

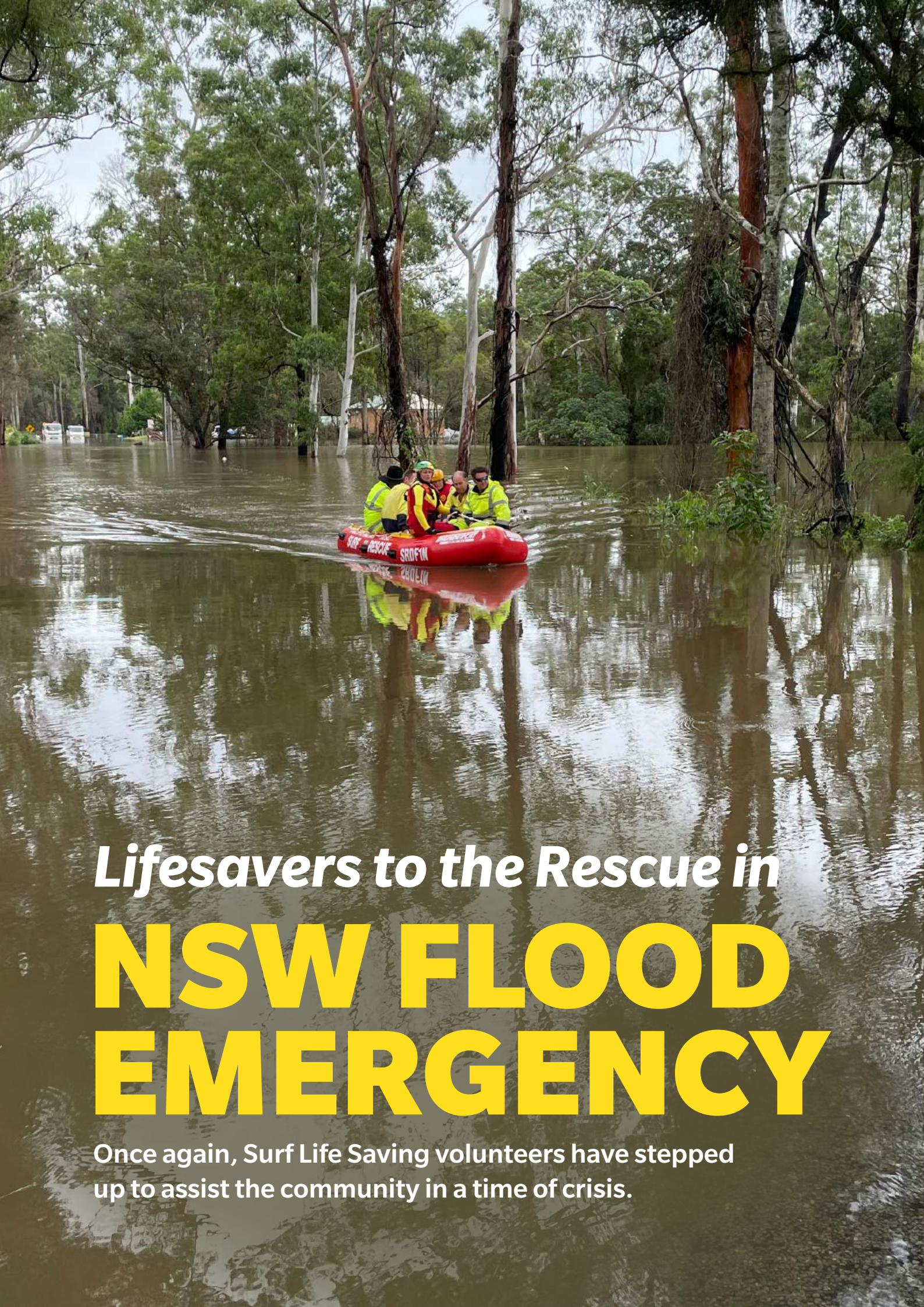
# SurfLIFE

ISSUE 46 – April 2021



SURF LIFE SAVING  
NEW SOUTH WALES





*Lifesavers to the Rescue in*

# **NSW FLOOD EMERGENCY**

Once again, Surf Life Saving volunteers have stepped up to assist the community in a time of crisis.





Since widespread flooding began to unfold with torrential rains impacting from 20 March 2021, Surf Life Saving and Australian Lifeguard Service assets, resources and personnel have been assisting other emergency services in all affected areas, bringing a range of response capabilities to bear on the one in one-hundred year event.

