

Volunteers saving lives on the water

SOUNDINGS



Quarterly Journal of Marine Rescue NSW | Issue 47, Winter 2021

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SOUNDINGS

Quarterly Journal of Marine Rescue NSW

Cover Image

NSW Police & Emergency Services Minister David Elliott has opened our first offshore unit, on the stunning Lord Howe Island. The largest vessel in the MRNSW fleet, *Lord Howe 40*, has been deployed to the island for operations to keep the local and visiting boating community safe. See Page 27.

Photo: Brad Whittaker.

Thank you to all the volunteers and staff who contributed photos from the floods and of other MRNSW activities.

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Commissioner
Stacey Tannos ESM

From the Commissioner

Coordinated flood response demonstrates our capability.

Not so long ago, we optimistically spoke of turning a corner and of “the new normal” after the terrors of the Black Summer bushfires and the year of the pandemic.

But it seems Mother Nature had another trick up her sleeve, with the worst floods NSW has seen in decades knocking us out of any sense of complacency in March.

While MRNSW has provided ad hoc support to emergency response operations in past natural disasters, when widespread, life-threatening flooding swept down the coastline and hinterland in March, we mounted our first coordinated all-of-service operation as part of the multi-agency response led by the NSW State Emergency Service.

Our volunteers were straight on to the frontline alongside our emergency services colleagues on the Mid North Coast and in Western Sydney.

We were able to deploy out-of-area taskforces to badly impacted communities and the emergency management ability of our staff and volunteers proved an asset in the SES Headquarters and regional command centres. The response from our people was immediate, unstinting and gratifying.

Whether they turned out to help their own neighbours or people in communities they had never been to before, they did not hesitate. Many were out in the rain, cold and wind at all hours without complaint.

The ability to mount a coordinated response on this scale was a demonstration of our maturity, growth and expanding capability.

Our contribution did not go unremarked, with both SES Commissioner Carlene York and Police and Emergency Services Minister David Elliott thanking our people. I add my sincere personal thanks to everyone involved.

I want to particularly acknowledge our Alpine Lakes volunteers, Cain Hopwood, Phillip Brown and Karina Hermeston, who travelled to help people far from their small High Country community. Along with other MRNSW vessels, *Alpine Lakes 21* was taking part in a multi-agency operation in difficult conditions to support the SES in evacuating

be sure to read our full report, *Mud Mission*, starting on Page 9.

Of course, in addition to mounting this out-of-the-ordinary operation, we have maintained our core services and training commitment.

Our first three Search and Rescue Exercises for the year provided a challenging and enjoyable test for the members of 25 units both on and off the water.

The opening of our first offshore unit on Lord Howe Island and commissioning of our first ocean-going vessel was an opportunity to reflect on our progress and the start of operations at the State Communications Centre is another critical milestone.

While our volunteers have responded to a number of tragedies, they have also continued to save lives on the water, returning boaters to shore and their families.

This edition of *Soundings* features several reports of well-deserved recognition for our people and their

The response from our people was immediate, unstinting and gratifying.

residents from Colo when the boat appears to have been caught on a low-hanging cable over the turbulent and fast-rising Colo River and capsized.

Two MRNSW volunteers, an SES volunteer and four members of the public were on board at the time.

All escaped and were returned to waiting NSW Ambulance paramedics at the operation’s staging point at Sackville. I am deeply grateful everyone on board was quickly accounted for and appeared to have suffered only minor abrasions, bruising and shock. I saw the Alpine Lakes crew the same evening and while understandably shaken by their experience, they were resolute and above all else, thankful no lives had been lost.

For more on our flood operations,

service as part of our mission.

The announcement of National Bravery Awards for 15 members of MR Port Stephens and the Queen’s Birthday Honours for our two Emergency Service Medal recipients are a source of great pride for us all.

The Rotary Emergency Services Community Awards also are coming up and we wish our finalists the best in the August presentations.

It takes nothing away from our award recipients to reflect that the many unheralded quiet achievers in our ranks also deserve our thanks for their service to their units and community.

Generosity of spirit and dedication to public service is the hallmark of our people and each does us proud.

Stacey Tannos ESM
Commissioner



Police and Emergency Services Minister David Elliott and Commissioner Stacey Tannos on board *Lord Howe 40*.

Awards for crews who put others' safety first

Port Stephens volunteers battled dangerous conditions with bravery and fortitude.

A Marine Rescue NSW volunteer has been awarded the prestigious Star of Courage for saving the lives of two of his crewmates when their rescue vessel was repeatedly knocked down on its side in a harrowing rescue mission in treacherous conditions in 2016.

Marine Rescue Port Stephens Coxswain Laurie Nolan will receive the Star of Courage in recognition of his conspicuous courage in the face of great peril as the crew of rescue vessel *Port Stephens 40* battled 50 knot winds and 5-6m seas to save disabled racing yacht *M3*.

Fourteen other members of the unit have been awarded national Bravery Medals for their service to the community in the *M3* mission and a series of other operations in wild conditions on January 6 and 7, 2016, including responding to five Maydays and searching for a lost yachtsman.

Commissioner Stacey Tannos congratulated the volunteers after the Australian Bravery Decorations were announced by the Governor-General in late March.

"We take great pride in this national recognition of our 15 volunteers. It is entirely fitting that we, as a community, thank them for their extraordinary service to our community and courage," he said.

"They faced danger and risk with



The crew of *Port Stephens 40* are among 15 members of MR Port Stephens recognised for their bravery in a series of search and rescue operations in harrowing conditions in January, 2016.

bravery and fortitude, putting the safety of others before their own to fulfil our mission of saving lives on the water.

"Mr Nolan's selflessness in saving his fellow crew members from being entangled and dragged under water was the finest demonstration of mateship and the Australian volunteering ethos."

Mr Nolan was awarded the first MRNSW Medal for Valour for the *M3* operation. In all, 21 crew members and radio operators received Commissioner's Commendations and Citations for their efforts over the two days.

On January 6, 2016, a number of racing yachts were caught in severe weather lashing the Hunter coastline. Experienced sailor Mal Lennon lost his life when he was

washed overboard from *Amante*. MR Port Stephens volunteers, along with the NSW Police Marine Area Command at Nelson Bay, responded to a string of emergencies, including five separate Maydays, as well as searching for Mr Lennon.

That evening, *PS 40* headed out in the dark to save *M3*, which was disabled and being blown up the coast. After battling the conditions for five hours, the 32-tonne vessel was hit by a wall of water at 2am, knocking it on to its port side and throwing the crew on deck off their feet. As the boat righted itself, a second large wave hit.

Mr Nolan regained his footing and went to the aid of one his crewmates, who had suffered a dislocated shoulder, helping him to free his safety line and reach the



The Star of Courage.

cabin. Realising another member was pinned to the deck by his safety line wrapped around 30m of towline and deck furniture, Mr Nolan quickly grabbed his knife, severed the lifeline and pulled him inside to safety. When the boat was knocked down for a third time, the whole crew rallied to save the vessel and successfully navigate the hazardous trip back to base.

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Chair
James Glissan AM ESM QC

From the Chair

Plan sets our course to deliver vision for a better future.

The official opening of our first offshore rescue unit on Lord Howe Island, coupled with the commissioning of the largest vessel in our fleet, was a true celebration of a community's commitment to harnessing its strength and abilities to care for its own and deliver its vision for a better, safer future.

We were fortunate to be able to welcome NSW Police and Emergency Services Minister David Elliott, Member for Port Macquarie Leslie Williams, NSW Police Commissioner Michael Fuller and members of the Lord Howe Island Board to the new unit's base, set in one of the finest locations it is possible to imagine, and aboard the 16m *Lord Howe 40*.

The most important guests by the picturesque lagoon that day, however, were not those in suits and braid but Unit Commander Jim McFadyen and his colleagues in blue. Jim's family has a long history on Lord Howe. After 24 years in the NSW Police Force Marine Area Command, he left the mainland for island life and has met the challenge to make a difference.

He has assembled a talented and experienced volunteer workforce who share his vision to make boating safer for the island's many local and visiting people of the sea.

Marine Rescue NSW shares their vision and is pleased to work together with the island's volunteers, investing \$1.4 million in the resources, infrastructure and facilities they require for their mission to save lives on their spectacular waters. We could only achieve this with the support of the State Government and Commissioner Fuller, who was keen to see for himself the refurbishment of the former Police vessel *Fearless*,

Board and staff provide the essential infrastructure and support our volunteer units require to operate but our organisation would not exist without the skill and commitment of more than 3,000 individuals with a belief in making a difference. Working in partnership, we continue to deliver immense benefits for the boating public and the wider community.

This is without argument the leading volunteer marine rescue service in this nation but we cannot rest on our laurels. We must remain determined, continue to strive for excellence and be ambitious in our goals to achieve even greater

We must remain determined, continue to strive for excellence and be ambitious in our goals.

now operating in our livery as *LH 40*.

All this support would have amounted to nought without the dedication to serving others of the 35 members of our newest unit. I thank each of them for their work to make their vision a reality.

Our newest unit is, in a way, a microcosm of our organisation. The

service and capability. We must chart a clear and defined course to our destination and each contribute, no matter our role, responsibilities or duties.

This course is taking the shape of a new strategic plan, currently being developed to steer our progress and deliver on our vision over the coming three years. While the process is, by necessity, being driven from Headquarters, members must - and will - be able to have their say.

For this reason, a survey seeking our members' views and feedback is being circulated. I ask each of you to respond frankly and constructively. While it is not possible to incorporate 3,000-plus different viewpoints in a plan to drive an organisation, our volunteers' experience and input will be in the DNA of this document.

I look forward to the challenges and achievements ahead as we all, like the members of MR Lord Howe Island, work together to deliver on our vision for a better, safer, stronger future.

Safe sailing
Jim Glissan



Pride of the fleet ... MR Lord Howe Island Unit Commander Jim McFadyen, Chair Jim Glissan and NSW Police Commissioner Michael Fuller at the helm of our first ocean-going vessel, *Lord Howe 40*.

Skilled volunteers recognised by our nation

Medal recipients have shown resilience and unrivalled dedication: Minister.

Two senior Marine Rescue NSW volunteers have been recognised in the 2021 Queen's Birthday Honours for their commitment to community service and saving lives on the water.

Marine Rescue Shoalhaven vessel Master Michael Boadle and Marine Rescue Tuggerah Lakes Unit Commander Anthony Younglove were awarded the Emergency Services Medal.

Commissioner Stacey Tannos congratulated the pair.

"These awards have been bestowed on behalf of our nation to thank Mike and Tony for their service, leadership, operational expertise and commitment to serving our community," he said.

"Each has saved lives on the

water and has also contributed to their unit by stepping up to shoulder additional responsibilities.

"Our organisation would not exist without our dedicated volunteers.

"Each of them deserves our gratitude and these awards are our chance to say thank you not just to our ESM recipients but to all their colleagues as well."

The Commissioner said Mike and Tony embodied the versatility of MRNSW volunteers in helping the community whenever and wherever called upon, including during the March floods and Black Summer bushfires, as well as on the water.

Police and Emergency Services Minister David Elliott said every single one of the police and emergency services personnel

who had been honoured on the Queen's Birthday had demonstrated resilience, bravery and an unrivalled dedication to keeping their communities safe

"Each one has made a significant contribution to their organisation," Mr Elliott said.

"These men and women have served throughout some of our State's most challenging emergencies and have gone above and beyond the call of duty.

"Although they don't serve for the hope of awards, each one is a well-deserving recipient and it is important we recognise their contributions."

The ESM was introduced to the Australian honours in 1999 to recognise distinguished service



The Emergency Services Medal.

by members of the emergency services.

A total of 44 MRNSW personnel have been awarded the ESM since 2000.



Tony Younglove.

Tony Younglove has served his community with distinction for more than a decade as a volunteer member of MR Tuggerah Lakes, including the past six years as Unit Commander.

As the unit's only qualified Coxswain, Mr Younglove has led numerous rescue missions across a waterways system covering more than 80sq/km, saving people caught in life-endangering emergencies, including six dragonboat racers suffering hypothermia.

His emergency management has ensured the unit's members work collaboratively to support other emergency services.

He oversaw the unit's support for the 2020 Black Summer firefighting operation, keeping its two rescue vessels on operational standby, ready to transport and evacuate those in harm's way and assist RFS brigades on the Hawkesbury River.

In his roles as a Trainer, Assessor and mentor, he has developed the highest levels of volunteer

professionalism and works collaboratively with other MRNSW units across the Central Coast region to support their training and operational activities.

Mr Younglove has provided exemplary leadership throughout his tenure as Unit Commander, developing a newly-formed unit into a highly-responsive and effective emergency service with strong volunteer spirit and commitment, ensuring its ongoing capability and viability.



Mike Boadle.

Joining MR Shoalhaven in 2009, Mike Boadle has consistently exhibited an exceptional volunteer work ethic, strong commitment and outstanding professionalism.

Mr Boadle has spent almost 2,500 hours on vessel operations, taking part in 325 rescue operations – close to half of all missions launched by the unit – and recently joined the MRNSW flood support operations in western Sydney.

A vessel Master and Coxswain, Mr Boadle has been the Vessels

Operation Manager for a decade, ensuring crews have safe and reliable vessels for their life-saving work. His management of the unit's fleet is characterised by innovative management and development, implementing new systems, procedures and techniques.

He provides a valuable technical resource for the Illawarra Region and as a Trainer and recognised Subject Matter Expert, he has been a role model and mentor for several "generations" of MR Shoalhaven

volunteers and also assisted MR Sussex Inlet, Port Kembla and Ulladulla. He is currently leading a working group planning to replace the unit's small, outdated radio base with a modern emergency management centre.

Mr Boadle has been awarded two Commissioner's Citations for his actions to save lives on the water in and around the Shoalhaven, most recently for saving a couple suffering from carbon monoxide poisoning on a cruiser in 2020.

Stakeholders have say in boating safety plan

Marine Rescue works with State Government on waterway strategies.

Marine Rescue NSW is helping to steer the future of boating safety on our state's waterways.

This year marks the conclusion of the State Government's first four-year Maritime Safety Plan, which set the strategic direction in maritime safety from 2017 to 2021, with a new plan now under development.

The objective of the inaugural plan was to continue the downward trend in the drowning fatality rate and to further reduce the rate of fatalities and serious injuries by 30 per cent by the end of 2021.

With Transport for NSW working on the development of the second Maritime Safety Plan (MSP), MRNSW Deputy Commissioner Alex Barrell and Director Operations Andrew Cribb recently attended the Countermeasures Workshop, which

focused on the future of boating safety. The event was hosted by the Centre for Maritime Safety as an integral part of formulating MSP 2026.

More than 60 stakeholders joined the workshop in person or online, as Centre personnel shared updates on boating fatality and serious injury trends, recapped key findings from latest research and shared draft countermeasures and actions for the next MSP.

The draft countermeasures centre on emerging strategic themes: saving lives on our waterways, safer boating through technology and safer waterway access and infrastructure.

Participants debated the options being presented before voting to indicate support for key measures.



MRNSW Director Operations Andrew Cribb attends a workshop as part of the development of the NSW Maritime Safety Plan 2026.

"The countermeasures workshop was a great opportunity to discuss current maritime safety issues and provide input on areas for future focus," Deputy Commissioner Barrell said. "Boating safety is central to the work of both organisations

so it was great to work side-by-side with the Centre for Maritime Safety, along with a range of other organisations and groups, to ensure we're developing a plan that results in safer and more enjoyable trips for all waterway users."

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Compelling cases win Federal grant funds

Five MRNSW units have been awarded more than \$65,000 in funding under the Federal Government's Stronger Communities grants program.

MR Sydney has secured \$10,247 for 10 laptops for its training activities, incident management and other radio room IT applications, along with a storage cabinet to keep the items secure.

MR Lemon Tree Passage has received a grant of \$8,500 that will help the unit to save money in future by installing solar panels on its base.

The members of MR Brunswick have been training on Headquarters-supplied Rescue Water Craft in recent months. The unit has received \$18,000 towards the cost of a new RWC.

Further south, the Lake Macquarie unit also received \$18,405 for a new RWC.



Two units have received grants for Rescue Water Craft.

Member for Gilmore Fiona Phillips presented members of MR Ulladulla with \$10,000 for an emergency generator on June 10.

Grants and Sponsorship Manager Mat Smith congratulated the units for developing compelling cases outlining their need for new and upgraded equipment.

"This funding will help the units to boost their rescue operations and support their volunteers," he said.

State Comms Centre hits opening target

Sydney unit anticipates dramatic improvements at new radio location.

The new high-tech State Communications Centre in Sydney's northern suburbs began operations in mid-June, marking a major advance in MRNSW emergency response coordination.

The Belrose centre had been planned to 'go live' ahead of the Greater Sydney Regional Search and Rescue Exercise on June 26.

The goal was met when MR Sydney switched its radio operations over from its Terrey Hills base on Friday, June 18.

The first functions in the new facility, an introduction evening for new members and two public radio courses, were held in early June.

Unit Commander Matt King said it was a great feeling to already be able to use the new facilities for meetings and training.

