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Spring 2014



Official magazine of
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FRONT COVER:

Within hours of the state meeting, the state president and vice president were at sea doing real life rescues.

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Marine Rescue Queensland

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

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VOLUNTEER MARINE RESCUE AURUKUN	C/- Shire Council	Aurukun 4871	(07) 4060 6120
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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
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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	(07) 4947 6274
VOLUNTEER MARINE RESCUE MACKAY	PO Box 235	Mackay 4740	(07) 4955 5448
VOLUNTEER MARINE RESCUE GLADSTONE	PO Box 797	Gladstone 4680	(07) 4972 3333
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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
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VOLUNTEER MARINE RESCUE BRISBANE	PO Box 201	Sandgate 4017	(07) 3269 8888
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VOLUNTEER MARINE RESCUE CURRUMBIN	PO Box 99	Currumbin 4223	(07) 5534 1000



STATE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

training package across to the new MAR training package and now he is busily preparing the first of the UTC workshops as he begins to roll out this package. Rob also assures me that over the next 12 months he will oversee another round of WHS audits on bases.

This coming weekend at time of writing (August 30, 2014) will see our state AGM. This completes my first term as president. This is a good time I suppose to reflect on the affairs of the last two years. I would like to thank certain people. I thank our awesome volunteers who make VMR what it is. Records show that over 1200 of our 1500 volunteers are actively engaged in formal training of some description, it's a huge workload. A recent statistical gathering exercise showed that the average VMR volunteer is putting in 7.8 hours per week on VMR activities. I would like to thank our zone representatives who actively bring all aspects of our activities to both my attention and the attention of the state council. The discussions being held at modern zone meetings are very productive. I believe this has made a measurable contribution to the success of VMR over the the last few years. Also the state council have been an awesome team to work with. They have devoted themselves to discussing, delivering, achieving and measuring outcomes that support VMR. I would love the opportunity to continue to work with them. I would like to thank the employees of the association. My only difficult task as manager is to enforce days off. Every last paid person also puts in some sort of volunteer effort over and above their required duties. I very rarely single out one person for mention, but this time I must. I would also like to thank Harry Hubner. Many people think Harry is enjoying retirement, but the truth is he is still functioning as association secretary and treasurer. This is work he used to do as well as manager, however his support on these tasks now leaves me with the time to get out and engage our volunteers.

At a recent zone meeting, a representative made a comment that since Ron Matlik and myself have been attending as many zone meetings as possible, communication has improved. Whilst I took this as a huge compliment I also acknowledge that the team of people around me have shared my workload and made a massive effort to progress our aims.

So what's my vision for the next two years? Starting out two years ago I had this vision to build one Marine Rescue Qld operating as a cohesive structure, as I believe only as a united body will we achieve the aims and recognition we are seeking. So firstly we have to live that goal and secondly the wider community needs to see it.

So for this last two years we have been getting our own house in order. In so doing we have gathered far more comprehensive statistics than have ever been available before. The results of this exercise alone were staggering. VMR volunteers in Qld put in 11,950 hours per week! Almost 59 hours of effort are put in for every one engine hour done by rescue vessels. I'm incredibly proud to work with such a dedicated and professional team.

After this phase we have now set about increasing awareness of VMR volunteer effort. One huge step in this direction has been engaging other community organisations and agencies in particular those in the area of emergency services. I'm pleased to report that the Assistant Minister for Emergency Volunteers the Hon Ted Malone has been a great support to VMR taking notice of our issues and working hard on our behalf. Our professionalism is growing and being seen to grow and I'm incredibly proud to be associated with this fantastic group of people.

I believe one of the key areas we can improve to increase recognition, is to form partnerships with other service providers and community organisations. This will have the dual benefit of raising our profile and improving emergency service delivery within Queensland. One issue faced by all volunteer sectors is the increasing average age of volunteers. Clearly we need to engage younger people and demonstrate that marine rescue and even the basic idea of volunteering are ideals worth pursuing. Towards that end the state council have formally adopted the idea of a partnership with the PCYC Emergency Services Cadets. This is not a new idea to many of our members, but I'm excited to report that the first joint open day occurred at Raby Bay recently. VMR Raby Bay members, surf lifesavers and cadets joined together in a range of marine rescue related activities.

These included tours of the Westpac Lifesaver helicopter, cadet inductions on to the VMR vessels, surf life saving demonstrations which cadets observed from the VMR vessels and finally a marine flare demonstration during which some cadets actually deployed the flares. I thank Assistant Minister Ted Malone for attending its inaugural day. It was also exciting to have Mr Bryan Cifuentes the new Deputy Commissioner – Volunteers for Queensland Fire & Emergency Services spend the day with us and observe the events and the inter-agency cooperation. Cadets will hopefully be an integral part of our future, with plans now underway for VMR Thursday Island to sponsor a cadet unit up there in paradise!

These are exciting and fast moving times for VMR. I look forward to the future unfolding as we continue to develop into the future.

Keith Williams

A Good Turn for the Queensland Tide Tables

The 2015 edition of the *Queensland Tide Tables* will arrive in stores in early November, ensuring that Queensland's boating and fishing communities continue to have this essential safety information in print.