Volunteers and assets including Inflatable Rescue Boats (IRB) and jetskis began assisting with flood relief and evacuations on the mid and lower north coasts as flood waters began to rise.

Over the following week, many more volunteers and services joined the response effort as the unfolding natural disaster worsened and spread to other areas, including the Hawkesbury region near Sydney.

Sodden crews of volunteers and Australian Lifeguard Service lifeguards worked throughout a 7-day period in the Port Macquarie and Taree areas, helping with everything from doorknocking and delivering fuel to rescuing stranded residents trapped by rising floodwaters.

Over 160 members of Surf Life Saving NSW helped during the flood event, taking time off from paid work to put themselves in uncomfortable, and sometimes hazardous situations.

On the Colo River north-west of Sydney, SLS members helped to pull seven members of the public and crew to safety after a Marine Rescue Vessel capsized in the swollen waters.

In addition to volunteers in the field, the SLSNSW State Operations Centre played a central role in coordinating assets and personnel in flood areas and volunteer SLS Liaison Officers were embedded in the major SES

incident command centres to help position equipment and personnel.

SLSNSW President George Shales, said he was enormously proud of the efforts of volunteers and thanked clubs for providing equipment and people to assist the community.

**“As usual, our volunteers responded immediately to requests for assistance and I can’t thank them enough for braving the conditions and forsaking their own comfort to help others in need.”**

“The expertise and contribution from Surf Life Saving has been highly-commended by the other emergency services and is another example of the many ways we can all work together to protect the community in times of crisis,” said George Shales.

Despite responding to the flood event, surf clubs continued to support their local communities along the coast, as hazardous surf conditions impacted causing widespread inundation, coastal erosion and in some cases minor damage to surf club structures and buildings.

As flood waters began to recede, polluted beaches, waterways and dangerous debris began to pose yet another hazard to beachgoers and volunteer surf lifesavers and many beaches throughout the state were closed for days.

## FLOOD ACTIVITIES

- 49 SLS services responded
- 164 members responded (operations and rescues)
- State Operations Centre (SOC) operated extended hours and was on standby as backup to NW metro regional emergency ops centre.
- SOC personnel hours increased by 30% with dedicated Flood Liaison Officer rostered.
- Multiple roles performed by members including Duty Officers, Forward Commanders, Liaison Officers, Rescue Water Craft operators, club callout teams and admin support.
- Tasking included: SES liaison, aircraft coordination, evacuation, flood rescue, essential services transport, re-supply and damage assessment.
- Areas assisted: Western Sydney, Mid North Coast, Port Macquarie-Hastings Region, Lower North Coast. Standby on South Coast/Far South Coast.
- Strike teams launched to provide back-up from Branches including Sydney, Far North Coast, Sydney Northern Beaches and Central Coast.
- Volunteers and staff worked together to provide support (UAV Service, Australian Lifeguard Service and SLSNSW clubs/Support Ops)

# Team building and corporate volunteering rolled into one!

Why not make your next team building session one that makes a positive contribution to the community! As a charity, Surf Life Saving NSW has partnered with Team Building with Purpose to create a challenge with online or face to face delivery options, that offers team building and corporate volunteering rolled into one.

The 'Community Lifesavers Challenge' has been specifically designed to help companies overcome the social and physical isolation impact that COVID-19 has had on their workforce with the added bonus of contributing to a community need by benefiting Surf Life Saving NSW.

Now more than ever, team building has become so important and this challenge improves staff connectedness during these difficult times, helping to build morale, cohesion and resilience.

## Face to Face

3 hours

10 – 100+ participants



## Online

2 hours

10 – 30 participants



*"The session for Surf Life Saving (SLS) was engaging and interactive, and best of all, the team managed to convert the challenges and messages from the SLS session into some tangible ideas for how we create change in our business."*

**Commonwealth Bank participant**



**Is your team up for the challenge?** Costs will be quoted on confirmation of numbers. [Click here](#) to find out more or contact Team Building with Purpose on 02 9158 9600 or via email at [info@teambuildingwithpurpose.com.au](mailto:info@teambuildingwithpurpose.com.au)



# INCLUSIVE ATHLETES

## shine in surf and on sand

On Sunday 28th February, 35 members from 16 clubs across the state came together to compete in the Inclusive events at the 2021 NSW Age Championships, proudly supported by Your local club.

