

## Circular 3949

UPDATED 13 May 2026



### 2026 SHARKSKIN NSW IRB PREMIERSHIP & STATE CHAMPIONSHIP ENTRY CIRCULAR

**Attention:** Club Presidents, Club Secretaries, Club Competition Officers, Team Managers, Coaches, Competitors, Branch Directors of Surf Sports, Branch Presidents, and Branch CEO/Secretaries.

**Actioned by:** Persons responsible for club entries.

**Date:** 22 April 2026

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<b>Summary</b>	<p>This circular provides information for clubs regarding the 2026 Sharkskin NSW IRB Premiership Rounds and 2026 Sharkskin NSW IRB Championship.</p> <p><b>Update to Section 14.10 – Injuries &amp; Return to Surf Duties</b> <b>Additional of Section 18 – Protest &amp; Appeals</b></p>
<b>Action</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The IRB Training Hour requirement is a <b>MEMBER AWARD</b> in Surfguard. This will be required to be endorsed every season and will remove the need to submit manual training logs. Please refer to <b>Section 13</b> for further details.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Complete the <a href="#">Team Managers Registration Form</a> by Sunday 19 April 2026 to receive important information.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Entries open 9am, Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2026. Complete and submit event competitor entries <a href="#">via LiveHeats</a> by:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Round 1 – Warilla-Barrack Point SLSC: 1pm Friday 24 April 2026</li> <li>• Round 2 – Terrigal SLSC: 1pm Friday 8 May 2026</li> <li>• Round 3 – Queenscliff SLSC: 1pm Friday 22 May 2026</li> <li>• Round 4 – Swansea Belmont SLSC: 1pm Friday 12 June 2026</li> <li>• State Championships – Fingal Beach SLSC: 1pm Friday 26 June 2026</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<input type="checkbox"/> Select your Club’s time preference for <a href="#">Scrutineering at Round 1</a> (BEFORE Sun 17 April) & <a href="#">Scrutineering at State Championships</a> (BEFORE Sun 14 June) For more details see <a href="#">Scrutineering</a>
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## 1 IRB Entries, Closing Dates and Time

EVENT	VENUE	EVENT DATES	ENTRIES CLOSE
Round 1	Warilla Barrack Point	1 – 3 May	1pm Friday 24 April
Round 2	Terrigal	16 – 17 May	1pm Friday 8 May
Round 3	Queenscliff	30 – 31 May	1pm Friday 22 May
Round 4	Swansea Belmont	20 – 21 June	1pm Friday 12 June
2026 State Championships	Fingal Beach	3 – 5 July	1pm Friday 26 June

Please note there are strictly **no late entries**. This is to ensure that competition draws can be completed and circulated in advance.

## 2 Communication

### 2.1 Team Managers Briefing – Compulsory

The 2026 IRB Series briefing will be held online Wednesday 29 April 2026 at 6pm will cover event rules, program, revised rules of competition and a Q & A.

Further details on the exact location of the briefing will be confirmed in the final event information.

### 2.2 Memos and Circulars

Memos and documentation will be available through Surf Sports Weekly and on the [2026 Sharkskin NSW IRB Premiership Series Webpage](#).

Final event information will be released along with the first round draws at least two days prior to competition with updates, as necessary.

### 2.3 Stack Team App

Closer to and during the competitions, Stack Team App will also be utilised to deliver important information and updates, including timetable changes to Team Managers, Competitors and Officials.

It is highly recommended that everyone planning to attend any IRB event download Stack Team App when entries are submitted. If you cannot download the App onto a phone or tablet, you may also access Stack Team App in a web browser on any computer.

**To register for these event updates please follow the below instructions:**

1. Download the “Stack Team App” application from the App Store or Google Play
2. Log in / Sign up to receive live event notifications.
3. Once logged in search “**2026 Sharkskin NSW IRB Series**”
4. Click the “Become a member of this Stack Team App” icon at the top of the screen then select the “Competitors” group. There will also be an “Officials” group and a closed “Team Managers” group.

By joining the event and turning on your mobile app notifications, you will receive notifications and email updates as they are posted, ensuring you never miss any important information.

## 3 Official Quota

To support the on-going delivery and development of IRB competition, a quota will be continued in 2026 based on a Clubs’ individual entries per Round/Championship to grow the number of IRB Technical Officials.

Clubs without sufficient currently accredited officials are advised that members should be encouraged to complete the online Technical Officials course. The face-to-face assessments will be run during the Premiership.

