

MEDIA RELEASE
Tuesday, May 4, 2021

Council funds go toward a safer volunteer marine rescue team

Wynyard's Volunteer Marine Rescue (VMR) team can now undertake rescues more safely with the help of a GPS Depth Sounder funded by Waratah Wynyard Council's Thrive & Survive Grants Program.

"The GPS will allow us to more accurately locate vessels out of visual range and to navigate to precise locations and be safer in shallow waters," Wynyard VMR Unit Commander Auston Rotheram said.

"It will also allow us to meet requirements for maximum range of operations providing vital safety for our members and rescued public."

With approximately one in eight Tasmanians having a recreational boat licence the VMR is kept busy with six rescues on average per year. This year so far, the VMR has also mobilised more than 20 safety patrols to support local sailing and canoeing activities.

"Ensuring we are rescue ready and able to respond and locate boats and people in distress, the greater chance of saving lives," Mr Rotheram said.

Formed in 2014, Wynyard VMR is a community organisation with a formal affiliation with Surf Life Saving Tasmania (SLST). As well as rescue services on the water, VMR volunteers provide public education and safety programs and produce educational support materials for the boating public.

"Our volunteers receive nationally accredited training by SLST, skills which are transferable to everyday emergencies. We work in conjunction with Tasmania Police and SLST contribute to providing volunteer search and rescue services," Mr Rotheram said.

Council's Thrive & Survive grants were launched by Council in October 2020 in response to COVID-19, with an initial \$80,000 distributed to organisations and businesses to enable the continuation of economic activity and strengthening of our local economy and community.

The Minor Grant Round has committed a further \$21,939 across 11 community groups and businesses facing increased demand and/or operational changes due to COVID-19.

Picture: Waratah-Wynyard Council's Acting Mayor Mary Duniam, Wynyard VMR crew members Ella Klinger, Mike Darby and unit Commander Auston Rotheram.

Authorised for general media distribution by Shane Crawford, General Manager, Waratah-Wynyard Council on Tuesday, May 4, 2021.

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