

Volunteers saving lives on the water

SOUNDINGS



Quarterly Journal of Marine Rescue NSW | Issue 49, Summer 2021

SUMMER ON THE WATER

Members ready for expected
record boating season

SAFE BUT NOT SOUND

New initiative helps deaf and hard of hearing boaters

ON CALL

New era for radio and telephony systems



PLUS: Member's sea survival story | MRTV one year on | Volunteer Memorial Service



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Quarterly Journal of Marine Rescue NSW

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Commissioner
Stacey Tannos ESM

From the Commissioner

Member dedication and adaptability key to a successful year

While localised lockdowns remain a possibility, this summer looks to be a far more ‘normal’ one than last year’s, with boaters and paddlers expected to converge on our waterways in large numbers.

Although restrictions have eased, we will continue to remain vigilant, ready to ramp up our COVID-19 protocols for the protection of our members and the wider community should public health orders change.

As we head into the busiest time of year for our members, I am pleased to report that we are in a stronger position than ever to meet the needs of the boating community.

Over the past 18 months we have delivered 11 new state of the art rescue boats, opened our first offshore rescue unit on Lord Howe Island, and by year’s end our Eden unit will commence rescue operations with the arrival of its inaugural vessel.

Of particular note has been the revitalisation of our radio and telephony systems, and the opening of our new State Communications Centre at Belrose, ensuring our members are able to communicate more reliably and clearly than ever.

Planning for the Marine Rescue Training Academy is well-advanced, with much work done in building and refining our business case to Government, and I wish to acknowledge the efforts of all who have worked so hard on this important project.

Despite the constraints of a lockdown that for Greater Sydney stretched to 106 days, our members continued their essential training and trainee assessment, with distance education via Zoom complementing more hands on training when permitted by eased restrictions.

With holidaymakers likely to remain cautious about undertaking interstate and overseas travel, there

remains the high probability that we will again see many opting to holiday within the state, and another record boating season.

In response, we will again be boosting our seasonal capability with additional patrols in high-traffic localities such as Sydney Harbour, and pre-deploying resources to high-risk locations, particularly during the busy Christmas – New Year period.

While last summer saw the cancellation of the Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race, reduced New Year’s Eve fireworks displays and the scrapping of popular on-water Australia Day activities; this summer we can expect to see these events return, along with the demand for our services to support boater safety.

is sincerely appreciated. I, and the other members of the Executive, look forward to continuing our fruitful and collaborative relationship in the year ahead.

Thanks, too, to the leaders and staff of our many emergency services partners including Resilience NSW, the NSW Rural Fire Service, the NSW State Emergency Service, Transport for NSW, NSW Police Marine Area Command, NSW Ambulance and Surf Lifesaving NSW.

Over the past twelve months our staff have diligently laboured to provide our members with the vessels, equipment, training and profile they so richly deserve; and I thank them all for their efforts.

The greatest thanks, however,

“The greatest thanks, however, must rightly go to our volunteers. They are the heart and soul of our organisation”

That we are in such a strong position to support the needs of the boating community and our on-water partners is a tribute to the dedication and adaptability of our volunteers and staff, who have all risen admirably to the challenges of the past year.

Our ability to meet the needs of the community is also strongly connected to the ongoing support provided by the New South Wales Government, and I particularly want to thank Police and Emergency Services Minister David Elliott and his staff for their time, interest and support.

Our MRNSW Board of Directors have provided welcome support to our projects and initiatives, and their commitment to the ongoing development of the Service and the welfare of their fellow volunteers

must rightly go to our volunteers. They are the heart and soul of our organisation, willingly giving up their time to help their local community at all hours and in all weathers, and accepting with good cheer all that the past tumultuous year has thrust upon them. Thanks, too, to their families and employers for their essential support.

I wish you all a very merry Christmas and a safe, healthy and prosperous new year.

*Stacey Tannos ESM
Commissioner*

Deputy Commissioner Corporate Services position created

Enhanced focus for corporate services activities

In a key appointment in the Service's organisational restructure, Todd Andrews has taken up the role of Deputy Commissioner Corporate Services.

The Deputy Commissioner Corporate Services role brings Marine Rescue NSW into line with other volunteer emergency services in the State, and will enable a more holistic and collaborative approach to the delivery of corporate services functions within the Service.

Commissioner Stacey Tannos said Todd had proved a valuable member of the MRNSW Executive team, and welcomed his appointment to the role.

"Commencing in 2018 as Chief Financial Officer and Company Secretary, Todd's responsibilities were subsequently extended beyond accounting, finance and administration to also include information technology and systems, communications and engagement, property and projects, and grants and stores." he said.

"Todd's keen business insight, breadth of skills and sound leadership are exactly what is needed at this pivotal time in the Service's history."



Todd Andrews at the commissioning of Port Macquarie 21

vessels, unit bases and improved communications infrastructure under the State Government's four year Capex funding model."

"I feel it's a privilege to work at MRNSW and I want to do the best I can with my fellow HQ staff and the volunteers to strive for continual improvement in all aspects of our organisation", he added.

"I have been involved in saving lives for many years through

Prior to working with Marine Rescue NSW, Mr. Andrews worked at international Chartered Accounting firms Deloitte and PKF, in both Sydney and London.

From there, he moved into a commercial role spending eight years at a diverse property group, including four years as the Chief Financial Officer / Chief Operating Officer at a boutique financing company located in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Immediately prior to joining Marine Rescue NSW, Mr Andrews spent seven years as the Chief Financial Officer of an international

construction group that designs and builds community assets & infrastructure including streetscapes, street furniture, public libraries, aquatic centres, playgrounds and other community assets.

Mr Andrews has a Bachelor of Business from the University of Technology Sydney and a Graduate Diploma in Applied Finance & Investment, and is a qualified Chartered Accountant. He is a Fellow of the Financial Services Institute of Australia and a Member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.



Todd Andrews with Minister for Customer Service, and Minister for Digital Victor Dominello, Member for Terrigal Adam Crouch and Tuggerah Lakes Unit Commander Bob Sutton at a cheque handover in late November.

I am looking forward to travelling more frequently and meeting more of the wonderful volunteers we have at Marine Rescue NSW

Mr Andrews said he was looking forward to his new role.

"I am looking forward to travelling more frequently and meeting more of the wonderful volunteers we have at Marine Rescue NSW." Mr Andrews said.

"I am also looking forward to continuing the delivery of our new

my lengthy association with Helensburgh Stanwell Park Surf Club, where I am still an active patrol member. I have been on the executive of the Junior Surf Club and acted as Treasurer for many years so I have a good understanding of volunteer organisations from a volunteer's viewpoint."

**Chair**

James Glissan AM ESM QC

From the Chair

Members stand tall in year of change and challenge

It was the great Martin Luther King Jr. who said, "The true measure of a man is not how he behaves in moments of comfort and convenience, but how he stands at times of controversy and challenges," and this year every one of our members has stood tall in the face of change and challenge, to their enduring credit.

In an emergency on the water, our members call on their resilience, adaptability and commitment to get the job done, and in the face of an ongoing pandemic, severe flooding and frequent poor weather, have this year drawn deeply upon all these qualities.

The tempering qualities of this year's difficulties has seen our members emerge the stronger, and I thank every one of them for their efforts, with not one emergency call missed out of the record 4,251 received.

Thanks too to the NSW

Part of this contribution included support to the flooding emergency in March that saw the most significant coastal floods in a generation. I want to thank all members who participated, whether undertaking rescues, taking calls in the Public Information Inquiry Centre, pulling shifts in an Emergency Operations Centre or helping to evacuate the displaced – your efforts brought credit to yourselves and our Service and are sincerely appreciated.

The unsung heroes of our Service are surely our radio operators, quietly providing essential communications between the public, our crew and our emergency service partners. Their efforts might be out of the public eye, but they are very much in the forefront of what we do, so I am delighted that this year has seen so much achieved to support them through the upgrade to our radio and telephony systems and the opening in June of the new State

working with him.

Thank you to all the Board members for their work over the past year, and for your confidence in returning me as Chair, and I look forward to reaffirming my commitment to working for the advancement of the organisation and the care and well-being of all our members.

I end reflecting on the many successes we have achieved despite the impediments the year has thrown in our path. That we should be in such a strong position is in no small part due to the leadership of Commissioner Stacey Tannos and Deputy Commissioners Todd Andrews and Alex Barrell. I thank all of them and our staff for their professionalism and dedication and the care they have shown for our membership and the boating community.

As always, my deepest thanks goes to our members. Thank you for your efforts in this most extraordinary of years, and I look forward to catching up and shaking hands, or at least bumping elbows, with you next year.

*Good sailing
Jim Glissan*

In an emergency on the water, our members call on their resilience, adaptability and commitment to get the job done

Government for their unwavering support, which has enabled us to make further enhancements to our vessels, buildings and equipment. This support has helped us become not just the best resourced volunteer marine rescue organisation in the nation, but an organisation that is truly world-class, able to hold its head high in any company, and something every member should be proud of.

A great organisation is, of course, built on more than boats, ropes and buildings – it relies most of all on its people, and I want to thank every member of the service, staff and volunteer, for their contribution.

Communications Centre in Belrose.

At our 2021 Annual General Meeting held on November 20, we bade farewell to Mid North Coast Regional Director John Lynch. John has proved a most able member of the Board, bringing vast experience and skills to the role. A 'lynch pin' of the Board, John will be greatly missed, and on behalf of the Board I thank him for his distinguished service.

The vacancy left by John's retirement has been filled by Forster Tuncurry member Roman Mazurek, who was elected unopposed. A sincere welcome to Roman. I and the rest of the Board look forward to

MRNSW Board Annual General Meeting

Proud Board Thanks Membership

The 2021 Annual General Meeting of the Marine Rescue NSW Board was held on Saturday 20 November at MRNSW State Headquarters.

Only one change occurred in the Board's make-up, with Mid North Coast Regional Director John Lynch stepping down after ten years' of distinguished service. Mr Lynch was presented with a framed Appreciation of Service by the MRNSW Commissioner Stacey Tannos, and Board Chair, Jim Glissan.

Taking Mr Lynch's place is Ray Mazurek, a member of the Forster Tuncurry Unit, who was elected unopposed. Ray brings a wealth of experience into the role, with his appointment welcomed by Board

Chair Jim Glissan.

Mr Glissan said that he and all members of the Board were immensely proud of the achievements of the membership over the past twelve tumultuous months.

"Time and time again our members proved their resilience, adaptability and spirit despite all that the past extraordinary year has thrown at them."

"My sincere thanks to all our members for their efforts in the past year and for their faith in the Board."

Commissioner Stacey Tannos welcomed the results of the Board election.

"I'm looking forward to continuing the strong working relationship between the Marine Rescue



Members of the MRNSW Executive and Board following the Annual General Meeting. Photo: Phil Campbell.

Executive and the Board that has been forged over the past few years."

"This relationship is leading to real and positive changes to our organisation and is helping further cement our status as the

leading volunteer marine rescue organisation in the nation."

At the meeting, Marine Rescue NSW also received a clean bill of health from the auditor, who noted the strength of the service's management and processes.

Marine Rescue efforts to save lives 'in vein'

Service receives award for members' efforts

Over winter, traditionally a time of lower blood donations, Marine Rescue NSW joined other emergency services from across the nation in the annual Emergency Services Blood Challenge, with more than 100 members rolling up their sleeves to give blood and plasma, saving over 310 lives. Altogether, the 56 participating organisations saved over 35,000 lives.

Following the completion of the challenge and the tallying of results, Australian Red Cross Lifeblood announced that Marine Rescue NSW had picked up the award for the 'Most Improved' agency, having tripled the number of members who participated from the year prior, with a healthy 316% increase.

The award was presented to Marine Rescue Commissioner Stacey Tannos at a dockside ceremony at Marine Rescue State Headquarters by Australian Red Cross Lifeblood's Group Account



Commissioner Stacey Tannos and Deputy Commissioner Operations and Capability Alex Barrell receive the award from Red Cross Lifeblood's Elissa King. Photo: Phil Campbell

Manager, Regional Partnerships Team, Elissa King.

Accepting the award, Commissioner Tannos, said that with much of the state in lockdown during the challenge, the efforts by

Marine Rescue members to get out and donate blood and plasma was to be commended.

"While our members are used to saving lives on the water, they've shown they are just as adept at

saving lives off it as well."

"I'm confident our members can make an even greater contribution, and save even more lives, next year."

Staffing restructure puts greater focus on volunteers

New roles to help shape a brighter future

Over the past year, the Marine Rescue Executive and Board have been hard at work developing the Service's future strategic direction.

A key component of this has been a close examination of the Service's current positions and determining what skills and capabilities are needed now, and what will be needed in the future, to meet the needs of our volunteers, emergency services partners and the broader boating community.

Following consultation with staff, a new organisational structure and roles have been developed to better enable Marine Rescue NSW to deliver its vital range of services to the boating community.

These changes will set Marine Rescue NSW for success as a world class marine rescue organisation and cement our position as the leading volunteer rescue service in the nation.

The new structure has three key objectives:

1. Strengthen connections between staff and membership to reinforce a safety culture, improve communication, increase operational standards and increase engagement.

2. Provide clarity on service delivery to members and what 'good service' looks like, using this to align messages, coordinate work and make service quality consistent.

3. Ensure all our work supports effective service delivery including governance, systems, and ways of working including resource levels and allocation.

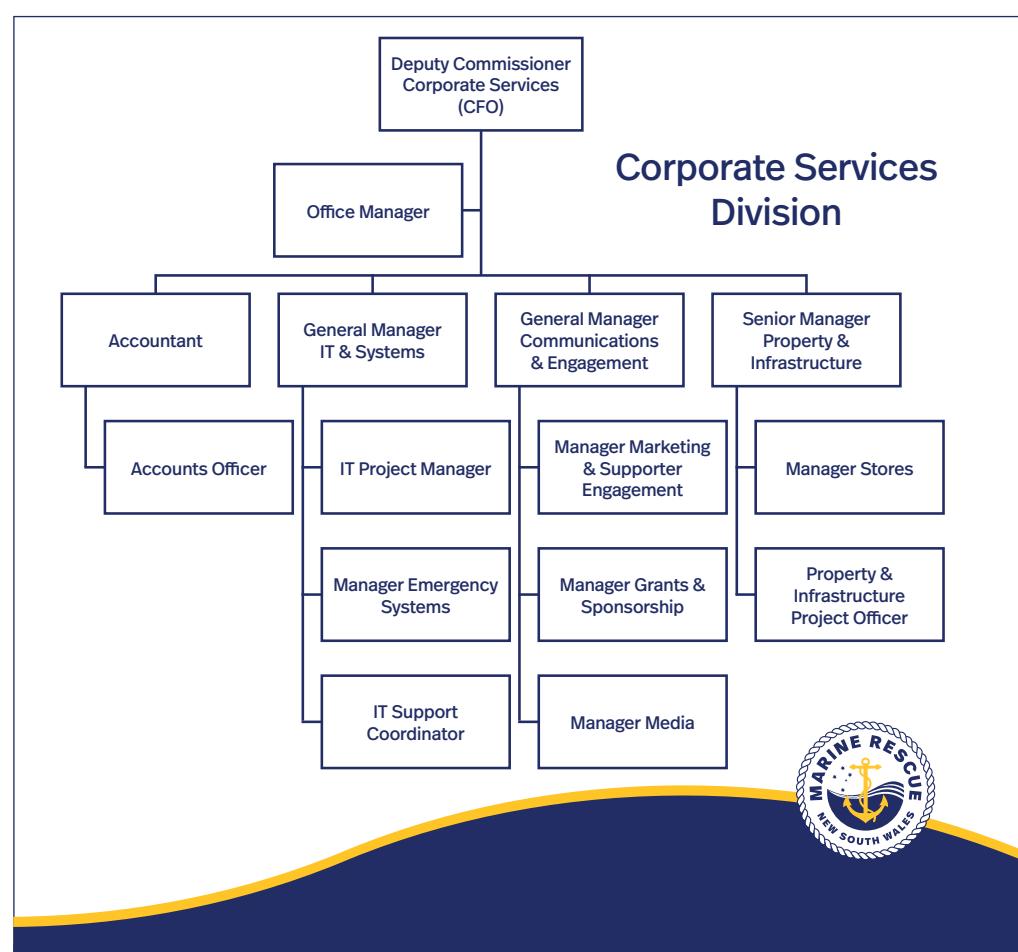
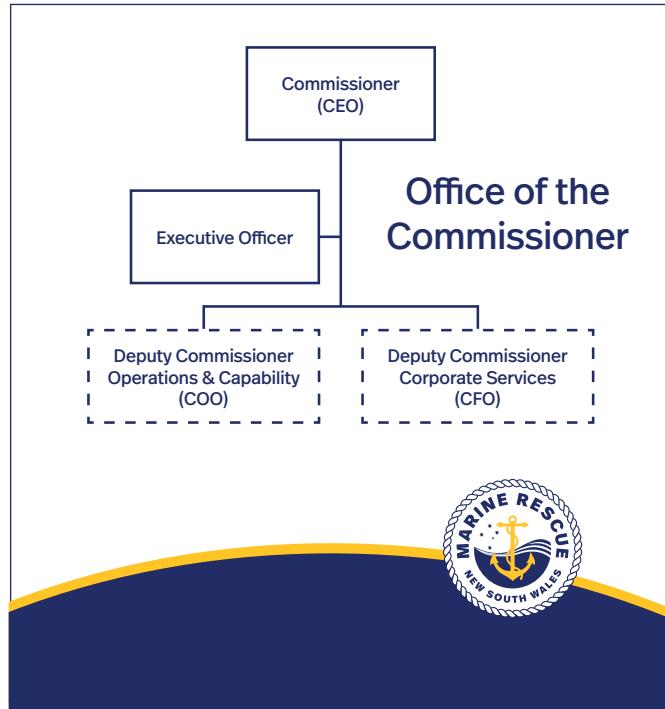
Central to the new structure has been the creation of three operational zones. This will ensure a full suite of coordination and support is available for Marine Rescue's units from their local region, and allow Regional Operations Managers

greater focus on the needs of their members and the local boating community.

