

SOS CALL TO TOW-TRUCKS

Melbourne's towing services entered a new field yesterday — rescuing a 100-tons luxury launch (below) hard aground on a reef at Sandringham.





The bow of the launch Watgania wedged firmly on a sunken reef about 30 yards off the pier at 10 a.m.

Watgania had come from Portsea, and was pulling into the pier, sheltered by the breakwater, for an auxiliary engine overhaul.

Six people, including two women and a child, remained on board while attempts were made to refloat the 70ft. launch.

First, a truck backed on to the 150yd. long pier, and tried to haul the Watgania clear with two rope towlines. Both snapped.

A tug from Melbourne was suggested, but it was decided to give the assignment to a towing service.

Two tow trucks backed on to the pier, and ran steel cable lines to the stranded vessel.

They started their winches. Watgania's screw began to churn, and she slipped off the reef, to the accompaniment of cheers from the crew aboard—three hours after going aground.

She was undamaged.

A towing service driver said: "We get lots of different jobs, but this one beats the lot."