Following the community feedback from the 2014 edition, this year will see the re-inclusion of some of the old favourites. "The 2015 edition will include all that is expected from a tidal publication, along with revitalised content, such as standard tidal curves for calculating intermediate tidal heights," said Editor-in-Chief, Matt Templeton.

The big news for 2015 is the addition of over 250 boat ramp location maps. Each map not only shows the location of the ramp, but also the access routes. Previously, unless you were a local, finding your way to a boat ramp was not always a simple task, not to mention of course a visiting vessel trying to come ashore for the first time.

Mr Templeton said, "It was a huge effort to locate, verify and then produce maps for all the ramps, but we are very pleased with the outcome, and we hope the community

finds it useful. We look forward to their assistance in helping us to improve the resource in future years."

The *Queensland Tide Tables* contain daily high and low water heights and times for over 30 standard ports along the Queensland coast. The locations of over 280 secondary ports are shown with accompanying maps, as well as time and height difference information from their standard ports.

The publication is funded entirely through sales and advertising, with no Government support. "As long as there is community support for the *Queensland Tide Tables*, we will keep producing it," said Mr Templeton. Copies will be available at newsagents, marine suppliers and tackle shops from early November.

> Stay in touch with the production team via their Facebook page at www.facebook.com/qldtides

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QUEENSLAND TIDE TABLES 2015

Available at your local store early November.





SOUTHPORT MARINE RESCUE QLD



Having been shown some statistics recently, it's amazing how busy Southport has been in the past 12 months. Eight hundred and seventy plus rescue activations, 500 plus training activations and in excess of 49,000 litres of fuel used.

The winter of 2014 has shown no decrease in activations, as the winter period normally does, with the midweek and weekend crews being kept on their toes, both day and night.

The weather has been somewhat ordinary over the past couple of months, with strong winds most days, however the whale migration season off the Gold Coast continues to entice boaties offshore, regardless of the conditions.

VMR Southport is approaching its Annual General Meeting in September, and the current management committee has worked very hard to provide the incoming committee with a very sound financial result to work with, along with a bunch of happy members as well. As happens each management term, some of the committee members move on, for various reasons, giving opportunity

for newer, interested members to step up and see how the organisation runs.

September at VMR will also see the delivery of our new NoosaCat 2300 Rescue vessel. The build process of this vessel has been some 18 months, due to this vessel being the first of this model built to commercial survey, since the new NSCV (National Standards for Commercial Vessels) legislation took effect.

Everyone is looking forward to this delivery and the acquisition



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SOUTHPORT MARINE RESCUE QLD



will certainly compliment the existing fleet, modernising Southport well into the future.

Progress is still slow on the renewal of our rescue base lease and it now appears for every forward step there are two backwards steps. The most recent direction was for a new survey to be conducted of the premises to sort some boundary anomalies. This was done exactly to the directions given, submitted, and then we were informed that a different approach was now required, so at more expense we are now taking that different approach.

Ultimately, our inability to see our lease renewed is affecting our intentions to begin constructing the new radio aerial tower which is urgently needed. From 19 months ago, when this project commenced, our most current updated quotation has increased in the range of \$20,000 due to material costs etc.

In late July, VMR Southport were privileged to invite current and past members, current and past dignitaries of VMRAQ, and family of Senior Skipper Chris Leech to a



dedication ceremony at our rescue base. Chris has been a member for over 25 years, holding positions within the organisation of president, vice president, search and rescue controller, duty skipper and southern zone representative.

Never afraid to stick his chest out and stand up for Southport, Chris has been battling serious illness for a number of years now and Southport thought it appropriate to dedicate the outdoor pergola area to Chris. This was a project Chris undertook from start to finish several years ago and since then, many a party, wedding, funeral and social gathering has been held here, bringing loads of friendship among members, good income for the VMR social club and many next day headaches for party goers, but overall an excellent function facility.

Chris was extremely overwhelmed on the day.

That just about wraps up the exciting things happening at Southport, so until next time safe boating.



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BRISBANE MARINE RESCUE QLD

ACTIVATIONS

A call was made from a family onboard a 19m yacht *Summer Hawk* sailing from Sydney to Indonesia when their fan belt failed on their motor. They contacted Seaway Tower who passed the message to VMR Southport who then contacted VMR Brisbane. This shows the great working relationships we have with our other squadrons. The family anchored the vessel off the northern tip of Moreton Island due to a stiff SW blowing up the bay, making it almost impossible to sail the yacht into the Brisbane River. It was at 1100 hrs when Thomas Grice, Glenn Phillip and Kelly Williams boarded *Energex Sandgate 1* and headed over to the Cape.



The tow was slow due to the yacht weighing 28 tonnes. When we reached the inner bar beacons, we could see the oil tanker *BM Breeze* was also coming into port and gaining on us quickly. The tow in total took 10 hours to complete due to the size and weight of the boat. We averaged 6kts across the bay and managed 10kts in the river as the tide was flowing in.

