



Sir Graham Henry.

## Supporting our volunteers: National MayDay Appeal 2016

Now in its sixth year, our National MayDay Rescue Appeal runs from the 1 to 10 May to spread the word and raise much needed funds to help train our heroes with the skills they need to continue to save lives at sea.

Coastguard is delighted that Sir Graham Henry is getting behind us and is back on board again as our MayDay ambassador. Like you, Sir Graham is a great supporter and stated, "Coastguard is a charity made up of great volunteers. They're generous Kiwis that have day jobs just like you and I giving up their time to save lives at sea. Coastguard is a great organisation doing great things to keep Kiwis safe on the water. I really hope New Zealanders get behind this great cause and make a donation this MayDay."

Our volunteers do a fantastic job often in challenging circumstances to save lives and that's why we need your help once again to make MayDay 2016 a success.

Please watch out for, and support, our MayDay Rescue Appeal which will land in your letterbox early May.

## Vodafone landline customers give a thumbs up to Coastguard!



Simply register as a 'Vodafone Friend of Coastguard', and every month they'll donate 3% of your monthly landline bill to Coastguard. Jeremy's bill is around \$70 a month, so over a year Coastguard receives about \$25 - all Jeremy had to do was sign up and Vodafone do the rest.

If just ten people like Jeremy signed up, Coastguard would receive an extra \$250 a year to save lives at sea. He told us, "every little bit helps, and it was so simple to sign up. I reckon every Vodafone landline customer should get on board!"

Visit [coastguard.nz/vodafone](http://coastguard.nz/vodafone) to sign up.



**“When I heard Vodafone would give some money to Coastguard without it costing me a cent, I signed up like a shot! Jeremy Richards**

## “We bought ourselves a boat, folks”



This is Coastguard's newest rescue vessel, *Bluff Rescue*, during her sea trials. She was funded largely by contributions from the people of Southland, and purpose-built to withstand long and difficult missions in the treacherous Foveaux Strait. There have been a number of tragic sinkings in the area in recent years, but the new *Bluff Rescue* and her volunteer crew now have a boat that can withstand rougher seas than before, and can search for longer. Coastguard crews all around the country are very proud of the fact that, thanks to the financial support of people like you, they are able to do everything to help, even in the most extreme conditions.

## “It was absolute bedlam, but we could not have been better prepared”

**Our volunteers were ready, thanks to your fantastic support.**

**You probably read the headlines in January.**

Tour boat PeeJay V, on its way back from a sightseeing trip to White Island, suddenly caught fire and sank off the coast of Whakatane. Seven crew and 53 passengers jumped into heavy seas to escape the leaping flames.

Some passengers had not been able to don lifejackets, and the sea was rough and choppy. You can imagine how helpless they felt. But through the rain arrived a fleet of boats that came to help, including the crew from Coastguard Whakatane.

The Coastguard building was set up as a triage centre and, when they were safely back on shore, all passengers and crew were checked by paramedics. Almost unbelievably, there were only four people with minor injuries, who were taken to Whakatane Hospital.

**“It was absolute bedlam but we could not have been better prepared. We have an excellent volunteer crew and we had identified what we believed to be the most realistic worst-case scenario within our environment - and this was it. We've trained extensively for this exact scenario. Everyone knew exactly what to do,”** said Coastguard Whakatane volunteer and duty officer, Neil Mower.



Photo / Whakatane Beacon.

**“It's because of your support that our brilliant volunteer crews can train for events just like this.”**

Jim Williamson, Coastguard Whakatane volunteer and President, said "we are so relieved everyone made it to shore safely. Our search and rescue training and meticulous planning meant that we were able to respond extremely efficiently and effectively."

"No lives were lost, there were no major injuries and all on board were rescued and brought back safely. It was the best possible outcome for all involved."

