



RACQ CQ RESCUE

2020 Community Report



Mackay, Queensland



Saving lives
24/7

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CEO report

2019 was another record breaking year for RACQ CQ Rescue. On October 19 we reached our 9000th milestone mission, making it the biggest and busiest year in our 23-year history.

Clocking up 689 missions in just 12 months, an increase of 53 missions since the previous record year in 2018, absolutely proves just how vital the role of RACQ CQ Rescue is within our region.

As many of our testimonials state, many people would not be alive today or their lives would be significantly different without this world-class rescue helicopter service in Central and North Queensland.

RACQ CQ Rescue provides rapid response aeromedical care to anyone, anywhere, at any time across this vast region. Our service has grown exponentially in our short history, from completing just 92 tasks in our first full year of operation in 1997 to nearly 700 missions in 2019.

In the face of an ever-increasing workload, it is an enormous responsibility to maintain such high standards of professionalism and to continue to provide the best aeromedical emergency service to residents, workers and visitors in the Mackay, Whitsunday, Isaac and Bowen Basin communities. I'm pleased to say we've surpassed many expectations and potential challenges, so our region can proudly claim to be serviced by one, if not the State's busiest single-base rescue helicopters, boasting no less than 98% availability.

2019 was certainly a challenging year for RACQ CQ Rescue. Our diverse and talented team, including our administration staff, board members, crew, medical team, engineers and volunteers have worked incredibly hard to ensure we continue to evolve and advance the delivery the most cost-effective, reliable, safe and clinically excellent patient rescue and transfer service this community demands and deserves.

Inevitably, this also involved a period of transition and fundamental changes to our organisation and how we will operate in the future. Not only has there been the ever-

increasing workload tackled by our dedicated and hard-working team on board the rescue helicopter, but the incredibly impressive \$3.2 million extension project at the Mike Jones Street hangar was completed in December. Having been successful in our grant application to the Building Better Regions Fund earlier in the year, the CQ Rescue hangar has been extended to cater for additional crew facilities, doubling the number of bedrooms from five to 10, with shared ensuite facilities. The office space has been expanded over two levels, enabling our fundraising and administration staff to co-exist with the operational crew under the same roof, and a mezzanine floor added in the hangar for additional storage, fitness area and provision for virtual reality training resources. The project began in May and was driven by Fergus Builders and Bold Architecture. October saw the project being finalized with the connection of services such as electricity and plumbing as well as the fit out of offices, bedrooms, kitchenettes, office spaces and storage facilities. It was an enormous job moving our fundraising and administration arms as well as drug and alcohol testing services into the new and improved premises and advancing our ongoing collaboration with the Babcock crew and engineers, all onsite and under the one roof.

Our focus moving into a new decade is on future-proofing our organisation with strategies developed to expand our current service capacity, deliver improved response times, improved training facilities and greater access to health care for those in dire medical need. With the predicted growth in the mining, agricultural and tourism industries, all of which are reliant on timely aeromedical response due to their geographic isolation, combined with increasingly poor health scores across the region's population, the future dictates an even greater increase in the necessity for and reliance on our community-funded aeromedical service.

Our ability to serve and save lives is a direct result of the phenomenal support we receive from our sponsors and the community. We extend our heartfelt thanks to every individual or organisation who has hosted or attended fundraising events, donated, sponsored, contributed with weekly payroll deductions or volunteered their time and expertise. Your ongoing support is testament to the pride and commitment this community has in our lifesaving service and is absolutely critical to ensuring we can keep this lifesaving service 'flying to the rescue' of hundreds of people in this region every year.

The support of a grateful community is absolutely fundamental to our ability to save lives. Without it, we literally couldn't get off the ground. Year after year, with every life we help save, RACQ CQ Rescue is proving its incredible worth to this region

Your lifeline when you really do need it most.
Ian Rowan, CEO

from the CHAIRMAN

As you read through the 2020 RACQ CQ Rescue Community Report and the remarkable stories shared by both our crew and patients, please consider how quickly life can change.

You never know when illness or injury will strike your family, friends or loved ones. Most of our patients never envisaged they would ever need our rescue helicopter service. When they do, they are incredibly grateful it is available and soon realise the enormous value of a world-class aeromedical rescue helicopter serving this region 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

I urge you to take a moment to donate to your region's rescue helicopter service as your ongoing support of RACQ CQ Rescue is absolutely critical to keeping us flying to the rescue. While our crew are considered by our patients to be their heroes, now, more than

ever we need you to step up and be our heroes by supporting the rescue helicopter which you or your family may need one day.

With our operational expenses expected to rise to \$10.5 million in 2020, now more than ever, your support for our service is absolutely critical to keep our crew flying to the rescue. Without your help, we literally couldn't get off the ground.

On behalf of the entire CQ Rescue team, along with my fellow directors, I extend a personal 'Thank you' to our colleagues at Queensland Health, Queensland Ambulance Service, Retrieval Services Queensland (RSQ), Queensland Police Service, Queensland Fire and Rescue, Volunteer Marine Rescue, the State Emergency Service and the Australian Maritime Safety Authority.

I also extend my sincere appreciation to the CQ Rescue board and to all our staff members and volunteers who work tirelessly, giving their time and expertise. We thank the numerous organisations, groups and individuals who have supported the service in so many ways since our first flight in 1996, allowing us to be a lifeline to more than 9000 people and their families.

It's an honour to help oversee the ongoing success of this life-saving rescue service which this region should be incredibly proud to call their own.

Chris Wright, Chairman

MILESTONE year

The transfer of an injured jet ski rider from Clermont on October 19 marked the 9000th mission milestone for RACQ CQ Rescue.

The 35-year-old man, who suffered a seriously broken leg in the boating mishap which was believed to have happened at Theresa Creek Dam, was flown to Mackay Base Hospital in a four-and-a-half hour mission.

The October task was also the 553rd mission completed by the Mackay-based rescue helicopter in 2019, the seventh task in one week and second visit to Clermont for the aircraft in just 24 hours.

RACQ CQ Rescue CEO Ian Rowan said the service was incredibly proud to be able to fly to the assistance of thousands of individuals in their moment of dire need and have made a difference to so many lives across the region. "The service had marked its 8000th mission on April 26th in 2018, so with another thousand missions under our belt and numbers increasing annually, this milestone task number is really an accurate representation of the ever-growing necessity for such a lifesaving service in this region," he said.

"In 2019 we completed a record 689 missions, whether it be via hospital transfers, attending motor vehicle or workplace accidents or search and rescue missions, and we're incredibly proud to have

grown both in size and status to become one of the most trusted and highly respected not-for-profit organisations in the state," Mr Rowan said.

