Breaches of Lifesaving Standards Guide
VERSION CONTROL

The record of changes to the Breaches of Lifesaving Standards Guide is outlined below:

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1. Introduction

Purpose
To provide a consistent structure/process for Clubs/Branches/SLSNSW to use when dealing with breaches of minimum lifesaving service standards – as they pertain to the SLSNSW ‘Lifesaving Service Agreements’ and ‘Standard Operating Procedures’ (SOPs).

Background
By signing a membership form and a club affiliation, SLS members are bound to abide by all regulations and the constitution of Branches, SLSNSW and SLSA.

By signing an affiliation form clubs/services and branches are bound to abide by all regulations and the constitution of SLSNSW and SLSA.

The provision of quality lifesaving services to (or above) an agreed minimum standard is essential to ensure public/member safety and maintain the integrity of Surf Life Saving within the emergency services, government sectors and the general community.

Breaches of lifesaving service standards put at risk the reputation of SLS as a whole and may create unacceptable levels of personal risk (injury/death/loss) to the public and SLS membership/personnel.

Objectives
The objective of this document is to provide clear parameters and expectations for all parties - around identification, communication, support and penalties related to delivery below the agreed minimum standards.

The document aims to provide a process for Clubs, Branches and SLSNSW to use to address lifesaving service standard breaches, in line with the relevant constitutions/regulations, namely: SLSA Regulations Section 5 and SLSNSW Constitution (Sections 2,6,11,17,18).

It also aims to focus primarily on preventative measures and support/assistance to ensure quality services, but also includes disciplinary (penalty) options.

Definitions
Lifesaving Service Agreement - Lifesaving service delivery agreement which includes minimum season length & days of patrol, minimum hours of service and minimum personnel/qualification requirements.

Branches and clubs may set minimum requirements as extensions (in addition/above) SLSNSW minimums.

Standard Operating Procedures (SOP’s) – Operating policies/procedures/guidelines for all SLSNSW affiliated lifesaving operations (clubs/services).


Clubs / Services: All Surf Life Saving NSW affiliated clubs/services, all Branch and affiliated support operations units (RWC, ORB, JRB, SurfCom, Aerial Service).

References / Related Documents
- SLSNSW Constitution
- SLSNSW Lifesaving Service Agreement (branch/club)
- SLSNSW Standard Operating Procedures
- Patrol Operations Manual Template
- Annual Patrol Audit Program
- Annual SLSNSW Compliance Circular
2. Breach Level Assessment

Breach Identification
Breaches of lifesaving standards primarily relate to a failure to deliver the minimum obligations as set and agreed by all parties within a club/service Lifesaving Service Agreement and the SLSNSW Standard Operating Procedures (SOP’s).

‘Breaches’ would emerge most commonly as one or a combination of the following events and are distributed within a tier system to identify the level (seriousness) of the breach.

Breach - Service Provision
- Failure of a club/service to deliver a lifesaving service on a pre-designated day/period, incl:
  - The late opening of patrol – after minimum start time
  - The early closure of patrol - prior to minimum finish time
  - No service provision for the entire required period

As outlined in a club/service Lifesaving Service Agreement and SLSNSW Constitution - Section 6.

Breach - Personnel / Qualifications
- Inadequate number of personnel to meet minimum requirements for staging a patrol (SLSNSW or branch minimums)
- Lack of qualified personnel to meet minimum requirements for staging a patrol (i.e. no first aid or IRB qualified personnel)
- Lack of minimum equipment on patrol (i.e. no AED or IRB)

As outlined in a club/service Lifesaving Service Agreement and SLSNSW Standard Operating Procedures.

Misconduct / Negligence
- Misuse/dangerous use of equipment (i.e ATV, IRB etc)

As outlined in a club/service Lifesaving Service Agreement, SLSNSW Standard Operating Procedures, Maritime Regulations.

