

RESCUE

VOLUNTEERS SAVING LIVES

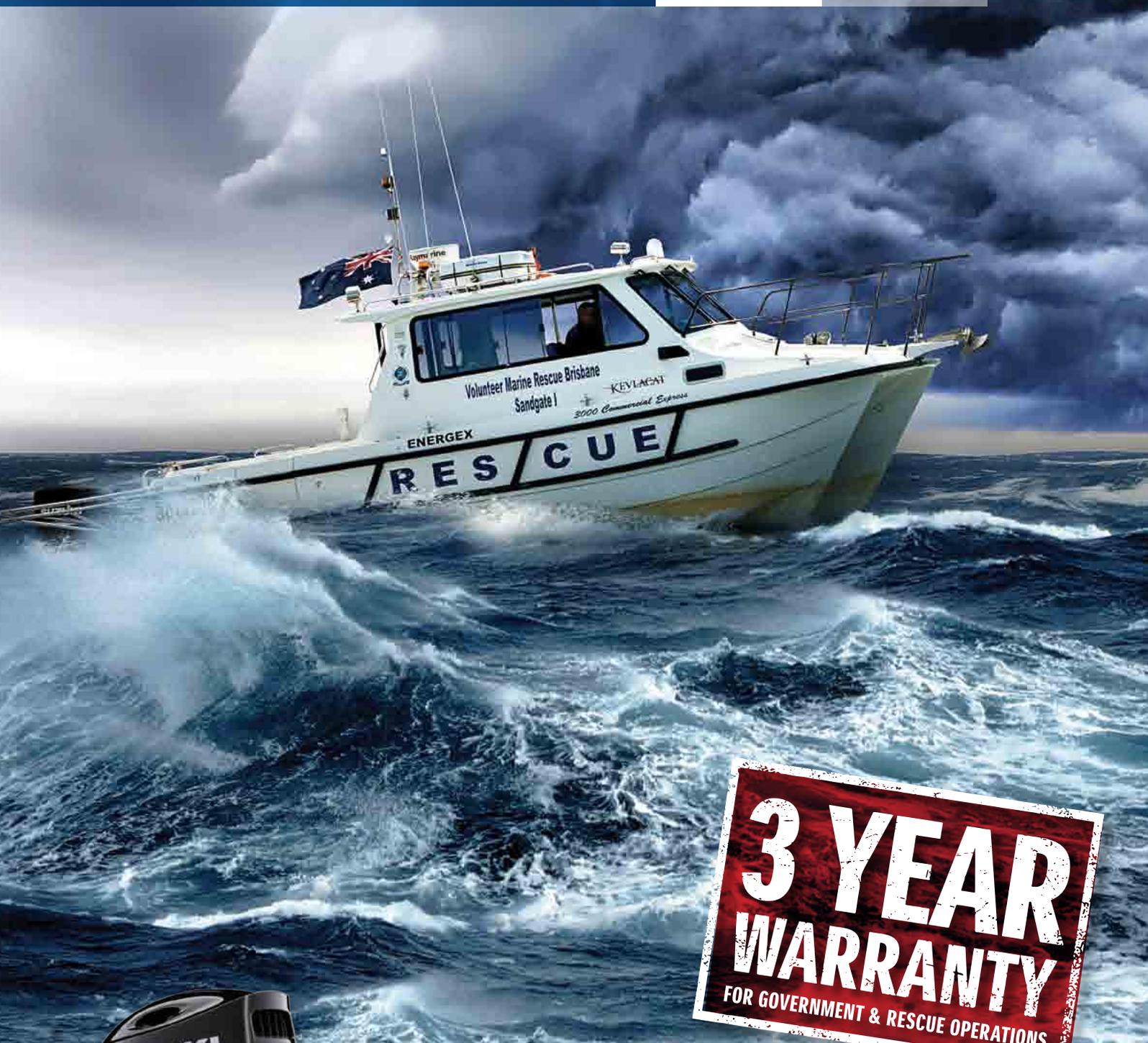
Autumn 2017



Official magazine of
MARINE RESCUE
QUEENSLAND

FREE

We're ready to help when
you need us the most



**3 YEAR
WARRANTY**
FOR GOVERNMENT & RESCUE OPERATIONS

That's why those in the know choose
SUZUKI MARINE – BOATING MADE BETTER



DF200A/AP

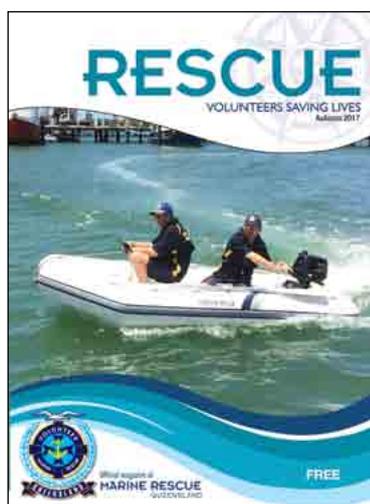
THE
ULTIMATE
4-STROKE OUTBOARD

suzukimarine.com.au

 **SUZUKI**
MARINE



MARINE RESCUE
QUEENSLAND



FRONT COVER:

Gladstone IRB on its maiden voyage.

STATE EXECUTIVE

PRESIDENT:	Graham Kingston	p 0477 888 497 e president@marinerescueqld.org.au
VICE PRESIDENT:	Glenn Norris	p 0408 004 720 e vicepresident@marinerescueqld.org.au
SECRETARY:	Ann Ivory	p 0424 438 401 e secretary@marinerescueqld.org.au
TREASURER:	Adrian Westerman	p 0467 555 645 e treasurer@marinerescueqld.org.au
MANAGER:	Keith Williams	p 0447 389 135 e manager@marinerescueqld.org.au

STATE COUNCIL

GULF OF CARPENTARIA ZONE

PRESIDENT:	Chris Emerick	p 0429 578 555
VICE PRESIDENT:	Paul Poole	p 0428 388 839

NORTHERN ZONE

PRESIDENT:	Rob Murolo	p 0418 799 934
VICE PRESIDENT:	Vince Papale	p 0427 166 378

CENTRAL ZONE

PRESIDENT:	Josie Meng	p 0427 749 250
VICE PRESIDENT:	John O'Callaghan	p 0488 334 458

MORETON BAY ZONE

PRESIDENT:	Ian Ivory	p 0419 012 499
VICE PRESIDENT:	Vacant	

SOUTHERN ZONE

PRESIDENT:	Jannie Bloem	p 0413 344 951
VICE PRESIDENT:	Vacant	

TORRES STRAIT ZONE

CHAIRMAN:	Ross Tindall	p 0499 977 875
------------------	--------------	----------------

Advertisers are reminded that the Trade Practices Act 1974 provides severe penalties for false and misleading advertising. It is not possible for the Association or the editor to check the accuracy of claims of quality of services offered by advertisers, and therefore the responsibility must lie with the person or companies submitting material for publication in their advertisement. Views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the Association, of its Council, or of the Editor.

This publication is copyright. Other than for the purposes and subject to the conditions prescribed under the Copyright Act, no part of it may in any form or by any means (electronic, mechanical, microcopying, photocopying, recording or otherwise) be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted without prior written permission. Inquiries should be addressed to the Editor.



RADIO COMMUNICATIONS

Squadron Call Sign

		VHF Repeaters	HF (2Meg)	27MHZ	VHF
VMR ST PAULS					
VMR THURSDAY ISLAND	VMR 422	22, 82	YES	YES	YES
VMR WEIPA	VMR 430		YES	YES	YES
VMR AURUKUN	VMR 498				YES
VMR KARUMBA	VMR 490	80		YES	YES
VMR BURKETOWN					YES
VMR MORNINGTON ISLAND	VMR 457			YES	YES
VMR BURDEKIN	VMR 481	80	YES	YES	YES
VMR BOWEN	VMR 487	21	YES	YES	YES
VMR WHITSUNDAY	VMR 442	81, 82	YES	YES	YES
VMR MIDGE POINT	VMR 458	81, 21			YES
VMR MACKAY	VMR 448	80, 21	YES		YES
VMR GLADSTONE	VMR 446	82	YES		YES
VMR ROUND HILL	VMR 477	81, 82	YES	YES	YES
VMR BUNDABERG	VMR 488	22, 80, 81	YES		YES
VMR HERVEY BAY	VMR 466	22		YES	YES
VMR BRIBIE ISLAND	VMR 445	81, 21		YES	YES
VMR BRISBANE	VMR 401	81, 21		YES	YES
VMR RABY BAY	VMR 455	81, 21, 82		YES	YES
VMR NORTH STRADBROKE	VMR 449	81	YES	YES	YES
VMR VICTORIA POINT	VMR 441	81, 82		YES	YES
VMR JACOBS WELL	VMR 450	82	YES	YES	YES
VMR SOUTHPORT	VMR 400	82, 22	YES	YES	YES
VMR CURRUMBIN	VMR 420	82	YES	YES	YES

AFFILIATED SQUADRONS

VOLUNTEER MARINE RESCUE ST PAULS	Moa Island	C/- Thursday Is.	0428 713 073
VOLUNTEER MARINE RESCUE THURSDAY ISLAND	PO Box 1018	Thursday Is. 4875	0477 040 440
VOLUNTEER MARINE RESCUE WEIPA	PO Box 580	Weipa 4874	(07) 4069 7535
VOLUNTEER MARINE RESCUE AURUKUN	C/- Shire Council	Aurukun 4871	(07) 4060 6120
VOLUNTEER MARINE RESCUE KARUMBA	PO Box 163	Karumba 4891	(07) 4745 9999
VOLUNTEER MARINE RESCUE BURKETOWN	PO Box 68	Burketown 4830	(07) 4745 5101
VOLUNTEER MARINE RESCUE MORNINGTON IS	PO Box 1854	Gununa 4871	(07) 4745 7336
VOLUNTEER MARINE RESCUE BURDEKIN	PO Box 167	Ayr 4807	(07) 4783 1014
VOLUNTEER MARINE RESCUE BOWEN	PO Box 130	Bowen 4805	(07) 4786 1950
VOLUNTEER MARINE RESCUE WHITSUNDAY	PO Box 298	Cannonvale 4802	(07) 4946 7207
VOLUNTEER MARINE RESCUE MIDGE PT.	PO Box 624	Midge Point 4799	0408 946 940
VOLUNTEER MARINE RESCUE MACKAY	PO Box 235	Mackay 4740	(07) 4955 5448
VOLUNTEER MARINE RESCUE GLADSTONE	PO Box 797	Gladstone 4680	(07) 4972 3333
VOLUNTEER MARINE RESCUE ROUND HILL	PO Box 282	Agnes Water 4677	(07) 4974 9383
VOLUNTEER MARINE RESCUE BUNDABERG	PO Box 566	Bundaberg 4670	(07) 4159 4349
VOLUNTEER MARINE RESCUE HERVEY BAY	PO Box 120	Urangan 4655	(07) 4128 9666
VOLUNTEER MARINE RESCUE BRIBIE ISLAND	PO Box 85	Bribie Island 4507	(07) 3408 7596
VOLUNTEER MARINE RESCUE BRISBANE	PO Box 201	Sandgate 4017	(07) 3269 8888
VOLUNTEER MARINE RESCUE RABY BAY	PO Box 87	Cleveland 4163	(07) 3821 2244
VOLUNTEER MARINE RESCUE NTH STRADBROKE	PO Box 28	Dunwich 4183	(07) 3409 9338
VOLUNTEER MARINE RESCUE VICTORIA POINT	PO Box 3276	Victoria Point West 4165	(07) 3207 8717
VOLUNTEER MARINE RESCUE JACOBS WELL	PO Box 279	Beenleigh 4207	(07) 5546 1100
VOLUNTEER MARINE RESCUE SOUTHPORT	PO Box 866	Southport 4215	(07) 5532 3417
VOLUNTEER MARINE RESCUE CURRUMBIN	PO Box 99	Currumbin 4223	(07) 5534 1000



from the PRESIDENT'S CHAIR

Hello everyone. Well the summer holiday season is now behind us and so far the forecast of more than usual cyclones has not eventuated. But as we know the marine rescue business can be quite lumpy in terms of events and quiet periods, so the forecast could still be realised with above average sea temperatures in the Coral Sea. Our squadrons in the south east corner have had a very busy summer quarter for general activations and medivacs. The jet ski fraternity is well represented in activation logs. Mackay had a major commitment over several days in a MOB search in the Percy islands, some 70nm south east of Mackay. Well done folks.

The last quarter has been pleasing on several fronts – the recognition of the cooperation we provide to the Water Police in SAR activity, the joint meeting with our colleagues in Coast Guard, progress with an outstanding issue in Exemption 24, response

from Government to queries about VHF repeater maintenance and cooperative activities within VMR zones.

Each year the Brisbane Water Police host an evening at headquarters on Whyte Island to update VMR and AVCG units in the Brisbane Water Police zone about significant activities and to thank units for their contributions to SAR activity. The night kicks off with a barbecue, followed by the update session. This year was special in that QWPS presented marine rescue units with a 'Thank you' plaque and AVCG and MRQ presented Senior Sargent Jim Whitehead with a plaque to thank

Thank you plaque to AVCG and VMR units from QWPS Brisbane.



PROPELLER PROBLEMS SOLVED

Performance Propellers utilises **Prop Scan**[®] to identify inaccuracies in your propeller's geometry.

Specialising in:

- New Propellers • Repairs & Repitching
- All Propellers to ISO Standard
- Marine Bearings & Shaft Seals

We will **Prop Scan**[®] your propellers **FREE OF CHARGE** and supply you with a detailed report highlighting the faults and indicate how our certified technicians can correct your propellers.



Performance Propellers Pty. Ltd.

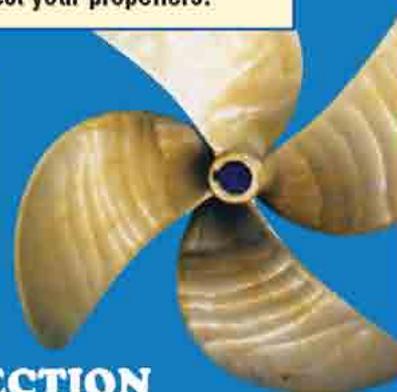
80 Taylor Street, Bulimba, QLD 4171

Phone: (07) 3899 1501

Fax: (07) 3899 9288

Website: www.pprops.com.au

Email: colin@pprops.com.au



Prop Scan[®] TOWARDS PROPELLER PERFECTION

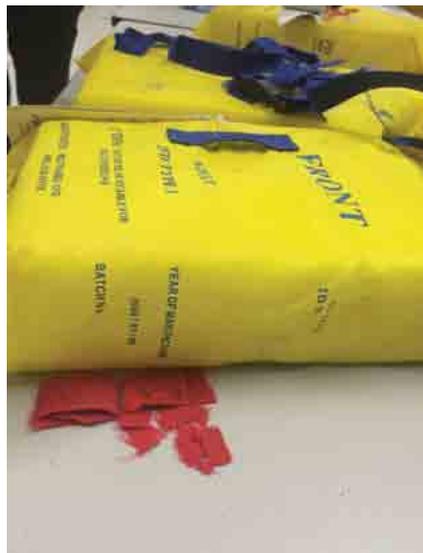
PRESIDENT'S REPORT



Insp. Greg Ringuet, Steve Fleming, Snr Sgt. Jim Whitehead, Keith Williams and Snr Sgt. David Edden with marine rescue thanks plaque to Jim Whitehead.



