

MEDIA RELEASE

NEW NAIAD RESCUE BOAT ARRIVES IN BROOME

Broome Volunteer Sea Rescue took delivery this week of a new high performance rescue vessel. The NAIAD 8.5m rigid hulled inflatable boat (RHIB) was designed in New Zealand and built by Kirby Marine Fabrication in Henderson. The outboard motors were supplied locally by Moby Dick Marine.

The vessel is powered by twin 225 HP Yamaha outboards providing a top speed of 50 knots, drastically reducing response time to vessels in distress. The NAIAD's 600 litre fuel load gives it a range of approximately 300 nautical miles. The vessel is ideally suited to the Kimberley conditions being able to operate at high speed in extremely rough seas, while still retaining the ability to operate in shallow coastal waters and tidal creeks.

The vessel boasts state of the art communications and navigation equipment to allow it to operate either independently or as part of a coordinated air-sea search and rescue.

Crew safety is paramount and the volunteers are provided with the latest safety equipment including an electronic man-overboard alert system. A personal transmitter worn by the crew member will sound an alarm in the boat should he accidentally fall overboard. The system is linked to the vessel's navigation system which aids rapid recovery. This system is vital to crew safety, especially when operating in heavy seas or at night. Crews also wear inflatable life jackets at all times as standard operating procedure.

Being trailerable, the craft can be rapidly deployed along the Kimberley coast with a response time far less than that of its predecessor the 13m Cygnet IV. Maintenance can also be performed far more cost efficiently than on Cygnet IV, and valuable volunteer time previously spent on routine maintenance can be re-directed into higher levels of training.

"The arrival of the NAIAD in Broome puts us at the very cutting edge of marine rescue worldwide." stated Commander Brett Winfield.

"These vessels are deployed widely both in Australia and overseas as their ability to perform safely in a variety of extreme conditions is awesome." he said.

"We have commenced an intense training program for our volunteer crews as it is vital that they can operate the vessel and its systems efficiently so as to maximise the potential of the craft."

The next major development project for the Volunteer Group is the acquisition of funding for a purpose built storage and operations facility close to the Port of Broome.

Brett Winfield
14/5/2005