater Wharf, with pile driving still in progress. Regular notices are broadcast to update boaters and visiting sailors are urged to check with port authorities to get the latest information on restrictions on

movement or anchoring/berthing in Snug Cove during the works.

*For more on the families' visit, see [www.merimbulanewswEEKLY.com.au/story/5528219/refugee-families-enjoy-visit-to-eden-photos-video](http://www.merimbulanewswEEKLY.com.au/story/5528219/refugee-families-enjoy-visit-to-eden-photos-video)*

*John McKinnon*

# \$45,000 grant funds Narooma radio upgrade

Satellite-enabled search buoy yields impressive results in first sea trial.

Marine radio communications and emergency response on the Far South Coast will be boosted thanks to a \$45,000 State Government grant to upgrade communications equipment in the MR Narooma radio base.

Unit Commander Paul Houseman said the unit had been awarded an Infrastructure Grant to refurbish its radio room facilities, replacing dated radio equipment with an integrated digital communications system.

"The new system will improve the service to our local and visiting boaters, helping enhance the community's confidence in our services and reducing the burden on our radio operators," he said. "We're grateful for the Government's generous support for this upgrade."

In a bid to boost its search and rescue capability, the unit has acquired a Voyager Self Locating

Search Datum Buoy (SDB).

The buoy can be deployed from a rescue vessel or helicopter to chart ocean currents' movement, direction and speed. It relays real-time data, including date, time, latitude/longitude and sea temperature through the Iridium Satellite phone network. The data can be accessed via computer or a smart device.

This information is valuable in calculating or validating net water movement and estimating the movement of any search target from its last known position.

The new equipment was successfully put through its first sea trials on August 29.

Along with the buoy, a rescue mannequin and dye were released from *Narooma 30* and visually plotted by the crew for an hour.

The mannequin also was monitored online from the Narooma



MR Narooma puts its new search buoy through a sea trial, comparing the data it provides about ocean current movements with the drift of a rescue mannequin and dye.

Search and Rescue Coordination Centre.

Even in a relatively short trial, the water movement data collected by the buoy matched the track of the fluorescent dye through the water.

The unit is looking forward to using the buoy in coastal search training techniques for its boat Crew, Watch Officers and Search and Rescue (SAR) support officers.

*Megan Fraser*

## Vessel puts Tuross at peak summer readiness

New Moruya River mooring will reduce response times on risky bar.

A new 4.8m Naiad centre console Rigid Hull Inflatable Boat set for delivery to MR Tuross will be a valuable asset to respond to emergencies on Tuross Lake and the Moruya River.

Unit Commander Blaise Madden, Deputy Alan Blessington and Monaro Regional Operations Manager Glenn Sullivan travelled to Yamba Welding & Engineering in northern NSW to undertake sea trials on *Tuross 12* on September 4.

YW&E owner Bill Collingburn first took us through the manufacturing plant where Marine Rescue's Naiad and Ocean Cylinder boats are built.

This was followed by an induction on the vessel's on-board electronic equipment and outboards with Mark Coates from BME and Suzuki Technical Manager Ian Clifford at the Yamba Marina.

Trent Carr, from YW&E, then took the helm for the sea trial of the boat, which performed extremely well and will be able to do everything we were hoping for and more.

We were very impressed with the standard of construction and fit out.

While we were on the sea trials in the north, another important project for our unit was under way at home on the Far South Coast.

A finger wharf is being added to Preddey's Wharf on the Moruya River to enable our AirBerth to be relocated, providing a permanent mooring for our vessel *TU 20*.

Stationing the boat on the river, just five minutes from the risky bar, will reduce our response times considerably.

This project has been two-and-a-half years in the making. While the concept was obvious, addressing the



MR Tuross Unit Commander Blaise Madden and Deputy Alan Blessington with Mark Coates from BME on board the new *Tuross 12* during inductions and sea trials at Yamba. Photo: Glenn Sullivan.

practicalities of securing approvals was a time-consuming process.

Now things have come in a rush, with a new vessel and a new wharf all in the same week.

By the end of September, *TU*

20 will be in the river and *TU 12* patrolling Tuross Lake.

Completing these two projects will see us at peak readiness for the Christmas holiday period.

*Blaise Madden*

## What we've been up to



Monaro leaders ... Regional Operations Manager Glenn Sullivan, Batemans Bay member Wido Melis, Narooma UC Paul Houseman, Tuross UC Blaise Madden, Bermagui DUC Alec Percival, Batemans Bay UC Richard Blundell, Eden UC John McKinnon, Merimbula DUC Sonia Teston, Bermagui UC Caron Parfitt, Regional Training Manager Stuart Massey, Regional Director Glenn Felkin and Tuross DUC Alan Blessington.



