



## Coastguard Supporter Newsletter | Christmas 2019

### You saved a family from losing their lives!

Thanks to you, Coastguard Radio Operators coordinated a multi-agency rescue that saved the lives of a family of three.

Coastguard Radio Operator Nico Doodeman was wrapping up his shift when an urgent call came in from Police at 5.40pm.

A family were in a life-threatening situation when their small boat overturned on the treacherous Port Waikato River bar.

The mum managed to call Police, pleading for help, before the call was abruptly cut off.

**Back in the Coastguard Operations Centre, level-headed and highly trained Nico knew his shift wasn't over. Within seconds he began coordinating a rescue.**


The first step was raising the alarm with Coastguard Waiuku, who are located 20 minutes from the bar.

Whilst volunteers rushed to launch their rescue vessels, Nico got on the radio calling out to any boatie in the area that could help.

Nico knew it was unlikely but if by chance someone close by could help, it would greatly increase the family's chance of survival.

**"For marine emergencies it's quite common to have lots of agencies and many rescue crews responding. It all happens very fast, so you need people there to help figure out how we're going to achieve what we need to,"** said Nico.

*Continued over.*



“ We do a lot of these operations, **but this one was incredibly difficult.** Knowing these people could be dying and we couldn't actually get to them... ”

Nico Doodeman - Coastguard Radio Operator

**Meet Allan & Kate**  
Coastguard heroes saving lives at sea.

SEE INSIDE...



# You saved a family from losing their lives! (Continued)

Lots of rescue crews volunteered to help, but the weather was not on their side. Conditions on the bar made it too difficult for Coastguard Waiuku to cross safely. Onshore, Surf Lifesavers couldn't make out where the sand met the sea and the helicopters above were fighting the sea spray.

**"We do a lot of these operations, but this one was incredibly difficult. Knowing these people could be dying and we couldn't actually get to them..."** said Nico.

It was the sharp eyes and infrared heat detection equipment on board the Police Eagle helicopter that spotted the family. Heat signs showed all three were alive, but barely.

Nico was filled with adrenaline as he worked with the team to figure out a plan. It was decided the safest option was to send a small inflatable rescue boat, guided by search lights from the helicopters.

Fighting the dark, rough seas and the intense pressure of hoping to find the family alive, volunteers finally spotted them. Thankfully alive, they were plucked from the freezing sea and rushed back to shore to get urgent medical care.

The mum and young son were immediately uplifted by rescue helicopter, both critically hypothermic. The situation got much worse when she suffered a heart attack on board the chopper, but the efforts of medical teams helped her survive.

Shaken and cold, the man was taken to hospital by ambulance, where after an anxious wait he was reunited with his partner and her son.

**Thanks to you, the family was saved and no lives were lost that day.**

Radio Operators like Nico are at the core of Coastguard rescues. They are the calm voice that works tirelessly behind the scenes to coordinate rescues 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

**It takes four months of intense training to become a Coastguard Radio Operator. Because of you, volunteer Radio Operators are trained to make lifesaving decisions under pressure. Your donations provide training for our volunteers. Thank you for saving lives at sea.**



Thanks to you,  
our volunteer  
Radio Operators  
can answer,  
on average,  
a staggering  
**5,616**  
calls every week.

## You've helped provide a new lifesaving rescue boat in Canterbury - Thank you!



### After years of fundraising, Kaiapoi Rescue hit the seas in August.

Kaiapoi Rescue will give our volunteers in North Canterbury a safer, bigger boat to save lives and treat injured survivors on deck. It will also handle rough seas better, so our volunteers can keep themselves safe too.

The volunteers' long-serving rescue boat, Kaiapoi 1, will be relocated to Lake Tekapo for use by Coastguard Mackenzie Lakes.

Your support will help Coastguard North Canterbury volunteers save lives at sea for years to come

# Thank You!

**Coastguard volunteers don't just save lives, they save families.** This is only possible thanks to you!

## 291,482

**VOLUNTEER HOURS**  
LAST YEAR

**Heather** is an ordinary person, doing an extraordinary thing - volunteering for Coastguard. She risks her own life and dedicates many hours to save lives at sea.



