

# Vsheet

Volunteer Marine Rescue

free issue

March 2016



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**VMR**<sub>400</sub>  
Volunteer Marine Rescue  
**SOUTHPORT**

# A day in the life of VMR Southport





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2015 - 2016

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# From the Wheel House



As we approach the autumn months I can reflect on the past summer months with immense pride as we as an organisation stepped up to the plate and safely rescued, towed and assisted the boating public in what has been our busiest period ever. In 1 midweek day alone we attended 10 callouts.

Spend a moment when reading our magazine and look carefully at the 3 months statistics, which will show the enormity of our volunteer members time and effort in replying to your requests for assistance. Having said that, to you the boating public you should be congratulated for your behaviour over these last 3 months. The number of serious incidents caused by misadventure in all areas of water based activities have I believe been reduced making it a safer place for all. Let's hope our wonderful Queensland weather continues throughout the next 3 months ensuring you all enjoy our waterways.

Our old radio tower which was taken down after our new tower was operational and had stood the test of nearly 33 years with aerial cables running up the side of the structure and pretty much untouched. Our new tower with cables running internally until the top and aerial connection have within the 4 months of operation seen we believe birds eat through 3 of our 6 cables, in some cases down to the copper centre, requiring us to now replace these completely. Don't you just love it when nature reminds us who is in control and even volunteer organisations need to plan for costs not expected or even foreseen?

To those of you who have used our facilities for a celebration of some type would have noticed the neat and tidy state of our buildings and grounds. This again falls back to the active members who not only attend to honouring our charter but also have immense pride in their surrounding by doing it themselves. Thank you!

To those members who are involved in the gathering and production of this magazine, I congratulate you for your untiring devotion to a task that I never realised was this large. Many people over the years need to be thanked and I can only hope they continue to support.

Till our June issue

Happy boating and stay safe.

*Dave Macdonald*  
President

PROUD SUPPORTERS OF VMR SOUTHPORT





with Glenn Norris

VMR Southport recently received a late afternoon phone call from a jetski rider whose craft had been swamped and washed onto the rocks on the North wall of the Seaway. To compound the problem, a mate of the troubled rider had come to his assistance to help retrieve his jetski, only to have the towrope sucked into the jet of his ski, rendering it inoperable. It too was washed onto the rocks. Upon VMR's arrival, a risk assessment determined that it was too rough and dangerous to attempt to assist these people. Water Police were now on scene as well. By this stage both jetski riders had managed to retrieve their jetskis to the beach and a 3rd jetski rider was advised by Police to go into the beach and tell these guys to secure their jetskis for retrieval when the sea conditions calmed. As dark was approaching they were then told to walk across the island, leaving their mobile phones switched on, where the Police would pick them up on the inside of the Broadwater. The VMR crew returned to Base. Approximately 45 minutes later a call was received from Police to advise that these two guys had not appeared on the inside of the island and phone coverage had been lost. A request was made for VMR to assist in a search for them. Departing the VMR Base again, a crew reached the Seaway, only to be advised that the two gentlemen had been located safe and well.

The Queensland Ambulance Service ( QAS ) recently requested transport by VMR Southport to a gentleman who had fallen from his surfboard on South Stradbroke Island, possibly suffering a spinal injury. VMR obliged and after trekking across the island Paramedics and VMR crew met a patient in extreme pain, with an obvious back injury. Whilst being treated, a 2nd Ambulance crew was transported by VMR from the Grand jetty to the scene. A decision was made to extricate the patient by Rescue helicopter due to the nature of his injuries. After being given pain relief and fitted into a spinal mattress. The Rescue 500 helicopter from Brisbane arrived, landing on the beach. The patient was loaded aboard and flown to hospital. The resultant condition of the patient is unknown. A great job was done by all concerned.

A concerned member of the public notified VMR Southport recently that an unmanned jetski was floating in the Nerang River. Having a VMR vessel in the area, a crew attended, locating the jetski. Water Police were notified and with a registration number were able to locate the owner who was safe and well. VMR were requested to tow the jetski back to the Base where the owner would collect it. A few hours later 3 people arrived, advising they had been using the jetski before pulling it up on the beach to go and visit friends. On return the jetski was gone and unable to be found. Thinking that it had been stolen, never to be recovered, the trio were driven back to their car by friends, where they headed off home. Reality was the tide had come in and washed the jetski away. A great deal of appreciation was shown of VMR's and Water Police's efforts.

Over the holiday period VMR crews were called on several occasions to jetskis and their riders who had been stranded in areas where the tide drops very quickly, leaving no way out. One occasion was behind Brown Island in the northern Broadwater. 3

people became stranded, requiring them to wade out over 300 metres through soft mud in order to be rescued. In this instance the jetski had to be abandoned. Later in the evening on the high tide, a call was received at VMR Southport that the jetski had been located floating in the mangroves. VMR attended in the early hours of the morning, retrieving the jetski, returning it to its grateful owners who made a generous donation for VMR's efforts. A lesson learnt, if you want to go exploring, always be aware of what the tides are doing and a study of a chart beforehand will save a lot of heartache, as these people discovered.

A lady contacted VMR recently requesting urgent attendance to a car that had rolled down the boat ramp near her residence on the Coomera River. The lady stated ' the car needs a tow real quick '. After determining no-one was in the vehicle, the lady was requested to contact Police, who could sort the matter. A little embarrassed, the lady later called back VMR and said she had panicked and soon realised that a tow truck would rectify the situation better than a boat.

<b>SOME STATS</b>			
<b>ACTIVATIONS</b>	<b>DECEMBER 2015</b>	<b>JANUARY 2016</b>	<b>FEBRUARY 2016</b>
Towed Vessels	50	70	32
Jump Starts	9	9	2
Pump Outs	4		
Transporting	15	3	3
Fire	1		
Standby	2	1	1
Medical	6	6	3
Searches	2		2
Dispersal of Ashes			1
Public Relations	10	5	1
Crew Training	49	95	56
Groundings	3	6	1
Other	11	6	1
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>103</b>

### **ACTIVE MEMBER PROMOTIONS**

Active Members who have achieved higher ranking  
*Congratulations to:*

**Senior Crew**  
 Sarah Race

**Crew**  
 Wayne Summerhayes  
 Michael Mudge



# IT WON'T HAPPEN TO ME – OR WILL IT?



'P.P. Anderson'

Written By  
Senior Constable Adam Howe  
GOLD COAST WATER POLICE

You have worked hard, made sacrifices and saved to be able to buy your boat so your family can enjoy a day out on the water, fishing or just cruising. To have your pride and joy stolen by a criminal is devastating and the impact it can have on the whole family, especially the younger members can be far reaching.

