

JULY 2010



Lifeboats

RNLI

Photo: RNLI/Andrew Filipinski

The Royal National Lifeboat Institution is the charity that saves lives at sea

It provides, on call, a 24-hour lifeboat search and rescue service to 100 nautical miles out from the coast of the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland. It also provides a seasonal lifeguard service on beaches in England and Wales. The RNLI is independent from Government and continues to rely on voluntary contributions and legacies for its income.

Purpose, vision and values

RNLI Purpose

The RNLI saves lives at sea.

RNLI Vision

To end preventable loss of life at sea.

RNLI Values

Our work is founded upon and driven by our values. Our volunteers and staff strive for excellence and are ...

Selfless ... willing to put the requirements of others before our own and the needs of the team before the individual, able to see the bigger picture and act in the best interests of the RNLI. Prepared to share our expertise with organisations that share our aims.

Dependable ... always available, committed to doing our part in saving lives with professionalism and expertise, continuously developing and improving. Working in and for the community and delivering on our promises.

Trustworthy ... responsible, accountable and efficient in the use of the donations entrusted to us by our supporters, managing our affairs with transparency, integrity and impartiality.

Courageous ... prepared to achieve our aims in changing and challenging environments. We are innovative, adaptable and determined in our mission to save more lives at sea.



The volunteer ethos

The RNLI is largely a volunteer organisation. Many thousands of people give their time, skill and commitment so that the RNLI can achieve its purpose of saving lives at sea.

It is because of the willingness of RNLI volunteers that such a high proportion of the RNLI's money can be spent on first-class lifeboats and equipment.

The RNLI sets great store by the voluntary spirit of the whole institution and would resist any change to this.

Services in 2009

RNLI lifeboats

9,223 launches
average 25 a day

333 lives saved

8,235 people rescued
average 22 a day

RNLI lifeguards

13,591 incidents

123 lives saved

15,957 people assisted

Since the RNLI was founded in 1824, its lifeboats, and since 2001, its lifeguards, have saved more than 139,000 lives.

More and more people are using beaches and the sea for leisure and RNLI crews and lifeguards are responding to an increased number of incidents.

In 2009, 54.2% of launches were to leisure craft users, 29.3% to people not using any kind of craft, 8.7% to merchant or fishing vessels and 7.8% to other sea users.



Photo: RNLI/Nigel Millard

→ RNLI TO THE RESCUE

Lifeboat crews

There are over 4,500 lifeboat crew members in the UK and RoI, 8% of whom are women. They are mostly volunteers who come from all walks of life within their local communities – from vicars to tattooists, they will readily exchange leisure, comfort and sleep for cold, wet and fatigue. Crews spend many hours of their own time training to become highly skilled and efficient, as their lifesaving work is essential, often difficult and sometimes dangerous.

Lifeguards

The RNLI currently employs over 800 seasonal lifeguards, with an increasing number of volunteers, in its expanding service. Preventing accidents before they happen is 90% of a lifeguard's job.

The RNLI lifeguard service operates a fleet of inshore rescue boats, rescue watercraft and four-wheel drive vehicles. Each lifeguard unit is equipped with rescue boards, rescue tubes, first aid kits, defibrillators and various other items of essential lifesaving equipment.



Photo: RNLI/Nigel Millard

Ready to launch

When someone dials 999 or 112 in an emergency, the call is directed to the appropriate emergency service. For the sea, UK calls go to HM Coastguard (part of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency) or in the RoI, the Irish Coast Guard. They then contact the Lifeboat Operations Manager of the appropriate lifeboat station and request the launch of the lifeboat. Lifeboat crew members are alerted by pager. The lifeboat crew stop whatever they are doing and arrive at the lifeboat station within minutes of the alarm being raised.

To receive computer alerts whenever there is an RNLI lifeboat launch, go to rnl.org.uk/desktoppager.



Photo: Robin Goodlad

Flood rescue

The RNLI's Flood Rescue Team (FRT) is a group of specially trained volunteers ready to travel anywhere in the world to assist in flood relief work.

During November 2009, the FRT helped hundreds of residents reach safety during the floods at Cockermouth, Cumbria. There are three teams of volunteers and staff, each made up of 20 members.



