



February 2019

VMR Whitsunday – Key Facts

VMR Whitsunday

- VMRW has the only ocean-going rescue vessel in the Whitsundays and covers an area 13,000 Sq Km, from Gloucester Island/Passage in the North West, to Cape Conway/Shaw Island in the South (as shown on the map below). Coverage boundaries to the East are determined after taking into consideration tides, weather, VMR vessel range and the size of the assisted vessel, if a tow is likely. There are many reefs, currents, and often rough seas due to wind against tide.
- The Whitsundays has the highest ratio of boat ownership in Australia, about 16%.
- VMRW was the first VMR in Queensland and VMR1 was the first vessel.
- Manned totally by approx. 50 Volunteers and has approx. 900 financial members. No paid employees.
- Volunteers – boat crew, phones, radio room, fundraising, maintenance, documentation.
- 120 Activations per year – assists, Search and Rescue, Medivacs, increased by 40% in 2018.
- A trend to more activations further afield, outer reef can be 8-12 hour activation.
- VMRW has restored VHF marine radio repeaters for channels 81 and 82 following Cyclone Debbie. Now installing AIS receivers at these locations

THE NEW VMR1

- Noosa Cat 4400 FB PATROL just under 12 metres long, 4.5 metres across the beam, only draws 1.2 metres
- Powered by twin Cummins diesel engines delivering a combined 960 horsepower. Configured for long distances and towing vessels. Cruise speed is over 25 knots and uses less fuel per hour in operation than our previous vessel. Maintenance costs long term should also be reduced.
- Specifically designed and purpose built as an offshore rescue vessel with a flybridge – a must for visibility near the reefs in the Whitsundays and for a wider range of visibility in Search and Rescue operations. Fitted with Forward Looking Sonar.
- Larger fuel capacity of 1600 litres provides a range of 300 nm's, which would allow us to go beyond our official working area but gives plenty of safety margin for long tows.
- The larger vessel footprint provides safer handling in the rough seas we can encounter in the Whitsundays and a safer working environment for our Volunteer crews. It has walk-around decks – safer for crew and offering more efficient access.
- State-of-the-art Furuno electronics with touch screen technology, Forward Looking Infrared Camera (which can pick up a person in the water up to 900 metres) and VHF Radio Direction Finder.
- Engines below deck - provides a spacious working area. Engine wells have automatic fire protection.
- Larger working area, is designed for Medivacs and stretcher handling. Vessel is fitted with its own QAS Stryker stretcher, plus our own first aid equipment.
- Vessel has its own life raft and a Life Cell for flares and emergency equipment
- In the cabin – air conditioning, toilet and shower (good for hyperthermia recovery) more spacious working area, kitchenette with microwave, fridge and coffee maker for long distance activations. It is air conditioned for the comfort of crew, emergency personnel, and any passengers that we are assisting



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