



ESTABLISHED 1967

MERITORIOUS SERVICE AWARD

Presented to

Station 7, East London

for the prompt and effective action taken by members of the station on the evening of 03 August, 1991, when the passenger ship MV Oceanos sent a Mayday signal that it had sprung a leak in horrendous weather conditions – hurricane force winds and 14 metre waves – off the Wild Coast of South Africa.

On hearing the Mayday call Station 7 knew that their presence at the scene of the unfolding tragedy was essential. The Oceanos had some 600 souls on board and, in the sea conditions obtaining, helicopter airlifts off the stricken vessel were going to be required, yet direct communication between the SAAF helicopter fleet and the ship was impossible because radio frequencies used by ships and aircraft are quite different. As a sea rescue unit Station 7's rescue vehicle, termed its Mobile, carried both types of radio.

A team of 17 crew was speedily assembled. Three were asked by the East London harbour senior pilot to join the harbour tug Jannie Oelofse, to provide first-aid to any casualties plucked from the sea, two remained behind to man the station base and the remainder set off in the station rescue vehicle, with the station's 5.5 metre RIB in tow, and a number of the crewmen's personal vehicles, for The Haven coastal resort, more or less opposite the position where the Oceanos was sinking. This journey took some six and a half hours, at night, mainly over deeply rutted and generally unmaintained rural roads, dodging cattle, goats and other livestock which strayed unchecked throughout the area.

On arrival at the Haven the NSRI team was given every assistance by The Haven management, set up their radio equipment and awaited the arrival of the SAAF helicopter fleet. From then until the end of the airborne rescue task on the afternoon of 04 August Mobile Rescue 7 was continuously manned and operated, forming the air/ship communication link vital to the success of the undertaking.

Coxswain

Geoff McGregor

Crew

Matt Fulton
John Pearson
Chris Abdo
Trevor Gordon
Billy Sharp
Tony Bell
Phillip Hawkins
Paul Underwood
Johan Bosman
Leon Kruger
Attie van Niekerk
Ken Elliott
Chris Kew
Aubrey Wiltshire
Andrew Godfrey
Denzil Mc Gregor

Ronnie Stein
Chairman of the Board of Directors



Date