New teams in Head Office will ensure that staff in related jobs have support, professional development, opportunities for improved career paths and the ability to work collaboratively on projects to improve the Service.

An important part of the restructure has been consideration of what skills will be required in the future - with increased member and supporter engagement, workplace health, safety and wellbeing and the modernisation of our property, facilities and stores identified as the key areas of focus.

The new structure creates two divisions, Corporate Services and Operations and Capability, each



overseen by a Deputy Commissioner.

The Corporate Services Division ensures the effective coordination and delivery of a wide range of support and enabling activities for all MRNSW stakeholders.

This Division leads in providing and coordinating the systems, infrastructure, finances and communications to support effective service delivery to the boating community of NSW and the welfare of our members who deliver it.

The Operations & Capability Division provides on-water and radio services to the boating community of NSW including monitoring the VHF marine radio network and preparing for and undertaking incident response and search and rescue activities.

This Division leads in ensuring that all MRNSW contributors – both staff and members – have the skills and on-water tools needed to operate as a world leading marine



The staffing restructure will help ensure a bright future for MRNSW. Photo: Sunrise at MR Evans Head base.

rescue organisation.

Work is already underway in implementing the new restructure with the recruitment of new roles a priority and most expected to be on board by early 2022. Until then, a staged approach has been adopted, with the current structure remaining in place until the new leadership

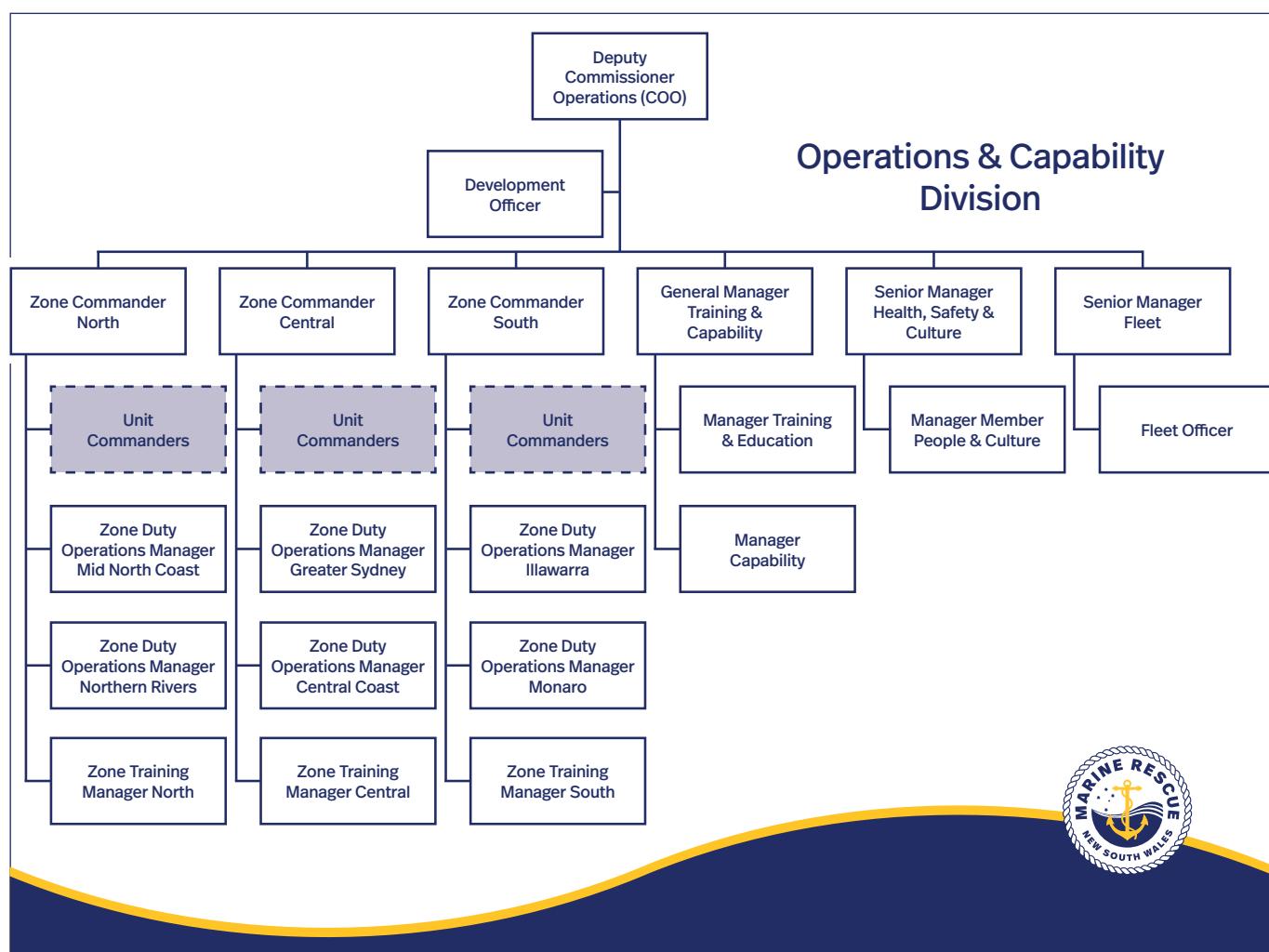
positions have been appointed.

Marine Rescue Commissioner Stacey Tannos said that the restructure would provide a solid foundation for the future growth of the Service.

"This restructure is the culmination of many months of patient research, discussion and

consultation," he said.

"In the ever evolving emergency services environment, these changes place us in the best possible position to effectively deliver our range of vital services to the boating community of the State and to ensure the health and welfare of our volunteer members."



Volunteers receive Life Membership honour

Award ceremony recognises distinguished service

Two Marine Rescue NSW volunteers have received the Service's highest honour of Life Membership in a ceremony following the Annual General Meeting of the Marine Rescue Board on 20 November.

James Glissan AM, ESM, QC, of the MR Botany Port Hacking Unit, joined the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard Botany Bay flotilla in May 2008 and remains an active member of the unit.

Mr Glissan was pivotal in the establishment and development of Marine Rescue NSW (MRNSW) in 2010. A strong supporter of a unified volunteer marine rescue service in NSW, Mr Glissan was appointed by the State Government to the Facilitation Group established to guide the transition process, with his professional expertise ensuring the new organisation was able to meet its legal requirements and establish a secure legal, governance and financial foundation.

A Foundation Board Member and current Board Chair, Mr Glissan's leadership and positive collaboration



MRNSW member and Chair of the MRNSW Board James Glissan with his Life Membership award. Also present MRNSW Commissioner Stacey Tannos and retiring Board member John Lynch.

involved in water safety for nearly fifty years, playing a significant role in setting up the Swansea Australian Volunteer Coastal Group (AVCG), becoming the first flotilla commander of the Royal Volunteer



MRNSW member Ron Calman receiving his Life Membership from MRNSW Board Chair James Glissan.

“ Two Marine Rescue NSW volunteers have received the Service’s highest honour of Life Membership ”

with the MRNSW executive has helped develop the Service into a world-class rescue and emergency organisation.

Mr Glissan was awarded the Emergency Services Medal in 2013 in recognition of his leadership, commitment and service to MRNSW, and was awarded the Member of the Order of Australia in 2019 for his significant service to the Law in New South Wales.

Ron Calman OAM, ESM, of the MR Newcastle Unit, has been

Coastal Patrol (RVCP) in the mid 70's, and remaining there through its amalgamation into Marine Rescue NSW.

In 2012, Mr Calman was asked to transfer to Marine Rescue Newcastle where he assumed responsibility for all governance, management and overview of administration.

As a member of MRNSW, Mr Calman has been instrumental in training and assessing across all boat related competency levels in Newcastle, Lake Macquarie and

further afield, and has played a significant role in promoting boating safety in the community.

Mr Calman continues to be available to be called in at a moment's notice, and has notched up thousands of hours of marine rescues in all kinds of weather, conditions and situations.

Mr Calman was awarded the

Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in the 2007 Queen's Birthday Honours for his service to the community through the RVCP, and the Emergency Services Medal (ESM) in the 2020 Queen's Birthday Honours for his many years of distinguished service to emergency service organisations.

New era for marine rescue radio and telephony systems

Technology upgrade delivers better communications

Marine Rescue NSW is on the cusp of a new communications era as the roll out of the new Frequentis consoles nears completion.

In June, the State Communications Centre at Belrose became a fully Frequentis site, with the decommissioning of the Omnitronics Alto system, with the only sites still outstanding those that do not hand over to the State Communications Centre.

While the bulk of work is now completed, some remains to be done to finish the most significant ever transformation of Marine Rescue's radio, internet and telephony systems.

The project brings a number of benefits to the Service. The most significant is a dispatch system purpose-designed for organisations such as emergency services, air traffic controllers and those needing

access, with installation of the new Frequentis consoles scheduled to commence in January.

Hidden from view is the investment in highly reliable servers supporting the Frequentis System, and the Telstra Multiprotocol Label Switching (MPLS) network linking all sites and the Telstra telephone network.

While such a significant project has required the combined efforts of many people, several deserve a special mention.

Information Technology Support Officer Matt Sims has logged thousands of kilometres travelling to and from Marine Rescue bases, where he has been busy finding and installing NBN connections and cutting over the internet connections.

Kurt Mason, Karera Project Manager, has been instrumental in managing the Frequentis

In June, the State Communications Centre became a fully Frequentis site

high availability dispatch consoles in an integrated network that supports Radio over Internet Protocol (RoIP), internet and telephone services. RoIP is similar to Voice over IP (VoIP), but augments two-way radio communications rather than telephone calls.

The network has two telecommunication links with automatic failover should the primary link fail. The new telephone system will be integrated across all connected sites and will provide enhanced call flow and control once installed.

As the system comes online, radio operators will notice new telephones and quicker internet

configuration pushes to all sites and the deployment of Karera resources to remote locations.

As the driver of the project on the coalface, Emergency Systems Manager Colin Williams has handled the ups and downs inherent in any significant project with professionalism and skill, ensuring the project has stayed on track to deliver its important benefits to the Service.

Finally, as the 'grandad' of the project, former Director Operations Andrew Cribb provided the thought leadership required to bring about this significant transformational technological uplift for Marine Rescue communications.



Radio operator Phillip Tremble inspects the technology that powers the new State Communications Centre. Photo: Brad Whittaker



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Lots to like as Facebook page hits milestone

Social media channels working to boost safety, profile

There was lots to like about the milestone reached by Marine Rescue's Facebook page in late September, as it notched up its 20,000th 'like'. 'Liking' a Facebook page shows support for that page, and ensures regular updates from the page in your Facebook news feed.

Created over a decade ago on the 23rd of September 2009, the Marine Rescue State Headquarters Facebook page has spent the past dozen years keeping the community informed of the many activities and achievements of our members, and providing boaters with critical safety and preparedness advice so they can stay safer on the water.

Since then, our Facebook page has been joined by Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram – all working in



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Marine Rescue State Headquarters Facebook page

concert with our website to keep the boating community safer and better informed.

Importantly, unit Facebook and Instagram pages have provided their local boating communities with

useful locally-targeted content to help them stay safer on the water, as well as information on their unit's activities, and encouragement to join as a member.

Thank you to everyone who has

'liked' our Facebook page – we're dedicated to keeping New South Wales' boaters safer and better informed and look forward to having you stay with us as we continue our vital work.

Karera

Stay safe and connected on the water, everywhere.

A large sailboat with a white hull and blue accents is shown sailing on dark blue water. The boat has multiple sails and a mast. In the background, there are some distant landmasses or hills under a clear sky.

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Three new rescue water craft boost for MR Brunswick and MR Lake Macquarie

Grants help fund capability enhancement

In mid-October a convoy of three new Rescue Water Craft (RWCs) made their way north from Sydney to the Hunter and North Coast in a boost for the Lake Macquarie and Brunswick units ahead of the summer boating season.

The three Sea-Doo GTX-170 RWCs are powered by a 170hp engine with a top speed of 90 km/hr, ensuring a swift response to any emergency. The new RWCs also have excellent manoeuvrability and the ability to operate in shallow water and on turbulent coastal bars.

Kitted out in new livery, the three RWCs come with an improved towline for use in rescues, portable radios and helmets, and are fitted with an Automatic Identification System (AIS) to track their location in real time, enabling more effective tasking to incidents.

The three Sea-Doo GTX-170 RWCs are powered by a 170hp engine with a top speed of 90 km/hr

Funding for the Brunswick vessels and trailers was achieved through the Federal Government's Stronger Communities Programme Round 6, which is provided by the Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources and the NSW State Government's Office of Responsible Gambling Clubgrants Category 3 fund, with the Lake Macquarie RWC funded through the Federal Government's Stronger Communities Programme Round 6 fund.

First to receive their new RWC was MR Lake Macquarie, with the delivery of LM12 by acting Greater Sydney Regional Operations Manager Brad Whittaker. LM12 is a



MR Lake Macquarie member Rolland Bennett aboard LM12. Photo: Brad Whittaker

sister craft to the existing LM13, and doubles the number of RWCs at the unit to two.

RWCs, designated BR11 and BR12, replace two temporary older craft.

MR Brunswick Unit Commander Jonathan Wilcox said that the new RWCs were ideal for navigating the tricky waters of the Brunswick River.

"These new craft will allow our members to respond to incidents in rough conditions and at low tide that would normally be too dangerous for

our larger vessel. This will boost our ability to save lives in the worst sea conditions, while keeping volunteers safer with the latest equipment," he said.

"The arrival of these new craft means locals and visitors alike can undertake their chosen aquatic activities confident that should the worst occur, help is close at hand."



Brunswick 11 & 12 en route to their new home. Photo: Brad Whittaker



Can we help you? Members ready for action at the Ngara Education Centre. Photo: Sophie Galvin

Greater Sydney volunteers mask up for vaccination drive

Vaccination the key to a normal summer on the water

In September, at the height of the drive to vaccinate residents in South West Sydney, Marine Rescue NSW received a request from the State Emergency Operations Centre for volunteers to assist NSW Health at several vaccination hubs with a range of support tasks.

with representation from every unit across the Greater Sydney Region.

Between September 20 and October 3, four to five volunteers could be found working up to ten hour shifts each day at the vaccination centre. The work performed included meeting and

including masks and face shields and all were double vaccinated, helping ensure their safety and that of the public they interacted with.

The Marine Rescue assistance was coordinated by MRNSW Development Officer Sophie Galvin, who said all members who attended were excited to be able to help combat the pandemic.