The ring of safety

There are 235 RNLI lifeboat stations strategically placed around the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland. Of these, four are on the River Thames in London, and another four are inland water stations. The RNLI operates over 150 lifeguard units on UK beaches.

The RNLI's Shoreworks section is in charge of building and maintaining station and lifeguard facilities.

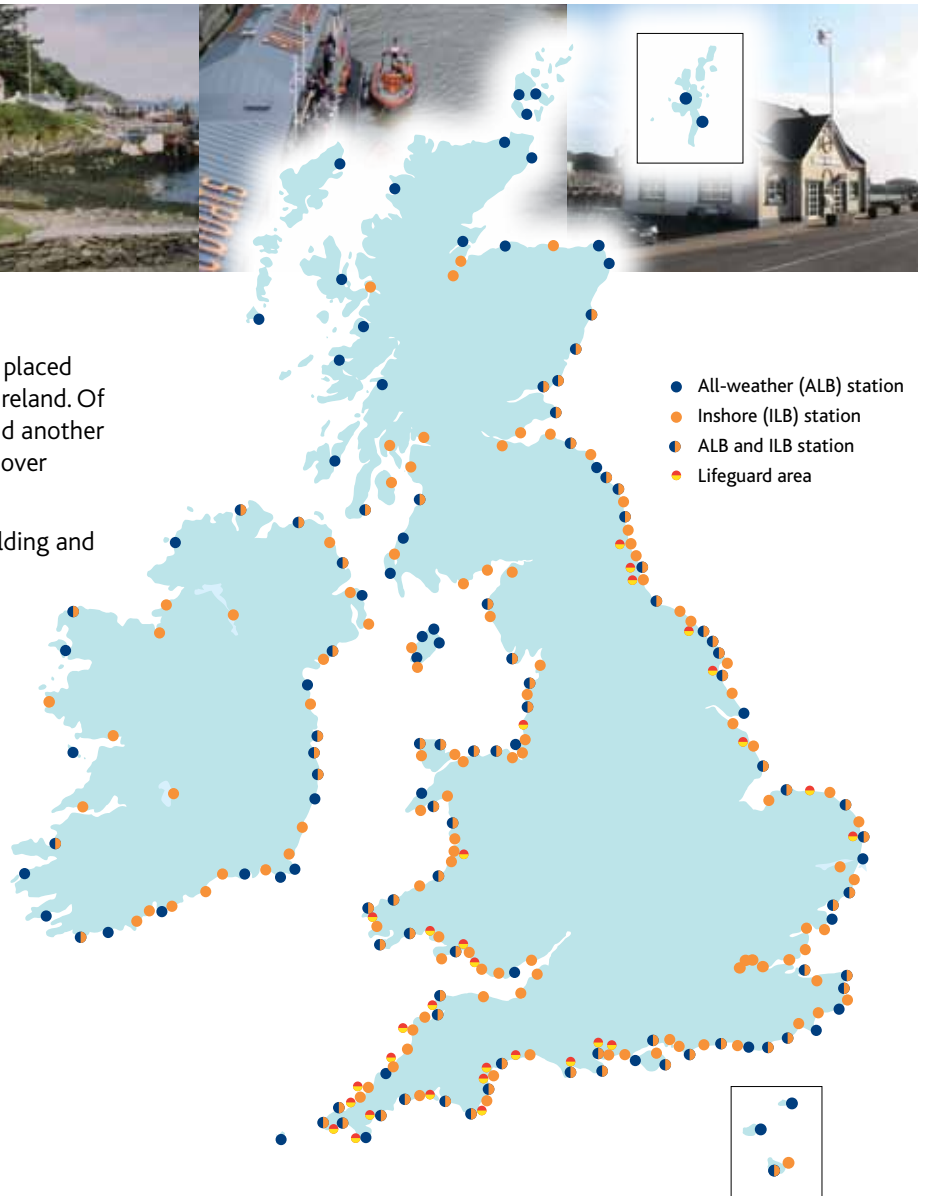
A network of support

Volunteer shore helpers form a vital part of the rescue team. They assist with the launch and recovery of the lifeboat, sometimes being appointed to specific tasks, such as tractor driver, depending on the way the lifeboat is launched.

