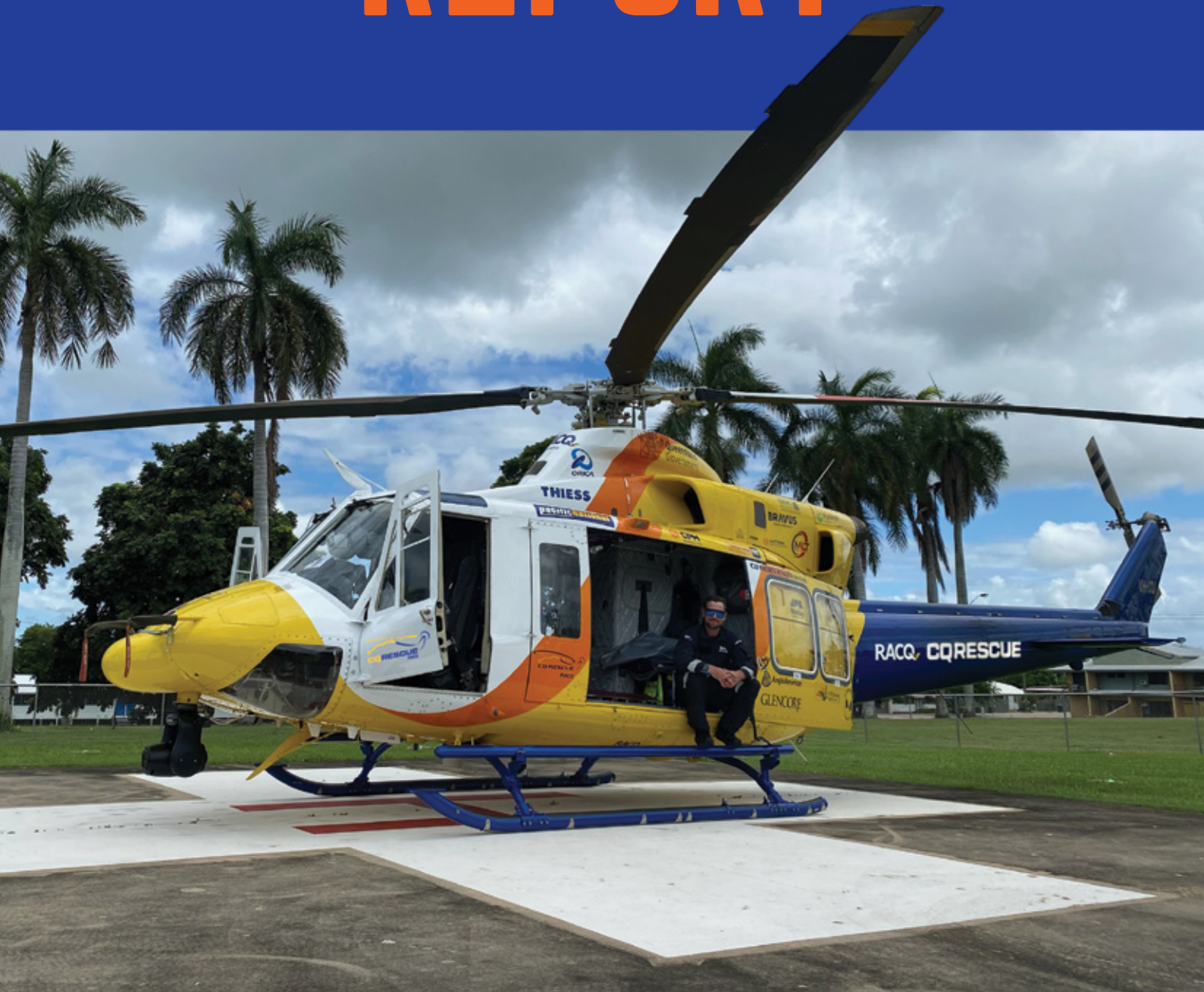


RACQ CQ RESCUE

2023 *Community* REPORT



Saving lives
24/7



FROM THE CEO

Tim Healee

It's not every day that you hear of a single-base rescue helicopter service flying the equivalent of almost five times around the world in a single year; but that's precisely what RACQ CQ Rescue achieved in 2022. The total distance flown by the service was an astonishing 170,502.50km, a testament to our unwavering commitment to serving the community of Central Queensland.

In September of the same year, RACQ CQ Rescue marked an incredible milestone of 26 years of service to the region, with more than 11,000 missions completed in that time. From missing persons searches in the outback to transporting premature babies to life-saving specialist care, the service has been there to help those in dire need time and time again. In 2022, the service was called upon 638 times to assist with a variety of emergency situations, including car accidents, cardiac conditions, vessel strandings, horse falls, and workplace injuries.

Of course, providing such an essential service comes with its own unique set of challenges. From maintaining the highest standards of safety and maintenance to fostering positive relationships with supporters and external stakeholders, the service faces numerous hurdles. Despite these challenges, RACQ CQ Rescue remains an integral part of the emergency and disaster network in Central Queensland, providing peace of mind to people living, working, and visiting the region.

As one of the busiest rescue helicopters in Queensland, our community-funded service plays a pivotal role in providing peace of mind to people living, working and visiting this region. Operational costs for 2023 will amount to \$11.4 million, which is partially funded by the State Government through Queensland Health, and the remainder is sourced from

the community served including corporate sponsorship, fundraising activities and donations.

As the community and the service itself continue to evolve, RACQ CQ Rescue has set its sights on long-term objectives that will ensure a sustainable and supported aeromedical and emergency helicopter rescue service is available 24/7, 365 days a year. One of the key objectives is to maximise the effectiveness and efficiency of the service's helicopter assets based on the needs of regional Queensland.

Since I commenced with CQ Rescue as CEO in April 2022, we've undertaken a significant amount of work with a view to align CQ Rescue with the best aeromedical capability there is, not only in Australia, but the world. We conducted an assessment of the medium twin-engine helicopter market guided by the Queensland Health aeromedical standards and CASA best practice performance requirements.

Following this review, the strategic decision has been made to select and source two Leonardo AW139's as the most appropriate helicopter platform to perform operations across Central Queensland. This new platform will replace the Bell 412 currently in use, but will ensure the ongoing ability to service and comply with future contracts as well as working towards a long-term objectives of CQ Rescue.



IN 2022, THE SERVICE WAS CALLED UPON 638 TIMES TO ASSIST WITH A VARIETY OF EMERGENCY SITUATIONS.

In addition, the aeromedical fit-out of these helicopters will be completed in Australia by a Queensland-owned and operated company, which will fit-out our helicopters to be the most advanced and best-equipped emergency aircraft in Australia. It equates to a flying intensive care unit, so we can bring the best critical care straight to patients at the scene, wherever that may be.

This exciting decision was announced at the Australian International Air show in Avalon, Melbourne, in March 2023 and the two aircraft are scheduled to arrive in mid-2024. The AW139s will be configured jointly for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and Search and Rescue (SAR) missions and will allow the crew to fly twice as far and about 30% faster, reaching patients in remote and rural locations more quickly and safely. The new aircraft will also deliver state-of-the-art avionics, superior performance, proven technology, and exceptional safety features.

These new helicopters will have so many new enhancements including: a ground proximity warning system, which is a database of all of the terrain in the region automatically feeding that information to the pilots which is valuable in low visibility or heavy rain; sophisticated autopilot systems; weather radar to enable the crew to detect and avoid hazardous weather like thunderstorms; and importantly, air-conditioning for the crew and patients, which is something that has been a real struggle in the summer months in our current helicopters. How cool is that?

This new aeromedical asset strategy will help ensure the longevity of this rescue service in Central Queensland and is testament to sound long-term financial management and investment by the board of directors and ongoing community

support for the service.

There are many to thank. Firstly, we thank our naming rights partner RACQ and every platinum, major and in-kind sponsor of our service who has helped us be a ray of hope for those plunged into darkness or despair this year. Your incredible ongoing sponsorship speaks volumes about our service, our future and your commitment to this community and those who live, visit and work here.

To our dedicated crew and engineers on the frontline, up in the air and saving lives, we thank you. To our colleagues, staff and board members who toil and volunteer to keep the service expanding and airborne, we thank you. To our loyal volunteers and to every individual or organisation who donated or supported an event or fundraiser for our service this year, we thank you.