"With vaccination the only way forward to a normal summer on our waterways, it was great to be able to lend a hand and to free up essential front line health workers," she said.

"Once again, our volunteers have shown their professionalism and commitment in helping the community when they needed them the most."

Feedback from the volunteers was very positive, with all members reporting that they'd had a good

experience at the hub.

In a survey taken after the deployment, one member wrote "The NSW Health staff were friendly, competent, and well organised - a pleasure to work with." Another member said, "If I didn't have primary school aged kids on holidays, I would volunteer again."

Feedback from NSW Health was also positive, with the Manager, Emergency Management Unit, at Liverpool Hospital Dwight Robinson thanking MRNSW for their assistance.

"On behalf of South West Sydney Local Health District, please accept our sincere thanks to the whole Marine Rescue NSW team for your assistance. The Liverpool Vaccination Hub has really appreciated the help and support provided over these last two weeks by your members."

“Four to five volunteers could be found working up to ten hour shifts each day”

Following discussions and several site visits with NSW Health staff on the best way to use our members, it was decided to focus our resources over a two week block on one site, the Ngara Education Centre at Warwick Farm.

Twenty five volunteers responded to the call to assist,

greeting people as they arrived for their vaccination, ensuring they signed in using the QR code, checking documentation, directing people to the registration area, and moving stock supplies.

In addition to their familiar blue uniforms, members were kitted out in personal protective equipment

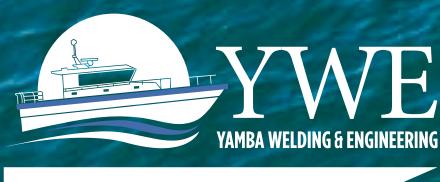
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Million Dollar boost for MR Point Danger

New vessel and base renovation for our northernmost unit



Minister for Police and Emergency Services David Elliott, MRNSW Commissioner Stacey Tannos, Coxswain Nicole Lockie, Trainee Crew Kathleen Weissel, Trainee Crew Sarah Bell, Coxswain Courtney Greenslade, and State Member for Tweed Geoff Provest MP.

MR Point Danger has received a million dollar boost with the commissioning of their new \$819,000 rescue vessel, PD31 and the \$200,000 renovation of their radio base.

Mr Elliott was joined by MRNSW Commissioner Stacey Tannos, Deputy Commissioner Operations and Capability Alex Barrell, Deputy Commissioner Corporate Services Todd Andrews, and Point Danger volunteers to officially welcome Point Danger 31, a 12.5 metre Naiad, to the MRNSW fleet.

Mr Elliott praised the professionalism and dedication of the Point Danger volunteers as they undertake their vital work.

"This new vessel is a great asset not only for the Point Danger volunteers but also for the many boaters in this area of the far North Coast, which is a significant drawcard for locals and visitors

alike.

"With triple 325hp Suzuki engines and a top speed of 42 knots, Point Danger 31 has the power and reliability to ensure the unit's crews can be on the scene of an emergency more rapidly than ever."

Marine Rescue Commissioner Stacey Tannos thanked the State Government and the boating community for their generous financial support for Marine Rescue NSW.

"This support means we can continue to deliver our volunteers modern, safe and reliable boats like this one, purpose-built to meet local operating conditions both on the Tweed River and its bar, and out to sea," he said.

"This means both our volunteers and local boaters alike will be safer."

Built by Yamba Welding & Engineering on the NSW North

Coast, Point Danger 31 is equipped with the latest search and rescue technology including Raymarine Axiom Suite, FLIR, radio direction finder, radar and side scan sonar, and provides greater manoeuvrability and endurance, enabling crews to search for longer. It also features a full first aid fit-out, including a defibrillator and oxygen kit.

Unit Commander Glenda Ashby said that the new vessel would be a tremendous boost for local boating safety.

"The updated technology and equipment on board will greatly improve our search capability," she said.

"It is more robust than our previous boat and with a range of 350nm has greater endurance, meaning we can operate more safely for longer periods and in a wider range of weather and sea

conditions."

The new vessel replaces PD30 which is being refitted to take up a new role at the other end of the state as the first rescue vessel for MR Eden.

At the commissioning, Minister Elliott took the opportunity to present several members with awards. These included Coxswain Nicole Lockie who was presented with her 25 year service medal pin, Elaine Fowler who received her 20 year service award, and Pat Watkins who received her five year service pin.

Unit Commander Glenda Ashby received a special citation for her many years of service as Unit Commander, a role from which she retired on 1 December.

After the formal proceedings, an all-female crew took guests on the water to experience the new vessel in person.

Minister commissions new Port Macquarie vessel

Latest technology helps unit give help faster

Minister for Police and Emergency Services David Elliott has commissioned a \$321,000 rescue vessel for the Port Macquarie unit while visiting the region in early November.

Mr Elliott was joined by Member for Port Macquarie Leslie Williams, MRNSW Commissioner Stacey Tannos, Deputy Commissioner Operations and Capability Alex Barrell, Deputy Commissioner Corporate Services Todd Andrews, Mid North Coast Regional Director John Lynch and Port Macquarie volunteers to officially welcome Port Macquarie 21, a 6.8 metre twin console Naiad, to the MRNSW fleet.

"The NSW Government is proud to support our emergency services volunteers, and to make sure they have the critical resources and equipment needed to protect and assist our community," he said.

"Its twin 140hp Suzuki outboards and top speed of 41 knots will give Port Macquarie 21 the power it needs to be on the scene of an emergency faster than ever."



The official party and members beside PM21 at the commissioning.

Port Macquarie 21 boasts the latest search and rescue technology including radar, 3D scan sonar and Raymarine electronics suite, and provides greater manoeuvrability and endurance, enabling crews to search for longer.

The vessel also features a full first aid fit-out, including a defibrillator and oxygen kit.

"The NSW Government is proud to support our emergency services"

Marine Rescue NSW Commissioner Stacey Tannos expressed his gratitude to the State Government and boating community for their ongoing support for Marine Rescue NSW.

"This support ensures our volunteers have modern, safe and reliable boats best able to meet the needs of the local community and of our members," he said.

"This means both our volunteers and the local boating community will be safer."

Built on the State's North Coast by Yamba Welding & Engineering,

Unit Commander Greg Davies said the new rescue craft was a great asset to the unit and the local boating community.

"The updated technology and equipment on board has greatly improved our search capability," he said.

"It is more robust than our previous boat, has greater endurance, and a range of up to 140nm, meaning we can operate more safely for longer periods and in a wider range of weather and sea conditions."



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The official party and members beside CB20 at the commissioning. Photo: Phil Campbell

Marine Rescue Crowdy-Harrington Members celebrate commissioning

Proud day for unit as new vessel formally welcomed

Having earlier that morning commissioned a new vessel for Port Macquarie, Minister for Police and Emergency Services David Elliott was soon in action again, commissioning a \$290,000 rescue vessel for the MR Crowdy Harrington unit.

Mr Elliott was joined by Member for Port Macquarie Leslie

Deputy Commissioner Corporate Services Todd Andrews, Mid North Coast Regional Director John Lynch and Crowdy Harrington volunteers to officially welcome Crowdy Harrington 20, a 6.8 metre centre console Naiad, to the MRNSW fleet.

"This fantastic new vessel is a great asset not only for the Crowdy Harrington volunteers but also

outboards and a top speed of 39 knots, Crowdy Harrington 20 is ideally suited to getting help to boaters quickly and reliably."

Commissioner Stacey Tannos thanked the State Government and the Mid North Coast boating community for their support for Marine Rescue NSW.

"This support enables us to provide our volunteers with modern, safe and reliable boats, purpose-built to meet the demanding local operating conditions on the Manning River and its bar, and out to sea, keeping our members, and local boaters, safer."

Built by Yamba Welding & Engineering, Crowdy Harrington 20 is equipped with the latest search and rescue technology including sonar, Radar RealVision

3D transducer and a Raymarine electronics suite, and provides greater manoeuvrability and endurance, enabling crews to search for longer.

The vessel also carries a full first aid fit-out, including a defibrillator and oxygen kit.

Unit Commander Cheryl Rowe said that the new vessel was already proving its worth on local waterways.

"The updated technology and equipment on board have greatly improved our search capability," she said.

"Its' robustness and greater range of 145nm lets us operate safely for longer periods and in a wider range of sea and weather conditions, helping keep our local boating community safer."

“The updated technology and equipment on board have greatly improved our search capability”

Williams, MRNSW Commissioner
Stacey Tannos, MRNSW Deputy
Commissioner Operations and
Capability Alex Barrell, MRNSW

boaters in this popular boating area of the Mid North Coast," Mr Elliott said.

"With twin Suzuki 115AZX

Marine Rescue TV celebrates a year of stories

Telling our story to the world



Deputy Commissioner Alex Barrell has been a regular on MRTV, appearing here at the opening of the State Communications Centre.

Launched in November 2020, and now in its second season, MRTV is an online video magazine and was conceived as a more engaging way to highlight the vital work undertaken by our members.

Over the past year's nine episodes, stories have included the commissioning of vessels at MR Tuross and MR Lord Howe Island, our support for the National Parks and Wildlife Service's whale disentanglement team, the Monaro, Mid North Coast and North Coast SAREXs, the opening of the State Communications Centre and our participation in the multi-agency response to severe flooding in March.

A regular segment by fishing guru and long-time supporter of Marine Rescue, Michael Guest, has provided handy hints and tips on such topics as lifejacket use, boat launching and trailer maintenance.

All segments are produced entirely in-house and have been subtitled as part of Marine Rescue's commitment to providing greater

access to information for people with disability.

MRTV is the brainchild of acting Greater Sydney Regional Operations Manager Brad Whittaker, and is a partnership between the MR Training and Education and MR Corporate Services teams with the project reporting against MRNSW's public education strategies.

Mr Whittaker said that the episodes were proving popular with members and the public alike, and were also being used by high school students undertaking Marine Studies.

"Each episode is placed on the Marine Teachers' Association Facebook page, and we've written student activity worksheets for each story that tie into the curriculum - giving teachers a valuable classroom resource that introduces Marine Rescue NSW to a youth audience."

"This will hopefully translate not only to a greater appreciation for the marine environment and the work of our members, but into a greater number of young persons joining as volunteers."



New horizons for old faces

Farewell and best wishes as two senior staff move on

Two long-standing familiar faces at MRNSW have left the Service, with the departure of Director Operations Andrew Cribb and Director Corporate Services Kate Woods.

Andrew 'Cribby' Cribb joined the Marine Rescue NSW staff in August 2015, after nearly a decade as the Development Manager for Yachting NSW.

Reflecting on his six years with the Service, Mr Cribb said that he was most proud of helping deliver a world-class VHF marine radio network, which has significantly boosted the ability of Marine Rescue crews to communicate.

"Another proud moment for me was the opening of the Service's new State Communications Centre in June this year, which was the culmination of years of hard work by many people."

"Other highlights have been enhancements to our incident management system, our involvement in the responses to the Black Summer fires and the severe floods earlier this year, improvements in the tasking of our resources, and the expansion in our



A talented and skilled yachtsman, Andrew Cribb has numerous Sydney to Hobart races under his belt.

search and rescue exercises and their change in focus."

"All of these positive changes could not have been achieved without our Marine Rescue volunteers, and I'd like to thank them all for their friendship, support and commitment over the past six years."

Deputy Commissioner Operations and Capability Alex Barrell thanked Mr Cribb for his dedicated service to Marine Rescue.

"Andrew made a significant contribution over the last six years particularly in the area of operations and emergency systems. I'm sure all members will join with me in wishing him well in his new role with Surf Lifesaving NSW."

A skilled sailor, Mr Cribb is hoping that the good fortune he's experienced while working at Marine Rescue continues.

"While at Marine Rescue I've had four top five finishes in the Sydney to Hobart, including winning line honours in 2015. I'm hoping some of that good luck comes with me to my new role."

After last year's cancellation due to the Northern Beaches COVID-19 outbreak, Mr Cribb will again be contesting the blue water classic.

Ms Woods joined Marine Rescue in 2010, seeing over a decade of change and growth in the organisation, working to build the Service's community and media profile, develop its social media capabilities and create quality publications such as Soundings.

Looking back at her time with Marine Rescue, Ms Woods said that she'd seen many changes for the better.

"Every volunteer and staff member can be rightly proud of the enormous strides Marine Rescue has made in the last decade. Its success and achievements have been a true team effort," she said.

"I'm proud of our work to build our community and media profile, develop our social media capabilities and consistently produce high-quality, professional publications. Hats off to all the volunteers who contributed to Soundings over the years. Like the organisation itself,

the magazine couldn't have existed without them and I hope all our readers have found it interesting and informative."

"One of my personal highlights was taking part in the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Parade. It's important to live our values and this was a mature sign of our inclusiveness and respect for diversity. I always say it's one of the best nights you'll ever have and the pride and delight our members gain from the warm welcome we always receive is the best part of the event."

"For me, the greatest reward of any job is the friends you make along the way and I'd like to thank everyone who has been supportive and extended warm wishes for my future."

Deputy Commissioner Corporate Services Todd Andrews thanked Ms Woods for her long and dedicated service.

"Kate has built a strong foundation for us to continue to raise our public profile. I thank her for her efforts and wish her the best in her future endeavours."



Kate Woods at this year's Mardi Gras parade.

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World first for deaf boaters

New videos promote safer boating for the deaf and hard of hearing

A series of nine boating safety videos, signed in Australian Sign Language by MR Jervis Bay volunteer Sean Sweeney, are believed to be a world first in boating safety for deaf and hard of hearing boaters.

The videos were the brainchild of MR Jervis Bay Unit Commander Tony Dagger and unit member Sean Sweeney, both of whom have strong connections to the Deaf Community.

After discovering that his then girlfriend had deaf parents, and wanting to make a good impression, Tony went to TAFE for 12 months and learned to sign. It clearly worked, as the relationship went from strength to strength with Tony and his girlfriend eventually getting married.

Sean runs a successful interpreting business and signed for the Deaf Community at the

daily New South Wales media conferences during the Black Summer bushfires, becoming a familiar figure on television screens across the nation.

Keen boaters in their own right, both saw a need for simple, signed information able to provide deaf and hard of hearing boaters with the critical safety advice they needed for a safe day out on the water.

Collaborating with the State Headquarters' media team, topics and scripts were developed, with filming occurring on a bright and breezy September day in the bayside town of Huskisson.

Supported by Deaf Australia, the videos are set to be distributed within the Deaf Community within Australia, with the videos and transcripts also available on the Marine Rescue website and social media platforms.



checking the engine gearbox and propeller, charging

Sean Sweeney and Tony Dagger in one of the videos.

For Tony, the videos were a labour of love, and fill a vital gap in the resources available for deaf and hard of hearing boaters.

"Boating is a popular activity within the Deaf Community, but until now there have been few resources available in their own language."

"These unique videos cover a wide range of safety and boating

maintenance issues, including how to Log On and Off with Marine Rescue, and will help keep deaf and hard of hearing boaters safer on our waterways."

"It's great to see Sean's and my vision come to fruition, and we have both been overwhelmed with the positive response to the videos within the Deaf Community."

Trainers and Assessors upgrade to new units of competency

Sixty members upgraded in training blitz

Sixty volunteer Trainers and Assessors have been upgraded to the new Provide First Aid and Advanced Resuscitation and Oxygen Therapy Units of Competencies HLTAID011 and HLTAID015.

The endorsement by the Australian Skills Quality Authority of new units of competency required Marine Rescue Regional Training Officers to amend training resources and assessments, with a tight completion deadline of the end of October.

A Zoom course over two evenings covered off on theory, and was followed up with a face-to-face practical session and assessment. Sessions were held in the Northern Rivers, Mid-North Coast, Hunter Central Coast, Greater Sydney, Illawarra and Monaro Regions.

The training resources were developed by the MRNSW Training Team and benchmarked against industry best practice, before their delivery to volunteers with experience



Members practice CPR at the Northern Rivers Region training. Photo: Rodney Page

and qualifications in Training and Assessing and First Aid.

Director Training and Education Chris Butler, said that he was grateful to the trainers for giving up their time to provide this valuable service to their fellow members.

"I want to personally thank those who have participated thus far, as they have not only given up their time to upgrade, but also provided much appreciated input to ongoing improvements to the course."

