

Volunteers saving lives on the water

SOUNDINGS



Quarterly Journal of Marine Rescue NSW | Issue 37, Summer 2018



MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Season's greetings from us
all at Marine Rescue NSW

Summer boating

Be water safe, not sorry

Ready when you need us

Volunteers primed for rapid response

PLUS: Minister thanks our members | New Directors elected | Sea bird guardians

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Quarterly Journal of Marine Rescue NSW

Cover Image

Even Santa wears a lifejacket. Marine Rescue Botany Port Hacking members Di Castro, Jenny Grant, Grahame Aulbury and Jesse Rowley asked for a safe summer boating season when Santa swapped his sleigh for a ride on rescue vessel *Botany 30*. Their fellow volunteer Kevin Thompson mysteriously claimed never to have been seen together with the man in the red suit.
Photo: Santa's official MRNSW photographer, Brendan Trembath.

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From the Commissioner

Our members ready for summer, supported by new resources and technology.



Commissioner
Stacey Tannos ESM

Marine Rescue NSW approaches the peak summer boating season confident in our preparations and enhanced operational capability.

Our skilled and experienced volunteers will again be standing watch over the coastline and our key inland waterways, supported by new and upgraded resources and technology.

Over the past year we have concentrated on boosting our operational responsiveness to make sure our crews can be on the scene of an emergency or other incident as quickly as possible. Vessels have been positioned close to hazardous coastal bars, units have expanded their operations on and off the water and the roll-out of the Telstra desktop messaging system has modernised and streamlined the crew activation process, resulting in reduced incident response times.

As always, our members are to be commended for their focus on training, acquiring a total of 1,505 new qualifications in 2017/18. Regional Search and Rescue Exercises have sharpened our skills and strengthened our cooperative working relationships with other rescue and marine agencies.

New rescue vessels have been delivered this year to the Norah Head, Central Coast, Camden Haven, Ulladulla, Forster-Tuncurry



MR Middle Harbour members David Bates, Peter Goode, UC Peter Steigrad, Jane Lugsdin and Sandy Hume join Commissioner Stacey Tannos at the launch of the NSW emergency services' summer safety initiatives with Minister Troy Grant on November 30.

and Tuross units, with four more to come before the end of the year.

We also have continued to invest in our marine radio network, working to eliminate blackspots on the northern NSW coastline and installing new digital radio technology in unit bases to improve radio coverage and bolster our service to the boating community.

This investment has ensured we are rescue-ready for another summer, committed to performing at our best to save lives on the water.

Thirty-six people drowned in NSW last summer, 11 per cent of whom were boating before their deaths. The 1,054 missions we launched over the season included the

Despite boaters' very best preparations, emergencies will still happen and we will be ready.

response to a number of fatalities. Our fervent hope is that we do not see a similar toll this year.

I appeal to all boaters to exercise caution and good sense on the water. Please ensure that everyone on board is wearing a lifejacket.

Make sure you Log On and Log Off with MRNSW by marine radio, phone or the free *MarineRescue* app whenever you head out on the water.

Our radio operators Logged On 74,500 boats last financial year. It's quick and simple and gives you the peace of mind of knowing a professionally-trained and resourced rescue team is watching over you while you're on the water.

Make sure you check your vessel, marine radio and other safety equipment is in good working order and check the conditions and weather before setting out.

If you are on holidays on unfamiliar waters, please feel free to talk to the experienced members of the nearest MRNSW unit about local hazards and conditions. Despite boaters' very best preparations, emergencies will still happen and

we will be ready when you need us.

As another year closes, I want to thank each of our 3,000-plus volunteers for their dedication to our mission and tireless work to provide our safety services to NSW boaters.

Our rescue vessel crew members, radio operators and all those in the numerous training, management, fundraising, administration and support roles in every unit work together as a strong and cohesive team to serve our community.

I also thank the MRNSW Board of Directors for their strategic leadership and support. Congratulations to our newly-elected Directors, Ken Edwards and Bob Wilson, and to Keven Marshall and

Glenn Felkin, who were re-elected. I look forward to working with the new Board over the coming year.

Our staff have continued to work with admirable commitment to support our volunteers and deliver the best possible services to them and the boating community. Thanks to each of them and welcome to our new team members.

I also express my appreciation to Emergency Services Minister Troy Grant and his staff, the Office of Emergency Management and our boating safety partners, particularly the Commander of the NSW Police Force Marine Area Command, Detective Superintendent Mark Hutchings and his staff.

My best wishes to you and your families for a safe and happy Christmas and New Year. Please make safety your highest priority over the festive season, when tragedy is particularly poignant.

The Marine Rescue NSW team will be here to keep watch and do our best to see you safely into 2019.

Stacey Tannos ESM
Commissioner

New and familiar faces elected to Board

Retiring Chief Financial Officer farewelled at Annual General Meeting.

Members have elected two new Directors to the Board of MRNSW.

The ninth Board elections since the formation of MRNSW were held in conjunction with the Annual General Meeting on November 24.

The elections were marked by the sad loss of Northern Rivers Regional Director Bill Wardrobe, who died on November 12 after a short illness.

Members this year had been due to elect a General Director and the Greater Sydney, Illawarra and Monaro Regional Directors but with only one nominee for each position, all three Regional Directors were elected unopposed.

Newcomer to the Board, former MR Hawkesbury Unit Commander Ken Edwards, is the new Greater Sydney Regional Director.

Keven Marshall, from MR Ulladulla and Glenn Felkin, from MR Batemans Bay were returned as the Illawarra and Monaro Regional Directors, respectively. MR Botany

Port Hacking member Bob Wilson was elected as the General Director from a field of four candidates. Mr Wilson previously served as the Greater Sydney Regional Director from 2010 to 2014.

Chair Jim Glissan welcomed the successful Directors to the Board, which subsequently re-elected him as Chair.

Mr Glissan paid tribute at the AGM to Mr Wardrobe, MRNSW Patron Ian Kiernan and other members who had passed away during the past year.

Retiring Chief Financial Officer and Company Secretary Alan Skelley was fondly farewelled and new CFO and Company Secretary Todd Andrews formally welcomed.

"Alan has done a remarkable job. We are in a strong fiscal position, largely because of Alan," Mr Glissan said. "He has served with distinction and grace.

"He is more than an executive team member. He is more than



Members of the MRNSW Board following the 2018 elections with new and retiring CFOs Todd Andrews (left) and Alan Skelley (right). Inset: Bob Wilson and Ken Edwards.



a friend. He is part of the Marine Rescue family."

Mr Skelley said it had been a fantastic job that he had enjoyed and would miss.

"It never ceases to amaze me, the dedication of all the volunteers, particularly - in my area - of the unit Treasurers," he said.

Deputy Commissioner Dean Storey outlined the organisation's achievements for 2017/18 and both he and the Chair praised its volunteers and staff.

"Our volunteers have worked tremendously hard throughout the year and that also extends to the whole of the staff," Mr Glissan said.

Smooth transition to online voting system

First electronic poll a landmark, saving cost, paper and time.

The MRNSW Board elections have been simplified and modernised with the successful introduction of online voting for this year's poll.

Regular and Life Members from all six regions were able to vote in the landmark first digital election for a General Director, contested by four candidates: MR Port Jackson member David Hand, MR Forster-Tuncurry member Roman (Ray) Mazurek, MR Alpine Lakes Unit Commander Les Threlfo and MR Botany Port Hacking member Bob Wilson. Mr Wilson was elected.

MRNSW IT & Business Development Director Florian Glajcar said the roll-out of the new system had gone without a hitch.

"We had set up the system for

four elections but there was a last-minute redesign to remove the ballot pages for the Regional Director elections, when all three of these Directors were elected unopposed," he said.

"Eligible members were emailed a link to the voting website, the required AGM materials and a link to the online Annual Report. We did not receive any reports of difficulties in voting, which members also could do via a portal on our website.

"Members adapted quickly to the new system; so much so that one Unit Commander had noticed the voting icon on the website and cast a vote in the minute between the voting website going live and the email hitting members' inboxes."



Chair Jim Glissan and Deputy Commissioner Dean Storey with Board election Returning Officer Noel Parkinson at the AGM.

The new system was developed inhouse with NetBit, producing a net saving of more than \$7,500 over the 2017 election cost of printing and mailing election and AGM papers.

Returning officer for the election,

MR Botany Port Hacking's Noel Parkinson, said the online system had been simple for members to use and had saved him and scrutineer Allan Russell two days of vote counting.

From the Chair

Board elections marred by loss of knowledgeable and caring Director.



Chair
James Glissan ESM, QC

This year's Board elections were clouded by the loss of one of our newest Directors, Bill Wardrobe.

Bill, a member of MR Evans Head, was elected in 2017 as the Northern Rivers Regional Director and had distinguished himself as a constructive, knowledgeable and caring leader of our organisation.

His passing, far too soon after falling victim to poor health, is a profound loss to his family and friends and to those of us at MRNSW who had benefited from his wisdom and constant good cheer.

Bill will be sadly missed, along with a number of other members we have lost recently.

These included figures well-known across the organisation, including MR Lake Macquarie Unit Commander and former Hunter/Central Coast Regional Controller Neil Grieves and former Regional Training Manager Leigh Carmichael.

Round-the-world sailor and Clean Up Australia founder Ian Kiernan readily took up the role as a Patron of MRNSW on the foundation of the new organisation. His passing was marked by a State Memorial Service.

Although we had been due to hold elections for four Directors' positions this year, all three of the candidates for the Regional Directors' roles were elected

unopposed. Congratulations to former MR Hawkesbury Unit Commander Ken Edwards, who joins the Board as the Greater Sydney Regional Director and to the incumbent Illawarra and Monaro Regional Directors, Keven Marshall and Glenn Felkin respectively, who were returned to office.

The role of General Director attracted a field of four experienced candidates. Congratulations to MR Botany Port Hacking member Bob Wilson on his election and return to the Board. Bob was the Greater Sydney Regional Director from 2010 to 2014 and is a former Company Secretary.

I look forward to working with my fellow Directors in the year ahead and thank them for their continued confidence in re-electing me as Chair.

The introduction of online voting for this year's election was a success, achieving our aims of simplifying the voting process for members and reducing costs and our environmental footprint.

The Annual General Meeting offers us the chance of reflecting on our achievements over the previous year and the life of the organisation.

As we approach the 10th anniversary of the establishment of MRNSW on July 1, 2019, we can all be proud of our contribution to the success and strength of our service and to our mission of saving lives on the water.

Thank you for all you have done throughout 2018.

Life Membership of MRNSW is the highest accolade our organisation can award. I would encourage members to nominate their fellow volunteers who have made a sustained and valuable contribution across our organisation.

While the nominees put forward this year all had demonstrated great commitment to their individual units, the Board was disappointed not to

receive nominations to recognise those who have had broader input. We hope to see this remedied in 2019.

The AGM also provided the opportunity to farewell our Chief Financial Officer and Company Secretary Alan Skelley, who has now left us for a retirement on the golf course. New CFO Todd Andrews has officially assumed the role of Company Secretary.

As another boating season ramps up, my best wishes to all our members for a safe summer both on and off the water.

This is the time when our mettle is tested. Our radio bases are on the air taking calls from thousands of boaters. A surge in traffic on our waterways necessitates extra patrols by our rescue vessel crews and inevitably, an escalation in the number of rescue missions. Our fundraisers and other members are busy engaging with the community.

No matter your role, please stay safe, follow procedures, take sufficient rest breaks and ensure your mates alongside you do, too. We rely on each other for our own wellbeing so watch out for your team as well as your own signs of fatigue.

At the same time, remember to pause and look around you to appreciate the beauty of our workplace. Summer on the water in NSW. Where else would you rather be? Make sure you also soak in the thanks of those who rely on us to help them when they are in trouble. The satisfaction of contributing to the safety of our community is what keeps us coming back week after week. It's a powerful motivator and a force for good.

In closing, I wish all our members, staff, advertisers and readers a merry Christmas and good health, happiness and prosperity in 2019.

Good sailing
Jim Glissan



Chair Jim Glissan and Deputy Commissioner Dean Storey present retiring Chief Financial Officer Alan Skelley with a Commendation for Service at the Annual General Meeting.

Volunteers primed for spike in emergencies

After 36 drownings last summer, public urged to be water safe, not sorry.

Marine Rescue NSW units will ramp up their on-water presence over the holiday season, ensuring they are well positioned for an influx of boaters to the State's waterways and a spike in emergency incidents.

Emergency Services Minister Troy Grant joined MRNSW Deputy Commissioner Dean Storey and representatives of Surf Life Saving NSW and Royal Life Saving to appeal to people to be water safe, not sorry over the summer holidays.

"Understandably, people are excited for the Christmas break and school holidays and often flock to our ocean shores and beautiful waterways to celebrate this period," Mr Grant said.

"Unfortunately, the festive season is also the peak time when we lose loved ones to drowning, particularly on public holidays."

Thirty-six people drowned in NSW last summer, including seven between Christmas and January 2.

"One life lost is one life too many," Mr Grant said.

Deputy Commissioner Storey said MRNSW units would increase local patrols over the season, especially



Be water safe, not sorry ... a joint appeal from Surf Life Saving NSW Chief Executive Steve Pearce, Emergency Services Minister Troy Grant, Royal Life Saving NSW Chief Executive Michael Ilinsky and MRNSW Deputy Commissioner Dean Storey.

from Christmas to mid-January.

"Our professionally trained volunteer crews will help provide maximum protection for recreational boaters," he said.

"We will be involved in Sydney Harbour classics such as the start of the Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race, the New Year's Eve fireworks and Australia Day celebrations.

"Regional Operations Managers and volunteers will again be based at the NSW Police Force Marine Area Command base at Balmain

to liaise with police and help coordinate rescue operations."

He said many MRNSW units also extended their marine radio monitoring over summer, complementing the 24/7 coverage provided year-round by regional Search and Rescue Coordination Centres (SARCCs) and the Terrey Hills State Operations Centre.

He urged boaters to always Log On with their local Marine Rescue unit before heading out on the water.

"Tell us where you are going

and when you expect to be back on shore. If you don't Log Off when expected our volunteer rescue crews can mount a search.

"You can Log On and Log Off using your marine radio or phone – and the free *MarineRescue* App makes it even quicker and easier.

"You can get on with enjoying your day, knowing a team of rescue experts is watching out for you, whether you're out for a morning's fishing, a local day trip or cruising further along the coast."

Work to eliminate radio blackspots in north

Work to eliminate marine radio blackspots and protect boaters on a high-traffic stretch of the NSW Mid North Coast is scheduled to be completed over the summer boating season.

The work, costing about \$200,000, is a pivotal part of the MRNSW \$750,000 upgrade of radio communications on the northern NSW coastline to ensure distress calls from boaters are received swiftly and efficiently.

MRNSW Emergency Systems Manager Andrew Cribb said radio reception between Port Macquarie and Coffs Harbour would be boosted

following the installation of new communications equipment on Mt Yarrahappini, north-west of South West Rocks and the Sugarloaf lighthouse at Seal Rocks.

The work, on two National Parks and Wildlife Service sites, involves the installation of VHF Channel 16 remote radios, AIS (Automatic Identification System) transceivers and channel changers, which enable boaters and MRNSW radio bases to switch between VHF Ch 16, the distress calling channel, and local working channels for more routine communications.