AVCG and MRQ state councillors at the joint meeting on February 11.



Deteriorated webbing on foam filled PFD1 jackets.

him for involving marine rescue personnel in the QPS SAR courses.

On February 11 we held a joint meeting of the state councils of Marine Rescue Qld and AVCG Qld to discuss options and value of a closer working relationship at administrative level to mirror the close cooperation that already happens for SAR and on water joint training activity. It was agreed a small committee would be formed to establish a joint venture between the organisations to foster issues of common interest. These might include a common voice and point of contact to and from Government and major sponsors. The meeting also discussed the importance of a state wide marine assist package, as boaties are only interested in the assistance provided, not the colour of the assisting boat. We look forward to developing this relationship with AVCG. The issue of maintenance of VHF repeaters and provision of BOM marine weather forecasts were other common issues and still work in progress.

Cooperation between AVCG, MRQ and other states representatives on the National Volunteer Marine SAR committee largely resulted in the current version of AMSA's Exemption 24 that applies to marine rescue vessels. However a grey area remained about need for a coxswain to command a vessel of <7.5m for low risk training activity. I must thank our general manager Keith Williams for his persistence on this matter. The current version of our Code of Practice has been agreed by AMSA and indicates a coxswain is not required for training activity, if:

- The vessel is less than 7.5m in length;
- The operation must be a low risk training activity (does not include towing);
- The operation must take place in sheltered waters and within 3nm of the point of departure;
- Both forecast and actual wave height must be less than 1.5m;
- Such activities must take place only during daylight hours.

Just before Christmas Keith Williams and myself had an audience with Minister Mark Ryan about issues of concern to MRQ. Minister Ryan gave us a good hearing and indicated he would follow up on matters with relevant departments as well as expressing support for our 'Life Jacket Testing Project'. The Minister's support has resulted in a Government project to have a strategic look at the marine VHF repeater network to assess options for sustaining the network and a consideration of the Victorian Government model of providing insurance for marine rescue units from Government sources.

Well trained volunteers are the backbone of our business, as our crews have to be ready to act as a team often in high risk and difficult conditions. This training resulted in the magnificent performance of two of our Southern Zone squadrons in response to boat fires and associated medivacs. In recent months we have seen good inter-squadron cooperation in use of ESS courses and access to diesel engine facilities at Jacob' Well and Gladstone. Next weekend (March 3-5) all of our northern squadrons will be working on a day and night SAREX in the Whitsundays.

**WELL TRAINED VOLUNTEERS
ARE THE BACKBONE OF OUR
BUSINESS, AS OUR CREWS HAVE
TO BE READY TO ACT AS A
TEAM OFTEN IN HIGH RISK AND
DIFFICULT CONDITIONS**

The VP's Watch in our Spring 2016 journal and our July 2016 Facebook post highlighted issues with deteriorating webbing on foam filled PFD1 life jackets, even when stored in plastic bags in the dark. This is an ongoing issue and should be highlighted to boaties. Our Whitsunday crew recently experienced this at first hand when the VMR skipper asked the towees to don lifejackets for the tow. The webbing had deteriorated to the extent that the jacket was not safe to use. Our general manager is planning a 'Life Jacket Testing Project' that will focus on inflatable jackets. Several government agencies and life jacket standards writers have expressed interest in observing the testing. Planned for late March – early April.

**Graham Kingston
President VMRAQ**

Cast away your worries




PANTAENIUS
Sail & Motor Yacht Insurance

Sydney - Phone +61-(0)2-9936 1670

pantaenius.com.au



The VP's WATCH

As I sit here typing away at my second report since becoming Vice President I have been thinking of what the future holds for VMR in Qld. I don't have to think too hard. It holds a hell of a lot. I look at the Whitsunday and Jacobs Well squadrons who eagerly await delivery of their new rescue vessels, the Hervey Bay squadron who are in the planning stages of finding their next rescue vessel, and the Midge Point squadron who have just re-furbished their existing vessel to achieve what they hope is another decade of use. The Raby Bay squadron who last year completed building additional space in their boat shed to safely house their vessels, the Aurukun squadron who have been provided room inside a yet to be constructed shed, room they can soon call their base, the Southport and Round Hill squadrons who are preparing to replace or extend their boat ramps to improve the process of, and ensure the safety of their members, when launching and recovering their vessels.

One question I ask though is, who pays for all of this, we are all only volunteers?

Who pays for all this infrastructure, the cost of new vessels and the continual cost of maintaining the assets that ensure the boating public's safety?

Yeah sure, the Qld Government contributes through grants and subsidies, some squadrons are lucky enough to have corporate sponsors who contribute, about 50% of those we assist make some sort of donation, be it a re-imburement of costs, or just a simple donation, but the greatest majority of funding comes from those members who rattle tins at clubs and pubs, at sporting events, and at community functions.

Without the copious amounts of time given by members in doing this, none of our squadrons could survive. Every squadron has had to do this since inception, and it will be a long time before any of us can stop doing this. We can't rely on governments to keep giving us money, they simply don't have the money to go around. We have to gain the boating public's trust in what we do, so they reward us for our efforts. We have to continually think of ways to sustain our bank balances to survive.

Just recently, a squadron were informed they were a part beneficiary of a deceased estate. Why were they a beneficiary? Because the deceased owned a boat and was once rescued by VMR nearly 20 years previous. So impressed by the service provided money was

left in the estate to that squadron. What a wonderful gesture.

Everyday we need to think of ways to survive financially and be more viable. My own squadron, Southport, purchased its first rescue vessel in 1969 for \$4000. The cost of today's rescue vessel sits at around \$400,000. Correct, its a lot better vessel, and it does a lot more things, and it goes a lot faster, but we need it to, our customers have vessels just as good and they go a lot further to sea, they have a lot more equipment that can break, and they now have more reliance on VMR squadrons than ever, because they know when it all goes bad, VMR will be there to ensure they get home, in most cases.

Everyday I hear stories, be it from those on the rescue vessels, or in the media, where if it weren't for a VMR organisation somewhere in Qld, someone may not be sitting down to dinner with their family this evening.

VMR in Qld is in very good hands, the willingness and dedication of our members to go out and fundraise in times of need is second to none, the enthusiasm of members who go out and meet with business in the hope of being given support to sustain and enhance their operation is heartwarming and the efforts of the member who goes to the pub on a Friday night to sell a couple of meat trays to earn a couple of hundred dollars should never be forgotten. What should also never be forgotten is the efforts of your organisation's executive who are always at the coal face of Government asking for a greater share of funding to keep their affiliated squadrons operational. Its a massive job on all fronts.

To everyone in this organisation, I take my hat off to you for the efforts you contribute. Just turning up to a shift is a huge financial contribution.

Just remember, when most of us joined VMR we did it for the love of the ocean, the want to help those in distress at sea, and the personal satisfaction we got out of seeing someone get home safely. Whatever it costs to run a squadron is money well spent.

Keep up the great work you do and the financial reward will follow. Be proud of your organisation and your squadron.

**Glenn Norris – Vice President
MRQ**

SOME USEFUL ANDROID APPS

Do you have a smart phone? Most of us do these days. Have you considered how useful they can be in your boat?

Once you get away from civilisation you might lose your phone signal, and your WiFi may not work, but if your phone has a built in GPS it can still be a very helpful tool.

There are many good apps available, but I would like to recommend two of them.

MY LOCATION

The first is a free one. My location

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.abhilash.mylocation&hl=en>

It gives your Latitude, Longitude and Altitude. While I don't care about your altitude, the latitude and longitude are very useful. We often need to find boats offshore, and while "About 2 miles off Q1" may sound like a good description of your location, it is not very helpful for the rescue boat looking for you.

It does not need data or WiFi or phone connections, just the on board GPS. Make sure the GPS is turned on, of course, and if you have problems with it, set your location setting to GPS only.



It gives South latitude as a negative, but we can cope with that.

Your phone may already have an App that let's you find your latitude and longitude. Check and see. Learn how to use it.

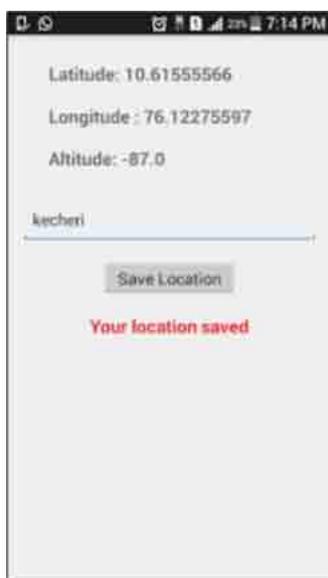
BOATING AU&NZ

From Navionics. This one costs money, but it is well worth it. Still under \$30.

It gives you a nice marine GPS. Channel markers, depth indications, your boat in the correct position. It is basically a very cheap, but very useful GPS. I have not used the fancy stuff, but the GPS seems good.

Again, no WiFi data or phone reception is needed once you are set up.

The thing to do is, when you have data, open it and move the cursor around the map. As you move it loads the map, and once loaded they stay there, so it can be used without data.



VICTORIA POINT

BEATING THE HEAT

Well we have just been through one of the hottest summers for many years with temperatures bringing out the boaties in their droves. Thankfully we have managed to get through this busy season without any serious incidents although the owners of some sunken vessels may not agree.



Over the Christmas holiday weekend Marine Rescue Victoria Point received a call from the owner of a sinking vessel at Blakesley's. *VP1* was deployed and made a high speed run across the bay to find the vessel settling by the stern on a rising tide about 100m off the beach. Luckily the owner had abandoned the vessel without injury and had removed most of his belongings, via his tender, and had set up on the beach at Blakesley's. There was little we could do except notify the water police and report the situation. The sad part about this sinking is the owner who hails from the Gold Coast had spent the last couple of years working on his boat and spent a large amount of his savings on his dream. Prior to setting out on this first outing he had the vessel checked for seaworthiness but neglected to have it insured. The cause of the sinking was not known and it was a little bemusing when we were asked if it was possible to pump it out and refloat it.

It was only a few weeks later we attended a house boat sinking off Potts Point. Two persons were transferred to a water police vessel whilst *VP1* along with a Raby Bay rescue vessel maintained watch and collected flotsam. Had this event happened the following day the story may have been a little different as *VP1* was hit by a decent storm which reduced visibility to less than 50m. The crew had to return from Potts Point under instruments and radar guidance.

More recently at shift start, a 21 year old lad reported his tinnie had capsized early in the morning near the Potts Point Red. He had been fishing and was stand near the stern when a wave flipped his boat. He managed to swim ashore and must have got a lift to the southern end of Macleay Island to catch a ferry back to the mainland. He then made his way to the base at Victoria Point to report the incident. *VP Papillon* made an initial search of the general vicinity and located flotsam and co-ordinates recorded. A search pattern was mapped based on tide and wind to locate the sunken vessel and both *VP1* and *VP Papillon* carried out a SAR operation to locate the boat which may cause a navigation hazard. The operation was a success with the partly submerged boat located, righted and towed back to base by *VP Papillon*. Much to the delight of the boy's father who made a generous donation to the base and perhaps a less generous donation to his sons pride for not fishing in the area he said he was going to. All turned out well and another job well done.

ACTIVITIES AND TRAINING

Reports showed all rosters had their fair share of tows over the summer period. Vessels ranging from 12 tonne yachts with engine problems to small tinnies as well as more luxurious motor yachts running out of fuel, to jet skies stuck on sand bars.

There is also the constant training carried out by all rosters during those quiet times ensuring crew are well tuned to handle MOB rescues, fire drills, vessel handling in all conditions. Live trials were also conducted to test various methods of recovering injured persons from the water with *VP Papillon*. The aim was to retrieve without incurring additional injury to the injured as well as those on board lifting a person to safety. As a result we will be acquiring a body recovery net for use on *Papillon* as an aid to rescue where appropriate.



First Aid courses have now been brought in-house with two courses run with success. We have also managed to secure a grant for \$3000 to purchase first aid training equipment. Well done to all involved in this achievement.

We have also completed interviews for new recruits and look like bringing six to eight new personnel into the training ranks.

Ongoing training with existing members has also seen a couple of our crew moving to skipper status. Congratulations are in order as there is a lot of hard work that goes into reaching that lofty height.

BASE DEVELOPMENT

For some time now our executive have been having discussions with council for development of our base. After many meetings council have agreed in principle to Marine Rescue Victoria Point having its own ramp and pontoon. This is a welcome acknowledgment to the fact that to have an efficient emergency service, it's imperative we have efficient response times. With the public ramp often congested on weekends and public holidays that isn't possible when emergency response vessels have to queue for launch access.

Hopefully there will be more good news we can report in the next instalment.

THE HAZARDS OF BOATING

One of the bullet proof beliefs which came up recently is that if you are a good swimmer you are safe out on the bay.

One morning we were approached by a man who had just had an experience that made him change his belief in that creed. He was still dripping wet when he relayed his experience he had when he was fishing with his son. Whilst moving about in his tinny he lost balance and fell overboard. At first he thought he was okay because he considered himself to be a strong swimmer but after several unsuccessful attempts to get back on board he found he was starting to flounder and was tiring quickly. That and the fact the boat was continually drifting away with the wind and the tide pulling him in the opposite direction started to scare him to a point of desperation. His ten year old son managed to start the motor and guided the boat back to his father who somehow managed to clamber aboard. Perhaps with a healthy dose of adrenalin. He said the first thing he was going to do was fit rope loops on the boat's sides and invest in a small ladder. A lesson learnt, but the scariest part



of the story was his 10 year old reversed the boat to him. Such a lucky person that this could have been a tragedy in more ways than one. At least we now have at least one person and a young boy going home with two messages of survival.

You don't have to be in deep water to get into trouble in the bay. Over the Christmas period we were advised there were a couple of kayakers in trouble on a sand bar near Coochiemudlo Island. We manoeuvred *VP1* as close as possible to a man and his wife who were in the water but standing chest deep on the sand bar with a rising tide. They didn't have flotation vests. Both had tried without success to climb back on board. The drama started when the woman had fallen out of her kayak and said she had panicked thinking she was in deep water. She tired quickly until she realised she could touch the bottom. Meanwhile her husband overturned his kayak trying to assist his wife. We managed to get both on board *VP1* along with their kayaks and returned to safety.

