



**ROYAL CANADIAN MARINE  
SEARCH & RESCUE**  
*Saving Lives on the Water*

**Our mission at Royal Canadian Marine Search and Rescue (RCMSAR) is to save lives on the water.**

Every year, hundreds of people find themselves in trouble on the water. Some face life-and-death situations, while others need assistance. Boats run aground, take on water, or capsize. Sailors can become overwhelmed by sudden changes in weather and sea conditions. Even with the best preparation, unexpected events can happen.

More than 950 dedicated volunteers operate 31 rescue stations along BC's coast, including one in the Shuswap. Most of those stations are situated along the lower mainland coastline and Sunshine Coast, as well as Southern Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands, where the majority of our rescue missions take place, and where I suspect most of your members spend their time on the water.

Through an agreement with the Canadian Coast Guard, we are tasked to marine emergencies by the Joint Rescue Coordination Centre in Victoria. RCMSAR volunteers respond to nearly one-third of all marine search and rescue calls on BC's coast—about 450 every year—assisting and saving hundreds of lives and recovering thousands of dollars in property annually.

Volunteers also provide boating safety information at community events, conduct pleasure craft safety checks, and run a kids' lifejacket loaner program at docks and marinas called Kids Don't Float.

#### **Option #1**

**IYCBC Scholarship** for marine related education available to active RCMSAR volunteers or their immediate family members. The value of the scholarship would need to be determined based on the amount of the gift, as we would ideally want the principle to remain and fund the scholarships from the interest. Scholarships could be used toward any one from a list of approved providers.

#### **Option #2**

##### **IYCBC Student Accommodation Wing at the RCMSAR Training Centre**

Our East Sooke-based Training Centre accommodates adult students and instructors in two single and two double rooms. By far, the most common complaint we receive is that sharing a room is undesirable and uncomfortable. With both men and women attending, scheduling becomes challenging as we only assign same-gender room-sharing.

Converting the double rooms into singles would significantly enhance the comfort and privacy of all students, addressing one of the few complaints about our facility. Four years ago, we received a quote of \$40,000, so we anticipate the costs now to be around \$60,000. Any remaining funds would be used to finish furnishing the rooms with small dresser drawers, mirrors, luggage racks, and marine-related pictures.

### **Option #3**

#### **On-the-water training**

There is no naming option with this opportunity, but we are including it because it's one of our largest unfunded needs and directly supports saving lives on the water. This training is not just beneficial, it's essential! Support for this training program will help ensure that our volunteers are ready to assist sailors and other water enthusiasts, making our waters safer for everyone. It ensures that our volunteer crews are *always* prepared for any situation.

Our professional marine rescue training program is one of the best in Canada and has undoubtedly resulted in preserving lives and property. Our station-based training includes on-the-water and classroom sessions (about a 60/40 split) and teaches seamanship, boat handling, navigation, search and rescue techniques, communications, first aid, and leadership and teamwork skills. For volunteers looking to advance to higher crewing or the coxswain level, we provide additional training at our East Sooke Training Centre.

In 2024, RCMSAR volunteers participated in 2,706 on-the-water training sessions, collectively spending nearly 7,000 hours on the water to prepare and train for this work. This is a significant amount of time away from their families and demonstrates how dedicated they are to safeguarding water enthusiasts, regardless of whether they are residents of, or visitors to their communities.

Here's how a legacy gift from IYCBC can help.

While the funding we get from the Canadian Coast Guard covers 100% of the costs associated with search and rescue missions, we receive only a finite amount to fund on-the-water training, which doesn't meet the full cost of this training. The balance must be obtained through fundraising, either by headquarters or the stations themselves. If funding is available, we send 'top-ups' to the stations to cover part or all of the shortfall.

We reimburse stations \$85 for every hour of training, which means a donation of \$85,000 supports 1,000 hours of training for our volunteers. However, the actual cost of on-the-water training is much higher due to the cost of marine fuel and maintenance, which significantly exceed \$85 per hour. Your donation would not only provide essential training support, but also help offset the true costs of preparing our crews to save lives on the water, making an even greater impact.

By funding this training, you would be directly contributing to saving lives on BC's waters and strengthening the safety of our coastal communities. Your support will ensure our volunteers receive the essential on-the-water training to respond effectively to emergencies.

In exchange for this, we would be pleased to add the IYCBC logo to our website and share our appreciation for your support on our social media channels and in two of our upcoming monthly newsletters, and with our 950+ volunteers.

January 20, 2025