

Surf LIFE

ISSUE 63 – July 2025

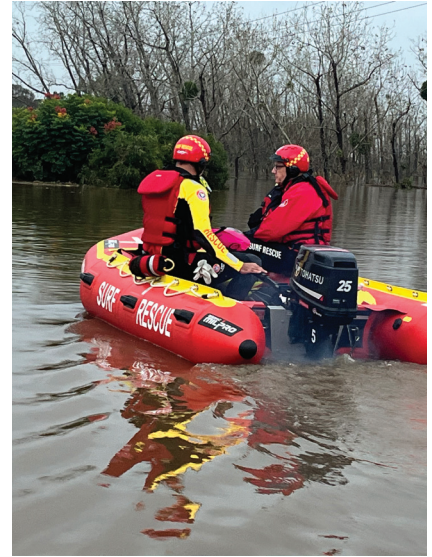
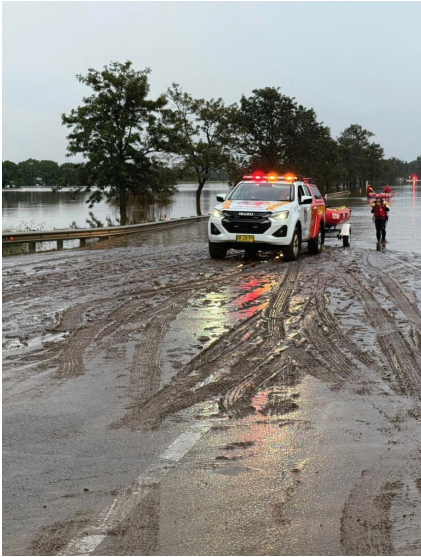


SURF LIFE SAVING
NEW SOUTH WALES



Mid North Receives
Flood of Support from

**VOLUNTEER
LIFESAVERS**



Surf lifesavers from across the state responded to the extreme weather event which affected the Mid North Coast in May, lending support to NSW SES and other emergency service agencies in rendering assistance to flood-ravaged communities in the area.

Strike teams of trained flood response personnel deployed to Taree and surrounds from Wednesday 21 May and aided immediate response efforts and subsequent relief and recovery efforts, with Surf Life Saving assets including vehicles, Inflatable Rescue Boats (IRBs) and UAVs all utilised.

In all, 35 lifesavers across 10 teams of three and four, comprised of in-and-on-water flood operators, UAV pilots and team leaders, took on missions

including rescues, welfare checks, food resupplies, clean ups and intel gathering.

"We were devastated by the destruction we saw as a result of this severe weather event, but we're extremely proud of our volunteer lifesavers who stepped up and provided support to those impacted communities on the Mid North Coast," SLSNSW President, Peter Agnew AM said.

"The inter-agency collaboration on the ground played a huge part in assisting these communities in their efforts to rebound under trying conditions, while our lifesavers have been heavily involved in helping members of the public displaced by flood waters to seek shelter and safety.

"Our lifesavers are highly trained individuals, and we are constantly providing them with enhanced training to ensure they are appropriately equipped to go out into these conditions and provide that assistance to the community as safely as possible."

The Westpac Lifesaver Rescue Helicopter also made several rescues while providing aerial surveillance to ensure search paths are as clear and safe as possible.



\$5 million Government Grant *Shared Among Surf Clubs*

Coogee SLSC and Maroubra SLSC are the biggest beneficiaries of the latest round of funding through the NSW Government's Surf Club Facilities Grant – two in a total of 38 clubs to share in a pool of \$5.4 million this year.

Minister for Sport, Steve Kamper confirmed that more than a quarter of the state's surf clubs saw their applications approved in a major announcement at Coogee on 3 April.

In 2025 the grants of up to \$1 million rewarded projects, in particular, that encourage participation by women and girls, people with disability, First Nations peoples, people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities, and LGBTQIA+ members.

Coogee will receive \$900,000 to put towards refurbishment of the ground floor of the clubhouse, which will include upgrades to amenities, changerooms and the training room. The total cost is estimated to be just over \$2.1 million, meaning the club is nearly halfway to the overall total required.