Members who have completed the online course will count towards the quota for the Premiership, however, must be accredited to count for the State IRB Championships.

Competitors Entered	Minimum Officials Required
0 to 4	—
5 to 11	1 Official
12 to 19	2 Officials
20+	3 Officials

Officials must be currently accredited and a current financial member of the SLSC that you are officiating for during the 2025/26 season.

## 4 Event List

### 4.1 Conducted Events

The following events may be conducted during the 2026 Sharkskin NSW IRB Premiership and State Championships:

DIVISION	TUBE	MASS	TEAMS	RESCUE	RELAY*
Open Male	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Open Female	✓	✓	✓	✓	
U23 Male	✓	✓	✓	✓	
U23 Female	✓	✓	✓	✓	
35+ Male	✓	✓	✓	✓	
35+ Female	✓	✓	✓	✓	
45+ Open	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Rookie		✓		✓	
Open					✓

**Note: Relay does not contribute to Overall Club Premiership Point score. Relay may only be run if time/conditions permit.**

**Note: Unlike the Premiership, the Relay contributes to Overall State IRB Championship Point score. Relay may only be run if time / conditions permit.**

**\* Note: a minimum of 3 starters constitutes a race.**

### 4.2 Competition Priorities & Tiering of Events

The 2026 Sharkskin NSW IRB Premiership & State Championships will be conducted within strict and challenging time frames.

In order to meet these timeframes, in their sole discretion the Championship Committee and the Championship Referees, a decision may be needed to adjust the order, draws and priority of events and priority of the Championships completion.

Adjustments to competition may include:

- Cuts in rounds in excess of the numbers as outlined in the Australian Surf Sports Manual 38th Edition
- Moving to block racing per discipline to ensure results in events

The priority/tiering of categories (from highest to least) is seen as:

- Opens
- U23's
- Masters
- Rookies

The priority tiering of events from (highest to least) is seen as:

- Surf Rescue
- Mass
- Teams
- Tube
- Relay

In the event of adverse conditions or time restraints impacting on the timely completion of the event, some age categories and events may be removed from the schedule as per the above.

## **5 Entry Conditions**

### **5.1 Proficiency and Patrol Hours**

Team Managers are responsible to ensure that competitors comply with the pre-requisites and entry requirements at the completion of close of entries. The club will be notified of any non-compliant competitors, and those competitors may be excluded from the event. To avoid any issues, Team Managers or the person completing the entries must check each competitor's bronze proficiency, IRB Driver or Crew proficiencies and patrol hours prior to the close of entries. Handlers must also be entered in LiveHeats.

**All entrants must meet SLSNSW award, patrol, and proficiency requirements as per the 2025/26 proficiency competition requirements and any other subsequent bulletins issued to be eligible to compete in the Premiership Rounds and the State Championships (minimum 25 patrol hours in the 2025 calendar year (Jan-Dec)**

Late Proficiency and Exemption Requests are required to be endorsed by both Club and Branch being received by SLSNSW. This process is detailed in the [SLSNSW 5.04 Patrol Exemption Process](#) and must be followed. All exemption requests MUST be received no later than **Friday 24<sup>th</sup> April. No requests will be accepted after this date.**

Please refer to process detailed in the [Classification on Pro-Rata Patrol Hours for Competition](#) before entering via LiveHeats

## 5.2 Quick Reference for Determining Minimum Age

Refer to the SSM for the full descriptions, provided here as a quick reference only.

POSITION:	SSM:	DESCRIPTION:
Driver	3.3.2.4, a, (i)	Be minimum age of 17 years of age as at the date of competition
Crewperson	3.3.2.4, b, (i)	Be minimum age of 16 years of age as at the date of competition
Patient	3.3.2.4, c, (i)	Be a minimum age of 15 years of age as at the date of competition and be a currently proficient Bronze Medallion holder and hold a proficient IRB crewpersons award
Handler	3.3.2.4, d, (i)	Be a minimum age of 15 years of age as at the date of competition and be a currently proficient Bronze Medallion holder and hold a proficient IRB crewpersons award

## 5.3 Quick Reference for Determining Age Groups

DIVISION	SSM:	DESCRIPTION:
All	2.3.2	For the purpose of determining an age group, all competitors must have a common birth date calculated as at midnight on 30th September each year, i.e. age at midnight on 30th September determines the competitor's age category (for individual events) in that competition season. (i.e. 25/26 Season)
U23	2.3.10	Members shall be eligible to contest the U23 division after attaining the minimum ages - refer to 3.3.2.4. Members shall be no older than 22 years of age as at the 30 <sup>th</sup> September 2025.
35+	2.3.13	(a) In Masters Team events, Masters may compete in the Open/Senior age group plus only one Masters Team age category in each event discipline conducted at a competition. (b) Masters Teams are permitted to compete only in their own Masters Team/crew age category in which their team/crew qualify by way of ages unless there are insufficient starters. In such cases the team may compete in the next youngest Masters Team age category.
45+	2.3.13	(c) Two Person Events: The team age is determined by the age of the younger competitor (d) 45+ category is classified 45+ Open. Any combination of male or female competitors.

