

Sunday, 9 November 2008

NEW ADDITION TO STATE'S MARINE RESCUE FLEET

A brand new search and rescue vessel known as the 'Intrepid' will become the latest addition to the State's Volunteer Marine Rescue squad today.

Emergency Services Minister, Michael Wright, who will commission the craft at **2:45pm at North Haven**, said it would be a valuable asset and equipped to handle marine related risks and emergencies around the State.

"The Australian Volunteer Coast Guard has made a significant contribution to marine safety in South Australia for many years through a 24-hour search and rescue capability, public education courses and the monitoring of marine emergency radio frequencies," Minister Wright said.

"The new vessel is a 6.7 metre Wescraft cabin cruiser, powered by two mercury outboards and fitted with an inventory of navigation electronics, radios and safety equipment"

Minister Wright said the Government recognised the ever-increasing need for our waters to be monitored extensively, with the number of registered vessels continually on the rise, which is why the Volunteer Marine Rescue association is allocated annual grants from the Community Emergency Services Fund. That funding contributes to operating costs, vessel replacement programs and contingency funding.

"The acquisition of Intrepid, which will be based at North Haven, is yet another example of the Emergency Services Fund serving the community, with a \$71,855 being allocated to the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard."

"As Minister for Police, I'm also acutely aware that officers often rely on the services of the Volunteer Marine Rescue association to provide an efficient and effective response to marine emergencies."

"I'd like to extend my sincere thanks and commend these volunteers, who give of their time freely, often at the expense of family and personal commitments, sometimes confronting potentially dangerous situations," said Minister Wright.

Mr Darryl Wright, Manager of Volunteer Marine Rescue in South Australia says that the ongoing support of VMR Associations by the State Government not only ensures that they are suitably equipped and prepared to respond to marine emergencies, but also demonstrates support of their valuable role within the community.

"This vessel will certainly improve the association's ability to respond to marine emergencies off northern metropolitan Adelaide, in the northern St Vincent Gulf region and also the estuary environments of the Port Adelaide River, as well as other areas of the State in support of operations as required," he said.