Seahouses Lifeboat Station
Tel : 01665 720370
From Station Press Officer

LATEST CALL OUT INFORMATION

Launch Report 14/2002.

DIVER WITH BENDS - URGENT EVACUATION REQUESTED

At 11.50am on Tuesday 23rd July, 2002, the Seahouses based vessel Three Sisters requested the urgent medical evacuation of a diver, who was one of a party diving from his vessel on the wreck of the Somali, offshore between Seahouses and Beadnell. The diver had surfaced quickly from 30 metres for reasons as yet unknown, and was showing signs of the bends. An RAF Helicopter was called from Boulmer, while the boat skipper spoke directly to a specialist doctor in Hull via the Coastguard radio link. Seahouses Inshore Lifeboat, which carries oxygen, was launched after discussion with the coastguard, and the crew were quickly alongside the "Three Sisters" as it approached Seahouses with the ill diver. The Lifeboat Crew administered oxygen till arrival of the helicopter. The 33yr old male diver was then winched aboard the helicopter, and flown directly to the nearest specialist hospital with decompression facilities, which is at Hull, together with the diver's colleague or "Buddy", who would be able to provide essential information to the medical team. The man was described as quite poorly as he was lifted to the helicopter.

It is not known at this time where the diving party were from, other then they were operating from Seahouses.

Weather conditions at the time were a calm sea with a slight swell (1mtr), wind south /westerly, rain and moderate visibility. The only other specialist hospital on this coastline is at Aberdeen. The importance of getting 100% oxygen to a "bends" diver can have a crucial and positive effect in aiding his/her recovery, but the oxygen bottles carried by many divers for this purpose, are limited, and can be quickly exhausted in emregency treatment of a casualty. Both the inshore and larger All Weather Lifeboats carry oxygen to assist in such emergencies, and the crews are fully trained to administer it.

Humber Coastguard reference: H557 refers.

Ends