Hard work pays off ... MR Middle Harbour member Jane Lugsdin receives her Marine Rescue Crew rating from new Unit Commander Peter Steigrad at a recent unit meeting.



Abandon ship ... Regional Training Manager Stuart Massey insists he wasn't made to walk the plank but he still ended up in the life raft during an offshore training exercise with MR Bermagui.



Terrier Hills ... MR Terrey Hills radio operator Helen Manifold and watch officer Merrilyn Little paws for a cheery visit from West Highland Terrier, Bronte.



IMB Ltd Chief Executive Robert Ryan presents Deputy Commissioner Dean Storey and MR Botany Port Hacking's Kevin Thompson and Bob Wilson with a \$10,000 IMB Community Foundation grant.

# Final notation in Gary's Book of Knowledge

Member heartily took on new challenges when he returned to service.

After seven years as a member of the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard Association at Lemon Tree Passage, Gary Bow took a lengthy shore leave before returning to the waterfront in 2016.

Gary had served in various capacities during his time as a member of the AVCGA until 2009.

A valued crew member with more than 225 hours of sea time and a radio operator with over 1,630 radio hours to his credit, he also edited the Coast Guard's Bow Wave magazine.

He joined MRNSW in April 2016, at the age of 78 - when he could

quite deservedly have sat back and put his feet up - and heartily took on further training to pass his marine radio and first aid qualifications.

Gary was a respected team member at MR Lemon Tree Passage, well known for his Little Book of Knowledge, a notebook that contained information for every task he tackled. He asked questions of everyone to confirm he was following the correct procedures. With a dry sense of humour, he was one of nature's true gentlemen.

Although he had been ill for some time he never let on and carried on his regular radio shifts until he was



Sadly missed ... MR Lemon Tree Passage member Gary Bow.

hospitalised and very soon after passed away.

The respect he had earned was evident in the number of unit members who attended Gary's

memorial service. Along with his wife Gwenda, his children and grandchildren, we will miss him very much.

Rick Tyler

## Tribute to 'first port of call' radio operators

*Gary Bow's son Roland forwarded Soundings his dad's last dispatch as he sat by his bedside at Tomaree Community Hospital. Roland sent his "thanks to everyone in Marine Rescue for working with my dad. I know that he greatly enjoyed volunteering with the group and got a lot of personal satisfaction from it". In his final report, Gary paid tribute to our radio operators.*

Radio operators, usually the first "port of call", gather a wealth of experience that is not recorded in official records of transmission.

They learn about tidal flows and local weather patterns. They know about secret locations not easily identified on local charts and their experience is all the better if they have done rescue work as boat crews in difficult circumstances.

They get to know about transit times from point to point. They not only deal with navigation crises but a range of other incidents like medical emergencies with children with life-threatening asthmatic conditions and diabetics who left their medication on shore and have

overstayed their boating time. Radio operators need to know the nearest ambulance pick up points and how to direct boats to them quickly.

Sometimes they have to pose what seem like idiotic questions to boat owners intent on trying their new boats on beckoning and unfamiliar waters. Have you ever asked a fearful boat owner, realising they were drifting in dangerous waters, whether had they put the anchor out? Astounding replies are no they haven't; they can't find the anchor; or they threw it overboard but forgot to secure the anchor line to the boat.

Sometimes the owners report that their runabout is taking on water from an unidentified source. They are asked to check their drain plugs at the stern near the outboard.

Sometimes they feel embarrassed that they have to admit to solving the problem by tightening the drain plugs or replacing them as they swirled around on the floor.

With the public now so used to having mobile phone conversations at any time, close or far, there is a perception that immediate

communications will solve problems immediately; that the rescue boat is just over the next wave. With the proliferation of mobile aerials, the public expects instant replies and clarity of reception that was not possible 15 years ago.

They can be very disappointed that an assistance vessel may not reach them in under an hour and it can come as a shock that they are advised to take suitable emergency precautions in the meantime.

The private nature of mobile

conversations from vessels carrying no marine radio limits the chance of a helping hand from a nearby vessel that could solve a problem within 10 minutes.

MRNSW has done meritorious work in drawing attention to wearing lifejackets as a safety issue. Maybe we now need to help people understand the limitations of phones compared to the value of using VHF Channel 16 in covering ships in the vicinity and attracting help while a rescue is under way.