Due to the extensive training which Thomas has completed over the years, he handled the pressure well when having to turn the towed yacht around in one of the busiest parts of the Brisbane River with a longer tow than what he would have wished for. Thomas had to also anticipate other vessels travelling in both directions whilst being mindful of anchored vessels in the vicinity.

The yacht was finally docked at the moorings at Gardens Point and the family invited us onboard

to check out their yacht and offered us coffee and some much needed sugar. The family then presented the paperwork back to us for the tow which included a generous donation.

In gratitude to the family for their generous donation, VMR Brisbane have offered the family a free years' membership.

COMMISSIONING AND NAMING OF THE QPV PERRY IRWIN

On August 14, 2014, Snr Vice President Thomas Grice attended the official commissioning and naming of the new Police catamaran QPV *Perry Irwin*.

The *Perry Irwin* is named after fallen officer, Snr Sgt Perry James Irwin who was sworn into the Qld Police Service on June 27, 1980. On August 22, 2003, Snr Sgt Irwin was fatally shot whilst responding to reports of a male person armed and acting in a dangerous manner. Snr Sgt Irwin posthumously received a Valour Award in 2009 and in 2013, an Australian Bravery Decoration,



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BRISBANE MARINE RESCUE QLD



Commendation for Brave Conduct, for his actions on that day.

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JACOBS WELL MARINE RESCUE QLD

This quarter saw the conversion of our last rescue vessel, the 5.6m RIB *Rotary 2* to Mercury engines. Previously, counter rotating engines had not been available in dual 90hp configuration, which is the size fitted to this vessel. All Jacobs Well vessels are now equipped with Mercury engines. We are happy to report improved performance in both speed, power and stability after water testing these engines. Brisbane Marine were responsible for the fitting of the new engines.



Rotary 2 at the Sanctuary Cove release of these new engines in June.



Jacobs Well personnel gathered outside the theatre prior to the release. Also pictured is Mercury's commercial manager Dallas Hersey and Brisbane Marine's Troy Wood.

In July Marine Rescue Jacobs Well were invited to the opening of the new Woolworths Pimpama store in a brand new centre called Pimpama Junction. At this opening we were pleased to receive a cheque for \$1000 donated by Woolworths as part of their local community fundraising initiative.



Local store manager Steve Teague presenting their cheque to Marine Rescue Jacobs Well Vice President Roger Hawkes.

In July an MRJW associate member called for assistance crossing the Pin Bar and experiencing engine problems. The vessel, a 7.3m Whitley Sea Legend was slightly longer than our rescue vessel, a 7.1m Noosa Cat with twin Mercury 150hp 4-stroke engines. After locating the vessel east of the Pin Bar the crew proceeded with the tow through a bar with sets of waves breaking right across. The size of the vessel being towed was a consideration but our rescue vessel, engines and crew all performed well which resulted in a safe return to shore. The video of the bar crossing can be seen on our website vmrjw.org.au

Not so lucky (also on our website) was another vessel that overturned trying to cross the Pin Bar in August. The people involved were experienced fishermen but still had problems. They were successfully rescued but with the loss of gear and damage to the vessel. Please remember to log on as this helps in all areas of response in the case of emergency.

The tow through the Bar.



JACOBS WELL MARINE RESCUE QLD



Marine Rescue Jacobs Well attended the Ormeau Show to promote boating safety by handing out information packs, capacity labels, tide guides etc. and to fundraise by selling raffle tickets in our car topper tinnie with 5hp Mercury outboard motor. Thanks to everyone who bought a ticket. We really do appreciate the support we receive from the community.

STATISTICS MAY 1, 2014-JULY 31, 2014

Total activations	160
Total Hours	238.61
Fuel used	4524 litres.

Break Down:

Medical	4,
Breakdown	37
Fuel	2
Grounding	12
Sinking/Sunk	5
Drifting	2
Training/Patrol	100
Total Crew Hours	793.27



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BRIBIE ISLAND MARINE RESCUE QLD

Asbestos removed from VMR roof

Roof damage from the wild storms earlier in the year revealed that asbestos had been used in our base roof. This week, asbestos removal and replacement of the roof was well underway, thanks in part to a grant from the Gambling Community Benefit Fund, announced recently by Lisa France MP, Member for Pumicestone and Assistant Treasurer.



Roofing materials were lifted by crane onto the base roof.
Photo by Peter McNamara

During the replacement process limited radio operations were conducted from *Energex Bribie One* (VMR Bribie Island's main rescue vessel), with assistance from neighbouring Coast Guards. As in general VHF radios operate on line of site of aerials, and those of *Energex Bribie One* are much lower than those on the radio masts on top of the base.



L to R: Bob Brandis and Keith Walters conduct their radio shift aboard *Energex Bribie One*.
Photo by Peter McNamara.

Emergency Services Group meet at VMR

Key stake holders in emergency services were invited to attend a meeting at Volunteer Marine Rescue Bribie Island last week. In attendance were the committee from VMR Bribie Island, and representatives from VMR Queensland, Queensland Police, Queensland Ambulance Service, Moreton Bay Regional Council, State Emergency Services, Parks and Wildlife, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services and the Member for Pumicestone Lisa France MP.

