

**CASE NO – 1620**

**DAVID JOHN ANDERSON  
HAYDEN NEPIA STOWELL**

**BRONZE MEDAL  
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On 25<sup>th</sup> January 2006 at Örete Beach, Waihau Bay, two young people, a 15 year-old boy and a 13 year-old girl were swimming. They became caught in a rip, were being carried out to sea and were in difficulty approximately 350 metres from shore. The conditions were hazardous with a strong offshore wind and a 3metre swell. The two were observed to be struggling to stay afloat. While the young girl did manage to get herself to shore, the boy continued to struggle offshore.

When David Anderson who was staying at a nearby motor camp became aware of the situation he immediately went to the beach and began to swim through the surf, out to the boy. He was joined a short time later by Hayden Stowell. A Cray boat which had been deployed to the area was unable to get close due to the conditions and the very rocky shoreline. After some 10 minutes the two reached the boy at about the same time, when he was approximately 300 metres from shore. The boy was barely conscious and could not stay afloat. When Anderson and Stowell retrieved him and succeeded in getting him to shore with chest injuries and suffering from hypothermia he had been in difficulty for over 50 minutes. Rough surf and rocks hindered their efforts. Both suffered cuts and abrasions.

By their efforts in very trying conditions David Anderson and Hayden Stowell had clearly averted a loss of life.