

SurfLIFE

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SURF LIFE SAVING
NEW SOUTH WALES





United front for water safety bodies

A difficult summer where more than 20 people drowned in lakes, rivers, pools, and the beach prompted an unprecedented show of co-operation between the state's water safety bodies.

Dismayed by the fact that the message of safety around water hasn't been getting through to the community, the agencies got together for a joint press conference ahead of the Australia Day Holiday.

Representatives from Surf Life Saving NSW joined NSW Police, Marine Rescue NSW, Royal Life Saving NSW, Roads and Maritime, Westpac Life Saver Rescue Helicopter Service, and the Australian Lifeguard Service at the Marine Area Command in Sydney to deliver a pointed safety warning to revellers.

Surf Life Saving NSW has subsequently been working with stakeholders on a coordinated advertising campaign across various media platforms to help spread the message of safety around water environments – specifically around rip currents and other beach and water hazards.

[View the full safety message at](#)
bit.ly/AusDayMessage2017



Australia Day Safety Message
25 January • 1.5k views



Governor of NSW with SLSNSW President David Murray

On the beach with our Patron

Surf Life Saving NSW was delighted to welcome His Excellency General The Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Ret'd), Governor of New South Wales and patron of the organisation as a special visitor to the NSW Championships at Blacksmiths Beach in March.

The Governor attended the final day of the Opens competition and was an interested spectator as the state's best athletes battled it out for medals and glory in the surf and on the beach.

During his time at the Championships, His Excellency took a tour of the competition areas, delivered a speech at the VIP function, and presented a number of medals to competitors.

Partnership milestone for Stramit & SLSNSW

Ever since first becoming naming rights partners in 2007, Stramit Building Products has been proud supporters of Surf Life Saving in NSW.

This year marks the 10th anniversary of what has been a very strong and productive relationship with the Australian company.

Stramit has always been vocal in its support for country surf lifesavers in particular and has been the naming rights partners of the annual Country Championships for the past decade.

"It has been a positive relationship over the years and we are proud to associate ourselves with the wonderful community of Surf Life Saving," said Andrew McLean Area Network Manager Stramit Building Products

"Lifesavers play an important role in keeping our beaches safe while also embodying many of the values that we at Stramit pride ourselves on as well.

"Teamwork, courage, and comradery are all familiar concepts to those within the lifesaving community and something that we could all do well to embrace in our daily lives," he said.



Country Champs hailed a success

The 2017 Stramit NSW Country Surf Life Saving Championships were hosted at South West Rocks in spectacular conditions.

For a second straight summer the event was condensed into two competition days which was well received by competitors, officials and spectators.

It was a highly competitive carnival with Cudgen Headland SLSC writing their own chapter in its history by bringing to an end Byron Bay's six year winning streak.

NSW Surf Sports Manager Rob Pidgeon said it was an outstanding competition.

"The Country Championships are always a highlight each summer and South West Rocks did an exceptional job as the host club.

"The organising committee were diligent and are well versed in the unique logistics required to host an event of this scale, and it's clear our membership had a fantastic couple of days in the beautiful Macleay Valley," he said.

An announcement on the 2018 hosts and competition dates will be communicated in the coming months.



2017 NSW Country Championships Top 5 Overall pointscore

1. Cudgen Headland SLSC	1106
2. Sawtell SLSC	542
3. Byron Bay SLSC	473
4. Port Macquarie SLSC	352
5. Lennox Head - Alstonville SLSC	301



A member of the
Fletcher Building
Group.

Stramit



Member for Port Macquarie Leslie Williams MP with the first group of qualified UAV operators

Future UAV pilots to be trained at Port Macquarie

The idyllic coastal town of Port Macquarie is about to experience a technological revolution after the establishment of a new academy to train UAV pilots was formally announced in February.

Over the last 18 months, Surf Life Saving NSW has supported trials of a range of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) by the Little Ripper Group © with a view to evaluating their effectiveness as a lifesaving tool.

The potential of the Westpac Little Ripper and the smaller Mini Ripper is enormous with possible applications such as shark spotting and being able to drop rescue equipment or survival gear to swimmers in distress.

It is constantly evolving technology and the first graduating class of pilots and operators have now completed their training. Six volunteer surf lifesavers and six professional lifeguards are now qualified with the new training school set to boost that number in future.