Deputy Commissioner Dean



New technology to protect boaters Sugarloaf Lighthouse at Seal Rocks is the site for new marine radio installations. Photo: NPWS.

Storey said the \$750,000 project, funded by NSW Government grants over three years would help ensure

emergency calls were clearly received and rescue missions swiftly mounted in response.

Two members named among state's finest

Evans Head and Shoalhaven volunteers celebrated in NSW awards.

Two members of MRNSW were named among the finalists in the 2018 NSW Volunteer of the Year Awards, announced on November 30.

MR Shoalhaven member Ray Jones was one of three finalists in the awards' Excellence in Volunteer Management category and MR Evans Head Deputy Unit Commander Karin Brown was named the Senior Volunteer of the Year for the Northern Rivers.

Run by the Centre for Volunteering, the awards are the biggest celebration of volunteering in Australia.

Mr Jones is the unit's Training Officer, a Marine Rescue Master and Watch Officer. He regularly performs weekend rescue vessel duty, providing extensive training activities

while on the water, and weekly radio shifts, as well as being on call for weekday response. As Training Officer, he oversees members' progress from their induction through their studies and is selfless in assisting other volunteers.

DUC Brown gives more than 250 hours of her time each month helping to save lives and promote water safety in the region. The former local postie has volunteered for the past eight years, performing multiple roles from Watch Officer to Unit Commander.

Announcing the Northern Rivers awards, Centre for Volunteering CEO Gemma Rygate said the region's volunteers gave so much time without asking anything in return.

"It was so pleasing to recognise their outstanding efforts and also



Northern Rivers Senior Volunteer of the Year, MR Evans Head Deputy Unit Commander Karin Brown. Inset: Awards finalist Ray Jones, from MR Shoalhaven.



celebrate the special contribution of the volunteers chosen to represent the region in the State final," she said.

NSW Minister responsible for Volunteering, Ray Williams, said the State's 2.1 million volunteers

contributed more than \$5 billion to the NSW economy every year. "The fact that so many nominations were received this year is recognition of the amazing effort of volunteers across NSW who help build stronger communities," Mr Williams said.



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Here to help: new IT support desk on way

Speedier alerts to achieve quick fixes.

A new MRNSW IT Help Desk will be open by the end of the year.

The Help Desk will enable units to quickly bring a problem with their IT equipment or systems to the attention of Headquarters IT staff.

IT & Business Development Director Florian Glajcar said the Help Desk would enable the quicker resolution of most problems.

"Units will log into the Help Desk via a porthole on the MRNSW website," he said. "They will create a 'ticket' spelling out what their problem is.

"That then gets logged into the system and emailed directly to Matt Sims and I so we have instantaneous vision of what's gone wrong and can get to work on trying to fix it. If it's a quick fix, we can make that happen and then reply via the Help Desk to tell the unit that the

problem has been solved and what action we have taken.

"If it's a larger problem, the Help Desk will allow us to seek more information and keep the unit updated on our progress in coming up with a solution. The unit will be able to track work on a 'ticket' from start to finish."

Mr Glajcar said units should use the Help Desk to log problems with technology including RoIP, training or other base computers, Seahawk, phone or system outages and Telstra or NBN service queries.

"The Help Desk will make it easier to track issues, identify any common problems or trends that units are experiencing and give us reliable statistics on IT support services," he said.

Units will be notified when the Help Desk is open for use.

Minister's thanks to remarkable volunteers

The festive season means something different to the emergency services.

It's hard to believe it's that time of year again with Christmas and the New Year just around the corner.

I know too well, however, as all of you do, too, that the festive season means something very different to those in the emergency services.

While most people will be spending this time winding down and reflecting on the year that was, dedicated volunteers like yourselves will often be spending this time away from your loved ones, offering a helping hand to those in need.

One of the most iconic parts of our stunning Aussie summers is spending time on one of our beautiful waterways.

But things don't always go to plan and that's where Marine Rescue NSW plays an invaluable role.

The people of this state know that

in times of trouble, they can rely on Marine Rescue to come to their aid.

So on behalf of the Government and indeed the people of NSW, can I say how much your efforts are appreciated! And what's so remarkable is that all of you do this out of the goodness of your hearts.

You do this because Australia is a nation based on volunteerism. A nation of mates helping mates and doing the right thing when things go wrong.

Needless to say, it's an amazing privilege to be your voice and advocate and it's an honour to continually meet with Marine Rescue volunteers from every corner of the state and hear first-hand of the work being done to help ensure people stay safe on our waterways.

Once again, I thank you for your



Commissioner Stacey Tannos and members of MR Cottage Point join Emergency Services Minister Troy Grant as he presents Unit Commander Paul Millar with a certificate marking the unit's 50 years.

unwavering dedication to your communities. I wish you a safe festive season and I look forward to working alongside you once more as

we ring in 2019.

*The Hon. Troy Grant MP
Minister for Police
Minister for Emergency Services*

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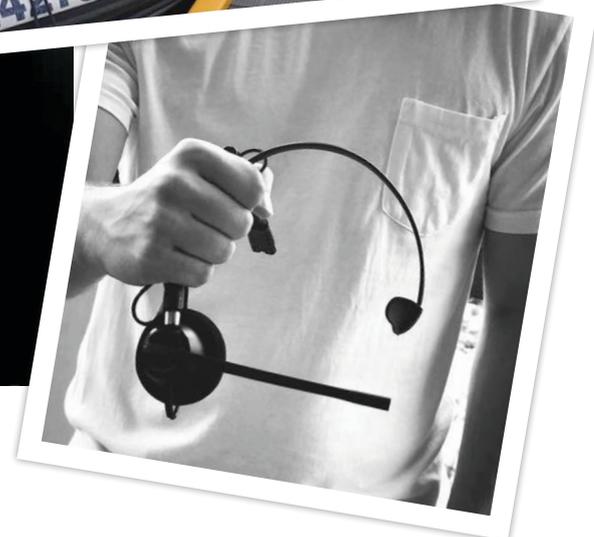
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Chris Cutler

Crew member, Marine Rescue Broken Bay



Saving lives on the water and with a headset ... Marine Rescue Broken Bay Crew member Chris Cutler, who works as a Triple Zero Call Taker in the NSW Ambulance Service control centre in Sydney.

Chris Cutler joined Marine Rescue Broken Bay in 2015 and is currently working towards his Leading Crew qualification. National television audiences have been following him at work as a NSW Ambulance Call Taker in the Channel 10 series *Ambulance Australia*.

■ **The reason I joined Marine Rescue NSW was to get more hands on with my local community and give back to those who have already given so much.** Little did I know that a few years on I would have become a Crew member, running first aid scenarios within our duty watch and becoming an extra pair of hands training new recruits in fire-fighting and advanced resuscitation.

■ **Now I am looking at fulfilling the requirements to become a Leading Crew member so I can further expand my knowledge of navigation and the marine areas around our base, as well as assisting the community in high stress situations.** Being a volunteer with MRNSW, a firefighter

with the NSW Rural Fire Service and a Call Taker with NSW Ambulance, I have gained significant emergency service experience that has had a hand in shaping the person I am now.

■ **Being part of MRNSW means the world to me.** Learning in a group environment at the base and then putting that into action on the water as a team responding to an emergency brings me great joy, knowing we did our best.

■ **There's no greater feeling than that fresh salt spray coming over the bow and slapping you in the face, bringing you back to earth and calming you en route to a medical emergency or sinking vessel.** Everyone at MR Broken Bay has been extremely supportive and encouraging, assisting me in my endeavours. A special thank you to Damian Fehon, my Watch Officer for quite some time. His never-ending support and 'go get' attitude has really boosted my spirits.

■ **Ambulance Australia gives an insight into what NSW Ambulance Call Takers,**

Dispatchers and Paramedics do to provide the best possible patient care. I joined the Ambulance Service in January, starting with six weeks at our Headquarters, followed by 350 hours with two different mentors in the control centre and a two-day assessment to be deemed competent to answer Triple Zero (000) calls.

■ **As a Call Taker, my headset is what I use to communicate with those who call in desperate times.** Those who are reaching out when they feel hopeless. Those who feel they can't go on. Those who act tough on the other end of the line, demanding help through anger, a raised voice and copious profanities.

■ **Through my headset, I've helped save lives.** I've talked people off the edge of balconies but also talked them through preparing to deliver their baby. I've delivered CPR instructions to people trying to help their relative when they've stopped breathing and handed over non-urgent cases to registered

nurses for further care. My handset is the conduit between my words and someone else's actions; actions that might save your life.

■ **Every call I've taken, every scream, threat and last breath I've heard, it's all been worth it.** Because you're worth it and that's why my colleagues and I choose to put our headsets on day after day. The people out on the road coming to save you and the people who advise them choose to do it day after day. We do it for you and wouldn't have it any other way.

■ **This is a shout out to all those serving in any form of voluntary or paid organisation who risk their lives to save others.** You give your time, spending days away from your own family to help protect someone else's, serving long hours on the job, often not knowing when you're going home, and you choose to do it day after day.

■ **That is why I joined Marine Rescue NSW and NSW Ambulance.** To help the community and to help support those already serving.

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Trusted partnerships deliver quality assets

New supply agreements secure outboards, electronics and vehicles.

Marine Rescue NSW has cemented its partnerships with three key suppliers, signing new agreements to help secure the quality of the operational assets vital to its work to save lives on the water.

Commissioner Stacey Tannos said MRNSW had extended its key preferred supplier agreements with three trusted business partners.

A renewed supply agreement will see Suzuki Marine continue as the power of choice for the MRNSW outboard-powered fleet to 2022.

Raymarine will continue to supply electronic navigation and search and rescue equipment on the fleet under a new three-year agreement and Stewart Toyota will deliver operational vehicles.

"We have established strong working relationships with these companies and we are pleased to renew our agreements with all three," Commissioner Tannos said.

"By working closely with us to meet our needs, they are investing in our people and joining us in our mission to save lives on the water."

Suzuki Marine's John Haines joined the Commissioner at Headquarters on November 29 to sign the new agreement to power the fleet. The agreement provides

for the supply of outboard motors for rescue vessels at competitive prices; three-year commercial warranties; responsive servicing; and joint educational activities to promote boating safety.

"Our volunteers require reliable, fuel efficient engines, designed and built for diverse and challenging marine environments," Commissioner Tannos said. "Suzuki Marine has a well-earned reputation for top class products and service."

Mr Haines said Suzuki Marine was delighted to extend the ongoing partnership for four more years.

"Marine Rescue NSW offers an invaluable lifesaving service and Suzuki Marine is very proud to be a part of their ongoing success," he said.

Commissioner Tannos said the strong partnership with Raymarine to install technology including Multi Function Displays, FLIR thermal imaging cameras and side sonar on rescue vessels had delivered significant benefits for operations and training.

"Raymarine has worked with us on continual improvement in our technology and equipment to support our crews' search and rescue operations," he said.



Power of choice ... MRNSW Commissioner Stacey Tannos and Suzuki Marine's John Haines secure a new four-year supply agreement.

FLIR Maritime Asia General Manager Damien Weber said Raymarine was proud to be an ongoing supporter of MRNSW and was likewise delighted to re-sign its exclusive supply agreement for new vessel builds and refits.

"This extends that support to eight years, after our first agreement was signed in 2013," Mr Weber said.

"It allows MRNSW access to the latest solutions for navigation and Search and Rescue, including thermal camera imaging and ClearCruiseTMAR Augmented Reality, which provide enhanced

situational awareness for the dedicated volunteer crews, as well as making their jobs easier when it comes to navigating in difficult situations and performing SAR operations, day or night."

The new agreement also continues Raymarine's training support for volunteers through the provision of MFD training kits.

Commissioner Tannos said Stewart Toyota at Cronulla supplied safe and reliable operational vehicles for MRNSW Regional Operations Managers, Regional Training Managers and, at no cost, a pool vehicle for Headquarters.

'Engaged' leaders endorse training program

The new MRNSW Leadership Training Program has received an enthusiastic thumbs up from participants.

Eighty Unit Commanders and Deputy Unit Commanders or their delegates joined one of the six sessions held in each of the six regions between August and November.

The new leadership course was developed in response to feedback from unit executives at the 2017 MRNSW Leadership Conference,

at which they asked for additional training support to assist them in their roles.

Assistant Director Training and Education Chris Butler thanked all the members who had attended the workshops.

"People were really engaged and contributed in a thoughtful and constructive manner," he said.

"The sessions were well received, attracting overwhelmingly positive feedback.

"Eighty nine per cent of



Mid North Coast Unit Commanders and Deputies at the Leadership Training Program with staff members Chris Butler and Mat Smith.

participants said they had gained new knowledge and 93 per cent

reported that the trainers had engaged them in the course work."

Grant to help guard against shark risk

\$54,000 radios will make it easier for units to sound the alarm.

Marine Rescue NSW units will be able to raise the shark alarm more rapidly following the roll-out of new radio technology worth \$54,000 in early December.

Fifty hand-held radios compatible to both MRNSW and Surf Life Saving NSW are being delivered with the assistance of a \$37,500 Shark Observation Grant from the NSW Department of Primary Industries.

Deputy Commissioner Dean Storey said the radios would help units to guard swimmers, surfers, paddlers and other water users from the low but present risk of shark attacks.

"This new equipment means we can make a valuable contribution to protecting the community," he said.

He said the priority was to deliver the new UHF radios to MRNSW

bases and radio towers situated on lookouts, clifftops or other vantage points that gave direct vision over beaches, coastal bars or other waterways where sharks could pose a threat to people. These included the MR Forster-Tuncurry, Brunswick and Point Danger bases.

"These bases are ideally located to spot shark activity so these new radios will be valuable tools in helping our members to quickly raise the alarm," he said.

"Personnel in our bases will be able to immediately alert their Surf colleagues and our own rescue vessel crews to the presence of a shark and the potential need to clear the beach and waterways.

"We are grateful to the NSW Government for this funding support to help expand this radio program."



Shared communications ... Surf Life Savers Jamie McDonald, Molly Parker and Nixy Krite with MR Cottage Point's Matthew Barrett.

He said the new radios would also enhance inter-agency collaboration between Surf and MRNSW in response to a range of other

emergencies.

Newer MRNSW rescue vessels are equipped with UHF radios as part of their standard fit-out.



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Volunteers saving lives on the water

New staff keen to get to know volunteers

Working to support our members the focus of Headquarters roles.

Three new faces and one familiar one have begun new roles at Marine Rescue NSW State Headquarters at Cronulla.

Brad Whittaker, who has been appointed to the State Training Manager role, has a teaching background and more recently worked for Sutherland Shire Council for 12 years leading its Beach Services (Lifeguards), Active Communities and Cultural Planning Teams.

"I am really looking forward to working with MRNSW and the great volunteers out there in the organisation," he said. "There is some outstanding work being done at each base and with the Regional Training Managers, so I come to support those people and ensure we have great outcomes for the organisation."

Mr Whittaker takes over from David Brown, who is moving with his family to New Zealand.

Adrian Adam, who joins MRNSW as the new Member Services Manager, has an extensive background in volunteer management and support.



