



2024-25 SLSNSW Awards of Excellence

Attention: Members, Clubs and Branches

Actioned by: Branches

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Summary	<p>This circular outlines the information related to the Surf Life Saving New South Wales (SLSNSW) Awards of Excellence recognising the 2024/25 season.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Section 1 – General Conditions• Section 2 – Summary of Awards• Section 3 – Nomination Process
Objective	<p>To recognise outstanding achievements and contributions from members, clubs and branches in the 2024/25 season.</p>
Key Strategy Ref. No.	<p>2. Develop and Support our People</p>
Action	<p>Branches are to endorse and submit one nomination per category to SLSNSW by Monday 16th June 2025.</p>

We all know them – members who care, give up their time and want to make a difference in the organisation. The Surf Life Saving NSW Awards of Excellence celebrate the incredible people in our organisation and the impact they have on their clubs, its members and their local communities. This circular outlines the award conditions, the awards on offer and the nomination process.

This year's awards will be presented at the SLSNSW Awards of Excellence function on Saturday 16th August 2025. This event will be held at Hyatt Regency Sydney, 161 Sussex Street, Sydney NSW 2000.

Section 1 – General Conditions

General notes

- Branches are encouraged to use the online nomination template for their Branch Awards. SLSNSW will accept one award from each Branch, per category to ensure the process is streamlined and transparent.
- All nominees must be SLSA financial members (or affiliated organisations). Nominations should focus on activities during the 2024/25 Surf Life Saving season, from 1st July 2024 – 30th June 2025.
- Where ages are mentioned, this refers to the members age as at 30 September in the 2024/25 season.
- Winners may be called upon to act as ambassadors of Surf Life Saving, both within the organisation and to external audiences.
- Surf Life Saving NSW State events or teams will not be considered for nomination for these awards.
- Paid employees at any level may apply for the awards listed. However, paid service will only be counted if applying for the Lifeguard of the Year or Coach of the Year awards. All other awards recognise voluntary contributions only. Unless otherwise specified, these awards are in recognition of individual achievements, team submissions will not be considered.

Guidelines for submission

- Applicants are required to complete and submit an [online nomination form](#) by **16 June 2025**. No nominations will be accepted via email or post.
- **Applicants must address the criteria for their nominated award** (*found in Section 3 of circular*).
- Nominations are to include a digital profile image of the nominee (for individual awards) or logo (for group/team awards) via the online nomination form. **Please ensure all nominee photographs are from the shoulders up and of a high-resolution quality. Please wear a club shirt or patrol uniform, no 'selfies'.**

Selection Process

- Finalists for the 'Surf Lifesaver of the Year', Volunteer of the Year', Youth Surf Lifesaver of the Year' and 'Youth Volunteer of the Year' will be invited to participate in an **online interview, scheduled for the weekend of June 28th and 29th**, details of which will be available following the close of nominations. The SLSNSW selection panels will determine a winner from both a review of the application and the interview.
- Finalists from the remaining awards will be determined by a volunteer selection panel and will involve a review of applications.

SLSNSW Winners

- Winners of Awards listed in the 'SLSA Volunteer Awards' list will be nominated for the SLSA Awards of Excellence. All SLSNSW categories are aligned with SLSA selection criteria.
- The SLSA Awards of Excellence will be held on Saturday 1st November 2025, location to be confirmed.

Section 2 – Summary of Awards

SLSA Awards *Winners will progress to the SLSA Awards of Excellence*

Surf Lifesaver of the Year

An active patrolling member who has made an outstanding contribution to the delivery and development of surf lifesaving frontline services.

Youth Surf Lifesaver of the Year

An active patrolling member (between the ages of 15-21, this refers to the members age as at 30 September in the 2024/25 season) who has made an outstanding contribution to the delivery and development of surf lifesaving frontline services.

Volunteer of the Year*

An impressive member who has made a difference through their volunteering efforts.

Club of the Year

An outstanding SLS-affiliated club that is committed to improving the experience of its members, providing a safer environment for the community, and improving club operations.

Athlete of the Year**

An athlete aged 15 or older who has achieved sporting excellence in Open Aged Competition.

Youth Athlete of the Year**

An athlete aged between 15-18 (this refers to the members age as at 30 September in the 2024/25 season) who has achieved sporting excellence in Youth and/or Open Aged Competition.

Surf Sport Team of the Year

The 37th edition of Surf Sport Manual defines a team as an event that is contested by more than one competitor from the same club or lifesaving unit who may either complete an event or race together as a discrete unit (e.g., boat race, IRB race, surf teams, R&R etc.) or separately (e.g., relay events, board rescue etc.).

Coach of the Year

An accredited coach who has made a significant contribution to athlete performance at a state, national and/or international level, to the development of athletes in SLS activities outside of surf sports, and to the educational development of other coaches in SLS.