"It's great to see such a positive

reception to the training, and with additional qualified trainers and assessors having put up their hand to deliver these courses, and we are working to get their induction and training accommodated in the near future."

Rescue highlights inter-agency cooperation

MR Broken Bay support NPWS in whale of a rescue

Members of Marine Rescue Broken Bay helped solve a super-sized problem after a juvenile two year old Humpback Whale became entangled in a bather protection shark net 800 metres off Whale Beach on Sydney's northern beaches.

The first report of a whale in distress was received mid-afternoon on a sunny but windy Saturday afternoon in mid-October, with Broken Bay 30 tasked to support a NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) marine mammal rescue team.

The NPWS team, aboard a small

inflatable boat, used specialised equipment to cut the netting free of the distressed whale, with Broken Bay 30 acting as the support ship for the delicate operation.

As darkness began falling, concern mounted that the rescue mission might have to be abandoned until the next morning.

Fortunately the eight metre whale was freed just after seven in the evening, minutes before the National Parks and Marine Rescue crews were to stand down, with the whale wasting no time joining others heading southward to their Antarctic feeding grounds.



NPWS staff return to BB30 after successfully freeing the whale

Marine Rescue volunteer added to Volunteer Memorial

Poignant ceremony commemorates Jervis Bay member

This year's Annual Emergency Services Volunteer Remembrance Service was again affected by the Covid pandemic, being pre-recorded then streamed at the traditional time of 11am on the second Sunday in October.

Marine Rescue NSW was represented by Commissioner Stacey Tannos, who was joined by the Honourable David Elliott MP, Minister for Police and Emergency Services; Rob Rogers AFSM, Commissioner NSW Rural Fire Service; Carlene York APM, Commissioner NSW State Emergency Service, and Senior Chaplain Ray Lotty, representing the Commissioner for the NSW Volunteer Rescue Association.

For Marine Rescue NSW, the service was a particularly poignant one, with one of four names added to the Volunteer Memorial being MR Jervis Bay volunteer, John Gallimore.

John was on active duty as Watch Officer at the MR Jervis Bay base on 15 February this year, when despite the best efforts of those with him, he died of a medical episode.

MRNSW Commissioner Stacey Tannos said that while everything is done ensure the safety of our emergency services members, tragically, sometimes they do not make it home.

"While the annual memorial service is a time for solemn reflection, it is also a time to



John Gallimore's name on the Volunteer Memorial.

take great pride in the lives and achievements of those we have lost," he said.

"John was a well-respected and much loved member of MR Jervis

Bay. It is fitting that John's service be remembered at the memorial service and through Jervis Bay's new rescue vessel Jervis Bay 40 bearing his name."

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Closed border opens opportunity for Eden unit

Unit upskills ahead of inaugural vessel

Brian and Sue Williamson grew up in the small NSW town of Eden, where their father David was employed as the Harbour Master from 1954 to 1962, after which the family moved to Sydney. Eventually the pair left home and went their separate ways until Covid conspired to bring them together again in the town where they grew up.

After retiring, Brian joined MR Ulladulla, quickly progressing to Coxswain, and achieving both his Masters 5 and Certificate IV in training. Earlier this year Brian and his wife Jenny sold their Mollymook house to move closer to family in Western Australia, only to find themselves unable to relocate due to that state's hard border closure.

With their caravan in tow, they could have waited out the border reopening anywhere, but instead at

sister Sue's suggestion, chose to head south to Eden so Brian could use his training skills to help prepare the local unit for the arrival of their first rescue vessel.

Sue, a 33 year Police veteran, arrived back on the South Coast much earlier, when in 1993 when she was stationed at Bega. From there she moved down the highway to her final station at Eden in 2007, before retiring there in 2012. Just over two years ago, Sue joined the local Marine Rescue unit to give something back to the local community.

According to Sue, for the Eden unit, Brian's delay was a great inconvenience for him, but occurred at just the right time for the unit.

"With our first rescue boat due at the end of this year, having Brian available to help train our members



Together again - Brian and Sue Williamson at the MR Eden base.
Photo: Ursula Wall.

has been a huge help."

"Even I have taken the plunge, joining his classes to work towards my crew qualification. Unfortunately, any thoughts that I'd be the

teacher's pet have been shattered, as he treats me just the same as everyone else!"

The new Eden vessel is expected to be in Service by the start of 2022.



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Happy New Year
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Volunteers saving lives on the water

Shellharbour volunteer recounts battle for survival at sea

Harrowing story of survival from half a century ago

Recently, MR Shellharbour member Bill Cockley recounted the sinking of the bulk carrier *Noongah* off Smokey Cape to the Australian Maritime Workers' Journal as part of its commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the tragedy.

Bill was one of only five survivors out of 26 crew when the *MV Noongah* and her load of steel went down on 25 August 1969 in the worst recent peacetime maritime tragedy in Australian coastal waters.

“He still heads out on the water with his MR Shellharbour crewmates... The man who was rescued, now rescues others.”

In pitch darkness and a howling gale that had whipped up a heavy swell, the ship's captain had lost control of the carrier, and at 3.55am radioed for help. At 4.47am he signalled again that the crew were abandoning ship, with the 26 Australian seafarers on board having just 14 minutes to escape before the *Noongah* went down.

By a twist of fate then Able Seaman Bill Cockley was not meant to be on the *Noongah* that fateful night. Rostered on the *Iron Kimberley*, he had asked for a transfer to the *Noongah* so he could be back in time for his wedding.

Bill said thoughts of his family and his forthcoming wedding helped him to survive.

“One of the main things that kept me going was I had to survive because the woman I was going to marry had our baby girl. She was only 8-10 months old,” said Bill.

As daylight broke, Bill and two other survivors drifted south. Around 10 that morning, the three men

sighted a search plane far off, but no one was looking that far from shore. Hours went by with the men continually battered by large waves, debris and rain squalls.

In the late afternoon they sighted a bulk carrier and waved and called out, but it passed without anyone seeing them.

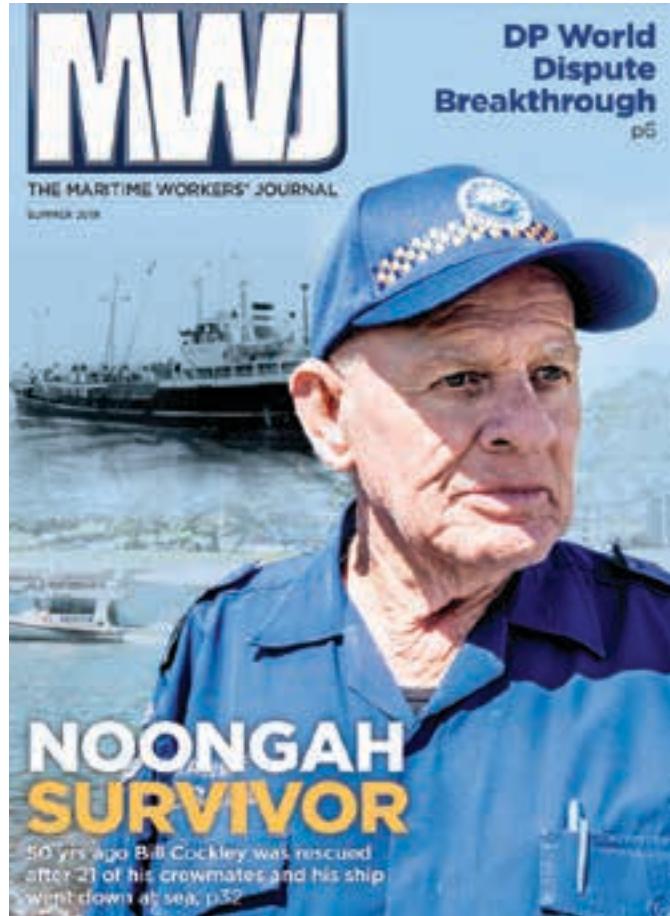
With dusk threatening, after more than 12 hours in the water, they sighted the Adelaide Steam bulk carrier *Meringa*.

“We started yelling and waving

our arms, and a couple of the crew waved back,” said Bill.

“Crew members threw us life buoys on lines and we were pulled onto the ship's side, where we climbed up the gangway net to safety.”

Despite his brush with death, Bill was not deterred from heading out on the water, spending 28 years at sea and a further 28 years doing voluntary marine rescue, and despite advancing years, he still



Bill Cockley graces the front cover of the AMW Journal.
Photo: Courtesy Australian Maritime Workers' Journal

heads out on the water with his MR Shellharbour crewmates once a month.

The man who was rescued, now

devotes his time to rescuing others.

Thanks to the Australian Maritime Workers' Journal for permission to reproduce extracts of Bill's story.



Busy days for Ballina members

Fresh hands on the wheel as Commander steps down

The eased Covid restrictions on the Northern Rivers has seen MR Ballina again opening up, with inductions, training and community events all restarting in recent months.

With this easing of restrictions, boaters are on the water in increasing numbers, with MR Ballina members undertaking several rescues ranging from a trimaran in trouble on its maiden voyage, a jet ski with a rope tangled in its jet, to the retrieval of a sailing craft that had floated across the bar and out to sea all by itself. Regular training aboard both Ballina 30 and Ballina 20 has stood the crew well in these assists.

Congratulations to Phil Causley for 10 years of service to our unit and Marine Rescue NSW. Phil is an invaluable member of the unit, holding a Coxswain rating, and always there to pitch in. On a Sunday, this has seen Phil setting up and cooking for Breakfast @ the Beach, before heading out to any rescues on the water. Phil was presented with the MRNSW Service Medal for 10 years of service by Regional Operations Manager, John Murray at a recent unit meeting.

A warm welcome to Babs Stephens, who recently transferred



Crew member Mark Muszynski watches on as a disabled jet ski and its riders are towed across the Ballina Bar.
Photo: Geoff Hutchinson.

and Trevor Stabb on completing the Certificate II in Public Safety (Aquatic Rescue).

In June 2020, Glenn Sanders (skipper), Phil Causley, Ian Grimwood and Bill Ewen, supported by Radio Operator Tony Hensley and Watch Officer Ray Tennent, undertook a trying, early morning rescue in which Ballina 30 plucked two sailors from the sea after their vessel had sunk. In December 2020, the team received Commissioner's Citations for their actions, and at the October 2021 unit meeting, Northern Rivers

but will continue volunteering at the unit. Geoff Shepherd will move from Deputy Unit Commander to

Unit Commander. Thanks Geoff for taking on the role.

Kath Begley

“Congratulations to Phil Causley for 10 years of service to our unit”

to Ballina unit from MR Bermagui. Babs has already been out training and involved in rescues and her experience will be a great asset to the unit.

Despite the lockdown, training continued, with several members recently receiving their certificates and epaulets. Congratulations to Ray Moss Vandinther on achieving her Radio Operator rating and becoming a full member, Bill Ewen for achieving his Senior Crew rating,

Regional Operations Manager John Murray presented each member with a citation pin to wear on their uniforms in further recognition of their efforts and service.

It takes a special member to step up and take on a leadership position as a volunteer. Thank you to Zsolt Mankowsky for his time and effort in leading the unit over the last few years. Zsolt has made the decision to stand down as Unit Commander to make more time for his family,

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Grant to power up Iluka Yamba vessel

New engines to deliver greater reliability, faster response

In early November, Clarence Nationals MP Chris Gulaptis visited MR Iluka Yamba, and announced that they had been successful in winning a \$26,000 grant for two new outboard motors for rescue vessel Iluka Yamba 20.

The Office of Responsible Gambling's Infrastructure Grants Program grant was one of just six awarded in the State in the July round, and testament to the quality of the unit's application.

During his visit, Mr Gulaptis praised the efforts of the unit's volunteers in securing the grant.

"Their rescue efforts will now be powered by two brand new 90hp Suzuki outboards, which means more lives saved," Mr Gulaptis said.

Marine Rescue Iluka Yamba Unit Commander Peter Richards



Members Peter Richards, Frank Bond, Mick Madde, Ann Oddy, Joe Dimauro, with local MP Chris Gullaptis aboard IY20.

said the waters along the Clarence River were some of the busiest in the state, and regularly used by recreational boaters, fishermen,

sailing and cruising yacht clubs, and dive groups.

"In an emergency, every second counts, and these new engines

will give us the power, speed and reliability we need to respond quickly and safely to emergencies."

Peter Richards

AED safety boost for Brunswick

Tragedy leads to successful fundraiser

Following the death of local surfer Phillip Jones, who died after being pulled from the water in August, local community fundraising sought three defibrillators (AEDs) for local beaches.

So strong was the support from the local community, \$21,000 was raised, allowing for ten AEDs to be purchased. Seven of these were placed at strategic locations from Lennox Head to the Marine Rescue Tower in Brunswick Heads. The other three have been placed in NSW Police vehicles in Byron Bay and Brunswick Heads.

Planning is underway to inform the public on the location of the AEDs along with a public training session with local MRNSW and SLSNSW members in both Byron Bay and Brunswick Heads.

With the tourist influx on the coast already starting, the arrival of



MR Brunswick receive its new AED with Glenn Sanders (Coxswain) Nick Varga (crew) Jonathan Wilcock (Unit Commander) and James Darcy and Jack Darcy. Photo: Priscilla Darcy

two new RWCs at MR Brunswick is very welcome. Kitted out in new livery, and with an improved towline for use in rescues and a new trailer, the two craft are ideal for operations on the river and local bar.

Over the last twelve months MR Brunswick have trained ten members from the Northern Rivers to become Rescue Water Craft Operators, with seven from MR Brunswick, two from MR Point

Danger and one from MR Ballina. This increase in local RWC operators is an important safety boost for North Coast boaters as we head into another busy summer season.

Jonathan Wilcox

Little buoy lost at Wooli

Drifting buoy provides tricky training task

MR Wooli unit recently had two opportunities to practice Search and Rescue (SAR) procedures, with the first coming from a call by Manly Hydraulics Laboratory (MHL).

Their Coffs wave-rider buoy had broken away and they asked if the unit could locate it. Complicating this, the buoy's tracker had exhausted its battery, so position data was not available, with the last sighting 4nm off Sandon Bluffs in 40m of water, 13nm to the north.

Two days later, Wooli 30, conducted a search for the buoy as a training event. Fortunately, the buoy's drift had been slowed by the remaining mooring line dragging on the seabed, and the search located it still in the reported area.

Locating was the easy part -

retrieving the heavily encrusted line and bungy by hand, followed by a long and slow tow back to Wooli proved demanding tasks. At 200kg it was too heavy and difficult to lift, but with typical community cooperation, the local oyster farmer helped with the crane on the oyster punt to lift it out of the water and onto the MHL contractor's truck.

The second SAR training opportunity was a mini-SAREX organised by MR Coffs Harbour. Vessels and radio operators from Coffs, Nambucca, Woolgoolga and Wooli participated in a well organised and worthwhile exercise. A high level of skill was demonstrated by all participants, with thanks to Coffs for their initiative, planning and execution.

Richard Taffs



Coffs Waverider Buoy with Wooli crew of Rick Murray and Michael Hammond on back deck, Matthew McLennan (Coxswain) and Matt Gardner out of picture, assisted at wharf by RO Chris Firth, moor the buoy at Wooli wharf ready to be craned out. Photo: Richard Taffs

Evans head members test their Meccano skills

Members build DIY berth

Having taken delivery earlier this year of their new Naiad, it was soon clear that MR Evans Head needed a different berthing system.

The unit has always kept their boat under cover and with the arrival of EH31 there was a need to make sure the new system fitted within the constraints of the existing 'boat shed'.

possibly go wrong?

The Sea Pen pieced together like a giant Meccano set, and after it was assembled, we towed it across the Evans River and successfully squeezed it into the existing boat shed.

The result was a tribute to the ingenuity and skills of our members, with special thanks to Brad Burgess,



Unit Commander Ken Exley congratulates Rohan Shanahan on his appointment as Training Officer.

After some research, a solution was found in a product called Sea Pen. Unfortunately, thanks to Covid, the Queensland-based installers could not make it across the border, so our ever-resourceful members resolved to have it delivered to the local fish Co-op and to put it together ourselves - what could

Ray Thorpe, Ken Exley, Hugh Johns, Hannabeth O'Reilly and Bill Bates.

