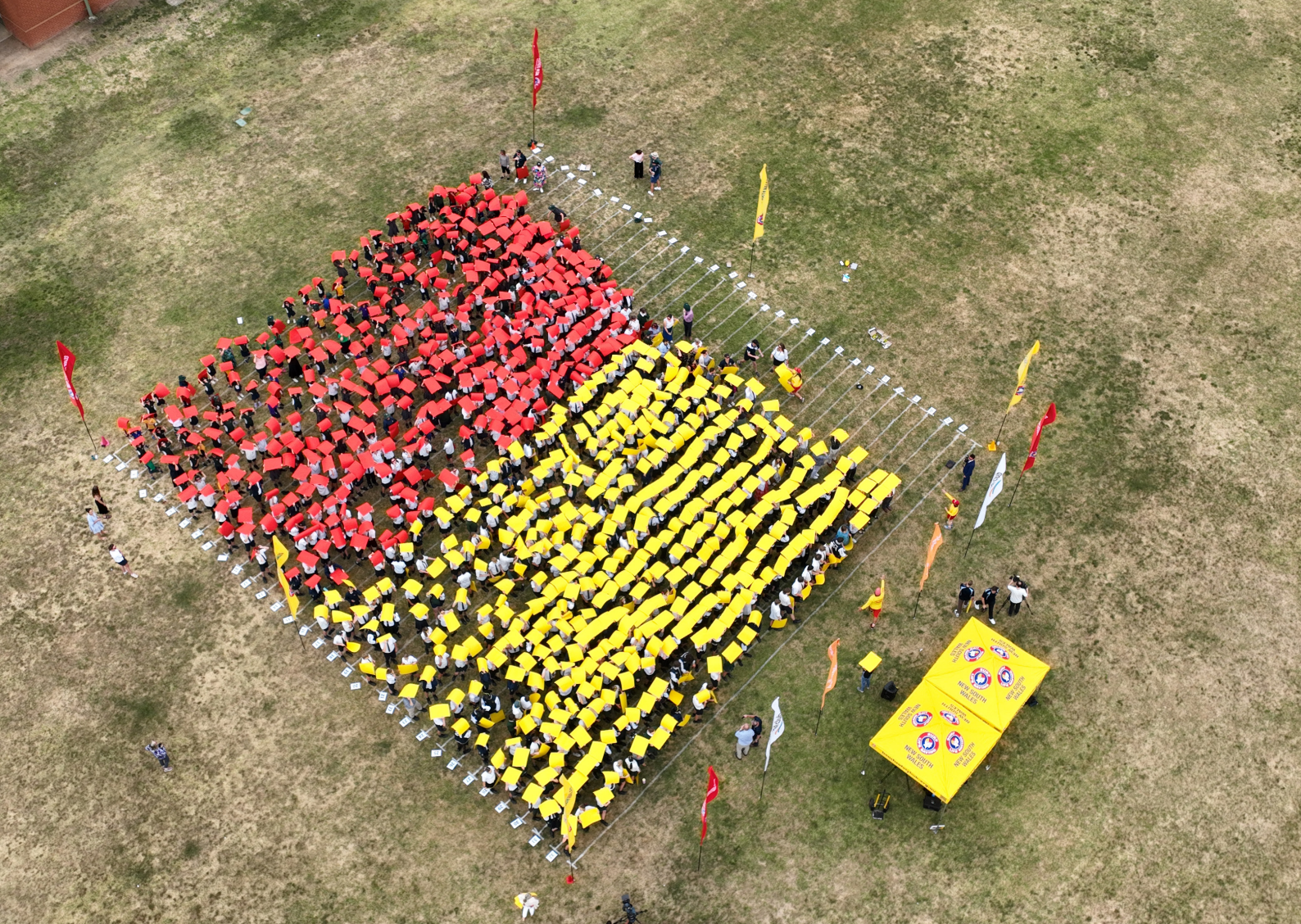


SurfLIFE

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SURF LIFE SAVING
NEW SOUTH WALES



1000 Students Make Human Flag For **Bush Beach Safety**

In recognition of 30 years of Surf Life Saving NSW's flagship educational program, Beach to Bush, 1,000 students from The Riverina Anglican College just outside Wagga Wagga came together in November to make the world's largest human red and yellow flag.

