

News release

30 January 2006

05SB0106

Exmouth RNLI volunteers save hypothermic canoeists

Exmouth RNLI's D class inshore lifeboat, *Spirit of the Exe*, was launched this afternoon (Monday 30 January) following reports of four capsized canoes in the entrance to the River Exe. After finding one empty canoe, the volunteer lifeboat crew were directed to another person who was in a canoe with a girl in the water beside it. The lifeboat crew rescued both before transferring them to the coastguard helicopter.

RNLI volunteers David Preece, Justin Adkin and Roger Jackson launched the Exmouth inshore lifeboat into rough conditions and were directed to the two casualties by lookouts at Straight Point Firing Range whose precise information led them straight to the couple. At this stage they requested that the Teignmouth Atlantic inshore lifeboat, *Frank & Dorothy*, be put on stand by. The Teignmouth RNLI volunteer crew of Kevin Clifton, Alan Edwards and Peter Shillabeer, then launched. While the Exmouth crew rescued the two canoeists, the Teignmouth lifeboat volunteers assisted in bringing the empty canoes and equipment back to Exmouth Beach. The coastguard helicopter, Whiskey Bravo, also airlifted a third casualty from the beach.

All three canoeists were taken to the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital for treatment, including the woman who was rescued from the water by the Exmouth lifeboat. She was suffering from severe hypothermia.

Tim Mock, RNLI Coxswain at Exmouth, says:

'We could see the two casualties rescued by the inshore lifeboat, from the boathouse, including the girl who was in the water. It was vital that the lifeboat crew got to them quickly because the water is very cold at this time of year. The volunteer crew did a marvellous job and worked well with the coastguard helicopter to transfer the casualties. We train regularly for this kind of situation and that crew training definitely paid off.'

ENDS.

Notes to editors

- This was the first lifeboat call out for Exmouth RNLI volunteer, Justin Adkin since he arrived back from the Atlantic Rowing Race, which he and his relatives won, by a huge margin.

- The RNLI is a registered charity that saves lives at sea.
- It provides, on call, the 24-hour service necessary to cover search and rescue requirements to 100 nautical miles out from the coasts of the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland.
- There are over 230 lifeboat stations.
- RNLI Beach Lifeguards operate in the south and south west of England.
- The RNLI further saves lives through sea and beach education.
- The RNLI depends on voluntary contributions and legacies for its income.

Vision

To be recognised universally as the most effective, innovative and dependable lifeboat service.

Royal National Lifeboat Institution headquarters:
West Quay Road, Poole,
Dorset, BH 15 1HZ
Tel 0845 1 226999
Fax 0845 1 1261999

Registered charity numbers
UK: 209603
Republic of Ireland: CHY2678

- RNLI crew volunteers are the lifeblood of the RNLI and it's thanks to their commitment and the support of their employers, that the RNLI as a charity can continue its work saving lives at sea.

**For further information please contact Tamsin Thomas,
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