Just 16 when he joined in June 2019, Rohan Shanahan is our youngest member.

Not having a driver licence, Rohan's parents would tirelessly drive him to training every Tuesday night and Saturday morning and

wait while he studied. Rohan succeeded in gaining his Radio Operators Certificate before qualifying as crew in July last year.

Still in Year 11, and sponsored by his school, he was able to enrol in

a Coxswains course at TAFE which he completed in Year 12. Rohan is a great asset to the unit and has now taken on the executive role of Training Officer.

Bill Bates

Nambucca use lockdown for safety blitz

Safety audit minimises risks

Thanks to the relaxation of Covid restrictions, training at MR Nambucca has not only resumed, but due to a big effort by the MR Nambucca Training Officer and members, is just about back to normal.

The quiet lockdown period was not wasted however, with members carefully checking the base and equipment for any risk management issues. Several areas of concern were identified, the most significant being the boat shed floor, which is consistently slippery when wet.

To mitigate the risk, three layers of epoxy non-slip high grip coating were applied over the entire work area, and all machinery and walkways demarcated with high visibility paint. Outside, the wharf edge was also demarcated for

increased member safety.

Another risk identified was water from rain or rough bar crossings making the sponsons and metal tread areas aboard Nambucca 20 slippery, with the placement of high grip tape on the gunnels providing a simple and effective solution.

A further area of concern was the on-board fire extinguisher, which was located in a locker under the skipper's feet – making it very difficult to access, especially in an emergency! This problem was solved by the addition of a second and more easily accessible extinguisher.

The changeable Nambucca Bar, as always, is causing issues for boat crew in finding safe access to the sea, with the sand continually changing location. A track can



Safety first in the boat shed, with new non-slip floors and high visibility markings. Photo: Gary Nichols

be set down one week and by the following week it has moved, with the previously tracked channel blocked. The unit almost needs a drone to go up before departing

base to guide the boat through, but that's the fun of the ocean and its waters.

Gary Nichols

Back to normal for Camden Haven members

Repairs have base ready for busy summer

Things are slowly returning to normal at MR Camden Haven, as we finalise repairs to our base and see an increase in boaters on our waterways and a return to normal training with the easing of Covid restrictions.

The floods in March caused a great deal of damage to the lower level of our building. Since then, a lot of hard work has been done to undertake repairs, with most of the damage now repaired or replaced.

While the repairs were happening, we have had the long awaited Reditalk Radio system installed. This is operating very well, with our radio operators now having all been trained in its operation with very few complaints.

Numbers at the unit have been boosted with the arrival of eight trainees – three crew and five radio operators. This increase in our



After being severely damaged in the March floods, the base's downstairs area has now been repaired. Photo: Ken Rutledge.

numbers puts us in a good position as we head into the busy summer boating season.

On the water, Log Ons have begun picking up as boaters return to our waterways after the easing

in restrictions. With that has come an increase in requests for our help, with several call outs in recent weeks. Both vessels had broken down, one being a six metre centre console with two people on board

located five nautical miles north east of the river mouth, and the other a six metre cuddy cabin with three people on board just outside the river mouth in breaking water.

Ken Rutledge.

New Woolgoolga tractor breath of fresh air

Local Member 'Singhs' tractor's praises

When the lockdown on the Mid North Coast lifted in mid-September, Member for Coffs Harbour Gurmesh Singh wasted no time in dropping by the MR Woolgoolga unit to officially hand over their new \$81,000 tractor, purchased with funding from the New South Wales Government's Infrastructure ClubGrants Category 3 Fund.

Mr Singh said the tractor would enable volunteers to more safely and reliably transport their rescue vessel Woolgoolga 30 from its shed on the Arrawarra Headland to its launch site on Arrawarra Beach.

"The purchase of this tractor allows Marine Rescue Woolgoolga volunteers to provide a safety net for thousands of water-users on the Coffs Coast," Mr Singh said.

"I applaud the Marine Rescue Woolgoolga volunteers for their dedication and vigilance in keeping our boating community safe. We're grateful they can be relied on when they're needed the most."



Tony Pepperell, Joshua Stangl, Mitch Harvey, Randal Gawne, Unit Donor Marilyn Ely, Member for Coffs Harbour Gurmesh Singh MP, Brian Taylor, and on the Tractor, Shirley Teague. Photo by Craig McTear

Woolgoolga Unit Commander Mitch Harvey said that the new tractor brought a breath of fresh air into the unit.

"For a long time we operated with older tractors that just did the job, but with this new tractor, our members can rest assured knowing

that each time they turn the key, it will start first go and the extra reliability and sustainability of the new machine will see us well into the future."

"I would like to thank Dennis Hardaker from Coffs Harbour Farm Machinery in Woolgoolga

for supporting us throughout the project, and for supplying his time for all future servicing. We would also like to thank Operations Manager Brian Taylor for all the work he has put in with research and overall management of this project."

Mitch Harvey

Trial Bay Members' service 'just the ticket'

Tribute paid to super fundraisers

After many tens of thousands of raffle tickets sold, members Pam Williams and Glenda Bridge have hung up their ticket books and retired from the MR Trial Bay fundraising team.

Pam joined the unit in 2009 with Glenda joining a few years later in 2013. Most weekends they could be found selling raffle tickets at local venues around South West Rocks, and their efforts have raised many thousands of dollars of much needed funds for the unit. Thanks to both of them for their dedication, and we wish them a happy and fun filled retirement.

At a recent face-to-face unit

meeting, five year service awards were presented to Steve Jacket and Dave Meani. Also at the meeting, trainers Jenny Edser and Jon Cragg presented Rick Turvey with his Radio Operator and Crew certificates, and Ian Turner his Radio Operator certificate. Congratulations to all these members for their service to the unit and their local community.

Fundraising has made a welcome return, with our fundraising team recently busy cooking up bacon and egg rolls at the Ingenia Holiday Park in South West Rocks, and more activities planned to take advantage of the summer holiday tourist rush.

Lorraine Rider



Flowers help farewell super fundraisers Pam Williams and Glenda Bridge. Photo by Ron Rider

Forster/Tuncurry out and about again

Four members receive Life Membership honour

Summer is on the way and Marine Rescue Forster Tuncurry have been busy building community awareness and promoting boating safety. Unit Commander David Gibson has been loudly beating the Marine Rescue drum with a long list of speaking engagements at local clubs and organisations, telling people what we do, encouraging safe boating, telling them how to Log On, and of course encouraging interest in membership.

MR Forster/Tuncurry recently welcomed eight new members, with all commencing radio operator training, ensuring we have sufficient members heading into the busy summer period.

The MR Forster Executive approved the award of four Unit Life Memberships in recognition of the significant and sustained contribution to the Forster Tuncurry

unit by Robyn Bramsen, Jutta Chant, Judy Mangan and Don Wright. Their contributions were recognised at a special unit morning tea held in their honour on 25 November. Congratulations and a heartfelt thank you from the whole MR Forster/Tuncurry team to these special people for what they have done for our unit and the community we serve.

With the easing in Covid restrictions, community work has also started again, with the return of the very popular and well patronised Tuncurry Markets. The markets are run by the unit and contribute significantly to our fund raising and community awareness programs and it is exciting for unit members and the community alike to be out and about and engaging with each other in person. Members have also returned to our local



Life members, Don Wright, Robyn Bramsen, Judy Mangan and Jutta Chant.

shopping centres with their fund-raising activities, with thanks to our

fundraising teams for their efforts.
Michael Portelli

Training the focus for Coffs Harbour members

Mini SAREX challenges local units

Over the last few months boating activity has been slow, mainly because of adverse weather, but the time has been well spent attracting new members and investing in training as far as restrictions would allow.

A promotional campaign using locally made videos placed in local shopping centres, and periodic sausage sizzles at our Coffs Harbour boat ramp, generated substantial membership interest and led to fifteen new members who are now undergoing intensive Radio Operator training, with the intention to graduate them for summer.

Training of more experienced operators and boat crew was the focus of a mini SAREX organised and run from the Coffs Harbour Search and Rescue Coordination

Centre on 23 October.

Forty Seven members from MR Coffs Harbour, MR Woolgoolga, MR Wooli and MR Nambucca, as well as Water Police from Coffs Harbour participated. The scenario scrambled the participants from their respective home berths to the last known position to the south of South Solitary Island of a disabled and sinking vessel with two people on board. Small teams had been established in our Coffs base to deal with navigation and planning, logistics, communications and command issues and the place was a hive of enthusiastic activity. After a couple of hours of parallel line searching with four vessels, the exercise concluded with both targets being retrieved, a BBQ lunch put on by some of our hard working



SAREX members relax after their efforts with a well-deserved BBQ lunch. Photo: Graham Taylor

auxiliary members, and a debrief led by our Regional Operations Manager.

Then to complete the cycle of experience in Marine Rescue, three of the unit's more senior skippers were awarded National Medals on

11 October. Greg Taylor joined the Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol in 2005, Andrew Innes in 2003 and Graham Taylor in 2006. All continue to serve with distinction.

Graeme King

Local boaters urged to get ready for boating season

Lemon Tree Passage ask boaters to Log On with a local



Smile for the camera! Members and guests at the boating safety media conference Photo: Sam Zammit.

Marine Rescue Lemon Tree Passage has partnered with Port Stephens Council and local emergency services to urge local boaters to get prepared ahead of an expected record boating season, holding a successful media conference to get out their important message.

At the media conference, MR Lemon Tree Passage Unit Commander Steve Vautier thanked the Port Stephens Council and local emergency services for joining them in promoting boating safety on Port

they and their boats are well prepared for a day out on the water."

Just over half of all rescues undertaken last year by MR Lemon Tree Passage involved boats or jet skis that had experienced engine or battery failure, or had run out of fuel.

"Ensuring your boat is serviced, you have a full tank of fuel and you've checked the tides and weather are an essential part of planning for any trip on the water. And of course, all boaters should Log On with Marine Rescue via the Marine Rescue NSW app or on their

"We're pleased to donate a banner to help promote safer boating on our waterways, and I urge boaters to Log On with Marine Rescue whenever they head out on the water," Mr Palmer said.

"I'd also like to thank the

volunteers of Marine Rescue Lemon Tree Passage for their vital work, and acknowledge all of the emergency services of the Tilligerry Peninsula for their efforts in helping keep local residents safe and prepared."

Sam Zammit.

“Unfortunately all too often we see boaters run into difficulties that could have been avoided with a little preparation.**”**

Stephen's extensive waterways.

"Our magnificent waterways are a magnet for local and visiting boaters alike. Unfortunately all too often we see boaters run into difficulties that could have been avoided with a little preparation," Mr Vautier said.

"We are grateful for the support of Port Stephens Council in helping us get out the message of the importance of Logging On and Off with Marine Rescue, and in ensuring

marine radio on VHF Channel 16," Mr Vautier added.

"Most important of all, boaters and all their passengers should be wearing a properly fitting lifejacket at all times and carry required safety equipment."

At the event, Port Stephens Council Mayor Ryan Palmer said that Council were proud to support Marine Rescue and help promote greater local boating safety.

If you're not a member of the **Boat Owners Association**, you should be!



Boat ramp access

We have fought attempts to reduce trailer parking at metropolitan boat ramps.

Don't lose your mooring

We are participating in the RMS moorings review, safeguarding your rights.

Boating access to prized anchorages

We have fought attempts to introduce anchoring bans at Manly Cove West and Quarantine Beach.

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Newcastle reel in generous donation from fishing club

Members gobsmacked by club's generosity

MR Newcastle members have been stunned by the size of a donation received from the local Sunnyside Fishing Club.

Before the Hunter's lengthy Covid lockdown, MR Newcastle unit received word that the club wished unit representatives to attend an official presentation to receive a donation.

The lockdown held the presentation up for some months until finally, in mid-October, members of the Fishing Club led by Michelle Hawkins-Power met Unit Commander Ron Calman, Deputy Lyn Van Homrigh and other members at the Newcastle Cruising Yacht Club, where a cheque for \$218,000 was presented.

Having run into financial difficulty, the fishing club decided to wind up its assets which included selling



Unit Commander Ron Calman and Michelle Hawkins-Power from Sunnybank Fishing Club 'cheque out' the club's generous donation. Photo: Lyn Van Homrigh

a holiday house for members they owned near Tea Gardens. Instead of splitting the funds between themselves, they decided to divide the money up, donating some to Marine Rescue Newcastle, and the remainder to other worthy causes.

The size of the donation shocked Unit Commander Ron Calman and the other members present. Commenting on NBN news several days later, Mr Calman said the funds were a great boost to the unit, with how best to use them to be

considered at a later date.

"We thought at first the figure was an error. Our members are all very thankful to the Sunnyside Fishing Club for their unbelievable generosity towards us."

Lyn Van Homrigh

Norah Head commemorate Royal Australian Navy Air-Sea rescue crews and vessels

'Ghostly' flotsam puzzle solved

Following receipt of a Department of Veterans' Affairs Saluting Their Service Commemorative Grant, MR Norah Head have erected a memorial to the service of the Royal Australian Navy Air-Sea Rescue crews and vessels who served during World War II. The unit was supported in their application by local groups and identities and the US Army Small Ships Association.

Royal Australian Navy Air-Sea Rescue crews and vessels made an invaluable contribution to the defence of Australia, saving the lives of countless Allied personnel whose aircraft had ditched in the sea. The memorial, unique in this country, commemorates their service and

promotes it to future generations. The memorial was dedicated on the fourth of December.

A strange piece of flotsam washed up on the beach resulted in Unit Commander Bill Hignett speaking to ABC Radio Central Coast. The curious object was part of a large 'ghost net' from a trawler registered in Hawaii and included part of the transponder. Detective work by members traced the debris to a trawler working off Samoa over 4,000km away.

Unit Commander Bill Hignett held a presentation to Matthew Bade for his ten years of dedicated service with Marine Rescue Norah Head. Matthew has been a crew member



The completed Royal Australian Navy Air-Sea Rescue Memorial
Photo: Bill Hignett

and a valuable Maintenance and Safety Officer throughout this time, with retired Watch Officer and

former Unit Commander Trevor Burkett also thanked.
Julie Rostron

Central Coast member trades A380 for CC21

Crew sail into unexpected off-water emergency



Members Penny Booth, George Kowalski, Allan Harvey, Chris Lawrence, Megan Loaney, Doug Fitzgerald, Lindsay Edgar, Regan Mitchell, Mark Luland, Neville Shakeshaft, Training Officer Adrian Nicholas. Photo: Duncan Coles

Despite the restrictions caused by lockdowns, the past eighteen months have seen the training department at MR Central Coast remain very busy, with trainers running approved and Covid compliant training courses midweek and on weekends.

The training department's efforts have been spread across the Point

one Watch Officer. In addition, there are four members at The Haven base waiting on recognition of prior learning assessments so they can receive their Coxswain rating.

A big thank you to the trainers and subject matter experts for their time commitment, and to the trainees for the many hours they have put towards their studies both

A380 captain during working hours, and a newly minted Coxswain on weekends.

Usually we get called to emergencies, but on a recent occasion, we came across one. In early October Central Coast 21 skippered by Peter Fischer with crew Ian Harris and Regan Mitchell departed the Point Clare base to do some much needed crew training on Broken Bay.

On their return to the base they were flagged down as they were going past Lions Park in Woy Woy. As the crew approached, they noticed that a gentleman had taken a fall.

Central Coast 21 pulled up alongside the wharf and one of the crew members disembarked the vessel and with the help of some very kind members of the public rendered first aid.

Once the ambulance arrived the

patient was handed over to the care of the paramedics, and our crew member reboarded Central Coast 21 for the remainder of the journey back to the Point Clare base.

Not long after, the wife of the injured gentleman got in touch with us via our Facebook page, saying, "Thank you to all of you for your help to my husband who had tripped and fallen. He broke his hip and is very grateful for all you and the bystanders did to make him comfortable whilst waiting for the ambulance."

It was good to know the injured person was doing well, and lovely to receive the message of thanks.

Finally, with the easing of restrictions our fundraising is again finally getting back to normal, with our meat and seafood raffles at The Ettalong pub on Friday nights back in operation.

Ian Leafe and Mitch Giles

“It is pleasing to see new the unit's new members coming from a mixture of retirees and full time workers< b>”

Clare and Terrigal Haven bases, with the unit's ranks expanding by twenty five rated members - including two Coxswains, eight Leading Crew, nine Crew, three Radio Operators and

at the base and at home.

