



THE AUXILIARIST

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Mariner Helping Mariner Patrolling Howe Sound and Beyond

The Coast Guard's Auxiliary Unit 1 (Howe Sound) was originally formed in 1978 by five local boat owners on Passage Island. One of the original founding members, Jorg Hellssen, owner of the Bismarck IV, still participates in training exercises and search and rescue (SAR). Hellssen recounts the first few years of the unit, when no one received reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses, "We had no pagers then. We listened to the radio and went out. Channel 19A was used by Vancouver Radio to dispatch 'Owner / Operators'. My first compensation was a salmon. I had towed a sailboat from Gibsons to Horseshoe Bay, and the family gave me a salmon as an expression of their thanks." During his third year, Hellssen was involved in the resolution of over 85 SAR incidents.

The Howe Sound unit has 114 members, two community-owned boats, and 22 owner-operated craft, which cover the waters of Howe Sound, Port Moody Harbour, Indian Arm, Vancouver Harbour, English Bay, and the area surrounding Vancouver International Airport. From accountants and mechanics, to firemen and doctors, Auxiliary volunteers dedicated to marine search and rescue, provide 24 hour pager

support to the community, while others focus on SAR prevention activities (courtesy examinations, safety lectures, etc.).

Most recently, members of the Howe Sound unit were called in to help search for the three boys who tragically lost their lives while canoeing in the waters south of Anvil Island. During the difficult 21 hour search, over 22 volunteers assisted the Coast Guard.

The Auxiliary plays an essential role on the West Coast. According to Captain John Palliser of the Rescue Coordination Centre, "The Coast Guard is grateful to the Auxiliary's volunteers. Their dedication to the wellbeing of their fellow mariners make them an invaluable asset to the SAR system."



Auxiliarists John Wright and Alan Gray aboard the Auxiliary 1



Canadian
Coast Guard

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Canada

First Graduating Class of the Coast Guard Rescue Specialist Program

Since its modern day inception in 1962, the Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) has sought to provide the marine community with the highest standard of search and rescue services possible.

On February 14, 1992, the Canadian Coast Guard reached a milestone, with the graduation of the country's first fourteen Coast Guard Rescue Specialists. The 1992 graduating class is as follows:

Rob Bennet, Gord Cairo, Mark Charlton, Dave Dahlgren, Graham Frame, Russell Jersch, Jim Kensett, John Mackie, Collin Michael, John Millman, Chris Moller, John Nielssen, Kent Reid, Gary Stewart.

THE AUXILIARIST

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Opinions expressed are those of the author and may not always represent official TC/CCG policy.

CONGRATULATIONS!

The Canadian Coast Guard has always dispensed assistance to citizens in distress, until now it did not require that a certified Rescue Specialist be assigned to every active station and vessel crew. Although this is the first class of Coast Guard trained Rescue Specialists, the Coast Guard has a long tradition of dedicated and motivated operational personnel who have provided service to the marine community.

These highly skilled professionals are drawn from among the nation's most capable Coast Guard personnel, and are recommended for this training by their Commanding Officers or station Officers-In-Command (OICs). Candidates are initially evaluated against, what has been colloquially referred to as, the "100 Point List", which demonstrates proficiency in basic seamanship. Further screening then assesses the applicant's suitability to deliver emergency services (particularly in the realm of patient care). If these criteria are met, the individual holds current certificates in standard first aid and CPR, and has successfully completed the medical requirements, he/she qualifies for the Rescue Specialist program.

Generally completed over a 24 month period, the curriculum consists of instruction in emergency medical care, the operation of rigid hull inflatable boats, and ocean rescue swimming. Supplementary

seamanship courses in fire fighting and marine survival, round out this precedent-setting program.

The emergency medical training of a CCG Rescue Specialist (R/S) is comprised of two modules, Medic "A" and "B". Medic "A" includes advanced first aid, treatment of immersion hypothermia and scuba diving injuries, and marine disaster scene management (triage). Medic "B" covers advanced patient pre-hospital care, and instructor training in the subjects of Marine-Oriented First Aid and CPR.