The K-12 composite school in Boorooma was the site of celebration on the morning of Tuesday 14 November with its students holding sheets of red or yellow cardboard aloft on the school oval to form the shape of the iconic flags that line the NSW coastline over summer.

The Ingenia Holiday Parks Beach to Bush program has taught more than 285,000 students how to stay safe at the beach since its inception in 1994, with messaging around the role

of surf lifesavers, why they should always swim between the red and yellow flags, how to spot a rip current, what to do if they get into trouble at the beach and the different types of marine life along the coast among the key takeaways.

For many students, the program represents their first interaction with a surf lifesaver.

In 2023, The Riverina Anglican College was one of 101 schools taking part

in the program all over NSW, with 21,000kms travelled and more than 11,000 students being exposed to a session over the first three weeks of November.

Following their session on the Tuesday morning, student Fletcher Rudd said the surf safety messaging the program provides would be valuable to him when he visits the beach.

"It was a good experience, and I learned a lot of information," he said.



"When I go to the beach I'll swim between the red and yellow flags."

"The lifesavers were great and taught us how to be safe at the beach and to be calm in certain situations," Eliza Dennis, a classmate, agreed.

Interim Principal, Anthony Heffer, too, was glowing in his appreciation of what the lifesavers do when they visit regional and rural schools as part of the program.

"I think it's really vital for young people in particular to get that training and education to prepare them," he said.

"The kids love seeing the lifesavers in their gear, that really gets their attention, and then of course the content itself is pretty engaging, and they all pick up on quite a lot which is great for when they do visit the beach."

Surf Life Saving NSW President, Peter Agnew ESM was thrilled to celebrate 30 years of the educational program the very students who benefit most.

"The red and yellow flag is an iconic safety image for Surf Life Saving and we're so chuffed that the kids here at The Riverina Anglican College got behind the initiative and helped us celebrate 30 years of Beach to Bush," he said.

Ingenia Holiday Parks Operations Manager NSW/ACT, Tony Greer said the organisation was proud to be behind such a valuable program.

"It's important from our point of view that people who want to enjoy the

Aussie way of life understand the dangers of the beach," he said.

"We want our guests to have a positive experience and we have a lot of coastal parks between Queensland, NSW and Victoria so it's very important to us that they get to go home and reflect on a good experience.

"I remember when Beach to Bush was touring around when I was in school and I can honestly say it still sticks with me now."



SLSNSW CEO Steve Pearce, Riverina Anglican College Interim Principal Anthony Heffer, Ingenia Holiday Parks Operations Manager NSW/ACT Tony Greer, SLSNSW President Peter Agnew ESM and SLSNSW Board Member Kerry Clancy.

» SEE THE FLAG COME TOGETHER

» WATCH OUR WRAP OF B2B

Reigning Champs Raring to host **COUNTRY SURF TITLES**

The 2024 Oakberry Acai NSW Country Surf Life Saving Championships kicks off at Warilla-Barrack Point SLSC on Australia Day, and the host club and reigning champions say they're ready and raring to go in the bid to defend their title.

Clubs from outside the Hunter to Illawarra belt will converge on the South Coast for three days of competition from 26-28 January 2024, bringing the best regional NSW athletes together to test their skills.

The Oakberry Acai NSW Country Championships is second only to the NSW Surf Life Saving Championships in size, with well in excess of 1,000 competitors, 200 officials and around 4,000 spectators expected across the three days of competition.

Speaking at the Official Launch of the event on 7 December, Surf Life Saving NSW Director and Chair of Surf

Sports, Don van Keimpema said it was the first time the event had been run on the South Coast in nearly a decade.