Each station is supported by a voluntary lifeboat management group, with local people taking key roles. A crucial figure is the Lifeboat Operations Manager (LOM), who has responsibility for authorising the launch of the lifeboat and the day-to-day management of the station.

Most lifeboat stations have a voluntary lifeboat press officer (LPO), who acts as a link with local press, TV and radio. LPOs are supported by both divisional and Headquarters External Communications staff, helping to maintain a positive awareness and understanding of the RNLI in their community and beyond.

Lifeboat visits officers (LVOs) promote the work of their lifeboat stations to local people, tourists and visiting groups



- All-weather (ALB) station
- Inshore (ILB) station
- ALB and ILB station
- Lifeguard area



Photo: RNLI/Nigel Millard

Lifesaving equipment

All-weather lifeboats

Severn class, refit	£255,000
Tamar class, new	£2.7M

Inshore lifeboats

Rescue watercraft	£6,000
Lifeguard inshore rescue boat	£9,500
D class inflatable	£35,000
B class Atlantic 85, RIB	£165,000



All-weather lifeboat crew kit

Gloves	£16
Safety boots	£42
Helmet	£166
Trousers	£230
Jacket	£170
Lifejacket	£494



Inshore lifeboat crew kit

Gloves	£16
Thermal suit	£145
Helmet	£166
Drysuit	£319
Lifejacket	£434



Lifeguard kit

Shirt	£5
Shorts	£30
Binoculars	£60
Full wetsuit	£85
Helmet	£166



Photo: RNLI/Chris Walker



→ MAKING IT WORK

Train one, save many

Today, fewer than 10% of crew members have a professional maritime occupation. The skills they need range from navigation to search and rescue; from being able to repair a lifeboat engine at sea to resuscitating someone who has stopped breathing. Each of these skills can save the life of someone in trouble at sea.

The RNLI can't train a crew member to be willing to risk their life to save others. That comes from within. But the RNLI can make sure they have the skills they need to save lives.

It is essential that the RNLI offers the best training it can. In 2002, the RNLI introduced competence-based training, providing crew members with externally accredited courses and qualifications. This approach was recognised in 2003 when the RNLI received a National Training Award.

These high standards are being maintained and developed with the help of the Lifeboat College, which complements training around the coast. This central facility provides accommodation, classrooms, distance learning resources and the Sea Survival Centre with a wave tank, full bridge simulator, live engine workshop and firefighting simulator.

Staff

The RNLI could not run as efficiently as it does without its staff, who are based at divisional and regional offices and the charity's Headquarters in Poole (pictured above). Staff members include lifeboat designers and engineers, crew and lifeguard trainers, surveyors, fundraisers and administrators.

The Lifeboat Support Centre in Poole stores and distributes the 750,000 items needed to run every lifeboat, station, lifeguard unit and fundraising office in the UK and RoI. A round-the-clock system can dispatch parts within 30 minutes.

Lifeboat stations are managed by six operational divisions, each run by a divisional inspector. Specialist engineers, surveyors and electronics and training experts look after the requirements of stations in their division.

Governance

The RNLI's work is directed by a Trustee Committee, made up of volunteers with skills and experience of particular relevance to the RNLI. The Committee is elected by the Council, which also provides guidance and advice to the Trustees.

Teamwork

In the UK, depending on the type of casualty and the location, HM Coastguard may decide to call on one of its own search and rescue (SAR) helicopters, request a military SAR helicopter or call on a Coastguard mud/cliff rescue team to work with the lifeboat. In the RoI, SAR units are coordinated by the Irish Coast Guard.

Helicopters can reach casualties more quickly further out to sea, but lifeboats can stay at sea for longer, carry more survivors, tow boats and launch quickly to local incidents.

Some rescues rely on the teamwork of lifeboat and helicopter crews or other rescue teams. Training exercises are organised so that crews become used to working with other SAR teams.





SPREADING THE WORD

Sea and fishing safety

The RNLI aims to save lives by promoting a safety culture among people who use the sea, particularly targeting the leisure boat community and commercial fishermen. Statistics are used to target those most at risk and to prioritise the work of the charity.

With the fishing industry being the most dangerous of all occupations, the RNLI has developed MOB Guardian, an automated system that pinpoints a casualty's location and confidentially alerts rescuers.