He said unit members,

Headquarters staff and supplier teams had worked hard to have the centre ready for the move.

The relocation was scheduled for a week day to avoid any disruption to busier weekend operations.

UC King said the challenges of connecting an array of complex new technology had been further complicated by poor weather delaying the installation of communication links for the centre's radios, phones and internet.

The radio room incorporates an impressive video wall, new Frequentis communications and purpose-developed operator workstations. The video array provides radio operators and watch officers on duty with enhanced situational awareness, displaying Seahawk, the MRNSW status board, AIS, charts and news feeds.



Marine Rescue Sydney Unit Commander Matt King and Deputy Sandy Howard test the State Communications Centre video wall.

"While there are always challenges with any new significant project, the rewards and operational benefits delivered through the new

State Communications Centre will be a dramatic improvement over our current system," UC King said.

Pamela Sayers

Global technology to 'empower heroes'

New mission-critical dispatch system to enhance rescue response.

Leading communications technology used in mission-critical control centres worldwide has been selected as the new marine radio call taking and dispatch system for MRNSW.

Director Operations Andrew Cribb said Frequentis technology had been selected to enhance Marine Rescue's emergency communications and response.

"By choosing this solution, we will ensure Australia's leading volunteer marine rescue team has the most up-to-date equipment to handle emergencies and feel confident that they have crucial information at their fingertips," he said.

Frequentis technology is currently used by Sydney Trains, at the Rescue Coordination Centre in Canberra and in air traffic control.

The new dispatch system is initially being installed in the new

State Communications Centre at Belrose and the MR Botany Port Hacking radio base.

"It will allow operators to maintain situational awareness and effectively manage complex and busy periods using a single, intuitive console, enabling them to access and communicate critical information quickly and easily," Mr Cribb said.

The technology was trialled at the MR Terrey Hills base over summer, with its volunteers heavily involved in the development of the product.

"Frequentis has also developed some additional functionalities to cater for our specific needs," he said.

Mr Cribb said the system provided a range of additional features, including an audio delay function to reduce echo from multiple radios relaying a single call, mapping and radio display coverage.



New Frequentis dispatch technology is critical to operations of the MRNSW State Communications Centre at Belrose.

Frequentis Head of Maritime Australasia Ruth Trojan said the company understood safety-critical industries and "the role technology plays in empowering Australia's heroes out on the water".

She said the solution had been introduced in a training environment to enable radio operators to

give valuable feedback and their requirements to be further assessed.

"This close collaboration with all stakeholders allowed finetuning of the highly configurable system to ensure Marine Rescue's needs and the essential radio communications to help vessels in distress could be delivered," Ms Trojan said.

Four finalists in running for Rotary awards

Recognition for people who give their all to keep us safe: Commissioner.

The MRNSW finalists in the 2021 Rotary Emergency Services Community Awards were named in a ceremony at NSW Parliament House on June 16.

Police and Emergency Services Minister David Elliott announced the finalists from the seven emergency services recognised in the annual awards.

The four MRNSW finalists are Alison Cameron-Brown from MR Port Macquarie, Alex Fenwick from MR Port Jackson, Neville Hamilton from MR Evans Head and Pat Welch from MR Shoalhaven. Together, they have given almost 50 years' service.

Mr Welch was named as a finalist in the Shoalhaven Emergency Services Community Awards.

Thirteen MRNSW members were nominated for the awards this year.



NSW Governor Margaret Beazley with representatives of Rotary and the emergency services at the launch of this year's Rotary Emergency Services Community Awards. Photo: Brad Whittaker.

The awards recognise Service Beyond Self by members of MRNSW, the NSW Rural Fire Service, State Emergency Service, Volunteer Rescue Association, NSW Ambulance, Fire + Rescue NSW and Surf Life Saving NSW.

The overall winners will be

announced at an event on August 14.

Commissioner Stacey Tannos congratulated the MRNSW finalists for the well-earned recognition.

"These awards are a chance to applaud members of our emergency services community," he said.

"Over the past two years, through bushfires and floods, our volunteers have worked alongside their colleagues from other services to assist and protect the community. It is pleasing to have this opportunity to acknowledge the people who give their all to keep us safe."

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MUD MISSION

Marine Rescue NSW volunteers swapped blue water operations for the muddy frontline of the NSW flood crisis in March, navigating around streetlights and rooftops and down swollen, debris-filled waterways to reach people in need. Working alongside their emergency services colleagues, they were at the heart of the response to the worst flooding to strike the state in decades.

Main photo: David Murn.



Volunteers quick to join flood crisis response

Mass support operation demonstrates our expanding capability, versatility.

Marine Rescue NSW was on the frontline of the mammoth emergency response to the March flood crisis, helping communities from the Mid North Coast to Western Sydney swamped by the worst flooding to strike the state in decades.

In its first large-scale, coordinated flood support operation, MRNSW provided on-water, logistical and incident management personnel and resources to the multi-agency response led by the NSW State Emergency Service.

Demonstrating the service's expanding capability and versatility, crews swapped their blue water operations to navigate down muddy flooded streets, over parks and fields and across swollen, debris-filled waterways along the coastline and hinterland from Port Macquarie to Colo, west of Sydney.

Director Operations Andrew Cribb, who was based at the SES State Headquarters for the response operation, applauded the service's volunteers for their community spirit and willingness to step into a new environment to support their emergency services colleagues and help people in need.

"We were pleased to be able to deploy our assets and trained personnel to assist in an operation of this scale, with such large areas of the state flooded," he said.

"Our volunteers played a valuable role, evacuating people from floodwaters, isolated houses, caravan parks and in one instance, half-way up a tree.

"They carried out welfare checks and resupply missions, they filled sandbags and they transported local government staff to inspect and repair public infrastructure needed for community health and transport.

"Our people quickly adapted to new operations in difficult conditions to help those worse off."

He said members from



Street light to starboard! MRNSW crew members navigate carefully around a power pole peeking through deep flood water on the Hawkesbury River near the Sackville Ferry. Photo: Brad Whittaker.

Merimbula, Batemans Bay, Ulladulla, Port Macquarie and Lake Macquarie had demonstrated their emergency management expertise in Incident Control and Emergency Operations Centres and a Cottage Point volunteer had joined operations at Sydney's Public Information Inquiry Centre to ensure the community was well-informed.

Others had ensured frontline crews were well fed and rostered duties covered, while yet others got to work on the clean up of their own flooded facilities, with the Port Macquarie, Camden Haven, Nambucca and Tuggerah Lakes bases all inundated.

The flood crisis began on the Mid North Coast, with crews from MR Port Macquarie, Camden Haven and Crowdy Harrington joining evacuation operations from March 19.

Members of MR Port Macquarie filled shifts around the clock for six days straight, working with other emergency services to rescue residents, including a six-month-old baby, from flooded homes and caravans. In contrast, a crew from MR Crowdy Harrington evacuated two elderly women, aged 83 and

94, from their isolated farms to their families.

An out-of-area deployment was assembled with volunteers from MR Ulladulla, Tuggerah Lakes and Broken Bay heading north to Taree to operate on the Manning River.

Over four days, the crews, with three smaller boats, evacuated residents, including a pregnant woman and a veteran Olympic swimmer, carried out welfare checks of people whose homes were surrounded by a sea of brown water and supported local council staff.

By March 22, a regional taskforce of more than 30 volunteers, seven

vessels and a fuel trailer from the Norah Head, Central Coast, Port Kembla, Shoalhaven, Sussex Inlet, Alpine Lakes, Merimbula, Tuross and Batemans Bay units had joined members of Botany Port Hacking in a deployment to Western Sydney. The Hawkesbury, Cottage Point and Broken Bay units were already on standby.

Commissioner Stacey Tannos met the taskforce members in Sydney and later inspected flooded facilities.

"All of our people, both volunteers and staff, gave 100 per cent, no matter their role," he said. "They all deserve our heartfelt thanks."



Paw patrol ... a greyhound and its owner are evacuated to safety by the crew of Port Macquarie 20. This was one of 22 pooches rescued.

Golden girl a ray of sunshine in the tempest

Taree taskforce evacuates Olympian, mum-to-be and two men up a tree.

Marine Rescue NSW vessels have the power to reach the scene of an emergency FAST but one person evacuated by our volunteers at the height of the flood emergency quipped she could probably swim faster than the rescue boat was travelling on the swollen Manning River.

Volunteers from MR Broken Bay, Ulladulla and Tuggerah Lakes were deployed to provide out-of-area support to emergency operations on the Manning at Taree South.

MR Ulladulla Unit Commander Dave Hall, Deputy David Lindley and Phil Anthony left the South Coast in the small hours of Saturday, March 20, to rendezvous with MR Broken Bay Commander Jimmy Arteaga, Deputy Andrew Majewski, Gavin Jarvis and Matt Colahan and MR Tuggerah Lakes members Steve Corbett and Craig Roberts. After reaching their staging point, they spent an afternoon filling sandbags with the SES.

With UC Hall acting as MRNSW Liaison Officer at the Taree council depot, the crews formed a discrete taskforce and were tasked to evacuate residents from harm's way, undertake welfare checks

and transport local government staff to inspect critical wastewater infrastructure.

When they headed out on board *UL 10* to evacuate one elderly woman trapped by the rising river while attending a funeral, they discovered to their surprise that their passenger was Olympic Gold and Silver medallist Lorraine Crapp.

Lorraine was the first woman to break the five-minute barrier in the 400m freestyle.

UC Arteaga said the golden girl had been in fine spirits, joking that she could swim faster than the boat.

Lorraine wasn't the only person helped to safety by the MRNSW team. A pregnant woman was ferried to a waiting NSW Ambulance and as the Broken Bay crew were making their way down the flooded Manning, they caught sight of two men wedged in trees on the far river bank. With the water levels on the river high up the trees, the men were frantically waving for help.

The pair had been making their way along the river in a kayak, without lifejackets, to deliver food and supplies to one of their elderly mothers, who had not wanted to leave her isolated home.



Veteran Olympian Lorraine Crapp was in fine fettle as the MRNSW Taree taskforce evacuated her to safety.



Convoy ... MR Tuggerah Lakes, Ulladulla and Broken Bay crews rendezvous on their way to join flood operations at Taree.

UC Arteaga said the pair had been unable to make their way against the swirling current and dragged into the trees in "the middle of nowhere".

"They're lucky we caught them out of the corner of our eye," he said. *BB 20* transported the pair to deliver their supplies to a very grateful mum.

Flood debris creates risks for safe boating

Debris washing down waterways and out to sea continued to pose a hazard to boaters weeks after the floodwaters had receded.

A NSW Environment Protection Authority operation to clear refuse from riverbanks on the Mid North Coast and Northern Rivers was still under way in mid-June, with assistance from three local MRNSW units.

Marine Rescue issued warnings in the wake of the flooding, advising boaters to keep a careful watch for dangerous submerged and floating

debris, including garden sheds, 44 gallon drums, fridges, furniture and other household items.

Deputy Commissioner Alex Barrell said the risks were exacerbated by lost or displaced navigation aids and channel markers, as well as floodwaters surging down rivers and across coastal bars.

"With chemicals, deceased stock and wildlife and other pollutants washed into waterways, boaters also needed to exercise extra caution to avoid the risk of being thrown overboard," he said.



A crew from MR Iluka Yamba took this yacht under tow after murky floodwater surging down the Clarence River prevented it from crossing the bar at Yamba, pushing it back out to sea.

Unit base swamped as river breaks its banks

Major works needed to repair damaged Camden Haven equipment, wharf.

When the most severe floods in years swept through the Camden Haven area in March, the Marine Rescue base was not spared.

Sitting right on the Camden Haven River, the unit's ground floor was quickly inundated, along with homes and businesses in North Haven, Dunbogan, Kendall and other low-lying areas around the river.

While many of its volunteers suffered damage to their properties and vehicles or were cut off by floodwaters, this did not prevent the unit rallying to assist community members in need of help.

Unit Commander Neville Adams said the unit had moved its 4x4 towing vehicle and small vessel, *Camden Haven 10*, a 4.2m Zodiac, out of the shed and to a member's home above the flood level.

"This proved the correct decision as this small vessel was extremely useful in enabling us to conduct several rescues to evacuate people from harm's way," he said.

"But with several members facing their own flooding or with roads cut off, we only had two crew available, John Evans and Ken Rutledge."



One-and-a-half metres of muddy floodwater sweep through the Marine Rescue Camden Haven base, damaging and destroying equipment, fittings and furniture.

The pair were tasked to medivac a pregnant woman from the Diamond Waters caravan park but on arrival, found she had made her way safely to hospital.

Two people were evacuated from the nearby Dunbogan caravan park.

Commissioner Stacey Tannos and Deputy Commissioner Alex Barrell visited the base in April to inspect the damage caused by the 1.5m of muddy floodwater that swept through the facility.

When the waters receded, the

damage included ruined wall linings, amenities and equipment, including a launch winch for vessel *CH 30*, lifejackets, uniforms, cupboards, a fridge, stove and the bathroom. The unit's wharf and slip rails also will need to be replaced after being damaged by debris.

UC Adams said the floods had brought hardship to many people, causing major damage to homes, motor vehicles and personal items.

"The area will take months, if not longer, to recover," he said.

"Several of our local caravan parks like Brigadoon, Dunbogan and Diamond Waters suffered major damage and losses."

UC Adam said after a working bee by members to clean and repair what they could, the unit was slowly getting things back on track.

"The radio room is fully operational again but it will take quite some time yet to have all assets replaced or repaired and back into full service," he said.

Ken Rutledge

Regional taskforce rallies to the frontline and

Volunteers from regional areas of the state rallied to join a Marine Rescue taskforce to support flood operations in Western Sydney.

Units with smaller vessels that could be towed hit the highways to join their Sydney colleagues.

Along with the boats and a fuel trailer, members from MR Norah Head, Central Coast, Port Kembla, Shoalhaven, Sussex Inlet, Tuross, Merimbula, Batemans Bay and Alpine Lakes were deployed to the frontline and incident management.

MR Tuross Training Officer Blaise Madden was one of the

crew on *Tuross 20* supporting SES operations. Initially tasked to the SES Blacktown unit, where they helped out filling sandbags, the crew soon found themselves in the thick of it on the swollen Hawkesbury River at Sackville.

"We quickly discovered that in a flood, ramps and moorings are what you can find at the time," he said.

"At one point we had to reverse half a kilometre down a narrow road to the Sackville Ferry terminal to launch and ended up tying up to a telegraph pole right up near the light, so deep was the water.

"We supported a smaller SES boat as the 'mother ship' while they doorknocked local residents, all the while getting used to the unfamiliar flood environment.

"We learned a lot from working with the SES and other agencies and took home a few lessons to apply to the next deployment."

MR Merimbula Unit Commander Sonia Teston was one of three volunteers tasked overnight to the Sydney Metropolitan Incident Control Centre, comparing flood control to her experience in a bushfire Emergency Operations Centre.

"Both had the electric buzz of professional and focused dynamic activities. MRNSW obviously had a water related role with the floods, whereas our volunteers were active in the evacuation centres for the fires. In both, we were consulted as to our capability and capacity and we stepped up without hesitation.

"Neither event required us to undertake activities for which we train, however, the mindset of our volunteers is such that we couldn't do anything but help. You can't be anything but proud of our volunteers," she said.

Team works around clock to help community

Port Macquarie members evacuate more than 100 people from danger.

In pelting rain and on rapidly rising water courses, volunteers from MR Port Macquarie worked around the clock for six days straight to help members of their community in danger and devastated by the region's flood crisis.

Crews filled shifts across 24 hours, working side-by-side with personnel from the State Emergency Service, NSW Police, Surf Life Saving and other emergency services.

Between March 19 and 25, they performed 32 rescues, relocating more than 100 people in cold, wet and windy conditions.

About 60 crew members were on rotation across every 24 hours, supported by a stream of their colleagues and kindly members of the public providing morale-boosting sustenance. Deputy Unit Commander Graham Gibbs was based in the local Emergency Operations Centre.

On the first night of the downpour, as the Hastings River broke its banks and flooded through the unit's boat base, crews responded to calls to evacuate residents from flooded homes and the tops of caravans.



Muck and mud ... the crew of *Port Macquarie 30* make their way carefully down the swollen Hastings River on a safety patrol, keeping a look out for debris and hazards that needed to be removed from the waterway.

Over the next five days, members transported more people from caravan parks along the river and steered over flooded roads and paddocks to reach isolated families.

Along the way, 22 dogs, three cats and one lucky flying fox hitched a ride to safety on board *PM 20*.

The members' ready access to the water also enabled them to save yachts in trouble on their moorings; help with a seaplane dislodged from its berth; relocate vessels and move houseboats to deeper water; assist a local boat hire business whose

boat shed was taken out when the Settlement Point ferry cable snapped and then transport council engineers to repair the ferry infrastructure. Floating and submerged trees, logs, hay bales and hundreds of livestock in and around the river made for a treacherous and also distressing environment.

Meanwhile, other members were working to move what equipment they could from the muddy water swamping the unit's boat shed.

