



NEW SOUTH
WALES

RESCUE OF THE MONTH

— MAY - JUNE 2018 —

Club: Surf Life Saving Central Coast

Lifesavers involved: David Smith & Paul Dowdell

On Wednesday 6 June 2018 at around 3pm, an emergency call for assistance was received by the Central Coast Duty Officer after a man was cut-off by a rising tide while exploring Snapper Cave.

The area is a notorious blackspot for drownings with five recorded at Snapper Point in eleven years. The powerful conditions along with the rapidly fading light presented a huge challenge for the emergency responders

Two Duty Officers, the Central Coast Support Operations Jet Ski, and members from the local Aquatic Rescue Team all raced to the scene upon receiving the call alongside Police and Paramedics.

The 30-old-patient faced an uncomfortable hour or so as he contemplated the reality that there was no way for him to exit the cave without assistance.

Prudently he had decided to wear a lifejacket for his adventures, which proved to be useful tool in his subsequent rescue.

Just after 4:30pm, conditions had subsided enough for the lifesavers to make their move.

David Smith (RWC Operator) and Paul Dowdell (RWC Swimmer) were able to launch their craft from Frazer Beach.

This was a particularly hazardous launch given the swell size, difficult currents, wind and chop.

Using all their skills and experience, David and Paul were able to negotiate the break and proceed to Snapper Cave.

Inside Snapper Cave David Smith saw the swell was too large to attempt a landing of the RWC and made the call to dispatch RWC swimmer Paul Dowdell to the rock beach landing inside Snapper Cave.

Paul was able to ascertain that the man though approaching hypothermic state was relatively uninjured and keen to make his escape.

After a brief swim the man was transported back to shore on the Jet Ski where he was assessed by paramedics, and given a clean bill of health.

This was an example of excellent co-ordination from everyone involved resulting in the successful rescue of the patient.

Had they not intervened with such skill and professionalism the outcome could indeed have been very different.

Director of Lifesaving
Stuart Harvey

President of Surf Life Saving NSW
David Murray