The Snapshot of 2019 on the following page of this report details the incredible workload of 2019 for our rescue helicopter and crew. Proserpine, Moranbah, Bowen and Clermont remain our top four frequented destinations, and 46 flights to transfer critically ill or injured patients to Townsville were completed, each costing about \$27,000.

The milestone of 9000 missions is yet another impressive achievement for the charitable organisation which started in 1996 in a small demountable building, using a quarter of a shared hangar space at Casey Avenue. In the first full year the service's single engine Bell Longranger helicopter undertook 92 tasks and operational costs were \$1 million.

RACQ CQ Rescue has certainly come a long way, both literally and figuratively, since then.

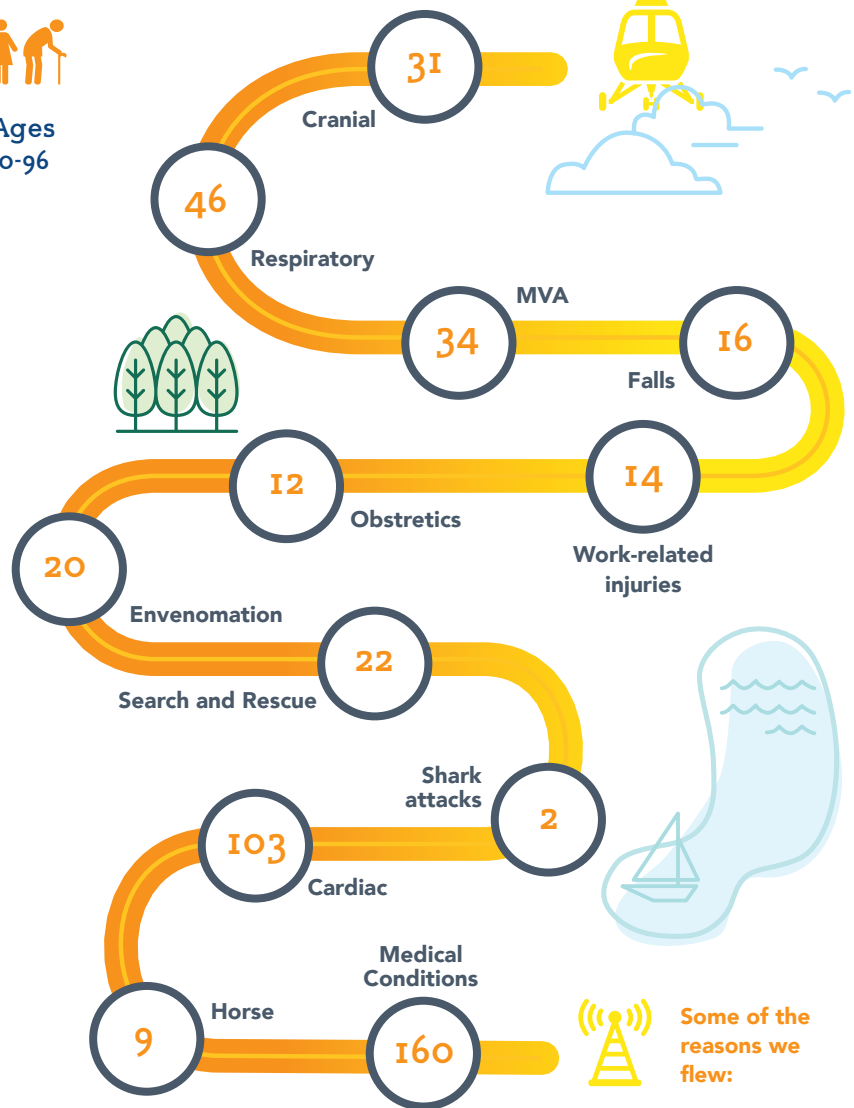
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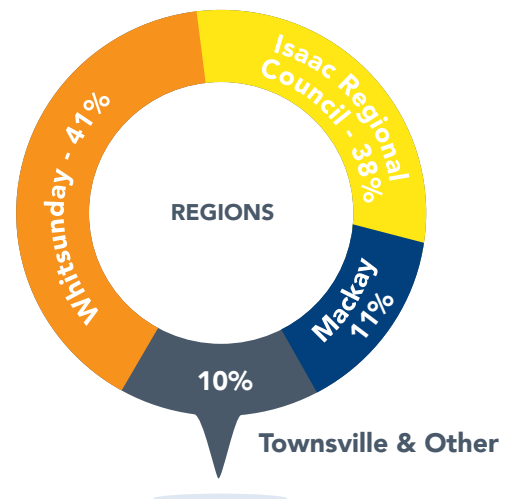
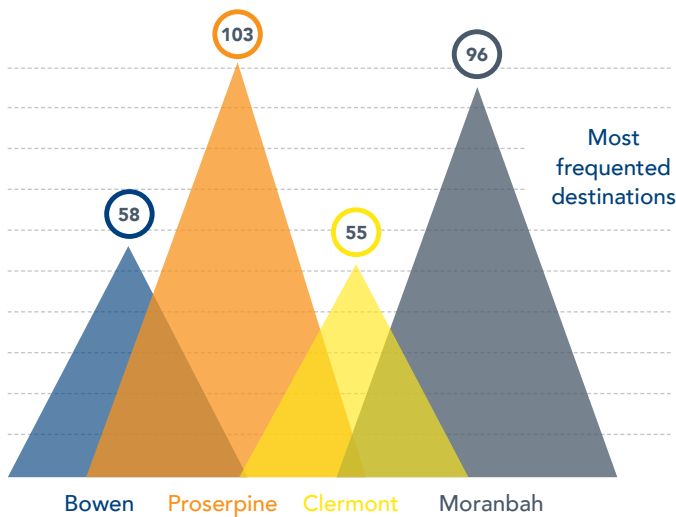
SNAPSHOT of 2019




46 tasks
to Townsville



 Some of the reasons we flew:





MESSAGE

from RACQ



As Queensland's largest club, RACQ's goal is to be there for our members wherever, whenever we are needed.

RACQ's core values include generosity of spirit, being of service, inspiring trust and dedication to excellence.

We exist for our members and judge everything we do by how well we serve their needs. Contributing to the wellbeing and welfare of Queenslanders, wherever they live in the state, is the cornerstone of RACQ community sponsorships and related programs.