Numerous items were lost or damaged and many key assets,

including the shed's main doors and winch, were forced out of operation.

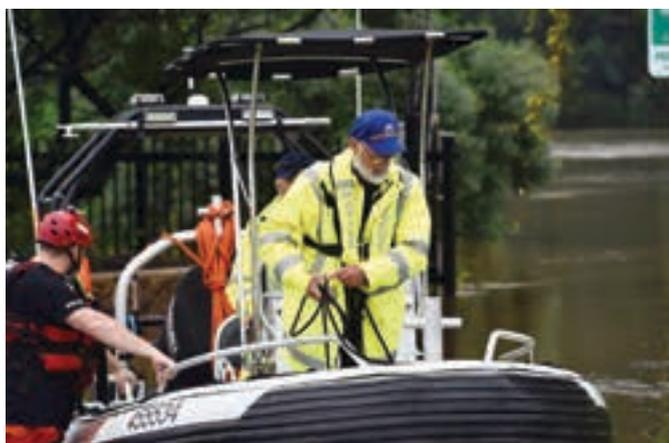
The unit worked closely with other emergency services in a coordinated operation.

Our unit was even able to provide NSW Police with a spare blade for their flood boat prop when none could be found in the state, enabling them to remain fully operational.

It was an extraordinary effort by all involved, again demonstrating our team's commitment to our community.

Michelle Rayner

incident control in sodden Western Sydney



MR Tuross Training Officer Blaise Madden was one of the regional taskforce of volunteers deployed to support SES flood operations, here in the thick of it on the swollen Hawkesbury River at Sackville.



MR Merimbula's Stewart Dietrich and UC Sonia Teston, Batemans Bay UC Richard Blundell, Development Officer Sophie Galvin and ROM Glenn Evans at the Sydney Metro Incident Control Centre.

Exercises build rescue skill and capability to

Specialists join forces in offshore searches and new desktop program.

More than 200 volunteers from 25 MRNSW units have honed their search and rescue skills and gained valuable incident management experience in three regional exercises over the past two months.

Search and Rescue Exercises have been staged at Bermagui, Forster-Tuncurry and Yamba in the first three events of the 2021 regional training series, with the Sydney SAREX to round out the calendar in late June.

The exercises gave volunteers the opportunity to work together and with their colleagues from other emergency services both on the water and on desktop exercises on shore.

MRNSW Deputy Commissioner Alex Barrell said the exercises

were a major component of the organisation's professional training program for its members.

"Our volunteers are trained to the highest standards for their roles and the on-water experience they gain from a SAREX helps keep them rescue-ready around the clock," he said. "These joint exercises are staged along the coastline each year to build marine search and rescue skills and cooperation between agencies to ensure we can all operate seamlessly.

"This is essential to ensure that we have the best possible chance of finding and rescuing someone in the water as soon as possible in an emergency, when time is always of the essence."

Personnel from the NSW Police Force Marine Area Command,



Safe! The crew on board MR Woolli vessel Woolli 30 rescue a 'victim' from a life raft in choppy conditions off Yamba. Photo: Josh Stangl.

Australian Maritime Safety Authority, Westpac Lifesaver Rescue Helicopter and Surf Life Saving NSW took part in all three events.

This year's search exercises were based on a scenario involving a search for multiple victims of a large-scale aircraft emergency.

Director of Operations Andrew Cribb said the on-shore exercise program had been re-shaped to provide volunteers with experience in communications, logistics, incident management and navigation.

"The desktop exercise, staged at the same time as the on-water activities, provides our members with an introduction to the various roles that are involved in the successful management of any major emergency," he said.

"Our people also have the

opportunity to learn more about the responsibilities and capabilities of our rescue partners, who explain their roles and take part in a Question and Answer session."

Media training was introduced for the first time this year.

Units taking part in the Monaro SAREX were: Batemans Bay, Bermagui, Eden, Merimbula, Moama, Narooma and Tuross.

MR Camden Haven, Crowdy Harrington, Forster-Tuncurry, Lemon Tree Passage, Nambucca, Newcastle, Port Macquarie, Port Stephens and Trial Bay assembled for the Mid North Coast/Hunter event.

MR Ballina, Brunswick, Cape Byron, Coffs Harbour, Evans Head, Iluka Yamba, Point Danger, Woolli and Woolgoolga joined the Northern Rivers exercise.



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Plotting ... MR Forster-Tuncurry members Dennis Travers and Michael Portelli check the charts in the unit's radio base ahead of the SAREX.

ensure seamless response to emergencies



The class of Forster '21 ... more than 70 volunteers from nine units took part in the Mid North Coast SAREX in May, along with members of the NSW Police Marine Area Command, Surf Life Saving NSW, AMSA and the Westpac Lifesaver Rescue Helicopter. *Photo: Brad Whittaker.*



MR Brunswick RWC duo Gabriel Wuyts and Robert Winter.



Back from the sea ... Northern Rivers SAREX participants and rescue vessels from MR Woolli, Iluka Yamba, Ballina and Evans Head at the completion of the search exercise off Yamba. *Photo: Jonathon Wilcock.*



A NSW Police 'victim' sets off a flare to direct searchers to his position offshore in the Monaro exercise. *Photo: NSW Police.*



Line-up ... Peter Brown, Bernie Ryan, Glenn Felkin, Volker Aebischer and Babs Stephens during the day two debrief at Bermagui.

Receptionist claims a heart in game of love

Wedding bells for Dragons fan who met her match watching the footy.

The St George Dragons may not have won a premiership for more than a decade but they led MRNSW Receptionist and Office Manager Stephanie Bruno to claim a heart.

When the team was scheduled to play on a Monday night in July, 2015, lifelong fan Steph wanted to watch the match but didn't have Foxtel at home so headed for her gym to watch it there.

She asked personal trainer Allan Newton to switch the channel to the game and the two got talking.

Allan left soon after on a rugby league tour to Canada.

"He was away for three weeks and we texted every day. When he got back, we had our first date at a bar in Newtown and we haven't been apart since," Steph said.

The pair returns to the bar each

year on their anniversary - and it was there on their fourth anniversary that Allan proposed.

Steph and Allan married on Sunday, March 14, at Athol Hall in Mosman. Torrential rain led to a quick change of plans to hold their ceremony indoors.

"The Saturday was hot and sunny, Monday was beautiful but on the day it poured from sun up to sun down. It was meant to be," she said.

The honeymooners got away for a short break "glamping" at Turon Gates west of the Blue Mountains.

"Horse riding, relaxing, no internet or phone reception, which didn't matter since I lost my phone in an Uber the night of the wedding," Steph said.

They plan a longer trip to Europe once COVID bans are lifted.



Rain on their wedding day ... MRNSW Receptionist and Office Manager Stephanie Bruno-Newton and her husband Allan.

MR TV
MARINE RESCUE TV

Volunteers saving lives on the water

YouTube

Services challenged to save lives in winter



Fleet Manager Kelvin Parkin donates to the Emergency Services Blood Challenge, with Lifeblood's Jackson and ROM Glenn Evans on hand.

Marine Rescue NSW personnel are being encouraged to roll up their sleeves this winter.

With demand for blood increasing in the colder months, our volunteers and staff are again taking part in the annual Emergency Services Blood Challenge to donate much needed blood and plasma.

More than 1,000 donations are needed across Australia every week and each donation can save up to three lives.

The Emergency Services Blood Challenge is one of the state's biggest blood drives. For details, visit <https://www.donateblood.com.au/lifeblood-teams/emergency-services>

Support helps members build mental fitness

Families welcome to join in smorgasbord of enjoyable wellness activities.

Marine Rescue NSW members can now take advantage of a new service to support their wellbeing and help build their mental fitness – and they can do it while enjoying a range of activities with their families and emergency services colleagues.

Under a new Memorandum of Understanding, Fortem Australia, a not-for-profit organisation established to help support emergency first responders and national security personnel, is providing the additional support to our membership.

Commissioner Stacey Tannos and Fortem's General Manager of Service Delivery, Darrin Lincoln, lauded the new partnership as offering tremendous benefits to MRNSW volunteers, staff members and their families.

Commissioner Tannos said Fortem provided an opportunity for frontline workers in the emergency services and other areas to deal with their wellbeing and mental health.

"It's an issue that's becoming more and more prevalent right across Australia and right across the world. It's great to see an organisation that has grabbed this issue and is actually doing something about it," he said.

Mr Lincoln said Fortem understood the trials and tribulations



Members of MR Botany Port Hacking, Geoffrey McDonald, Jesse Rowley, Grahame Aulbury and Bronwyn Daniels at the Fortem Australia family fun day on May 15.

MRNSW personnel and their families dealt with day in and day out.

"We support members and their families. Sometimes families get forgotten in the overall struggle of what members do. It's important that families are treated equally, if not better," he said.

"We look forward to delivering a whole lot of services that we provide to members across NSW."

Fortem uses research and best practice to develop activities, community engagement and psychological support services to assist participants' mental health and wellbeing.

MRNSW members and their families will now be able to choose from a smorgasbord of wellness

activities such as bushwalks, gym classes, lawn bowls, surfing lessons, barbecue classes, craft activities and ten pin bowling.

Volunteers from MR Port Macquarie have already taken part in activities including surfing and paintball challenges through the program and members of MR Botany Port Hacking took part in a family fun day at Appin on May 15.

Online activities also are offered, such as a monthly trivia competition that has linked personnel serving not only around Australia but also others farther afield, such as Federal Police officers in Papua New Guinea and Timor and the International Court of Justice in The Hague.

All activities are free to members and their families.

Joining in is easy – simply book online at <https://fortemaustralia.org.au/calendar/> and add that you are from Marine Rescue NSW.

"Family is anyone you share a fridge with – it might be your husband or wife and your kids. Maybe you live with your parents or maybe it's your flatmate who's your sounding board. They're all welcome," Mr Lincoln said.

"We don't care what rank, in uniform or security clearance you have. It's about people talking to each other while they're there that's



The MRNSW Rescue Water Craft proved a drawcard at the family fun day.

important – it's informal chats and bonding that helps."

Events can be organised specifically for members of one agency but more commonly are open to a range of participants from different services.

Some events are only for families and others combine members and families.

Fortem also offers a range of counselling and psychological support services free of charge to members. These can be accessed on 1300 338 594 or psychology@fortemaustralia.org.au. This is in addition to Marine Rescue NSW's existing Critical Incident Support Service.



Fortem Australia General Manager of Service Delivery Darrin Lincoln and Commissioner Stacey Tannos sign a new agreement to provide wellness services to MRNSW volunteers.

WINTER ON THE WATER

Dangerous chill

Shiver me timbers! Avoid risk when it's brisk

Falling overboard will place you at threat of life-endangering hypothermia.

With winter now upon us, boaters need to be mindful of the need to take extra safety precautions when heading out.

If you fall into cold water, cold shock can set in very quickly, placing you at risk of hypothermia - and that can quickly become life-threatening.

While the volunteers from our High Country unit, MR Alpine Lakes, are familiar with the dangers of hypothermia, boaters on the coastline, especially on the South Coast, need to be just as wary of water below 15 degrees Celcius.

Hypothermia happens when your body temperature drops below 35 degrees Celcius.

As soon as you enter the water, your body begins to cool but the full effects of hypothermia can take

about 30 minutes to develop. Signs include:

- Intense shivering in the early stages as the body tries to maintain its core temperature.
- Slurred speech and confusion.
- Slowing pulse as blood flow to the hands, feet and skin slows.
- Dilated pupils.
- No shivering in the later stages.
- Eventually, a hypothermic person will lose consciousness.

Follow these tips to stay safe:

- Always wear a lifejacket. If you fall overboard, it will help you manage the initial cold shock, conserve energy and give you time to get back to your boat or for a rescue vessel to arrive.
- Check the weather and dress for the conditions.



Fleet Officer Sean Jewiss demonstrates how to prevent heat loss from your core if you fall into cold water. Photo: Brad Whittaker.

- Try to get back on board or get as much of your body out of the water as you can. Only swim for shore if it is very close.
- If you can't get back on board, stay with the boat and huddle with anyone else who is in the water to reduce body heat loss.
- If you are by yourself, draw your knees to your chest, wrap your arms around your knees and clasp your hands together so you're in a tucked position to prevent heat loss.

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Have a whale of a time with giants of the sea

Keep your distance from animals on the east coast migration highway.

Whale watching season is now well under way, with the giants of the sea on their annual migration north along the NSW coastline.

Boaters will be heading out in droves until the end of the season in December, hoping to get a glimpse of a whale or better still, a full-blown breaching, jumping, tail-slapping performance.

From June to August, the whales will be heading north to Queensland's warmer climate and waters to breed and calve before then heading back south to Antarctica to feed between August and December.

Boaters out to watch whales must remember the rules in place for their own safety and that of the whales and other marine mammals they may encounter.

In a boat, whether powered or non-powered (such as a surfboard, surf ski or paddleboard), stay at least 100 metres away and 300m if there is a calf present.



Do not disturb ... boaters must stay 100 metres from a whale and triple that distance if it has a calf with it. Photo: Brad Whittaker.

Jet skis must stay 300m away at all times. Between 100m and 300m, you are required to travel at a constant slow speed and leave negligible wake. As you manoeuvre, watch the whales carefully to avoid disturbing or colliding with them.

Do not approach whales from behind or wait in front of them for their approach. If a whale approaches your vessel, do not move suddenly.

To protect yourself, your boat and the whale, slow your motors right

down and let the whale swim past you before moving away when it is safe to do so.

As a pod of whales may attract fellow onlookers, watch out for other boaters and keep a safe distance to avoid collisions.

How boaters can help entangled wildlife

What should boaters do if they spot a whale entangled in fishing lines, nets or other debris during migration season?

Marine Rescue TV spoke to an experienced whale disentanglement team from the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service to find out.

Natasha Funke, from the Greater Sydney Branch of NPWS, said the first thing boaters should do if they spotted a whale in distress was to notify NPWS or ORCCA.

She said the NPWS had a highly experienced team that would head out, working with other agencies, to try to disentangle a whale caught in crab pots, shark nets or other fishing detritus.

"It's really important that you keep an eye on that animal for us,"

she said. "That is the best job that you can possibly do, especially if you're in a boat.

"That way, we can find you and we can then find the entangled whale. Please don't try and disentangle it yourself. This is a very distressed animal."

MRNSW crews commonly work with NPWS and ORCCA personnel to help free trapped whales.

"I have the privilege to be able to work with Marine Rescue volunteers," Ms Funke said. "They're there helping support us as the parent vessel, helping look after myself and my team and I really appreciate all of them who do come out to give up their time to help us out there on the water in this important operation."



NPWS whale disentanglement team, John Lambert, Natasha Funke and Luke McSweeney, on Sydney Harbour. Photo: Brian Roberts.

If you see a whale or dolphin that is sick, injured or caught in netting or other debris, call the ORRCA rescue hotline on 9415 3333.

Learn more about safe boating around whales on Episode 8 of Marine Rescue TV on the MRNSW website or YouTube.

Sydney festival to celebrate life on the water

International Boat Show reshaped as local event while borders remain closed.

The local boating industry is turning over the motors again after COVID-19 scuttled last year's Sydney International Boat Show.

With the nation's borders still closed to the world, the show has been remodelled for COVID-safe times as the 2021 Sydney Festival of Boating - and Marine Rescue NSW has the event firmly on our calendar.

The Festival will be held from July 29 to August 1 at the International Convention Centre, with the newest and finest on show on the Cockle Bay marina - including the first 12m Naiad in the MRNSW fleet, *Botany Hacking 30*.

The event is the initiative of the Boating Industry Association, which is already planning for the return of the Sydney International Boat Show



Talking boating safety ... *Cottage Point 30*, open to visitors at the 2019 Sydney International Boat Show.

in 2022. MRNSW will be joining our partners, Transport for NSW, the NSW Police Force Marine Area Command and Surf Life Saving NSW in the Festival's safety zone.

Our volunteers will be on

hand to talk all things boating safety with patrons, encouraging boaters to 'help us help you' by Logging On and Logging Off with MRNSW whenever they're on the water, ensuring they always wear

lifejackets and making the switch from their older 27MHz marine radio to the newer, safer VHF technology.

MRNSW volunteers will soon be notified on how they can sign on to join the MRNSW contingent.

Thank you
to our first responder families
who also sacrifice so much.
#ThankAFirstResponder
#PowerOfThanks



App update advice for Android users

The MarineRescue App continues to grow in popularity with boaters, who appreciate the safety benefits it offers.

Almost 30 per cent of the boaters who Log On to enable our volunteers to track their voyage until their safe return do so using the app.

A number of enhancements and fixes have recently been introduced to improve the app user experience.

Boaters who use the iPhone app are encouraged to update to the latest version, which is now available on the Apple App Store.

Issues replacing the current Android app in the Play Store mean the existing version cannot simply be updated. Instead, a new version has been uploaded to the Play Store.

If you are using the Android version of the app, you need to delete the existing version on your device, download the new version

and re-create any profiles you have previously set up.