"The last Country Championships on the South Coast was at Mollymook in 2015, and it's so exciting to be bringing one of the biggest surf sports events on our calendar back to the region again next year," he said.

"Back then Warilla and Cudgen were second and third on the overall point score, and now all these years later those two clubs will be fighting it out at the top again, I'm sure.

"This event is an important showcase for our regional members to compete, there are so many friendly rivalries between clubs, but the really special thing is that it's done in such a safe and fun way.

"Last year we saw the labour of many years of work from the team at Warilla bear fruit when they de-throned Cudgen as champions, and now to be able to see them defend that title on their home turf is going to be every exciting.

"Thank you to Warilla-Barrack Point SLSC for hosting, and to





the Shellharbour City Council for supporting us to get this event together."

Indeed, a dramatic Open Mixed Taplin relay last year– the final event of a thrilling 2023 Oakberry Acai NSW Country Championships at Cape Hawke SLSC on the state's Lower North Coast – would mark the turning point on years of dominance by Cudgen Headland SLSC at the premier regional surf sports event.

Warilla's win earlier this year was the first time the Far North Coast club had not taken out the Championships overall point score in six years.

It's a win that will fuel the club on to further success, says Warilla-Barrack Point Club President, Alan Beveridge.

"We take a lot of pride in being the defending champions," he said.

"If we're training hard and working well, the results will come. This is a great opportunity for our athletes to show what they've got.

"We have some very good coaches and our team will be more than ready, they'll be pumped."

Naming rights partner, Oakberry Acai said its association with Surf Life Saving NSW and the Country Championships provides a platform for young athletes to achieve great things.



"Oakberry Australia is proud to be the Naming Rights sponsor of the 2024 NSW Country Championships," Oakberry Australia CEO, Renan Pinto said.

"Since we began our much-valued association with SLSNSW, Oakberry Australia has grown considerably. Much like Surf Life Saving, Oakberry is a trusted and instantly recognisable brand on our beaches.

"Oakberry's valued presence in these unique and beautiful beach communities forms the bedrock of the strong partnership between Oakberry and Surf Life Saving NSW"

Shellharbour City Council Mayor, Chris Homer said there is a lot of excitement around hosting and looks forward to seeing thousands of people enjoying everything the region has to offer.

"We are thrilled that Surf Life Saving NSW has chosen to hold this competition here in Shellharbour

City. I know that Warilla-Barrack Point SLSC will do a fantastic job of hosting the event," Mayor Homer said.

"Council was pleased to contribute \$15,000 from Council's financial assistance budget towards the competition. An event of this size will deliver a significant boost to our local economy.

"The thousands of participants and spectators who travel here will be spending money in local restaurants, cafes, accommodation businesses and other attractions.

"The event is also a great lifestyle visitation showcasing opportunity for our stunning Shellharbour City, with many visitors wanting to return again in the future."

The Oakberry Acai NSW Country Championships will run from 26-28 January 2024 at Warilla-Barrack Point SLSC.

New Boat Series

TO SHAKE UP SURF SPORTS

A supercharged surfboat series is set to hit the Surf Sports calendar in 2024 – the latest move by Surf Life Saving NSW to streamline representative pathways for athletes of all disciplines across the state.

The establishment of the Surfboat Interseries, set for a shotgun start in April 2024, will become the latest sport to align itself under a regionalised team representative model following the Super Surf Teams League (SSTL), with the best crews from within the five surfboat series in NSW to compete in a high-octane Championship event.

It comes just over a month after SLSNSW introduced the Surf Sports Academies to the NSW surf sport ecosystem providing 15- and 16-year-old athletes with the opportunity to access professional athlete services relating to strength and conditioning, sports nutrition, sports psychology, media skills, preparing for performance and injury prevention.