This was the third year of Inclusive events run as part of the State Championships, welcoming old and new competitors from as far north as Coffs Harbour down to our clubs in Sydney Branch. Event size was capped at 40 competitors who were joined by parents, water safety volunteers and supporters. Competitors were split into Junior, Youth and Senior age groups, and members competed in Swim, Sprints, Flags, Board and for the first time a Wade race.

Conditions were spectacular, allowing many competitors to get in the water for the swim, wade and board events and almost all competitors getting involved in the beach sprints and beach flags.

The Inclusive events provide a fun and competitive pathway for the NSW clubs which run Inclusive weekend programs for their members. Thanks to our dedicated team of volunteer officials who made the events run smoothly and allowed for some fierce competition with many close finishes!

Hosting the Inclusive events at the Age Championships aligns with SLSNSW's strategic objective to be an all-inclusive organisation that protects, educates, prepares, and

embraces everyone. SLSNSW will continue to support this event and the inclusion space, to grow participant numbers in future years.

Surf Life Saving NSW Inclusive Events Liaison Donna Hargreaves said the event always brings tears of joy to everyone involved. "It's just so much fun for everyone who is part of this event. The kids don't have a disability when they're down here on the beach.

"The kids feel like they can do anything that anyone else can do and their parents feel the same," said Donna Hargreaves.

"The event is about giving all our inclusive members state-wide, the opportunity to do what any able-bodied member can do and the parents love it because many of them didn't think their children would ever be able to take part in Surf Life Saving

and here they are competing and loving every minute."

Richard from North Narrabeen SLSC loves bringing his son Oscar to the event and said it's helped his confidence and skills development but is also just a great program to be part of.

"Seeing all the kids having fun, being competitive, being included and being given the chance to join in like everyone else is so great," he said.

"They love being part of surf sports and Surf Life Saving. Oscar is now an excellent swimmer because of the program we run at North Narrabeen and he wants to be a lifesaver like me one day."

Contact your local surf club to find out more about inclusive programs offered in the area.





# SURF CLUBS ACROSS THE STATE BENEFIT FROM CLUBGRANTS FUNDING



## ClubGRANTS

Surf **[www.clubgrants.com.au](http://www.clubgrants.com.au)**  
for available grants now.



For more information, visit the website  
or call the Member Enquiries Centre on 1300 730 001.



# Joint rescue saves two lives

**Sunday 27 December 2020:  
Near record crowds flock to  
Sydney's beaches after a wet  
Christmas. Surf Life Saving  
Sydney Support Ski operator  
Kane Hughes described the  
day as the busiest he had  
experienced in a long time  
along the Bate Bay stretch.**

At Wanda Beach there was over 40 rescues alone that day, but there was one rescue that could have resulted in a tragic double fatality if it wasn't for the quick thinking of off-duty lifesaver Lachlan Crawford.

Just before 3pm when the beach was at capacity, 21-year-old Lachlan went for a swim in front of Track 15, south of the patrolled area at Wanda Beach.

Lachlan noticed two people struggling to keep their heads above water so

made his way towards the female in her 20s while surfers assisted the male in his 40s.

Kane Hughes saw the lifeguard buggy moving quickly up the beach so launched his ski and met the team on the sand between Elouera and Wanda where the incident was unfolding.

"There were so many people in the water, the ski simply couldn't get through to assist, so I beached it and helped set up the oxygen and defib. We could see the patients weren't in good shape and everyone just quickly and seamlessly worked together to assist however they could," Kane Hughes said.

Sutherland Lifeguard John Hayman paddled out on a rescue board and took the female patient who was the most serious, from Lachlan who was supporting her limp body in the water.

Once back on the beach, Kane assisted John in moving the female patient from the water and began first aid treatment.

The Elouera roving patrol members arrived and took over treatment of the male. After a quick assessment of the two patients two ambulances were requested.

The woman regained consciousness on the beach in the hands of a competent team before being transported to hospital in a critical condition.

The male who was assisted to shore by surfers was treated for shock on the beach and with the help of lifeguards was also transported to hospital.

"The club is so proud of the immediate actions Lachlan took to preserve the woman's life. If he wasn't there she would have lost her life. He did everything right," said Wanda SLSC Club Captain Michael Bonnici.

"Everyone in our club trains hard and is always around, the beach is our way of life and we're very proud of the culture and helping nature of everyone. Even when our members aren't on patrol, they're so vigilant, just like Lachlan was this day. He was just out for a swim and he saw someone in danger and reacted instantly," he said.