Marine crime is typically focussed in two areas:

- theft of small vessels, primarily those on trailers, and
- theft from vessels, generally where the vessel is easily accessed either on a trailer or in the water and those with modern and expensive electronic equipment

Police receive numerous reports of boats being stolen from driveways, backyards, security garages and pontoons. A boat left on a nature strip outside a house is an invitation for it to be stolen. A spate of recent reports to Gold Coast Water Police has involved dinghies with outboards being stolen as a result of the vessel being ineffectively secured to the pontoon.

The highest risk period for theft from vessels is during school holidays as vessels are opportunistic. During the holidays there is a sharp increase in waterways usage and people often drop their guard when they are in 'holiday mode'. Attractive items such as electronic equipment, outboards, fuel tanks, fishing tackle, propellers, engine cowls including food and alcohol are targeted. Easily disposed of items are considered desirable and often the repair damage caused during the breaking is greater than the value of the item stolen.

The marine public are the only market for marine equipment. Therefore, buying good marine equipment at a very low price is possibly buying equipment that has been stolen. This is effectively encouraging marine theft. Someone once told me, if the price is too good to be true, it probably is.

## What do I do to minimise the Risk – Practising Crime Prevention Strategies

A crime prevention strategy enforced by the Police and insurance companies is, when not in use, anything of value should be removed from the vessel or at least removed from view.

The best prevention is to:

- Lock your equipment away, chain and padlock the outboard with an approved security device.
- Do not leave the keys to your vessel under the equivalent of the flowerpot or doormat – laugh you may, but lots of people have a spare set of keys in a locker next to their helm.
- Photograph the interior and exterior of your boat, showing all valuable equipment. Make a note of all equipment by make,

model and serial numbers. Personalise them as much as possible, paint or engrave the equipment with some obvious mark like your boat name. Engrave the name of your vessel on your anchor.

- Don't leave your boat and trailer unattended for any length of time on the roadside, storage is best on the driveway or in the back yard, preferably chained to something solid.
- Use a tow bar lock and wheel clamp. If possible chain the vessel to the trailer, some vessels like jet skis are small enough to be manhandled from the trailer, fixing it to the trailer adds an extra deterrent.
- Personalise your vessel as much as possible; your tender or small dinghies should be marked in a discrete place with your contact mobile number.

Crime prevention is about making your property difficult to remove, making it easily identifiable as being 'yours' and very difficult to remove your personal 'marks'.

## When buying a boat

Be careful when buying a used boat at a private sale. Verify all identifying numbers to make sure they haven't been tampered with. Be certain that the boat's description on the registration matches the boat you are buying and check year, make, length, and hull identification number.

- Do not buy a boat if the hull identification number has been altered or removed.
- Do not buy a boat that is registered as "homemade" but is obviously a manufactured model.
- Do not buy an outboard motor if the model and serial number plates have been removed.

## Remember the Basics

Thieves like easy access and unattended property. Check your vessel frequently; the chances of recovering your stolen property are far higher if Police know about it soon after the offence. It also greatly improves our chances of obtaining fingerprint evidence from the scene.

Know your neighbours, report unusual activity. We would rather investigate false alarms than increased crime. By being security aware and doing some simple things we can all discourage thieves and help to stop crime.

Be safe, enjoy the water and be considerate to your fellow boaties.

## Remember

If your boat, trailer, or gear has possibly been stolen, you should immediately report it to **Policelink 131444**.

If you are broken into, even if the damage and property stolen is minimal, still report it to **Policelink 131444**.

# SEASICKNESS

Many who have been to sea, in a small fishing boat or a large cruise liner may have at some stage felt a little bit queasy or discomfort in the stomach.

Seasickness is hardly fatal, but with symptoms such as nausea, stomach cramps and vomiting, it can certainly put a damper on your day of fun. Motion sickness is thought to be caused by the visual disorientation resulting from being on an object in motion (ship) competing against our body's natural inclination for balance. Whatever the technical cause, the majority of seafarers are familiar with how rough; rocking seas can leave us feeling less than our best.

Mal de mer, however, is not caused by choppy waters alone. Scientific studies have shown that some folks become seasick by suggestion. They simply convince themselves that being on a vessel will make them ill. On the other hand, for those who can forget about it, it's often smooth sailing.

Some people have a genuine tendency for motion sickness and will undoubtedly suffer more during rough seas. According to medical professionals, seasickness is more prevalent in children and women. On the other hand, children under 2 seem to be immune from the ailment. Of equally interesting note, elderly people are less susceptible.

If you have a proneness to motion sickness or are concerned that you might develop symptoms, arm yourself with preventive measures beforehand. On board a vessel where possible the best strategy is to stay

towards the middle and look at the horizon and if you feel discomfort face leeward.

There are many medications on the market for motion sickness along with acupressure wristbands which report some relief. Old wives' tales tell of taking ginger prior to traveling. I have heard from people unknown to each other, that drinking a carton of chocolate milk before going to sea can also prevent that nauseous feeling.

Eat a light breakfast like tea and toast before heading out. It's best to avoid orange juice and too much alcohol the night before. Whilst on the Broadwater or out on the ocean drink plenty of water and snack on ginger nut biscuits or dry biscuits and green apples if peckish. The peckishness is a good sign that all is well.

I shall leave you with this note from Dr. Timothy Hain, an expert on motion sickness. He writes of some interesting sea-sickness facts:

Motion sickness is the nausea, disorientation and fatigue that can be induced by head motion. The first sign is usually an unhealthy pale appearance. Yawning, restlessness and a cold sweat forming on the upper lip or forehead often follow. As symptoms build, an upset stomach, fatigue or drowsiness may occur. The final stages are characterized by nausea and vomiting.

