



Lifeboats



The D class lifeboat

The RNLI is the charity that saves lives at sea
Royal National Lifeboat Institution, a charity registered in England and Wales (209603)
and Scotland (SC037736). Registered charity number 20003326 in the Republic of Ireland

Photo: RNLI/Nigel Millard

RNLI.org

D class: facts and figures

Launch: trolley or davit
Crew: 2-3
Survivor capacity: 5
Length: 5m
Max speed: 25 knots

Endurance: 3 hours at maximum speed
Engines: 1 x Mariner at 50hp
Fuel capacity: 68 litres
Construction: hypalon-coated polyester



Damien Bolton
Port Isaac Lifeboat Station
Helmsman

Photo: RNLI/Nigel Millard

What kind of lifeboat is this?

The D class is an inflatable inshore lifeboat, so she's designed to operate in shallower water. There's no wheelhouse, so the crew (usually 3) are exposed to the elements at all times. All D class lifeboats are built at the RNLI's Inshore Lifeboat Centre at East Cowes on the Isle of Wight.

How is the D class launched?

Most D classes are taken down to the sea on a trolley with the help of a launching vehicle. But some are lowered into the sea by a hoist from the harbour.

What sort of rescues is the D class designed for?

Inshore lifeboats like this one are ideal for rescues in the surf, close to shore or cliffs, among rocks, or even in caves.

What do the volunteer crew members think of this lifeboat?

Port Isaac Helmsman Damien Bolton received a Silver Medal for Gallantry for a rescue he and his crew carried out at the foot of cliffs. 'The D class is the best boat in the fleet in my opinion,' he says. 'We couldn't have got in there with anything else. She's an understated pocket rocket.'

To find out how to visit our lifeboat stations go to RNLI.org/comevisitus

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INSHORE LIFEBOAT FACTSHEET AND POSTER

D CLASS

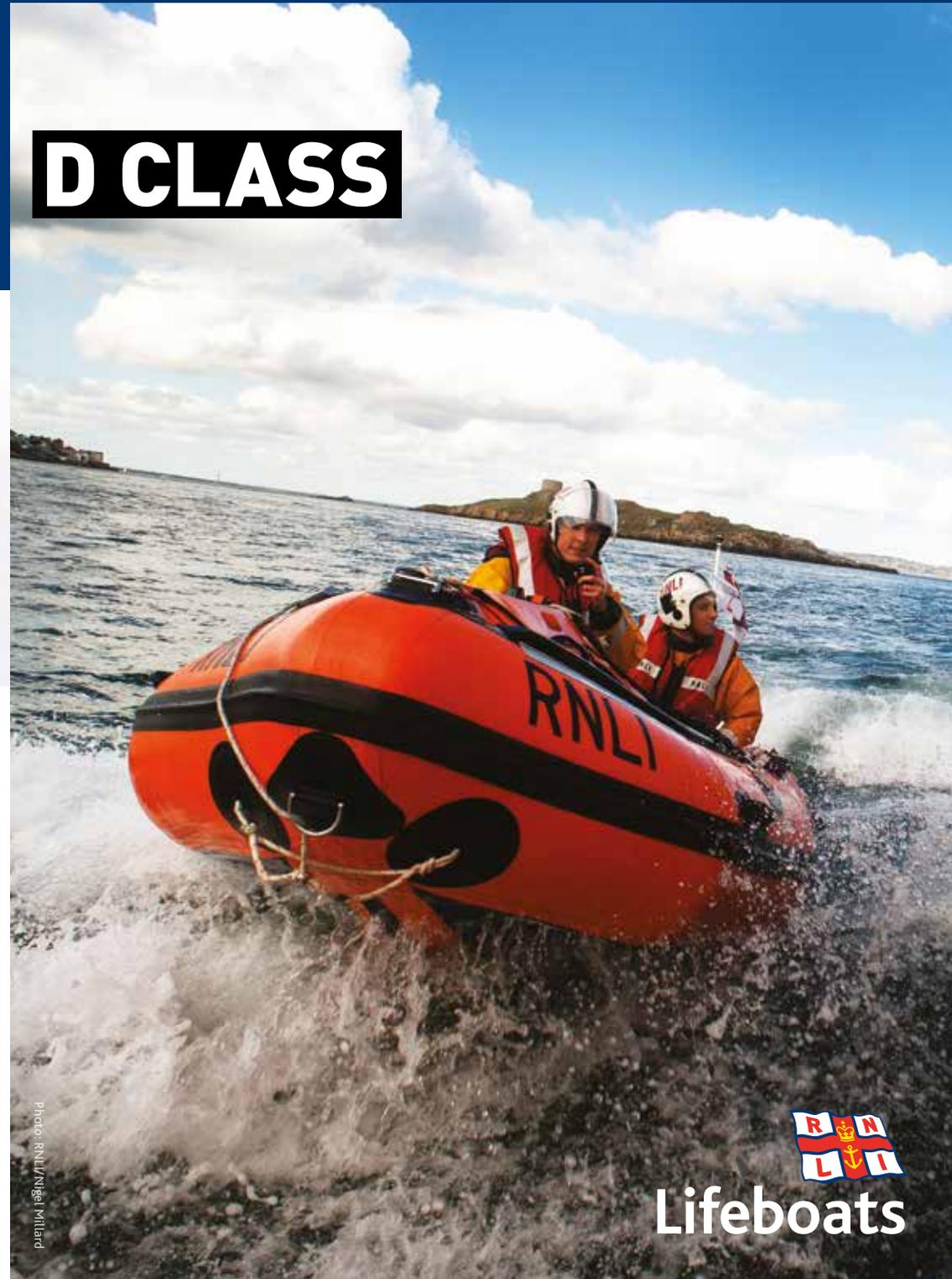


Photo: RNLI/Nigel Millard



Lifeboats



POWER

A single 50hp outboard engine can be restarted by the crew after a capsize.



Photo: John Perlam

HELM

A helm is responsible for the inshore lifeboat and the crew members onboard. They lead the rescue to ensure the lifeboat gets to where it needs to be and that casualties are given the appropriate care. A helm will have many years of experience as a volunteer crew member, and be trained to the highest levels in areas including navigation, search and rescue, casualty care, leadership and team management.

D CLASS LIFESAVING FEATURES



Photo: RNLi/Martin Fish

LAUNCH AND RECOVERY

Launching by davit or trolley from harbour or beach is made possible by a team of RNLI volunteer shore crew and can involve shore vehicles, such as tractors.



IDENTIFICATION

All lifeboats have a unique identification number. The first part of the inshore lifeboat's number indicates the class. All D class lifeboats begin with D and the numerals after the dash refer to the build number, so the first D class inshore lifeboat of the current design to be built was given the number D-600.



CASUALTY CARE

Medical equipment is stowed in the bow pod, including oxygen and full resuscitation kit, responder bag and multi-purpose ambulance pouch.

COMMUNICATION

Fitted and hand-held VHF radio ensure communication, for example between the crew and Coastguard, remains constant.

NAVIGATION

Crew use a magnetic compass and an onboard global positioning system (GPS) plotter.



NIGHT VISION

Many rescues take place at night and can involve being close to dangerous cliffs and man-made structures, or searching caves and crevices. Being able to illuminate the surrounding area with a searchlight and parachute illuminating flares, along with using night-vision equipment, helps keep crew members safe as well as locate those in need of help.

