



Surf Life Saving Australia – Circular

Title:	Skills Maintenance (Proficiency Check) Requirements for 2023/24 Season
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Audience:	Lifesaving and Education Committees
From:	Coastal Safety and Learning & Development
Date:	UPDATED 29 th June 2023
Subject:	Skills Maintenance for 2023/24 season
Summary:	All active lifesavers are required to complete a skills maintenance (proficiency check) to demonstrate competency in the lifesaving award/s they hold and in which they wish to remain current. This circular outlines the skills maintenance requirements for the 2023/24 season.

Introduction

The requirements in this circular detail the minimum national requirements for the SLS 2023/24 season as developed in consultation with the Lifesaving and Education Committees and ratified by the Lifesaving Committee. Additional requirements may be required by your relevant SLS state/territory centre.

The lifesaving committee previously approved a three-year cycle for skills maintenance for both the Surf Rescue Certificate and Bronze Medallion. This season the skill maintenance practical will focus on Tube Rescue.

Theory Component

Members are required to complete the skills maintenance theory component online, as assessment marking and record keeping is automated and reduces the burden placed upon SLS trainers and assessors.

A Bronze Medallion member will need to:

- Watch a video update
- Complete three online learning branching scenarios
- Answer six questions related to any of the above content

A Surf Rescue Certificate member will need to:

- Watch a video update
- Complete one online learning branching scenario

* Please note there are no theory questions for SRC this season

Please note that Award Members are not required to complete any theory this season.

If a member is unable to complete this component online, they should speak with their club training officer.

What is a branching scenario? A branching scenario is a more interactive form of learning online. The member will be given three scenarios which they must work through, involving rescue and first aid, where they will need to make decisions and then be presented with the consequences of that decision. They will be given choices at each step, with each response they give determining the next part of the scenario given. They are unpredictable and more engaging and can be completed a number of times with a different outcome. Best of all they put theory into perspective.

Practical component

The information below outlines the practical requirements of each SLSA award for skills maintenance. Where possible scenarios should be used to combine components; for example, a scenario combining a tube rescue with CPR. Training resources that support SLSA awards are located in the [SLSA Members Area](#) Document Library. Members are encouraged to review these prior to commencing the patrolling season.

Gap Analysis (Appendix 1)

Appendix 1 indicates the changes in the various awards over the years to enable the necessary updates to be given to the member in the form of an in-depth proficiency. Members who have not remained proficient for any period may not be required to complete their award again and should be dealt with on a case-by-case basis with their club training officer.

The guideline set by the Education Committee is that a period of five or more years would require re-completion of the award, however the experience of the individual member should always be taken into account.



Aquatic Rescue Pathway Awards

Bronze Medallion (BM) and Surf Rescue Certificate (SRC)

1. Run-Swim-Run (timed)

- SRC—Unaided: 100 m Run-100 m Swim-100 m Run in 5 minutes or less
- BM—Unaided: 200 m Run-200 m Swim-200 m Run in 8 minutes or less
 - The run distance to be taken from waist deep water, e.g., the run is from a flag, around a marker and to waist deep water. The aquatic components are from waist deep water around two swimming buoys and back to waist deep water
 - Swim leg must be around two swimming buoys
 - Reasonable adjustment may be made for surf conditions on the day.

2. Signals

Demonstrate knowledge of signals. The demonstration must include the following:

- Beach to water signals
- Water to beach signals

3. Resuscitation (CPR)

- A primary assessment (DRSAB--) on a live victim including the demonstration of the lateral position.
- Primary assessment (DRSABCD), CPR 1 and 2 person (adult or child AND infant) on an approved manikin – to include resuscitation methods using a resuscitation mask or face shield and AED (individually issued face shields are preferred, if using masks special cleaning procedures need to be followed).
- Team CPR scenario including primary assessment (DRSABCD) – to include resuscitation methods using a resuscitation mask or face shield and AED.

