

# Taking lifejacket safety nationwide - Coastguard's Old4New Lifejacket Upgrade Campaign

If a boat capsizes, sinks or a passenger falls overboard, a lifejacket is the number one piece of safety equipment. Lifejackets save lives but they need to be fit-for-purpose to do so!

Coastguard's Old4New Lifejacket Upgrade Campaign encourages boaties to trade-in their old and often dangerous lifejacket for a discount on a brand new, quality Hutchwilco lifejacket.

This summer Coastguard's energetic Old4New team, Sue Tucker and Mary Miller, drove the Old4New van exhaustively across the country. Over a ten week period they stopped at 55 popular boating locations to give boaties the opportunity to be safer at sea.

Many of the 3,000 lifejackets traded-in were unusable and dangerous.

"A farmer brought in an inflatable jacket that had been stored in his barn over winter and the rats had got inside and nibbled the inflatable lining. It was worse than useless. The farmer was shocked, as he had no idea how dangerous it was," said Old4New Community Ambassador Sue Tucker.

Sue also saw jackets that were over 70 years old, filled with Kapok and water-laden. "A chap in Hawkes Bay brought in a Kapok relic he used as a spare for children on board. When I pointed out the poor condition of this jacket, his jaw dropped as in an emergency it would have been more of a hindrance than help. He thanked us and said, 'you'll never know how many lives you are saving nationwide!'"

The benefits of the Old4New campaign also extend beyond our shores, as traded-in lifejackets in good condition are boxed up and sent to communities in need in the Pacific Islands. Since the start of the Old4New Lifejacket Upgrade Campaign in 2014, over 1500 jackets have been donated and are keeping fishermen and children safe at sea. Another great outcome!



Happy boaties have traded in their old lifejackets, with the ones still in good condition heading off to the Pacific Islands to communities in need.

# You rescued a 76-year-old from a cruise liner nightmare

Picture the scene: a 93,000-ton cruise liner, a struggle against fierce conditions, and a passenger's life hanging in the balance. But this wasn't a film – it was a critical, very real situation that our volunteers had to face on January 18th.

Shortly after it had left Auckland, the cruise ship *Norwegian Jewel* made a distress call. A 76-year-old Australian passenger, Linda\*, had suffered a heart attack and needed emergency medical attention. With no way to airlift her from the cruise ship, the *Norwegian Jewel* needed a sea-based rescue. The Coastguard radio team, Police, St John, and Ports of Auckland pilot boat planned how to tackle the challenging conditions to help Linda.

Coastguard volunteers Simon, James, Rebecca, Steven, Tony and Megan launched their rescue vessel at 9.14pm. They reached the cruise ship in just 26 minutes to find Linda's condition was critical. She was drifting in and out of consciousness. She needed urgent medical help.

Linda and her husband were lifted carefully into one of the *Norwegian Jewel*'s lifeboats and lowered down to the rough seas below. The massive cruise liner dwarfed the Coastguard rescue vessel and it was very tricky to stay alongside in such rough, dark conditions. But our volunteers delicately lifted Linda and her husband onto their rescue vessel. Safely aboard, they sped back to their rescue base, and transferred her to a waiting ambulance.

If our volunteers hadn't been on hand to rescue her, Linda might well not have made it. Thank you for supporting our volunteers. You're the reason Linda's life was saved at sea!

\*Names have been changed in this story for privacy.



Coastguard volunteers battled heavy seas in the pitch black to come to the aid of the cruise ship passenger Linda. Photo credit: Simon Marshall, skipper of Lion Foundation Rescue.



Coastguard Auckland are on hand no matter the time or day thanks to your donations.



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PO Box 33559, Takapuna, Auckland 0740



How many people **have you saved** this summer?  
*Find out inside!*



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# The calm voice at the end of the line

Looking out across the sea, volunteer radio operator Ian Graham patiently stands by for the next distress call.

In his role at Coastguard Northern Region Communications, he can receive a staggering 300 calls a day. He's one of the many volunteers you support with your generous donations to Coastguard. It's thanks to you that volunteers like Ian are the calm voice at the end of the line keeping boaties safe on the water.

Ian's volunteered with the Communications team for the past six years, and has seen his fair share of urgent callouts. He has the difficult job of remaining calm and composed even when there's no guarantee the people he helps will be OK. Ian's years of training and experience help get him through these difficult times.

"When a call comes in your heart rate goes up, and you do feel quite nervous," says Ian. "But we do a lot of training and part of that is how to respond to a distress situation. That's very important because any radio operator at any time will out of the blue get a distress call."

"Normally you'd get a routine call dealing with a stuck anchor or a motor that won't start. But when a more urgent call comes in, training is very, very important to make sure we don't clam up."

*(Continued over)*



Volunteer radio operator Ian Graham is always on hand for emergencies.



Patrick Holmes  
Chief Executive Officer  
Coastguard New Zealand

**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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Over 1,000 people rescued thanks to you

SEE INSIDE...

Mary Miller (left) and Sue Tucker (right) have travelled thousands of miles over the summer to keep boaties safe on the water.