Safety messages and advice are delivered by teams of volunteers in various ways, such as presentations and demonstrations of safety equipment to clubs, roadshows at events and through a free safety advisory scheme called SEA Check.

Beach safety

The beach safety programme aims to save lives through educating beach users and raising safety awareness.

The RNLI also encourages beach users to choose lifeguarded beaches, read beach safety signs and to think about the tides. With the increase of water sports such as kitesurfing, the RNLI is now delivering safety messages to these sea users as well.



Photo: RNLI/Ingeel Millard



Photo: Mike Rushworth

Education

Raising awareness, particularly among young people, is vital, as they will be the crews, fundraisers and supporters of the future. The RNLI educates children and young people about its work, how they can help and how to stay safe on or by the sea. Regional education managers work with teams of volunteers to run a variety of educational initiatives. For more information visit rnli.org.uk/shorething.

Public relations

The public is made aware of the work of volunteer crews, fundraisers and specialist staff through all media – local, regional, national and increasingly, via the social media. The charity also raises awareness of its work through publications, events and its website, rnli.org.uk.



A proud history

Since it was founded in 1824, as the National Institution for the Preservation of Life from Shipwreck, there have been countless examples of courage, selflessness and dedication – qualities still shown by the people of the RNLI today.

The RNLI Heritage Trust was set up in 2004 to support and celebrate the RNLI's heritage, past, present and future. The trust is a subsidiary charity of the RNLI and, with the help of volunteers, manages five RNLI museums and 25 historic lifeboats, as well as extensive collections and archives. Heritage funding has enabled the museums celebrating Henry Blogg (pictured centre) at Cromer and Grace Darling at Bamburgh to be redeveloped in new buildings with family-friendly displays. Whitby and Zetland museums are set in their original boathouses while Chatham Historic Dockyard holds the National Collection of historic lifeboats.

Collections are also displayed in some lifeboat stations and visitor centres, many of which hold 'Explore' status – with free access and pre-booked tours available.



Photo: Associated Press



THE FLEET

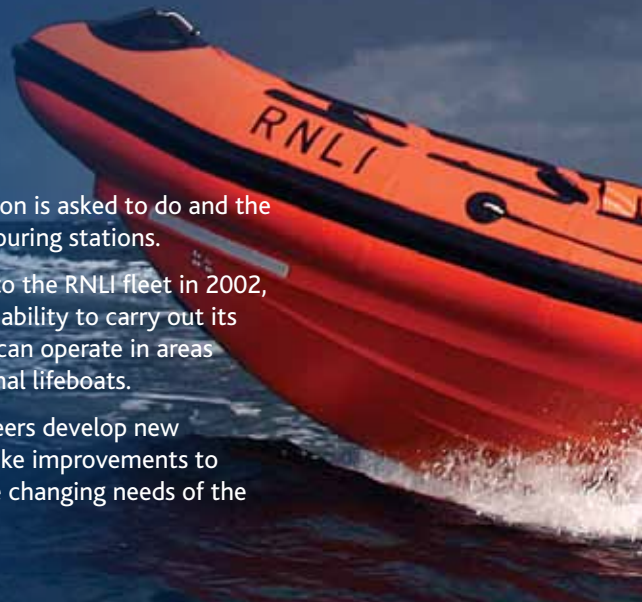
The RNLI has an active fleet of over 330 lifeboats, ranging from 5–17m in length, as well as a relief fleet. There are also four active and three relief hovercraft. Lifeguards operate purpose-designed powered craft.

RNLI lifeboats can be divided into two categories: all-weather and inshore. Different classes of lifeboat are needed for various locations, depending on geographical features, the kind of

rescue work that the station is asked to do and the cover provided by neighbouring stations.

Hovercraft, introduced into the RNLI fleet in 2002, have extended the RNLI's ability to carry out its vital rescue work as they can operate in areas inaccessible to conventional lifeboats.

RNLI designers and engineers develop new classes of lifeboat and make improvements to existing ones, to meet the changing needs of the lifeboat service.



All-weather lifeboats

All-weather lifeboats (ALBs) are capable of high speed but can be operated safely in atrocious weather. They are inherently self-righting after a capsize and fitted with navigation, location and communication equipment. The RNLI allows its ALBs a working life of around 25 years. In 2005 the Tamar became the newest introduction to the active fleet.