This second phase (Medic "B") in the program is slated to commence after the initial corps of Rescue Specialists have been deployed for over a year.

Medic "B" is of particular significance to the R/S serving aboard a Coast Guard ship, as he/she is more likely to be faced with the task of caring for a patient for an extended period (in excess of 24 hours), or being required to train crew members in first aid and CPR procedures.

Graduates of these medical modules possess skills comparable to those of an Emergency Medical II or a mid-level paramedic.

Time is often the most critical factor in a search and rescue incident, therefore a Rescue Specialist must be able to deliver assistance as quickly as possible. And since he is responding to an emergency situation in a marine environment, the R/S must be capable of employing all of the resources,

and skills necessary to affect a rescue at sea. A primary tool utilized in the resolution of marine SAR incidents, is the Rigid Hull Inflatable, or RHI.

Many people associate these "rubber boats" with Zodiac, but they are generically referred to in the industry as RHIs. These boats have come to play an important role in the Canadian Coast Guard's overall SAR capability, as they respond to roughly 40% of all incidents.

Versatile and highly manoeuvrable, RHIs have become the staple fast rescue craft of the Canadian Coast Guard. The boat's ability to operate in shallow waters, or in adverse sea conditions, where the effectiveness of larger vessels may be diminished, make the RHI an essential element of the Coast Guard's response repertoire.

Specialized training is required to learn how to operate these boats effectively, in emergency conditions, often under less than ideal circumstances (e.g. travelling at various speeds (up to 50 knots), through treacherous waves; or at night, with next to zero visibility). To meet this distinctive training requirement, the Coast Guard personnel **Kevin Tomsett** and **Jeff Nemrava** developed the RHIOT training program. The Coast Guard conducts the week-long RHI operator training program throughout the winter months, at Bamfield, B.C., where students are challenged by the turbulent waters off the west coast of Vancouver Island.

The Ocean Rescue Swimmer program provides the R/S with

the vital skills required when deployed to swim to the aid of a victim at sea. This module of the Rescue Specialist program was developed by the Canadian Coast Guard's **Gordon Boivin**.

In 1988, Boivin, an Advanced Diving Medic, and member of the British Columbia ambulance service, developed the Coast Guard's Ocean Rescue Swimmer Program (ORS), and what has grown to become the only emergency response training program of its kind in the world.

The course teaches the swimmer how to manoeuvre in difficult sea conditions, often dragging tow lines, or life-saving equipment; how to assist the injured, traumatized, and frequently struggling victim, while coping with rapid weather changes; and how to negotiate rescues along imposing shorelines. The physical demands of this element of the Rescue Specialist Program, made it necessary for the Coast Guard to define exacting fitness requirements for student eligibility. These parameters were determined through a process developed by the Departments of Physical Education and Kinesiology at the University of Victoria, and adopted by Transport Canada in 1990.

Once the rigorous program has been completed, Rescue Specialists are certified for three years, during which time they must maintain their qualifications. A home study plan, participation in SAR exercises, a regular personal fitness regimen, as well as essential time spent observing in an emergency healthcare environment (on board ambulances, in trauma

centres, etc.), completes the framework for skills maintenance.

Spearheading the regional effort for the past decade, has been **Captain Peter Golden**. As Western Regional Manager of Search and Rescue, Captain Golden is responsible for responding to the marine SAR needs of an area in which more incidents occur annually, than any other district in the country — **"The R/S training program is very important to the Coast Guard, as it clearly establishes a 'reasonable' level of service which the marine community can depend on in a rescue situation. I am pleased that this innovative program originated, and has successfully evolved, in this region. But I am particularly proud of the passionate and professional contributions, made by the many members of the Coast Guard, past and present, who persevered to make this program a reality."**

These first Rescue Specialists will be deployed in the Western Region, with a plan to eventually place a further 168 throughout the nation. Once the program has been fully implemented (expected to occur over three years), the Canadian Coast Guard will assume its rightful place among the world's finest in the civilian delivery of state of the art marine SAR services.