The moral. Never take the bay for granted and always prepare for the worst.

MEMBERSHIP

We all at the base work hard at raising funds to keep our boats on the water and the cost of doing that is constantly rising. A good proportion of income is reliant on associate membership. For the first time in a number of years we have increased membership fees to \$77 to bring us in line with Marine Rescue Bases up and down the coast. Registration of a second boat remains at \$30. Membership is reciprocal with all Marine Rescue bases across Moreton Bay.

When you are next taking your boat out, take a moment to walk across to the base and ask about benefits of membership. It may well be the best decision you make to enjoy safety and peace of mind on the water.

JELLYFISH



By Sharon McLean

Following on from the Irukandji Jellyfish article (by Glenn Norris) in the last Journal, in this edition we focus on the other jellyfish that are found in Australian waters.

Jellyfish are regarded as dangerous animals in many parts of the world, most jellyfish are harmless to humans. However, in Australian waters there are a few species that can kill us, or make us very sick.

With the warmer months and higher sea temperatures, there has been an increase in jellyfish stings. This summer has also seen the jellyfish which was always mainly found in tropical waters, spread further to the southern waters of Queensland. There have been a number of beaches closed throughout Northern and Central Queensland due to the very poisonous Box Jellyfish, also known as the Sea Wasp.

Jellyfish belong to the Phylum Cnidaria, which also contains various types of coral, hydroids and sea anemones with a common feature, their tentacles possess specialised stinging cells called nematocysts. The stinging cells are commonly used to capture prey, not for defence against large

animals or attacks on humans, these microscopic spring-loaded stinging cells on jellyfish tentacles are very sensitive to pressure. When they are touched, hundreds of thousands of them are discharged to kill the prey. Often there are species of fish that have developed anti venom to those stings and use the jellyfish (or sea anemone) living amongst its tentacles in protection from predators.

It is a good idea to keep a bottle of white vinegar in your boat at all times. You can receive a jellyfish sting if a tentacle is caught around the anchor rope and when you are pulling in by hand, you may be stung. Tentacles can also get caught around fishing line.

BOX JELLYFISH – ‘SEA WASP’

The Box Jellyfish, also known as the Sea Wasp is considered to be the most poisonous animal in the world. Its venom is strong enough that it can kill many people in on go. It is one of the biggest jellyfish in Australian waters and is so transparent that it is nearly invisible if you are not looking for it.

It has a box shaped body with four corners approx. 25cm in diameter. Up to 15 tentacles arise from each corner, and the tentacles may be up to 3m long. The stings leave burning marks on the skin and the victim will lose consciousness rapidly and stop breathing. Once stung the toxin reached the blood, the blood pressure increases, this can lead to a heart attack, and ultimately death.

First aid treatment – Assistance should be sought immediately by calling for an ambulance. The victim should be removed from further danger when it is safe to



Jellyfish tentacles.



Box Jellyfish, also known as the Sea Wasp.



The victim of a Box Jellyfish sting.

do so and prevented from rubbing and touching the stung area. The area should be doused with household vinegar in order to prevent further stings from discharged stinging cells. CPR maybe required.

CYANEA – ‘HAIR JELLY’ OR ‘LIONS MANE’

The Cyanea jellyfish also known as the Hair jelly or Lions Mane has a disc shaped bell which can be over 1m across and its trailing tentacles can reach more than 10m in length. These tentacles are very fine and difficult to see. The tentacles can extend outwards in a fan like trap through which only the smallest of animals can pass without being caught. Large individual's often have many small fish that live near the bell of the jellyfish and avoid the stinging tentacles. This gives the fish protection from predators, as few animals will approach it.

First Aid Treatment

– Douse effected area with vinegar and call for ambulance.

Cyanea Jellyfish, also known as the Hair Jelly or Lions Mane.



PHYSALIA – ‘BLUEBOTTLE’ OR ‘PORTUGUESE MAN OF WAR’

The Physalia, also known as the Bluebottle or the Portuguese Man of War, it has a pear-shaped sac that can exceed 15cm and has one tentacle up to 1m long. It is mainly blue, though its upper margin may show delicate shades of green or pink. It is a living muscular bag that secretes its own gas, which is similar to air.

First Aid Treatment – Douse effected area with vinegar and call for ambulance.

CATOSTYLUS – ‘BLUBBER’

The Catostylus jellyfish also known as Blubber jellyfish is the most commonly found jellyfish along Australia's east coast. Large swarms of this species will sometimes appear in estuarine waters. It is mushroom shaped with an up to 30cm long body and no tentacles, it has frills hanging underneath. If you get sting by one of these it will cause skin irritation and burning pain.



Physalia Jellyfish, also known as the Bluebottle of Portuguese Man of War.

First Aid Treatment – Vinegar is not required, seawater does the job, but apply cold packs and call for medical assistance if symptoms persist.



Catostylus, also known as blubber.

DISCLAIMER : This article is for informational purposes only and further research and training is required.

SOUTHPORT

VMR Southport has been absolutely manic over the past quarter. The months of December, January and February saw in excess of 250 activations undertaken (excluding training), with some long distance tows, some very serious Qld Ambulance Service activations resulting from marine incidents, and a much greater than usual number of vessel groundings, resulting in the transfer of large numbers of passengers from the grounded vessels to rescue vessels for return to shore. One of these incidents took in excess of 2.5 hours (between 0300-0530 hours) to transfer 177 passengers from a grounded ferry to three VMR rescue vessels. The operation went very smoothly under the direction of the Gold Coast Water Police.

Over the New Year week, VMR Southport vessels were activating up to nine times per day, mostly for towing broken down vessels, and battery jump starts. Of particular frustration was the number of vessels who called requesting assistance due to having faulty fuel gauges, water in the fuel, fuel line blockages, and broken fuel pumps. In most of these instances, the real fuel problem is 'OUT OF FUEL'. On the Gold Coast, fuel prices rose in excess of 20 cents per litre over this period. On talking to boaties there was a serious misconception that \$100 of fuel gives a good day of boating. That may have been so before the fuel price rise, however, a 20 cent / litre price rise over \$100 of fuel is very substantial and many boaties didn't properly calculate this into their planning for their days boating.

Marine incidents involving Personal Water Craft rider injury were a little higher than would have been liked. Crews attended to several suspected spinal, bone fracture and soft tissue injury activations.



'Marine Rescue 3' under repair.

Quite often VMR Southport's work is very localised with a return activation greater than 20nm quite rare, however, in January alone we undertook four missions greater than 50nm. The crews love these big jobs (when the offshore conditions are good) and the training benefit is awesome. All these missions involved towing broken down vessels.

The VMR Southport vessels have all performed admirably, with no breakdowns to report. Given the availability of some of our members on holidays over the Christmas period we took the opportunity, given the expertise of several of these members, to re-paint our training vessel *Marine Rescue 3*. This vessel has been looking shabby for quite some time and needed urgent repair. The vessel was off the water for three weeks, combined with a puncture on the starboard pontoon, while the work was undertaken. Now back in action, it looks fantastic, and the troops are using it very regularly.

THE CREWS LOVE THESE BIG JOBS (WHEN THE OFFSHORE CONDITIONS ARE GOOD) AND THE TRAINING BENEFIT IS AWESOME

Training has re-commenced on Tuesday evenings and over March and April we are running an Elements of Shipboard Safety Course, which will be attended by members from VMR Southport, Currumbin and Jacobs Well. They will enjoy themselves.

One incident to note of late involved our rescue vessel *Marine Rescue 4*. This is a Noosa Cat 2400 series, powered by 2 x 150hp Mercury Verado engines. As this vessel being winched into the Southport boat shed, the winch cable slipped, causing a rapid sudden jerk on the trailer. As a result, the trailer winch cable snapped, and the secondary attachment shackle straightened, resulting in one Noosa cat sliding off the trailer onto the concrete boat ramp. Miraculously the engines were tilted up at the time and the vessel received only minor fibreglass damage to the transom and inner hulls. The trailer also received some bent re-inforcing bars where the weight of the boat falling crushed them. The moral of the story, accidents happen, very unexpectedly, without warning. In this instance, none of the crew were anywhere near the boat or trailer, the skipper had raised the

motors in preparation to put the boat in the shed and most importantly no-one got hurt in any way. I would have run away and hid in a hole if the motors had been down and the boat landed on them! That would have been very costly and time off the water would have been very inconvenient. The squadron has held an extensive review into this incident and the recommendations suggested have already been implemented. The trailer winch cable has been replaced with a cord triple the breaking strain of the previous, and the trailer attachment hook has been upgraded to a much stronger industrial grade model. The crews are also in the process of reviewing their operational procedures when using the winches.

From January 1, 2017 VMR Southport adopted wearing the MRQ work uniform on rescue vessels. This has been very well accepted and the crews look very smart in their new attire.

VMR Southport has seen quite a few new faces on the boat crews of late. Generally, those new faces are people we have assisted who have liked what we did for them, and in return they have joined the Organisation to help others in difficulty. The crews are all very well numbered at present, however, we would desperately like to boost our midweek radio operator numbers.

All else is good, the summer season is drawing to a close on the water, albeit, we are still busy with activations still regular.

NOTABLE JOBS

On a training run over the Christmas period, a VMR crew were flagged down by boaties who were trying to assist a swamped vessel on the northern Broadwater side of the Gold Coast Seaway. The very rapidly flowing outgoing tide was quickly sweeping



A few handsome souls in their new uniforms.

the vessel into the Seaway area. On pulling up to assist, not previously seen, were a male and female clinging to the side of the small vessel. The VMR vessel manoeuvred to allow the crew to lift the female into the rescue vessel through the side door, however the male was too exhausted and too heavily built to be safely assisted, resulting in him having to be assisted onto the vessel by the rear ladder.

The small vessel was a tender from from a hired houseboat which was anchored approximately 20m from the rocks off the Seaway north wall. The tender had been attached to the houseboat by a very poor quality rope, which, as a result of the fast flowing tide had come loose from its cleat, resulting in the tender drifting away from the mother houseboat. Even sillier was the actions of the two people, who were very average swimmers, jumping into the water to swim after the tender. Eventually they caught it, but resultantly couldn't climb inside and hence were stranded.

Sharp PLYWOOD PTY. LTD.

PLYWOODS & VENEERS FOR Stockists, Contractors, Handymen

- SLICED & ROTARY VENEERED PARTICLEBOARD & MDF BOARD
- FANCY VENEERED PLYWOOD • PARTICLEBOARD
- THIN MDF & PARTICLEBOARD • MELAMINE FACED BOARDS
- LAMINATES • PARTICLEBOARD • T & G FLOORING
- MARINE & STRUCTURAL PLYWOODS • HARDBOARD PRODUCTS

FULL RANGE OF SIZES & THICKNESSES

5587 1500

Cnr Wheeler Cr & Coghill Dr, Currumbin
1171 Boundary Rd, Wacol 3718 6400

JONES MARINE

Glad to assist VMR Karumba

- ☐ SALES & SERVICE TO ALL BRANDS
- ☐ SPECIALISING IN:

YAMAHA **MARINER**
OUTBOARDS

LOWRANCE

Ph: (07) 4745 9159
Yappar Street, Karumba 4891

SOUTHPORT

This could have been a situation that ended tragically and a very stark reminder that the ocean has no mercy, so look before you leap and think about what might go wrong before it does go wrong, as these people found out.

The two persons were returned to the houseboat by VMR, along with the tender, and given some good advice to find a different place to anchor.

VMR Southport were recently activated by the Qld Ambulance Service to transport paramedics to Tipplers Resort on South Stradbroke Island, where a lady had reportedly stepped on a stingray and was in distress. On arrival, the lady had been given good first aid by the resort staff, with bleeding controlled and the foot in a bucket of warm water, the standard treatment for stingray envenomation. The lady was attended to by the paramedics and on removal of the bandage used to assist in controlling the bleeding, a distinct black coloured spike could be seen under the skin in the lady's ankle.

THE TWO PERSONS WERE RETURNED TO THE HOUSEBOAT BY VMR AND GIVEN SOME GOOD ADVICE TO FIND A DIFFERENT PLACE TO ANCHOR

The lady was given pain relief and transported back to VMR, where the paramedics further conveyed her to hospital for treatment and further examination.

A man called VMR recently requesting assistance with retrieving his vessel onto its trailer at the boat ramp. When further questioned as to the difficulty the man was experiencing it soon became evident that the reason for his predicament was due to not wanting to get the wheels on his car wet. The man was attempting to skull drag his boat up onto his trailer with his winch, which was proving too hard, heavy and tiring. The man, against all his wishes, eventually reversed his car further down the boat ramp and successfully floated his boat on to his trailer with minimal difficulty.

A frantic call was made to the Seaway Tower over the Christmas holidays, from an 11m Cruiser that had lost all electrics, and was drifting towards the Seaway rock wall on the outgoing tide. The caller stated he had no engine power, nor an anchor, and was in immediate danger. VMR responded immediately, along with the Gold Coast Water Police who were at the time in the Seaway. The vessel was thrown a tow line, approximately 2m from hitting the rocks on the northern wall, and was dragged to safety by the Water Police vessel in the nick of time. The vessel was towed back to the VMR mooring where owner tried to explain his predicament. The skipper had tried to anchor his vessel in the Seaway however his anchor chain and rope had somehow become tangled in his propellers, creating his problem of no

anchor and no engine power. At the same time the skipper discovered water was leaking into the engine bay. VMR towed the vessel to Runaway Bay, where it was lifted from the water. The chain was so tightly wrapped around the propellers it had to be cut off with an angle grinder, the engine shafts were under that much strain the glands were leaking water, and the propellers were quite badly damaged from their run in with the chain.

All in all, the situation could have been a lot worse.

On New Years Day, in the very early hours of the morning VMR Southport were tasked to assist the Gold Coast Water Police with a passenger ferry that had run aground in the Aldershots just north of the South arm of the Coomera River. The vessel had 177 passengers on board who were returning from a new Years Eve party at McLarens Landing at approximately 0245 hours. On arrival the water police advised of their plan to use the three responding VMR vessels to transport the passengers from the grounded vessel to another commercial vessel which was anchored approximately 200m away in deep water. The VMR vessels just had enough water underneath their sterns, albeit a falling tide, to allow this to happen, and the mission to extricate the somewhat scared, and somewhat tired and under the weather passengers went very well, with no injuries reported. This exercise took approximately 2.5 hours and all the grateful passengers were returned to Mariners Cove. This certainly allowed for very little sleep for the VMR duty crew as bedtime was previously after the midnight fireworks had finished.

