

New, improved amphibians to the rescue



Company expects demand to be strong because of increased flooding

by Errol Kloug

Auckland-based manufacturer Sealegs Corporation has created a special rescue version of its amphibious boats.

The new 6m and 7m models announced yesterday have a new feature that enables the boats to run continuously on land or water — something chief executive David McKee Wright hopes will meet the demands of rescue services and coastguard agencies.

Earlier models of Sealegs' amphibious boats — which have steerable, retractable wheels enabling them to be driven in and out of water without the need for a trailer to be backed down to the water's edge — were only able to run continuously on land for around 10 minutes, limiting usage in rescue operations.

McKee Wright said the development of the new models, which took nearly a year, had been sparked by feedback and requests from international rescue organisations.

The first units of the new boats were expected to be shipped to Malaysia in the next three months, he said.

McKee Wright said with flooding becoming increasingly prevalent globally, demand should be strong.

The new models will be made in the company's second manufacturing site in Albany.

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