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Welcome

Kia ora koutou,



The 2024/2025 year has been a true testament to the dedication, skill, and resilience of our crews, our people, and the wider community that stands behind our mission. From emergency medical responses and serious accidents to complex search and rescue operations, our helicopters and specialised crews have remained a vital lifeline across the Auckland, Northland, and Coromandel regions - delivering critical care exactly when and where it's needed most.

This year marked a significant milestone in the evolution of our service. In alignment with Crown funding and strategy, all aviation-related assets and operational capabilities of the Auckland Rescue Helicopter Trust (ARHT) and the Northland Emergency Services Trust (NEST) have now been brought together under a single charitable operating arm: Northern Rescue Helicopters Limited (NRHL). As a registered charity, NRHL allows us to achieve greater economies of scale while strengthening our commitment to always being ready when our communities need us most.

Over the past year, Northern Rescue undertook 2049 missions over Auckland, Northland and Coromandel. 1001 of these missions were flown from our Ardmore base, delivering expert care to those in their most critical moments. While we are grateful for the significant support received from the Crown, the rising cost of maintaining and operating this essential service continues to outpace available funding. That's why the generosity and support of our community remains so critical to funding ongoing operational costs, upgrades and improvements on base, safety and clinical equipment, and gear for the crew such as helmets and uniforms.

As an organisation, Northern Rescue continues to navigate one of the most significant and transformative periods in its history. In May we officially launched the first of three new AW169 helicopters to deliver on our fleet strategy. This marked a significant step up in supporting enhanced safety, improved operational efficiency, and reduced long-term costs. The AW169 is the largest and most capable EMS aircraft in the country. Versatile, it can be used to meet different mission requirements ranging from offshore and land-based rescues to prehospital or primary jobs such as motor vehicle accidents, to inter hospital patient and neonatal transfers. It goes to places land-based vehicles or vessels can't, it reaches people in distress faster, in almost any weather and carries with it state-of-the-art equipment and the best trained clinical teams in the country.





Pictured above: Jane Sheetz

By the end of 2025, Northern Rescue will have implemented the phased introduction of our AW169 fleet, and be operating five AW169s across Auckland and Northland, before retiring our older aircraft. The efficiency created by operating a single fleet will allow us to concentrate our resources and energy into patient care in the knowledge our staff can move freely between bases, that the equipment and procedures are the same and that maintenance will be more easily managed.

With increased demand for missions, we have also planned for the relocation of our Whangārei base and secured our future at Ardmore. You will read more about that in “Looking Ahead” as we look towards 2026 and continue to shape the future of air ambulance services across the Northern region and the aeromedical sector.

This year also brought moments of deep sorrow. In February, we experienced the untimely loss of our Chair and valued colleague, John Duncan. John’s dedication and leadership left a lasting legacy on the Auckland Rescue Helicopter Trust, and we honour his memory and the impact he made.

In what has been a year of economic uncertainty for many New Zealanders, we want to particularly acknowledge the unwavering efforts of our Auckland Rescue fundraising team. In a challenging environment, they have continued to adapt and innovate to ensure our service remains sustainable and accessible for those who need us most.

None of what we do would be possible without the support of our donors, sponsors, partners, and community. You are the lifeblood of Auckland Rescue. With your help, expert medical assistance remains within reach - no matter how remote the location or how urgent the situation.

Our 2024/2025 Annual Report reflects the milestones, challenges, and outcomes of this year. It is a story of resilience, commitment, and community. Most importantly, it is a story of lives saved - because of your belief in what we do.

Your continued support ensures we’re ready to serve, when every second counts.

Ngā mihi nui ki a koe,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jane Sheetz', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jane Sheetz - Chairperson
Auckland Rescue Helicopter Trust



“You are Angels in the sky”

Sharon Morris
Organiser of Rodders
Beach Festival

“In 1998 I lost my brother
Ron Morris at 45 yrs of age in
the chopper.