A phone call was received in the VMR radio room recently from a boatie who reported he had just launched the brand new family boat at the Broadwater boat ramp. Unfortunately, the gentleman had inadvertently forgotten to install the bung, and now the vessel was on the bottom. VMR assistance was requested. On arrival, the situation was not as bad as it looked, the stern of the vessel was still above water and the boatie was advised to leave his boat where it was, as his family could an eye on it, drive to the closest marine supplier, buy a bung, return and put it in, then let the bilge pump pump the water out. This was successfully done and the vessel was re-floated with only minimal water damage inside the boat. Fortunately the engine survived the ordeal. On returning to VMR, the crew were advised of a speedboat that had sunk near the Marine Stadium. On arrival at that assist, a small speed boat, with a very large engine had sunk, due to the transom seperating from the sides of the vessel. The engine was lying in the water, and the vessel was full of water. At low tide, when all the water had drained, the outboard motor was manhandled back into the boat, and VMR made a mercy dash, with the vessel in tow, to the Spit boatramp, where the vessel could be retrieved on a boat trailer. We are unsure if this vessel will see water again though!



Water Police vessel 'Damien Leeding' and Thirsty Sound coast guard during the search at Middle Percy Island.

To date, the summer months have not been very kind to the recreational fishermen around Mackay. Days where the BOM has been confident enough to utter the 'V' word ('variable' for the uninformed) have been few and far between and as most local small boat owners know, even a 10-15kt prediction can result in an uncomfortable day on the water. That is the problem around Mackay, we have a lot of open water in-between areas of shelter. While the weather has limited the number of small boats on the water, VMR448 has been involved in two activations worth mentioning since I last put pen to paper (or fingers to keyboard).

Sadly, the first of these resulted in a fatality with a person missing, presumed drowned after disappearing from a moored sailing catamaran anchored in Western Bay at Middle Percy Island. Being 65nm away, this location is towards the southern extremity of the VMR448 area of operation and as such, the SAR was a combined activation

with Thirsty Sound Coast Guard and the Whitsunday Water Police. The Mackay VMR long range vessel *Mackay Rescue 5* was used throughout the four day search and was backed up with crew changes and reprovisioning by Dalrymple Bay Coal Terminal *Mackay Rescue 6*. This was the first long range, extended duration activation for VMR448 for a considerable period of time and as such was an eye opener for many of the crew members who were involved. A comprehensive debrief following the activation ensured any learnings and areas for improvement were captured and enacted. Many thanks to the caretakers of Middle Percy Island for their assistance and hospitality during this week and I have a firsthand account that their local goat stew is divine.

The second activation of note came after the first heavy rains of the season and while there were no injuries or loss of vessels, it could have all ended much worse. The Pioneer River runs right through the city centre of Mackay after beginning in the foothills of the Eungella ranges and winding its way through the Pioneer Valley. In periods of heavy rain in the valley, the dams on the river disappear under metres of brown water allowing all sorts of debris to wash down river and out to sea. In fact,

Floating debris offshore.



The Gold Coasts Freshest Seafood straight from the boats!



BRING YOUR ESKY!

Prawns, bugs, spanner crabs, fish, octopus, sand and three spot crabs caught from the pristine ocean waters off the Gold Coast

7 Days a week - weather permitting

Gold Coast Fishermen's Co-Operative
168 Seaworld Drive, Main Beach
Phone 0439 675 926
www.freshestcatch.com.au



Recognised Repairer of VMR Vessels

Repairs & Maintenance to Vessels including Refits, Painting & Surveys Slipping Facilities

**Peter Hardisty - Qualified Tradesman
40 Years Experience**

Phone/Fax 3893 2263 - Mobile 0418 155 921
Email: millkraftboatyard@bigpond.com
Shed 3, Wyuna Court, Hemmant, Qld. 4174



Safe and sound on St Bees.

after severe flooding it is not unusual to find trees and mats of freshwater weed many miles out to sea and for the history buffs, it was this debris that in 1918, alerted a passing steamer that something bad had happened to Mackay. Fast forward to 2017 and a 5m fibreglass runabout has left the Mackay marina for a day fishing with two POB. Approximately 10nm out they have collided with a large, semi-submerged log resulting in severe structural damage to the hull. Taking water quickly, the skipper of the vessel has handled the situation very well. Life jackets were donned, the EPIRB was activated and the contents of the boat were either jettisoned or relocated to the stern in an effort to save the vessel. These actions were successful and as the RACQ rescue helicopter hovered overhead, the crew managed to limp the boat to Keswick Island where it was grounded and secured above the high water mark. This is where *DBCT Mackay Rescue 6* located the crew and transferred them and their remaining possessions back to Mackay. As a happy ending, the vessel was later patched up and returned home.

MISSING EPIRB

Around Christmas, AMSA alerted *VMR448 Mackay* of an EPIRB being detected by aircraft in the Mackay marina vicinity. The new AMSA Challenger CL-604 jet had been dispatched and after low-level flyovers confirmed the device was in the marina. Interestingly, the signal was on 121.5MHz and not the 406MHz band and as such could not be identified to a registered device. Armed with our hand-held EPIRB locator, VMR personal roamed the arms of the marina searching for the offending transmitter and after a couple of false alarms located it on a vessel that had recently arrived from Townsville. The EPIRB was removed from the vessel and disabled. Speaking with the vessel skipper after the event, he advised that during the passage south, they had encountered some heavy weather and the EPIRB, which was one of the earliest 406 units, had activated itself but they had turned it off.

VESSELS

Our high speed response vessel *DBCT Mackay Rescue 6* has recently been repowered to further improve her capabilities. Now sporting two, brand new 300hp Suzuki outboards, towing capability has improved along with a slightly higher top speed while actually improving cruise speed fuel burn. With digitally selective rotation, the two motors are the same part and while there is no real reasoning behind it, this also improves their resale value. Many thanks to Reef Marine Mackay for their valuable assistance during this exercise.



'DBCT Mackay Rescue 6' with new 300 Suzuki's.

Our smallest fleet member, the 7m Swift RHIB *Mackay Rescue* has also received a Christmas present in the form of a new Garmin GPS, sounder combo. With our other vessels all utilising Garmin products, this installation keeps all the vessel electronics uniform and easily understood and operated by the crew members. While this vessel does not see a lot of sea-time, its importance cannot be underestimated. It continues to serve admirably anytime we need to respond to an activation in a remote waterway or operate in any of the shallow areas we are faced with in this area of high tidal ranges.

TRAINING

The New Year has seen the recommencement of Wednesday night crew training with the first cab off the rank being First Aid and CPR renewals. 2017 also heralds revalidation for our skippers and like anything in life, a little study will be healthy for all of us. Unless you use knowledge all the time, it is amazing how quickly we tend to forget little details so having to revisit the Col Regs every now and again is not a bad thing. The other priority for the squad is to ensure we continue with succession planning to ensure we have experienced crew ready to take the next step to VMR coxswain as required. None of us are immune to the aging process, unexpected health issues or any number of other reasons that could see us suddenly become unavailable at the helm on a rescue boat.



again and the pumps were restarted. Once in the harbour everything settled down and we made way to the boat travel lift where the guys from the boat yard were on standby waiting for us. We got the slings under the yacht and lifted it out the water – we did it!

CHRISTMAS PARTY

I can't conclude this update with making mention of the social event of the year – the VMR448 Christmas party. Held once again at the squad base, it was good to see a healthy number of active volunteers and their families enjoying each other's company, great food, cold drinks and lots of laughs.

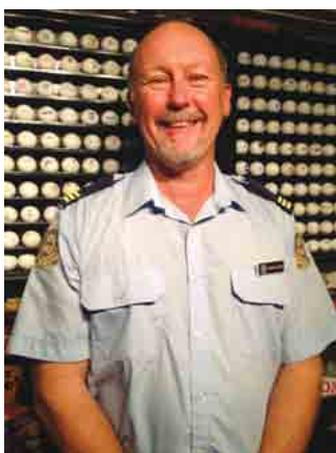
MEET THE VMR448 MACKAY SKIPPERS

This quarter we introduce **Darryl Jenkins**.

Began with VMR: January 2009

Why VMR: Love boats and water, and it's a great way to give back to the community.

Most memorable activation: A 50ft sailing yacht that had run aground on Dorsal Rock, over 30nm north of Mackay. It was a beautiful 5kt day but coincided with big tides. *DBCT Mackay Rescue 6* was at full throttle (close to 50kts) all the way there with 4 POB, pumps and fuel. Using carpet and sails to block the holes, we towed her off the rock and stabilised the situation with more sails by wrapping the hull, with crew manning pumps and buckets. A fellow yachty came by and lent a hand on the buckets. We had her back to the waterline once again when the backup crew arrived on *Mackay Rescue* with more pumps. We set up the pumps as backup and set course for home (Mackay) making about 4kts. Six hours into the eight hour trip we were hit a by a thunder storm with 20kt winds, rain and lightning all around us. The yacht started taking water



Darryl Jenkins.

Have you been involved in any life threatening situations or emergency activations?

Many, but the one that stands out is when we were dispatched to look for a possible missing boat near Prudhoe Island and we found a half cabin trailer boat, three quarters submerged. After three hours of searching, three men were pulled from the water after having spent fifteen hours in the water in winter. One man was air lifted by the RACQ helicopter and we bought the other two back to Mackay to waiting QAS officers.

What are your current roles in VMR? VMR Duty Skipper.

Interests outside of VMR: Full time business owner. Being a husband and dad to our two kids, taking the family fishing, camping and travelling.

BENNETT + BENNETT
Surveyors + Planners

Experience, Resources... Results

"Established in 1968 we have the skilled staff and flexibility to service your project irrespective of its size"

- Geospatial & Visual services
- Land & Engineering Surveys
- Mining & Infrastructure Projects
- Town Planning
- Photogrammetry / Laser Scanning
- Development Applications
- Volumetric Subdivisions
- Statutory Planning
- Subdivision & Strata Title Surveys
- Urban Design

Providing Survey & Planning Expertise

Gold Coast | Brisbane | Coomera | Ipswich | Sunshine Coast | Darwin
mail@bennettandbennett.com.au
www.bennettandbennett.com.au

GLADSTONE



Down the stairs goes 'Dunken'.



Vice President and President listening in over the airwaves.



It's a bit different out there at night.



Tricky manoeuvres to get a casualty on board.

I'M SEEING SARS

Captain's Log: Date – February 18, The weather was fine, the sea was fair – what a day for a training search and rescue exercise.

Before the exercise got underway, we had a real activation that gives a good example of situations that all squadrons would have come across. We received advice that a red boat with a person whose first language was not English and was geographically challenged was reported to be aground and sinking under a bridge. Reality turned out to be a white vessel was stuck on rocks with two people on board under a coal conveyor.

Our eager skippers and crew were assembled in the training room to receive their brief on what was happening. By brief we mean that their instructions were minimal. People were assigned to be 'in charge' and the first task was for *Gladstone I* to go to the aid of two casualties at South End. Under the command of Noni, the skipper and crew departed the marina with an ambulance officer onboard to rescue a person with a broken leg and another who was in and out of consciousness.

Meanwhile *Mobil II* was stranded at 'the third red post past Gatcombe'. It was the task of *QGC Rescue III*

to go to their aid. One small issue, there were three possible locations that the description fits.

The mastermind behind the exercise, Trevor Davies, Vice President and Unit Training Coordinator was at the base listening to the radio traffic with Mike Lutze, President while also checking vessel tracks on AIS.

"We do these exercises to put our skippers and crew in rescue situations that are as close as possible to real activations. It gives our crew the opportunity to hone their skills in a supportive environment preparing them for when they are under pressure," said Trevor.

"I was in charge of Gladstone I and gained valuable experience in working with the crew as a team to successfully rescue the casualties. The crew worked well together and we all learned a few things," said Noni

To add to reality, the exercise continued after dark. "Nightfall gave all those involved a bit of a reality check showing how different and difficult a rescue can be in the dark," said Trevor.

There were a lot of valuable lessons learned during the exercise that will be put into practice and contribute to making the team better crew.

THANKS AURIZON!

VMR Gladstone has recently replaced their inflatable rescue boat (IRB) thanks to Aurizon's Community Giving Fund. "Our area of responsibility is from Cape Capricorn in the north to Bustard Head in the south and 50nm seaward to reef islands," said Mike Lutze, President Volunteer Marine Rescue Gladstone.

"The IRB allows us to go into shallow areas or transport casualties from locations that don't have landing or mooring facilities which extends the capability of our large rescue vessel, *Gladstone I*. This funding has enabled us to replace our current IRB which is at the end of its useful life," said Mike.

Like other Volunteer Marine Rescue organisations around the state, Gladstone relies largely on income from membership fees, donations, and support from local companies.

Mike said "Receiving this grant from Aurizon is greatly appreciated and goes a long way to assist in continuing the great work of our volunteers in providing a rescue service for the local and visiting boating community".



The IRB atop rescue vessel 'Gladstone I' – fits just nicely.



Some of the crew taking the IRB on its maiden voyage.

WEIPA BOWLS CLUB



Trading Hours:

Monday - Sunday: 10am - late

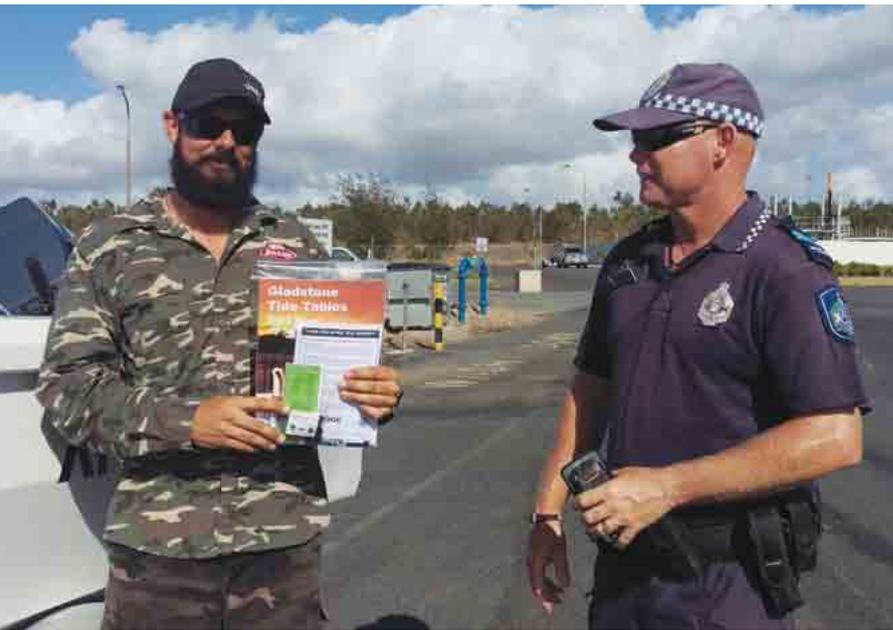
Sunday Social Bowls:

\$10 per person
(includes lunch and raffle ticket)



ARTIE WALES DRIVE, WEIPA, QLD 4874

ph: 07 4069 7300 fax: 07 4069 7616 email: weipabowlsclub@bigpond.com



Water Police Officer John Kernan with one of our local boaties proudly showing off his safety pack.