After the incident Kane Hughes reflected on the capability of the lifesaving team, "The whole response was so streamlined," Kane. "We've got great leadership in the Bate Bay area and really good attitudes. The success of this rescue demonstrates the great cohesive working relationship we all have – the council lifeguards, the four surf clubs and the Support Operations team – especially when it counts."

Lachlan Crawford (Wanda SLSC), Kane Hughes (Surf Life Saving Sydney Support Operations Ski), John Hayman and Cameron Pyett (Sutherland Shire Council Lifeguards) as well as Elouera SLSC have been awarded the Surf Life Saving NSW Rescue of the Month for December 2020 in recognition of the successful rescue of two people and the teamwork demonstrated that day.



# Near drowning leads to launch of innovative learn to swim program

Two rescues performed by off-duty surf lifesavers, which saved the lives of eight men from Western Sydney, were the inspiration for a new learn to swim program that was officially launched on the Australia Day long weekend in Cronulla.

It was the October long weekend, 2019 and a group of men from a Western Sydney Mosque were on a father-son camping weekend at Seven Mile Beach near Forster on the NSW Lower North Coast. Several men and

their sons ventured into the water for a swim not realising they were heading straight into a rip. The group quickly got swept out by the strong current and began struggling to stay above water.

Hearing cries for help, a group of off-duty surf lifesavers from Sydney, who were camping at the same campground as the men, raced down to the beach to rescue them. Two of the men, who almost drowned, were treated by paramedics and required hospitalisation.

It was this lifesaving rescue, and a similar one the following day involving the same group of men, that inspired Omar Mahmoud and Feroz Sattar to form **Swim Brothers**, an innovative new learn to swim program that is providing men from

diverse communities with culturally-appropriate learn to swim training – both in the pool and in the surf.

Omar and Feroz realised that many people in their community have limited swimming ability in the pool and the surf and decided to do something about it. The Swim Brothers program was the result and it was officially launched at North Cronulla Beach in Sydney's Sutherland Shire on Sunday 24 January.

"There are challenges with men from our communities being able to access surf and beach safety programs in a culturally sensitive format. Swim Brothers specifically tailors all aspects to address this and make this important skill accessible to all," Feroz Sattar said.





"It's interesting because we developed this program - but we are also the target market for it as well. I had started this program with Feroz and immediately learned that I was not as good a swimmer as I thought. And the importance of beach and surf safety was further reinforced," Omar Mahmoud said.

Omar and Feroz were also inspired to form Swim Brothers after seeing the success of the similar Swim Sisters program which partnered with the Garie Surf Life Saving Club in Sydney to assist women to achieve their Bronze Medallions and become surf lifesavers.

Swim Brothers program participant Abdullah Syed said that being from an Islamic cultural background, he recognises that there are barriers to learning beach and water safety.

"One of the barriers involves the separation of men and women when their being together is not required in a professional or emergency capacity. This has been the case in Islamic tradition as a way to preserve the modesty of the two sexes," Abdullah Syed said.

"In turn, this has meant that swim and beach activities, which generally involve the socialising of women and men, have been largely avoided by people of the Islamic faith. This has meant poor swim skills and techniques as well as inadequate knowledge of beach and surf safety.

"Swim Brothers has recognised the cultural sensitivities of people from immigrant and Islamic cultural backgrounds and has facilitated for these communities through their swim programs specifically for men

and for women," he said.

Another Swim Brothers participant, Nasmin Taybah, said that after some challenging experiences in the water, he decided he needed to learn to swim properly.

"Once I was at the beach and I went into the water not realising how strong the waves were. It wasn't very deep

but I had to use all my powers to reach the shore. I almost did not make it," Nasmin Taybah said.

"I also had a cousin who drowned at the beach. This event left a scar on me ever since," he said.

According to the NSW 2020 Coastal Safety Report, men are over-represented in coastal drowning deaths, making up 88 percent of people who drowned during the 2019/20 season.

Steven Pearce, CEO of Surf Life Saving NSW, said that Surf Life Saving NSW was fully supporting the Swim Brothers program, to help reduce the number of drowning incidents involving people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

"What Feroz and Omar have done in establishing the Swim Brothers program is to be commended. When it comes to coastal drownings, people from Western Sydney, particularly people from diverse communities, are identified as an at risk group," Steven Pearce said.