I’m a hairdresser by trade and
I bought a 1959 Pink Cadillac
in 2009 and was going to do
a recipe book as a fundraiser
for Auckland Rescue to say a
big thank you for everything,
when it somehow turned
into a Hot Rod show in 2010
instead.

Now 16 years later, the Hot
Rod club I’m in, The Hibiscus
Rodders and my incredible
team have raised over
\$500,000 and we realise
how amazing you guys are at
saving lives.

My Mum Shirley Morris
purchased 3 helmets for the
crew to honor my brother and
my late father and one with
my name on to honor our
family contribution to your
team.

We keep going as you guys
just get more choppers, better
equipment, more crew and
save more lives... You are the
Angels in the sky!”



OUR MISSION

“When lives are on the line, when minutes matter, they trust us to respond.”



WHO WE ARE

The Auckland Rescue helicopter supports Northern Rescue to provide life-saving medical and search and rescue services across the greater Auckland region and beyond. Operating 24/7, 365 days a year, our highly skilled crew of pilots, air crew officers, critical care paramedics, and pre-hospital doctors respond rapidly to medical emergencies, trauma incidents, and rescue situations, whether on land or at sea. Our purpose is simple, we bring the hospital to the patient, when every second counts.

WHY WE DO, WHAT WE DO

Every mission we fly is underpinned by a deep commitment to saving lives. Here's why our mission matters — and why we need you with us.

WHY DOES FAST AIRBORNE RESPONSE MATTER?

In medical emergencies, time is critical. Our helicopters allow rapid access to remote, hard-to-reach areas, ensuring patients receive advanced care as quickly as possible. A fast response can mean the difference between life and death.

WHY TRAINING, EQUIPMENT AND CREW READINESS REQUIRE ONGOING INVESTMENT

Our crew operate in complex, high-stakes environments. Ongoing investment in specialist training, state-of-the-art medical equipment, and advanced aircraft ensures they are always ready to deliver world-class care under pressure. Lives depend on this.

WHY COMMUNITY SUPPORT IS ESSENTIAL YEAR AFTER YEAR

While the value of the service is immeasurable, it comes at a real and ongoing cost. Auckland Rescue is a non-for-profit organisation that works to support Northern Rescue. While we get a percentage of the funding from the government, we also rely on the generosity of the community to fund much of what we do. Your support ensures we can keep flying, keep training, and keep saving lives, now and into the future.



24/7

Statistics for Ardmore Base

Numbers by Mission Type

- 351 Medical
- 361 Accidents
- 253 Inter-Hospital Transfers
- 35 Search & Rescues
- 1 Organ Transport



Average
Response
Time

Daytime
14.68 mins

Night time
18.68 mins



1154



Full Flight hrs for
tasked missions

47



30



52



Units of Blood
Transfused

Patients receiving
blood transfusions

Winch Rescues
during Taskings

1001
Missions*



Region
City
Coromandel
East & Hauraki Plains
Far North
Franklin
Hauraki Gulf
King Country
North
Northland
Other
Out of Area
South
Unknown
Waikato
West