VMR Bribie's Graham Gibb brought together this group to strengthen partnerships and highlight VMR's capabilities to assist with planning future resources, and to become included in disaster management plans and regular coordination meetings and exercises. A further objective of the meeting was to ensure that VMR members had the appropriate training, equipment and infrastructure to undertake their role safely and effectively.

Further meetings and exercises/activities are planned for the near future, enhancing the safety of the Bribie Island and surrounding community.



L to R: Trevor Stark QFES, Neil Francis QFES, David Crawford-Raby QP, Jim Whitehead QP, John Traill VMR, Annette Mengel VMR, Bob Skinner VMR, Ryan Hanlon QP, Carl Peterson MBRC, Keith Williams VMRAQ, Mary Brown VMR, Brendan McLarty NPRSR, Adrian Westerman VMR, Lisa France MP, Graham Gibb VMR, Ross Jones VMR, Henk van den Ende SES, Stewart Watkins QAS. Photo by Peter McNamara



Presentations at VMR

Trevor Stark, Station Officer, from Bribie Island Queensland Fire and Emergency Services gave an address on fire safety and preparedness for the coming fire season to some 110 members and guests at VMR Bribie's monthly Sunset Drinks last Friday evening.

All present also enjoyed hamburgers and sausages which quickly sold out, with proceeds from all fund raising efforts currently going towards the purchase of a new vessel for VMR Bribie Island.

Service pins were also awarded to members who had completed at least five years of active service with the VMR, these were awarded to Uldis Baltars, Peter McNamara and Bill Gibbings.

Radio Operator Bill Taylor was also given a special presentation for his service to both VMR Southport and VMR Bribie. Unfortunately Bill has had to call it a day for health reasons and we wish him the best health in yet another retirement. Bill had extensive service with the Royal Australian Navy (1957-1988), retiring at the rank of Commodore, he was also the Federal Member for Groom (Toowoomba) between 1988 and 1998, and Administrator (Governor) for the Indian Ocean Territories (Christmas Island and the Cocos Islands) 1999 to 2003.



right from top:

Trevor Stark addressing the Sunset Drinks members and guests.

Photo by Peter McNamara

Radio Operator Uldis Baltars received his 5 Year Pin from Commodore Bob Skinner.

Photo by Peter McNamara.

Bill Taylor flanked by Deputy Radio Officer, Dennis O'Neil (L) and Radio Officer Peter McNamara (R).

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7 Rescue being launched.

So far this year has been fairly busy, we have had several events such as the Bay to Bay Yacht Race, Cruise for Charity, Paddle out to the Whales, and Blessing of the Fleet, all which our vessels have taken part in, mainly as safety boat roles along with the standard line of tows and assists, medivacs and the odd search and rescue or two pushing our total activation for the quarter up to 78, which for us isn't a lot, that can be put down to a mix of bad weather and the general public being better prepared and looking after their vessels.

This year we have acquired a new vessel, to join our fleet. 7 Rescue, a 5.99m centre console Polycraft boat, which was built in Bundaberg and has a 175hp Suzuki, 4 stroke outboard.

This vessel has been purchased to fulfill a training role as a graduation from provisional crew through to cert I then to cert II and gives some experience handling a single engine boat.

We have found that 7 Rescue is an ideal vessel for assessing provisional crew's experience and knowledge of boat handling skills.

It has also become very important in the retrieval of vessels stranded in the many river systems within our region. A proven time and expense saver not only for the squadron but also for the boat owner as this vessel can be towed to a boat ramp close to the area of activation.

7 Rescue has also played an important role in search and rescue. She can be used to search beach areas close in to the shore as well as rivers and creeks with ease compared to our bigger Noosa Cats within our fleet.



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At long last, the Mackay squad has finally returned to grace the pages of our state magazine and it's great to be back. It's not that we haven't had anything interesting to report, in fact it is the exact opposite as we are in the middle of a year of change, improvement and growth.

With the Mackay area suffering from the downturn in the mining industry, the squad was not immune to a loss of members with people either leaving town or changing occupations with the result being a drop in financial membership numbers. One of the sad facts of an economic downturn is that the first things to either get sold or put into moth balls are the 'toys' and in this area the toys are usually boats. It is pleasing to now report that we appear to have reached the bottom of this dip with numbers once again on the increase. The credit for a lot of these new memberships rests solely on the shoulders of our ridiculously hardworking secretary Sharon McLean, who has helped drag us older members kicking and screaming into the modern world of social media. Yes, VMR448 now has a Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/#!/vmr.mackay>) and from the number of friends and likes we have received, we 'oldies' have

had to swallow our pride and admit to the value of these resources. The transfer of our membership database to a new software package has also assisted getting all this information up to date and makes it readily available for reference by the active crews or radio operators. Many thanks to our IT man Brian Farley and Charles Linsley for the long and boring job of completing this task.

