SURF LIFE SAVING

NEW SOUTH WALES

PUBLIC SAFETY
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES
VERSION 1, JULY 2023

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

<div style="background:blue; color:white">

NSW

Introduction

</div>

- SurfBot – Quick Reference Guide
- Acknowledgements
- Signature of Endorsement
- Other Information

Last modified: 14/08/23

SURFBOT – QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

SurfBot is an AI-powered chat-bot that knows everything there is to know about the SOPs, and replaces the quick reference flip-books. Ask SurfBot any question you have, and it'll try find you an answer!

Access **SurfBot** here

Please note *that SurfBot is not a generative AI bot, meaning it won't make up, or learn anything new, it'll just tell you what it already knows from the SOPs as published.*

Last modified: 14/08/23

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Last modified: 25/07/23

SIGNATURE OF ENDORSEMENT

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Joel Wiseman
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The registered office of Surf Life Saving NSW is situated at the 3 Narabang Way, Belrose NSW 2085 Australia.

ABN 93 827 748 379.

Last modified: 16/08/23

OTHER INFORMATION

FEEDBACK

To provide feedback or request clarification or changes be made to this manual (including spelling or grammatical changes/errors), please complete the form here.

SURFBOT

A quick reference, AI Chatbot is available here. This allows you to ask questions, and receive answers referring to these SOPs immediately. If any errors or complications arise, please complete the form here, or email lifesaving@surflifesaving.com.au.

Last modified: 08/08/23

PSS 1 WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY

PSS 1　　Work Health and Safety

- [PSS 1.1 Work Health and Safety](#)
- [PSS 1.2 Sharps](#)

Last modified: 10/08/23

PSS 1.1 WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY

A NOTE FROM THE SURF LIFE SAVING NSW BOARD

Health and safety is an integral part of all surf lifesaving activities. All SLSNSW Operational Procedures will have health and safety implications and any decision or action taken will affect the health and safety of volunteers, staff and third parties. Surf Life Saving New South Wales' ultimate goal is to promote a culture where all members understand that SAFETY COMES FIRST!

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Standard Operating Procedure is to communicate the health and safety responsibilities of our surf lifesaving volunteer, staff and third parties with the aim of always ensuring a safe and healthy environment for lifesavers and others.

POLICY

All surf lifesaving volunteer personnel are required to perform their tasks in a safe manner and follow Surf Life Saving policies, procedures, and established work practices.

All surf lifesaving volunteer personnel are required to meet their responsibilities under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 No. 10.

PROCEDURE

SMOKING

Smoking while on active lifesaving duties is not permitted including in any SLS property, SSV, powercraft or any other SLS vehicles. This includes tobacco, e-cigarettes (Vapes) and any other substance.

Smoking of any substance is prohibited in all Surf Life Saving buildings, facilities, and vehicles. Surf lifesaving personnel must not smoke while in uniform, in the public's view or while representing the organisation.

Smoking brings with it additional hazards in terms of fire safety. Surf lifesavers must ensure others do not smoke near oxygen equipment, fuel or in other circumstances where there is an increased risk of fire or explosion.

ALCOHOL

Alcohol is not to be consumed whilst wearing any Patrol and Support Operations uniform.

Lifesaving service personnel should not undertake patrolling duties or incident responses including emergency callouts with a blood alcohol level higher than 0.05% or operate any surf lifesaving vehicles, SSVs and powercraft.

Lifesaving service personnel who are on their provisional driving license should have a blood alcohol limit of 0% when undertaking patrolling duties or incident responses including emergency callouts or operate any surf lifesaving vehicles, SSVs and powercraft.

Lifesaving personnel acknowledge and agree that they may be breath tested at any time to ensure they are meeting these requirements.

DRUGS

Surf lifesaving personnel are responsible for monitoring their own condition and communicating any (relevant) changes in medical state to the Patrol Captain.

The use of drugs prescribed by a doctor for medicinal or recuperative purposes may be taken, however the Patrol Captain must be advised as to the type of medication and all possible side effects.

If these prescribed drugs affect your wellbeing or impair or disrupt your senses, you must advise the Club Captain immediately and cease surf lifesaving patrol duties until you have completed the prescribed course of medication.

The improper use of non-prescription and/or prescription drugs during the course of duties is prohibited. Surf lifesaving personnel must not present themselves for duty whilst under the influence of any prohibited substance.

No member is permitted to undertake active lifesaving duties including the operation of powercraft, SSVs or SLS vehicles whilst under the influence of any prohibited drugs and substances.

OPERATING GEAR AND EQUIPMENT

Surf lifesaving personnel must adhere to all legal blood alcohol limits for the operation of gear and equipment, including any type of lifesaving vehicles, SSVs, e-bikes and Powercraft of all types and UAVs.

Persons impaired by drugs and/or alcohol are not permitted to operate gear and equipment under any circumstances.

Surf lifesaving personnel must attend task specific training as provided and adhere to Surf Life Saving procedures, i.e. induction prior to driving the SSV and must not operate plant or equipment unless authorised and qualified as per Surf Life Saving NSW requirements.

SUN SAFETY

Lifesavers are required to follow necessary precautions to protect themselves from the effects of direct exposure to sun light and UV radiation. Steps may include:

1. Reduce exposure to the sun by using shade e.g. a patrol tent.
2. Wear UV rated clothing such as patrol uniform (long sleeve shirt, rash vest, SLSA issue shorts).
3. Wear a SLSA approved cap, bucket or wide brimmed hat.
4. Apply broad spectrum sunscreen regularly.

5. Wear UV protective sunglasses.

It is recommended that surf lifesaving personnel check their skin regularly for suspicious spots and address any concerns with a doctor.

Please refer to the Beachsafe App of BOM for the current sun safety rating on any given day.

DEHYDRATION

As dehydration can cause fatigue and loss of concentration, impacting on performance of lifesaving activities, it is important to take in sufficient fluids while on duty. 8 to 10 glasses of water per day is advised (higher depending on external factors such as temperature, time of day and physical exertion).

To minimise the effects of dehydration, which in extreme cases may lead to heat exhaustion and heat stroke, lifesaving personnel must continually hydrate and reapply sunscreen and should rotate through various positions on the beach throughout the patrol.

Sun shelters (e.g. patrol tents) and other shaded areas and means should be used where possible.

Suitable quantities of water &/or rehydration / electrolyte mixture should be carried while patrolling on powercraft. It is prudent to carry extra to ensure your safety in the event of a breakdown, prolonged SAR operation, etc. UV rated patrol SLSA issue SLSA approved cap, bucket or wide brimmed hat.

PENALTIES FOR BREACHES

Surf lifesaving personnel who present themselves for duty whilst suspected to be under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs may be immediately suspended from duties and referred for disciplinary action.

Any lifesaver who knowingly allows a person to carry out duties whilst under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs may also be subject to disciplinary action.

Cases that indicate evidence of illegal drug use shall be referred to the appropriate authorities for investigation.

REFERENCE

SLSA Safer Surf Clubs Guide, Version 4, May 2020
The Cancer Council of Australia
Sports Medicine Australia
Drug Misuse and Trafficking Act 1996 (NSW)

Last modified: 13/07/23

PSS 1.2 SHARPS

PURPOSE

To raise the awareness of "sharps" as a potential health risk to lifesaving personnel.

POLICY

MANAGEMENT

There are two aspects to sharps management:

1. Education (community and lifesaving services personnel).
2. Prevention and response.

THE LAW

In Australia it is not an offence to possess sterile needles and syringes. However, it is an offence to dispose of injecting equipment in an unsafe manner.

SAFE DISPOSAL

All needles and syringes should be placed immediately after use in the sharps container located in your First Aid kit and/or First Aid room. Certain makes of anaphylaxis delivery devices can leave an exposed needle and should be disposed of in a sharps container. What to do if you find an unsafely discarded needle/syringe

If you find a needle and syringe:

- Find and put on protective gloves if possible;
- Dispose of the Needle in a Sharps Disposal bin;
- Remove gloves, wash hands with running water and soap; and
- Call the NSW Needle Clean Up eHotline, **1800 NEEDLE (1800 633 353)** to report any incidents of unsafely discarded needles and syringes.

NEEDLE STICK INJURY

Reports of needles being found on or near beaches are becoming increasingly common. Due to the risks of Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and HIV infection, all needle stick injuries must be regarded as potentially serious. Even the tiniest break in the skin should be reported to the patient's doctor or the nearest major hospital.

At the earliest stage, Hepatitis B can be prevented by prompt injections. The sooner they are given an injection the better.

- Stay calm.

- Promote bleeding at the site by squeezing.
- Scrub the area gently, but thoroughly, in hot soapy water.
- Wearing gloves and using forceps or tongs, dispose of needles in a sharps container so that the sharp end presents no further risk to anyone. Remember to take the container to the sharp, not the sharp to the container.
- Send the patient to hospital for treatment and blood tests (advise them it is just a precautionary measure).
- If the needle is still stuck in the skin, treat as a foreign body wound.
- Report the injury to SurfCom, preferably via phone (to ensure member welfare to be organised where required) and complete appropriate paperwork (Incident Report Log within Operations App).
- Consider the need for counselling of the injured person.

FURTHER INFORMATION ON DISPOSAL

The NSW Needle Clean Up hotline (1800 NEEDLE/1800 633 353) is available to access information regarding needle stick injury, disposal of community sharps and information for IDU.

If you see a needle in a public place, call the hotline and report incidents of unsafely discarded needles and syringes and find out where and how used sharps can be safely disposed of. This service is available 24 hours, seven days a week, and is run by the Alcohol and Drug Information Service (ADIS).
Note: The hotline is staffed – Monday to Friday 8.00am – 6.30pm with an answering machine at other times.

REFERENCE

SLSA Safer Surf Clubs Guide, Version 4, May 2020
SLS First Aid Training Manual

Last modified: 13/07/23

PSS 2 INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

PSS 2 Information Management

- PSS 2.1 Information Management and Online Services
- PSS 2.2 Beachsafe.org.au
- PSS 2.3 Public Emergency Contact Information
- PSS 2.4 Media
- PSS 2.5 Warnings
- PSS 2.6 Member Statements

Last modified: 10/08/23

PSS 2.1 INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND ONLINE SERVICES

PURPOSE

To provide an overview of the key information management tools for lifesaving operations.

POLICY

Surf Life Saving NSW (SLSNSW) is committed to the quality management of key lifesaving data and information.

SLSNSW supports alignment and adherence to the centralised lifesaving information management tools available through SLSA, namely SurfGuard and Members Area.

PROCEDURE

The following provides a general overview of requirements. For specific milestones and due dates clubs/members should refer to the relevant pre-season circulars/memos released annually.

SLSA SURFGUARD

Surf Guard is Surf Life Saving Australia's central system, in which all branch, club, equipment, operational and membership information is held, including:

- Branch/Club **service profile** (contact details and Office holders)
- Club/Service **patrol teams/rosters/substitutions/patrol logs**
- **Branch/club teams** created and updated, including:
    - RWC Teams
    - Duty Officer Teams
    - Club Emergency Response (Callout) Teams
- **Lifesaving Gear and Equipment** information updated (pre- and post annual gear inspections)
- **Skills maintenance, Awards & Assessments** – All skills maintenance must be completed and entered into SurfGuard by December 31st annually. This includes junior activity members participation and competition skills evaluation.
- Personal **member information**
- **Incident Logs**, required to be entered into SurfGuard (IRD) within 24 hours of incident.

SurfGuard also provides group SMS and emailing function to assist Branch/Club/Service Officers in effective communication with their members

SurfGuard can be accessed at https://surfguard.sls.com.au/ by members who have been authorised to do so.

SLSA MEMBERS AREA

The **Members Area** is an online self-service membership area for members of clubs and support organisations in Surf Life Saving. To have access members must create their individual Members Area account by clicking on to the logon screen (please see web address below) and follow the prompts. It is web-based and can easily be added to any suitable electronic device. It offers Members access to the following:

- Personal Information Summary (Home page)
- Membership (details, renewals, awards, SLSA online store)
- Patrols (roster, hours, swaps)
- e-Learning
- News and events
- Document library (Circulars, memos, guidelines, manuals, etc.)
- Transaction history
- Forms

The Members Area is located at https://members.sls.com.au/.

SLSA OPERATIONS APP

The Operations App is the preferred means to manage all operational information of lifesaving frontline services including patrols, incidents, and support operations during the patrolling season. The app provides an electronic, mobile surface that, through its connection to SurfGuard, functions as display for and data entry layer into SurfGuard. Access to the Operations App is limited to members who:

- Hold roles as Patrol Captain, Patrol Vice-Captain or Patrol Application Captain;
- Have certain awards (e.g. SMIRBD) to perform certain entries, e.g. the powercraft log; and
- Where these roles have been entered into SurfGuard.

The SLSA Operations App's functions include:

- Patrols (e.g. sign on/off, beach status, team roster, weather conditions, patrol stats, etc.)
- Gear and Equipment (list of club/service gear and equipment that has been entered into SurfGuard)
- Powercraft Logs
- Issues (with gear and equipment, e.g. damages, need for repair, etc.)
- Incidents
- Risk Assessments (should be conducted at least at the beginning of each patrol shift and then as needed)

Some information (e.g. patrol photos, beach status) may be shared and displayed in real time in linked systems like the Beachsafe App and the SurfCom Management System.

SLSA BEACHSAFE APP

- Provides comprehensive information about weather and surf conditions as well as beach safety, e.g. rips, waves, sun safety, flags and signs, patrolled and unpatrolled beaches, etc.

- Covers all Australian beaches
- Is ideal for patrol preparations

The Beachsafe App can be accessed at https://beachsafe.org.au.

SLSA IT HELPDESK

SurfGuard training is available via Webinar or from SLSA by contacting SurfGuard IT Helpdesk . Training sessions ideally are run as group sessions.

The SLSA help home page can be accessed at https://help.sls.com.au.

A support ticket can be submitted at http://support.sls.com.au.

Online training 'playpens' may sometimes become available. These 'dummy' systems allow appropriately authorised personnel to practice using the systems without affecting information. Contact SLSA for more information and visit https://help.sls.com.au.

SLSA MEMBERS ONLINE STORE

The Members Online Store is available to all members who have activated their Members Area account through the SLSA Members Area at https://members.sls.com.au/.

For specific purchases on behalf of a club, e.g. through the Club Lifesaving Equipment Grant (CLEG) a specific and separate access for an 'ordering delegate' and a 'financial delegate' will be authorised by the club.

SURF LIFE SAVING SERVICES (NSW) ONLINE SHOP

The Surf Life Saving Services online shop is available publicly at https://services.surflifesaving.com.au/. First Aid, Lifesaving Equipment, Defibrilators, Oxygen Equipment and other SLS Branded items can be purchased via this storefront.

Last modified: 13/07/23

PSS 2.2 BEACHSAFE.ORG.AU

PURPOSE

To outline the single public safety information portal that should be used by all lifesaving services.

PROCEDURE

Lifesaving services shall align and promote consistent public safety messages to all stakeholders.

www.beachsafe.org.au provides consistent public safety information and patrolled locations/times to the public in both website and smart-phone application formats. Patrol service information inputted into SurfGuard aligns directly to public information available through Beachsafe.

www.beachsafe.org.au shall be the central reference point for all public safety information released internally and externally by lifesaving services.

This shall include:

- Media Releases/media enquiries – key safety messages should align and media releases/ enquiries should be referred to Beachsafe for more information.
- Branch/Club/Service websites – safety information tabs/pages should link directly to Beachsafe.
- Public information/education collateral – should align key messages and reference Beachsafe.
- Social media posts regarding public safety information should refer to Beachsafe.
- External partners/agencies should be encouraged to link their websites, media releases and other communications regarding beach/surf safety to Beachsafe.

CAUTION: The Beach Safe App is linked to the SLSA Operations app. Any photos taken with and used in the Operations App can be displayed on the relevant Beach Safe App page of your beach.

REFERENCE

www.beachsafe.org.au

Last modified: 13/07/23

PSS 2.3 PUBLIC EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

PURPOSE

To outline 'public emergency contact information,' for promotion by lifesaving services.

POLICY

Surf Life Saving New South Wales has in place structured emergency communication processes which must be adhered to by all members/clubs/services.

This structure is founded on 'Triple Zero' and includes complementary systems such as the Surf Emergency Response System, SurfCom protocols and other centralised information (Beachsafe).

PROCEDURE

PUBLIC EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Lifesaving services shall promote 'Triple Zero' (000) as the public avenue for reporting emergencies.

Note: For in-water specific incidents/emergencies, lifesaving services should promote '000 – Police'.

Branches/clubs/services **shall not** promote any other emergency contact information (other than 'triple 0') to the public. This includes any local/regional emergency contact information for a club/service or individual member.

The Surf Emergency Response System (13SURF) must not be promoted to the public/media or any parties, other than to the appropriate emergency services, by the appropriate SLS officers.

Triple Zero (000) is Australia's primary telephone number to call for assistance in life threatening or time critical emergency situations. Dialing 112 directs you to the same Triple Zero (000) call service and does not give your call priority over Triple Zero (000).

After notifying Police via 000, an SLS member may pass relevant information on an unfolding incident to the rostered State Duty Officer on 9471 8092 – this number is monitored 24/7.

CLUB ANSWER-PHONE MESSAGES

All dedicated landline and mobile lifesaving service phones shall provide a consistent initial answer-phone message (excluding call-divert systems).

"You have called 'Club/Service Name', if this is a rescue emergency please hang up and dial triple zero, ask for Police and include a cross street or point of reference."

CLUBHOUSE EMERGENCY CONTACT SIGNAGE

Club/service facilities should provide consistent emergency contact information on key locations (SLSC, towers etc.) to assist the public at unpatrolled times. This information should read "In an Emergency Dial 000 for Police'.

The following symbol should be displayed with said information:

REFERENCE

Triple Zero
Emergency Plus

Last modified: 27/07/23

PSS 2.4 MEDIA

PURPOSE

To outline acceptable parameters for the use of social media regarding lifesaving operations.

This policy aims to provide principles to follow when using social media. This policy does not apply to the personal use of social media platforms by SLSNSW members or staff where the SLSNSW member or staff makes no reference to SLSA or related issues.

POLICY

Social media offers the opportunity for people to gather in online communities of shared interest and create, share, or consume content. As a member-based organisation, Surf Life Saving NSW recognises the benefits of social media as an important tool of engagement and enrichment for its members.

SLSA, its state centres, branches and clubs have long histories and are highly respected organisations. It is important that Surf Life Saving's reputation is not tarnished by anyone using social media tools inappropriately, particularly in relation to any content that might reference the organisation.

When someone clearly identifies their association with Surf Life Saving (SLS), and/or discusses their involvement in the organisation in this type of forum, they are expected to behave and express themselves appropriately, and in ways that are consistent with SLSAs stated values and policies.

PROCEDURE

This policy applies to SLSA members, staff or any individual representing themselves or passing themselves off as being a member of SLSA.

This policy covers all forms of social media. Social media includes, but is not limited to, such activities as:

- Maintaining a profile page on social or business networking sites (such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Shutterfly, Twitter or MySpace);
- Content sharing include Instagram (photo sharing) and YouTube, TikTok or other video sharing platforms;
- Commenting on blogs for personal or business reasons;
- Leaving product or service reviews on retailer sites, or customer review sites;
- Taking part in online votes and polls;
- Taking part in conversations on public and private web forums (message boards); or
- Editing a Wikipedia page.

The intent of this policy is to include anything posted online where information is shared that might affect members, colleagues, clients, sponsors or Surf Life Saving as an organisation.

USAGE

For SLSNSW members and staff using social media, such use:

- Must not contain, or link to, libelous, defamatory, or harassing content. This also applies to the use of illustrations or nicknames;
- Must not comment on, or publish, information that is confidential or in any way sensitive to SLSA, its affiliates, partners, or sponsors; and
- Must not bring the organisation or surf lifesaving into disrepute.

BRANDING AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY (IP)

It is important that any trademarks belonging to SLSA or any state centre, branch or club are not used in personal social media applications, except where such use can be considered incidental (where incidental is taken to mean "happening in subordinate conjunction with something else").

Trademarks include:

- Club, branch and SLSA logos;
- The "Life of the Beach", "Whatever it Takes" or any other associated slogans; images depicting surf lifesaving volunteers, staff and/or equipment, except with the permission of those individuals;
- Other SLSA imagery includes the red and yellow flags, the SLSA red and yellow caps or the official SLSA red and yellow patrol uniforms.

OFFICIAL SURF LIFE SAVING (SLS) BLOGS, SOCIAL PAGES AND ONLINE FORUMS

When creating a new website, social networking page or forum for staff/club member use, care should be taken to ensure the appropriate person at a club/branch/state level has given written consent to create the page or forum.

Similarly, appropriate permissions must be obtained for the use of logos or images. Images of minor children may not be replicated on any site without the written permission of the child's parent and/or guardian.

For official SLS blogs, social pages and online forums:

- Posts must not contain, nor link to, pornographic or indecent content;
- Some hosted sites may sell the right to advertise on their sites through 'pop up' content which may be of a questionable nature. This type of hosted site should not be used for online forums or social pages as the nature of the 'pop up' content cannot be controlled;
- SLS employees must not use SLS online pages to promote personal projects; and
- All materials published or used must respect the copyright of third parties.

CONSIDERATION TOWARDS OTHERS WHEN USING

SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

- Social networking sites allow photographs, videos, and comments to be shared with thousands of other users. SLSNSW members and staff must recognise that it may not be appropriate to share photographs, videos, and comments in this way. For example, there may be an expectation that photographs taken at a private SLS event will not appear publicly on the internet. In certain situations, SLSNSW members or staff could potentially breach the privacy act or inadvertently make SLSNSW liable for breach of copyright.
- SLSNSW members/staff should be considerate to others in such circumstances and should not post information when they have been asked not to or consent has not been sought and given. They must also remove information about another person if that person asks them to do so.
- Under no circumstance should offensive comments be made about SLSA members or staff online.

BREACH OF POLICY

SLSA, State, branches and clubs continually monitor online activity in relation to the organisation and its members. Detected breaches of this policy should be reported to SLSNSW.

If detected, a breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action from SLSNSW or SLSA. A breach of this policy may also amount to breaches of other SLSNSW and SLSA policies.

PRIVILLEGE OF INFORMATION

This policy applies to all SLS members and personnel. However, members who operate in a capacity/ role where they may be privileged to information must be made especially aware of this policy.

This applies but is not limited to roles such as SurfCom Operator/Supervisor or Branch or State Duty Officers.

Employees of the Australian Lifeguard Service are included.

REFERENCE

SLSA Policy 6.20 – Social Media
SLSA Policy 6.21 – Photography, Digital Recording and Images

Last modified: 13/07/23

PSS 2.5 WARNINGS

PURPOSE

To outline parameters for the dissemination of Hazardous Surf Warnings, Severe Weather Warnings and Damaging Surf warnings to internal and external stakeholders.

POLICY

Release of warning and operational information shall be undertaken by authorised State/Branch/Club personnel only.

PROCEDURE

Definition: Any of above warning shall be deemed as any 'release' of a warning to the media/public other services regarding forecast high-risk surf/weather conditions.

The warning system shall be administered by SLSNSW under its arrangement with the Bureau of Meteorology (The Bureau).

MEDIA

SLSNSW shall be responsible for disseminating warning information to the media via a Media Advisory. Authorised branch/clubs/services may in addition to that 'release' provide local/regional advice and information to the media.

Branch/Clubs/Services may release local SMEACS (or TSMEACs) briefings, however the SLSNSW State Operations Centre must always be consulted and copied into all dissemination. Branches/Clubs/Services shall not release warnings to the media without SLSNSW approval.

WARNINGS PROTOCOL (GENERAL)

The following Bureau/SLSNSW protocols are in place to best identify and provide warnings:

1. The Bureau forecasters identify potentially dangerous surf situations 48-24hrs prior;
2. The Bureau provide SLSNSW a 'heads-up' notification regarding potential warnings;
3. SLSNSW prepare briefing (SMEAC) and Media Releases;
4. The Bureau confirm warnings and impact area/timeframe;
5. SLSNSW release a briefing to internal and external services/emergency services;
6. SLSNSW release media advisories to impacted regions (or statewide), these releases are either:
   - 'General'; or
   - 'Rock-Fishing specific' depending on time-of-year/risk activities;
7. SLSNSW releases translated media advisories to foreign language media (general or rock-fishing);
8. The Bureau advise on any changes/extensions to warnings;

9. SLSNSW provide updated information to stakeholders if deemed necessary.

REFERENCE

[Hazards, warnings and safety – Marine Knowledge Centre](#)

Last modified: 13/07/23

PSS 2.6 MEMBER STATEMENTS

PURPOSE

To outline the protocol for member statements collected by lifesaving services. Collecting member statements is normally a part of a Critical Incident Debriefing process.

POLICY

Member statements may be collected for the purpose of further investigation or as evidence to be presented in a court.

SLSNSW must receive copies of all witness statements and will be filed confidentially for future reference if required.

Personnel privy to witness statements must not forward them to any unauthorised person.

PROCEDURE

The procedure below outlines the process for collecting and filing witness statements.

1. Member statements may be collected during or immediately at the conclusion of a critical incident.
2. Member statements must be documented legibly on the SLSNSW Member Statement template.
3. All member statements are to be forwarded to the State Operations Centre.
4. The Branch Director of Lifesaving will forward all member statements to SLSNSW Lifesaving team.
5. SLSNSW will file member statements.

REFERENCE

Critical Incident Management Support Procedures
Member Statement Form

Last modified: 13/07/23

PSS 3 OBLIGATIONS AND STANDARDS

PSS 3   Obligations and Standards

NSW

- PSS 3.1 Lifesaving Service Agreements
- PSS 3.2 Lifesaving Service Requirements
- PSS 3.3 Club Patrol Requirements
- PSS 3.4 Maintaining Minimum Lifesaving Standards
- PSS 3.5 Lifesaving Service Shortage
- PSS 3.6 Lifesaving Service Extension of Hours
- PSS 3.7 Patrol/Service Reviews
- PSS 3.8 Gear and Equipment Inspections
- PSS 3.9 Patrol Operations Manuals
- PSS 3.10 Emergency Management and Rescue Committees
- PSS 3.11 Nipper Activities and Patrols

Last modified: 10/08/23

PSS 3.1 LIFESAVING SERVICE AGREEMENTS

PURPOSE

Lifesaving Service Agreements and Lifeguard Contracts are documents that specify the operations for a particular beach/service or area to which a lifesaving service operates.

POLICY

SLSNSW encourages all Clubs, Services and Support Operations to apply a high focus on preventative methods and actions to enable the reduction of injury and death on New South Wales beaches.

PROCEDURE

LIFESAVING SERVICE AGREEMENTS

Lifesaving Service Agreements (LSAs) between SLSNSW and Clubs, Support Operations and Branches have been developed utilising a risk-based approach to allow all levels of the organisation to plan and implement the most appropriate types and number of lifesaving frontline services required for their relevant area(s), taking into account the following risk elements:

- History and Type of incidents
- Beach visitation numbers
- Prevalent recreational activities
- Weather and climate conditions
- Surf conditions, i.e. High surf
- Existing hazards, i.e. Rock platforms
- State and Local Government/Council requirements

In addition to above LSAs, Clubs and Branches may also have agreements in place with their LGAs/Councils. If an LGA/Council wish to negotiate an agreement with Clubs or Branches, please notify SLSNSW. It is strongly advised that legal advice be sought prior to the agreement being entered into.

LIFEGUARD CONTRACTS

Lifeguard contracts are a commercial in confidence document between the Contract Manager and Surf Life Saving Services. Surf Life Saving Services manages all Lifeguard Contracts and its contents on behalf of the organisation.

All lifeguard services shall have a lifeguard contract or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the provision of services. Lifeguard contracts are negotiated and agreed upon by the delegated staff member and the Chief Executive Officer.

All lifeguards and lifeguard supervisors shall operate within the parameters of the relevant lifeguard

contracts at all times.

SERVICE AREA DEFINITIONS

- **Primary Patrolling Area:**
  - 'Beach segment': sandbar, and adjacent inshore holes and rip currents (approx. 400m)
  - Highest level of service provision; constant supervision;
  - Use of red and yellow flags;
  - Proactive engagement with beach and water users, and focus on preventative actions e.g. reduce the likelihood and severity of incidents;
  - Identify persons in difficulty and respond immediately using a rescue tube or rescue board; response using an inflatable rescue boat or rescue watercraft as required.
- **Secondary Patrolling Area:**
  - Additional 'segments' either side of the 'Primary Patrolling Area' (200-300m either side). These 'segments' may include beach, rock shelf, headlands etc.;
  - Moderate level of service provision; regular 'surveillance';
  - Roving surveillance using an all-terrain vehicle, inflatable rescue boat, and/or rescue watercraft e.g. once every 30-60 minutes;
  - Proactive engagement with beach and water users, and a focus on preventative actions during roving surveillance;
  - Identification and response using an all-terrain vehicle and rescue tube and/or rescue board, or an inflatable rescue boat or rescue watercraft.
- **Emergency Response Area:**
  - Lowest level of service; response to incidents outside Primary and Secondary Patrolling Areas;
  - Areas north and south that the service can respond to immediately to potentially affect a successful rescue e.g. within 10 minutes via all-terrain vehicle, inflatable rescue boat and/or rescue watercraft;
  - Response alongside other services is likely in these areas;
  - Services could be tasked beyond these areas e.g. more than 10 minutes, but a positive outcome may be less likely;
  - Clubs and Branches should identify these areas within their Patrol Operations Manuals and Emergency Tasking Procedures.

SCOPE

Lifesaving Service Agreements shall be completed for the following services:

- ALS/Council Patrol times
- Club Beach Patrols
- Support Operations including RWCs, ORBs and Duty Officers
- Other applicable services such as UAV Operations

LIFESAVING SERVICE AGREEMENTS POLICY

The Lifesaving Service Agreement are required in accordance with SLSNSW Regulation 4b 'Lifesaving Agreements' for the proper advancement, encouragement, management, and administration of SLSNSW. The SLSNSW Constitution and By-Laws are binding on all members of Surf Life Saving NSW.

As Regulations, the agreement comprises part of the rules framework of SLSNSW and all lifesaving services, including Australian Lifeguard Service (ALS), Australian Event Safety Service (AESS) and the Australian UAV Service (AUAVS) are obliged to execute this agreement.

Clubs, Support Operations and Branches that do not execute the agreement will have contravened SLSNSW Regulations. The agreement is subject to, and will be interpreted in accordance with, the SLSNSW Constitution.

Clubs and Support Operations whose Constitution do not comply with the relevant State Constitution and vary from the above, should take the necessary steps to ensure that the constitution does under the SLSNSW Regulations of Affiliation.

A Club's Lifesaving Service Agreement shall be negotiated and endorsed by the respective Branch Director of Lifesaving and SLSNSW prior to the commencement of each agreement period.

The persons responsible for the negotiation of the Lifesaving Service Agreements on behalf of their relevant committee/executive shall be the Branch Director of Lifesaving and the Club Director of Lifesaving/Service Captain (or equivalent) of the affiliating Club/Service in consultation with the SLSNSW Director of Lifesaving, the General Manager, Public Safety and Emergency Management and the Manager, Lifesaving.

All Club, Service and Branch Lifesaving Service Agreements shall be sent to SLSNSW and received no later than September 1 of each year of review (agreements may be signed for a period beyond 1 year).

The Board of SLSNSW reserves the right to make alterations to minimum service requirements based on special and/or unforeseen circumstances, provided such is based on evidence or mandated requirements (i.e. change in legislation).

LSA DISPUTE PROCESS

If there is a dispute (i.e. no agreement) between the Club, respective Branch and Surf Life Saving New South Wales that cannot be rectified/resolved during the normal negotiation process, a dispute resolution process can be pursued. The relevant Branch Directors of Lifesaving will facilitate negotiations with the State Director of Lifesaving and a resolution.

The dispute resolution process is separate to the granting of exemptions for Clubs and occurs during the Lifesaving Service Agreement Review which is conducted every 2 seasons.

Where a new signed agreement is NOT achieved by the start of the patrol season, the Lifesaving Service Agreement from the previous year will continue until a new Lifesaving Service Agreement is signed and endorsed by all parties.

SPECIAL EXEMPTION REQUESTS

In special circumstances clubs/services may request consideration of a special exemption to specified requirements within a lifesaving service agreement. Such a request must be made in writing to the SLSNSW Director of Lifesaving and have the signed endorsement of the Club President and Club Captain, Branch President and Branch Director of Lifesaving. A special exemption request must be

supported by clear evidence/data/need and include a specific plan and timeline to re-establish full capacity.

Note: Were no special exemption has been granted and a club falls below its minimum LSA requirements, there may be implications imposed on the club's SLSA/SLSNSW Grant Funding, Surf Sports Competition involvement or other organisational awards as deemed by the SLSNSW Board.

REFERENCE

Lifesaving Service Agreement
Patrol Operation Manuals
ALSNSW Lifeguard Contracts (commercial in confidence)
Patrol Review Program

Last modified: 16/08/23

PSS 3.2 LIFESAVING SERVICE REQUIREMENTS (MINIMUM)

PURPOSE

To outline the lifesaving service requirements of Surf Life Saving NSW (SLSNSW).

POLICY

LIFESAVING REGULATIONS

Each lifesaving service shall be responsible for patrolling the beach(es) or water areas in accordance with their Lifesaving Service Agreement/contract, the SLSNSW Standard Operating Procedures and SLSA Policies.

Local operations may set minimum requirements that apply to their local area of operations over and above State and National minimum requirements. No lifesaving service may set minimum requirements beneath the minimums set by State and National bodies (unless endorsed by the SLSNSW Board).

PROCEDURE

MINIMUM LIFESAVING SEASON – SURF LIFE SAVING CLUBS AND SUPPORT OPERATIONS

SLSNSW affiliated Club/Services must provide lifesaving services on Saturdays, Sundays and Public Holidays from the first day of the Spring NSW public school holidays to the last Sunday of the Autumn NSW public school holidays (or ANZAC Day if it falls after and is endorsed by the SLSNSW Board). The specific days/dates for each season are outlined in the individual Lifesaving Service Agreements.

Clubs are encouraged to operate over and above the minimum requirements of the official patrol season where local conditions and visitations demand and should confirm the best means to achieve this within their Lifesaving Services Agreement and Patrol Operations Manual. Where relevant this should be done in consultation with local Council Lifeguard services.

Any alterations to a lesser minimum patrol season must be authorised by the SLSNSW Board. Extensions beyond the minimum patrol season must be authorised by the SLSNSW Board.

MINIMUM LIFESAVING SEASON – LIFEGUARD SERVICES

Lifeguard services seasons are stipulated with each individual contract schedule. These vary from contract to contract, however all effort is made to ensure that times patrolled by volunteer lifesavers are consistent with that of lifeguard services.

Any alterations to the lifeguard contracted time must be dually authorised by the General Manager,

Public Safety and Emergency Management and the Contractee in writing (unless in an emergency).

LIFESAVING OPERATIONAL TIMES

Minimum lifesaving service times are determined by both the local level (i.e. Clubs, Branch/Council) in conjunction with SLSNSW, taking into consideration local hazards/risks/beach patronage/recreational activities and prevailing environmental conditions etc. The specific times of patrolling for each season shall be listed in the Lifesaving Service Agreement. Any reductions to patrol times set within the lifesaving service agreement must be approved by the State Director of Lifesaving.

Note: It is pertinent that minimum start and finish times are applied as consistently as possible to all lifesaving services across Branches, as it enables these to be advertised to the public and maximise public safety/communication around supervised swimming locations/times.

LIFESAVING PERSONNEL/QUALIFICATIONS

All club patrols shall have on-duty, at a minimum, the following financially current and proficient personnel with the following qualifications, for the duration of the base patrol.

1. 1 x Patrol Captain (see requirements below)
2. 3 x Bronze (Cert II) qualified members **
3. 1 x Silver Medallion IRB Driver *
4. 1 x IRB Crew *
5. 1 x Advanced Resuscitation Techniques *

Note: These awards may be held collectively by the 3 x Bronze holders as long as the same person does not hold both IRB Driver and IRB Crew positions.

**Identified clubs where there is higher risk and beach patronage may have a higher minimum requirement of 5 x Bronze (Cert II) qualified members, as per their LSA.*

Branches and/or clubs may set minimum personnel number and qualification requirements above the SLSNSW minimums, and such should be reflected in their specific Lifesaving Service Agreement and Patrol Operations Manual.

PATROL CAPTAIN REQUIREMENTS

The Patrol Captain is the principle leader of their patrol's lifesaving functions on the beach. At the operational level, the major function of the Patrol Captain is to ensure effective beach management and rescue capabilities are established and maintained during their rostered watch.

The Patrol Captain is the designated forward commander of an incident that occurs within their patrolling area during patrolling times. The Patrol Captain must hold the following qualifications:

1. Bronze Medallion/Certificate II in Public Safety (Aquatic Rescue); and
2. Silver Medallion Beach Management OR Silver Medallion Patrol Captain.

REFERENCE

Lifesaving Service Agreement
Patrol Operations Manual
[SLSA – Patrol Captain](#)

Last modified: 07/09/23

PSS 3.3 CLUB PATROL REQUIREMENTS

PURPOSE

To outline the minimum types and placement of rescue equipment and lifesaving personnel for general operations.

POLICY

Lifesaving services must operate one of the three core patrol types.

A sub-patrol type must only be established in addition to a core patrol and cannot operate independently of a core patrol.

PROCEDURE

PATROL TYPES

The core patrol types and the three sub-patrol types are:

Core Patrols	Sub-Patrols
1. Base Patrol	a) Roving Patrol b) Outpost Patrol c) Satellite Patrol
2. Incliment Weather Patrol	
3. Beach Closed Patrol	
4. Surveillance Patrol	

BASE PATROL

Definition: A Base Patrol covers the primary and secondary patrolling areas for a lifesaving service established at all times and dates as identified in the Lifesaving Service Agreement. A Base Patrol must meet all minimums for personnel and equipment as stated below to have a status be considered 'beach open'.

A Base Patrol may be supported by multiple Sub Patrols to effectively manage risks during beach operations as identified in the services Patrol Operations Manual.

LIFESAVING PERSONNEL AND QUALIFICATIONS (MINIMUM)

A volunteer surf club patrol shall consist of the following minimum financially current personnel who are proficient in the minimum qualifications listed below:

- 3 x Bronze Medallion (Cert II) qualified members
- 1x Silver Medallion Basic Beach Management or Silver Medallion Patrol Captain *

- 1x Advanced Resuscitation Techniques *
- 1x Silver Medallion IRB Driver *
- 1x IRB Crew *

*The above qualifications may be held collectively by the 3 x Bronze holders as long as the same person does not hold both IRB Driver and IRB Crew positions. Where required, the Patrol Captain may be the award holder of any/all of the above minimum requirements.

Should an outpost or satellite patrol be established, the minimums and resources above must be maintained at the Base Patrol, this excludes an IRB if the primary patrols IRB can respond in a timely manner.

MINIMUM EQUIPMENT

Lifesaving equipment must be complete, functional, available for immediate use (rescue ready) and in position at the scheduled patrol start time. It must remain rescue ready for the duration of the operational hours.

The following gear & equipment items shall be deployed/available at a minimum for all Surf Life Saving patrols.

Primary Patrolling Equipment	**Primary Patrolling Signage**
Pair of RED and YELLOW feathered patrol flags (base frames optional)	2x "Rescue Craft Access Area" mobile signs (IRB/RWC operating zone)
Pair of BLACK and WHITE quartered flags (surfcraft prohibited signage attached)	2x "Swimming Not Advised" mobile signs
Inflatavle Rescue Boat (IRB), including 25HP outboard motor, fuel bladder and accessories	2x "Beach closed" mobile signs
2x Level 50 SLSA approved lifejackets (PFD)	2x "Blue Bottle" mobile signs
4x Handheld radios in waterproof bags (2 of which must be set to Channel 3 to monitor SurfCom by the Patrol Captain and/or Patrol Vice-Captain, the other 2 must be set to Channel 2, Patrol)	1x "Red/Dangerous Conditions (Beach Closed)" mobile sign
1x Side-by-Side (SSV) or alternative Vehicle (where applicable)	**Primary Patrolling Resources**
1x Patrol shelter or tent (including sufficient anchors/tie-downs)	SLSNSW Standard Operating Procedures (access online version is suitable)
1x Pair of binoculars	Patrol Operations Manual (electronic copy suitable)
2x Rescue boards	Patrol Log (Operations App) or Patrol Log Book
3x Rescue tubes	Incident Logs (Operations App)

	or Incident Log Book
1x Defibrillator (AED)	IRB Log (Operations App) or IRB Log Book
1x Oxygen Resuscitator Kit	Radio Log
1x First Aid Kit (including Sharps Disposal Bin/Container)	
1x Spinal board	
1x Whistle per patroller (recommended)	**Optional Patrolling Equipment**
2x Pair swim fins	Patrol Information Board
1x Loud hailer/PA system	
1x Emergency Evacuation Alarm (loud hailer applicable)	
2x Signal Flags (orange with blue stripe)	
1x Emergency evacuation flag (red and white quartered)	**Process**
2x First aid bum bag	1. Refer to PSSOP 7.1-7.5
Access to sunscreen (min. SPF 30+)	2. Should a Sub-Patrol be required, refer to the Sub-Patrol section in following pages

SATELLITE PATROL – MINIMUM EQUIPMENT

- Red and Yellow Feathered Patrol Flags
- Black and White Chequered Surfcraft Boundary Flags
- 2x Handheld Radios in Waterproof Bags
- Tower, Trailer, Tent, SSV or Shading
- 1x Pair of Binoculars
- 1x Rescue Board
- 1x Rescue Tube
- 1x First Aid Kit

PATROL UNIFORM

- Uniform must meet the SLSA minimum standards. Members wishing to wear a jacket on patrol are to wear an approved SLSA jacket.
- Consideration of wet weight should be assessed when selecting clothing items for use in an IRB. A rash shirt and/or wet suit is recommended, to be worn in conjunction with a compulsory PFD.