## 6 Entry Limitations

IRB competition may be conducted in different categories of age, grade, and gender. Competitors are permitted to compete in multiple events in line with the rules stated in the Surf Sports Manual.

A driver and/or crew may compete in a particular event once e.g. a driver cannot compete in an event in one team as a driver and compete again in the same event as a driver or crewperson in a separate team. If eligible to compete in multiple grades or age categories, drivers and crewpersons may do so but may only compete in a particular event once e.g. open male rescue is a different

event to the under 23 male rescue. IRB patients are to be considered as gender neutral with respect to their participation in male and female IRB events. Patients may compete in any grade, age or gender category events but may only compete in a particular event once.

### 6.1 Entry Limitations – Premiership Rounds

Due to increasing participation numbers within the SLSNSW IRB Racing Competition, a limitation has been implemented this season, relevant to Premiership Rounds only.

A competitor may compete in a maximum of **eight (8)** events plus the IRB Relay at any one (1) Premiership Round event. This limitation applies to all competitors, including patients.

### 6.2 Entry Limitations – State Championships

Limitations for State Championships will be as outlined in the SSM. A competitor may compete in a maximum of twelve (12) events plus the IRB Relay at the State Championships. This limitation applies to all competitors, including patients.

### 6.3 Competitor Audits

All competitors will be audited after the close of entries to the Premiership Round and the State IRB Championships to ensure the compliance with relevant rules set out in the Surf Sports Manual (SSM), SLSA Policies (see appendix for a list of the most relevant) and this Entry Circular.

Team Managers shall refer specifically to the following sections of the SSM:

- 3.3.2.4 Competitor Pre-Requisites (a-e)
- 3.3.2.5 Entry Limitations (a-g)

All entrants must meet SLSNSW award and proficiency requirements. **It is a Clubs responsibility to check and ensure that all members comply.**

### 6.4 Rookie Category

**Please note: Rookie division is condition dependent.**

- The Rookie Category events are restricted to entry by IRB Drivers in their first season of IRB competition. This change is a result of a review of the IRB Review Committee.
- Rookie IRB Drivers are encouraged to utilise an experienced crewperson; however, a Rookie crewperson is also permissible.
- Rookie events will not contribute to the overall point score at any round/event.
- If you compete in Rookie Division as a Driver, you cannot compete in any other category/events (as a Driver)
- If you compete in the Rookie Division as a Crewperson or Patient, you can compete in any other division in the same events as long as it complies with 3.3.2.5 Entry Limitations (a-g).

### 6.5 45+ Category

- The 45+ Male and 45+ Female will be combined into one (1) category.
- This will be an 'Open' category with no gender limitations. Teams can be comprised of any combination of athletes; i.e.: two (2) Males, two (2) Females or one (1) Male and (1) Female.
- Category identified as 45+ Open.

### 6.6 IRB Relay

The IRB relay shall be conducted as per [Rule 3.3.4.5](#) of the SSM. Additionally, a male crew (driver and crew person) must complete two (2) legs of the event, and a female crew (driver and crew person)

must complete two (2) legs of the event. It is up to each team to decide which leg is completed by which crew.

## 6.7 Composite Teams

Composite teams will be considered in the Rookie division only. Requests for all rounds of the Premiership must be received prior to entry close for Round 1 and must remain consistent across all rounds. These requests will be reviewed by the IRB Premiership Competition Committee prior to each event.

If you would like to apply for a composite team, please email [surfsports@surflifesaving.com.au](mailto:surfsports@surflifesaving.com.au) by Friday 24 April 2026.

## 7 Entry Process

### 7.1 LiveHeats

Club entries to the 2026 Sharkskin IRB Premiership Rounds and Championship must be submitted using **LiveHeats**.

