Saving Lives at Sea Series 4
General Q&A

Q: What is Saving Lives at Sea?
A: The RNLI was approached in 2014 by Blast! Films, a TV production company looking to create a real-life documentary-style drama series about the RNLI. Since then, the BBC has commissioned and broadcast three series of the programme, and we are delighted that it is returning for a fourth series in 2019. We were happy to work with Blast! Films again to create a programme that shines a light on the work the RNLI do, saving lives at sea around the UK and Ireland. Ten hour-long episodes will be broadcast on BBC2, starting on Tuesday 27th August at 8pm.

Q: What are the RNLI’s expectations?
A: Our overall aim is to raise general awareness of the RNLI, inform audiences of our charitable status and spread the word about water safety. We very much hope that the programme delivers ratings success for the BBC; we’re also keen to evaluate social media traffic and general chatter about the programme.

Q: How were the stations featured in Saving Lives at Sea chosen?
A: Blast! Films identified rescues of interest from the RNLI’s news and media libraries and worked directly with volunteers and RNLI teams to research the stories behind the rescues.

Q: Were film crews allowed on shouts?
A: As the rescue footage featured in the series was captured by the RNLI’s boat and helmet cameras, the production company did not need to go out on shouts with our crews. Blast’s own film crews followed up on each featured rescue with the volunteers, filming them during exercises and at their stations. Occasionally, our volunteers were also filmed while they were at work or at home to give viewers an insight into their lives outside of the RNLI.

Q: Have Blast! Films / BBC paid the RNLI?
A: We have not been paid for our involvement in the series and we have not sought a donation as we believe that the awareness the programme will give us will far outstrip any payment they could offer. The RNLI respects that the BBC has its own dedicated charity arm, and while a donation has not been made to the RNLI, we are grateful for the fantastic prime time exposure that Saving Lives at Sea will offer.

Q: How much has the series cost the RNLI?
A: There has been little cost to the RNLI to make the series. The cameras used on the boats/helmets are already in place and the footage is taken from shouts as they happen. The RNLI hasn’t paid Blast! Films to make the series.

Q: Will the series bring in donations?
A: We hope so! The RNLI is a charity that depends on public donations, so if you’ve enjoyed what you’ve seen, please consider donating to us. Every donation, no matter how small, will help us save lives.
Q: What agreement did we have with other emergency services involved in rescues?
A: Agreements and permissions were made by the production company with all relevant agencies, including the Maritime and Coastguard Agency and other emergency services.

Q: Why isn’t my station featured in the series?
A: We’re pleased to say that half of the lifeboat stations featured in Series 4 are new to Saving Lives at Sea, having not previously featured in the programme. Whilst every effort has been made to provide the production company with footage from stations across the UK and Ireland, it would be impossible to feature every one of the RNLI’s 238 stations and over 240 lifeguarded beaches in the series.

Q: When will my station appear?
A: We’re unable to give spoilers or reveal which stations appear in each episode before they air, but tune in to find out!

Q: I missed an episode – how can I watch it again?
A: You can catch up with Saving Lives at Sea on BBC iPlayer - bbc.co.uk/iplayer. You can also find out more about some of the rescues featured in each episode at www.rnli.org/savinglives

Q: Will a fifth series be produced?
A: Whilst we’d be delighted for this to happen, this remains the decision of the BBC and its commissioners.