Three new staff members and one more familiar "Movembered" face ... Brad Whittaker, Sophie Galvin and Adrian Adam have joined MRNSW, while Mat Smith is changing roles.

He was National Membership Manager for the Australian Red Cross for nearly eight years and Membership and Events Manager at the Australian National Maritime Museum for 10 years.

"I have worked for a lot of years with volunteers and I like the outdoors as well so it was a nice hook for me," he said.

"I think the most immediate thing for me is to get to know as many members as possible in a short space of time and hopefully visit

them face to face."

Mr Adam replaces Mat Smith, who has moved to the role of Grants and Sponsorship Manager.

"I am looking forward to the challenge of securing alternative sources of revenue to support our operations," Mr Smith said.

He said he had enjoyed his previous role and keenly anticipated continuing to work with and support unit members in his new capacity.

The new staff also include Sophie Galvin in a new Development

Officer role, which aims to provide additional administration and project support across departments.

Ms Galvin joins the team from Rowing ACT, where she held the position of Executive Officer. She graduated from the International College of Management Sydney in 2017.

"I've come from a pool and aquatics background, specialising in risk assessment. My passion lies in water safety," she said.

Brendan Trembath

Respect and inclusion on show at Mardi Gras

Marine Rescue NSW will again demonstrate its commitment to inclusion and equality when it joins in the 41st Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Parade on Saturday, March 2, 2019.

MRNSW first took part in the parade in 2017, with 28 volunteers, staff members, family and friends joining more than 12,000 other entrants, including many of our emergency services colleagues.

MR Central Coast members Jane and Raymond Lewis said they had taken part in the 2017 parade to demonstrate that MRNSW welcomed diversity and believed in equality.

"It was the most incredible

experience to be marching down Oxford Street behind our 'float' and under the Marine Rescue banner. We felt extremely proud," they said.

MRNSW will again march with a rescue vessel under the theme 'Reach Out', highlighting our core role in rescuing those reaching out for help on the water but also reflecting that we reach out to our community for members, financial support and inclusion and that our members, too, can reach out for help.

Commissioner Stacey Tannos said MRNSW wanted to send a strong message of respect, equality and inclusion to its own members and



The MRNSW contingent and rescue vessel in the 2017 Mardi Gras.

the wider community.

"We want people to know they are welcome to join our ranks and will be treated equally, with respect

and dignity," he said. MRNSW has been allocated 50 places in the parade. Joining instructions will be issued early in the new year.

Patron remembered for passion and courage

Ian Kiernan recognised our volunteers' skill through his role.

Marine Rescue NSW Patron, round-the-world sailor and Clean Up Australia founder Ian Kiernan AO was honoured with a State Memorial Service following his death in October.

MRNSW Chair Jim Glissan said Mr Kiernan had been a man respected by all who spent time on the water, both for his skill and courage as a sailor and for his environmental passion.

"He was a fitting choice to become a patron of this organisation from the outset and we were honoured that he chose to recognise the skill and work of our volunteers through this role," he said.

Mr Kiernan is one of a number of well-known MRNSW figures who are being remembered after they

passed away in recent months (see *In Memoriam*, pages 43 and 44).

In 1986, Mr Kiernan set an Australian record for a solo circumnavigation of the world during the BOC round-the-world yacht race. Horrified by the amount of rubbish in the ocean, he returned to Sydney determined to make a change. NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian said it was a tribute to his determination, capability and high degree of personal commitment that an event that started with 40,000 people in Sydney became a worldwide movement - Clean Up the World - attracting 40 million people in 120 countries.

In 2012, he told *Soundings* that recreational boating was one of the State's most popular past times but



MRNSW Patron Ian Kiernan cleaned up Australia and the world.

seemingly simple situations on the water could turn dangerous very quickly.

He said MRNSW volunteers donated their time to assist the

boating community but maintaining and operating a fleet of rescue boats and rescue and radio communications bases required millions of dollars a year.



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No video, no story: how to make it on TV

When television reporters contact MRNSW State Headquarters to ask about an operation or exercise they invariably ask, "Do you have any video?"

Generally, if there's no video they have no story. Still photos are useful but no substitute. TV news thrives on compelling video, whether it's a flood, fire or a marine rescue.

MRNSW units can assist by using smart phones and waterproof sports cameras to record scenes on the water, including significant rescues and bad weather.

Saving lives on the water is always a priority but it need not take much time or effort to show the capabilities of our determined volunteers. Headquarters can assist with reviewing and editing video and contacting television networks.

- Ten tips for filming on the water:
1. Make sure the lens is clean.
 2. Hold the phone horizontally. TV

networks prefer this orientation and it looks better on social media, too.

3. Keep the camera steady.
4. Try to have the sun behind you.
5. Get close to the subject. Seek permission of those being assisted if they or their boat can be identified.
6. Show crew members' faces rather than their backs.
7. Hold on to something while filming or have someone hold on to you.
8. Record short clips as they are easier to send than long ones.
9. Get a variety of angles (wide, medium and close up).
10. Don't miss the boat. Notify Headquarters promptly that you have video worth sharing.

Video can be shared with Headquarters by emailing short clips or uploading material to a file sharing site such as Google Drive or Dropbox.

Brendan Trembath



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Our guardians of the Five Islands sea birds

Port Kembla volunteers help make a big difference to little creatures.

On Big Island just off Port Kembla a NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service ranger carefully reaches into a burrow and pulls out a fluffy little penguin, checking its condition and weight.

Dr Rowena Morris and her colleagues keep a close watch on the island's seabirds with regular help from the volunteers of Marine Rescue Port Kembla.

They assist by transporting rangers, equipment and supplies to and from the island on board the rescue vessel *Port Kembla 30*.

"Big Island is not very far off the mainland but it's way too far to swim," Dr Morris said with a smile.

She said NPWS had a "fantastic" relationship with MR Port Kembla crews and the Hill 60 radio base.

"They'll ring us up if something's

going on on the island which shouldn't be going on."

The Five Islands Nature Reserve, including Big Island, is a restricted area to help keep little penguins, petrels and shearwaters safe.

"The shearwaters nest in burrows that are really fragile," she said.

"They lay one egg per year, so if someone treads on that burrow that's their entire family killed for that year."

Dr Morris advises boaters to observe the islands from a safe distance.

"You cannot land on the Five Islands but it's fantastic to look at the islands from a boat. There's no problem with driving your boat around and enjoying the sight of the fauna," she said.

NPWS is revegetating Big Island



MR Port Kembla helps National Parks ranger Dr Rowena Morris keep watch on sea birds like this little penguin. *Photo: Brendan Trembath.*

with native plants and eradicating invasive weeds that can trap birds in their burrows. NPWS makes a donation to MR Port Kembla to pay for the fuel used, which Unit

Commander Graeme McCrudden said was a "significant" help.

"It's a very good working relationship," he said.

Brendan Trembath

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What we've been up to



North Coast landmark ... Mt Warning provides a spectacular backdrop as *Ballina 30* heads to the search zone for the Northern Rivers Regional Search and Rescue Exercise on November 11. The exercise, based at MR Point Danger, brought together rescue services from both NSW and Queensland (see story page 19). *Photo: Brendan Trembath.*



Trans-Tasman visit ... Coastguard New Zealand CEO Patrick Holmes and MRNSW Deputy Commissioner Dean Storey, on board *Middle Harbour 30*, discuss South Pacific search and rescue collaboration.



I take thee ... MR Port Stephens Watch Officer Matt Darby married his wife Kelly Hartwell in the grounds of the Inner Light, where the unit is based, on November 23. *Photo: At A Glance Photography.*



Diligent service recognised ... MR Camden Haven training officer Gordon Gray receives his 20-year Long Service Medal from Northern Rivers Regional Operations Manager John Murray (see page 24).



Anchors aweigh ... MR Lake Macquarie Acting Deputy Unit Commander Malcolm Druce casts a weather eye over proceedings at the unit's Open Day on October 28 (see story page 27).

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PROUD TO SUPPORT MARINE RESCUE NEW SOUTH WALES

Win for both sides in State of Origin test

NSW and Queensland specialists join forces for major capability exercise.

State of Origin rivalries were put aside when marine rescue specialists from NSW and Queensland assembled for a Search and Rescue Exercise (SAREX) on the border on November 11.

Seven search and rescue vessels headed out to sea from Point Danger as part of the major capability exercise.

The flotilla was drawn from MRNSW, the NSW Police Force Marine Area Command and Volunteer Marine Rescue Queensland.

Deputy Commissioner Dean Storey said the SAREX had primed crews for the peak summer boating, swimming and fishing season, when locals and visitors alike flocked to the tourist meccas of the Gold Coast and Northern Rivers.

"The exercise sharpened crews' marine search and rescue skills and strengthened cooperation between agencies on both sides of the border," he said.

"We are used to seeing New South Wales and Queensland on opposite sides during the State of Origin. This time the states were united for a common cause."

Other participants included Surf Life Savers from both states, a Westpac Life Saver Rescue Helicopter crew and representatives from the Australian Maritime Safety



No state borders on the water ... NSW and Queensland search and rescue vessels head down the Tweed River during the Northern Rivers Regional SAREX. Photos: Brendan Trembath.

Authority (AMSA).

The MRNSW contingent comprised volunteers from the Point Danger, Brunswick, Ballina, Evans Head, Woolli and Woolgoolga units.

After crossing the Tweed River bar just after 8am, the seven vessels moved into defined search areas south of Point Danger to locate and retrieve three mannequins representing missing boaters.

Mt Warning, the Tweed hinterland and Gold Coast skyscrapers made for a striking backdrop.

At 11am one minute's radio silence was observed to mark 100 years since the Armistice that ended the First World War, the bloodiest conflict the world had seen.

By early afternoon all three rescue mannequins had been successfully located and the fleet returned to the

MR Point Danger boat base on the Tweed River.

Brendan Trembath



MR Point Danger member Phil Pickering, a former Canadian Naval Ships Diver, wears a poppy during the Remembrance Day event.



MR Point Danger's Nicole Lockie, John Nolan, from Volunteer Marine Rescue Currumbin and Chris Hargreaves from VMR Southport.



The crew of Point Danger 20 returns to shore after successfully locating and retrieving a search target.

Boater takes overnight pit stop far offshore

Iluka Yamba crew returns yacht to safety in lengthy tow home.

A local boater sailing his newly-purchased 36 foot yacht south from the Gold Coast spent an unplanned night at sea when he could not start the vessel's auxiliary engine to cross the Clarence River bar in the dark.

As the vessel was in no danger, MR Iluka Yamba advised the skipper and his two passengers to anchor close to the bar, with the unit's rescue vessel to be deployed at first light to assist.

With the skipper reporting he was located near the bar, the crew of *Iluka Yamba 30* headed out in the morning to return the boat to shore.

After crossing the bar, the crew was unable to locate the yacht.

No wonder. When they asked the skipper for the vessel's latitude and longitude, it proved to be 12nm offshore.

The crew headed out to sea in lumpy conditions for the lengthy rescue operation to return the boater

and his new vessel home.

The incident was a timely reminder for all new boat owners to take the time to familiarise themselves with their new purchase, whether it is straight off the showroom floor or an older model.

A training exercise with the crew of *Woolli 30*, who had travelled north to Yamba for routine outboard maintenance, took an unexpected turn on November 12.

MR Woolli Unit Commander Richard Taffs had arranged with MR Iluka Yamba UC Frank Bond for Woolli Crew members Ron Plowman and Nick Firth to undertake the diesel engine section of their Leading Crew training on *IY 30*, a diesel-powered Steber.

As we were starting the training session, our radio base advised that a vessel on a mooring just behind our berth in the Yamba Marina had requested assistance to reach its destination in Yamba Bay.



Iluka Yamba 30 on a long, lumpy journey back to shore under a leaden dawn sky.

The vessel's skipper reported that he had been heading to a mooring when one engine on his 31 foot cruiser failed just after leaving a berth in the marina.

Although the other engine was still working, he was not making headway and had managed to get

hold of one of the moorings behind *IY 30*.

We decided to tow the cruiser alongside, providing additional training for the Woolli crew in a procedure that is not suitable to undertake on their home river.

Frank Bond

Shark alarm silent over this year's Surf Classic

Government grant funds speedy facelift for Evans Head radio base.

Marine Rescue Evans Head again provided a safety watch for competitors in the annual Malibu Surf Classic.

Unlike the previous two years, when the unit was forced to sound the shark alarm over the event, there were no incidents during the 28th competition.

Evans 30 was on the water from early morning and it was another great opportunity to work with the Malibu Club and Surf Life Saving.

Once the Classic was finished, the unit set to work on a refurbishment of our radio base funded by an \$11,000 State Government Community Building Partnership grant.

Local company MTK Cabinets prefabricated the furniture, enabling

the work to be completed in record time, keeping the interruption to our radio operations to just two mid-week days. Thanks to Graham Newman, Nev Hamilton, Tony McNally and the other members who made this possible.

On October 26, the unit welcomed about 100 Casino Public School students and their teachers to the radio base, training room and *EH 30*. The day was coordinated by Jim Roberts with his team of Joe Medina, Jacqui Graham, Helen and Rocky Koroheke and the skippers and crew of *EH 30*. School Principal Shaun Piccoli thanked the unit.

"The day was excellent and the kids loved it," Mr Piccoli said. "They really enjoyed talking on the radio, the boat and learning about some



Students from Casino Public School enjoy the spectacular coastal views during a visit to the MR Evans Head unit in October.

of the things you guys do. We had a great time and will be back. It was good for the kids to learn about the drum lines and shark alert and discuss issues/concerns regarding the bar and ocean."

Four unit members attended the Northern Rivers SAREX, which was followed by the sad news of the passing of our member and Regional Director Bill Wardrobe.

Bill Bates

Tweed fisherman rescued from upturned hull

Major search operation mounted after boater fails to Log Off as scheduled.

An elderly boater was fortunate to survive when his runabout capsized offshore north-east of Brunswick Heads on October 31.

With a major search and rescue operation under way, the man was found on the hull of his upturned boat offshore by a passing trawler.

The fisherman had Logged On with the MR Point Danger radio base as he headed out on board his centre console open runabout to fish at Nine Mile Reef off Tweed Heads just before 7am, planning to return at 1.30pm.

Having headed south without updating the radio base on his changed plans, the man was trying to pull up his anchor about 10.30am when a wave hit and capsized the boat.

When the boater had not returned to shore and Logged Off as scheduled, the unit's radio operator tried to contact him by radio, mobile phone and SMS. After confirming that the man's vehicle and trailer were still at the boat ramp, search procedures were immediately instigated.

Point Danger 30, a Queensland Police vessel and the Gold Coast



Point Danger 30 on its way to rendezvous with *Cheryl Anne*, a trawler that rescued a boater from the hull of his capsized runabout. Photo: Todd Stoll.

Life Saver Helicopter were tasked to search his last known position.

The skipper of the trawler *Cheryl Anne* contacted the base to report that he had noticed a white object in the water, which on closer examination proved to be the man on the hull of his capsized boat 5nm offshore and 4nm north of Brunswick Heads.