The academy will operate out of the Surf Life Saving NSW Northern Operations Centre in Port Macquarie and will provide professional training to selected candidates.

One aspiration of the program is for it to eventually complement a high school course that is currently being trialled on the Gold Coast which introduces students to the science of UAVs.

The UAV pilot training program may also open doors to those who have restricted movement, allowing them to work alongside surf lifesavers but also gain qualifications that can give people living with disability opportunities for employment in the industry.

"To think that we can offer people living with disability, for instance in a wheelchair, the opportunity to operate Westpac Little Ripper Lifesaver equipment and save a life in the surf is incredible," said Surf Life Saving NSW President David Murray.

"This would set a precedent and be a world-first I'm sure. We are proud that Surf Life Saving is at the forefront of testing, training and deploying this amazing technology," he said.

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Demanding Summer For Lifesavers

As the patrol season begins to wind down for 2016/17, lifesavers can look back on what has been another busy summer for those tasked with protecting our beaches.

In the three months of summer (December – February) there were over 3.5 million visitors to the beach averaging out an impressive 1 million a month. Attendance was boosted by the warm weather the state enjoyed throughout this peak period highlighting just how important a role the beach and the ocean environment play in community life.

Our volunteer surf lifesavers from 129 clubs were on their toes performing over 2,500 rescues, 72,000 preventative actions, and administering 12,300 first aid treatments during this period.

Surf Life Saving NSW Director of Lifesaving John Restuccia paid tribute to the efforts of volunteer surf lifesavers throughout the summer.

“I would like to publicly acknowledge the efforts of all our patrolling volunteers who consistently go above and beyond the call of duty to ensure the welfare of all visitors to our coastline,” Mr Restuccia said.

“It’s always a challenging time of year to patrol when people give up time with their families and friends to fulfil their commitments. The good weather over summer meant that it was an extremely busy period.”

These numbers don’t include the beach visitations and work done by the professional lifeguards from the Australian Lifeguard Service who fulfilled a number of contracts across the state during the busy school holidays.



Sadly throughout summer there were 15 coastal drownings with around half of these occurring while swimming. These deaths, combined with those in inland waterways and backyard pools has prompted the state's peak water safety bodies to unite behind a pointed safety campaign in an effort to continue to educate the public about ocean dangers.

Surf Life Saving NSW is extremely grateful for the efforts of all our valued patrol members as they continue to embody our mission of saving lives, creating great Australians and building better communities.

During Summer



2,529

Rescues



12,307

First Aid



72,292

Preventative Actions



3,640,198

Attendance



Miller Mason, Manly
and Harry Leo, Swansea
Belmont cemented their
friendship at the 2017
State Champs

NSW surf lifesavers honoured for rescues

New South Wales surf lifesavers continued to be honoured for their amazing efforts in the surf often going above and beyond the call of duty, while always displaying great professionalism.

Following on from the efforts of their peers two more clubs were honoured for distinguished rescues with the prestigious title of National Rescue of the Month.

North Wollongong's Patrol 4 led by Captain Kevin Ryan took out the award for January after they successfully rescued four beachgoers on Monday 2 January when one man slipped off the rocks and his friends got into difficulty while attempting to rescue him.

Cooks Hill Club Captain Mark Doherty received the award for February for his efforts in a rescue at Bar Beach on Sunday 12 February 2017.

At around 5:30pm, Doherty had finished duties with Patrol 1 and was upstairs in the clubhouse when members of the public informed Mark there were two children struggling in a rip at the southern end of the beach.

Without hesitating, Mark ran downstairs to the patrol room, grabbed a rescue board and ran 300m south to the water's edge and entered the 2-3ft swell.

Representatives from North Wollongong and Cooks Hill SLSCs will travel to Canberra in June where they will be formally presented with their National Rescue of the Month Awards at a ceremony in Parliament House.

Junior Heroes

It's not just the experienced lifesavers making a difference. At the recent State Championships there was an outstanding act of sportsmanship between two rival competitors in the heats of the Under 11 Surf Race.

Manly's Miller Mason was competing in the surf race and attempting to bodysurf a wave when he hit his head.

Fellow competitor Harry Leo (Swansea Belmont) saw the incident unfold. Abandoning his position in the race, the youngster made a beeline for the injured swimmer and waited with him, checking on his welfare until water safety arrived.