EQUIPMENT PLACEMENT

- Equipment should be placed as follows:
- Patrol flags shall be placed no more than 15 metres from the water at any stage.
- Rescue Tubes are to be placed on Rescue Board stand (or on Rescue Board), at the waters edge. They should also be readily available at the lifesaving base.
- Rescue Tubes must also be carried on the SSV or by a patrol member when on roving patrols.

- Rescue Boards are to be placed on the water's edge in board-stands in the most appropriate area and in the 'rescue ready' position.
- First Aid Kits, Oxygen Resuscitation Kit, Spinal Board and the Defibrillator Kit are to be kept in the Patrol Area/SSV – easily accessible at all times (this should include splints and other accessories).
- Other equipment should be placed with consideration to local operational requirements as set in the service Patrol Operations Manual.
- Tent in between flags.
- Radios with Patrol Captain and IRB Driver when in operation.

INFLATABLE RESCUE BOAT (IRB) SPECIFIC

- The IRB should be positioned on the beach at the water's edge in a rescue ready position that it can be launched & recovered quickly without posing a risk to beach visitors and/or lifesaving personnel.
- Rescue Craft Access Signs (2) should be erected either side of the IRB/RWC launching/retrieval area.
- Under standard conditions IRBs should be positioned on the sand with the stern facing the ocean. If necessary to position the IRB on the sand for a long period of time the trailer should be removed from the beach. Based on conditions, and in consultation with the IRB Driver, the Patrol Captain can elect to keep the IRB on the trailer (stern facing the ocean) near the water's edge.

DEPLOYED LIFESAVING EQUIPMENT LAYOUT FOR A PATROL
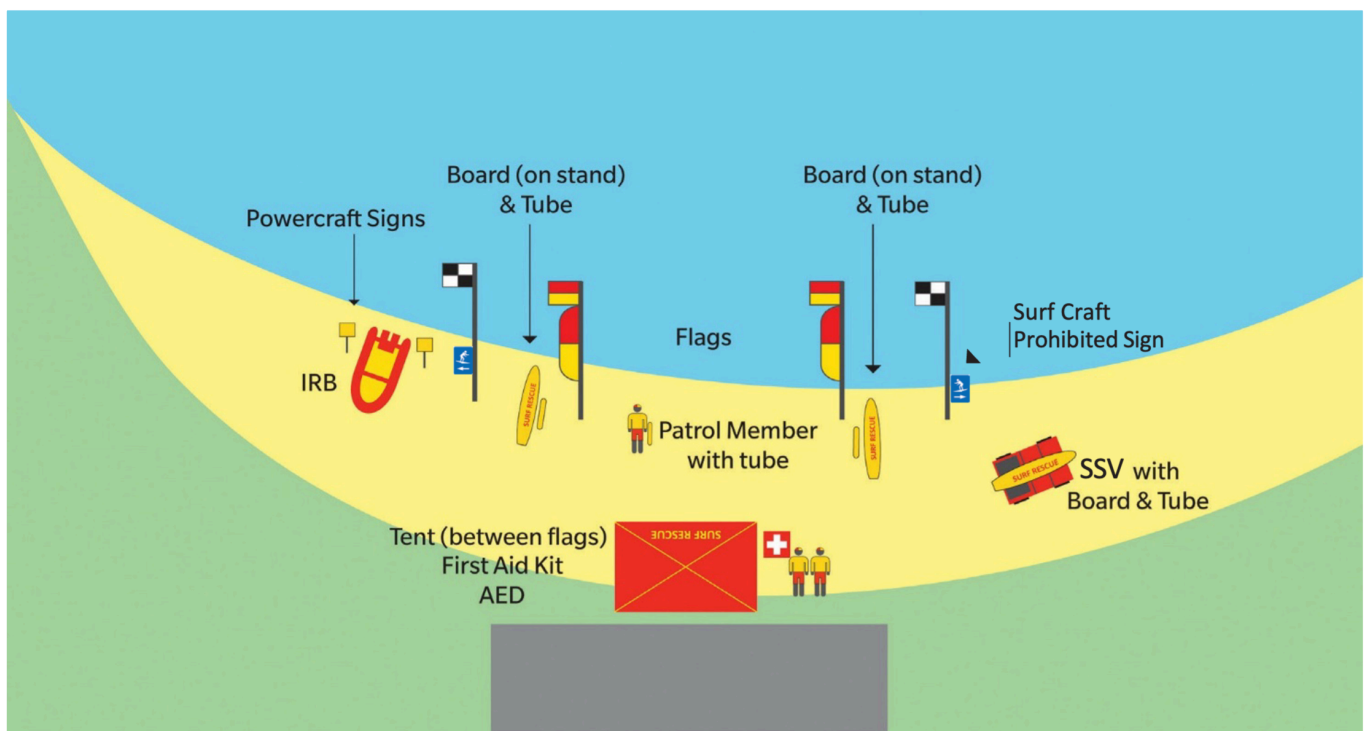
INCLEMENT WEATHER PATROL

Definition: An Inclement Weather Patrol is a 'downgraded' Patrol, operated when services are exposed to extreme or poor weather conditions, irrespective of the surf conditions.

The purpose of an InclementWeather Patrol is to ensure the welfare of the patrolling members and may

be temporary in nature.

MINIMUM PERSONNEL

As per Base Patrol

MINIMUM EQUIPMENT

As per Base Patrol

PROCESS

- Patrol Captain to conduct risk assessment to ascertain if an Inclement Weather Patrol is suitable.
- All equipment (including Patrol Flags) should remain functional, available for immediate use (rescue ready) and in position at the scheduled time and remain on duty throughout the duration of the operational hours.
- Patrol Captain does not need to advise SurfCom that the service is switching to operating an Inclement Weather Patrol.
- Where an assessment has been conducted of the patrolling area and no beach patrons have been identified, all patrolling members may seek refuge in a Club House/ building.
- Constant visual surveillance of primary and secondary patrolling areas must be maintained.
- At any point during an Inclement Weather Patrol, public may choose to enter the flagged area. When this occurs, lifesavers must be in a position to provide immediate emergency response.

BEACH CLOSED PATROL

Definition: A Beach Closed Patrol is a Base Patrol with a closed swimming area. The swimming area may be closed for situations such as dangerous conditions or an emergency. This indicates that a swimming area is not safe for the general public.

A Beach Closed Patrol includes all minimum personnel and all minimum equipment with the exception of patrol flags.

MINIMUM PERSONNEL

As per Base Patrol

MINIMUM EQUIPMENT

As per Base Patrol with patrol with Patrol and Surfcraft boundary flags removed

PROCESS

- Patrol Captain to conduct risk assessment to ascertain if a 'Beach Closed Patrol' is suitable.
- All equipment should remain functional, available for immediate use (rescue ready) and in position at the scheduled time and remain on duty throughout the duration of the operational hours.
- Patrol Flags and Surfcraft Boundary Flags are to be removed from the beach and/or laid flat on the sand in their current locations to signal to the public that the beach is closed.
- Mobile warning/hazard signage – "Swimming not advised" signage should be displayed in suitable positions including the area where the patrolled swimming area may have been.
- Patrol Captain to advise SurfCom, preferably via the Operations App, that the service is now

operating a 'Beach Closed Patrol'. If the Operations App is not working/available patrol captain to advise SurfCom via radio.

- Lifesavers must maintain an effective position to provide surveillance of the patrolling area and an emergency response if required. If a Beach Closed Patrol operates for an extended period, the Patrol Captain shall ensure that an effective rotation roster is in place for this duty.
- During a Beach Closed Patrol, public are to be advised that the swimming area has been closed and for their own safety they should not enter the water. Roving patrols can be used to ensure beach visitors receive the message clearly.
- Patrol Captain to conduct ongoing risk assessments to ascertain if a 'Base Patrol' can be reestablished.
- Patrol Captain to advise SurfCom, preferably via the Operations App, as soon as the service establishes a "Base Patrol" and the beach is re-opened. If the Operations App is not working/ available Patrol captain to advise SurfCom via radio.
- Risk vs. Gain – Should someone in the water find themselves in difficulty patrols are to consider their own safety and ensure they are not exposing themselves to an unacceptable level risk. SurfCom should be advised immediately of a person in difficulty who the patrol doesn't assess as safe to rescue.

SURVEILLANCE PATROL

Definition: A Surveillance Patrol is executed when minimum personnel requirements cannot be met for any reason. In this situation available members are required to stay at the beach for the duration of the rostered hours and monitor swimmers. Flags are not erected. SurfCom and the Duty Officer must be informed immediately and additional personnel sought wherever possible to return the beach to Open status.

SUB-PATROL TYPES

The following sub-patrols may only be implemented **in addition** to a Base Patrol.

ROVING PATROL

Definition: A transient patrol method whereby a mobile lifesaving unit sourced from the Base Patrol, travels along the coastline (via land or water) surveying adjacent areas of water/beach as per services Patrol Operations Manual.

PROCESS

Any one or a combination of the following Roving Patrols may be established as per the needs of the service during patrol operations and at the discretion of the Patrol Captain. Where possible a roving patrol of two patrolling members (ideally one male and one female, is recommended).

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS (FOOT PATROL)
- 1x Bronze Medallion member
- Radio in waterproof bag
- Rescue tube and fins
- Basic First Aid Kit (e.g. in a bum bag)

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS – SSV ROVING PATROL

- 1x Bronze Medallion member (who has received SSV induction)
- 1x Rescue Board
- Radio in waterproof bag
- Rescue tube and fins
- First Aid Kit
- Defibrillator
- Spinal Board
- Oxygen Resuscitation Kit
- Adherence to maximum capacity (as per SSV owner's manual)

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS – IRB ROVING PATROL

- Qualified Silver Medallion – IRB Driver (proficient)
- Qualified IRB Crewperson (proficient)
- Radio in waterproof bag
- 1x lifejacket for each person

OUTPOST PATROL

Definition: An Outpost Patrol is established at a point outside the primary and secondary patrolling areas. This sub patrol type has no patrol flags, and operates as an extension of the Base Patrol, as defined within the services' Patrol Operations Manual to provide surveillance at an area of high risk.

PROCESS

An Outpost Patrol may be established at the discretion of the Patrol Captain. Typically it will replace the need for a roving patrol to the same location and may be established during times of high beach attendance in area with a high risk.

If an Outpost Patrol operates for an extended period, the Patrol Captain shall ensure that an effective rotation roster is in place for this duty.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

- 2x Bronze (Cert II) members (proficient)
- 1x Rescue Tube and 1x Board
- First Aid Kit
- 1x Handheld Radio in waterproof bags
- Shade

Note: All outpost patrols must be in radio communication with the main patrol at all times.

SATELLITE PATROL

Definition: A Satellite Patrol is a sub patrol type with patrol flags, and operates as an extension of the Base Patrol, as defined within the services' Patrol Operations Manual to provide surveillance at an area of high risk. A Satellite Patrol can only operate as an extension of a Base Patrol.

PROCESS

Satellite Patrols may be established on a needs basis (risk based approach based on sunny, high patronage days) determined by the Patrol Captain.

Minimum requirements for a Satellite Patrol are 2 x Bronze (Cert II) members (proficient).

Last modified: 13/07/23

PSS 3.4 MAINTAINING MINIMUM LIFESAVING STANDARDS

PURPOSE

To outline the framework regarding delivery, compliance checks, and issue resolution for lifesaving services in NSW.

POLICY

As providers of key public safety services SLSNSW has established in partnership with its membership, state/ local government, emergency service partners and the public, minimum service expectations.

Ensuring it meets its minimum obligations is fundamental to Surf Life Saving from a public safety, member safety and credibility perspective.

All active patrolling members/clubs/services have an obligation to ensure individual and club/service minimum standards are reached and maintained consistently.

PROCEDURE

FRAMEWORK

The following programs/initiatives complement each other and facilitate clear expectations and ongoing quality assurance measures at club/service/branch/state levels.

- Lifesaving Service Agreements (club/service specific)
- SLSNSW Standard Operating Procedures
- Club/Service Patrol Operations Manual (POM)
- Annual Gear and Equipment Inspections (branch delivered)
- Lifesaving Improvement Program (branch delivered)
- Surfguard compliance audits (branch and state delivered)

NOT MEETING MINIMUM STANDARDS

This will result in an Improvement Notice in the first instances. Ongoing challenges with meeting minimum standards will be escalated to a "Breach Status". Refer to SLSNSW Guide to dealing with breaches of minimum lifesaving standards.

REFERENCE

Lifesaving Service Agreement
Patrol Review Program
SLSNSW Constitution

PSS 3.5 LIFESAVING SERVICE SHORTAGE

PURPOSE

To outline the immediate procedure to mitigate risk when a lifesaving service fails to meet the minimum standards as set in the Lifesaving Service Agreement/Contract.

POLICY

In the event that a lifesaving service does not have the minimum number of qualified personnel or equipment to establish a patrol, it is vital that immediate action is taken to:

- Meet minimum standards and establish a patrol;
- Mitigate/manage risk as best able in the interim, in order to protect the bathing public.

Personnel and equipment (including signage) already on-site shall be actively engaged in surveillance, roving patrols, preventative actions and rescues even though minimum standards are not yet met to open a flagged patrol area.

SurfCom shall notify the appropriate Branch Duty Officer/s and local Lifeguard Supervisor/s to assist in coordinating any resources to assist in the short term.

Such assistance may include:

- Additional personnel from neighbouring lifesaving services;
- Support Operations positioned in the area (RWC, Duty Officer);
- Lifesaving Service Support/Club Callout Teams being activated.

The Branch Director of Lifesaving or ALS Lifeguard Manager shall be notified.

MITIGATION STRATEGIES

Ideally service shortages as described above should be avoided through thorough planning and counter measures should only be required due to unforeseen circumstances, e.g. illness. Successful mitigation strategies include, but are not limited to:

1. Have a patrol roster finalised and communicated to members prior to season commencement
2. Have reliable substitution processes in place and communicated to members
3. Regularly remind members of those processes in an appropriate manner
4. Remind relevant members and patrol teams of upcoming patrol shifts in a timely manner
5. Utilise electronic means (e.g. patrol swaps in the Members Area) where possible
6. Provide electronic links (e.g. to the Members Area) where ever opportunity presents
7. Utilise multiple communication channels, e.g. text messages and various social media where available, appropriate and useful

Last modified: 13/07/23

PSS 3.6 LIFESAVING SERVICE EXTENSION OF HOURS

PURPOSE

To provide guidance for lifesaving services in extending their operational hours past their minimum finish time.

POLICY

Lifesaving service times are allocated based on an averaged risk management approach which considers lifesaving operations, weather, time of year, beach visitors and the like. However, these times are a minimum and may need to be extended depending on the conditions on the day (i.e. a very hot day in September may cause the public to remain longer at the beach in the afternoon).

PROCEDURE

When a lifesaving service is due to finish its operations the person in charge of the lifesaving service should conduct an assessment of the level of risk present.

Given this risk assessment it may be deemed a 'high risk' to close the patrolled area and go 'off-duty' and thus the need to extend services may be warranted. If this is the case the following should occur:

1. The Patrol Captain/Senior Lifeguard is to consult team member/s to discuss extension of hours and requirement to meet minimum lifesaving standards to do so.
2. SurfCom is to be contacted and informed of the situation at least 30 minutes prior to the end of patrol.
3. SurfCom shall notify the appropriate Branch Duty Officer/s and local Lifeguard Supervisor/s.
4. The Duty Officer/Lifeguard Supervisor should notify the appropriate personnel for any authorisation required (i.e. Council if a lifeguard patrol).
5. Relevant Support Operations are considered to assist (i.e RWCs) to either complement or substitute the patrol.

If extended hours are agreed:

1. Minimum lifesaving standards shall be required for the continuation of a patrol (including the number of Bronze Medallion holders, equipment etc).
2. The lifesaving service is to continue operations and monitor/evaluate every half an hour until making a decision to complete operations.
3. SurfCom shall continue to function until the last patrol has closed for the day.

REFERENCE

Lifesaving Service Agreement

PSS 3.7 PATROL/SERVICE REVIEWS

PURPOSE

To outline the approach for reviewing and improving lifesaving services.

DEFINITIONS

Patrol Review	The standardised process of assessing compliance of patrols/services to lifesaving service agreements and operations policies/procedures and identifying areas for improvements.
Patrol Reviewer	Branch appointed Officer who conducts/delivers Patrol Reviews.
Branch	Surf Life Saving body responsible for administration/delivery of Patrol Review Program in the Branch.

POLICY

All lifesaving services shall be reviewed by a Branch appointed 'Patrol Reviewer', within a Branch administered patrol/service Lifesaving Improvement Program, at least twice during each season.

Delivery of patrol reviews shall utilise the standard SLSNSW Patrol Review Form/process.

Patrols/services must reasonably participate with a patrol review and actively participate in identifying strengths and opportunities for improvement.

SLSNSW may conduct patrol/service reviews as it deems appropriate with prior approval of the State Director of Lifesaving and with prior notification to the Branch Director of Lifesaving.

Branches may choose to review components/items in addition to the minimum requirements of the SLSNSW Patrol Review Form/process (as it deems necessary). Branches may also choose to utilise an additional score-based approach. However, these shall be delivered on supplementary Branch forms (not contained within standardised SLSNSW forms or included in any SLSNSW standardised 'scoring' system).

PROCEDURE

REVIEW PLANNING/PREPARATION

Prior to the commencement of the patrol season, Branches shall:

1. Establish a Patrol Review Team, of appropriately experienced SLS members.
2. Appoint/endorse the Patrol Reviewers as Branch Officers for the season.
3. Confirm reporting structure to the Branch Director of Lifesaving and identify whether a Patrol Review Coordinator shall be appointed.

4. Conduct a briefing/induction with all Patrol Auditors, including issuing appropriate resources and uniform/equipment.
5. Develop an 'review roster' to ensure appropriate number/spread of reviews during the season.
6. Communicate Patrol Review process/expectations/information to all clubs/services.
7. Provide to SLSNSW written confirmation of Patrol Review preparedness.

REVIEW DELIVERY

Patrol Reviews shall be delivered as per the 'SLSNSW Patrol Audit Guide' and shall utilise the standardised forms.

Patrol Reviewers shall wear uniform to identify them as Branch Patrol Reviewers.

Should 'excessive' patrol/service activity (public safety focused) at the time of a review (significantly heavy workload/rescues) mean that review may compromise effective beach management (create an unacceptable risk) then the Patrol/Service Captain (or Patrol Reviewer) may reasonably decline participation in components which may hinder service delivery.

Note: The Patrol Reviewer having recorded the details, may continue to review the 'other' components as able (i.e equipment/beach setup/uniform etc).Should the Patrol Reviewer witness any clear breaches of lifesaving standards, which are creating immediate unacceptable risk to the public or members, the Patrol Reviewer shall inform the Patrol/Service Captain. Should no action be undertaken to remedy the issue, the Patrol Reviewer shall notify either the Branch Duty Officer or Director of Lifesaving (directly or via SurfCom).

REVIEW REPORTING

1. Following the completion of a review, the Patrol Reviewer shall discuss the outcome with the Patrol Captain and provide feedback/advice as appropriate.
2. Any issues requiring immediate support shall be communicated to the Duty Officer and Branch Director of Lifesaving or on-duty Duty Officer and noted in the "Next Steps" section of the Patrol Review Form.
3. A copy of the Review Form shall be sent to Branch within 1 week of being conducted.
4. A copy of the Review Form shall be retained with the Patrol Review Logbook.
5. Branch shall input the date and other information into a central spreadsheet and retain a copy of the Review Form on file.
6. Branch shall send progress reports (spreadsheet) to SLSNSW (in November, February) and submit a final report/spreadsheet in May as per Annual Compliancy requirements.
7. SLSNSW may request copies of specific or all Patrol Review Form if required at any stage over the year, with reasonable notice.

REFERENCE

SLSNSW Patrol Audit Guide
SLSNSW Patrol Review Form
Patrol Reviewer – Job Description
Annual Compliancy Circular

PSS 3.8 GEAR AND EQUIPMENT INSPECTIONS

PURPOSE

To outline the annual gear and equipment inspection program and identify the programs requirements, processes, and benefits for all Surf Life Saving clubs, services and support operations.

The annual gear and equipment inspection program ensures all Surf Life Saving patrols have sufficient functional equipment to meet Lifesaving Service Agreement requirements. The program also promotes the management, maintenance and quality of all patrolling gear and equipment, creating a safer working environment for members and enhances rescue capabilities.

POLICY

All services are required to ensure they maintain a safe environment and meet their responsibilities in regard to gear and equipment inspections.

PROCEDURE

A circular will be issued by SLSNSW annually and shall be forwarded to the Branches and Clubs outlining the key dates and actions.

Each year all volunteer surf lifesaving equipment shall be inspected prior to the commencement of the patrol season by nominated Branch supervisors/inspectors, in accordance with the annual Gear and Equipment Inspection program.

All equipment shall be recorded by the inspector ideally through the Operations App.

Clubs/services shall ensure gear and equipment information is regularly updated in SurfGuard and reviewed/updated prior to commencement of gear and equipment inspections. Clubs should incorporate the gear and equipment inspections process into the general management system for clubs repairs and maintenance programs throughout the season. Supervising bodies (Branch) shall be responsible for ensuring SurfGuard is updated at the completion of the inspections.

Gear and equipment that has not passed inspection must be removed from service until it is repaired to an approved status.

REFERENCE

SLSA Guideline to Safer Surf Clubs
Gear Inspection Information is available from www.surflifesaving.com.au
Gear and Equipment Specifications (Lifesaving)
Annual Compliancy Circular

PSS 3.9 PATROL OPERATIONS MANUALS

PURPOSE

To outline the purpose of Patrol Operations Manuals (POM's) within SLSNSW. Specific local beach management/response plans are essential for appropriate planning/preparation, response, and recovery operations for clubs.

POLICY

All SLSNSW clubs/services shall have developed, implemented, and endorsed annually (by Club/ Branch) a Patrol Operations Manual that is submitted to SLSNSW as part of annual compliancy requirements.

As part of annual season planning these manuals shall be reviewed and updated (if necessary) to reflect the Standard Operating Procedures and communicated to the patrolling membership.

At a minimum each club/service POM shall include:

1. Communication – SLS & Emergency Service contacts, radio network information.
2. Hazard/Risk Management – Map, hazard/risk management plan, emergency response areas.
3. Beach Management – Patrol requirements, patrolling types, patrol/club procedures.
4. Emergency Operations Plan – Emergency beach closure, tsunami plan, flood plan, emergency rally point, helicopter landing zones.
5. Standard Operating Procedures – reference of current SLSNSW Standard Operating Procedures.

PROCEDURE

1. POM reviewed and updated (if necessary) as part of annual season planning.
2. POM endorsed by Club and Branch then submitted to SLSNSW as part of annual compliancy requirements.
3. Key contact information, including emergency callout teams are to be kept up to date in SurfGuard.
4. All new patrolling members are recommended to be provided a copy of the POM (e.g. uploading to the Document Library of the Members Area is one effective way to provide access to the file).
5. All new/existing Patrol Captains are to be provided a copy of the POM.
6. The POM should form part of the annual pre-season briefings/inductions with Patrol Captains and key patrolling members.

REFERENCE

Patrol Operations Manual
Lifesaving Service Agreement

Last modified: 13/07/23

PSS 3.10 EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND RESCUE COMMITTEES

PURPOSE

To outline the process for Surf Life Saving representation at local and district emergency management, and rescue committees.

POLICY

SLSNSW as an Emergency Service Organisation and the peak-body in coastal search/rescue operations, and as a 'support agency' within the NSW EMPLAN (Tsunami, Flood and Storm) supports consistent and quality representation and input into the local and regional joint-agency committees.

PROCEDURE

Forums at which emergency service and stakeholder partners meet are structured under the 'state emergency management arrangements' and occur within 2 silos (Emergency Management and Rescue) and sit within 3 tiers (State, Regional, Local).

SLSNSW shall take the lead surf lifesaving facilitating role working with branches/services to ensure consistent representation by appropriate personnel, consistent and quality reporting to these forums and dissemination of information/outcomes to appropriate personnel/services.

Last modified: 13/07/23

PSS 3.11 NIPPER ACTIVITIES AND PATROLS

PURPOSE

To outline the SLSNSW requirements for staging nipper activities (including training). *Training* means authorised nipper training conducted in accordance with the SLSA Water Safety Policy.

POLICY

All clubs shall adhere to the requirements stipulated in this document and additional policies/procedures regarding Nipper activities.

PROCEDURE

GENERAL NIPPER PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

Nippers programs (and like activities) shall adhere to the SLSA Water Safety Policy at all times. Where possible, Nipper activities shall be delivered during the scheduled patrol season and during the hours of a scheduled club patrol. To facilitate any in-water Nippers activities, all minimum patrol personnel requirements must be present where a rostered patrol is not in operation. Should the patrolled area be closed due to dangerous conditions, or for other reasons, no in-water Nipper activities shall take place at this location.

It is recognized that some beaches do not have exclusive control over the status of their flagged area, it is noted that a specific risk assessment can be undertaken to determine if Nipper events can be suitable.

PATROL MEMBERS ASSISTING NIPPER ACTIVITIES

On-duty lifesaving personnel may be tasked to assist with Nipper water safety only if doing so does not reduce patrol capacity below minimum patrol standards. Should a Nippers program lack sufficient water safety personnel to meet the requirements of the Water Safety Policy, and associated patrol lack additional personnel to assist and still meet minimum patrol standards, then in-water Nipper activities should not proceed.

CHAIN OF COMMAND

The Patrol Captain shall have internal SLS 'control' of all lifesaving activities on the beach including 'Nippers'. The Nipper Coordinator (person in charge of Nippers on the day) shall have delegated 'command' of their water safety delivery requirements – as per the SLSA Water Safety Policy. The Nipper Coordinator and the Patrol Captain should conduct a risk assessment and agree for nipper activities to take place, however the command role is undertaken by the Patrol Captain as necessary and this means that the Patrol Captain has final authority on whether nipper activities can proceed or not.

COMMUNICATION

An ongoing line of communication should be maintained between the Patrol Captain and Nipper Coordinator, including a pre-activity briefing. The nipper area shall be in contact with the patrol via radio at all times. Where Nipper activities are being facilitated outside of general patrolling hours, SurfCom shall be notified via radio or the Operations App with communication maintained via radio at all times.

MOVING NIPPERS TO AN ALTERNATE LOCATION

Where possible, nippers should be delivered during the scheduled patrol season, and during the hours of a scheduled club patrol.

To safely move nippers the Junior Activity Chair and Water Safety Supervisor (in conjunction with the patrol captain) must contact SurfCom to advise of the new location prior to any activities taking place. The patrol captain can also log this via the Patrol Ops App.
To facilitate any in-water nipper activities in a new location the following equipment must be available (as the minimum standard): rescue tube/s and/or rescue board/s, radio, oxygen and defibrillation equipment, first aid kits. Based on water conditions an operational IRB (and qualified driver and crew) may also be required. A risk assessment must be completed at the new location and water safety ratios must be met.

Should a patrolled area be closed due to dangerous conditions, or for other reasons, no in-water nipper activities can take place at this location. Clubs may choose to temporarily move nippers to an alternative location if the conditions are deemed unsuitable at the main location after a risk assessment is conducted. To safely move your nippers the patrol captain must be contacted and advised of the new location prior to any activities taking place.

When a club moves location for their nippers, safety is still the priority. A change to the nipper location must be noted in the patrol log, a risk assessment must be completed at the new location and water safety ratios must be met. Based on this risk assessment and to facilitate in-water nipper activities, minimum water safety requirements must be present where a rostered patrol is not in operation. Equipment required may include rescue tubes, rescue boards, IRB, radios, oxygen and defibrillation equipment, and first aid kit. The Patrol Operations Manual will need to be updated if an alternate nipper location is permanently utilised.

NON-CLUB BASED NIPPER (OR SIMILAR) GROUPS/PROGRAMS

Non-club-based Nipper programs shall hold a club/branch/state endorsed safety plan (endorsed annually) and consistently meet the requirements of the SLSA Water Safety Policy.

RESCUE EQUIPMENT

1. Rescue equipment used for the purposes of water safety must be SLSA approved and can include:
    • ALL equipment listed on the SLSA approved lifesaving gear and equipment list.
    • SLSA approved racing boards.
2. It is highly recommended that an IRB or RWC be used for water safety (where safe and applicable).
3. If an IRB is used for water safety, the IRB accounts for 2 members of the water safety supervision

ratio (IRB driver and crew).

4. If an RWC is used for water safety, the RWC accounts for 1 member of the water safety supervision ratio, OR 2 members if an RWC crew is also in attendance.

5. During the activity rescue equipment must be readily available and operational. The IRB and/or RWC should be on the water rather than stationary on the beach.

6. If the patrol IRB is used (at the direction of the Patrol Captain) then it should be in radio contact with the patrol at all times. If an IRB that is not the patrol IRB is used, it should also be in radio contact.

7. Search and Rescue (SAR) Kit, which is recommended to include:
    a. Polystyrene Float with Anchor, Chain 2m and Rope approx. 15m
    b. Fins
    c. Goggles
    d. Mask and Snorkel
    e. Rash Shirts/Hi Vis Vests (numbered)
    f. Dye Packs
    g. Knife
    h. Whistle
    i. Sign Out Sheets
    j. Air horn
    k. 10 x high visibility yellow caps
    l. 4 x grid maps of area being used
    m. 1 x anchor kit and marker buoy
    n. Signal flag or beach marker to mark last known point on land

REFERENCE

SLSA Water Safety Policy
SLSA Operations App (to complete Risk Assessment)
Junior Activity Search and Rescue Procedure

Last modified: 13/07/23

PSS 4 REGULATIONS – RESCUE VESSELS

PSS 4   Regulations

Rescue Vessels

NSW

- PSS 4.1 Role Specific Licences
- PSS 4.2 Powercraft Operator Licencing
- PSS 4.3 Rescue Vessel Regulations/Exemptions
- PSS 4.4 Vessel Incident Reporting
- PSS 4.5 Rescue Vessel Operations Close to Flagged Areas
- PSS 4.6 Rescue Vessel Launching and Beaching Zones
- PSS 4.7 Whale and Dolphin Regulations
- PSS 4.8 SLS Rescue Vessels
- PSS 4.9 Vessel Towing

Last modified: 10/08/23

PSS 4.1 ROLE SPECIFIC LICENCES

PURPOSE

To outline the licences required for specific roles within lifesaving services.

POLICY

All personnel are required to hold the appropriate licences and be current and proficient in order to operate powercraft for lifesaving services.

PROCEDURE

RESCUE VESSELS

Vessel Operators are required to obtain the necessary Federal and State Government licences relating to the operations of the marine rescue vessel they are operations (including exemptions and arrangements in place with SLSNSW).

A rescue vessel is defined as a rescue vessel that operates both short and long range in both surveillance and response operations.

TYPES OF SLS RESCUE VESSELS

- Jet Rescue Boat (JRB)
- Offshore Rescue Boat (ORB)
- Inflatable Rescue Boat (IRB)
- Rescue Water Craft (RWC)

DRIVERS LICENCE (MOTOR VEHICLES)

The length of the tow vehicle and trailer is considerable and all up the weight of the boat and trailer can be up to 5 tonnes. A 'Class C' licence covers vehicles up to 4.5 tonnes gross vehicle mass (GVM). GVM is the maximum recommended weight a vehicle can be when loaded, therefore crew members are to obtain the appropriate NSW driver licence class. This may be a Light, Medium or Heavy Rigid Class or an "Articulated and Combination" licence, depending on the size of the towing vehicle and trailer.

REFERENCE

Service NSW
Marine Rescue NSW

Last modified: 13/07/23

PSS 4.2 POWERCRAFT OPERATOR LICENCING

PURPOSE

To outline Services NSW licensing requirements for Surf Life Saving Powercraft such as Inflatable Rescue Boats (IRBs) and Rescue Water Craft (RWCs).

POLICY

All personnel operating a Surf Life Saving IRB/RWC must be qualified, endorsed, and proficient to operate the vessel under Surf Life Saving Australia (SLSA), Surf Life Saving NSW (SLSNSW) and State regulations/ requirements.

Holding a SLS RWC Operator Certificate allows for RWC operation within lifesaving operations only (on approved lifesaving RWCs). The SLS RWC Operator Certificate does not cover the use of Personal Water Craft (PWC) for non-lifesaving activities, a separate Services NSW boating licence and PWC license must be obtained from Services NSW.

PROCEDURE

RWC LICENCING PROCEDURE

The following procedure applies to a member's Service NSW licencing:

1. Member must meet SLSNSW and Branch prerequisites prior to commencing RWC training (see Support Operations Member Application Form);
2. Application must be approved by SLSNSW and Branch prior to commencement;
3. Member completes the RWC pre-course workbook to obtain gratis surf licence;
4. Member undertakes Part 1 of RWC training (Navigation, preparing for boat operations) under supervision of a State RWC facilitator or State IRB Assessor;
5. Member must maintain their signed workbook as proof of completion of Part 1;
6. Member undertakes section 2 and additional training under supervision of an endorsed Branch RWC trainer and/or State RWC facilitator;
7. Member completes RWC assessment under the supervision of State RWC facilitator;
8. Candidate applies to become a Member of Branch Support Operations Services;
9. Member commences active patrolling only after both RWC and Support Operations Services approvals are granted.

ANNUAL RENEWAL/PROFICIENCY

Members must complete their RWC proficiency annually.

SLS has a duty of care to all its' members.

RWC's operate in a high-risk environment and usually operate in isolation. Due to the heightened risk members are encouraged to complete their RWC and Bronze proficiency as early as possible. Specific Branch SOPs may have specific additional requirements.

SERVICE NSW LICENCING

All drivers and operators of SLSNSW craft (for strictly SLSNSW activities) shall hold* a SLSNSW Licence for the craft to which they are operating. The licence will indicate the relevant vessel:

- RWC – Rescue Water Craft
- IRB – Silver Medallion IRB Driver
- ORB – Offshore Rescue Boat Driver/Skipper
- JRB – Jet Rescue Boat Driver/Skipper

Trainee drivers must have the minimum qualification signed off by an assessor on an Assessment Summary Form and be under the direct supervision of someone who holds a licence.

SLSNSW RWC and IRB award holders are not required to obtain additional Services NSW boating/PWC licences due to the components of such being included with the SLS training/assessment structure. This process is endorsed and is an exemption granted by Services NSW. This exemption applies to lifesaving activities only i.e. personal boating activities or activities are not deemed as lifesaving operations (patrolling, emergency response, training).

Members may already hold the general boating licence and PWC licence through Services NSW (be licenced for personal use). This however, does not negate the need to complete Part One of RWC training within
the SLSA RWC course. Additionally, a current Services NSW issued Boat or PWC licence does not negate the need to complete annual SLS powercraft proficiency.

SLSNSW will not issue the SLSNSW Licences as it is no longer a requirement for these licences to be held. However, should an incident occur, proof of required training and proficiency is required to be produced within 48 hours.

It is highly important that accurate and timely updating of proficiencies and training course outcomes is maintained by clubs and branches.

REFERENCE

[SLSNSW Support Operations Member Appointment Procedure](#) (Support Operations Membership application needs to be completed, endorsed by Branch and returned to SLSNSW.)

Last modified: 13/07/23

PSS 4.3 RESCUE VESSEL REGULATIONS/ EXEMPTIONS

POLICY

All boat users and vessels in NSW fall under NSW maritime regulations and legislation, including all SLS vessels, services, and personnel. Due to the nature of Surf Lifesaving operations, a series of exemptions have been granted to SLSNSW when performing a rescue or when responding to an emergency. All SLS vessels, services and personnel operating in NSW are required to adhere to the requirements of NSW regulations and NSW legislation.

PROCEDURE

SURF RESCUE VESSEL REGISTRATION

All Surf Lifesaving vessels must be registered with a Surf Rescue (SR) number through SLSNSW, and all vessels shall be re-registered through the annual Gear and Equipment Inspections program facilitated by SLSNSW. The exemption allows SLSNSW to facilitate a registration program for all Surf Life Saving vessels operating in NSW. The exemption allows SLSNSW to facilitate an in-house registration program for all Surf Life Saving vessels operating in NSW.

Service NSW have granted SLSNSW an exemption of general vessel registration requirements in NSW.

Surf Lifesaving Services (ALS) vessels will need to be registered with AMSA (Australian Maritime Safety Authority)

Service NSW hold the right to request a report of all Surf Life Saving vessel registrations and to exercise disciplinary action for any misconduct at any time.

REGISTRATION PROCEDURE – NEW VESSELS

This process applies to the registering of all new or second-hand Surf Rescue vessels.

1. Prior to purchasing a vessel from a manufacturer/ supplier, the purchasing SLSNSW entity must complete a SLSNSW New Vessel Registration Application Form. The manufacturer/ supplier will provide the relevant vessel details required to complete the form.
2. SLSNSW will review and record the details of the vessel then provide the registration number to the entity in form of an SLSNSW SR Registration Confirmation.
3. The purchasing SLSNSW entity is to forward the new vessel registration details to the manufacturer/ supplier for registration application to the vessel.
4. The entity must enter the vessel details and new SR registration number into SurfGuard before operating the vessel.
5. RWCs can only be registered to a Branch or SLSNSW.
6. Prior to use all vessels must be registered with SLSNSW and have registration number displayed.

ANNUAL RE-REGISTRATION

The annual re-registration of all Surf Rescue vessels occurs through the SLSNSW annual Gear and Equipment Inspections program.

1. Vessel owners are responsible for maintaining accurate vessel registration and equipment details in SurfGuard and any changes to these details are communicated to SLSNSW.
2. Prior to the annual gear and equipment inspection the appointed Branch Gear Inspectors are required to confirm all Surf Rescue vessels are registered with SLSNSW with the correct details via the Operations App that is preferably used to conduct the gear inspection.
3. It is recommended that the club / service will provide a set of printed hard copy of all inspection checklists to the Branch Gear Inspector in case of difficulties to access the Operations App.
4. Where all details have been checked and confirmed as correct, the inspectors archive a file/copy of the inspection document at the Branch office, if the Operations App was not used. Note: These inspection documents may be audited by SLSNSW at any time.
5. Where vessel details are found to be incorrect, the Branch gear inspector is to make the relevant amendments and return this information to the Branch, which will pass it on to SLSNSW.
6. In the event that a Surf Rescue vessel is not registered with SLSNSW, SLSNSW must be notified immediately, and the entity will be required to complete a New Vessel Registration Application Form and submit to SLSNSW. Prior to use, all vessels must be registered with SLSNSW and have registration number displayed.
7. If an SLSNSW entity has sold a vessel previously registered with SLSNSW the SLSNSW entity will be required to complete the vessel transfer procedure below, prior to exchanging the vessel.

VESSEL TRANSFER PROCEDURE (SELLING/GIFTING/DISPOSING)

1. Prior to selling/gifting/disposing of a Surf Rescue vessel the SLSNSW entity shall complete an SLSNSW Transfer of Vessel Registration Form.
2. When the vessel transfer has been acknowledged by SLSNSW, the entity must remove/delete the vessel details from SurfGuard.
3. Where a vessel is sold to a party external of SLSNSW, or is being disposed of, the Surf Rescue

(SR) number and all associated Surf Life Saving branding, wording and logos must be removed from the vessel prior to transaction being completed. Failure to remove SR and SLS branding may result in a penalty to the SLSNSW entity in which the SR is registered to.

REGISTRATION NUMBERS

Each Surf Rescue vessel shall display its registration number on both its port and starboard forward gunwales. The registration numbers shall be affixed in block letters at least 150mm in height [minimum of 100mm for Rescue Water Craft (RWC)] in either black or contrasting in colour with the hull or background.

Each SLSNSW entity (Clubs, Branches, Support Operations and Services) have been assigned unique identification characters by SLSNSW which are included in Surf Rescue registrations. This registration system requires entities to re-register any newly acquired vessel to ensure the registration reflects the correct owner identification code.

Surf Rescue Registration Number Example: **S R X X 1 N**

MINIMUM SAFETY EQUIPMENT

SLS vessels are exempt from carrying the full complement of minimum safety equipment that normally all vessels must carry under NSW State maritime laws.

LIFEJACKETS (PFDS)

As of 1st October 2014, all Surf Life Saving Inflatable Rescue Boat (IRB) personnel (Drivers and Crew) operating IRBs both in frontline lifesaving operations and IRB training must wear an approved type (Minimum level 50) lifejacket (predominately red &/or yellow), also referred to as Personal Flotation Devices (PFD's). For the purpose of this SOP and in practice "wear" means that the lifejacket must be clipped and zipped up as per provision/design of the PFD. Licencing of Drivers/Operators.

All drivers and operators of SLSNSW rescue vessels (for strictly SLSNSW activities) shall hold* a SLSNSW Licence for the craft to which they are operating. The licence will indicate the relevant vessel:

- RWC – Rescue Water Craft
- IRB – Silver Medallion IRB Driver
- ORB – Offshore Rescue Boat Driver/Skipper
- JRB – Jet Rescue Boat Driver/Skipper

Trainee drivers must have the minimum qualification signed off by an assessor on an Assessment Summary Form and be under the direct supervision of someone who holds a Licence.

SLSNSW RWC and IRB award holders are not required to obtain additional Services NSW boating/PWC licences due to the components of such being included with the SLS training/assessment structure. This process is endorsed and is an exemption granted by Services NSW. This exemption applies to lifesaving activities only. Patrolling, emergency response, training (not personal boating activities or activities not deemed as lifesaving operations).

Licences will be sent to members by SLSNSW when they achieve their award through SurfGuard. Award holders shall be required to carry their licences with them at all times when operating marine rescue vessels.

MARINE INCIDENTS

A 'Marine Incident' is a serious event and requires immediate reporting and adherence to Services NSW and SLSNSW protocols. See the Marine Incident Report Policy LS4.4.

Generally, a 'Marine Incident' involves events where there is:

- Collision of a surf rescue powercraft with another vessel causing damage/injury.
- Collision of a surf rescue powercraft with a member of the public causing injury.
- Injury sustained by surf life saving member from a surf rescue powercraft.
- Any injury/death caused to a member of the public or lifesaver by any public powercraft.
- A Duty Officer should be tasked to every serious marine incident.