The trawler quickly took the survivor on board as *PD 30* headed

south to a rendezvous point to transfer the man on board and return him to the Tweed River pump out jetty, where a NSW Ambulance was waiting to transport him to hospital. Released next morning, he visited the unit to express his heartfelt gratitude to everyone involved in his rescue.

Unit Commander Glenda Ashby praised the professionalism of the unit's radio operators Gary Burch

and Barry Ferris, watch officer Phil Pickering and the rescue crew, coxswain Chris Quinn, Michael Coulter, Nick Wythe and Todd Stoll.

The Point Danger unit hosted NSW and Queensland teams for the Northern Rivers Search and Rescue Exercise on November 10 and 11.

UC Ashby said the weekend had successfully showcased the lifesaving capabilities of volunteers.

Dale Leo

Unit's support a gift for cancer fundraiser

Members of MR Point Danger have supported a colourful initiative by Madison Murray to raise funds for the Breast Cancer Foundation of Australia.

"With my mother being diagnosed with breast cancer in May of 2017, I felt like I needed to make a difference by raising money for the Foundation," Madison said.

"My aunty has a strong talent and passion for quilt making and kindly donated her time by making a quilt and three pillowcases, all encasing small messages of support, characters and pictures resembling

women overcoming and surviving breast cancer.

"Not knowing where to sell the raffle tickets, I contacted the beautiful shopkeepers at MR Point Danger, who displayed the quilt in their gift shop.

"The ladies went above and beyond in allowing me to raise money for the Foundation by wrapping the quilt in cellophane for protection with ribbons, bows and signage so it was seen.

"They sold the raffle tickets and collected the money, for which I couldn't thank them enough."



Madison Murray raising funds in the MR Point Danger gift shop.

Madison's raffle raised \$492. Along with the shop volunteers,

particularly Jo McLean, she thanked everyone who bought a ticket.

Goanna champs pull big donation for Woolli

Unit engages community on land and water, in drought and rain.

The Australian National Goanna Pulling Championship is the flagship event of the year in the small coastal town of Woolli and the members of MRNSW again seized the opportunity to promote our work to a crowd of about 3,000 visitors over the October long weekend.

The championship is a fun family event that also includes a tug-of-war, North Coast axemen event, brick carrying races, market stalls, carnival rides and live music.

MR Woolli supports the day with our display trailer and members providing information to the public. It was also our turn this year to collect entry donations on behalf of our local emergency services. Thanks to the public's generosity, we collected almost \$3,000, with the Goanna Pull Committee rounding up the total to provide a donation of \$1,000 each for the State Emergency Service,

Rural Fire Service and MR Woolli.

The championship was held in bright sunshine but the drought broke over the DPI Gone Fishing Day at Grafton. Our members and their colleagues from MR Iluka Yamba stayed the course, providing information and a barbecue to those who braved the weather.

The sun shone again for the Remembrance Day service, with Unit Commander Richard Taffs laying a wreath on behalf of the unit.

On the water, we assisted with the return of a vessel that had drifted 80nm after capsizing 12nm off Brunswick Heads on October 23. MR Brunswick had attended the incident, with the three passengers safe but the 7.2m boat unable to be recovered.

Two days later, our radio base received reports of a capsized vessel as it drifted past Minnie Water. *Woolli*



MR Woolli's Jackie and Richard Taffs receive a cheque for \$1,000 from Woolli Goanna Pull Committee President Graeme Walker.

30 attached a buoy to the boat but it later drifted on to Sandon Beach. The owner recovered the hull the next day but just a day later, the hardtop washed up on the beach, posing a traffic hazard as the beach is the only road into Sandon village.

The incident provided an excellent study of drift and leeway calculations, the influence of the

East Australia Current on offshore search and rescue operations and the effect of local conditions on drift once closer inshore. With *W/ 30* off the water for servicing at Yamba, we also gained experience in a tug tow operation, which cannot be conducted on the Woolli Woolli River, while training with MR Iluka Yamba.

Richard Taffs

New radios to boost Ballina shark response

Crews deployed to offshore searches for two capsized vessels.

Another shark attack off a Ballina beach has highlighted the value of new technology being delivered to enable MRNSW and Surf Life Saving NSW to communicate more effectively during the response to such life-threatening emergencies.

The MR Ballina base is located on Lighthouse Beach, adjacent to Shelley Beach, where a 43-year-old surfer was bitten by a 1.5m shark on November 7. The new handheld radios being delivered to units as part of the NSW Government's shark observation program will support our unit's 24-hour response capability.

Our crews have been deployed on numerous operations recently, including a dual response in which *Ballina 30* was on its way to assist one disabled vessel when it received a call that another boat had run out of fuel.

On November 1, Ballina Airport informed the base that a military helicopter had spotted a small runabout that had capsized north of Brunswick Heads the previous day. This boat could not be located but a second vessel, whose occupants had been rescued uninjured from the water, was retrieved.

Aiming to increase the number of skippers in the unit and build our capability, we are focusing on training at sea with MR Brunswick and Evans Head and on our new program of night and mid-week training sessions. Our crew trained with the Westpac Rescue Helicopter on the Richmond River in October.

These efforts were supported by the chance to work with other stakeholders in the Northern Rivers SAREX. *BA 30* and a crew of six made the two-hour trip north to



Ballina 30 against the Gold Coast skyline during the Northern Rivers Regional SAREX on November 11. Photo: Brendan Trembath.

Point Danger for the weekend but the trip home into the southerly was a taxing 3.5 hours.

The unit's fundraising for new engines for *BA 30* is progressing well, with the introduction of Breakfast at the Beach, a tasty delight of bacon, eggs, hash browns

and sausages. We again joined the SES on World Tsunami Awareness Day on November 5 and plan to have a visible presence over summer, both on the water and at community events and our annual base Open Day on Australia Day.

Doug Hunter

Crew rapidly under way to capsize off bar

Brunswick volunteers honoured for 85 years' service and commitment.

A rescue crew was quickly activated when a 7m centre console boat capsized 12nm east of the Brunswick bar on October 23, throwing three people into the water.

MR Brunswick Deputy Unit Commander Jonathon Wilcock prepared *Brunswick 30* to launch within 10 minutes and was joined by Bill Spicer and Dave Warren for the 40 minute journey to the vessel's last known position. Radio operator Roy Drew took over communications from MR Cape Byron.

While the three passengers had been taken on board a nearby boat, their vessel posed a navigation hazard. *BR 30* began a 45 minute search before finding the boat with only a small part of the hull visible.

The boat was too low in the water to be righted to tow so was left to drift with the current and a Securite broadcast.

Richmond MP Justine Elliot has presented six unit members with MRNSW Long Service Medals for a total of 85 years' commitment.



Members of MR Brunswick and Regional Operations Manager John Murray join Richmond MP Justine Elliot as she presents Long Service Medals to six volunteers recognising a total of 85 years' commitment.

"These medals are an opportunity to recognise and thank these volunteers for their hard work and commitment to serving and protecting our boating community," Ms Elliot said. "The Brunswick Marine Rescue volunteers make a valuable contribution to the safety and wellbeing of our community.

"These awards today give us a chance to say thank you to them."

The 15 year Long Service Medal was presented to radio operator and former Unit Commander and Deputy Owen Danvers, who oversaw the unit's transition from the Volunteer Rescue Association to MRNSW.

Radio operator, crew member and

trainer Andrea Danvers, who also served as Commander and Deputy also received a 15 year medal, along with radio operator and Treasurer Sylvia Van Rossum, radio operator Otto Vornegger and coxswain Lazlo Szabo. David George received his 10 year medal.

David Parkinson

Total refit transforms Cape Byron base

CCTV cameras to provide vision of boats travelling past lighthouse.

Members of MR Cape Byron are celebrating the revitalisation of their radio base.

A complete refit of the small radio room was carried out in October in a \$120,000 project.

New cabinetry, desks and even a sink and running water were installed and the building was rewired with electrical, internet and communications cabling.

CCTV cameras will soon be installed to allow us to view vessels travelling past the cape.

With National Parks and Wildlife Service officer Keely Markovina helping to address restrictions on alterations to heritage buildings

and the hard work and persistence of Unit Commander Terry Sandon, work to strip the base started on October 8.

Apart from the radios and computers, the entire existing fit-out went to the tip, with unit members bonding over their crowbars as they took to the demolition work with gusto.

With the unit managing the project, a team of local subcontractors and Karera communications spent the next few weeks on the transformation.

Thanks must go to MR Ballina for taking over the radio watch for our unit and MR Brunswick while the



Radio operator Clare Hamilton on duty in the refurbished MR Cape Byron radio base.

work was under way.

The unit has raised the funds for the project over the past few years

under the wise leadership of Joy and Ted Taylor.

Clare Hamilton

Vigilant boaters stay safe at Camden Haven

Unit joins neighbours in training sessions to build regional capability.

Less than ideal boating weather and the safety consciousness of our boating community have resulted in a calm run-up to the peak summer season at MR Camden Haven.

It is pleasing to note that our local boaters have been increasingly vigilant in looking after their vessels and not attempting to head out when the weather is unsuitable.

In one of our few incidents, *Camden Haven 30* was tasked to assist a large yacht when it experienced engine trouble after crossing the bar into the Camden River. Another boater who broke down off a local headland in the last weekend of October also was towed to the boat ramp on the river.

With the completion of the upgrade to the unit's radio room, the unit has focused on training and building skill levels in the lead-up to summer to ensure that we will be ready to respond in a professional



By dawn's early light ... the view over Camden Haven Inlet from the upgraded MR Camden Haven radio room. Photo: Ken Rutledge.

and safe manner when needed.

We have conducted regular training with our colleagues from neighbouring MR Crowdy Harrington, including towing, mannequin rescue and first aid drills, helping to keep both units up to speed.

Our experienced skippers and trainers also have assisted MR Port

Macquarie with two operational assessments for new coxswains.

We find working with our nearby units a great help for all crew members and radio operators in building our regional capability.

Congratulations to two members who recently have been awarded their MRNSW Long Service Medals.

Our training officer Gordon Gray, who has served as the unit's primary rescue vessel trainer throughout most of his membership, received his 20-year medal and Steve Barnard, who serves as both a skipper and radio operator, received his 10-year medal.

Ken Rutledge

Forster vessel brings 'more grunt' to task

Rescue crew responds swiftly to transfer ill fisherman from offshore trawler.

The Forster-Tuncurry unit is looking to serve the boating community with a degree of boosted confidence this summer following the recent arrival of our new rescue vessel, *Forster 20* (Wallis Lake).

Local trials by our boat crews have revealed its easy manoeuvrability. As one member said, "it's got more grunt".

While the main role of the 6.8 metre Ocean Cylinder is to respond to incidents on Wallis Lake and local rivers, its operational limit is seven nautical miles offshore, increasing our capability to assist in emergencies off the coastline.

One such incident occurred on the night of November 3, when *FO 30* was called to a medical emergency on a fishing trawler

about 3nm offshore. Our crew responded swiftly when they were tasked at 10.40pm to transfer a young fisherman who was in a deal of pain for medical treatment.

The patient was successfully taken on board the rescue vessel in the dark and safely conveyed to shore.

The swift and empathetic assistance of our crew, Tony Breen, Peter Mouwen, Richard Neal and Shane Dimech, resulted in a generous donation to the unit from the trawler's captain.

It almost goes without saying that the purchase of a new vessel such as *FO 20* would be nigh on impossible without the efforts of our hardworking fundraisers.

Our Forster-Tuncurry team



Sea spray ... *Forster 20* is boosting crews' confidence for a busy summer on the water. Photo: Fran Breen.

puts in many an hour conducting community barbecues, running the local markets, selling raffle tickets, giving up their Sundays to run public boat licence courses or sewing and knitting the handcrafts that are sold

at our local stalls. A special thank you to our fundraisers whose work is so vital to our continuing ability to assist and protect the boating community.

Fran Breen

Crowdy powers up with \$85,000 in grants

Unit welcomes Government funding for new vehicles, solar energy system.

Christmas came early for the Crowdy Harrington unit with news it had received \$84,900 in NSW Government grants for two new vehicles and a power system for its boat shed and training room.

Port Macquarie MP Leslie Williams said the Infrastructure Grants funding would provide the local community with a well-resourced marine rescue unit with modern equipment.

"The new 4WDs will help the Crowdy Harrington unit respond to emergencies more quickly and effectively, while the installation of a solar power system will cut costs that can be directed towards volunteer training," Mrs Williams said. "The local community can have continued peace of mind that volunteers can respond to a variety of distress calls, which could be from swimmers in trouble or from an upturned boat in heavy seas.

"The Harrington and Crowdy Head fishing communities have



Thumbs up ... Port Macquarie MP Leslie Williams visits the MR Crowdy Harrington base to give volunteers the good news of their success in attracting two grants.

grown over the past few years, so it's important that local marine rescue volunteers are prepared and equipped to respond to emergencies."

Racing Minister Paul Toole said more than \$50 million was being provided during the current term of government under the Clubgrants

Category 3 Infrastructure Grants program for projects across sport and recreation, emergency preparedness and arts and culture.

MR Crowdy Harrington Unit Commander Bek Brown welcomed the valuable funding.

"This is a tremendous boost," she said. "We will be much better

equipped much sooner than we hoped. The savings on our power bills will be spent productively on operations and training.

"We will now also have a high-quality, reliable towing vehicle for our new boat, which is due next year, as well as a vehicle to transport fuel to our boat at the harbour."

Tragic start to Coffs Harbour boating season

Skipper dies when vessel capsizes close to Campbells Beach.

A man died after his boat capsized north of Coffs Harbour in a tragic start to the boat season on the Mid North Coast.

Emergency services, including members of MR Coffs Harbour, were called to Campbells Beach on Oceanfront Drive, Sapphire Beach following reports a vessel had capsized about 200m offshore about 11.15am on Friday, November 9.

A short time later, the boat and the body of a man, believed to be aged in his 80s, washed ashore.

Coffs 30, the Westpac Life Saver Rescue Helicopter and Surf Life Saving took part in a search to determine whether anyone else had been on board.

The crew of *CO 30* was skipper

Bernard Tight, Graham Taylor and Darryl Hamilton. Jane Leach was the Radio Operator at the base.

On November 15, the unit took part in the opening ceremony of the World Rally Championship, held every year in Coffs Harbour.

Thousands of enthusiasts were attracted to the three-day event.

Our members set up our promotional trailer and sold tickets in our Christmas raffle at the special showcase of the latest-generation WRC cars at the Coffs Harbour jetty.

Coffs 30 became a familiar sight to the huge crowds, with the harbour providing a spectacular backdrop to two stages of the race.

The following weekend, we provided a safety watch for the Coffs



Members of MR Coffs Harbour sell tickets in the unit's Christmas raffle at the World Rally Championship.

Harbour Outrigger Club's regional regatta.

More than 50 crews took on

some challenging courses over the successful weekend event.

Russell Shelton

Alison first female skipper in region's ranks

Newly-qualified members add depth and flexibility at Port Macquarie.

Alison Cameron-Brown has become the first female skipper at MR Port Macquarie and in the Mid North Coast Region.

Alison, who is also the region's only female Rescue Water Craft operator, successfully completed her coxswain assessment on October 23.

She was closely followed by Rob Breskal, who qualified a week later.

They are among 40 members of the unit to gain new qualifications this year, building depth and flexibility within our ranks.

