

## Rescue shield awarded to Shetland-based coastguard teams

Coastguard rescue teams from Lerwick, Hillswick and Sumburgh, the coastguard search and rescue helicopter crew from Sumburgh and staff from the Coastguard Operations Centre in Shetland have been awarded the prestigious Department for Transport Rescue Shield by Brian Johnson, Chief Executive of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency.

The DfT Rescue Shield is the highest national accolade, awarded to coastguard teams which have performed the most outstanding rescue of the year. It's the sixth time that Shetland-based teams have been awarded the shield.

On the evening of 9 May 2018, a teenager was trapped at the base of a 120ft cliff for two hours with the tide coming in, in Fethaland, Shetland, after attempting to scale it. The rescue was challenging and its success was due to the professionalism and teamwork of all involved in a rescue co-ordinated by HM Coastguard. Coastguard rescue teams navigated difficult terrain in appalling conditions on the narrow headland, setting up cliff rescue equipment before one of the team descended the cliff, enduring storm force winds, rain and heavy squalls from the incoming tide to safely recover the casualty to the top of the cliff.

"As emergency response teams we rely heavily on each other to achieve success and this case was a prime example of that," says Dave Sweeney, senior coastal operations officer. "It was a challenging rescue and we needed all our teams' shared expertise and resources to safely rescue the man. It was teamwork at its best. We are honoured to be awarded for our efforts on this particular rescue and it's a mark of recognition for all the work and dedication of the front line volunteers, paid crew members and behind the scenes teams that help us all save lives together."