TYNE

The RNLI's first 'fast' slipway lifeboat was introduced in 1982, but the Tyne is also capable of lying afloat. Features include a low profile wheelhouse and a separate cabin aft of the upper steering position. The propellers are protected by substantial bilge keels. The last Tyne was built in 1990.

Length: 14m; speed: 17 knots; range: 240 nautical miles; construction: steel; crew: 6; weight: 25 tonnes; launch: slipway or moored afloat.



MERSEY

Introduced in 1988 as the RNLI's first 'fast' carriage lifeboat, the Mersey can also lie afloat or slipway-launch if required. A slightly 'boxy' wheelhouse is set well aft and the sheerline is flattened towards the bow. The propellers are protected by partial tunnels and substantial bilge keels. Last built in 1993.

Length: 12m; speed: 17 knots; range: 140 nautical miles; construction: aluminium or fibre reinforced composite (FRC); crew: 6; weight: 13 tonnes; launch: slipway or moored afloat.



TRENT

The 1994-introduced Trent has the same hull shape as the Severn class but is smaller. The sheerline sweeps down for ease of survivor recovery.

Length: 14m; speed: 25 knots; range: 250 nautical miles; construction: FRC; crew: 6; weight: 27.5 tonnes; launch: moored afloat.



SEVERN

The Severn class lifeboat was introduced in 1995 and is the largest lifeboat in the fleet. It carries a Y class inflatable that can be launched with a crane. The Severn has the same hull shape as the Trent class.

Length: 17m; speed: 25 knots; range: 250 nautical miles; construction: FRC; crew: 6; weight: 41 tonnes; launch: moored afloat.



TAMAR

The Tamar will gradually replace the Tyne. Designed to be launched from a slipway, the Tamar can also lie afloat. A computerised Systems and Information Management System (SIMS) is installed, so many of the onboard controls can be operated from any position and the crew can remain in their ergonomic seats for longer, further improving their safety.

Length: 16m; speed: 25 knots; range: 250 nautical miles; construction: FRP; crew: 6; weight: 30 tonnes.

Lifeguard craft



RESCUE WATERCRAFT (RWC)

In service with the RNLI since 2002, the current RWC is a modified branded model with rescue sled.

Very quick, agile and durable, it can

be deployed rapidly and operated by one lifeguard. RWCs are in use at many RNLI lifeguarded beaches as well as Enniskillen and Bude lifeboat stations.



INSHORE RESCUE BOAT (IRB)

IRBs are in use worldwide. Brought into the RNLI in 2001, they are now the lifeguards' workhorse.

They are hand-built at the Inshore

Lifeboat Centre in East Cowes under licence to Arancia. Sturdy enough for heavy surf conditions, IRBs are still light enough for just two people to launch.



Inshore lifeboats

Inshore lifeboats (ILBs) usually operate closer to shore than ALBs, in shallower water, close to cliffs, among rocks or even in caves.



ATLANTIC 75 (B CLASS)

This rigid inflatable lifeboat came into the fleet to replace the Atlantic 21 (the last of which left service early in 2008) in 1993. Crew can right the craft using an inflatable bag should it capsize, and the engines are inversion-proofed to restart from wet. Launchable in conditions to force 7, the '75' is derived from a length of nearly 7.5m.

Speed: 32 knots; endurance: 3 hours max; construction: glass-reinforce plastic (GRP); crew: 3; weight: 1.7 tonnes; engine: 75hp; launch: trolley; floating boathouse or davit.



ATLANTIC 85 (B CLASS)

This latest version of the B class was introduced in 2005. It is larger than its predecessor, has a faster top speed, radar, VHF direction finder, provision for a fourth crew member, and more survivor space. Operational in daylight up to force 7, and at night to force 6.

Length: 8.5m; speed: 35 knots; endurance: 3 hours max; construction: FRC; crew: 3-4; weight: 1.8 tonnes; engine: 2 x 115hp; launch: trolley; floating boathouse or davit.



D CLASS

In service since 1963, this inflatable is the smallest lifeboat in the fleet. Ideal for rescues close to shore in fair to moderate conditions, it has a single 50hp outboard engine and can be righted manually by the crew after a capsize. The design of the D class has continued to evolve since its introduction. The figures below are for the latest version (the IB1 type), which was introduced in 2003.