SPEED

- SLS vessels shall adhere to state regulations including exemptions regarding speed and distance to other vessels and persons in water except for when required for lifesaving activities (patrolling, emergency response, and training).

- Adherence to the vessel operating procedures (SOPs), Powercraft Code of Conduct and the application of a risk assessment approach shall always be required.

REFERENCE

SLSNSW New Vessel Registration Application Form
[SLSNSW Transfer of Vessel Registration Form](#)
SLSNSW Witness Statement Form
SLSA Incident Report Log
Service NSW Vessel Incident Report
SLSA Powercraft Code of Conduct

Last modified: 14/08/23

PSS 4.4 VESSEL INCIDENT REPORTING (SERVICE NSW)

PURPOSE

To outline regulations for marine rescue vessels in NSW.

POLICY

Surf Life Saving NSW (SLSNSW) has an obligation to comply with the relevant Service NSW requirements.

PROCEDURE

Surf Life Saving work closely with and within the Service NSW scope of management/responsibility.

It is essential that any incidents involving Surf Life Saving resources follow the correct reporting and reviewing procedure in line with our requirements as an emergency service.

DEFINITION OF "AN INCIDENT" WHICH REQUIRES IMMEDIATE REPORTING TO SLSNSW

- Collision of a surf rescue powercraft with another vessel causing damage/injury.
- Collision of a surf rescue powercraft with a member of the public causing injury.
- Injury sustained by surf life saving member from a surf rescue powercraft.
- Any injury/death caused to a member of the public or lifesaver by any public powercraft.

Where no lifesaving personnel or powercraft are involved, the responsibility primarily falls to the skipper of the vessels involved and/or the Police or Service NSW officer on scene. If Police or a Service NSW officer is not immediately available, it may be prudent for lifesavers to make a report.

All incidents and injuries where a powercraft has been involved must be reported to SLSNSW and Service NSW within 48 hours of the incident occurring. All incidents involving a fatality, serious injury and/or damage to property, including a vessel, costing more than $5,000 are to be reported to Service NSW within 48 hours of the incident occurring. Marine Incidents requiring notification to Service NSW.

- Injury to any person or a fatality.
- Damage to property costing more than $5000 if not associated with an aquatic licensed event.

Service NSW must be notified using the Services NSW Vessel Incident Form (available from SLSNSW and Services NSW websites).

Notification to SLSNSW can be done immediately via the Branch Director of Lifesaving with a report completed into the Incident Report Database and a copy of the Incident Report Log communicated to SLSNSW.

A SLS Duty Officer should attend marine incidents.

Note: Some incidents may also require notification to SafeWork NSW following an injury or serious incident.

REFERENCE

Service NSW Vessel Incident Report

Last modified: 25/07/23

PSS 4.5 RESCUE VESSEL OPERATIONS CLOSE TO FLAGGED AREAS

PURPOSE

To outline Surf Life Saving NSW (SLSNSW) policy with regards to SLS marine rescue vessel use in and around designated red and yellow flagged patrol areas.

POLICY

SLSNSW is committed to safe operations and requires all personnel to follow the requirements listed in this policy.

PROCEDURE

Rescue vessels could pose a hazard due to size, weight and speed of the vessel.

Rescue Vessels will usually not operate, launch or beach within a designated patrolled area and must remain at least 60m either side and/or at least 500m from shore unless required within their patrolling or rescue duties.
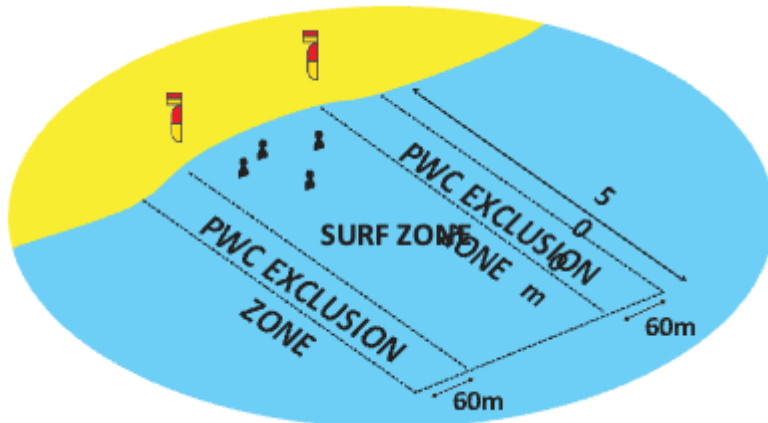
SLSNSW EXEMPTIONS

The following regulations do not apply to Surf Life Saving Powercraft, but ONLY for the purpose of undertaking rescues or responding to an emergency. For clarity, SLSNSW vessels are able and endorsed to be operating within the break zone.

SERVICE NSW REGULATIONS – PUBLIC (NON SLS) VESSELS

PWCs (excluding SLS RWCs included in lifesaving operations) exceeding 8 knots, must stay:

- 60m from any person in the water
- 60m from any non-powered vessel under 4m

- 30m from any other vessel
- 30m from the shore/riverbank/structures

Other vessels must (if exceeding 8 knots) stay:

- 30m from any person/object/vessel in water
- 60m from any person in water, if towing an aqua-planer (skier/wakeboard/tube)

All vessels must stay 500m from shore and 60m clear of any lifesaver/lifeguard patrolled areas. Lifesaving craft/vessels are exempt only if undertaking patrolling or rescue duties.

Last modified: 25/07/23

PSS 4.6 RESCUE VESSEL LAUNCHING AND BEACHING ZONES

PURPOSE

To outline the procedure for ensuring public safety during positioning, launching, and beaching of SLS marine rescue vessels on beaches.

POLICY

Surf Life Saving NSW (SLSNSW) require additional safety considerations when launching and beaching marine rescue vessels.

PROCEDURE

Surf Lifesaving Marine Rescue Vessels could pose a hazard due to their size, weight, speed, and a combination thereof. Launching and beaching creates a situation where the vessel may have a lowered level of control.

Vessels shall be positioned on the beach in 'standby' and shall launch and beach within pre-determined designated areas demarcated by specific 'Rescue Craft Access Area' hazards signs.

Drivers/operators/skippers shall ensure the beach area and immediate water area is clear of patrons prior to launching or beaching the vessel.

In emergency situations marine rescue vessels may be exempted from this requirement but shall ensure risk is minimised to any in-water patrons as best able/appropriate.

REFERENCE

SLSA Surf Store/Signage
SLSA Powercraft Manual

Last modified: 25/07/23

PSS 4.7 WHALE AND DOLPHIN REGULATIONS

PURPOSE

To provide guidance regarding operating close to marine mammals. Follow the direction of the lead agency.

POLICY

Surf Life Saving NSW (SLSNSW) expects all personnel to adhere to the guidelines below.

PROCEDURE

If in the course of lifesaving duties personnel are required to operate close to marine mammals the following shall apply:

Requirements	Distance to a Whale	Distance to a Dolphin
CAUTION ZONE • No Wake Speed • Maximum of 3 vessels • Do not enter caution zone if animals are stranded	**BETWEEN** • 100 and 300 metres	**BETWEEN** • 50 and 100 metres
NO APPROACH ZONE • Do not enter • No waiting in front of direction • Do not approach from the rear	**WITHIN** • 100 metres	**WITHIN** • 50 metres
BOW RIDING • Do not deliberately encourage bow riding • When animals are bow riding do not change course or speed suddenly • If there is a need to stop, gradually reduce speed.		

Lifesaving personnel, vessels and/or equipment shall not directly undertake animal/mammal disentanglement operations (i.e. shark net entanglement) as well as approach or deal with any animal/mammal carcasses. This is not a lifesaving activity and falls outside of SLSNSW's scope of work, SOPs, and relevant insurances. These should be reported to SurfCom for further action.

Lifesaving services may provide in water safety support to other agencies/vessels involved in entanglement operations but shall maintain a 100m (whale), or 50m (dolphin) distance, unless in a life-threatening emergency.

Lifesaving Services may assist with:

- National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) officers with their vehicles (e.g. SSV) to tow NPWS trailers/boats
- NPWS boats into the surf zone and with initial reconnaissance of animal
- Advice on launch locations – beach entry and/or boat ramps
- Use of SLSNSW radio for communication

All assistance is subject to sign off from the Duty Officer/Patrol Captain/Lifeguard & IRB/RWC Driver.

REFERENCE

NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service
Service NSW

Last modified: 25/07/23

PSS 4.8 SLS RESCUE VESSELS

PURPOSE

To provide policy and procedure for the function of marine rescue vessels in lifesaving operations in NSW.

POLICY

Surf Life Saving marine rescue vessels are required to comply with the obligations outlined in the relevant Government Regulations, operating procedures, licencing specifications, and Lifesaving Service Agreements.

PROCEDURE

A marine rescue vessel is defined as a rescue vessel that operates both short and long range in both surveillance and response operations.

TYPES OF SLS MARINE RESCUE VESSELS

- Jet Rescue Boat (JRB)
- Offshore Rescue Boat (ORB)
- Inflatable Rescue Boat (IRB)
- Rescue Water Craft (RWC)

SCOPE OF OPERATION – PATROL SEASON/PATROL HOURS

A marine rescue vessel shall perform normal rostered patrols on Saturdays, Sundays and Public Holidays within the patrolling season as outlined in each units Lifesaving Service Agreement and endorsed by the Branch and State.

A marine rescue vessel shall patrol, as a minimum, the State (and Branch if in extension to the State) patrol hours as outlined in the units Lifesaving Service Agreement.

SCOPE OF OPERATION – OUT OF SEASON/AFTER HOURS

Marine rescue vessels shall be on call for response to emergencies 24/7, 365 days a year and be able to be "on water" within the shortest operation time.

REFERENCE

Lifesaving Service Agreement
[PSS 9.10 Low Light Operations](#)

Last modified: 25/07/23

PSS 4.9 VESSEL TOWING

PURPOSE

To outline vessel towing protocols.

POLICY

- Lifesaving personnel should only attempt to tow another vessel when there are people in immediate danger.
- Lifesaving personnel should at no stage attempt to tow another vessel if it creates unacceptable risk.
- The primary function of Surf Life Saving is preservation of life, not recovery of property or salvage operations.
- RWCs are at no stage permitted to tow any form of vessel.
- Assistance from larger and more towing-capable vessels from other marine rescue organisations should be sought as soon as feasible, e.g. Marine Rescue NSW or NSW Water Police.

PROCEDURE

The decision to tow another craft should be carefully evaluated. The first consideration should be the safety of the crew and those aboard the stricken vessel. If a tow is too hazardous, and the crew of the stricken vessel is in imminent danger, then they should be transferred to the rescue vessel. The primary function of Surf Life Saving is preservation of life, not recovery of property or salvage operations.

If a tow is feasible, the first decision is whether to leave some or all crew on board the disabled vessel. Those on board should have personal flotation devices and means of communicating between vessels. Wherever able persons should be transferred to the safety of land before commencing a tow.

Before attempting a tow, a verbal agreement should be reached that the skipper of the other boat will accept the tow and that the marine rescue vessel will take all care but no responsibility.

The outboard on the vessel should be left down to allow control of the direction of the towed vessel.

In long tows out to sea both boats must be in step, that is, both boats enter the troughs or crests simultaneously and at least one swell apart. The towed boat should be observed continuously. If it begins to yaw, the driver should slow down or the boat may broach, especially if the tow point is high above the waterline. Ideally the tow line should be attached as low as possible to the waterline of the vessel, at the bow.

The towed boats anchor, and anchor line can be attached in the tow line to allow a shock absorber in the line when towing in swells. Any slack line must be taken in to avoid fouling the propeller or jet unit.

If the tow is in a following sea, a drogue or sea anchor may need to be rigged 20 to 30 metres astern of the tow. A suitable drogue can be made from a bucket or similar.

If a large wave astern forces the disabled boat to override the rescue boat, it could prove disastrous. This can be avoided by quick throttle action. If the marine rescue vessel is forced to steer away, quickly abort the tow.

CREWS DUTIES

- Ensure fenders are in place.
- Remove tow rope and bridle from rope locker.
- Rope selection:
    - A long rope or two joined together connected to towed vessels anchor line, using anchor as a spring for big swell, or to a bollard or tow point.
    - A short rope used for closed quarters and flat conditions (can be shorted even more by sheepshank).
- Bridle is looped around stern bollards; ensuring pulley and shackle are free and connect tow line to shackle at pulley.
- Lay out tow line on boat deck to ensure no tangles.
- Inform skipper that you are ready to tow.
- If warranted, use a light throw line from either vessel then use this to pull towline between vessels.
- Ensure person secures towline to anchor bollard, capstan or anchor line.
- Inform skipper all is secure.
- As driver takes up slack, pay out the line, ensuring it does not snag on vessel or crew, until taunt.
- As tow commences, monitor towline and vessel, being ready to sever (with knife) the tow line in case of emergency.
- At completion of tow, pull line in, keeping clear of motors.
- In close quarters, i.e., Marina, line is pulled in and an appropriately sized sheep shank placed in line. Line is then again laid out and tow recommences.
- Have a knife on deck to cut line free.

DRIVER DUTIES

- Place boat to the windward side of the vessel to be towed, close enough for lines to be transferred safely and await for signal that line is secured.
- On signal move forward on one motor at low revolutions to take up slack.
- Once line taut and towed vessel is true, speed can be increased.
- In enclosed or close quarter conditions, i.e. Marina, the line should be shortened to allow easy manoeuvring without risk of collision with other vessels.
- Be aware that the size of the towed vessel is proportional to the amount of momentum when towing ceases.

SKIPPERS DUTIES (JRB/ORB DRIVER DUTIES)

- Plan the transfer of tow line from a safe distance + inform crew of planned procedure.
- Ensure other vessel is aware of your intentions whilst crew prepares for tow.
- Double check tow line is correct.
- Inform driver and other vessel when ready to tow.
- Oversee towing procedure ensuring safety of all involved.
- Advise crew and other vessel of intention to shorten line in close quarters.
- Get particulars from skipper of towed vessel i.e. Name, address, type of vessel, reason for

requiring tow.

PSS 5 GEAR AND EQUIPMENT

PSS 5   Gear and Equipment

NSW

- PSS 5.1 Lifesaving Vehicles
- PSS 5.2 All Terrain Vehicles – SSV
- PSS 5.3 Water Safety Signage
- PSS 5.4 Water Safety Flags
- PSS 5.5 First Aid Equipment
- PSS 5.6 Oxygen Resuscitation Equipment
- PSS 5.7 Automatic External Defibrillators
- PSS 5.8 Methoxyflurane
- PSS 5.9 Public Rescue Equipment
- PSS 5.10 SLSA Equipment Policies

Last modified: 10/08/23

PSS 5.1 LIFESAVING VEHICLES (4WD)

PURPOSE

To provide a minimum standard by which lifesaving vehicles shall be managed.

Lifesaving vehicles are defined as motor vehicles (excluding SSV) that are used for lifesaving operations (patrolling/emergency response).

POLICY

Lifesavers/Lifeguards required to drive as part of their patrolling duties will only be permitted to do so if they hold the following driver qualifications.

- Driver's license (Provisional or Open).
- Appropriate lifesaving qualifications for the patrol/response task.
- Vehicle induction (specific to that vehicle).

Surf Life Saving is not recognised by the State Rescue Board of NSW as an accredited rescue unit so vehicles shall abide at all times with speed limits and all relevant laws and regulations relating to vehicles (including registrations, speed, seatbelts, red-lights, parking). Lifesaving vehicles are not exempt from any fines and infringements, including during emergencies.

Vehicles operating on-beach shall minimise speed and shall operate with headlights and hazard lights on at all times.

PROCEDURE

RESCUE EQUIPMENT

All vehicles assigned to patrol/response duties are recommended to carry the following lifesaving equipment during operational times:

- Surf Life Saving branding/magnets
- Oxygen Resuscitation Equipment + AED + First Aid Kit
- Rescue Board
- Rescue Tube + Fins
- Radio
- Spinal Equipment & Stretcher
- Loud Hailer/PA System
- Jumper Leads
- Torch/spot-light
- Reverse Beepers
- Compressor
- Snatch straps

- Tire pressure gauge

Any modifications including roll bars carry racks and storage containers must adhere to manufacturer's guidelines and be carried out in consultation with the manufacturer or dealer.

VEHICLE BRANDING AND SURF RESCUE/LIFEGUARD MAGNETS

Permanently branded lifesaving vehicles shall only be operated by approved personnel for approved duties.

Surf Rescue/Lifeguard Magnets shall be utilised only by approved personnel during lifesaving operations, such as Duty Officer Patrols or Emergency Response Callouts.

When the vehicle is being disposed, all surf lifesaving branding and equipment must be removed at the end of service.

FLASHING LIGHTS

Use of flashing lights shall be restricted to dedicated lifesaving vehicles (not private vehicles).

Flashing lights shall meet the relevant state laws/restrictions regarding use and colours (Note: red and blue lights shall not be used by lifesaving vehicles). SLS colours should be red and amber.

The use of flashing lights should be restricted to on-beach patrolling/emergencies and shall not be used on public roads. For the purpose of clarification, Surf Life Saving cannot utilise blue or blue/red combination of lights or a warning device (siren).

Use of flashing lights does not exempt lifesaving services from any laws, regulations and by-laws (including speed/parking).

REFERENCE

SLSA Brandbox (Branding Guidelines)

Last modified: 25/07/23

PSS 5.2 ALL TERRAIN VEHICLES – SSV (SIDE BY SIDE)

PURPOSE

To outline requirements for Side by Side SSVs in lifesaving operations.

POLICY

All SSV drivers must be at least 17 years of age and:

- Hold a current and proficient driver's licence (provisional or open);
- Be a financial Surf Life Saving member or employed lifeguard (on active duty).

All SSV drivers must:

- Be inducted in the operation of the specific SSV by a nominated club/service officer.

PROCEDURE

INTRODUCTION

Side by Side All Terrain Vehicles (SSVs) enable suitably qualified lifesaving personnel to be more mobile and capable of quickly responding to emergencies both inside and outside of their patrolled area.

OPERATIONAL POLICY

All SSVs are to meet SLSA gear and equipment specifications. These specifications are outlined at: www.sls.com.au.

Single Seat (Quad Bikes) are no longer to be used by clubs/members for Surf Life Saving operations. Any use of 'quads' forfeits coverage by the association's insurance policy for any member/club/service involved in an incident.

SSVs shall abide at all times with speed limits and all relevant laws and regulations relating to vehicles (including registration, speed, seatbelts, red-lights and parking). Speed should be minimised at every opportunity. SSVs are not exempt from any fines and infringements, including during emergencies.

Local government and/or state regulations in relation to speed must be adhered to at all times.

The SSV should not exceed 20km/h under normal operating conditions. The speed limit for heavily populated areas and between the red and yellow flags is 5km/h.

It is the operator's responsibility to evaluate the environment to determine a safe and appropriate speed within these limits.

SSVs shall minimise speed and shall operate with headlights on at all times. Passengers should not exceed maximums set within the SSV owner/operator manual.

Flashing lights and headlights should be turned on whenever 'underway'. If using two lights, the colours should be red and amber combinations. If using a single light, the colour should be only amber.

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES ARE FLASHING LIGHTS TO BE USED ON ROAD.

REGISTRATION

All SSVs must be conditionally registered via Service NSW annually.

RESCUE EQUIPMENT

All on-duty SSVs shall carry the following lifesaving equipment and hold the following safety items:

- Rescue board
- Rescue tube & fins
- Radio
- Loud Hailer/PA System
- Reverse beepers (shall activate whenever in reverse)
- Flashing light (shall activate whenever SSV is moving)
- SSV must have side doors/barriers

No SLS Vehicle is permitted to use a siren on a road or carriageway. Sirens and lights are strictly for beach use only.

Any modifications including roll bars, carry racks and storage containers must adhere to manufacturer's guidelines and be carried out in consultation with the manufacturer or dealer.

VEHICLE BRANDING

Branding for all Surf Life Saving SSVs shall comply with the SLSA Equipment and Uniform Branding Policy. This policy can be obtained through the SLSA Members Portal.

REFERENCE

SLSA Approved Gear and Equipment Manual
SLSA Brandbox (Branding guidelines) Manufacturers guidelines

Last modified: 25/07/23

PSS 5.3 WATER SAFETY SIGNAGE

PURPOSE

To provide an overview of beach safety signage for lifesaving services.

POLICY

1. All Beach Signage and Flags shall be as per the National Aquatic & Recreational Signage Style Manual (3rd Edition) and Australian/New Zealand Standard 2416.
2. All Surf Life Saving personnel shall actively promote the use of signage systems to be compliant with the above when signage is not that of Surf Life Saving.
3. Any existing metal mobile beach signage should be replaced through natural attrition with the hard-plastic variety.
4. SLS services shall only utilise 'prohibition' signage where the appropriate delegated authority has been provided.

PROCEDURE

Signage serves an important part of the overall education program which aims to reduce the number and severity of incidents in the aquatic environment.

Signage systems provide important messages to the public. These messages fall into three categories:

1. Information
2. Warning
3. Prohibition

Type	Function	Example
Information	Indicate direction or give general information, location, etc.	Patrolled area to north
Warning	Warn the public of a danger, a potentially dangerous situation or a hazardous environment exists.	Swimming not advised
Prohibition	Indicate that certain activities are prohibited.	No dogs

LOCATION

Signage should provide appropriate information at point of entry and reinforces specific messages and information at additional specific sites.

ON-BRACH (MOBILE) SIGNAGE

Lifesaving services personnel that have direct responsibility for on-beach signage shall ensure that signs and message boards are erected at the appropriate access points and/or hazard locations.

Lifesaving services personnel shall report on the availability & condition of all beach signage through their annual Gear and Equipment Inspections and patrol log book.

Presentation is an important part of the 'impact' of on-beach signage.

Safety signage (and flags) shall not have any form of sign-writing or content other than the requirements of ASNZ2416 and SLSA/SLSNSW policies/requirements. All forms of sign-writing/signage, flag-bases and flags must be endorsed by SLSNSW.

Signs should be made of plastic material and any metal signage should be replaced by natural attrition.

Poles should be constructed of a non-hazardous material that limits impact of injury.

DIAMOND VS TRIANGLE WARNING SIGNS

Lifesaving Services shall use the existing diamond shaped warning symbols/signs. The standard provides both a diamond and triangle option. No lifesaving service shall utilise 'triangle' warning symbols.

MOBILE (PATROL) WARNING/HAZARD SIGNAGE

The 'swimming not advised' sign should be used to warn of strong currents/rips at high-risk locations and access points. The specific 'strong currents' hazard sign should generally not be used for mobile warning signage and should rather feature within appropriate permanent access signage (as recommended by an appropriate public coastal risk assessment). However, the 'swimming not advised' sign may be displayed with descriptive text relating to the identified hazard leading to the recommendation that swimming is not advised (e.g. strong currents, dangerous rips and dangerous surf).

Swimming Not Advised	Strong Currents (To be phased out)

MOBILE (PATROL) PROHIBITON/WARNING SIGNAGE

Unless a service has delegated authority and supporting legislation to enforce a prohibition, no mobile prohibition signage (red circle/white background) should be used, but rather warning/advisory signage should be used (yellow diamond).

Swimming Not Advised	Prohibition Signage (To be phased out)

RESCUE CRAFT ACCESS SIGNAGE

All lifesaving services shall utilise a set of 2 'rescue craft access' signs to demarcate designated launching and beaching areas for powercraft (RWC, IRBs). Signage shall be placed at the water's edge

on either side of the designated area and can be complemented by 'orange cones' as deemed necessary.

On particular beaches and/or at particular times of year, it may be prudent to demarcate vehicle access onto/off the beach and/or from the patrol base to the waters edge. Orange cones can be effective in ensuring a 'path' is kept clear of patrons and their belongings.

REFERENCE

National Aquatic & Recreational Signage Style Manual (3rd Edition)
Australian/New Zealand Standard 2416:2010.1,2 & 3 – Water Safety Signs and Beach Safety Flags

Last modified: 25/07/23

PSS 5.4 WATER SAFETY FLAGS

PURPOSE

To outline water safety flag requirements for lifesaving services.

POLICY

RED AND YELLOW PATROL FLAG AND FEATHER (AUGMENTATION)

Lifesaving Services shall utilise the red and yellow patrol flag with the red and yellow feather ('Beach Flag Augmentation') as its standard for indicating the patrolled swimming zone at beaches.

The 'feather' also enhances public identification of the patrolled area from in the water – so that the public can better ensure they continue swimming 'between the flags'.

BLACK AND WHITE QUARTERED FLAG AND FEATHER (SURFCRAFT BOUNDARY)

Lifesaving Services shall utilise the black and white quartered flag (with optional feather) to indicate surfcraft exclusion zones where SLS services have delegated authority. Implementation of black/white 'feathers' shall require SLSNSW approval.
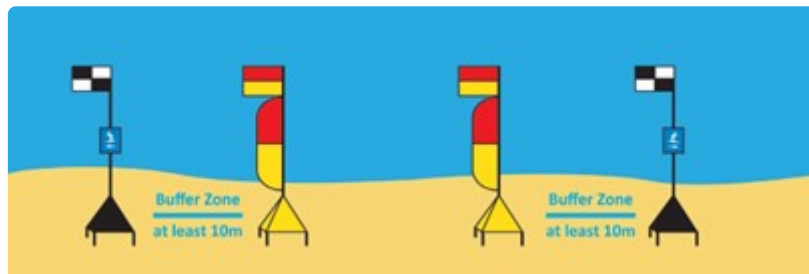
DISPLAY OF SURFCRAFT SIGNAGE WITH BLACK AND WHITE FLAGS

SLS also endorses the use of surfcraft directional or probation signs to be used in conjunction with surfcraft boundary flags. This may be through the placement of signs on the 'flagpole' or 'pole base'. The most common example of this would be the use of a directional 'surfcraft' information sign on the flagpole (figure 4). The use of the surfcraft prohibition sign (figure 5) should only be used where the service has delegated authority and supporting legislation to prohibit the activity.
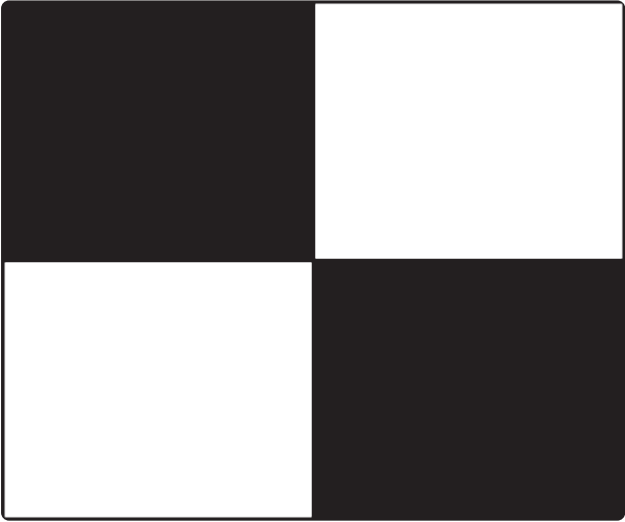
Figure 4 – Surfcraft Directional Signage (as shown in A/NZS 2416:2010.2)		Figure 5 – Surfcraft Prohibition Signage (as shown in A/NZS 2416:2010.2)
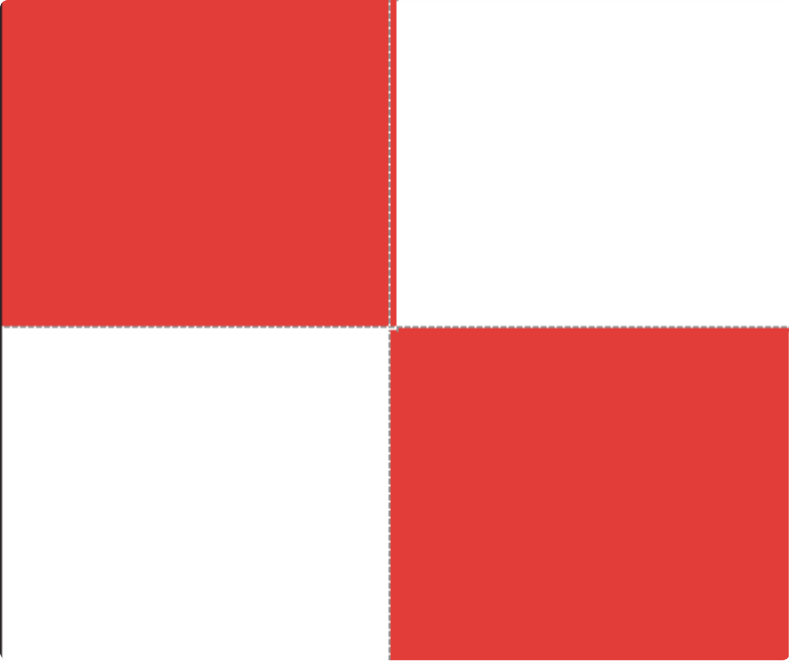
TABLE 1 – FLAGS APPROVED FOR USE BY LIFESAVING SERVICES IN NSW

1		Patrol Flag	Pair of flags to signify a swimming and bodyboarding zone which has a patrol on-duty.
2		Patrol Flag – Feather	Additional 'feather' flown only with rectangular patrol flag.

3		Surfcraft Boundary Flag	Pair of flags used to demarcate a surfboard and other water craft zone or boundary. To signify a zone, or the boundary of a zone, designated for use of surfboards and other water craft.
4		Surfcraft Boundary Flag – Feather	Additional 'feather' flown only with rectangular surfcraft boundary flag.
5		Clubhouse Patrol Flag	Single flag flown from clubhouse/tower to signify an active on-duty service. Shall only fly if patrolled area is open.

6		Signal Flag	Pair of flags used by lifesaving services to signal other lifesavers.
7		Emergency Evacuation Flag	Emergency evacuation. To signify that people should leave the water because of an emergency.

PSS 5.5 FIRST AID EQUIPMENT

PURPOSE

To provide guidance relating to the requirements for first aid/emergency care equipment for lifesaving operations.

POLICY

SLSNSW first aid equipment requirements are generated from the "Safe Work Australia, First Aid in the Workplace, Code Of Practice."

The document can be found at www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au

EXAMPLE OF CONTENTS FOR A FIRST AID KIT

For an example of the equipment list, refer to www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au. In addition 2 x CAT tourniquet should be included in all First Aid Kits.

FIRST AID/MEDICAL ROOM

The contents of a first aid room should suit the hazards that are specific to the workplace.

The following items should be provided in the room:

1. A first aid kit or supplies appropriate for the workplace
2. Minimum contents list
3. Trauma kit including 2 x tourniquet
4. Hygienic hand cleanser and disposable paper towels
5. An examination bed with waterproof surface and disposable sheets
6. An examination lamp with magnifier
7. A cupboard for storage
8. A container with disposable lining for soiled waste
9. A container for the safe disposal of sharps
10. A bowl or bucket (minimum two litres capacity)
11. Electric power points
12. A chair and a table or desk

The location and size of the room should allow easy access and movement of injured people who may need to be supported or moved by stretcher or wheelchair.

A FIRST AID ROOM SHOULD:

- Be located within easy access to a sink with hot and cold water (where this is not provided in the room) and toilet facilities.
- Offer privacy via screening or a door.
- Be easily accessible to emergency services (minimum door width of 1 metre for stretcher access).

- Be well lit and ventilated.
- Have an appropriate floor area (14 square metres as a guide).
- Have an entrance that is clearly marked with first aid signage.

Last modified: 25/07/23

PSS 5.6 OXYGEN RESUSCITATION EQUIPMENT

PURPOSE

To establish appropriate requirements for the provision of oxygen resuscitation equipment.

POLICY

All personnel required to use oxygen resuscitation equipment should be appropriately trained and qualified.

All oxygen resuscitation equipment should meet SLSA and SLSNSW standards.

PROCEDURE

EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENT GUIDELINES

An oxygen resuscitation kit should contain the following items as a minimum:

- 1 x Standard 'C' size medical oxygen cylinder
- 1 x Australian Standard Regulator
    - Three (3) settings; 8L/min, 15L/min, Off
    - Gas contents gauge
- 1 x BVM (Bag Valve Mask)
- 2 x Resuscitation Masks – Child and Adult (Sterile packaged)
- 2 x Therapy Masks – Child and Adult (Sterile packaged)
- 1 x Cylinder Key Wheel/Lever (Permanently attached with chain/rope to interior of casing)
- 2 x Oxygen Tubing
    - Soft plastic
    - 2m in length
    - 5mm in diameter
- 2 x Spare Sealing Washers (Stored in a watertight container)
- 3 x Oropharyngeal Airways in Various Sizes
- Pen and Notebook (To record patient details)
- Disposable Gloves (2 pairs)
- Rescue sheet (space blanket)
- Spare stocks of oxygen masks and tubing etc.
- Penlight torch
- Manual suction unit
- Coloured Chalk

CARRY CASE/BAG

The carry case/bag for oxygen resuscitation equipment must be:

- Of durable material, sturdy in design and able to protect contents from damage.
- Of non-corrosive material.
- Able to accommodate all the necessary equipment in a safe and orderly manner.
- Able to safely secure an oxygen cylinder (either internally or externally) to prevent movement of the cylinder.
- Be as water resistant as possible dependent on material/s used.

TECHNICAL SERVICING (EXTERNAL)

A qualified operator should closely check equipment. The oxygen regulator should be serviced annually, preferably during non-peak times (winter months), and all consumable equipment checked for expiry.

CLEANING

After having carried out resuscitation with an air bag resuscitator it is very important to clean all the equipment to minimise the chance of spreading disease or infections.

- Disposable Bag-valve-masks are recommended (disposed of after use).
- Oxygen therapy masks, regurgitation valves and resuscitation tubing should be discarded after use.
- Disassemble patient valve, wash in soapy water to remove all solids, rinse in fresh running water and assemble.
- Wash air bag in warm soapy water, rinse in fresh running water and assemble.
- Disassemble rear valve, wash in warm soapy water, rinse in fresh running water and re-assemble.
- Wash reservoir valve (bag only) and oxygen reservoir in soapy water and rinse in fresh running water.
- Then soak all parts in a solution of at 10% bleach for at least two minutes.
- They should then be rinsed and dried (not in direct sunlight). Refer to SLSA Policy.
- Operate all features after drying before storage.

Last modified: 25/07/23

PSS 5.7 AUTOMATIC EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATORS (AED)

PURPOSE

To establish the appropriate requirements for the provision of defibrillators.

POLICY

All personnel required to use defibrillator equipment should be appropriately trained and qualified. All defibrillator equipment should meet SLSA standards.

PROCEDURE

DEPLOYMENT

All NSW SLSCs are to maintain at least one operational AED at all times.

Due to the nature of cardiac arrest and the importance of "time to first shock" it is necessary that the AED is located with other first response equipment (on/in rescue vehicle etc.) or at a common accessible location (patrol tent etc.).

EQUIPMENT

An AED Kit must contain the following items as a minimum:

- AED (SLSA Endorsed) and AED Pads
- Pen and paper
- Small towel (for drying chest)
- Non-alcohol wipes
- Clothing shears (for cutting heavy clothing/wetsuits)
- Disposable razor
- Disposable gloves and resuscitation mask (unless included with the accompanying first aid or oxygen resuscitation kits)
- Water-resistant carry case (waterproof pelican-type case preferred)

REFERENCE

SLSA Approved Gear and Equipment Manual

Last modified: 25/07/23

PSS 5.8 METHOXYFLURANE

PURPOSE

To outline SLSNSW policy and procedure for methoxyflurane use in lifesaving operations.

POLICY

BACKGROUND

Lifesavers/Lifeguards are often primary responders to emergencies where a patient is in significant pain. Some of these incidents occur at relatively isolated locations where paramedic assistance can be some time away. The administration of basic pain management medicine can add value to service provision in some areas where there is proven need.

INTRODUCTION

The provision for clubs/services to hold pain management medicine requires adherence to strict NSW Department of Health regulations and SLSNSW approval – specifically related to need, supply, training, storage and auditing/reporting requirements.

PAIN MANAGEMENT MEDICINE TYPE

The pain management medicine approved for use by NSW Lifesavers and Lifeguards is restricted to methoxyflurane dispensed from an approved inhaler.

AUTHORISED PERSONNEL

Methoxyflurane is to be administered by an authorised person, only for the purpose of emergency first aid in the course of their duties as a member or employee of SLSNSW, in accordance with the protocols issued by SLSNSW and SLSA, and in accordance with the authority issued under the Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Regulation by the NSW Department of Health.

APPROVAL TO HOLD METHOXYFLURANE

Clubs/services seeking to hold methoxyflurane must complete a 'SLSNSW Application to Stock Methoxyflurane' form outlining their desire to obtain and administer methoxyflurane and the proven need and club/service capacity to do so effectively.

Clubs/Services must forward completed application form to Branch for endorsement. Branch must endorse the application before SLSNSW can review the application.

Approval will be subject to the review of the application by a panel made up of the Director of Lifesaving, Lifesaving Manager, Education Manager and Manager Australian Lifeguard Services (NSW).

A set number of units (inhalers) will be approved for a club/service.

APPROVAL CONSIDERATIONS WILL INCLUDE:

- Distance/average response time to ambulance services – a club/service within a close distance/ response time to ambulance services may not be eligible to hold methoxyflurane.
- Club patrol membership size – whether the club/service holds a sufficient number of personnel to make the provision of methoxyflurane effective.
- High incident numbers and frequency of need.
- Personnel qualified in the administration of methoxyflurane.

TRAINING/PERSONNEL REQUIREMENTS

In accordance with clause 170 of the *Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Regulation 2008* (NSW), only a SLSNSW member or employee who meets the following requirements is authorised to administer methoxyflurane for initial pain relief in persons suffering an injury.

CONDITIONS OF AUTHORISATION

A SLSNSW member or employee (current/financial), over the age of 18, who holds the following awards:

- First Aid (current)
- SLSA Certificate in Silver Medallion Advanced First Aid (current)
- SLSA Certificate in Advanced Resuscitation Techniques (current)
- SLSA Certificate in Pain Management or equivalent (current) as endorsed by Surf Life Saving New South Wales

Note: equivalent (non-SLS) first aid qualifications will be recognised.

Authorised persons are to be re-accredited to the satisfaction of the SLSNSW Director of Lifesaving at least every two years and documentary evidence of re-accreditation retained by SLSNSW in the authorised person's service records.

METHOXYFLURANE SUPPLY

In accordance with the NSW Department of Health authority the supply of methoxyflurane shall be to approved clubs/services with SLSNSW as the only supply agent.

Approved clubs/services shall submit a purchase request on the approved 'Order Form for Methoxyflurane' to SLSNSW.

Orders following the initial (first time) supply must be accompanied with a copy of the incident log which resulted in the use of stock.

REPORTING (FORMS/DOCUMENTS)

A *'Drug Register Logbook'* shall be maintained within the lockable storage cabinet with the supply of methoxyflurane and utilised by the patrol/service captain (who holds the key) to 'sign-out and sign-in' the drug when released for patrol duties and log drug use (incident) and resupply.

A *'Patient Handover Form'* shall be used and completed by the authorised personnel administering the

drug. A copy is provided for handover to Ambulance.

A *'Methoxyflurane Order Form'* shall be submitted to SLSNSW by the club/service wishing to obtain or replenish its stocks of methoxyflurane.

A copy of the relevant *'incident log'* which gave rise to the need to replenish stocks shall be provided with the *'Methoxyflurane Order Form'* to SLSNSW.

A copy of the *'Patient Handover Form'* shall be provided to SLSNSW with the *'Methoxyflurane Order Form'*.

Records relating to the administration and disposition (receipt and supply) of methoxyflurane are to be retained for twelve months.

STORAGE

LIFESAVER/LIFEGUARD SITES

Methoxyflurane shall be stored in a locked cabinet which is either fixed or not easily moved. Access to the cabinet is via a key or electronic code by the authorised service captain only (Club Captain, Patrol Captain, Lifeguard Supervisor etc.). The register of keys/access shall be maintained by the Club Captain or Lifeguard Supervisor.

During lifesaving duties, the methoxyflurane may be 'signed out' from the drug register and placed within the first aid kit or similar so long as it remains under the direct supervision of the authorised lifesaver/ lifeguard at all times. At the completion of duties, or when not under the direct supervision of the authorised lifesaver/lifeguard, the methoxyflurane must be signed back in and locked within the designated lockable storage cabinet.

The signing into an out of the drug register should be done by the lifesaver/lifeguard in charge and witnessed by another lifesaver/lifeguard if at all possible.

VEHICLES

A vehicle registered to a lifesaving/lifeguard service, which is in use for lifesaving duties, may be used to secure drugs in so long as they are stored in a lockable secure area of the vehicle and the key to that secure area and vehicle remain with the authorised lifeguard/lifesaver who has signed the drugs out from the patrol base/club.

DISPOSAL

All used/empty drug ampoules requiring disposal are to be placed in a 'sharps container' and disposed of as per 'sharps' requirements. This includes:

- Empty ampoules

All ampoules containing Methoxyflurane requiring disposal must be disposed at a Chemist or Pharmacy and a disposal certificate received. This includes:

- Expired ampoules
- Damaged ampoules (refrain from transporting damaged ampoules which are leaking)

Where Ambulance services attend the incident, request ambulance services to dispose of used ampoules.

AUDITS

In accordance with the NSW Department of Health authorised clubs/services holding methoxyflurane shall be regularly audited at intervals of not more than two months. This shall be completed in a combination of the following ways:

- Club/Service Captain to maintain internal records of supply/use of methoxyflurane. These are available for audit presentation and inspection at any time. Club Captains shall conduct their own internal checks/audits of supplies and storage requirements regularly.
- SLSNSW shall review each methoxyflurane order against the required copy of the incident log, which generated the need for additional supply.
- SLSNSW (or an authority delegated to by such) shall retain the right to randomly inspect a club/ service against the requirements of this SOP and associated regulations.
- Branches and the Australian Lifeguard Service shall include in their annual 'Gear and Equipment Inspection' processes inspection/audit of club/service adherence to this SOP and associated regulations.