"This was a strategic decision driven by the Boat Series Chairs, the SLSNSW Surfboat Panel and

the SLSNSW Surf Sports Standing Committee to provide a clear representative pathway within a very well established, and contemporary surfboat competition calendar," SLSNSW Surf Sports Manager, Jim Pinnington said.

"Alignment of participant pathways across all disciplines is a critical component of our strategy, *Surf Sports Re-Imagined* and this initiative was the next step to ensuring a coherent sports pathway in NSW.

"Super Surf Teams League and the Surfboat Interseries Championships sit directly under Interstate Representation in the pathway and is now supported by the introduction of sports academies."

The competition will follow the current surfboat Interstate format, with eight crews competing in the U19, U23, Reserve and Open crew divisions (male

and female). Crews will be selected from within their respective Boat Series.

In addition to the Interseries Championship held on the Sunday, Saturday's competition will see the City and Country Championships contested.

"The launch of the Interseries Championships, coinciding with City and Country Championships on the same weekend in April, positions the weekend as one of the premier weekends for surfboats in NSW. Championship medals will be on the line," SLSNSW Chair of Surf Sports, Don van Keimpema OAM said.

"The timing of the inaugural Interseries Championships weekend will provide NSW crews with one final tune up before The Aussies."

The Interseries Championships, and the City and Country Championships will be staged on the weekend of 6-7 April 2024 at Ocean Beach SLSC.





Career Pathways Highlighted by **DRONE DAY**

Stepping out of the classroom and into the field, students from across Sydney have experienced the thrills and spills of remotely piloted aircrafts following the University of NSW's Drone Racing Day – a joint project between UNSW's School of Aviation and Surf Life Saving NSW.

The Drone Racing Day on 21 November was part of a larger project facilitating the implementation of a new degree through the respected Sydney-based university – that of a Bachelor of Aviation, majoring in Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems.

The degree is a first-of-its-kind in NSW, combining theoretical and practice-based learnings- the latter facilitated by SLSNSW's Australian Uncrewed Aerial Vehicle Service (AUAVS). It will equip students with the skills and knowledge needed to support demand in the ever-evolving field of aviation, laying the platform to produce a new line of

commercial pilots, drone operators, and aviation researchers.

Gathering at Swans HQ in Moore Park as part of an activation to announce the degree, a group of Sydney's best up-and-coming drone pilots were put to the test in a series of race formats.

Students took control of their own DJI Avata drone in timed heats of no more than four, with the quickest racers around the pre-designed track advancing throughout the day.

"This was a great opportunity for us to come here and experience flying the drones," Knox Grammar student, Amar Qadri said.

"It's been a lot of fun and interesting to learn something new because we can't do this sort of thing in school."

Teacher Victoria King from Ravenswood School for Girls said the students loved getting out of the classroom for their learning.

"The main value is the hands-on experience, applying what they learn in class to the real world, and learning from people from within the field," she said.

Dr Vanessa Huron from the University of NSW said the day acted as a

fantastic tool to launch their new degree into the market.

"We are about a holistic teaching experience, with practical experience underpinned by academia," she said.

"This has been a great opportunity for students to connect with people who have walked the path they're currently on and it's fascinating to see some of the students who have flown before and others flying for the first time, but it's all sparked from the same idea of a passion or interest that can also be a career."

Stuart Jackson from the AUAVS said there was a lot of research and time put into running the event.

"It's almost second nature to some of these kids, seeing what they're capable of," he said.

"The day is very different to what we usually do, it's quite an immersive experience today, and a way to potentially attract people to the potential of remotely piloted aircraft from a different angle."



NSW Lifesavers Star AT NATIONAL AWARDS

Several NSW volunteer surf lifesavers have seen a wonderful 2022/23 season rewarded at a national level, taking out categories including the blue-ribbon DHL Surf Lifesaver of the Year award at the 2023 SLSA Awards of Excellence in Sydney.

Indeed, for the second year running the night's top gong went to a member from NSW, with Bermagui SLSC's Cheryl McCarthy winning the prestigious category.

"For me this award is not about the individual," Cheryl said.

