



What Is the RNLI?

The RNLI is a charity which saves lives at sea. It has over 300 lifeboats and additional hovercraft.

The RNLI is a 24-hour lifeboat search and rescue service around the UK and Ireland.

The letters stand for Royal National Lifeboat Institution.



Lifeboats

Different lifeboats are needed depending on the location and type of rescue. There are two kinds of lifeboats: all-weather and inshore.

All-weather Lifeboat



All-Weather Lifeboats

- Can travel at high speeds
- Safe to use in varying weather conditions
- Self-righting after capsizing
- Fitted with navigation, communication and location equipment
- Crew size of around 6 - 7 people
- Range from 11 - 17 metres in length

All-weather Lifeboat



Inshore Lifeboats

- Used nearer to the shore where the water is shallow
- Used near to cliffs, rocks or in caves
- Range from 4 - 9m in length
- Crew of 2 - 4 people

Inshore Lifeboat



Hovercraft

Hovercrafts are useful in areas which are inaccessible to lifeboats, such as mud flats.

RNLI Hovercraft



Lifeboat Crew

Most RNLI crew members are volunteers. Volunteers give up their own time and don't get paid. Their work is often dangerous and difficult.

Important roles include:

- coxswain
- mechanic
- helm
- hovercraft commander
- crew members

Why do you think individuals might volunteer if they're not getting paid?



Lifeboat Crew

Coxswain

- In command of the all-weather lifeboat
- Responsible for launching the lifeboat and for the safety of crew members
- Must do everything possible to rescue those in danger
- Makes sure all equipment is ready for the next rescue
- Most are volunteers but some are paid to do this job full-time



Lifeboat Crew

Mechanic

- Each all-weather lifeboat station has a full-time mechanic who maintains the engine of the lifeboat and all of the machinery at the station.
- Whilst out at sea, it is the mechanic's job to check all machinery is working well. He/she also works as part of the crew.



Lifeboat Crew

Helm

- A volunteer who is responsible for the inshore lifeboat during launch, and whilst at sea. The helm is also in charge of making sure the lifeboat is always ready for its next rescue.
- This role involves taking responsibility for the safety of all crew members and for the rescue itself.



Lifeboat Crew

Crew Members

- Other volunteers make up the rest of the crew. They help the helm or coxswain to operate the lifeboat during rescues.
- Volunteer crew members have to attend regular training so they can keep their boat handling, radio communication and casualty care skills up to date.



Lifeboat Crew

Hovercraft Commander

- A volunteer who is in charge of the hovercraft during launch and rescue. After the rescue, the commander must make sure that the hovercraft is ready for the next emergency.



Which role would you prefer?

Why?



Lifeboat Crew Kit

Kit includes items such as gloves, boots, waterproofs, thermal under suit and top dry suit, life jacket and helmet.



Facts

- There are 237 lifeboat stations around the UK and Republic of Ireland.
- There are four lifeboat stations along the River Thames.
- RNLI lifeguards patrol over 200 beaches around the UK and Channel Islands.
- The RNLI has a flood rescue team.
- It costs about £460,000 to run the RNLI every day.
- There are around 4,600 RNLI volunteers in the UK.
- The RNLI rescues an average of 23 people every day.