Online entries will close as below

EVENT	VENUE	EVENT DATES	ENTRIES CLOSE
Round 1	Warilla Barrack Point	1 – 3 May	1pm Friday 24 April
Round 2	Terrigal	16 – 17 May	1pm Friday 8 May
Round 3	Queenscliff	30 – 31 May	1pm Friday 22 May
Round 4	Swansea Belmont	20 – 21 June	1pm Friday 12 June
2026 State Championships	Fingal Beach	3 – 5 July	1pm Friday 26 June

If you are having trouble entering via LiveHeats, please contact [surfsports@surflifesaving.com.au](mailto:surfsports@surflifesaving.com.au)

### 7.2 Team Names

Clubs that have more than one team in any event should **give each team a name** rather than a letter or number **for the duration of the Premiership**. Team names must be alpha characters only and **must not** contain numbers or non-alphanumeric characters such as exclamation marks or commas. This affects the reports generated impacts on the calculation of the point score. SLSNSW reserves the right to reject team names deemed offensive.

If a team composition is changed from round to round, it is asked that clubs use the same team names as the previous round. If a new team is created and that team would like to accumulate points from a previously named team, a new team name must be created and entered.

Team names must be suitable for publications and public facing documents. If in doubt, please contact SLSNSW for approval.

**Please watch this [LiveHeats How To Video](#) to customize the Team Names of your crews. Please follow the below structure:**

**‘Full Club Name’ ‘Team Name’ ‘- Event Name’**

**E.G. Kiama Downs Red – Open Male Rescue OR Nobbys (NSW) Nobbys Blue – Open Female Mass**

## 8 Finance

### 8.1 Competitor Entry Fee

The cost of entry per competitor is \$53.50 (incl. GST) for each of the Premiership Rounds and State IRB Championships. Members who are entered as handlers only are not required to pay an entry fee.

#### **LATE ENTRIES WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED**

The only entries accepted after the closing date will be for athletes replacing other athletes that have already been entered at that round.

Entry fees are **not** refundable if members withdraw or do not take part in these events due to illness (COVID included) or injury.

Please see [Refund Policy](#) of this document for more details regarding refunds in the event of cancellation/suspension or change of contingency location.

## 9 Event Cancellation and/or Suspension

### 9.1 Background

SLSNSW always strives to deliver the best competition experiences for our membership, however, safety will remain the first priority, and some changes may be necessary. As has always been the case, weather, surf, or other weather conditions may also present safety concerns resulting in postponement or cancellation of events.

### 9.2 Go / No Go Dates

In order to reduce the impact of cancellations, a “Go” or “No Go” cancellation process will be in place. Approximately 72 hours prior to the commencement of the event, a review of conditions will be made by the Organising Committee, and a decision will be subsequently communicated to Clubs and Teams.

These decisions will be made with the best judgement based on the information available at the time. This may include, but will not be limited to:

- Bureau of Meteorology weather forecasts and warnings
- Advice from medical or safety personnel

The intent is to provide fair and timely communications to avoid undue costs/impact to members travelling to an event where it is subsequently cancelled **before** the scheduled competition start time. It is noted that some members will not be able to access refunds for accommodation and although beyond the control of SLSNSW this process aims to provide members with enough time to make alternative arrangements.

This builds on the standard risk assessment process in place and given that conditions change, there is still the possibility of cancellation or suspension of competition even after “Go” decision. The difference is the earlier notification where possible.

#### **Go Decision**

This refers to the event going ahead as per plan and/or with amendments to the procedure in place. A Go Decision is determined by the organisers being confident as at the specified Go / No Go date &

time, that the event is able to start safely with a likeliness of completion within the scheduled timeframe.

Amendments to the program of events will be made by the respective Referee and Deputy Referee closer to the event and may include changes to schedule of events, including cancellation of some events or change of event location.

### **No Go Decision**

This refers to the event not going ahead as per plan. A No Go Decision is determined by the Organising Committee having a low confidence in the event starting and/or reduced likeliness of completion within the scheduled timeframe, due to weather, surf, and other environmental conditions and other information available at the time of the Organising Committee meeting.

This does not preclude SLSNSW from making a decision that is in the best interest of the event and the safety of event attendees.

### **9.3 Refund Policy**

- a) No refunds for competition withdrawals or did not compete.
- b) No refunds in the event a **Go Decision** is made and subsequently competition is suspended or postponed.
- c) If a **No-Go Decision** is made:
  - o Premiership Rounds
    - i. Entry fees in that specific Round will be carried over to the Back Up Round only (if available).
    - ii. If a backup round is unavailable, 75% of the fees of the affected round(s) will be credited to the Club (invoice will be reversed and fees paid will be credited). 25% will be retained for administration costs.
  - o State Championships
    - i. 75% of the fees will be credited to the Club (invoice will be reversed and fees paid will be credited). 25% will be retained for administration costs.

