Title: Mandatory Wearing of EN1385 Certified Surf Helmets in Surf Boats

Document ID: Bulletin 02/13-14

Department: SLSA Capability and Capacity

Audience: State/Territory Centres, Branch Centres, All Clubs, All Surf Boat Crews, All Members

Summary: This bulletin outlines new rules, effective 1 January 2014, that mandate the wearing of certified surf helmets in surf boats (in both training and competition) where there are breaking/cresting waves in the surf zone.

Background

During our 100 year + history there have been significant changes to the management of Surf Life Saving’s events to increase the safety of competitors. These changes include (but not limited to):

- Introduction of compulsory high visibility lycra vests for all competitors
- Introduction of risk management applications to align competition related risk assessments
- Enhanced venue selection criteria for major events
- Introduced onsite risk managers at major events to assess the suitability of competition conditions and who have the authority to suspend any event on the spot

SLSA remains committed to ongoing enhancement of safety and protection of members competing in SLS competition. Following recent consultation with members SLSA announces additional safety initiatives on behalf of the Surf Life Saving Australia Board of Directors;

- All surf boat rowers and sweeps must wear certified surf helmets from 1 January 2014.
- All surf lifesavers operating inflatable rescue boats, both in frontline lifesaving services and in competition, must wear lifejackets from 1 October 2014
- All competitors at the Australian Surf Life Saving Championships must hold the SLSA Bronze Medallion with Certificate II in Public Safety (Aquatic Rescue) from 2015

This bulletin outlines new rules, effective 1 January 2014, that mandate the wearing of certified surf helmets in surf boats (in both training and competition) where there are breaking/cresting waves in the surf zone.

Decisions

1. SLSA mandates the compulsory wearing of certified surf helmets [EN1385: Helmets for Canoeing and White Water Sports] by surf boat crews including sweeps, in all surf boat competition and all surf boat training where there are breaking/cresting waves in the surf zone (breaking / cresting waves have been defined as ‘the visual presence of white water resulting from a breaking wave in the surf zone’. Helmets must be painted / designed in accordance with the approved club competition cap design. Surf zone is defined as ‘the zone that extends from the outermost line of breaking waves to the limit of wave uprush on the beach’**).

**Definition of “cresting/breaking wave” and “surf zone” have been defined by SLSA following a literature search of appropriate definitions. This definition shall be aligned across all relevant manuals including surf sport manual and lifesaving manuals. A diagram is attached to support a visual representation of the surf zone definition (figure 1 below).

2. All certified surf helmets worn in SLS competition must be painted / designed in accordance with the approved club competition cap design by 1 January 2015 (helmets to be worn effective 1 January 2014 with a further 12 month period to ensure compliance with club colours).
3. SLSA allows for the optional wearing of certified surf helmets [EN1385: Helmets for Canoeing and White Water Sports] by surf boat crews including sweeps, in competition in and in surf boat training in still water conditions only (i.e. rivers, lakes, dams, inlets and ocean conditions where there are no breaking/cresting waves). The optional use of surf helmets [EN1385: Helmets for Canoeing and White Water Sports] is to be determined by the designated Competition Safety Committee and/or the designated Safety Officer only (in sanctioned competition) and the surf boat coach/water safety supervisor only (in competition training), following a documented risk assessment using SLSA mobile/tablet risk applications.

**Implementation Detail**

**Implementation Timeframe:**
- Compulsory wearing of certified surf helmets in surf boats takes effect from **1 January 2014** which will be reflected in an update to the SLSA Surf Sport Manual 34th Edition.
- All certified surf helmets worn in SLS competition must be painted / designed in accordance with the approved club competition cap design by **1 January 2015** (helmets to be worn effective 1 January 2014 with a further 12 month period to ensure compliance with club colours).

**Equipment Requirements:**
- Surf helmets must meet the SLSA specification; most notably the safety standard and certification that underpins the specification - European Safety Standard for canoeing and white water sports EN1385.
- Certified Surf helmets [EN1385: Helmets for Canoeing and White Water Sports] are subject to competition scrutineering requirements (to be confirmed in due course prior to 1 January 2014).

**Operational Requirements:**
- When required (as defined in decision 1 and 2, above), ALL surf boat crew members and sweeps must wear an SLSA approved surf helmet [EN1385: Helmets for Canoeing and White Water Sports] (fitted correctly and secured under the chin) when in the boat on the water.
- The certified surf helmet must also remain fitted in the event a crew member falls from the boat into the water.

*Figure 1: Visual representation of the surf zone definition*
**Educational Campaign:**
- An education campaign has been, and will continue to be, developed by SLSA to support the implementation of this decision with the membership; this will include the reasons leading to the decision. This information can be found on the SLSA website [www.sls.com.au/safety](http://www.sls.com.au/safety).