Risk Identification
The level (seriousness) of a breach is assessed against ‘risk’ using a standard risk assessment/management framework - pertaining to likelihood and consequence of the issue/action to cause injury/loss. The following ‘risks’ should be considered for each breach;

Risk to the public
- Where the breach creates increased risk to the public of injury or death

Risk to membership
- Where the breach creates increased risk to the SLS membership of injury of death

Risk to the organisation
- Where the breach creates increased risk to the organisations image/credibility/integrity with key stakeholders (community/government/sponsors/emergency services)

Contributing/Causal Factor
- Where the breach has contributed too or caused loss (disrepute/injury/death)

Frequency
- Frequency should be considered for repeated minor (level 1) breaches – where ongoing/unresolved negative trends are identified
- Moderate-High (level 2/3) breaches are cause for more immediate action, and repeat occurrences of such would be cause for serious consideration/review
**Breach Level Identification**
This 3-tier structure provides a ‘risk-based’ model to assist in identifying and acting on various breaches in a consistent manner.

**Level 1**
Continued minor breaches of SOP’s (patrol standards etc), resulting in:
- Safety Risk: No immediate threat of injury to members or public
- Organisation Risk: Minor risk to organisation image/integrity

A club/service will reach ‘Level 1’ after repeat documented instances of failing a patrol audit/inspection and/or having substandard equipment or patrolling standards.

**Examples include (but not limited too) ongoing instances of:**
- Poor uniform standards
- Sub-standard equipment on patrol
- Poor beach management standards
- Inappropriate use of radio network

**Repeated Offences**
Further breaches within a 12 month period may be elevated to a Level 2 breach review.

**Level 2**
Failure to maintain/provide appropriate minimum standards, in breach of Lifesaving Service Agreement and SOP’s; resulting in:
- Safety Risk: Increased risk of injury/death to public/members
- Organisation Risk: Organisation brought into disrepute

**Examples include (but not limited too):**
- Repeated Level 1 breaches
- Late commencement of patrol / early closure of patrol
- Patrol numbers / qualifications below minimum requirements
- Unreported non-operational core equipment (i.e. IRB, AED, O2)
- Misconduct on patrol (inappropriate/dangerous use of vessels, vehicles, medicines, equipment, public address systems, public signage)

**Repeated Offences**
Further breaches within a 12 month period may be elevated to a Level 3 breach review
**Level 3**

Failure to maintain/provide appropriate minimum standards in breach of a clubs/service Lifesaving Service Agreement and/or SLSNSW SOP’s, resulting in:

- Safety Risk: Significant threat of injury/death to the public/members, and/or injury/death occurs which is related to the breach
- Organisation risk: Organisation is brought into disrepute

**Examples include (but not limited too):**

- Repeated Level 2 breaches
- Non staging of patrol (patrol no-show)
- Late commencement of patrol / early closure of patrol which results in injury/death at that location
- Patrol numbers / qualifications below minimum requirements during an injury/death incident
- Unreported non-operational core equipment (i.e. IRB, AED, O2) during an injury/death incident
- Substantiated serious misconduct on patrol causing or contributing too injury/death (inappropriate/dangerous use of vessels, vehicles, medicines, equipment, public address systems, public signage)

**Repeated Offences**

Further breaches shall be addressed in due consideration with previous breaches for a 24 month period.
3. Breach Identification Methods

Pre-Identification
Context: Where a club/service can foresee that a ‘breach’ is likely to occur (i.e. 48 hours before a potential breach).

Branch Officer and SLSNSW staff are committed to assisting clubs where possible to ensure service levels are maintained.

The club/service should contact one or more of the following to request support/assistance:
- The Branch Director of Lifesaving
- SurfCom
- The Branch Duty Officer (or equivalent)
- The Branch Manager/CEO (Staff)

These personnel shall activate the necessary branch/club resources (including neighbouring clubs, support operations etc) to assist the club in service delivery in the short-term.

This short-term action should correspond with the wider goal to identify any internal club issues and formulate strategies to remedy/rectify ‘root-cause’.

Patrol Sign-On/Sign-Off With SurfCom
Context: Where SurfCom conducts radio checks with club/service and records patrol sign-on/sign-off.

Sign-On
If a lifesaving service signs-on late (after the scheduled start time) or fails to sign-on and are subsequently uncontactable (not on-duty) or if the resources communicated fall short of required minimums (#’s of personnel, equipment available etc).

