

APRIL 2014: PAUANUI



RESCUE OF THE MONTH

RECOGNISING OUTSTANDING RESCUES

NATIONAL WINNER

In it for life

Date/time: April 19, 2014 at 1pm
Location: Tairua Bar, Pauanui Beach
Lifeguards involved: Jock Rosie, Jordan Stent, Martine Smith, Matt Williams, Alexandra Beggs

While performing a routine scan of Pauanui Beach on April 18, lifeguards on tower rotation noticed a group of three inexperienced ocean kayakers paddling out into dangerous conditions on the Pauanui Bar.

A watching brief was put on them and shortly after, one of the kayakers over-turned and could not get back on board his craft.

Jock Rosie and Jordan Stent were dispatched in the IRB and they quickly headed out to the trio as the other two vessels then overturned. The patients were struggling in the treacherous conditions.

As Jock reached the patients, he assessed them and pulled the female victim and her father into the IRB leaving the third victim with a tube while he ferried the two victims back to lifeguards on shore.

Radio communication was difficult due to current infrastructure; nevertheless, crewman Jordan made effective use of signals to communicate with lifeguards on shore.

The IRB was met by Matt Williams

who took the handover of patients. Jock informed him that the patients had alerted to a missing fourth vessel that was occupied by the victim's mother and husband. They were the most inexperienced kayakers and had separated from the group early on; they had not been seen by the group for considerable time.

Matt passed this information on to fellow lifeguard Martine Smith who was acting incident controller and it was decided that the IRB should retrieve the remaining patient and a second IRB should be launched with Alexandra Beggs and Matt to search for the remaining two patients.

A resident of Mount Paku in Tairua had also noticed the trio in distress and had called emergency services that had tasked the Pauanui Coastguard Unit. Martine attempted radio communications with the unit however radio contact was still proving difficult.

After a brief expanding box search of the patients' last known location, the second IRB sighted the Coastguard vessel that had retrieved the remaining two patients from inside the harbor mouth where they had been swept. The patients' details were retrieved and all

patients were dropped to the waiting ambulance staff at the rendezvous point of the Coastguard Base.

Due to the quick recognition and response from all rescuers, the patients were all alert and able to leave the scene immediately; however, it seems a far more serious crisis had been averted. In what had the potential to be a life threatening situation involving a large number of victims, had been circumvented by a prompt and effective response by lifeguards and effective collaboration with other emergency services.