**CMS CALLAGHANS MARINE SERVICES**

» SERVICING ALL DIESEL, PETROL & STERNDRIVES  
» REPOWER & REFIT SPECIALIST  
» ENGINEERING & FABRICATION  
» PROPULSION & STEERING SYSTEMS  
» ONBOARD SYSTEMS  
» SALES, SERVICE & PARTS for



Located @ Fenwicks Marina, 31 Brooklyn Rd, Brooklyn NSW 2083  
P: 02 9985 7885 | F: 02 9985 7991  
E: info@callaghansmarine.com.au | W: www.callaghansmarine.com.au

# Mike linked Central Coast to the world

Technical officer took unit online.

**M**ike King was well qualified for his new responsibilities when he joined the Central Coast Division of the Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol in 1996.

Having gained his Ships Radio Officer qualification at age 18 and radar qualifications at 21, Mike had had a lengthy career as a Ship's Radio Officer on international ships, oil rigs and later Australian vessels.

He soon established himself as a great Marine Radio Watch Officer and was the Central Coast Division's Marine Radio Education Officer for many years, working with his friend Hugo Stromhall.

He established the first computer cafe on the Central Coast and introduced the division to the internet via a dial-up modem quite early. As the Division Radio Technical Officer, Mike was 'on-call' to repair radio room problems.

Later taking on the role of Division Secretary, he agreed that his 'filing' system was a little unique.

Mike was ever ready to go the extra mile to help out when needed to fill a gap in the radio watch roster or sell raffle tickets to help the unit.

Softly spoken and often described as "a real gentleman", he was a voracious reader and enjoyed a wide selection of novels.



Mike King at NSW Parliament.

When MRNSW was formed, Mike transferred to the new service.

In 2012, he and Hugo became two of the first seven MRNSW volunteers to be presented with the National Medal, in a ceremony at NSW Parliament House.

Despite illness over the past three years, he continued his radio watch and radio training mentor duties until he entered Gosford Hospital for an operation in late July, passing away unexpectedly with post-operative complications.

Mike is sadly missed by all who knew him. He was farewelled at a service on August 3 that was well attended by his colleagues from MR Central Coast. Mike is survived by his children, Elizabeth, Edwina and Charles and his grandson Max.

Ron Cole




**Poly Flex**  
AUSTRALIA  
CNC Machined Steel Half Couplings

Poly Flex half couplings come in a range of models including 424, 434, 464, 524, 534, 546 & 616. The first number of the model specifies the flange OD being either 4", 5" or 6". These accommodate shaft sizes ranging from 3/4" - 3". Please ask one of our trained staff for more info.

EXPORTING TO THE WORLD

**Custom Half Couplings & Cotton Reel Adaptors Available on Request!!**

Better By Design

**Poly Flex Group Pty Ltd**  
26 - 28 Tubs Street Clontarf, Queensland 4019  
Ph (07) 3284 2799 . Fax (07) 3284 2672  
Email [info@polyflex.com.au](mailto:info@polyflex.com.au) Web [www.polyflex.com.au](http://www.polyflex.com.au)



# Touched by agencies' efforts and support

Thanks for all you've done: resident.



NSW Police launch *Fearless* and *Wooli 30* in the search off Sandon.

Hi Jackie and Richard (Taffs)

I took this photo on Saturday, June 16, of *Wooli 30* and Police launch *Fearless* doing a parallel search for the missing fisherman/Sandon guest.

A huge thank you to all the agencies and organisations involved in searching for this gentleman. The person he was staying with is very touched by everyone's efforts and the support provided. He said everyone was very kind and helpful and that they could not have done any more than they did.

With Sandon being a small and remotely located village we appreciate the logistics, funding impact and time involved for such a search effort to be undertaken. Thank you to each person within Wooli Marine Rescue, the SES and Yamba Surf Life Saving Club for your voluntary works and the Westpac Rescue Helicopter and NSW Police – it was appreciated.

*Zoe (Sandon village resident)*

To Marine Rescue Cottage Point

A huge thank you to Paul, Astrid and the Cottage Point Marine Rescue team for their assistance this Sunday morning. I had forgotten my Ventolin and had an asthma attack last night while boating this weekend.

I called them up to ask where I could get Ventolin along the river and because there are no pharmacies at all along the river Paul kindly drove me in to Mona Vale to buy Ventolin and then back to our boat. What an amazing bunch of people. I can't thank them enough for helping me out!

*Karen Hall (July 23)*

## Help our injured wildlife

Every year thousands of marine birds and animals are injured by plastic bags, fishing line, hooks and sinkers.

If you see an injured bird or marine animal please call WIRES on 13000 WIRES or Australian Seabird Rescue on 0428 862 852.



