



# Lifeboats

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Chief Minister's Department  
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Patron: Her Majesty The Queen  
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From:  
RNLI Chief Executive

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11 July 2017

*Dear Chief Minister,*

I am pleased to see that the RNLI Lifeboat crew at St Helier have now returned to the station, and that the lifeboat station, with its 2 lifeboats, is back on service.

The last 3 months have not been easy for anyone - for the RNLI, the crew, the States of Jersey, for the people of St Helier or, most importantly, the people who may be at risk on the water. Whilst the RNLI made a public apology, it is reasonable to believe that mistakes were made on all sides, and that all parties in the recent dispute should carry some responsibility; not just the RNLI and the Cox'n, but also the States of Jersey, the Harbourmaster and the Coastguard.

The reason for this letter is to let you know that the RNLI will not go through a protracted dispute of this nature again - at any of our stations. We have done, and we continue to do everything within our power to stabilise this station and keep the vital lifesaving service going on behalf of the people at risk in your waters. But we have well-defined values, and standards of behaviour that we expect from ourselves, our volunteers and all the communities within which we work. These are things that we will not compromise. Equally, I would be most unwilling to re-commit the very expensive resource that we have given to St Helier over the last 3 months, shoring up the service in the face of deeply-entrenched and at times bitter criticism from the people of Jersey. Provision of the stand-in crew at St Helier came at a significant cost to the volunteers and lifeboat stations around the rest of the British Isles, and it has caused some damage to the wider service that I would not wish to suffer again.

So I need to inform you that, if a similar dispute were to occur at St Helier at some time in the future, we would seriously consider taking the St Helier lifeboat station off service until we believe that it can be run in a sustainable manner without compromising our values or our wider lifesaving obligations around the UK and Ireland. This decision would not be taken lightly, and it would, I'm afraid, be very much to the detriment of the water users around the island, possibly for some time. I do not believe that such an eventuality would be in the best interests of the islanders, or the RNLI.

I am therefore writing ask for your help and support as we try to restabilise the station over the coming months and years. The solution lies as much within the island as it does in the RNLI, and it is, I believe, only by working together that we will be able to underwrite the safety of your waters in a sustainable way, and provide a service that people of Jersey can rely on for years to come.

I hope that I can have your assurance that you are prepared to help us to do this, so that together we can ensure that the people of Jersey have the benefit of the service at its very best.

*Yours sincerely*

[REDACTED]  
Chief Executive

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