As Radio Club members' vessel details are already stored in our database, when they log in to the app using their Marine Rescue-supplied Radio Club call sign and vessel registration, their profiles will automatically re-populate.

In the short term, both the old and new versions of the app will be visible on the Play Store.

Although new users will not be able to download the older version, existing Android users will still be able to use the version already downloaded in their device until they have set up the new version. This will be the case while the old version is still visible on the Play Store.

If you have any questions about this process, please email servicedesk@mrnsw.com.au for tech support.

Marine Rescue at work



Calm before the chop ... the sun sets over glassy waters in Yamba Marina the evening before the Northern Rivers and Mid North Coast SAREX in June. Five MRNSW vessels, including *Wooli 30* (above), a NSW Police boat and MRNSW and Surf Life Saving Rescue Water Craft headed out from the staging point soon after dawn the next morning into a sizable swell, successfully locating their search targets.



Test drive ... MR Point Danger's Courtney Greenslade puts 12m *Naiad Botany Hacking 30* through its paces off Port Hacking, ahead of the delivery of the same model superboat to the border unit.



Flood thanks ... NSW Governor Margaret Beazley meets MR Port Macquarie volunteers Natalie Welsh, Alison Cameron-Brown, Chris Condon and Dave Bigeni, who joined local flood support operations.



Welcome to Woolgoolga ... Fleet Manager Kelvin Parkin and Regional Operations Manager Randall Gawne with Darryl Hamilton, Shirley Teague, David Forge, Brian Taylor and Mitch Harvey.



Briefed and ready to go ... MR Lemon Tree Passage members Chris Dando, Daryl Jurd, Greg Fletcher and Chris Zammit prepare for the Mid North Coast/Hunter Central Coast SAREX in May.

Life lost as four boats roll on high-risk bars

Wooli team rescues three men from open waters, offers welfare to survivors.

Marine Rescue Wooli crews have responded to a run of life-threatening emergencies, with four recent roll-overs on local bars.

Three boats have capsized on the Wooli entrance and one further north on the Sandon, with three men also ending up in the water when their vessel flooded and capsized wide of Arrawarra Headland.

A persistent easterly swell has increased the bar crossing risk, especially when combined with an ebb tide.

The boaters in the three Wooli incidents, all of whom were wearing lifejackets, were swept around the end of the north wall into the surf zone to land safely on the beach in front of the unit's radio base, which became the recovery centre for the welfare of the survivors.

Once checked by NSW Ambulance and the Wooli First Responders, our members, led

by Jackie Taffs, provided survivor welfare.

Dry clothes are easy but it is not just the boat that is lost. Gone to the bottom are people's car keys and mobile phones, they're a long way from home and Wooli has very limited services.

Two of the capsized vessels were swept out of the surf zone, becoming navigation hazards before being recovered by *Wooli 30*. The other, stranded on the beach, was temporarily secured by our members as it presented a danger to the public but required earthmoving equipment for its removal.

Sandon's rocky shoreline offers no such soft landing and its isolation means a lengthier response from either MR Wooli or Iluka Yamba. The rescue helicopter out of Lismore had the best response time on May 7, arriving to attend to a survivor with minor injuries and one deceased.



MR Wooli crew member Michael Hammond prepares to throw a life ring to three men thrown in the water when their boat capsized.

The crew of *Wooli 30* had already completed one operation early on Easter Saturday when a runabout capsized off Arrawarra Headland, 12nm to our south. A strong wind warning had been issued but *WI 30* made good progress into a moderate sea, reaching the

scene in 30 bumpy minutes. The crew located the trio, all wearing lifejackets, clinging to the upturned hull. In choppy conditions, they were brought safely to the rescue boat one by one with accurate throws of the life ring.

Richard Taffs

Famed sailor dies in capsized at Ballina

Sydney-Hobart veteran renowned for saving shipwrecked teenagers.

Renowned Australian sailor Peter Warner died when his yacht capsized on the Ballina bar on April 13, throwing the 90-year-old and a teenager on board into the water.

Mr Warner won three Sydney to Hobarts in the 1960s but was best known for rescuing a group of shipwrecked Tongan teenagers who had been stranded on a remote island for more than a year and presumed dead.

He was sailing his fishing boat past the Tongan Island of 'Ata in 1966 when he saw burned patches of grass on the side of the island.

Six schoolboys had run away from school, stolen a fishing boat and landed on the uninhabited island after eight days stranded at sea.

MR Ballina was quick to respond to the emergency when Mr Warner's

yacht rolled. The 17-year-old pulled Mr Warner on to Lighthouse Beach, where they were attended by NSW Ambulance paramedics and Police. The yacht, which was pushed along the southern breakwall by the swell, was secured by an MR Ballina crew on *Ballina 30* and Surf Life Saving once it was in a safer location.

The unit joined a training exercise with the Westpac Lifesaver Rescue Helicopter in March, staging training runs on the Richmond River after scanning for flood debris.

We continued to reach out to our local community, handing out water to walkers against domestic violence to mark 100 years of Rotary. On Anzac Day, members laid wreaths at the local cenotaph and flagpole outside the base and in early May, we hosted the Weekend Today



Ballina 30 secures Peter Warner's yacht after it capsized on the bar, claiming the celebrated sailor's life.

program while running our popular Breakfast @ the Beach BBQ.

Congratulations to newly accredited watch officer Trevor Stabb and radio operator Paul

Campbell. The unit has 15 radio operators and seven vessel crew in training, with another three new volunteers in the ranks.

Kath Begley

Evans Head crews keen to get on board

New vessel arrives home after first test in Yamba search exercise.

One of the newest rescue vessels in the fleet has arrived at its home port of Evans Head.

MR Evans Head members enthusiastically welcomed *Evans Head 31* after it took part in the Regional Search and Rescue Exercise at Yamba in early June.

Our crew are now looking forward to training on board and familiarising themselves with the 10m Naiad, a replacement for our catamaran.

Off the water, the unit hosted a first aid course, led by Training Officer Kira Hartland, for 13 members of the Evans Head, Woolli, Ballina, Brunswick and Iluka Yamba units on May 1 and 2. With COVID ruling out the involvement of any human "patients", the State Emergency Service and Evans Head Casino Surf Life Saving kindly



Well pleased ... Fleet Officer Sean Jewiss with MR Evans Head members Brad Burgess, Bill Bates and Ian Murray at the end of their induction on the unit's new vessel at Yamba Marina.

supplied us with extra mannequins. Radio operator and crew member Ian Murray has been presented with his five-year long service pin.

After joining the unit in 2016, Ian completed his Radio Operator and Crew assessments within a year, before then qualifying as Leading

Crew and Coxswain. He and his wife Donna manage the unit's rosters and grants.
Bill Bates

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Brunswick River paddlers raise \$33,000

World-class entrants, dragon boats, families enjoy perfect day on water.

A near-record field assembled in perfect conditions for this year's Mullum2Brunns Paddle on May 23.

More than 1,130 paddlers - the second highest number in the event's 11 year history - made their way from Mullumbimby 10km down the Brunswick River to Brunswick Heads.

The field included international class paddlers, dragon boats and surf boats, along with many families having a great day out on the water.

Twenty-nine members of MR Brunswick took part, along with two each from MR Ballina and MR Point Danger. Crews provided a safety watch on the river on board *Brunswick 30* and the unit's two Rescue Water Craft, *Ballina 20* and



Ready, set, paddle ... more than 1,130 entrants assemble among the crowd at the starting line for this year's Mullum2Brunns Paddle at Heritage Park on May 23.

and Surf Life Saving Club craft.

The unit also ensured competitors were well fed, with its barbecue proving popular at the end of the

course at Terrace Park.

The event raised about \$33,000, to be shared among the three organising agencies, MR Brunswick,

the Brunswick Surf Lifesaving Club and the Brunswick Heads Visitor Centre.

Jonathon Wilcock

Point Danger looks to next big project

Replacement vessel set to patrol border waters by year's end.

After completing the relocation of our radio operations and gift shop to our Duranbah Beach base, MR Point Danger is now focusing on our next major project, the delivery of our new 12m Naiad vessel.

Deputy Commissioner Alex Barrell and Fleet Manager Kelvin Parkin visited the unit in April to discuss the replacement for *Point Danger 30* later this year.

Two of the unit's Coxswains, Courtney Greenslade and Glen Hatton, visited Sydney in late May to test the capabilities of the first 12m Naiad superboat in the fleet, MR Botany Port Hacking's vessel *BH 30*.

The unit's crews have responded to about 25 emergencies in recent weeks, including a search into the twilight for a Stand Up Paddle Boarder feared missing off Kingscliff in mid-April. *PD 30* responded about 4pm after a member of the public reported seeing the board but then losing sight of the craft in the rough conditions. The search was called

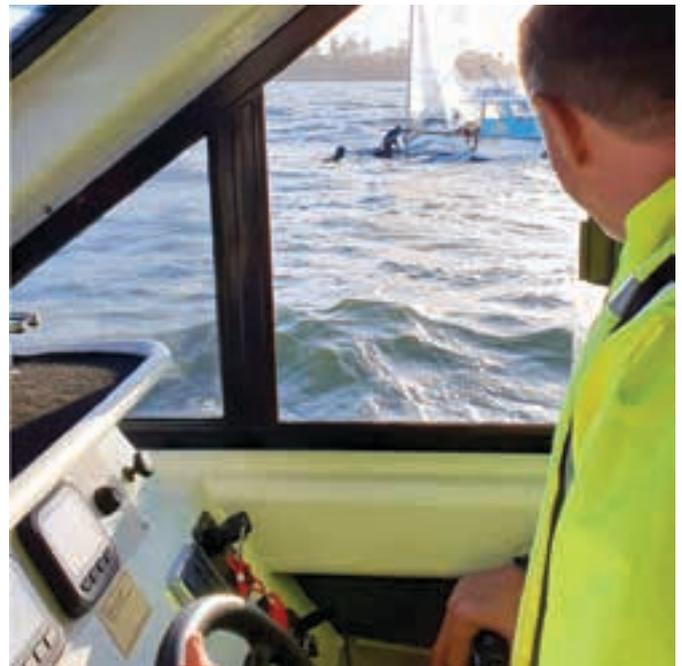
off due to poor light, without any sign of a missing board or person.

A leisurely late afternoon's sailing took a turn for the worse for two men whose small catamaran broached just off Snapper Rocks, throwing both into the water. A nearby jet ski rider saw the event unfold, recovering the men and taking them ashore.

The crew of *PD 30* was tasked to recover the drifting cat. In the meantime, a commercial fishing vessel, now with the skipper of the catamaran on board, arrived and attempted to recover the stricken boat.

Finding the fishing vessel in the process of securing the cat and preparing to take it home, *PD 30* stood by to provide any further help needed. After two failed attempts to cross the bar, the catamaran became waterlogged and dislodged its mast and a hydraulic steering failure disabled the fishing boat.

PD 30 went to the rescue. The



Coxswain Glen Hatton watches as a fishing boat tries to assist a catamaran to safety before *Point Danger 30* took both under tow.

safest way to bring both boats across the bar was to raft the catamaran to the fishing vessel and tow them slowly into the Tweed

River. Once safely in the river, the boats were returned to local ramps and all crew returned to shore.

Philip Pickering

Boaters saved in dramatic offshore mission

Skipper falls overboard trying to cut loose rigging from dismasted catamaran.

Marine Rescue Iuka Yamba volunteers rescued a woman who fell overboard from a dismasted catamaran in the darkness far offshore north-east of Yamba during a challenging overnight rescue mission in mid-June.

The female skipper, one of two people on the catamaran, was attempting to cut loose rigging trailing in the water when she fell overboard.

The rescue crew, who were already on scene to rescue the disabled boat, swiftly pulled her from the water and took her safely on board rescue vessel *Iluka Yamba 30*.

Skipper Cherrylle Stone later commented on the MRNSW Facebook page: "I was transferring the tow line from the port to the starboard hull prior to the tow commencing and stepped through a broken trampoline.

"I was wearing a lifejacket and tether and my partner was able to slip the tether over a cleat until the Marine Rescue vessel manoeuvred back to the bows of my boat at which point my partner released the tether and I made it the couple of metres to the rescue vessel holding onto the tow line.

"The Marine Rescue crew are extraordinarily professional, competent and compassionate. We in the boating community are so fortunate we have such accomplished people to call on in an emergency."

The volunteers launched the mission to rescue the 12-15 metre catamaran 12nm north-east of Yamba after the skipper called for help just before 10.30pm on June 11, reporting that the boat had lost its mast, which was hanging over the side, and the two crew on board were attempting to cut it loose.

The call was answered by MR Sydney overnight radio operator Pamela Sayers via the MRNSW coastal marine radio network,



The damage to this catamaran, which lost its mast about 12nm north-east of Yamba, was clear in daylight. The crew of *Iluka Yamba 30* returned it to the safety of the Clarence River. Photos: Marg Deguara.

with Ross Howard also providing communications support.

The crew who headed out in the dark on board *IY 30* were skipper Frank Bond, Bob Adams, Margaret Deguara, Joe Dimauro and Gail Scobie.

The crew located the catamaran in the pitch dark, arriving on scene by 12.40am and taking the vessel under tow to start the long voyage back to shore.

When the skipper fell overboard, *IY 30* quickly doubled back to rescue her before resuming the journey to safety.

The crew successfully navigated the tow across the Clarence bar just before dawn at 4.45am and placed the catamaran safely on a river mooring at Whiting Beach at mission's end by 5.30am.

And after working throughout the night, the crew were soon up and back on the water again to ensure the boaters did not need more help.

Deputy Commissioner Alex Barrell said the successful rescue mission was the result of professional teamwork by volunteers at MR Iuka Yamba and Sydney.

"Just the weekend before, more than 50 of our volunteers had assembled at Yamba for a major



Marg Deguara, Frank Bond and Bob Adams reunited with the two boaters they rescued in a dramatic overnight mission.

Search and Rescue Exercise to fine-tune the skills they need to save lives in operations just like this one," he said.

"This mission demonstrates the value of our professional training, our world-class vessels and communications network and the skill and courage of our volunteers.

"This emergency, so far offshore and in the pitch black of night, could have had a very different outcome.

"The two people on board the catamaran are safely back on shore thanks to our volunteers, who



Mission end as dawn breaks.

heard their call for help and did not hesitate to respond.

"Congratulations to the members of both our Iuka Yamba and Sydney units for a job well done in the dead of night."

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First offshore unit a \$1.4m safety investment

New dedicated rescue service for Lord Howe Island boating paradise.

Standing in the late afternoon shadows of the ancient pines lining the Lord Howe Island waterfront, NSW Police and Emergency Services Minister David Elliott marked two major milestones in the development of Marine Rescue NSW on June 4.

Mr Elliott officially opened the service's first offshore rescue unit and commissioned *Lord Howe 40*, the largest vessel in the fleet.

The new unit - the island's first dedicated marine rescue service - is a \$1.4 million investment in the island's recreational boaters and commercial operators, along with the many sailors who stop over on Lord Howe each year.

Mr Elliott was joined by Port Macquarie MP Leslie Williams, MRNSW Chair Jim Glissan, Commissioner Stacey Tannos and Deputy Commissioner Alex Barrell, NSW Police Commissioner Michael Fuller, members of the Lord Howe Island Board and volunteers from the new unit for the dual celebration.

"Lord Howe Island is a boating, fishing and water sports paradise. The Berejiklian Government is proud to support the volunteers from this newest Marine Rescue unit," Mr Elliott said. "We made a commitment to establish this vital rescue service on the island and it was made possible through the Government's \$37.6 million investment in MRNSW from 2019."

The unit's \$408,000 waterfront base includes a radio room, Unit Commander's office, change room and storage for rescue equipment, including an inflatable boat to reach *LH 40*.

Ms Williams said a community as reliant on the water as Lord Howe needed and deserved its own dedicated marine search and rescue service.

She said the refurbishment of *LH 40*, a retired NSW Police vessel, at Birdon Marine in Port Macquarie



Top deck ... Emergency Services Minister David Elliott, Port Macquarie MP Leslie Williams, Chair Jim Glissan, Commissioner Stacey Tannos, Deputy Commissioner Alex Barrell and Police Commissioner Michael Fuller join volunteers for the commissioning of *Lord Howe 40*. Photos: Brad Whittaker.

was another example of Marine Rescue's support for the NSW boat building industry, "directly contributing to skilled employment in our regional areas".

MRNSW took ownership of the 16m boat, named *Fearless*, from NSW Police in February, 2020. Its \$655,000 refurbishment included a full mechanical overhaul, new navigation and communications systems, new internal fit out, repairs to hull and structural corrosion and new paint and livery.

Commissioner Tannos thanked the State Government and boating community for their ongoing financial support.

"Last year our members launched more than 2,500 rescue missions. We could not do this without this vital financial support, which has now enabled us to build a new base, install essential marine radio infrastructure and refurbish and deploy our first ocean-going rescue vessel here to Lord Howe Island."

Radio infrastructure, including a satellite link to the mainland, was installed on Intermediate Mountain in 2020 at a cost of \$320,000.



Lord Howe 40 (Fearless) is the first ocean-going rescue vessel in the MRNSW fleet and at 16 metres, the largest.