**Disclaimer: This policy is intended as a guideline for competitors, officials and spectators when making their accommodation and travel plans and/or taking time off work. It is the responsibility of competitors, officials, and spectators to investigate their own personal situation and potential financial consequences and make their own decisions as to whether they wish to attend the Championships.**

## **10 Point Score**

### **10.1 Premiership Series Point Score**

Points will be awarded from 1<sup>st</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> in each event point score:

(1<sup>st</sup> =10 points | 2<sup>nd</sup> = 8 points | 3<sup>rd</sup> = 6 points | 4<sup>th</sup> = 5 points | 5<sup>th</sup> = 4 points | 6<sup>th</sup> = 3 points | 7<sup>th</sup> = 2 points and 8<sup>th</sup> = 1 point).

The Premiership Series Point Score will be decided by the accumulation of the results throughout the season for **both event category and club points score**. The overall point scoring winner for each event in the **Premiership** will be the team who accrues the greatest number of points over the best

four rounds. If a round is cancelled due to adverse conditions, the Premiership will be decided by the accumulation of the best three results and so forth.

The top placed crew from each club in the final will only receive points towards the overall point score. i.e. If Forster A finish 1<sup>st</sup>, Forster B finish 2<sup>nd</sup> and Windang A finish 3<sup>rd</sup>, only Forster A will receive points towards the overall point score, Forster B will not, and Windang will get points for 3<sup>rd</sup>. The next highest placed club will be awarded the points for the consecutive places.

If a team is disqualified or fails to finish an event, then that team fails to gain points for the event and club point score.

Where a dead heat (as defined in Section 2 of the Surf Sports Manual) occurs in the final of an event the teams will share the placing points. The club of the next teams to finish will receive the relative placing points based on the number of teams finishing ahead of them. For example, if two teams finish equal 1st, both teams shall receive 10 points each. The next placing team shall be awarded the 6 points and the bronze medal.

The overall point scoring winner for each event in the **Premiership** will be the team who accrues the greatest number of points in all the carnivals. In the event of a tied overall point score, a 'count back system' will be enforced where the club with the greater number of first or higher placing positions will determine the winner.

## 10.2 State Championships Point Score

Points will be awarded from 1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> in each final:

(1<sup>st</sup> place = 6 points | 2<sup>nd</sup> place = 5 points | 3<sup>rd</sup> place = 4 points | 4<sup>th</sup> place = 3 points | 5<sup>th</sup> place = 2 points | 6<sup>th</sup> place = 1 point).

Where a dead heat (as defined in Section 2 of the [Surf Sports] Manual) occurs in the final of an event the teams will share the placing points. The club of the next teams to finish will receive the relative placing points based on the number of teams finishing ahead of them. For example, if two teams finish equal 1st, both teams shall receive 6 points each. The next placing team shall be awarded the 4 points and the bronze medal for coming 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Unlike the IRB Premiership, if 2 crews from the same club earn points from a final, both teams **will be** eligible for points towards the club point score. If a team is disqualified or fails to finish an event, then that team fails to gain points for the event and club point score. The Club with the highest accumulated total at the completion of all finals will be deemed the Overall Champion Club.

## 11 Approved Gear and Equipment

### 11.1 IRB Surf Rescue Registration

All IRBs taking part in the IRB Premiership and the NSW IRB Championships must be registered with SLSNSW and carry the appropriate 'SR' number. If you have any questions regarding registering of IRBs with SLSNSW please contact Lifesaving on 9471 8000.

Prior to the Premiership Round, all Clubs will be required to submit the SR numbers of the vessels which will be used throughout the Premiership Round and the NSW Championships. Please Complete the [SR Number Survey](#) by **Friday 24 April 2026**

## **12 Scrutineering**

### **12.1 IRB Premiership Round 1**

Scrutineering of motors and props will be conducted from 11am on Friday 1 May 2026, prior to the commencement of Round 1 at Warilla Barrack Point SLSC. Clubs are to present all motors and props that they intent to race with this season, noting 2 motors per hull and 2 props per motor.

Clubs may nominate their preferred time by filling out the [form online](#) by Sunday 14 June 2026, however, high demand timeslots will be allocated to clubs based on distance clubs are required to travel.