LEAP INTO SAFETY THIS SUMMER!

Volunteer Marine Rescue Gladstone told boaties to leap into safety over the summer holiday season.

On December 17, the sausages were sizzling and the frogs were leaping! Volunteers along with one of the local Water Police Officers handed out boating safety information packs containing *2017 Tide Tables*, *Guide to Recreational Boating and Fishing*, 2017 VMR Gladstone calendar, a boating safety flyer and a packet of frogs encouraging boaties to leap into safety.

“Summer is usually a busy time on the water with lots of local and visiting boaties,” said Mike Lutze, President Volunteer Marine Rescue Gladstone.

“Taking some time to plan your trip and check your boat is always important, but even more so at this time of year,” said Mike.

Put boating safety first on your list this summer holiday by:

Maintaining your boat and checking safety gear – make sure your boat and safety gear are in good order. Check you have the right gear for where you are heading and that items such as EPIRB's and flares have not expired.

Checking the weather – it is essential to check before you decide to head out and when you are on the water. November to April is the season for extreme weather and conditions can change quickly.

Knowing your alcohol limits – under .05 is the limit on the water. The skipper should also watch alcohol consumption of their passengers as wind and waves can multiply the effects of alcohol.

Logging on and off with VMR Gladstone on VHF channel 82 – just provide a few details about your boat, how many on board, where you are headed and when you expect to be back. This is a free service and you don't need to be a member to use it.

Mike said “We want everyone to have a safe summer when they are out boating in the beautiful Gladstone region and a little bit of preparation can make everyone's time more enjoyable”.

The weather gods were on our side that day with lots of action at the boat ramp. The packs and sausages were well received by those who left from the ramp near the VMR Gladstone base.

CALL ME!

VMR Gladstone have been busy working on a new computerised radio log. Building on the great work that was done with our current system the new log has a few improvements.

“Our new system has been developed by radio operators with Barry Taylor taking the lead on this project,” said Mike Lutze, President.

“The main idea behind the new system was to continue with a system that was easy to use with some enhanced features on a web-based platform,” said Barry Taylor. “We have radio operators that take calls from various locations across the Gladstone area, and previously passing on information about vessels that were out overnight involved phone calls or in some cases faxes,” said Barry.

The new web-based system allows for operators to all be looking at the same database regardless of location making handovers much more streamlined and less subject to human error.

Our radio operators, wherever they are, will be able to log calls in the system and have a complete record of what is happening across the region. This will also be beneficial for controllers who can see the complete picture of what is going on at any particular time.

“On a busy day, checking through pages of radio calls to find vessels overdue will no longer be needed. Just a click of a mouse and a list of the vessels at sea with any overdue vessels flagged will appear on the screen,” said Barry.

Other outputs will include reports on all radio traffic for any chosen period, a report on all assists, and separate reports on vessels transiting north or south through our area of operations. These reports can be filtered down to a single vessel if required.

VMR Gladstone is in the final stages of putting all the bells and whistles on the system and expect that it will be operational in March.

YOU'RE ON THE AIR WITH VMR GLADSTONE

All squadrons would probably agree that an important part of their organisations are our radio operators. While they aren't the ones out on the water, they are in our radio rooms and are often the first voice that is heard when help is needed.

"In recognition of the importance of their roles, VMR Gladstone has organised courses for our radio operators," said Mike Lutze, President. "We have put together some guidelines for the operators and have been working on a new computerised radio log. The difference this time is that the radio operators have been brought together to seek their input into how they do their job and what VMR Gladstone can do to make this happen," said Mike.

Four courses will kick off the training program and Jim Purcell, Radio Operator Manager will continue on the program with the assistance of Radio Operator Coordinators. It is intended that the radio operators will meet at least a couple of times a year. Suggestions for improvement or changes will be open at any time.

"The courses have a bit of pre-reading and a bit of time in the meeting room. They are topped off with some practical local knowledge by heading out on the water to see some of the places that they hear people talking about on the radio" said Mike.

"Three courses have been held so far and the feedback has been positive," said Trevor Davies, Vice President and Unit Training Coordinator. "A highlight for participants, both new and long serving, has been getting out on the boat," said Trevor.

I have been with VMR Gladstone for just over three years as a radio operator and I find it great to be able to go out on the boat to gain local knowledge and see what goes on out there," said Ceci Woods. The last of the formal courses will be held in April.



Some of VMR Gladstone's radio operators gaining first hand local knowledge.

**FISHERMANS
BOAT
HIRE** 

MAAS MARINA WOONGOOLBA
PUBLIC TRAILER BOAT RAMP

★ Bait, Tackle ★ Fuel, Ice, Chandlery

(07) 5546 2222

eastcoast
Marina

Manly Boat Harbour, Moreton Bay Brisbane

- 365 wet berths - 10m - 20m with power & water
- 240 dry rack storage - up to 10m - unlimited launch & retrieval, hull wash down and motor flush
- Short walk to Manly village & railway station
- Slipping for vessels up to 55ft
- Bistro / Boat Sales / Engineer / Shipwright / Trimmer
Marine Electrician / Sail Training & more, all on site

ph: (07) 3393 3811
info@eastcoastmarina.com.au





VOLUNTEER MARINE RESCUE

ASSOCIATION OF QUEENSLAND INC.

CODE OF CONDUCT.

V.M.R.A.Q. Personnel will maintain the highest standards of conduct in serving the Queensland community. In particular, V.M.R.A.Q Personnel will always strive to maintain these five principles required of all members of Volunteer Emergency Services

V.M.R.A.Q Members Will:

- 1. RESPECT THE LAW AND THE SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT.**
- 2. RESPECT OTHER PEOPLE.**
- 3. BE DILIGENT.**
- 4. ALWAYS ACT WITH INTEGRITY.**
- 5. MAKE DECISIONS AND UTILISE RESOURCES WITH DUE REGARD FOR ECONOMY AND EFFICIENCY.**

For more information on the 5 principles, please refer to the Code of Conduct & Anti Discrimination Manuals held by your Management Committee.

Date of Issue 01.09.96

DRAMATIC DECEMBER RESCUE

In early December, we received a call at 3am advising us that a yacht had hit Flat Rock off Point Lookout, North Stradbroke Island. Many phone calls later found Doug Fraser, Allan Chaplin, Colin Haigh and Roger Slinger taking *North Stradbroke 1* out to the yacht. Fortunately the seas and especially the South Passage Bar were benign and we made good time. We were soon joined by the water police to find the yacht upright with two people on board, the 73 year old owner and a young Danish backpacker who was crewing for the journey from Hervey Bay to the yacht's home port in Tasmania.

The owner had sailed the east coast of Australia many times in what was a magnificent example of an all timber yacht. On the face of it, with the yacht upright and supposedly not taking on water, it looked like we may be able to get him off. A rescue chopper had landed on Flat Rock and a chopper crew member was able to walk across and ask them if they wanted to be taken off. They declined for the above reasons. Although the tide was low and we would have preferred to wait for the tide to rise, the owner asked if we could try to get him off immediately as he was concerned that a higher tide and increased swell could have washed him further up the rock. The crew member rowed out to us in the inflatable tender and

took our tow rope back and secured it. On taking up the tow, it looked like the yacht would come off easily as the yacht immediately turned through 90° in the direction we wished to free him.

However, this is where it became apparent the situation wasn't going quite as planned because we could not budge him any further. It seemed that his keel was stuck in a hole big enough to turn but not to go anywhere else. In consultation with the police, we decide to wait for the tide to come up and try to pull him out as swells came through. After attempting to do this many times, we were not having any success and the owner informed us he was taking on water. By this time a television news chopper arrived and hovered for a considerable amount of time filming the action. The swell was now causing a problem and the yacht was obviously sustaining damage. As luck would have it, two divers had arrived on the scene, and the owner decided that he had to abandon ship. The crew member quickly went below and retrieved his backpack and other gear but the owner was taking his time and gave us and the water police some concern. He eventually came on deck with bags of possessions which were then promptly washed overboard by continual waves. Their tender had by now had its paddles washed away but their life raft was dispatched. Chaos ensued as they had

SEAPOWER MARINE

**DIESEL, PETROL & STERN DRIVE
MARINE SPECIALISTS**

Volvo Penta • CAT • Cummins
MAN • Yanmar • Mercruiser • Hyundai Marine

MARINE GENERATOR SERVICE & REPAIRS

Onan • Kohler • Westerbeke

**MARINE MECHANICAL REPORTS
REPOWER WORK
INSURANCE REPAIRS**



SEAPOWMARINE

Unit 5, Runaway Bay Marina
247 Bayview St, Runaway Bay 4216
sales@seapowermarine.com.au
t: 07 5577 3008 f: 07 5577 3800



MARINE







40 Chapple St, Gladstone
www.curtiscoastmarine.com.au
Phone: 4972 0135

NORTH STRADBROKE



'VMR NSI' joint effort to assist yacht and crew aground at Flat Rock, NSI.

the tow rope, the tender rope and the life raft rope all entangled and unable to free the raft. One of the divers promptly entered the water and was able to cut them loose. The water police got another rope from us and went in to give it to the crew in the life raft and pull them away, and the police then took them on board. The diver had detached our tow rope and we were able to retrieve their gear floating off into the sunset and return it to the police boat. We felt so sorry for the elderly owner who had a total look of shock from the whole episode and the fact he was going to lose this magnificent yacht. We took the life raft, the tender and several other items the divers retrieved on board and returned to base.

That night, we saw on the news from a later chopper visit to the yacht, that it was breaking up and would be completely lost. A sad outcome.

HOLIDAY SEASON ON NORTH STRADBROKE ISLAND

The medivac 'season' began on December 10, 2016 and continued through to January 26 2017. This so called season begins when Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) has two paramedics on the island to cater for the greatly increased population due to holiday makers and day trippers. Of the 58 medivacs we carried out during this seven week period, the QAS OIC estimated about 50% were visitors and the rest locals. VMR Raby Bay also conducted a number of medivacs during this period and we thank them for taking the pressure off during this busy time.

Although all members contributed greatly during this time, it is worth mentioning some who managed to do a considerable number. They include skippers

Rob Brain (15), Colin Haigh (14), Doug Fraser (14), Richard Dunn (11) and crew member Roger Slinger with 10.

Special mention should be made of the contribution made by Ian Ivory from Victoria Point VMR who volunteered again to stay at our base for a couple of days at a time to relieve the night time skippers in particular (of which there are only three).

Ian, along with crew member Victor Korzeniewski was unfortunate to be on call New Year's Eve and copped four medivacs with five patients all done at night in pretty ordinary conditions with a 25kt north-northeast blowing. Wind from this direction makes it uncomfortable to say the least when transporting patients to Raby Bay, where they are transferred to a waiting ambulance.

Skipper Al Chaplin possibly would have done the most number of activations until he fell down the stairs when leaving to do a medivac and broke his arm. The arm is coming along well and he is not so grumpy and annoying his wife Julie.

TWO LUCKY CANINES

The night before the 'season' began, we received a call at 3am from the local vet saying that a dog needed to be transported to the mainland for an emergency caesarean. We have offered this service of transporting sick or injured animals to the community for a number of years given the fact that we are on an island, people love their animals as part of the family, and emergency care can only be provided at a 24hr vet clinic. A taxi met us at the Raby Bay pontoon and owner and dog were taken to Manly Vet Clinic. Unfortunately two pups were lost but mum, Macey, is the proud mother of a beautiful boy called Spud. It is only our second transfer of an animal.



NSI VMR's emergency delivery Spud at one week old with proud mum Macey.

SERVICE AS USUAL

Our normal services continued during medivac season, though fortunately only included a few tows and minor incidents. One that took a bit longer involved a call regarding a disabled yacht. The original call advised us that the yacht was somewhere between Reeder's Point on Moreton Island and Amity on North Stradbroke. Though not a great distance, it could have involved a deal of time locating the yacht as the guy didn't have a radio working and a

NORTH STRADBROKE

flat mobile phone battery. Fortunately we located him quickly to find his rudder was being held on by only one bolt. We spent some time standing by while the owner went in the water on several dives to lash the rudder as best he could. We then towed him to Deanbilla Bay at Dunwich, rafted up and took him in as close to the shore as possible so he would be able to get at the rudder when the tide dropped.

IT NEVER RAINS BUT IT POURS

Our medivac boat, *North Stradbroke 1*, had some problems with one of the motors overheating a very short time after starting and being at idle for only a few minutes. The problem usually rectified itself after turning off the offending motor and restarting it a short time later. However, one night time medivac had the motor refusing to restart. We were underway at the time hoping that it would come good and only making 8kts. This medivac was going to take a while. Fortunately it did come good after 10 minutes and we continued on our way, and hopefully the problem has been fixed. During the time *NS1* was out of the water, we still had our Kevlacat *Blue Diamond* at our disposal. As often happens, it never rains but it pours. On a particular Saturday morning, we had an early call that a boat needed some assistance off Point Lookout. As we were already committed to a tow from Amity to Southport at the same time, we had to pass the job on to Coastguard Manly. We then had a call from a Moreton Bay cruiser that it had a disabled rudder just off Dunwich and needed a tow. On heading out to it, our port motor decided it was not going past 650 revs. A fuel feed problem, we thought, and switched it over to the starboard fuel tank to no avail. Many phone calls later, VMR Raby Bay took care of the cruiser, and VMR's Victoria Point and Jacobs Well between them took care of the tow from Amity to Southport in a swap-over. We thank them for their assistance

The *Blue Diamond* issue was not fuel but an electrical fault involving the fly by wire throttles and the motor. Another problem hopefully resolved.

ONE LUCKY KAYAKER

Yet another call was received from a lady concerned about her friend who had set off from Dunwich in an inflatable kayak to Peel Island. On attempting to return late in the afternoon, the wind had increased markedly and the tide was not in her favour. She had rung her friend to say she was having difficulty getting back and her phone went flat. We advised the water police who activated us along with Coastguard Redland Bay and Polair. She was located a relatively short time later in the dark on Bird Island between Peel Island and Dunwich.