RACQ is committed to looking after the communities in which our members live. We live, work and contribute to the same community as our members. We hold ourselves to the very highest standards of corporate citizenship and work in collaboration with communities for the better.

RACQ provides naming rights sponsorship across the Queensland rescue helicopter network including the CQ Rescue helicopter based in Mackay. Our long-term association with CQ Rescue is a highly appropriate way of contributing to the Queensland community where our club has progressed and prospered. Like RACQ, your region's rescue helicopter provides peace of mind 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The service they provide is literally often the difference between life and death.

The Royal Automobile Club of Queensland Limited (RACQ) was formed in 1905 to advocate on behalf of the state's early motorists. For the past 113 years it has been the voice of members and their families, ensuring safer drivers in safer vehicles on safer roads.

Much of CQ Rescue's lifesaving work involves response to road crashes. What price can you put on a service where rapid helicopter response, expert medical care on the scene and swift retrieval to hospital can make all the difference to the trauma outcomes?

Overwhelmingly the majority of RACQ members obviously agree our support is vital, with 99.4% of those most recently surveyed supporting this major sponsorship.

To continue delivering emergency medical aid in remote regional centres, your rescue helicopter needs your help. Please consider donating to your region's rescue helicopter. RACQ CQ Rescue is a vital, lifesaving service so please join us in supporting them so they can continue to be your lifeline when you need it most.

David Contarini, Head of Community and Education RACQ



ON THE MEND: Dexter Reynolds (above).

FOREVER GRATEFUL *to rescuers*

Patient Story

Dexter Reynolds // 6 years old // Pneumonia

Dexter Reynolds was only six years old when he had his first flight in a helicopter – it was one of the most terrifying experiences of his mother Katie’s life.

Dexter was taken to the doctor in Moranbah on September 13 and was diagnosed with a viral infection. His condition continued to deteriorate very quickly and two days later he was back at the hospital. His temperature had risen to 40 degrees, his heart rate was 200 beats per minute and he was hallucinating and struggling to breathe.

An X-ray at Moranbah hospital showed Dexter had pneumonia and one lung had already collapsed. Unbelievably, he also had influenza and scarlet fever. Katie remembers being absolutely terrified for her small son, especially when the doctor told them Dexter was critically ill and needed to be airlifted to Mackay by RACQ CQ Rescue immediately.

“It was so very scary. His prognosis was very grim. My husband Luke went with him on the flight as I’m terrified of flying,” Kate said.

“I drove to Mackay with my three daughters and met them at the Mackay Base Hospital. My son doesn’t remember anything about the flight at all – that’s how ill he was,” she said.

“The helicopter crew and paramedics were just amazing. They all spoke to us before the flight and instantly put our minds at ease about the transfer. They were so kind and compassionate at what was such a terrifying and emotional time for us as a family,” she said.

Dexter arrived at Mackay hospital about 1.30pm and was admitted for one night before the decision was made to transfer him to Townsville hospital where he spent almost two weeks in the paediatric intensive care unit and another five nights in the general ward afterwards.

He was fortunate to receive the urgent medical treatment he so desperately required and eventually he completely recovered although he has scarring on his lungs which are regularly monitored by X-rays. He still worries a lot about getting sick again. He is now back to being his active, outgoing and football-obsessed self. But it’s an ordeal his parents will never forget.

Luke, who is an electrician at BMA’s Goonyella Riverside mine, is very grateful for the ongoing support of his employer for the Mackay-based rescue service. The service was absolutely invaluable to Moranbah residents and their families and all workers and visitors in Central Queensland, Katie said.

“My mother-in-law was also flown from Moranbah to Mackay by RACQ CQ Rescue in 2015 when she had a brain aneurysm burst. We just never imagined anyone in our family would ever need the rescue helicopter service, and then we used it twice in two years!” Katie said.



"To this day, we feel sick in the stomach when we hear the chopper come into Moranbah. It's such a tight-knit community, that any time we hear RACQ CQ Rescue we wonder if it's someone that we know who is ill or injured," she said.

"It's incredibly scary to think that my son and mother-in-law may not have survived if they weren't transferred to Mackay as quickly as they were by our region's rescue helicopter," Katie said.

"It's incredibly scary to think that my son and mother-in-law may not have survived if they weren't transferred to Mackay as quickly as they were by our region's rescue helicopter," Katie said.

"We will be forever grateful for the lifesaving work the RACQ CQ Rescue helicopter does for our community," Kate said.

SPICK and span

Why do we wash the Bell 412 rescue helicopter?

At least once a week, our crew gives our primary and back-up aircraft a well-deserved bath.

According to RACQ CQ Rescue base manager and air crewman Russell James, it's because a cleaner aircraft theoretically performs better than a dirty one.

"We regularly wash the aircraft to remove the dirt, in particular, the black soot from the engine exhaust which covers the tail as a result of the downwash," he said.

"Unlike a fixed wing aircraft, a rescue helicopter is flying in very dirty areas and a lot lower so bugs and dust are a real issue.

"During training the doors are open when we are winching so that really stirs up the dust and when we're hovering, salt spray covers the tail boom.

"It can take about two to three hours to thoroughly clean the chopper and oil the winch cable after we've done winch training with Volunteer Marine Rescue or conducted an over water winch. The inside of the cabin including the roof also requires a thorough clean with fresh water to remove salt spray. Even the Douglas tracks, the base which clips the stretcher into the aircraft have to be cleaned and dry and relubricated with WD40.

"A dirty aircraft is the same as walking up a hill with an extra 10kg on your back – it's much easier to not have it," Russell said.

"It's really basic maintenance of the aircraft – plus we also want our loyal sponsors' stickers to shine."



GRATEFUL: Chris Newlyn and his beloved pet, Smellycat. (Above)

Patient Story

Chris Newlyn // Boating Accident

SAILOR'S FIGHT *to survive*

Laying in pain in the foetal position in dense bushes as the rain pelted down, Chris Newlyn clearly remembers the RACQ CQ Rescue helicopter approaching him in the dark on a remote island in the Whitsundays.

"It was pitch black and the rain was horizontal and there was blood all over the place," Chris said.

"The smell and warmth of the helicopter engine as it was coming down ... it was just unbelievable. For the first time I felt safe. They saved my life, they saved my cat's life, they saved my boat."

Chris was sailing his 15.4 metre yacht Stormtrooper around the Percy Islands with his cat, Smellycat, when treacherous conditions pushed him to the brink of disaster on May 13, 2019.

Huge waves knocked him and his boat around, resulting in injuries from a heavy fall.

"It was extreme weather happening out there, a huge swell. I was trying to get a safe anchorage and I slipped over on deck," he said.