Official of the Year

An accredited surf sports official who has made a significant contribution to both officiating at a state, national and/or international level, and to the educational development of other officials in SLS.

Trainer of the Year

An endorsed Trainer who is passionate about building the skills of others, consistently delivers a positive learning experience, and who encourages other members to engage in the delivery of training.

Assessor of the Year

An endorsed Assessor who is passionate about building the skills of others, consistently delivers a positive and supportive assessment experience, and who encourages other members to engage in training or assessment.

Community Education Program of the Year

A non-commercial activity or program that is targeted to non-members who are an identified at-risk group within the community. The purpose should contribute significantly to the organisation's mission of saving lives, creating great Australians and building better communities.

Innovation Award***

A well-researched concept, piece of equipment, program or event which is/has been implemented to improve any facet of Surf Life Saving.

*Applications that focus on significant achievements in one particular area may not be considered if this area is also covered by other awards (e.g. Lifesaver, Coach, Official, Trainer and Assessor of the Year).

**A youth aged competitor (i.e. aged 15 to 18 years as at 30 September in a 2024/25 season) may be nominated for both the Athlete of the Year and Youth Athlete of the Year. However, only results achieved in Open Age Events and Open Age Team representation are considered for Athlete of the Year Award.

*** The innovation may have been developed in conjunction with an external body/sponsor but must be owned by a member or group of members of an affiliated SLS club.

SLSNSW Awards

Youth Volunteer of the Year

An impressive member (between the ages of 15-21, this refers to the members age as at 30 September in the 2024/25 season) who has made a difference through their volunteering efforts.

Patrol Captain of the Year

A Patrol Captain who is passionate about improving the service their patrol offers to the community, or the experience it offers to members.

Support Operations Member of the Year

A Member involved in Support Operations (Duty Officer, Rescue Water Craft, Jet Rescue Boat, Offshore Rescue Boat, UAV) who has made a difference through their volunteering efforts in support operations.

Administrator of the Year

An Administrator who consistently goes the extra mile to make the lives of other members easier, or to make the services and programs delivered by the club run smoother.

Services Team of the Year

An outstanding team who have made a positive impact in Surf Life Saving or the community through their volunteer services.

Branch of the Year

A Branch which demonstrates commitment to improving the experience of its members, and to delivering tailored support to its clubs to enable them to overcome challenges.

Masters Athlete of the Year

An athlete over the age of 30 who has achieved sporting excellence.

Facilitator of the Year

A Facilitator who encourages members to engage in training or assessing, is passionate about building the skills of others, and consistently delivers a positive learning experience.

Section 3 – Nomination Process

Volunteer and Program/Innovation Awards

SLSA Awards

- Surf Lifesaver of the Year
- Youth Surf Lifesaver of the Year
- Volunteer of the Year
- Assessor of the Year
- Trainer of the Year
- Community Education Program of the Year
- Innovation Award

SLSNSW Awards

- Youth Volunteer of the Year
- Patrol Captain of the Year
- Support Operations Member of the Year
- Administrator of the Year
- Facilitator of the Year
- Services Team of the Year
- Branch of the Year

To nominate for the above awards, complete the [online nomination form](#) which includes answering the three questions below (with each answer no more than 400 words).

1. Tell us about the member/individual or program/innovation being nominated.
2. What has been achieved?
3. What impact has this had, and for whom?

For Surf Lifesaver and Youth Surf Lifesaver of the Year awards, nominations require patrol hours to be uploaded for the 2022/23, 2023/24, and 2024/25 season (extracted from Surf Guard).

When showcasing members' achievements, you may want to consider the questions below to boost the quality of your nomination...

- What relevant positions, roles, or responsibilities do they hold?
- Have they done something in response to an identified need or problem?
- Have they done something new or different to achieve results?
- Have they inspired others to think or to do things differently?
- Have they had to overcome any challenges to make a difference or achieve success?
- Do they model positive and supportive attitudes, behaviours and actions?

When showcasing the achievements of programs or innovations, you may want to consider the questions below to boost the quality of your nomination...

- What was the motivation or research which drove the program/innovation?
- What were the aims and objectives?
- What did it look like (location, duration, resources required etc.)?
- How was it evaluated to ensure it achieved its aims and objectives?
- Were there any challenges which needed to be overcome to achieve success?
- You may wish to attach photographs, include links to any promotional material created or media coverage received.

Club of the Year

To nominate for the Club of the Year award, complete the [online nomination form](#), attaching your club's strategic and/or operational plan, and your answer to the five questions below (with each answer no more than 400 words).

1. Tell us about the club.
2. What has your club achieved over the last 12 months (2024/25 season)?
3. Why have the achievements made a difference at your club, and to whom, and how did you bring the club members on the journey?
4. What are your plans for future development and continuous improvement?
5. What is the ONE lesson that your club can teach and share with all other SLS clubs both here in Australia and internationally?

When showcasing club achievements, you may want to consider the questions below to boost the quality of your nomination...