It is pleasing to see new the unit's new members coming from a mixture of retirees and full time workers, one of whom is a Qantas

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Tuggerah Lakes honours longstanding members

Awards honour dedicated service



Ben Hogan and Tony Jago proudly show off their ten year service awards. Photo: Bob Sutton.

With the normalisation of operations, there is relief at MR Tuggerah Lakes that members can finally get back to business.

While the time spent in restricted operations was punctuated by a number of rescue callouts from locals, the bulk of the unit's work comes from Sydney boaters over the peak boating season from now until February. We fear there will be a number of boaters who have left their boat sitting in the backyard for many months and will hitch up the trailer and head to the lakes without first servicing their motors - we will see!

One of the problems created by the restrictions was that there were no opportunities for getting together as a unit. Now they have concluded, MR Tuggerah Lakes Unit Commander Bob Sutton has been able to present two of our unit members with their Ten Year Service awards.

The first was presented to our unit Administration Officer Ben Hogan, a retired Police Inspector from the United Kingdom, who joined the unit in 2011. Ben is Leading Crew and Watch Officer qualified and has been the Administration Officer for the past five years. His wife Lesley is also a unit member, and we are looking forward to presenting her award to her when it arrives.

The other member was Radio Operator Tony Jago, who started his volunteer service with the Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol back in 1994 in Pittwater, working on the famous WWII vessel Krait which was then one of the Patrol's vessels. He also joined the unit in 2011.

Congratulations and thanks to both members for their service and commitment to the local boating community and to Marine Rescue NSW.

Peter McCann

Port Stephens ready to weather the summer crowds

New weather station for historic site

Sitting on a hill with commanding views over the harbour, MR Port Stephens' base has a long and fascinating maritime history, with several unique attractions on site.

Atop Nelson Head, the base overlooks the entrance to beautiful Port Stephens between Yacaaba Head to the north and Mount Tomaree to the south. In 1872 it was selected as the location for a lighthouse, and by April four kerosene lanterns were lit on a wooden tower. The construction of an octagonal lantern room and cottage were completed in 1876.

Today the lighthouse is home to a small nautical museum and tea rooms where you can have lunch beneath frangipani trees and enjoy a spectacular view of the Heads. Also of historical interest is a World War

footpath from the main flagpole to the location of our new weather station to bring data from a wind sensor which will be mounted atop the flagpole.

The new weather data collection platform is located next to a Stevenson Screen where unit members read and record temperature data twice a day for the Bureau of Meteorology. The new platform sits on top of a stainless steel pole providing a place to mount a tipping bucket rain gauge and a Gill MetPak weather station. The MetPak provides temperature, humidity and barometric pressure data and acts as the data collection point. Data from the new station will be available on all computer terminals in the Communications Centre and on the home page of the



The Stevenson Screen weather station and new data collection platform. Photo: Will Scott

“The new weather station will be dedicated to much respected Coxswain Barney Pinney... very adept rescue vessel coxswain **”**

Il bunker and gun emplacement on the hillside just below the cottage, being just one of several bunkers in the area that were used to defend the Hunter Coast of Australia during the war. The unit also operates a small gift shop located just below the Communications Centre, packed with unique items with a nautical theme, and over the Christmas season will see up to one hundred visitors daily.

The end of Hunter New England lockdown and easing of Covid restrictions on October 11 allowed the resumption of significant works on a new weather station at the base before the return of tourists. This has included a trench across the lawn and under the entrance

MR Port Stephens website.

The new weather station will be dedicated to much respected Coxswain Barney Pinney, who passed away late last year. Barney was not only a very adept rescue vessel coxswain but a keen sailor who taught a course in basic navigation and chart skills at the base for many years.

Marine Rescue Port Stephens welcomes all MRNSW members and their families to visit Nelson Head and tour our museum, have lunch at the tea rooms and shop in our unique gift shop - and if Covid restrictions allow, come upstairs to the Communications Centre and have a chat.

Will Scott

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Lake Macquarie trainees clear training hurdle

New crew qualify in time for holiday rush

On 17 October several Marine Rescue Lake Macquarie crew trainees underwent 'Fight Fires' and 'Sea Survival' training near Lucy's Wall in the Swansea Channel.

The training included instruction and practical experience in the use of various fire-fighting equipment, and practical sea survival training including the use of life rafts and safety equipment, and the importance of working together as a group to ensure survival should members need to abandon a rescue vessel during a rescue.

The Unit and Deputy Unit Commanders commended both the boat and radio crew trainees for their commitment, particularly given the disruption caused by Covid restrictions which resulted in trainees needing to be stood

down while bases were operating at minimum staffing.

Feedback received from the trainees was that the training was somewhat physically demanding, but also a lot of fun. The training also provided an opportunity for trainees to spend time together as a group, something that doesn't often occur given the nature of rostering for boat duties.

For many of the crew trainees, this training represented the last hurdle before achieving their crew rating, with the majority of trainees undertaking their operational assessments in the next few months. This will be of great benefit to the unit as we move into the busy summer period.

The day also drew a significant amount of interest from the public



The safe handling of flares was one of skills learned by new trainees

with several expressions of interest to volunteer received in the days

following the training.
Garry Luxton

An advertisement for the GME GPS Personal Locator Beacon (PLB). The top half shows a sailboat on the water with mountains in the background. Text overlaid reads "WHEREVER LIFE TAKES YOU, TAKE A PLB.". The bottom left features the product name "GPS PERSONAL LOCATOR BEACON" and model "MT610G". The bottom right shows a close-up of the grey, compact device with red and yellow accents. It has a screen displaying "GME", "ACCUSATO", "GPS", and "GIVE CLEAR VIEW TO SKY".

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Busy time on and off the water for Botany Port Hacking

Training focuses on offsetting shortfalls

Over recent months with the easing of Covid restrictions, there has been a return to recruitment. The first wave of new Radio Operator intakes was undertaken on 24 October, with 14 people attending a morning briefing chaired by Trevor Leak, Rosemary Holloway and Training Officer Bernie Ward.

Unit Commander Greg Inglis kicked off proceedings with an informative introduction to Marine Rescue and the Botany Port Hacking unit. Intakes for crew will commence in the near future.

Unit training has focused on ratings for crew and Coxswain to offset any forecast shortfalls, with existing skippers and rated crew stepping forward to offer drills training, night training and on-shore training as well as supporting inter-agency training with the Toll Rescue Helicopter.

A key component for active duty is first aid re-certification, however, Covid restrictions had put this on hold. A concerted effort by our training team of Kevin Thompson and Allan Russell has helped get this important requirement back on track.

As well as all of the behind the scenes activity, the unit has been particularly busy operationally, with a variety of complex situations due to recent strong winds and



Crew member Rohan Stirling looks on at the Toll Helicopter during recent training.

fishing charter boat off North Bondi experienced engine failure. The seas were approximately 3-4 metres making the tow into Sydney Harbour particularly cautious. The tow continued up the Harbour to allow passengers to alight at Woolwich Wharf before the vessel could be returned to its swing mooring at Drummoyne Bay. The trip back to Port Hacking into the heavy seas



Crew member Trevor Leak aboard BH30 throws a well-aimed line to a boat full of teenagers grounded on rocks in South West Arm last October. Photo: Brad Whittaker.

and even elicited an email of appreciation from the Regional Operations Manager for the efforts of the crew and radio room.

Recently we were able to celebrate Graham Clarke attaining 15 years' service to the unit. Graham has and continues to contribute as skipper, Watch Officer and mentor, and gives valuable

assistance with base maintenance and acts as our chief humour officer!

On a sad note, we have recently had to say farewell to Di Castro after five years as the unit's Membership Officer. We thank her and wish her well, hoping that someday soon she may make her way back to our unit.

John Lembeke

“Unit training has focused on ratings for crew and Coxswain to offset any forecast shortfalls”

heavy seas catching some boaters unawares.

One typical and particularly difficult example occurred during a routine training session for Botany Hacking 30, when a 38 foot Steber

was challenging for the vessel crew, with the continuous support of our radio base greatly appreciated. The tricky conditions on the day certainly provided the adverse conditions for which we are trained to perform,

Boating season off with a bang for Broken Bay members

New trainees ready for action



MR Broken Bay's new trainees were finally able to attend the unit in person. Photo: Julie Derry

The boating season has started with a bang for MR Broken Bay, with members already busy on the water attending to all sorts of different requests for help. These have ranged from the standard running out of fuel and mechanical issues, to more complex multi-agency responses including working closely on a recovery with the

Cetaceans in successfully freeing a juvenile whale caught in netting off, ironically, Whale Beach.

With the easing in MRNSW Covid requirements, we have been delighted to welcome our members back in person, particularly our vital office and administration volunteers and our trainers and assessors, with the task of getting all of our

with us back in August. Having completed their basic training through Zoom, they are now able to start joining a response team, and with the theory portion of their learnings completed, the practical and fun part of their learnings have now begun. In the near future, we will see our trainees jumping into the water to complete their sea survival course and then fight a real bellowing (controlled) fire as part of their firefighting at sea course.

Warwick Bedwell has worked hard to attain his crew rating and is to be commended for his perseverance. Warwick's learning was significantly impacted by the lockdowns and although ready to complete his assessment back in June this year, his assessment was only recently able to be completed.

Thank you to Alan Turner-Morris who has retired from MR Broken

Bay for health reasons. Alan Turner-Morris, (warmly referred to as ATM), has been with the unit for over 15 years and was instrumental in promoting MR Broken Bay in the local media and community, and helped out elsewhere where he could. Even with his health challenges, ATM continued to attend, and truly epitomised the Broken Bay spirit of commitment. ATM was thanked for his efforts with the presentation of a Unit Life Membership by Unit Commander Jimmy Arteaga, and we wish him well for the future.

Finally, thanks to all Broken Bay members for persevering through the lockdowns by their continued volunteering, and putting our Pittwater and Broken Bay communities first despite sometimes difficult and trying circumstances.

Jimmy Arteaga

“The unit has been excited to finally welcome in person the newly inducted trainees who started with us back in August.”

Broken Bay Water Police and local Ambulance Service; to support of the National Parks and Wildlife Service and the Organisation for the Rescue and Research of

members back up to date in their training our top priority.

The unit has been excited to finally welcome in person the newly inducted trainees who started

New cat prowls the Hawkesbury

New vessel boosts safety on the water

There's a sleek new cat prowling the Hawkesbury River with the arrival on the last day in September of the unit's new vessel, Hawkesbury 30.

The 8.3 metre catamaran was manufactured on the NSW North Coast by Sailfish Catamarans, and made the long journey south to the Hawkesbury by road, where it was launched at Fenwicks Marina in Brooklyn.

The new vessel replaces an older catamaran that has found a new life running tours on Sydney Harbour.

Offering a wide range of features including Forward Looking Infra-red camera, radar, side scan 3D sonar, full Raymarine suite with Axiom multifunction display, larger windows for better visibility, Shockwave S5

seats and a power split davit, the new vessel provides a timely boost to the unit's capability ahead of the summer boating season.

Powered by twin 250hp Suzuki outboards, Hawkesbury 30 has the power and speed to get to incidents faster and more reliably.

Marine Rescue Hawkesbury Unit Commander Derek Whorlow said that the new vessel was a welcome addition to the Hawkesbury.

"Catamarans such as this are ideal for the Hawkesbury as they can get in close to the many beaches on the river to help injured bushwalkers or evacuate people stranded by bushfires."

Hawkesbury Logistics Officer, David Stocks, said the new Sailfish vessel had a deck large enough to



Unit members aboard Hawkesbury 30 undergoing induction training.

allow medical responders room to work, and with a 2D survey rating of 11, can provide support to other emergency services and assist in the evacuation of lower river residents when required.

"Hawkesbury 30 is the most

advanced rescue vessel our unit has operated and an excellent training platform for our members."

Hawkesbury 30 will be officially named at a commissioning ceremony next year.

David Stocks & Kym Mahoney

Sydney share whale of a 'tail'

Radio Operators help solve 'big' problem

The role of the Radio Operator is critical to every rescue, and in mid-October was pivotal to the release of a juvenile whale caught in netting.

Watch Officer Marguerite Mason received the initial calls from two members of the public advising that a whale was caught in netting approximately 300 metres offshore of Whale Beach.

The radio team, under the watchful eye of Duty Officer David Crawford, sprang into action, contacting the Greater Sydney Regional Operations Manager Brad Whittaker, the Organisation for the Rescue and Research of Cetaceans in Australia, and the NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS). MRNSW has a Memorandum of Understanding with NPWS to provide on scene assistance by way of a 'mothership' to support the small NPWS' rigid Inflatable boats used to

get in close to the whale.

MR Sydney tasked Broken Bay 30 to provide assistance to the specialist NPWS whale disentanglement team. The Broken Bay members worked closely with NPWS, with the juvenile Humpback successfully released just before sunset.

The MR Sydney duty radio operators were Artemis Demetriou, Marguerite Mason, Tim White, Pamela Sayers and Trainee Liz Binet with Duty Officer David Crawford, who all did an extraordinary job supporting the operation.

In June, the State Communications Centre entered a new phase for making and receiving radio calls with the introduction of the new Frequentis System for VHF communications.

Frequentis is a highly effective and interactive communications system that allows our radio



Radio Operator Marguerite Mason at work in the State Communications Centre.

operators to quickly communicate with boaters and other craft on coastal and inland waters.

The system is linked to wireless headsets and a 'press to talk' foot pedal. It features extensive and easy to use 'drop down' menu options that allow operators to configure the

system to manage calls depending on whether they are working during the day or overnight, and enhances MR Sydney's communications overnight when it covers over three quarters of the NSW coast on behalf of other Marine Rescue bases.

Denis Comber and Pamela Sayers

Port Jackson members zoom through pandemic training

Online training helps ready new recruits



At the end of a busy day, Port Jackson 31 heads under 'the bridge' and into the setting sun on the voyage home. Photo: Joseph Taouk

Despite the disruption of the pandemic, the resilience, commitment and stoicism of MR Port Jackson members has been well in evidence in recent months, with members taking challenges in their stride and working together to overcome obstacles.

During lockdown, regular online training sessions and Zoom conferences became the norm as we worked to refresh and maintain our member's skills and knowledge.

130 members. Again that resilience and commitment was displayed, with many of the new recruits attending online training sessions, sometimes multiple times a week for several months, without ever having set foot on the base or one of our boats. A side benefit was how well advanced the skills and knowledge of the new recruits was by the time they were finally able to be rostered for duty.

The easing of restrictions saw

“During lockdown, regular online training sessions and zoom conferences became the norm”

During the pandemic, many members of the public found inspiration in the wake of adversity and desired to give something back to their community. This saw a jump in enquiries to join our unit, with membership increasing to around

the return of the Marine Rescue Port Jackson Bunnings BBQ fund-raiser at their Gladesville store. A quarter of the unit got involved over the course of the weekend, with members happy to get out and meet new recruits and old friends alike,



In late November Port Jackson joined in with other Greater Sydney volunteers to undertake sea survival training. Photo: David Mills

while raising essential funds for the unit.

Marine Rescue Port Jackson's presence was well received by the community, with numerous members of the public expressing their best wishes to the unit, and their pleasure in seeing our return to Bunnings. It was great to be thanked for our service, and to give out critical boating safety information

- a busy, enjoyable and successful weekend for all involved.

With the easing of restrictions and warmer weather, the team at Port Jackson has much planned for its growing membership base to keep them well trained and ready to assist the boating public, and in public education activities and other community events.

Joseph Taouk

Regional coxswains meeting at Cottage Point builds knowledge

Triple the learning as three units share knowledge

On Wednesday October 27, a perfect spring day set the scene for a gathering of senior vessel masters from MR Hawkesbury, MR Broken Bay and MR Cottage Point.

The three units share overlapping operational areas and often provide cover for each other in busy times or when many hands are needed.

Although bordering each other's operational areas, the units seldom meet to share experiences, something remedied by MR Cottage Point in hosting the meeting.

The morning was spent reviewing a presentation by one of MR Cottage Point's most experienced vessel handlers, David Burns, on some of the more technical aspects of vessel handling. This was followed by a discussion on how our vessels operate and the conditions they are capable of safely operating under.