Maroubra, meanwhile, is working towards a redevelopment of the entire clubhouse which will include a new lift, upgraded changerooms, enhanced storage and fire safety upgrades. They

will receive \$940,000, with the planned redevelopment just recently given the green light by Randwick City Council after 18 months of consultation.

"We are pleased to see the NSW Government directly support the vital contribution made by our volunteer lifesavers and surf clubs in NSW," SLSNSW President, Peter Agnew AM said.

"Our growing membership of over 83,000 lifesavers and Nippers deserve



(L-R) Steve Pearce, Minister for Sport, Steve Kamper, and Member for Coogee Marjorie O'Neill.



safe, secure, and accessible facilities. This program allows those members, who do such important work volunteering at our beaches, to focus on saving lives."

Other clubs to be awarded six figure sums include Austinmer SLSC who will see \$282,900 put towards essential bathroom and shower facility upgrades, while Coffs Harbour SLSC are to be given \$160,510.56 for structural repairs at the club.

"This summer has again illustrated the vital job our surf life savers do protecting swimmers and keeping people safe at beaches along the NSW coast," Minister Kamper said.

"The \$5.4 million funding awarded by the NSW Government will ensure our Surf Life Saving Clubs across NSW remain modern and accessible so that surf lifesavers can continue their invaluable work."

"Projects announced here will encourage increased participation by women and girls, people with disability, First Nations peoples, people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities, and the LGBTQIA+ community," added Emergency Services Minister Jihad Dib.

"Every year more and more people from all sections of the community are participating in Surf Life Saving and it's only through programs like

the Surf Club Facility Program that we are able to make clubs inclusive and accessible."

2025 SURF CLUB FACILITIES GRANT RECIPIENTS

Austinmer SLSC \$282,900	Narrabeen Beach SLSC \$47,294
Bilgola SLSC \$312,370	Newcastle SLSC \$85,734
Cabarita Beach SLSC \$99,733.28	North Curl Curl SLSC \$98,738
Cape Hawke SLSC \$92,849	North Entrance SLSC \$90,908
Catherine Hill Bay SLSC \$54,376	North Steyne SLSC \$181,582.80
Caves Beach SLSC \$32,663	Nowra Culburra SLSC \$78,160
Coffs Harbour SLSC \$160,510.56	Ocean Beach SLSC \$94,045
Collaroy SLSC \$44,000	Pacific Palms SLSC \$114,541.81
Coogee SLSC \$900,000	Scarborough Wombarra SLSC \$30,000
Dee Why SLSC \$215,425	Shelly Beach SLSC \$122,454.75
Elouera SLSC 156,950	Soldiers Beach SLSC \$30,600
Fairy Meadow SLSC \$30,030	South Curl Curl SLSC \$34,377
Forster SLSC \$74,597.30	South Narrabeen SLSC \$216,954.28
Gerringong SLSC \$98,000	Swansea Belmont SLSC \$81,294
Hat Head SLSC \$55,980	Taree Old Bar SLSC \$48,266.73
Kiama SLSC \$84,100	Urunga SLSC \$31,561.57
Long Reef SLSC \$71,409.09	Warilla Barrack Point SLSC \$53,899
Maroubra SLSC \$940,000	Warriewood SLSC \$86,940
Nambucca Heads SLSC \$129,500	Wollongong City SLSC \$56,824

King's Birthday Honours

For Outstanding NSW Lifesavers

Congratulations to the members of Surf Life Saving NSW who were named in this year's King's Birthday Honours list on 9 June.

Michael Bate received an AM for significant service to Surf Life Saving and to business. A former Director of Surf Sport for SLSNSW, he first joined Towradgi SLSC in the late 1960s and is the president of Freshwater SLSC.

He is a Branch, State and National life member, and has made a significant contribution to surf sports as a championship referee, competition official, team manager and committee member over many decades.

Receiving OAMs in 2025 included World Champion ocean paddler Dean Gardiner, who has been a member of Manly and Nth Curl Curl SLSCs. Louise and Peter Lambeth from Ocean Beach SLSC both received OAMs as recognition of their significant contribution to drowning prevention through initiatives including publishing the *Annie and the Waves* children's books and volunteering as Beach to Bush presenters for many years.

Ray Petersen OAM from Manly LSC chairs the SLSNSW History Panel and has volunteered countless hours to preserving and recognising the enormous contribution surf lifesavers and clubs have made to the community.