Even if you weren't one of the many grateful recipients of our lifesaving care this year, we thank you for your ongoing support and for being part of this incredible journey of delivering hope and help to those in need.

You are literally the difference between life and death and your support offers peace of mind 24 hours a day, 365 days a year for all of us that live and work in this region.

Thank you for helping us save lives.



Tim Healee,
CEO, RACQ CQ Rescue

SNAPSHOT

of saving lives

IN 2022

638
TASKS

1147
FLYING HOURS

170,502.5KM
4.5X AROUND THE WORLD

LONGEST TASK
5.5 HRS

LONGEST MISSION
936KM
Dysart to Townsville for spinal injury patient

53
AVERAGE MISSIONS PER MONTH

AGES
1-91

MOST COMMON INCIDENTS

89 CARDIAC

47 RESPIRATORY CONDITIONS

42 ABDOMINAL CONDITIONS

MOST FREQUENTED

13 AMSA TASKS

69 BOWEN

58 MORANBAH

89 PROSERPINE

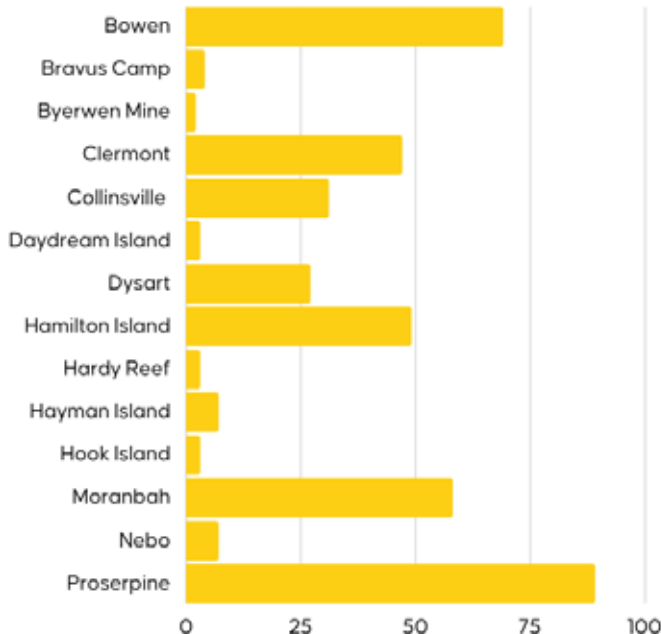
37 MVA'S

29 FRACTURES

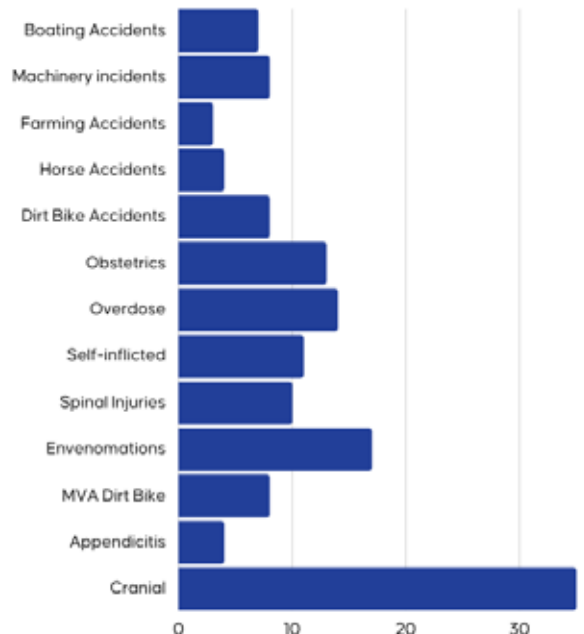
22 FALLS

15
QUEENSLAND POLICE

WHERE WE FLEW



OTHER REASONS WE FLEW



122
PRIMARY MISSIONS

350
INTER-FACILITY TRANSFERS



PARTNERSHIP *message*

This year marks 22 years since RACQ started sponsoring CQ Rescue and we remain just as proud today as we were all those years ago to have our brand associated with such a purpose-driven cause.

Over the years, the demand for CQ Rescue's critical service has grown and while much has changed over the decades, our shared commitment to being there for people in their time of need has not wavered.

Every year, CQ Rescue provides incredible lifesaving care and transportation when it's needed most to anyone, anywhere, anytime across central and north Queensland.

From heart and respiratory events on rural properties, to car crashes, search and rescue missions, and patient transfers, the service helps people in need. This support will only be enhanced by the new AW139 aircrafts that will join the fleet next year.

As CQ Rescue responds to emergencies from above, RACQ is there to help Queenslanders on the ground.

Last year alone, our Roadside Assistance team responded to more than 58,500 calls from motorists across central and north Queensland, and in FY22 the RACQ Foundation committed more than \$111,000 in grants to groups, sporting clubs and charities in these communities.

The increasing road toll is one of the many issues facing both of our organisations - 299 lives were lost on Queensland roads last year and that's 299 too many.

RACQ continues to fight for better roads, better driver behaviour and improved safety, whether that's through our advocacy efforts, road safety campaigns and engagement with governments at all levels.

Reducing our state's road toll will continue to be at the heart of our advocacy efforts until all motorists return home safely to their loved ones every day.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank our almost 1.8 million RACQ members - their business enables RACQ to give back to our communities every day and stand behind incredible organisations like CQ Rescue.

MJ Bellotti,
RACQ Chief Purpose Officer

BEST *job in the* WORLD

MEET CARLIE WHITELEY



ROLE: Critical Care Flight Paramedic (CCP). I work in collaboration with the flight doctor to deliver high-quality aeromedical care to patients across Central Queensland. This includes rural hospital retrievals as well as responding to primary (on-scene) emergencies and search and rescue missions.

HOW LONG: I've been with RACQ CQ Rescue since January 2023 and in Mackay since November 2022. I took an 18-month temporary contract up here to fly on Rescue 412.

EXPERIENCE: I've been with Queensland ambulance for more than seven years now, working initially as an Advance Care Paramedic (ACP) and then participating in the Critical Care Paramedic (CCP) internship. In this role I get to do a combination of flight work and road response. I'm finishing my Masters of Critical Care and I'm also a qualified Registered Nurse. I tutor paramedical science students at the University of the Sunshine Coast and also volunteer as the secretary for the Australian Tactical Medical Association.

POSTIVES: I genuinely think we have the coolest job in the world! My favourite part is the amazing crew we get to work with - everyone is really supportive and we have a great team which makes those early morning, long distance flights much easier to bare.

CHALLENGES: Playing charades with patients at 6000 feet because everyone has to wear hearing protection in the helicopter. I'm still working on my skills - sometimes I even type out what I'm asking on the iPad.

MOST MEMORABLE TASK: Recently, we flew to a primary job on a small island just off the coast of Mackay - it would have to be the most beautiful flight I've been on. We flew over beautiful, blue water and coral reefs, and landed on a stunning white beach. We were also able to fix the patient's problem (a dislocated knee) and make her comfortable enough so that she too could enjoy the sights on our flight back to Mackay Base Hospital.

MY TEAM: I'm really looking forward to the service welcoming AW139s as they will have a very positive impact on the services we deliver to this community including being able to travel faster and further, more space in the cabin as well as having air-conditioning (which is very exciting).



CREW STORY

REWARDS *Speak volumes for* ARMY VET

Former army veteran Mick DiStefano found himself in a new kind of war zone when he commenced work with RACQ CQ Rescue last year.

The 32-year-old was on his first day shift as an air crew officer when the task, which turned out to be an alleged executive-style mass shooting, came in on the morning of August 4, 2022.

Initially, the crew were not told that three people had been tragically killed in the infamous mass shooting at the Bogie cattle property, west of Bowen. Mick's first thought was simply "let's go".

After spending 15 years in the army with a specialist skillset in areas of combat, Mick is used to high-pressure scenarios. That day his focus was not on reports of a shooting or the potential dangers involved in the mission, but on the semantics of the operation such as landing in an unknown area and situational awareness for the pilot and medical crew.



Image: RACQ CQ Rescue rescue crewman Arno Schoonwinkel, air crewman Mick DiStefano and pilot Owen Maitland.

"I was just thinking about how to get us there, what the coordinates were, how I was going to operate," he said.

As the rescue chopper was en route from Mackay to Collinsville, more information came through from police that three people were presumed dead, there was a survivor and that the alleged shooter was still at large.