"I didn't think too much about it until later when I had pins and needles in my arms and legs. To top it off I had a catastrophic failure in the engine bay when the manifold broke and superheated exhaust melted stuff including my electrical wiring (and my radio).

"I went down into the engine room and passed out. I don't know how long I was out for but I knew that I was in serious trouble," he said.

Drawing on his extensive military training, Chris rigged his radio off a broken battery - one watt of power enabled him to signal caretakers on Percy Island for help.

His distress call was passed to the Queensland Water Police, who alerted Mackay Volunteer Marine Rescue. But the extent of Mr Newlyn's injuries prevented transportation by boat and the RACQ CQ Rescue helicopter was required.

At first, he refused to leave.

"I told them I wasn't getting off the boat without my cat," Chris said.

"Simple as that, she's the only thing I've got left in my life."

A deal was struck with Mr Newlyn: get to safety and onto the helicopter and VMR would salvage the boat and his beloved pet, Smellycat.



"I used my tender to get to the island and proceeded to go to where I was told was a possible landing zone. It was dark, pouring with rain and moving was difficult due to my breathing. At one point I passed out again. The rain and wind were against me with every minute, but I waited in the dark," Chris said.

"After a short time I saw the helicopter coming, I stood up and activated a red flare. The helicopter circled me and put the search light on locating me instantly. The helicopter began to land in front of me and I could only imagine how difficult it was to land safely in that weather. The warmth and distinct smell from the helicopter as it landed was an unbelievable relief. For the first time I felt safe," he said.

Chris was overwhelmed with relief and gratitude for his saviors including CQ Rescue, Volunteer Marine Rescue and the caretakers on Percy Island.

"The helicopter crew were very calm and caring and I remember looking out of the window as the helicopter started to lift off and looking at my boat thinking that I may never see her again. But then I saw VMR pulling up alongside and going aboard," he said.

RACQ CQ Rescue landed at the Mackay-based hangar and Chris was taken to hospital by ambulance where he remained for six days.

"The crew were very calm and caring and I remember looking out of the window as the helicopter started to lift off and looking at my boat thinking that I may never see her again. But then I saw VMR pulling up alongside and going aboard," he said."

Chris has no doubt that the experience and skills of the RACQ CQ Rescue crew saved his life on that awful night.

"I've lived on my boat for the last six years, basically to get away from people ... but seeing humanity at its best like that all of a sudden was super magical," he said.

"My memories of the incident will remain with me forever – the professionalism and skill of the crew of a very capable helicopter, as well as VMR.

"These people should all wear capes as they are definitely heroes – both for myself and for many other people."

"I can truly say that the sight of you guys arriving in those appalling conditions will forever be in my memory. The power of the helicopter and professionalism of the crew is second to none. Thank you guys for saving this very grateful traveller."





THE TEAM BEHIND YOUR RESCUE HELICOPTER



MEET:  **Grant** *Bollington*

ROLE: Mine is a dual role as **Rescue Crew Officer** and an **Air Crewman**. Therefore, I have many different duties on board the aircraft including going down the wire as a rescue swimmer and also conducting operations in the rear cabin such as winching and clearing the helicopter into small areas to land. I also assist in the front left seat with navigation, communication and flight planning

HOW LONG: I've been with CQ Rescue for 12 months.

EXPERIENCE: Previously I have been a touring Rescue Crewman working at Horn Island, Rockhampton and Barrow Island (Western Australia).

POSITIVES: I love the team effort. It's a high-pressure environment which requires everyone to perform at their very best operationally, which generally results in very positive outcomes for our patients.

CHALLENGES: The most challenging part of my job is dealing with unsuccessful missions where we aren't able to get to people in time or to locate them. I try to constantly challenge myself and our team on how or what we could be doing better.

MOST MEMORABLE TASK: The most memorable job was a search for a four-year-old autistic child who went missing near Emu Park. We knew he loved the beach and had a small white fox terrier dog which never left his side. Flying about in the mangroves, we noticed a small sandbar jutting out onto the beach which had a small puddle in the centre. To the left of the puddle was a small white patch, which the pilot identified as the dog. As we got closer we could see a little head sticking out of the water. At that point we were worried he had drowned. We landed quite close by, making a huge amount of noise which provoked him to jump out of the puddle and run away. It was a huge relief to see this little guy jump up and be ok. We returned him to his very relieved mum and dad. Being a dad, you get pretty emotionally invested in a job like that.

MY TEAM: I have been a crewman for five years now and have worked at many bases around the country. The CQ Rescue team is one of the most incredibly passionate and dedicated I've ever had the pleasure of working with. The time and energy of both the crew and team in the background raising funds to keep us flying is definitely something that will keep me in the job for a long time to come.

MEET:  **Damien** *Etherington*

ROLE: **Aircrew Officer.** I conduct many different tasks during flying operations ranging from navigation, communication, flight planning and other flying duties. I also conduct operations in the rear cabin such as winching, security and obstacle clearance during confined unprepared lands.

HOW LONG: One year

EXPERIENCE: I have been in the Australian Army aviation since I was 17. First as a Ground Crew Mission Support which assisted helicopter operations, mission planning and flight following. I was then selected for aircrew in 2015 and initially flew S70A-9 Blackhawks, then transitioned to the MRH90. I was then selected for an exchange program with Royal Australian Navy encompassing maritime operations as a senior aircrewman and rescue swimmer.

POSITIVES: The satisfaction of assisting others when they are in dire need is the best thing about this job. When all the agencies work together in this high-pressure environment there is no greater sense of accomplishment. Also my table tennis skills have greatly improved over time while the CQ Rescue crew are waiting for tasks

CHALLENGES: It's the unknown. Not knowing what's next and what could eventuate is why it is a challenge. A simple phone call in flight can have us re-tasked from a hospital patient transfer to a motor vehicle accident in the complete opposite direction.

MOST MEMORABLE TASK: Late last year we transported a very ill patient to Townsville Hospital late in the evening. On return we were diverted to find a man on a remote Island in the Whitsundays who had suffered serious burns in a campfire incident. The combined effort and communication with the local maritime and regional assets made it possible for us to find him. We had to conduct an 80 foot winch to retrieve him as he was on the side of a sandbar with a cliff face in close proximity. The look of relief on his face as I winched him up made this job very satisfying. It was very rewarding knowing that I was part of the crew which was instrumental in searching for and rescuing this poor man

MY TEAM: From the office staff, media team, fundraising team, engineers and the flight crew, the people here at RACQ CQ Rescue are very passionate and dedicated to providing this life saving asset to the Mackay region. I am very proud to be a part of this well-established group of professionals and look forward to many years of flying to come.