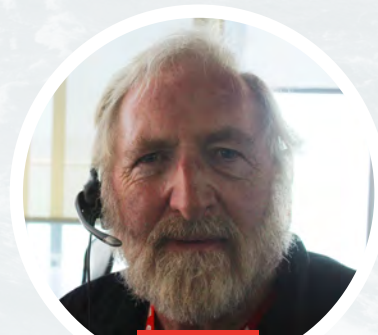
*Heather*

Coastguard Sumner Lifeboat

## 5,616

**RADIO CALLS**  
**RECEIVED EACH WEEK**

Volunteer Radio Operators like **Ian** are the calm voices saving lives at sea. They're ready for the next emergency all thanks to you!



*Ian*

Coastguard Northern Region  
Communications

## 6,774

**PEOPLE BROUGHT HOME**  
**SAFELY LAST YEAR**

Because of you, Peter's daughters still have their Dad. **Chris** had the specialised training to rescue burns survivor Peter when his boat exploded.



*Chris & Peter*

Coastguard Auckland

## 56

**RESCUES**  
EVERY  
WEEK



## 38

**RESCUES NEEDING AIR PATROL**  
**ASSISTANCE**  
LAST YEAR



## Meet Allan Turia: Saving lives on Lake Taupo, thanks to you.

**Turangi local Allan is described by others as having "dedication over the top." That's exactly why we're pleased to announce him as our Century Batteries Rescue Vessel Volunteer of the Year!**

Allan started volunteering for Coastguard in 2002 after he got a job at the local police station. Now a skipper with Coastguard Turangi, Allan is a well-respected mentor and coach who's passionate about getting more youth involved in Coastguard. Thanks to you, Allan is making sure lives are saved at sea long into the future.

Together with a local Iwi trust, Allan started a Cadetship Programme for Iwi descendants to join Coastguard. One cadet is currently working towards his skipper's certificate. This is a great example of his passion for youth and Coastguard! Allan is truly dedicated to saving lives at sea.

Thanks to you, our volunteers are continuously trained to make life-saving decisions under pressure. They couldn't save lives at sea without you.

**Thank you for being part of our Coastguard crew.**



**Want to know more about volunteering? Visit [www.coastguard.nz](http://www.coastguard.nz)**

# Meet Kate Stewart

Coastguard Mana



Thanks to your support, volunteers like 20 year-old Kate are able to have life-changing opportunities with Coastguard. Here's her story:

### When did you join Coastguard and what's your role?

**Kate:** I joined Coastguard in 2015 when I was 16 years old. I'm now senior crew with Coastguard Mana and training to be an Instructor.

### What inspired you to become a volunteer with Coastguard?

**Kate:** I was invited to a training session by one of my mums work colleagues and enjoyed it so much I decided to join.

### What have you learned about yourself since volunteering for Coastguard?

**Kate:** I've developed a passion for helping people and have chosen to pursue a career as a Paramedic. I've learnt that I am capable of a lot more than I thought, I never thought I would be training to become an Instructor. I've learnt I'm good at problem solving, working in a team, being adaptable and staying calm under pressure.

### What has surprised you about working in the search and rescue field?

**Kate:** The number of people from all walks of life, coming together, to achieve the goal of saving lives at sea.

### What do you find most satisfying about your Coastguard role?

**Kate:** The many amazing opportunities I've been given to grow as a person - like training to be a Coastguard Instructor.

### Is there a particular Coastguard-related moment that stands out for you?

**Kate:** I love being out on jobs but also enjoy being out with my training crew, learning and teaching.

### Is there an achievement or contribution that you are most proud of?

**Kate:** Achieving senior crew status was an amazing accomplishment, being one of the few women and the youngest in the unit at the time.

### How has Coastguard changed you?

**Kate:** When I first joined Coastguard I was a bit quiet. There's a bit of a joke that I never spoke on the boat. I'm now confident to run training sessions and be second in charge - something I never thought I would be doing. That confidence has helped me with my paramedic training and being a lifeguard. My life would be very different if I hadn't been invited to join Coastguard.

“  
Achieving **senior crew** was an amazing accomplishment, being one of the few women and the **youngest in the unit** at the time.

Kate - Coastguard Mana”

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

Royal New Zealand Coastguard Inc is the charity saving lives at sea  
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