TRAINING

With the increase in new members, we have also seen an increase in the numbers of new active members wishing to join the crew roster along with a dramatic shift in the approach to further training by the established members. With UTC Don Bowdon and Charles Linsley working tirelessly in front of the screen and Stuart and Denise Holley doing a fantastic job performing monthly inductions for newbies and correlating all the material behind the scenes, training has taken on a more structured approach. I suspect the Mackay squad suffers as much, or more than anyone from the difficulties of having active crew working remotely on differing shift rosters. In the past this has proven to be a very real roadblock to training, but through the hard work of this

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MACKAY MARINE RESCUE QLD

group of people we have managed to work through these issues and made it easier for these members to complete modules.

Use of the Marine Rescue Queensland Extranet has increased and when combined with training material such as 'local knowledge' which has been developed in-house, this has also assisted with remote learning. The setting up of a couple of work stations in the base solely for this purpose is being pursued by Brian Farley and when available will provide another avenue for members to work on their development outside of scheduled training sessions.

With the change in training courses from MSQ to AMSA control set for July 31, Mackay crew members have been busily working on completing any unfinished modules prior to this deadline.

During June, nine new recruits spent one weekend learning the theory portion of Elements of Shipboard Safety. This is a mandatory module for every volunteer who works on our rescue vessels. The module includes shipboard safety, firefighting and how to survive at sea if the vessel has to be abandoned. The fun part will be in July when the practical part of this training is done. This will include simulated



Charles Linsley taking new crew members through their Elements of Shipboard Safety theory.

exercises in a swimming pool, lighting flares and the use of fire extinguishers.

Moving up the ladder, Mackay VMR now boasts having three more commercial coxswains in the ranks with Charles Linsley, Mal McLean and Graham Brake all



Charles Linsley, Mal McLean and Graham Brake after receiving their commercial coxswain stripes.

successfully completing their MSQ requirements. Being one of these, I can attest to how much hard work and study is required before you can sit in front of the MSQ officers in order to gain this fourth stripe.

In our local area the operator of the CQ Rescue helicopter has changed and to allow the new pilots and crews to get up to speed as quickly as possible, VMR448 has been busy conducting joint winching exercises in all conditions. This has been so successful, the operating company has agreed to compensate the squad to enable them to utilise this resource to train outside crews as well, resulting in a win-win for both parties. Keep your eyes on our Facebook page for some footage of these exercises in 25kt winds and large seas.

MASTERMYNE MACKAY RESCUE 6

(Reprinted with permission of *NQ Fish & Boat* magazine)

After a longer than expected wait due to unforeseen issues during its construction, the week prior to Easter saw the gleaming new 8.5m, Woody Marine RHIB *Mastermyne Mackay Rescue 6* arrive by truck at VMR448 Mackay base at the Mackay marina. Not only is this calibre of vessel a first for the Mackay squad, it was also the first boat in nearly 50 years of squad operation to carry the name of

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above: Mackay Deputy Mayor Kevin Casey doing the honours.
right: *Mastermyne Mackay Rescue 6*.



a major sponsor. To ensure the most efficient utilisation of this new vessel, one other major new sponsor came on board in the form of Vanderfield whose generous assistance enabled the procurement of a brand new John Deere tractor to tow the new 'toy' to and from the water. Without the support of companies like Mastermyne, Vanderfield and all the other smaller sponsors, VMR448 could not exist, as government assistance is minimal and

the money recuperated from activations only covers the cost of the fuel and incidentals used on the water.

So what exactly is *Mastermyne Mackay Rescue 6* and why did we need it? VMR448 already had two vessels: a 6m RHIB powered by twin 90hp Suzuki motors, and an 11m, flybridge Steber 3800 powered by twin 355hp Cummins diesel engines. Between the two existing vessels

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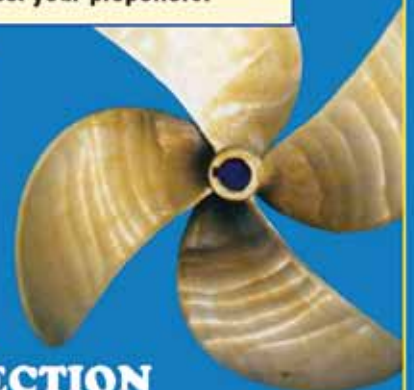
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MACKAY MARINE RESCUE QLD



Sharon McLean – Our hardworking Secretary.

we had excellent inshore, shallow water capability and the ability to perform long range, all weather activations. The missing piece of the puzzle was a high speed vessel that could perform in the majority of conditions experienced in our operational area. Enter the 8.5M RHIB. Powered by twin 250hp, 4 stroke Yamaha outboards, the new boat not only has a top speed close to 50kts (93kph) but when at cruise speed has a range of almost 200nm. These attributes are perfect for medical and maritime emergencies where the time taken to get to the patient or scene is critical. Having a fuel burn rate of half that of the Steber, *Mastermyne Mackay Rescue 6* also provides the boating public with less costly activations in situations where the larger vessel is not required.