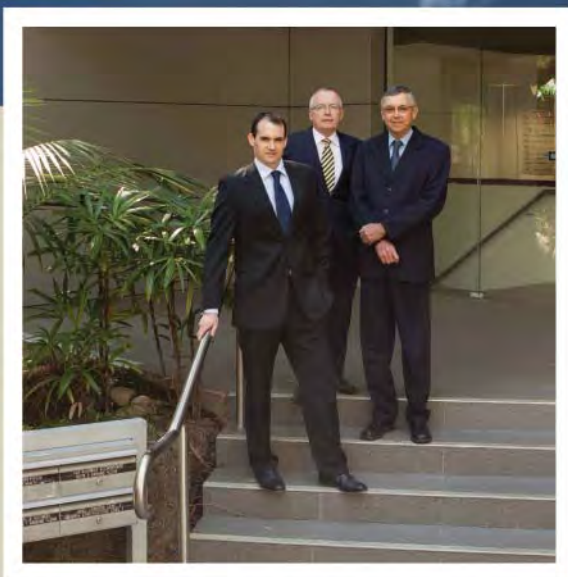
Source:

<http://www.dizziness-and-balance.com/disorders/central/motion.htm>

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Photographed by George Paschedag shortly after the official opening of the seaway 1984

Joint operation by VMR and AVCG.



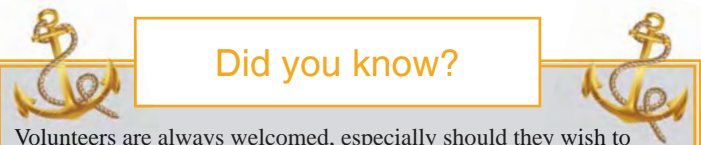
The view as seen by a Seaway Tower Radio Operator; always looking for volunteers



Photo courtesy of Hunter Neuss

# SEAWAY TOWER OPERATIONAL STATISTICS

MONTH	NOV-15	DEC-15	JAN-16
VESSELS	495	805	953
ALL PHONES	512	599	599
TOTAL RADIOS	2428	3276	2417
ASSISTS & REPORTS	120	135	118
RADIO CHECKS	161	178	170
WEATHER REPORTS	210	217	217
TRANSIT ARRIVALS	25	30	36
TRANSIT DEPARTURES	76	57	60



## Did you know?

Volunteers are always welcomed, especially should they wish to join as an active crew member or a radio operator. We even have a general category for those that don't mind assisting in other areas such as office or social functions.

As an active crew member your commitment is generally Tuesday nights for training or a monthly meeting and of course a 24 hour shift every three weeks. This is where our commitment to you is to train you in all aspects of rescue vessel handling and knowledge of the theory side of safe boating with certificates of achievement when modules completed.

As a radio operator you have the choice of a 4 hour shift at either the Seaway Tower or at our base. You can do as many as you like or as few as your time permits.

A visit to our base on a weekend will ensure the duty skipper of the day can show you around, answer questions, introduce you to like-minded volunteers and even start your application process.

Call us anytime on 075591 1300

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# Tales from Rex's Boat Shed.

With Rex Scott

## Part 1: Trailer Maintenance

**I was asked to put together an article on boat maintenance, why me? I suspect it has something to do with the fact that my hair is going grey and that I'm known for being a man of few words. Obviously there is only space for a very short article.**

Or possibly it has something to do with the fact that I was born on an island in Moreton Bay and the school was on another island so apparently I had to go (hee hee, what my dad didn't know didn't hurt him at the time), and the only way to get there other than swim was to go by boat.

Since then I have restored/built/modified/motored/sailed and or sunk boats made of wood, steel, aluminium and fibreglass (I think that only leaves moulded plastic) from an 8ft tinnie to a 36ft yacht. So my experience was gained the hard way!

Enough about me – "Boat Maintenance"

Most boats made today for recreational boaters are made from fibreglass (GRP- glass reinforced plastic) or Aluminium and most of those come with a trailer. So I reckon this article should be about Trailers seeing as how boating doesn't happen if you can't get to the boat ramp!

How many times have you packed up the boat with the Fuel, bait, provisions, safety gear, wet weather gear, bundled the family or mates into the car and on the way to the ramp you pass someone pulled up on the side of the road with a boat in tow, all lopsided cause the axle stub has bitten the dust. You think poor bugger that would be a real bitch. Especially if the kids are in the car, it's hot and they want to know if we are there yet?

You also think, how come 7 out of 10 of these are boat trailers? The answer is always the same, harsh environment coupled with no maintenance! We all love our boat, and lovingly care for it. If you don't, you should! It may just save yours or the lives of those you love one day! But we forget to love our trailer equally.

The things on any trailer (and I'm assuming you have the correct trailer for your boat) that will eventually bring you undone if neglected are: -

- Tyres
- Bearings
- Springs
- Rollers and Pins
- Brakes and Electrics
- Rust and Corrosion

**Tyres:** - Ok, you have checked that there is adequate tread, that they are correctly inflated, that the tread is wearing evenly. Good, now look for cross chaffing or scrubbing, you'll know it when you see it. If in doubt, go for a spin down the street in a straight line and check both your mirrors, if you don't see exactly the same amount of your trailer mud guards in each mirror, one of your U bolt plates holding the axle have moved back along the leaf spring causing the trailer to crab (ie; go sideways rather than follow).

**Bearings:** - This is the biggie! How many people when they pull into the servo to fuel the car or boat bend down and rest the palm of their hand on the trailer wheel next to the hub? Off course you do it every time, so it's the other guy I'm talking about, you know the one broken down on the side of the road! If you can't leave your hand there as long as you like cause it's too damn hot, you have a problem! Next grab the top of the tyre with both hands and give the biggest push or pull in and out that you can and if there is more than the tiniest bit of play, you have a problem!

Forget going boating! If it's hot or loose enough the chances are you might not make the ramp or home. And as you are at the servo, get out of the way and investigate or get help while help is available, cause there won't be any 5k down the road I'll bet. I'm not going to spell out in detail how to replace wheel bearings, you can get that info on the web by searching "Timken Bearing Installations" they have been doing it for about 117 years so should have a fair idea.

What is more important is that you understand how you have arrived at the point where you have a problem.