Flights
19
189
5
8
1
234
1
9
137
7
207
72
1
1
110

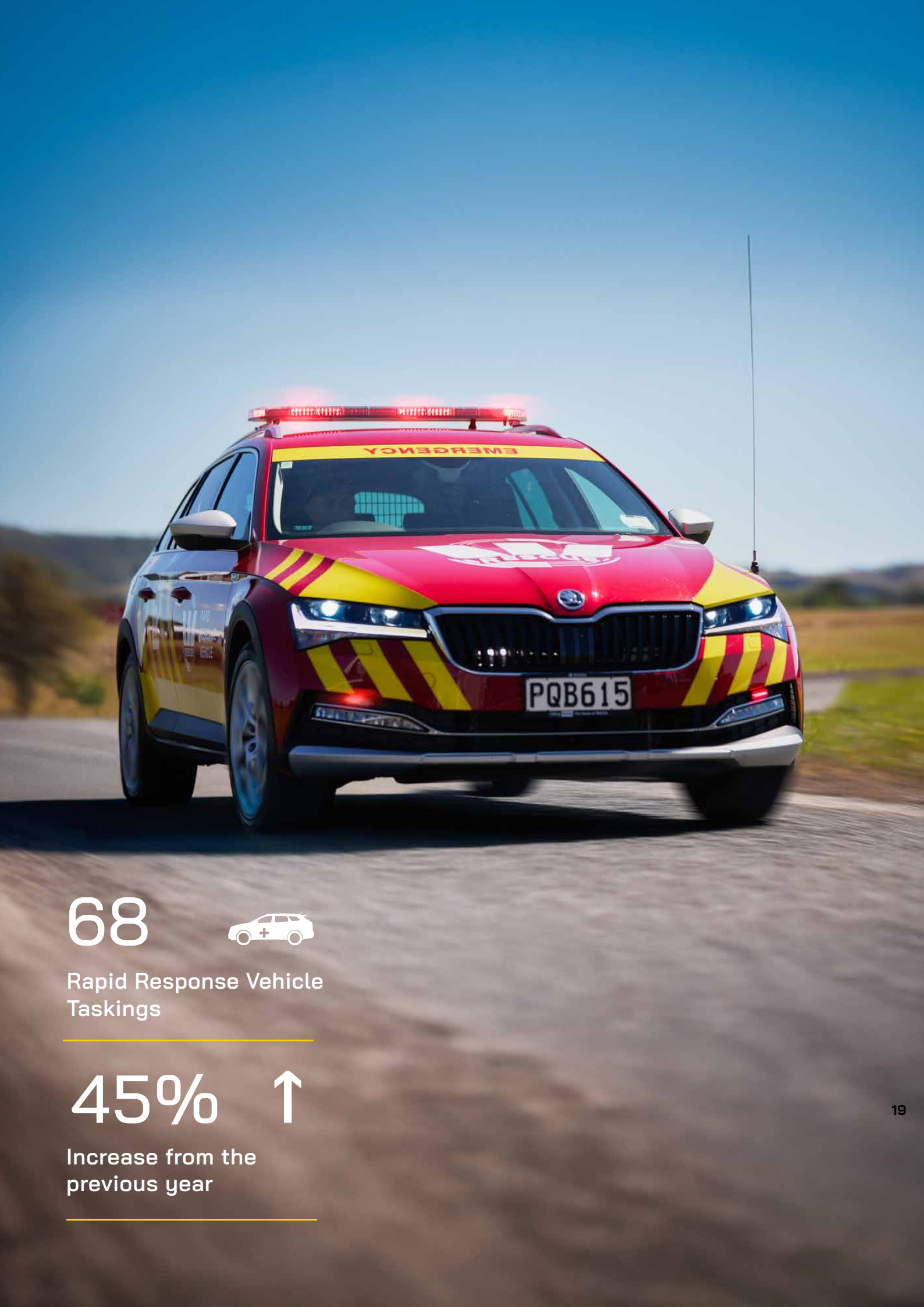
83.41



Monthly Mission
Average

DATA QUALIFICATION
Date: 1/07/2024-30/06/2025
Service types: Accident, Medical,
IHT, SAR and Organ transport
Responsible base: Ardmore Mission
status: Abandoned, complete,
incomplete & stood down

*Helicopter



68



Rapid Response Vehicle
Taskings

45% ↑

Increase from the
previous year

John's Story

AOTEA
GREAT BARRIER
ISLAND

On Sunday, 28 July 2024, seasoned kayaker and Great Barrier Island local John Ogden set out from Medlands Beach for what was meant to be a short afternoon paddle. At over 80 years old, John is no stranger to the local coastline, and with his wetsuit, personal locator beacon (PLB), and a flask of coffee, he was well-prepared for the journey.