[Read more »](#)

***"The Swim Brothers collaboration gives us a fantastic opportunity to use our expertise to deliver vital beach and surf safety messages"***





# Women Lead

## on Rescue Watercraft Skill Development

When the indefatigable Nixy Krite came to Andrew Mackellar, RWC (Jetski) Coordinator at Surf Life Saving Sydney, with a six-page proposal for a training program to develop and retain female RWC operators, he knew he couldn't say no.

"We have five RWCs in the Sydney Branch and each one does between 500 and 600 hours on the water each season. We need all the RWC operators we can get to cover demand and when Nixy Krite came to me with her proposal I knew it made a lot of sense", Andrew Mackellar said.

"Our first hurdle was getting access to the Sydney Branch RWCs for the training – and when the women were all available for training. Our RWCs are in use so often that we realised the only window of opportunity to run the Women's Development Program was mid-week during the Christmas holidays when most people are on leave from work and the RWCs weren't out on the water patrolling.

"Nixy is one of our most passionate trainers and she basically said to me that there was a need to upskill our operators to take them to the next

level of operational preparedness," said Andrew Mackellar.

"Our basic RWC drivers' training program is ten weeks long and we concentrate on basic RWC operation and rescue techniques in the surf zone.

"What we don't spend much time on is interoperability with other rescue assets such as offshore rescue boats and helicopters. And that's exactly what Nixy was proposing we teach in our RWC training program for our female operators," Andrew said.

Nixy Krite said that when she took the initiative to Andrew his support was instant.

"He supported the ideas within the clinic and looked after all the logistical nightmares of having all five jetskis from the Sydney Branch serviced and in the once place for the women to

have the best craft possible for the day," Nixy Krite said.

The new RWC Women's Development Program aims to promote the development of RWC operating skills, broaden operators' experience of the craft, provide additional knowledge and understanding of maintenance and mechanics of the craft, increase RWC standards across Surf Life Saving Sydney Branch and promote, recruit and retain women in the RWC space.

"This was the first RWC women's development clinic in the Sydney Branch. I did a survey with the participants when the EOI went out







and one of the questions was around what they would like to know more about and upskill on. So, I wrote the program to address all those requests.

"We did some exercises that will help everyone, going forward, on patrol but also to ensure we're rescue ready to work alongside Surf Rescue 30. Understanding how to move and operate alongside a big moving boat is a skill in itself.

"So, we're doing rock rescues, transferring patients and crew, coming up close to boats and other objects in the water," said Nixy Krite, RWC Trainer from Bondi SBLSC.

Coco McCarthy, from Maroubra SLSC, said it was a great opportunity to come together and learn from each other.

"It is technique and not all strength. And building on that and working with each other is very valuable. Personally, I wanted to upskill. RWC and jetski is a life skill," Coco McCarthy said.

Lucy Schott from North Bondi SLSC said that her advice for other women interested in becoming a RWC driver was, "Just do it! Don't listen to anybody else, just go forward and do your best!"

Nixy Krite said that it was an amazing day and thanked Surf Life Saving Sydney and Surf Life Saving NSW for supporting the new RWC Women's Development Program.

"All in all, we had a hugely successful day and we're excited about the outcomes. The women gained confidence and motivation to work at what they have learnt for the day.

"They also took away a sense of belonging and self-worth. Above all, the friendship these ladies formed helps them to keep improving every time they get on the craft.

"The women got a lot from it and we're looking forward to many more training sessions like it," Nixy Krite concluded.



# Women in Surf Life Saving

## #ChooseToChallenge

On International Women's Day 2021, Surf Life Saving NSW recognises our valuable and incredible female members from across the state.

This year's theme is #ChooseToChallenge which emphasises that 'from challenge comes change' and encourages us all to challenge and call out gender bias and inequality, to seek out and celebrate women's achievements and collectively help to create an inclusive world.

From a Surf Life Saving NSW perspective, our new Strategic Plan has a focus on inclusion, and on increasing the diversity within club, branch and state management teams – gender is most definitely a part of this.

There are a number of things that the organisation is doing and can do to support gender equity from our national Women's Mentoring Program, to the case studies celebrating the contribution of

women to SLS that you will see promoted through our channels, and to the Emerging Leaders Program that we are developing which will take a gendered look at giving members the confidence to put their hands up for leadership roles.

We had a chat to three inspirational women about who inspires them and their views of the roles that women play in our movement.