These include a Search and Rescue Support Officer, three watch officers, 12 radio operators, four coxswains, two leading crew, 14 crew and four Rescue Water Craft operators.

More than 45 members continue to be the eyes and ears of the unit in our radio base, watching over the bar and monitoring vessel movements in the area.



Port Macquarie 30 tows a small runabout to safety down the Hastings River. Photo: Alex McNaught.

Our fundraising team has launched a new raffle with the major prize a Quintrex runabout, outboard and trailer. The team is at all the major shopping areas and events such as the local monthly markets.

Our boat crews have responded to a number of incidents, towing

vessels to safety and providing an escort over the bar for numerous other boats, such as Sydney Catamarans and a Papua New Guinea Navy warship.

Showing the value of taking a patrol initiative on the way to support Port Macquarie 30 at a

scheduled event, our Rescue Water Craft, PM 10 and X Ray 10, were alerted by a member of the public to a stranded yacht that had broken its moorings in strong winds. PM 30 was tasked to tow the yacht to an emergency mooring.

Alex McNaught

Woolgoolga settles into new home base

Members buoyed by upgraded facilities and technology at Arrawarra.

Marine Rescue Woolgoolga has relocated in time for the summer boating season, beginning operations in its new home on December 10.

The new \$1.3 million base is located on the western side of the Arrawarra Headland, providing panoramic views over the popular boating waters of Arrawarra Bay and a strong radio signal.

Unit Commander Tony Skalla said members were buoyed by the new base, which had created increased enthusiasm, motivation and commitment.

He said the redevelopment of the former University of New England Marine Science Research Station had been made possible by Coffs Harbour City Council injecting some

\$1.1 million into the project.

The unit moved its equipment and supplies from its former home on the Woolgoolga beachfront during late November.

UC Skalla said the base was fitted out with a RediTalk radio system, RoIP technology, well-equipped training facilities and a workshop.

"Moving to Arrawarra puts us in direct contact with the larger boating community in the area," he said.

"This increased exposure is sure to provide us with additional opportunities to educate recreational boaters and hopefully attract an increase in membership."

He said a major advantage of the new location was that it provided for the safer launch and retrieval of Woolgoolga 30 in all tides.



The radio room in the new MR Woolgoolga base, overlooking Arrawarra Bay.

"The launch area at Arrawarra is supported by firm sand, overcoming the issues created by the softer sandy beach at Woolgoolga," he said.

"The bay is also more protected from all but a ranging Nor Easter."

The base sits on culturally sensitive land, with all members undergoing a cultural induction by local Aboriginal Elder, Uncle Mark, who drew attention to the fact that the land is a sacred site.

Rodney Page

Open Day highlights unit's service to public

Sail past and flyover cap entertainment on Lake Macquarie waterfront.

Marine Rescue Lake Macquarie celebrated the district's community and emergency services at its annual Open Day, held under rainy skies on October 28.

The event was staged just a fortnight after the unit lost its recently-elected Unit Commander Neil Grieves, who passed away during a fishing trip to North Queensland (see *In Memoriam*, page 44.) With former Deputy Unit Commander Mal Wardrop stepping up to the leader's role, elections being held for the Deputy's position.

The Open Day saw Pelican Foreshore Park filled with emergency services personnel and vehicles from Swansea Belmont Fire and Rescue, the State Emergency Service, Rural Fire Service and Belmont Police, who brought a highway patrol car, 4WD and two dirt bikes for kids and

adults to explore. The event was officially opened by Shortland MP Pat Conroy, Swansea MP Yasmin Catley and Lake Macquarie Mayor Cr Kay Fraser, who all reinforced the important role MRNSW plays in the local community.

The highlight of the day was the vessel sail past, accompanied by a pipe band, while UC Wardrop and Acting DUC Malcolm Druce accepted the salute. Our two vessels and Rescue Water Craft were joined by boats from the Police Marine Area Command, NSW Roads and Maritime Services and the RFS, with a flyover by the Westpac Rescue Helicopter as the fleet moved down Swansea Channel.

Tours of the unit radio base and vessel excursions highlighted our various roles. It was great to see a sea of blue uniforms engaging with the public and flying the flag, which



Unit Commander Mal Wardrop and Acting DUC Malcolm Druce accept the salute at the MR Lake Macquarie Open Day sail past.

resulted in a number of people expressing an interest in joining us.

Crowds were delighted by entertainment from indigenous dancers, a marching band, pipe bands, singers, a school band, line dancers and a martial arts demonstration.

Our all-day barbecue ensured people were well fed and the crowd

had a lot of fun with the various stalls, prize wheel, competitions, activities in the park and the arrival of Santa on a jet ski.

As part of our preparations for the peak summer season, the unit's catamaran, *Lake Macquarie 11*, has been drydocked for maintenance and a full clean by members.

Malcolm Druce

Training heats up for Central Coast trio

Neighbouring Rescue Water Craft operators in pre-summer drills.

As the weather heats up at this time of year, it's the signal for MR Central Coast and Lake Macquarie to start up our joint Rescue Water Craft training.

The Central Coast unit currently has three trainees who are gearing up for their operational assessments.

They have been busily honing their skills on our local waters and at two Saturday training sessions at Lake Macquarie.

This training has involved responding to a scene, rescue techniques and water safety.

The Central Coast unit's annual boat raffle was drawn at the popular Ettalong Beach Oyster Festival on November 11.

The winner, Ryan from Elanora Heights, was pleased but his children even more so.

When Unit Commander Roger Palmer rang to give Ryan the good news, he could hear the children screaming with excitement in the background.

UC Palmer and member Ian Leafe handed Ryan and his wife Bel their prize at our base on November 21.

After a number of years of offering a boat as the major prize, our fundraising team and unit executive are considering refreshing the raffle to build increased enthusiasm and profits next year.

With the delivery of our new Naiad, *Central Coast 30*, in early August, we have recently farewelled *Central Coast 21*, which has found a new home in Gympie in Queensland.

A solid workhorse, *CC 21* will be missed by a lot of our members, however, we are excited by the pending arrival of a 7.5m Naiad



MR Central Coast Unit Commander Roger Palmer (right) and member Ian Leafe congratulate raffle winners Ryan and Bel.

replacement, scheduled before the end of the year.

CC 30 is moored at the unit's base at Point Clare due to the mooring at the Haven needing to be moved and serviced.

As soon as this has been rectified, *CC 30* will be relocated to the Haven, where it will be in prime position to respond to emergencies offshore.

Mitch Giles

Committed volunteers reap training rewards

Port Stephens crew demonstrates skill in long, rough rescue operation.

Gaining a MRNSW operational rating requires serious dedication and time by both our volunteer trainees and trainers.

Congratulations to MR Port Stephens members who have achieved their ratings this year, Brian Bibbing (Coxswain), Michael Duggan (Leading Crew), Ian Jack (Crew), Ian Peacock and Peter Baldwin (Watch Officer) and Paul Buckley, Nigel Eves, Sarah Charters and Ben van der Wijngaart (Marine Radio Operators).

The support of our experienced trainers who work to help their fellow members achieve their ratings is greatly appreciated.

The benefit of this training is demonstrated in our radio and rescue vessel operations. By mid-November, the MR Port Stephens radio room had received or made more than 25,000 radio and telephone calls, Logged On more than 3,500 vessels and responded to 155 vessels in distress.

One such case was an emergency response at 6.30am on October 3, when *Port Stephens 31* was tasked to assist two people on board a sailing vessel experiencing mainsail and engine problems north of Seal Rocks. The skipper also had a shoulder injury, restricting his ability to sail the vessel.

With the crew realising the distressed vessel's position could result in a five to six-hour operation, additional supplies were sourced before the rescue vessel headed out for a long morning's work.

PS 31 was forced to divert west of Broughton Island to find calmer water on the journey north, locating the disabled boat after 90 minutes and taking it under tow for a slow three-hour return journey.

The unit is fortunate to receive strong support from our community, including from author and fisherman John 'Stinker' Clarke, who recently arranged the donation of an incredible photo of Fingal Spit by his



Assessor Ken Edwards congratulates Brian Bibbing, accompanied by his crew and other assessors, on achieving his Coxswain rating.

friend Rodd Owen for us to raffle. Long-time supporter Anthony Dunn, from GME, generously presented three hand-held VHF radios for use on our boats and dock.

About 50 unit members and friends visited the Westpac Rescue Helicopter facility at Newcastle.

Retired Chief Pilot Graeme Nickisson spoke of the service's work and related a few of the harrowing rescues in which he was involved over 38 years. He showed

us a video of the rescue of two spear fishermen who drifted away from their "mother ship" 9nm off Fingal Head in northern NSW.

The pair filmed their experience with a Go-Pro, including Great White Sharks circling them. After seeing a helicopter searching in a different area, they were relieved when a second helicopter heading to the search area spotted them after three hours in the water.

Iain Blackadder

Donation funds life-saving equipment

Norah Head members set for full summer workload on new vessel.

Marine Rescue Norah Head has been able to purchase new equipment thanks to a generous donation from the Central Coast Freemasons Society.

Members of the Society, which has been a great supporter of our service over time, presented Unit Commander Bill Hignett with \$3,750.

This welcome funding will purchase an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) to install at our base and a Digital Base Radio, ensuring the unit is well resourced to respond to emergencies.

The unit has spent recent months familiarising crew members with its new vessel, *Norah Head 20*, which was delivered in late July.

All inductions have been completed and *NR 20* is fully operational for a full summer workload.

The unit's members have welcomed back two familiar faces, Malcolm and Yvonne Fletcher.

The couple moved to the Mid North Coast about a year ago, with Mal transferring to MR Camden Haven, but recently decided to return to the Central Coast.

Mal is back on board at Norah Head, where he was based for many years, holding the positions of Radio Room Manager, Trainer and Deputy Unit Commander.

Back on duty as a radio operator, Mal brings a wealth of experience and knowledge, which he will be



The Central Coast Freemasons Society's Graeme Ingall, Geoff Bown, Adam Steven, John Simpson and David Williams present MR Norah Head UC Bill Hignett with a donation. Photo: Lee Deacon.

able to impart to our recent recruits.

These new members are training for both radio and boat crew duties, which will help relieve the pressure

on our existing roster of members, who have been performing extra shifts.

Lee Deacon

Boys' own adventure ends in drama on lake

Strong winds blow group of poor swimmers offshore on unstable boats.

A group of agitated parents raised the alarm when six of their young teenage sons were blown more than half a kilometre into the centre of Tuggerah Lakes on a poor collection of boats on November 10.

Strong winds had pushed the six from the shore of the caravan park where they were staying, on board a dinghy suitable only for a pool, another plastic dinghy and a rundown 3m tinnie with no seats.

Tuggerah Lakes 20 had just returned to base after assisting a stranded jet ski at the mouth of The Entrance lake when the crew was immediately deployed to the scene by radio operator Colin Thom and watch officer Ben Hogan.

Skipper Tony Younglove and crew Bob Sutton, Graeme Cartwright, Danny Knight, Don Hobbs and John Wade made good speed, finding the first youth floating in the pool dinghy, which was full of water.

He was taken onboard and the dinghy under tow as TL 20 headed towards the rest of the group

Another boy was in the plastic dinghy and four others were trying to row the tinny to no avail in the wind.

TL 20 headed back to North Entrance with three youths on board and three in the tinnie under tow, along with the two plastic dinghies.

This could have resulted in a

very serious incident as none of the boys had lifejackets and all reported being poor swimmers.

After a 15 minute tow they were back safely on dry land at the boat ramp, where their mothers were waiting, ready with some loving advice.

With few other recent incidents on our local waters, crews have dedicated time to valuable training on and off the water.

We have conducted a number of night training drills, which give new personnel an immediate appreciation of how different everything looks as night falls.

The unit's 20-year-old Nissan Patrol, which towed our two rescue vessels and caravan, recently gave up the ghost.

Thank you to one of our newer crew members, Danny Knight, who is a mechanic and helped us find a Mitsubishi 4WD replacement.

Members were saddened by the recent passing of former Regional Controller Neil Grieves and Training Manager Leigh Carmichael.

Neil was a regular visitor to our bases over the years and we had many good times with him, while trainers Jim Davidson and Tony Younglove worked closely with Leigh Carmichael while he was an Assessor.

Bob Sutton & Sue Younglove



The crew of Tuggerah Lakes 20 returns the six boys safely to shore after their unexpected journey on the lake. Photo: Bob Sutton.

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Crew outruns storm to tow tinnie to safety

Newcastle responds to series of jet ski incidents up river and offshore.

An approaching storm front added a degree of urgency to operations for crew members on board *Newcastle 30* as they responded to two calls for help in quick succession on October 21.

The crew was tasked just north of Stockton Bridge to help an adult and three children on a disabled tinnie.

Skipper Ron Calman and crew Rick Neville, Stuart Lawson and Mick Quill located the vessel just as the nasty storm was approaching, taking it under tow safely to a nearby ramp.

As the storm broke, the crew was tasked up the Hunter River near Raymond Terrace to check on a couple of jet skis that had called in with motor and fuel problems.

Communication was lost after the first contact but it was eventually confirmed the riders had made it

home safely. The dual operations made for a busy first shift for new member Jasmine Jackson. Radio room controller Wayne Bissett said Jasmine had proven a great help in monitoring the operations.

The unit has responded to a spate of recent incidents involving jet skis.

On September 22, *NC 30*, with skipper Terry Reynolds and crew Rick Neville, Steve Randell, Mick Quill and Stuart Lawson, responded to a jet ski operator whose craft was swamped in the surf on Stockton Beach. An attempt to have a 4WD drag the craft up the beach came to no avail.

A second jet ski was able to tow the disabled craft out past the surf line to reach *NC 30*, which successfully towed it back to Carrington ramp. The next day,



Newcastle 30 crew members Rick Neville and Stuart Lawson watch over the towline to a disabled jet ski.

NC 30 was tasked to assist another jet ski with two people on board in Stockton Bight, again returning it to safety at the Carrington ramp.

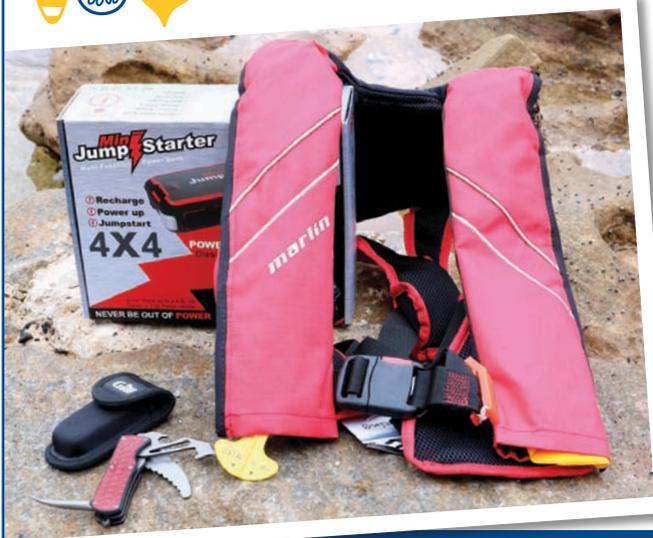
Congratulations to UC Ron Calman, who has been awarded the clasp to the MRNSW Long Service Medal and the third clasp to the

National Medal, recognising a total of more than 45 years' service to the NSW Police Force and marine rescue. Member Steve Randell has received his MR Crew qualification and Terry Reynolds received his 10 year Long Service Medal.