MISUSE/BREACH OF REQUIREMENTS

A report of misuse or breach of the regulations/rules within this and associated documents shall result in the immediate suspension of a club/service from utilising methoxyflurane until an investigation is concluded.

Investigation shall be conducted by the Director of Lifesaving, Manager, Lifesaving, Training and Education Manager, and Operations Manager, Australian Lifeguard Service (NSW) (or agent delegated to by such).

Should misuse/breach be proven, the following shall occur:

- The immediate and indefinite suspension of Club/Service from use/stocking of methoxyflurane (or any other pain management medicine).
- Medicine misuse shall be referred to the NSW Police as a criminal matter.
- The individual/s involved shall be immediately suspended from the organisation, pending appearance in front of the State Disciplinary Committee.
- Any individual/s proven to have misused the drug in a non-emergency situation shall at a minimum be suspended from the organisation for a period of 2 seasons. Depending on the scale of misconduct, expulsion from the organisation may be considered.

ADMINISTERING MEDICINE (METHOXYFLURANE)

The administration of methoxyflurane by authorised personnel to a patient shall adhere to the requirements within the SLSA Pain Management Certificate and relevant regulations outlined in this SOP

and related regulations/rules.

Methoxyflurane shall not be administered to any patient who intends to transfer themselves to hospital, other medical centres, or none at all. Methoxyflurane shall only be administered where a direct 'handover' can be undertaken from Lifesavers/Lifeguards to ambulance/hospital staff.

Administration to a patient is limited to 6ml/day (or 2× 3ml ampules).

In addition:

- Patient Handover Forms shall be maintained with the methoxyflurane and used for any/all incidents where methoxyflurane is administered, with a copy being forwarded to SLSNSW with a copy of the incident log.
- An Incident Log must be completed and submitted to SLSNSW. Ambulance/hospital staff (or equivalent) must be notified during the 'hand-over' that the patient has been administered methoxyflurane.
- The name of the patient to whom the drug is administered should also be recorded in the drug register, signed by the administering lifesaver/lifeguard and witnessed by another lifesaver/ lifeguard, if at all possible.

REFERENCE

Poisons and Theraputic Goods Regulation 2008 (NSW)
Medicines, Poisons and Theraputic Goods Act 2022 (NSW)
NSW Health

Last modified: 25/07/23

PSS 5.9 PUBLIC RESCUE EQUIPMENT (PRE)

PURPOSE

To provide guidance relating to the use of publicly accessible lifesaving equipment for public emergencies.

POLICY

Lifesaving services are encouraged to conduct a risk assessment on whether Public Rescue Equipment (PRE) should be provided where or when traditional lifesaving services are not available. Any risk assessment on the provision of PRE should be undertaken in consultation with the local Land Manager.

Most commonly in NSW, PRE refers to a Rescue Tube, Angel Ring, and publicly accessible defibrillator (AED). All proposed PRE installations require written approval of both the Branch and SLSNSW before proceeding.

PROCEDURE

Lifesaving services that place or are advised of the placement of a form of PRE should notify SLSNSW for inclusion and dissemination of any records that SLSNSW may keep.

Lifesaving services should regularly check areas where public rescue equipment (PRE) exists to ensure they have not been used or removed as a result of theft.

When any PRE is used in an emergency and the lifesaving services are aware of its use, notification of this should be given to SLSNSW via an Incident Report Log being completed and forwarded as soon as possible after the event.

Note: PRE shall not be considered as part of minimum equipment for patrolling use i.e., the provision of a public access defibrillator is not to be considered as patrolling equipment and a defibrillator must be with the patrol at all times.

Last modified: 25/07/23

PSS 5.10 SLSA EQUIPMENT POLICIES

PURPOSE

To provide guidance relating to the use of lifesaving equipment.

POLICY

Equipment specifications and policies are endorsed by the National Board of Lifesaving. All members have a responsibility to ensure that all policies are followed at all times. The most current versions of these policies are located on the SLSA members portal.

At the time of publication of these Standard Operating Procedures they were as follows:

- Use of SLSA Equipment
- New and Modified Equipment
- Gear and Equipment Specifications (Lifesaving)
- SLSA Approved Gear and Equipment Manual
- SLSA Equipment and Uniform Branding
- IRB Outboard Motor Sealing Process

Last modified: 25/07/23

PSS 6 RADIO COMMUNICATIONS

PSS 6   Radio Communications

Last modified: 10/08/23

PSS 6.1 RADIO COMMUNICATIONS

PURPOSE

To outline club/service radio communications requirements for all lifesaving operations in NSW.

POLICY

All SLS clubs/services/branches shall meet the SLSNSW radio/communication requirements when undertaking lifesaving operations, including:

- SLSNSW approved radio equipment (types/models)
- SLSNSW approved radio frequencies (channels)
- Coordinating though SurfCom

All SLS clubs/services/branches shall utilise and operate within the SLSNSW approved radio network. No service shall undertake lifesaving operations on alternative networks or establish their own alternative radio communications networks unless authorised by SLSNSW.

All Surf Life Saving clubs/services in NSW shall utilise the State Operations Centre (SOC) . No Surf Life Saving service shall implement their own 'SurfCom type' entity without the authorisation of SLSNSW.

Only SLSNSW approved radio frequencies and channel allocations shall be programmed into SLS radios. No unapproved frequencies or frequency changes shall be permitted without the approval of SLSNSW.

SLS radio frequencies are licensed and managed by SLSNSW. No Surf Life Saving service in NSW shall apply for or implement frequencies through the ACMA for lifesaving operations outside of the SLSNSW frequency plan.

All SLS radios shall be serviced regularly by a licensed and SLSNSW endorsed technician/service agent.

Only SLSNSW approved, licensed agents/service technicians may service or program SLS radios.

All SLS services must be contactable via radio if conducting lifesaving operations in regular patrol coverage areas.

All SLS radios must meet the minimum SLSNSW radio specifications as outlined in this document.

Only approved SLS club/service officers/personnel (who are currently SLS/ALS members/staff) shall utilise and operate lifesaving radio equipment and monitor lifesaving frequencies. External partner agencies/stakeholders shall require written permission to hold, use or monitor SLSNSW radio frequencies.

Last modified: 25/07/23

PSS 6.2 RADIO SPECIFICATIONS

PURPOSE

To outline minimum radio specifications for SLS radios used in NSW.

DEFINITIONS

Base-set/Mobile-set: Fixed radio unit-usually located in towers/clubs or SSV/4WD

Portable/Handheld: Radio units used/carried by individual lifesavers/lifeguards

Lifesaving Operations: Patrolling/Emergency Response/Training/Events/Carnivals

POLICY

1. Only SLSNSW approved radio makes or models shall be utilised for lifesaving operations.
2. Radios for lifesaving operations shall be purchased only from SLSNSW approved suppliers/dealers and must be Australian type approved radios.
3. Only SLSNSW approved radio service agents shall be authorised to service or program SLS radios.
4. SLS radios shall only have the SLSNSW schedule of radio frequencies/channels programmed into them (additional frequencies must have SLSNSW written approval and subsequent records updated on the SLSNSW frequency schedule).
5. No one other than authorised SLSNSW personnel shall provide SLSNSW frequencies to other parties, and no other radios other than SLS radios shall hold SLSNSW frequencies without SLSNSW approval in writing.
6. External (non SLS) services with authorisation to hold SLS frequencies shall reapply to SLSNSW annually.
7. SLS clubs/services shall service all radio equipment regularly, including frequency/channel alignment.
8. Only those 'special functions' approved by SLSNSW and provided to endorsed radio suppliers/service agents shall be activated on SLS radios.
9. SLS services shall utilise only radios which meet the following specifications to ensure optimal working ability within the SLSNSW radio network for lifesaving operations.
10. Only SLSNSW approved services will be permitted to install the ESO frequencies on radios (State, Branch, ALS and Support Operations).

Last modified: 25/07/23

PSS 6.3 RADIO EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE AND SERVICING

PURPOSE

To outline the recommended maintenance procedures for SLS radios.

POLICY

RADIO SERVICING/PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE

All radio equipment shall be serviced every two years by a SLSNSW endorsed service agent to ensure the integrity of equipment and lifesaving service provision.

Equipment needs to be checked for (at a minimum):

- Channel/frequency assignment
- General condition of radio
- Battery condition
- Transmit power levels
- Correct CTCSS number and format
- Correct ANI and ANI stored within the Surfcom Radio System

PRESEASON RADIO TEST

Club and Branches must ensure that radios are kept in an appropriate condition to so that services can operate effectively. Preseason Radio Tests

Clubs/Services and SurfCom should conduct a series of preseason radio tests with all lifesaving services within the SurfCom coverage area.

Testing should commence no later than one month before the start of the season to enable issues to be identified and rectified so as to not inhibit lifesaving operations.

RADIO PROGRAMMING/FREQUENCIES

All radios shall be programmed only by a SLSNSW endorsed licensed technician/agent as per SLSNSW specifications and allocations. Radio frequencies schedules are maintained by SLSNSW and are provided only to endorsed radio service agents. They shall not be provided to other clubs/services or other bodies/ persons. No alterations to radio programming shall be undertaken without SLSNSW authorisation to ensure adherence to licenses and to ensure radio channels are correctly documented (SLSNSW).

Club and Branches must ensure that radios are kept in an appropriate condition to so that services can operate effectively.

SLSNSW recommends that radios over 12 months old are serviced every two (2) years.

Last modified: 25/07/23

PSS 6.4 COMMUNICATIONS SECURITY/ STREAMING

PURPOSE

To outline expectations and restrictions regarding recording, releasing and streaming of lifesaving communications.

POLICY

No individual club or service shall record, release, publish or stream any Surf Life Saving radio, phone or written communications without the written authorisation of Surf Life Saving New South Wales.

These restrictions include:

- Recording of SLSNSW radio frequencies and/or provision of recording communications to any other party (internal or external).
- Live streaming of SLSNSW radio frequencies on the internet or any intranet system.
  • Recording of any lifesaving operations related phone/mobile communications and/or provision to any other party (internal/external).
- Provision of Surf Life Saving logs or forms to any other party (internal/external) – other than NSW Police/Coroner.
- 'Posting' or publishing any official surf life saving logs/forms online (to any audience) or in the media.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Please refer to the SLSA Policy 6.20 – Social Media.

SENSITIVE INFORMATION

Members may be privy to sensitive information during the course of lifesaving duties, particularly those who undertake roles in SurfCom or as Duty Officers. To be clear, all information (and especially that of a sensitive nature) must remain confidential and must not be disclosed via any medium unless authorised by SLSNSW.

Any suspected breaches will be taken seriously and SLSNSW will investigate. Severe consequences may result for any person(s) found to be responsible.

REFERENCE

PSS2.4 – Media
SLSA Policy 6.20 – Social Media

Last modified: 25/07/23

PSS 6.5 RADIO CALL SIGNS

PURPOSE

To ensure a consistent and standardised form of communication across NSW the following call signs are to be used by and for all radio communications.

PROCEDURE

CALLSIGN 'SURFCOM' – ALL RADIO COMMAND CENTRES

CLUB

Unit Name	Call-sign
Patrol Captain or Patrol Base	[Club Name] Patrol
Patrol Captain	[Club Name] Patrol Captain
Tower (mobile or fixed)	[Club Name] Tower
Flagged Area (waters-edge)	[Club Name] Flags
Roving Foot/SSV Patrol	[Club Name] Roving or Mobile
IRB*	[Club Name] IRB*

*Additional units assigned numbers. I.e. "[Club Name] IRB 1" and "[Club Name] IRB 2".

LIFEGUARDS (ALS)

Unit Name	Call-sign
Patrol Base	[Beach Name] Lifeguard
Tower (mobile or fixed)	[Beach Name] Tower
Flagged Area (waters-edge)	[Beach Name] Flags
Lifeguard RWC	[Beach Name] Support Ski
Roving Foot/SSV Patrol	[Beach Name] Roving or Mobile
Lifeguard Supervisor	[Council Name] 1
Lifeguard Supervisor (additional)	[Council Name] 2

BRANCH

Position	Call-sign

Branch Director of Lifesaving	[Branch Name] 13
Duty Officer (in command)	[Branch Name] 10
Duty Officer (additional)	[Branch Name] 11
Duty Officer (additional)	[Branch Name] 12

SLSNSW

Department	Position	Call-sign
Leadership and Management	Director of Lifesaving	NSW 1
	General Manager, Public Safety and Emergency Management	NSW 2
	Manager, Emergency Management	NSW 3
	Manager, Lifesaving	NSW 4
	Communications Systems Manager	NSW 5
	Manager, AUAVS	UAV 1
	Operations Manager, ALS	Lifeguard 1
State Operations Centre	State Operations Centre	Surfcom
	State Duty Officer	NSW 10
	Marine Area Command Liaison Officer	NSW 20
Emergency Management	State Commander	NSW 11
	Zone Emergency Management Officer (ZEMO) – Northern	NSW 12
	Zone Emergency Management Officer (ZEMO) – Central	NSW 13
	Zone Emergency Management Officer (ZEMO) – Metro	NSW 14
	Zone Emergency Management Officer (ZEMO) – Southern	NSW 15
	Emergency Management Team – Unassigned	NSW 16-19
Operations – Public Safety	Lifesaving Operations Coordinator	NSW 24
	Support Operations Coordinator	NSW 25
	SLSNSW Public Safety Staff – Unassigned	NSW 26-29
Operations – Lifeguards (ALS)	Lifeguard Coordinator – North Coast	Lifeguard 12
	Lifeguard Operations Coordinator	Lifeguard 13
	Lifeguard Coordinator – Mid North Coast	Lifeguard 14
	Lifeguard (ALS) – Unassigned	Lifeguard 15-20

Operations – AUAVS	AUAVS Operations Coordinator	UAV 2
	UAV Duty Officer	UAV 10
	UAV Supervisor (FNC)	UAV 11
	UAV Supervisor (NC)	UAV 12
	UAV Supervisor (MNC)	UAV 13
	UAV Supervisor (HUN/CC)	UAV 14
	UAV Supervisor (SNB/SYD)	UAV 15
	UAV Supervisor (ILL/SC)	UAV 16
	UAV Supervisor (FSC)	UAV 17
	AUAVS Unassigned	UAV 18-20
Communications	Testing/Radio Techs	NSW 51-59

HELICOPTERS

Unit	Call-sign
SLSQ Gold Coast Helicopter	Lifesaver 45
Sydney Westpac Lifesaver Helicopter	Lifesaver 21
South Coast Westpac Lifesaver Helicopter	Lifesaver 23
Westpac Rescue Helicopter Redundancy Aircraft	Lifesaver 22
Police Helicopters	PolAir 1-5
Police Fixed Wing	PolAir 25-26
Ambulance (operated by Toll)	Rescue 201-204, 206-206

RESCUE VESSELS

Unit	Call-sign
Randwick Offshore Rescue Boat	Surf Rescue 30

SURF SPORTS

Unit	Call-sign
Safety Emergency Management Coordinator	[Beach Name] SEMC

Note: All Club, Branch and State run events which have a Safety Emergency Management Coordinator (SEMC) shall use this call-sign.

PSS 6.6 RADIO CODES

PURPOSE

To outline SLSNSW endorsed radio codes and the parameters of use in lifesaving operations.

POLICY

Use of radio codes is not mandatory for lifesaving operations, but if used, shall adhere to the following.

PROCEDURE

- Any SLSNSW services wishing to use radio codes shall adhere to the codes below and shall implement their use consistently across the whole service (i.e. club).
- No alternative 'codes' shall be used by lifesaving services on SLSNSW frequencies without written authorisation by SLSNSW.
- SurfCom shall be aware of radio codes and have 'the code' immediately available to reference when on-duty.
- SurfCom Operators and Duty Officers shall be inducted in 'the code' during SurfCom training.
- Club/service personnel should be adequately trained/inducted in the use of codes should that service implement their use.
- If in any doubt services/personnel should always revert to standard English (clear and concise sentences).

RADIO CODES

Code	Meaning	Further Explanation
Rescue Rescue Rescue	Prefix for emergency transmissions to indicate urgency + call-sign	Should prefix every initial 'Priority 1' emergency call to notify/ request support. i.e. from lifesaver to patrol base/patrol captain or from club to SurfCom.
Break Break	Grouping transmissions together (should always leave a gap after 2 different transmissions)	'Break break' can be used to group different transmissions together. *E.g. "Avoca patrol from SurfCom, all copied thank you. Break break, Copacabana Copacabana patrol this is SurfCom requesting your patrol sign-on, over"*
No Duff	A real incident underway during a training exercise	The term 'NO DUFF' is used when a real incident is occurring during a training exercise or simulated event. Every transmission after "No Duff" is treated as legit. *E.g. "No Duff No Duff No Duff, Rescue Rescue Rescue, SurfCom SurfCom this is Avoca Beach"*
Priority 1	Urgent task	Specific tasking that requires immediate attendance – usually involves life-threatening situation/rescue or serious injuries or

		several patients.
Priority 2	Non-urgent task	Specific tasking that requires lifeguard to provide emergency care or to undertake rescue operations but not considered life-threatening.
Priority 3	Routine task	Specific task but is not considered urgent. May include administrative, logistics requests.

Last modified: 25/07/23

PSS 6.7 RADIO NETWORK FAULT REPORTING

PURPOSE

To outline the process and roles/responsibilities of lifesaving services and service providers in resolving radio network issues.

POLICY

A fully operational and effective radio network is essential to the provision of lifesaving services across the state. The resolution of radio problems must be undertaken in a coordinated manner, to achieve the most time efficient and effective outcome.

PROCEDURE

RADIO NETWORK RESPONSIBILITIES

The outlined components of the radio network are managed by the following parties:

Component	Responsibility
Base sets, handheld radios, facility antennas	Clubs/Services/Lifeguards
SurfCom facilities/equipment	SLSNSW
SurfCom phone lines	SLSNSW
SurfCom internet	SLSNSW
Radio Network Repeaters/VOIP	SLSNSW
Radio Frequencies	SLSNSW
Radio Network SOPs/Procedures	SLSNSW

RADIO TRANSMISSION QUALITY CHECKS – FOR USE BY LIFESAVING SERVICED

Report on readability
Readable
Unreadable

Example: "You are coming through readable."

RADIO NETWORK MAINTENANCE PROCEDURE

1. A lifesaving service identifies a problem with their radios:
    *   Lifesaving service undertakes radio checks within its own area on at least 2 handhelds and its base set (simplex, main repeater channel, and alternative repeater channel).
    *   Lifesaving service undertakes radio checks (on main and alternative repeater channels) with SurfCom and services to the North and South.
    *   Lifesaving service records the results of these radio checks and contacts its appropriate branch/service officer/lifeguard supervisor.
2. The SLSNSW Service should call the SLSNSW State Operations Centre on 02 9471 8092
3. The State Operations Centre will notify the SLSNSW Services via radio when the repairs are complete and the network is fully operational via an all stations message.

NOTE: ONLY THE SLSNSW GENERAL MANAGER, PUBLIC SAFETY AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT CAN ENDORSE REPAIRS TO THE RADIO NETWORK

REFERENCE

SLSA Public Safety and Aquatic Rescue Manual

Last modified: 25/07/23

PSS 7 PATROL OPERATIONS (GENERAL)

PSS 7   Patrol Operations General

- PSS 7.1 Beach Management Methods and Roles
- PSS 7.2 Opening of Patrol
- PSS 7.3 Patrol Briefings
- PSS 7.4 Closure of Patrol
- PSS 7.5 Lifesaving Activities on Closed Beaches
- PSS 7.6 Lifesaving Vehicles on Beaches
- PSS 7.7 Regulation Enforcement
- PSS 7.8 Inappropriate Behaviour by Public
- PSS 7.9 Marine Pollution
- PSS 7.10 Shark Meshing Program
- PSS 7.11 Beach Attendance Monitoring

Last modified: 10/08/23

PSS 7.1 BEACH MANAGEMENT METHODS AND ROLES

PURPOSE

To provide an understanding of the minimum roles and responsibilities a lifesaving service shall undertake within their beach operations.

POLICY

Surf Life Saving NSW (SLSNSW) is committed to ensuring a professional working environment by providing guidance to personnel regarding service expectations.

PROCEDURE

BEACH OPERATIONS

1. Lifesaving personnel shall ensure the flagged primary patrol area is located in the safest possible area for swimming. The patrolled area shall be under constant surveillance of lifesavers for the full duration of the patrol.
2. Patrol shelters, tents or bases shall be based in the most appropriate position to ensure full surveillance of and access to the primary and secondary patrolled areas, publicly identifiable and accessible.
3. The flagged primary patrol area should be as wide as appropriate to best manage risk, given the various factors involved (conditions, personnel, hazards).
4. Patrol flags, IRB/RWC/Boards and tubes shall be positioned as close to the water's edge as practical.
5. Lifesaving services should provide an information sign at the main access point to the patrolled area identifying the key hazards and information.
6. Appropriate hazard and information signage (mobile) shall be placed at adjacent beach access points and specific hazards.
7. Lifesaving personnel shall ensure the beach is in a safe and clean condition prior to setting up of the flagged patrol area. Particular attention should be made to hazardous items such as broken glass, bottles, syringes, branches, floating debris, etc.
8. In a multiple person team situation lifesaving personnel shall be assigned patrol duties and tasks e.g. Patrolling water's edge, tower surveillance, roving SSV patrols duties etc.
9. Lifesaving personnel should rotate roles on a regular basis, under the direction of the Patrol Captain. (i.e. every 20 minutes, to minimise fatigue/boredom and ensure full attention and efficiency)
10. Non lifesaving personnel are not permitted in a lifesaving arena except in an emergency.
11. All Lifesaving personnel assigned to surveillance duties shall not utilise personal mobile phones or other devices which may distract attention from duties.
12. Where possible, a lifesaver shall be stationed in an elevated position (mobile tower/facility tower/ high point on sand dunes etc) at all times during operation when swimmers are in the water and have the beach area, including secondary area, under observation at all times.

13. Lifesaving personnel should consider patrolling the water's edge with a rescue tube whilst swimmers are in the water.
14. Radio channels (Ch3 SurfCom, Ch2 patrol) shall be constantly monitored. This requires two (2) radios, to be set to SurfCom channel 3 and two (2) to channel 2.

PATROL CAPTAIN/LIFEGUARD

The Patrol Captain should be someone with sound patrolling experience and who, ideally, has been a Patrol Vice-Captain for at least 2 patrol seasons. In addition to being a well-skilled subject matter expert in patrolling the Patrol Captain is the team leader who manages his / her patrol team. This requires well developed organisational skills (e.g. to ensure shift attendance and swapping) as well as interpersonal skills to be able to appropriately interact with all team members in a culturally diverse organisation.

Before a patrol shift the Patrol Captain/Lifeguard/Club Captain shall ensure that sufficient patrolling members are available to attend the upcoming patrol shift and that all compulsory awards in accordance with the Lifesaving Services Agreement (BM, IRBD, IRBC, ART, SMBM) are covered. It is recommended to do this at least three days before the next patrol shift to allow sufficient time for members to organise a swap if needed.

At the beginning of every patrol the Patrol Captain/Lifeguard shall:

1. Carry out a **risk assessment** via the Risk Rating component of the SLSA Operations App
2. **CONDUCT A BRIEFING** with the patrol team at the start of every patrol The briefing should cover, at a minimum, conditions, tides, hazards, task allocations, rostering, breaks, expectations, etc. This briefing should be noted as having occurred in the notes section of the Operations App. Sign on with the Patrol Operations App and standby for a radio check with SurfCom
3. Prior to the commencement of duty check all previous log entries and **liaise with the previous Patrol Captain/Lifeguard to identify any issues** (equipment or other) or hazards present (if applicable).
4. Ensure all lifesaving **equipment is checked and prepared before duty** with the assistance of patrol team members.
5. According to training **select the safest area of beach to erect the flagged primary patrol area** from an elevated observation point and/or physical test of the area (where permitted).
6. Ensure the **positioning of lifesaving equipment inside/outside of the flagged patrol area** is in a manner that it is readily available for emergency responses and that will not become harmful to the public.
7. **Ensure a proper buffer zone exists** between the surf craft area and the swimming area.
8. **Ensure that all lifesaving services personnel take a pro-active approach to preventative measures** (i.e. Warning the public of dangers, surveying swimmers between the flags, placing of equipment in the vicinity of hazards etc.)
9. **Co-ordinate any search and rescue situation** that may occur.
10. Be aware of and **abide by the Local Government Act**.
11. **Ensure Council ordinance signage** and mobile hazard and information signage are erected (where required).
12. Ensure the **correct recording of information** in the Operations App, log books, report forms etc.
13. Make themselves **easily accessible** to the general public to answer any general enquiries.
14. **Have with them a radio (handheld) at all times** during patrol and monitor SurfCom.
15. **Delegate roles**, activities and rotations to members of patrol.

16. **Allocate responsibilities in case of emergency** and/or rescue.
17. **CONDUCT A DEBRIEF** with the patrol team at the end of every patrol.

LIFESAVING SERVICES PERSONNEL

Prior to an upcoming patrol shift it is the Patrol Team Member's responsibility to contact the Patrol Captain/ Lifeguard to advise if she/he is unavailable to attend the upcoming patrol shift. Organising a swap is the Patrol Team Member's responsibility unless prior arrangements have been made at your Club and approved by the Club Captain. This is particularly important for those members who hold compulsory awards in accordance with the Lifesaving Services Agreement (SMPC/SMBM, BM, IRBD, IRBC, ART). It is recommended to do this at least three days before the next patrol shift to allow sufficient time to organise a swap.

During each patrol, Lifesaving service personnel shall:

1. Always **carry a rescue tube** when patrolling the water's edge. It is recommended that a whistle and radio are also utilised.
2. Practice the basic principles of **PREPARDNESS, PREVENTION, RECOGNITION, and RESCUE** on duty.
3. **Report to the Patrol Captain for sign on/off** in the Operations App or log book at start/finish of patrolling operations.
4. Ensure all lifesaving equipment is erected in a secure and safe manner.
5. **Proactively encourage swimmers to swim in between the red and yellow flags.**
6. **Warn swimmers entering the water outside of the flagged area** of the danger and hazards and advise them to swim between the red and yellow flags.
7. **Ensure that board riders do not impose on the flagged patrol area**.
8. **Wear the correct patrol uniform** during their rostered times.
9. **Remove their uniform at the completion of their operations/duties**.
10. **Not leave the patrol area unless authorised** by the Patrol Captain/Lifeguard.
11. **Take a handheld radio when leaving the patrol area** to be contactable in case of an emergency.
12. **Maintain fluid intake during operations**, especially on hot days.
13. Have access to required **PPE**.
14. **Practice the basic principles of sun safety**.
15. Always **be polite and courteous** when dealing with the public.
16. **Advise Patrol Captain if feeling fatigued, ill or injured**.
17. **Check rescue equipment for damage** or breakages and report such.
18. **Proactively advise members of the public that the patrolled area is closing** (i.e. At the end of the day and/ or due to dangerous conditions etc.)
19. **Advise of your absence**, late arrival or early departure if needed.
20. **At all times be under the direction of the Patrol Captain.**

REFERENCE

Patrol Captain – Surf Life Saving
Life Saving Victoria – SOP 1.02 – Patrol Captain Duties

Last modified: 25/07/23

PSS 7.2 OPENING OF PATROL (START OF PATROL)

PURPOSE

To outline the key required actions when opening a patrolled area.

POLICY

Lifesaving personnel in most areas are required to determine the safety of the selected patrol area and the most appropriate method and efficient deployment of equipment and personnel in addition to any specific actions that may have to be taken to ensure public safety.

PROCEDURE

ESTABLISHING A FLAGGED AREA

The flagged area should be located in the safest area for swimming and should be opened as wide as possible where conditions, activities and resources allow.

Patrol flags and rescue equipment shall be positioned as close to the water's edge as possible.

The flags and rescue equipment must be moved with the rise and fall of the tide to keep them at the waters edge.

It should be noted that the decision to not erect a flagged area does not mean that the beach is closed for other participants e.g. Surfers or Nippers. Prior to any SLS activities commencing on a closed beach, an appropriate documented risk assessment must be completed by SLS personnel and in consultation with Lifeguards where appropriate to the respective beach.

In areas where a flagged area is established the following factors should be considered:

GENERAL

- Size and distance of area to be patrolled.
- Number of patrons.
- Skill level(s) of patrons.
- Type of activities.
- Recreational equipment in use (inflatables, etc).
- Potential hazards (i.e. Rocks, sudden drop off, etc).
- The number of personnel on duty.
- The type and amount of equipment available.
- Facilities available to the lifesaving services.
- Safety and emergency support operations.
- Communications systems (access to support/emergency services).

- Consideration given to the other beach users (i.e. Surfers)

BEACH/SURF

- Beach type.
- Prevailing conditions (weather, swell, tide, current).

EQUIPMENT

It is the responsibility of the Patrol Captain/Lifeguard to ensure that all emergency equipment is in place and in working order.

Any damaged or missing equipment shall be reported in the log, tagged and communicated ASAP to the Club Captain or Lifeguard Supervisor.

All patrolling equipment shall be checked on each deployment, with specific attention to the condition and operability of; power craft, rescue equipment, first aid and resuscitation equipment.

OXYGEN RESUSCITATION KITS

- System test and miscellaneous equipment check.
- Check oxygen cylinder is over ½ full.
- It is strongly recommended that at least 1 full backup cylinder is available.

DEFIBRILLATORS

- System test and miscellaneous equipment check.

FIRST AID KITS

- Condition and contents check

POWERCRAFT

- Inflatable Rescue Boat (IRB) checks
- Side-by-Side Vehicle (SSV) checks
- 4WD Vehicle checks

RESCUE EQUIPMENT

- Rescue board checks
- Rescue tube and fins checks

RADIOS

- Fully charged and operational and set to the correct channel/s, TWO radios to channel 2 (patrol) and TWO to channel 3 (SurfCom).

PATROL – SIGN ON PROCEDURE

Patrol Captains/Lifeguards are required to report to SLS SurfCom when they have commenced patrol. The Operations App is the primary method used for this with radio as a backup. SurfCom will contact services to conduct a radio check in a North – South order.

PSS 7.3 PATROL BRIEFINGS

PURPOSE

To outline the concept of a "patrol briefings" and topics to be covered within.

POLICY

Good beach management requires good communication. Patrol briefings provide excellent tools for optimal patrol planning and preparation.

In a volunteer situation this should be conducted by the Patrol Captain.

In a lifeguard situation this may be done by the Senior Lifeguard or Lifeguard Supervisor.

A briefing should be consistently employed on every occasion, regardless of the predicted level of patrolling/rescue activity.

PROCEDURE

A start of patrol briefing should:

- Include all lifesaving personnel.
- Invite input and questions at any stage (open forum).
- Utilise visual aids (whiteboards/maps etc).

Roles and responsibilities:
• Identify any new personnel that may require a full induction.
• Pair up new/inexperienced personnel with experienced personnel.
• Reiterate that personal devices are only to be used on patrol for short periods of time and only in a backward area, e.g. under the patrol tent. The Patrol Captain and designated Patrol Application User (if appointed) will use them only for purposes related to lifesaving (e.g. Operations App data entry, radar weather check).

An operational briefing may cover:

- Patrol Operations Manual (POM).
- Beachsafe App.
- Patrol Audit Form.
- Uniform check (current/meets policy, clean, practicable).
- Equipment checks (as a team or task personnel).
- Allocate equipment as necessary (radios, call-signs etc).
- Current and expected beach/water/weather conditions.
- Expected patronage.
- Identified high risk areas (areas of lateral drift, rips, holes etc).
- Identified high risk groups (rock fishermen, tourists etc).

- Beach management plan (surveillance positions, flag duties etc).
- Incident contingency plans (based on identified risks, who, what, where, when).
- Introduce new members/substitutes and allocate tasks and rotation information health and safety issues (Sun Safety, Fluid intake etc).
- Public image/professionalism expectations and awareness of social media.
- Radio communications (SurfCom/Channels).
- Notify the Patrol Captain or Vice-Captain before leaving the flagged area.
- Always take a radio to be contactable in case of an incident.

PATROL CHANGE OVERS

PROCEDURE

Outgoing Patrol Captain's should perform a debrief with the incoming Patrol Captain regarding conditions and any information relevant to the incoming patrol.

Material changes in the minimum requirements to keep the beach open (e.g. if the IRB is no longer operational) should be logged in the Operations App where available. If the Operations App is not available SurfCom needs to be notified via radio on channel 3 or the local repeater channel.

REFERENCE

Patrol Operations Manual

Last modified: 25/07/23

PSS 7.4 CLOSURE OF PATROL (END OF PATROL)

PURPOSE

To outline best-practice procedure for closing a lifesaving service patrol for the day.

POLICY

The closure of a lifesaving service patrol at the end of the day requires effective communication to ensure a safe transition from supervised swimming to unsupervised swimming.

PROCEDURE

DISESTABLISHING OF A FLAGGED PATROL AREA

1. Refer to Lifesaving Service Agreement and identify whether extended times (above minimum hours) are required due to patronage or conditions.
2. Inform SurfCom of closure or if extending patrol operations, notify Surfcom 30 mins prior.
3. Utilise the public announcer or similar to inform swimmers of closure and recommend they cease swimming for the day.
4. Utilise in-water lifesaving personnel to inform public of closure.
5. Consider a roving patrol to adjacent areas to inform public of closure.
6. Repeat communication of closure and warning of hazards to remaining swimmers if required.
7. Maintain surveillance of water by delegated lifesaving personnel while equipment is packed up for the day.
8. Maintain dedicated rescue equipment on-standby while other equipment is packed up for the day.
9. Prepare after-hour/call out response equipment (rescue-ready).
10. Conduct a final surveillance sweep of surf area before packing up standby equipment and leaving the beach.
11. Notify relevant club/service/branch officers/supervisors of any issues (i.e. Equipment damage, consumable/fuel shortages etc).

If beach/water patronage warrants, and personnel are available, surveillance of the beach area should be maintained by lifesaving personnel (with access to rescue equipment) for at least 30min-1hour after the patrol has closed.

IRB RESCUE READY AT CLOSURE OF PATROL

It is permissible that at the discretion of the Patrol Captain for an IRB to be removed from the beach, no earlier than 30mins before the minimum closing time, to be washed, refuelled and prepared for after-hours/ call out response under the following conditions:

- That the IRB driver and crew are in radio contact during this process and must be present until the minimum closing time is reached

- That the IRB (with driver and crew) is maintained in a rescue ready position to enable quick response to the beach should it be required until the minimum closing time is reached. e.g. attached to SSV.-

Last modified: 25/07/23

PSS 7.5 LIFESAVING ACTIVITIES ON CLOSED BEACHES

PURPOSE

To provide clarity for lifesaving activities that can be undertaken during a Closed Beach Patrol.

POLICY

To ensure that members have the required skills and abilities to safely work in surf conditions that constitute a Closed Beach Patrol refer to PSSOP 4.3.

Training can occur in large surf conditions where the Patrol Captain judges it is safe to do so having undertaken a risk assessment.

Endorsed surf lifesaving competitions/events shall continue to be guided by the specific event safety plan.

No in water lifesaving activity is to be undertaken on closed beaches affected by the following hazards:

- Dangerous Marine Creatures
- Debris in the water
- Marine pollution
- Electrical storms

This policy refers to beaches under the control of Surf Life Saving. Should the beach be under the control of another agency (i.e. Council lifeguards), the lifesaving service should communicate with the appropriate person responsible and agree on the training area to be used. This may result in training and activities whilst there is no flagged areas for public swimming

PROCEDURE

For the purposes of this SOP, lifesaving activities are separated into the following areas:

1. Training of members for the Bronze Medallion
2. Training conducted for maintaining the skills of lifesavers in SLSA awards currently held
3. Training of members for Powercraft awards
4. Training conducted for surf sports

1. TRAINING OF MEMBERS FOR THE BRONZE MEDALLION

If a Closed Beach Patrol is operating, water-based training of members for the Bronze Medallion or Surf Rescue Certificate (i.e. the award is not currently held) cannot be undertaken.

2. TRAINING CONDUCTED FOR MAINTAINING THE SKILLS OF LIFESAVERS IN

SLSA AWARDS CURRENTLY HELD

Members who are undertaking lifesaving activities for the purpose of maintaining or improving skills must adhere to the following procedure:

1. Members must be financial members and be proficient in the award (minimum Bronze Medallion).
2. Patrol Captain must conduct risk assessment to ascertain if the conditions are suitable for training.
3. Prepare appropriate water safety
   a. If swim or board rescue training is being conducted there is to be a minimum of one fully operational IRB, on standby as water safety.
   b. The crew of the water safety IRB must be briefed on the training to be undertaken and must be ready to respond.
   c. The services' IRB on duty can be used with approval from both Patrol Captain and IRB Driver.
4. The relevant training signage should be positioned near the training area
5. Patrol Captain to advise SurfCom that the service is conducting training on a Closed Beach. e.g. "SurfCom this is South Narrabeen, be advised we are currently conducting board training for the next 2 hours, over."
6. Should conditions or circumstances change, the Patrol Captain has the authority to suspend the training activity.
7. At the completion of training, the Patrol Captain is to advise SurfCom that training is now complete.

3. TRAINING OF MEMBERS FOR POWERCRAFT AWARDS

Members who are undertaking Powercraft training for new or existing awards must adhere to the following procedure:

1. Members must be financial members and be proficient in the prerequisites (minimum Bronze Medallion).
2. Patrol Captain/Trainer must conduct a risk assessment to ascertain if training is suitable.
3. Prepare appropriate water safety.
   a. There must be a minimum of one fully operational IRB, on standby as water safety. The crew of the water safety IRB must be briefed on the training to be undertaken and must be ready to respond.
   b. The services' IRB on duty can be used with approval from both Patrol Captain and IRB Driver, but it cannot be used for the training, i.e. if one IRB is on the water the second IRB must be on standby and capable of responding.
4. The relevant training signage should be positioned near the training area.
5. Patrol Captain to advise SurfCom that the service is conducting training on a Closed Beach. e.g. "SurfCom this is South Narrabeen, be advised we are currently operating IRB training for the next 2 hours, over."
6. Should conditions or circumstances change, the Patrol Captain has the authority to suspend the training activity.
7. At the completion of training, the Patrol Captain is to advise SurfCom that training is now complete.

TRAINING CONDUCTED FOR SURF SPORTS

Refer to [SLSA Policy 1.01 – Water Safety](#)

Last modified: 25/07/23

PSS 7.6 LIFESAVING VEHICLES ON BEACHES

PURPOSE

To provide guidelines for the safe management of vehicular traffic on beaches.

POLICY

Driving on beaches is only permitted:

- Should it be approved by the local regulating authority (if applicable);
- where the beach surface structure supports the weight of vehicles;
- where there are no roads running immediately adjacent to the beach; and
- where the driver of the vehicle has undertaken an induction which is recorded in SurfGuard.

On-beach driving shall be undertaken at the slowest safe practical operating speed.

Local government and/or state regulations in relation to speed must be adhered to at all times.

The SSV vehicle should not exceed 20km/h under normal operating conditions. The speed limit for heavily populated areas and between the red and yellow flags is 5km/h.

It is the operator's responsibility to evaluate the environment to determine a safe and appropriate speed within these limits.

PROCEDURE

BEACH ACCESS

Enter and leave the beach only at ramps and designated access points.

Beach access gates, ramps and tracks should be sign posted with appropriate driving rules and regulations specific to the area.

When driving on beaches the following conditions/precautions should be taken into consideration:

- Poor visibility (sun on sand, sea spray and mist).
- Distractions from other vehicles, water and wave conditions, wildlife, fishers, beach users and swimmers etc.
- The best sand vehicles are light.
- Wet sand near the wave line may be hard but an odd soft patch can send you off-course without warning.
- Know your tides, never drive along wave line on a rising tide.
- Be aware of fishers and fishing lines.

- Beware of washouts after heavy rains.
- Always park in the direction of intended travel.
- Sand tyre pressures:
  - For beach driving a reduction in tyre pressure to manufacturers specification is recommended.
  - It must be noted that tyres deflated to half normal pressure won't respond to braking or steering as effectively.
  - Finding the correct pressure is largely trial & error for a particular vehicle with a particular load, but most vehicles place the lower limit at 16psi.
  - Never drive on roads with these reduced tyre pressures.

OTHER FACTORS

Other factors that need to be considered and promoted to owners and operators of vehicles to be driven on beaches include:

- Speed of travel on beaches;
- Ground clearance;
- Consistency of the sand;
- Other vehicles and degradation of the beach; and beachgoers;
- Driving on beaches at high tide or on narrow beaches contributes to general beach erosion and erosion of native habitats including birds, crabs and sea turtles.
- Driving on the beach causes sand compaction and rutting and can accelerate erosion.

RULES OF THE "ROAD"

The following specific rules of the road shall be met for driving on beaches:

1. Vehicles should have a current and valid registration. Only approved vehicles to be used.
2. Drivers must have a current and valid:
   a. Drivers license for the vehicle type;
   b. Permit to drive on a beach (if required).
3. A red or green P-Plate must be displayed in cases where the operator holds a Provisional 1 or Provisional 2 Drivers Licence
4. It is the operator's responsibility to affix the P-Plate in and appropriate and visible spot on the vehicle and to remove it after use.
5. Headlight and hazards lights shall be activated when in motion.
6. Pedestrians, swimmers and bathers have the right of way over all vehicles.
7. Wildlife has the right of way over all vehicles.
8. Vehicles should not be driven in the dune systems.
9. Seat belts must be worn at all times.
10. Passengers should not be carried on the outside of the vehicle.
11. Keep to the left of oncoming vehicles.
12. Use indicators when overtaking or turning (if fitted).
13. A driving suspension automatically means suspension of driving privileges for SLS vehicles.

ACCIDENTS/INJURIES

Accidents and/or injuries as a result of driving on beaches will be at the jurisdiction of the law.