Let's see:

- nut too tight, too loose, failed to properly fit cotter pin,
- locking nut washer too small, back stub seal perished, inner / outer cones too loose in the hub due to corrosion of the alloy,
- poor quality bearings,
- wrong load ratings for your boat,
- not marine grade bearing grease or too little of it,
- pitting of the axle stub where the bearing roller base fit's too it,
- roller needles pitted,

ok you give up?

So remember this, most boat trailer wheels and hubs today are made from cast aluminium alloy, which contains Zinc. That wheel comprises the rim, spokes, and on small un-braked trailers the hub including the bearing housing. It's worth noting here that the predominant metal used in all sacrificial anodes for marine application is Zinc!

Trailer bearings are case hardened metal and look like stainless steel, at least a quality bearing made in Japan will. Bright, smooth and very hard, but it can also be brittle, especially under extreme heat.

Also we now have the age-old problem of dissimilar metals in the presence of salt and oxygen. That's a galvanic reaction inside your bearing housing causing corrosion and or pitting of the weaker metal ie; Zinc. Oxygen is present in both air and water, so if you can keep them both out by having a quality bearings properly fitted, the back seals in good condition and the bearings and housing full of the right grease, operating under the correct tension and load rating, with a dust cap installed and the wheel is regularly checked as above, you won't ever be that poor bugger on the side of the road!

**Springs:** - Leaf, coil or torsion bar, it is fair to say springs themselves very seldom fail. It is generally the welds at the mounting brackets that fail and generally due to rust. I always give my springs a good drink of Lanox (made from lanolin oil which comes from sheep's wool) every once in a while and that's about it.

**Rollers and Pins:** - Boat rollers should match the weight of the boat, For instance an Ali Plate boat is heavy and will probably have a bigger dead rise angle; deeper "V" and will require high density polyethylene rollers generally blue in colour. Where as a tinnie will only need dense rubber, mostly black. A fibre glass hull will still be heavy but its gel coat will need some protection even though its profile is more contoured than Ali so maybe go for a medium density polyethylene probably red in colour.

Pins are mostly 5/8" (16 mm) in dia. and should be Hot dip Galvanized. If not remember to load them up with Lanolin grease as you fit them, because bright steel will rust at a very rapid rate when introduced to salt water and it is only a matter of time before the rollers cease rolling, boat suddenly got heavy. Split pins of course will be S.steel.

**Brakes and Electrics:** - Queensland Department Transport, will have all the information on when a trailer must be braked. Boat trailer brakes



generally are of a mechanical nature rather than electrical (depending on the Gross Vehicle Mass) as salt water and electrics don't mix. They operate via a piston ram at the draw bar, which operates a calliper arm at the disc, which forms part of the hub on braked trailers. The calliper arm is connected to the piston ram via a wire cable. So car brakes, trailer moves forward on the ram, tightening the cable and thus applies pressure to the calliper arm and engages the disc brakes on the trailer.

Maintenance here is simple, lot's of clean water to rinse away the salt when you get home, keep the moving parts lubricated with Lanox (excluding the disc and pads) and keep an eye on the brake cable adjustment which should be just slack when there is no load on the ram.

Electrics generally refer to trailer lights, and as far as I'm concerned the only trouble free lighting system I've ever had are the ones I made myself. Simple, a piece of marine ply 12 mm thick, 150mm wide and the length equal to the width of the boat trailer. Paint it white and attach all your trailer lights to the board. Number plate and plate light. It's a bit hard to hang the light board off the boat when the outboard is in the way so I used to get a couple of the boat roller mounting brackets, bolt them to the back cross bar of the trailer and get some corresponding box section welded up in a "L" shape with a flat end plate that I could screw to the back of the light board.

The "L" brackets then dropped into the roller mounting brackets and the whole light board could be lifted off before launching the boat. A long cable lead running inside the boat and connecting directly to the light socket attached to the car, meant my lights never saw salt water and lasted indefinitely.

**Rust and Corrosion:** - If you have a nice new boat and trailer, chances are the trailer is all aluminium alloy, Joy! Give it a rinse, grab a beer and put your feet up? Not yet! The next best is a trailer frame that has been fully fabricated then sent away to be hot dip galvanized, but even so it's highly likely that the axle is mild steel with a coat of paint just like the alloy trailer. Axle and stubs could be a one-piece bar or the machined

stubs are welded to a steel box section forming the axle. Either way the stubs cant be hot dip galvanized as they are a precise machined component that accept the rear seal, the inner and outer bearing race and the locking nut and cotter pin.

Depending on how a trailer frame is fabricated, often when you first see rust, the damage is already done because they can rust from the inside out. Give it a good wack with the Ball of an engineers hammer, and if the hammer goes straight through the metal, you have a problem.

If it is only surface rust, it's fixable depending on how much metal has been lost, and provided you act on it now. So start by de-scaling the rust, clean up the remainder with a wire brush in the electric drill, generously apply a rust converter containing phosphoric acid and when dry, coat with an etching primer. I used to paint my trailer axle and or frame with a 2 part epoxy tar, but they don't seem to make it any more, so now I use a 2 part epoxy the marine chandlers sell for painting underwater boat parts like rudders and shafts as a base under antifoul.

The product I use is "Sigmacover 280" yellow / green base and when it has cured I topcoat with "Ormanoid silvershield," It's a bitumen base with aluminium flakes and is necessary because epoxy's contain no ultraviolet inhibitors and will break down in sunlight I recently had to replace the back cross rail on my ramp trolley as it had rusted from the inside out and has to be strong as it supports the back roller, bow guides, the back end of the bed or skid rails and in my case the end of the deck plank (no point getting your feet wet if you don't have to!). So when we were welding the new rail into the frame I cut end caps, welded them to totally seal the rail. Then drilled a 1/2" hole in the top of the rail, welded a gal m12 nut over the hole, filled the rail with sump oil and inserted a small m12 gal bolt with soft washer into the nut and painted the whole thing as above, rust now you little bugger!

Corrosion on trailers, I think I have dealt with adequately under bearings.

Let the boating begin!!



