

VMRWA UPDATES

FROM AROUND THE TRAPS

Welcome to the VMRWA updates Christmas Edition.

It has been an interesting year with a lot going on in the background, from Augusta's new building progressing, and Carnarvon's shed being completed in what is effectively the first stage with more to come.



The one thing holding many of these projects back is the spiralling cost of building materials and a shortage of suitable contractors, but we are no orphans here.

VMRWA Association Update.

The AGM held at Burswood after the WAFES24 Conference saw some changes to the Committee. **Jeff Howe** has stepped aside as Association Commander with **Dan Goodlad** elected for the next two years. Jeff will serve as Vice Commander to assist Dan as he settles into his new role.

A minor change to the Rules of Association sees the Projects role replaced by Vice Commander - Administration and filled by **Roger Martin**. **Barb Walton** continues as Secretary and Treasurer along with **Darryl Menaglio** as Training Development Officer. **Adam Harffey** is the new Media Officer, replacing **Ian Beard** who has joined the new Communications Support Group.

Welcome to **Allan Brown** from Pt Walcott has replaced Adam Harffey as Kimberley/Pilbara Regional Commander.

Other Regional Commanders are as follows:

North-West Regional Commander
Greg Ridgley (Shark Bay)

Mid-West Regional Commander
Barry Kennewell (Kalbarri)

Metropolitan Regional Commander
John Beer (Lancelin)

South-West Regional Commander
Tony Grasso (Naturaliste)

South Coast Regional Commander
Sam Karamfiles (Windy Harbour)

Great Southern Regional Commander is
Currently Unfilled

If you are a member of Marine Rescue Albany, Bremer Bay, Hopetoun or Esperance and would like to do a bit more for your fellow volunteers as Great Southern Regional Commander, contact Dan (Commander@vmrwa.org.au) or Jeff (ViceCommander@vmrwa.org.au) and they will give you the good oil on what is involved.

A few words about the outgoing Commander.

It would be remiss of the Association not to acknowledge the amazing time and effort outgoing Commander Jeff Howe has given to VMRWA.

Jeff's commitment to all Marine Rescue groups throughout the State cannot be understated.

Some highlights are:

- Jeff has given many years and untold hours working alongside the Volunteer National Search and Rescue Committee to ensure a smooth as possible change to the Federal Government requirement that Marine Rescue Groups rescue fleet around Australia become Domestic Commercial vessels. Jeff was also heavily involved in AMSA approving EX24 allowing Marine Rescue members the ability to skipper and crew rescue vessels without having to complete the full commercial training and sea time hours.
- Jeff has worked tirelessly to establish a strong working relationship between DFES Marine Services and DFES itself. Through this relationship VMRWA has been invited to be on various committees within DFES giving Marine Rescue a voice in some of the decision-making affecting Marine Rescue.
- Jeff was the mainstay for VMRWA to have been able to purchase a truck to tow the two standby rescue vessels, Sardam and Tom Reed to Marine Reed to Marine Rescue groups in need of a rescue vessel. He was also involved in getting a shed to house those assets.
- As the Commander, Jeff has always looked at Marine Rescue Groups around the State as a whole and not as individual groups. Using this logic gives all Groups, regardless of size and remoteness of locations equality in any assistance that VMRWA can provide.



There are too many things that Jeff as Commander has done to improve Marine Rescue throughout the State to mention here.

Finally, thanks Jeff for everything you have done to improve Marine Rescue Statewide. Bloody legend.

Dan Goodlad

Commander VMRWA

A SPECIAL VMRWA COMMENDATION

As we do every year, we held a Face 2 Face meeting to get updates and plan for the following year. To the Committee members that were able to make it around work and family commitments, thank you. However, the award must go to our newest committee member who couldn't make it in person but committed to an all-day MS TEAMS attendance, now most of us have done these and we are well aware of what it takes



Congratulations to **ALLAN BROWN** bloody well-done mate, a sensational effort.

BARRY KENNEWELL from Marine Rescue Kalbarri also Informed those present that he is planning to head off with his wife on a major road trip which will leave the Mid-West Regional Commander's position vacant.

So, if you are a member of the Kalbarri, Port Denison, Leeman or Jurien Bay Groups and would like to do a bit more for your fellow volunteers contact Dan (Commander@vmrwa.org.au) or Jeff (ViceCommander@vmrwa.org.au)

RECENT INCIDENTS

Several Groups have attended some less than pleasant incidents recently. These can have a profound effect on our first responders.