Terry Reynolds



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Visit the Marine Rescue NSW online store this Christmas for great discounts on a range of gifts for the boater in your life.

You'll find essential safety equipment and top boating and fishing gear including Marlin PFDs for adults and children, Mini Jump Starters and Gill marine tools and clothing.

And you can show your support with our Marine Rescue NSW merchandise.

Remember, discounts apply for Marine Rescue NSW volunteers and Radio Club members. It's just one way for us to say thanks.

When you shop with us this Christmas, you'll join us in our mission to save lives on the water.

Shop at the MRNSW e-shop
shopmrnsw.com.au

Cottage Point celebrates twice in one day

Unit follows commissioning ceremony with 50-year anniversary reunion.

With the warmer weather producing an early-season upswing in local boating activity and incidents, volunteers from MR Cottage Point took the chance to gather ahead of another busy summer for an historic dual celebration in early November.

On a magnificent spring day, a raft of dignitaries, including Mackellar MP Jason Falinski, MRNSW Chair Jim Glissan and Board members, Commissioner Stacey Tannos and several Unit Commanders, along with many friends, joined our members to formally commission our nine-metre Sailfish, *Cottage Point 31*.

CP 31 was officially named *Elizabeth Watts* in recognition of Beth's 24 years of continuous and outstanding service to our unit, the organisation and the boating community.

A former Australian Volunteer Coast Guard Association Squadron Commander and Unit Commander and executive member of the MR Cottage Point unit, Beth was appointed by the State Government



MR Cottage Point member Beth Watts, joined by her sister Jean Galloway, christens her namesake, rescue vessel *Cottage Point 31* (*Elizabeth Watts*). Photo: Don Smallwood.

to the Foundation Board of Directors of MRNSW, helping to guide the transition of Coast Guard squadrons to the new organisation.

The day's second celebration marked the unit's 50 years of service to the boating community of Broken Bay.

A day after Emergency Services Minister Troy Grant visited to

congratulate the unit on its half-century, we welcomed many former and current members to our base at the Ku-ring-gai Motor Yacht Club - which has been our benefactor for the past 47 years - to recount stories, share photos, compare uniforms and equipment and chat about all things boating.

Originally the Ku-ring-gai Flotilla

of the Sydney Squadron, the then Coast Guard started operations from Illawong Bay in 1968 with a cobbled-together fleet of members' own vessels.

Now as part of MRNSW, with two state-of-the-art rescue vessels, we look forward to serving our boating community for the next 50 years.

Tim Pike

Volunteer raises funds for a good cause

Marine Rescue Terrey Hills member David Crawford has turned full cycle, volunteering to raise funds for another good cause.

David recently took part in the Great Cycle Challenge, raising funds to fight childhood cancer.

Cycling his modified wheelchair over 83.6km, he raised about \$2,500, bettering his fundraising target by \$2,000. David ranked 69th in NSW and 204th in Australia.

The unit held its third Watch Officer training course in November. Based on feedback, the course has been restructured to focus on case study scenarios and geared to enable learners to confidently fulfil

their assessment requirements.

We have continued to seek new members. Aside from advertising in various magazines, the unit also has a regular information and recruitment desk at the Bunnings store at Terrey Hills. Since September, we have seen greater interest from members of the public, with increasing numbers attending our induction courses.

A number of our members again took part in the St Ives Lions Club's Monster Garage Sale on November 2 and 3, sorting and collecting donations, selling to the public and operating a MRNSW inquiry desk.

Denis Comber



MR Terrey Hills member David Crawford cycled more than 83km to raise funds to fight childhood cancer.

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MAKING WAVES

Greater Sydney News

Bad weather up-ends canoe classic on river

Visitors still smiling after tour in rain.



River rain ... Deputy Commissioner Dean Storey, Emergency Services Minister Troy Grant and MR Hawkesbury UC Peter Moore on HW 21.

Crews from MR Hawkesbury were kept busy assisting capsized paddlers from the water and shadowing others to a new finish line after a change in the weather hit this year's Hawkesbury Canoe Classic.

The unit has a long-standing safety partnership with the Classic, an annual event in which more than 300 entrants paddle from Windsor to either Wisemans Ferry or the long stretch to Mooney Mooney, which is more than 100km.

Our members provide a safety net of checkpoints and chase boats from just downstream of Wisemans Ferry to the finish at Mooney Mooney, along with recording entrants' times and helping set up and pack up.

This year, our members put in a total of 650 hours over the two days, without counting the time in the lead-up to event, which raises money for the Arrow Foundation and bone marrow cancer research.

Unfortunately, the onset of the bad weather resulted in the event being shortened due to concerns for the safety of the paddlers after several capsized.

A hundred paddlers made the entire distance to Mooney Mooney before the weather change, with the

remainder finishing at Spencer.

Our members were called to a handful of other assists over the same weekend, including a runabout tied alongside a houseboat that capsized and a man with a fishing hook injury.

The runabout was successfully righted and the water pumped out before it was towed back to Deerubbin Reserve and taken on to a mechanic to attempt to save the engine, which had been in the salt water for more than an hour. All in all, a very busy weekend for our crews, who performed remarkably in all situations presented to them, from simple tows to searching for paddlers in the water at 2am.

We were recently delighted to show Emergency Services Minister Troy Grant our base and talk about what we do to support the local community, as well as boaters in general.

Unfortunately, the weather was not kind when we set out for a trip to see the sights of the Hawkesbury but to their credit, both the Minister and MRNSW Deputy Commissioner Dean Storey came back dripping wet but smiling broadly.

The Hawkesbury is the place to be, whatever the weather!

Jamie Abnett-Miller

A special present for Port Jackson this year

Sydney Harbour unit keenly awaiting delivery of new Naiad rescue vessel.

After spending a couple of weeks out of the water for repairs to its port engine leg, *Port Jackson 30* didn't disappoint on its return to duty.

On its first weekend back on the water, the rescue vessel was involved in four operations, including three tows. One of these saw the crew helping NSW Maritime to tow a large commercial two-storey ferry that had run aground after its mooring snapped in strong winds.

A crew member from both *PJ 30* and the Maritime vessel boarded the ferry to successfully relocate it to its mooring near Rhodes.

This proved a valuable early-season 'live' training exercise for incident reporting, manoeuvring a vessel using engines alone and in strong winds and long and tug tows.

Our crews also gained experience on a different vessel, the operational replacement vessel *X-Ray 21*, while *PJ 30* was off the water. The open

cabin vessel tested the effectiveness of the crew's wet weather gear and stamina in the rainy and windy October weather.

Meanwhile, members are eagerly anticipating the completion of the unit's new rescue vessel, *PJ 20*.

The 7.5m Naiad RHIB, being built at Yamba Welding & Engineering, is scheduled for delivery before the end of the year.

The Port Jackson unit is never idle in enhancing its members' skills.

Ian Harding attended the MRNSW coxswain development course and congratulations to John Anschau, Will Stainton and Gerard Kaudeer, who have all received their Crew qualifications.

Our 25 new members are continuing their formal training in first aid, advanced resuscitation, fire fighting, sea survival and radio operations, along with our unit-based activities and drills to ensure



A bit big to gift-wrap for Christmas... members of MR Port Jackson are keenly awaiting the delivery of their new Naiad RHIB.

their familiarity with our rescue vessel, maritime regulations and local operating procedures. Special thanks to members of all crews for helping our new volunteers gain skills and confidence.

We've also been engaging the community to increase awareness of safe boating practices, including at the Sydney 4WD Show.

Our members and vessel also supported the Emergency Services Volunteers Memorial Service, on and off the water, in October. We are now looking forward to supporting boaters' safe enjoyment of the busiest waterways in Australia over the Christmas, New Year and summer period.

Tom Crvenkovic

Tragedy as yacht overturns in rough seas

Search called off as skipper located in water off southern Sydney beach.

A tragedy south of Kurnell has highlighted the importance of Logging On with MRNSW and checking conditions when venturing offshore.

Early in the morning of September 24, MR Botany Port Hacking was tasked to assist police in a search for the skipper of a yacht that had overturned in strong winds and rough seas off Boat Harbour.

Soon after, *Port Hacking 30* was stood down and the search called off, with the missing man's body located near Wanda Beach.

The boat had not been Logged On.

Shortly after 10pm on November 9, the crew of *PH 30* came to the aid of two boaters whose boat was sinking at South West Arm.

The boat was pumped out and escorted to Burraneer Marina.

During the season our skills base continued to expand with a strong emphasis on training.

Congratulations to Steve Bigeni, who successfully completed his coxswain's assessment and Michael McFadyen for successfully completing his Watch Officer assessment.

A number of our provisional members have also started their radio operator and boat crew training.

Thanks to the supporters who help fund our operations by buying raffle tickets and the unit's popular new cookbook.

Sadly, the unit farewelled a veteran volunteer in late spring.



Allan Russell makes up Kevin Thompson for his role as an accident victim in a first aid training course at MR Botany Port Hacking.

Karen "Kel" Larter died after a long illness (see *In Memoriam*, page 44). At her family's request, unit members provided an Honour Guard for her funeral at Woronora.

Kel served the unit as a Radio

Operator and was a regular at boat shows and boating safety events.

The unit is considering an appropriate way to recognise her service.

Brendan Trembath

Engine, battery failures mark start of season

Broken Bay team captures dinghy spinning dangerously out of control.

Crews from MR Broken Bay had a busy start to the official boating season, responding to 18 incidents in six weeks from the start of October.

In a timely reminder for boaters to ensure they have carried out basic maintenance and safety checks on their vessels after the winter lay-off, most of the calls for help resulted in a tow home due to engine and/or battery problems.

While patrolling in the Bayview and Newport area on October 27, the crew of *Broken Bay 30* was alerted to an unmanned 4m dinghy speeding in circles out of control.

The owner had been thrown overboard when his boat was struck by the wake from a passing cruiser.

Two people on a RIB from a nearby sail training group had pulled him out of the water but could not stop the dinghy, which was heading towards moored yachts and nearby junior sailing classes, risking a collision, damage or injury.

BB 30 skipper Andrew Majewski set up a vessel exclusion zone and crew member Chris Guy boarded the RIB, managing to capture the dinghy on the second attempt and stop the engine. The young skipper was instructed about the proper use and value of the engine kill switch lanyard, which was not in use, before he proceeded home.

We joined in the regional SAREX on the Hawkesbury River and Broken Bay, which provided a good refresher for experienced skippers and introduced new members to our key search and rescue roles.

BB 30 and *BB 20* then took part in the Royal Motor Yacht Club sail past to mark the start of the 2018/19 sailing season, leading the fleet for the official salute.

In November, members congratulated Graham and Margarita Weir for their individual 10 years' service to MRNSW. An experienced coxswain, Graham is always available to help and mentor



Brian Alexander, skipper Jameson York and Mike Whitworth on board *Broken Bay 20* during the Sydney SAREX.

other members, with a calm and collected manner. Margarita is a highly skilled crew member and our former membership officer, who in fact formally inducted and supported me when I joined MR Broken Bay.

Unit stalwart Mike Seale has retired from the unit, leaving a legacy of 38 years' service. Mike held executive roles including Deputy Unit Commander, deputy watch officer and administration officer and also was a capable

coxswain. We are a much better unit thanks to his unwavering commitment and high standards.

Deputy Unit Commander Stuart Sperduti and I attended the MRNSW Leadership program at Headquarters in November. The course also was attended by our colleagues from MR Moama, highlighting that although we were from different areas of operation, we all had common ground and similar experiences.

Jimmy Arteaga

Young achiever sets pace at Middle Harbour

New Leading Crew member thanks colleagues for encouragement.

Joanna Mycroft spends a great deal of time preoccupied with boats.

A naval architect and marine surveyor with Lloyd's Register by day, Joanna has just become the youngest member of MR Middle Harbour to achieve the rank of Leading Crew.

The 34-year-old spent her childhood on the water in Hobart, sailing and rowing, and has extensive experience sailing on UK waters. After attending university in Sydney, she moved away before returning four years ago for work.

"Boats and being on the water make me happy," she said.

"I was keen to get back out on the water as quickly as I could and

through the sailing community I learnt about Marine Rescue."

MRNSW is her first foray into powered boating and she has taken to it with gusto, breaking the unit's record for gaining the Leading Crew qualification.

"I knew that, as a sailor, if I ever called for help the members of Marine Rescue were probably going to be the people who came to my rescue," she said. "I wanted to give back.

"I found an amazing environment to learn new things, supported by a great group of people. I feel lucky to have had the opportunity to develop.

"I would not have been able to get to Leading Crew so quickly without the unwavering support of



Boats make me happy ... Leading Crew member Joanna Mycroft on board *Middle Harbour 30*. Photo: Brian Roberts.

my colleagues, who always seemed happy to take time out of their day to coach me, train me and teach me. Their encouragement has meant a lot."

Other unit members to attain Leading Crew this year are Howard Gipps, Gary Reed, Laurence Adney and Sandy Hume.

Brian Roberts

Skills honed for rapid emergency response

Sydney and Illawarra search exercises build coordination on busy waterways.

Boaters on Sydney and Illawarra waters can be confident that rescue teams are primed for a rapid response to emergencies this summer.

More than 100 marine search and rescue experts took to the water north of Sydney and off Jervis Bay in capability exercises in September and October.

The Greater Sydney Search and Rescue Exercise (SAREX) was held on the Hawkesbury River and Broken Bay in late September. More than 50 volunteers and nine rescue vessels from the Broken Bay, Central Coast, Cottage Point, Hawkesbury, Norah Head, Terrey Hills and Tuggerah Lakes units took part.

This was followed by the Illawarra Regional SAREX on October 14, which tested another 50 volunteers and eight rescue vessels from the Jervis Bay, Kioloa, Port Kembla, Shellharbour, Shoalhaven, Sussex Inlet and Ulladulla units.

Both events also involved the NSW Police Force Marine Area Command and Westpac Life Saver Rescue Helicopter.

Deputy Commissioner Dean Storey said the exercises helped ensure crews were at peak readiness, honing their search and rescue skills and improving coordination with other agencies on high-activity waterways.



The Westpac Life Saver Rescue Helicopter provided an eye in the sky to support marine search and rescue experts taking part in the Illawarra Search and Rescue Exercise off Jervis Bay in October. Photo: Glenn Evans.



Form up ... Cottage Point 30, Hawkesbury 22, Central Coast 30 and Hawkesbury 21 pass rugged terrain on the Hawkesbury River during the Sydney SAREX. Photo: Brendan Trembath.

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Breakdowns a timely maintenance reminder

Local exercises help Ulladulla crews prepare for peak holiday season.

With 10 emergency responses and two local training events in recent weeks, MR Ulladulla's three rescue vessels have been a high visibility presence on the water as the unit gears up for the peak holiday season.

In a timely reminder for boat owners to undertake routine maintenance before heading out over summer, crews have been called to tow five recreational fishing boats experiencing mechanical or electrical problems to safety.