Last modified: 25/07/23

PSS 7.7 REGULATION ENFORCEMENT

PURPOSE

To provide guidance in relation to the practical enforcement of local by-laws/regulations.

POLICY

Lifesaving personnel shall be responsible for enforcement functions only as delegated by the relevant authority (local government) under the specifications of the Local Government Act.

Outside of a delegated authority situation lifesaving services may also provide advice and guidance to the public regarding by-laws, regulations and prohibitions in order to promote the safety of personnel and the public.

PROCEDURE

The enforcement of regulations will generally follow a systematic progression or escalation of information and warnings.

The following outlines a series of stages a Patrol Captain/Lifeguard can work through to promote local regulations:

1. Advisory
2. Warning
3. Reporting

ADVISORY STAGE

The advisory stage can have three sub-stages:

1. Communicate – Establish communication
2. Inform/Educate – Provide information
3. Advise – Provide specific advice

COMMUNICATE

- Greet the person
- Introduce yourself
- Positive body language
- Smile
- Establish a rapport

INFORM/EDUCATE

- Explain that the area is subject to certain rules and regulations.
- Explain that these rules are for the safety and health of all.

- Identify the authority of the regulation – i.e. Local Authority.
- Advise them of the preferred course of action.

ADVISE

- Advise the person that they would be, or are, in breach of these regulations.
- Reinforce what you would like from them as a preferred course of action.

WARNING STAGE

WARNING

- Advise the person that they are in breach of the regulation and of the penalty if they continue their current activity.
- Advise them of your course of action.

REPORTING STAGE

REPORTING

- Report offence to appropriate authority.
- Record details.

Last modified: 25/07/23

PSS 7.8 INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR BY PUBLIC

PURPOSE

To outline the protocols for managing inappropriate behaviour.

POLICY

Inappropriate behaviour covers numerous activities that occur on beaches.

These include, but are not limited to:

- Theft
- Consumption of alcohol/drug use on beaches
- Suspected paedophiles
- Indecent exposure
- Public sexual activities

PROCEDURE

Where a patron reports someone to lifesaving personnel or lifesaving personnel observe someone involved in offensive inappropriate behaviour, or they believe someone to be suspicious they should follow the procedures listed below:

- Maintain a safe distance.
- If possible, keep members of the public away (i.e. restrict access to area of beach or public toilets etc).
- Make note of the person's description, location and vehicle.
- Take notes from witnesses.
- Contact SurfCom for Police assistance.
- Where Police are not on-site lifesaving personnel (minimum of 2) should observe the suspect (if safe to do so) and remain in contact with their patrol base until the Police arrive.

Water safety should not be compromised in this situation and minimum lifesaving service standards should be maintained in regard to water surveillance/patrolled area.

Last modified: 25/07/23

PSS 7.9 MARINE POLLUTION

PURPOSE

To provide guidelines relating to marine pollution incidents.

POLICY

In addition to the environmental risks associated with marine pollution there is a potential for risk to the community that includes:

- The health risks associated with potentially poisonous substances.
- The potential threat of fire or explosion.
- Marine Algae

PROCEDURE

ACTIONS ON IDENTIFYING MARINE POLLUTION

- As per "Emergency Beach Closure."

Plus:

- Notify SurfCom and request they contact the Environment Protection Agency, National Maritime Safety Authority, Department of Primary Industries.
- Provide assistance to Service NSW/DPI Officers as instructed.

REPORTING

Witnesses to pollution being discharged from any vessel or noticing oil or chemical pollution should contact SurfCom, who will then contact the NSW Maritime or Environment Protection Authority.
The information that should be provided includes:

- When and where the pollution occurred.
- The type of discharge or a description of the product.
- The extent (area covered).
- Name of the vessel or other source.
- Any other relevant information.

Last modified: 25/07/23

PSS 7.10 SHARK MESHING PROGRAM

PURPOSE

To provide information relating to the recognition and reduction of risks associated with beaches that have a shark meshing program (nets).

POLICY

This policy aims to:

- Help identify existing and potential health and safety issues.
- Raise the overall awareness of hazard identification and risk reduction.
- Assist in establishing risk management procedures.

PROCEDURE

THE NSW DEPARTMENT OF PRIMARY INDUSTRIES (DPI) SHARK MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

The Shark Mitigation Program includes:

- Increasing Surf Life Saving NSW's drone surveillance program to provide higher levels of beach coverage in more Local Government Areas (LGAs);
- Increasing coastal surveillance using tagged shark listening stations to ensure at least one in every LGA;
- Continuing the rollout of SMART drumline technology;
- Continuing beach meshing between Newcastle and Wollongong;
- Funding to continue to enable Surfing NSW to provide shark mitigation support and services such as trauma kits and drones; and
- Boosting shark tagging, research and community education programs.

For more details refer to the Shark Smart pages of the [NSW DPI website.](#)

SLSNSW monitors issues relating to sharks across the state and consults with NSW DPI about the future directions of programs.

ROGUE EQUIPMENT

Includes, but not restricted to, nets, lines, fishing gear, buoys and hooks that have moved from site, in particular, if the equipment is in a location that may present a hazard to people.

In the event of "rogue" equipment being identified the following procedures shall be followed:

- Follow procedures listed in 'Emergency Beach Closure'.

- Isolate the equipment from public access/interaction.
- Do not move or retrieve the equipment.
- SurfCom (or similar) is to contact the SLSNSW State Duty Officer, who will call a Fisheries NSW Officer.
- Record as much detail regarding the equipment as possible.

ENTRAPMENT OF SPECIES IN SHARK NETS

In the event of any species being identified as caught in a shark net whether it be alive or otherwise the following procedures may be applied:

At all times safety to lifesaving personnel and the public is to be considered the priority. While concern for an entrapped animal is warranted, no actions should be taken that may expose the personnel or the public to risk of injury.

In the first instance SurfCom should be notified, and they'll contact the SLSNSW State Duty Officer. He/she will be responsible for contacting a Fisheries NSW Officer as listed above.

In rare cases Fisheries NSW may request assistance from Surf Life Saving to identify what is in a net. The following procedures are to be followed:

- Assess risk – only if risk is deemed low and acceptable should this activity be undertaken.
- Maintain a safe distance.
- Only suitably qualified and competent lifesaving personnel should participate in operations and shall involve only marine rescue vessels IRBs, RWCs, JRBs or ORBs (not in-water swimmers/board paddlers).
- Lifesaving personnel should not swim near shark nets.
- Lifesaving personnel must not attempt to free live or deceased entangled animals due to the risks associated with live animals and personnel entanglement.

Note: Live animals can and have killed the people trying to release them. Where required a trained team will be deployed to undertake disentanglement.

ANIMALS COMING ASHORE

In the event of any deceased animals/mammals (specifically sharks, turtles, whales, dolphins, seals and dugongs) SurfCom shall contact the SLSNSW State Duty Officer who shall liaise with a Fisheries NSW Officer.

PERSONAL SAFETY

At all times safety to lifesaving personnel and the public is to be considered the priority. While concern for the animal is warranted, no actions should be taken that may expose the operators or the public to risk of injury.

REPORT INTERFERENCE WITH SHARK NETS/ILLEGAL FISHING

It is an offence under the Fisheries Management Act 1994 to interfere with set fishing gear. Lifesaving

personnel are encouraged to report any one seen interfering with Shark Nets and any illegal fishing activities to the Fisheries Watch 1800 043 536 or via the [website](#).

Last modified: 25/07/23

PSS 7.11 BEACH ATTENDANCE MONITORING

PURPOSE

To provide a consistent formal beach attendance monitoring program to improve the reliability, accuracy and range of data collected with regards to beach visitation.

POLICY

An evidence-based approach can be used to inform decisions on lifesaving service provisioning and resource allocation and assist with procuring funding.

Attendance is captured and broken down into 4 specific areas:

1. In the water inside the flags
2. In the water outside the flags
3. On the beach
4. Craft

PROCEDURE

Lifesaving services should have the same methodology and procedures for observing and estimating beach attendance.

Visual scanning techniques utilised for effective water observation can also be applied for estimating on beach visitation figures.

The technique described below is subjective and is estimate based, however with additional checks and balances in place there should be improved confidence and faith in the figures.

DEFINITIONS

- **Attendance:** Shall include the total number of people in the water and on the beach in the area specified.
- **Area:** Shall be the area defined as the primary and secondary patrolling areas (up to 200m either side of the flags).

GROUPING TECHNIQUE

1. During observation, personnel should break the beach/water up into smaller representative groups.
2. Count the number of people in one such group.
3. Multiply the number of beach users in that group by the total number of groups contained on the beach.

4. It may be appropriate to estimate on beach and in water separately and then combine to give a total beach attendance.
5. This method is still subjective and if the representative group is poorly selected the total beach attendance figure can be significantly affected.

Beach Attendance = Group Total X Total Number of Groups
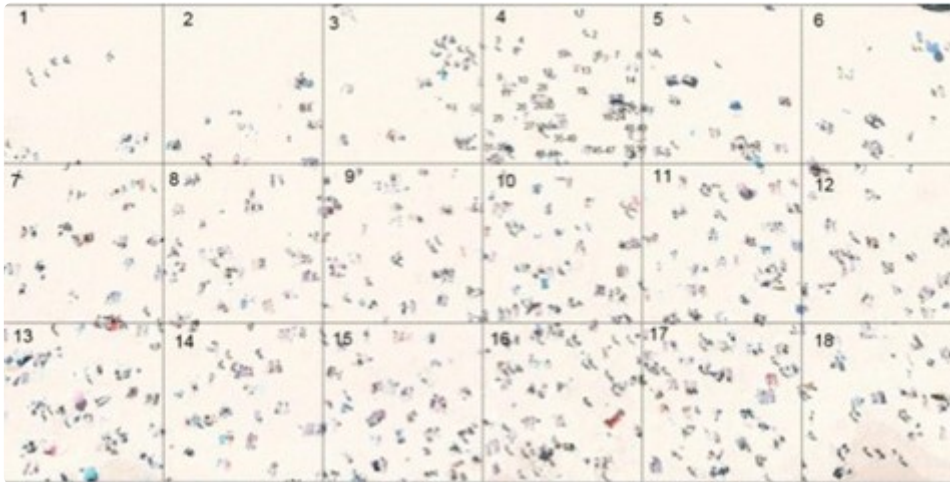
Figure 1

EXAMPLE

In Figure 1, the beach has been split into 18 groups. Group number 4 has been selected as having an average representative number of attendees. Approximately 51 attendees can be counted in group 4. When multiplied out across the 18 groups, this gives and approximate attendance figure of 918 people.

Beach Attendance = Group Total A x Total Number of Groups

Beach attendance 918 = 51 × 18

REPORTING

Beach attendance should be collected at the start of each patrol and every hour thereafter and entered into the Operations App where available or patrol log book.

Beach attendance shall include the number of people in the water and on the beach at each of the specified times.

Data must be collected and recorded on Patrol Logs to be entered into SurfGuard within 14 days (as per SOP 3.1). Data entered via the Operations App must be approved and closed in SurfGuard by the Club Captain within 14 days.

REFERENCE

Brewster, C B 2003, 'Open Water Lifesaving – The United States Lifesaving Association Manual', United

States Lifesaving Association, New Jersey, USA.

Last modified: 25/07/23

PSS 8 PATROL OPERATIONS (EMERGENCY)

<table>
<tr><td>

PSS 8   **Patrol Operations Emergency**

NSW
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</table>

- PSS 8.1 Emergency Beach Closure and Evacuation
- PSS 8.2 Lost/Missing Persons
- PSS 8.3 Requesting an Ambulance
- PSS 8.4 Requesting Helicopter Support
- PSS 8.5 Shark Incidents
- PSS 8.6 Lightning
- PSS 8.7 Public Order Incident
- PSS 8.8 Bomb Threat
- PSS 8.9 Body Recovery
- PSS 8.10 Coastal Flooding
- PSS 8.11 Tsunami Warning
- PSS 8.12 Coastal Fire
- PSS 8.13 Aircraft Crash

Last modified: 10/08/23

PSS 8.1 EMERGENCY BEACH CLOSURE AND EVACUATION

PURPOSE

To assist Patrol Captains/Lifeguards by providing guidelines to determining their options and acting upon their decisions to close the patrolled area in a safe and efficient manner at any time other than the end of the patrol.

POLICY

Lifesaving Personnel are required to assess conditions and determine if closing the patrolled area (aquatic area) is an appropriate option.

PROCEDURE

Patrol Captains/Lifeguards should consider 'closure', at any time that there is an unacceptable/ unmanageable risk to the public or the lifesaving service is unable to effectively, and safely perform their duties.

The following are specific conditions under which 'closure' may be considered (this list should not be considered exclusive):

Dangerous Surf Conditions	Heavily Dumping Surf
	Large Surf
	Rips/Strong Currents
	Debris
Marine Life	Sharks
	Excessive Stingers
Human Hazard	Uncontrollable Surf Craft Infringements
	Powercraft Hazards
Civil Disturbance (public unrest, criminal activity etc.)	
Equipment in Surf/Swimming Area (lines, netting, buoys, etc.)	
Environmental/Weather	Lightning
	Cyclonic conditions
	Tsunami warning
Chemical/Biological Hazard	High pollution levels

	Chemical spill
	Oil/petrol spills
	Biological agent(s)
Other	Dangerous objects (such as munitions)
	Suspicious packages

EMERGENCY BEACH CLOSURE – PROCEDURE

1. Determine if water area is to be evacuated.
2. Log the beach closure through the Operations App (where available) and inform SurfCom via radio on channel 3 that you are about to close the patrolled area and the reason for closing.
3. Activate the Emergency Evacuation Alarm.
4. Inform everyone of the following:
   - Water area is being closed; and
   - Reason for closure.
5. Lower and remove the red and yellow patrol flags and black and white surfcraft flags.
6. Post 'Swimming Not Advised' signs at identified beach access points and where the flagged area was located.
7. Continually monitor all areas.
8. Maintain minimum personnel, qualification and equipment requirements.
9. Maintain an active presence on the beach to advise/warn public.
10. An appropriate record should be made in the patrol log giving an outline of the incident.
11. Where required liaise with Emergency Services

EMERGENCY EVACUATION ALARM – PROCEDURES

Emergency evacuation of a patrolled area: Alarm is sounded continuously until everyone has exited the water.

All Clear/Beach Open: Announcement is made over the loud hailer/PA system. Where an announcement system is not available a short blast of the alarm can be sounded.

CLOSURE PERIODS

The beach is to remain closed until such time as the identified hazard is controlled or no longer presents a risk.

Recommended closure periods include:

- Dangerous surf conditions (as determined/appropriate).
- Shark sighting & encounters (Refer to PSS8.5).
- Chemical/biological hazards – after confirmation from appropriate authorities that the area is safe.

REOPENING PROCEDURE

Once it is determined that it is safe to reopen the beach, normal patrol procedures should be re-

established under the direction of the Patrol Captain/Senior Lifeguard. The beach opening should be logged through the Operations App (where available) and SurfCom informed via radio on channel 3.

Where SLS does not have exclusive control of the flagged areas, the patrol captain should consult with the Lifeguards, and ensure that their position is logged, via the App and Radio to Surfcom.

Last modified: 25/07/23

PSS 8.2 LOST/MISSING PERSONS

PURPOSE

To ensure lifesaving personnel follow the correct procedures when a missing person is reported. This guideline provides principles on which to base a response.

POLICY

Lifesaving Personnel are required to follow the guidelines provided when a lost/missing person is reported.

PROCEDURE

The Patrol Captain/Lifeguard Supervisor is to notify the State Operations Centre as soon as a situation has been identified.

DEFINITIONS

Lost Person: where a family member, friend or guardian approaches the lifesaving personnel and reports a person missing.

Found Person: where the lifesaving personnel either:

- Is approached by a member of public who has lost their group;
- Comes across someone who appears distressed and lost, or;
- When a member of the public finds the child/person and hands them over to lifesaving personnel.

PRIORITISING INFORMATION GATHERING

Lifesaving personnel should prioritise information gathering before declaring the type of response and then follow a series of escalating procedures to handle lost and found persons.

Serial	Action	Details
1	Information Gathering	0-2 minutes
2	Type of Search Declared	In-water or Land-based
3	Assistance Requested/Incident Reported	via SurfCom
4	Initial Search Conducted	with On-site Assets
5	Person Not Located/Advise Police	via SurfCom
6	Coordinated Search – under external agency	with other Emergency Services

INFORMATION GATHERING

In all search incidents it is imperative that the following information is collected and recorded on paper. Informants must be retained with the lifesaving service for the duration of the search.

1. Name
2. Age
3. Sex
4. Clothing
5. General Description (size/weight/appearance)
6. Last known location
7. Activity (swimming/surfing etc.)
8. Floatation devices?
9. Likelihood of being in the water
10. Swimming ability
11. Missing persons site on the beach (where their clothes/possessions are)

DECLARING AN IN-WATER SEARCH

Incidents where persons are missing in the surf or believed to be missing in the surf require an immediate, coordinated, and methodical response by lifesaving personnel.

An in-water search should be declared by the Patrol Captain/Senior Lifeguard under the following circumstances:

- Lifesaving personnel witnessed submersion – while under surveillance or in the process of rescuing.
- Public communicated missing person – last seen in water.
- Public communicated missing person – believed to be in the water.
- Public communicated missing infant/child (<8) – last seen near the water.
- Personnel missing (dangerous conditions) – last seen in water.

IN-WATER SEARCH RESPONSE

- Details collected.
- Informant retained.
- Patrol Captain/Lifeguard Supervisor notified.
- Lifesaving personnel dispatched.
- Radio communications.
- Observers from tower with binoculars (or elevated position).
- Shoreline search (foot and/or SSV/4WD).
- Water based search with powercraft.
- In water swimmer positioned at last known location.
- SurfCom informed.
- Emergency service support requested.
- Additional lifesaving services/support operations requested (if required).

IN-WATER SEARCH CONSIDERATIONS

- Consider current/drift direction (Consider use of 'dye').
- Marking of last known position of the victim on land and/or in the water
- Activate on-scene resources ASAP and initiate support from other services ASAP.
- Remember to maintain management of flagged area or close flagged area if it cannot be adequately maintained.
- Send lifesaving personnel to where the missing persons towel etc. are positioned on the beach and/or to their car (land-based search).
- Ensure all responding units have radio communications (excluding swimmers/boards).
- Reassure parents or carer and where possible obtain addition details such as other possible search areas (i.e. location of car, residence, etc.).

Last modified: 25/07/23

PSS 8.3 REQUESTING AN AMBULANCE

PURPOSE

To outline the minimum information required by the Ambulance Service from lifesaving services/State Operations Centre regarding a patient's condition.

POLICY

SLSNSW expects lifesaving services to align their procedures with the information gathering requirements of the Ambulance Service of NSW.

PROCEDURE

Good incident management involves the correct and concise collection and communication of information.

The Ambulance Service has a standard set of questions it must answer before it can respond by sending an Ambulance to an incident. To maximise the effectiveness and efficiency of a response lifesaving services (including SurfCom) should align their procedures to the following:

Note: Ambulances should be requested via the State Operations Centre (or via Triple Zero only if SurfCom is not available). If injuries are non-life-threatening, NSW Ambulance may not provide an ETA.

PROCEDURE – PATIENT REPORTING

Lifesaving personnel should provide the following information to SurfCom regarding a patient's condition.

Lifesaving personnel should continue to monitor the SurfCom radio channel, as SurfCom will provide any relevant updates over this channel.

PRIMARY INFORMATION

SurfCom should provide the following information to the Ambulance:

1. Patient Sex
2. Patient Age
3. Mechanism of Injury (what happened)
4. What is the injury
5. Breathing Present?
6. Level of Consciousness
7. Chest Pains?
8. Patient location/access point (beach, club house first aid room etc.)
9. What action/treatment lifesavers are administering.
10. Update if patient condition deteriorates (loss of consciousness, difficulty breathing etc.)

SECONDARY INFORMATION

- Is the patient changing colour?
- Is the patient clammy?
- Does the patient have a history of heart problems?
- Did the patient take any drugs or medication in the past 12 hours

INCIDENT REPORTING MATRIX – PATIENT INJURY

> **!**   **Remember:** Position, Problem, People, Progress

Action	Explanation	Example
Inform SurfCom (via radio)	Identifies your call as an emergency and prioritises it above non-emergency transmissions	*"Rescue, Rescue, Rescue – SurfCom, SurfCom, this is [Club/ Service Name], over"*
Problem	Outline what has happened – mechanism of injury	*"SurfCom we have one patient who has been run over by a surfboard and has severe laceration to their head"*
People	Outline the details of the patient and their condition	*"Patient is Male, aged 36yrs old. Patient is breathing. Patient is conscious. Patient is bleeding severely from the head. Patient has no chest pains, over"*
Position	Where is the patient located? How can emergency services best access them?	*"Patient has been transported to the Surf Club, at the corner of Old Bar Rd and Ungala Rd. A lifesaver will be positioned on the side of the road to direct the ambulance, over"*
Progress	SurfCom should be updated if the patient's condition deteriorates	*"SurfCom this is [Club/Service Name] the patient has lost consciousness, over"*

REFERENCE

[Ambulance Service of NSW](#)
[Triple Zero](#)

Last modified: 25/07/23

PSS 8.4 REQUESTING HELICOPTER SUPPORT

PURPOSE

To outline procedure for requesting helicopter support for lifesaving operations.

POLICY

SLSNSW requires all lifesaving services to follow the provided guidelines regarding requesting helicopter support.

PROCEDURE

SCOPE

Helicopters serve two primary roles in lifesaving operations.

1. In-water/coastal search and rescue
2. Medical response and evacuation

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE PROCESS

- SLSA Life Saver Rescue Helicopters shall be notified/requested via the State Duty Officer.
- For medical emergencies, helicopters may be requested by the State Duty Officer via the NSW Ambulance Service (000). Advise of accessibility issues and specific location details. NSW Ambulance Service will triage all relevant medical emergencies, in line with their operating procedures.
- The State Duty Officer will notify and liaise with NSW Police regarding the most appropriate assets to deploy to all in water / emergency incidents.

RESCUE HELICOPTERS

The State Duty Officer who determines that it is appropriate in the circumstances, may request the Westpac Rescue Helicopter for emergencies.

Lifesaving personnel **may request** the assistance of the SLS Lifesaver Helicopter service, through the State Operations Centre. The State Duty Officer has the final delegated authority to approve or reject a request and is responsible for all liaison with the Westpac Helicopter Service including notification, tasking and communication.

Individual members/services **shall not** directly contact the Lifesaver Helicopter service bases to request support or advise (this shall only be undertaken by the State Duty Officer).

Note: If a helicopter is airborne and at a location the Forward Commander or service may liaise directly

with the helicopter over radio communications. Council Lifeguard services shall either contact the State Operations Center or NSW Police (000) to request helicopter SAR support regarding an incident and shall not contact the service base directly.

It is important to note that the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) may task Life Saver helicopters direct to assist with major search operations. Procedures exist to ensure other lifesaving services are advised of such – particularly where the incident is coastal. In such cases standard joint-operations may continue, however SLS Life Saver helicopters will be under the control of AMSA, rather than the NSW Police (who is the normal combat agency/incident controller for SAR incidents that lifesaving services are involved in).

Note that this is only a helicopter request and that a support response by helicopter may not always be available or most appropriate.

REFERENCE

Australian Maritime Safety Authority – Search and Rescue
NSW Ambulance – Operations
NSW Police – Aviation Command
NSW Police – Marine Area Command

Last modified: 25/07/23

PSS 8.5 SHARK INCIDENTS

PURPOSE

This guideline is an aid to recognising and reducing risks associated with sharks. It recognises the role of lifesaving services in managing an environment that sharks inhabit.

This guideline:

- Assists in identifying existing and potential health and safety issues;
- Raises the overall awareness of hazard identification and risk reduction; and
- Assists in establishing risk management procedures.

POLICY

SLSNSW requires lifesaving services to follow the provided guidelines regarding shark sightings/incidents.

PROCEDURE

For the purposes of this document the word shark is used in the broad sense to include all sharks. SLSNSW acknowledges that not all sharks are dangerous, with nearly all shark bites in NSW coastal waters being attributed to just three shark types. These include whaler sharks (including bull sharks), tiger sharks and great white sharks (also called white pointer or white shark).

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this Standard Operating Procedure the following definitions apply:

table(no border). | **Shark Alarm** | Where a civilian or lifesaving personnel have seen an object in the water and they believe it to be a shark. Action is taken to ensure public safety and to confirm the identity of the object. | | **Shark Sighting** | Where the presence of a shark has been confirmed. Usually as a result of a shark alarm. | | **Shark Incident/Shark Bite** | Death/injury caused by a marine animal (which is presumed to be a shark) or property damage where it is apparent that the damage has been caused by the same. | | **Shark Net** | Shark nets are 150m long nets that are set by contractors as part of the Shark Meshing (Bather Protection) Program managed by Fisheries NSW.

Note: Enclosed 'shark netted' swimming areas are managed by local councils or National Parks|

RISK FACTORS

Lifesaving services should be aware of the following risk factors to ensure a heightened sense of alertness and an appropriate level of response when these factors are present.

While sharks may be present at any time, the following factors may increase the risk of an encounter with a shark. These risk factors are:

1. Twilight hours (dusk or dawn) and night. These are considered as times when sharks are typically more active;
2. Salt water meets fresh water. Often this water is dirty, silt-laden or has debris in it (including river-mouths/estuaries/harbours);
3. Deeply overcast conditions;
4. Large amounts of fish schooling in the vicinity (seabirds diving is a good indicator of baitfish);
5. The occurrence of a shark attack in the area in the recent past; and
6. Swimming near steep drop offs and between sandbars.

PERSONAL SAFETY

Some of the advice for safe swimming also applies to helping reduce the risk of incidents involving sharks and humans, and should be promoted to the public so they can take appropriate self-precautions:

- Always swim at a patrolled beach and between the red and yellow flags.
- Leave the water immediately if a shark is sighted.
- Leave the water if you hear a siren or a public address announcement. Do not enter the water if the beach is closed.
- Never swim or surf alone.
- Avoid swimming when it is dark or during the twilight hours (dusk or dawn) when sharks are most active and have a sensory advantage.
- Never swim or surf in dirty or murky waters.
- Do not swim or surf near schools of fish.
- Do not swim in canals, channels, near a river or creek mouth or drainage outlets or where fish are being cleaned.
- Do not swim near, or interfere with, shark nets.
- Steep drop offs are favoured shark 'hangouts'.
- If you see a shark leave the water as quickly and calmly as possible.

Refer to Fisheries NSW Shark Smart public education program website and brochure.

ACTIONS ON SIGHTINGS

In the event of a confirmed shark sighting by Lifesaving Services near the patrolled area the following procedure should be enacted:

- Determine if patrolled area is to be closed and swimmers asked to evacuate the water (considering size of shark, proximity to swimmers, level of confirmation of sighting and conduct of shark).Note: Closure should be considered upon the following factors:
- Size of shark (greater than 2.5m)
- Identification of species (Bull, White or Tiger)

If closing the patrolled area:

- Activate the Emergency Evacuation Alarm (continuous tone);
- Inform everyone that the beach is being closed due to a shark sighting and strongly recommend they leave the water;
- Lower and remove red and yellow patrol flags and all other flags;

- Post 'Swimming Not Advised' signs at identified beach access points;
- Post 'Shark' hazard sign where patrolled area was located;
- Continually monitor all areas from an elevated position (i.e. tower) and through the use or power-craft and aerial assets (if available);
- Do not attempt to kill, capture or injure the animal;
- Contact SurfCom (or similar) and inform them of the shark sighting and status of patrolled area (i.e. closed);
- The patrolled area should remain closed until after a full search of the area has been completed and the Patrol Captain/Lifeguard is confident that there is no obvious risk to swimmers, surfers and other beach- users posed by the shark; and
- Complete Shark Report Form and forward to SLSNSW.

ACTIONS IN EVENT OF SHARK INCIDENT/BITE

In the event of an apparent shark incident/bite, the following procedure should be undertaken:

- Recover and treat the patient as per normal procedures;
- Close the beach immediately as per above;
- SurfCom to contact the Branch Duty Officer and State Duty Officer (SDO) who will advise appropriate authorities (i.e. Fisheries NSW) to activate NSW Shark Attack Response Plan;
- Consider closing patrolled areas at adjacent beaches;
- Record as much detail regarding the incident as possible;
- Implement critical incident debriefing/peer support process;
- Consider deploying marker buoys at attack site(s) and last seen (victim & shark) locations;
- Consider securing a body retrieval kit.

STATE DUTY OFFICER (SDO)

- Contact NSW DPI to advise.
- Contact all relevant Lifesaving Personnel via a SurfCom Incident Notification SMS.
- Ensure that the Rescue Coordinator at the relevant VKG Radio Communication Centre has been advised.

MEDIA LIAISON

The State Duty Officer will notify the SLSNSW Media Team. All media queries, releases and statements relating to shark attacks must be referred to SLSNSW Media Team or the delegated SLSNSW spokesperson.

RE-OPENING PATROLLED AREAS AFTER A SHARK ATTACK

The decision to re-open patrolled areas after a shark attack should be a decision made by the joint working group. This group comprises NSW DPI, SLSNSW, ALS and Council.

It is strongly recommended that the beach where the attack occurred should remain closed for at least 24 hours following an incident.

When deciding to re-open patrolled areas a risk management approach needs to be undertaken and all risk factors (as outlined above) need to be reviewed. If risk factors remain high, beaches should remain

closed, and a Media 'Beach Safety Warning' issued.

CONSULTATION

This Standard Operating Procedure was developed in consultation with the NSW Department of Primary Industries.

REFERENCE

Emergency Beach Closure
Media Guide
Critical Incident Debriefing
Fisheries NSW Shark Smart Public Education Program

Last modified: 25/07/23

PSS 8.6 LIGHTNING

PURPOSE

To outline the procedure for lifesaving services in conditions where lightning strikes may occur.

In statistical terms lightning poses a greater threat to individuals than almost any other natural hazard in Australia, accounting for five to ten lives lost and well over 100 injuries annually.

POLICY

THE 30/30 RULE

The '30/30 Rule' is recommended for lightning safety in the Australian Standard on Lightning Protection.

PROCEDURE

CLOSURE OF PATROLLED AREA

Where the flash to bang count is less than 30 seconds, this indicates that the lightning is less than 10km away. In this circumstance, the following action should be taken:

- Patrol and surf-craft boundary flags should be dropped (patrol area closed).
- With an approaching thunderstorm, all persons should be advised to leave the water and clear the beach immediately. The patrol should retire to the shelter of the clubhouse/patrol base, maintaining a surveillance lookout from there.
- Seek shelter in a 'hard top' vehicle or building – avoid small structures, patrol shelters, fabric tents and isolated or small groups of trees.
- If isolated in the open, away from shelter, crouch down (preferably in a hollow) with feet together and remove metal objects from head and body. Do not lie down but avoid being the highest object in the vicinity.
- If swimming, surfing or in a boat leave the water immediately and seek shelter.
- In the event of a surf carnival or special event all effort should be made by the carnival Emergency Services Officer/referee and/or organisers to delay the event until the danger has passed or cancel/ postpone events completely.
- Avoid the use of portable radios and mobile telephones during a thunderstorm if in the open. If emergency calls are required keep them brief.
- SurfCom should be advised of the action being taken.

The Bureau provides an application "BOM Radar" that can be used to monitor the severity/progression/ movement of nearby thunderstorms and can forecast movements up to 90 minutes into the future.

REOPENING OF PATROLLED AREA

Reopen when 30mins have passed since the last sighting of lightning strike. A typical storm travels at

about 40km/h. Waiting 30 mins allows the thunderstorm to be approximately 20km away.

REFERENCE

Emergency Beach Closure

Last modified: 25/07/23

PSS 8.7 PUBLIC ORDER INCIDENT

PURPOSE

To define the procedures when a disturbance (such as an altercation) occurs at a beach during patrol hours.

POLICY

It is possible that an altercation may take place adjacent to patrol areas. Members are to ensure their own personal safety and that of any members in their charge.

PROCEDURE

NOTIFICATION TO THE STATE OPERATIONS CENTRE

- The State Operations Centre is to be notified immediately whenever a Public Order Incident occurs via radio.

NOTIFICATION OF THE POLICE

- Upon receiving information that a Public Order Incident is occurring the State Operations Centre is required to contact the police and pass this information on to them

NOTIFICATION OF OTHER LIFESAVING SERVICES

- The State Operations Centre is to notify neighbouring clubs of the situation (if applicable). Additional resources should only be sent to the incident if they are requested by the Patrol Captain or a Duty Officer.
- Duty Officers must be notified and shall attend to liaise with other Emergency Service Organisations (I.e. NSW Police)
- The State Duty Officer will send an Incident notification to relevant Lifesaving Personnel.

RESCUES

In the event of a rescue, consideration should be given to taking any patients to an adjacent beach, or swimming them out to sea (if appropriate) to an awaiting SLS Powercraft. Normal protocols in regards to the safety of members, the patients and rescuers are paramount.

ALTERCATIONS

- If there is likely to be an altercation near patrol members all members are to leave the beach with two members remaining at a vantage point to monitor the bathing public (if it is safe to do so). Otherwise close the patrolled area by removing the flags.
- The members are to proceed to the club rooms until the disturbance has subsided. The State Operations Centre must be advised of this.

- Any radio, first aid and oxygen equipment etc. is to be removed from the beach.
- Every effort is to be taken to ensure that young or inexperienced members are protected and do not become involved (directly or indirectly).

IRB/RESCUE VESSELS

If able, rescue vessels should conduct patrols from the water. The IRB must be equipped with a radio.

INTERACTION WITH OFFENDERS

1. Members are to avoid becoming involved in any form of interaction with people causing a disturbance on the beach. Have no verbal communication with them and avoid eye contact if possible.
2. If members are harassed leave the area and make sure that you stay with experienced members. Ensure SurfCom has called the Police.
3. At no time should a member communicate with any person who is harassing or intimidating them.
4. If it is safe to do so, members may film the offender (using a mobile device or club CCTV) from a distance to assist the Police to establish the identity of the individual(s). This footage should be provided to the State Operations Centre or Duty Officer in attendance.

INJURIES AND RESCUES

If any person is injured or requires rescuing from the water, including offenders, normal first aid and rescue procedures are to be provided as long as it is safe to do so.

POST-INCIDENT

- Complete an incident report log (take particular care to complete the narrative as thoroughly as possible and state the nature of the incident). Where the SOC has created an incident the club can be provided with the incident number and append their information to the same record.
- Where physical abuse has been suffered the Police should have been contacted immediately.
- Remain calm and follow other SLSNSW procedures including Incident Reporting, Media and Notification of Incidents.
- Consider initiating critical incident debriefing/peer support.

REFERENCE

Critical Incident Debrief
State Rescue Board Policy

Last modified: 25/07/23

PSS 8.8 BOMB THREAT

PURPOSE

To provide guidance if lifesaving service personnel receive a bomb threat.

POLICY

SLSNSW advises personnel to treat all bomb threats as genuine and to take appropriate action.

PROCEDURE

INITIAL ACTION

ASCERTAIN DETAILS

- Informant name/contact/location.
- Location – person/s or premises threatened.
- Type of device.
- Any time limit?
- If a telephone threat – has the telephone line been kept open? Is there caller ID?

COMMENCE LOG

- Time/Date/Place
- Record full account of conversation outlining threat

NOTIFY

- The State Operations Centre
- NSW Police (via SurfCom)
- Duty Officer (via SurfCom)

If outside patrol hours contact 000 – Police.

ACT

1. Continue Log;
2. Evacuate area and surrounds to place of safety;
3. Establish assembly area – put someone in charge;
4. Cordon off scene;
5. Set up command post;
6. Support emergency service access (if attending); and
7. Assist with police requests.

PERSONNEL REQUIRED AT COMMAND POST

#Duty Officer;

1. Police Coordinator;
2. Ambulance Coordinator; and
3. Log Keeper.

AT COMPLETION

DEBRIEF

1. Arrange venue away from activities and interruptions;
2. Ensure police and ambulance coordinators in attendance;
3. Arrange refreshments;
4. Ensure all personnel are accounted for;
5. Conduct debrief – SLS/Police/Ambulance;
6. Take notes;
7. Take contact details of all major participants in incident;
8. Thank members; and
9. Arrange any ongoing assistance.

Last modified: 25/07/23

PSS 8.9 BODY RECOVERY

PURPOSE

To outline considerations, roles and expectations of lifesaving services regarding body recovery operations.

POLICY

SLSNSW expects lifesaving services to align their procedures with the body recovery guidelines listed below.

COMMON SUBMERGED BODY PROCESS

A body in the water will under normal circumstances initially sink and then (over 36 – 72 hours) as the body's cells degenerate, gas will be released and the body will float. Variables include water temperature and depth. Cold water will slow down degeneration and deeper water will compress the gases.

PROCEDURE

Lifesaving personnel should always treat a body as a viable rescue/resuscitation attempt until it is otherwise obvious that the body is of a deceased nature (decomposition, tasked body retrieval etc.).

It is not appropriate to risk life, serious injury or major equipment damage in body retrieval operations. Body retrieval is the responsibility of NSW Police. Any recovery should be under the direction of the Police.

Lifesaving services may be requested and be able to provide effective safety support to Police body recovery operations i.e. in-water support to Police Divers, or recovery from rocks/cliffs.

BODY RECOVERY

ON LAND

1. The body recovery should be completed by NSW Police.
2. If a body must be moved at the direction of NSW Police, lifesaving personnel should note any details and keep it as close as possible to the original site.
3. Utilise protective clothing (Gloves, Mask, Eye wear).
4. If necessary, ensure the body is retrieved above waterline.

IN WATER

1. Assess the situation/risk.
2. Keep observation and apply a rescue tube to the body if appropriate (so that it does not disappear).
3. Notify NSW Police and request that they recover the body (via State Operations Centre or the on-scene Duty Officer).

4. At the direction of NSW Police, recover the body (SLS personnel should only do this as a last resort).
5. Minimise direct contact with the body.
6. If no recovery is possible then mark or note location and, if possible, maintain contact/sight of the body.

ALWAYS CONSIDER

- Young/inexperienced lifesaving personnel (minimise exposure).
- Members of the public.
- Relatives/friends.
- Note important details: times, location, etc.
- Keep any witnesses close to the scene or take contact details.

EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENT GUIDELINES

It is advisable that all lifesaving services maintain a Body Recovery Kit for health and safety reasons.

A Body Recovery Kit should contain the following items as a minimum:

Item	Quantity
Body Bag	2
Protective Face Masks	4
Gloves – arm length	2 pairs
Bio-hazard bags/plastic bags	6
Blanket/sheet	2
Disinfectant	1 litre
Small anchor/buoy system	1

SAFETY

All normal hazards associated with search and rescue operations are present in a body recovery. It is not appropriate to risk life, injury or equipment damage in body recovery operations.

The risk of infection is increased, and the use of gloves is highly recommended. Personnel involved in operational activities should be aware of the available counselling services that aid in maintaining psychological health.

TRANSPORT ARRANGEMENTS

The arrangements for transporting the deceased person will normally be the responsibility of the Police. Lifesaving resources may be requested to assist in this task (especially in remote areas). This should not interfere with the safety and rescue tasks of the lifesaving service.

CRITICAL INCIDENT DEBRIEF/PEER SUPPORT

A critical incident debrief process and peer support/psychological first aid (including Critical Incident Debriefing options) should be undertaken for any incident where members/staff have been involved/exposed to a deceased person.

REFERENCE

Critical Incident Debriefing
[SLSNSW Member Welfare](#)

Last modified: 25/07/23

PSS 8.10 COASTAL FLOODING

PURPOSE

To outline how SLSNSW as a Support Agency supports the NSW State Emergency Service (SES) as the Combat Agency during major flood incident response operations.

POLICY

In the event of a flood event the SLSNSW Flood Response Plan shall be located and followed. All SLSNSW actions will be under the control of the SLSNSW Incident Controller.

PROCEDURE

SLSNSW is deemed a Support Agency under the NSW Emergency Management Plan (EMPLAN)/Flood Sub-Plan. As such there is an expectation that lifesaving services may assist during major flood events or other major incidents.

The NSW State Emergency Service (NSWSES) is the combat agency for flood response operations.

SLSNSW will be tasked by the NSWSES, through the SLSNSW Incident Controller/SLSNSW State Incident Management Team as per the arrangements between SLSNSW and the NSWSES.

In case of a major flood incident response where SLSNSW services have been requested by the Combat Agency a State Incident Management Team (IMT) might be stood up. The IMT will have its base operation at SLSNSW HQ. In addition – and depending on the severity of the incident – SLSNSW Liaison Officers may be deployed to the NSW State Emergency Operations Centre (SEOC, based at NSWRFS HQ) and/or the NSWSES State Control Centre (SCC, based at NSWSES HQ in Wollongong) and/or other regional or local Incident Control Centres (ICCs).

Lifesaving premises may be requested as local community shelters and/or local Emergency Operation Centres (EOCs) or local Incident Control Centres (ICCs) where the location is suitable and where appropriate inter-agency communication and other facilities are available.

The SLSNSW IMT will collaborate with relevant Branches to identify and task Lifesaving services for deployment.

LOCAL RESPONSE PROCEDURE

- Under NO CIRCUMSTANCES are any independent local deployments of any kind permitted.
- Deployments will only occur following tasking through the SLSNSW State IMT.
- State Duty Officer (13SURF) shall notify Branch Duty Officers and the State Operations Centre (if during patrol hours) of directions/information from the SES and required actions.
- If during patrol hours – close patrolled area and evacuate members of the public from the area.
- Evacuate personnel and key equipment as necessary from high risk areas following corresponding advice from the NSWSES.

- Evacuate members and key operational equipment to pre-determined safe location (rally point).
- Await advice/updates from the State Operations Centre/Duty Officer/NSWSES.
- Do not undertake any flood SAR activities unless authorised/tasked by the State/Branch Duty Officer (Lifesaving Services to activate and follow Club Coastal Flooding Plan).