MEET:  **Julian Kibby**

ROLE: Critical Care Flight Paramedic. I am very fortunate to be part of the medical team alongside a flight Dr. We collectively treat patients on primary retrievals including road traffic crashes (RTCs), mining or farming incidents and rescues from precarious places as well as perform secondary retrievals of patients from rural hospitals.

HOW LONG: I've been a part of the CQ Rescue team since April of 2019.

EXPERIENCE: I have been a paramedic with the Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) for 10 years, originally working as an Advanced Care Paramedic in Ipswich and the western suburbs of Brisbane prior to moving to Mackay in 2012. I have undertaken a postgraduate university masters course specialising in prehospital medical care as well as completing the QAS Critical Care Paramedic Program in 2018. In addition, I am currently studying a graduate diploma in Aeromedical Retrieval. When I am not working on the CQ Rescue helicopter I am rostered to work as a road Critical Care Paramedic in Mackay, servicing the Mackay Local Ambulance Service Network.

POSITIVES: I really enjoy the working relationships that I have developed with the medical team and aircrew. I have been welcomed and made to feel that my insight and experience is valued in the team decision-making processes.

CHALLENGES: Probably the biggest challenge would be the unknown factor in the tasking of a medical retrieval. Communication to us regarding the medical condition of a patient may be limited or superficial. We need to be dynamic in our planning and management whilst also being receptive and possessing the ability to adapt to sudden or unexpected events. This requires a lot of forward thinking and foresight into what we may encounter.

MOST MEMORABLE TASK: I recently attended a road traffic crash involving a truck and van at Carmila. The case brought many challenges and stresses to our performance, however, we were able to adapt and manage our resources at the time well. The team effort between QAS and the CQ Rescue crew allowed us to provide the timely aeromedical retrieval of two critical patients to the Mackay Base Hospital.

MEET:  **Kevin Berry**

ROLE: Pilot/captain. I'm responsible for flying the helicopter safely, the overall supervision of operation and completing the mission effectively and safely. It's also important to look great which I'm working on, I'm due for a haircut next week!

HOW LONG: I've been flying in Mackay with RACQ CQ Rescue for nearly 3 years, but have spent 26 years in the helicopter world, most of which I've spent rescuing others.

EXPERIENCE: In addition to my time in Mackay, I started my Australian flying with the State Rescue Helicopter Service in Adelaide flying the Bell 412 classic, the BK 117 and the Eurocopter EC130 in police operations. Before coming to Australia, I flew to the oil rigs in Egypt but spent most of my career in the British RAF flying Army support operations in Northern Ireland and gained extensive Search and Rescue experience flying operations around the UK and Cyprus. I've conducted rescues in Atlantic storms, from snow covered mountains and off foggy cliffs, each one different and demanding in its own way.

POSITIVES: I'm really driven by our direct positive impact on the local community, sometimes providing someone's last hope of rescue when nothing else can reach them. The feedback we receive and the ongoing improvements that our patients make, inspire us to strive for the best.

CHALLENGES: Conducting operations in the worst of weather, usually at night with plenty of unknowns and minimal resources, then trying to remember what happened for the TV crew.

MOST MEMORABLE TASK: There are several that make this grade, but it would have to be 2 two's. The rescue of two shark attack victims one day after the other and two rescues off The Leap within two weeks. All of these occurred just before sunset so we were using NVGs (Night Vision Goggles) which brings its own demands. At The Leap, the wind and weather added another layer of complication to each rescue.

MY TEAM: All of the personnel at RACQ CQ Rescue make a very effective team. We couldn't do what we do and make a difference to so many lives without everyone's input. It's a massive team effort much like the workings of a fine clock; the chopper crew are just the hands on the face. Is it time for lunch yet?



ON THE MEND: Graycin Dickinson with her family and our crew.

Patient Story

Graycin Dickinson // 3 years old // Unknown Illness

MEDICAL MYSTERY

a race against time

The last couple of years could be described as a parent's worst nightmare for the Dickinson family.

But looking at little Graycin today with her gorgeous big eyes and rosy cheeks, you wouldn't know that what started as an unexplained illness in October 2018, developed into a full-blown emergency and the removal of a 5cm x 5cm mass from the three-year-old's stomach more than 12 months later.

It's been a rollercoaster of emotions for her Mackay family including mum Hailey, dad Daimon and brother Ace, 8, and little sister Esika, 2.

"We thought we had actually lost her a couple of times," Hailey said.

"She's been poked and prodded for more than 12 months by a multitude of doctors and specialists and they just couldn't tell us what was wrong with her. To see your child so unwell, in terrible pain and not be able to talk or walk.... It was absolutely terrifying."

The Dickinsons first took Graycin to the emergency department on October 28 in 2018 with vomiting, headaches and abdominal pain. On the third day she still hadn't eaten they took her back and she was hospitalized and treated for dehydration and a urinary tract infection.

On November 6 she was sedated for an MRI but ended up in the intensive care unit after she suffered a bronchial spasm. As a result, she was transferred to Townsville, the worst four-hour drive of their lives, Hailey said.

"We were frantic not knowing what was wrong with our little girl," she said.

In Townsville, Graycin was diagnosed with appendicitis but medical imaging didn't show a clear picture of her abdomen. In February her appendix was finally removed via keyhole surgery, but she subsequently developed an infection in her wound and a haematoma.

2019 was a year of ongoing stomach pain, general unwellness and abdominal issues for the little girl and her worried family.

On October 31 last year, Graycin's condition deteriorated severely. She was suffering severe pain, vomiting, shortness of breath and sporadic seizures. At the hospital doctors were unable to examine her thoroughly as she was so guarded, but the next day she was again brought to hospital by ambulance trembling and in extreme pain. An ultrasound revealed a 3cm x 3cm mass in her stomach.



On November 12, RACQ CQ Rescue was tasked to fly the very sick three-year-old and her incredibly worried mother to Townsville immediately. Her father and siblings drove up to be by their side.

"It was terrifying to be told she had a mass in her stomach – the specialists didn't know if it was cancer so tests and further imaging was needed to rule it out. No mother ever wants to hear that," Hailey said.

CQ Rescue pilot Kev Berry, air crewman Grant Bollington, critical care paramedic Ian Buck-Barrett and doctor Annette Forrest were on duty and awaited their little patient who was transferred by road ambulance to the CQ Rescue base from Mackay Base Hospital. They took off at 12.15pm and arrived in Townsville at 1.45pm.