After stopping at a nearby beach to enjoy the scenery and warm drink, John began the two-hour paddle back to Medlands around 3pm. Although the sea remained relatively calm, the wind had picked up significantly. Midway through the return trip, John experienced a sharp pain in his hip, making paddling increasingly difficult. With the wind and waves building, he made the wise decision to turn back and let the sea carry him to a rocky shoreline he had previously identified as a safe exit point.

After beaching his kayak and pulling it above the high tide line for visibility, John attempted to climb to higher ground. But the terrain was steep and unforgiving. As night began to fall, John's efforts to activate his PLB were thwarted by numb fingers—a result of Raynaud's syndrome, a condition that affects circulation in cold weather.

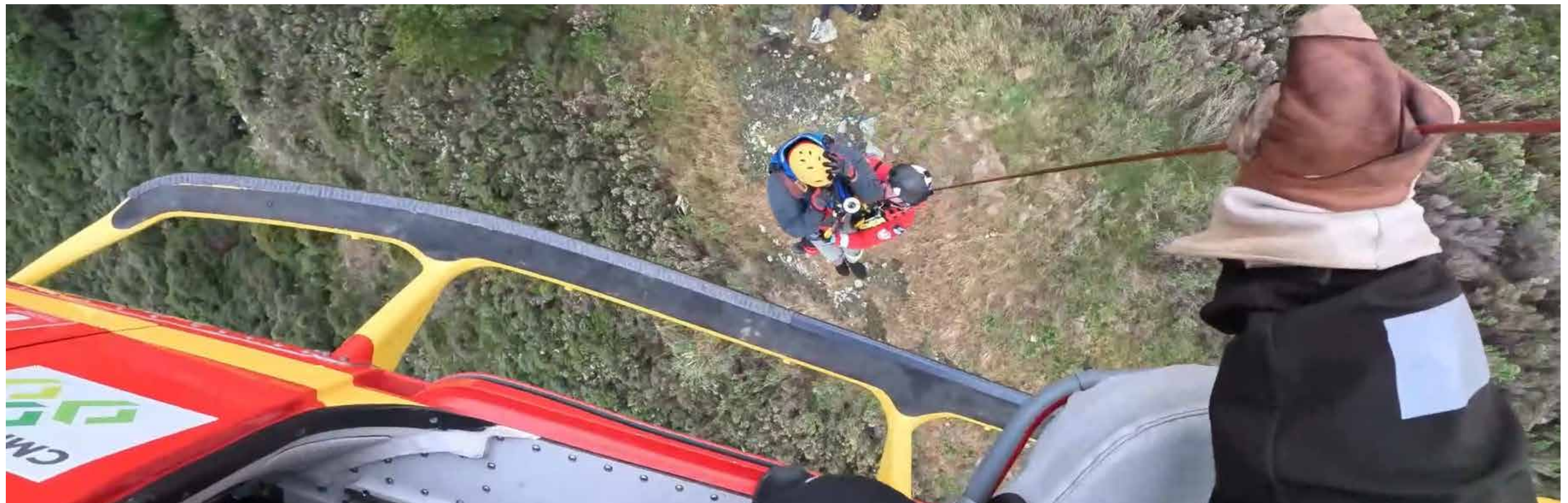
Meanwhile, back home, John's wife raised the alarm when he failed to return by 7:30pm. Police quickly initiated a search and rescue operation. Around midnight, the Police Eagle helicopter, using thermal imaging, located John on a ridgeline. Two officers were deployed to reach him on foot.

The Auckland Westpac Rescue Helicopter was also tasked with assisting. However, due to challenging conditions, the crew determined a winch rescue was unsafe at the time. Instead,

they worked with the police to establish a safer extraction point. The officers remained with John overnight, keeping him safe and warm until the helicopter could return.