"We will definitely remain friends, it was really good of Harry to swim over and check that I was ok," said Miller Mason.

Harry Leo was modest about his efforts believing it was more important to make sure his fellow racer was alright than winning the race.

"I'm just glad I was able to help out and it's great that he's going to be ok," he said.

I'm just glad I was able to help out and it's great that he's going to be ok

The story does have a happy postscript. Despite being in a neck brace for at least the immediate future Miller Mason will make a full recovery.

Harry Leo actually finished the race well and using his hometown knowledge of the surf, managed to qualify for the quarter final.

In a gesture of gratitude for his efforts, Miller presented Harry with a gold medal he had won in the Surf Relay event earlier.

The two have declared that they will remain friends and are a great example of the skill, mateship and bravery instilled through Surf Life Saving.



Education playing key role in community safety

It's been a busy start to 2017 for the Surf Life Saving NSW Community Education team who have involved in many events to help promote beach safety to the widest possible audience.

Sadly there have been a number of recent drownings of international students this season which has reinforced just how crucial it is to develop relationships within the community to help people make safe decisions in the ocean environment.

Two of the key events the team has been involved with this year include appearances at the traditional orientation week for international university students and providing support for a Beach Safety workshop for Chinese migrants living in the Hornsby Shire.

During "O Week", community educators delivered 8 presentations to over 1,400 students at locations including the University of Sydney, University of Wollongong, Liverpool TAFE NSW - South Western Institute, Meadowbank TAFE – Northern Sydney.

It is hoped that this program will continue to grow next year. In March, 40 members of Hornsby's Chinese Community including young families attended the workshop where they mingled with members of Toowoon Bay SLSC and participated in beach safety presentations, as well as board and swimming activities on the Central Coast.

The workshop was supported by Surf Life Saving NSW, Surf Life Saving Central Coast, Community Migrant Resource Centre and the Australian Asian Cultural Association.

Surf Life Saving NSW was also delighted to be invited to attend the recent Sydney Lord Mayor's Welcome for International Students at Town Hall where we had the opportunity to provide resources to the new students and deliver our key safety messages by contributing to a video production.

Plan to consolidate lifesaving's future

How will Surf Life Saving evolve over the next five years? It's an important question, and one that Surf Life Saving NSW is actively engaging with as it develops a new strategic plan for the future.

The organisation is currently in the first stage of setting a strategic direction for the next half decade with the aim of ensuring a sustainable future in all aspects of our activities.

The SLSNSW Board, staff and representatives from the wider lifesaving community will provide input on a wide range of issues including frontline services, technology, and the challenges facing Surf Life Saving as the plan is drafted.

A member survey will also be distributed which will give all volunteers the opportunity to input to the plan.

**It's important to be on the front foot as we prepare for technological, social and cultural change.**

Following this process a draft document will be developed and refined before the plan is implemented over the coming years.

Surf Life Saving NSW President David Murray said developing a strategic plan is an important stage in shaping the future direction of the movement.

"Like other volunteer based organisations, Surf Life Saving will face significant challenges in coming years and it is important to be on the front foot as we prepare for technological, social and cultural change.

"It's important that everyone within the lifesaving community can feel an ownership of this plan moving forward and it has been wonderful to hear the views of so many different people as we put in place strategies to improve Surf Life Saving in NSW," he said.

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SURF LIFE SAVING
NEW SOUTH WALES





Crowning glory as NSW Country Team seals title

A highly successful tour of New Zealand ended in the best possible fashion for the NSW Country Surf Life Saving team who were crowned Trans-Tasman Champions in January sealing their third consecutive title in the process.

A 20-strong team contested the three-meet biennial series against surf athletes from Northern Region (New Zealand) and the Central Coast with the athletes in fine form at the beaches of Waipu, Takapuna and Omaha during the competition.

The defending champions saved their best performance for the series finale blitzing the field in the team and water events to finish with 43 points. They ended the three-meet series with 9 points on the overall standings (3 points for winning each meeting) while Central Coast and Northern Region couldn't be split finishing the competition with 4.5 points each.

NSW Country Coach Alan Beveridge was delighted to be coming home with the extra weight in the team's kit.

"It's been a wonderful competition and was a real team effort over the three days of competition. Every single member of this team can feel rightly proud of their contribution to this success," Beveridge said.