**Thank you for funding specialist search and rescue training for our crews. Your help saves lives at sea.**

## Thank you so much for helping our heroes save lives at sea!

**Royal New Zealand Coastguard Inc is the charity saving lives at sea**  
Charity Registration No CC 36138

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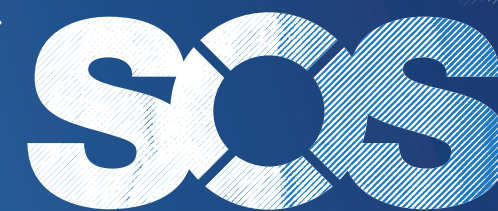


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Find out **how your donations help!**



## Autumn Newsletter 2016

## Coastguard radio operators raise the alarm - and save three lives

**“We were shaking, we were pretty cold. We were looking to the heavens waiting, but there was nothing. I said my goodbyes. I said my goodbyes a couple of times, actually. I knew the situation was bad.”**



Saved: Buzz and Oisin were so grateful to Coastguard. [Photo / NZ Herald]

Imagine being lost at sea, injured and exhausted, with no way of calling for help. It's exactly what happened to three experienced boaties when they tried to cross the Manukau Bar.

John, Buzz and Oisin, mates for many years, had been out fishing when they decided to call it a day and head back to shore, to duck the bad weather that was coming.

John Potter, skipper, radioed Coastguard volunteers to let them know they were about to cross the notorious Manukau Bar, a dangerous stretch of water that has a history of tragic drownings. **That one radio call saved their lives.**

As soon as they started they were in trouble. Their boat came off the back of one wave and was immediately scooped up by

another. The wave flipped the boat as easily as a child's toy, rolling it twice.

John and Buzz were flung 30 metres from the boat.

Buzz could see that John was in real trouble. "There was a 130-litre chilly bin beside me," said Buzz. "I emptied as much water as I could out of it and swam over to John. He couldn't swim - he had a badly cracked pelvis." But, worse still, they couldn't see Oisin at all.

When the boat rolled, Oisin was trapped underneath. He fought to get out.

**“I was stuck in the boat, getting forced back in by each wave as I tried to get out. I tried to get a Mayday call out but the radio was hanging by a wire. I knew I had to get out. I was in the hull running out of air.”**

Continued...

# FIRE at SEA!



**“It was absolute bedlam, but we could not have been better prepared”**

See back page.



What none of them knew was that their earlier radio call to Coastguard had put our volunteers on high alert. The Manukau bar is so dangerous that they're trained to immediately start searching after 30 minutes, should boats not radio in to say they are safely across.

Finally Oisin managed to swim out from under the boat. Exhausted and losing blood fast, Oisin climbed onto the hull and started looking for his mates.

He also tied ropes from the boat into handles, so he had something to hang on to.

"Then I saw the guys about 30 metres away. Buzz was dragging the skipper and they were getting smashed by the waves."