We have seen an increase in the number of rescued vessels that have not Logged On before heading out.

The incidence of flare and flashing light sightings also has risen, with our rescue vessels deployed to investigate on four occasions, including one that sparked multiple reports from the community and local police of a flare seen between Ulladulla and Mollmook.

The skipper of a small cabin cruiser who could not restart his engine and was unable to communicate by radio had set off two flares as he drifted close to rocks. Mollmook Surf Life Saving assisted by reporting the exact



The crew of *Ulladulla 10* makes best time to the scene of an emergency on Burrill Lake in a live-activation local search and rescue exercise. Photo: Peter White.

location to our radio operator. *Ulladulla 30* rescued the boat, returning it to Ulladulla Harbour. Other sightings were false alarms.

The unit joined the Illawarra Regional Search and Rescue Exercise in October. While the conditions were not ideal, our crew gained valuable experience working with other crews and the Westpac Rescue Helicopter.

Unit Commander Dave Hall also instigated a live-activation local SAREX to provide realistic training scenarios for the crew of *UL 10*

as part of the unit's continuous development program. UC Hall and David Lindley took up position on the bank of Burrill Lake to observe the *UL 10* crew, Barry Clapson, Frank Ward and Len Smart, with watch officer Kel Greathead observing Raine O'Keeffe and John Gregory in the radio base.

Long-standing unit member and Illawarra Regional Director Keven Marshall was presented with his 20-year Long Service Medal at our October meeting. Highly regarded by the community and members, Keven

joined the Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol in 1998 and was awarded the Emergency Services Medal in 2017.

Skipper Brian Williamson has been appointed as the unit's Boat Master and will oversee crew rosters. Congratulations to skipper Barry Clapson for achieving his Marine Rescue Master qualification.

To thank our local supporters, each week we are highlighting on our unit Facebook page a different a business that provides a MR Ulladulla donation box on its counter.

Raine O'Keeffe

Jervis Bay volunteers raise profile in awards

More than 20 individual members and three teams from MR Jervis Bay were nominated in the 2018 NSW Volunteer of the Year Awards for the Illawarra region.

Unit members attended the regional awards at the Wollongong Golf Club. This was a valuable way to raise the profile of the unit and MRNSW, with a number of speakers mentioning our great work for the boating community.

Jervis Bay nominees for the Senior Volunteer of the Year were Greg Atkinson, Allan Reidy, Ronald

Hanson, Graeme Wheeler, John Townsend, Harold Plumb, Kevin McMahon, Carole King, Peter Madgwick, Jurgen Kiaupa, Leonard Harlen, Joyce Goddard, John Gallimore, Michael Fogarty, Dennis Douglass, Graham Colbeck and Don Andrews. Nominees for Adult Volunteer were Leona Curran, Kevin Hill, Jeffery Choat, Elizabeth Beasley, Michael Sutton and Cheryl Fogarty.

Volunteer Team nominees were the unit's fundraising team and 2014-16 and 2016-18 executives.

Alex Ross



Illawarra volunteer of the year nominees, MR Jervis Bay past and present Unit Commanders Greg Atkinson, Allan Reidy, Kevin Hill and Alex Ross.

Crew contains oil spill from sunken trawler

Shoalhaven puts best foot forward at SAREX and emergency services day.

A crew from MR Shoalhaven was swiftly on the scene of an operation to contain a pollution spill on the Crookhaven River when a trawler sank at the Greenwell Point jetty in mid-October.

Shoalhaven 30, with skipper Bill Smith and crew Kit Laughlin and Glenn Kolomeitz, assisted Fire and Rescue NSW to position floating booms around the trawler to contain oil and diesel leaking from the vessel, most of which was under water.

The commercial fishing boat was a sister ship to another trawler whose crew was rescued by *Jervis Bay 40* and assisted by *SA 30* when it sank at sea on August 8.

The environmental emergency came just four days after the unit hosted the Illawarra Regional Search and Rescue Exercise.

Almost 70 personnel from the MRNSW Illawarra Region units and the NSW Police Force Marine Area Command, Surf Life Saving, Westpac Rescue Helicopter and Australian Federal Police took part, along with vessels from the Port



Shoalhaven 30 helps contain a pollution spill from a sinking trawler. Photo: Danielle Carter.

Kembla, Shoalhaven, Jervis Bay, Kioloa and Ulladulla units and the police launch *Victor*. The exercise involved marine search and rescue theory on the Saturday, followed the next day by a sea search for four targets missing on Jervis Bay.

The unit's Pilot House at Crookhaven Heads operated as

the communications centre for the major capability-building test.

The annual Emergency Services Open Day hosted by the unit again attracted large and enthusiastic crowds to the Greenwell Point waterfront on November 19.

The event included mock rescue operations, first aid demonstrations,

family entertainment and displays by emergency services and public agencies including the State Emergency Service, Rural Fire Service, Australian Border Force, NSW Police Force, NSW Roads and Maritime Services and Shoalhaven Navy Cadets.

Bill Carter

Hill 60 radio fit-out boosts safety for boaters

IMB grant funds new generation technology for Port Kembla base.

A major technical upgrade has been completed at MR Port Kembla in readiness for the peak boating season on one of the busiest stretches of the NSW coastline.

New digital marine radio communications have been installed in the unit's Hill 60 base thanks to the IMB Community Foundation's generosity in providing a \$70,000 grant for the project.

The work has boosted the unit's 24/7 marine radio monitoring of the Illawarra region's coastal waters.

Unit Commander Graeme McCrudden said the move to digital was a great advance for the MR Port

Kembla radio base and personnel.

"This new-generation technology will provide the unit with increased monitoring and coordination capacity and the boating community with improved radio safety services," he said.

The installation work was scheduled ahead of the peak boating season in the first week of November and completed in less than a week.

"It was a huge effort by our volunteers in getting this completed so quickly with minimal interruption to the Illawarra public," UC McCrudden said.



MR Port Kembla Unit Commander Graeme McCrudden on duty at Hill 60, following the installation of new digital radio technology.

Measures were put in place to maintain services. Overnight VHF radio calls were monitored by MR Terrey Hills and the unit's operations

also were supplemented by the MR Shoalhaven radio base, which operated around-the-clock during the installation work.

Kioloa at strength after rapid renewal

January Open Day aims to raise awareness and attract members.

After a period of rapid renewal and training, the MR Kioloa radio base and rescue vessel are again at full operational status.

Our vessel crew has been tasked to three recent assists.

In late September, a vessel that had Logged On with the MR Batemans Bay unit to our south experienced motor problems off Depot Beach and required a tow to safety.

Although the boater called the Batemans Bay unit for help, *Kioloa 20* was on a training exercise in the area and best placed to assist.

As Illawarra Regional Operations Manager Bruce Mitchell later noted, it was a good example of why there are no unit or regional boundaries on the water.

The second incident occurred

during our regional Search and Rescue Exercise on Jervis Bay on October 14, which took a realistic turn when another vessel with mechanical problems needed help to return to Huskisson.

Fortunately for the distressed vessel, eight MRNSW vessels were nearby, all standing ready to help.

The Kioloa crew was tasked to respond before rejoining the exercise later in the morning.

Our last assist was to rescue a jet ski and two cold riders from Belowla Island, where the craft had broken down and washed ashore on to rocks.

The pair, neither of whom was wearing a wetsuit, was brought safely back to Kioloa just in time as both were in the early stages of developing hypothermia.



Crew members Peter Lee and Tim Bogg on board *Kioloa 20* during the Illawarra Region Search and Rescue Exercise on Jervis Bay.

The Kioloa unit is planning to welcome local residents and visitors to an Open Day on Monday, January 7.

The radio base and rescue vessel will be on display for the event, which will be a valuable opportunity

to raise awareness of our work to assist the local community and attract new members.

We would also welcome any MRNSW members who are in the area to come along and meet us.

Peter White

New recruits boost Sussex Inlet capability

Commander praises trainees' exceptional enthusiasm, perseverance.

The Sussex Inlet unit has boosted its capability thanks to a successful recruitment and training campaign.

Five new recruits have recently qualified as radio operators, with three subsequently progressing to complete their rescue vessel crew assessments as well.

The recruitment campaign was built around monthly articles in the local newsletter focusing on the unit's activities and boating safety lessons, complemented by each unit member's commitment to actively recruit one new member over a year.

Unit Commander Ellen Dodd said the trainees had demonstrated exceptional enthusiasm and perseverance to gain their qualifications in minimum time.

"Their efforts have boosted the unit's capability to sustain operations over the coming Christmas holiday period," she said.

The recruit training was strongly supported by Regional Training Manager South Stuart Massey.

Congratulations to our new radio operators, Karen Lowry, Shane Lowry, Lawrence Jaques, Greg Tuffy and Tom Jensen. Extra kudos to Lawrence, Greg and Tom, who completed their Crew assessments in November. Four new recruits will begin their training in January.

In early October, the unit responded to a report of an overturned sailing catamaran in St Georges Basin, plucking a father and his two young sons from the water just before sunset.

Proceeding to the vessel's reported position off Sanctuary Point Beach, the crew of *Sussex Inlet 22* was unable to sight the disabled catamaran so headed downwind, following the most likely drift line towards Cabbage Tree Point.

The crew spotted the hull of



Regional Training Manager Stuart Massey with newly-qualified MR Sussex Inlet Crew members Greg Tuffy, Tom Jensen and Lawrence Jaques.

the overturned vessel with the three males in the water 200m away between the vessel and the beach. The trio was taken on board and transported to the Sanctuary Point boat ramp, where they were met by NSW Police and an ambulance. The crew returned to base after sunset.

The next day the unit was tasked to ensure the overturned Hobie Cat was not posing a navigation hazard in the Basin. The catamaran, which had drifted further towards the shore, was taken under tow to Sanctuary Point Beach.

Les Pataky

Shellharbour escapes the rough for golf day

Unit stages new event to thank community for its tireless support.

Marine Rescue Shellharbour's first annual golf day proved a hit, with 48 players joining the spirited four man ambrose event on November 9.

The line-up for the event at the Links Golf Course at Shellharbour included local business representatives, community leaders, MRNSW supporters, unit members more used to rough seas than fairways and the MRNSW Headquarters Hackers team, led by Commissioner Stacey Tannos.

The unit's cooks ensured players were well fed, with the barbecue firing throughout the day.

The event was not only a valuable fundraiser for the unit but also a way for the volunteers to give something back and thank the community for its endless support.

We would like to thank everyone who generously donated, participated and lent a helping hand on the day, particularly Deputy Unit Commander Peter May and unit functions officer Alana Heywood.

The unit has farewelled Zane



The blues on the greens ... MR Shellharbour members Gerry Kelly, Peter May, Jordan Brown, David White, Dennis Quye and Eva Goodchild at the unit's first annual golf day. Photo: Brendan Trembath.

Heywood, who performed his last shift on November 4 after 35 years' service.

DUC May wished Zane and his family all the best in the next chapter of their lives.

"Zane has given exemplary service to Marine Rescue NSW and before that to both the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard and Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol," he said.

"He has always presented himself

professionally and his skillsets will be missed by all who had the privilege of working alongside him.

"We will all miss Zane's sense of humour, loyalty and pride in his unit.

"I have known Zane for many years. He is someone you can rely on and trust with your life - and I have, many times.

"I have been honoured to call Zane a mate."

Alana Heywood



Zane Heywood has retired after 35 years' service.

Alpine Lakes opens door to a new view

Work to beautify the foreshore of Lake Jindabyne is under way in front of the MR Alpine Lakes shed.

The work is providing parking for the numerous boaters who frequent the area each day. A stone wall has been built to protect the road from rising lake levels and the waves whipped up by the winds during winter storms. Our shed is at least a metre higher than the dam wall but the road is on a lower grade.

The project's second stage will include public toilets and showers. Thanks to Snowy Monaro Regional Council and the Foreshore Committee for carrying out the work.

Karin Davies



Landscaping works under way on the shore of Lake Jindabyne in front of the MR Alpine Lakes shed, which was opened this year. Photo: Tony Davies.

Services work to bolster remote response

Bermagui training exercise strengthens joint coverage of coastline.

Emergency response on remote stretches of the NSW Far South Coast will be enhanced by strengthened cooperation between two local rescue services.

As part of their commitment to water and boating safety, MR Bermagui and the Bermagui Surf Life Saving Club held a joint training exercise on October 29 to polish search and rescue coordination and practices and increase awareness of each other's capabilities.

The two agencies took to Bermagui Harbour and Horseshoe Bay to practice skills such as loading a Surf inflatable rescue boat (IRB) on to the stern of rescue vessel *Bermagui 30*.

In an emergency, a surf club boat could be transported to a remote location, allowing surf life savers to search the surf zone.

MR Bermagui Unit Commander Caron Parfitt said the exercise with Bermagui SLC went extremely well.



Hitching a ride ... MR Bermagui and Bermagui Surf Life Saving crew members load a Surf boat on the stern of *Bermagui 30* during a joint training exercise.

"We've been looking at ways that we can work together to fill the gaps that might exist in a search, particularly on parts of the coastline where it's quite remote," she said.

"We can't get in close but they can - but they can't get their boats there."

She said the point of closer cooperation was to broaden the coverage the two groups could offer.

The two teams also practiced

transferring people between vessels.

Ms Parfitt thanked everyone who took part in the exercise.

Master Denise Page, Steve Angelo, Volker Aebischer and Babs Stephens were on board *Bermagui 30*, while the Surf Club members were Cheryl McCarthy, Andrew Curven, Vikki Marshall, Steve O'Sullivan and Euan McKenzie.

MRNSW Monaro Regional Training Manager Stuart Massey

said joint training between MRNSW and Surf Life Saving NSW was a smart move.

"To cover white and blue water at the same time is killing two birds with one stone," he said.

Mr Massey has experience in both blue and white water.

In his own time he is a patrol member at North Wollongong Surf Club.

Brendan Trembath

Volunteers keep watch over river paddlers

No incidents as hundreds join massive marathon on mighty Murray.

The Murray River put almost 549 paddlers in 166 boats to the test in the 50th Massive Murray Paddle in November.

The competitors navigated a 400km course from Yarrowonga to Swan Hill over five days from November 19 to 23, raising almost \$230,000 for charity.

MRNSW provided a safety watch for stages of the event, ready to rescue anyone who ended up in the water, watching out for fatigued paddlers, especially in cold and windy conditions on the second last day, and keeping powered vessels from the course.

Monaro Regional Operations Manager Glenn Sullivan said a crew from MR Moama had patrolled the river on the last two days of

competition, supported by two members of MR Tuross on another day.

Mr Sullivan thanked MR Moama volunteers Beresford Ralph, Norm Berger and Tony Clarke and MR Tuross Unit Commander Blaise Madden and member Paul Carter for taking part in the event.

He said the crews had not been called to respond to any incidents during the marathon.

Paddle safety advice from NSW Maritime, which supported the event, is for paddlers to know their ability, plan their trips accordingly and always wear an appropriate lifejacket.

Back on the coastline, MR Tuross' two-year project to provide a permanent berth for *TU 20* near the



MR Tuross UC Blaise Madden and DUC Alan Blessington on board new Naiad, *Tuross 12*.

Moruya Bar is almost complete.

