

# Annual Report Guidelines

April 2025

## Importance of annual reports

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Annual reports are an excellent way of showcasing your club's or branch's achievements over the past year and of acknowledging the support of members, the community, sponsors and the government. Annual reports can also be used to attract more members and funds by highlighting the valuable services you provide to the community. In terms of the Financial Statements, they are also a mandated requirement of the ACNC and Department of Fair Trading.

## Transparency of reporting in the Not-for-Profit (NFP) sector

As community expectations continue to rise, so does the focus on the quality and transparency of reporting, particularly in the Not-for-Profit (NFP) and Charity sector.

The Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission (ACNC) ensures that a minimum standard of governance is being met by all charities and maintains an online registry of charities. This makes information on every registered charity freely available so that the public can make informed decisions about which charity they provide donations to, or volunteer for.

## Defining your charitable purpose and abiding by the Charitable Fundraising Act

It is mandatory for branches and clubs to highlight in annual reports what your charitable purpose is. A charitable purpose (also called a mission or object) is the reason your charity has been set up and what your activities work towards achieving. This helps other people such as volunteers, donors and government agencies to understand why the charity does what it does.

When considering your charitable purpose, you should ensure the purpose states clearly what your charity wants to achieve, and the activities undertaken by your organisation to work towards this purpose. A charitable purpose cannot extend to benefits for individual members, so statements need to be more overarching in terms of lifesaving activities.

Affiliated SLSC's and branches should ensure they meet the requirements of the NSW Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 and the ACNC (which administers the Charities Act 2013 and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulations 2022) by documenting how fundraising goes back into the SLS club or branch to meet its charitable purpose. This is also important if your SLSC is on Crown Land as you should be demonstrating efficient management and administration for charitable purposes if conducting fundraising activities as per the Crown Land Management Act 2016. Furthermore, when conducting appeals for donations, you must take all reasonable steps to ensure that total expenses payable do not amount to more than 50% of gross proceeds. In other forms of fundraising, such as the sale of goods and services, the return must be fair and reasonable. For more on Charitable Fundraising information, visit <https://www.nsw.gov.au/money-and-taxes/charitable-fundraising>

### Acknowledgement of Funding

Clubs and branches are strongly encouraged to acknowledge those organisations, funding agencies and individuals which have given them funding or in-kind contributions in the last financial year. It is important for each Surf Life Saving entity to recognise those that support us and provide us with vital funding to maintain our activities.

When recognising individuals, you must ensure you have their permission to do so publicly, due to privacy policies. Should there be supporters who wish to remain anonymous, consider a statement to acknowledge the support of those contributors who wish to remain anonymous. Donors who provide funds under the Charitable Act cannot receive benefits such as a commercial sponsor would, but a simple acknowledgement or honor roll is acceptable.

## Sponsorship Recognition

Recognising sponsors in annual reports is important, to thank them for their support and generosity. Wherever possible, sponsorship logos and photos that depict the sponsors' logos, should be used, along with text to demonstrate how their support has assisted the club/branch throughout the year.

Aside from recognising club and branch sponsors, the following sponsors at a national and state level should be recognised in annual reports for the 2024-2025 year (in the following order):

National	State
Ampol	Your local club
DHL	Ingenia Holiday Parks
Isuzu	Oakberry
Westpac	Sharkskin

For copies of these sponsor logos to be used in your Annual Report, please download them directly from the dropbox here:

### SPONSOR LOGOS

## Fundraising Distributions

The Surf Life Saving Foundation should be acknowledged for conducting fundraising on behalf of clubs and branches. Conducting fundraising efforts centrally frees up our members' time to focus their energy and resources on lifesaving activities – their number one mission. It also helps to ensure greater equity of funding across the state. The generous support of the general public and our donors should also be acknowledged. In your annual report, you should state how these financial distributions were used by your club or branch (eg on the purchase of rescue gear and equipment; or the recruitment and training of surf lifesavers).

## Government Recognition

All clubs and branches should acknowledge the:

- The NSW Government through the Emergency Services portfolio for ongoing funding of state-wide operations and programs which benefit clubs, members and the community.
- The NSW Government for the support of the Office of Sport, for their support to increase usage, safety and participation in Surf Life Saving through ongoing programs, specifically the Surf Club facility grant program
- Federal Government for the Beach Safety Equipment Funding which directed \$10,000 to every SLSC for the purchase of vital rescue equipment, first aid and medical supplies.
- Federal Government for the VET Funding which enabled hundreds of assessors to update their training qualifications.