**Funding and Supply:**
- On average the cost range for a certified surf helmet is between $90-155. Therefore the average cost for each surf boat crew will be approximately $450-775. Clubs/Members will be responsible for providing certified surf helmets at events.
- At this stage, Gath Sports EN1385 certified helmet has been tested and meets the SLSA specification for surf helmets. Information of Gath Helmets can be found at: [http://www.gathsports.com](http://www.gathsports.com).
- SLSA is aware of a number of other helmet manufacturers that are working through the process of obtaining certification for their models and these should be available in the market in the coming months.

**Attachments:**
1. SLSA Specification – Surf Helmet
SLSA SPECIFICATION: SURF HELMET

INTRODUCTION:

- Surf helmets are personal protective equipment used by members when they are operating craft during aquatic activities.
- The following specification outlines the requirements for the manufacture and supply of surf helmets.
- A surf helmet is personal protective equipment that may be used by operators of both powered and non-powered aquatic craft, including:
  - Surf boats
  - Surf Skis
  - Boards (rescue, racing and nipper)
  - Inflatable rescue boats (IRB)
  - Rescue water craft (RWC)
  - Offshore rescue boat (ORB)
  - Jet rescue boat (JRB)
  - Rigid inflatable boat (RIB)

PURPOSE:

The primary purpose of a surf helmet is to provide the user with head protection that may help reduce the risk of a major head injury in the event of a collision.

SCOPE:

1. There is one type of helmet permitted for use in surf lifesaving aquatic craft activities; a surf helmet.
2. The safety standard that underpins this specification is EN 1385-2012 - Helmets for canoeing and white water sports.
3. All surf helmets must be certified to meet this standard and the additional specifications outlined in this document.

SPECIFICATION:

1. CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS:
   1. All surf helmets must be certified to meet EN 1385-2012 - Helmets for canoeing and white water sports
   2. The surf helmet is to be lightweight (600g or less)
   3. The surf helmet must not have any sharp edges or materials that will cause injury to the user
   4. The surf helmet must be able to be secured under the user’s chin. The chin strap must be adjustable and not cause a choking effect
   5. When fitted correctly the helmet must not slip backwards over the base of the neck or forwards onto the face/nose
   6. The user of a surf helmet must be able to maintain/respond to communication
   7. Any fastening devices and straps are fashioned in a way that they are not prone to entanglement
   8. The surf helmet is to be comfortable to wear.
2. SLS OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS:
To be able to fulfill the unique operational requirements of surf lifesaving aquatic activities, a surf helmet must be able to meet the following requirements:

1. Be non restrictive for operational duties including swimming (25m in calm seas), paddling, rowing
2. Allow for duck diving in breaking surf; (An adult user must be able to achieve five (5) consecutive duck dives in calm seas to a depth of two meters (2m) with a 10 second interval between each dive and a child user must be able to achieve five (3) consecutive duck dives in calm seas to a depth of one meter (1m) with a 10 second interval between each dive)
3. Be easy and quick to fit and remove
4. Be suitable and durable for beach and surf conditions

3. BRANDING AND COLOUR REQUIREMENTS
For frontline lifesaving purposes, the branding and colour of surf helmets is to align with the SLSA Equipment and Uniform Branding Guidelines.

For competition purposes, the branding and colour of surf helmets may be:
1. Manufactured in the user’s club cap colours; or
2. Manufactured in any other colour with a club cap fitted over the top of the helmet
Title: Mandatory Wearing of Certified Lifejackets in IRBs – Lifesaving and Competition

Document ID: Bulletin 03/13-14

Department: SLSA Capacity and Capability

Audience: State/territory Centres, Branch Centres, all clubs/services, all IRB Operators (driver and crewpersons)

Summary: This bulletin outlines new rules, effective 1 October 2014, that mandate the wearing of certified lifejackets in IRBs (lifesaving, competition and all IRB training).

Background

During our 100 year + history there have been significant changes to the management of Surf Life Saving’s operations and events to increase the safety of members. These changes include (but not limited to):

- Introduction of new national water safety policy and procedures
- Introduction of new ‘iRisk’ mobile and tablet software to assist members with risk checks and assessments
- Introduction of compulsory high visibility lycra vests for all competitors
- Enhanced venue selection criteria for major events
- Introduced onsite risk managers at major events to assess the suitability of competition conditions and who have the authority to suspend any event on the spot

SLSA remains committed to ongoing enhancements of safety and protection of members operating on patrol and competing in SLS competition. Following recent consultation with members, SLSA announces additional safety initiatives on behalf of the Surf Life Saving Australia Board of Directors;

- All surf boat rowers and sweeps must wear a certified surf helmet from 1 January 2014
- All surf lifesavers operating inflatable rescue boats (IRBs), both in frontline lifesaving operations and in competition, must wear certified lifejackets from 1 October 2014
- All competitors at the Australian Surf Life Saving Championships must hold the SLSA Bronze Medallion with Certificate II in Public Safety (Aquatic Rescue) from 2015

This bulletin outlines new rules, effective 1 October 2014, that mandate the wearing of lifejackets in IRBs when conducting frontline lifesaving services and in competition (including all training).

