

The following messages from the Prime Minister were released to the press this afternoon:

TO COMMANDING OFFICER (CAPTAIN W. A. TOFTS, ROYAL NAVAL AIR STATION, CULDROSE)

"I should like to congratulate you, your crews and all those at Culdrose and the Plymouth Co-ordination Centre and elsewhere who contributed to the Fastnet rescue operation, on your remarkable achievement over the past three days. Without your untiring efforts many more lives might have been lost. The whole country salutes the skill and courage of those who took part in the rescue."

MESSAGE TO THE DUKE OF ATHOLL (R.N.L.I.)

"I should be glad if you could pass on to the lifeboat crews involved and all of those who work to support them my congratulations on their achievements in the Fastnet Race rescue operation this week. It has brought home to us once again how much we depend on the bravery and willingness to serve of those who man our lifeboats."

MESSAGE TO THE CHIEF COASTGUARD

"I should like to congratulate you and all those in the coastguard service who took part in the Fastnet rescue operation on your outstanding achievements. Along with all the others concerned, you contributed towards averting what could have been a far worse tragedy, and I pay tribute to the part played by the coastguard over the last three days. It reminds us how much we depend on your vigilance at all times."