If your club or branch received funding through the NSW Government's Community Building Partnership program, please thank the Premier and the State Members of Parliament who provided funding to you.

If your club was in receipt of funding through the office of Sport Surf Club Facilities Grant, please thank the Premier, The Hon Steve Kamper MP-Sports Minister, your State Member of Parliament and the Office of Sport who provided the funding to you.

## Preparation of financial statements

The SLSNSW Finance Team periodically review club financials and provide a Financial Compliance Review report. The report aligns with the requirements of the Incorporated Associations Act and the Australian Charities and Not for Profit Commission (ACNC) requirements. Clubs should use these reviews to identify the areas which are required to be included in their financial reports as well as key areas which required amendment from previous year's accounts. Treasurers and/or external accountants and auditors should contact the SLSNSW Finance Team [finance@surflifesaving.com.au](mailto:finance@surflifesaving.com.au) if they have any questions around the requirements of financial reports.

## Other Annual Report inclusions

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The critical elements in your Annual Report are your club's or branch's vision/mission (or both), objectives, strategies, performance, reviews, outcomes and outlook.

### Overview, objectives and highlights

- Club/branch history and profile
- Mission, purpose, values, and objectives
- Strategies for achieving objectives and outcomes
- "Statement of intent" or explanation of your club's future - this presents you as a forward-thinking organisation with an eye to future success
- Highlights of the year
- Performance measures and indicators, key financial and non-financial features (e.g. rescues compared to last year)
- Funding received and financial results
- Case studies which demonstrate the practical results of your work

Wherever possible, quantify information in charts or present them in infographics to generate interest, comparing figures to last year or to similar organisations.

### Overview of programs and activities

- Development, youth involvement and other member programs, as well as open days and other community activities undertaken to showcase your activities.
- Water safety/community education programs or campaigns held on water safety, and those that are specifically targeted at people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds, Indigenous communities, and people living with a disability.
- Programs relating to teaching school-aged children swimming, water safety and rescue skills education or programs for children in rural areas.
- Any advancements, innovation, or developments the club has made in moving forward and connecting with a progressive community.

Wherever possible, list the number of participants.

### Office bearers

- List of office bearers, using photos if possible.
- Office bearer reports to showcase achievements.

### Statistical summaries

- Membership and patrol statistics.
- Financial figures and other non-financial activities e.g., preventative actions.
- Number of participants reached through community education programs, lifesaving and competition events.
- Statistics from social media and website to highlight the number of people reached through these mediums

### Awards

- List of awards received by your members (e.g. Junior Activity Awards, Patrolling Lifesaver Awards, Recognition Awards, Junior Lifesaver of the Year, Awards of Excellence awards, external awards like NSW Sport or Community Citizen of the Year awards and awards under the Australian Honours system).
- Sample of media coverage the club/branch enjoyed as a result of the awards gained.

## Commitment to Child Safe Practices

The annual report is an ideal space to demonstrate your club's commitment to child safety. We recommend sharing your commitment statement '*SLSC is committed to safeguarding children and young people*' and showcasing any activities where children and young people have been engaged, or practices to support member welfare are in place. This information can sit in the Presidents report or membership section of your annual report.

## Other Items

- A list of patrons, vice-patrons, and life members and an acknowledgement of the contribution of members.
- An index of contents, glossary of terms, calendar of events.
- The availability of the report through the web or via hard copy.

## Use of Images

As your annual report is a promotional tool, it is worthwhile considering what images you use in your annual reports to best highlight the core purpose of the organisation. For example, be sure to use images where patrolling personnel are wearing the correct patrol uniform (only DHL, Ampol and Isuzu logos), or operating an IRB and wearing a lifejacket. In addition, try to use images showing lifesavers, correct sponsor logos or ones that promote safety messages and highlight community education.

## Further Resources to assist SLSCs and Branches

- Surf Life Saving NSW Club Guide <https://www.surflifesaving.com.au/members/resources/slsnsw-club-guide-46/>
- Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission for templates for governing documents, report templates, fact sheets, guides and tips – <https://www.acnc.gov.au/for-charities>
- NSW Government for charitable fundraising information and guidelines – <https://www.nsw.gov.au/money-and-taxes/charitable-fundraising>