No teams are permitted to compete without undergoing Technical Scrutineering. i.e. If a Club or Crew decided not to compete in Round 1, they must arrange for their Motors/Propellers to be scrutineered prior to participating.

Scrutineering will take place at the first round for:

- Hulls – floor in
- Motors
- Props

Helmets and PFDs will be randomly scrutineered on the beach during competition across all four rounds and the Championships.

All gear and equipment must be presented ready for inspection as per the Scrutineering memo. i.e. air boxes off, restrictor plates and props separate. Team Managers MUST complete Scrutineering forms for Hulls/Motors/Propellers with all the required information and submit the forms to the scrutineering registrar prior to entering the competition area.

No post manufacture modifications will be permitted i.e. engine must be as is “out of the box”. Any clubs found to be using equipment in the 2026 Premiership Rounds or 2026 NSW State Championship that does not meet manufacturers or IRB Gear & Equipment Regulations 2026, shall be referred to the Competition Committee. Any equipment that does not meet these regulations may be excluded from the event and clubs; team managers and competitors may face further disciplinary action.

Any club, coach, team manager or competitor found to have deliberately modified gear and equipment will be referred to the Competition Disciplinary Committee for further action.

### **12.2 IRB Premiership Round 1, 2, 3 & 4.**

During competition, (on Saturday & Sunday) random scrutineering will take place in the competition area and some clubs may be selected to present all their equipment to the scrutineering team for a detailed technical examination at the end of the day. Any equipment that is to be used in these rounds or any new clubs competing in the Premiership MUST arrange for full technical scrutineering prior to arrival.

### **12.3 State IRB Championship**

Full technical scrutineering will take place on Thursday 2 and Friday 3 July 2026. Timeslots will be available between 12pm and 4pm on Thursday and 7am and 10am on Friday, all scrutineering must

be completed by 10am. Competition on Friday will commence at the finish of scrutineering, start times are subject to change.

Clubs may nominate their preferred time by filling out the [form online](#) by Sunday 14 June 2026, however, high demand timeslots will be allocated to clubs based on distance clubs are required to travel.

Clubs are to be ready 30 minutes prior to their allocated timeslot with completed paperwork and equipment ready for inspection.

Scrutineering will take place in accordance with last year's timetable for:

- Hulls – floor in
- Motors
- Props

Helmets and PFDs will be randomly scrutineered on the beach during the Championships.

***More detailed information about scrutineering will be provided in subsequent Memos to be released in due course and may supersede any information detailed above.***

#### **12.4 One Hull Policy**

From January 1, 2024, SLSA implemented the one hull policy in IRB sport racing. NSW IRB competition Clubs are reminded of this transition whereby all hulls in competition shall be as per the one hull policy applicable to the IRB competition season of 2026. Clubs using previous models of Class 1 soft hull and former Class 2 rigid hull IRB's, will be allowed to continue to use these hulls for surf sport purposes until 1 January 2025. Approved technical specifications are available online in the Members Area [https://members.sls.com.au/members/document\\_library](https://members.sls.com.au/members/document_library)

### **13 IRB Training Hours**

The IRB Training Hour requirements for competition, from April 2025, has become a Member award, "IRB Training – Competition Eligibility". **This is required to be updated yearly** and is a pre-requisite for entry into IRB competitions. The pre-requisite for this award will be the Silver Medallion IRB Driver OR Proficient IRB Crew.

Clubs will be required to ensure competitors are proficient in this award (including completion & proof of the required 20hrs training) on Surfguard before entering competitors into LiveHeats.

### **14 Safety**

The purpose of this section of the circular is to provide awareness of the various safety components related to IRB competition. To be clear, competitors & team management shall refer to the appropriate sections of the current Surf Sports Manual for full reference.

#### **14.1 Safety Essentials**

WARNING: IRB competition can be inherently dangerous. IRB competition participants acknowledge that they are exposed to certain risks during IRB competition including but not limited to leg, spinal and neck injuries, physical exertion, contact with the IRB, temperature, weather, and water conditions and even drowning. IRB competition participants acknowledge that accidents can and often do happen which may result in IRB competition participants being injured or even killed. All

members through their participation in IRB events agree with, acknowledge, and understand this warning and accept and assume the inherent risks in IRB competition.