### What are your views on women in lifesaving? What role do they play?

**LIZZIE:** We (women) are so important because we are helping the next generation of girls believe they can do anything, especially when dealing with insecurities like body image.

Being on the beach, whether training, competing or patrolling, we spend a lot of time being vulnerable in our swimmers, which would turn a lot of women and girls away. However, there are so many women out there of all

ages, cultures and sizes showing other women that it doesn't matter what you look like, you can be involved in our sport.

**MOLLY:** Women are becoming more and more involved in Surf Life Saving every season which is so encouraging to see. I love seeing women take on leadership roles, whether as patrol captains, club captains as well as higher up in our branches and as branch presidents. It is so important for women to get involved in their local club as well as the leadership roles within the club. Women are not as heavily involved as I would hope, but this could be for a lot of different reasons such as openings in leadership positions as well as having the confidence to step up in what is sometimes a male-dominated environment.

**RACHEL:** Women play such an important role in all aspects of lifesaving. There is certainly a long way to go before we get to equity when you look at the lack of women



**Molly Parker**

SLSNSW Duty Officer, RWC Operator, Vice Patrol Captain, UAV Pilot, Surfboat athlete, trainee Paramedic



**Lizzie Welborn**

Nutri-Grain Ironwoman, Environmental Science student



**Rachel Crerar**

Mum, Coach, Athlete, Physiotherapist



holding leadership positions and in sport but at least times are starting to change. I was the first female Nippers head coach at Manly Life Saving Club during the time of our first female junior president but it's still difficult to maintain a position as a minority. We need to encourage women to step up, support each other and believe we can make a difference together.

## Who is an inspirational female that you look up to?

**LIZZIE:** At the moment I am incredibly inspired by my teammate Jemma Smith. She is so passionate about so many things and always finds time to do them all. I look up to her because whenever I feel like I don't have time for something, she is a reminder to me that if I love it, I will always have time for it. She is one of the busiest people I know, but always has time to be a great friend and role model for the younger kids.

**RACHEL:** I really look up to Naomi Flood. She has inspired me right throughout my involvement, from when I was a kid competing to now. She became the first female life member at Manly and is one of the only elite female coaches in the country. I have also always been inspired by Courtney Hancock who is a couple of years older than me. She's always pushed the limits and continues to prove that age is no barrier in our sport.

Outside lifesaving, my mum is my greatest influence. She told me when I was younger that no one can tell you, you can't achieve something. She told me I could do anything, and I did. Every time someone tells me 'no you can't' it drives me to do it even more. When they told me I couldn't train and complete a Physiotherapy degree I did and went on to win a state title. They told me not to compete when I was pregnant, and I went on to get second place in the 2019 Coolangatta Gold short course event. You have to keep that fire, don't let anyone tell you that you can't! Thanks mum.

**MOLLY:** I look up to Brittaney Banks from North Bondi SLSC. Britt makes time to compete, take on leadership roles both within her club as well as branch and also volunteers as a duty

officer on weekends and on Surf Rescue 30.

While doing this, she was also studying Paramedicine, while working as a nurse. For me, Britt has been an inspiration in encouraging me to get involved in all aspects of Surf Life Saving and confirms that you are able to compete, gain leadership roles as well as work hard towards any goals you set your mind to. Britt is always involved in leadership development camps, to help increase the awareness of women within leadership roles.

**Despite 43% of our total membership and 37% of our patrolling membership being female, only 11% of presidents and 16% of club captains are female.**

## What ideas do you have to encourage more women in lifesaving?

**MOLLY:** I would love to see more women becoming IRB drivers and RWC operators as well as taking on more roles at the surf club such as

club captain and board positions. Younger women and girls look up to women in these roles and get inspired by seeing them make a difference. I would love to be able to encourage more women to become members and learn new skills by showing them a variety of opportunities available, from patrolling to taking on roles with greater responsibility.

I also think that there should be more all-female courses to make it easier and more comfortable for women to take part in training like IRB and RWC courses and leadership programs. It will help build people's confidence in a supportive environment.

**RACHEL:** In sport, I think there could be changes to the difference in races like the Taplin Relay which for the boys is a 6-person relay but for females, it is a 3-person relay. These days clubs have the depth, strength and competitors to field a team and I would love to see that happen.

**LIZZIE:** Definitely encouraging young women to not let their insecurities prevent them from doing things they love. Encourage your friends and family to participate. Being part of what we do is such a healthy way of life and has so many benefits mentally and physically.