Sign-Off
If a lifesaving service signs-off early (prior to designated finish time).

SurfCom should:
1. Contact the pre-appointed branch representative to advise of the issue (i.e. club/service is not present/at full strength (including personnel and IRB status)
2. Record the breach in the ‘Supervisor overview and reporting sheet’ for SLSNSW Lifesaving Staff to include in the Lifesaving Standards Report

The pre-appointed branch representative should:
1. Contact and liaise with the Club Captain to organise assistance and resolve the immediate issue (if able)
**Patrol Audits**

Context: Where a branch or SLSNSW patrol audit is conducted and the club/service is found to be in breach of their Lifesaving Service Agreement and/or SOP’s.

**The patrol auditor should:**
1. Contact the pre-appointed branch representative to advise of the issue (i.e. club/service is not present/at full strength (including personnel and IRB status)
2. Contact SurfCom to advise of the issue

**SurfCom should:**
1. Record the breach in the ‘Supervisor overview and reporting sheet’ for SLSNSW Lifesaving Staff to include in the Lifesaving Standards Report

**The pre-appointed branch representative should:**
1. Contact and liaise with the Club Captain to organise assistance and resolve the immediate issue (if able) This short-term action should correspond with the wider goal to identify any internal club issues and formulate strategies to remedy/rectify ‘root-cause’.

*Note: Branch/SLSNSW Officer beach visits (not formal audits) shall also constitute a ‘method’ of identification*

**Lifesaving Standards Report**

Context: SLSNSW Lifesaver Staff conduct regular reviews of SurfCom communication and incident logs and may find a club/service potential breached their Lifesaving Service Agreement and/or SOP’s. A Lifesaving Standards Report is periodically distributed to each branch.

**SLSNSW Lifesaving Staff should:**
1. Collate details of all breach incidents since previous Lifesaving Standards Report and distribute a report for each branch. Report should be sent to the Branch Director of Lifesaving.

**Branch Director of Lifesaving/Branch Representative should:**
1. Contact and liaise with relevant Club Captain/s to ascertain why breach occurred, identify if breach is likely to occur again (short term) and what measures can be implemented to ensure breach does not occur again.
2. Provide feedback to SLSNSW Lifesaving Staff as to why breach occurred and what action has been taken to ensure breach does not occur again or outline what assistance is required to ensure breach does not occur again.
4. Breach Classification Actions

Risk Mitigation
Where a breach is identified during patrol hours, the patrol auditor/SurfCom Operator/pre-appointed branch representative will attempt to resolve the issues with the Patrol Captain and Club Captain without delay (see section 3. Breach Identification Methods)

Level 1 Breach
The recorded details of the breach should be sent to the club/service Captain and President within 7 days of notification to Branch (i.e. SLSNSW Lifesaving Standards Report). All attempts should be made to contact club/service Captain/President at the time of the breach.

The club/service should be outline to the Branch: (within 14 days of receiving notification)
- The reasons for the breach/es
- What measures the club/service will/are taking to prevent a repeat occurrence (and how it will maintain a system of compliance checking)
- What disciplinary action the club is taking internally

The branch should:
- Identify options to provide support to resolve the issues
- Identify a process of checks to ensure ongoing support is provided and that consistent review is undertaken to measure progress/compliance
- Identify whether any disciplinary action may be required
- Advise SLSNSW if further support is required to rectify issue
- Maintain a record of the breach on file for at least 12 months

Further investigation/actions may be undertaken by branch/SLSNSW.

Level 2 Breach
The recorded details of the breach should be sent to the club/service Captain and President within 7 days of notification to Branch (i.e. SLSNSW Lifesaving Standards Report). All attempts should be made to contact club/service Captain/President at the time of the breach.