A lot of thought went into the design of the new vessel to ensure it was not only suited for the intended role but was also accepted by the skippers and crew who would man her. A 'VEG' or 'vessel evaluation group' was set up by the management committee and not only included committee members but also active skippers, with this proving to be the perfect forum and blend of ideas to successfully come up with the desired end product. Each step of the process was discussed in an open and friendly environment with all parties contributing their thoughts and ideas based on their many years of experience.

A full cabin was demanded with forward facing windscreens, ensuring side windows and roof hatches provided adequate ventilation on our hot, sticky summer days as well as protection from the elements on cold, wet winter's nights. The 12 inch Garmin display incorporates radar and AIS and is linked to an autopilot, while a complete iPad station is available for use as back up navigation or note taking. Radio communication is via two, VHF units and a HF radio for long range work, while human comfort is assisted through suspension seats, an onboard refrigerator and port-a-potty facilities.

VMR448 Open Day for the official launch of *Mastermyne Mackay Rescue 6*.




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Photo courtesy Just One Moment Photography.

The official launch of *Mastermyne Mackay Rescue 6* was held on Saturday, June 14 at the base at the top of the Mackay Marina boat ramp.

With the permission of the Mackay Regional Council, a section of the roadway was closed to traffic to enable a climbing tower and other children's activities to be set up

for the enjoyment of the public. With young Kasey Kilsby showing his musical talent and a sausage sizzle satisfying the hunger, the general public had the opportunity to inspect the facilities and take guided tours of the squad vessels. Upstairs was a selection of news articles and historical documents of the squad since inception, along with charts showing the activations for the last five years. It was interesting to hear the comments when it was realised the Mackay squad looks after an area of over 10,000sqm or an area half the size of Tasmania. There was also the 'Name the Knots' quiz to test the memory of the old boy scouts and sailors and with \$150 worth of lures donated by *NQ Fish and Boat* magazine to be won it had the grey matter working overtime. Congratulations go to Steve Garrad who successfully identified 18 of the 24 knots on display to take home the prize.

VMR Mackay would like to thank the following people for attending the official ceremony and being a part of the proceedings.

- Tim Mulherin – Member for Mackay
- Ted Malone – Member for Mirani

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Mackay Rescue 5 towing in a beautiful old Norman Wright.

- Kevin Casey – Deputy Mayor Mackay
- Keith Williams – President Marine Rescue Queensland
- Vivienne Gayton – Mastermyne
- David Pace – Vanderfield
- Stephen Plummer – Woody Marine
- Special thanks also to Pastor Reno from the Pioneer Community Church who blessed the new vessel and for his kind prayers for all the volunteers who crew her.

ACTIVATIONS

Earlier, I mentioned *Mastermyne Mackay Rescue 6* arrived the week before Easter. Well, you guessed it, Easter long weekend brought on some of the best boating weather experienced in Mackay area for some time and the boating public hit the water in droves. It was only a matter of time before the radio room at the top of the ramp received the first call for assistance and for the remainder

of the four days it didn't stop. To say the new boat got a baptism of fire would be an understatement. From towing an 8m fibreglass cruiser with eight people onboard (at 24kts), to a high speed emergency run to retrieve two gentlemen who were in the water after their boat went down in a matter of seconds to the standard breakdowns, *Mastermyne Mackay Rescue 6* did it all and did it well.

Along with the more common scenarios, Mackay squad has had its fair share of the unusual in the last few months as well. When a party of five left their vessel anchored and went ashore at Silloth Rocks, the last thing they expected was having to be winched to safety by the CQ Rescue helicopter and have VMR retrieve their boat after it broke anchor and drifted away. Luckily, common sense prevailed and as they attempted to swim to the drifting vessel, they realised it was futile and returned safely to land and awaited rescue. This could easily have changed from embarrassing to fatal.



The mystery tinny that may have come all the way from New Caledonia.

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The sighting of a drifting, upturned vessel approximately 25nm south east of Mackay had *Mastermyne Mackay Rescue 6* back in the water and heading across flat seas at 30kts. The sun reflecting on aluminium guided the crew to a Quintrex Dory that showed all the signs of having been in the water for a long time. The Yamaha motor was missing the cowl and the propeller was severely damaged but other than the drain plugs hanging out, the vessel was intact. After hooking a rope to the trailer hitch point on the bow and laying it over the hull, a quick burst of the throttles had it the right way up again and slowly draining. On arrival back in the marina, the bungs were reinstated and the resident school of fish liberated back over the side. All pretty run of the mill stuff until two coins and an empty aluminium can were found. These went a long way to explaining the unusual registration numbers on the sides as they all appeared to have originated in New Caledonia.

MACKAY BOAT SHOW

During June, the Mackay boat show was once again held at the Mackay marina precinct. While usually coinciding with the running of the Offshore Superboat races, this year, the round was held further north at Bowen. This did not deter the crowds who made the most of the perfect weather and turned out in droves to look through everything from tiny tenders to quarter million dollar trailer boats and all the accessories available to fit them out. VMR Mackay has a long standing arrangement with the port authority to manage the parking for this event and for a gold coin donation you can park in a grassed area all day. Many thanks go to Warren Harmer

for organising this task for the weekend, and to all the volunteers who assisted on the gate.