"From my experience being in the army and having been in combat before, it didn't really cross my mind," Mick said. "The police were on scene and that's what we understood.

"And you've got to take it in pieces too because there's so much information ... what can we affect, what can't we affect."

From Collinsville the chopper flew to the homestead and retrieved the gunshot patient. The chopper was on scene no more than 10 minutes.

RACQ CQ Rescue flew critically injured man Ross Tighe to Mackay Base Hospital for lifesaving surgery. He was the sole survivor after allegedly witnessing his brother Graham Tighe, mother Maree and stepfather Mervyn Schwarz gunned down at close range at the front gate of a neighbour's property.

Ross had suffered a bullet wound to the stomach and was forced to run and hide in bushes as gunshots allegedly continued to ring out.

He eventually made it to a farm ute and drove about 40km to a neighbouring homestead where he raised the alarm. It was also where the CQ Rescue helicopter would later land in what is known as a "hot scoop".

"This job overall is pretty rewarding to be honest. Every time you get a phone call ... it is someone's life or someone's livelihood at risk," he said. "But on that day I didn't really think about it as you're just doing your job.

"Afterwards the thought process was ... oh we really helped save that man's life."

A month later, in lieu of flowers at the funeral, the victims' family asked for donations to be made to RACQ CQ Rescue. The donation totalled \$15,000.

During his time in the army Mick was stationed in Afghanistan where he had come up against "some combat". His specialist skillset included close combat shooting and direct fire scenarios.

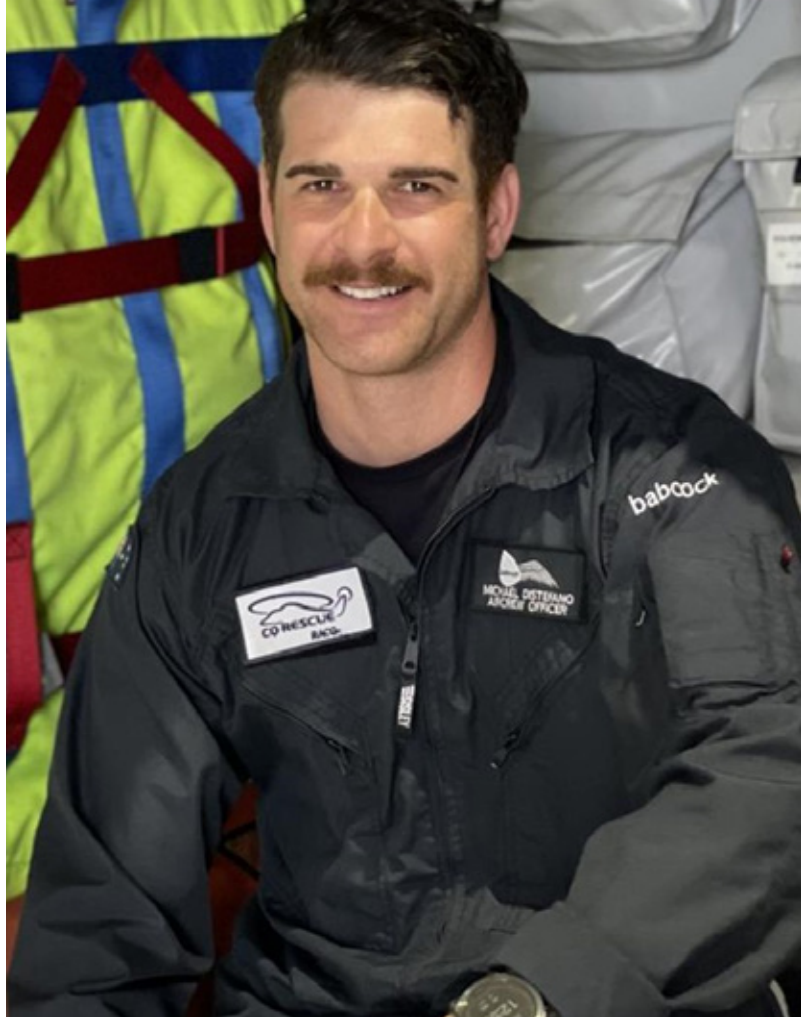
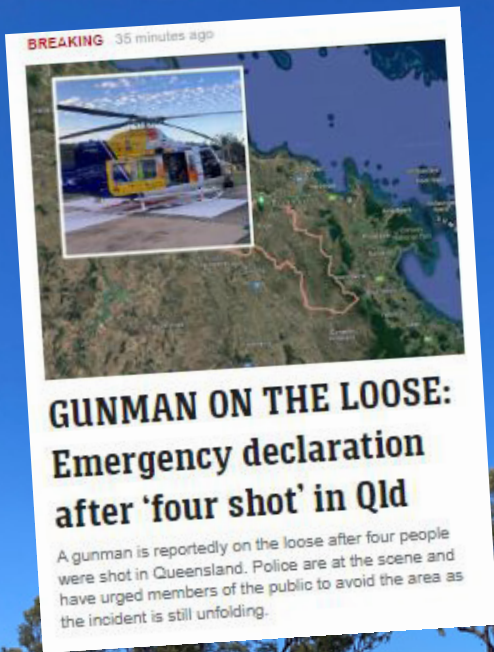
As an aircrew officer Mr DiStefano's role involves "front left-seat, non-flying pilot duties". This includes monitoring the aircraft, conducting navigation, co-ordination with Retrieval Services Queensland (RSQ) and providing situational awareness to the pilot. "And also reconfiguring the aircraft to take as many people as possible," he said.

The former corporal joined the Australian Army straight out of high school and spent eight years in an infantry battalion during which he was deployed to the Middle East and South East Asia, before he transitioned into aircrew where he worked as an air crewman on black hawk and MH90 helicopters accruing about 1200 hours flying time.

"I grew up in Newcastle and saw the Westpac rescue helicopter quite frequently as a kid and I just thought one day that would be a really rewarding career path to go down," he said.

In fact, one of his first times in a helicopter was in Afghanistan.

"At the time I was pretty mission focused ... but it sparked that interest that this was a pretty awesome machine with a really awesome capability," he said.



It drove him to “look forward ... to do something a little different and give back a little more.”

“To be a part of something bigger,” he said. In late 2021 and with friends in the same field, Mick decided it was time to make the switch. “I started getting my resumes together and all the scary things you need to apply for a job, especially for someone who hadn’t applied for a job in over 15 years,” he said.

By May 2022, he had an interview with Babcock Mission Critical Services, which contracts to RACQ CQ Rescue, and the following month found out he had the job, making the move from Townsville to Mackay.

And as a former senior crewman in the army, he brought a range of established skills to the Mackay team. The biggest challenge in his role was the technical side, such as providing the pilot with feedback on air speed awareness and basic flying awareness.

“Consistently giving them feedback on the overall airspace awareness ... knowing what to say at the right times ... just to back them up. I want to be a contributor and make sure I’m giving them as much of the right information as possible.”

Being part of a small team which was mission focused, task focused and outcome focused was what he loves about the job with RACQ CQ Rescue.

“And who provides something that gives back ... overall your job has a positive effect on people. That is a really rewarding experience to be a part of as well.”

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OR SOMEONE’S
LIVELIHOOD AT
RISK.”** *— Mick DiStefano*

2023 MAJOR ANNOUNCEMENT

AIRCRAFT *to revolutionise* CQ SERVICE

Two new AW139 rescue helicopters based in Mackay in 2024 will be revolutionary, not to mention lifechanging, for residents, workers and visitors in Central Queensland.

The \$45 million deal with Leonardo to welcome two AW139 rescue helicopters to RACQ CQ Rescue was announced in Melbourne on March 1 at the Avalon Air Show.

The two state-of-the-art modern helicopters, which set the benchmark in performance, safety and innovation, will replace the workhorse Bell 412 models currently in use and enable CQ Rescue to reach patients in remote and rural communities faster than ever before.

The new aircraft will fundamentally change how this lifesaving aeromedical service is delivered in this region. It will increase our service's response time to missions, increase the distance the trauma team can travel and further improve the level of care and comfort of patients.

CQ Rescue CEO Tim Healee said the AW139s would hugely increase the speed, range and capabilities of our region's rescue helicopter service, which is partly funded by the community.

"The aeromedical service we deliver and type of missions we complete are unique, being very time consuming and over long distances. The AW139s will deliver enormous benefits to our service including state-of-the-art avionics, superior performance, proven technology and exceptional safety features."