DFES are very aware of this can provide support through the wellness Team or the Peer Support Programme. For more information, check out the [Family Support page on the DFES website](#).

While every effort is made to look after our crews, please don't forget them in the Christmas/New Year festivities.

VMRWA RESCUE VESSEL UPDATE

Well, "RV Tom Reed" is just back from the deep south and is currently "in the shed" until early January when he will go to Jurien Bay for some time and "RV Sardam" who is currently residing in Jurien Bay after being involved in a marine SAR exercise in Dongara will be taken up to Onslow for an extended stay after a short visit to Suzuki in Karratha for a minor electronic fix.

No different to everyone else, VMRWA is out and about.



Australian Government

Australian Maritime Safety Authority

EXEMPTION 24 UPDATE

Early October saw AMSA open a consultation period on proposed changes to Exemption 24 - Marine Safety (Emergency service vessels). To read or download the draft document, click [here](#).

The key proposed changes include:

- *applying consistent competency requirements for volunteer emergency services by broadening the volunteer marine rescue (VMR) allowances to other services such as state emergency services and fire service organisations*
- *making it easier to share crew between volunteer organisations*
- *introducing specific training for vessels between 12 and 24 metres in length*
- *clarifying the permitted activities that can be conducted under the exemption*
- *reducing the radio competency requirements for operations closer to shore*
- *removing unnecessary certificate of survey allowances - all vessels are required to meet the same domestic commercial vessel (DCV) vessel certification requirements*
- *removing the exemption application process for other emergency service authorities (AMSA792), with arrangements to be made through the specific exemption (SPEX) process if still required.*



The period for consultation ended earlier this month (December) and to the best of our knowledge all Groups had the opportunity to submit their comments.

VMRWA was no different and the one major issue was AMSA's lack of understanding regarding training here in Western Australia, not just what we are doing but the Training Accreditation Council's (TACWA) position on non-accredited training.

We were happy to inform AMSA of where they had a misunderstanding on the matter.

The DFES Trainer / Assessor package is in our opinion extremely good and is "fit for purpose" as they say.

We can now only wait for AMSA's response. Something, this side of Christmas is plainly out of the question and in the new year most probably but when, don't ask hard questions. We will keep everyone up to speed.





Join the Deckee Trial

Making Boating Safer and Easier!

The Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) and Marine Rescue Western Australia are excited to introduce **Deckee**, a free app designed to make boating safer and more convenient for everyone.

From **17 February to 17 April 2025**, we are running a public trial in selected areas to test how Deckee can improve safety on the water.

What is Deckee?

- It is a **free** app for your phone.
- It includes a **Log On/Log Off (LOLO)** service to keep you safe when heading out on the water. NOTE – you can download the app now, but the LOLO function will not be available for use until the trial start date 17/2/25
- You will also get access to local weather updates, safety alerts, and more.

What is LOLO, and Why Should I Use It?

The **Log On/Log Off (LOLO)** service is a simple way to let someone know your plans on the water:

- **Log On** when you head out by sharing details of your trip (such as your destination and return time).
- **Log Off** once you are back safely. If you do not return on time, Marine Rescue volunteers will follow processes to locate and assist you if required

Using LOLO means:

- If something unexpected happens, help can reach you faster.
- You will give your family and friends peace of mind knowing someone is keeping track of your safety.
- It's quick, easy, and could save lives.

Why Join the Trial?

- Be part of an exciting new way to improve boating safety.
- Help us make sure the app works well for boaters like you.
- It's free and takes only a few moments to use!

Trial Locations:

If you boat near **Broome, Port Walcott, Onslow, Geraldton, Two Rocks, Whitfords, Rockingham, Walpole, or Denmark**, you are invited to join!