# THE DAY IS NOT OVER

This is a story about a volunteer. A compilation of stories told from a number of interviews with volunteers. It is a story of dedication and comradeship of those who choose to volunteer in the marine rescue field. As the years go by, each volunteer builds a trust in their fellow members, a bond that holds each other's life in their hand especially during dangerous rescues, in sometimes adverse and treacherous conditions. There are no names of volunteers or vessels and any similarity to actual events is purely coincidental, but it is a story that should be told as it has a strong message, generally ignored by these men and women during the course of their duty.

For the purpose of the story we will call our volunteer SKIP, a youngish man, full of energy, knowledgeable and hungry to climb the corporate ladder. His working week is filled with day-to-day turmoil's of high-pressure work within his industry. Skip has just spent the last intensive week in a training seminar updating his skills in the latest equipment for the company. His promotion within the business being contingent on him successfully passing the required assessments and exams completed throughout the training week.

Today is Saturday, the day started early with 4 hours of assessments and a day of home duties before going to the base to commence his 24-hour shift at 6pm. The first half of the shift consisted of a very late night (well after midnight) training for the newer members of his crew. An early rise on Sunday morning to prepare for the day and ensure everything is ready for the possible onslaught of jobs. The day rolls along relatively smoothly, actually uneventful and passes comparatively quickly.

Whilst packing his gear up and cleaning the boats for the end of shift with 30 minutes to go, he was informed of a vessel requiring assistance. Aware of the simplicity of the job and mindful not many are able to stay back, he selects only one crew member. The job goes according to plan and is completed fairly quickly thankfully with no unexpected complications. Looking forward to the day being completed he heads back to base to attend to the final paper work before finally going home.

On the way back he received a call from the overnight operator at Base advising him there is another vessel requesting assistance. Knowing the location of the vessel is on his way back and being mindful of the time having just reached after 7pm, not wanting to spoil other member's night off and after consultation with his crew member he confirms they will assist.

Now, this is a large vessel possibly 3 times the size of Skip's boat, dragging anchor towards sandbanks in the now 20knot plus winds. To complicate the situation further, Skip has just been told the vessel has no power due to battery failure. He is now faced with the unenviable task of trying to secure the stricken vessel and also raise their anchor with only 1 crew member. Eventually after what felt like an eternity and with

some help from the people on board they are on the way to the marina berth.

The vessel under tow and with the passage clear ahead both he and his loyal crew member are gathering their breath and regaining some form of strength and composure back. Reflecting on the feat undertaken and how well his crew member managed the mammoth task, Skip focuses on what potentially may lie ahead as he continues the journey towards the marina.

As he approaches the allotted berth he notices 2 very large and expensive boats at either end. It's at this point that Skip realised just how exhausted and fatigued he was and began wondering how many mistakes he had been making over the last 4 hours, it was now heading close to 11pm. After tirelessly maneuvering the vessel into the confined space and with assistance of onlookers the vessel was berthed successfully without a scratch. The day was not over as he still has to secure the vessel, before returning to Base, complete paperwork, go home for some food (having last eaten at lunch) a night's sleep and be ready for the working week in the morning.

Skip and his crew member were awarded accolades from the vessel owner for professionalism and stoicism.

This story like so many heard about volunteers in the quest to help others, forget about their own health and well-being and become rundown and quite often fatigued. As with Skip and his own recognition, fatigue is a state of mental and or physical exhaustion that could reduce a person's ability to work safely and effectively. In many cases with volunteers it can occur because of prolonged or intense mental and physical activity, sleep loss and extensive exposure to the elements and working in extreme conditions.

As well as assisting members and aiding the community, it is also imperative for volunteers to have a duty of care and be responsible for their own safety and that of co-workers by monitoring and looking out for signs of fatigue. We all strive to be the best we can when it comes to assisting others, and quite often it is to the detriment of our own general well-being.



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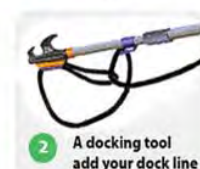
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# Alan Coy

I have been a Radio Operator at VMR Southport for the past three years. Over the past twelve months I have held the position of Seaway Tower Manager. This role requires the liaison between VMR Southport and AVCG Southport as the Tower is jointly manned by volunteer Radio Operators from both organisations 16 hours each day.

Outside of VMR I have been involved in boating for 40 years and still enjoy time out on the water with family and friends. I also spend my leisure time cycling and golfing.

I am currently retired from the business world and following 35 years of managing my own Company followed by my role managing a large Materials Handling business I am hopeful that some of my experience will be of assistance to VMR Southport.



# Martin Walsh



## VMR role

Joined VMR as an associate member in 2010.

Became an active member in January 2014 - Green Crew.

Elected as Committee Member in April 2014 - Interim position due to resignation.

Elected as Committee Member AGM 2014 - took on roles to Chair Membership Sub-Committee, Assist with migration of Web-Site platform, Instigated on-line Crew Forum and participated on the Pontoon Repair sub-committee.

Elected as Vice-President AGM 2015.

## Business Role

Works as a specialist strata property consultant to the development industry.

Currently employed by Foxtel - Strata Account Manager.

Previously Employed by Stewart, Silver King and Burns - Development Consultant.

Previously Employed by Telstra - Technical Specialist.

B.Bus (Accounting).

Cert IV in Property Management.

Cert III in Electronic Technology.

## Family Role

Married with 3 Adult children and 1 Grandchild.

## Social Role

Active on the water - current vessel Honda Aquatrax Jet Ski.

previous vessels - Hartley Half Cabin, Cruise Craft Ski Boat, Yamaha Waverunner.

# Dave Macdonald

Began my career in banking with one of the majors. Transferred to New Zealand with the idea of transferring around the world. Returned to Australia and tried a life in the luxury hospitality industry.

Returned to the finance industry and continued until some 25 years ago when I had a sea change that got me out of offices and into the building industry to help out a friend, this morphed into property maintenance and I am still there. I think I am too scared to retire at present.

Joined VMR to

1 repay society that has been good to me and obviously learn and improve my skills.

2 In doing that found a great bunch of like minded people with the same attitude.

I have found immense pleasure in remaining active and helping others. To my wifes amusement I lasted the first 5 years and now towards the end of this year will I hope tick the box for 20 years.