Mr Healee said the AW139 was one of the most reliable platforms in the industry. The two aircraft would be configured jointly for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and Search and Rescue (SAR) missions.

"These new aircraft will enable our crew to fly twice as far and about 30% faster to reach patients in dire need in remote and rural locations, so it's an enormous coup for our community."

The two new aircraft are now in production in Italy and are expected to arrive in Mackay in mid-2024.

Mr Healee said the purchase would assure the longevity of the rescue service in Central Queensland and was testament to sound long-term financial management and investment by the board of directors and ongoing community support in the service.

"The plan is to finance these helicopters over the next 10 years, which means we will be more reliant on our community support than ever before," he said.

"But we are also giving back to our supporters and this community by providing the best technology there is in the aeromedical industry.

"After all, having access to faster, more advanced and reliable aeromedical aircraft is crucial when every minute counts," Mr Healee said.



The \$45 million contract for two AW139s was announced at the Avalon Air Show last week. Pictured are Leonardo representatives from left Paolo Alzetta, Roberto Macchiavello and John Skeen, RACQ CQ Rescue CEO Tim Healee, board member Bert Sadleir and Diego Di Sabatino. Seated from left is Vincenzo Alaimo and CQ Rescue board chairman Chris Wright.



CRASH & CAREER CONNECT BRAD'S CARE

As a former flight paramedic in South Africa and Abu Dhabi, Brad Poultney knows how important lifesaving aeromedical care is in a time of dire need.

He also knows how terrifying it can be to be a patient.

The BHP Mitsubishi Alliance (BMA) Health, Safety and Environment Superintendent was riding dirt bikes with his son in Moranbah in October 2021 when a serious crash saw him suffer a smashed ankle, broken shoulder and a severe concussion requiring urgent medical attention.

"My son and I picked up the hobby of dirt bike riding in mid-2020 to take advantage of what Moranbah had to offer. We moved to Moranbah in 2015 from Abu Dhabi and were keen to find a hobby that both of us could do together. Learning to ride bikes ticked the boxes for us like so many others in the area," Brad said.

"On Sunday, 10th October 2021, my son and I went for a ride like most Sundays. My wife met us at a well-known quad bike track to watch us and enjoy some family time."

Unfortunately, while riding around the track, his son discovered Brad lying unconscious on the ground after a serious fall off the bike.

"He immediately intervened and positioned me to open my airway and stop me snoring like I had taught him (a legacy from my paramedic days). I remained unconscious for about 10 minutes but started to come around after that."

Brad's wife was frantic and contacted the local Doctor. Two teenagers riding their dirt bikes nearby contacted 000 and Brad was transported to Moranbah Hospital by Queensland Ambulance.

"The hospital doctor was concerned about neck and spine injuries and the decision was made to fly me to Mackay Base Hospital. Here it was quickly identified that I had fractured my left ankle very badly and I had fractured my left shoulder. What was most concerning though was my ongoing significant confusion and inability to recall anything longer than a few minutes," he said.

Brad said although his wife had previously been exposed to helicopter hospital transfers given his career as a flight paramedic in South Africa and Abu Dhabi, she was naturally extremely stressed.

"She was comforted by the flight doctor as I was being transferred to the helicopter. While I was flown to Mackay Base, my wife had to drive with my son to Mackay. The support and comfort offered to my wife by the flight doctor has stuck in her memory as a bright spot in what she has described as one of the worst days she has experienced. My wife has said that she cannot bear to think of what the alternative would have been if the helicopter with a doctor and paramedic on board had not been available," he said.

He awoke in hospital with no recollection of the accident or his aeromedical transfer. He recalled the day before the accident and waking in the Base hospital 10 days later. In total Brad spent a month in hospital going through two surgeries, daily physical therapy and rigorous occupational therapy.

"Aeromedical services have always held a special place in my heart and in my career, but this was my first time as a patient of a vital service like RACQ CQ Rescue," Brad said.

"I have now been on both sides of the equation as both flight crew and now as a patient and would like to help raise awareness of how important this service is to communities in Central Queensland.

"My family and I are incredible grateful and proud that my employer BHP partners with CQ Rescue to help deliver timely care to anyone in need in our remote mining region.

"It literally saves lives."

RACE AGAINST THE TIDE



It started as a morning of sightseeing in a picturesque area of North Queensland – and ended with a chopper rescue and a race against the tide.

Misty Davison, her three daughters and a niece were exploring the walking tracks at Cape Hillsborough, about 50 kilometres north of Mackay, on Saturday January 7, when her 16-year-old daughter Elisha dislocated her knee.

“We’d done the whole track and then we got to the bottom of Andrew’s Point and she [Elisha] ended up taking two steps on the rocks and ... she said, ‘My knee’s popped out mum’,” Ms Davison said.

“She was screaming cause it wasn’t going to pop back in by itself.”

Ms Davison called emergency services for help, but it wasn’t clear if the rescue would be via boat, or helicopter.

Adding to the group’s stress was the speed at which the tide was coming in. “I was like, ‘Oh shit, the tide’s coming in, we’re going to have to move her ... it’s coming in quick’,” she said.

“Where we were, when the tide comes up it can block you to get access to the path back up to the top.” “[But] if we kept moving back inwards, they [the rescue helicopter] wouldn’t have seen us under the tree line.”

Friends of the family had raised the alarm with the operators of the nearby Nature Tourist Park, so a staff member set off to try to find Ms Davison and the girls.

“He tracked himself in to look for us and he got there about the same time as the helicopter got there,” Ms Davison said.

“He stayed with us and walked us all the way back and made sure we were all alright [after Elisha was rescued].”

She also praised the RACQ CQ Rescue Service crew who came to their aid. The helicopter circled the area several times before the decision was made to winch a doctor and a rescuer down to the injured teen.

“It was such a relief when we knew they were coming,” Ms Davison said. Elisha was flown to the Mackay Base Hospital in a stable condition and was discharged later that morning. Her mum said her daughter was already planning her next hike.

“She’s already said, I’m going back there and I’m going to smash that rock’,” she said.

Elisha’s emergency was one of eight rescue missions the RACQ CQ Rescue Service attended that weekend, in what proved to be a hectic start to 2023.



**“SHE WAS
SCREAMING CAUSE
IT WASN’T GOING
TO POP BACK IN BY
ITSELF.”**

– Misty Davison



DESPERATE TRIO SWIM FOR SHORE

“You read about it, watch YouTube and videos, but it’s one of those things you think will never happen to you.”

A Mackay fisherman whose boat sank 18km from shore at dusk has recalled the desperate decision to swim amid fears they wouldn’t be rescued.

Ryan Taylor, 33, and brothers Sean and Mitch Cook had spent Friday, March 25, 2022 fishing near an island off Mackay’s coast and were returning with a hefty haul in the Esky when their boat experienced “fuel drama”.

Ryan, who had only bought the 16-foot centre console boat three months prior, and was on his third trip out to sea on it, said they stopped about 5pm to fix the line. But a rogue wave in choppy seas as the trio was about to head off again became their great undoing, sinking the vessel and leaving the mates with no option but to make a desperate swim to shore.

“We were out fishing, had been out all day, and everything was as per normal and then sort of come unstuck,” Ryan said.

“As we went to take off (after fixing the fuel issue) a wave came over the back end of the boat. “That was it. It was finished.”

The boat was hit by another couple of waves and began taking on water quickly, partially sinking with only an air pocket holding it above sea level. Ryan had to dive into the partially sunk boat to get the EPIRB and activate it. They waited.

With no way of knowing if the distress beacon had registered, Ryan and the Cook brothers grabbed what they could to stay afloat, including the Esky filled with fish.

Eventually, the Esky was let go and they strung together two jerry cans and a dive float, and held on. Then waited.

As the sun continued dipping, the trio made the call to start swimming to shore towards the Seabreeze Tavern lights beyond the Mackay Harbour. “We had hopes and dreams, we didn’t want to sit out there all night,” Ryan said.

“Once we activated the EPIRB we sat there for about half an hour.” With a continuous check on any boats coming from the harbour, Ryan said their initial hope of a rescue faded when no vessel headed their way.

“We saw the EPIRB was on but we could see the harbour and no-one was coming,” he said. “I said, it’s not an EPIRB, it’s a no-PIRB.”

They made a desperate decision - start swimming to shore.