BLACK DOG RIDE

As you read this article, VMR Mackay Skipper Charles Linsley will be taking part in the 'Black Dog Around Australia Ride 2014', generating funds to raise awareness of depression and suicide prevention. The Black Dog Ride name was inspired by Winston Churchill, who described himself as "being followed by the black dog of depression". The ride, starting at Bateau Bay just north of Sydney on July 26, will do a complete circuit of Australia, about 14,500km, returning to Sydney on August 26.

Every year in Australia, 1,000,000 adults and 100,000 young people live with depression. Of these, 50% won't seek treatment and nearly 3,000 will take their own lives every year. In some regional centres, such as Mackay, the suicide rate for young men is currently higher than the regional road toll. Many sufferers, and their families and friends seek support from Lifeline and Mental Health First Aid, the recipients of the funds raised from the Black Dog Rides.

Charles would be pleased to accept donations – at least one (1) cent per kilometre for the 14,500km ride would be good, otherwise whatever you can spare. Plus, of course, all donations are tax deductible. Donations can be made via http://www.everydayhero.com.au/event/blackdog-ridearoundaustralia-2014/sponsor_a_friend, and type Charles' name into the search bar.

Charles will be using Facebook to keep in touch if you'd like to follow the ride's progress.

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INAUGURAL EMERGENCY CADET TRAINING

On Sunday, August 24, VMR 455 played host to the newly formed Emergency Cadet Service. Along

with the PCYC and Surf lifesavers, the inaugural event was held at our base in Raby Bay in front of local and national dignitaries including the Assistant Minister for Emergency Volunteers, Ted Malone and Danny Donald from our major sponsor, Energex.

During the day the students experienced many different aspects to marine rescue operations including hands-on demonstrations of liferafts and survival equipment as well as firing off live flares.

The Surf Lifesavers helicopter was the main event and proved a popular feature with the cadets. Unfortunately, due to the conditions they were unable to perform an in-water rescue as we had hoped.



However, the Surf Lifesavers more than made up for this with a number of high-octane jet-ski and RIB rescues. Everyone present was impressed with the supreme skills they demonstrated in extracting the casualties from the water. Their high-speed boat and jet-ski handling were superb and provided an adrenaline-fuelled half-hour for everyone. That event was followed by more high-speed manoeuvres for the cadets and guests in four rescue units, three from Raby Bay and one from Victoria Point.



RABY BAY MARINE RESCUE QLD



The success of this event was due to the efforts of many people and their organisations: Energex, who provided the comestibles, the surf lifesavers, VMR Victoria Point, PCYC representative and initiative organiser Jenny Schoof and Keith Williams, VMR 455 volunteer and VMRAQ president.

Behind the scenes were another 12 VMR volunteers who did lots of the less glamorous support work and Michael 'Crispy' Crisp, who fed the entire multitude twice!

It should be mentioned also, that while all this was going off around them, D/O Peter Stock and crew two managed to keep the base fully operational at all times.

And finally, high praise must go to the cadets. They were excellent ambassadors for their units and a credit to their leaders. They remained engaged, polite and respectful all day and still managed to have lots of fun!

Congratulations to all who took part in what was an unqualified success and an event that should become a regular fixture to the calendar.

NOTABLE INCIDENTS

Whilst we have been very busy, there were no particularly spectacular rescues during the quarter. Just run-of-the-mill tows and medivacs. Business as usual.



PERSONNEL

Training: Congratulations go to the six candidates who passed TDM07 Certificate II in Marine Studies and the three who passed their Commercial Coxswain qualifications. As well as this, five crew obtained Training,

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Assessment and Evaluation (TAE) qualifications. And 10 existing TAE qualified crew upgraded their qualifications with Language Literacy and Numeracy (LLN) skills.



During the last members meeting, while discussing the thorny issue of fund-raising, Bill Bennet was ambushed. The commodore was awarded the golden-bucket for his sterling efforts with fund-raising. Along with the bucket was a commemorative plaque and a large bundle of dodgy banknotes bearing his visage. They have been aptly named 'Bill-bills'.



JASON YOUNG, HE CAME TO INSTALL A COMPUTER SYSTEM ...

As if he hasn't racked up enough hours at the base installing and configuring the IT system, Jason put his hand up and joined the VMR. Having successfully completed his certificate one, he received his first stripe on crew. He has spent so much time at base this year his wife is going to have his mail forwarded. Especially the one from her solicitor.

She is still not sure if it is a promotion or a punishment, but Jocelyn Ashcroft is to take over from Harry Hubner as the new VMRAQ journal editor. Jocelyn, who has a

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family, a full time job and attends two crews is also an experienced fundraising campaigner who winks out grants for our unit. In her spare time ...

BASE INFRASTRUCTURE

The pontoon is currently being renovated and the fuel bowser is next in line for upgrading.

With the new public boat ramp being fully operational, we now have a total of seven public launch lanes. Along with a further two at the adjacent private boat club, the combination has generated significant traffic across our launch area. However, to mitigate that, we applied for, and have received approval from DERM for a building extension to allow RBIV to be stationed next to Energex

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Medivac at the top of the ramp. This will both reduce ramp congestion and improve our response time. (And create another SOP.)