4. Radio

Participation in a scenario involving equipment. The scenario must include at least three of the following situations and must be conducted for each candidate:

- Pre-operation checks
- Knowledge of local operating channels and uses
- Inter-patrol communications
- Rescue procedures, requests for assistance which include the four P's

5. Rescue

Demonstrate a minimum of one rescue of a victim. SLSA strongly encourages that this is of an unconscious victim, using a **rescue tube** and according to SLSA operating procedures in the current *SLSA Public Safety and Aquatic Rescue* training manual. The rescue must include the following:

- Negotiating the surf zone
- Securing the victim
- Returning to shore with the victim
- Calling for assistance

Silver Medallion Aquatic Rescue (SMAR)

Proficiency is required in the prerequisites for this award to remain current. The prerequisites are:

- Complete a 400 m swim in 8 minutes or less in a swimming pool of no less than 25 m length
- Hold and be proficient in the SLSA Bronze Medallion [and hold the Certificate II in Public Safety (Aquatic Search and Rescue)].

Gold Medallion (GM)

1. A member must be proficient in each of the following awards:

- Bronze Medallion
- Advanced Resuscitation Techniques
- First Aid or First Aid [AID]



If any of these award proficiencies lapse during the season, even after successful completion of the Gold Medallion proficiency, then the member will become non-proficient in the Gold Medallion, until such time as the lapsed award has been updated.

2. Pool Swim

- The member must complete an 800 m swim in under 14 minutes in a swimming pool of no less than 25 m
- The pool swim must be completed before any other component of a Gold Medallion skills maintenance.

3. Mission Test (timed)

- The distance will be 400 m swim, 800 m run, 400 m board paddle, and 800 m run
- The time will be less than 25 minutes
 - The run distance to be taken from waist-deep water, e.g., the run is from a flag, around a marker and to waist-deep water. The aquatic components are from waist-deep water around two swimming buoys and back to waist-deep water
 - Aquatic course must be around two swimming buoys.

4. Rescue

- Demonstrate a board rescue according to SLSA operating procedures in the current SLSA Public Safety and Aquatic Rescue training manual. The victim should be 200 m out to sea.
- Demonstrate a tube rescue according to SLSA operating procedures in the current SLSA Public Safety and Aquatic Rescue training manual. The victim should be 100 m out to sea and the member should use swim fins during this rescue.

5. Complex Rescue Scenario (may include one of the rescues above)

- Demonstrate a complex rescue scenario as set by the delegated assessor according to the SLSA operational procedures in the current SLSA Public Safety and Aquatic Rescue training manual
- The rescue must assess the following events:
 - Negotiating the surf zone
 - Securing the patient/s
 - Returning to shore without losing the victim/s
 - Calling for assistance
 - Performing emergency care as required by the victim/s.

Emergency Care Pathway Awards

SLSA awards involving resuscitation are to be assessed annually. Once proficiency is achieved, resuscitation in other SLSA award skills maintenance is not required to be performed again.

Please note that completion of the SLS skills maintenance for any award in the SLSA emergency care pathway is not sufficient to result in the renewal of the HLTAID unit of competency that aligns with the member's award. For example, the skills maintenance for the SLSA Resuscitation award is not sufficient to result in the renewal of a member's HLTAID009 Provide cardiopulmonary resuscitation or HLTAID015 Provide advanced resuscitation and oxygen therapy units of competency. Members should contact their SLS state/territory centre for advice on renewing their units of competency.

Resuscitation

- A primary assessment (DRSAB--) on a live victim including the demonstration of the lateral position.
- Primary assessment (DRSABCD), CPR 1 and 2 person (adult or child AND infant) on an approved manikin – to include resuscitation methods using a resuscitation mask or face shield and AED. (Individually issued face shields are preferred, if using masks special cleaning procedures need to be followed).
- Team CPR scenario including primary assessment (DRSABCD) – to include resuscitation methods using a resuscitation mask or face shield and AED.



Advanced Resuscitation Techniques

Please note that the Advanced Resuscitation Techniques Certificate is no longer available to be made proficient this season. The below requirements are for the Advanced Resuscitation Techniques and Advanced Resuscitation Techniques [AID] awards only.