REFERENCE

SLSNSW Flood Response Plan

Last modified: 25/07/23

PSS 8.11 TSUNAMI WARNING

PURPOSE

To outline how SLSNSW as a Support Agency supports the NSW State Emergency Service (NSWSES) during Tsunami response operations on the NSW coastline.

POLICY

In the event of a Tsunami the SLSNSW Tsunami Plan shall be located and followed. All actions will be under the control of the State Duty Officer through the NSWSES.

PROCEDURE

IMPORTANCE OF AN EFFECTIVE TSUNAMI RESPONSE

SLSNSW are considered a Support Agency for Tsunami events within the NSW Tsunami Emergency Sub Plan and NSW SES planning and response arrangements.

The Tsunami threat is of specific importance to SLSNSW and coastal lifeguard services for the following reasons:

1. The "coastal" location of lifesaving activities and facilities place SLSNSW and lifesaving personnel/ facilities in a high-risk area given a Tsunami event.
2. As the services are most active on the beach and in-shore aquatic areas, lifesavers and lifeguards are best situated, equipped and trained to warn beach goers of a potential hazard and recommend evacuation/action, based on advice/instruction of the SES.
3. Lifesavers and lifeguards are best situated to notify the SES when unusual ocean behaviour indicative of a Tsunami is observed, or a Tsunami has occurred for which there has been no prior warning.
4. Lifesavers and lifeguards are equipped and trained to support NSW Police in search and rescue activities post Tsunami.
5. As an expert provider of aquatic safety training to the public SLSNSW is able to assist the NSWSES in educating the public regarding best practice response to a Tsunami event.

For additional Tsunami procedures relevant to specific areas, refer to individual to Clubs Patrol Operations Manuals (POM's).

REFERENCE

SLSNSW Tsunami Plan
Patrol Operations Manual (Club Level)

Last modified: 25/07/23

PSS 8.12 COASTAL FIRE

PURPOSE

To outline guidelines for lifesaving service response to a coastal fire event in support of the NSW Rural Fire Service (NSWRFS).

POLICY

In the event of a major coastal fire emergency response procedures shall be undertaken to mitigate the risk to members, the public and other emergency services, under control/direction of the appropriate Combat Agency and Authorities (NSWRFS/NSW Police) and command of the State and Branch Duty Officers.

PROCEDURE

Coastal fire events create a number of risks for lifesaving services in particular locations such as in national parks, forested areas and regional clubs which have limited access through forested areas.

In case of a major fire incident response where SLSNSW services have been requested by the Combat Agency a State Incident Management Team (IMT) might be stood up. The IMT will have its base operation out of the SLSNSW HQ. In addition – and depending on the severity of the incident – SLSNSW Laison Officers may be deployed to the NSW State Emergency Operations Centre (SEOC, based at NSWRFS HQ) and/or other regional or local Incident Control Centres (ICCs).

Specific risks include:

- Direct threat to lifesaving personnel/facilities.
- Direct threat to bathing public/coastal communities.
- Isolation of beaches impacting evacuations (access cut – roads/tracks).
- Isolation of beaches preventing lifesaving service provision (access cut – roads/tracks). The following contingencies may be required in one or more of the above circumstances:
- Provision of shelter/refuge to lifesaving personnel, public, wider community in surf life saving clubs/facilities.
- Water-based evacuation of personnel/public from a existing patrolled beach and/or additional isolated coastal communities.
- Water-based provision of patrol services to isolated (but not threatened) coastal communities.

RESPONSE PROCEDURES (GENERAL)

- Under NO CIRCUMSTANCES are any independent local deployments of any kind permitted.*

- Deployments will only occur following tasking through the SLSNSW State IMT.*

Lifesaving response to fire events shall be undertaken within the existing emergency response system, including State Duty officers, branch Duty Officers and the State Operations Centre (if during patrol

hours).

As the combat agency/authority, the NSWRFS shall provide direction and incident control.

Lifesaving services may only undertake evacuation response activities (to locations other than club patrol locations) SAR within an authorised and coordinated State/Branch response plan under the direction of RFS.

Last modified: 25/07/23

PSS 8.13 AIRCRAFT CRASH

PURPOSE

To provide guidelines and special consideration for lifesaving personnel responding to an aircraft crash incident.

POLICY

Lifesaving service response to an aircraft crash incident aligns with standard SLSA training relating to in-water search & rescue and/or land based first aid treatment and emergency care.

The possible number of injured or lost patients requires the response of a significant quantity of lifesaving resources, rescue helicopters, Ambulance, Fire and Police resources as soon as possible.

PROCEDURE

Any response to an aircraft incident should be conducted under the direction of the State Duty Officer.

Types of Aircraft Accidents:

- **Land emergency:** Where an aircraft makes an emergency landing on land.
- **Water emergency:** Where an aircraft makes an emergency landing on.

PERSONAL SAFETY

Plane crash incidents can pose hazards to lifesaving services that require specific consideration, such as:

- Fuel
- Fire/smoke/gas hazards
- Sharps (glass/metal)

COMMUNICATION/SUPPORT REQUESTED

- Contact the State Operations Centre immediately and inform of incident details.
- Request additional lifesaving services and emergency services.

SITE MARKING

The submersion of an aircraft may require lifesaving services to mark the location via the use of buoys etc.

Interpretation of currents and drift may be required to identify search areas. Marker dye may be suitable for such.

TRIAGE CENTRES

Lifesaving services personnel may be requested to assist with the establishment of a triage treatment centre either within a surf club and or adjacent areas.

EVACUATION

An aircraft must only be evacuated once it is stationary. It is important to move passengers well away and upwind after evacuating the aircraft.

AIRCRAFT CRASHES INTO WATER

When an aircraft crashes into the water, the impact is likely to cause the aircraft to break up in pieces. Although the risk of fire is reduced fuel floating on the surface of the water can ignite spontaneously. When the aircraft is floating after a crash care should be taken to ensure buoyancy is not disturbed. Survivors should be evacuated smoothly and quickly before the aircraft begins to fill and sink. If there is some time before the aircraft sinks divers can sometimes rescue persons trapped in the air pockets within the fuselage. Lifesaving personnel should not attempt to enter an aircraft which has crashed.

AIRCRAFT CRASHES ON LAND

When an aircraft crashes onto land there may be several impacts before the aircraft becomes stationary. There is a very high risk of smoke, fire and explosions post-crash and persons may become trapped inside the aircraft. Lifesaving personnel should not attempt to enter an aircraft which has crashed.

PRECAUTIONS WHEN DEALING WITH CRASHED AIRCRAFT

Although the risk of igniting fuel on the water surface is low, every precaution should be taken to prevent such an event. This may even include turning off the motors to prevent any possibility of ignition. If crew members are required to enter the water, they should be protected against the effects of the fuel. This includes wearing a wetsuit, a helmet, and a mask. The effects of fuel are to irritate the skin and especially any mucus membranes. Women should be especially careful when entering fuel contaminated water. When the crew re-boards the boat they should be thoroughly washed down with copious amounts of fresh water and then shower as soon as possible. Wetsuits should also be thoroughly cleaned to prevent damage.

Last modified: 25/07/23

PSS 9 SURF EMERGENCY RESPONSE SYSTEM

PSS 9   Surf Emergency Response System

NSW

- [PSS 9.1 Surf Emergency Response System](#)
- [PSS 9.2 State Duty Officer](#)
- [PSS 9.3 Branch Duty Officer System](#)
- [PSS 9.4 Duty Officer Code of Conduct](#)
- [PSS 9.5 Duty Officer Equipment](#)
- [PSS 9.6 Duty Officer Uniform](#)
- [PSS 9.7 Duty Officer Pre-Operation Checklist](#)
- [PSS 9.8 Duty Officer Post-Operations Checklist](#)
- [PSS 9.9 Club/Service Callout Teams](#)
- [PSS 9.10 Low Light Operations](#)

Last modified: 10/08/23

PSS 9.1 SURF EMERGENCY RESPONSE SYSTEM

PURPOSE

To outline the Surf Emergency Response System within NSW with the aim to:

- Save lives;
- Improve casualty survival rates;
- Reduce the response time of lifesaving and other rescue services to casualties;
- Maximise the quality of a coordinated emergency response system;
- Provide clarification on the most appropriate resources to utilise; and
- Reduce the risk to responding personnel.

POLICY

Surf Life Saving NSW (SLSNSW) requires personnel to follow the provided guidelines to ensure the effectiveness of the Surf Emergency Response System as the notification/tasking process for emergency services to contact and activate lifesaving services in NSW.

DEFINITION

An emergency response is a response to a request for assistance from any of the following agencies/organisations:

- Emergency Services (Police, Fire, Ambulance)
- NSW State Emergency Service (SES)
- Marine Rescue NSW
- Lifesaving Services (Australian Lifeguard Service, Council Lifeguards, Surf Life Saving Clubs (patrols), SLS Support Operations etc)
- NSW Maritime
- National Parks and Wildlife Service Rangers

BACKGROUND

The nature of emergency response often results in a situation where:

- Incident is at an unpatrolled location/time.
- There is limited information – unknown circumstances/details available.
- Patients are in the mid-latter stages of the drowning cycle.
- Response time is critical to the casualty's survival/recovery.

PROCEDURE

COMBAT AGENCIES REQUIRING ASSISTANCE

1. The SLSNSW administered Surf Emergency Response System shall be the process for upward notification of locally identified or notified major incidents from lifesaving services (either directly outside SurfCom hours, or via SurfCom).
   a. Internal notifications, i.e., those from lifesaving services still filter into the Surf Emergency Response System
      i. During the SLSNSW State Operations Centre (SOC) standard operating hours, initial notification from SLS volunteers, ALS Lifeguards, Council Lifeguards and SLS Life Saver helicopters should be made to Surfcom via radio (primary) or telephone (secondary)
   b. Outside of the SOC standard operating hours initial notification should be made by dialling 000 and requesting Police (the combat agency for aquatic events, Marine search and rescue inclusive of underwater and inland waterway searches).
   c. Subsequent updates and intel from lifesaving services should be communicated to the SLSNSW rostered State Duty Officer on (02) 9471 8091 (monitored 24/7).
2. No lifesaving service shall implement duplicate/contrary systems which do or may undermine the Surf Emergency Response System at local/regional/state level. Regardless of the origin of the request for assistance or agencies involved, the Surf Life Saving Surf Emergency Response System (coordinated by the State Duty Officer) shall utilise the nearest/most` appropriate resource from any agency/organisation for assistance to ensure the quickest response time. The integrity of the State Duty Officer (on-duty) shall be maintained at all times. No other person shall assume the role, function, authority or call-sign of the on-duty State Duty Officer, unless delegated to by that person. The contact number for the Surf Emergency Response System shall not be communicated by any party to the public or media.

The system shall be referred to externally as the 'Surf Emergency Response System'.

COMMUNICATION AND RESOURCE TYPES

1. **Primary Resource Notification:** The surf rescue resource which is deemed nearest/most appropriate to respond to an incident and is notified/tasked first.
2. **Secondary Resource Notification:** The surf rescue resource/s which may provide value to an emergency response and is notified/tasked after the primary.
3. **Notification Only:** a notification made to additional resources, including neighbouring resources, Branch or State Executive where a response from these parties is not necessary.

CONTROL AND COMMAND

The Surf Emergency Response System is primarily responsible for disseminating emergency information to lifesaving services on behalf of the NSW Police Force (and other emergency services) and providing updated/SITREPS to those agencies as appropriate.

For a surf rescue incident NSW Police are the combat agency and have 'control'.

For all notification and responses, the Rostered State Duty officer will have the delegated authority of

Surf Life Saving NSW to act in the position of SLS Incident Controller.

Responding services are to appoint a SLS Forward Commander/Duty Officer on- scene). ALS and Council Lifeguard Services shall do likewise.

On-scene, the various incident commanders shall establish a joint incident command post, and under the control of Police establish a joint response-plan. If appropriate and agreed, a 'forward incident commander' may be delegated to oversee a task involving assets from multiple organisations.

The State Duty Officers who deliver the Surf Emergency Response System retains a 'Command' function for responding SLS/ALS services when:

1. No local service 'forward commander' is available (Duty Officer/Supervisor).
2. The local service 'forward commander' is delayed/some time away.
3. Requested to take on that role by the Duty Officer/Supervisor.

RESPONSE SEQUENCE OF ACTIONS

In alignment with 'Search and Rescue' best-practice, the Surf Emergency Response System has a sequence of actions that relate to each of the search and rescue stages.

These are as follows:

AWARENESS STAGE

1. The State Duty Officer will advise the most appropriate lifesaving services.
2. Lifesaving services will alert their personal, and ascertain what resources are available to respond.

The State Duty Officer may disseminate information to the relevant SLS Officers and Management personnel from agencies involved with the incident to aid in enquiries from the community/media stations.

INITIAL ACTION

1. The State Duty Officer will begin monitoring the situation.
2. Lifesaving services will respond under their internal protocols advising the State Duty Officer of response details.
3. The responding lifesaving service shall appoint and respond a Forward Commander (Duty Officer or Supervisor) or request 'command' support from their State Duty Officer – Incident Controller if not available/delayed.
4. The 'Forward Commander/s' shall begin monitoring/coordinating their response.
5. The State Duty Officer will contact other non-priority agencies for 'notification' as deemed appropriate.

STATE DUTY OFFICER – LIFESAVING SERVICE COMMUNICATION

The initial notification/tasking call from the State Duty Officer to lifesaving services shall provide any/all available information as provided by the authority/combat agency (Police/SES etc). It shall be recognised that available information initially may be limited.

The initial call from the State Duty Officer to the lifesaving service shall include:

1. Notification of incident – including all relevant information held.
2. Advisement of what other resources have been/are responding.
3. Request for regional/local asset availability status. Request for any additional regional/local asset availability status.
4. Request for SITREP via SurfCom or SLS Radio once responding.

ADVISEMENT OF NON-PRIMARY SERVICES/RESOURCES

Where a paid lifeguard service (Council/ALS) or SLS service may not be the "nearest/most appropriate resource" to activate as 'first-call' or have no on-duty/available resources to respond at all, the State Duty Officer shall still contact the lifeguard service contact/supervisor or Branch Duty Officer as soon as practical, to advise of the situation. Note: This should not be given priority over primary response coordination, however.
The State Duty Officer will make the decision when this call is to be made (i.e. during the incident for significant incidents or post incident.)

The State Duty Officer (or Surfcom) will notify additional local lifesaving resources of an ongoing incident regardless of patrol status/time of day as soon as practicable, but not at the expense of coordinating a primary incident response.

PLANNING

1. The State Duty Officer (or delegate) will review existing plans (if in existence).
2. The Incident Commander/s (Duty Officers/Supervisors) should provide SITREPS on the Initial Action Stage.
3. The State Duty Officer (or delegate) should review SITREPS, weather reports and operational information for an action plan.
4. The State Duty Officer (or delegate) should communicate the plan to relevant agencies.

OPERATIONS STAGE

STATE LEVEL

The State Duty Officer will:

1. Assume communications control of operations (where able – i.e SOC) and monitor the situation.
2. Advise other agencies at State level, particularly the NSW Police VKG/Marine Area Command.
3. Assist and or provide SITREPS and assist as able with information to the Media Manager.
4. Acquire and coordinate dissemination of information to both internal and external support resources as appropriate.
5. Will assume the position of 'Incident Commander'.

REGIONAL LEVEL

The Forward Commander/s (Duty Officers/Supervisors) will:

1. Activate and assume 'command' of their lifesaving operations;

2. Advise other agencies of their requirements for support and arrange that support and establish appropriate on-site liaison;
3. Liaise with other agency Forward Commanders and personnel;
4. Arrange to provide logistic/operational support for out-of-area groups; and
5. Liaise with or act as the Incident Forward Commander (Police).
6. Facilitate communications with on-site Rescue Helicopters.

LOCAL LEVEL

The Forward Commander/s (Duty Officers/Supervisors) will:

1. Advise and establish liaison arrangements with their Incident Commander (State Duty Officer), SurfCom, other emergency services and participating organisations.
2. Establish a joint response plan with other organisations/agencies – setting clear tasks/goals/ milestones and always considering risk/safety.
3. Commence operations.
4. Call for assistance/support via their Forward Commander (Duty Officer/Supervisor) if required.
5. Maintain constant communications and provide regular SITREPs to the Incident Commander (often via Surfcom).

CONCLUSION

1. All responded lifesaving services shall be accounted for and stood down before the incident is declared 'over.'
2. The appropriate Incident Commanders and emergency services (Police VKG/MAC) shall be advised.
3. The Forward Commander or other appropriate Officer may co-ordinate a debrief.
4. Lifesaving Services will refuel, replenish, and undertake post operational checks.
5. All parties will complete the necessary documentation.
6. The State Duty Officer (or their delegate) will ensure responding members details are supplied to the SLSNSW Member Welfare team for EAP referrals and critical incident support.

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PSS 9.2 STATE DUTY OFFICER

PURPOSE

To provide policy, procedure and best practice regarding the role of a State Duty Officer within the Surf Emergency Response System.

POLICY

A coordinated system of control/command/communication is required at Club, Branch and State level for any major emergency and/or after-hours incident that may occur.

The flow of communication from external agencies to the correct lifesaving services is essential to ensure an optimal response of appropriate resources in a coordinated, efficient and effective manner.

At the upper level of this system sits the role of the State Duty Officer.

PROCEDURE

STATE DUTY OFFICER – DEFINITION

A Board appointed role within SLSNSW which provides operational communication, command, coordination and external liaison to emergency incidents within NSW. The rostered State Duty Officer will have delegation of authority from Surf Life Saving NSW while on shift.

STATE DUTY OFFICER – OBJECTIVES

To provide communication, incident command, coordination and liaison support to all lifesaving services for search and rescue emergencies (including SLSC, Support Operations, SLS Life Saver Helicopters, Council Lifeguards, ALS Lifeguards).

SCOPE OF OPERATION – COVERAGE

The State Duty Officer role shall operate 24 hours a day, 365 days a year within the Surf Emergency Response System.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Primarily the State Duty Officer is responsible for:

- Acting as the single, central Surf Life Saving contact/liaison for communications/tasking bodies within NSW Police, Fire, Ambulance, AMSA, SES, ADF, BOM, DPI for any search and rescue incident or natural disaster (flood, tsunami, fire) in NSW.
- Informing lifesaving services of a search and rescue incident (as advised by external agencies) which will see them respond their specific resources under their specific 'command' structure.

- Acting as the SLSNSW lifesaving agency 'controller' for all operations in the event of a major emergency or natural disaster.

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PSS 9.3 BRANCH DUTY OFFICER SYSTEM

PURPOSE

To provide policy, procedure and best practice for the function of a Branch Duty Officer system.

POLICY

All Branches are required to have an emergency response system of which a Duty Officer component is fundamental.

PROCEDURE

DUTY OFFICER – DEFINITION

Lifesaving personnel that within a local system provides operational command, coordination and external liaison for regular patrolling and emergency incidents.

Duty Officers are to be Branch appointed volunteers.

SCOPE OF OPERATIONS – COVERAGE

A Duty Officer system shall function in 2 capacities:

- Rostered on-duty shifts (normally during the regular patrol season)
- Emergency Response/Callout (24/7/365 days)

REGULAR PATROL SEASON DAYS/TIMES

At least one (1) dedicated Branch Duty Officer shall be on active rostered duty at any one time during normal patrol hours, during the lifesaving patrol season. This Duty Officer does not need to be at a beach for the whole period (however this is preferred) but must be 100% contactable and able to respond during that rostered time.

Consideration shall be given to geographical positioning of Branch Duty Officers to ensure adequate coverage for the branch.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE/CALLOUTS (AFTER-HOURS/OUT-OF-SEASON)

After hours/outside season a rostered on-call Branch Duty Officer system is highly recommended. Using a branch-level mobile phone divert protocol will ensure that any request for assistance through 13SURF is immediately answered.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

All Branches should maintain a specific Branch Duty Officer Manual (updated regularly) and available in soft and hard copy. and provided to all current duty officers and lifeguard supervisors.

All active Branch Duty Officers shall be updated annually in SurfGuard and details provided to SLSNSW. All new/prospective Duty Officers shall complete the 'Support Operations Member Appointment Procedure'.

Personnel and contact detail changes should be regularly checked and updated within the Branch resources, on SurfGuard and communicated to SLSNSW.

The Branch shall ensure all club/service callout team information is updated annually on SurfGuard and details provided to each Duty Officer.

TRAINING/EXERCISES

- Branches should conduct a pre-season briefing for all Duty Officers.
- Branches should conduct an in-depth induction with all new Duty Officers.
- Branches should conduct at least one (1) exercise involving all Duty Officers and club/service callout teams annually.
- Branches should facilitate club/service callout team briefings/induction exercises annually.

KEY DUTIES

- Liaises with and Provides support and guidance to Patrol Captains/SurfCom Operators.
- Liaise with emergency services.
- Act as forward commander of lifesaving response to a reported emergency at unpatrolled locations or after-hours/out-of-season.
- Liaise with lifeguards/ lifeguard supervisors.
- Act as Forward Commander or other role as delegated to by Patrol Captain at patrolled locations.
- Co-ordinate lifesaving services at unpatrolled locations.
- Co-ordinate post incident debriefing and facilitate counselling for personnel.
- On-site media liaison (directs media to the appropriate Branch/State personnel).

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PSS 9.4 DUTY OFFICER CODE OF CONDUCT

PURPOSE

To outline the Duty Officer code of conduct.

POLICY

All Surf Life Saving NSW (SLSNSW) State and Branch Duty Officers are expected to adhere to the following code of conduct.

PROCEDURE

ACT RESPONSIBLY AND WITH PROFESSIONALISM

As a Duty Officer you are providing leadership and support to lifesaving personnel and representing Surf Life Saving to external agencies/emergency services.

As an operational figurehead, other agencies and our members have high expectations of your conduct, image, and professionalism.

PROMOTE A CULTURE OF SAFETY

As an operational leader the Duty Officer should at all times promote safety within lifesaving. The Duty Officer must understand his/her role in assessing risk while co-ordinating the response of lifesaving resources and promote safety at any opportunity.

BE PREPARED

The time-critical nature of the role requires a Duty Officer to become an asset to an emergency response almost immediately. Duty Officers must ensure that the minimum equipment and information required for the role is readily available whenever on duty.

COMMUNICATION

Maintaining good communication with lifesaving services is essential in optimising a response. Building good relationships with key lifesaving service personnel is important.

FOLLOW/STRENGTHEN OPERATING PROCEDURES

SLSNSW provides Standard Operating Procedures for lifesaving services and adherence to these should be promoted by Duty Officers. Specific procedures and contingency plans should be developed, maintained and exercised within your local/regional area and reflected in Branch Duty Manuals and Club Patrol Operations Manuals.

PSS 9.5 DUTY OFFICER EQUIPMENT

PURPOSE

To outline the minimum equipment requirements for a Duty Officer.

POLICY

Duty Officers are expected to carry the specified minimum equipment to ensure the effectiveness of their duties.

PROCEDURE

Duty Officers shall carry the following equipment with them when on duty as a minimum:

MINIMUM EQUIPMENT

- Handheld radio (SLSNSW approved make/model/programmed)
- Car inverter/radio charger
- Radio waterproof bag
- Rescue Tube + Fins
- Mobile Phone (personal or role specific)
- Torch (waterproof)
- Binoculars
- Area coastal map, with high-risk locations, secondary names and hazards identified
- First Aid Kit
- Pen/Notebook
- Emergency Contacts List (Branch)
- Access to Digital SOPs Manual or printed version
- Incident Logbook
- Clipboard and RFA Forms
- Lifesaving Operations Procedure Guide
- Critical Incident Debrief Kit (Debrief Forms)

RECOMMENDED EQUIPMENT

- Smart phone (iPhone – with up-to-date emergency contacts)
- iPad (tablet) with up-to-date maps and resource information
- AED + Oxygen Resuscitation Kit
- Body Recovery Kit
- Helicopter Landing Kit
- Night Operations Kit
- Incident Command Kit
- Throwsticks (in pairs)
- Phone charger (car & wall types)
- Handheld FLIR unit

PSS 9.6 DUTY OFFICER UNIFORM

PURPOSE

To outline minimum uniform requirements for a Duty Officer.

POLICY

Official Duty Officer uniform may only be worn while on duty and/or responding to an after-hours incident. It may not be worn at any other time.

PROCEDURE

Shirt	Red polo shirt – short/long sleeve variants SLS Logo on the left chest
Name Badge	Blue background SLS Generic Logo Arial Narrow font
Hat	Navy peak cap with red/yellow chequered ribbon on both sides Embroidered "Duty Officer" SLSNSW Logo
Jacket	Red Bourke jacket (Pacific Coastal hooded style) "DUTY OFFICER" printed in reflective silver on the back SLSNSW logo and card pocket on front left chest SURF RESCUE across back SURF RESCUE on front right chest (Capitals, Arial Narrow, Red) SLS Generic Logo on front left chest
Vest	Orange Night/Day Reflective Lined (for use when acting as the appointed SLS forward commander) DUTY OFFICER, SURF RESCUE across back SLS Generic Logo on the left chest

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PSS 9.7 DUTY OFFICER PRE-OPERATION CHECKLIST

PURPOSE

To provide a guideline for Duty Officer start-of-shift requirements.

POLICY

The on-shift Duty Officer shall be contactable via radio and/or mobile phone at all times. If for unplanned or temporary reasons the Duty Officer is uncontactable the Duty Officer shall inform SurfCom of such (prior to and once back in contact).

PROCEDURE

1. Ensure the correct uniform is worn.
2. Check radio and phone are charged.
3. Check the contents of the Duty Officer Kit.
4. Conduct radio check with SurfCom and 'sign-on' 15mins prior to commencement of first lifesaving services.
5. In conjunction with SurfCom:
   a. Ensure SurfCom holds correct mobile phone number.
   b. Discuss forecast weather and surf reports and expected beach patronage.
   c. Discuss possible high-risk localities, periods and contingency plans.
   d. Discuss any actual or potential service shortfalls.
6. Listen to lifesaving services morning sign-on.
7. Visit or contact lifesaving services of identified/expected high-risk locations to discuss management planning.
8. Where a lifesaving service is found in breach of their lifesaving service requirements, the Duty Officer in consultation with lifesaving service shall assist the lifesaving service to rectify the problem both immediately and long term.

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PSS 9.8 DUTY OFFICER POST-OPERATIONS CHECKLIST

PURPOSE

To provide a guideline for Duty Officer end-of-shift requirements.

POLICY

Duty Officers are required to ensure the appropriate hand-over and planning/preparation actions are undertaken at the end of shift, to ensure ongoing effectiveness of a Branch Duty Officer/Emergency Response System.

PROCEDURE

1. Listen to lifesaving services 'sign-off.'
2. In conjunction with SurfCom (in person or via mobile phone):
    a. Ensure all SLS clubs/services have signed-off and are safely offline.
    b. Identify any service extensions being undertaken or required (and maintain support).
    c. Complete the patrol log and any SITREPs for the day's activities.
    d. Note any activities for follow up and notify Branch DOL.
    e. Ensure the recording of all information is complete.
3. 'Sign-off' with SurfCom only after all patrols/services are offline.
4. All equipment is to be appropriately stored.
5. Any replacement equipment needs to be documented and requested.
6. Radios/phones to be placed on charge.
7. Appropriate phone diverts/answer messages engaged.

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PSS 9.9 CLUB/SERVICE CALLOUT TEAMS (EMERGENCY RESPONSE)

PURPOSE

To outline the requirements of club/service emergency response systems.

POLICY

Due to the benefit to the community, all volunteer lifesaving services in NSW should have emergency response (24/7 callout) capability.

This should be achieved through a coordinated system of suitably qualified personnel with access to appropriate rescue equipment, responding within specific emergency response plans.

PROCEDURE

LOCAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE SYSTEM

Lifesaving services should have emergency response systems in place that fall in line with the Surf Life Saving Emergency Response System; namely:

- Response areas (maximum) – Lifesaving Service Agreement/Contract.
- Equipment preparedness (suitable 24/7 'rescue ready' equipment).
- Formally established and administered callout teams.
- Local response plans – included in their Patrol Operations Manual.
- A formally administered personnel contact list (based within SurfGuard).
- A contingency notification/tasking process for use during business continuity events (SMS groups/ messaging services etc).

DECLINING A REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE

Lifesaving services/personnel may decline a request to respond to an emergency if they feel it would create a level of unacceptable risk to do so.

Examples of inhibitors may be:

- Insufficient personnel;
- Insufficient equipment;
- Dangerous conditions; and
- Geographical distance (outside achievable response area).

Appropriate local emergency response planning/preparedness (equipment and procedures) will minimise the above inhibitors and maximise the ability to render assistance.

PLANNING/PREPAREDNESS

To maximise emergency response effectiveness and personnel safety, it is recommended that clubs/ lifeguard services maintain the following equipment/logistical preparedness:

EQUIPMENT

Item	Quantity
Rescue Tubes	2
Fins	2 pairs
Rescue Boards	2
SSV	1 – fuelled and operational
Oxygen Resuscitation Kit	1
AED	1
First Aid Kit	1 – stocked and operational
Radios	2
Personal Telephone	1
Emergency Back-up contact book	1

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT

- Searchlights / Torches
- Glow Sticks
- Loud hailer

LOGISTICS

- SurfGuard should be utilised to maintain and administer club/service callout team contact information (updated pre-season, post-season and when otherwise changes).
- SurfGuard SMS functions should be utilised and/or other suitable emergency notification systems.

TRAINING/EXERCISES

- All club/service callout teams should conduct an annual pre-season induction/briefing.
- All club/service callout teams should conduct at least scenario/exercise annually.

REFERENCE

Lifesaving Service Agreement
Patrol Operations Manual

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PSS 9.10 LOW LIGHT OPERATIONS

PURPOSE

To outline guidelines and procedures for low light emergency response operations.

POLICY

Any low light operations shall be delivered by pre-identified, trained and resourced Branch Groups (or Branch endorsed clubs).

PROCEDURE

INTRODUCTION

Surf Life Saving personnel and assets may be tasked to perform search/rescue operations during low light conditions. This Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) sets out to offer guidelines and procedures to be followed when responding to emergency response operations during low light conditions. Low light conditions are considered to be the period leading up to and shortly after sunset.

On water Night Operations are to only be conducted in surf conditions in the lead up to sunset and up to 1 hour (60 minutes) following sunset.

Low-light/Night IRB operations can be conducted on enclosed (flat water) at any time, following an appropriate risk assessment, approval granted from the on-call State Duty Officer and sufficient navigation/safety equipment requirements are available.

LAND PROCEDURE

Land based searches between sunset and sunrise (night operations) are to be conducted under the instruction and direction of the appropriate combat agency i.e. NSW Police, provided that it is safe to do so, and that Lifesaving Services have the correct safety and protective equipment for the given task.

WATER PROCEDURE

ROADS AND MARITIME SERVICE REGULATIONS

- Powered vessels of less than seven meters in length shall exhibit a white light visible all round and separate port/starboard sidelights.
- Navigation lights should be positioned so they are not obscured by the vessels superstructure or interfered with by deck lights.
- Do not travel at excessive speeds.
- Type 2 PFD must be worn by Driver and Crew at all times.

SLS OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

The following must be adhered to:

1. ENDORSEMENT FOR IRB NIGHT OPERATIONS

Any Club/Service in New South Wales can participate in 'Low-Light Operations' if the following is adhered to:

- Club/Service is Branch and SLSNSW endorsed for low light operations.
- Proposed members complete 'Support Operations Member Application Form' and are endorsed by Branch and SLSNSW before commencing training.
- The Club/Service holds the minimum required equipment.
- Appropriate member/s are available and trained in 'Low-Light Operations.'

Member/s are saved in SurfGuard under a Branch Low-Light Operations Group. E.g. SNB – Low-Light Operations Group.

Last modified: 25/07/23

PSS 10 SAR OPERATIONS

PSS 10   SAR Operations

NSW

- [PSS 10.1 Search and Rescue (SAR) Responsibilities](#)
- [PSS 10.2 Search and Rescue Stages](#)
- [PSS 10.3 Risk vs Gain](#)
- [PSS 10.4 SAR Information Factors](#)
- [PSS 10.5 SAR Briefings](#)
- [PSS 10.6 Parallel Line Search Pattern](#)
- [PSS 10.7 Creeping Line Search Pattern](#)
- [PSS 10.8 Expanding Square Search Pattern](#)
- [PSS 10.9 Underwater Search and Rescue](#)
- [PSS 10.10 Information Exchange in Transfer of Coordination](#)
- [PSS 10.11 Conclusion of SAR Operations](#)

Last modified: 10/08/23

PSS 10.1 SEARCH AND RESCUE (SAR) RESPONSIBILITIES

PURPOSE

To outline the search and rescue responsibilities used by Surf Life Saving NSW (SLSNSW) for lifesaving operations.

POLICY

SLSNSW provides the following search and rescue definitions for use by clubs/services/personnel.

PROCEDURE

DEFINITION

Search and Rescue (SAR) services are defined as the performance of distress monitoring, communication, coordination of search and rescue functions, provision of medical advice and initial medical assistance through the use of lifesaving resources.

Lifesaving resources include all SLS active members/ALS staff, approved lifesaving equipment, Surf Life Saving clubs, support operations and lifesaving aircraft operating in New South Wales.

OVERVIEW

There are three levels of management within the SAR system:

1. Overall management of SAR responsibilities by SAR Authorities;
2. Control of individual SAR incidents by an Incident Controller (IC); and
3. Command of lifesaving services by a SLSNSW Incident Controller (SDO) and Forward Commander (usually Patrol Captain or Duty Officer/Lifeguard Supervisor).

This section outlines, in general terms, the management and coordination actions required when a decision is made to implement procedures in prosecuting a SAR.

Once it is decided to proceed with a search, plans should be enacted for the commencement of search activity with a minimum of delay.

SAR AUTHORITY

In NSW NSWPF is the SAR Authority in charge of all SAR operations.

NSW Police are the combat agency for all Search & Rescue incidents in New South Wales. NSW Police can request Surf Life Saving assets to operate outside normal standard operating procedures, i.e. use of Rescue Water Craft in prohibited waterways

INCIDENT CONTROL

Control of an incident relates to overall management of a SAR involving multiple agencies. A representative of the SAR Authority shall take the role of Incident Controller.

Most commonly in Surf Life Saving operations, the Incident Controller shall be a senior representative of the NSW Police Force.

Each SAR operation is carried out under an Incident Controller (IC) designated for the purpose by the appropriate SAR Authority. The role of the IC may vary between SAR Authorities depending on their command arrangements. They must understand the extent of their authority and responsibility and must be capable of taking immediate and adequate action, basing their decisions on knowledge, logic and good judgement.

INCIDENT COMMAND (SLS)

Command of an incident relates to the management of an individual agency's resources and delivery of specific tasks/objectives/goals, as set generally by the Incident Controller.

For Surf Life Saving, the Incident Commander shall be the State Duty Officer, with the role of Forward Commander delegated by the SDO, usually to the most senior lifesaving officer on-scene. (Often the Patrol Captain/Senior Lifeguard or Duty Officer/Lifeguard Supervisor).

The Surf Life Saving Incident Commander will assume 'command' and will be responsible for the coordination of all Surf Life Saving assets, resources, and personnel involved in the SAR, not limited to Lifesavers/Lifeguards (SLSNSW/ALS), IRBs, RWC, ORB, JRB, Surf Life Saving aircraft (helicopters, fixed-wing, UAVs).

Co-responding lifesaving services from adjacent branches or states shall fall under the command of the specific SLS incident commander, unless otherwise delegated by the Incident Commander.

Note: The relevant operational responsibilities of the various lifesaving service vessels/aircraft/skippers/ pilots shall be maintained however, as per the procedures for the safe operation of those craft.

The Incident Commander may delegate roles/responsibilities/tasks (including establishment of forward command posts/and delegation of forward incident commanders) as required – but reporting to the Incident Commander.

SAR ROLES – OVERVIEW

STATE DUTY OFFICER (INCLUDING STATE OPERATIONS CENTRE)

The State Duty Officer is the sole emergency contact and dissemination point between emergency services and lifesaving services regarding a beach or aquatic (coastal/offshore/inland) incident in NSW and for 'disasters' as per the NSW EMPLAN and relevant Sub-Plans.

All communications from emergency services and SLS/ALS/Council Lifeguard Services/Lifesaving Aircraft shall be directed to the State Duty Officer.

The State Duty Officer shall correlate and disseminate the relevant information to the relevant lifesaving services.

Responding lifesaving services shall provide the relevant SITREPS and communications to the State Duty Officer.

The State Duty officer shall provide SITREPS and seek further information from emergency service communications centres and key departments, including but not limited to Police VKG's, Marine Area Command, NSW Ambulance, Aeromedical Control, SES, NSW DPI.

Responding lifesaving services shall establish contact with on-site emergency services and agency Forward Commanders.

All SLS Life Saver Helicopter notifications/requests for support shall be made via the State Duty Officer (including when SurfCom's are operating).

Only State Duty Officers (including SOC) shall undertake a tasking/notification role for lifesaving services (unless otherwise delegated to by the State Duty Officer).

Note: During regular patrol hours, SLSNSW SurfCom shall fulfil the communication function to emergency services (Fire, Ambulance, Police) to request support for lifesaving services.

BRANCH DUTY OFFICER/ALS LIFEGUARD SUPERVISORS

These roles deliver 3 key functions:

1. Local dissemination and coordination of services for emergency response (generally outside regular patrol times and/or to unpatrolled locations).
2. On-site liaison with Agency Commander (most commonly NSW Police).
3. Forward Command of own services/assets/personnel.

Lifesaving services which shall fall under the operational 'command' of the Branch Duty Officer if participating in a SAR incident in NSW include:

- SLSC patrols/callout teams.
- SLS RWCs.
- SLS ORB/JRBs.
- Surf Life Saving Aircraft
- SLS services responding from adjacent Branches.
- SLS service responding from SLSQ, LSV.
- Other SLS services (i.e. visiting inter-state team).

JOINT-RESPONSE SITUATIONS (VOLUNTEER AND PAID SERVICES)

Where both volunteer lifesaving services and ALS services are co-responding they shall initially fall under the operational command of their own Incident Commander (Branch Duty Officer, Lifeguard Supervisor) respectively, until such time a coordinated command structure is agreed between both services.

Where volunteer lifesaving services, ALS and Council services may be undertaking joint operations,

command of their services shall fall to their own Patrol Captain, Branch Duty Officer, Lifeguard Supervisors respectively, until such time a coordinated command structure is agreed between all services (if appropriate).

SURFCOM

SurfCom provides the support function to a SAR, including the combination of the following:

- Initial dissemination of information and tasking of SLS/ALS services to an emergency;
- Coordination of emergency service support;
- Upward and downward SITREPs to SLS/ALS and emergency services;
- Monitoring service response/status/welfare; and
- Maintaining data/communications records.

Only SLSNSW SurfCom and/or State Duty Officers (including SOC) shall undertake a coordination/communications support role for lifesaving services over the SLSNSW radio network (unless otherwise delegated to by the State Duty Officer).

The staff of a SurfCom perform duties in the prosecution of search and rescue events in addition they have responsibility for maintaining the operations in a continuous state of preparedness. The SurfCom staff shall consist of personnel who are experienced and/or trained in SAR operations. When a period of heavy activity is anticipated or during major SAR incidents, the regular staff may be supplemented as required.

Last modified: 27/07/23

PSS 10.2 SEARCH AND RESCUE STAGES

PURPOSE

To outline Surf Life Saving NSW (SLSNSW) search and rescue stages.

POLICY

SLSNSW provides the following information for use by lifesaving services personnel.

PROCEDURE

INTRODUCTION

When the SAR system first becomes aware of an actual or potential emergency, the information collected, and the initial action taken are often critical to successful SAR operations. It must be assumed that in each incident there are survivors who will need assistance and whose chances of survival are reduced by the passage of time. The success of a SAR operation depends on the speed with which the operation is planned and carried out. Information must be gathered and evaluated to determine the nature of the distress, the appropriate emergency phase, and what action should be taken.

Prompt receipt of all available information by the SurfCom is necessary for thorough evaluation, immediate decision on the best course of action and a timely activation of SAR assets to make it possible to:

1. Locate, support and rescue persons in distress in the shortest possible time; and
2. Use any contribution survivors may still be able to make towards their own rescue while they are still capable of doing so.

SAR STAGES

The response to a SAR incident usually proceeds through a sequence of five stages. These stages are groups of activities typically performed by the SAR system in responding to a SAR incident from the time the system becomes aware of the incident until its response to the incident is concluded. The response to a particular SAR incident may not require the performance of every stage. For some incidents, the activities of one stage may overlap the activities of another stage such that the portions of two or more stages are being performed simultaneously. The five SAR stages are:

1. Awareness – Knowledge by any person or agency in the SAR system that an emergency situation exists or may exist.
2. Initial Action – Preliminary action taken to alert SAR assets and obtain more information. The stage may include evaluation and classification of the information, alerting of SAR assets, communication checks and, in urgent situations, immediate performance of appropriate activities from other stages.
3. Planning – The development of operational plans including plans for search, rescue and final

delivery of survivors to medical facilities or other places of safety as appropriate.

4. Operations – Dispatching SAR assets to the scene, conducting searches, rescuing survivors, assisting distressed craft, providing necessary emergency care for survivors and delivering casualties to medical facilities.

5. Conclusion – Return of SRUs to a location where they are debriefed, refueled, replenished and prepared for other missions, return of SAR assets to their normal activities and completion of all required documentation.

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PSS 10.3 RISK VS GAIN

PURPOSE

To provide guidelines regarding the process of evaluating risk versus gain in relation to SAR operations.

POLICY

Surf Life Saving NSW (SLSNSW) requires lifesaving personnel to evaluate SAR operations to determine the level of risk versus the likely gain before commencing activities to ensure the ongoing safety of personnel.

PROCEDURE

SAR facilities are responsible for taking whatever action they can to save life at any time and place where their facilities are available and can be effectively used. Nevertheless, there may be a point beyond which SAR services are not expected and cannot be justified.