“We made the decision to leave the boat because once the tide turned, we would be carried out to sea,” he said.

“It probably wasn’t the brightest idea at the time.”

The trio started swimming, making it about a kilometre with the EPIRB tracking their effort.

Ryan said his rescuers told him they were zigzagging and would have made landfall by the morning. The thought of sharks as dusk set in was never far from their minds.

“Don’t kick anything,” was a recurring thought as they clung on.

The Australian Maritime Safety Authority alerted RACQ CQ Rescue which deployed a crew to rescue the fishermen.

The rescue service tracked the men through the EPIRB, and lowered down crew fitting each of the men with a vest before winching them into the chopper.

All three returned to the Mackay Airport base, uninjured but exhausted. Mr Taylor said he was grateful to the crew.

“You read about it, watch YouTube and videos, but it’s one of those things you think will never happen to you,” he said. “I honestly worshipped those guys yesterday.

“A big thanks and muchly appreciated to the VMR and RACQ CQ Rescue - it would have been a long night without them.”





JESSICA'S

journey proof of

DIFFERENCE

“We were on our first holiday out of Melbourne since the start of Covid and had looked forward to it for months. We were travelling with Jessica’s grandparents, her Aunt and Uncle, as well as myself, her dad Tim and big brother. It was the last day of our trip in Airlie Beach - we were due to fly out the next day and had already been out sailing and snorkelling. We’d had an absolutely wonderful holiday.

Our daughter Jessica, 7, was at the waterpark at the Airlie Beach Discovery Park with her aunt. The rest of us were nearby at the coffee van and cabins at the time when Jessica collapsed coming down a waterslide. She was submerged briefly in the pool of water at the bottom of the slide after collapsing before her quick-acting aunt pulled her out. Her aunt could see instantly that Jessica wasn’t responsive, so with the help of a kind bystander who was first-aid trained, they called OOO and started CPR. Thankfully, there was also a staff member nearby who was able to grab the AED and administer it.

The paramedics arrived within a few minutes. Our first piece of luck was that they were already very close and Tim and I were there by that stage as well. No one knew what had happened to Jessica - was it possible she had drowned as she was briefly submerged? We know now that she actually had a cardiac arrest on the waterslide. She was in a very, very critical state having had to have CPR, the AED used and oxygen administered.

Jessica and I were loaded into the ambulance at the park and the next piece of good fortune was that the RACQ CQ Rescue helicopter had just landed down the road in Airlie Beach (they had been diverted after being tasked to attend to another patient). It only took a couple of minutes in the ambulance to reach the waiting helicopter. The incredible chopper crew worked with the amazing paramedics in the ambulance for what I believe was an hour to ensure Jessica was stable enough to be flown.

During this time, Tim and I waited outside the ambulance unsure whether our daughter would survive, both of us in a state of complete and utter shock. Once Jessica was intubated and in an induced coma and ready for the flight, we were finally able to see her. Tim then had to say an incredibly difficult goodbye and I boarded the helicopter to accompany her on the flight to Mackay. I will never forget the sound of the helicopter blades; I think that sound will haunt me forever. Sam, the critical care paramedic, was such a kind support to me throughout the flight to Mackay Base Hospital



“RACQ CQ RESCUE WAS THERE FOR US ON THE WORST DAY OF OUR LIVES. THEY ARE AN ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL SERVICE. WE ARE PROOF THAT HAVING THE CHOPPER AVAILABLE CAN REALLY MEAN THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH.”

– Sally, Jessica's mum

and upon our arrival. Jessica was rushed into emergency where what felt like a room full of people were waiting for her.

After several hours, I was finally reunited with Jessica in the intensive care unit (ICU) where she was still in an induced coma. Finally, we were transferred to Townsville Hospital to be admitted to the PICU, arriving at around 3am. During this time, Tim and the family hired the last available hire car in Airlie Beach and drove the five hours to Townsville to meet us there.

RACQ CQ Rescue's Critical Care Paramedic Sam visited us in Mackay hours after our arrival and then again in Townsville. To me that was going above and beyond and honestly was so incredibly comforting in such a horrendous time.

Jessica was in an induced coma for another two days, during which she had many tests. Finally, comfortable that she was stable enough to be brought out of the coma, she was taken off the drugs. We were not sure how she would wake up or if there had been any brain damage. It was the most incredible sight to see her opening her eyes and I was finally able to give her a cuddle. What an amazing feeling!

It was only then doctors established that Jessica's collapse was heart-related and we had to be transferred to the Brisbane Children's Hospital. From there she continued to recover and was diagnosed with CPVT, a rare heart condition with a heart arrhythmia triggered by adrenaline.

Finally, nearly two weeks after her cardiac arrest she was discharged and we flew home to Melbourne where she remains under the care of the cardiac team at the Royal Children's Hospital.

Thankfully she has recovered really well with no brain damage at all. We have all started counselling to try to work through the trauma and PTSD. Jessica has returned to school and some activities and is managing her diagnosis and daily medication as well as you could hope for! Even though it was an unspeakably traumatic event, we are so very fortunate that Jessica survived and that we are now aware of her condition. With treatment we can hopefully avoid any further massive cardiac events for her.

It's impossible to put into words the shock and trauma we felt that day. Everything happened so suddenly and quickly. I have very traumatic memories of sitting on the ground next to the ambulance with the helicopter behind us as they worked on Jessica. It felt incredibly surreal. Almost like an out-of body experience; it was too much to comprehend. I was also so grateful that the helicopter was there and the crew were so kind and supportive. I have no doubt that they, along with the first responders, saved Jessica's life.

RACQ CQ Rescue is an absolutely essential service. We are proof that having the availability of the chopper can really mean the difference between life and death.

I hope that people will continue to support the service so that if anyone else is in a position to need them, that they will be there. I wouldn't wish our situation on anyone, but I'm so grateful that CQ Rescue were there for us and got Jessica to hospital for the medical help she needed."

STAKEHOLDER *overview*

With 638 tasks completed 2022 was the second busiest year for RACQ CQ Rescue in 26 years of operating also ticking over 11,100 missions in the service's history. The RACQ CQ Rescue helicopters flew longer hours and further kilometers transporting seriously ill and injured patients to the Townsville Hospital on 60 occasions alone.

The RACQ CQ Rescue team work tirelessly to be the difference to those who find themselves having the worst day of their life with the crew often facing extremely confronting scenes. None more so than attending the numerous motor vehicle accidents our regional roads experience each year finding themselves roadside over 40 times in 2022.

Surpassing the Motor Vehicle Statistics this last year were the flights completed to rescue those seriously injured in workplace and recreational accidents. The RACQ CQ Rescue Annual Appeal slogan 'How you get yourself into trouble is your business, how you get out of it is ours' was applicable frequently throughout the year.

The new year started a little differently for the RACQ CQ Rescue team with the announcement of the CEO's retirement. Ian Rowan after five years at the helm of the regions aeromedical service shared his retirement plans in January, however remained in the role until April when the new CEO Tim Healee took up the position. There have been quite a few changes to the service in the five years Ian was with CQ Rescue including completion of the Building Better Regions hangar and office extensions, establishment of the Emergency Services Day and patients access to Critical Care Doctors 24 hours a day.

The new CEO Tim Healee with a wealth of experience in the aviation industry combined with a passion for charity work, took up the reins on April 26. Tim is a former pilot with more than 20 years' experience in both senior management and the aviation industry. At the commencement of his new role Tim said he was looking forward to leading a world-class organization which was held in such high esteem by the community.