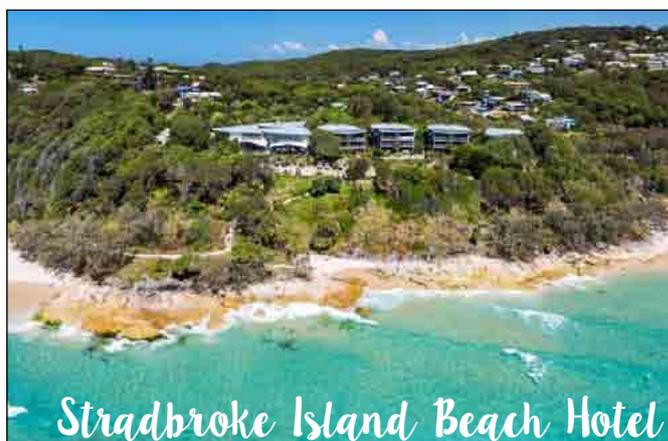
ANOTHER YACHT AGROUND

On Friday, February 24, we received a call at 6am from the water police that a yacht was aground on

the South Passage Bar and could we assist. A couple of our members had seen the yacht late on Thursday afternoon drop her sails and begin motoring off Point Lookout in the direction of the bar. As it turns out, it was a bad decision that they had made to attempt to cross the bar going on dusk. Speculation is that they may have hit the Rufus King wreck although they insist they only hit sand.

Rob Brain, Colin Haigh and Doug Fraser arrived at Amity in *NS1* to find the yacht under tow by the Water Police. Bill Corten, a well known Moreton Bay boating identity who conducts charters and bar crossing lessons, had come across them and pulled them off the bar. The police had an officer on board the yacht with one of their pumps but it was just maintaining the water level inside the yacht, supposedly 2-3ft. We asked one of our crew on the island to bring one of our pumps to the One Mile Pontoon with extra fuel and the police RIB went back to pick it up. Rob Brain went aboard the yacht, got the pump going and we took up the tow. The second pump made all the difference as the yacht begun to ride appreciably higher in the water.

The yacht was a beautiful 50ft two master fibreglass hulled boat in superb condition. The owner, who hailed from Switzerland, had been sailing the world



Stradbroke Island Beach Hotel

BUS GROUP PACKAGES

1 COURSE \$18/PERSON - MAIN MEAL ONLY

2 COURSES \$25/PERSON - MAIN MEAL & DESSERT

Enquire now for menu choices.

T & C's: strictly one bill per group | numbers to be confirmed by no later than 7 days prior | notification of dietary requirements required with final confirmation | MONDAY – THURSDAY only | Not available during School Holidays or public holidays | minimum 15 guests required.

Driver eats free!

stradbrokehotel.com.au | 07 3409 8188 | functions@stradbrokehotel.com.au



'VMR NSI' with yacht 'Samantha' under tow.

since 2014 and intended to continue for another two years. His son joined him in New Zealand where they sailed to Coffs Harbour and then on to Queensland.

The tide and seas were in our favour as we towed them back to the Brisbane River. They had made contact with Rivergate marina where the boat was to be lifted out of the water and assessed. As we do not know the river, we contacted VMR Brisbane who kindly met us not far from the coffee pots at the entrance to the river, took over the tow and took them to Rivergate. We are thankful to VMR Brisbane for their assistance.

On contacting Rivergate the next day, it was clear that the damage was extensive, although an assessor had not yet seen the yacht. Hopefully the outcome is better than the Flat Rock incident.

As it happens, just as we swapped the tow, VTS advised us that one of the Stradbroke Ferry barges had spotted two people marooned on Bird Island off Dunwich. We got back there in quick time to find two very embarrassed fishermen whose boat had floated away. The tide allowed us to come right up to the island and take them to their errant boat which was on the Amity Banks.

An eventful day.

Doug Fraser

GENERAL



PRAWN RECIPES

by Debbie Copnell

CURRIED PRAWNS

Prawns
2 level tbsp butter
1 onion
1 red capsicum
1/2 cup celery
1 level dsp curry powder
2 tabs flour
1 lb tomatoes (can be blanched and skin removed)
3 dsp soy sauce
1 tabs sherry
1 cup fish stock (or water and fish sauce)
1 clove garlic
2 chillies

Chop and sauté onion, garlic, red capsicum, celery, tomatoes and chili in butter. Keep frying and add curry powder.
Remove from heat and add soy sauce, sherry and fish stock.
Lastly add prawns and thicken with flour.
Serve with rice.

TUNA LEMON PASTA

400g Orecchietta or other short pasta
1 1/2 tabs capers rinsed
1 cup flat leaf parsley
1 cup basil leaves
1 clove garlic
2 anchovy fillets drain oil
1 tsp Dijon mustard
Finely grated zest and juice of 1 lemon
425g can tuna in oil (reserve oil)

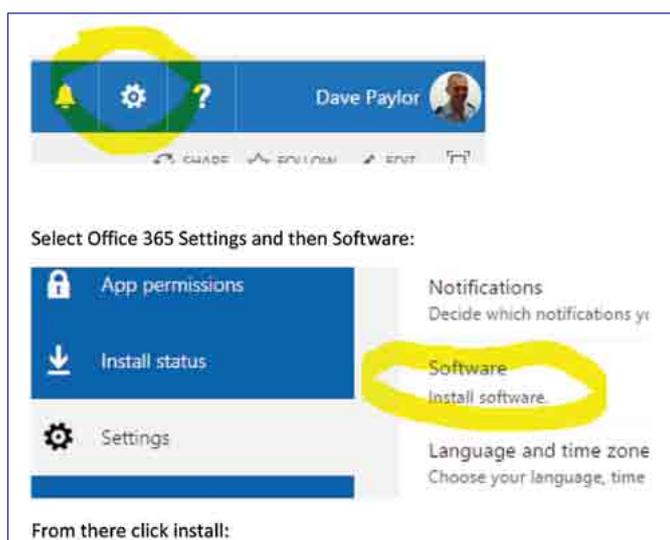
Boil pasta and drain
Place herbs garlic anchovies mustard lemon zest and juice
And 2 tsp capers in food processor till roughly chopped then add tuna oil to paste
Combine pasta tuna and paste.

THROUGH THE PORTAL

FEBRUARY 2017

One of the tools available to us in our Portal is Skype for Business. While very similar to the Skype that many of us use to keep in touch with family across the world it does have a few important differences and some huge potential for MRQ as a whole.

Every individual account that has been created in the Portal has also been configured to use Skype for Business (I am going to refer to this as SfB). There is a client application that can be downloaded from the portal – click on the settings cog in the top right corner:



This will install the client application to which you then log in with your standard MRQ credentials. If you are installing this on a shared PC then do not save your credentials as this would mean anybody else using the PC would be logged into SfB as you.

SO WHAT DOES SFB ALLOW YOU TO DO?

INSTANT MESSAGING

You can send messages which will be delivered immediately to other Skype or SfB accounts which are also logged in. You can find other MRQ accounts by searching for a name and add other Skype accounts by typing in the account name.

At some point, I can see this could potentially be valuable for neighbouring units to send messages about vessels, radio calls tasking etc.

VOICE CALLING

If PCs at both ends have microphone and headphones or speakers then voice calls can be made between SfB or Skype accounts at no cost.

VIDEO CALLING

If PCs at both ends have video capability (web cam) then video calls can be made between SfB or Skype accounts at no cost.

SCREEN SHARING

In any of the above scenarios between SfB accounts, either party can choose to share their desktop or a specific application such as a PowerPoint presentation.

Could be useful for training without needing everybody to travel to a specific location.

VIRTUAL MEETINGS

In any of the above scenarios with SfB, multiple accounts can be part of the same call thus facilitating conference calls, potentially with video and/or presentations.

This facility could be used for zone or state meetings, or UTC meetings to reduce the impact of travelling.

Individual squadrons could also set up a screen, microphone and webcam in a room which would then mean they could gather locally and take part in a larger meeting as a group.

DOCUMENT COLLABORATION

If a document shared is saved to the Portal in a place both accounts can access then it is also possible for both accounts to be working on the same document at the same time.

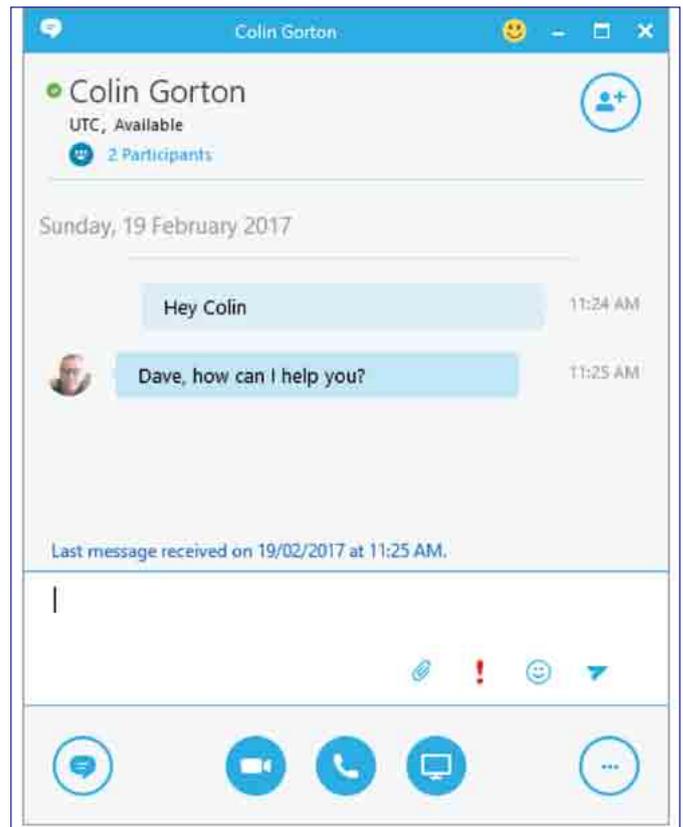
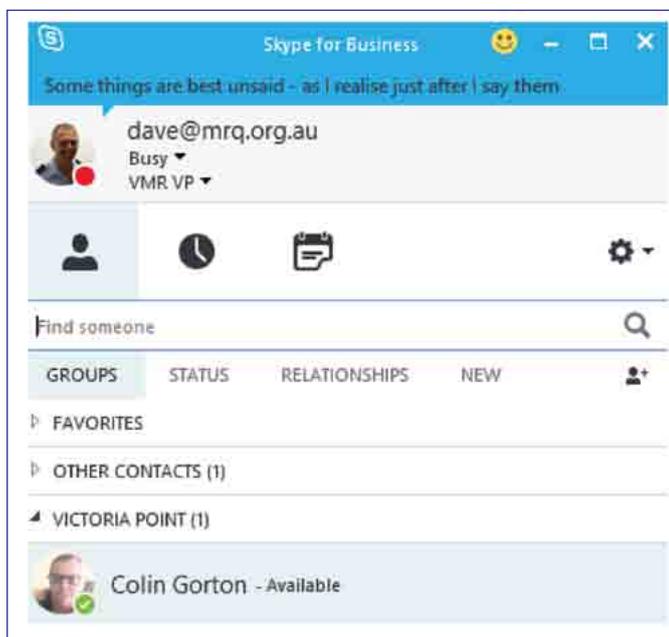
GENERAL

This could be useful for developing new SOP's or training material – possibly even developing new vessel requirements and getting some input from another squadron.

AVAILABILITY

The app will allow you to create groups including favourites for the SfB accounts you want to interact with. It will also show you their current status – green is logged in and available, red shows they are logged in but busy. There are also some special statuses that show when they are in a call or presenting.

It is possible to configure SfB to be able to call normal telephone and mobile numbers though there would be a cost implication to this so it is not yet available.



SUMMARY

While I still believe there is huge value in meeting face to face, Skype for Business offers us increased options for collaboration while potentially reducing both the cost and time impact of travelling around the state.



PLYWOODS & VENEERS FOR Stockists, Contractors, Handymen

- SLICED & ROTARY VENEERED PARTICLEBOARD & MDF BOARD
- FANCY VENEERED PLYWOOD • PARTICLEBOARD
- THIN MDF & PARTICLEBOARD • MELAMINE FACED BOARDS
- LAMINATES • PARTICLEBOARD • T & G FLOORING
- MARINE & STRUCTURAL PLYWOODS • HARDBOARD PRODUCTS

FULL RANGE OF SIZES & THICKNESSES

5587 1500

Cnr Wheeler Cr & Coghill Dr, Currumbin
1171 Boundary Rd, Wacol 3718 6400

JONES MARINE

Glad to assist VMR Karumba

SALES & SERVICE TO ALL BRANDS
 Specialising in:


YAMAHA

MARINER
OUTBOARDS

LOWRANCE


Ph: (07) 4745 9159

Yappar Street, Karumba 4891

ACTIVATIONS

It was a mixed bag of activations this quarter ranging from the usual assists, a hoax Mayday search, a jet ski recovery and safety boat duty for the arrival of ex-HMAS *Tobruk* in Bundaberg to.

On December 6 *Bundy Rescue 2* was activated by QWPS, in conjunction with the LifeFlight helicopter, to respond to a Mayday call on VHF16. The only words our radio operator heard were "Mayday, Mayday, Mayday sinking off Bundaberg". There was no response to a return call. *Bundy Rescue* undertook a near shore search to the south while the helio went further off shore and searched to the north. After several hours of fruitless searching the activation was called off as a hoax. A major waste of resources.

On December 14 *Bundy Rescue 2* was activated as a safety boat for the arrival of ex-HMAS *Tobruk* to Port

Bundaberg. The *Tobruk* will undergo environmental preparation at Port Bundaberg prior to being sunk as a dive attraction mid-way between Burnett Heads and Hervey Bay.

Barubarra Island at the mouth of the Burnett River is a popular camping ground during holiday periods and also an area that provides several activations for VMR Bundaberg each year – usually associated with dingys that fill with sand after being washed up over night against sand cliffs on the seaward side of the island. On December 29 we were alerted to the sinking of a runabout on the river side of the island because of a short anchor rope in the strong current. We transferred five people and their gear to safety on the south bank.

Then all quiet until January 15 when *Bundy Rescue 2* was activated to recover a jet ski from the water police vessel *Conroy* some 27 miles south east of Burnett Heads. It transpires a trawler skipper used his jet ski to come into the Burnett River to get oil for the trawler's engine. He came in one afternoon and did not try to return until the following afternoon. He was apparently unable to find the trawler. His situation was relayed onshore contacts through a series of phone messages and these resulted in a search being initiated by the QWPS vessel (*Conroy*) which was in the area and an AMSA Dornier. By daylight the jet skier was instructed by QWPS to activate his EPIRB and was promptly located by the Dornier. *Conroy* then took the jet skier and his life jacketed dog on board and requested VMR Bundaberg to tow the jet ski back to Burnett Heads.



Track of 'Bundy Rescue' in hoax Mayday activation.



Little ship and big ships.



Our crew on safety watch with 'Tobruk'.



'Bundy Rescue' and the jet ski back at Burnett Heads.

BUNDABERG

On February 12 *Bundy Rum* was activated to tow an 8m fishing vessel that had engine problems and with a dragging anchor just outside Burnett Heads. It turns out the problem was water in the fuel.

