

MEDIA RELEASE
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Coastguard Education to Help Reduce Fatalities on Manukau Bar

Coastguard is hoping to reduce the number of fatalities and boat capsizes on the Manukau Bar this summer by hosting an educational Manukau Bar Awareness Day on Sunday, February 26.

New Zealand's coastline can be ruthless, catching out even some of the most experienced boaties. Getting to some of the best fishing spots often means navigating one of the many notorious bar crossings along the coast. This is one of the most dangerous parts of boating, resulting in many boats getting damaged and lives being lost each year when attempts to navigate these bars go wrong.

To help up-skill locals, Coastguard's Titirangi, Papakura and Waiuku Units are teaming up to take boaties on an educational trip over the Manukau Bar. Each of the Units will take registrations and hold presentations covering bar safety, communications and local knowledge at a local meeting point before heading onto the water and gathering at Blow Hole Bay.

Darren Arthur, Education Manager of Coastguard's Northern Region, says the aim of the awareness day is to educate locals of the dangers that bar crossings can present and show them how to cross them safely.

"Knowing what you are doing, having some good local knowledge and making sure everyone on board is well-prepared are essential ingredients for a safe crossing. By working together, we hope to help boaties prepare themselves for a safe and enjoyable summer on the water," he says.

Attending the Manukau Bar Awareness Day is free however participants are encouraged to become a Coastguard member or make a donation to support Coastguard as the charity saving lives at sea.

Coastguard's Bar Awareness Days often sell out fast so make sure you book as soon as possible to secure a place.

You can book online by visiting www.coastguard.org.nz or by calling the Coastguard Education team on 0508 RESCUE (737 283).

8.00am – Registration/Presentations/Vessel inspections – Papakura Base

9.30 am – Registration/Presentations/Vessel inspections – Titirangi Base at French Bay

9.30am – Registration/Presentations/Vessel inspections – Waiuku Base at Te Toro

11.30am – Vessels from the three Units come together at the marshalling point – Blow Hole Bay

11.45am – The first of the five trips over the bar commence with a maximum of 10 private vessels and a minimum of two Coastguard vessels per trip

*Each crossing will be subject to weather conditions and vessel availability on the day. Registered participants will be notified of cancellation or changes via text and/or email.

Ends

For more information or images please contact:

Alaina McGregor, Mango Communications, alainam@thisismango.co.nz, Ph 09 374 0045 or 021 068 2584 or Anna-Louise Hoffmann, Mango Communications, annah@thisismango.co.nz, Ph 09 354 1371 or 0274 996 277

About Coastguard Northern Region:

Coastguard is the charity that provides New Zealand's primary maritime search and rescue service. The organisation operates from a network of four regions and 71 affiliated units, located around the coastline and major lakes of New Zealand. Coastguard Northern Region operates the area from Thames across to the Mokau River and everything north and is based at the Auckland Marine Rescue Centre (AMRC) in Mechanics Bay. Each year the operations room at the AMRC receives over 100,000 VHF marine radio calls.

Coastguard Northern Region however, does more than daring rescues at sea. Generations of dedicated people have established an organisation that provides a wealth of services to every person using our harbours and beaches.

- We provide a 24 hour a day, 365 days a year service.
- Install and maintain VHF radio repeaters throughout the Northern Region to enable mariners to communicate with each other over long distances.
- Install and maintain buoys and beacons to make recreational boating safer.
- Provide a 24 hour continuous weather forecast on marine radio VHF channels 20, 21, 22 and 23.
- Accept trip reports from any vessel able to make radio contact.
- Provide a range of boating education courses to ensure that boaties have a sound knowledge of their boats and the rules of the road at sea.

Coastguard's Northern Region Maritime School gives boaties the skills they need for a safe and enjoyable time on the water. They have a range of theory-based and practical (RYA) courses available. These are aimed at encouraging people to get to know the boating rules and regulation whilst gaining the skills and experience to keep safe.