"There's a huge team behind every person succeeding and I've been so fortunate in my journey to have so many great people around me pushing me all the time.

"We have an amazing club at Bermagui and the Far South Coast Branch more broadly, we don't have a lot of members, but we have an amazing team of lifesavers who work together to cover that stretch of coastline.

"Surf Life Saving has inspired me to do better and be better and play a part in my community."

Cheryl's name was the last called from a slew of NSW winners on the night, with Australian Lifeguard Service lifeguard, Mariah Jones taking out the DHL Lifeguard of the Year category and Fingal Beach SLSC's Steve Westcott named the Assessor of the Year.

In the Surf Sports category, young Ironman Conner Maggs added another accolade to the appendix of his 2022/23 season, named the Youth Athlete of the Year.

His Aussies campaign earlier this year saw the Newport SLSC competitor, coming off his first year in the Nutri Grain Iron Person Series, become the first ever athlete to claim the Iron, Board, Ski, and Surf Race in his age category.

Alongside Anthony Doyle and Luke Chaffer, he also won the U17 Male Single Ski Relay and U17 Male Taplin

and, with Zachary Paul now making a team of four, would also win the U17 Male Surf Teams event.

"I sat down with my coaches and made the tough decision to pull out of the Open Iron to focus on my age group, I thought it was possible (to win all the events) but I put a lot of work in," he said.

"Some great athletes have won this award (Youth Athlete of the Year) before me so I'm very proud, but the focus is definitely on next season already."

Ski legend Murray Braund's illustrious 16-season career in surf sports was met with induction into the SLSA Hall of Fame – the Avoca Beach SLSC Life Member one of two on the night.

Meanwhile, the Central Coast club was one of four to be recognised among the Meritorious Awards on the night, joining members from Ocean Beach SLSC, North Cronulla SLSC and Avalon Beach SLSC as recipients.



Conner Maggs

Meritorious Awards are awarded to clubs, members or the public for outstanding deeds of bravery performed through lifesaving actions during and outside of patrol hours.

Accepting the award on behalf of Avalon Beach, Mike Stanley-Jones recounted the dramatic and emotional rescue and resuscitation of one of his mates and fellow club member Mark Head.

Mike's rescue of Mark, unconscious and with serious spinal injuries, and the actions of fellow members, Andrew Clark, Stuart Cooper, Carl Atkins, Blaze Roberts and Lucas Molloy, meant Mark was able to be with the team to celebrate their award.



Cheryl McCarthy receives her award.



Avalon Beach SLSC members receive their Meritorious certificate.



Mariah Jones



"Mark and I had gone down to do some in and out training on the rescue boards and we started getting some alerts from the headland, so I headed back out and found a body in the water," Mike said.

"I rolled the body onto my board and realised it was Mark"

Mark said the support from his mates in the aftermath of the accident was critical to his survival.

"It's not just the hour on the beach they spent with me, it's the 15 months after.

"They're the only reason I'm here tonight."

SLSA AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE NSW WINNERS:

DHL SURF LIFESAVER OF THE YEAR -
Cheryl McCarthy

DHL LIFEGUARD OF THE YEAR -
Mariah Jones

ASSESSOR OF THE YEAR -
Steve Westcott

YOUTH ATHLETE OF THE YEAR -
Conner Maggs

HALL OF FAME - Murray Braund

MERITORIOUS AWARD - Avalon Beach SLSC (Michael Stanley-Jones, Andrew Clark, Stuart Cooper, Carl Atkins, Blaze

Roberts, Lucas Molloy)

MERITORIOUS AWARD - Avoca Beach SLSC (Nick Welsh, Mitchell Renouf, Kai Hodson, Kai Mitchell, George Ruzek, Jason Barnes, Stuart Harvey, Jeff Barnes, Gordon Jones, Garry Clarke, Millie Parker)

MERITORIOUS AWARD - North Cronulla SLSC (John Bourn OAM, Terry Tierney, Stewart Cameron, Brian Vassarotti, Maxwell Lewis)

MERITORIOUS AWARD - Liam Drake (Ocean Beach SLSC)

NSW LIFESAVERS

Awarded National Medal

Surf Life Saving NSW would like to congratulate a host of surf lifesavers who have been awarded the National Medal, as well as Second Clasps and First Clasps for their sustained service and commitment to Surf Life Saving.