The Rescue Specialist Program — dedicated emergency response at sea.

CMRA Maritimes Training



The above photograph was taken by John Long during CMRA Maritimes training of Zone 7 CMRA Prevention Officers on the Isle de la Madeleine.

From left to right are members Alphonse DeRaspe, CMRA Prevention Officer, Grand-Étang; Urbain Mioussse, CMRA Prevention Officer, Gros-Cap; Gaston Cyr, Zone 7 Director, Étang-du-Nord; and Armand LeBlanc Past-Director, Gros-Cap. The statues in the background are part of the Fishermen's Memorial at Étang-du-Nord.

New SAR Helicopters



The above photograph is a life-sized model of the new EH101 Rescue Helicopter which will be replacing the aging Labradors beginning in 1997. These new helicopters will be fully equipped with state of the art equipment which will enhance SAR capabilities in Canada.

Expensive Mayday

Uriah Ross of Clam Point was fined \$8,625 for making a bogus Mayday call last June. Mr. Ross changed his plea to guilty just as the preliminary trial was to begin.

Mr. Ross made the distress call from a vessel tied up at a Cape Sable Island wharf. At the time, Ross indicated to the Coast Guard that he had abandoned his sinking boat and was moving to his life raft.

Mr. Ross, who had been drinking the night of the incident, told the Coast Guard that he was six miles out to sea from the island and was taking on water. He said his 18 metre boat was sinking and that he was standing by on channel six on the VHF radio.

The Coast Guard alerted the HMCS PRESERVER of the Canadian Forces, the Coast Guard ship the Alert and the Cutter 116 as well as the federal

fisheries patrol vessel Chebucto. A contracted fisheries helicopter based at Yarmouth was also called in along with a Labrador helicopter and Hercules and Aurora military aircraft. Aircraft cost for the search were \$135,300 while the costs of the ships involved was over \$93,000 for a

total of \$228,000. Apart from his fine of \$8,625, Mr. Ross was also placed on probation for one year and ordered to abstain from alcohol and continue in alcohol addiction counselling.

Reprinted from : Atlantic Fisherman, March 1993.



"They'll rescue us faster if we radio to send gold mining equipment ..."

Reminder

Remember the success of "The Auxiliarist" depends upon you the member as well as the CCG. We are constantly on the lookout for new material. Please forward any articles, photographs, material that you wish to be considered for your newsletter.

Safety Sam



The Prevention and Auxiliary division of CCG Central is currently using Safety Sam as their safe boating mascot. The aim of the mascot is to target and encourage safe boating practices amongst young children. Safety Sam will hand out publications and promotional material at boat shows, schools and static displays. Safety Sam appears above beside one of Coast Guard's Prevention display vans. For more information about Safety Sam, contact the Prevention and Education Supervisor in Sarnia, Ontario at (519) 383-1983.

Auxiliarists Assist United States Coast Guard

During the fall of 1992, the CCG and CMRA assisted the United States Coast Guard (USCG) with field testing on Lake Erie. The purpose of the testing was to evaluate the new AN/APS-137 Airborne Radar System for probability of detection of small search and rescue targets. The radar system was being carried on board an HC-130 Hercules aircraft.

When the USCG Research and Development Centre's Project Team decided to

conduct the field test on Lake Erie, it was determined that the CCG and CMRA could lend tremendous support to the experiment.

Four vessels operated by eight CMRA members participated, and their conduct was later described by USCG personnel as "competent, enthusiastic and professional" despite the fact that the trials were often conducted in 6-12 foot seas which tested the limits of the crews during their 12 hour days on the water. During field

testing, the participants were assigned a "station" location to maintain while the aircraft conducted fly-overs using various SAR patterns.

Throughout the field test, valuable information was obtained for the research project which will be used to enhance SAR operational response capabilities in the future.

Leslie M. Reading
CMRA Member
Central Region

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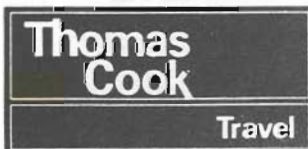
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