

NZSAR Gold Award

This was awarded for the most significant contribution to search and rescue in the New Zealand Search and Rescue region in 2010.

Captain Greg Lyall and the crew of the fishing vessel Amaltal Atlantis For the rescue of crew from the Oyang 70 on the 18 August 2010

At 4.30am on 18 August 2010, the Fishing Vessel Amaltal Atlantis received a distress radio message from the Fishing Vessel Oyang 70. The Amaltal Atlantis was in the Southern Ocean close to the Bounty Islands. They relayed the MAYDAY message back to New Zealand and then travelled as fast as they could in the direction of the distress message. At the same time, the Rescue Coordination Centre received two signals from the 406MHz distress beacons that were registered to the Oyang 70.

The Amaltal Atlantis located the Oyang 70 on its radar, but within ten minutes it had disappeared off the radar. When the Amaltal Atlantis arrived at the distress location it found that the Oyang 70 had sunk, so it commenced a search pattern and was able to recover life rafts from the sunken vessel. One of the life rafts recovered had three survivors on board and was partly submerged in oil and water. Two of the survivors were probably only minutes from death. In total, the Amaltal Atlantis rescued 45 survivors from the sea and recovered 3 bodies. The crew provided clothing, food, comfort, and support to the survivors during the search and rescue operation and the voyage back to Lyttleton.

This award recognises the initiative and sound decision making of Captain Greg Lyall; the professionalism of the Amaltal Atlantis crew in responding to the distress call; their recovery and care of the survivors; and their respectful treatment of those who died.

NZSAR Certificates of Achievement

These were awarded for an important contribution to search and rescue in the New Zealand Search and Rescue Region, either during 2010, or over an extended period.

The Helicopter Line

For services, leadership and dedication to Alpine Search and Rescue at Aoraki/Mt Cook

The Helicopter Line is a commercial tourist operator that has provided SAR services in the alpine environment of Aoraki/Mt Cook National Park since 1980. In 1997 a Memorandum of Understanding was signed with Police for the commitment to provide both Human Sling Load rated pilots on standby and financial assistance for training. Human Sling Load rescue is identified as one of the most hazardous roles of any alpine rescue operation and the altitude and weather conditions in the

Aoraki/Mt Cook National Park only increase the operational challenges Helicopter Line pilots face.

Regular flying in the National Park is essential, as it gives the pilots the opportunity to hone the advanced skills they need to perform search and rescue operations at high altitude and in challenging weather conditions. The Police and the Department of Conservation's Aoraki/Mt Cook Alpine Rescue Team have a high level of trust in the Helicopter Line.

Over the last 15 years, the Helicopter Line has provided assistance to almost 80% of all search and rescue incidents at Aoraki/Mt Cook, at an average of almost 17 per year.

This Certificate recognises the commitment of the Helicopter Line to Alpine SAR in the Aoraki/Mt Cook National Park as well as the dedication of the company and its pilots for the great many lives they have saved, rescued, and assisted over the last 30 years.

Larry Charles, from LandSAR NZ Dogs
For services, leadership and dedication to Search Dogs in New Zealand

Larry Charles has been involved in Murchison Land Search and Rescue (LandSAR) for over 30 years. During this time he became convinced that dogs would be very useful to help find missing people, so he researched training methods and subsequently trained his first search dog. Larry's training skills quickly led to him being appointed a search dog assessor by the NZ LandSAR National Search Dog Committee.

Over the last ten years, Larry has trained three dogs and has had 10 finds from around 90 searches. His operational achievements are among the best in the history of search dog handlers in New Zealand.

Larry has been passionate and instrumental in helping develop other search dog teams around New Zealand and he has not missed a search dog assessment camp during the last ten years. He has given large amounts of his own time to attend those training camps and to train search dog teams, around running his own business.

This Certificate recognises Larry's commitment and excellence in land-based SAR, in particular with search dogs. It also reflects his high standing within New Zealand's search dog community.

Alasdair Lean, Daryl McMillan, Dave Cox, Geoff Pollard, Ian Blackler, Murray Paul, Richard Craig, from Coastguard Kaikoura
For the rescue of the yacht Marguerite on 18 June 2010

On 18 June 2010, the yacht Marguerite hit what the crew believed to be a whale, sustaining damage to the rudder. The lurch of the vessel injured the two crew members on board. With their rudder jammed in heavy seas, a large wave pushed water into the cabin disabling their electronics. They spent a very uncomfortable night at sea and activated their 406MHz distress beacon in the morning.

Coastguard Kaikoura was tasked to assist the Marguerite, which was 30km off-shore and well outside their normal operational area. Their vessel Kaikoura Rescue battled swells of five metres and winds gusting 55-75 km/h, so it took them 90 minutes to reach the stranded yacht. Then the Marguerite crew had to set off two flares to help the Coastguard crew locate the yacht because the visibility was so poor. The injured crew were transferred to the rescue vessel in difficult conditions and were taken back to shore for hospital treatment. The volunteers later returned to the yacht and took it under tow to the harbour.

This Certificate recognises the skills and dedication demonstrated by volunteers Alasdair, Daryl, Dave, Geoff, Ian, Murray, and Richard in the severe weather conditions they faced during the search and rescue operation.

Harry Stevenson, Life Flight Trust

Dave Greenberg, Life Flight Trust

Peter Collins, Wellington Free Ambulance

W/O Darren Smith, RNZAF

RNZAF Iroquois Rescue Operation at Pukerua Bay on Anzac Day 2010

On 25 April 2010, three RNZAF Iroquois helicopters were flying in formation to Wellington to conduct an ANZAC Day parade flyover. They flew into adverse weather and, while manoeuvring clear, lost contact with one of the helicopters.

The lead Iroquois in the formation declared a MAYDAY and a search commenced. Shortly after dawn the searching Iroquois detected an emergency locator signal. Within 15 minutes, the Life Flight Trust helicopter Capital 01 was on the scene to join in a coordinated search with the Iroquois. While the Iroquois attempted to find an alternative route to the beacon site, Capital 01 persevered from the coastal side to find a way through the cloud and up the steep and rugged terrain. At the same time, W/O Darren Smith had started a 2km run up the ravine to try and locate the missing Iroquois from the ground.

Capital 01 located the wreckage of the crashed Iroquois and used hand signals to direct Darren to the crash site, where he found surviving crewman Sgt Steve Creeggan. Paramedic Peter Collins was winched down to the crash site and advised that the Steve could be winched up in a nappy harness and that he would stay at the scene to help Darren search for the remainder of the crashed Iroquois's crew. Capital 01 flew Steve to the staging point, where treatment was started, and he was transported to hospital.

This Certificate recognises the combined efforts of Harry, Dave, Peter and Darren in locating and rescuing Sgt Steve Creeggan from the crash site, in extremely difficult conditions.