"We are forever grateful for the service of CQ Rescue, words truly can't express our gratitude," Hailey said.

"I can't imagine what would have happened if they weren't available to assist us and get us to Townsville as quickly as they did. I can honestly say that CQ Rescue not only assisted in the transfer to Townsville hospital they helped save our daughter's life. And by no means do I say that lightly."

"The team during our flight were amazing. I personally was a complete mess but they were all so calm and collected. Their professional ability gave me the reassurance I needed during a very difficult time while I felt so helpless watching my daughter lay on the bed in a state I wish never to see again."

Graycin spent the next couple of weeks in hospital meeting with paediatric specialists, oncologists and undergoing cat scans and MRI's. "There was so much imaging done of her tiny body to try and find out what the mass actually was," Daimon said.

On November 30, she underwent surgery to remove the mass which had by then grown to 5cm x 5cm and on December 2, after

doctors examined the tissue, they were thrilled to finally deliver the anxious family some good news.

"I'll never forget the day – the doctor just came into the room and his face lit up as he said 'it's not cancer'. We were just so relieved," Hailey said.

The mass was actually a build-up of waste tissue and fecal matter in the omentum, which is an expanse of fatty-like tissue that encases the liver, intestine and stomach. Little Graycin's body had in fact been absorbing the toxic waste byproducts of her burst appendix in her abdomen to protect her liver, intestine and stomach.

"The doctors were absolutely amazed and said they had never seen anything like it before," Hailey said.

It's certainly been a tumultuous journey for the Dickinson family. As a result of more than 12 months of trauma, Graycin has developed gall stones and adolescent epilepsy. Months of physio, speech therapy and psychologist visits have helped her regain some of her speech and her ability to walk.

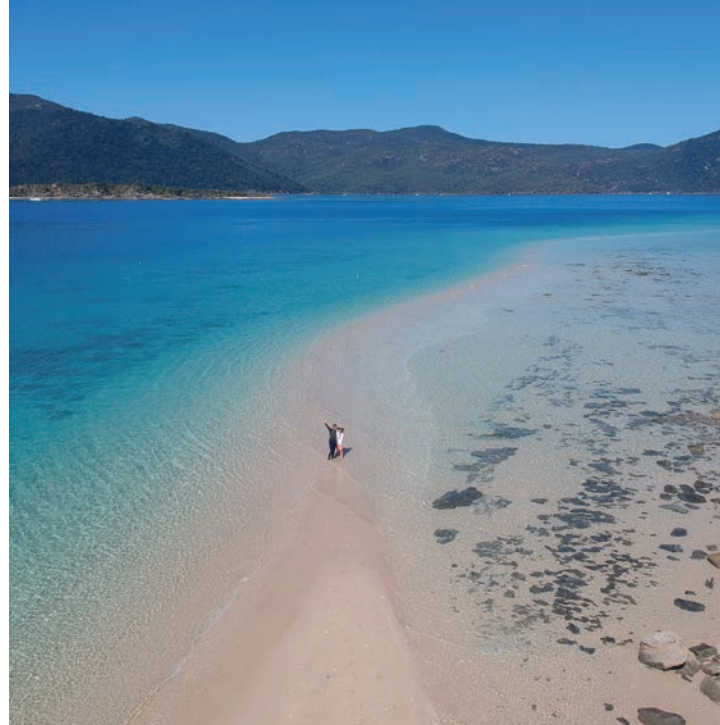
"It surely won't be something we are able to forget any time soon," Hailey said.

"Though in saying that it does put things into perspective in how lucky we really are. We can only offer the biggest and most heart-felt thanks to the Townsville hospital and the CQ Rescue team and all the men and women behind the scenes who help keep this great organisation in the air and available when it's needed and when someone, just like myself, least expects it," she said.

"Each and every day Graycin is improving, and that is partly due to the help from CQ Rescue.

"Thank you for welcoming our family back to your hangar to give us a more enjoyable memory of CQ Rescue – this time Graycin was happy and smiling as we toured the helicopter. "

Today Graycin is finally on another journey – this time to finally regaining her health.



RELIEVED: Victorian Scott Grant was rescued from Hook Island.

Patient Story

Scott Grant // 33 years old // Burn victim

DREAM HOLIDAY turns nightmare

It was meant to be a dream holiday; camping, kayaking and snorkelling in paradise. But it suddenly turned into a horrible nightmare for Victorian tourist Scott Grant.

The 33-year-old man had been hiking and camping with his partner on Hook island, 117km north of Mackay in the Whitsundays, when late in the afternoon on September 18 last year he spilled boiling hot water. Scott suffered serious burns to 20% of his body including his groin.

"I was using a fast boiling camping stove and accidentally caught the handle, causing the boiling water to pour into my lap," Scott said.

Unfortunately for Scott, who is originally from England and moved to Melbourne in November 2018, he was wearing only Speedos at the time.

"I felt the pain immediately as my skin was stripped from my body! I screamed and ran into the sea," he said.

"My partner Maggie heard, came down to the shoreline, looked at my injuries and we decided I needed medical attention ASAP so she called the authorities."

RACQ CQ Rescue was en route back to base in Mackay about 7.30pm after transporting a critically ill patient from Bowen to Townsville hospital when they were advised a 000 call had been received and a patient was suffering serious burns and required immediate aeromedical retrieval from Hook Island.

The Mackay-based rescue helicopter crew made contact with Maggie on the island via a mobile phone and she was instructed to light up their camp site on the northern side of the island, facing Hayman Island, with torches and lamps to enable the crew to easily identify their exact position.

"Maggie was in contact with the pilot and had to describe the location as it was remote and getting dark," Scott said.

"They also advised that I not go too deep into the water as it was dusk and shark feeding time. Aside from being in pain with the burns I was being bitten by sea lice, but my burns were too serious to leave the cool water."



As the helicopter approached the island in the dark with the search light on, Maggie dragged Scott out of the ocean where he had been sitting cooling the burns on his thighs and abdomen and pull him back on to the beach, RACQ CQ Rescue pilot Doug White said.

Given there was nowhere for the helicopter to land, the Critical Care Paramedic on board was winched down onto the island to administer immediate pain relief and secure Scott into an Air Rescue Vest (ARV).

Nearly three hours after being burnt, he was now hypothermic by the time rescuers arrived.

“I felt extremely relieved when the helicopter came and I was on board receiving treatment for the pain,” Scott said.