At first light, the rescue helicopter returned. John was winched to safety with a critical care paramedic and flown to the Aotea Health Centre in Claris for assessment. Fortunately, John was in good spirits and able to go home later that same day.

The success of this rescue highlights just how vital seamless coordination and cooperation between emergency services truly is— from the local police and Eagle team to the skilled crew of the Auckland Westpac Rescue Helicopter. Thanks to their swift action and teamwork, John's adventure ended safely.



Pictured above: John's winch rescue from aboard the AW-169

Sophie's Story

COROMANDEL

In June 2024, seven-year-old Sophie Jack from Cooks Beach was getting ready to hit the soccer field when an unexpected asthma attack brought everything to a sudden halt. Luckily, her Dad—who also happens to be the local Fire Chief—was quick to act. He immediately called for an ambulance, and before long, the Auckland Westpac Rescue Helicopter was tasked to fly to her aid.

Emergency services worked seamlessly together. At one point, Sophie had a full team of responders by her side: two fire crew, two ambulance staff, and two medics from the rescue chopper—all ensuring she received the very best care.

The ambulance transported Sophie to a nearby landing site where the rescue helicopter awaited. As the chopper lifted off for Thames Hospital, local firefighters waved goodbye, sending Sophie off with their best wishes.

Despite the whirlwind experience, Sophie found a silver lining. "It was pretty cool being in the helicopter," she said. "I could look down and see Cooks Beach, Whitianga—and even a rainbow!"

Although she was initially taken to Thames Hospital, Sophie's condition didn't improve as hoped. She was later transferred by road to Waikato Hospital, where, after three days of care, she made a fantastic recovery and was able to return home.

Sophie is a vibrant, active girl who loves horse riding, soccer, and singing. Determined not to let asthma hold her back, she's now attending Breathing Works in Auckland, where she's learning how to manage her breathing and stay calm in emergencies.

Her advice to others?
"Stay calm and don't freak out—the crew have got you!"

On board the rescue helicopter that day were Dr. Nick Longley, Critical Care Paramedic Russell Clarke, and Pilot Matt Shrimpton. To show her gratitude, Sophie organised a bake sale on January 3rd, knowing plenty of holidaymakers would be around. Her big-hearted effort raised over \$300 for the Auckland Rescue Helicopter Trust, along with a handmade card that was recently delivered to the Ardmore Base.

From everyone at the service—thank you, Sophie! We wish you all the best for the bright future ahead.



Pictured: Sophie with sister Marie Jack and Medic Bear



The new AW-169

CALL SIGN IRB

The purchase of a new AW169, the largest and most capable EMS aircraft in the country, was a highlight during the year. After months of preparations, fit out modifications and testing, our new AW169 has been added to the fleet.

The aircraft was released for service in mid-May and flew its first mission, flying an injured child from Waiheke Island to Starship Hospital. It is versatile and can be used to meet different mission requirements ranging from offshore and land-based rescues to pre-hospital or primary jobs such as motor vehicle accidents, to inter hospital patient and neonatal transfers. It will fly up to 500hrs per year for at least another 15+ years. This aircraft and the crew that fly in it will save many lives over that course of time.

It is important to also acknowledge that without the support of our corporate sponsors and community donors over the decades we would not be here. They will continue to play an essential role by contributing to the operating budget, and funding specialised equipment which is essential to the safe and effective delivery of clinical care.

From left: James Tayler, Vignesh Nagasubramanian, David Richards, Ian MacPherson and Minister Casey Costello.