The club/service should be outline to the Branch: (within 14 days of receiving notification)
- The reasons for the breach
- What measures the club/service will/are taking to prevent a repeat occurrence (and how it will maintain a system of compliance checking)
- What action the club is taking internally
- What action the club believes branch or SLSNSW should take

The branch should:
- Identify options to provide support to resolve the issues
- Identify a process of checks to ensure ongoing support is provided and that consistent review is undertaken to measure progress/compliance
- Ensure a process is in place to address any preventable breaches prior to them occurring
- Consider referring the issue to the Branch Judiciary - to identify and implement any appropriate penalties (and advise SLSNSW if required)
- Advise SLSNSW if further support is rectify to rectify issue
- Maintain a record of the breach on file for at least 12 months

Further investigation/actions may be undertaken by branch/SLSNSW.
**Level 3 Breach**

The recorded details of the breach should be sent to the club/service Captain and President within 7 days of notification to Branch (i.e. SLSNSW Lifesaving Standards Report). All attempts should be made to contact club/service Captain/President at the time of the breach.

*The club/service should be outline to the Branch:* (within 14 days of receiving notification)

- The reasons for the breach
- What measures the club/service will/are taking to prevent a repeat occurrence (and how it will maintain a system of compliance checking)
- What action the club is taking internally
- What action the club believes branch or SLSNSW should take

*The branch should:*

- Identify options to provide support to resolve the issues
- Identify a process of checks to ensure ongoing support is provided and that consistent review is undertaken to measure progress/compliance
- Ensure a process is in place to address any preventable breaches prior to them occurring
- Consider referring the issue to the Branch Judiciary - to identify and implement any appropriate penalties (and advise SLSNSW if required)
- Advise SLSNSW if further support is rectify to rectify issue
- Maintain a record of the breach on file for at least 24 months

Further investigation/actions may be undertaken by branch/SLSNSW (i.e. referral to Branch/SLSNSW Judiciary)
5. SLSNSW and Branch Judiciary Guidelines

A Level 3 breach is deemed serious in nature and warrants review by a Branch and/or SLSNSW Judiciary. Branch and SLSNSW Judiciary requirements and processes shall be as per the relevant and binding Branch/SLSNSW/SLSA regulations and constitutions.

**Penalty Guidelines**

In addition to providing operational and development support to a club/service, branch and/or SLSNSW may apply penalties as deemed appropriate through a judicial process.

Penalties should align with SLSNSW compliancy requirements - which may include (but are not limited too):

- Restriction of funding/grants
- Tagged or SLSNSW/Branch administered funding/grants (to address breach, i.e. equipment issues)
- Restriction of recognition awards (awards of excellence etc) – not training awards/qualifications
- Restriction of competition/event participation

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<td>- Organisation Risk: Minor risk to organisation image/integrity</td>
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**Penalties may include:**

- Grants/funding tagged/administered by Branch/SLSNSW to correct breach (i.e. equipment)

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<td><strong>Failure to maintain/provide appropriate minimum standards, in breach of Lifesaving Service Agreement and SOP’s; resulting in:</strong></td>
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<td>- Safety Risk: Increased risk of injury/death to public/members</td>
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<td>- Organisation Risk: Organisation brought into disrepute</td>
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**Penalties (for up to 6 months) may include:**

- Ineligibility for grants/funding
- Grants/funding tagged/administered by Branch/SLSNSW to correct breach (i.e. equipment)
- Suspension from surf sports competition/representation
- Ineligibility for recognition awards such as those presented at the ‘Awards of Excellence’ (Branch/SLSNSW/SLSA) – not training awards/qualifications
Level 3 Breach

Failure to maintain/provide appropriate minimum standards in breach of the Lifesaving Service Agreement and SOP’s, resulting in:

- Safety Risk: Significant threat of injury/death to the public/members, and/or injury/death occurs which is related to the breach.
- Organisation risk: Organisation is brought into disrepute.

Penalties (for up to 12 months) may include:

- Ineligibility for grants/funding
- Grants/funding tagged/administered by Branch/SLSNSW to correct breach (i.e. equipment)
- Suspension from surf sports competition/representation
- Ineligibility for recognition awards (Branch/SLSNSW/SLSA) – not training awards/qualifications
- Individual member suspension from organisation

Penalties options beyond 12 months

- Individual member expulsion from organisation
- Club/service suspension from the organisation pending affiliation review

Appeals

Any individual/club/service may appeal the decision under its rights set out in the regulations/constitution.