“Maggie did a good job of guiding the pilot and lighting up the beach with what lights we had. The beach was too small for the helicopter to land so I had to be winched up,” he said.

On board the helicopter he was treated by the flying trauma team. After cutting off his clothing and seeing the state of his burns, he was administered strong pain relief, so he remembers very little about the flight to hospital.

“What I do remember is the crew were extremely efficient, clear with instructions on what they were doing and explaining things very well. They were also very reassuring,” he said.

Scott was flown to Mackay Airport about 9pm to meet an ambulance to transport him to Mackay Base Hospital.

“I was in Mackay hospital for a day before being flown to a specialist burns unit in Brisbane hospital. On news of this Maggie booked a flight to Brisbane and we somehow managed to meet at the same time at the hospital reception,” he said.

Scott spent a week in hospital in Brisbane before being discharged and flying back to Melbourne, visiting a burns specialist every few days for the next few weeks.

“I am now fully recovered and I am feeling good but incredibly lucky really that it wasn’t a lot worse,” Scott said.

“I am also feeling very grateful for all the help that I received. From the CQ Rescue helicopter team, the volunteer rescue boat that picked my girlfriend up, hospital staff and even to the boat taxi company who went to the island and collected all our stuff and packed and posted it back to Melbourne,” he said.

“I think the rescue helicopter service and staff that assisted me are doing an amazing job and I will be forever grateful for their help. I’m not sure what would have happened if they hadn’t been able to help me that day.” Scott said.

“If I’d gone by boat from where we were camping on Hook Island, it would certainly have taken me a lot longer to get the necessary pain relief, treatment and to get to the hospital.”



MISSION Costs



Average cost of a mission per hour is \$10,500

Mission to:

Sarina	\$10,500
Proserpine	\$15,750
Moranbah	\$17,850
Bowen/Collinsville	\$21,000
Clermont	\$29,400
Townsville	\$39,000

Average fuel bill per month \$60,000

Leasing costs \$490,000 per month

(primary and back up helicopter plus crew)

GIVE WHERE you live

Making a difference starts at home. You can help us save lives and improve our local economy by donating to RACQ CQ Rescue.

Where you spend your charitable dollar is important as is how you can make a difference to those around you. Investing in your own community is really important. When you donate your money to a vital not-for-profit organisation like CQ Rescue that spends its money locally, you are boosting your own economy. By supporting a charity that is close to home the entire Central and North Queensland region will enjoy benefits that can't be found through donating to big national or global charities.

Giving locally means you get to concentrate your limited resources into your community which means even small donations can make an enormous difference. More donations locally means more people aided in your community.

Many of us are drawn to causes that are close to our homes and hearts and there's certainly a lot of people in the community who have friends and family whose lives have been touched or changed by the region's rescue helicopter. You never know when you or a loved one might need the help of RACQ CQ Rescue, so giving to our not-for-profit supports local business, aids those residents, workers and visitors in need, and increases the overall wellness of our community and the industries which sustain it.

The money you donate to CQ Rescue directly benefits our region – the funds stay local and help people in your community better their lives. This way your donation has a direct impact on those around you.

There's a number of ways you can help us save lives. Drop your loose coins in moneyboxes, swipe at a Tap and Donate terminal, workplace giving and donate through your payroll, make a donation to our annual appeal – all of this is an investment in your community. RACQ CQ Rescue does so much to help workers, residents and visitors in Central and North Queensland, but we can't do it alone.

You know exactly where your money is going and how it is being used. No need to wonder how your donation is making a difference as you can see firsthand the impact being made on a daily basis. It's the blue and yellow helicopter flying directly overhead to assist those in need.



BELL 412 EP Helicopter Costs

Composite main rotor blade	\$250,000 ea (x4)
Aluminium tail rotor blade	\$43,000 ea (x2)
Skid tube of Bell 412 EP	\$10,000 (x2)
Pratt & Whitney PT6T-3D Twin-Pac Engine	\$800,000
Powerplant of 412	
2 power sections	\$690,000 ea
C-box (combining gear box)	\$750,000
Tail rotor drive system	
42 degree tail rotor gear box	\$126,000
90 degree tail rotor gear box	\$138,000

YEARLY TASK NUMBERS



COST TO OUTFIT A Crew Member



Boots
\$250



Helmet
\$4000



Flight Suit
\$690



Flight Gloves
\$120



Wetsuit
\$700



Harness
\$2500



Mask/Snorkel
\$120



Split Fin Boot
\$240



Switlik Air Crew Vest
\$620

12 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.



BY MAIL

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



ONLINE

Donate securely online
at www.cqrescue.org.au



BY PHONE

Call us on
1300 SAVINGLIVES
(1300 728 464)



IN PERSON

Visit us at
16 Mike Jones Street,
Mackay Airport



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 or use one of our Tap and Donate terminals. If you are a business and would like to host a money box or Tap and Donate terminal to assist with fundraising, please contact us on 1300 SAVING LIVES (1300 728 464) or email office@cqrescue.org.au.



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.

For more information about these opportunities, please contact us on 1300 SAVING LIVES (1300 728 464) or email office@cqrescue.org.au.



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 or us on 1300 SAVING LIVES (1300 728 464) or email office@cqrescue.org.au for more information.



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.



12 rescue 412 PROGRAM

Rescue 412 participants donate a minimum of \$1000 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.

For more information about the Rescue 412 Program, please contact us on 1300 SAVING LIVES (1300 728 464) or email office@cqrescue.org.au.

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.

Contact us on 1300 SAVING LIVES (1300 728 464) or email office@cqrescue.org.au for further information.



HELPING *us takeoff*

We are extremely grateful to all of our existing long-term Platinum Partners, Major Sponsors and In-kind Supporters for remaining loyal in their support of RACQ CQ Rescue in 2019. Their loyalty is testament to the pride in and commitment to our lifesaving service and is absolutely critical to ensuring we can keep flying to the rescue of hundreds of people in this region every year.

Every one of our partners renewed their commitment in 2019 with some increasing their support. The ongoing support of three regional councils within our service area, including Mackay, Isaac and Whitsunday, is also appreciated immensely.

Throughout 2019, the Mackay-based rescue service continued to evolve and advance the delivery of life-saving aeromedical and emergency helicopter rescue services to the people of this region. Inevitably, this also involved a period of transition and fundamental changes to our organisation and how we will operate in the future. Not only has there been the ever-increasing workload tackled by our dedicated and hard-working team on board the rescue helicopter, but finally the incredibly impressive \$3.2 million extension project at the Mike Jones Street hangar which was completed in December. Having been successful in our grant application to the Building Better Regions Fund earlier in the year, the CQ Rescue hangar has been extended to cater for additional crew facilities, doubling the number of bedrooms from five to 10, with shared ensuite facilities. The office space has been expanded over two levels, enabling our fundraising and administration staff to co-exist with the operational crew under the same roof, and a mezzanine floor added in the hangar for additional storage and virtual reality training resources.