1. Resuscitation (CPR)
 - See Bronze Medallion and SRC Skills Maintenance Resuscitation (CPR) component above for requirements. A member is proficient in this component of the ART Skills Maintenance if they have previously completed the BM and SRC Skills Maintenance.
2. Advanced Resuscitation
 - Team CPR scenario including primary assessment (DRSABCD) – to include resuscitation methods using a resuscitation mask or face shield, AED, and oxygen supplement (oxygen cylinder connected to bag-valve-mask resuscitator on an unconscious victim).
3. Oropharyngeal Airways
 - Correct measurement and insertion of an oropharyngeal (OP) airway
 - Demonstrate an understanding of when and why an OP airway is introduced into resuscitation.
4. Bag-valve-mask resuscitator
 - Correct use of bag valve mask resuscitator

The deadline for the completion of the upgrade from Advanced Resuscitation Techniques (ART [AID]) - HLTAID007 to Advanced Resuscitation Techniques (ART) – HLTAID015 has been extended from July 2024 to July 2026 (unless a new training package is released prior to this date and HLTAID015 is superseded).

Beach Management Pathway Awards

Radio Operations (RO)

A member is proficient in the stand-alone SLSA Radio Operations award if they have completed a practical radio assessment.

For those who use this award as part of their operation within a SLS communications centre, additional skills maintenance requirements may be included at a local level.

Powercraft Pathway Awards

Powercraft award holders may need to demonstrate skills in a 'one off' skills maintenance check or may be deemed as proficient via demonstration of competency during normal operational activities.

All members must demonstrate proficiency in the pre-requisite awards associated with these awards as follows:

- IRB Crew
 - Proficient Bronze Medallion
- Silver Medallion IRB Driver
 - Proficient Bronze Medallion
 - Proficient IRB Crew
 - Hold a current state/territory boat license (where applicable)
- RWC Operator
 - Proficient Bronze Medallion
 - Hold a current state/territory boat/PWC license (where applicable)
 - Additional state/territory pre-requisites as required.

IRB Crew (IRBC)

Demonstrate effective and safe crewing practice and ability including:

- Parallel running
- Figures of eight
- Response to signals



- Negotiation of surf as required
- Demonstrate victim rescue
- Demonstrate ability to carry out a victim lift, exit, carry and lay
- Awareness of Powercraft Code of Conduct.

Silver Medallion IRB Driver (SMIRBD)

Demonstrate the ability to apply safe driving practice including but not limited to:

- Parallel running
- Figures of eight
- Response to signals
- Negotiation of surf as required
- Demonstrate ability to conduct a victim rescue
- Demonstrate ability to carry out a victim lift, exit, carry and lay
- Awareness of Powercraft Code of Conduct.

Side-by-Side Vehicle (SSV)

It is not a national requirement to undertake an annual SSV (ATV) proficiency. Instead, a member's driving license must be checked each year for currency. Each SLS state/territory centre can manage this process and this information can be recorded in SurfGuard.

A member who loses their driver's license (whether through cancellation or suspension) must not be driving the SSV. Provisional drivers are to display plates as required by their state legislative body.

Members must participate in an SSV Operator Induction for each new SSV make and model that they have not driven before. The SLSA *SSV Operator Induction Guide* is available in the SLS Members Area Document Library.

Rescue Watercraft Operator (RWCO)

Skills maintenance for the Rescue Watercraft Operator certificate must be completed as per SLS state/territory centre requirements and may be assessed during normal operational activities.

Specialist powercraft awards (JRB/ORB/RIB Crew, Driver, Skipper)

Skills maintenance for specialist groups shall be determined by the individual group and as approved by your relevant SLS state/territory centre. Skills maintenance may be assessed during normal operational activities.

Age Manager Award

Age Manager awards expire after 5 years and must be renewed on expiry to manage Nipper activities on the beach. Age Managers need to refer to the Members Area for the expiry date.

There will also be an annual update that will need to be undertaken to keep abreast of changes that may have occurred during the season, with each state rules differing slightly. Please refer to your local state/territory.

A member is considered to be proficient:

- If they hold a current Age Managers course (completed online)
- If they hold the current working with children check or equivalent requirement for their state/territory
- It is also highly recommended if they have watched the video released this season by the National Development Chair relating to the changes which have occurred within their area. If a member is unable to complete this component online, they should speak with their Junior Activities Coordinator.