Commissioner Stacey Tannos congratulates MR Lord Howe Island Unit Commander Jim McFadyen at the opening of the new unit.

Searchers locate lost CSIRO device on rocks

Forster-Tuncurry proud to host fellow volunteers for regional exercise.

While MR Forster-Tuncurry's operational tempo has slowed somewhat for the cooler months, local tourism continues to be strong, keeping our volunteers busier than expected at this time of year.

The Mid North Coast floods caused heartbreaking damage to our local communities and saw waterways closed due to danger from debris washing downstream.

The debris lasted for some weeks, requiring extra navigational vigilance.

Safety was further compromised by many crucial navigation markers being dislodged.

Our base received numerous reports of markers washed up in all sorts of places. Thanks to all who assisted in reporting and removing these displaced items and to the teams from MR Ulladulla, Broken Bay and Tuggerah Lakes, who travelled north to support local SES flood relief and rescue operations.

We are continuing to put a major effort into training, with 11 new members undertaking radio operator training, along with four boat crew.

On a recent training exercise, the crew of *Forster 30* was asked to search for a missing CSIRO mooring that had broken loose and stopped transmitting.

These moorings contain expensive equipment used to monitor the speed and temperature of the East Australian Current.

Instruments attached at various depths, from just below the surface to the bottom, measure the current speed, temperature and salinity of the water.

These measurements provide improved understanding of the current's influences on climate, leading to more reliable forecasts for eastern Australia and coastal communities and improved management of east coast fisheries.

Vigilant eyes on board *FO 30*



Gold standard chefs ... MR Forster-Tuncurry members Margie Foster and Paul Northrop on board the unit's mobile kitchen with Deputy Commissioner Alex Barrell.

spotted debris washed up on rocks in a remote area, with National Parks and Wildlife Service personnel climbing down and confirming the items were indeed part of the mooring.

The unit was proud to host the Mid North Coast/Hunter SAREX, attended by members and vessels from eight surrounding bases, Police

Marine Area Command, Surf Life Saving and AMSA. We would like to thank all participants and the organisers for putting on such a great learning opportunity.

We were extra proud to have our mobile kitchen nominated as gold standard by Deputy Commissioner Alex Barrell, who climbed on board.

Michael Portelli

Nambucca's boat afloat without leaving shed

Metre of water through vessel bay puts new dry storage on unit's radar.

The MR Nambucca boat shed was one of the thousands of properties on the Mid North Coast inundated in the March floods.

Members who headed to the base to place our vessel, *Nambucca 20*, on its trailer to travel south to help other MRNSW units with flood support operations found more than a metre of water in the boat bay.

This meant the radar unit on the canopy was pressing against the roof, preventing us from getting the boat under the roller door to launch.

Thanks to a generous offer from a member, we will be able to accommodate *NH 20* in dry storage in the event of a future flood.

The unit is continuing to pursue operations for a permanent dry base for our main rescue asset.

Commissioner Stacey Tannos and Deputy Commissioner Alex Barrell inspected the damage during a visit to the region in April.

The unit is continuing to focus on training, completing members' six-monthly updates and introducing monthly first aid drills under the guidance of Training Systems Officer Matt Campbell, who is sharing his Army first aid experience.

Unit members who attended the Mid North Coast Search and Rescue Exercise returned enthusiastic and keen to implement what they had learned. Our rescue jet ski, just back from repairs, received a full and successful workout.

Despite the valuable experience they gained, the SAREX may not have provided the skills our



Blue skies for Commissioner Stacey Tannos and Regional Operations Manager Randall Gawne, who met members of MR Nambucca in the wake of the March floods.

members needed for our most challenging search and rescue operation in recent months, helping WIRES and a local vet trying to capture two pelicans entangled in fishing line and hooks.

Both birds were still able to fly so eluded our two rescue jet ski operators trying to herd them into darting range for the vet. We remain ready to help again if needed.

Gary Nichols

Crew steps back in time for adventure at sea

Port Macquarie volunteers follow in convict settlers' wake on tall ship voyage.

Twelve volunteers from MR Port Macquarie swapped outboards and radar for wind power and celestial navigation during a five-day adventure at sea in April.

The members sailed from Sydney to Port Macquarie on board the tall ship *Coral Trekker* as part of the bicentenary of the city's European settlement.

The 23m square-rigged ship followed the same route that the *Lady Nelson* sailed 200 years ago to establish Port Macquarie as a penal colony.

The 12 volunteers spent a day of familiarisation on Sydney Harbour before the *Trekker* made her way out of the Heads, stopping over at Broken Bay, Refuge Bay and Port Stephens - where the volunteers visited their colleagues at MR Port Stephens while waiting out some poor weather - before arriving home to a warm welcome.

The unit's *Port Macquarie 30* provided a traditional water salute and its other vessels escorted the tall ship up the Hastings River before a crowd of spectators lining the southern breakwall and riverfront.

The journey was a timely opportunity to provide a once-in-a-lifetime experience to some of the unit's volunteers who had worked tirelessly during the March flood crisis.

They took the chance to gain new sea skills, such as climbing rigging and hauling in sails, significantly different from their usual duties on a rapid response vessel powered by outboard engines.

Working on rotating shifts of four hours on and eight off, they also completed chores such as checking bilges, swabbing the decks and conducting man overboard and fire drills.

Skipper Natalie Welsh told the *Port Macquarie News* the experience had been "totally amazing".

"The voyage from Sydney to Port



Land Ahoy! The *Coral Trekker* on approach to Port Macquarie, with 12 volunteers from Marine Rescue Port Macquarie on board for the voyage from Sydney.

Macquarie and spending such a long time at sea and the challenges of that as well, kind of takes you back to the early days of Australia in a way," she said.

Unit Commander Greg Davies said the experience was about seamanship and teamwork.

"It's not just about sailing - it's about living together and working together," he said.

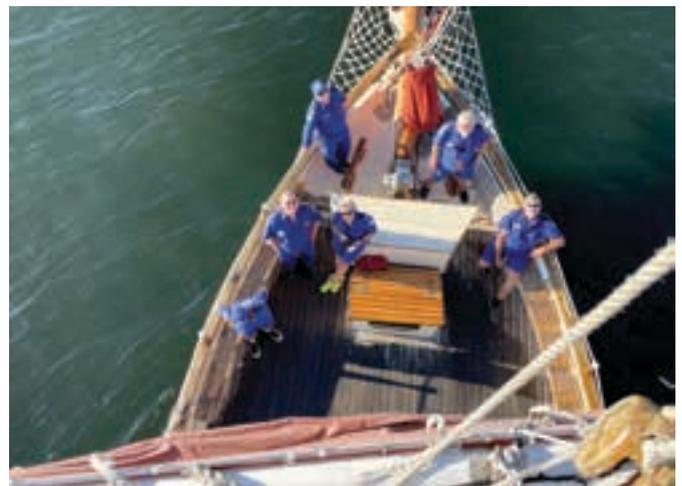
He said after a tough time for the local community with the bushfires, pandemic and floods, the unit's members were delighted to be part of the city's bicentennial celebrations.

"This will both help to lift the spirits of the community as well as providing a unique experience for our hard working volunteers."

The *Coral Trekker* was at Port Macquarie until April 20 before departing for Coffs Harbour with another two unit members aboard.

The ship is scheduled to again sail from Sydney to Port Macquarie later in the year, with another 12 members on board, followed by another dozen for the return voyage south.

Michelle Rayner



A bird's eye view of the crew in blue from the tall ship's rigging.



Members undertook a day's familiarisation on Sydney Harbour before the homeward voyage.

Elderly evacuees keep rescuers entertained

Crowdy navigates through floods to ferry isolated residents to safety.

When severe flooding cut road access to the small twin townships of Crowdy Head and Harrington in March, the local MRNSW volunteers were quick to overcome the obstacles to help stranded residents.

With many people unable to reach safe ground, MR Crowdy Harrington deployed its small vessel, *Crowdy 20*, to rescue locals from farms along the Manning and Landsdowne rivers.

These included two women, aged 83 and 94 years, isolated alone on their farms.

Both were delightful company and entertained us with their stories while being ferried to their family members.

Many of our members marked Anzac Day at services in both Harrington and Taree, with the unit's Training Systems Officer Susan

Worsley given the honour of laying a wreath at the Harrington ceremony.

The fourth annual Rattletrap event on Crowdy Beach on May 8 marked the resumption of our major fundraising. Members organised a barbecue and raffle for the event, run by the Drag-ens Hot Rod Club, which drew 2,000-3,000 people to watch the old jalopies and motor bikes race on the beach at low tide.

Just as the day was winding down, the radio base received a call for help, which saw two of our crew exchange aprons for lifejackets and race to recover a 40ft steel hull cruiser stranded 5nm offshore.

We are seeing a gradual increase in the number of call-outs as boaties are again able to venture out on our local waterways.

Mid North Coast Regional Operations Manager Randall Gawne has presented Chris Burdett with



Shake, rattle and roll ... MR Crowdy Harrington kept the crowds well fed and kickstarted its fundraising activities at this year's Rattletrap.

his 10-year Long Service Medal and Susan Worsley her five-year pin.

Warm congratulations to both and also to our latest crew member Mark Heffernan, who sailed - or more precisely, motored - through his assessment after four frustrating postponements.

Thanks go to MR Forster-Tuncurry's Peter Mouwen for conducting Mark's assessment.

Recruitment also has started to

pick up and we currently have six new members completing their observation shifts and about to start training, two as radio operators and four as crew, including the first two female crew members we have had in several years. Great to see!

Unfortunately, we also must report the sad passing of two valued volunteers as we farewell Alan Malcolm and Colin Higgins. Both are greatly missed.

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Units help clean up



In the week leading up to the June long weekend, volunteers from three units supported the NSW Environment Protection Authority in flood recovery clean-up works.

The EPA was removing debris from along the banks of the Hastings, Bellinger and Clarence rivers. Volunteers from

MR Iluka Yamba, Nambucca and Port Macquarie transported EPA Shoreline Supervisors around the waterways to liaise and supervise with contractors removing rubbish.

MR Port Macquarie Unit Commander Greg Davies said it was a great way for the volunteers to support their local communities.

Stranded boats find safe refuge in harbour

Gourmet lunch helps counter COVID isolation for Coffs volunteers.

The skipper of a 10 metre yacht caught in a southerly squall south-east of Coffs Harbour called for help when the boat's engine suffered a severe mechanical failure.

The crew of *Coffs 30* headed into the unfavourable conditions just after 7.30am on May 22 to rescue the two people on board the yacht.

MR Coffs Harbour skipper Andrew Innes and crew Graham Taylor and Ken McNeil took the yacht under tow to safe refuge, placing it on a courtesy mooring in the harbour by 10.30am.

The unit responded to 18 incidents over the eight weeks from the end of March, including overdue boaters who forgot to Log Off, vessels at risk of washing on to the breakwall and mechanical and battery failures.

Members have continued training and operating with their colleagues from neighbouring MR Woolgoolga.

An Anzac Day training exercise for members of both units on board *Coffs 30* ended up in two rescue operations.

First, a five-metre tinny with fuel issues was located and brought safely back to shore, closely followed by a tasking to secure a drifting 12m steel fishing boat that



The crew of *Coffs 30* headed out when this 10m yacht's engine failed in the middle of a southerly squall off Coffs Harbour. Photo: Graham Taylor.

had crashed into a yacht.

Crew members taking part were Mitch Harvey, Brian Taylor, Tony Pepperell, Shirley Teague, Maxine Cowie and Steve Aspey.

Earlier the same week, the units had joined forces to rescue two people stranded on an 8m boat broken down east of North West Solitary Island, 19nm north of Coffs Harbour and 5nm east of Arrawarra, where MR Woolgoolga is based.

Woolgoolga 30 headed out with Mitch Harvey, Josh Stangl and Josh Landow on board, to take the boat under tow before rendezvousing en

route with *Coffs 30*. Bernie Tight, David Oliver and Ken McNeil safely returned the boaters to their launch point at Coffs Harbour.

To help overcome the increased isolation caused by COVID-19, unit member Shirley Teague initiated a lunch for members at the Coffs base. With assistance from Diane Strachan and cooks Graham Taylor and his niece, the social event was a huge success, with almost 30 people attending to enjoy the company and gourmet delights, including salmon frittata, quiche and lemon tart.



Graham Taylor and Shirley Teague at a lunch to help MR Coffs Harbour members combat COVID-19 isolation.

Applause for six decades of commitment

Ten Trial Bay volunteers recognised for long and diligent service.

It was smiles all around when 10 members of MR Trial Bay were recognised for their diligent service.

Eight members were awarded their five-year long service pins and another two were recognised with their 10-year medals.

Members gathered to applaud their colleagues for their commitment and celebrate with cake.

Congratulations to Jenny Edser, Peter Holyfield, Robyn O'Brien, Julie

Mills, Craig Lockwood, Lesley Rae, John Rae and Steve Jackett for chalking up five years and Rob Hose and Jon Cragg, who have served their community for a decade.

After COVID-19 forced the cancellation of last year's Anzac Day commemorations, the Trial Bay unit joined other local organisations in this year's parade at South West Rocks. Nine unit members took part in the march.

Lorraine Rider



Sixty years in blue Trial Bay members Jenny Edser, Peter Holyfield, Rob Hose, Jon Cragg, Robyn O'Brien and Julie Mills.

Early morning mission to locate ill sailor

Central Coast crew searches for disabled yacht in rough conditions.

When an ailing solo sailor on a 26 foot yacht becalmed in rough conditions 5nm east of Norah Head called for help, a crew from MR Central Coast headed offshore in the cold darkness before dawn.

The crew of *Central Coast 30* was tasked at 3am on May 16 after the yacht's skipper reported to the unit's radio base that his sail had blown out and his outboard engine was not handling the conditions in 3m seas and a 30km south-east wind.

The on-duty radio operator advised the boater to deploy his drogue as *CC 30* headed to the yacht's last known position.

With the crew unable to locate the vessel at the position provided, the skipper was asked to activate his EPIRB, guiding *CC 30* to the boat by 6am, along with the Westpac

Lifesaver Rescue Helicopter.

Despite enduring a back injury, bruising and a migraine, the skipper, who was below deck, wanted to stay on board his yacht.

A Water Police vessel from Broken Bay was deployed to tow the yacht back to Terrigal Haven.

The skipper was taken ashore to a waiting NSW Ambulance and transported to hospital for treatment.

More than two months after the March storms and floods, Central Coast crews are continuing to find debris in Brisbane Water.

Unfortunately, some boaters have been caught out by hazards sitting just under the surface.

On Wednesday, May 26, a boater on a small runabout called the radio room to report that he had hit a log and damaged his prop.



The crew of *Central Coast 21* prepares to return to base as the sun sets on another day on duty. Photo: Janette Pinnington.

A crew on *Central Coast 21* was training nearby and quickly diverted to tow the stricken boat from Hardys Bay to the Blackwall ramp.

Another boater reported a pile of logs sitting in Iron Ladders.

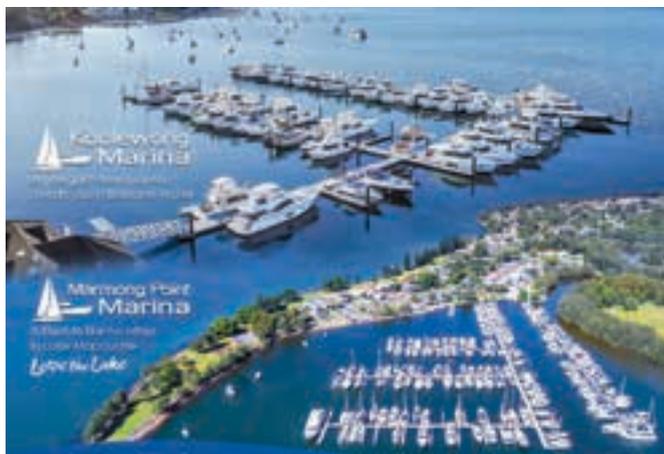
The unit has launched a new meat and seafood tray raffle at the Ettalong Hotel. After the success of the first raffle on May 22, this will now be a weekly event on Friday afternoons. Thanks to volunteer Andrew McKellar, who works at the Ettalong and helped secure this fundraising opportunity for the unit.

Members have been keenly focused on their training activities, with a number of newer volunteers successfully attaining their Crew ratings, including most recently Megan Loaney.

Quite a few not-so-new members also have completed their Leading Crew assessments.

Our Rescue Water Craft Operators were put through their six-monthly marine drills on May 15, reporting that even before winter, it was much warmer in than out of the water.

Mitch Giles



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Broken Bay Water Police return a disabled 26 foot yacht to Terrigal Haven, where the skipper was taken ashore and transferred to a waiting NSW Ambulance. Photo: NSW Police.

Newcastle steps on gas to reach ill crewman

Rescue vessel dwarfed by massive LPG tanker in medivac operation.

A medical emergency on board an enormous LPG tanker off the Hunter coastline sparked a David and Goliath operation for a crew from MR Newcastle on a hectic Sunday morning in April.