Established in 1975 as a military recognition award, the National Medal has since branched out into government and voluntary organisations and is now Australia's most awarded civil medal.

The National Medal is awarded to individuals on behalf of the Governor-General of Australia, His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd) and recognises long and diligent service in organisations that are dedicated to protecting life

and property at a degree of risk to their members.

National Medals can also be awarded to those who risk their lives or safety to protect or assist the community in enforcement of the law or in times of emergency or natural disaster.

"On behalf of our organisation I would like to congratulate the NSW recipients of this honour," said Surf Life Saving NSW President, Peter Agnew.

"We are very lucky as a gazetted

emergency service to be supported by more than 76,000 dedicated and passionate members, and this honour, in a way, is testament to their commitment to the movement and their character as individuals."

Heading the list of those honoured are Rodney Austin OAM, Keith Claxton, and Ivan Johnson (Mollymook SLSC), Robert Dan (Merewether SLSC), Darcy Morrow (Ballina Lighthouse and Lismore SLSC) and Valoria Georgina Crick (Woonona SLSC) who received their Second Clasp for 35 years of service.

Surf Life Saving NSW volunteers with a minimum of 30 patrolling hours over a minimum period of 15 seasons, are eligible for the National Medal.

National Medal - 2nd Clasp (35 Years)

Rodney Austin OAM - Mollymook SLSC
Keith Claxton - Mollymook SLSC
Valoria Georgina Crick - Woonona SLSC
Robert Dan - Merewether SLSC
Ivan Johnson - Mollymook SLSC
Darcy Morrow - Ballina Lighthouse and Lismore SLSC

National Medal - 1st Clasp (25 Years)

Neville Bunn - Soldiers Beach SLSC
Keith Claxton - Mollymook SLSC
Gary Curtis - Cape Hawke SLSC
Robert Dan - Merewether SLSC
David Ellis - Pacific Palms SLSC
Brendan Guiney - Cape Hawke SLSC
George Kolek - Mollymook SLSC
Tracey Lake - Narrabeen Beach SLSC
Darcy Morrow - Ballina Lighthouse and Lismore SLSC
Keiren Paull - North Avoca SLSC
Matthew Slattery - North Avoca SLSC
Kevin Whitford - Mollymook SLSC
Damien Woods - South Maroubra SLSC

National Medal (15 Years)

Nigel Ball - Avoca Beach SLSC
Cassandra Bickhoff - North Avoca SLSC
Aiden Blair - Wollongong City SLSC
Karen Bryce - Elouera SLSC
Lauren Budd - Newport SLSC
Jean-Paul Buhagiar - Bondi Surf Bathers LSC
Neville Bunn - Soldiers Beach SLSC
Robert Burfitt-Williams - Whale Beach SLSC
Glenn Cairncross - Elouera SLSC
Diego Carrasco - Broulee Surfers SLSC
Shane Carter - Shelly Beach SLSC
Jessica Clifford - Kiama SLSC
Amelia Cole - Terrigal SLSC
Richard Cowan - The Entrance SLSC
James Crittenden - Freshwater SLSC
David Dawson - Sandon Point SLSC
Belinda Dobson - Freshwater SLSC
Richard Donaldson - North Steyne SLSC
Joshua Douglas - Kiama Downs SLSC
Matthew Edwards - Newport SLSC
Matthew Evans - Maroubra SLSC
Simon Falconer - Soldiers Beach SLSC