How to Get Started:

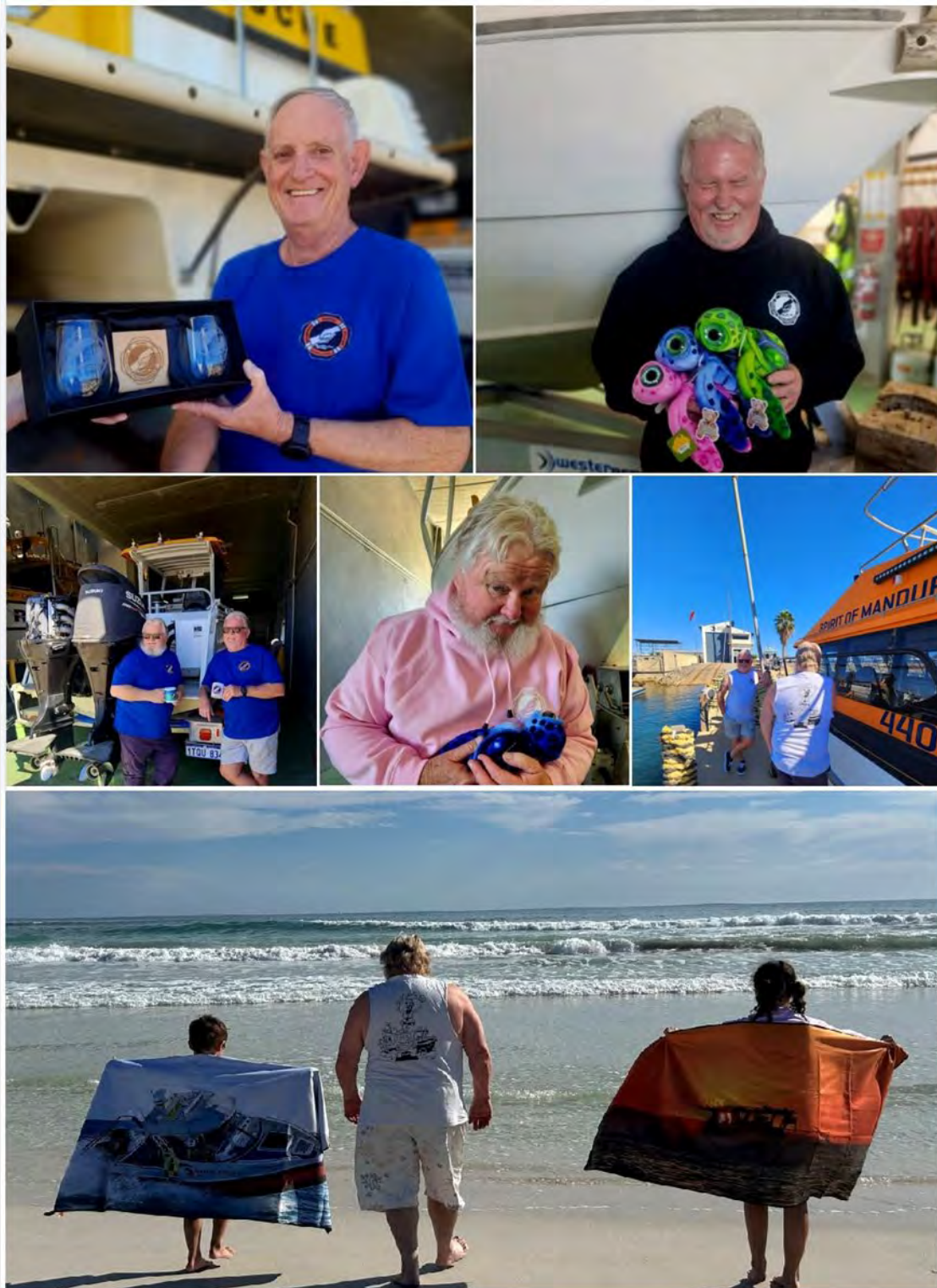
1. Download Deckee from the App Store or Google Play. (The QR code works for both Apple & Android devices – just scan and follow the prompts to install Deckee on your device)



2. Use the LOLO service to log your trips during the trial (17th February to 17th April 2025).
3. Share your feedback to help us improve! Email lolo@dfes.wa.gov.au to share your thoughts with the project team, or talk to your local Marine Rescue Group volunteers

It might be a bit late for Christmas, but VMRWA has a great range of merchandise available at the [Association website shop](#).

From a presentation set of [Stemless Wine Glasses](#) to our amazing [Sand Free Beach](#) Towels there is a great range available.



VMRWA's CHRISTMAS CARD (Not the corporate one we send to all Groups, one from the UPDATE crew).



To all of the VMR members (including our committee), DFES staff (and welcome to **Kelly Player**) who have been with us all the way and not forgetting partners, families and furry animals that we all talk too at times have a Merry Christmas. Don't do anything we wouldn't do and most of all stay safe.

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