#### **14.2 Safety Infringements**

- a) A strong emphasis will be placed on safe driving, crewing and patient safety practices. All competitors must complete each event in a safe and controlled speed and manner or will face immediate disqualification from the event, and/or issue of a safety infringement and consideration for further penalties.
- b) A safety infringement shall be issued to any competitor deemed to have committed an unsafe practice. This will result in immediate disqualification of the competitor and their entire team (i.e. crew and patient/s) from the event in which the infringement occurred. The name of the competitor and the details of the infringement shall be logged through the safety infringement register of the relevant State and National Office.
- c) If a competitor receives more than one safety infringement in any one competition (Round or State Championship) they shall be disqualified from the entire competition.
- d) Should a history of safety infringements be identified by an SLSA office or official in a twelve-month period, the matter shall be referred to the relevant state or national officer/s for consideration of further penalties or disciplinary action.

#### **14.3 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

Note: In all training and competition, it is compulsory for competitors to wear high visibility (conspicuous colour) SLSA approved level 50 Australian Standard (AS4758) lifejackets or Type 2 (AS1499-1996) lifejackets. (Level 50S lifejackets unless listed on the SLSA Approved Gear and Equipment List are not approved.) It is not required for high visibility safety vests to be worn over the top of lifejackets. See also Section 2 of the Surf Sports Manual.

SLSNSW will not be issuing lifejackets (PFDs) – this is the responsibility of the individual/club.

#### **14.4 High Visibility Garments**

Due to the PFD requirement, pink high visibility vests are not required if wearing a PFD as stated above.

Handlers are required to wear a competition cap and shall be required to wear a distinctive high visibility vest if entering the water beyond knee depth. Alternatively, handlers may wear a high visibility (conspicuous colour) SLSA approved level 50 Australian Standard (AS4758) lifejacket or Type 2 (AS1499-1996) lifejackets. (Level 50S lifejackets unless listed on the SLSA Approved Gear and Equipment List are not approved.) It is not required for high visibility safety vests to be worn over the top of lifejackets.

SLSNSW will not be supplying High Visibility Garments – this is the responsibility of the individual/club.

To assist with judging coloured rash shirt sleeves or belts for each lane will be worn with the lifejacket. This will apply to the IRB Driver only. SLSNSW will be providing these garments.

#### **14.5 Helmets**

The wearing of approved helmets is compulsory for patients in all events (other than the Rescue Tube Race). IRB patients are to wear helmets in both training and in competition. See also Section 2 of the Surf Sports Manual.

**SLSNSW will not be issuing helmets – this is the responsibility of the individual/club.**

#### **14.6 Warm Up Areas**

Competitors who enter the competition area and warm up will be deemed to have committed an unsafe practice. A designated 'warm up' area will be communicated closer to each event.

#### **14.7 Club Signal Flags**

The use of signal flags by clubs is permitted, although they MUST NOT be the same colour as any of the competition cans.

#### **14.8 SLS Radios**

The use of SLS radios (connected to current Surf Com bands) by clubs for team communications is NOT permitted.

#### **14.9 Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) and Drones**

SLSNSW prohibits the use of drones or Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) at IRB competition by members and/or public unless approved by SLSNSW, 7 days prior to the event. The operator must supply an operations manual (including risk management plan), provide public liability insurance and comply with all Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) requirements.

#### **14.10 Injuries & Return to Surf Duties**

Members who receive treatment from First Aid are to ensure their details are recorded in an incident report. Workers Compensation may be payable under the Workers Compensation Act. An iCare form must be completed within 48 hours of injury to make a claim.

More information can be found on the workers compensation page here:

<https://www.surflifesaving.com.au/resources/workers-compensation>

Members who seek further medical treatment/advice will be required to provide a medical clearance letter from a health professional to return to duties.

By participating in this event, competitors consent to authorised first aid, medical and paramedic personnel collecting, recording, using and disclosing relevant patient treatment information where reasonably necessary to provide care, complete treatment records, coordinate emergency response, support clinical handover, and meet incident reporting or legal requirements.

This information will be treated confidentially and shared only with authorised event, medical, emergency, insurance or organisational personnel, including SLSNSW Surf Sports Staff and Senior Officials on a need-to-know basis.

## **15 Prizes**

SLSNSW is again providing prizes throughout the 2026 IRB Competition Season, giving clubs an incentive and reward to all competing in the 2026 IRB season with Clubs in the running to win fuel vouchers up to the value of \$150 and Sharkskin vouchers up to the value of \$500. The overall club point score winners for the Premiership or the State Championships will receive 1x IRB Motor with the support of Lakeside Marine. See below for further details.