Josep Font Sadurni - Bondi Surf Bathers LSC
Deborah Foote - North Steyne SLSC
Stephen Foster - Sawtell SLSC
Kiva Galgut - North Bondi SLSC
Brian Gallagher - Mollymook SLSC
Gregory Gardner - Freshwater SLSC
David Gaston - Shellharbour SLSC
Gregory Gigas - Bellambi SLSC
David Gorman - Kiama SLSC
Naida Guy - Kiama Downs SLSC
Steven Guy - Kiama Downs SLSC
Paul Haes - Coogee SLSC
Michael Hass - Shellharbour SLSC
Peter Heald - Nowra-Culburra SLSC
Mitchell Jon Hermens - Cooks Hill SLSC
Richard Hermens - Cooks Hill SLSC
Michael Holz - Kiama Downs SLSC
Bradley Honey - Kiama Downs SLSC
Anthony Ireland - Mollymook SLSC
Trina Jensen - Kiama Downs SLSC
David Johnson - Mollymook SLSC
Ian Keller - Byron Bay SLSC
Ronald Krite - Bondi Surf Bathers LSC
Daniel Lavery - Coogee SLSC
Geoffrey Leong - Coogee SLSC
Douglas Luckman - Kiama Downs SLSC

Mark Maddox - North Steyne SLSC
Alan Mahn - Avalon Beach SLSC
Nathan Mcinerney - Kiama SLSC
Rebecca Mister - Coogee SLSC
Alan Moran - Avalon Beach SLSC
Drew Morgan - Redhead SLSC
Bruce O'Sullivan - Mollymook SLSC
Douglas Patrick - Collaroy SLSC
Symone Pearsall - Coledale SLSC
Andrew Pitt - Kiama SLSC
Stuart Presgrave - Elouera SLSC
Alexandra Salier - North Steyne SLSC
Brett Schweitzer - Kiama Downs SLSC
Paul Seymour - Elouera SLSC
Robert Sinclair - Kiama Downs SLSC
William Soulos - Elouera SLSC
Matthew Sproll - North Avoca SLSC
Stephen Strong - Kiama Downs SLSC
Andrew Sugerman - Elouera SLSC
Rosemarie Taliano - North Bondi SLSC
Adam Giles Taylor - Queenscliff SLSC
Mark Taylor - Elouera SLSC
Clive Thompson - Collaroy SLSC
Carolyn Tyne - Kiama SLSC
Grant Walsh - Nowra-Culburra SLSC
Susanne Whitford - Mollymook SLSC

Report Shows **ROCK FISHING PROGRAM SAVING LIVES**

More than 45 community groups, 90 languages of origin, 1,080 life jackets and nearly 20,000 people reached directly or otherwise – these are the numbers behind Surf Life Saving NSW's Gone Fishing initiative, a report into the ground-breaking safety education program has revealed.

An initiative made possible with support from the NSW Government through the Department of Primary Industries, Gone Fishing is a practical program designed to better educate rock fishers on the safety measures and skills that can make the popular pastime a whole lot safer.

During the 2022-23 Surf Life Saving season, 10 coastal safety sessions were hosted at locations across NSW, including North Bondi, Shellharbour, Port Kembla and Port Stephens. In all, 3,737 people were directly educated through these sessions and various associated media, video packages and factsheets, while 18,300 are estimated to have been reached in all as a result of the program.

Importantly, of the people educated, 70 percent spoke a language other than English, 98 percent had worn their new lifejackets while rock fishing after attending a session, and 95 percent of those who attended learned new information about safety – a clear illustration of the program's impact on at-risk and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities.

"People tend to associate Surf Life Saving with only volunteers on the beach and swimming between the flags, but our educational reach extends much further than that," SLSNSW CEO, Steve Pearce said.

"Programs like 'Gone Fishing' are vital for our at-risk communities to learn valuable skills and be able to better

understand the dynamic nature of the ocean and the dangers involved with rock fishing and how to ensure you protect yourself and your family.