Ray is a life member at club, Branch and State level and boasts a revered history in surf swimming and R&R, where he was a club coach in both disciplines for almost four decades. Across 55 years in the movement, he has held many roles through the organisation including Vice President, Patrol Captain and Education Officer.

Bondi SBLSC life member Peter Quartly received an OAM for services to Surf Life Saving along with



LOUISE LAMBETH OAM



SHALEIGH LENNOX ESM

Tamarama SLSC life member, Edward Gilroy.

In addition, two members also received the prestigious Emergency Service Medal.

Shaleigh Lennox of Cooks Hill SLSC has demonstrated over 30 years of exceptional service in lifesaving and emergency management within the Hunter region.

She has held numerous frontline roles, including Patrol Captain and Zone Supervisor. Since 2009, she has served almost 1,200 hours in Support Operations and as a Duty Officer, attending to emergencies and frontline incidents, in addition to fulfilling standard beach patrol duties.

Her contributions to education include developing assessment tools for the Hunter branch, which became templates for national standards, and her service also extended to disaster response, playing a critical role in floods and extreme weather events in her region for almost 20 years.

Doug Lucas of Garie SLSC, among several clubs across Sydney and the Northern Beaches, has demonstrated exceptional leadership and dedication in the emergency management space



MICHAEL BATE AM



RAY PETERSEN OAM

over many decades and continues to be a frontline responder and leader.

An integral member and current captain of Surf Rescue 30 (SR30), the Offshore Rescue Boat within Surf Life Saving Sydney Branch, has responded to many major maritime rescues, searches and recoveries in challenging conditions and has amassed over 6,500 volunteer patrol hours and over 25 years as a Duty Officer and Rescue Water Craft operator.

A current trainer with over 23 years of consecutive service, Doug is an assessor for key frontline lifesaving awards and has showcased his versatility and expertise in different operational aspects of emergency response as a Forward Commander and Duty Officer in SLSNSW flood and bush fire deployments.

"I want to congratulate all our members honoured this year and thank them for their significant contributions to our great movement. I'm extremely proud that Surf Life Saving attracts and retains members of such a calibre who continue to serve their clubs and the community. This is well deserved recognition," SLSNSW President Peter Agnew AM said.

Lifesaving Future In Good Hands With **Junior Lifesavers Of The Year**



Mia Jamal of Avoca Beach SLSC and Max McDermott of Warriewood SLSC are the 2025 NSW Junior Lifesavers of the Year, awarded the titles following three days of team building and leadership development on Sydney's Northern Beaches.



Formally recognised during a presentation ceremony on Thursday, 17 April, Mia and Max were two in a group of 22 eager teenagers who came from each of the 11 branches across NSW, having been acknowledged themselves as Junior Lifesavers of the Year for their region.

The pair represented the Central Coast and Sydney Northern Beaches with distinction, while commendations for all participants proved once again that NSW is blessed with talented young lifesavers along the entire coastline.

Knowing well that they were privileged to be among a very worthy group, all of whom could have been named as winners, the pair were thrilled.

"There's a lot of thought going through my head, mainly excitement and pride," Mia said.

"I think I was even a little stressed beforehand but just super happy to be in this position."

"I'm a bit shocked actually, it's fun to win obviously, but it's fun to just be here and have the experience of the camp," Max added.

A reserved but clearly passionate and personable lifesaver, Mia impressed the panel of judges with her vision for more resources to support all abilities in engaging with Surf Life Saving.

"I was really happy to get such great feedback, I just think it's so important to build up the platform for people with disabilities and grow their confidence around the water," she said.

"I've had friends, buddies in school who love the water and Surf Life Saving and I just want to help them and everyone who might not be able to get everything they need."

Max, meanwhile, has community in his heart and a passion for what so many people enjoy about Surf Life Saving, the camaraderie.

"I've been really lucky at Warriewood, ever since I was five in the white caps, everyone comes together – the patrols, water safety, everybody. It's one of the best communities I've ever seen," he said.

"I want to grow that, and I'm also lucky that this camp has shown me there are so many different ways to do things and so many perspectives which has helped me."

