

Friday 18<sup>th</sup> April, 2014.

For immediate release

## **Southend RNLI Search and Rescue Hovercraft Launched To Assist Paramedics With Medivac**

**Southend on sea's RNLI search and rescue hovercraft was launched from the inshore boathouse at 11.00hrs this bank holiday Friday morning to assist paramedics with a medical evacuation from a boat in Smallgains Creek, Canvey Island.**

The man around 60yrs of age was in a poor condition, having suffered a suspected heart attack on the vessel, below deck.

With paramedics on scene trying to stabilize the his condition, it became obvious to them, that trying to move the casualty to the ambulance along the narrow walkways in a stretcher was a real safety issue for all involved, without seeking addition help. With one of the paramedics also being a lifeboat crew volunteer, his training and experience guided him to seek assistance via Thames Coastguard from Southends RNLI lifeboat station.

With the state of tide being low water, the hovercraft was launched and the volunteer crew made best speed, arriving on scene, despite the steep mud banks and gut ways to the entrance of the creek, to within 10ft of the vessel.

The hovercraft crew laid down specialist mud mats and made their way across the mud with a stretcher, to the boat.

The casualty was taken aboard the hovercraft and ferried approx 100yds to the Island Yacht Club Slipway, where a transfer to the ambulance could be safely carried out.

Southends search and rescue hovercraft returned to station for a wash down and refuel.

Hovercraft commander, Saxon Cronin-Garrod said "This was a good example of the emergency services working together in a situation where it was difficult to recover the casualty ashore and if it were not for the hovercraft at Southend, a helicopter might have been required to assist"

### **RNLI media contacts**

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**RNLI online:** For more information on the RNLI please visit [www.rnli.org.uk](http://www.rnli.org.uk). News releases and other media resources, including [RSS feeds](#), downloadable photos and video, are available at the RNLI [Press Centre](#).

**Key facts about the RNLI:** The RNLI is the charity that saves lives at sea. Its volunteers provide a 24-hour search and rescue service around the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland coasts. The RNLI operates over 230 lifeboat stations in the UK and Ireland and has more than 140 lifeguard units on beaches around the UK. The RNLI is independent of Coastguard and government and depends on voluntary donations and legacies to maintain its rescue service. Since the RNLI was founded in 1824 its lifeboat crews and lifeguards have saved over 137,000 lives.

Visit the RNLI's official [YouTube channel](#) for more films and follow our rescue stories on [Twitter](#).

A charity registered in England and Wales (209603) and Scotland (SC037736).  
Charity number CHY 2678 in the Republic of Ireland.