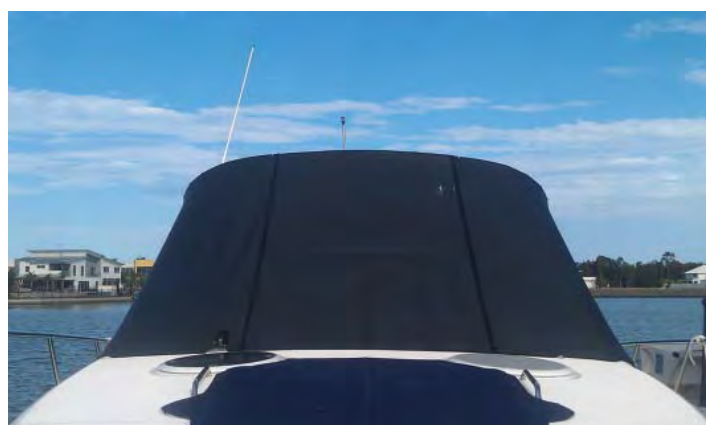
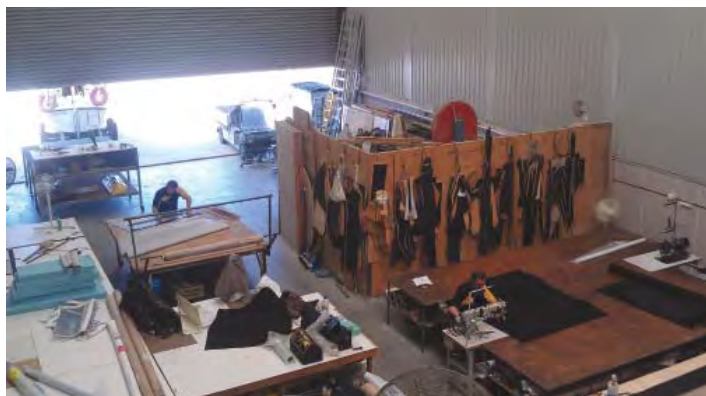


# Caring for Boat Fabrics and Trims

with Nathan Brown

Custom Marine Trimming is a family owned and run trim shop that specialises in the marine market but is capable of much more. The commencement of Custom Marine Trimming in 2007 was the result of the well-known marine manufacturer, Haines Hunter, relocating to Melbourne, Victoria from their base situated at Yatala, Queensland. At that time, Gary and his sons, Cameron, Nick and Nathan, ran the in-house trim shop. As this move coincided with the redevelopment of Horizon Shores Marina by Meridien Marinas it was decided to base Custom Marine Trimming in this growing precinct.

Gary and his sons have a combined total of 100 years' experience together in the marine trimming industry. In that time they have taken ongoing contracts with boat companies involving production schedules. The work required designing seating, lounges, side boxes, all weather covers suitable for production. Also, our customers of privately owned vessels are offered custom fitted designs for all external and internal trim work.



## Care and cleaning of acrylic canvas

- Regularly use a sponge and soft brush to apply mild soap and warm water to canvas. Rinse thoroughly. Air dry. You should never use a high-powered washer to clean your covers; the pressure can damage the cotton.
- Mildew and mould can't and won't grow on acrylic canvas, but, can and will grow on dirt. Therefore it is advised that owners regularly clean their covers.

## The recommend cleaning process for clears

- Remove any particles on the surface of the materials to avoid scratches when wiping with a clean cloth

- Clean with a soft fabric cloth using a diluted warm water based detergent solution of 1:10 (1 part detergent to 10 parts water) use a neutral detergent, and always check with the manufacturer.
- Rinse completely with clean water and wipe dry with a soft lint free cloth or sponge.

You should never fold your clears, always roll the clear for storage. Never roll up your clears when wet, irreparable damage may occur due to the sunlight magnifying through the clear, and heating up the moisture captured inside.

If your clears are hard to see through and the outside surrounds are still ok, we can sew new clears in and cut the old ones out.

## The recommend cleaning for zips and zip runner.

- When it comes to your zips, you should regularly lubricate zips and zip runners.
- Never force a zip as you may damage it. Salt builds up inside your zip runners, which will stop the zip from working freely.
- If you regularly spray your zips with silicone spray (not WD40), you will maximums the life of your zips.

## The recommend cleaning and maintenance for press-studs

- With press-studs, a little bit of Vaseline on each clip will help to stop the salt build up.
- If you have any clips that are stuck, use a flat head screw-driver between the press-stud and the clip in your cover to pop it off.
- You should never try pull on the cover as the clip may pull out of the cover completely.

## The recommend cleaning for vinyl and leather cushion

- When it comes to your vinyl and leather cushion, we recommend using Arco. This product helps to protect your cushions and will also help in removing marks. It also stops the vinyl or leather from drying out and cracking.
- With regular maintenance, you can maximize the life of your covers, clears and cushions. If you have any questions about cleaning or if you need new covers, we are more than happy to assist.

## The recommend cleaning for mesh windscreen covers

Looking after your mesh windscreen covers, and mesh in your side curtains or storm covers.

- Keep the fabric clean by brushing regularly both side of the fabric using a soft-bristle brush and hosing occasionally with clear and cold water.
- Do not apply detergents, cleaning fluids, soaps.
- Do not allow foreign matter; dirt, bird droppings, tree sap etc., to remain in contact with the fabric.
- Do not allow petrochemicals or solvents to come in contact with the fabric.
- Avoid harsh scrubbing or rubbing otherwise the surface of the fabric may damage.
- Before stowing away your shade, ensure that the fabric is dry.

## Removing stubborn stains from your mesh

- Mix a weak concentration of household detergent (1; 20) in lukewarm water. The detergent must not contain solvents

- Apply the detergent and water mix to the fabric using a soft cloth, sponge, soft bristle or soft mop. After cleaning rinse off ALL residue with plenty of fresh clear, cold water
- Always check with manufacture beforehand.

Truck wash, car wash, or mineral turps should never be used on any of canvas, clears, vinyl or leathers. As harsh chemicals can take the protective UV coating off, and this will lessen the life of the materials.