On February 14 an elderly couple decided to have an engine test run with their 14m ferro-yacht in the Burnett River when a 25kt south easterly was pumping. The engine was only allowing 1kt against the current and wind and was overheating. They dropped anchor, but could not get holding and were drifting towards the northern bank. When *Bundy Rescue 2* arrived in scene they were about 8m from the bank. A quick raft-up was organised to stabilise the drift while the anchor was slowly retrieved with a hand winch and forward motion from *Bundy Rescue*. We took the yacht to Bundaberg Port Marina, where management had thankfully arranged an outside berth to avoid any dramas associated with trying to pen the yacht in the strong wind.



Rafted to the 14m ferro yacht.
Tobruk in the background.

In the Summer journal we highlighted the exercise with the LifeFlight helicopter for reaccreditation of flight crew for marine operations and to familiarise VMR crews with such operations. We undertook another exercise with the LifeFlight helio on February 20. This involved several transitions of recovery of a dummy life raft, a helio crewmen being winched onto *Bundy Rescue* and recovery of a MOB dummy. Another very useful day for both crews.



'Bundy Rescue 2' – that high-vis yellow boat.
Images courtesy LifeFlight.

In previous issues of the journal we have mentioned involvement in searches to the east of Fraser Island for fishermen missing from capsized trawlers. MSQ have undertaken a hydrographic survey and on January 20 posted a Notice to Mariners and coordinates for a natural geographic formation 5.7nm east-northeast of Waddy Point that could interfere with trawl operations. Let's hope for safer operations in that area.

VMR BUNDABERG FAMILY FISHING CLASSIC

How time flies. We are now well on the way to organising the 12th VMR Bundaberg Family Fishing Classic for June 23, 24 and 25, 2017. Last year we attracted a record registration of 1,748 people. This year the lucky prize draw pool has been boosted to from \$38,000 to \$50,700 to include 2 x 390 Quintrex runabouts with 30hp outboards and trailers as well as a 4.4m Quintrex runabout with a 50hp four stroke outboard, trailer and fish finder. The pool includes registration and safety packs. As we say "mark the date – get the bait", but you don't have to fish to be in the lucky draws.



One of the 2016 happy winners.

Graham Kingston
Public Relations Officer
Marine Rescue Bundaberg

Don't think products. Think systems.

Vetus/Maxwell designs marine systems.

We create more than 2500 products, which are sold in more than 100 countries.

It amounts to more than a global brand and distribution network.

It means people count on us to come through with the right solutions at the right place at the right time.

And that is the Vetus difference.

Learn more about us at vetus-maxwell.com

VETUS-MAXWELL PTY LTD – AUSTRALIA

E: salesau@vetus-maxwell.com
P: +61 7 3245 4755 F: +61 7 3245 5906

VETUS-MAXWELL APAC LIMITED – NEW ZEALAND

E: sales@vetus-maxwell.com
P: +64 9 985 6600 F: +64 9 985 6699

NORTHERN ZONE

VMR Midge Point hosted the Northern Zone joint Sarex on March 3-5 in the Whitsundays. VMR Whitsunday kindly opened their base and provided the catering for 75 people over the three days.

The Whitsunday Water Police set the exercise scenario and activated the squads at 14:00hrs on Friday. VMR Burdekin launched their vessel *Delta 1* in Bowen and along with the Bowen squad, were given search tasks to complete on their way south to VMR Whitsunday. The Midge Point and Mackay squads were also set search tasks on their way north.

Friday night the Whitsunday Water Police conducted EPIRB hand held location finder training with the squads, before activating them back onto the water to conduct FLIR and spotlight searches of the coastline in the search area from Mandalay Point in the south, to Grimson Point in the north. The exercise scenario was that a vessel had sunk at 14:00hrs, was believed to have two people on board and was towing a blue kayak. It was believed that one person made it to shore while there was still one person in the water. The Water Police had dropped a dummy overboard at 19:00hrs which had a training EPIRB and GPS attached to it to track the movement of the dummy in the water.



Ronny Robert, VMR Whitsunday hand held EPIRB location finder training.

Saturday morning dawned with showers of rain as the crews gathered for breakfast and the Water Police briefing. The vessels resumed the search for the missing person in a search area of 66nm, while the *Damian Leeding* water police vessel was the command centre a member from each squad was on



Mal McLean, VMR Midge Point spotlight search.

board. There were also items in the water from the capsized vessel 'xxxx' that the crews were to locate and report the location. The morning search did not locate the missing person and crews returned to the base for lunch.



Water Police advising the search area.

After lunch, the weather had cleared and the vessels resumed the search. VMR Whitsunday located the missing person on the way out to the search area. They reported the location to the Water Police and the dummy was left in the water while the exercise continued with a search pattern. VMR Mackay retrieved the dummy from the water on the way back to Able Point Marina.

Tom Hudson, VMRAQ State Trainer attended the Sarex and conducted skipper revalidations over the weekend.

VMR Burdekin's David Papale, aged 22 was the youngest skipper participating in the SAREX, while Aiden Favero, aged 18 was the youngest crew member.

The visiting squads stayed at Mantra Club Croc, which is located across from VMR Whitsunday and were the first large group of people that they have hosted since the Mantra Group took over the motel.



VMR Burdekin's David Papale and Aiden Favero.



The chefs.



Participating squads and Whitsunday Water Police.



The 'missing person'.

We would like to thank them for their hospitality and the service that they provided to our group.

Northern Zone President Rob Murolo, thanked the Whitsunday Water Police and participating squads for attending the Sarex. He also thanked VMR Whitsunday for their hospitality in providing the base and the catering for the weekend. These exercises provide not only valuable skills for the volunteers, but also the social interaction which makes the Northern Zone a tight knit community.



Whitsunday Water Police.



VMR Burdekin, Whitsunday, Bowen, Mackay, Midge Point and Whitsunday Water Police vessels.

MIDGE POINT



Midge Point Rescue has a new lease of life with the installation of two new 300hp Suzuki motors. The new motors compliment the refurbishment of the vessel that commenced early in 2016.

President Gary Considine, said that the new motors are performing well and the vessel has less cavitation compared to the old motors.

MEMBERSHIP

The squad's membership numbers are continuing to grow after the success of December's

Midge Point Emergency Services and Community Fun Day. At last count 19 new members have signed up as a result of the Community Day. This also includes new members that will undertake their crew training to join the boat crew.

We welcome to the crew Jamie McCabbin who has commenced his crew training.



JAMIE MCCABBIN

Jamie is a wireless networks and information management supervisor and has a lifetime of boating experience.



VOLUNTEER MARINE RESCUE **ASSOCIATION OF QUEENSLAND INC.**

WORKPLACE HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

The Volunteer Marine Rescue Association Queensland Inc. accepts the principle that the Workplace should be a healthy and safe place and therefore requires that its member Squadrons should adopt a standard Workplace Health and Safety Policy.

SQUADRON

WORKPLACE HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

The Squadron shall:

- (a) Ensure by all practical means, the observance of Workplace Health and Safety Standards as may be required.
- (b) Ensure that all Squadron working/active members should have regards for the Health and Safety of themselves and others.
- (c) Conduct appropriate Health and Safety educational programs.
- (d) By periodic Safety Audits, identify unsafe or unsatisfactory equipment, conditions or practices and take steps to rectify these.
- (e) Maintain records of work associated illness or injury.

RABY BAY



GENERAL BASE UPDATE

Summer was a busy period for VMR Raby Bay with more boaties heading back out to Moreton Bay to enjoy the warmer weather. As usual, the base stayed open for the entire Christmas to New Year period. The weather brought several days with very high winds resulting in numerous challenging activations to respond to.

The last quarter we had 123 activations, bringing 169 people to safety. This involved 23 medivacs and 40 breakdowns and with the balance being a mix of search and rescues, sinking vessels, groundings, etc. A total of 7,873 litres of fuel were consumed.

OPEN DAY – APRIL 29, 2017



Open day – July 29, 9.00-15.00.

On April 29, VMR Raby Day will host an Open Day from 9am to 3pm. This will provide an opportunity for the general public and members of other VMR units to visit us and see the new facilities.

The open day will include an opening ceremony for the new facilities, with local dignitaries as well as activities planned throughout the day including a barbecue, a raffle, various booths with Haines/Suzuki,

SES Cleveland, Naval Cadets, etc. There will also be seminars on boating, fishing, rope/knot works, etc.

It will be a great day so please come and join us and bring your family and friends as well.

RESCUE VESSEL SOLD

Our trusty *RBIV* has finally been sold, after a long time on the market. She has found a good home locally in Raby Bay and will be missed sorely by the many skippers and trainee skippers she has served so loyally for years.

Plans are underway to procure a new vessel, which will be a 7.5m RIB with four seats, a Samson post a hard top (and proper window wipers!).



'RBIV' has been sold to a local Raby Bay resident.

VESSEL UPDATE

Our two catamarans *RBII* and *RBIII* are performing well after having completed trailer upgrades and hull repairs over the past few months.



'RBIII' ready for another couple of years service.

We have ongoing issues with the injectors on one of the Suzuki 300hp outboards, which remains unresolved, despite multiple attempts by Suzuki to fix it.

GENERAL FUND RAISING

With the government's decision to terminate Energex's funding to VMR, we are seeking to develop alternative sources of funding.

However, money is not easy to come by and replacement sources for the lost funding have yet to be identified. In the meantime, collection in buckets remains our main, albeit declining, form of income.

In line with the sponsorship termination, *Energex Medivac* has resumed her old name of *RBIII*.



'Energex Medivac' being renamed back to 'RBIII'.

ASSESSMENT & TRAINING

Training Centre

The new regional training centre at VMR Raby Bay is effectively complete. It is set up to handle a broad range of training requirements for the skipper qualifications.

The practical area includes a complete and operating bilge system, an electrical system with a switch panel, a complete Yanmar diesel inboard engine with gearbox and shaft, an outboard engine, an extensive tool set, five computers, various pumps, a fire fighting box to practise live fire fighting as well as various other fire fighting equipment such as jackets, gloves, etc.

Thank you to Shark Tank for providing the funding and to Andy Ross, Cliff Matfin, Bob Cooper, Peter McKendry, Chris Joy, George Brenk and Darryl Francis for spending countless of hours creating this wonderful facility.

TRAINING EVENTS

On Saturday, February 25 the in-water component of the Elements of Shipboard Safety was conducted at the base, in conjunction with practical flare training. New members from VMR Victoria Point and VMR Stradbroke also joined the training to create a larger group.

Over the past few months, three new skippers have been certified as operational skippers on *RBIV* (and its imminent replacement).

The skippers on crew four have been through the MRQ re-validation process, with the rest of the skippers to follow in the coming months.

ACTIVATIONS AND EVENTS

Crew one made the News by responding to a Mayday call from a houseboat. Two men were rescued after their vessel started taking on water. The following link shows *RBII* in action along with VMR Victoria Point and the Water Police.

<https://au.news.yahoo.com/a/33988587/two-men-rescued-from-sinking-houseboat-at-queensland-s-moreton-bay/#play>



Mayday call – sunken house boat.

The year started with two crews heading up the Brisbane River to support the New Years Fireworks. The return trip was a rough with 2-3m swells. Apart from the great fireworks, the only item of note was some people swimming near the story bridge, which the water police attended.



New Year's Eve Crew – Brisbane River.

RABY BAY



UQ Sailing club members.



Visit to 'Notorius' on Australia Day.

A group of sailors from the University of Queensland Sailing Club requested assistance for their gear and one crewmember to be brought back from Peel Island.

This turned out to be a significant amount of gear and eight members. It took almost six hours for the sail boats to make the return trip due to the low wind. They were happy to pay the operating costs for the trip.

A disabled 35' cruiser was transferred from Deanbilla Bay to One Mile. Its rudder was jammed but fortunately the skipper had been able to affix it amidships so, in combination with the light winds, the tow was relatively straightforward (pun intended).

Crew three on Australia Day went to visit the *Notorius* pirate ship. The carpark and ramp were so busy that day, that at one point you could have walked directly from the public pontoon to the VMR pontoon across the boats.

Another 'activation' involved a scissor lift being deployed to 'rescue' our flag pole ropes.



Flag pole ropes being 'rescued'.

Fibreglass Materials and Polyurethane Foam

Insulation for Ice Boxes, Deck Boxes, Freezer Holds etc.
COMPETITIVE PRICES

COLDESIGN G.R.P

20/115 Dollis Street, Rocklea 4106

Phone: **07 3274 4308** Fax: **07 3274 5140**

The summer months and the abnormally warm weather have resulted in a very hectic few months at VMR Jacobs Well.

Our volunteers have attended numerous activations, with plenty of variety from both ends of the spectrum. There has been an increase in the number of jetskis requiring assistance, including a few that had sunk! One notable job was a callout for a jetski that had sunk just inside the Jumpinpin bar. The rider had been jumping waves, but came to grief after landing heavily and cracking the hull. Some ingenuity from the crew, utilising a tarp, extra flotation and a bilge pump, refloated the stricken vessel and towed it to the Jacobs Well ramp.

The larger vessels assisted included some power cats with issues ranging from a jammed rudder to fuelling issues. By far the largest and trickiest activation was a tow of a 60ft, 48t trawler to Horizon Shores Marina. Our largest rescue vessel, *Jacobs*

Well 1, was dwarfed by the sheer size, but the crew skilfully manoeuvred the vessel into its berth.

Some of the other activations for jetskis in trouble highlighted the importance of being prepared, especially carrying enough water. Red crew was called to assist a jetski that had run aground on an outgoing tide. Although their exact position was known, almost three hours passed between them running aground and successfully being towed off the mud bank. The extreme heat and humidity quickly dehydrated the three passengers, and there was no water on board. All three were severely dehydrated and utterly exhausted after battling the thick mud, and were very grateful for the assistance provided.

On the business front, work is continuing on our new vessel to replace *Beenleigh 2* that was retired early last year. Fitout is progressing nicely, engines have been fitted, and sea trials are due to commence soon.



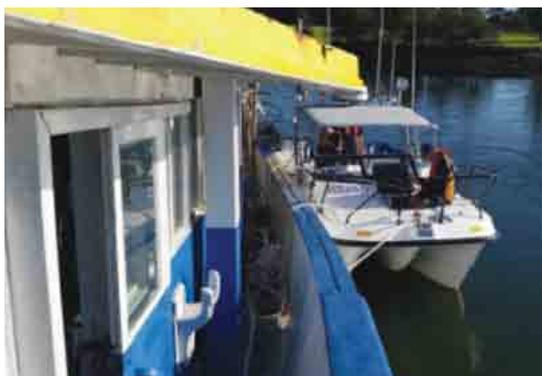
Under tow from Jumpinpin.



Another jetski under tow near Russell Island.



Powercat under tow.



'Jacobs Well 1' alongside.



Crew posing beside trawler.



View from the other end of the tow rope – after engine failure crossing Jumpinpin Bar.

JACOBS WELL



Engines being fitted.