Community support is the backbone of the RACQ CQ Rescue organization. Without this, the service would simply cease to exist. Looking back over the last 26 years and the missions the service has completed, none would have been possible without the partnerships, donations, events and communities in Central and North Queensland. RACQ CQ Rescue missions appear in our social posts, news reports

and media however the real heroes, our supporters, rarely receive the same accolades. Every single person, business and organization who assists in CQ Rescue's funding deserves recognition starting with the services amazing partners who have been there from the beginning including BMA, MEU, Thiess and the Mackay Regional Council. Our naming rights Sponsor RACQ have been by our side since 2001. Orica, a major partner since 2010 have increased their support in 2023 to Platinum and will be back on board as a Platinum supporter of the Gala. They are also working on a vehicle branding to be presented this year. Glencore have been a platinum partner since 2005 with a long history of crew support. RACQ CQ Rescue's partnerships consists of different types of support including events run by Hamilton Island (2012) and Whitsunday Regional Council (2016), Payroll Giving and Matched Giving contributes also, through G & S Engineering (2007) along with numerous other businesses in our communities. CQ Rescue Health Services and Anglo American both supporters since 2011 have maintained their Platinum status. Reaching over a decade with our service are Isaac Regional Council (2008), Pacific national (2013), Arrow Energy (2009), and Corefleet (2011). The services support comes from far and wide from our local businesses like MM Electrical (2015) to our mining partners Foxleigh Mine (2017) in Middlemount. The CQ Rescue Team simply couldn't function without varied assistance including vehicles thanks to North Jacklin (2017) the hangar's generator from Hastings Deering (2018) and Kennards (2018) providing any bit of machinery we may need to keep the CQ Rescue facility up to scratch. Our media partners Channel 7 (2021) always helping to get our message and event notifications out to the communities. We are so very appreciative of our longstanding partners and what they have helped us achieve over the years and now more than ever extremely thankful our CQ Rescue family of Sponsors are expanding with the announcement of new helicopters coming in 2024. A big thank you to our more recent partners PIMS Group (2019), Bravus (2020), CPH Mining & Civil (2020), Dalrymple Bay Infrastructure (2022) and Mickala Lighting Towers (2022).



RACQ CQ Rescue's fundraising activities are varied with one in particular ticking a lot of boxes for businesses. The 'Change for Choppers' campaign is slowly gaining momentum not only providing much needed funding for the rescue service but creating environmental awareness in the workplace. A simple process is made even easier by our friends at Anything Environmental. Jason and Jo are extremely passionate about recycling and love nothing more than helping businesses implement this in their workplace. It's as simple as a phone call with the first one to Jason (49 526 866) to get the ball rolling. Businesses who have already jumped on board include Bravus, G & S Engineering/Kaefer, Dalrymple Bay Infrastructure, Daly Bay Terminal, Nepean Conveyors, Hydraulink and Chess Electrics. Thank you for being a part of this fantastic campaign.

We are well and truly in the organizational stage of this year's Gala Dinner. On the back of such a successful event last year the team are definitely feeling the pressure. With a record \$240,000 raised, it was an absolutely amazing night and hard act to follow. However, each year the team manage to take it up a notch and all indications are attendees will not be disappointed.

No matter how you support the service every individual and business is making a difference in our community's lives. Who knows what tomorrow will bring but know we'll be there thanks to you.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT IS THE BACKBONE OF RACQ CQ RESCUE. WITHOUT THIS, THE SERVICE WOULD SIMPLY CEASE TO EXIST.





NEW-LOOK *program connects* SUPPORTERS

When you become part of RACQ CQ Rescue's HeliCore Collective, you'll be helping our service save lives. This new-look supporter program is a great way to give back to your community and establish and maintain connections with like-minded businesses in our service region.

HeliCore Collective is a great networking opportunity for local businesses, business people and other organisations who want to show their support for their community and help us deliver a vital lifesaving service.

The new-look program, which was launched early in 2023, replaces our Rescue 412 program.

HeliCore Collective has a broad cross-section of members including individuals and organisations from the local business, the mining industry, community groups and former patients. Participants in this program pay \$1,200 per annum (which is tax deductible) in support of RACQ CQ Rescue.

HeliCore is a great way for our supporters to get a behind-the-scenes look at the lifesaving service they support at quarterly networking events held in our hangar. It gives you access to our crew and view the rescue chopper at these events.

Our first 2023 networking event was in March and was combined with a very special announcement about the future of our rescue helicopter service in this region.

We were thrilled to welcome so many stakeholders, supporters and sponsors for the announcement about the contract to purchase two AW139 helicopters which will revolutionise this service and the delivery of aeromedical care across Central Queensland.

Our newest HeliCore supporters who have joined in the last 12 months include: AON, Centurion, Chess Electrics, Fergus Builders, Full hammer, LMD Industries, Minefleet, MOE Office Supplies, Moggy's Developments, NQ Water, SRE Mechanical and Blacksmith Jacks.

We invite you to become a HeliCore Collective supporter and support RACQ CQ Rescue, our region's vital rescue helicopter service.

For more information, please email helicore@cqrescue.org.au.



WE ARE HONOURED TO SUPPORT THIS WORTHY SERVICE WHICH SAVES LIVES 24/7, 365 DAYS A YEAR AND INVITE OTHER LOCAL BUSINESSES TO DO THE SAME. A HEARTFELT CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR RACQ CQ RESCUE HEROES, WE ARE SO LUCKY TO HAVE YOU.

— Elizabeth Dent

DGL Accountants, Mackay





CREW STORY

CHOPPER *crewman* HONOURED

RACQ CQ Rescue rescue crew officer Ben McCauley has received a commendation for brave conduct for his actions retrieving a shark attack victim in Cid Harbour on Whitsunday Island on September 19, 2018.

The Governor-General His Excellency the Honorable David Hurley announced the Australian Bravery Decorations in March to recognize the courageous acts of 66 people.

"We recognize and celebrate the bravery of 66 people who put themselves in danger to help others. The courage they showed is matched by their selflessness and they deserve our respect, gratitude and recognition," the Governor-General said.

Australian Bravery Decorations recognize acts of bravery where people selflessly put themselves in jeopardy to protect the lives or property of others.

Ben was the rescue crew officer on board the region's rescue helicopter, RACQ CQ Rescue, for three shark attacks in the Whitsundays in 2018. He said he was honoured and incredibly humbled by the bravery commendation but that he was "just doing his job" that day.

The incident he was commended for took place on September 19, 2018 when Tasmanian woman Justine Barwick was attacked by a shark while swimming in Cid Harbour, north of Hamilton Island.

Ben, who had only been with RACQ CQ Rescue for six months, said the Mackay-based rescue helicopter was on a beacon search at Proserpine when they were tasked to the scene about 5pm. They flew direct to Whitsunday Island in 15 minutes.

Justine was aboard a 39-foot yacht bleeding profusely with barely a pulse after being bitten while swimming.

"The shark had taken a huge chunk out of her inside leg and she was bleeding out," Ben said.

"Her husband and friend on board had quickly packed the gaping wound to help stem the haemorrhaging and this undoubtedly saved her life."

RACQ CQ Rescue, with a Critical Care Paramedic on board, orbited the area and made contact with the vessel Topaz. There were about 30 boats in the popular anchorage, some only about 30 metres away from each other.

The rescue was made difficult by fading light, low fuel and the inability to land on a nearby beach due to the incoming tide so the crew made the difficult decision to winch the critically injured woman out of an inflatable dinghy.

"When you've got a 1200-pound helicopter hovering overhead there is a lot of down-force wind," Ben said.

"It (the inflatable) sort of blew around the place. The aircraft's trying to chase it around. You're sort of playing cat and mouse until you go, 'right, this is as close as we're going to get'."

Ben was then winched down out of the helicopter into the water – where the shark had just been – and had to swim to a dinghy and climb on board. Justine was secured into an ARV (Air Rescue Vest) and winched up with the rescue crewman into the helicopter within 20 minutes to be treated by a Critical Care Paramedic.

"I actually got lowered into the water about five metres away from them and then swam to the tender," Ben said.

"To be honest I didn't think about the shark in the water that day. When you're on the job, you're on the job; I had 100 other things that I was concentrating on other than the shark."

The helicopter flew direct to Proserpine Airport to refuel. The helicopter was met by paramedics who delivered blood and further pain relief before Justine was transported to Mackay Base Hospital.

"Given how serious Justine's injuries were and how far from shore and from medical help they were, without the rescue helicopter I don't think she would have made it back to the mainland alive. She really was incredibly lucky," Ben said.

Justine arrived at Mackay Base Hospital just after 8pm where she underwent emergency surgery. She was sent to Brisbane the next day for an 18-hour vascular surgery to reconstruct her leg.

Five years after the incident which changed her life, Justine said she was very excited to hear of the news of Ben's commendation.

"Ben was part of an extraordinary effort on that day. His contribution was fundamental to my survival. His bravery during my retrieval was amazing. It would seem to me that had Ben not taken advantage of what was very probably his only opportunity to reach me that the outcome for me would have been very different," Justine said.

"While all members of the crew went above and beyond in their areas of operation, Ben's assessment of the situation and the action required for him to get me into the helicopter saw him swimming in an area where he knew there had been recent shark activity. He gave this fact little consideration, but rather he prioritised the task at hand over his own safety.