With your boat being shut up for weeks or months at a time, you can start to get mildew or mould inside the cabin of your boat. If you can't leave a hatch window open, due to water getting in when it rains. Leave a couple of moisture absorbers around the cabin, preferable down low. This will help to get some of the moisture that builds up, and make sure you put a plug in the sink, and leave the toilet lid shut. You can pick plugs from any supermarket, or hardware.

### Maintaining carpets

There are two alternative methods of maintaining carpets.

- The first one is for dry carpets; the best way is to regularly vacuum. Preferably with a power head vacuum or a normal vacuum can be used as well. If the carpet is loose laid, vacuuming the backing side is also recommended.
- The second method is to hose the carpet with fresh water. Using warm water and mild household detergent. Soak the carpet with the solution for a few minutes, and then rinse thoroughly with clean water on both front and back of the material. It's important when using the wet method; carpet should be left in open air to dry.

Never hang your carpet over the side of the boat or a fence, or use fabric softener. Never use a pressure washer on your carpet, as this may stretch the carpet pile and it will not fit properly. For removing stains, it is always important to act quickly to remove efficiently.

If the carpet is able to be wet, use some mild household detergent or some very mild bleach solution and water, lightly rise through with clean water. If the carpet cannot be wet, use either a branded carpet spot cleaner (as directed). You should always check with the manufacture before using any chemicals on your carpet.

### With your boat on the trailer

When towing your boat, you should remove any clears, and covers. There is a lot of wind pressure on your clears and covers when towing boat. With late model cars having more power, it is not uncommon to see someone going down the highway at 110kh with the boat in tow. This will in time stretch clears and any covers.

The bimini canopy and clears will act like a parachute; this puts a lot of pressure on the stitching and fittings on your covers. You should roll your clears (never fold your clears) and place them in the boat where they will not get damaged.

For your canopies and biminis you should fold them down if possible and secure them from moving around. You can get a sock made for this by your local marine trimmer. It is a cover with a zip you put over your bimini or canopy and zip together when the cover is folded back. By doing this, your covers will last a lot longer.

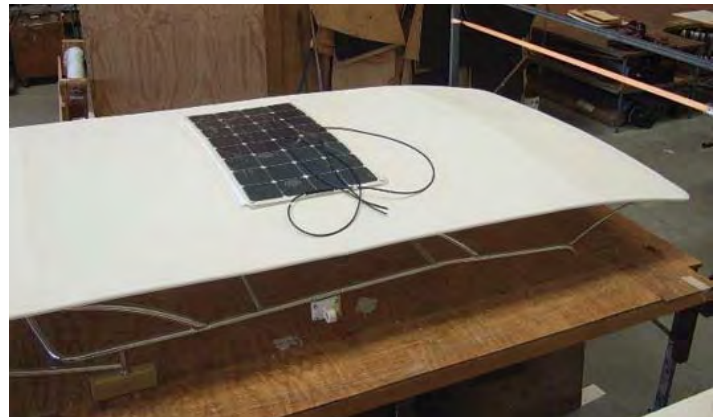
Custom Marine Trimming has its own in house wood shop, vinyl welder and carpet overlocker facilities. We now also do flexible solar panels. If you need extra power and you don't have a frame to take ordinary solar panels, flexible are the way to go. They can be zipped on to new covers or clipped on to pre-existing covers and come in various wattages.

Contact details for Custom Marine Trimming

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## VALE : ROGER 'HICKO' HICKMAN

*What matters is not what we bought, but what we built; not what we got, but what we gave.*

*What matters is not our success, but our significance.*

*What matters is not what we learnt but what we taught.*

*What matters is every act of integrity, compassion, courage or sacrifice that enriched, empowered or encouraged others to emulate our example.*

*What matters is not our competence, but our character.*

*What matters is not how many people we knew, but how many people will feel a lasting loss when we are gone.*

*What matters is not our memories, but the memories that live in those who loved us.*

*What matters is how long we will be remembered, by whom and for what.*

*Living a life that matters doesn't happen by accident.*

*It's not a matter of circumstance, but a matter of choice. (Poetic Expressions)*

Vale, Roger Hickman.

VMR Southport joins the yachting fraternity in extending sympathy to the family of Rolex Sydney Hobart winner, Roger 'Hicko' Hickman and to the many who crewed with him in over thirty Hobart races and, in particular, the winners on his yacht, WILD ROSE, in 2014.

Following the tragic loss of life in the 1998 Sydney Hobart Race, Cruising Yacht Club Australia (CYCA) established Trusts to assist the immediate needy family of those lost at sea during Yachting Australia sanctioned races, to provide assistance to search and rescue organisations and to foster research and training to improve procedures and equipment for use at sea.

Active Members of VMR Southport have provided the safety and finishing-line radio service for a number of years for the CYCA Sydney to Gold Coast Yacht Race. Following the establishment of the Solas Trust, Roger Hickman, as Rear Commodore, invited and actively supported a VMR Southport submission for a grant for the replacement of the Base radios. A further substantial grant has recently been provided by the Solas Trust towards the costs of the new Radio Tower .





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# GOING OFFSHORE FOR THE FIRST TIME

Sitting in the comfort of your marina berth can easily offer you a false sense of security with regards to the overall seaworthiness of your vessel. Prior to any offshore cruising whether it be coastal or ocean crossings it is imperative you ensure your vessel is completely prepared for the voyage.

Hauling your vessel is very important to ensure the condition & cleanliness of the hull bottom and running gear as this can seriously hinder your fuel economy over long distances. At this time you should also check the integrity of all under water running gear including propellers, shafts, shaft bearings, anodes, rudders & stock bearings, bow & stern thrusters and stabilizers. Additionally all-through hull penetrations, fittings and valves should be inspected and replaced if any weeping or corrosion is evident or the isolating valves are tight in operation.

Ensure you have an intimate knowledge of your vessel and its operation so you can maintain it while underway with best sea keeping practices in mind. It is also important that the master and crew have a sound un-

**By Rod Twitchin of RTM Marine,  
courtesy of Gold Coast City Marina**

derstanding of all safety equipment on board with regular drills ensuring swift reactions in the case of an emergency. When voyage planning you should factor a suitable fuel reserve (15-20%) coupled with enough water and stores should your course be altered by unknown factors causing more miles to be covered equalling a greater time at sea.