Length: 5m; speed: 25 knots; endurance: 3 hours max; construction: Hypalon coated polyester; crew: 2-3; weight 436kg; launch: trolley or davit.



E CLASS

Introduced in 2002, the E class fast response craft is the fastest lifeboat in the fleet. Powered by waterjets and kept afloat, all the RNLI E class lifeboats are stationed on the River Thames. A new version of the E class is in production.

Length: 9m; speed: 40 knots; endurance: 4 hours at maximum speed; construction: aluminium alloy with closed cell polythene foam collar; crew: 3; weight: 3,500kg; launch: moored afloat.



HOVERCRAFT

Introduced to the fleet in 2002, hovercraft can operate in areas of mud, sand and very shallow water – useful for shoreline searches. Lift is provided by air pressure under the craft and thrust by two large rear-mounted fans. Steering is by aerofoil-shaped 'rudders' located behind the propellers.

Length: 8m, speed: 30 knots; endurance: 3 hours at maximum speed; construction: marine grade aluminium with moulded FRC; crew: 2-4; weight: 2,400kg; launch: bespoke transporter.

Launching

There are three main ways of launching an all-weather lifeboat: from a mooring; down a slipway; or from a carriage, hauled across a beach by a tractor. Shore helpers, a vital part of the team, help with slipway and carriage launches.

Inshore lifeboats differ. The lightweight D class can usually be manhandled into the water from a trolley. Larger B class Atlantics launch by tractor-hauled DoDo (drive on drive off) carriage, by shore-mounted crane (davit) or from a floating boathouse.

Hovercraft can launch from any flat area, such as a car park or beach, provided there is enough room. Specialist transporter vehicles move them between sites.



The RNLI is independent from Government and continues to rely on voluntary contributions and legacies for its income.

In 2009 it cost approximately £147.7M to run the RNLI. For every £1 spent, 84p went to operations and 16p to generating voluntary income.

Any surplus of income over expenditure is held in the RNLI's reserve fund and used to guarantee the RNLI's boat building programme and other capital projects.



Fundraising

In 1891, the RNLI became the first charity to organise a street collection, marking the beginning of a strong fundraising tradition.

Now, the RNLI's annual fundraising day is SOS Day, which takes place on the last Friday in January. All sorts of enjoyable fundraising activities, including raft races, coffee mornings, suppers, bungee jumps and sponsored runs, are organised across the UK and Rol. But fundraising carries on all year long, with thousands of volunteers lending their time and talents to boost funds for the RNLI. Online fundraising includes virtual gifts which celebrate special occasions and help the charity as well.



Legacies

Six out of ten launches are made possible by the kind supporters who leave bequests, large and small, in their Wills. More information on legacies is available from the RNLI Legacy Enquiries Officer at Headquarters.

RNLI shop

Thanks to the help of volunteers, the charity's shops are highly successful alongside its mail order business, which boost funds and public support. To find your nearest RNLI shop visit rnli.org.uk/nearestrnli and to shop online visit rnlishop.org.uk.

Members and supporters

Supporters are the lifeblood of the RNLI. While many people make an occasional or regular donation, more than a quarter of a million have committed to membership: Shoreline, Offshore or Governor. Corporate supporters join so their employees can support the charity as a group, while Storm Force is the RNLI's membership for children.

The Serious Fun fundraising campaign aims to increase support for the charity among all watersports enthusiasts. For more information visit: rnli.org.uk/seriousfun.

There are approximately 1,300 fundraising branches and guilds throughout the UK and Rol. Centred around friendship and fun, they help raise funds to save lives at sea, and give members a rewarding sense of achievement. Many branches and guilds have close links with lifeboat stations, which helps generate support and enthusiasm.

The RNLI is grateful to all supporters, however they choose to demonstrate their commitment.



People like you!

The RNLI needs people like you so that it can continue to save lives at sea. Committed supporters and volunteers make the charity what it is today. Can you help too? Contact your nearest office (see below) or RNLI Headquarters for more information.



The RNLI is the charity that saves lives at sea

Registered in England and Wales (209603) and Scotland (SC037736). Charity number CHY 2678 in the Republic of Ireland

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