



**RNLI PRESS RELEASE**

**REPORT No: 19/99**

**Search for Missing Divers off Longstone,  
Farne Islands.**

At 6.12pm on Saturday 7th August, 1999, Tyne Tees Coastguard received a "MAYDAY" call from the dive boat "Winalot", which reported that three divers were missing off the Longstone End at the Farne Islands. The boat was with the dive boat "Boomerang", and formed part of a party of eleven divers. The missing divers were 45 minutes overdue. Seahouses Lifeboat were paged for immediate launch. The Lifeboat under command of Coxswain David Shiel, accompanied by the Inshore Lifeboat proceeded to the scene, arriving at 6.40pm. A Rescue Helicopter from RAF Boulmer had also been scrambled and joined the search. Sea conditions were moderate to rough in the tidal flows around the islands. There was also a gusty breeze. By 7pm, the divers had not been found and because of the choppy sea and time of night, Coxswain Shiel requested that the Coastguard alert Berwick Lifeboat and place them on standby to join the Seahouses Lifeboat, in case the search was to become protracted. At 7.08pm, the divers were sighted by the helicopter and inshore lifeboat, having been carried approximately four miles north of their original dive site, by the strong currents. One diver was airlifted by the helicopter, and the other two were picked up by the Inshore Lifeboat, transferred to the Offshore Lifeboat, and taken back to Seahouses. Apart from being rather shaken by their experience, they were otherwise well, and appreciated a warm drink aboard the Lifeboat. They met by Local Coastguards, and were reunited with their colleagues at Seahouses at 8pm. None required medical attention. These divers were very fortunate to be found so quickly, as sea conditions made the search difficult. The passing coastal tanker "Asperity" and Seahouses dive boat Sovereign II also joined the search, in answer to the "Mayday".

The divers were from Nottingham, from Longeaton Sub Aqua Club, and all had dived at this location previously.

Ends.

9.20pm 7th August 1999.