The unit's radio base had been busy Logging On 35 competitors taking part in a Newcastle to Port Stephens yacht race when radio operator Dianne Hammond took a call for the unit to medivac an ill crewman from the tanker *Wincanton*, anchored 3nm offshore south of Newcastle, in a 2m swell.

The crew member, from Peru, was suffering chest pains and his condition had deteriorated overnight.

This was the second MRNSW medivac in just over 12 hours, with a crew from MR Lake Macquarie returning a sick sailor to shore overnight.

Stuart Lawson, who had just finished his radio shift, joined Ron Calman and Bill Johnston, along with two NSW Ambulance Special Operations Team members, on



An ill crew member suffering cardiac problems scrambled down the boarding ladder of this 120m LPG tanker to board *Newcastle 30* for transfer to shore and a waiting ambulance.

board rescue vessel *Newcastle 30*.

At 120 metres, the tanker is 12 times the length of *NC 30*. With our vessel dwarfed by the bulk of the tanker, the skipper positioned *NC 30* in the swell to enable the paramedics to clamber up the boarding ladder to assess the patient's condition, only to see the sick crewman climbing down to

meet them. As the swell rose, he was able to step on board *NC 30*, with the paramedics conducting their assessment on the return to port and a waiting NSW Ambulance.

The following week, *NC 30* was on the water to take the salute for Anzac Day and lead about 30 boats out of the harbour for the Newcastle Game Fishing Club competition. At

7.45am, a cannon was fired from Fort Scratchley to mark a one-minute silence.

The second firing started the day's competition.

The Anzac Day crew was Ron Calman, Terry Reynolds, Ian Morrow and Rick Nevile, with radio support from Dianne Hammond.

Lyn Van Homrigh

Retiring leader praises unit's achievements

Marine Rescue Tuggerah Lakes' retiring Unit Commander Tony Younglove has thanked members for their excellent work over the past year.

Addressing the unit's Annual General Meeting on June 7, UC Younglove, who is stepping down after three terms at the helm, gave a glowing review of the members' achievements in the face of the disruptions of COVID-19.

Congratulations to Tony, who was awarded the Emergency Services Medal on the Queen's Birthday.

Awards and unit citations were presented at the AGM to recognise members who had excelled.

A Watch Member of the Year was awarded for each of the unit's four watches: Anthony Hollingworth

(Black Watch), Tim Macdonald (Red), Peter McCann (Blue) and Colin Thom (Gold). Marcus Murphy was named New Recruit of the Year and Scott Walkerden Maintenance Member of the Year. Bill Owen was presented the Steve Anderson Memorial Trophy for Fundraiser of the Year and Steve Corbett received the Alex Coleman Trophy for Member of the Year.

Citations were presented to Ben Hogan for his commitment as administration officer and Gary Boylett for managing the unit's maintenance.

The unit was one of three providing out-of-area support to the community on the flooded Manning River at Taree in March. Steve Corbett and Craig Roberts were recognised for their untiring



Baton change ... MR Tuggerah Lakes' retiring Unit Commander Tony Younglove hands the reins to incoming leader Bob Sutton.

work, transporting the unit's vessel *Tuggerah Lakes 21* north and evacuating and assisting residents in harm's way.

Anthony Hollingworth, Paul Norris and Marcus Murphy were

congratulated for achieving their Crew qualifications and Steve Corbett his Coxswain rating.

Bob Sutton was welcomed as the incoming Unit Commander and Peter McCann as Deputy.

Teamwork ensures safe ending to Mayday

Holidaymakers bump up workload for Port Stephens crews, radio base.

The boating season ended with a crew from MR Port Stephens responding to an early morning Mayday call from a vessel dangerously close to washing on to rocks on April 27.

Port Stephens 31 headed out to rescue the 11m mono sailing vessel in Coal Shaft Bay at Broughton Island as the radio base relayed the 5.30am Mayday call to other boaters in the area via an all ships broadcast.

A nearby boat responded and helped the sailing boat back to safer water. *PS 31* arrived on scene to find the two people on board safe and well, preparing to head back to Port Stephens. Our crew shadowed them back to shore.

The teamwork of our radio operators and crew and the quick assistance of the other boater ensured that this potential emergency ended safely.

This was just one of the 46 operations during an extremely busy April and May for both our radio base and vessel crews.

With an increase in boating traffic over the Easter and school holidays, we recorded a high number of vessels Logging On, sometimes reaching the high 60s.

The payoff for our volunteers' training commitment is evident when operations run smoothly, as we witnessed on one morning during the holidays, when the crew of *PS 31* was kept on the move.

The crew started the day by returning four relieved people on board a 6m cuddy cabin vessel with engine issues just off the Anchorage Marina safely back to Soldiers Point boat ramp.

No sooner had *PS 31* made its way back to the dock than the radio base received another call for help.

A 5-6m open runabout with four



MR Port Stephens' Nigel Eves and Brad Polak help a boater whose 6m runabout broke down south of Broughton Island on May 9.

people on board was having engine problems and drifting towards the rock wall near Tomaree Heads.

After at first being unable to get the anchor to hold, the runabout's

skipper eventually was able to secure the boat before *PS 31* arrived on scene and took it under tow back to Little Beach boat ramp.

Murray O'Dea

Lake Macquarie joins exercise on marina

Services test response to simulated boat fire, injuries and fuel spill.

Marine Rescue Lake Macquarie members recently joined their local emergency services colleagues for a joint training event at the Marmong Point Marina.

Three scenarios were created by Toronto Fire + Rescue Brigade and the marina for the exercise, which was supervised by NSW Police Marine Area Command, the Lake Macquarie Emergency Management Committee and NSW Maritime.

A simulated fire on a boat at the fuel wharf was attended by Fire + Rescue, with our vessels *Lake Macquarie 30* and *LM 20* rescuing stranded members of the public from the end of the jetty and recovering injured members of the public from the water for triage and transfer for treatment.

The simulated burning vessel was

then set adrift within the marina, with a Rural Fire Service fire boat towing it away from other boats in the marina while working on the fire.

LM 30 and *LM 20* continued to attend to people in the water and maintain a clear pathway for the RFS vessel. In the third scenario, *LM 20* worked with the Fire + Rescue team to deploy booms to contain pollution and fuel spills.

The search and rescue coordination facility at our new base was activated during the exercise to maintain logs and communication links, while Fire + Rescue maintained site control with one of our coxswains coordinating maritime activities on site.

This was a great initiative for all involved and a wonderful learning experience, giving us



Lake Macquarie 20 tows a pollution boom into place during an emergency exercise at Marmong Point Marina. Photo: Garry Luxton.

valuable lessons on coordinating communication and incident control resources. The unit will take part in the Sydney Search and Rescue Exercise and we are looking forward to further exercises planned with the Westpac helicopter and Surf

Life Saving, as well as a combined exercise with SES flood boats.

It is great for the members to see combined operations in play and the value we provide the community when we all work together.

Malcolm Druce

Elderly boater dies in emergency on rocks

Mass search launched when man reported missing on Port Hacking.

An emergency operation launched after an 8m cruiser ran on to rocks beneath luxury clifftop homes at Bundeena ended in tragedy.

The cruiser was spotted being pounded by powerful waves beating up Port Hacking late in the afternoon of May 31.

A mass search operation was launched along the rocky shoreline when a report of a possible missing boater was received.

MR Botany Port Hacking vessel *Botany Hacking 30* had just returned from a trip offshore to demonstrate the 12m *Naiad's* capabilities to crew members from MR Point Danger, who had travelled to Sydney to inspect the vessel ahead of the delivery of the same model to replace their current vessel.

BH 30 was readied and turned back out on to the Hacking to join

NSW Police, the Westpac Lifesaver Rescue Helicopter, Surf Life Saving NSW, NSW Maritime, Fire + Rescue NSW and NSW Ambulance on scene in fading light.

An elderly man was found unresponsive on board the cruiser and winched to nearby Bundeena Oval for treatment by paramedics but declared deceased. Police said initial inquiries indicated the death was not suspicious.

This operation followed an offshore search for a missing person off Cape Banks at the entrance to Botany Bay on May 1. The unit's crew carried out a parallel search with a NSW Police vessel before being stood down.

Noel Parkinson has stepped down as the Acting Unit Commander, with new Commander Greg Inglis and Deputy John Lembke now taking up the command post.



The Westpac Lifesaver Rescue Helicopter hovers above a cruiser that ran aground on rocks at Bundeena. Photo: Brad Whittaker.

On their first day in their new roles, they met representatives of Fortem Australia, who visited the

unit's base and Headquarters to meet the volunteers on Thank A First Responder Day.

Radio duo first on scene of yacht explosion

Sydney volunteers help 'incredibly lucky' survivor off boat to safety.

Off-duty MR Sydney volunteers Giovanna Vorrath and Stefano Amato were the first responders on the scene when a yacht exploded at the Newport Anchorage Marina in mid-March.

Giovanna and Stefano helped a 54-year-old woman, the only person on board, to escape the blast, about 7.30pm on March 13.

With debris thrown 30 metres and nearby residents reporting the explosion had shaken their homes, the woman suffered lacerations to her lower legs and hearing loss.

NSW Ambulance paramedics provided initial treatment at the marina before conveying the patient to Royal North Shore Hospital.

Giovanna told 7 News Sydney the woman was very lucky to have survived the explosion on the yacht.

"I just saw everything flying

around," she said. "The deck of the boat was just gone.

"We helped her to get out. I just told her to lay down because she was really in shock."

The yacht - which competed in the Sydney to Hobart race in 1969 and 1971 - sank, leaving a field of debris floating on the marina's surface.

NSW Ambulance Inspector Darren Hoschke said the woman was incredibly lucky.

"The patient was initially assisted by bystanders Giovanna Vorrath and Stefano Amato, who were the first responders to the scene and helped the occupant off the vessel," he said.

"Their prompt response assisted greatly in the recovery of the yacht's sole occupant after such a horrific explosion.



First responders ... Stefano Amato and Giovanna Vorrath were quickly on the scene of a boat explosion, helping a woman on board to safety.

"Vision was poor around the marina, so paramedics did a terrific job treating the patient in the ambulance. The explosion caused enough damage to start to sink the boat, it was a relief to see the

patient walk away from the scene." Giovanna and Stefano joined MR Sydney in 2019 and have recently completed a voyage to Melbourne on board their new yacht.

Denis Comber

Team proud to support flooded communities

Broken Bay members prove their mettle in mud and under dark.

Members of MR Broken Bay have proven their versatility in recent weeks, deploying on muddy floodwaters on the Mid North Coast and the darkness of Pittwater for night navigation exercises.

Our volunteers took advantage of the cool autumn nights to train, practice and increase their skill at evening operations under the guidance of experienced vessel master Vic Lawrence.

We were proud to support impacted communities suffering in the extensive March floods, deploying our manoeuvrable vessel *Broken Bay 20* to Taree.

Over the four days of our deployment, we evacuated and assisted a number of residents facing the danger of rising waters.

Our tasks included ferrying Greater Taree City Council engineers

to inspect critical water treatment infrastructure 25km down the flooded Manning River. While we were out for a relatively short time compared to other emergency services, the Taree community's gratitude and appreciation was overwhelming.

Congratulations to members Andrew Cooke and Matt Bruin, who have recently attained their Crew ratings.

Both worked hard, maintaining their focus despite the impact of COVID lockdowns and restrictions across 2020, including the Northern Beaches lockdown.

With COVID-induced fundraising restrictions being lifted, the unit held its first Bunnings barbecue for more than a year in March.

Our members were inundated by hungry customers, all pleased to see



Steering by instrument ... MR Broken Bay's Tim Cuming and Matt Colahan on a night training exercise in autumn.

the barbecue back.

Along with the members of our Blue Starboard team, special thanks go to our young supporters Sarah Christensen, Georgie Arteaga and

Harry Euers, who also gave up their time to help the unit as part of their school community involvement initiatives.

Jimmy Arteaga

Cottage Point quick off mark in emergency

Local residents recruited to boost response time from unit's remote base.

Marine Rescue Cottage Point has boosted its ability to respond to emergencies around the clock, as demonstrated by a recent rescue mission under a full moon.

The unit received a call to help a vessel stranded by engine problems at 9.04pm and within 50 minutes had the boat safely alongside its dock, with the crew preparing to head home an hour later.

From a closed base to props turning, we can be under way in a little under or over 30 minutes.

This ability to respond at any time and at short notice is due to an increase in our volunteer numbers and the availability of our experienced members.

All our existing members live outside Cottage Point, which is in a remote location surrounded by National Park.

Keen to recruit new members,

we have recently engaged with the Cottage Point community, attracting five residents who have shown interest in joining our unit.

We expect this will further reduce our reaction time in emergencies and ensure our assets are readily available when needed.

With COVID still with us and international travel still constrained, we expect the winter months to be busier than usual. Having the ability to respond quickly in the cooler months is critical, given the lower temperatures create a riskier environment for boaters.

Deputy Commissioner Alex Barrell recently attended a unit meeting to present member Elizabeth Watts with her 25-year Long Service Medal.

Beth, after whom our vessel *Cottage Point 31* was named, has been committed to saving lives on



Catch! *Cottage Point 30* crew member John Fennell throws a tow line to the skipper of a broken down trawler at Patonga in mid-April.

the water for a great deal of her life. A keen sailor and constant enthusiastic leader at Cottage Point, her experience is a great resource that she has shared selflessly in

many roles over the years. Our thanks to Beth for her service to our unit and boating for a quarter of a century.

Tony Gordon

Good debut for new harbour rescue vessel

Training on 'awesome' larger boat challenges Port Jackson crews.

Marine Rescue Port Jackson's new rescue vessel was put through its paces from its very first day in service on the premier waterway at Easter.

Port Jackson 31, a 10.5m Naiad, has replaced our beloved 8.5m Kevlacat *PJ 30*.

The many differences in driving a larger and different model vessel, have seen us go back to basics in our training and inductions, which have been conducted both wharf-side and at the helm since its delivery.

Driving this awesome vessel has been fun but challenging. With instruction from the Fleet team, our Coxswains and Leading Crew have gone from driving a vessel we could engine-manoevre to one that is the equivalent of a single engine vessel.

On its first day on duty, Good Friday, the vessel undertook five rescues, all filmed by the crew of Discovery Channel production Harbour Force. Just as we were heading back to base at day's end, we were tasked by the NSW Police Marine Area Command to one of our farthest offshore operations, rescuing a 10m Bertram cruiser that had run out of fuel 10nm off South Head just before sunset.

The cruiser's skipper had been able to give us GPS coordinates but it was also a good opportunity to use the new boat's Radio Direction Finder. With the gold and purple rays off the setting sun behind us, we arrived to take the boat under tow, returning it to its mooring just before 9pm. *PJ 31* performed beautifully for its first day on the water.



Challenging and fun ... MR Port Jackson crew members adapt to driving new, larger vessel, *Port Jackson 31*.

The unit has 30 new trainees, most of whom are ready to complete duties over the next six to 12 months to become valuable rated crew. We have 22 Leading Crew candidates and three Coxswains in training, with the training team

ensuring everyone stays engaged, running Zoom courses, night training, extra weekday training and working with MR Middle Harbour to use its facilities and Steber to sign off diesel engineering skills.

David Mills



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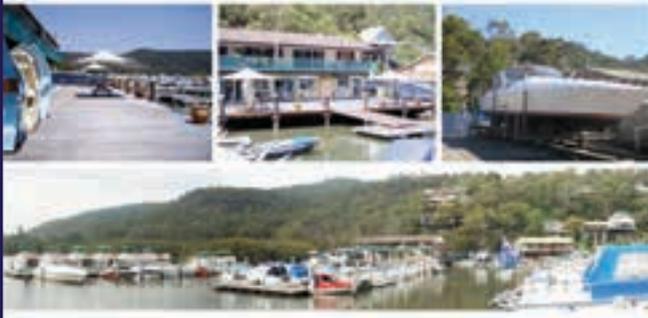
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Grant powers Middle Harbour volunteers

SOLAS funding for two new outboards.



SOLAS Trusts Chair David Kellett presents MR Middle Harbour Deputy Ben Crowther with a \$25,470 grant, watched by Unit Commander Peter Steigrad and Regional Operations Manager Glenn Evans.

Boaters on Sydney Harbour can be sure that rescuers will power to their aid in an emergency thanks to a generous donation to MR Middle Harbour.

The Chair of the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia's SOLAS Trusts, David Kellett, recently presented Unit Commander Peter Steigrad and Deputy Ben Crowther with a \$25,470 grant for two new outboard engines.

Mr Crowther thanked Mr Kellett and the SOLAS Trusts for the funding for two Suzuki 115hp outboards for *Middle Harbour 20*.

"This grant is a great boost for our work to keep boaters safe on the harbour and up to seven nautical miles out to sea," he said.

"Sydney Harbour is the busiest waterway in the country, with thousands of commercial, passenger, sporting and recreational vessels out every day, along with ever-increasing numbers of paddleboards, kayaks and similar craft.