A finger wharf and security fence have been built at Preddey's Wharf and once the anchors for the AirBerth are installed, *TU 20* will be able to be moved to its new location, just three minutes from the

hazardous river bar.

The unit has also installed a new floating block dock for its new vessel, *TU 12*, a 4.8m Naiad that will be deployed to respond to emergencies on Tuross Lake and the Moruya River.

Eden radio base upgrade nears completion

\$75,000 project improves operational environment and access for all.

A major upgrade of the MR Eden base is expected to be completed before the summer rush.

The construction of our new search and rescue coordination facilities is almost complete, along with car parking.

A new external staircase and stair lift are the final stages of the project. Funded by a \$75,000 NSW Government Infrastructure Grant, the work will provide a more efficient and comfortable working environment for our volunteers, as well as disabled access and an emergency exit.

Recent patchy weather has resulted in fewer boaters on the water. The unit has responded to calls to medical emergencies, coordinating NSW Ambulance assistance, and from distressed vessels experiencing mechanical problems, mostly relating to batteries and fuel.

All were resolved with the help of the Police Marine Area Command at Eden.

In October, members joined a Melbourne Cup promotional cruise on the waters of Twofold Bay, enjoying the chance to have a photo taken with the famed trophy.

MR Eden is again gearing up for our role in the Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race. This is always a big event for our unit and town and considerable effort is put into making sure that all of our systems are working at maximum efficiency.

A meeting with representatives of the race organisers, the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia, and Police Marine Area Command is scheduled to plan this year's radio operations.

MR Eden provides radio coverage for the fleet as it heads south down the coast.

The radio base will be operational 24/7 for the first three days of the



Monaro Regional Director Glenn Felkin and MR Eden Unit Commander John McKinnon inspect progress on the unit's \$75,000 upgrade.

event before Tasmanian authorities take over the race safety monitoring. CYCA members will again be located in the radio base.

Now is the time for boaters to check all aspects of their craft, including batteries, engines, fuel,

radios and safety equipment.

Remember to Log On with MRNSW when you head out and Log Off when you return, either by radio on VHF Ch 16 or 27 MHz Ch 88 or the *MarineRescue* app.

John McKinnon

Batemans Bay prepared for holiday influx

Increased focus on training ensures more members qualified to assist.

With summer crowds already starting to build, a recent run of fantastic weather has attracted more boaters to the local waterways watched over by MR Batemans Bay.

We are regularly seeing the car park full of cars and trailers and recently had more than a dozen boats Logged On by 6am.

The unit will extend its operations for the peak season. The radio base will be on the air from 5.30am daily and our rescue vessel crews will be standing ready to respond to the inevitable late afternoon calls for help from boaters striking mechanical, engine, battery or fuel problems as they return to shore.

The unit has placed a heightened focus on training in recent months to ensure as many members as possible are qualified to join the

response to incidents on the water, whether as radio operators or crew members.

David Murn has earned his Master qualification and Peter Varkulevicius has been promoted to Coxswain.

Other members who have gained new ratings include John Clement (Leading Crew), Sandra Simmonds, Michael Rodgers and Peter Johnson (MR Crew) and Greg Irvine (Radio Operator).

Our recruitment activities have resulted in six new members signing on and starting their training.

A commemorative sail past by the unit's three rescue vessels on the harbour on Remembrance Day was well received by the crowd of about 200 people attending the memorial service at the town



MR Batemans Bay rescue vessels stage a commemorative sail past on Remembrance Day.

Cenotaph. The unit has also raised the profile of MRNSW at two recent events, an open day at the Old Courthouse Museum and the Seaside Carnivale.

Both events attracted large crowds, with a number of prospective members indicating their interest in joining MRNSW.

Richard Blundell

What we've been up to



Reason to celebrate ... members of MR Cottage Point, dignitaries and guests gather on the waterfront on a spectacular spring morning to witness Chaplain Carmelo Sciberras bless *Cottage Point 31 (Elizabeth Watts)* during the rescue vessel's official commissioning ceremony. The unit also marked its 50th anniversary with a reunion of past and present members (see story, page 31). Photo: Jon Bensley.



In remembrance ... MRNSW Commissioner Stacey Tannos and Senior Chaplain Richard Wrightson honour the fallen at the annual Emergency Services Volunteers Memorial Service in October.



Easy does it ... MR Tuggerah Lakes Unit Commander Tony Younglove and Hawkesbury member Jamie Abnett-Miller, on *TL 20*, recover a search target during the Sydney Regional SAREX (see page 35).



Handle with kid gloves ... members of MR Eden joined a Melbourne Cup promotional cruise on Twofold Bay, where Unit Commander John McKinnon came to grips with the famed trophy (see page 41).



Headquarters Hackers ... IT Support Officer Matt Sims and new Chief Financial Officer Todd Andrews, ready to tee off in the Shellharbour unit's successful golf day (see story, page 39).

Leigh's legacy of excellence will live on

Trainer always willing to help members improve their performance.

Leigh Carmichael will be remembered as one of the best things ever to happen to MR Lemon Tree Passage, leaving us a legacy of excellence in training and boating skills.

Leigh became a member of the Lemon Tree Passage Coast Guard in 2005, bringing commercial maritime qualifications and from that point, raising the bar in the standard of our training and professionalism.

His knowledge of boating was second to none and his ability to

share and transfer his skill was extraordinary. He was generous and always willing to help others enhance their performance.

Leigh's excellence in training was recognised by MRNSW when he was appointed our Regional Training Officer. While he was a wonderful asset for MRNSW as a whole, the unit soon found that we had to share him. Leigh held this position for four years, battling stoically to keep going until he simply became too ill to maintain a full-time role.

He continued as a unit member with contagious and inspirational enthusiasm.

Even when he was obviously suffering, he always managed to crack a smile, tell a bad joke and encourage everyone to strive for excellence. Leigh never had a bad or discouraging word for anyone; rather, he had the knack of finding the positive in everything. Even in his last few months he continued to give his time when well enough.

We will miss our colleague very



Leigh Carmichael.

much but his legacy will live on.

Rick Tyler

Arthur honoured for gallantry and service

Respected volunteer and decorated member of MR Port Stephens Arthur Heiler passed away suddenly in October, aged 79.

After retiring to Fingal Bay in 1995, Arthur maintained his enthusiasm for community work in roles including secretary of the Port Stephens Sister City Committee, chairman of a local volunteer park committee and a director of the Fingal Bay Sporting Club. He joined the Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol in 1999, where his experience as

the former General Manager of Bankstown City Council was put to good use. He spent many years as a crew member on *Girralong* and *Dania Thain* and was awarded the RVCP Albatross Medal, the highest award for gallantry, for his work on a police boat attempting to rescue the skipper of the vessel *Trade Winds* foundering in heavy seas.

The Division was successful in obtaining funding towards its command centre and other projects with which Arthur was involved. He

became the Divisional Commander and later the senior manager for the Central Coast and Hunter units.

Awarded the Commissioner's Commendation for Service in 2005, he was highly regarded by all units, as he was happy to share his skills and knowledge, always with a smile.

Working tirelessly with his wife Margaret to make our waterways safer and enhance our community, he was presented the NSW State Government Community Service Medal and the National Medal.



Arthur Heiler.

Arthur will be sorely missed.

Peter Phillipson

Units grateful for Dick's input and inspiration

Members of three units in the Greater Sydney and Hunter/Central Coast regions are mourning the loss of a volunteer who shared his time and commitment with them all, Richard (Dick) Jarman.

Dick was initially a member of the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard Association at Cottage Point before joining the Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol at Middle Harbour in 2001.

After a decade, he transferred to MR Lake Macquarie in 2011, coming with a great

recommendation from his previous unit. Having spent his early years in the Royal Navy, Dick had a tremendous wealth of maritime knowledge and experience with boats and his willingness to share this with his colleagues was appreciated by all. We are grateful for his input and inspiration.

It was always a pleasure to be on duty with Dick and he was great to spend time with. His stories around the crew table at the Pelican base were legendary (we assume

some of them were true). He had great expertise with a piece of rope and knots and spent many hours teaching these skills to our crew members.

The treasure trove he kept in the boot of his car always amazed us.

If you needed a left-handed screw driver with a ratchet that glowed in the dark, he had it among all his other treasures in the boot. A service manual for a US Landing craft? He had that, too.

We salute you, Richard Jarman.



Dick Jarman.

You are missed.

Jim Wright & Ben Crowther

The happiest Director remembered fondly

Bill a popular and clear-thinking member of the Evans Head unit and Board.

Bill Wardrobe will be recorded in the history of MRNSW as a constructive and valued Board Director. He will also be fondly remembered by all who knew him as a man of good humour, generosity and devotion to his family and friends.

One of Bill's signature catchphrases was 'happy days!'. And 'happy days' were what Bill brought. He had only lived in Evans Head for about four years and yet such was his popularity in town that the church was bursting at the seams for his funeral, the congregation laughing at the tales of

the fun times in his life.

Bill joined MR Evans Head in 2014, shortly after moving north from Melbourne. He had just retired from the one job he had held his entire working life, spending more than 46 years with Coles/Kmart, and brought his senior management and PR skills to our unit.

He soon became a radio operator, and as our membership officer, he encouraged and mentored new members, bringing professionalism and clear thinking to our executive.

Bill was elected to the Board in 2017 as the Northern Rivers Regional Director and made a point

of visiting as many units in the area as possible, making new friends along the way.

As well as his MRNSW duties, Bill's other passions were the ukulele and motorcycles. In this, his 70th year, he finally stepped up to a Triumph Bonneville. He was determined to master it and we're sure he would have eventually.

Bill was not known for his handyman skills. Anecdotally, if he went to hang a picture, Nola got a new wall. But if his children needed a hand he would jump on the plane to Melbourne or immediately drive up to Brisbane. Bill and Nola had



Bill Wardrobe.

three children but he sadly did not get to meet his newborn grandchild.

He left us all too soon.

Bill Bates

A life devoted to family, fishing and rescue

'Start fishing, start fishing, Start fishing' was the familiar radio call to members of the Lake Macquarie Game Fishing Club from their long-time radio controller, veteran MRNSW volunteer and staff member, Neil Grieves.

The much-valued member passed away on October 14 after a day on the water doing what he loved, hooking a beautiful blue marlin off the Great Barrier Reef.

Neil could always be found in the radio truck handling the radio traffic at club competitions, joined by his wife Lyndy at events along the coast.

Game fishing was Neil's second

love; his first was his family. At his funeral, each member of his family spoke of his love, devotion and guidance in their lives. MRNSW members from the Hunter/Central Coast formed a Guard of Honour.

Neil gave 36 years' service to the boating community of Lake Macquarie as a member of the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard at Swansea, which he joined in 1982, and then MR Lake Macquarie. He served two terms as Swansea Commander and spent countless hours either at the helm of its rescue vessels in all types of weather or behind the radio. He continued to

serve as a duty skipper in MRNSW and his guidance was appreciated by all who served with him. In 2010, he was appointed the Hunter/Central Coast Regional Coordinator (later Regional Controller), liaising between the region's seven units and Headquarters and coordinating the response to emergencies and incidents on the water.

Neil stood down from his role in 2016 to concentrate on serving as a coxswain and Search and Rescue Support Officer in the Lake Macquarie unit. In June this year he was elected Unit Commander.

He will be remembered as larger



Neil Grieves.

than life. In the words of his best fishing mate, it's time to "Stop fishing, stop fishing, stop fishing".

Mal Wardrop

Wheelchair no barrier to Kel's enthusiasm

Marine rescue and medieval re-enactment were two passions of Karen "Kel" Larter, who died in November after a long illness.

Ms Larter spent almost 12 years as a volunteer with the Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol and MRNSW. She used a wheelchair and would go to great lengths to attend events, including boat shows,

fundraisers and water safety events.

"She could get anywhere on public transport," said her fellow MR Botany Port Hacking member and friend of 20 years, Sue Tate. Last summer, Kel joined fellow volunteers at a water safety campaign launch at Nielsen Park with Emergency Services Minister Troy Grant. She said at the time she hoped to show

people with disabilities were capable of many things.

Three years ago Ms Larter joined the Stowe on the Wowld medieval society. Member Jacqueline Cadwgan said Ms Larter would be sorely missed. "She was an active and enthusiastic member, becoming involved in all aspects of the society, from crafts to feasting and more



Kel Larter

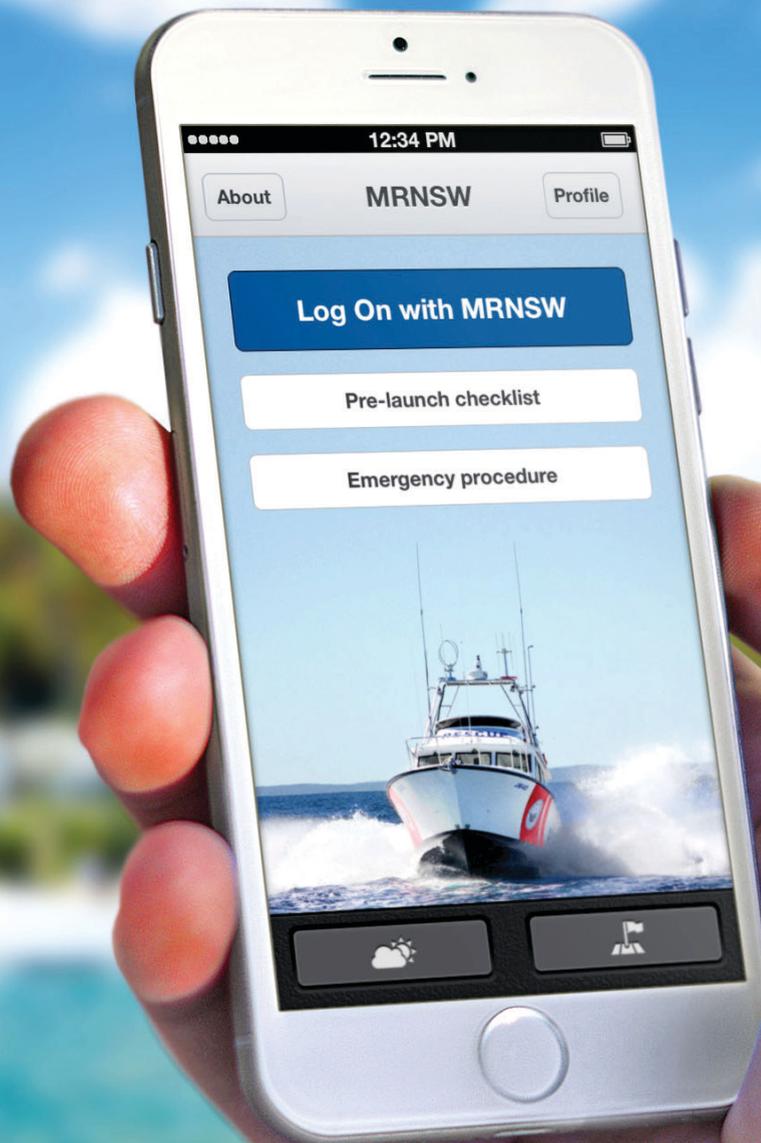
active pursuits such as fencing and she especially loved dancing."

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