PERENNIAL WEBSITE CONSTRUCTION

Although the website is still not commissioned we at least had a great time getting the photos for the pages. Following is a few thousand words worth ...



SAREX – SUNDAY, AUGUST 17, 2014

Two Search and Rescue Units (SRU's) from VMR Raby Bay and one from VMR North Stradbroke were involved in the SAREX at Raby Bay.

The briefing was held at 08:30 hours with all vessel commanders, crews and personnel involved in the operation.

Details provided included the objectives of the exercise, the scenario, the search area, contingency plans, first aid aspects and communications.

Jim Kennedy, with previous SARMC experience, volunteered to be the SARMC for the operation.

Three trainee skippers from VMR Raby Bay were given the opportunity to act as on-scene coordinators during the SAREX operation as part of their practical assessment for the Search and Rescue competency MF1.

The multi-vessel parallel track search commenced at 09:15 hours in reasonably good conditions and visibility, but conditions deteriorated later with the arrival of a strong westerly.

The operation concluded at 12:15 hours with both targets being recovered.

At the debrief the consensus was that it had been a very valuable exercise and had achieved all of its objectives.

In the wash-up, there was a useful discussion about improving communications and, even though this was essentially good on the day, there is always room for improvement to ensure that communication is brief, clear and efficient.

The three on-scene coordinators successfully passed their practical test, and thanks go to Jim Kennedy for providing his knowledge and experience to the exercise.

Having the SRU from VMR North Stradbroke was an invaluable contribution to the event and their presence created the

RABY BAY MARINE RESCUE QLD



realistic scenario of having diverse search-and-rescue units working together in close-quarter manoeuvres.

Due to the value of their contribution, we intend that in the future we will coordinate between the local VMR bases more regularly to pool our resources and combine our trainee skippers into one SAREX to complete their practical component of MF1. This should broaden the skills and experience of all crews and skippers in our operational zone.

THIRD QUARTER STATISTICS:

Activation for April 1, 2014-July 31, 2014

Medivacs	37
Breakdowns	23
Insufficient Fuel	1
Grounding	6
Sinking/ Sunk Vessel	1
Search	0
Drifting Vessels	0
Flares	0
EPIB Activation	0
Training	42
Total	110
Persons returned to Safety	108
Amount of Fuel used (Litres)	7,636



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- 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



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.

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Media Release

Modernised satellite system to assist Aussie beacon owners in distress

The Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA), in cooperation with Maritime New Zealand (MNZ) has awarded a substantial contract to enhance the regional search and rescue satellite system used to detect emergency distress beacons.

AMSA Chief Executive Officer Mick Kinley said McMurdo Group's Techno-Sciences, Inc (TSi) has been selected to establish a next-generation Medium-altitude Earth Orbit Search and Rescue (MEOSAR) capability in Australia and New Zealand, following a rigorous tender process.

The 10-year Australian contract provides for installation and maintenance of a six-antenna MEOSAR ground station in Western Australia and a Mission Control Centre in Canberra.

Installation is expected to take 15 months.

"Australians are the biggest per capita users of distress beacons in the world, with more than 300,000 beacons registered," Mr Kinley said.

"The modernised MEOSAR satellite distress beacon detection system will allow AMSA to detect beacon activations in a more timely manner."

The MEOSAR system will replace the Low-altitude Earth Orbit Search and Rescue (LEOSAR) satellite system, which will be phased out in coming years under international arrangements.

Once fully operational the MEOSAR system will reduce beacon detection times from hours under the current system, to within 10 minutes, 95% of the time.

"AMSA is continually looking to take advantage of new technology in its search and rescue system and the MEOSAR system will allow AMSA to detect and respond to beacon activations more effectively," Mr Kinley said.

Australia and New Zealand's MEO Local User Terminals (MEOLUTs) or satellite tracking ground stations will work cooperatively to achieve overlapping coverage of Australia and New Zealand's Search and Rescue Regions.

"This offers a high degree of resilience in the event of a system outage that would be expensive for either country to achieve alone," Mr Kinley said.

"AMSA is pleased to continue this collaborative regional approach with New Zealand, which allows a data feed from the NZ MEOLUT to the Mission Control Centre in Canberra, which immediately relays information to Rescue Coordination Centre New Zealand in the event of a beacon activation in the New Zealand Search and Rescue Region."

MNZ Director Keith Manch said the joint investment in the MEOSAR project was another example of the close cooperation between Australia and New Zealand in a vital area of operation.

Distress beacon owners should be aware their beacons will continue to be detected and processed, if activated, without any change.

AMSA reminds beacon owners 406MHz GPS encoded beacons have the best chance of being located in the event of activating their beacon in an emergency and that 121.5MHz beacons are now obsolete.

Beacon owners are urged to register their beacons at www.beacons.amsa.gov.au to further assist authorities in the event of an emergency, with vital details and travel plans for the registered owner.

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