- How does your club support the SLS 2025 Strategic Plan?
- What new initiatives, programs or events did your club implement in the last 12 months (season 2024/25) that extended your strategic objectives? How did you identify the need for this?
- How does your club deliver a range of sustainability and improvement measures across areas of governance, leadership, development, community engagement (or community support initiatives), and delivery of lifesaving services?
- What, if any, challenges did the club had to overcome to achieve success?
- How does your club management team model positive and supportive attitudes, behaviours and actions?
- You may wish to attach any photographs, reference letters or media coverage to your nomination.

Note:

If your club has been a successful Club of the Year at a Branch, State or National level in the past five (5) years, please note this on your nomination.

Please attach the Club's Strategic Plan and season 2024/25 season membership statistics.

Sport Awards

SLSA Awards

- Athlete of the Year
- Youth Athlete of the Year
- Surf Sport Team of the Year
- Official of the Year
- Coach of the Year

SLSNSW Awards

- Masters Athlete of the Year

Athlete of the Year

How to nominate for the above award:

Complete the [online nomination form](#) and answer the questions listed below (with each answer no more than 400 words).

1. Has the athlete competed in any representative teams (including international competition) during the 24/25 season? If so, please list the team and how they contributed to the success of the team?
2. List the competition results achieved by the athlete in the 24/25 season at championship carnivals or major surf sports events?
3. In the 24/25 season how is the athlete a positive role model, a good sportsperson and/or an ambassador for Surf Life Saving? How do they contribute to broader lifesaving activities and engage with other members (including juniors or mentoring)?
4. Does the athlete hold any coaching and/or officiating qualifications?

Youth Athlete of the Year

How to nominate for the above award:

Complete the [online nomination form](#) and answer the questions listed below (with each answer no more than 400 words).

1. List the competition results achieved by the Youth Athlete in the 24/25 season at championship carnivals or major surf sports events?
2. Has the Youth Athlete competed in any representative teams (including international competition, if relevant) during the 24/25 season? If so, please list the team and how they contributed to the success of the team?
3. In the 24/25 season how is the youth athlete a positive role model, a good sportsperson and/or an ambassador for Surf Life Saving? Do they contribute to broader lifesaving activities and engage with other members (including juniors, mentoring, coaching or officiating)?

Surf Sport Team of the Year

How to nominate for the above award:

Complete the [online nomination form](#) and answer the questions listed below (with each answer no more than 400 words).

1. List the competition results achieved by the Team in the 24/25 season at championship carnivals or major surf sports events?
2. Has the Team competed as a Branch/State or National representative team during the 24/25 season? If so, please list the events?
3. In the 24/25 season how has the Team been positive role models and shown good sportsmanship and/or been good ambassadors for Surf Life Saving? Do they contribute to broader lifesaving activities and engage with other members (including juniors)?

Official of the Year

How to nominate for the above award:

Complete the [online nomination form](#) and answer the questions listed below (with each answer no more than 400 words).

1. What officiating qualification does the member currently hold, Core, Technical or Senior Official?
2. List the member's officiating roles they have fulfilled during the season at Club, Branch, State, National and International level (where applicable).
3. Describe the Officials achievements during the 24/25 season, including examples, areas of achievement may be in mentoring, training, documentation and process, new programs, solving problems etc.
4. Please provide examples of how the official adheres to and is a role model of the values of SLSA, Surf Sports and the SLSA Match Fixing Policy.
5. List any training or development the official has undertaken this season to improve themselves and their impact.

Coach of the Year

How to nominate for the above award:

Complete the [online nomination form](#) and answer the questions listed below (with each answer no more than 400 words).

1. What coaching qualification does the member currently hold, Foundation, Development or Performance Coach?
2. What coaching roles has the member fulfilled during the 24/25 season at Club, Branch (where applicable), State, National and International Level?
3. List the competition results attributed to the coach, where this member was the primary coach for the athlete and/or team, in the 24/25 season.
4. Has the coach been involved in any mentoring and development of other coaches, creating of supporting documentation and/or programs. Please provide examples of where the coach has shown a positive and supportive attitude, behaviour and actions (including who it has impacted and how) in the 24/25 season?
5. Has the coach undertaken any personal development to improve themselves as a coach in the 24/25 season?

Masters Athlete of the Year

To nominate for the above award, complete the [online nomination form](#) which includes answering the two questions below (with each answer no more than 400 words).

1. Has the athlete competed in any representative teams (including international competition) during the 24/25 season? If so, please list the team and how they contributed to the success of the team?
2. List the competition results achieved by the athlete in the 24/25 season at championship carnivals or major surf sports events?
3. In the 24/25 season how is the athlete a positive role model, a good sportsperson and/or an ambassador for Surf Life Saving? How do they contribute to broader lifesaving activities and engage with other members (including juniors or mentoring)?
4. Does the athlete hold any coaching and/or officiating qualifications?