Further discussion was had over

morning tea and lunch, before the attendees took to the water aboard the five vessels in attendance to examine first hand some of the technical aspects from the morning's presentation.

With the vessels of various lengths and hull designs, the skippers enjoyed reviewing the differences and management styles their sister units operate under. A treat for the attendees was the opportunity to view one of the newest vessels in the Marine Rescue fleet, Hawkesbury 30, which had only been delivered from Sailfish in the previous few weeks.

Although only a few years younger than Cottage Point 31, the Sailfish had had some dramatic and effective design changes that had added many operational efficiencies to the catamaran platform.

Broken Bay 30 was also in



Attendees at the successful gathering of senior vessel masters.
Photo: Darren Lake

attendance, enabling exploration of the benefits of the Naiad monohull design. This design is shared by Broken Bay 20, also in attendance, and one of the most used vessels in the fleet and still going strong.

The day was a fantastic opportunity to meet new faces and rekindle old acquaintances, which will make working together easier

out on the water.

Thank you to the attendees and the Unit Commanders of Hawkesbury and Broken Bay for allowing the use of their vessels for the day, to David Burns for his outstanding efforts in preparing the information, and Kuring-Gai Motor Yacht Club for the use of their club facilities.

Tony Gordon



Marine Rescue Port Jackson joined other emergency services at the 'Get Ready for Summer' campaign launch on December 1.

Herculean effort by Shellharbour volunteers

Training day shakes off Covid cobwebs

A run on the waters off Shellharbour in mid-October to test the newly repaired steering on SH30 turned into an impromptu opportunity to 'shake off the lockdown blues' and get in some training.

After extensive on-water testing found the steering on Shellharbour 30 to be performing well, and with perfect weather and sea conditions, skipper Geoff Troth and crew Steve Thompson, Greg Khan, Eva Goodchild and rescue mannequin 'Hercules', decided to use the opportunity to get in some training.

Over the next four hours, the crew and skipper were put through their paces practicing marine drills, scenarios, mooring, confined space manoeuvring and coastal landmark familiarisation.

Hercules the rescue mannequin



Shellharbour 30 hosts members of the public at the new Waterfront Shell Cove marina. Photo: Geoff Troth.

(called so because it takes the strength of Hercules to lift him, especially when wet), joined in the training as the casualty in person overboard drills, and was the focus of a game of 'who can get the life ring over the rescue dummy'.

After months of lockdown, it

was an enjoyable but tiring day for everyone, Hercules included.

A few weeks' later on the last weekend in October, the Waterfront Shell Cove, a major coastal residential, commercial and tourist development, welcomed the first boat to its new 270 berth marina.

Members of the Shellharbour unit aboard Shellharbour 30 dropped by to check out the new development, tying up at the central pier where they gave interested members of the public tours of their rescue vessel.

Geoff Troth

First job for Jervis Bays' new vessel

Multi-vessel assist baptism for new rescue vessel

With new rescue vessel Jervis Bay 40, 'John Gallimore', signed off as operational in mid-October, duty patrols and training resumed, allowing a few teething problems and some minor maintenance to be completed.

The last day of October saw a landmark event, with Jervis Bay 40 attending her first rescue. The target was a motorised fishing vessel with engine problems off Collingwood Beach. Skippered by Gregory Atkinson, Jervis Bay 40 towed the vessel with one adult and two children aboard to a safe mooring within Jervis Bay, as returning the vessel to Currambene Creek was not deemed safe due to a large swell.

Jervis Bay 20, skippered by Unit Commander Tony Dagger, then collected the three passengers and delivered them safely to shore. This

multi-vessel assist was coordinated by the MR Jervis Bay radio base, and proved a valuable training exercise for the duty crews to familiarise themselves with boat handling in large swell conditions.

MR Jervis Bay has appointed a new Training Officer, Ernie Panucci, after the departure of Steve Hutchinson. Sincere thanks to Steve for his hard work and achievements as Training Officer, and a big welcome to Ernie.

The easing in Covid restrictions has allowed training to recommence for both radio and crew trainees and has also allowed induction of new members to proceed, with a warm welcome to new members Daniel Blattner, Debbie Holmes, Frances Koster, Jackie Schultz and Koula Mantzioris.

Anita Smith.



Jervis Bay 40 has its first job safely in tow. Photo: Cara Pacitti

Kioloa pay tribute to members past and present

Fond farewell for dedicated Deputy

Deputy Unit Commander and long serving member of MR Kioloa, Peter Lee, has announced his retirement. A laconic and affable shipmate who joined us in 2009, Peter dedicated twelve years of service to the unit and the local boating community.

As with all emergency service volunteers our jobs come with risks, and on one occasion for Peter this almost ended in tragedy. In October 2009, while Peter and then skipper Keiran Cruise were searching for a missing swimmer near Depot Beach, they almost drowned when a rogue wave dumped their vessel onto nearby rocks. Peter and Keiran were trapped beneath the upturned vessel, with both having to be airlifted out. According to Peter countering these downsides are the upsides of volunteering and the satisfaction of saving a person's life

and returning them safely to their family.

Having achieved his ambitions, Peter is now looking forward to spending some more time at home. On behalf of Marine Rescue we thank Peter for his dedication and service to the community and wish him and his partner Gerry well for the future.

On 11 September our longest serving member Joan Noble was presented with her Marine Rescue 20 Year Long Service Award by Regional Operations Manager (ROM), Bruce Mitchell. Twenty years of service in any organisation is a remarkable achievement and even more so when your time is given voluntarily and for the benefit of others. The award is a deserved addition to the Emergency Services Medal received in 2013 for her outstanding contribution to Marine



New recruit Maria Beckett at the radio desk.

Rescue as a Radio Operator and administrator. Congratulations Joan.

Recently, one of our newest members Maria Beckett successfully gained her Radio Operator's Rating and becomes a most welcome addition to our small but vital band

of operators. Maria was presented with her rating epaulettes by ROM Bruce Mitchell before commencing her first solo watch. Well done

Maria, and thank you for your time and commitment.

Peter White

Batemans Bay fetch ketch in multi-unit response

Solo sailor in dramatic rescue

A solo sailor and his dog had a 'ruff' time of it when his 12 metre ketch lost steerage in a strong southerly and five metre seas seven nautical miles off Narooma. The emergency call from the ketch's skipper was received by the radio room at Batemans Bay, sparking a multi-unit response, with volunteers from MR Narooma, MR Batemans Bay, MR Tuross and MR Bermagui responding.

As Batemans Bay 30 travelled slowly down the coast in very rough conditions, Narooma 30 headed out to keep watch on the welfare of the skipper and his dog and to provide an accurate location for the inbound Batemans Bay 30.

Meanwhile, one of the members on board BM 30 became unwell and needed to be returned to shore.

Fortunately Tuross 20 were out training and able to rendezvous in the lee of Broulee Island, collect the crew member, and bring her back to shore at Moruya.

With BM 30 making slow progress caused by transhipping of a crew member and the difficult conditions, Bermagui 30 was dispatched north to provide backup, and with a following sea able to make good time up the coast.

The arrival of Batemans Bay 30 saw Narooma 30 able to stand down, with Bermagui 30 standing by until it was confirmed that the Batemans Bay vessel was able to effect a tow. With the towline set, Bermagui 30 then began their slow trip home into the wind, with crew member Caron Parfitt having spent eight hours of her birthday on the



Rod Ingamells and John Clement connecting up the tow to a 42' ketch before the 20 nm journey to Batemans Bay. Photo: David Murn

response.

For Batemans Bay 30 the day was not yet over, with the towline snapping and having to be reset, before they finally met with sister vessel Batemans Bay 20 near Snapper Island, with the ketch placed on a courtesy mooring.

Notable for the response was the

calm and efficient way the vessels and radio operators communicated. With so many units involved along a wide stretch of coast, the mission also highlighted the benefit of recent improvements to the VHF network and the installation of new repeaters at Moruya.

David Murn

Shoalhaven ready for busy summer

'Picture perfect' preparation for summer

Marine Rescue Shoalhaven members have been readying the unit's vessels for the busy Christmas and New Year holiday season, with Shoalhaven 30 removed from service for several weeks to undergo a major 4000 hour service. The service has involved replacing many of the vessel's engine parts including both batteries which were at the end of their working lives, with the cost of servicing exceeding \$30,000.

An interesting rescue occurred on the morning of 8 November, when Shoalhaven Radio Operator James Guy received information regarding a vessel needing assistance some 500 metres off the Culburra Beach Surf Club. The 4.5 metre vessel, with two adults on board, had engine problems and would not start, with the two crew not having a mobile phone or a marine radio and having to flag down a passing vessel to call for help. Shoalhaven 20, skippered by Mike Boadle with crew Fred Burley and Mark Asper, attended the scene and towed the broken down vessel back to Greenwell Point. The incident was a



Shoalhaven 30 immortalised in paint by local artist Eve Smith.

good reminder about the importance of boaters having an effective way of summoning help in case of an emergency.

The members of the Shoalhaven Unit have been delighted by the efforts of local artist Eve Smith from Culburra Beach who has painted

a picture of Shoalhaven 30 at her wharf in West Street Greenwell Point.

Bill Carter

AED for Port Kembla Oak Flats base

Unit 'bank' on first aid boost

In October, an AED, or Automated External Defibrillator, was generously donated to the Port Kembla unit by Bendigo Bank.

AEDs are used to help those experiencing sudden cardiac arrest by analysing the heart's rhythm and, if necessary, delivering an electrical shock to help the heart re-establish an effective rhythm. As Port Kembla 20 churns around Lake Illawarra helping those with broken propellers, flat batteries or injuries, boaters and kayakers can rest a little easier knowing that in a cardiac

emergency help is at hand.

Graeme McCrudden, section leader for inshore boats in the Illawarra region said that so far this spring it had been quiet with only a few emergency calls.

"That's expected to change as summer approaches and lockdown restrictions end, and people get back out on the water," he said.

"The lake is a popular spot for boating, making the AED unit a welcome addition to the base, ready for anyone who needs it."

Roslyn Smith



Port Kembla Unit Commander Kevin Bradley with Bendigo Bank's Bec Clancy.

Sussex volunteers renew old friendships

Multi-unit training readies members

With the lifting of Covid restrictions during the month of October, Marine Rescue Sussex Inlet began following through on plans to conduct training with other Illawarra units.

The training began with a joint inshore Search and Rescue operation at Burrill Lakes, where Sussex Inlet 10 and 11 (Seadoo GTI 130 Rescue Water Craft) were deployed alongside Ulladulla 10, a Zodiac RHIB.

Subject matter expert Benjamin Hill, assisted by Bill Norris and Paul Sapsed, used the opportunity to complete the skills log for member Leigh Urquhart who was preparing to undertake his operational assessment to join the unit's expanding team of rated RWC operators. The training was coordinated by MR Ulladulla Master Lesley Kelly and MR Sussex Inlet Training Officer Brett Eurell aboard UL10.

A trip down the coast to Kioloa saw Sussex Inlet 10 and Sussex Inlet 11 conduct joint offshore exercises with Kioloa 20 and their Naiad RHIB. With the spectacular local coastline as a backdrop, Kioloa Unit Commander Peter White, subject matter expert Tony Pollard, Bill Norris and other crew made the most of the opportunity to work and practice their skills together.

Inter-unit cooperation also included inboard engineering training for Leading Crew candidates



Ellen Dodd with Unit Commander Karen Lowry and Illawarra Regional Operations Manager Bruce Mitchell.

from MR Shoalhaven and Peter White from MR Kioloa. A big thank you to Lesley, Ray and Peter for their assistance!

On Monday 18 October, member Ellen Dodd was presented her National Medal by Regional Operations Manager Bruce Mitchell, having achieved a commendable 15 years of combined service with



Sussex Inlet vessels SI20 and SI11 on a Spring training run.

“Ellen Dodd was presented her National Medal having achieved a commendable 15 years of combined service**”**

conducted by Lesley Kelly on Ulladulla 30, and operational assessment for Coxswain candidates conducted by Ray Jones

Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol (RVCP) and Marine Rescue.

Joining the RVCP in 2006 as a Radio Operator, Ellen and

husband Tom not only undertook a weekly shift, but also helped with fundraising tasks such as BBQs and lamington drives.

In 2010 the RVCP was incorporated into Marine Rescue, with Ellen continuing to volunteer as a Radio Operator, contributing her time wherever it was needed.

With the stepping down of the Unit Commander in 2016, Ellen put up her hand to take on the demanding unit leadership role. Forming a strong executive team with her good friend Tom Dunlop, Ellen led the unit until 2020 before herself stepping down.

Karen Lowry / Brett Eurell

Deputy Commissioner tours southern Monaro

Members honoured for distinguished service

Deputy Commissioner Operations and Capability Alex Barrell visited the Bermagui, Merimbula and Eden units on a trip to the south of the region in early October.

Mr Barrell was welcomed to the Eden unit by Unit Commander Stuart Manson, who was himself presented with his Ten Year Long Service medal. Discussions were held on the accreditation of the Eden

Mr Barrell then visited MR Merimbula, where he was welcomed by Unit Commander Sonia Teston and Deputy Unit Commander Bill Blakeman; presenting a Ten Year Long Service Award to member Walter Kleiner in the presence of his wife Rose.

The final stop was at MR Bermagui, where Mr Barrell was welcomed by Unit Commander

“Mr Barrell congratulated the Bermagui Unit on winning a major award”

unit to undertake on-water rescues, their inaugural rescue vessel, and proposed crew facilities in Snug Cove.

Caron Parfitt and Deputy Unit Commander Stephen Knight. DC Barrell took the opportunity to congratulate the unit members for



Walter Kleiner, wife Rose Kleiner and Deputy Commissioner Alex Barrell. Photo: Glenn Sullivan.

winning the South Coast Volunteer Team of the Year Award category in the 2021 NSW Volunteer of the Year Awards, run by the NSW Centre for Volunteering.

“This award is testament to the unit's sound leadership and the ongoing commitment of its members to their local community, and I wish them the very best for the finals.”

Snow melt brings boating hazards to alpine lakes

Danger lurks in chilly alpine waters

As we head into the warmer months, snow melt from the surrounding mountains causes water levels rise across the alpine lakes. Jindabyne Dam is currently around 86% and has been steadily rising over the past few months as the snow melt runs into our lakes and dams through the Snowy Hydro scheme.

With lake levels rising, logs and rocks at the lake edge become submerged hazards, while on open water, floating logs washed into the lake by the high meltwater flows provide further dangers for the boating enthusiast.

In late October while the local Marine Rescue team were out on Lake Jindabyne performing training drills, they pulled multiple logs from the water, towing some of the larger ones back to shore.

These hazards are something



A large log under tow in Lake Jindabyne. Photo: Cain Hopwood.

alpine boaters need keep in mind when out enjoying themselves on the water – being vigilant for these potential dangers can save lives

and prevent injury. We want to see people once again safely enjoying the alpine lakes and are looking forward to welcoming visitors

back to our beautiful the area this summer.

Karina Hermeston

Bermagui volunteers named region's best

Team effort by Bermagui members

While everyone at Marine Rescue knows that volunteers make up the backbone of our service, we often wonder if the general public knows this too. So, it came as quite a surprise to the members of MR Bermagui to be announced as the winner of the South Coast Volunteer Team of the Year Award category in the 2021 NSW Volunteer of the Year Awards, run by the NSW Centre for Volunteering.

The nomination was submitted by a local Bermagui resident who said while the sea can be a wonderful place for recreational or travel activities, it can quickly become treacherous if equipment fails or weather conditions change for the worse.

In her nomination, she praised the contribution of the Bermagui Unit to the safety of vessels and their crew along the South Coast of NSW in monitoring the emergency radio network seven days a week, providing information on sea state and weather conditions, and sending



Unit Commander Caron Parfit and Deputy Unit Commander Stephen Knight with the award.

made the submission without us knowing. Our congratulations to

"This award is just recognition of the hard work and commitment of the Bermagui Unit, and I warmly congratulate each and every one of them on this significant achievement."

"Earlier this year the unit hosted the Monaro SAREX, at which the spirit, dedication and skills of the Bermagui members were very

much in evidence. Well done to all involved, and I wish you the best of luck in the next stage of the award."