**WIRES**

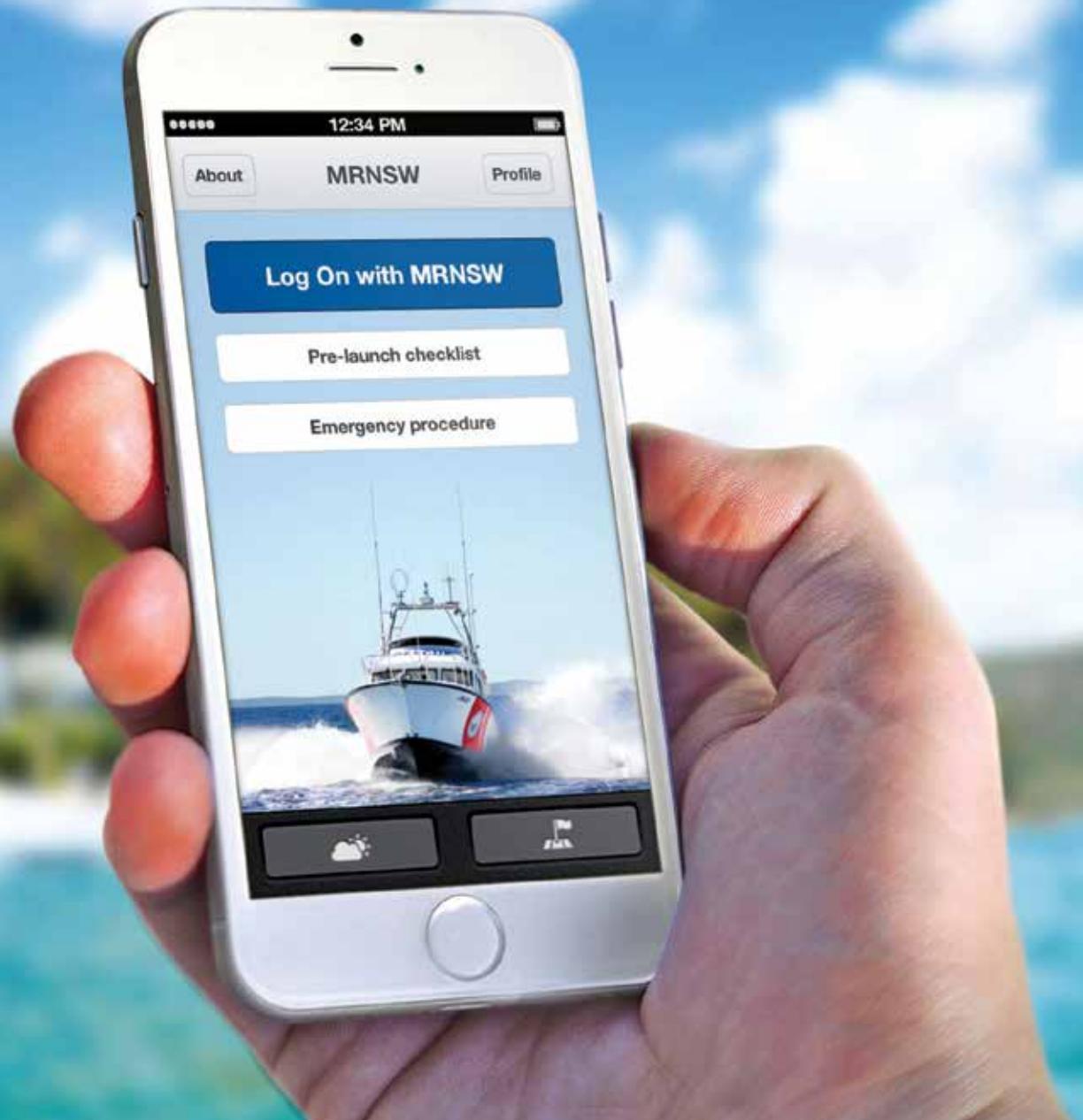
Donate to WIRES at [www.wires.org.au](http://www.wires.org.au) or to Australian Seabird Rescue at [www.seabirdrescue.org](http://www.seabirdrescue.org).

*Safer boating at your fingertips*



## MARINE RESCUE NSW

***Download the FREE  
MarineRescue App!***



*Volunteers saving lives on the water*



# SIMPLY SUPERIOR™

## NEW RealVision™ 3D Sonar and AXIOM Multifunction Displays

Superior RealVision 3D sonar displays fish and underwater structures in stunning, lifelike detail. And with gyro-stabilization, RealVision 3D automatically compensates for boat movement, delivering the best under water imaging anywhere.



Images for illustrative purpose only

**Raymarine**