Our lifeline
is your
support

PRINCIPAL SPONSOR

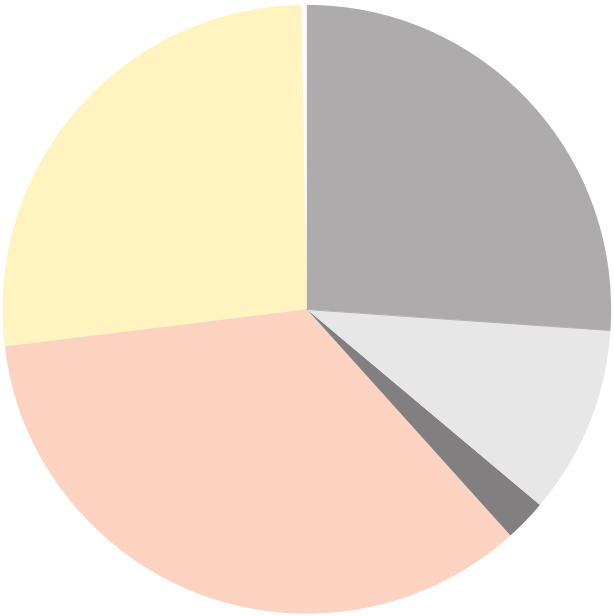


SPONSORS

How you help us to save lives

FUNDRAISING REVENUE

- Telefundraising Events & Lotteries
- Sale of Goods (Merchandise)
- Sponsorship
- Donations & General Grants
- Fundraising
- Bequests



Based on 30th June 2024
Audited Accounts



Looking forward

As we look to the future, Northern Rescue is one organisation united by a single shared vision, backed by our two founding Trust Shareholders - Auckland Rescue Helicopter Trust (ARHT) and the Northland Emergency Services Trust (NEST).

Our patient is at the heart of everything we do. This commitment will continue to guide every decision and every action we take. Our dual focus — on patient outcomes and unwavering safety — remains central to our mission.

Delivering excellence in aeromedical services means building a culture founded on continuous learning, education, innovation, and high performance. By the end of 2025, Northern Rescue will operate a fully standardised fleet of five AW169 helicopters across Auckland and Northland, enhancing both safety and operational efficiency for our teams.

As of 1st July 2025, Northern Rescue began operating its Northland based operations from a temporary base at Onerahi. While the relocation is interim, the operational improvements have been substantial. The upgraded layout and improved facilities have enhanced workflow and team coordination, resulting in a noticeable improvement to day-to-day operations. At our Ardmore Base — an opportunity arose to help resolve some of the major basing issues we experienced. On 18 July 2025, we settled on the adjacent hangar and will see the temporary hangar which was not weather-tight dismantled. Both moves reflect our ongoing commitment to investing in modern, fit-for-purpose infrastructure that supports both our team, air assets and the communities we serve.

We are proud to continue innovating. In August, we commissioned the Rear Cabin Procedural Trainer (RCPT) — a national first and the result of over two years of development. Purpose-built to replicate the interior of our AW169 aircraft, this advanced simulator enables realistic crew training — including winch procedures — without using the actual aircraft. This will save significant operational costs and provide a safe, controlled environment for clinical and technical training. We will also welcome external agencies to utilise this facility to foster inter-agency collaboration, and we will share our learnings with aeromedical organisations globally. A major step forward in operational training and clinical preparedness, the RCPT provides an immersive training environment for both aircrew and clinical teams that is independent of aircraft availability, weather conditions, or operational demand.

Partnership is integral to how Northern Rescue operates. We prioritise collaboration, knowing that strong partnerships bring greater value to the communities we serve. Our work alongside Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora Ambulance Team, ACC, and ACC Investments is essential, and we remain committed to strengthening those relationships and engaging meaningfully with our sector and communities.

Tomorrow's
mission
is already
in motion



CRITICAL
PARAM

GET INVOLVED

As always, our ability to save lives depends on the incredible support of our community.

There are many ways you can join us in our life-saving mission.

Stay connected

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or call 0800 4 737283

To leave a legacy

email: bequests@arht.org.nz
or call 0800 4 737283

To become a sponsor

email: paul.gates@arht.org.nz



Special thanks to photographer Tom Robertson.