# Hero Nippers

## *Save Friends During State Final*

Over 25,000 kids between 5-13 years took part in the Nippers junior activities program this season in NSW. They learn about surf safety, gain skills in the water as well as participate in competition with many also representing their clubs in local, branch and state championship events.







As their skills and confidence in the surf grows, they observe the culture and commitment of their club's qualified lifesavers and senior members.

They are fast and fearless and time and time again we see the youngest members of the movement perform outstanding rescues.

The 2021 NSW Age Championships, proudly supported by Your local club was held at Swansea Belmont SLSC and on Friday 26 February there was almost 1,000 people on the beach either competing or watching our youngest competitors take on the waves.

For three young Nippers from South Maroubra SLSC, it was a State Champs they'll never forget.

It was just after lunch on the second day of competition for the Nippers and Owen, Tate and Jordan were on the line for the Under 11 Male Surf Race final.

Parents of the finalists were standing on the beach, eagerly watching as the boys sprinted off the start line into the challenging surf.

All the boys were almost clear of the break. Owen was sitting in second place as the pack approached the turning can when the unexpected happened.

"About ten metres away from the cans I just couldn't breathe," recounts Owen who began to suffer an asthma attack in the water.

He flipped onto his back and tried to remain calm. Within seconds he felt someone by his side.

Tate didn't hesitate to respond, and perhaps without truly realising the courage and maturity of his decision, he swam towards the person he could see was in distress.

"I was swimming and out of nowhere I saw someone's legs stop underwater," said Tate. "I went over to them and when I got there, I realised it was Owen.

"He just told me to keep swimming, but I said no, and I called for help."

Coming up from the side towards the cans, Jordan also swam towards the boys to help.

"I held Owen above the water as soon as I reached him and Tate was signalling to the IRB for help," said Jordan.

"I just thought to myself, he's a friend - the race doesn't matter. I need to help him no matter what," said Jordan.

Sacrificing their places and potentially medals in the final as the pack swam on past the boys, Tate and Jordan didn't leave their friend, continuing to reassure Owen as they waited for the IRB to make its way through the pack of swimmers.

"I was very dizzy and I couldn't breathe. I felt like my life was going to end," said Owen.

"Then I just had two kids come along and save me. It was quite nice to know that I got saved by two kids in a surf race and that they gave up their position to help me."

The South Maroubra Under 11s Team Manager Renae McNamara said "it was a phenomenal effort by the boys, for them this is all about mateship and we're just so proud of them.

"They didn't hesitate to give up their own race and put into practice their junior lifesaving skills, because that's

what they are first and foremost, they're junior lifesavers in training," she said.

"What they learn is how to be a lifesaver and competition is a fun side of that. To them, if you see somebody in trouble you rescue

them and that's what they did, and we couldn't be more proud."

Renae McNamara said to have kids as young as 10 and 11 years old with the skills and competency to rescue somebody is amazing and a credit to the organisation. "These are the future lifesavers of Australia and we've got them here in training and putting their skills into action. They have learned the rescue skills, they know who to call and what to do in an emergency which is just incredible.

"It was big surf that day, really tough conditions and all they want to do is save somebody's life."

***"I just thought to myself, he's a friend - the race doesn't matter. I need to help him no matter what."***

# 2021 STATE CHAMPS

And that's a wrap! After five years of hosting the state's premier surf sport event at Blacksmiths Beach at Lake Macquarie, the carnival rolls on to a new location from next year, on Sydney's Northern Beaches.

This year's event was hosted over four weekends and extended to 12 days of competition and two beach locations in order to comply with Covid restrictions on attendees.

Despite the extra logistical issues and a massive effort from the host clubs (Swansea Belmont and Redhead SLSCs) the NSW Championships, proudly supported by Your local club, saw almost 6000 competitors, 500 officials, hundreds of volunteer workforce and thousands of supporters enjoy all the action and camaraderie of one of the country's largest annual sporting festivals.

Host club president Graham Burge said he was very proud of the competitors, and his team of dedicated workforce volunteers who have brought the last five NSW Championships to fruition.

"We've had fantastic support from the Lake Macquarie City Council and we're very proud of our competitors, they've all excelled," said Burge.

The NSW Championships is the largest surf event of its kind and in many years it attracts more competitors than the Australian Championships. The event delivers a massive economic boost to the host region, in the order of \$10M each year.