"The motors on *MH 20* were nearing the end of their operational life. The new engines, boasting the latest in marine engine technology including electronic gear control, will ensure we can remain ready to

respond around the clock."

Mr Kellett said that the SOLAS Trusts had donated more than \$1.75 million in their 20 year history and he was delighted they were able to support the vital work undertaken by the Middle Harbour volunteers.

"The SOLAS Trusts donate to marine search and rescue organisations all over Australia and we are particularly pleased to support the MR Middle Harbour unit in keeping yachties and other boaters safe on our nation's busiest waterway," he said.

"I congratulate the volunteers of MR Middle Harbour for their professionalism and dedication and wish them well in their vital work in helping to save lives on the water."

MRNSW Commissioner Stacey Tannos also thanked the SOLAS Trusts for their continuing support.

"We are grateful for the Trusts' generous and steadfast support of our organisation, our volunteers and their vital work," he said.

"Their financial support has not only provided important equipment such as these new outboards for our units but also contributed to a series of major projects to upgrade the marine radio network for all boaters along our coastline."

River crews respond to spate of emergencies

Three-day search for missing Hawkesbury paddler ends with his safe return.

Crews from MR Hawkesbury were on the water across three days in early May as part of a major search for a 52-year-old man missing after his ocean ski was found on Lion Island on the Hawkesbury River.

The blue and red ski was found late on Saturday, May 8 and it emerged that the man had last been seen about 8.30am that day at his workplace at Mooney Mooney.

Police had been alerted when he failed to return home after going out on his ski.

A crew on board *Hawkesbury 21* headed out in the darkness, searching with Broken Bay Water Police before resuming the operation on Sunday morning and again on Monday, May 10, with a crew from MR Cottage Point.

Later that day, police reported the man had returned safe and well to Brooklyn.

This was among more than 50 operations conducted by the unit over the past three months and the second within weeks around Lion Island. A yacht with three people on board grounded on Pearl Beach, behind the island, on April 10, setting off its EPIRB to direct



A positive outcome ... a missing 52-year-old man was located on shore after a three-day search on the Hawkesbury River by MR Hawkesbury and Cottage Point crews and Water Police. Photo: Sarah Adair.

rescuers to the location.

The Hawkesbury crew was stood down after it was decided it was too risky to attempt to retrieve the boat.

On Easter Sunday, the unit was one of numerous emergency services to respond when a 28-foot Bertram exploded at Brooklyn, injuring up to eight people.

Both *HW 21* and *HW 22* rushed to the chaotic scene.

Conditions on the Hawkesbury continued to be challenging for boaters for weeks after the severe

flooding in the catchment, with large amounts of debris, submerged rubbish and floating hazards washed into the waterway.

Garden sheds, fridges, a lounge, bits of a jetty, 44 gallon drums and a snake seeking refuge on a floating log were among the nasties to avoid.

Speed limits were still being imposed on the river as late as April 15 as debris continued to wash downstream.

The unit's training is back in full swing post-COVID, with members



A couch floats downstream. Photo: Matt Barros.

taking part in first aid, firefighting and survival at sea courses.

Kym Mahoney

Praise for unit's safety officer and mentor

Marine Rescue Hawkesbury stalwart Ken Bate has been recognised with a Community Service Award for more than two decades of saving lives on the water and mentoring Central Coast youth.

The Rotary Club of Kariong/Somersby presented Ken the award in early May.

Ken has fulfilled many roles in his time as a member of both the Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol and MRNSW.

He has taken part in numerous rescue operations and the many major aquatic events the unit

supports, including the Hawkesbury Canoe Classic, which raises money for charity each October.

A Leading Crew member, he is now working towards his Radio Operator qualification.

Currently the unit's Work Health and Safety Officer, he is responsible for ensuring first aid kits are stocked and ready for medical emergencies and that the unit's lifejackets are kept in good condition for crew members. He is also the unit's Grants Officer.

When I joined Marine Rescue, Ken was one from whom I

learned so much. He was such an inspiring teacher and mentor about seamanship, radio operations and where to learn more.

He kept us all up to date with health and safety, keeping everyone safe out on the water and ensuring we were all looked after on the watches.

We were always ready to go when the call came in.

Ken is one of the key crew members that make Marine Rescue Hawkesbury such a great place to volunteer.

Kym Mahoney



Deserved recognition ... MR Hawkesbury volunteer Ken Bate. Photo: Sarah Adair.

Dad and daughter team to the rescue

Sussex Inlet gains extra firepower to tackle bar and St Georges Basin.

Marine Rescue Sussex Inlet is the latest unit to deploy rapid-response Rescue Water Craft on its local waters.

This is the perfect location for these highly-maneuvrable craft, which now give us the capability to cross the bar in most conditions, which our rescue vessel *Sussex Inlet 20* is not always able to manage.

As well as being ideal assets to respond to emergencies on hazardous coastal bars, RWC also are well suited to operations in confined, shallow waters and our new craft will allow our members to enter areas of St Georges Basin which we have not been able to access by boat.

A Dock Pro system is to be installed to facilitate rapid deployment of the new equipment, along with new amenities with hot and cold showers.

Eight RWC Operators recently undertook a gruelling four-day training and assessment program.

Day one started under sunny skies with relatively calm conditions for our trainees to undertake the required 200m swim in wetsuits,

lifejackets and helmets. This was not easy in a strong current.

All eight trainees, ranging from 21 to over 60 years of age, including father and daughter Paul and Jessie Sapsed, completed the swim.

The rest of the day was filled with manoeuvring and search and rescue techniques.

Over the next two days, although the sun was shining, the trainees were confronted with a challenging southerly change before the return of the favourable conditions.

Congratulations to the members who successfully attained their RWC qualifications.

The unit continues to attract new recruits and to focus on volunteer development. We have four Radio Operators, a Watch Officer, 10 Crew, four Leading Crew, a Coxswain and five RWC Operators in training. All trainers are working extremely hard to ensure our trainees are completing their requirements within the necessary timeframes.

Thank you to our neighbours at MR Ulladulla for their training assistance.

Karen Lowry



Dad ... Rescue Water Craft Operator Paul Sapsed during a rigorous four day training program. Photos: Brad Whittaker.



And daughter ... Jessie Sapsed joined the unit with her dad after the pair were rescued on St Georges Basin.

Long tow home for stranded solo boater

Unit boosts capability as more members gain crew qualifications.

A crew from MR Shellharbour undertook a lengthy operation to rescue a solo boater stranded 16nm offshore on a bleak day in mid-June.

The boater called for help after his 5-6m runabout lost power.

Shellharbour 30, with crew Gerry Kelly, Dennis Quye and Geoff Troth on board, headed to the rescue in good sea conditions.

The runabout was taken safely under tow back to the Shellharbour boat ramp. Communications support was provided by Roger Fermino and Neil Lovett at MR Port Kembla.

The Shellharbour unit has

benefited from the generosity of another local volunteer group.

Oak Flats Lions Club kindly presented the unit with a \$700 donation in early May.

Congratulations to three unit members, Peter Anderson, Roger Eager and Tammie Butcher, on achieving their Crew ratings.

Members were pleased to welcome Commissioner Stacey Tannos and Deputy Commissioner Alex Barrell to the base recently.

Commissioner Tannos presented Steve Thompson and Alana Heywood with their five-year service pins.



Volunteers helping volunteers ... Oaks Flat Lions Club members present MR Shellharbour DUC Peter May with a \$700 donation.

Naiad twin heads south to the Illawarra

Port Kembla team lauds 'exceptional' performance, handling in trials.

The identical twins in the MRNSW fleet have been separated with the delivery of MR Port Kembla's smart new rescue vessel.

The new 10 metre Naiads, *Port Kembla 31* and *Evans Head 31* were built in parallel at Yamba Welding & Engineering on the NSW Northern Rivers.

Boaters on the mighty Clarence River could have been forgiven for thinking they were seeing double when the pair undertook their sea trials together on May 18.

PK 31 was transported south by semi-trailer in June to take up residence at its new home base on Port Kembla Harbour.

The new monohull RHIB replaces MR Port Kembla's ageing workhorse, the Kevlacat *Port Kembla 30*.

Unit Commander Kevin Bradley, Deputy Tom Watson and Kevin McCulloch travelled to Yamba for the



Twilight settles over the new *Port Kembla 31*, moored on the Yamba Marina ahead of its delivery to the Illawarra unit in June.

new boat's sea trials.

"*PK 31*'s performance, ride and handling were truly exceptional and we are very much looking forward to its arrival," UC Bradley said.

"Our catamaran *PK 30* has served the boating community of Port Kembla and the Illawarra extremely well but did it tough in heavy sea conditions, making an

uncomfortable ride for crews.

"This new Naiad will provide our crews with a more comfortable work platform with state of the art electronics and rescue equipment."

Ulladulla looks forward to bright year ahead

Unit in good shape after range of operational and fundraising challenges.

Launching an average of a rescue a week, MR Ulladulla crews have risen to diverse operational challenges over the past year, proving their skill offshore, on enclosed waters and in muddy floodwaters.

Unit Commander Dave Hall gave a report on the unit's major activities and operations at the 2021 Annual General Meeting in May.

The unit launched 51 missions over the year, in line with its standard annual workload of 51 to 60 responses.

This number fell minimally to the mid-40s in 2020, likely due to fewer vessels heading to sea due to COVID-19.

In just the past six months, the unit's crews have rescued a solo sailor on a sinking yacht in atrocious conditions at sea, evacuated

residents including a golden Olympian from the Taree floods and retrieved a boat spinning in circles after flipping its skipper into a lake and a barnacle-encrusted jet ski floating off the coastline.

Speaking at the AGM, UC Hall thanked the executive committee and members for their hard work throughout the year.

He said the unit was in a reasonably comfortable financial position, with the fundraising team keeping it in the black despite the effects of COVID and adverse weather affecting its monthly markets, golf day and raffles.

"The forecast for the next year looks promising, barring unforeseen expenses, with no major assets needed other than an automatic back-up generator to supply the base," he said.



It might need a bit of a clean-up ... MR Ulladulla recovered this barnacle-encrusted jet ski adrift off Bentalong on May 22.

Gilmore MP Fiona Phillips presented the unit with a \$10,000 Stronger Communities grant towards the cost of the generator in June.

UC Hall said the unit was looking forward to the new Boyne

Trig antenna and the subsequent upgrade of its Reditalk radio system to the Frequentis system.

The unit is continuing to work on recruiting new volunteers to counter a decline in volunteer numbers.

Maintenance effort keeps boats ship-shape

Shoalhaven volunteers roll up sleeves to help in flood zone and on slipway.

Two members of MR Shoalhaven were among the deployment of MRNSW volunteers who headed to Western Sydney to join the flood support operation in late March.

Skipper Mike Boadle and crew member Rhys White were tasked to the Windsor district, navigating across flooded roads and paddocks with their colleagues from other units and emergency services.

After three long days they returned to the Shoalhaven.

Congratulations to Mike, who was awarded the Emergency Services Medal in the Queen's Birthday Honours and Pat Welch, our finalist in Rotary's Shoalhaven Emergency Services Community Awards and now the state awards.

The end of the summer peak heralded the start of maintenance season for our members, who have spent the past two months ensuring both our vessels are ship-shape.

Shoalhaven 20 was slipped first



MR Shoalhaven members roll up their sleeves to clean and anti-foul the hull of *Shoalhaven 20* while it's out of the water.

for its 700 hour motor service. At the same time, our crew cleaned the hull, replaced the anode and applied anti-foul. Thank you to Paul Windfield, Ray Jones, Chris Petersen, Peter Dicker, Paul Poulsen, James Guy, Marty Kaye and Mike Boadle for their hard work.

SA 30 was next up for its annual clean and anti-foul, combined with

an external out-of-water survey marking its 10 years of service. While it was on the slipway, all the seawater inlets were removed and defouled. In a difficult job, due to the restricted access, Warren Zamai and Paul Poulsen also removed, resealed and replaced the toilet inlet skin fitting. With the surveyor satisfied with its condition, *SA 30* returned

to the water for a short sea trial and subsequently to full service.

In mid-May, the unit supported the Nowra Water Dragons' annual regatta on the Shoalhaven River at Nowra. Throughout all these activities, our 90 members maintained their training, boat and radio duties and fundraising.

Bill Carter

Floating debris still a hazard on Jervis Bay

New vessel on way as *Colin Woods* retires to a more leisurely life.

Despite the shorter, cooler days, MR Jervis Bay is continuing to receive a significant number of calls for help from boaters in trouble on Jervis Bay and surrounding waters.

A high proportion of these incidents have been caused by flat batteries, serving as a reminder for boaters to always check their boat's battery, fuel and engine before heading out.

Flotsam and jetsam is still being washed into the bay by floodwaters, with lots of tree stumps and random debris bobbing below the surface.

The crew of *Jervis Bay 40* was tasked to investigate a report of what looked to be a large block of floating concrete but was actually a 120mm thick section of a wharf made of aerated concrete and steel.

This structure, which would have caused serious damage to the hull of any boat unfortunate enough to collide with it, was towed to Long Beach for council rangers to remove.

The National Parks and Wildlife Service has briefed the unit about the contribution we can make to its operations to disentangle whales caught in nets and fishing lines along our section of the coastline.

We have also resumed helicopter drop training with the CHC helicopter service based at HMAS Albatross. These exercises provide valuable practice for both crews, building understanding of how we can work together in air-sea rescues.

Ahead of the delivery of our new vessel *JB 41* toward the end of June, *JB 40* (*Colin Woods*) has now



Out for its first spin ... the new *Jervis Bay 41*, due for imminent delivery, on its sea trials on the NSW North Coast.

been retired from active service. The 40-foot Steber spent a decade as an Australian Federal Police vessel and almost 20 years with the Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol and

MRNSW. It has served all its owners well, saving lives on the water in and around Jervis Bay, and now deserves a more leisurely life.

Tony Dagger

New \$400,000 vessel source of great pride

Tuross Ocean Cylinder boosts safety of Eurobodalla local and visiting boaters.

New rescue vessel *Tuross 21* was officially commissioned on a stellar day in April at the Moruya Town Wharf.

Dignitaries and guests, including Bega MP Andrew Constance, Eurobodalla Mayor Liz Innes and MRNSW Deputy Commissioner Alex Barrell and Monaro Regional Director Glenn Felkin, assembled with unit members ahead of the arrival of the \$400,000 Ocean Cylinder, which was looking grand.

The ceremony, ably led by MC Geoff Clarke, included an acknowledgement of the Traditional Owners of the Land, the National Anthem and flag raising before Chaplain, Major David Simpkin, blessed the new vessel.

Mr Constance, Cr Innes and unit sponsors, Graham and Julie Brown from Euro Civil and DJ Matt Brown, later got the chance to inspect the boat close-up during a short trip on the Moruya River.



Bega MP Andrew Constance (rear), Deputy Commissioner Alex Barrell and members of MR Tuross assemble for the commissioning of *Tuross 21*. UC Alan Blessington (below) addresses guests.

Unit members are proud of their new 7.5 metre primary rescue vessel, purpose-designed and built for offshore operations. Constructed by Yamba Welding & Engineering, *TU 21* is an investment in the safety of the large local and visiting boating community enjoying the waters of

Eurobodalla - and of our volunteers operating on board. Powered by twin Suzuki 150hp outboards, the vessel is fitted with the latest generation search and rescue and first aid equipment, including a defibrillator and oxygen kit.

Ilze Svarcs



Lessons to be learned in new environment

Extension to unit base gives Batemans Bay members a lift.

As summer drew to a close, a crew from MR Batemans Bay headed north with other MRNSW personnel to support the State Emergency Service's flood operations on and around the Hawkesbury River in Western Sydney.

This was a unique experience and a challenge for the crews from all units, who performed well in debris-filled floodwaters, learning many lessons in a difficult and changing environment.

Closer to home, our volunteers and members of MR Tuross were out on the water to help conduct and maintain safety for the Batemans Bay Paddle Challenge.

The crews set out marker buoys, checked on entrants' safety and in

one instance recovered a paddler from the water and helped them back to the staging point.

At the end of April, a crew on board our primary rescue vessel *Batemans 30* travelled to Bermagui for the annual SAREX event, with a mix of experienced and new attendees. Aside from the sea journey - into a north east swell for the whole return trip - our members enjoyed the learning and networking experiences and the new format for the two-day event.

Off the water, construction is finished on the extension of the unit's base at Hanging Rock.

The new addition will enable the unit's RHIB vessel to remain permanently attached to its launch vehicle, reducing response times.



Volunteers from MR Batemans Bay and Tuross join forces to help keep entrants in the Batemans Bay Paddle Challenge safe.

It will also accommodate a new training room and a lift for improved access to the building.

Members of our unit and Tuross will again join forces on July 3

to take part in the Hanging Rock Emergency Services Fun Day, with vessels on display and other fun family activities.

David Murn

Merimbula liaison skill valuable in flood crisis

Members tasked to Western Sydney incident control centre and frontline.

Marine Rescue Merimbula members, who so amply demonstrated their emergency management skill during the Black Summer bushfires, stepped forward to join the response to the NSW flood crisis in March.