Known and inherent and residual risk must be carefully weighed against the mission's chances for success and the gains to be realised.

SAR personnel and equipment shall not be placed at risk, nor the mission attempted, unless lives are known to be at stake and the chances for saving lives are within the capability of the personnel and equipment available.

All reasonable action shall be taken to locate distressed personnel, determine their status and bring about their rescue. Prolonged SAR operations after all probability of survival has been exhausted are uneconomical and not warranted. The decision to conduct such operations must be based on probability of detection.

Studies have shown that the period within 12 to 24 hours of a distress incident is the most critical for recovery of survivors. The best chance of successful recovery occurs during this period. After 48 hours the chance of successful recovery decreases rapidly.

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PSS 10.4 SAR INFORMATION FACTORS

PURPOSE

To provide an overview of search and rescue information factors.

POLICY

Surf Life Saving NSW (SLSNSW) provides guidelines regarding search and rescue information factors to assist lifesaving personnel in undertaking their duties effectively.

PROCEDURE

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE INCIDENT CONTROLLER

Incident Controller (IC) duties can be demanding, the gathering of information, evaluation of this information and initiation of action all require concentrated effort on many details. The IC will find the various forms, checklists, worksheets, tables and graphs provided in the appendices to be very helpful.

The following provides some general guidance for the early stages of a SAR operation, including information gathering and preparation for the possible need to plan searches.

Several factors will influence the extent and manner of an initial SAR response. In general, these are the:

1. Extent/reliability of information about the location of the distressed craft/occupants;
2. Availability of aircraft, marine craft and land parties for searching;
3. Actual and forecast weather conditions;
4. Times of daylight/darkness;
5. Nature of terrain;
6. Availability of survival supplies and supply dropping teams;
7. Sea currents; and
8. Time delay in notification

LOCATION CLUES

Some of the clues that may indicate the survivors' location or situation include:

- Intentions;
- Last known position;
- Hazards;
- Condition and capabilities;
- Crew behaviour;
- On scene environmental conditions; and
- Results of previous searching.

PSS 10.5 SAR BRIEFINGS

PURPOSE

To provide guidelines regarding SAR briefings.

POLICY

Comprehensive briefing and de-briefing of search crews is a vital component of search planning. They are time-consuming processes, and in the case of briefing, preparation must commence at an early stage and, whenever possible, in good time before departure. It must be appreciated that many personnel engaged for search operations are neither trained for, nor experienced in the search role. Field SAR personnel shall therefore be given every opportunity to familiarise themselves with all relevant details of the distress. All instructions for the SAR operation shall be clearly and precisely presented.

The Briefing Officer appointed to the briefing task must be thoroughly familiar with the overall plan and individual search unit tasks

PROCEDURE

SEARCH BRIEFING

Comprehensive briefing of search units is vital to every search operation. The Incident Commander should be satisfied that the briefings are well prepared, and that where group briefings are to be conducted, the venue is suitable for the purpose.

Briefings for marine units will cover similar topics to those given to air and land units, but there may be less opportunity for face-to-face briefing contact. Appointed Briefing Officers (Patrol Captains/Duty Officers/ Lifeguard Supervisors) should be aware of the difficulties inherent in briefing indirectly and the increased potential for misunderstanding.

Similar arrangements shall be made for debriefing SAR units.

SMEACS

A standard sequence for issuing orders or instructions is used to convey operational plans to all personnel (especially in inter-agency training exercises and operations).

This sequence is known as SMEACS, referring to:

- S (Situation)
- M (Mission)
- E (Execution)
- A (Administration and Logistics)
- C (Command, Control and Communications)

- S (Safety).

Using the SMEACS system to sequence your delivery is commonly utilised and understood and can enhance briefings.

PSS 10.6 PARALLEL LINE SEARCH PATTERN

PURPOSE

To provide guidelines regarding parallel line search patterns.

POLICY

Surf Life Saving NSW (SLSNSW) provides the following guidelines to assist personnel in effectively performing their duties.

PROCEDURE

Parallel line search patterns are used when the area of probability is large and the location of craft or person in distress is not well established. The search legs used are parallel to the major axis of the search area. This search pattern can be carried out by single or multiple vessels.

The parallel line search pattern is best used in rectangular or square areas. It is a very suitable pattern for a search conducted over water. The search vessel/s proceeds from one corner of the search area maintaining parallel tracks. Successive tracks are maintained parallel to each other and one track spacing apart.

This type of search may be carried out by one aircraft or by several aircraft following parallel tracks or each searching smaller rectangular areas separately.

This search pattern provides uniform coverage and should be utilised only when operating in the open ocean. Search and rescue crews should follow the following steps when utilising this search pattern for single vessels:

1. The search pattern shall begin at one corner of the search area.
2. Crews shall take a visual reference or drop a buoy and anchor as a surface marker. This will then provide a continuous reference point during the search.
3. The search pattern should begin so that there is a continuous overlap of vision throughout the search.
4. Crews shall ensure that successive tracks are maintained parallel to each other and are one track space apart.

Parallel line searches utilising more than one vessel should follow the same steps as one vessel operations but include the following considerations:

1. When operating within a relatively small area of probability (e.g. a beach 500 metres or less in length) each craft shall be designated a specific starting point in the search area in line with each vessel and shall be one track spacing apart.
2. When operating within a relatively large area of probability (e.g. a beach greater than 500 metres

in length) each craft shall be designated a specific section of the search area based on distance with a specific overlap distance incorporated e.g. each vessel is designated a starting point 300 metres apart with an overlapping distance of 50 metres.
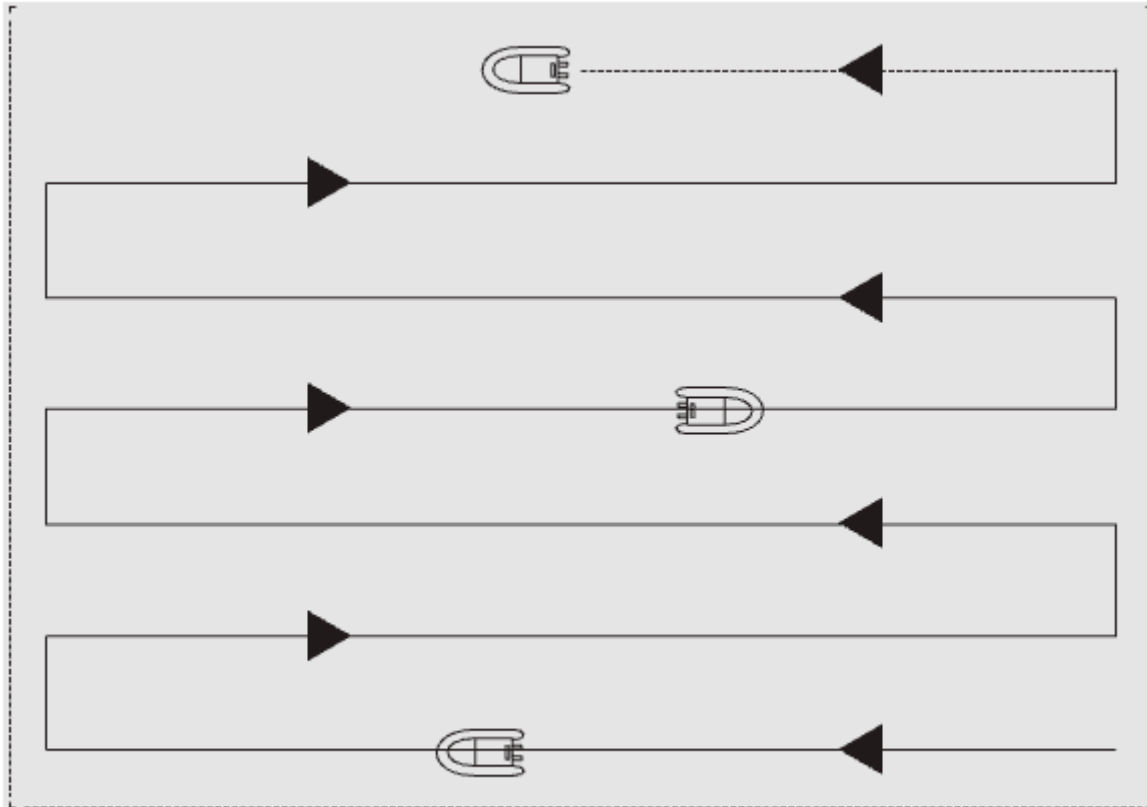
Single Vessel Parallel Line Search

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PSS 10.7 CREEPING LINE SEARCH PATTERN

PURPOSE

To provide guidelines regarding creeping line search patterns.

POLICY

Surf Life Saving NSW (SLSNSW) provides the following guidelines to assist personnel in effectively performing their duties.

PROCEDURE

A creeping line search pattern would be used when there is a stronger probability of the craft or person in distress closer to one end of the search area.

There are two different types of creeping line search patterns, these are:

1. Rip to Open Ocean
2. Open Ocean

RIP TO OCEAN

A rip to ocean creeping line search is to be utilised in inshore conditions when the last known position of the patient/s were in a rip current, and the current direction is known. This search pattern should also be utilised when undertaking search and rescue operations in river and creek mouths and bars.

When undertaking a rip to ocean creeping line search the following steps should be utilised:

1. The search pattern shall begin at the last known position.
2. Crews shall take a visual reference or drop a buoy and anchor as a surface marker. This will then provide a continuous reference point during the search.
3. The search pattern should follow the direction of the current. The search lines taken should be close enough so that there is a continuous overlap of vision throughout the search.
4. Crews shall work from the last known position, down current, observing the change from rip current to ocean current. Crews shall alter the heading of the search accordingly with the current.

OPEN OCEAN

An open ocean creeping line search is to be utilised in open ocean or flat water conditions. This search pattern is to be utilised when the direction of the current or wind is known.

When undertaking an open ocean creeping line search the following steps should be utilised:

1. The search pattern shall begin at the last known position.
2. Crews shall take a visual reference or drop a buoy and anchor as a surface marker. This will then provide a continuous reference point during the search.
3. The search pattern should begin following the direction of the current or wind. The line taken should be close enough so that there is a continuous overlap of vision throughout the search.
4. Crews shall work from the last known position and move along search lines that are equally spaced.
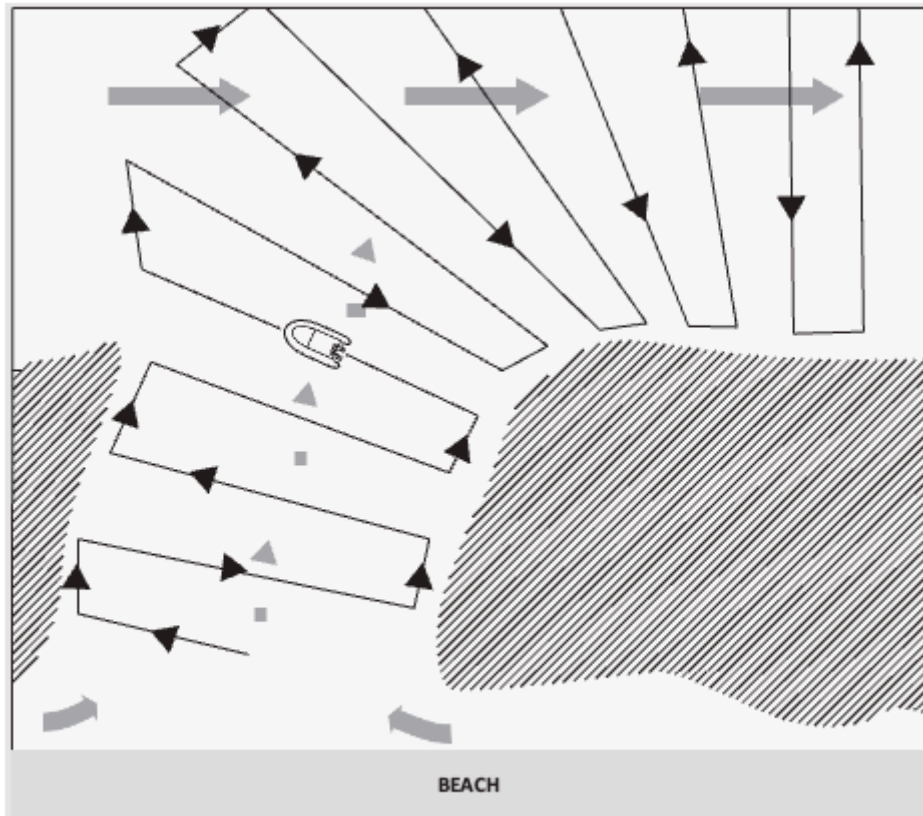
Creeping line search pattern (Rip to open ocean)

Creeping line search pattern (Open ocean)

PSS 10.8 EXPANDING SQUARE SEARCH PATTERN

PURPOSE

To provide guidelines regarding expanding square search patterns.

POLICY

Surf Life Saving NSW (SLSNSW) provides the following guidelines to assist personnel in effectively performing their duties.

PROCEDURE

This procedure is referred to as an expanding square search as it begins at the reported position or most probable location and expands outwards in concentric squares. It is a very precise pattern and requires accurate navigation.

The square search pattern is used when the target is known to be in a relatively small area and the current direction is unknown. This search pattern provides uniform coverage and should be utilised only when operating in the open ocean.

Search and rescue crews should follow the following steps when utilising this search pattern:

1. The search pattern shall begin at the last known position.
2. Crews shall take a visual reference or drop a buoy and anchor as a surface marker. This will then provide a continuous reference point during the search.
3. The search pattern should begin so that there is a continuous overlap of vision throughout the search.
4. The first two legs are held to a distance equal to the track spacing and every succeeding two legs are increased by a further track space. Turns may be to the left or right at a 90 degree angle, depending upon the observer positions.
5. To ensure that each two legs are as accurate as possible the following methods may be used:
    a. Distance – Each two legs are of equal length.
    b. Time and Speed – Each two legs are to occur over the same amount of time and at the same speed.

Expanding square search patterns utilising more than one vessel should follow the same steps as one vessel operations but include the following considerations:

1. The second vessel is to commence the same pattern but orientated 45°.
2. If the same speed is used for both vessels, the first vessel must be allowed to complete at least 3 search legs before the second commences to avoid risk of collision.
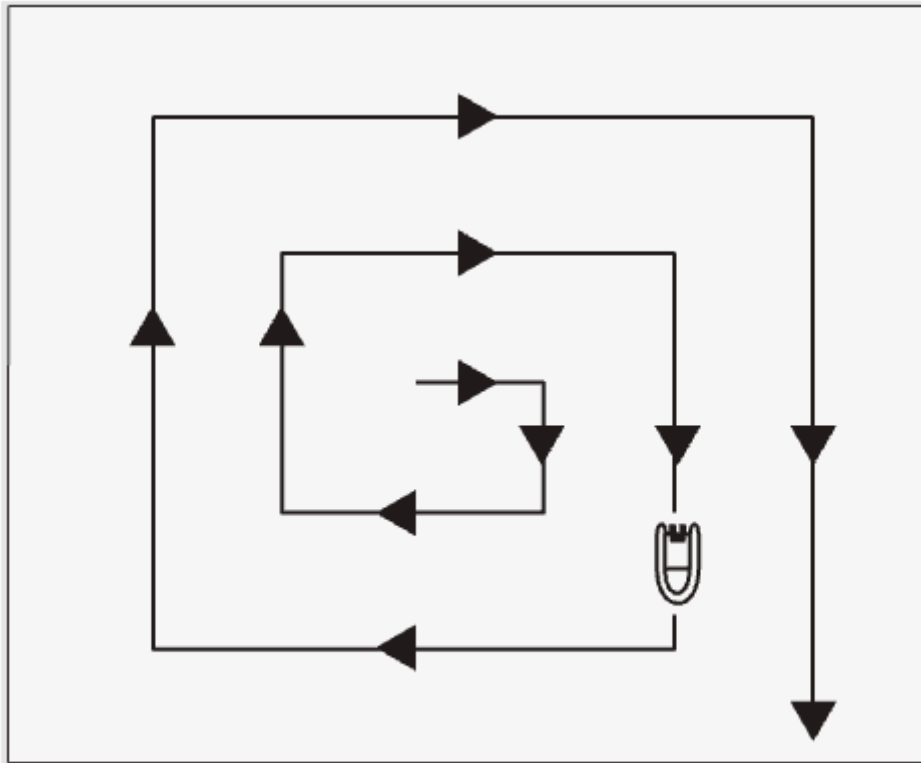
Expanding square search pattern (Open ocean)
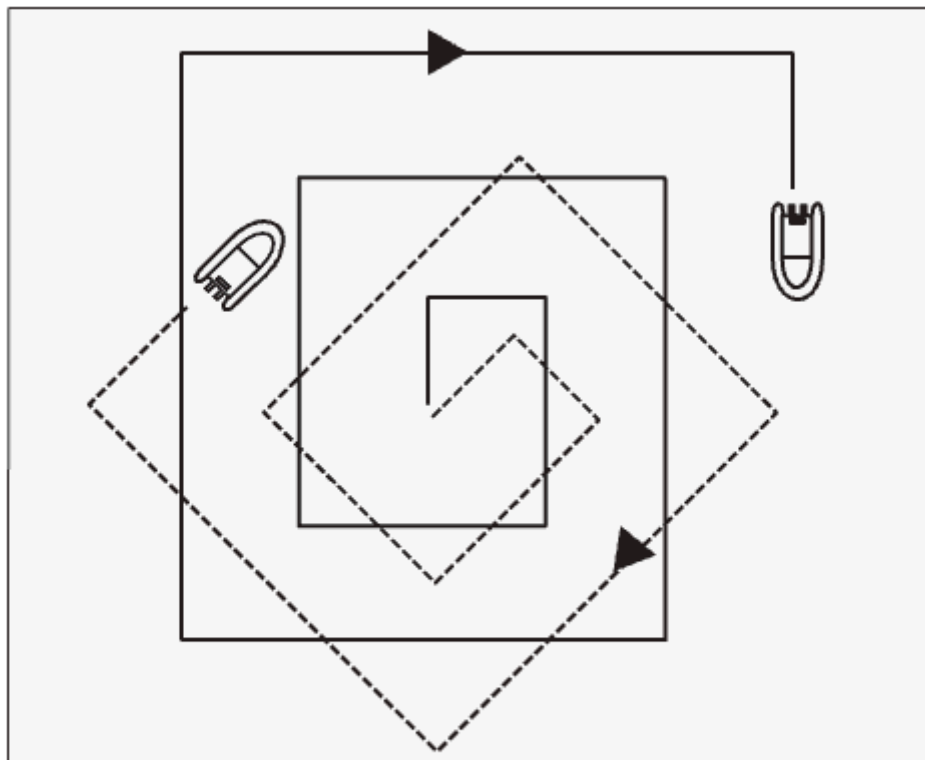
Expanding square search pattern – 2 Vessels (Open ocean)

PSS 10.9 UNDERWATER SEARCH AND RESCUE

PURPOSE

To outline the correct procedure when undertaking an underwater SAR.

POLICY

Surf Life Saving NSW (SLSNSW) provides the following guidelines to assist personnel in effectively performing their duties.

PROCEDURE

Underwater search and rescue activities may be conducted by lifesaving services in the initial phase of a SAR where the objective is to save a patient's life. When a search becomes a definite 'body recovery' operation, lifesaving services shall not undertake underwater SAR activities.

The use of SCUBA equipment is not to be used by lifesaving personnel at any time. Lifesaving services may not tow lifesaving or emergency service personnel with SCUBA equipment.

Known and inherent risks must be carefully contemplated against a mission's chance for success and the gains to be realised. All reasonable effort should be taken to locate those in trouble, determine their status, and affect the rescue.

The decision to prolong an operation after all probability of success has been exhausted should not be undertaken, unless at the direction of the Police.

The first consideration is the safety of the divers, the crew, and the boat. When the time has elapsed, such that the search is basically for a body, the crew should not place themselves in a situation of risk. Where there is a chance that a life may be saved, the risks must be evaluated by the divers and the skipper.

All participants must be qualified and proficient Surf Life Savers or Lifeguards. The diver on scene initially must assess the situation faced, to ensure the safety of the team and the supporting crews. The diver is expected to exercise judgement based on training and experience, in relation to the safety of the mission. If a diver considers the risk too great, other personnel must accept the diver's decision as final.

INITIAL SEARCH

Firstly, establish where and when the victim was last seen. Determine this by dissecting two sets of landmarks and marking with anchor line and marker buoy.

During underwater SAR extreme care should be taken to avoid running the diver over. Dive flags must be on or displayed at all times.

UNDERWATER CURRENTS

In many instances due to tide and underwater currents the body will have drifted from the position last seen. To determine the underwater current use marker dye and drop it into the sea at the position where the victim was last seen and observe the direction and rate of drift.

SEARCH PATTERN

In consultation with the diver, determine the area to be searched, the search pattern to be adopted and the width between each search run. This is determined by clarity and depth of water. Before commencing the search, the size of the initial search area should be established and co-ordinates noted from various objects on the land so the search area can be accurately determined. If the search is unsuccessful then a new area should be defined unless timeframes dictate that the likelihood of survival has been exhausted.

RECOVERY OF SEARCH OBJECT

When located, the diver should attempt to recover the patient if able or maintain a visual. The diver should signal to their support boat to gain their attention.

CREW'S DUTIES

- Assist diver to don equipment (if necessary).
- Monitor the diver safety as they deploy and use "OK" dive signal to check their condition once they are in the water.
- Observe position of the diver at all times and report any hazards to driver/skipper.
- Assist diver back onto boat.

DRIVER'S DUTIES

For a stationary search, anchor vessel then assist crew with preparations:

- Ensure motors are in neutral when divers are entering or leaving water.
- Steer appropriate bearings as indicated by skipper/crew, as accurately as possible.
- Listen to directions from crew as dictated by messages from diver.
- At no time during towing should the vessel reverse.

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PSS 10.10 INFORMATION EXCHANGE IN TRANSFER OF COORDINATION

PURPOSE

To provide guidelines regarding information exchange in the transfer of coordination of search and rescue operations.

POLICY

Surf Life Saving NSW (SLSNSW) provides the following guidelines to assist personnel in effectively performing their duties.

PROCEDURE

INCIDENT INFORMATION, HANDOVERS AND SITREPS

Where the Incident Controller or Agency Commander needs another agency or Incident Controller/ Agency Commander to take responsibility for a SAR event or a specific activity in the SAR event:

1. The incoming Incident Controller/Agency Commander must be provided with:
    a. Clear objectives, scope and scale of the delegated responsibility and service required;
    b. Full briefing on the SAR event to the extent that it will affect the service to be provided;
    c. Conditions and constraints on use of assets;
    d. Time requirements and constraints; and
    e. Tactical intelligence, information and data as it becomes available that may affect the progress of the support service provided.

1. The incoming Incident Controller/Agency Commander must:
    a. Accept, or reject the proposed delegation. If the action is other than to accept the delegation, then the coordinating authority must be informed of the operational reasons;
    b. Operate within the terms of reference for the supporting service;
    c. Inform the coordinating authority of any circumstances, if they arise where the specified service cannot be provided or needs to be varied, together with reasons;
    d. Exchange with the coordinating authority, tactical intelligence, information and data as it becomes available that may affect the progress of the SAR event; and
    e. Report progress of the support activity to the coordinating authority

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PSS 10.11 CONCLUSION OF SAR OPERATIONS

PURPOSE

To provide guidelines regarding concluding a SAR operation.

POLICY

Surf Life Saving NSW (SLSNSW) provides the following guidelines to assist personnel in effectively performing their duties.

PROCEDURE

GENERAL

SAR operations enter the conclusion stage when:

1. The target is located and the survivors are rescued;
2. Information is received that the target is no longer in distress;
3. All known persons on board are accounted for;
4. The SAR authority determines that further searching has no significant chance of succeeding and either suspend or terminate the search;
5. The Lifesaving Incident Commander (Duty Officer/Lifeguard Supervisor) deems conditions are too dangerous for personnel;
6. There are not sufficient lifesaving services available to safely continue operations.

The authority to end a search rests with different levels within the SAR organisation, depending on the circumstances.

In particular, the SAR authority is responsible for deciding when to suspend or terminate an unsuccessful search where lives were known to be at risk.

SUSPENSION OF A SEARCH WHEN THE TARGET IS NOT FOUND

When it is determined that further search would be of no avail, the Incident Controller shall consider recommending the suspension or termination of the SAR operation. However, search action shall not be suspended or terminated, nor the distress phase cancelled without the specific concurrence of the SAR authority.

The decision to suspend a search shall not be made until a thorough review of the search is conducted. The review will focus on the probability of there being survivors from the initial incident, the probability of survival after the incident, the probability that the survivors were in the search area, and the effectiveness of the search.

The review should:

1. Examine search decisions to ensure that proper assumptions were made and that planning scenarios were reasonable;
2. Reconfirm the certainty of initial position and any drift factors used in determining the search area;
3. Re-evaluate any significant clues and leads;
4. Examine datum computations and data calculations;
5. Confirm that all reasonable means of obtaining information about the target have been exhausted;
6. Review all intelligence material to ensure no information had been overlooked;
7. Examine the search plan to ensure that:
   a. assigned areas were searched;
   b. the probability of detection was as high as desired; and
   c. compensation was made for search degradation caused by weather, navigational, mechanical or other difficulties; and
8. Consider the survivability of the survivor/s taking into account:
   a. time elapsed since the incident;
   b. environmental conditions;
   c. age, experience and physical condition of (potential) survivors;
   d. survival equipment available;
   e. studies or information relating to survival in similar circumstances; and
9. Consider the rescue plan to ensure that:
   a. best use was made of available resources;
   b. contingency plans were sufficient to cater with unexpected developments; and
   c. coordination with other agencies was effective in ensuring best treatment of survivors.

Before an unsuccessful search is suspended or terminated, the SAR authority shall make arrangements to ensure that the next of kin are fully briefed on the complete search effort, including conditions in the search area, other salient operational factors and the reasons for proposing the suspension or termination of the search.

Consideration may be given to notifying the decision to suspend or terminate search effort at least one day prior to suspension of operations allowing next of kin at least one more day of hope while giving them time to accept that the search cannot continue indefinitely.

When a lifesaving service SAR response is discontinued or a search is suspended, the Incident Commander (Duty Officer/Lifeguard Supervisor) shall inform the Incident Controller and all authorities, units and facilities that have been activated and/or alerted.

On occasions, after the suspension of a search, it may be necessary for the Police to continue to search for bodies and/or aircraft/vessel wreckage. In such cases the SAR authority that had responsibility for the coordination of the search and rescue operation may, where possible:

1. Provide briefings on the path of the aircraft/vessel prior to disappearance, last known position, area searched and related intelligence;
2. Review intelligence to assist search;
3. Source aircraft for transport or search purposes; and/or
4. Provide drift information.

Should any other organisation wish to continue with or initiate an independent search, the SAR authority that had responsibility for the coordination of the search and rescue operation should ascertain whether there is any new intelligence that provides grounds to resume or continue the search. Under the circumstances where there is new intelligence, it should be evaluated and if considered valid the search should be continued or resumed.

Where there is no new intelligence, then the SAR authority may assist the requesting organisation by:

1. Briefing the aircraft/vessel's path prior to disappearance, splash/crash point, area searched and related intelligence;
2. Advising the possible location of suitable search aircraft; and/or
3. Providing drift information.

REOPENING A SUSPENDED SEARCH

If significant new information or clues are developed reopening of a suspended case should be considered. Reopening without good reason may lead to unwarranted use of resources, risk of injury to searchers, possible inability to respond to other emergencies, and false hopes among relatives.

RECORDS AND REPORTS

Records relating to search and rescue operations, including air searches on behalf of other organisations, shall be retained for periods as required under the relevant legislation and regulation.

When a search has been terminated without locating a missing aircraft or its occupants, all records, charts etc. shall be retained and be accessible to SAR staff to allow easy resumption of search activity should further intelligence be received.

Reports on SAR actions shall be generated as required for Coroners inquiries, management purposes and for training requirements.

INCIDENT DEBRIEFS

Following an incident, the conduct of a debrief of agencies and groups involved should be considered. The purpose of incident debriefs is to establish opportunities for improvement in the operation of the national SAR system.

Incidents worthy of debrief may include those where:

1. Lives have been lost unexpectedly;
2. Large and complex searches have been conducted;
3. Multi agency involvement occurred; or
4. Where coordination, communication or response challenges were experienced during the incident.

This list is not exhaustive and the conduct of a post incident, multi-agency debrief is at the discretion of the SAR authority in overall coordination of the incident with mutual agreement of other SAR authorities and agencies involved.

Post incident debriefs should be used to:

1. Establish opportunities for improvement in the operation of the National SAR System; and
2. Ensure current policies and procedures are appropriate. The SAR authority with overall coordination is to:
3. Decide the need for a debrief in consultation with other SAR participants;
4. Organize and host the debrief unless otherwise agreed by the participants;
5. Establish a venue that maximizes opportunity for participation in, and learning from, the debrief; and
6. Capture and share the opportunities for improvement arising.

Participation at debriefs may be restricted to particular SAR authorities and agencies depending on the issues that are likely to arise and would be a decision for the SAR authority with overall coordination for the incident.

SAR authorities that participate in the debrief will meet their own attendance costs, unless otherwise agreed by the participants.

The debrief should include the opportunity for all significant parties involved in the incident to contribute and learn from it.

REFERENCE

[Critical Incident Support](#)
[Critical Incident Management Support Procedures](#)

Last modified: 27/07/23

PSS 11 SURFCOM

PSS 11 SurfCom

- [PSS 11.1 Overview of SurfCom Operations](#)
- [PSS 11.2 SurfCom Facilities and Equipment](#)
- [PSS 11.3 SurfCom Emergency Protocols](#)
- [PSS 11.4 Information Systems](#)
- [PSS 11.5 Information Assessment](#)
- [PSS 11.6 Dissemination of Information](#)
- [PSS 11.7 Information Filing/Storage](#)
- [PSS 11.8 Closing SurfCom](#)
- [PSS 11.9 Voice Recordings](#)

Last modified: 10/08/23

PSS 11.1 OVERVIEW OF SURFCOM OPERATIONS

PURPOSE

To provide an overview of State Operations Centre (callsign SurfCom) operations within Surf Life Saving NSW (SLSNSW).

POLICY

SLSNSW provides the following guidelines and requirements to ensure the ongoing effectiveness of SurfCom in the support of lifesaving operations.

PROCEDURE

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of a SurfCom is to assist the Forward Commander (Patrol Captain, Lifeguard, and Duty Officer) to carry out their roles. SurfCom provides support/coordination between lifesaving services and other emergency services.

SURFCOM AUTHORISATION

Only SLSNSW authorised 'SurfCom' may utilise SLSNSW radio frequencies and fulfil the 'SurfCom' type function. Other agencies/services/groups within Surf Life Saving and externally shall seek written permission from SLSNSW to utilise radio frequencies and undertake SurfCom type roles (temporary or ongoing) for their own services and/or with lifesaving/other services.

SURFCOM OBJECTIVE

To provide communications and coordination support to lifesaving services/emergency services.

SCOPE OF OPERATION – DAYS/HOURS

The State Operations Centre operates 365 days a year.

Seasonal hours may vary, however minimum operating hours are 0700 – 1700. SurfCom is considered operational for the duration of SOC open hours, the coastal radio network is actively monitored during this time.

Where patrols extend hours due to conditions such as beach visitation or developing incident, SurfCom shall extend its hours to match.

No Surf Life Saving patrol/service should operate a scheduled patrol without the support of a SLSNSW endorsed SurfCom.

SCOPE OF OPERATION – AFTER-HOURS CAPACITY

SurfCom retains the capacity to be activated after-hours/out-of-season for specific events and emergency incidents.

SURFCOM KEY DUTIES

- Patrol/service sign-on/offs + key data/stats;
- Provide key planning information – weather/warnings/tides/other;
- Coordinate resources to support lifesaving services;
- Coordinate emergency service support to aid lifesaving services;
- Information management – this relates to the necessity of SurfCom to maintain records and collect, interpret and disseminate relevant information.

SURFCOM ELEMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

SurfCom is key to effective emergency management, with the following elements which are generally common to all operations centres.

1. Management – of operations is the responsibility of the Incident Commander, the State Duty Officer. This person is responsible for decisions made in respect to the conduct of operations. The Incident Commander is supported in this role by the operations element (SurfCom).
2. Operations – This element supports the decision-making responsibilities of the Incident Commander and carries out:
   a. Processing of Information.
   b. Coordination of the acquisition and deployment of resources.
   c. Deployment of operational plans.
   d. Liaison with representatives of other organisations.
3. Communications – This element provides the communication necessary to support the command, operations and administrative elements. It is a central part of the planning process and must anticipate the increased need for information transmission, in both technological and personal terms. It must provide for sufficient capability to achieve reliable and effective communications.
4. Administrative Support – Like any office, SurfCom creates administrative demands through its own activities. These demands are met by an administrative support element.

SURFCOM ROLES/POSITIONS

- **State Duty Officer (SDO):** State appointed officer responsible for overall SurfCom function. Incident Commander. Callsign: NSW 10
- **Senior Emergency Response Operator (SERO):** Senior SurfCom Operator on-shift (2IC to SDO) on any given day.
- **Emergency Response Operator (ERO):** Standard SurfCom communications role.
- **Probationary Emergency Response Operator:** New operator, who has completed training, and is undertaking initial shifts under supervision.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE OPERATOR PRE-REQUISITES

Minimum:

- 18 years of age (at commencement of duties)
- SLSA Financial Member
- Excellent communication skills
- High standard of computer literacy

Desired:

- Bronze Medallion
- Radio Operator Certificate
- Comprehensive understanding of Surf Life Saving operations
- Emergency Service Experience

SURFCOM PERSONNEL UNIFORM/EQUIPMENT

State Duty Officers shall wear the following uniform:

- SLSNSW sky blue business shirt with SLSNSW roundel on left chest or SLSNSW
- SLSNSW Navy staff polo with SLSNSW roundel on left chest
- SLSNSW name badge with name, role and SLSNSW roundel
- Enclosed shoes
- Tidy dress pants, shorts or skirt

Emergency Response Operators shall wear the following uniform as a minimum:

- SLSNSW Navy staff polo with SLSNSW roundel on left chest
- SLSNSW Name badge – with name, role, and SLS roundel
- Tidy dress pants, shorts or skirt
- Enclosed shoes

Note: All relevant workplace health and safety requirements shall apply to a SurfCom facility/personnel

Last modified: 27/07/23

PSS 11.2 SURFCOM FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

PURPOSE

To outline minimum equipment and capacity requirements for a SurfCom Operations Centre.

POLICY

To ensure the effectiveness of SurfCom operations, Surf Life Saving NSW (SLSNSW) has established minimum hardware and logistics requirements which is to be complied with by all SurfCom Operations Centres.

PROCEDURE

A SurfCom should carry the following equipment and capacities as a minimum.

MINIMUM HARDWARE

- One (1) independent phone line for each radio/operator console or one (1) phone line with call-waiting or call divert functionality.
- 1(one) internet connected computer for each radio/operator console
- SLSNSW approved radio equipment per console
- Backup power supply for radio system (generator/battery)
- Whiteboard and markers
- Planning table

MINIMUM LOGISTICS

- Access to SurfCom Management System
- Access to Beachsafe.org.au
- A SLSNSW email address and access to email
- Appropriate forms/logs (hard copy) – in lieu of loss of SurfCom Management System
- Local and State contacts – hard copy and computer based
- Coastal Maps – in google-earth format (computer) and in hard copy
- Area emergency callout team contacts – hard copy and computer based
- External emergency service contacts – hard copy and computer based
- 24/7/365 activation capability

Note: All relevant workplace health and safety requirements shall apply to a SurfCom facility/personnel.

Last modified: 27/07/23

PSS 11.3 SURFCOM EMERGENCY PROTOCOLS

PURPOSE

To ensure that all verbal communication is clear, concise, accurate and in line with the needs of the operation.

POLICY

Surf Life Saving NSW (SLSNSW) expects professional and effective communication at all times and provides clear guidelines regarding the information that should be obtained when receiving a request for assistance.

PROCEDURE

A Request for Assistance (RFA) has four main sections:

- Callers Details
- Incident Location
- Incident Description
- Communications Log

Note: Specific procedures should be referenced as well (i.e. lost/missing persons).

CALLER'S DETAILS

It is very important to obtain the caller's details so they can be contacted if information needs to be verified at a later stage (including Contact #, CAD/Incident #).

INCIDENT LOCATION

The most important information is the location of where assistance is required. Write down things such as the nearest access point, beach ID, beach name or anything that may be relevant.

INCIDENT DESCRIPTION

Problem	An overview of the problem including the severity of the situation and any likely consequences
People	The number and details of the people involved, depending if search or medical.
Progress	The response being carried out, the current response situation. Progress updates should be provided to SurfCom as appropriate (milestones reached or changes occur).
Assistance	What assistance is required (either directly requested or appropriate to activate as per SOPs).

PSS 11.4 INFORMATION SYSTEMS

PURPOSE

To ensure all information is managed correctly through SurfCom operations.

POLICY

Surf Life Saving NSW (SLSNSW) provides the following guidelines regarding SurfCom Information Systems.

PROCEDURE

In order to effectively manage operations, a system must be established for information flow. Where there are more than one SurfCom operator, personnel should be assigned their duties.

For any SurfCom Operator information flow should follow the below procedure in conjunction with the Standard Operating Procedures of an incident as detailed within this manual.

These items are provided in detail in the following operating procedures:

- Information gathering
- Information collating
- Information assessment
- Reaction to information
- Dissemination of information
- Filing of information

Last modified: 27/07/23

PSS 11.5 INFORMATION ASSESSMENT

PURPOSE

To provide guidelines regarding information assessment.

POLICY

Surf Life Saving NSW (SLSNSW) provides the following guidelines regarding information assessment for personnel to adhere to.

PROCEDURE

Once collated, information needs to be accessed and interpreted to convert it to intelligence by asking, among other things, the following:

- Is it relevant information, and does the relevance produce further information or change existing information?
- Is its source reliable? Information must not be accepted at face value without assessing reliability of the source and cross checking with other information. Do not discard what appears to be unlikely without sound reasons.
- Is confirmation required?
- Does the information have urgent implications?
- Is it significant? If the significance of an item of information is not recognised, the resulting response may be deficient. Significance is determined by what may need to be done in response to the information.

REACTION TO INFORMATION ASSESSMENT

When information has been gathered collated and assessed, it is then possible to consider and plan appropriate responses. Actions to be considered include:

- Deploying resources and personnel to an incident.
- Activating Support Operations.
- Requesting other internal SLS assistance.
- Requesting emergency service support.
- Lifesaving service support.
- Peer support/welfare services.
- Recording – accurate recording of all actions and orders is essential to:
  - ensure accountability for the exercise of authority and the use of resources.
  - facilitate investigations including coronial and criminal.
  - maximising learning through debriefing and subsequent training.

Last modified: 27/07/23

PSS 11.6 DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION

PURPOSE

To outline the final process in information management – dissemination.

POLICY

Surf Life Saving NSW (SLSNSW) provides the following guidelines regarding dissemination of information.

PROCEDURE

The final process in information management is to ensure effective declaration of the results and actions. Information flow must be upwards to supervisors, downwards to personnel/services and outward to other agencies and the community.

This is achieved by the following:

- Orders (written or verbally).
- Situation Reports (SITREPS) – They may be formal written communications or telephone messages. Controversial issues should be advised to the next higher level (or as per the SOPs) as soon as possible, rather than waiting to be included in the next routine situation report.
- Public Warnings – A number of methods of distribution may need to be used at the same time to make sure that everyone who needs to be warned is warned. One method is to use the media (all public warnings must be logged).
- Media Releases – These are designed to ensure that the public is properly informed of the current situation and the organisations involvement (see the media section of this manual).
- Briefings – these give an overview of the situation and may contain operational, administrative, communications and media information.
- Debriefings – these are to be conducted at the level appropriate for the incident and given the suitable level of importance.

OUTGOING INFORMATION

Ideally all outgoing information should be written and a copy of the information filed digitally (and in hard copy if such exists).

Last modified: 27/07/23

PSS 11.7 INFORMATION FILING/STORAGE

PURPOSE

To outline SurfCom record management requirements.

POLICY

All SurfCom information shall be consistent with the SLSNSW Records Management Policy.

PROCEDURE

A key responsibility of SurfCom (and Patrol Captains, Duty Officers) to ensure that all of the information generated at the incident is held indefinitely so that it is secure for future reference and can be readily retrieved if required.

All SurfCom must maintain a filing system that is consistent with the below:

- All computer-based systems must be backed up on appropriate disks and stored in a suitable environment to avoid corruption and loss of data
- All paper-based logs shall be maintained and stored appropriately
- All rosters of SurfCom personnel must be maintained in SurfGuard
- All incident reports must be inputted correctly in SurfGuard
- All information must be recorded either digitally in the SurfCom Management System, SurfGuard and on the any radio log and other SLS logs/forms utilised

All these records are retained to ensure that detailed records are available for any subsequent:

- Formal reports
- Debriefings
- Operational analyses
- Coronial Inquests
- Commissions on inquiry
- Critical Incident Debriefing
- Witness statements

All records shall be collated using the following references (in order):

- Date
- Location
- Time

Last modified: 27/07/23

PSS 11.8 CLOSING SURFCOM (END OF DAY)

PURPOSE

To outline the process of closing SurfCom at the end of the scheduled patrol day.

POLICY

The decision to close a SurfCom is made by the State Duty Officer (SDO) when the following has occurred:

- Normal operations have ceased (last patrol/service signed-off).
- Active incidents have ceased (incident is over and all responded lifesaving services safely back at base).

If there is still the likelihood of further activity, the SDO may decide to keep a SurfCom operational however scale down the personnel.

PROCEDURE

Each individual ERO has the responsibility to close his/her own workplace at a SurfCom. Each member must also assist in de-activating communications, information recording and display and other processes with this SOP.

