



# RESCUE OF THE MONTH



## 1<sup>ST</sup> PLACE

## MARCH 2008

**CLUB: Piha and United North Piha Life Guards**

**SURF LIFEGUARDS: Abbi Manley, Cali Manley, Liz Manley, Vanda Karolczak, Paul Picot, Gary Turton, Ukiah Brown, Tony Featherstone (PC), Paul Downey, Jason Anderson, Merrin O'Brien, Jess Hosking, Jonathon Webber, Geoff Calvert, Hayley Seymour, Leif Neilson, Brent Airey**

After patrol had finished for the day, lifeguards at South Piha were packing up when a member of the public alerted them to a person "being carried away in a current" through large messy surf. After a brief but intense search by lifeguards some distance from the original patrol area, the unconscious patient was returned to shore. The Westpac Rescue helicopter was called while communications were managed and additional resources (stretcher, blankets, extra oxygen and AED) were brought to the scene. Distressed family members were looked after by additional life guards, as statements and other information was recorded.

The person was transported from the water's edge to the mid-beach helipad where ambulance officers took over the management. The patient's condition was deteriorating fast and it was hugely important that all information that was collected and recorded by the guards was handed over to the ambulance officers to ensure they had a clear picture of what had happened. As the ambulance officers continued to work on the patient lifeguards kept communications between SurfCom and the ambulance dispatch going and

ensured the helipad area remained secure. In poorly lit conditions lifeguards transferred the patient to Helimed, in preparation for transfer to hospital. He remained in a serious state in Auckland City Hospital for three days before being discharged.

Throughout the incident lifeguards continually liaised with the family, provided additional help to the patient and documented the incident to ensure an accurate hand-over to the ambulance and Helimed officers. Lifeguards were highly commended on their work by both the ambulance and Helimed teams. It is without doubt that the quick-thinking response from this team and the extremely effective scene management the means for this successful patient rescue and favourable outcome.



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