Junior lifesaver finalists engaged in a three-day team building and leadership development program at Collaroy, which culminated in Mia and Max being selected as the NSW Junior Lifesavers of the Year.

"Obviously at the start there's a little bit of nerves, maybe some awkwardness, but that passed so quickly, and we all had so much fun," Mia said.

"It was a blast, so many fun activities, got to know the instructors really well, and so good to get to know everyone here and create friendships," Max added.

Partnership Expands Drone Operations Out of Sight

The exciting future of drone operations in emergency response continues to evolve, with a partnership between Surf Life Saving NSW (SLSNSW) and Babcock Australasia (Babcock) exploring a series of short and long-term goals for the lifesaving technology.

A MOU signed on 10 April proposes, at its core, the potential to enhance the air observation and intelligence-gathering capabilities of the Australian Uncrewed Aerial Vehicle Service (AUAVS) – SLSNSW's drone services arm – for search and rescue, environmental monitoring and maritime operations.

Babcock – a trusted platform provider in the fields of defence, aviation and critical services, aiding the Australian and New Zealand Defence Forces, among other clients – will also work to support and boost existing service deliveries and expand operations into the Beyond Visual Line of Sight (BVLOS) space.

"This partnership presents some really exciting opportunities for the Australian UAV Service to continue to harness and expand the potential of drones as a lifesaving device," AUAVS Manager, James Bassam said.

"Perhaps most exciting is that this doesn't just mean along the coastline either.

"It's an opportunity for us to enhance the scale and quality of our existing services, but also push ourselves into the next phase of operations and expand beyond lifesaving services, which hopefully will put us at the forefront of drone-enabled disaster management and emergency response."

In leveraging Babcock's long-range Remote Pilot Aircraft System (RPAS), the AUAVS is well-positioned to take the learnings from the NSW Government-funded 'Long Range

UAV Project' – which most notably included a week-long testing phase of the effectiveness of various operating systems in key drone operations in mid-2023 – and progress naturally through to the next phase of development.

Recent initiatives such as the Drone in a Box (DIAB) capability have aimed to position the AUAVS for long term deployment of a comprehensive and multi-purpose Long Range BVLOS capability.

Babcock now takes on a major role in this process, both in the immediate future and longer term.

The AUAVS stands to benefit from modernised and expanded coastal capabilities. In search and rescue response specifically, this will manifest as greater operational agility, real-time data collection, and increased reach.

On a broader level, the pathway to further evolution also intends to position the AUAVS as a national disaster prevention asset.

"We know how important surveillance along our beaches and waterways can be, particularly in summer, so we welcome the opportunity to partner with AUAVS and utilise our aviation expertise to develop and deliver transformative long-range technologies and services that will help save lives," Babcock Australasia CEO, Andrew Cridland said.

"It forms part of Babcock's commitment to creating a safe and secure world, together."

"Proactive and reactive missions, such as search and rescue, will benefit from greater operational agility, real-time data collection, and increased reach," SLSNSW CEO, Steve Pearce said.

"This will substantially improve detection, response times and success rates in both localised and large-scale incidents.

"The partnership will modernise and extend the capabilities of Surf Life Saving's coastal and emergency response operations."



Lifesavers At Forefront *Of Major Recognition Initiatives*

Volunteer surf lifesavers were front and centre at several big events over the past few months, namely representing SLSNSW at the Sydney Roosters' second annual Emergency Services match and the Australian Red Cross Lifeblood Emergency Services Blood Drive, both in June.

On Sunday 22 June our volunteers joined NSW Police Force, NSW Ambulance, Fire and Rescue NSW, NSW RFS, Marine Rescue NSW, VRA Rescue NSW and NSW SES for a half time spotlight at the Roosters v Cowboys clash.

The red and yellow shone on the field as our members helped welcome the team back on for the second half – it was a great night celebrating the people who help keep our communities safe.

It came after earlier in the month the red and yellow was on show once again as we helped to launch the Lifeblood Emergency Services Blood Drive, joining emergency services across NSW in a shared mission to give blood and plasma this winter.

It's a fantastic initiative and a timely reminder that every donation supports people in urgent need and helps keep emergency services like our lifesavers ready to respond.



Volunteers at the Sydney Roosters Emergency Service Match (above) and the Lifeblood Emergency Services Blood Drive launch (left and right).