Each SurfCom will have its own local operating procedures for closing. As a guide this should include the following where applicable:

1. Confirm all Surf Life Saving services have completed duties for the day (patrols/incidents). SurfCom shall not close while a patrol/service they are responsible for is on-duty or still involved in an incident, without handover to overnight SDO and Duty Officer;
2. Confirm no outstanding/uncontactable clubs/services (i.e. RWC not signed off);
3. Ensure all relevant data is correctly inputted and finalised in SurfCom Management System and SurfGuard;
4. Replenish any consumables;
5. Restow maps and plans and logs/paperwork;
6. Close down computer programs and computers;
7. Ensure that the SDO and/or General Manager, Public Safety and Emergency Management is aware of any reportable issues.
8. Advise all lifesaving services and relevant emergency services of the closure "all stations";
9. Reactivate the after-hours phone divert system (including answering machine, diverted numbers);
10. Turn off or place on standby all electrical equipment; and
11. Turn off lights, close and lock all external doors and windows.

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PSS 11.9 VOICE RECORDINGS

PURPOSE

To outline the procedure for requesting voice recording files from the SurfCom communications server.

POLICY

All radio transmissions over the SLSNSW repeater channels are recorded at SLSNSW headquarters.

No recording will be released without permission from the SLSNSW Director of Lifesaving or the General Manager, Public Safety and Emergency Management.

Recordings may be used for:

- Quality and training purposes
- Surf Life Saving and Coronial enquiries
- Monitoring the amount and quality of radio traffic out of hours

PROCEDURE

The equipment records:

- All communications made on channel 3 (repeaters) – 24/7
- All communications made to and from SurfCom – 24/7

Clubs or Services who wish to access voice recording files must enquire with the State Operations Centre.

Surf Life Saving NSW would like to remind everyone that confidential, personal and identifying information (e.g. names, phone numbers, and addresses etc.) should not be transmitted over the radio and a phone call is suggested instead to the intended party.

Last modified: 27/07/23

PSS 12 VESSELS AND AIRCRAFT

PSS 12   Vessels and Aircraft

NSW

Last modified: 10/08/23

PSS 12.1 RWC OPERATIONS – OVERVIEW

PURPOSE

To provide policy, procedure and best practice for the Rescue Water Craft (RWC) operations.

POLICY

Surf Life Saving NSW (SLSNSW) requires all RWC Operators to adhere to the established policies, procedures and guidelines to ensure safe and effective practices relating to RWC operations.

PROCEDURE

DEFINITIONS

RESCUE WATER CRAFT (RWC) UNITS

RWC Support Operations must be owned and managed by Branches, Clubs are not permitted to have ownership or sole operation of an RWC.

RWCs are not to be used for night operations at any time.

An RWC is a personal water craft commonly known by brand names such as a wave runner or jet ski, operated by at least 1 qualified and proficient lifesaving personnel, that is primarily responsible for patrolling outside patrol flagged areas, with additional rescue capabilities.

RWC SERVICE

The response area in which a RWC provides active patrolling (including roving) and emergency response capacity. There are multiple 'RWC Services' within a single branch, each with its own response area.

Additional RWC services may be deployed to an RWC service area in events such as an extended SAR, special event, carnival etc.

RWC SERVICE OBJECTIVE

To provide operational support to existing patrols and patrolling/emergency response capacity to non-patrolled areas/times.

SCOPE OF OPERATION – PATROL SEASON/PATROL DAYS/PATROL TIMES

The minimum patrol season/hours for an RWC service shall be as agreed in the Lifesaving Service Agreement with each Branch.

A RWC service shall undertake rostered patrols on Saturdays, Sundays and Public Holidays within the

patrol season. A RWC service shall provide water safety for approved SLS events, e.g. surf carnivals.

SCOPE OF OPERATION – AFTER-HOURS CAPACITY

RWC services shall have the capacity to respond to after-hours/out-of-season emergencies within the scope of the Emergency Response System.

RWCs are not permitted to operate after Sunset or to be used for night operations at any time.

SURFCOM/CALL-SIGNS

RWC units shall be issued with a call sign by SLSNSW and utilise radio callsigns and communicate with the SOC as per SLSNSW SOPs.

REFERENCE

Branch Lifesaving Service Agreement

Last modified: 27/07/23

PSS 12.2 RWC MINIMUM EQUIPMENT

PURPOSE

To outline the minimum RWC equipment required for operations.

POLICY

The following equipment shall be maintained on/in the RWC for all activities (training, patrolling, emergency response).

PROCEDURE

MINIMUM EQUIPMENT

All equipment must be SLSA approved equipment.

- Rescue Sled
- Rescue Tube
- Paring Knife
- Throw rope (bag) (to be located in forward hatch)
- First Aid Kit (to be located in the forward hatch, and contained within a waterproof case)
    - Pursuant to PSS 12.5
- Flares (2 smoke flares)
- PLB (worn by the operator at all times)
- Marker dye x 2
- GPS Tracking Unit

RECOMMENDED EQUIPMENT

- Spare Lanyard (stored in the glove compartment of the RWC or on driver)
- Waterproof Bag
- Rescue Handle
- Bilge Pump Internal

Last modified: 27/07/23

PSS 12.3 RWC UNIFORM AND PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

PURPOSE

To outline minimum uniform and PPE requirements for a RWC Operator.
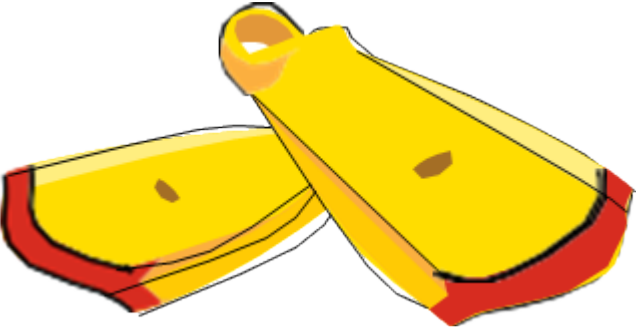
POLICY

Operators shall wear/have the following uniform/on their person when operating a RWC.

PROCEDURE

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

PFD	Australian Standard (AS) 4758.1-2008 Personal flotation devices (Level 50S) or the International Standard (ISO) 12402.6:2006 Personal flotation devices (Level 50) and meet the SLSNSW Equipment and Uniform Branding Guidelines. It is preferable that the PFD has a PLB pocket. Note: PFDs are to always be worn externally (not under a jacket or rash shirt).	
Rash Shirt (if not wearing a SLS branded wetsuit)	SLSA Rash Shirt (long or short arm) Worn over wetsuit Worn under lifejacket	
Wetsuit Shorts	Worn under patrol shorts or stand-alone	
Radio and Radio Bag	SLSNSW endorsed radio and water resistant bag	

Helmet	Yellow, red or chequered red/yellow. Must provide coverage of entire back, top and sides of head (including ears)	
Spare Lanyard	To be stored in the glove compartment of the RWC or on driver.	
Whistle	Whistle to be positioned on Lifejacket.	
PLB	To be worn by operator at all times.	
Swim Fins	Standard body boarding style swim fins (no dive fins).	

RECOMMENDED/OPTIONAL

Wetsuit	Full suit or spring suit. If wetsuit is not branded with SLS then a yellow SLSA rash shirt is to be worn over the top.	
Fin Belt	Available at all times by operator for fin carriage.	
Jacket	SLSA Jacket	Note: windcheaters are not to be worn over the top of lifejackets.
Sunglasses	For the provision of eye protection for UV and sea-spray. Polarised glasses are recommended.	

Booties	For the provision of added warmth and traction.	
Gloves	For the provision of added warmth and grip-ability.	

Last modified: 27/07/23

PSS 12.4 RWC DESIGN AND LAYOUT

PURPOSE

To outline branding and outfitting standards for RWCs in operation in SLSNSW.

POLICY

RWCs shall as a minimum be checked to the following standard.

PROCEDURE

VESSEL BRANDING

Branding for all Surf Life Saving vessels shall comply with the SLSA Equipment and Uniform Branding Policy. This policy can be obtained through the members portal.

OUTFITTING

Security Straps *recommended for large surf*	Seats should be equipped with straps to ensure security when in transit and when in operation. A strap shall be used for each independent seat. A strap should also be considered for the front hatch.	
Security Bungees *recommended for large surf*	Front hatches and glove compartments should be fitted with security bungees.	
Wear Protection	RWCs should have the rear area of the hull, where the rescue sled meets the craft, covered with "ute liner." This will prevent all wear and damage to the craft from the rescue sled.	

Last modified: 27/07/23

PSS 12.5 RWC FIRST AID KIT

PURPOSE

To outline the minimum requirements for a portable RWC first aid kit.

POLICY

All RWC's operating within NSW shall carry a first aid kit, consisting of the following items:

	Required Minimum
1	Waterproof case/bag
1	Pocket Mask (resuscitation)
1	Resuscitation Face Shield
4	Disposable Gloves (in bag)
2	Tourniquet
1	Emergency Blanket (Space Blanket)
	Recommended
1	Crepe Bandage (10cm)
1	Conforming Bandage (10cm)
1	Medical Shears (scissors)
1	Adhesive Dressing Tape (2.5cm x 5m)
1	Triangular Bandage (90-100cm)
1	Gauze Swabs (7.5cm x 7.5cm)
1	Non-adherent Dressing Pad (10cm x 7.5cm)
1	Waterproof Notepad
1	Pencil

PROCEDURE

The nature of RWCs and their scope of operations within SLS see them tasked to support existing patrols and respond to remote locations where no patrols exist and/or to locations not accessible via land.
It is essential that the RWC is equipped (at a minimum) with a first aid kit that will enable it to deal with the life-threatening types of medical incidents, being:

- Resuscitation

- Severe Bleeding
- Hypothermia

Accordingly, RWCs (which by nature are short of storage space) do not require the full inventory of first aid equipment as required by a standard patrol, rather they require specific pieces of equipment targeted at the above medical conditions.

Where a non-life-threatening injury occurs at a patrolled location, the patrol will be equipped to deal with such. Where a non-life-threatening injury occurs at a remote location, the RWC will be equipped to secure the patient and prevent any life threatening condition developing while awaiting assistance.

It is also essential that the storage case is of a type that will prevent water ingress, which will destroy the contents of the kit – a robust case is required to make the kit a feasible asset.

Last modified: 27/07/23

PSS 12.6 OVERVIEW OF AERIAL SERVICES

PURPOSE

To outline the requirements of Surf Life Saving fixed-wing, rotary aircraft and UAVs conducting lifesaving operations in NSW.

POLICY

All Surf Life Saving aircraft must ensure/maintain the following:

- Hold a service/SLSNSW endorsed Lifesaving Service Agreement/Contract/MOU (operational) for each operational year.
- Should include the provision of roving patrols in regular patrol times (where able).
- Volunteer crew shall be active/financial members of an affiliated SLSNSW SLSC.
- Operations shall be run in accordance with the SLSNSW SOPS.
- Service training must be in accordance with the SLSA awards structures (excluding specialist requirements).
- No service may seek or hold a State Rescue Board 'accreditation' or be represented at any local or regional rescue or emergency management committees without written approval from SLSNSW.
- Service must align its emergency response policies and procedures with the SLSNSW Emergency Response System (no separate arrangements with emergency services or government may be entered into without SLSNSW approval).
- Must utilise endorsed SLSNSW radio frequencies and communications channels as per SLSNSW requirements.

PROCEDURE

OVERVIEW

Aerial services may provide enhanced preventative patrolling and search and rescue capacity for coastal/offshore areas.

NEW SERVICES

Any proposed new service and expansion of existing services must apply to SLSNSW for endorsement under the requirements set in the *SLSNSW Guide to Establishing a Support Operation*.

NON-SURF LIFE SAVING AERIAL SERVICES

No Surf Life Saving services shall undertake joint-operating arrangements with non-SLS aerial services without the written authorisation of SLSNSW.

This includes 'private' shark patrol companies/organisations.

DESIGN/LAYOUT/BRANDING

All newly aerial services must have approval from Surf Life Saving NSW for the design and layout of the aircraft.

Branding must meet the specification of SLSA equipment branding requirements and be approved by SLSNSW.

Last modified: 27/07/23

PSS 12.7 HELICOPTER LANDING SITE

PURPOSE

To outline the procedure for lifesaving services to secure a helicopter landing site.

POLICY

All lifesaving personnel shall be aware of helicopter safety. The pilot will have final and ultimate decision on whether and where to land.

PROCEDURE

APPROACHING A HELICOPTER

- Only approach & depart helicopter if essential and only once given "thumbs up" by the pilot or crewman
- Always approach/depart from the front (between 10-2 o'clock)
- Sloping ground may expose you to rotor blades. Be cautious on sloping ground.
- If blinded by dust, stop and sit down.
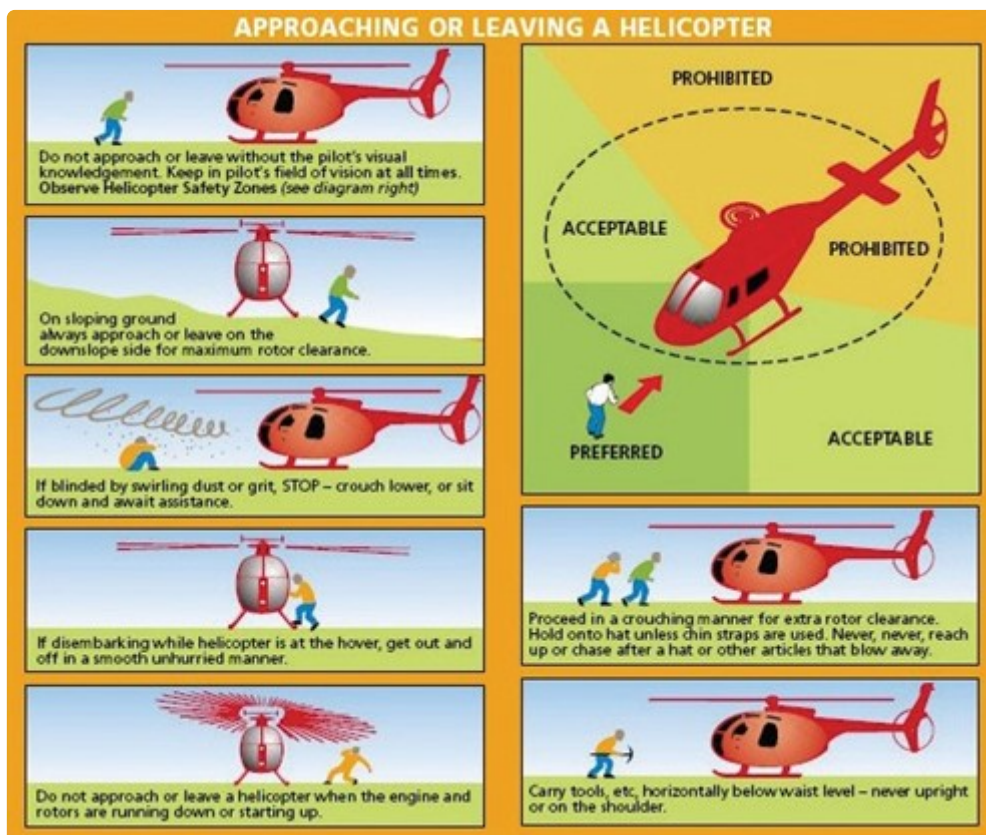
ESTABLISHING A LANDING SITE

1. Nominate a suitable lifesaver/lifeguard to manage the Landing Site.

2. Locate flat area of land 50m by 50m (40m2 minimum).
3. Clear area of all people / animals.
4. Remove all loose objects (umbrellas, surfboards, tents etc.).
5. Ensure all access points to the Landing Site are manned by lifesavers (preventing public access), facing outward to view hazards.
6. Establish radio contact with helicopter on Surf Channel 1 prior to landing.
7. Be aware of debris as the helicopter lands or takes off.
8. The helicopter will land and take off into the wind (in most instances).
9. When dealing with the helicopter on water, the IRB/RWC should be positioned at the 2 o'clock location of the helicopter.

Day Time
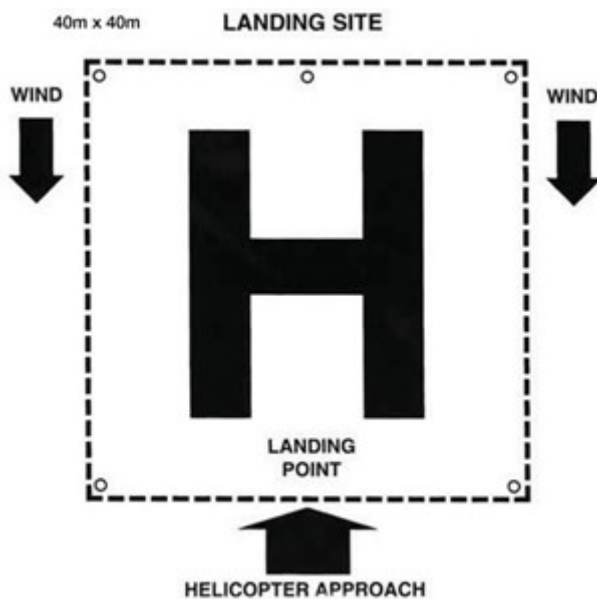
Night Time
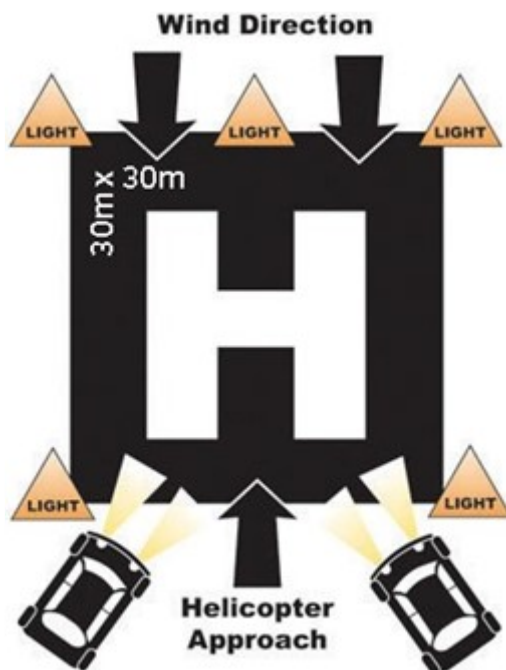
PSS 12.8 OVER WATER HELICOPTER INTERACTION

PURPOSE

To outline the procedure for lifesaving services to secure a helicopter landing site.

POLICY

All lifesaving personnel shall be aware of helicopter safety. The pilot will have final and ultimate decision on whether and where to land.

PROCEDURE

When dealing with the Helicopter on water, watercraft should be positioned at the 2 o'clock position. If safe to do so, RWC should face away from the incoming Helicopter so that the sled is exposed for an unobstructed winch operation.

An IRB driver should attempt to face the incoming Helicopter and position themselves so the helicopter approaches from the 2 o'clock angle.

All watercraft should take direction from Helicopter pilot via Surf Channel 1 where possible. Watch for hand signals when Helicopter is in close range and radio is not available*.

*Radio does not operate when watercraft are directly below a hovering Helicopter.

Last modified: 27/07/23

PSS 12.9 UAV OPERATIONS

PURPOSE

To outline the procedure for safe SLS Uncrewed Aerial Vehicle (UAV/drone) operations.

POLICY

All lifesaving personnel shall be aware of general UAV operations and safety, which can be found on Surf Life Saving NSW's Australian UAV Service Website (see reference below). Roles and responsibilities are outlined in the SLSNSW UAV Standard Operating Procedures available to all current UAV Pilots and UAV Operators via AVCRM.

PROCEDURE

Specific detailed Standard Operating Procedures have been created for SLSNSW UAV Operations. Please refer to AVCRM to access the UAV SOPs.

REFERENCE

AUAVS SOPs

Last modified: 27/07/23

PSS 13 POST-INCIDENT

PSS 13 Post-Incident

- PSS 13.1 Media – Critical Incidents
- PSS 13.2 Critical Incident Debriefing
- PSS 13.3 Member Welfare – Critical Incidents

Last modified: 10/08/23

PSS 13.1 MEDIA – CRITICAL INCIDENTS

PURPOSE

To provide guidelines for consideration when dealing with the media in relation to *critical incidents*.

POLICY

Positive interaction with the media is important for the organisation. It is imperative however that those media enquiries are handled by the appropriate lifesaving personnel.

Generally critical incidents are defined by Surf Life Saving as either (or a combination) of the following:

- Incident resulting in death (including unsuccessful CPR, body recovery);
- Incident resulting in serious/major injury (shark attack/propeller strike);
- Incident whereby a member of SLS is seriously injured (requiring hospitalisation);
- Incident whereby a member of the public is injured by lifesaving personnel/equipment (requiring external medical treatment or hospitalisation).

PROCEDURE

CRITICAL INCIDENT MEDIA – PROCEDURE

1. For any 'critical incident' the SLSNSW General Manager, Communications and Partnerships (or State Operations Centre) shall be notified as soon as practicable.
2. Lifesaving personnel may disregard any media enquiries during the response phase of an incident.
3. The senior lifesaving member involved (Patrol Captain/Lifeguard Supervisor/Duty Officer) shall assume the role of media contact until advised otherwise. This person shall direct media enquiries to the SLSNSW General Manager, Communications and Partnerships.
4. The senior lifesaving personnel shall restrict media comment by any other lifesaving personnel.
5. The SLSNSW General Manager, Communications and Partnerships shall establish the facts, communicate with key personnel involved (including the Branch DOL) and establish a media plan.
6. The media plan may involve the identification and briefing of an appropriate local (club/branch) spokesperson or may delegate the role to the SLSNSW General Manager, Public Safety and Emergency Management (or other State Officer).

GENERAL MEDIA ENQUIRIES (NON-CRITICAL)

General media enquiries (e.g. hours of operation, surf conditions, patrol activity, etc.) should be treated as a positive opportunity to represent/promote the organisation.

The Patrol Captain/Lifeguard Supervisor may deal with this directly or refer the media to the Club Captain, Club President, Branch DOL, Branch President or Lifeguard Supervisor.

Note: If the enquiry is more serious or potentially negative, the matter should be referred to the Branch DOL, Branch President or SLSNSW General Manager, Communications and Partnerships.

PRESENTATION/PUBLIC IMAGE

Members should ensure that they are presenting themselves in correct, full uniform at all times if staging photos or doing video interviews for the media.

Equipment and patrol setup should always be as per SOPs.

Do not be influenced to stage a photo or video which is against SOPs or might bring the organisation into disrepute.

RULES OF THUMB

- If you are unsure as to whether or not you should answer a question or make a comment to the media, always refer it to the next level.
- Stick to the facts.
    - this is what happened,
    - this is what we did,
    - this was the outcome,
    - these are the key safety messages.
- Never engage in hearsay/rumour/innuendo.
- Never appoint blame.
- There is no such thing as 'off the record.'
- You have control of what you say and how you look – don't be 'dictated to' by reporters.
- If you can't, don't want to or don't think you should answer a question – DON'T.
    - State: "I am not the appropriate person to comment on that, please contact the SLSNSW Media Team".

REFERENCE

SLSNSW Media Kit
Duty Officer Media Check Sheet

Last modified: 27/07/23

PSS 13.2 CRITICAL INCIDENT DEBRIEFING

PURPOSE

To outline relevant procedures/processes to enable consistent and structured delivery of an operational debrief following a critical incident.

PROCEDURE

WHY SHOULD AN OPERATIONAL DEBRIEF BE UNDERTAKEN FOLLOWING A CRITICAL INCIDENT?

An operational debrief is undertaken to ensure that:

1. Environmental conditions are noted, and the nature of the incident is agreed.
2. What went well during the incident is highlighted and reinforced.
3. What could have been done better is discussed and noted for suggested changes to local beach tactics or patrol operations generally.
4. As a precursor to discussions on support options available to the members involved (see" *PSS13.3 Member Welfare – Critical Incidents*":#pss-12-3-member-welfare-critical-incidents).

WHAT INCIDENTS REQUIRE AN OPERATIONAL DEBRIEF?

Duty Officers' attendance to the scene and operational debriefs are compulsory in any event where members are involved in an incident response. Examples of when a Duty Officer will be required to conduct an operational debrief include:

Incidents involving death of a patient	Major injury with hospitalisation
CPR	Major rescues
Drowning	Severe trauma
Failure to save a life	Abuse
Shark attacks	Aggressive Behaviour
A member of SLS is seriously injured	Heart Attack
Severe asthma attacks	

WHEN/WHERE SHOULD THE OPERATIONAL DEBRIEF BE UNDERTAKEN?

An operational debrief at Surf Life Saving is often conducted directly after the conclusion of the incident. This captures the best recollections and information from the incident and allows members to receive information about welfare and support immediately post-incident.

It should be conducted in a private and secure location isolated from any media or public interference

with no thoroughfare. Ideally the location will have access to a whiteboard or notepaper for collection of feedback and have access to chairs, tables and water for participants – the Surf Life Saving Club is often ideal.

WHO SHOULD DELIVER/LEAD THE OPERATIONAL DEBRIEF?

A Duty Officer should lead every operational debrief following a critical incident as part of the incident Recovery Phase. If a Duty Officer is not available an appropriate Branch Representative should be tasked to deliver the debrief.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

All Surf Life Saving personnel who were involved in the incident should attend, regardless of the level of involvement. Any personnel not in attendance should be recorded in the debrief form and followed up by the Duty Officer or Branch Representative.

WHAT INFORMATION NEEDS TO BE RECORDED AND RETAINED?

- The Critical incident Log (detailed in _PSS13.3, Member Welfare – Critical Incidents) must be completed and provided to the SOC.
- If the incident occurred on patrol, a copy of the Patrol Log and Incident Report Log must be completed in full by the patrol, copied and handed to the Duty Officer. Photographs of these logs is recommended.
- In certain circumstances, the completion of Member Statement Forms may be requested by the SOC.
- In the case of member injury during a critical incident, WorkCover forms can be obtained in the membership section of the SLSNSW Website. (Workers Compensation – Surf Life Saving NSW)

NOTE: ALL paperwork must be sent to the Branch Director of Lifesaving and SOC within 12 hours after incident.

REFERENCE
_PSS13.3 MEMBER WELFARE – CRITICAL INCIDENTS

Last modified: 27/07/23

PSS 13.3 MEMBER WELFARE – CRITICAL INCIDENTS

PURPOSE

To outline SLSNSW's approach to member welfare following a critical incident.

POLICY

The environment in which surf lifesaving operates has the potential for members to be involved in incidents of a traumatic nature. Such incidents could include the loss of life, the provision of emergency care, search and rescue operations, or a serious incident involving fellow members. SLSNSW has implemented a strong framework of support to ensure that members are cared for and receive appropriate support.

Members are affected differently by incidents, and it is the reaction of the individual which makes the incident critical for that person, not necessarily the size or nature of the incident. SLSNSW is committed to lessening the impact of critical incident stress on members, staff and their families by providing best practice support following an incident.

PROCEDURE

The following procedure should be read in conjunction with the SLSNSW Critical Incident Management Support Procedures which provides further background, context and support for its implementation (including details of what a **Group Briefing Session** and **wellfare check** entails).

1. The Duty Officer and State Duty Officer determine the support required for member welfare.
2. When the response to the incident has concluded, the Duty Officer (or appropriately trained Branch Representative) delivers the Group Briefing Session and conducts a well check where possible. The Operational Debrief often takes place at this time.
3. As part of the Group Briefing Session, members involved in the critical incident are advised that they will be contacted for a well check as part of standard procedures.
4. Within 12 hours, Duty Officer completes **Critical Incident Log**, compiling a list of members directly and indirectly involved in the incident.
5. Within 24 hours the State Duty Officer forwards the members' details to the SLSNSW Member Welfare Officer.
6. Within 48 hours, SLSNSW Member Welfare Officer:
    a. Sends members' details to SLSNSW's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provider.
    b. Sends each member post-incident support information via email.
    c. Conducts a well check **if this was not completed** by either the Duty Officer or an appointed Branch Representative.
7. Two further well checks will be conducted – one at approximately one-week post-incident and one at approximately one-month post-incident. These will be conducted by either SLSNSW Member Welfare Officer or a branch-based State Welfare Officer, depending on local arrangements.

REFERRALS

Referrals can be made to professional psychological support at any stage of the process. Referrals can be made by the Member Welfare Manager to the SLSNSW Employee Assistance Program, or via the individual member's GP.

MAJOR INCIDENT SUPPORT

Throughout the season, major critical incidents may occur which require swift professional support over and above the process outlined above. In these instances, the SLSNSW Membership Manager and/or the SLSNSW Senior Leadership Team will work directly with the Club or Branch to activate additional support.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

Some clubs and branches have additional support people or networks in place who can be contacted for support outside of the SLSNSW Critical Incident Support process. These include chaplains and peer support networks.

REFERENCE

[SLSNSW Critical Incident Management Support Protocols](#)

Last modified: 27/07/23

PSS 14 SLSA REFERENCES

PSS 14 SLSA References

PURPOSE

To outline the requirements of Surf Life Saving NSW (SLSNSW) to adhere to the minimum standards set out by Surf Life Saving Australia (SLSA).

POLICY

SLSA have a number of universal policies which apply to all entities associated with SLSA. SLSNSW, as an affiliated body, is bound to comply with such policies.

PROCEDURE

SLSA policies are combined with the SLSA Constitution and Regulations to form our National Policy Framework. Policies are periodically reviewed by the relevant National Boards and changes are implemented accordingly.

All personnel within SLSNSW must be aware of their obligation to comply with the policies of SLSA. The master copy of these policies can be found on the SLSA Members Portal – Document Library and some of these policies are listed below:

Policy ID	Name and Link
1.01	WATER SAFETY
1.01a	WATER SAFETY PROCEDURE
1.02	USE OF SLSA EQUIPMENT
1.05	Patrol Uniforms
1.06	Gear & Equipment

5.01	ANTI-DOPING POLICY
5.04	Competition Eligibility
5.11	Competition Manipulation and Sport Wagering
6.00	SLSA Integrity Framework
6.01	Intellectual Property
6.02	Privacy
6.03	Limiting and Permanent Disability
6.04	Child Safe
6.05	Member Protection
6.06	Complaints Resolution
6.09	Risk Management
6.09A	Risk Management Procedure
6.14	IT Electronic Acceptances
6.16	Criminal Conviction
6.19	IT Systems – Terms of Use
6.20	Social Media
6.21	Photography, Digital Recording and Images
6.23	Improper Use of Drugs and Medicine in Sport
6.25	Non-Political and Non-Sectarian
6.27	Anti-corruption and Fraud
6.28	Sponsorship

REFERENCE

SLSA Members Portal

Last modified: 10/08/23

PSS 15 GLOSSARY

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PSS 15 Glossary

NSW

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Acronym	Surf Life Saving Definition	Surf Life Saving Reference
POM	Patrol Operations Manual	Resources Manuals and Documents
PSAR (35)	Public Safety and Aquatic Rescue Manual (35th Edition)	
PSS	Public Safety Standard	
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures	
DO	Duty Officer	Personnel
DOL	Director of Lifesaving	
DOO	Duty Operation Officer	
ERO	Emergency Response Operator	
SDO	State Duty Officer	
SERO	Senior Emergency Response Operator	
IRB	Inflatable Rescue Boat	Vessels and Vehicles
JRB	Jet Rescue Boat	
ORB	Off Shore Rescue Boat	
PWC	Personal Water Craft	
RWC	Rescue Water Craft	
SSV	Side-by-Side (All-Terrain Vehicle)	
UAV	Uncrewed Aerial Vehicle	
ANSW	Ambulance NSW	External Agencies and Assets
BOM	Bureau of Meteorology	

DPI	Department of Primary Industries	
FRNSW	Fire and Rescue NSW	
MAC	Marine Area Command (Police)	
MACSAR	Marine Area Command Search and Rescue (Police)	
MRNSW	Marine Rescue NSW	
NSWPF	NSW Police Force	
POLAIR	Police Helicopter	
RFS	Rural Fire Service	
RMS	Roads and Maritime Services	
SES	State Emergency Service	
VKG	Police Radio Command Centre	
AESS	Australian Event Safety Service	
ALS	Australian Lifeguard Service PTY LTD	
SLSA	Surf Life Saving Australia (National)	Internal Services
SLSNSW	Surf Life Saving New South Wales (State)	
SOC	State Operation Centre	
AED	Automated External Defibrillator	
ANI	Automatic Number Identification (Radio Network)	
EMPLAN	Emergency Management Plan	
ERB	Emergency Response Beacon	
GPS	Global Positioning System	
LSA	Lifesaving Service Agreement	
NFAR	No Further Action Required	
PFD	Personal Floatation Device (Lifejacket)	Miscellaneous Terminology
PLB	Personal Locator Beacon	
POB	Person On Board	
POI	Person Of Interest	
SAR	Search and Rescue	
SAREX	Search and Rescue Exercise	
SERS	Surf Emergency Response System	
SMEACS	Situation, Mission, Execution, Administration,	

	Communications, Safety
WHS	Work Health and Safety

Surf Life Saving NSW Assets and Support Operations

Acronym	Definition	Location
LS21	Lifesaver 21 Rescue Helicopter	Sydney Base
LS23	Lifesaver 23 Rescue Helicopter	Moruya Base
SR30	Surf Rescue 30 Offshore Rescue Boat	Sydney
SR40	Surf Rescue 40 Jet Rescue Boat	Ballina
SR50	Surf Rescue 50 Offshore Rescue Boat	Kiama
SurfCom	Surf Life Saving NSW – State Operations Centre	Belrose (SLSNSW HQ)

Branches

Acronym	Branch Names	Associated Clubs
SLSFNC	Far North Coast Branch	10 Clubs
SLSNC	North Coast Branch	8 Clubs
SLSMNC	Mid North Coast Branch	8 Clubs
SLSLNC	Lower North Coast Branch	6 Clubs
SLSHUN	Hunter Branch	13 Clubs
SLSCC	Central Coast Branch	15 Clubs
SLSSNB	Sydney Northern Beaches Branch	21 Clubs
SLSSYD	Sydney Branch	15 Clubs
SLSILL	Illawarra Branch	17 Clubs
SLSSC	South Coast Branch	9 Clubs
SLSFSC	Far South Coast Branch	7 Clubs

Last modified: 10/08/23

PSS 16 CHANGES LOG

PSS 16 Changes Log

CODE	SECTION	ENHANCEMENT (DELETE/MODIFY/ MOVE/ADD)	KEY CHANGES
PSS1	Work Place Health & Safety	Modify	Note from the Board, include vaping, more specific language around alcohol consumption
PSS1	Work Place Health & Safety	Modify	Changing order of sections and language updates
PSS1	Work Place Health & Safety	Modify	Safe needle disposal, reference to NSW Needle Clean Up hotline
PSS2.1	Information Management	Modify	Update of terminology relating to Surf Guard, Members Area, Operations App, Beach Safe App, SLSA IT Help Desk, Members Online Store
PSS2.3	Information Management	Modify	Emphasis on '000' being the main emergency number for MOP
PSS2.4	Information Management	Modify	Inclusion of current platforms, e.g. TikTok
PSS2.5	Information Management	Modify	Release of local SMEACs
PSS3.1	Lifesaving Service Agreements/ Contracts	Modify	Updated LSA terminology in procedure
PSS3.1	Lifesaving Service	Add	Include Australian Lifeguard Service (ALS), Australian Event Safety Service (AESS) and the Australian UAV

	Agreements/ Contracts		Service (AUAVS)
PSS3.1	Lifesaving Service Agreements/ Contracts	Modify	LSA Dispute Process
PSS3.1	Lifesaving Service Agreements/ Contracts	Modify	Position title
PSS3.1	Lifesaving Service Agreement/ Contracts	Modify	Service Area Definitions updated to reflect definitions included in current LSAs
PSS3.2	Lifesaving Service Requirements (min)	Add	SMPC
PSS3.2	Lifesaving Service Requirements (min)	Add	Operations App
PSS3.2	Lifesaving Service Requirements (min)	Add	Patrol Captain Requirements
PSS3.3	Club Patrol Requirements	Modify	Terminology in 'process' section
PSS3.3	Club Patrol Requirements	Add	"risk vs. gain"
PSS3.5	Lifesaving Service Shortage	Add	Mitigation strategies
PSS3.6	Lifesaving Services Extension of Hours	Modify	SurfCom to be notifies 30 minutes prior (not 15)
PSS3.8	Gear & Equipment Inspections	Modify	Use of Operations App
PSS3.9	Patrol	Modify	Update: Document Library in the Members Area

	Operations Manual		
PSS3.11	Nipper Activities and Patrols	Add	Moving Nippers to alternate location
PSS4.1	Role Specific Licences	Modify	Delete RIB and Radio licence
PSS4.2	Powercraft Operator Licencing	Modify	SLSA licenses are valid operate SLS craft only, specified annual proficiencies for RWC operators
PSS4.3	Rescue Vessel Regulations & Exemptions	Modify	Updates to registration and annual re-registration, include use of Operations App, inclusion of ALS's need to register their vessels with AMSA
PSS4.3	Lifejackets	Modify	Specify meaning of "wearing" a PFD
PSS4.4	Vessel Incident Reporting (Services NSW)	Modify	Specify marine incident requiring reporting
PSS4.5	Rescue Vessel Operations Close to Flagged Areas	Modify	Language updates
PSS4.7	Whale & Dolphin Regulations	Modify	Wording updates
PSS 4.8	SLS Rescue Vessel	Modify	Wording updates
PSS 4.9	Vessel Towing	Modify	Inclusion of larger towing vessels from other agencies
PSS5.1	Lifesaving Vehicles	Modify	Remove snatch straps from rescue equipment
PSS5.2	All Terrain Vehicles – SSV (Side by Side)	Modify	P-plates must be displayed where applicable, deleted non-exemption from fines, deleted use of single flashing light on SSV on the road, additional recommended rescue equipment
PSS5.3	Water safety Signage	Modify	Added UAV operations signage
PSS5.5	First Aid Kit	Modify	Added access to hot water, updated equipment requirement guidelines
PSS5.6	Oxygen	Modify	Deleted cleaning of resuscitation equipment as now all

	Resuscitation Equipment		disposable
PSS6.3	Radio Equipment Maintenance and Servicing	Modify	Changed radio servicing interval to bi-annually
PSS6.5	Radio Call Signs	Modify	Added Patrol Captain, amended helicopters
PSS6.5	Radio Call Signs	Modify	Deleted DPI helicopters and SR50
PSS6.7	Radio Network Fault Reporting	Modify	Amended reporting to SLSNSW, role title change
PSS7.1	Beach Management Methods and Roles	Modify	Included sign on via the Operations App
PSS7.2	Opening of Patrol (Start of Patrol)	Add	Amended that a closed beach does not close all activities, e.g. surfing or Nippers beach activities, added correct radio channels
PSS7.3	Patrol Briefings	Modify	Amended use of personal devices; members must take a radio when leaving the flagged area, shift change over through Operations App where available
PSS7.4	Closure of Patrol (end of day)	Modify	Delete to remove flags 20 minutes prior to shift end
PSS7.5	Lifesaving Activities on Closed Beaches	Modify	Deleted that no nipper activities are to be undertaken on a closed beach (on-beach activities can still happen)
PSS8.1	Emergency Beach Closure and Evacuation	Modify	Added to log beach closure and re-opening in Operations App
PSS8.2	Lost/Missing Persons	Modify	Inclusion of a forward commander and marking the last known position of victim
PSS8.3	Requesting an Ambulance	Modify	Wording changes
PSS8.7	Public Order Incident	Modify	Added to post incident reporting where the SOC has created an incident

PSS8.9	Body Recovery	Modify	Added EAP in references
PSS9.1	Surf Emergency Response System	Modify	Updated other agencies (definition), procedure, control and command, additional wording changes
PSS9.2	State Duty Officer	Modify	Updated definition, minimum qualification (e.g. Incident Controller Level 1, etc.)
PSS9.3	Branch Duty Officer System	Modify	Updates to wording and qualification
PSS9.3	Position Description – Duty Officer	Modify	Updates to wording and qualification
PSS9.5	Duty Officer Equipment	Modify	Updates to wording and qualification
PSS9.6	Duty Officer Uniform	Modify	Update to current standards
PSS9.9	Club/Service Callout Teams	Modify	Updates to Local Emergency Response System and added additional recommended equipment
PSS9.10	IRB Operations (Low Light)	Modify	Deleted that IRB operations are part of support operations only
PSS9.12	Principles of the Incident Control System	Modify	
PSS10.1	SAR Operations	Modify	Update SAR Authority and wording changes
PSS10.2	Search and Rescue Stages	Modify	Streamlined introduction and SAR stages
PSS10.22	Information Exchange in Transfer of Coordination	Modify	Wording updates
PSS11.1	Overview of SurfCom Operations	Modify	Various updates to amend to current environment across most sections of this LS
PSS11.5	SurfCom Operator	Modify	Update to role prerequisites
PSS11.6	SurfCom	Modify	Update to reflect current practices

	Emergency Protocols		
PSS12.1	RWC Operations – Overview	Modify	Update to RWC service and scope of operations
PSS12.2	RWC Minimum Equipment	Modify	Move of GPS tracker from recommended to minimum equipment, spare lanyard and key the other way around, wording updates
PSS12.11	UAV Operations	Modify	Updates to reflect current environment and reference to AUAVS website
PSS13	Post Incident	Modify	Deleted 'recovery phase' from title
PSS13.1	Media – Critical Incidents	Modify	Updates to role titles
PSS13.2	Critical Incident Debriefing	Modify	Wording updates to what incidents require a debrief and timing/location
PSS13.3	Member Welfare – Critical Incident	Modify	Wording updates, flow chart on page 8 to be updated
PSS13.6	Critical Incident Debriefing	Modified	Changed terminology to Operational Debrief
PSS13.7	Critical Incident Debriefing	Modify	List of information to be collected and retained
PSS13.3	Emotive Debriefs (Psychological First Aid)	Add	Re-named to "Member Welfare Critical Incidents". Completely revised SOP specifically details SOPs for the Welfare aspects of debrief/post critical incident management
(Previous version) LS14	SOP Index	Delete	Removed due to updated, searchable digital version

Last modified: 08/09/23