Sunken houseboat.



VMR Base Jacobs Well.



150hp Mercury Sea Pro.



Alex receiving his first stripe from skipper Geoff Lind.



Rescue Vessel - Jacobs Well 1.



Rescue Vessel - 'Rotary 2'.

Another major capital expenditure looming is the replacement of our ageing pontoon. The state of the pontoon was not helped by the impact from a houseboat that had broken its mooring and drifted into the end, holing the hull and causing it to sink. Plans are afoot to expand the pontoon with extra berths to better cater for the fleet.

Plans were progressing for an open day in March, but that has now been postponed due to a clash with the major boat shows being held on the Gold Coast on the same weekend.

Welcome to new active member Alex Bond, from Purple A crew. He is pictured receiving his first stripe from skipper Geoff Lind.



In Queensland there are some 5000 committees, and the not for profit sector contributes a total of over 600 million hours of labour to the Australian economy annually.

This equates to 359,700 full time equivalent employees, using the base rate of pay, this equates to 3.5% of gross domestic product or in dollar terms \$16.5 billion dollars' worth of volunteer contributions. So the value of your contribution is not to be underestimated.

Activation: November 8, 2016
Skipper: Ray Lewis
Crew: Roger, William and Dewi
Task: Tow - Luncheon Bay, Hook Island

Received a call from Fin that a vessel had broken down at Luncheon Bay. From the name of the vessel, I knew that it was a large charter vessel so I asked Fin to make it clear what the conditions and cost were while I proceeded to down to *VMR1*.

We departed APM at 0935 to find perfect conditions; a flat sea and about 8kts of wind from the north east, so it was a beautiful run across the passage to meet up with the stricken vessel.

On arrival, we attached the tow line and started our journey home. As the conditions were so good, we were able to cross the passage at 8kts with an economic fuel consumption.



Why are there two black balls hanging in the rigging?

On arrival outside APM we shortened the tow rope and proceeded slowly into the marina where I swung the vessel around so that its bow came into its berth on G arm. A line was passed to a person waiting on the pontoon and a tender pushed the vessel to complete the berthing.

We refuelled and were finished by 1350. My thanks to the crew for a smooth operation.

Time on job: 4 1/4 hours

Activation: November 29, 2016
Skipper: Fin Forbes
Crew: Ray, Roger and Norbert
Task: Tow – Funnel Bay

Bill, our 24/7 phone holder, rang at 1230 looking to put together a crew.

The crew had us leaving APM at 1305, on this beautiful Whitsunday afternoon. We arrived at the 35ft cabin cruiser at 1320 and had it in tow within five minutes.



We put it alongside *VMR1* just inside the marina in lovely calm conditions and Ray manoeuvred it into its tricky pen at the inside end of T arm. We did not need to wash down or even refuel so we were safely back in our pen at 1430.

Time on job: 1 1/2 hours

Activation: November 30, 2016
Skipper: Geoff Smith
Crew: Greg, Dewi and Bob
Task: Escort, potential Tow – Cape Gloucester

Got the call from Bill on the 28th for an activation on the 30th.

The owner of a 45ft boat was having intermittent problems with the twin diesels and didn't want to chance the Gloucester Passage with a potential engine failure. They were safely anchored off the Eco Resort and had plenty to eat and drink, so we could go and get them when it suited us. Early Wednesday the 30th looked good, little wind predicted and a flooding tide if we had to tow.

We were all on board by 0600, checks done and on our way in perfect conditions. At 0645 near Edwin Rock Dewi spotted something odd to our port. Everyone had a different idea of what it was; I thought it was a fish trap.

On approach it proved to be a 3m Stacer tinny, half full of water, with a small outboard on the back. The bow fitting was broken, possibly how it had been tied onto something, and even though there was a newish reef anchor on board, no chain or rope. There was a newish inflatable lifejacket floating around as well. All very puzzling.

WHITSUNDAYS

No bow fitting and no trailer pulling point so Tom's Hook was used on the front apron and off to the eastern beach on Grassy Island to anchor it before going back to our original mission at 0715.

En route to Gloucester we called Bill, who did the chasing round for us, and we were asked to collect the tinny on the way back if we could.

No more dramas and we arrived off the Eco Resort just after 0800. Paperwork done and after tying alongside the motor boat we left, heading back along the passage. At the eastern end of the passage the boat dropped our lines and carried on on its own with us as escort.

South of George Point we went ahead to get the tinny sorted. After rigging a bridle from the front thwart we went out to meet the rescuee who was still doing a steady 10kts towards APM.

At APM we tied the tinny alongside and followed the rescuee to their pen. No hint of the intermittent problem all the way home. Then off to the police dock at 1045 to drop off the tinny, then to the fuel dock to refuel, then back to our pen by 1130.

Time on job: 5 1/2 hours

Activation: December 9, 2016

Skipper: Fin Forbes

Crew: Rod and Norbert

Task: Tow – NE of Hook Island

Bill rang at 1135 organising a crew to assist a non-member in a 4.7m vessel with engine problems.

We left APM at 1205 and established exactly where this vessel was located.

It was approx 10nm NE of Pinnacle Point, the NE tip of Hook Island; therefore they were closer to Bait Reef than to Hook Island and in the main shipping channel.

We ensured that Hay Point VTS were fully aware of the situation and could inform other large vessels, like the container ship coming through, fortunately well away from us and our rescuee.

As they were drifting, we established radio contact after exiting Hook Passage to keep updated with their changing position.



The weather and seas were superb, but we still could not see them until we were within about 2nm. We had made good time reaching them at 1340 and quickly had them in tow using Tom's Hook.

Travelling back at 4300rpm and at just over 17kts, we were using approx 135 litres of fuel per hour.

After completing all paper work, we dropped them off at the APM public jetty and we were back in our pen, after refuelling and signing off with Bill, at 1550.

Thanks to all involved.

Time on job: 3 3/4 hours

Activation: December 21, 2016

Skipper: Geoff Smith

Crew: Michel and Jim

Task: Medivac – Hayman Island

Got the call from Fin at 0945 for a medivac from Hayman; a young lady with fainting spells. We would meet the paramedic on the fuel dock at 1030 so no mad panic.

All on board by 1025 with the checks done, on to the fuel dock and then on our way in perfect conditions.

We arrived at Hayman (Ch 6, it's on the outer Stbd lateral) 1125 and the patient loaded and on our way back at 1140.



Jim took us to APM for 1245. Again the conditions continued to be perfect. We dropped the passengers and back to the pen for 1300.

Thanks to the good crew it was all too easy and a beautiful couple of hours on the water to boot. Thanks Fin.

Time on job: 2 1/2 hours

Activation: December 26, 2016

Skipper: Geoff Smith

Crew: Michel and John

Task: Tow – Shute Harbour

Got the call at 0530 which woke the dog so everyone was awake. A tinny was broken down just off Low Rock at the Southern, which became the northern, entrance to Shute.

When I arrived at the boat Michel and John had done the checks but were looking at the Port engine which was making a clattering noise. We couldn't see an obvious problem so we departed APM at 0610, flat seas and a light south westerly.



We arrived at the tinny, who had anchored, at 0635. As it was so flat we tied alongside and headed into Shute.

The owners didn't have cards or identity with them so we did the paperwork alongside the fishing pontoon whilst one of them ran to their car for cards.

We left at 0640 and were alongside the fuel dock at 0705.

Back in the pen we took the lid off the port engine and had a closer look for the source of the noise, with no success. We rang a few people (some of the contact details on the boat are incorrect) also without success.

Ray rang back with our mechanic's number but he was getting on a ship in Sydney for a two week cruise.

I would not be happy going any distance to sea with *VMR1* until someone with more knowledge of these engines than I has had a look and okayed it. So, unless we hear something to the contrary, we are out of business for the time being.

Time on job: 1¹/₂ hours

Editor's Note: The problem turned out to be damage to the gears in the gearbox, resulting in *VMR1* being out of action until January 21.

Activation: January 24, 2017

Skipper: Geoff Smith

Crew: John and Roger

Task: Search – Overdue vessel, between Pioneer and Hannah Point

I apologise if this report is confusing. It was a lot more confusing out there.

Emergency coordinator Mackay called to say a 14ft Hobie cat, with brown, white and red sail and 2 POB was overdue.

Bill called approx 1530 with the info but there were several unanswered questions. When did they leave? From where? How overdue were they? It's 3.30 in the afternoon and good conditions for goodness sake! Did they have a destination/goal, etc?

We left APM at 1555 heading for Pioneer Point and broadcast an 'all ships' on 16, 82 and 86. One vessel, *Sunset(?)* responded with a possible sighting of an off the beach type cat with large letters on the mainsail, between Hanna and Baird. Bill was on a day trip and reported a similar possible in the same area.

Roger was talking to the rescue coordinator by phone and they asked us to search towards False Nara then up the west coast of Hook Island to Stonehaven. Water Police updated the description to a white sail and black mast.

We had a quick look in the entrance to Nara then started a parallel pattern heading north. We spotted a possible, about 2.5 miles west of the bay below Caves Beach.

On arrival we saw an unnamed 'tri'; that is twin Maricat hulls with an open canoe centrally fixed to the crossbeams between them. It had a white taffeta main with a blue diagonal band and with large letters on it black mast and 2 POB, sailing comfortably towards Airlie. It looked like the possible that Bill and *Sunset(?)* had seen.

The 'tri' crew didn't have any problems, or know of any reason for anyone to be concerned about them, so we left them to it and headed east towards Hook Island. We called Water Police and gave him all the info on the 'tri' we could. Still searching on the way, we arrived at Baird Point when Water Police called off the search at 1730.

John took us home to APM arriving at 1815. We fuelled up and gave *VMR1* a quick washdown and into the pen by 1845.

Thanks to the patient crew.

Time on Job: 2²/₃ hours

THE LAST THREE MONTHS

The last three months have been interesting, to say the least, for *VMRW* as we have had to deal with a couple of major failures of equipment!

It started on Boxing Day when the port outboard engine on *VMR1* was making horrible noises. It turned out the gears in the gearbox had started to break up, and this could not have happened at a worse time, with mechanics away on leave and suppliers also having their Christmas/New Year break.

There were no spare gearboxes or even parts available in Australia, so a new gearbox was ordered from Japan, taking three weeks to get here.

Fortunately we were not required while we were out of action, and on the two occasions Qld Ambulance



L-R: Jason, Ray, Norm and Norbert.

Service may have required us, they were able to get assistance from Qld Water Police.

As reported in the last edition of the journal, we had been trying to find funding to replace the aging equipment for our Channel 81 and 82 repeaters as we knew it was on the verge of failing.

This has now happened; first Channel 81 stopped working, then within a month, so did Channel 82.

The management committee had already discussed at length what the plan would be if this were to happen, and had decided to offer the licenses and equipment, as is where is, to the charter- and bareboat industries.

These groups have the most interest to keep Channels 81 and 82 operating, so a meeting was arranged with them where an initial agreement was developed and they will be taking over the licenses and equipment. They have already put plans in place to get the repeaters operating again.

On a positive note, VMRW ran a Christmas Gift Membership campaign offering half price memberships. This was promoted mainly through social media (ie, Facebook) and the local newspaper also helped out with a byline in one of their VMRW stories. In the end, we signed up 34 new members,

without any advertising or promotion costs, so that was a great result!

We also ran a request for more volunteers for our radio room on Facebook, resulting in the recruitment of a number of extra operators.

In fact, we've found Facebook more and more useful as a tool to get information out quickly. For example, our notice about *VMR1* being out of action was quickly seen by close to 3,000 people while the post about the repeater failures reached 12,000 very, very quickly!

In mid-February, we had a visit from our local state member, Jason Costigan MP.

IN FACT, WE'VE FOUND
FACEBOOK MORE AND MORE
USEFUL AS A TOOL TO GET
INFORMATION OUT QUICKLY

We took him out for a run on *VMR1* to Funnel Bay and grabbed the opportunity to have a bit of a chat about VMR Whitsunday, the services we offer, our funding, the delay of our new boat, etc, etc.

After some selfie photo opportunities, we headed back and Jason thanked us for giving him a chance to see what we do. I reckon he would get an even better idea on a 3am activation callout! :)

Speaking of our new vessel; we STILL don't have it! There are a few more issues to be completed to finalise AMSA survey requirements, but we certainly hope we will have good news by the next edition of this journal.



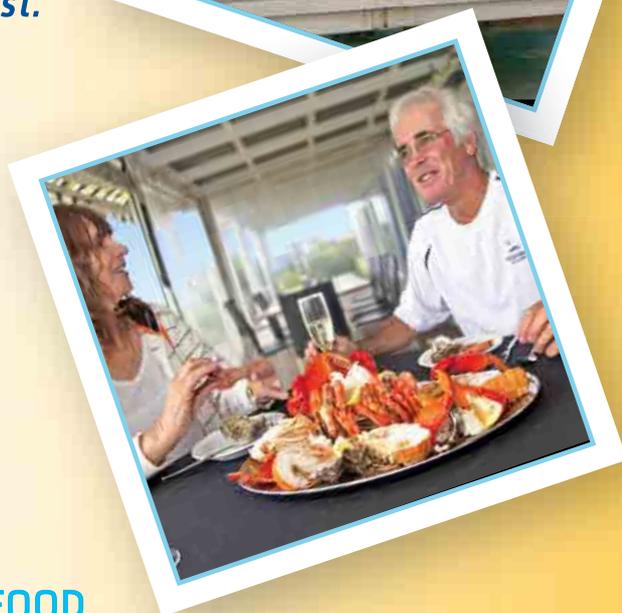
BUNDABERG PORT marina

Port of Entry to Bundaberg

Bundaberg Port Marina is situated 1 nautical mile from the entrance of the Burnett River and offers all weather, all tides deep water access to visitors to the Coral Coast.

FACILITIES AVAILABLE

- » FLOATING BERTHS UP TO 40m
- » 75 TONNE MARINE SHIPLIFT, HARDSTAND AND DRY STORAGE SPECIALIST
- » GIFT STORE, MARINE CHANDLERY AND YACHT BROKERAGE
- » COURTESY BUS AND HIRE CARS AVAILABLE FOR TRANSPORT
- » 24/7 REFUELLING DOCK
- » LICENCED RESTAURANT AND TAKEAWAY SEAFOOD



VHF
81

MARINA DRIVE PORT BUNDABERG QUEENSLAND 4670

T: 07 4159 5066 E: info@bundabergportmarina.com.au

www.bundabergportmarina.com.au

NOOSA CAT AUSTRALIA PTY LTD

setting the standard



NOOSA CAT

6 Production Street, Noosaville, Qld, 4566, Australia

p: 07 5449 8888 f: 07 5449 9480

int p: 61-7-5449 8888 int f: 61-7 5449 9480

e: mail@noosacat.com.au

www.noosacat.com.au