Prior to departure it is advised to conduct a final check over the vessel ensuring all bilges are dry, the fuel and water tanks are pressed etc. coupled with the items mentioned above. The weather and tides should also be monitored for your departure with a structured navigation watch in place so the crew know their obligations lessening the possibility of fatigue. All vessels are different and the above is a guideline only - if you have any questions relating your vessel please feel free to contact Rod Twitchin Marine or the friendly staff at Gold Coast City Marina.



## PREPARATION CHECKLIST

Ensuring the vessel is sound with water and weather tight integrity in mind

- All seacocks are easy to cycle for ease of servicing systems and for isolating in the event of an emergency
- All machinery and systems are serviced and functioning well with adequate spares on board
- All bilges are dry and clean with all bilging systems operational
- Fuel tanks are clean without any contamination settled in the sumps that could potentially block filters when in open water and the vessel is rolling and pitching
- Rigging and sails are sound (if applicable)
- All batteries and electrical systems are in good working order
- Communications and navigation equipment is working including all navigation lights as per COLREGS
- All safety and fire fighting equipment is in good working order, registered or in date where applicable. Additionally regular drills should be performed to ensure all crew are aware of equipment location and operation in the event of an emergency
- Registrations, insurances, passports are current and customs are contacted if applicable
- A sail plan is generated accompanied by the relevant paper charts to back up any possible GPS failure

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# Brush up on spearfishing rules on the Gold Coast

People looking to enjoy a spot of spearfishing on the Gold Coast over Easter are reminded to familiarise themselves with rules around where they can and cannot spearfish.

Queensland Boating and Fisheries Patrol (QBFP) acting district manager Mathew Davidson said 'spearfishing is prohibited in all fresh waters and the use or possession of a spear or spear gun within prohibited waters is an offence.'

'QBFP officers conduct regular patrols on the Gold Coast and those found spearfishing in closed waters are risking a maximum fine of \$110,000,' he said.

Spearfishing regulations are in place to maintain safety and avoid potentially conflicting uses of the waterways, including boats entering while spear fishers are in the water.

Spearfishing is prohibited in the following Gold Coast tidal waters: Tallebudgera Creek upstream of a straight line between the eastern extremity of Burleigh Heads marked with a SF↑B (Spear Fishing Boundary) sign, and the seaward extremity of the rock groyne on the southern bank of the creek mouth.

The Gold Coast Seaway upstream of a straight line between the tip of the northern wall to the tip of the southern wall.

This means that spear fishing activities cannot occur on the inside of the walls; however spear fishing can be conducted on the seaward sides of each wall. Persons wishing to spear fish on the outside of the northern wall must have access to a vessel. It is NOT acceptable to swim across the Seaway with a spear or spear gun even if it is unloaded or disassembled.

Waters of Southern Moreton Bay including the Gold Coast Broadwater other than between these imaginary lines:

a) a line from a SF↑B sign at The Bedroom, South Stradbroke Island, to a SF↑B sign on the north-eastern shore of Woogoompah Island

b) a line from a SF↑B sign at Currigee, South Stradbroke Island, to a SF↑B sign on the shore at Hollywell near Azalea Avenue.

100 metres of public jetties, for example the sand pumping jetty and public jetty at Paradise Point.

Mr Davidson said 'all the normal rules, regulations, size and possession limits for recreational fishing also apply to the spear fisher.'

'Spear fishers need to be aware of the potential dangers to themselves and others in the water,' he said.

'Be aware of the weather and sea conditions, use a diver-below flag as well as a diving partner, know your equipment and keep it in good condition.'

For more information on Queensland fishing rules, visit [www.fisheries.qld.gov.au](http://www.fisheries.qld.gov.au), call 13 25 23 or download the free 'Qld Fishing' app from Apple and Google app stores.

Follow Fisheries Queensland on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram (@FisheriesQld).

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## GCWA keeps the channels clear

A range of works aimed at keeping navigation channels safe and accessible in Gold Coast waterways are underway or being planned for delivery by the Gold Coast Waterways Authority (GCWA) over the next three months.

GCWA CEO, Hal Morris, said maintaining safe access for all waterways users was a vital part of the Authority's role.

"Navigational channels are constantly subject to changing tides and weather conditions that result in a build-up of sand which can cause these channels to become narrow or too shallow to use safely," Mr Morris said.

"With reliance on Gold Coast waterways for recreation, it's important that we take a disciplined approach to keeping the channels clear and open."

Residents and other community stakeholders from throughout the region have been consulted on the planned navigation improvements from the Broadwater to the main navigation channel north and to southern Stradbroke Island.

Channel Maintenance projects are currently in the planning, consultation or delivery phase in the following areas:

- South Arm Coomera River
- Cabbage Tree Point main channel
- Jacobs Well main channel
- Tipplers Passage
- North Channel, South Channel and South Wavebreak Island Channel
- Biggera Creek

with  
**Annabel Walden**  
Executive Coordinator  
Gold Coast Waterways Authority



"While clearing navigation channels is business-as-usual in an area such as the Gold Coast which is gifted with inland waterways, canals and beaches, it is important to point out that all works are only carried out following receipt of strict environmental approvals from the relevant State Government agencies," he said.

Mr Morris said that while the Authority was inviting tenders for works throughout the Gold Coast, these works would only go ahead once the required approvals were in place.

"We are going to the market to get the best value for channel clearing projects and to ensure the specialised equipment is available when we need it."

Last week, GCWA invited tenders for channel clearing around Wavebreak Island in the southern Broadwater. This follows close consultation with groups with a strong interest in the area.

"Our aim is to reuse sand wherever possible to nourish foreshores to protect property and improve amenity in the area," Mr Morris said. "Where this isn't possible, we deposit the sediment offshore in designated areas approved by the relevant environmental authorities."

Changing weather conditions may affect scheduled works and interested community members are encouraged to visit the GCWA website or Facebook page for up-to-date information. <http://www.gcwa.qld.gov.au/>

## VMR Southport's Charter



To save and assist in saving life and property at sea.

To provide personnel and equipment in order to carry out search and rescue operations at sea and on the Gold Coast waterways.

To liaise and work with other marine rescue groups.

To undertake campaigns to educate members of the boating public in matters of marine safety.



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