



21st January 2017

## **Solo sailor rescued in rough seas off Cape Howe**

A solo yachtsman was winched to safety in the early hours of this morning in rough seas off the southern New South Wales coast. The search and rescue operation was coordinated by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA).

AMSA's Joint Rescue Coordination Centre received a distress beacon alert around sunset last night and tasked AMSA's Dornier search and rescue aircraft. AMSA also tasked three merchant ships in the area to assist with the search.

The Dornier aircraft located the yacht approximately 90 kilometres south-southeast of Cape Howe, finding it had been damaged in the rough weather and its sails were no longer operable. Due to rough sea conditions, the three merchant vessels could not retrieve the sailor safely, but stayed in the area to monitor the condition of the yacht through the night.

At first light this morning, AMSA tasked Ambulance Victoria's La Trobe Valley based Air Ambulance Helicopter to retrieve the sailor. The helicopter crew was able to winch the man from his life raft, which he had deployed next to his stricken yacht. The helicopter returned to the Traralgon helicopter base and the man was transferred to a road ambulance. He is in a stable condition at La Trobe Regional Hospital.

AMSA would like to thank all involved in the rescue operation and express special thanks to the merchant ships OOCL Dubai, African Lark and Eagle Columbus who stood by during the operation.

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