Caves Proves Cream Of The Crop at

RESCUE BOAT CHAMPIONSHIPS

A near flawless season ended in triumph once again for Caves Beach SLSC at the end of June, with the club picking up yet another Sharkskin NSW IRB Championships title to go with the Premiership victory its teams tasted just a few weeks earlier.



Hot off the back of the four-round Premiership Series that took Inflatable Rescue Boat drivers across NSW to race, Cape Hawke on the state's Lower North Coast played host to the State Championships from 27-29 June.

The Hunter club entered the weekend with a special sporting trifecta of the favourites tag, the reigning champions crown, and the confidence built from an overall point score victory during the Premiership Series, and they didn't disappoint in Sunday's finals package, picking up an incredible 157 points to blow apart the competition.

Caves was the only club to achieve triple digits, with the competition's southernmost clubs, Thirroul SLSC and Kiama Downs SLSC rounding out the podium on 99 and 79 points, respectively.





"The competition keeps growing so much so to see the team feed off that and continue to train hard and work to stay on top is pretty good to see," Caves Beach Open Male competitor, Oliver Kleyn said.

"We've got an amazing team and Scotty (Bryant – Team Coach) holds us all together and everyone has that hunger which makes it really easy to come back each year and contribute."

Oliver joined Luke Warzecha, Victoria Copen and Samantha Bryant in taking out the Open Male Mass final – one of several big wins for Caves on the day that contributed to the comprehensive victory they achieved on the point score.

Notable results for the overall point score podium included Thirroul's KNOT SHORE team of Max and Layla Montgomery, and Samara and Jaryd

Turner who picked up gold in the U23 Male Mass Rescue, while the Illawarra club's DUCK DUCK GOOSE team of Alison Montgomery and Anne Walton, supported by Max and Layla, took out the 35+ Female Mass.

Kiama Downs' U23 Male Rescue team of Elijah Foster-Percy, Copper Walsh and Maria Flor Santana De Castro were also excellent in winning their final.

Elsewhere, Bondi SBLSC's Aqua Ambush won the U23 Female Tube, North Cronulla SLSC's Emotional Beached Whales won the U23 Female Rescue, Nobbys SLSC's Should Have Gone to Specsavers were too strong in the Open Male Tube, and Queenscliff SLSC's Old Mate won the 45+ Open Tube.

SLSNSW Chair of Surf Sports, Don van Keimpema said the carnival was a fantastic showcase of lifesaving skills.

"We're grateful to MidCoast Council for hosting this great community event, it really enhances our lifesaving skills and is a great part of surf sports," he said.

Naming Rights Partner, Sharkskin's Business Development Manager, Mick Robertson echoed this feeling.

"We love the IRB community, it's a great partnership and we're very proud to be associated with such a tight knit community event," he said.

Caves Beach would leave the Lower North Coast with not only the Overall Point Score title, but each category title as well. Those included the Alistair 'Slim' Peebles Memorial Trophy for the U23 Champions, the Rodney 'Rocket' Williams Memorial Trophy for the Masters Champions, and the John Wake Memorial Trophy for the Opens Champions.



» FULL RESULTS

PHOTO SPOTLIGHT **VIVID 2025**

Surf Life Saving NSW's event safety arm was busy once again at Sydney's iconic Vivid 2025, keeping patrons safe over 23 nights.

From lifeguards and first aiders to paramedics, coordinators and control room staff — the team delivered comprehensive medical and water safety support across a vast Sydney CBD footprint.



Members Win Big AT SPORT AWARDS



Sienna Sinclair, Olivia Edwards, Zara Green and (right) Don van Keimpema, Alan Beveridge OAM and Peter Agnew AM.

Congratulations to the four members from our ranks - Zara Green, Olivia Edwards, Sienna Sinclair, and Alan Beveridge OAM - who were recognised at the 2025 NSW

Community Sports Awards at CommBank Stadium in June.

Zara, Olivia, and Sienna from Terrigal SLSC made up the U17 Female Ski Relay team that won the Community

Team of the Year award and Warilla Barrack Point SLSC President, Alan Beveridge was honoured for his efforts as an official, named as a recipient of the Distinguished Long Service Award.

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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 83,000 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.

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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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