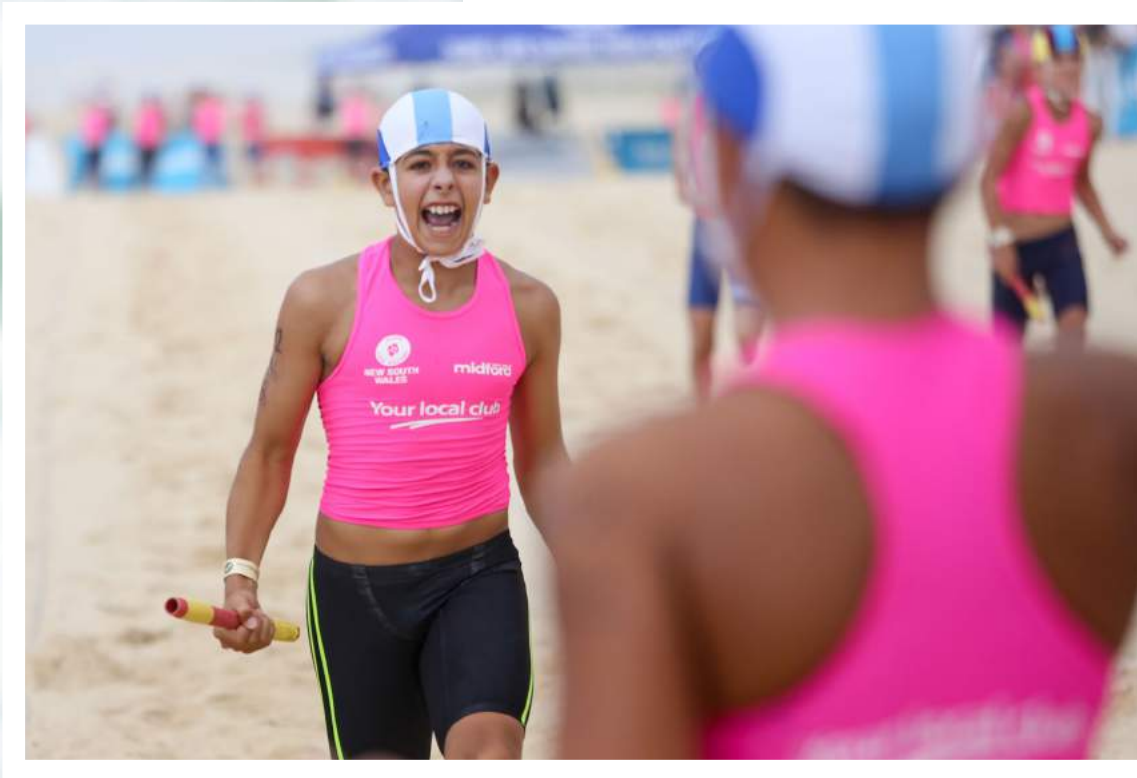
"The NSW Surf Life Saving Championships celebrate volunteer surf lifesavers and the fantastic work they do in keeping our beaches and waterways safe," said CEO of ClubsNSW and Your local club, Josh Landis.

President of Surf Life Saving NSW, George Shales OAM, thanked the host clubs, the council and sponsor Your local club for their tremendous support.

"An event on this scale just doesn't happen overnight and it takes an army of volunteers to ensure we deliver the very best competition experience for our members," said George Shales.

















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## Our Mission

To save lives, create great Australians and build better communities.

## Summary

Surf Life Saving NSW is the state's major water safety and rescue organisation, and with over 76,000 members, is one of the largest volunteer movements in Australia.

The primary role of Surf Life Saving NSW is to save lives on our beaches, while other activities include developing our members through education, leadership and surf sports programs.

There are 129 surf clubs and 11 branches in the state which are affiliated with Surf Life Saving NSW, stretching from Fingal Rovers SLSC near Tweed Heads, to Pambula SLSC on the Far South Coast.

## Contact Us

For contributions or suggestions for Surflife please contact SLSNSW Media on 02 9471 8000 or [media@surflifesaving.com.au](mailto:media@surflifesaving.com.au)

Surf Life Saving NSW wishes to thank the following sponsors and supporters for helping our volunteers save lives on the beaches each year.

## Your local club



SLSNSW endeavours to ensure all information contained in *Surflife* is correct and true, however accepts no responsibility for any inaccuracies or mistakes contained in the publication.

## Surf Life Saving New South Wales

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