"What has been most pleasing from a coaching perspective has been how well the team came together. Once we got over here everyone switched on and was really supportive of each other and this good environment really came out during the competition."

Surf Life Saving NSW Surf Sports Manager Rob Pidgeon said it was fantastic result for the Country Team.

2017 NSW Country Team

Jedd Mitchell Coffs Harbour SLSC

Will Jones Byron Bay SLSC

Shaylla Young Cudgen Headland SLSC

Luke Chaffer Cudgen Headland SLSC

Angus Macphail Cudgen Headland SLSC

Nadine Canning Cudgen Headland SLSC

Brett Willims Warilla-Barrack Point SLSC

Matthew Sperring Warilla-Barrack Point SLSC

Jack Carberry Warilla-Barrack Point SLSC

Jordan White Warilla-Barrack Point SLSC

Maddison Prior Warilla-Barrack Point SLSC

Tahlia Kollen Sawtell SLSC

Caitlin Callahan Byron Bay SLSC

Jy Timperley Byron Bay SLSC

Anthea Warne Cudgen Headland SLSC

Bradley Hunt Byron Bay SLSC

Madeleine Bakker Warilla-Barrack Point SLSC

Joshua Jones Cudgen Headland SLSC

Claudia Crawford Cabarita Beach SLSC

Jayde Bagnall Warilla-Barrack Point SLSC

Team Management

Alan Beveridge Head Coach

Dennis Allan Team Manager

Scott McCartney Assistant Coach

Jo-Ann Prior Team Chaperone

Tim Piper SLSNSW Sports Development Officer

LIFESAVERS *return from* **KIWI EXCHANGE**



It was a successful mission for a group of dedicated NSW surf lifesavers who have recently returned from a five-day trip across the Tasman.

The annual Lifesaving Exchange Program in March was an opportunity for volunteer surf lifesavers to experience patrolling in a totally different environment, to share skills and knowledge and is an important development opportunity within Surf Life Saving NSW.

Nineteen-year old Matt Calbert (Ocean Beach SLSC), and 21 year old Sarah Bugbird (Merewether SLSC) were selected as the representatives for the New Zealand tour after participating in the City/Country Exchange Program in January where they impressed with their commitment, knowledge and skills.

Additionally Nixy Krite and Anthony Turner were selected to further their skills as facilitators and joined the two participants on the exchange.

All the lifesavers involved returned with a lifetime of memories and new skills that they can take back to their clubs.

"The highlight of the New Zealand Exchange program for me was completing the two day 'Intermediate Guard School' at Bethell's Beach. As a group, we learned techniques around rock entries, exits and rescues, cave exploration as well as search and rescue night operations," said Sarah Bugbird.

“Ultimately I want to be the best lifesaver I can be in all aspects of the movement and to keep sharing, mentoring and learning from all the amazing people I get to meet.”



Anthony Turner, Nixy Krite, Matt Calbert and Sarah Bugbird

"In New Zealand I learnt so many new and valuable skills but one thing in particular I will bring back to my club will be the teamwork. The Northern Region Lifeguards worked so effectively as a team in both the rock and cave work and the night search, which resulted in clear communication and positive outcomes!" Matt Calbert added.

Anthony Turner said the trip reiterated the importance of mentoring young surf lifesavers as they come through the ranks.

"I would like to continue to facilitate and mentor future lifesaving members with programs such as the Lifesaving Exchange Programs and continue to promote a safer beach and aquatic environment for the community," he said.

Nixy Krite felt that the program was a challenge that can only improve their skills and knowledge on their home beaches.

"Ultimately I want to be the best lifesaver I can be in all aspects of the movement and to keep sharing, mentoring and learning from all the amazing people I get to meet."

"The New Zealand exchange was a physically and mentally challenging program and I am so thankful I had amazing people around me to experience it with," she added.

STATE CHAMPS ENDS ON A HIGH

Mother Nature didn't always co-operate but that didn't stop the first NSW Surf Life Saving Championships to be held at Blacksmiths Beach in seven years from being declared a success.

Swansea Belmont Surf Life Saving Club last hosted the state titles in 2010, and were eagerly looking forward to the chance of showcasing the best of Lake Macquarie to the expected deluge of visitors.

During the course of the competition which was open to athletes aged from 9 through to well over 70 there were some amazing performances on both the sand and in the surf.