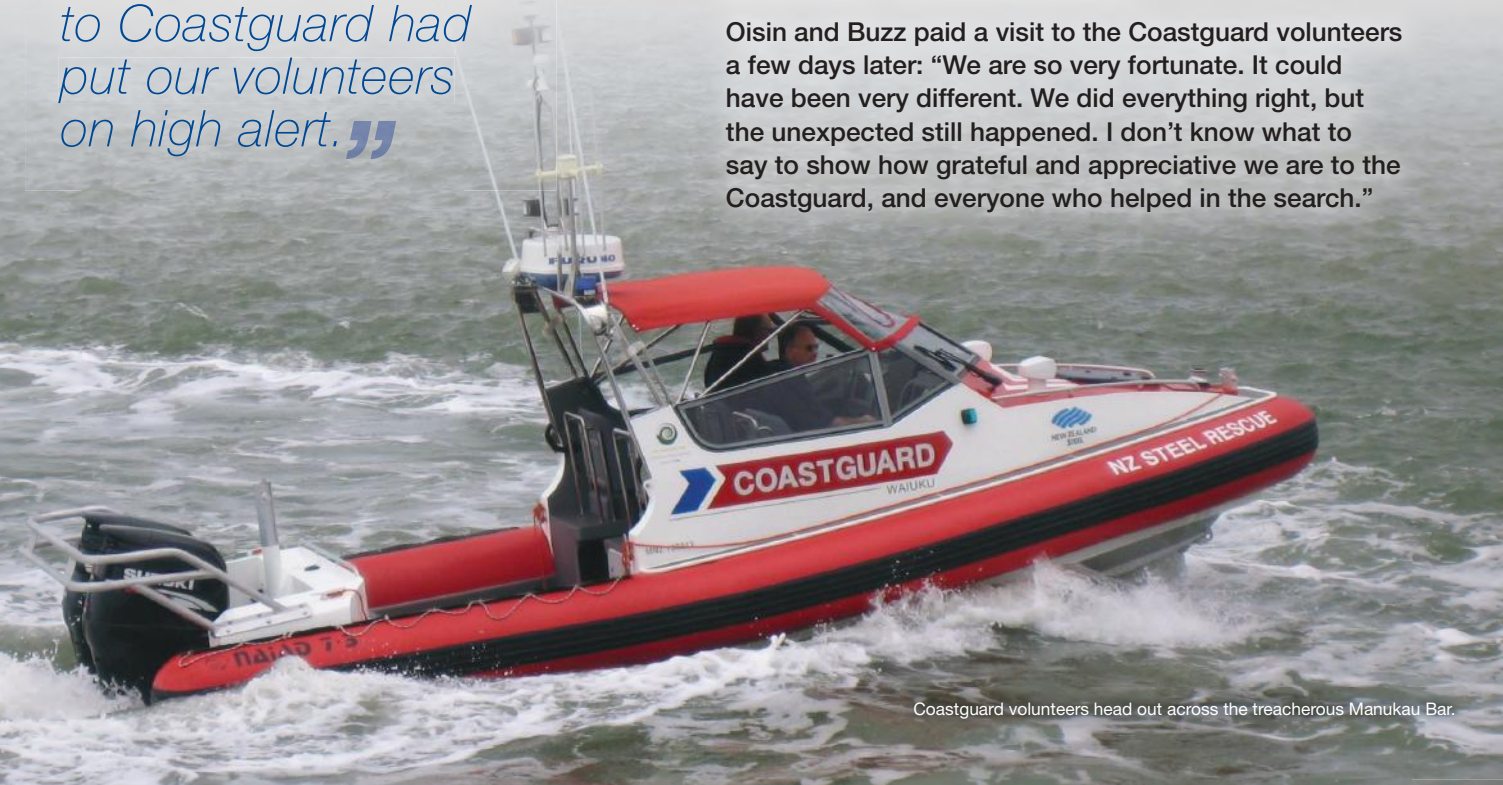


Their upturned boat on the Manukau Bar.  
[Photo / Auckland Rescue Helicopter Trust]



The Coastguard Radio Room. Their diligence and care saved the lives of three men.

*"Their earlier radio call to Coastguard had put our volunteers on high alert."*



Coastguard volunteers head out across the treacherous Manukau Bar.

Buzz and John fought their way to the boat where they clung on to the ropes. The three men were back together but their horrific ordeal was far from over.

The boat was slowly drifting out to sea. All they could hear was the sound of waves breaking and their own ragged breathing. Injured, with no way to call for help, and with a wrecked, upturned boat, Oisin realised how utterly helpless they were:

"We were shaking, we were pretty cold. We were looking to the heavens waiting, but there was nothing. I said my goodbyes. I said my goodbyes a couple of times, actually. I knew the situation was bad."

**But Coastguard radio operators had their backs.** Having not heard from the men since they started cross the bar, they raised the alarm and started searching for them. A Coastguard rescue vessel and two helicopters were immediately scrambled.

The search was long and arduous and three hours later, they had not located the men. But the tide had turned and Oisin, John and Buzz were finally drifting back to shore. When they finally heard waves crashing against a beach, they were exhilarated; but then they pictured their boat being picked up by the surf and hurled onto the sand like a missile.

**"We had to get away from the boat... We had to get away from it, we didn't want to be anywhere near it when we hit the [surf]line," said Oisin.**

So they swam away, but the sea was rough as anything. "We all got in the water and the next wave, we were all separated. The last time I saw John he was on his back."

Oisin and Buzz managed to stagger onto the sand. But, there was no sign of John. Oisin kept watch for as long as he could. "I waited for 15 to 20 minutes but I was so cold. I was shaking so much, I couldn't see, I had to go..." he said.