### 15.1 Sharkskin Prizes

Sharkskin and SLSNSW are proud to announce that for the 2026 NSW Sharkskin IRB Premiership, Sharkskin will provide \$6,500.00 worth of prizes. The overall winners in each category/division will receive Sharkskin store credit to the value of \$200, with the winners of the relay receiving \$500!

The following prizes will be awarded:

DIVISION	RESCUE TUBE	MASS RESCUE	TEAMS	RESCUE	RELAY
Open Male	\$200	\$200	\$200	\$200	
Open Female	\$200	\$200	\$200	\$200	
U23 Male	\$200	\$200	\$200	\$200	
U23 Female	\$200	\$200	\$200	\$200	
O35 Male	\$200	\$200	\$200	\$200	
O35 Female	\$200	\$200	\$200	\$200	
O45 Open	\$200	\$200	\$200	\$200	
Rookie		\$200		\$200	
Open					\$500

### 15.2 Premiership Prizes

Overall Premiership point score medals will be presented at the completion of Round 4 for each event. In addition, the overall champion club at the conclusion of the Premiership will receive a new IRB Motor that they will be able to pick up from the closest Authorised Tohatsu Dealer.

The following prizes will be awarded:

	1st	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3rd
Round 1	\$150 Fuel Voucher	\$100 Fuel Voucher	\$50 Fuel Voucher
Round 2	\$150 Fuel Voucher	\$100 Fuel Voucher	\$50 Fuel Voucher
Round 3	\$150 Fuel Voucher	\$100 Fuel Voucher	\$50 Fuel Voucher
Round 4	\$150 Fuel Voucher	\$100 Fuel Voucher	\$50 Fuel Voucher
Overall Champion Club	IRB Motor*		

### 15.3 State IRB Championship Prizes

Championship Medals will be awarded at the State Championships for each event at the conclusion of competition.

Championship Trophies will be awarded to the overall point score winner for the following categories:

- U23 Championship
- Open Championship
- Masters Championship
- Overall Champion Club

In addition, the overall Champion Club at the conclusion of the State Championships will receive a new IRB Motor.

	1st	2nd	3rd	Random Draw
<b>State IRB Championships</b>	IRB Motor* OR \$200 Voucher*	\$150 Fuel Voucher	\$100 Fuel Voucher	\$50 Fuel Voucher

\*(**Note:** The same club cannot win both the Premiership Motor and State Championships Motor. If the State Champion club is also the Premiership Club, then a \$200 Sharkskin voucher will be the prize, and the IRB Motor will be awarded to the second placed Club at the State IRB Championships).

## 16 Sharkskin Merchandise

SHARKSKIN is very proud to support Surf Life Saving and Surf Life Saving Members and volunteers Australia wide.

Online purchases for official merchandise products are strongly recommended and are available at [sharkskin.com](http://sharkskin.com). Whilst Official Merchandise items will also be available to purchase at each event from the SHARKSKIN merchandise tent, stock at events will be limited. If not available at a particular event, we can arrange collection at the subsequent IRB round two weeks later.

Official Merchandise for this event is in production and will be available for shipping just prior to round one. Collection can also be arranged at each weekend event.

2026 Sharkskin Official Merchandise will be available shortly.

[Sharkskin SLS Product Range](#)

[Sharkskin SLS Members Only](#)

## 17 SLSA Rules and Policies Index

Reference is made to the following circulars and bulletins issued by SLSA and SLNSW. This is not an exhaustive list and SLSA circulars and updates are available on the Members Portal:

[https://members.sls.com.au/members/document\\_library](https://members.sls.com.au/members/document_library)

It will be up to the individual to review the SLSA Member's Portal for any updates that may affect IRB competition.

[Surf Sports Manual 38<sup>th</sup> Edition](#)

[IRB Competition Gear and Equipment Regulations 2026](#)

[Bulletin 06.23-24 – Updates to lifejacket branding guidelines](#)

- [Fuel Safety and Compliance Record Check](#)
- [Hull Compliance Check Record](#)
- [Outboard Motor and Propeller Guard and Compliance Check Record](#)
- [Propeller Safety and Compliance Check Record](#)

## **18 Protests**

All protests shall be lodged with the appropriate Liaison Officer in the Area in accordance with the procedures set down in the current edition of the SLSA Surf Sports Manual and any subsequent bulletins and shall identify the specific sections/clauses in the Competition Manual and or event rules upon which the protest is based.

Protest Forms are available from the Liaison Officer. An “Appeals Fee” of \$150.00 must accompany all documentation when the process is officially submitted to the Appeals Committee for adjudication.