The project began in May and was driven by Fergus Builders and Bold Architecture. October saw the project being finalized with the connection of services such as electricity and plumbing as well as the fit out of offices, bedrooms, kitchenettes, office spaces and storage facilities. It was an enormous job moving our fundraising and administration arms as well as drug and alcohol testing services into the new and improved premises and advancing our ongoing collaboration with the Babcock crew and engineers, all onsite and under the one roof.

As part of the renovation project, Hastings Deering generously provided a generator to power the building in times of extreme emergency with a 60kva generator and cost of installation. BHP announced \$1.5 million in funding for our service over the next three years at our CQ Rescue One Night in Monte Carlo Gala dinner in August which is a huge boost to help deliver our vital



aeromedical services to areas in which we operate and where their employees live. During the last quarter we also welcomed Anglo American's funding which returned them to Platinum Partner status and welcomed PIMS on board as a major sponsor.

In 2019 we also farewelled Julie Boyd as a CQ Rescue board member but welcomed two additional board members including aviation enthusiast and Mackay Regional Council Mayor Greg Williamson and Mackay businesswoman Tonia Wilson. We ended 2019 in a very strong financial position although operational costs remained at \$9.45 million

Operations expenses are expected to increase to \$10.5 million in 2020 so we will be actively working to maintain our existing loyal partners, as well as seek new sponsorship opportunities. In addition, we also endeavour to work towards welcoming new members to our Rescue 412 Program.

Without the support we receive in a number of ways from our sponsors and the corporate sector, as well as workplace giving, RACQ CQ Rescue's vital services simply wouldn't be available to those in need. We will continue to provide our sponsors with information, support and feedback throughout the year and we look forward to their continued partnership throughout the coming year.

We take this opportunity also to thank RACQ for their incredible support as naming rights partner of our service over the past 19 years. Our board of directors, management, staff and crew are acutely aware of the importance of each of our partners and extend our thanks for the incredible backing we receive from RACQ and all of our corporate supporters.

THE POWER OF ONE

*one moment, one action,
one dollar*

In 2019 we celebrated one of our best years for fundraising and events. This was because of the community we live in, the time given by our volunteers, the efforts made by our supporters and the money given through donations and sponsorship.

It is the power of our community that helps raise us up...literally about 5000ft off the ground.

In addition to the Annual Appeal which raised our target of \$200,000, RACQ CQ Rescue held three major events including the Emergency Services Day, the Sydney Street Medical Beach to Gardens Charity Fun Run and the RACQ CQ Rescue One Night in Monte Carlo Gala Fundraising Dinner which raised a record total of \$140,000.

Although the initial date for Emergency Services Day was postponed due to wet weather and a flooded ground, we had a wonderful day in June welcoming about 7000 people to Harrup Park. This set the scene for our following events with a glorious, sunny but fresh morning for the Sydney Street Medical Beach to Gardens Charity Fun Run where over 500 people ran various routes along the beautiful Bluewater Trail. The One night in Monte Carlo Gala Fundraiser was an incredible event, attracting a record crowd and raising a record amount of \$140,000. Australian comedian Dave Hughes entertained our guests and sponsors and amazing totals were reached in the silent and live auctions.

CQ Rescue celebrity guests didn't stop there. For the first time, we added a Sportsman's Lunch to our fundraising and events diary with rugby league great Sam Thaiday as the speaker. Sam had the crowd in stitches while telling his story and answering questions. We aim to continue this entertaining lunchtime event and make it part of our annual events calendar.

The crew, our volunteers and staff have always been a crucial part to the organisation of CQ Rescue events and during Rescue Chopper Week they make all the difference when visiting schools and businesses, hosting tours of the hangar, speaking at community events and sharing their stories and experiences.



"It's always great to see the kids when we (the crew and helicopter) arrive at a school for Rescue Chopper Week. We can hear the cheers well before we land. The kids love hearing about the rescues we have done and ask the most amazing questions. I've even been part of one of the stories written for the competition when a meatball sub saved the crew from a shark," Ben McCauley, rescue crewman, said.

These events, together with money from donation boxes and the tap and donate terminals; which continue to be a significant support helping RACQ CQ Rescue to raise nearly \$450,000.

RACQ CQ Rescue Fundraising and Events Manager Zenta Martin-Szpyt said the service could not be more grateful for the continued support from third party events such as the Whitsunday's Mayor's Ball, Hamilton Island Golf Day, Brooke Lee Talent Search, River 2 Reef Charity Ride, ESA's Christmas Gift Wrapping, Hornery's 4U2 concert and Battle of the Mines. "The community fundraises in so many ways, big and small, simple and sometimes crazy, ranging from music sales, sausage sizzles and morning teas to DJ nights, bull sales and sports tournaments.

"My heart is warmed when someone raises money for CQ Rescue. I have had the privilege of receiving donations for CQ Rescue from some very young supporters who have chosen to help us save lives rather than have a birthday party. I know never to underestimate the value of a dollar...because I have seen the efforts that go into raising a dollar and I know the difference a dollar makes," she said.

Community groups, local businesses and sporting clubs continue to show their support for RACQ CQ Rescue. Many of these organisations support us year on year and help increase the funds to keep our chopper in the air and saving lives.

In 2019 CQ Rescue also received a significant amount from gifts left in wills. Our thoughts and prayers go out to those left behind. Our hearts will be forever grateful for a gift left in memory of a loved one.

...there is so much power in one and our community is ONE in a million. We are proud to be here for you as much as you are here for us. Thank you!



OUR sponsors

We proudly recognise our strong relationships with our generous partners:

NAMING RIGHTS SPONSOR:



GOVERNMENT PARTNER:



Queensland
Government

PLATINUM PARTNERS:

CFMEU



Mining and Energy



HAMILTON ISLAND
GREAT BARRIER REEF AUSTRALIA



AngloAmerican

GLENCORE



BHP Billiton Mitsubishi Alliance

MAJOR SPONSORS:

THIESS



Peabody



MIDDLEMOUNT SOUTH



pacificnational

Hastings Deering



PIMS GROUP

IN KIND SUPPORTERS:



CORE FLEET

uvex



RACQ
CQ Rescue

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

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