



Yacht and Boat > Marine Rescue NSW volunteers honoured on Queen's Birthday

## Marine Rescue NSW volunteers honoured on Queen's Birthday



Left: David Lyall ESM, Clareville; Top Right: Bernard (Bernie) Gabriel ESM, Tweed Heads South and Bottom Right: Robert (Bob) Herbert ESM, Wandella

12th Jun 2012

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Three volunteers from Marine Rescue NSW have been recognised for their contribution to safety on the water and the NSW boating community in this year's Queen's Birthday honours.

Bernard (Bernie) Gabriel, David Lyall and Robert (Bob) Herbert have today been awarded the Emergency Service Medal.

Mr Gabriel is the Unit Commander of Marine Rescue Point Danger. Mr Lyall is a member of Marine Rescue Broken Bay and the organisation's property officer. Mr Herbert is the Regional Coordinator for the MRNSW Monaro region on the State's South Coast.

In addition to the Emergency Service Medal recipients, Unit Commander of Marine Rescue Nambucca, Owen Rushton, received an Order of Australia Medal in recognition of his voluntary work in his local community.

MRNSW Commissioner Stacey Tannos congratulated the four members on the national recognition of their distinguished service.

"These awards are an opportunity to thank these volunteers – along with all the members of Marine Rescue NSW – for their work and commitment to serving the boating community," Commissioner Tannos said.

"Our volunteers deserve our gratitude for their contribution to saving lives on the water and improving boating safety.

"They are often called upon to put their own safety at risk, turning out in the worst possible weather and sea conditions, to help boaters in need.

"They also give up valuable time with their families to attend training, support community events, conduct education courses for local boaters and raise funds for our organisation. Many also volunteer with other community groups as well.

"They make a valuable contribution to the safety and wellbeing of our community without

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any expectation of reward or recompense.

"Our members are a credit to our organisation and these awards today give us all a chance to say thank you to them all."

David Lyall ESM, Clareville

Mr Lyall is a volunteer member of the Marine Rescue Broken Bay on Sydney's northern beaches and also one of a small group of support personnel who volunteer their time to provide specific subject expertise to the management of Marine Rescue NSW. Mr Lyall brings extensive experience, skill and enthusiasm to the management of the MRNSW property portfolio. One of the earliest and most demanding tasks faced in the start-up phase of MRNSW (established in 2009) was the need to unify three separate asset portfolios under one umbrella. This painstaking operation would have been beyond the resources of the organisation without the commitment and time Mr Lyall has devoted to this task. He also advises on building and development projects and issues.

Bernard Gabriel ESM, Tweed Heads South

Bernard (Bernie) Gabriel has made a longstanding commitment and contribution to marine rescue, stretching back to 1965, when he became a Foundation Member of Air Sea Rescue (ASR) Tweed Heads, serving the Twin Towns region on the Queensland and NSW border. As a Skipper for more than 20 years, Mr Gabriel has taken part in many rescue operations, particularly on the hazardous Tweed River bar and assisted countless skippers who found themselves in trouble on the water. He also held the position of Chief Controller for more than 11 years, Chief Training Officer and Vice President of Air Sea Rescue for 14 years. Mr Gabriel has been the Unit Commander of Marine Rescue Point Danger for three years and is a Life Member of MRNSW.

Robert (Bob) Herbert ESM, Wandella

Robert (Bob) Herbert is a member of Marine Rescue Batemans Bay and has been the Regional Coordinator for the MRNSW Monaro Region since 2010. In this volunteer role, he is responsible for the coordination of vessels and radio facilities and supports local units and Headquarters. He has been influential in assisting and encouraging members on the South Coast to gain additional boating qualifications and fostered greater emergency services cooperation through his organisation of Search and Rescue Exercises. He has worked tirelessly on the establishment of MRNSW's first inland waterways units at Lake Jindabyne and Lake Eucumbene, helping recruit, train and equip 40 new recruits. He is now working to establish another new unit on the Murray River.

Owen Rushton OAM, Macksville

Owen Rushton is the Unit Commander of Marine Rescue Nambucca and has been an active member of the rescue community in Nambucca for more than 20 years, both on the water and with the VRA on land. In this time he has overseen the acquisition of two new rescue vessels and most recently, the completion of new premises on the water. He has participated in countless rescues and provided support to those who have lost loved ones in marine accidents. He has been media officer, training officer, president, captain and continues as Unit Commander. Owen's services to his community include a committed contribution to education with 27 years as a teacher and to local sport with 12 years' participation in the organisation of the Macksville Gift professional running race that attracts elite athletes from across Australia and around the world.

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