"We're very excited to see the positive results of these workshops, and even more encouraged by the anticipated ripple effect this will have both within these communities and on our coastal drowning statistics."

In NSW from July 2021 to June 2022, 11 people lost their lives while rock fishing. For the same period in 2022-23, 6 people lost their lives while rock fishing.

Participants of the program heaped praise on its structure and informative nature.

"In Pakistan, we don't have a lot of coastline there, so coming to Australia six months ago, I've seen a lot of people fishing and I wanted to learn more, as safety is the first thing that comes to mind when you start a new hobby. It was a very informative session, I learned a lot and I'm looking forward to starting rock fishing," Little Bay workshop participant Amna Awan said.

"Courses like this should be frequently happening, to help people in the community to build up their confidence, because safety is the priority for everyone," Keyur, a North Bondi workshop participant from Parramatta agreed.

"We know we have had a positive impact on at-risk communities and hope this continues to be reflected in our coastal drowning toll moving forward," Steve Pearce reiterated.

 [READ THE REPORT](#)



UNTRAINED RESCUERS

Drowning On Our Beaches

The 2023 NSW Coastal Safety Report has highlighted a stark increase in bystander rescue drownings along with the finding that more than half of coastal drownings are happening in regional and remote areas.

The rise in attempted rescues by members of the public who end up drowning themselves (bystander rescues), is a worrying trend that lifesavers don't want repeated this summer.

A spate of these rescues occurred last summer, including a tragic end to a family holiday for a father who drowned while trying to save his daughter from a rip current at an unpatrolled beach near Black Head on 3 January.

Just two days earlier, an off-duty police officer died while rescuing his teenage son from a rip at a secluded beach near Narooma on the Far South Coast.

"It's absolutely natural to want to try to save someone from drowning, especially a loved one. But without the necessary skills or equipment, it can be a deadly decision," said SLNSW President Peter Agnew.

"It's what makes swimming at an unpatrolled beach so dangerous."

The NSW Coastal Safety Report also found that getting caught in a rip current remains the number one contributor to coastal drowning, with 27% occurring as a result.

Twelve people also drowned at coastal locations in National Parks, another worrying trend and a reminder of the dangers of unpatrolled beaches.

Emergency Services Minister Jihad Dib said the NSW Government is increasing funding to expand the rollout of Emergency Response Beacons at blackspot locations and new jetskis for volunteers to conduct patrols along remote stretches of coastline this summer.

"Australia has some of the most enviable beaches in the world and as the holidays approach we know that people will take advantage of a getaway to enjoy our coastline," said Minister Dib.

"People on holidays may find themselves in conditions that are unfamiliar or unsafe, please swim at patrolled beaches and speak to Surf Life Saving volunteers to better understand local conditions as they can change quickly."

"Volunteers on our beaches and our emergency services are well equipped to respond, by swimming safely and within your abilities we can make sure you enjoy a day at the beach without needing their help."

In 2022-23, lifesavers, lifeguards and support operations personnel responded to 753 emergency callouts, rescued more than 4,780 people and conducted 861,000 preventative actions.

READ THE REPORT

DROWNINGS BY SURF LIFE SAVING BRANCH

Far North Coast - 4
North Coast - 2
Mid North Coast - 2
Lower North Coast - 2
Hunter - 5
Central Coast - 4
Sydney Northern Beaches - 6
Sydney - 11
Illawarra - 2
South Coast - 7
Far South Coast - 2
Other - 1

KEY FINDINGS IN 2022-23

- Coastal drownings totalled 48
- 51% of fatalities occurred in regional or remote areas
- Bystander rescue fatalities climbed to 8 (150% increase on 10-year average)
- 27% of coastal drownings were rip-current related
- Men made up 83% of all coastal drownings
- Rockfishing fatalities represent 13% of total deaths





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3. Select **Get Donation Reminder** at the bottom of the first page and download the easy fundraiser extension to your google chrome
4. Shop online at over 680 retailers and a donation will be made for free!



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

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



National Partners



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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