"Myself, my family and friends are all in debt to everyone who assisted in my journey through retrieval, survival, recovery, and rehab – but had I not been winched into that helicopter when I was, I doubt that I would have made it. Thank you to Ben and all at RACQ CQ Rescue. You are lifesavers," Justine said from her home in Tasmania.

In 2018, there hadn't been a reported shark attack in Cid Harbour before, so it came as an enormous shock when, within 24 hours of Justine's attack, emergency services were called again to another attack in the previously safe Cid Harbour.

Twelve-year-old Melbourne girl Hannah Papps, who was holidaying with her family on a boat in the Whitsundays, would require an above-kneed amputation after her attack. The unthinkable happened when less than two months later another shark attack claimed the life of 32-year-old Melbourne doctor Daniel Christidis.

Ben attended all three attacks and said he still thinks about them every time he flies over Cid Harbour.

"After the third attack, people were asking me 'Are you OK? Tell me about it,'" he said of the incidents five years ago.

"Yeah, I don't want to tell you about it. I've definitely had enough shark attacks for a while.

Very surprised and humbled by the honour, Ben said he was grateful to have been nominated for the award and to be a recipient of a commendation.

"The reality is though I was just doing my job that day in Cid Harbour and hoping our actions could help give Justine the very best chance of survival and for her long-term recovery."

**“THE SHARK HAD
TAKEN A HUGE
CHUNK OUT OF HER
INSIDE LEG AND
SHE WAS BLEEDING
OUT.”**



– Ben McCauley

REGION

mourns tragic loss

20 YEARS ON

HONOURING THE SACRIFICE OF ANDY, STEWART AND CRAIG.



Parents lost sons, a young boy lost his dad, colleagues lost workmates and the region was shaken by the magnitude of the tragic loss.

October 17 2023 marks 20 years since the darkest day in CQ Rescue and Mackay's history – it was the day the rescuers could not be saved. On that dark night, three RACQ CQ Rescue crew members were killed when the Bell 407 ditched into the sea between Cape Hillsborough and Little Green Island, off Shoal Point.

It started off as a routine Friday night medivac mission, but ended tragically six kilometres east of Cape Hillsborough when the RACQ CQ Rescue helicopter suddenly plunged into the sea. On board were the pilot Andy Carpenter, crewman Stewart Eva and paramedic Craig Liddington. All men were aged just 31. There were no survivors. The helicopter crew were en route to Hamilton Island for a medical transfer at 9.35pm. Fifteen minutes into the flight, the single-engine helicopter (VH-HTD) went down at high impact without any warning or mayday calls received from the crew.

Pilot Andrew Carpenter was born in New Zealand where he

began flying helicopters. He worked in Gladstone before joining the RACQ-CQ RESQ team in August 2003.

Crewman Stewart Eva had been with the team since 2002 after a 10-year stint in the Australian Army. He'd flown in Army Black Hawks in Australia as well as in East Timor and the Solomon Islands. He was also involved in special operations for the Olympic games and CHOGM.

Intensive care paramedic Craig Liddington, who began his career in Emerald, had been in Mackay for four years. All three were held in very high regard by their colleagues and the community.

For the last 20 years, the Eva family has made the annual pilgrimage to Cape Hillsborough to pay their respects to their son and brother Stewart.

"We come every year to Mackay, with a sense of apprehension, but also with a sense of welcome," Jan Eva

said. "We once said we could never return, but it is the people here that always bring us back. It touched us deeply to know how much of an impact the crash had on the ordinary people of Mackay."

"We go out to Cape Hillsborough and up to visit the memorial at Turtle Point Lookout every year, and have done so for the past 15 years, to honour the sacrifice these three vibrant young men made and also the sacrifice their families have made."

"We lay flowers under the names of each of the three young men under the community memorial."

Immediately following the crash, the Eva family became very close to the other crew members' families, particularly during those agonising four days as they searched for the bodies. "It was like we were in a cocoon but a fog all at once," Jan said.

"The other reason that we visit the lookout at Cape Hillsborough every year on the anniversary is that it is the closest point of land to the crash site. When Sergeant Zane Male, the police assistant to the Coroner, saw the lookout, he mentioned it was a line of sight to the crash site as the helicopter was only in the air 7 minutes after departing the Mackay airport. We also feel closer to Stewart there."

The incident prompted an Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) investigation and led to a number of procedural changes to enhance the safety of the State's rescue helicopter network.

The coroner found "these three young men died serving the public of Queensland in very responsible positions and had assisted many people in times of physical distress, bring them safely to the medical facilities which would not have been immediately available to them but for the intervention of the community-based helicopter rescue service".

"We feel that flying crew of all emergency aircraft owe a debt of gratitude for this sacrifice made 20 years ago and for other fatalities that happened around that time that forced the changes to emergency aeronautical operations," Jan said.

RACQ CQ Rescue marks the anniversary every year with crew, staff and board members, both past and present, joining the Eva family on the trek up to Turtle Point lookout to honour the lost crewman and place flowers at the memorial plaque.

The darkest day in CQ Rescue's history resulted in statewide changes that made aeromedical helicopters safer and the introduction of the safer twin-engine IFR machines. Despite the huge loss, CQ Rescue was back up in the skies again just over a week after the accident. But it's a day not likely to ever be forgotten by the families or those involved.

"It's been 20 years, but there is still not a day that goes by that our hearts long to hear a knock on the door and Stewart's familiar voice saying "got some time for a brew?" Jan said.

The enduring legacy of our lost rescue crewmen has been to use this tragedy as a source of strength and respect and to always seek out the seed of triumph in the face of tragedy and adversity.



THE ANATOMY OF CQ RESCUE



If the rescue helicopter is the heart of this organisation, the crew and staff are the muscles that keep us moving; the board members the brains; our media platforms our voice; and our volunteers our arms and hands that stretch out across the region; then our community is our oxygen.

Essentially, they are our energy and our lifeblood.

When we say our community is the lifeblood of our service we are hard pushed to find a more inspiring example than Addison; one of our youngest supporters. Instead of birthday presents she asks for donations to support our service...and this isn't the first, second or third birthday she has done this for us, and we're not the first charity she has supported. For the last four years Addison has been a truly amazing champion for CQ Rescue with her generous and selfless care.

Schools are very important to RACQ CQ Rescue when raising awareness of our service. They are also some of the most fun events with lots of questions and excited children. RACQ CQ Rescue were lucky to be invited to Walkerston U8s day and had a great time working with the schools and other community groups to put on this entertaining but informative day for the students and parents.



In October we held our annual Rescue Chopper Week to encourage the younger generation of our community to find out more about the service we deliver. This year we opened registrations to Community Groups and Sports Clubs. This enabled us to provide more information about what we do to a wider audience, whilst giving more people an opportunity to see the helicopter up close, without any emergency. Every school, club and group that register to take part is entered into a draw to win a helicopter landing. This year we were very pleased to visit Nebo State School. The helicopter landed at the showgrounds and had a very hot but really enjoyable morning with pupils, parents and teachers. The crew not only show the pupils the chopper, answer questions about how it works but also speak to them about the tasks they complete, how they use the equipment and pose for loads of photos with children and teachers. This year Stanmore Coal supported and helped fund the Rescue Chopper Week Landing.

Although we have more school interactions during Rescue Chopper Week our visits and presentations are not limited to this week. We do numerous hangar tours for sponsors and supporters of our service. In 2022 we invited the Airforce and Army Cadets, Guides, Scouts and Joeys into the hangar so they could meet the crew, learn about our equipment and explore the helicopter up close. With some amazing questions and shared experiences, they all had an informative and enjoyable visit. We were certainly pleased to meet them all and privileged to have been offered volunteer teams for future events.

RACQ CQ Rescue was lucky to have beautiful morning to hold our annual Beach 2 Gardens Charity Fun Run in July. With plenty of smiles and cheering spectators, our participants travelled the Blue Water Trail, along the Mackay's Pioneer River and helped us raise funds to keep the Rescue Chopper in the air. Whether it was 5, 8, 16, or 21.kms, those who joined in had a great time with many personal bests achieved. We had some great feedback from serious runners that challenged themselves and others that were more interested in the fun rather than run.