Appendix 1 – Gap Analysis

Award	Season	Change
All Resuscitation (including SRC, BM, First Aid, ART)	2009/10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ratio of compressions to breaths in CPR changed to 30:2 Defibrillation awareness added 'D' added to DRABCD, defibrillation
	2011/12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'S' added to DRSABCD, send for help
	2012/13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Treatment of anaphylaxis, using an autoinjector
	2013/14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infant resuscitation on a manikin to be assessed in all CPR training
	2014/15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Victims airway and breathing is routinely assessed on their back – they are only rolled if necessary to clear foreign matter
	2015/16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specified number of scenarios and 2 minutes of uninterrupted CPR on: a) an adult manikin on the floor; and b) an infant manikin on a stable surface to be assessed in all CPR training
	2016/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rate of CPR compressions changed to 100-120 compressions per minute
Advanced Resuscitation Techniques only	2010/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suction introduced SLSA awards Advanced Resuscitation Certificate and Defibrillation Certificate replaced with Advanced Resuscitation Techniques Certificate
	2014/15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment of vital signs Respirations, Pulse and Temperature, completion of incident report, and 3x scenario to be assessed
Bronze Medallion	2011/12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IRB awareness added
	2012/13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 new signals added <ul style="list-style-type: none"> submerged patient missing (Code X); and all clear
	2013/14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 34th edition training manual released Theory paper added to skills maintenance assessment Revision of: safety while working in a beach environment; surf awareness and rip current survival principles; how oxygen is used in team resuscitation; use of whistles as communication; identifying distressed and drowning victims; surveillance methods and beach management Addition of: use of swim fins as a basic survival technique; information on the lymphatic system; stroke; anaphylaxis; the phonetic alphabet; 3 person walk up spinal Removal of: in-water rescue breathing; 5 person spinal carry
	2016/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 34th edition (revised July 2016) training manual released ARC guideline changes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compression rate (100 – 120 compressions per minute) Heart attack first aid treatment (give aspirin unless anaphylaxis is a contraindication) Shock first aid treatment (no longer raise legs) Heat exhaustion first aid treatment (give electrolyte sports drink) External bleeding first aid treatment (no longer raise bleeding limb) Spinal management (removal of standing spinal and application of a cervical collar)
	2017/18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> October 2017 reprint of SLSA 34th edition Public Safety and Aquatic Rescue (revised July 2016) ARC guideline changes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Checking resuscitation equipment (notably oxygen pipe connection, assembly or resuscitation bag valve devices). EpiPen administration (now 3 seconds and no massaging injection site) (9.2.7)
2018/19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ARC guideline changes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Severe Bleeding (prioritise management of severe bleeding over airways) Tourniquets (use of two) 	



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Haemostatic dressing (to manage severe bleeding) ○ New guideline for first aid management of a diabetic emergency (9.2.9)
	2019/20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● PSAR 35th edition released May 2020 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Removal of oxygen therapy and oxygen aided resuscitation to the resuscitation component of the SRC / Bronze ○ Spinal Management content added to Bronze ○ Tourniquet training added to Bronze ○ Mental health awareness training for SRC and Bronze ● ARC guideline updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Shock (control bleeding, send for help, reassure) (9.2.3) ○ Snake bites (send for help, immobilise and apply pressure) (9.4.1) ○ Hyperthermia (send for help and cool person by any means available) (9.3.4)
	2020/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ARC guideline changes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Treatment for hyperthermia includes ice on the soles, palms, and cheeks in addition to groin and armpits. No longer on the back of the neck. (9.3.4) ○ Removal of blind finger sweeps for airway management. Now reach in to seize and remove visible items directly. (4)
	2021/22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ARC Guideline changes: (9.2.10) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Recommend against the routine administration of oxygen in persons with suspected heart attack and stroke who do not have signs of shock ○ Oxygen should be administered to persons with an oxygen saturation of less than 92% (where a pulse oximeter is available). ○ Oxygen should be given to persons with signs of blue colouration of skin, shock, decompression illness or a situation suggestion carbon monoxide poisoning (irrespective of oxygen saturation level)
	2022/23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Industry Changes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A new brand of adrenaline autoinjectors are available with Anapen being reintroduced. Members should be familiar with and practice the administration of both an EpiPen and an Anapen training device
IRB Crew & Driver	2007/08	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Powercraft Code of Conduct introduced
	2011/12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Extra safety protocols for IRB introduced, including safe lifting of IRB, removal of right crew foot strap and addition of 'locked in' position for crew
	2015/16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Introduction of lifejackets, personal flotation devices and surf helmets in IRB training
IRB Crew	2015/16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Knots and lashings to be assessed