The Bermagui unit, along with finalists from 17 other regions, will now progress to the gala state ceremony in early December when the 2021 NSW Volunteer of the Year winners will be named.

Debbie Worgen

“The award recognised the many amazing volunteers on the NSW South Coast”

out their rescue vessel, Bermagui 30, to assist boats in trouble.

The award recognised the many amazing volunteers and organisations on the NSW South Coast who keep their communities strong and connected.

MR Bermagui Unit Commander Caron Parfitt said it had been humbling to be selected as the 2021 South Coast Volunteer Team of the Year against such strong competition.

"It is a fantastic outcome for all our members at MR Bermagui, and I would like to offer a special thank you to the Bermagui resident who

all nominees, and of course, to the other winners."

"After a difficult few years with the Black Summer bushfires, flooding and the pandemic, the announcement of the award is a wonderful lift to the spirits of our members as we head into another busy summer on our local waterways."

Marine Rescue NSW Deputy Commissioner Alex Barrell dropped in to the unit on a visit to the Monaro Region in early October, and personally congratulated the Bermagui unit members on their achievement.

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Merimbula Unit set for summer

Training blitz readies new members

MR Merimbula is all set for the busy summer months with new vessels, additional equipment, an influx of new members and a training blitz.

Fundraising is a big part of our volunteers' work, and this year opportunities to fundraise have been significantly affected by lockdowns and reduced tourist numbers. Fortunately, with Covid restrictions easing, locals and holiday makers are already showing remarkable generosity and support. It is heart-warming to experience this support, both financially and emotionally, not only to Marine Rescue Merimbula but to all our local business and services.

In addition to fundraising, we actively seek grants to help us purchase bigger ticket items, with Grants Officer Stewart Dietrich recently successful in securing two grants.

A \$5,000 grant from the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal and GlobalGiving will allow us to buy a computer and associated equipment; while a \$6,664 Commonwealth Powering Communities Program grant will be used to purchase solar panels for our base. The solar panels will not only have a positive effect on the environment and our costs, but will also support local business Lakeside Electrical, who will supply and install the panels.



Members of the Merimbula unit with Member for Eden-Monaro, Kristy McBain. Photo: Mel Leach

grant. A morning tea allowed our members to meet and greet Ms McBain, who also toured the base and chatted with our members about our role and rescue vessels.

Late last year we were excited to take possession of a 6.8m rigid hull inflatable vessel 'Merimbula 20'. Fitted with a folding soft top canopy, Merimbula 20 is able to pass under the main road bridge enabling us to patrol and assist vessels in the top lake, as well as providing additional offshore capability. Unlike its larger partner vessel, Merimbula 20 also



Merimbula 20 undergoing final fit out at Yamba Welding and Engineering on the NSW North Coast. Photo: Marg Deguara

with the smaller Merimbula 20, excitement is building as receipt of the replacement for our larger vessel Merimbula 30 nears. Under construction at the Yamba Welding and Engineering shipyard on the NSW North Coast, it is expected to be plying our waterways during the coming summer.

The delivery of Merimbula 20 and the coming arrival of our new vessel has had a positive effect on our recruitment of quality volunteers. All have demonstrated an eagerness to join our existing professional long-term team members, some of

whom have recently been presented with a Unit Life Membership. The boost to our membership holds us in good stead to provide a robust safety service to those on the water needing our help this boating season.

Finally, a training blitz has targeted our crew training and refreshed our skills in first aid and advanced resuscitation in readiness for the boating season; and while we hope not to need it, it is comforting to be able to draw on this knowledge if required.

Sonia Teston

“MR Merimbula is all set for the busy summer months with new vessels, additional equipment, and an influx of new members **”**

The unit's funding success did not go unnoticed, with the Unit visited by local MP Kristy McBain, Member for Eden-Monaro, who congratulated the unit's success in securing the

has the advantage and flexibility to be trailered to other waterways when needed.

Just as we start the journey of inductions and familiarisation

Super Saturday in Tuross

Big day for little unit



Tuross 21 basks in the late afternoon light at Preddys Wharf on the Moruya River. Photo: Ilze Svarcs.

Just because you're a small unit does not mean you aren't a busy one, with a recent Saturday keeping unit members busy.

The day started with the generous donation of \$6,000 from Coeur de Lion – Narooma. The Freemason's Lodge Master, Martin de Graf, presented the cheque to Unit Commander Alan Blessington and Treasurer Mary Moss at a brief ceremony at Moruya Town Wharf. The Freemason's Lodge had raised \$3,000 from local Bunnings sausage sizzles and a 'Trailer Load of Wood' raffle, with the remainder from a matching grant by Masonicare, the official charity of NSW and ACT Freemasons.

While some members were receiving the welcome donation

from Coeur de Lion, a team of crew and trainees were out on the waters of the Moruya River on Tuross 21, undertaking targeted training under Master Blaise Madden.

Elsewhere, a third team was promoting Marine Rescue Tuross and selling raffle tickets at the Moruya Markets, which were buzzing with activity. This was the first Saturday market since lockdown, and it was great to again be out in our community. The unit's marquee was visited by local MP Fiona Phillips, who published a picture of the stall praising the contribution Marine Rescue volunteers make to the safety of our community.

To cap off a great day's work, a new application for membership

was received following recruitment conversations at the market. A busy

and productive day!
Ilze Svarcs



In fading light, TU21 towed a solo boater and his tinny to safety after it developed engine trouble. Photo: Viktor Svarcs.

Eden gears up for arrival of first rescue vessel

New era for southernmost unit.

There's a lot going on in Marine Rescue's southernmost unit. Unit Commander Stuart Manson was presented with his ten year Service Medal by Deputy Commissioner Alex Barrell during a visit to inspect Marine Rescue Eden's new premises at Snug Cove. Congratulations to Stuart, who is leading the unit through a period of significant change, notably the acquisition of the unit's first rescue vessel.

Delivery of Eden's first rescue vessel is drawing nearer with crew training proceeding well under Training Services Officer Kent Farrell. Kent has been conducting an intensive program covering all aspects of unit operations, with considerable effort put into Leading Crew, Navigation, Vessel Induction

and General Vessel Operations and well as training on general unit operations including Seahawk, Otter and Open CPN (AIS).

The new boat will arrive on 9th of December following its refurbishment on the North Coast. It is planned to truck the vessel to Batemans Bay from where it will be sailed down the coast to its new home port, Eden. The arrival of the boat in Eden will be the start of a new phase of unit operations which up until now have been focused on the provision of marine safety through radio monitoring and working with the local NSW Water Police to facilitate rescue services.

Eden has been fortunate to be able lease additional premises in Snug Cove near the main wharf. The premises will be used as a



Deputy Commissioner Alex Barrell and Eden Unit Commander Stuart Manson. Photo: Ursula Wall.

boat crew ready room as well as a training facility. It will also be a place where the public can make face to face contact. The area

was previously NSW Maritime Offices and will be refurbished and equipped to suit the unit's purposes.

John McKinnon



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Lake Macquarie

Unit mourns loss of three valued members

Marine Rescue Lake Macquarie have sadly farewelled three of our long standing, well respected members in Audrey Burgess, Brian Davies and Col Simms, all of whom made significant contributions to the safety of their local community. The Executive and members of Marine Rescue Lake Macquarie acknowledge their efforts and pass on our sincere condolences to their family and friends.

Audrey Burgess

Audrey joined the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard in April 1990 where she attained the rating of Quartermaster, going on to achieve the rating of Watch Officer with Marine Rescue New South Wales. Audrey was awarded her 30 Year Service Award medal by Director and friend Jim Wright in 2020.

Audrey was joined at the unit by her daughter Kay in 1993 and between them this much loved mother and daughter team notched up almost 60 years of combined service. Kay continues to volunteer as a Watch Officer at the Swansea SARCC.



Audrey Burgess

Brian Davies

Brian joined the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard in August 2007. Brian attained the ratings of Crew and Radio Operator. He was awarded a 10 Year Service Medal in 2017.

Brian brought with him a wealth of experience and previous service with him from the SES. He was

awarded the 3rd National Medal Clasp for a combined total of 45 years' service in March 2015.

Brian had a Certificate 4 and was an accredited Trainer and Assessor within the unit. His First Aid and Advanced Resuscitation training sessions are fondly remembered

by those who attended for not only being informative, but for the fun Brian brought to the sessions.



Brian Davies

Colin Simms

Col, as he was known to his many mates in the unit, joined the Volunteer Coast Guard in July 2001. Col attained the rating of Watch Officer and was awarded the National Medal in 2016.

Despite being unable to continue on the operational side of things, Col remained a keen and interested

member of the unit and enjoyed keeping across all developments in the unit and Marine Rescue New South Wales.

Col is fondly remembered as a member for whom nothing was any trouble. He was always the first to raise a hand to assist where needed and one of his last official duties

was driving the shuttle bus between the unit's boat and radio base during one of the unit's open days. His friendly nature and efforts on the day assisted in raising the unit's profile in a very positive manner and directly contributed to the success of the day.



Colin Simms

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Lewis Stockbridge

MR Botany Port Hacking are mourning the passing of Lewis Stockbridge, a valued long term member and friend of the unit. Lewis started with the Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol in 1988, and became Flotilla Commander in 1990, with the rank of Divisional Captain. From 1999 till 2003 he was again Flotilla Commander

until the Coastal Patrol, merging with other marine rescue services, became Marine Rescue NSW.

Lewis' service to Marine Rescue lasted 33 years and was recognised with the presentation of the 2nd Clasp to his Marine Rescue Service Medal. Lewis made many significant contributions to the Botany Port Hacking unit where

he served as Stores Officer, Watch Officer, Deputy Unit Commander & Unit Commander. His mentoring and listening ability was appreciated by everyone and he was always there to lean on and to discuss problems, and to engage in a bit of banter along the way.

Condolences to his wife Trish and his three adult children.



Lewis Stockbridge

Elsie Collins

Elsie Collins, a founding member and stalwart of MR Kioloa for many years, passed away peacefully on 17 August 2021. Elsie's dedication to the community was evidenced in her volunteering work as a long serving member of both Marine Rescue and the Rural Fire Service in addition to other local community groups.

Elsie joined the Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol (RVCP) when the

Kioloa unit was formed in 1987 becoming one of the lynch-pins of the unit, undertaking both crew and radio communications duties from her home with Bill Rowley, the founder of the Kioloa unit.

Elsie also co-ordinated the fundraising activities to raise the capital to build and equip a permanent base in Kioloa and to purchase the first unit vessel. On the amalgamation of the three

NSW marine rescue services Elsie transferred across to the newly created Marine Rescue NSW where she continued to actively perform weekly radio watches as well as being heavily involved in fundraising.

Elsie provided 21 years of active service to the RVCP and Marine Rescue before continuing on as an honorary member for another 10 years. She will be sadly missed by all in Marine Rescue.



Elsie Collins

Captain Andrew Topp

Captain Andrew Topp was a highly credentialed member of MR Sydney both in his career as a professional mariner and in the roles he held at the unit.

A capable and accomplished seaman, Andrew started in his seagoing career at the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) at the tender age of 13, before joining the Merchant Navy as he wanted to "get out on the water" which wasn't happening with the RAN.

A Master Mariner Class 1, Foreign Going, he could command any size or tonnage vessel, later working ashore as a superintendent, cargo surveyor, and compliance to charter, company representative and manager.

On his retirement from the Merchant Navy and return to family life, he worked for a number of

shipping companies, including Sitmar, BHP and Associated Steamships.

Andrew joined the Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol (RVCP) Terrey Hills Base in 2006, after a stint at the Broken Bay Base. Initially Membership Officer, Andrew quickly became a valued and influential member as a mentor to many new members. Andrew served as Deputy Unit Commander from 2010 to 2012 and Unit Commander from 2012 to 2014, after which he continued to support the unit as Training Officer.

Andrew was passionate about Marine Rescue and worked hard to ensure that our teams possessed the necessary skills to perform their duties. He was an Assessor of Watch Officers and Radio Operators and was involved in a number of

training initiatives and the unit's only qualified SARSO Officer.

Throughout his service, Andrew made a significant contribution to our professional growth and was integral to the formation of the culture and fabric of our base. His contribution to the operational efficiency of our base was significant. His positive attitude, dry sense of humour, and navigation skills made him a great asset in the training of new recruits and the earlier overall running of VMR 225 Marine Rescue Terrey Hills base. He would say "when you are navigating you need to be 100% sure that you know where you are". Andrew was a man of strong character who will be greatly missed.

Denis Comber & Marguerite Mason



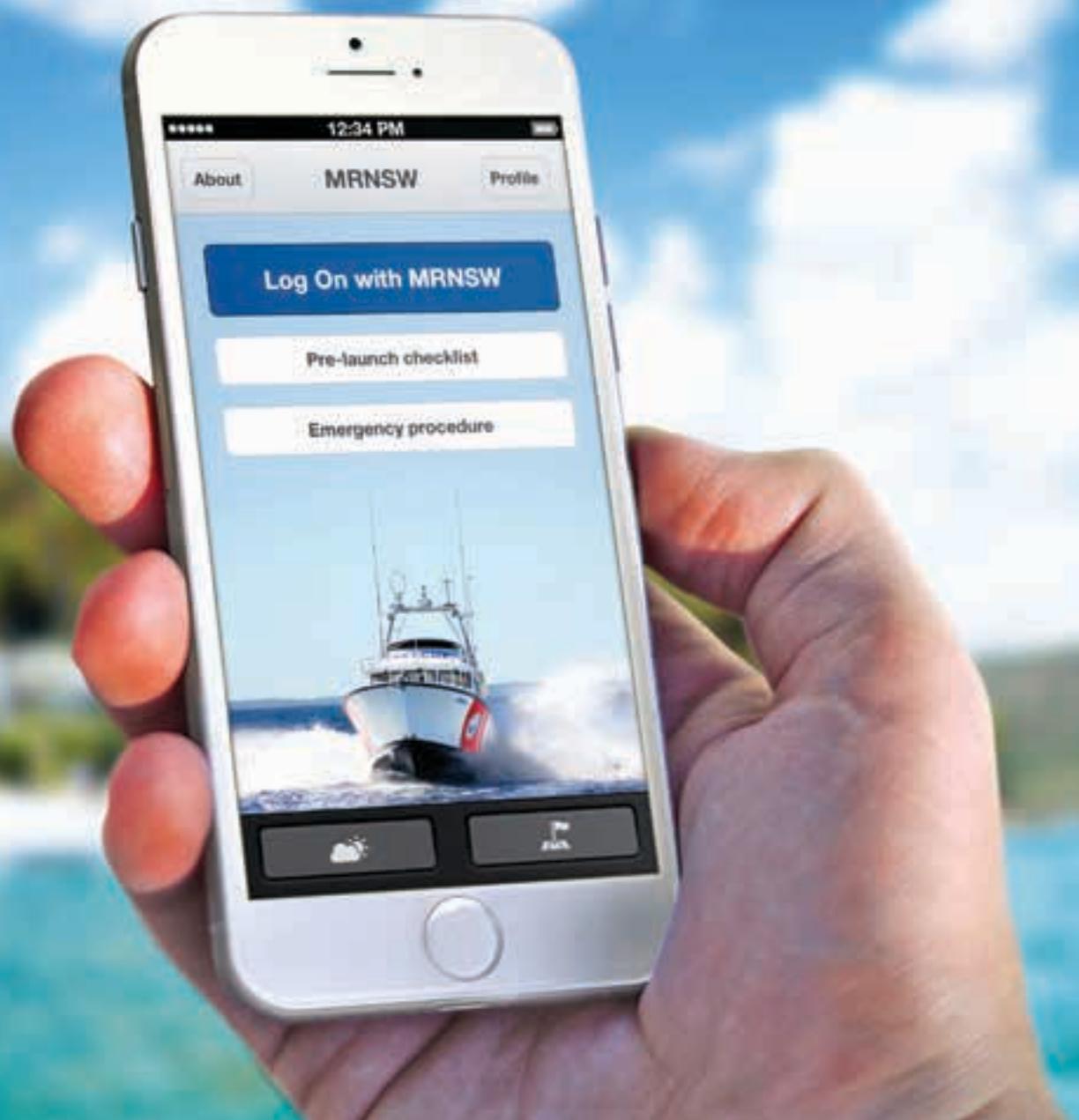
Captain Andrew Topp

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