The BMA River 2 Reef Ride Festival was held across two days in October with the Kids Colour ride kicking off the high-energy weekend, filling the air with a rainbow of colours, laughter, and screams of joy (from both the kids taking part and the parents throwing paint bombs) in 2022 a new venue at the botanic gardens allowed plenty of space for picnic and play following the epic effort the children made, riding numerous laps around the gardens. Riders as young as three had a special course so they could get involved safely and enjoy the experience with everyone else. With Tri-ActiV8 taking on the management and organisation of this event for 2022 and doing a spectacular job, we are looking forward to getting involved in 2023.

The Battle of the Mines is another high-energy event and the Clermont region never fails to put on a spectacular show of community, involving everyone in the area; businesses, community groups, spectators, volunteers and of course the players. RACQ CQ Rescue extends congratulations to all involved and thank the Clermont community for their support.

CQ Rescue was lucky in 2022 to be the recipient of a fundraising event called Camp & sCare, held by BIG4 Adventure Whitsunday Resort. Turning their campsite into ghoulish grounds and with creepy competitions throughout the weekend, they raised an incredible \$10,000 for our service.

The Christmas Charity Gift Wrapping Stall at Caneland Central, run by the tireless workers ESA Alpha Rho Mackay, is always well supported by this community. This year was no exception. These volunteers work year-round sourcing and making bows and cards. We are extremely grateful for their continued work and support. Each year they aim to increase their donation - in 2022, it hit a staggering \$42,000! What a gift.

RACQ CQ Rescue are incredibly proud to be the charity of choice for so many events in this region. The variety of ideas, the energy, the planning, the passion that's shown by all those involved and the amazing results achieved never fail to impress. Our gratitude is eternal and unwavering.

Whether you are a volunteer, a sponsor, a donor, an event participant, a crew or staff member, someone that shares a social media post or drops change into a money box. Every role is important and it takes all our combined action to help deliver this vital service to a grateful community.





LETTY SLATTERY

VOLUNTEER'S

service a gift to

COMMUNITY

If the saying 'the greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members', then Clermont is one amazing place.

Letty Slattery is a Clermont local of 51 years and is well-known in the small Bowen Basin town for her volunteering efforts and as unofficial face of RACQ CQ Rescue.

Letty knows first-hand how her neighbours and their community would "be absolutely lost" without the vital care and service delivered by the Central Queensland rescue chopper.

The sprightly 81-year-old retiree spends three to four days a week collecting, counting and depositing the proceeds of CQ Rescue donation boxes, selling merchandise and cakes at local markets, as well as organizing and selling raffle tickets to help raise funds to keep the community-funded helicopter flying and delivering lifesaving care to rural and remote townships.

Since she began volunteering, Letty has collected and helped raise more than \$30,000 for RACQ CQ Rescue.

Letty said she first realized the importance of the aeromedical service back in 2012 when she started treatment for breast cancer and required regular chemotherapy and radiation.

Since then, she's also broken her ankle in a fall and suffered a stroke, all of which have seen her be a patient aboard the Mackay-based chopper.

"I've had about four flights on the chopper now – it's a very appreciated service out here in this community, so I decided that I really had to do something to try and help," she said.

"To travel in by car or ambulance when you are so unwell is horrific. The chopper service makes a big difference to people who are sick or injured out here."

Letty, who has 17 grandchildren and 16 great-grandchildren – said her family were very proud of her volunteering work.

"I started work at age 12 and only retired at 79-and-a-half," Letty said. "I just like to keep busy."

In a town of just 3000 people, Letty is often found collecting the donation boxes from Clermont businesses like the golf club, IGA, Cornetts, Penny's Coffee Shop, the Commercial hotel and local pharmacy.



"I get a great deal of satisfaction in fundraising for CQ Rescue. I just love it – it also gets me out of the house and talking to people. It keeps me busy and active," Letty said.

"It really is my pleasure to do it."

Letty also co-ordinates raffles at Easter, Christmas and for Mother's and Father's Day to raise funds for CQ Rescue – she donates a lot of the prize contents herself including her own sewing masterpieces such as embroidered towels. Her recent Easter raffle raised \$1100 for the community-funded service.

"People out here are happy to buy tickets in my raffles for CQ Rescue – they don't mind buying \$20 worth to show their support. They know me and know what I do and why – they know I'm raising funds for the chopper," she said.

"They all appreciate their vital work and just really want to support the chopper and crew."

While it's certainly true that Clermont residents realise they would be lost without CQ Rescue; the reality is, we'd all be lost without people like Letty.

**"I STARTED WORK
AT AGE 12 AND ONLY
RETIRED AT 79-AND-A-
HALF, I JUST LIKE TO
KEEP BUSY."**

– Letty Slattery, Clermont

THE COST *of keeping* US FLYING



\$4,000

HELMET



\$700

FLIGHT SUIT

CREW GEAR:



\$2,500

HARNESS



\$250

BOOTS

\$11,500

AVERAGE COST
P/HOUR ON A MISSION

\$830

P/HOUR IN FUEL

1800 LTRS PER MISSION



\$50,000

NIGHT SUN SPOT LIGHT



\$250,000

ONE ROTOR BLADE

\$40,000

TAIL ROTOR



MISSION COSTS:

SARINA - \$11,500

PROSERPINE - \$16,750

MORANBAH - \$18,750

COLLINSVILLE - \$22,000

TOWNSVILLE - \$39,000

CLERMONT - \$29,400

BOWEN - \$22,000

\$30,000

SKIDS

\$5,000

FUEL CAP



14 WAYS to help

DONATE TODAY

Please support RACQ CQ Rescue by making a donation to our vital, lifesaving service. We have several convenient ways to support us and donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible.



01 By mail:

Post your cheque/ money order to:
PO Box 1850,
Mackay, Qld 4740



02 Online:

Donate securely online at www.cqrescue.org.au



03 By phone:

Call us on
1300 SAVINGLIVES
(1300 728 464)



04 In person:

Visit us at
16 Mike Jones Street,
Mackay Airport



05 Direct Debit:

Contact us for a copy of our Direct Debit Request form to set up easy automatic and regular donations.

06 COIN OR CARD



Donations: Drop your spare change into one of our money collection boxes. Contact us if you are a business and would like to host a money box.

07 BECOME A SPONSOR



There are several levels of sponsorship: Platinum Partner, Major Sponsor and Corporate Supporters.

The higher levels of sponsorship entitle organisations to have their logo on the helicopter as well as ample opportunities for cross promotion.

08 VOLUNTEERING AND EVENTS



We warmly welcome offers from organisations and individuals who would like to organise events on our behalf or fundraise for our service. We are always looking for new volunteers to assist at the many events we take part in.

09 WORKPLACE GIVING PROGRAM



Payroll contributions are a no-fuss method of making small, regular tax deductible donations through your pay to support RACQ CQ Rescue. Simply ask your payroll officer about making donations through your pay.

10 MATCHED GIVING BY YOUR EMPLOYER



Matched giving is a benefit offered by some employers to encourage their workers to support charitable organisations. Your donation to RACQ CQ Rescue could be eligible for matched giving so talk to your employer about matching staff contributions.

11 GIFT IN YOUR WILL



By leaving a bequest to RACQ CQ Rescue, you can ensure your legacy will make a lasting impact and help save the lives of others in your community.

12 HELICORE

HeliCore participants donate a minimum of \$1200 each year to RACQ CQ Rescue. The amount is tax deductible and contributors are invited to quarterly events which allow them to meet and network with other supporting organisations.

13 FOLLOW OUR SOCIALS

Get a behind-the-scenes look at our service and find out about our lifesaving work.

Follow us on:



14 DONATE YOUR REFUND

Containers for change: When you take your eligible containers to an over-the-counter depot, drop-off, Reverse Vending Machines, mobile or pop-up site, you can donate your refund to RACQ CQ Rescue.

Use our CQ Rescue ID code:
C10042112

OUR sponsors

WE PROUDLY RECOGNISE OUR STRONG RELATIONSHIPS WITH OUR GENEROUS PARTNERS:

NAMING RIGHTS SPONSOR:



GOVERNMENT PARTNER:



Queensland Government

PLATINUM PARTNERS:



GLENCORE



MAJOR SPONSORS:

THIESS



pacificnational



BRAVUS MINING & RESOURCES



SILVER SPONSORS:



IN KIND SPONSORS:



MEDIA SPONSORS:



RACQ CQ RESCUE

Mike Jones Street, Mackay Airport
PO Box 1850, Mackay, QLD, 4740



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