Swansea Belmont President and Organising Committee Chair Graham Burge was full of admiration for the efforts of his club's work party believing it played a significant role in ensuring the success of the event.

"Some of the many tasks the group did included setting up competition areas on the beach and in the water, along with the logistics of moving boats, cleaning the beach of litter at the end of every day and the long process of packing up all the equipment & fencing.



Swansea Belmont Colour Party proudly fly the flag during the 2017 March Past.

"I would like to thank the BBQ teams who cooked all day long, the parking staff who dealt with vehicle movements, the bar staff who provided hospitality at the end of each day and our cleaning teams keeping the toilets and garbage bins clean throughout the days," he said.

The President also acknowledged the support of the local community as well as the efforts of those out on the water who helped deliver a memorable carnival.

"Lake Macquarie City Council and especially Mayor Kay Fraser have been wonderful supporters of us as hosts of the State Championships. The whole community embraced the event, which is very pleasing to see.

"I would also like to thank all the Surf Life Saving officials, the water safety volunteers, the IRB and Jet Ski crews and of course the safety committee for ensuring that competitors welfare came first in what was large surf conditions."

Swansea Belmont's years of experience hosting major surf sport events certainly proved to be an advantage during the 2017 NSW Championships, and after pausing to reflect, the club has set its sights on surpassing the event in the future.

The NSW Surf Life Saving Championships, proudly supported by Your local club returns to Blacksmiths Beach, Swansea in 2018 from Feb 24 – March 11 for another exciting year of competition.



Members of the water safety team on Blacksmiths beach.



James de Vries (Shelly Beach) with Director of Surf Sport Donald van Keimpema and the Saxon Bird Memorial Trophy.

Trophy winners show their class

Two young medal winning competitors received special honours in the U19 age group, winning trophies honouring the lives and contributions of two great lifesavers, the late Saxon Bird and Jacob Lollback.

In 2017 James de Vries (Shelly Beach SLSC) won the U19 Surf Race with a fantastic swim to claim his maiden individual title ahead of Lachlan O'Reilly (Coffs Harbour) and Evan Stratton (Manly).

His win also gave de Vries the Saxon Bird Memorial Trophy that honours the life of the champion Queenscliff competitor.

Newport's Charlie Brooks stormed home to beat Luke Chaffer (Cudgen Headland) and Zak Van Dartel (Terrigal) in the U19 Board Race to claim the Jacob Lollback Memorial Trophy.

The victory confirmed Brooks as a rising star of the surf and was the second straight summer he had earned the trophy which honours the late Yamba surf lifesaver.

Age Point Score

1. Manly LSC
2. Wanda SLSC
3. Elouera SLSC

Masters Point Score

1. North Bondi SLSC
2. Queenscliff SLSC
3. Bondi LSC

Open Point Score

1. Newport SLSC
2. Manly LSC
3. Wanda SLSC



Mollymook beachies all speed

There's something special happening on the sands of Mollymook and the recently completed NSW Surf Life Saving Open Championships at Blacksmiths Beach only enhanced their reputation as an emerging sprinting powerhouse.

In future years the records will show that Mollymook left Blacksmiths in 2017 with 11 medals (6 gold, 3 silver, and 2 bronze) across the Beach Sprint, Relay and Flag events.

But what makes this squad so successful? New recruits including Adam Newey and Sam Zustovich who joined the club earlier this season puts it down to a strong culture driven by their coach, and a training environment where you are always being pushed to better yourself.

"Full credit for our success at the Championships goes to our coach Daniel Robberds. He puts his heart and soul into training and gives so much time, and despite a few of us being new this season the club has been so accepting and made us all feel really welcome," said Newey.

Despite the bulk of the team still being in their mid-to late teens they know the next generation coming through at the club are keen to shape their own path to state glory at future championships.

With speed to burn and a strong culture emerging out of Mollymook don't be surprised to see these names on the podium for many seasons to come.



thank you

to all of our volunteers who keep
NSW beaches safe each season!

Without your tireless efforts,
we wouldn't be able to do what
we do which is save lives, create
great Australians, and build
better communities.



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

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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 74,000 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.

For contributions or suggestions for *SurfLIFE* please contact SLSNSW Media on 02 9471 8000 or webmaster@surflifesaving.com.au



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.

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