They thought they would never see their mate John again. But the rescue crews had finally found John at sea - injured, exhausted and probably hypothermic, but alive. He was given first aid and airlifted to hospital where he had surgery on his broken pelvis. They had all survived.

**Oisin and Buzz paid a visit to the Coastguard volunteers a few days later: "We are so very fortunate. It could have been very different. We did everything right, but the unexpected still happened. I don't know what to say to show how grateful and appreciative we are to the Coastguard, and everyone who helped in the search."**

## Summer Rescue Snapshot

Coastguard volunteers worked around the clock this summer to help Kiwis out on the water. Here are a few rescues from the busy period to show you the day-to-day challenges our volunteers face and how your donations help them save lives at sea.

### Capsize at Anzac Bay, Tauranga

Two Katikati fishermen are lucky to be alive after an attempted bar crossing at Anzac Bay went horribly wrong. The pair found themselves thrown from their boat and spent four hours desperately clinging to the upturned hull. One of the men decided to swim to shore to raise the alarm whilst the other tied himself to an empty petrol container. Coastguard Waihi Beach sprang into action with the help of the Westpac Rescue helicopter, who spotted the yellow container from above. Both men are lucky to be alive thanks to the efforts of volunteers who came to their rescue.



### Flames engulfed boat near Waimahani Bay, Northland

A boatie found himself in a frightening situation when his boat caught on fire off the coast of Waimahani Bay, north of Whangaroa Harbour. He was forced to jump overboard after it was engulfed in smoke and flames. Luckily for the boatie, a member of the public immediately alerted Coastguard Whangaroa. By the time they arrived, another boat had picked him up - he was suffering from severe smoke inhalation. The Coastguard volunteers took him back to the beach, where an ambulance was waiting.



### Collision in the Bay of Islands

In the early hours of the morning, three fishermen made a distress call after their boat struck rocks. However, radio operators on shore soon lost contact with them. Coastguard volunteers from the Bay of Islands went out to look for them north of Whale Bay. They found them and their partially-submerged fishing boat under a cliff. The fishermen were shaken by what had happened and thankful Coastguard Bay of Islands could come to their rescue.



### 48km tow off Napier Port

Coastguard Hawke's Bay was called out to a 50ft launch that had run out of fuel during its journey from Whangarei to Picton. Before the rescue crew set out, they loaded additional fuel onto their rescue vessel so that it could be transferred to the boat stuck out in the open sea. The vessel was 48km off the Napier Port and had to be towed by Coastguard Hawke's Bay. It just goes to show that being a Coastguard volunteer is not all guts and glory, but it's great knowing that our volunteers have your back out on the water no matter the situation.



## Your donations save lives at sea

**By funding clothing and medical gear, training and rescue vessels, your donations support our volunteers and save lives at sea - thank you.**

Heading out on the water is a way of life for one in three of us. Kiwis own almost one million recreational vessels - boats, kayaks, canoes, jetskis, paddleboards and craft of all shapes and sizes.

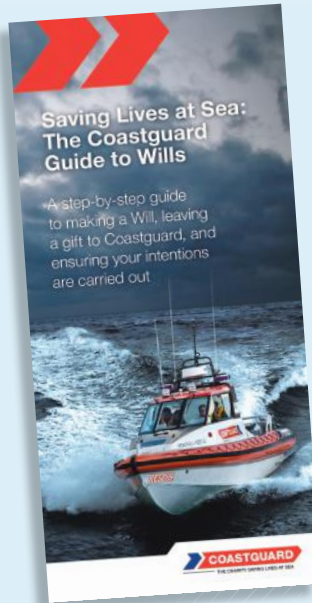
Coastguard volunteers are there for when things don't quite go to plan. Your donations help fund training courses, gear, safety equipment, medical supplies and rescue vessels for our 59 'wet' units, three air patrols, and two communications teams.

Together, you and over 2,200 Coastguard volunteers are saving lives at sea. Thank you so much for your brilliant support.



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If you would like to know more about leaving a gift in your Will that will support Coastguard into the future then please tick one of the following.

- ☐ Please send me information about how I can leave Coastguard a gift in my Will
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