



## RESCUE OF THE MONTH



### **CLUB: Mt Maunganui Lifeguard Service**

**SURF LIFEGUARDS: Andrew Fergusson, Callum Mckenzie, Grant Davis-Calvert, John Svendsen, Kent Jarman Mnz, Peter Edmondson & Thomas Yule**

With large surf and Cyclone Cody approaching the Mt Maunganui Lifeguard Service Search & Rescue Squad carried out a challenging night-time rescue of a man trapped on rocks after his fishing boat capsized.

On the night of the 12th of January, the Mt Maunganui Lifeguard Service SAR Squad were notified of a person in the water near Motuotau (Rabbit) Island after the boat they were fishing in had capsized. Lifeguards were advised the person wasn't wearing a lifejacket and was possibly located on the rocky shore.

The SAR squad was activated and two IRBs were set up ready for a night operation. The IRBs were launched from Shark Alley towards Motuotau Island in darkness with challenging 1.5m surf. On arrival at Motuotau Island, the IRBs began a search of the rocky shore and discovered the person was not at his last seen location. The crews continued to search other possible locations and found the man on the South East side of the island, tucked into a rocky outcrop known for having a nasty wave break.

Getting the person into the rescue boat was a difficult task requiring strong team coordination and top-notch skills in handling the IRBs. The first IRB approached the man, with the second crew on standby for assistance and providing light on the scene.

Timing the entry between rocks and sets was critical. The first crew asked the man to move to a safer area for retrieval, but this was unsuccessful. He was then asked to move closer to the water and jump into the IRB as it approached. The driver skillfully maneuvered the IRB into the rocks where the man was located, and the crewperson secured the man and pulled him to the safety of the IRB. This happened just as a large set rolled around the point of Motuotau, with the waves crashing over the nose of the IRB and rocks.

The IRB drivers guided the boats to a safe area to check the man for any signs of injury. Once he was deemed to be in a stable condition, the IRBs navigated their way back to shore. The Lifeguards questioned and re-checked the man for any injuries and he thanked them before leaving the scene.

During this rescue, the Mt SAR squad showed their ability to complete a difficult and timely rescue safely and professionally. Every member of the squad played a critical role that night in getting the man to safety.

*In it for life*