Decisions

1. SLSA mandates the compulsory wearing of Australian/International Standard certified lifejackets [AS:4758 or ISO:12402 - Level 50] by all IRB operators (drivers and crewperson/s) when operating IRBs for both frontline lifesaving services and competition (including all IRB training).
Implementation Detail

Implementation Timeframe:
- Compulsory wearing of certified lifejackets in IRBs takes effect from 1 October 2014 which will be reflected in an update to the SLSA Surf Sport Manual 34th Edition, SLS state/territory standard operating procedures and the SLSA powercraft manual.

Equipment Requirements:
- Certified lifejackets must meet the SLSA specification; most notably the safety standard that underpins the specification – Australian Standard:4758 Personal Floatation Devices - Level 50 or International Standard:12402:5 Personal Floatation Devices - Level 50
- Clubs/services are to procure certified lifejackets to satisfy their current SLS state/territory service agreement/ standard operational procedures or their local operational and membership requirements. As a guideline only, it is recommended that 3 x PFDs per IRB owned by the club/service in varying sizes (XS-XXL) be held.
- Certified lifejackets [AS:4758 or ISO:12402 - Level 50] are subject to gear and equipment inspection and competition scrutineering requirements (to be confirmed in due course prior to 1 October 2014).

Operational Requirements:
- Both IRB driver and crewperson/s are to wear a certified lifejacket [AS:4758 or ISO:12402 - Level 50] (worn correctly; zipped and clipped up applicable and in the correct size) at all times when in an IRB on the water.
- The IRB crewperson may only remove the certified lifejacket [AS:4758 or ISO:12402 - Level 50] when exiting the boat to perform an in-water rescue. The lifejacket must be put back on upon re-entry to the IRB.

Educational Campaign:
- An education campaign has been, and will continue to be, developed by SLSA to support the implementation of this decision with the membership; this will include the reasons leading to the decision. This information can be found on the SLSA website www.sls.com.au/safety

Funding and Supply:
- On average the cost range for a certified lifejacket [AS:4758 or ISO:12402 - Level 50] is between $70-200. Clubs/services/members will be responsible for providing certified lifejackets for frontline lifesaving operations and competition.
- In the near future, SLSA will make available a number of suitable supply options to assist clubs with the purchase of certified lifejackets [AS:4758 or ISO:12402 - Level 50].

Attachments:
1. SLSA Specification – Buoyancy Aid for Inshore Aquatic Power Craft Activities

_Note: ‘Lifejacket’ is the common name for an IRB/RWC buoyancy aid_
SLSA SPECIFICATION: BUOYANCY AID - INSHORE AQUATIC POWER CRAFT ACTIVITIES

INTRODUCTION:

The following specification outlines the requirements for the manufacture and supply of buoyancy aids for inshore aquatic power craft activities.

A buoyancy aid is personal protective equipment that is used by operators of inshore aquatic power craft, including:

- Inflatable rescue boat (IRB)
- Rescue water craft (RWC)

PURPOSE:

The primary purpose of a personal floatation device is to provide a person immersed in water a reasonable assurance from drowning.

SPECIFICATIONS:

1. CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS:

- All buoyancy aids used for inshore aquatic power craft activities must be certified and meet International Standard: 12402:5 (Personal Floatation Devices – Buoyancy Aids - Level 50) or Australian Standard 4758 (Personal Floatation Devices – Level 50S).
- Inflatable buoyancy aids that require user intervention are not acceptable.
- The buoyancy aid is to be lightweight;
- The buoyancy aid is to be non-obstructive to the throat, neck or face area;
- The buoyancy aid must not have any sharp edges or materials that may cause injury to the user;
- The buoyancy aid must be able to be secured as to prevent riding up;
- Any fastening device/s on the buoyancy aid are to be fashioned in a way that they don’t cause entanglement;
- The buoyancy aid is to be comfortable to wear.

2. SLS OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS:

To be fit for surf lifesaving purpose, a buoyancy aid for inshore aquatic power craft activities must be able to meet the following requirements:

- Be non-restrictive and streamlined for operational duties including swimming (25m in calm seas), lifting patients and moving in and around power craft;
- Be suitable for beach and surf conditions (durable to salt water and extreme UV conditions);
- Be easy and quick to fit and remove;
- Optional: Where the lifejacket is to be used for night time operations, it is to have reflective taping. Reflective taping must be on the outside of the jacket;
- Optional: If required, have a securing point for a duty radio on the right collar bone area.
3. BRANDING AND COLOUR REQUIREMENTS

- For frontline lifesaving purposes, the branding and colour of buoyancy aids for operators of inshore aquatic power craft are to align with the SLSA Equipment and Uniform Branding Guidelines.

- For competition purposes, the branding and colour of buoyancy aids for operators of inshore aquatic power craft may be in any colour. However high visibility vests must be worn outside the buoyancy aids.