



Speech by

ANDREW McNAMARA

MEMBER FOR HERVEY BAY

Hansard 14 May 2002

VOLUNTEER MARINE RESCUE, HERVEY BAY

Mr McNAMARA (Hervey Bay—ALP) (10.26 a.m.): This Friday I will be honoured to represent the Minister for Emergency Services, Mike Reynolds, at the official handover of a new rescue vessel for Volunteer Marine Rescue Hervey Bay. Hervey Bay Air Sea Rescue commenced in June 1972 with a total of eight members. The first rescue vessel, *Rescue One*, was purchased in 1973 with a bank loan of \$4,000 guaranteed by those same members. Their first major search and rescue operation was mounted in 1974 when two local boaties were lost at sea. After two days of searching the boat was found, but tragically the bodies of the two men were never recovered.

Back in those days Hervey Bay was a collection of sleepy little fishing villages with a population of only 6,000. Now it is a thriving coastal city of 43,000 at last count and one of the east coast's premier recreational fishing destinations, enjoyed by locals and visiting fishers alike. Along with our vitally important commercial fishing fleet, Hervey Bay's boat harbour is working at full capacity. All this adds up to plenty of work for the Hervey Bay VMR, and the new vessel will be a source of comfort to all users of the boat harbour and the surrounding Hervey Bay waters.

This is an 8.2 metre vessel of a cat type, built by Noosa Cat. It has state-of-the-art electronics, a chart table and a 1,000 litre fuel capacity, which enables the vessel to operate for up to 12 to 15 hours before refuelling. It will be sponsored by Jim and Kay Sullivan of Fisherman's Corner, and the vessel will be named *Fisherman's Corner Rescue* in recognition of their generous support.

I take this opportunity to congratulate all those members of the VMR, including Commodore Leith Lindsay, patron Lila Davies, secretary Emil Andronicas and the rest of the members who do such vital work for my community. Through their efforts they are not only saving individual lives; they are also rebuilding the social capital which holds communities together. The preparedness to accept personal risk in helping strangers for no reward is the noblest aspect of our human nature. It is what Hervey Bay VMR members do every day. On behalf of my community I thank them. I wish them all the best with the new vessel.

Time expired.