A crew and rescue vessel were activated to join the MRNSW deployment to support flood operations in Western Sydney.

Unit Commander Sonia Teston and Stewart Dietrich were on the ground as Liaison Officers in the Sydney Metropolitan SES Incident Control Centre.

Meanwhile, back on the Sapphire Coast, three people were thrown from their small runabout while crossing the Merimbula Bar in rough seas in March, in a timely reminder of the need to carefully consider the state of any bar before deciding if it is safe to cross. Fortunately, the shallow conditions enabled all three to make it to shore, with NSW Ambulances quickly in attendance.

Their boat was later recovered and secured to a visitor mooring.

A month later, a local boater at the fish cleaning pontoon heard cries for help from four swimmers who had been swept down the channel and were heading toward open water.

The quick-thinking skipper radioed our base as he headed to recover the two most vulnerable swimmers, while the others reached rocks or the extended sandbank at the river mouth.

Again, ambulance crews were on hand, to treat those involved for shock and hypothermia.

There were smiles all around at the draw of our annual raffle on April 23. Prizes were donated by Barbeques Galore Bega, the National Parks and Wildlife Service, Merimbula Whale Watching Cruises, Boardwalk Fashion and Reva Jewellery.

Despite the area's reduced tourist numbers, thanks to Jeff Lawes and our enthusiastic members, another great fundraising result was produced.

The unit's Fantastic Fish Feast



They know which side a SAREX team's bread is buttered ... MR Merimbula members Sarah Dewar and Robyn Neasmith on breakfast duty at the Monaro exercise.

was held on Saturday, May 8, with our fishing enthusiast volunteers' catch over the preceding week ensuring much fish was consumed. Thanks to Maria Osta.

MR Merimbula made a major contribution to the Monaro Regional SAREX in May. Along with our

rescue vessel crew and desktop exercise participants, four of our volunteers turned out early to ensure everyone was well fed. Well done to our catering crew, Geraldine Wunderlich, Robyn Neasmith, Bill Harvey and Sarah Dewar.

Roger Barson

Narooma gets to grips with new vessel

Memorabilia, photos needed for history of local marine rescue services.

Marine Rescue Narooma crews have dedicated themselves to familiarisation training on board the unit's new rescue vessel in recent weeks.

The team has tested *Narooma 20* on the local bar and a range of conditions offshore and upstream, practising towing, rafting and the manoeuvring required to save lives on the water.

The 6.8m Naiad RHIB, which has a lower canopy and the ability to convert to a topless cockpit, has been redeployed from the neighbouring Merimbula unit, which will take delivery of a new 6.7m Naiad.

Unit members kept up a hectic schedule during National Volunteer Week in May, conducting fundraising, information and recruitment activities in addition to Saturday morning boat training.

The week ended with the crew of *NA 20* providing a safety watch for the Narooma Blue Water Dragons, accompanying them on their 10th anniversary paddle.

Radio Operator Craig Petterd is compiling a history of Marine Rescue in Narooma, including the Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol (established in 1982) and VRA Marine Division that preceded today's MRNSW operations.



MR Narooma crew members set off for a training run on their new vessel, *Narooma 20*.

If members past and present or their families have documents, photos or memorabilia from years gone by relating to volunteers,

vessels or the unit's various bases, these would be very helpful in telling our story. Please contact Craig on 0417 438 538 if you can help.

Volunteers collaborate, share experience

Bermagui crew exhilarated to successfully complete exercise mission.

The Monaro Regional Search and Rescue Exercise, staged out of Bermagui, proved a great opportunity for MRNSW members to work with crews from a range of different professional and volunteer rescue and safety services.

Volunteers from MR Bermagui, Batemans Bay, Tuross, Narooma, Merimbula, Eden and Moama took part in the major capability exercise, along with the NSW Police Marine Area Command, Australian Maritime Safety Authority, Surf Life Saving NSW and the Westpac Lifesaver Rescue Helicopter.

The search exercise began early, in response to a simulated emergency in which two aircraft had ditched offshore, with multiple victims, both injured and deceased.

The MRNSW boat crews worked together in a number of different search patterns, while the helicopter practised airlifting 'victims' on and off the Police launch *Falcon*.

MRNSW and Surf Life Saving Rescue Water Craft operators deployed to search close to shore near Haywards Beach, Camel Rock and Blue Pool. Search mannequins that had drifted away and washed up on shore, where helpful locals had moved them into the sand dunes, added another layer of complexity to the operation to locate and recover these training tools.

The Bermagui team managed to retrieve two of the three targets off the Three Brothers. Even as an exercise, it was exhilarating to successfully complete our mission.

Meanwhile on shore, just as many volunteers were taking part in a desktop exercise emulating an emergency management centre, involving rotating incident management, communications, logistics and navigation teams.

The pace was frenetic as the simulated emergency unfolded and the teams worked to task crews, determine the search areas and manage logistics such as ambulances for injured survivors and relief crew for vessels.

The SAREX was a chance to meet and collaborate with other members from bases near and far. There was so much to compare: operations, types of work, members, vessels, management styles and their role at the SAREX. When you work from one base you tend to think that all units are the same. Although the official Standard Operating Procedures are the same, we came to appreciate that each unit's environment, vessels and member skills differ enormously. Each is unique and designed to meet the needs of its particular environment and community.

Being involved in Marine Rescue



MR Bermagui UC Caron Parfitt, Merimbula's Debra Bartlett, Eden UC Stuart Manson and Tuross' Blaise Madden at the desktop exercise.

is like becoming part of a wider network, in which you really feel like you can do some good for the community, while learning skills in areas you had never thought you

would be involved in. Whatever the differences, the unifying principle is consistent for volunteers saving lives on the water.

Debbie Worgan



Gotcha! The crew of *Bermagui 30* locates one of the search targets near the Three Brothers.

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Marine Rescue at work



Sculpted by the sea ... this year's Sculpture Bermagui featured artist David Doyle's Maritime Markers Field installation, featuring lateral, cardinal, special, isolated danger, new danger, safe water and divers symbols high on the headland. MR Bermagui's Greg Jones, UC Caron Parfitt, Jeff Donovan, Jim Anderson and Babs Stephens tested their knowledge after Saturday morning training. *Photo: Debbie Worgan.*



Double trouble or twice as nice? Bearded twins David Swilks, from MR Narooma and Volker Aebischer, from MR Bermagui, compare the pair at the Monaro Regional Search and Rescue Exercise.



Thank you! Nicole Delle Cost and Mark Kennedy from Fortem Australia visit MR Botany Port Hacking on Thank A First Responder Day to salute some of our 3,000-plus volunteers.



Congratulations ... MR Shoalhaven member Pat Welch (third from right) was named as a finalist in Rotary's Shoalhaven Emergency Services Community Awards on June 9.



Helping hand ... Gilmore MP Fiona Phillips presents a \$10,000 grant towards a new generator to MR Ulladulla Deputy Unit Commander Dave Lindley, UC David Hall and Illawarra Director Keven Marshall.

Services honour active community member

Radio Operator had shown the nation its history on Bicentennial tour.

Malcolm Webber is greatly missed not only by his fellow volunteers at Marine Rescue Forster-Tuncurry but also by the members of other Great Lakes emergency services to which he also belonged.

An active member of the local community, Mal gave his time to numerous organisations, including the State Emergency Service and Westpac Lifesaver Rescue Helicopter. Members of all three services formed a Guard of Honour after his funeral service.

Born in 1939 in Punchbowl in Sydney, Mal joined the Forster-Tuncurry unit in 2015, serving as an enthusiastic, conscientious radio operator. He particularly enjoyed Logging On vessels, talking to passing skippers and

boat crew and interacting with his fellow volunteers. He also did not hesitate to offer his services to the fundraising team, spending many shifts selling raffle tickets, always with a cheery greeting and a welcome word.

He said one of the greatest jobs of his life was as a crew member on the 1988 Bicentenary Travelling Exhibition, covering 34 cities and country towns across Australia.

The exhibition gave Australians the chance to view items from the nation's history that were rarely seen outside capital city museums and galleries, like a suit of armour worn by a member of the Kelly Gang, a scale model of First Fleet ship *HMS Sirius*, a large selection of Aboriginal art and a set of Arthur Boyd's masterpieces. Mal's five-year-old

grandson joined him in the cabin of his Kenworth truck on the journey billed as the "greatest roadshow ever to circle Australia".

A train enthusiast and avid model train collector, Mal was especially enamoured of the beautifully restored steam engine, 3801, known as the Newcastle Flyer, that conveyed passengers between Newcastle and Sydney. Restored by the State Rail Authority, it visited every mainland capital accessible by rail during the Bicentenary celebrations, accompanying the Flying Scotsman for much of its tour across Australia. The locomotive returned to service in March but sadly, Mal did not live to see it.

He is survived by two of his three daughters, four grandchildren, seven great grandchildren and 11 nieces



Malcolm Webber.

and nephews.

Unit Commander David Gibson said at Mal's funeral: "Marine Rescue members feel we have lost a kind, gentle soul, a conscientious worker and a true friend. Rest in peace, Mal, you'll be greatly missed."

Wendy Donellan

Ballina mourns longest-serving volunteer

Kevin shared his knowledge willingly as he mentored new generations.

Members of Marine Rescue Ballina remember our longest-serving member as welcoming, courtly and kindly willing to share his knowledge and experience.

Kevin Thompson served for more than three decades as a member of the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard Association and Marine Rescue NSW.

His service on the water can be traced back to 1989 and in 2008,

Kevin was awarded his Search and Rescue Coordination Centre Duty Officer accreditation. He continued his service when the Coast Guard made the transition to MRNSW.

Our members are grateful not only for Kevin's commitment to his radio operations duties but also his generosity in training and mentoring new volunteers.

As the unit's training officer between 2013 and 2015, Kevin

mentored and guided many "generations" of members through various roles.

Many of us fondly recall being entertained and fascinated as he regaled us with stories of his years in the Navy.

As a unit, we feel privileged to have known and spent time with Kevin. Our thoughts are with his family and friends at this time.

Kath Begley



Kevin Thompson.

Coxswain's cheery disposition fondly recalled

Volunteers from Marine Rescue Narooma were saddened to hear of the passing of their former long-term colleague Dennis Cox.

Dennis joined the Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol in the 1990s and remained with MRNSW for many years after its formation in 2009,

along with his wife Gayle.

Dennis was a diesel mechanic by trade and a skilled Coxswain.

His cheery disposition at sea in any conditions will be remembered by all the crews who headed out with him.

Dennis' mechanical skills were

invaluable during his time as Boat Master on the unit's former RNLI Waveney Class lifeboat and the 40 foot jet-powered ex-cray fishing boat that operated until 2008.

Dennis will be fondly remembered by all who knew and sailed with him.

Kerry McDonnell



Dennis Cox.

Phillip's quiet humour, stories will be missed

Tuross farewells hard-working member.

It was with great sadness that members of MR Tuross learnt of the death of our unit member Phillip Watson.

Phillip, who had recently turned 65, joined the unit in 2018.

Keen to help out and increase his skills, he completed the two-year Coxswain's course at Moruya TAFE.

Phillip was a hard-working, reliable and jovial member of our unit. We will miss his quiet humour, broad grin and great stories.

Whenever Phillip said, "That reminds me of a story..." we gathered around to listen as we knew there would be a good laugh.

Twelve members of MR Tuross, along with Monaro Regional Operations Manager Glenn Sullivan, formed a guard of honour at Phillip's funeral at Broulee Cemetery.

The chapel was full, with many people spilling outside. Unit



Coxswain Phillip Watson.

Commander Alan Blessington spoke on behalf of our unit.

With Phillip's wife Julie reading a poem and his four adult children and many grandchildren speaking, we learnt of his passion for his work as a professional turf groundsman, of his joy in travelling as a transport driver and his love of his footy team, his family and MR Tuross.

Our sympathy goes to Julie and their large and loving family.

Vale, Phillip, you will be greatly missed.

Izse Svarcs



MR Tuross members form a guard of honour.

Kayaker impressed with diligent service

'I feel very protected by your actions.'

On Sunday, 18th April I was late returning from a kayaking trip.

I had registered with your app and after recovering from a long arduous day was most impressed with the diligence of your follow-up when I was overdue.

From my side I saw or heard about (a) voicemail message left on my mobile phone, phone calls to my contacts (and) police arriving at Apple Tree Bay as we were loading my kayak on to its trailer.

I feel very protected by your actions and thank you sincerely for your follow through. You may be interested in the story that led to my late return:

I had been out paddling on the ocean in my ocean kayak *Blue Moon* on Saturday and parked for the night about 10 kilometres South East of Barrenjoey. The weather forecast was very light SE breezes, so I should have drifted whilst sleeping closer to Barrenjoey.

Instead, the EA current drifted

me 20km toward the SE, and a long way further from making Apple Tree Bay by my landing time on Sunday evening. I only travel at about 4km/h. My original plan was 6pm at Apple Tree Bay.

Instead, I had only reached Barrenjoey by about 5pm with four hours-plus paddling still to go.

At that point, I retrieved my mobile and app in a safe dry place to make a later rendezvous time off the water. I reached Apple Tree Bay, slowly and close to my time limit.

At the boat ramp, I found there was no mobile reception, so I was unable to log off the app, at least until I got out of the valley.

By that time the police had checked in on my wellbeing.

My intention is reinforced to try to avoid creating fuss, whilst still being most appreciative that you do care when things don't go to plan.

Dr Richard Barnes

Paddington

April 29

Volunteers there in time of great distress

On May 25, our boat, *Begonia*, was in distress and issued a Mayday call from the Tweed bar as our situation worsened.

This letter is sent to express our sincere gratitude at the support and assistance we received from this amazing volunteer group (Marine Rescue Point Danger) both in managing our Mayday calls and in assisting us to the dock once safely back into the river when we were without power or steering.

While I understand that the following listed members were all involved in coming to our

assistance (by radio or by boat), we also understand that this could not have been done without many, many others: John Bullock, Graham Challenger, Glen Hatton, Christopher Quinn (and) Keith Smith.

The Volunteer Marine Rescue system, which we have always been impressed by and grateful of, now especially so as it was there for us in a time of great need and distress.

With sincere and humble thanks to all involved.

Kyle and Maryanne Webb

Begonia - US catamaran

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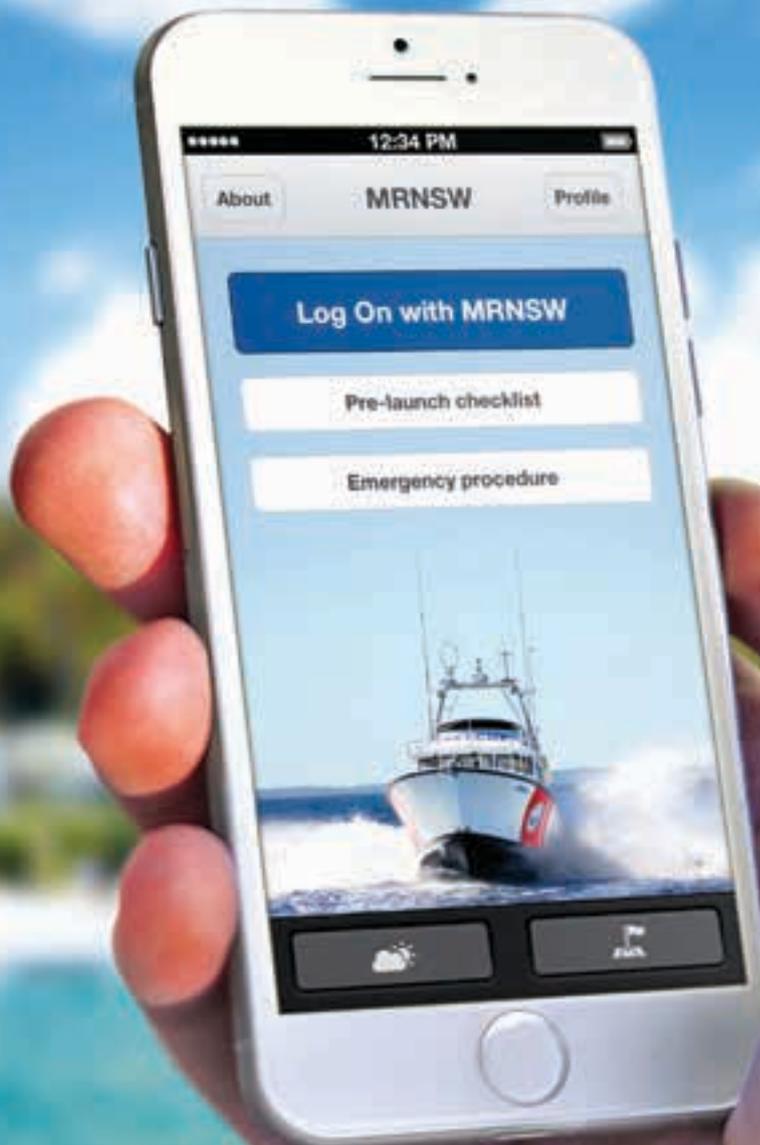
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