



With frozen smiles and frigid fingers, three CALM mariners, left to right, Alan Byrne, Nigel Sercombe and David Pearson practice the HELP survival method while instructor Andrew Borral, in wetsuit, looks on. Photo by Andrew Hill

Eleven get HELP in rough waters

ELEVEN CALM staff have successfully completed a four-day Course in Proficiency in Small Craft Safety and Handling.

The Maritime Studies Department of TAFE conducted the course at the coastal waters district office at Hillarys, with certificates being issued to the successful participants by the Department of Marine and Harbours.

The first three days of the course consisted of theory covering topics such as the skipper's responsibilities, boat construction, fire prevention, regulations on prevention of collision, chart pilotage and buoyage.

Practical sessions covered rope splicing and

knots and a swim, fully-clothed, in the Hillarys Marina.

The purpose of this last exercise was to show how participants could increase their time in cold water conditions for a 30 per cent longer period without suffering from exposure.

The exercise, carried out by CALM's intrepid eleven in icy conditions, is known as Heat Escape Lessening Practice (HELP).

The final day was also devoted to practical exercises, operating patrol vessels *Pseudorca* and *Wadjuk* in what turned out to be highly unfavourable boating conditions with 25-knot winds and rising seas.

Nevertheless, all successfully completed the tasks.

Course participant Alan Byrne said he believed the course was a must for those officers who operated CALM's small craft in local and immediate off-shore waters.

"Much of what we learnt could mean the difference between life and death, particularly in emergency situations," Alan said.

The successful mariners were: Bill Muir, Matt Warnock, Mark Bailey, Phil Roberts, Peter Collins, Phillip Fuller, David Pearson, Stephanie Turner, Nigel Sercombe, Andrew Hill and Alan Byrne.

