Surf Life Saving Australia – BSEF Circular

Title:	Beach Safety Equipment Fund (BSEF) 2026/27
Document ID:	Circular 14/26-27 - Beach Safety Equipment Fund
Audience:	Clubs and State/Territory Centres
From:	Coastal Safety
Date:	Wednesday 19 August 2026
Subject:	Beach Safety Equipment Fund - 2026/27
Summary:	Notification to Clubs of Beach Safety Equipment Fund information and processes for 2026/27, outlining key dates for eligibility period, invoicing and acquitting of funding. Please ensure you familiarise yourself with updates from previous years and important information updates listed below.

Background

Surf Life Saving's mission is to Turn the Tide on coastal drownings. Surf Life Saving exists to save lives, create great Australians and build better communities. To support this, the Australian Government provides funding through the **Beach Safety Equipment Fund (BSEF)**, aimed at reducing water-related injuries and deaths by equipping Surf Life Saving Clubs (**SLSC**) with vital front-line equipment and Patrol uniforms to support and enhance frontline Lifesaving operations.

Outcomes of the program are closely aligned to the priority areas outlined in the Australian Water Safety Strategy.

Since 2013, the BSEF has helped fund the purchase and upkeep of vital patrol equipment. For the 2026–27 season, SLSA has secured funding that will provide $5,500 GST to registered surf lifesaving clubs and $5,000 to those not registered for GST.

SLSCs are encouraged to publicly acknowledge the Australian Government's support through events, media coverage, and sharing this with SLSA via bsef@slsa.asn.au

2026/27 Updates & Important Information

- *Servicing and repairs of equipment (whether state approved or not) are NO longer eligible to be acquitted under the BSEF program.*
- *Postage, freight, shipping, etc is not eligible to be claimed through this program. Please ensure all postage, freight, shipping, etc is removed from acquittals before submission.*
- *Partial acquittals will not be accepted, please refrain from submission until spend/acquittal is complete.*
- *Due to Government reporting guidelines and restrictions, no extensions can be granted. Please reach out to the Coastal Safety team prior to closing dates should you require assistance.*
- *Patrol tents are not eligible to be acquitted through this funding.*
- *All purchases must be paid for within the limits of the funding period. Orders placed are insufficient. Proof of payment is required. Unpaid invoices and/or quotes will NOT be accepted.*

Beach Safety Equipment Fund Process 2026/27

This funding **can only be used** to purchase approved first aid and frontline operational lifesaving equipment which must be listed in the SLSA Gear & Equipment List.
Please note: not all items located on the Gear & Equipment List are eligible under this particular program.

The funding can further be used to purchase approved Lifesaving Patrol uniform items from the SLS member store. Acquittals will not be accepted for Patrol Uniform items that are not approved for patrolling purposes. Water Safety Rash Vests/Caps and SLSA backpacks CANNOT be acquitted.

To be eligible for the 2026/27 BSEF, clubs must have already completed the acquittal process for the 2025/26 period and unspent funds returned to SLSA.

SLSCs that have not finalised their 2025/26 BSEF funding will not be eligible.

Key Dates Timeline

BSEF 2026/27 Process	Key dates
SLSCs must invoice SLSA via: BSEF Invoice Form.	**Invoice due date:** 30 September 2026
Payment will be made via electronic transfer into the SLSC's designated bank account outlined in invoice.	**Funding Distributed:** September to November 2026
Gear, Equipment and Patrol Uniforms purchased within the specified periods are eligible for acquittal under the BSEF. Proof of payment/receipt **must** be provided for all purchases.	**Purchasing Period:** 1 July 2026 to 31 March 2027
SLSCs must complete Acquittal by submitting payment receipts via the BSEF Acquittal Form.	**Due Date:** 1 May 2027

SLSA Invoice

The BSEF Invoice from clubs must include the SLSC's bank details. If the bank details have changed, a deposit slip (or equivalent) for the new account must be included with the SLSC invoice form. GST registered SLSCs should invoice for $5,500, while non-GST registered clubs should invoice for $5,000 with no GST applied.

Please ensure your invoice is made out to:

2026/27 Beach Safety Equipment Fund (BSEF)

Surf Life Saving Australia
Level 1, 1 Notts Avenue
Bondi Beach NSW 2026
ABN: 67 449 738 159

Any invoices incorrectly addressed will not be accepted.

Gear and Equipment

All gear and equipment purchased must adhere to SLSA 's policies regarding endorsed providers and/or be included in the SLSA Gear & Equipment List.

Any First Aid or Lifesaving equipment that is not listed in the current SLSA Gear and Equipment List must be approved in writing by the SLSA Coastal Safety Team prior to purchase.

Terms and Conditions

In consideration of receiving the grant, SLSCs must adhere to the terms set out below:

1. SLSCs must be compliant and affiliated with their respective State/Territory Surf Life Saving entity (**State Centre**). Please refer to your SLSC's State Centre for detailed compliance requirements necessary for affiliation. If the State Centre advises Surf Life Saving Australia (**SLSA**) that a SLSC is non-compliant, all BSEF payments will be withheld until the Club is compliant and affiliated with the State/Territory Surf Life Saving Association.

   ***Note* SLSCs** who have not acquitted previous funding will not be eligible until such time as this has been completed.*

2. SLSCs must invoice SLSA via the BSEF Club Invoice Form 2026/27 by **30 September 2026**. GST registered SLSCs should invoice for $5,500. SLSCs that are not GST registered will invoice $5,000 without applying GST.
3. First aid and lifesaving equipment purchased must comply with SLSA policies on endorsed providers and/or appear in the current SLSA Gear and Equipment List. Items outside this list must be approved in writing by SLSA before purchase.
4. Tax receipts for purchases must be submitted via the BSEF Acquittal Form 2026/27 by **1 May 2027**. Failure to provide payment receipts shall result in all allocated funding being repaid to SLSA for redistribution. SLSCs will also be ineligible for ongoing funding for the remainder of the program.
5. SLSA reserves its rights to recover funding that has not been acquitted according to the Terms and Conditions of the BSEF, as required by the Government.
6. All gear and equipment purchased by the SLSC must be updated in SurfGuard selecting the 'BSEF' checkbox.
7. Equipment purchased through the BSEF must be retained by the SLSC for a minimum of 3 years (excluding consumable products).
8. Should the actual total cost of purchasing equipment be more than the agreed funding costs, SLSA will not be responsible nor obliged to pay any monies additional to the notified grant amount.
9. Purchases may be spread over consecutive years, providing each payment is made within aligned purchasing periods. Ie: Purchase an IRB with deposit paid in the 26/27 purchasing period, with final payment made in the 27/28 purchasing period.
10. The BSEF monies must not be used for any purpose other than that for which the grant is approved.
11. SLSCs must promote the grant through their SLSC communication channels and participate in promotional media opportunities that could be generated through the program. Copies of media, government engagement with local MPs and other promotions are to be provided to SLSA.

Further Information

For more details, contact the Coastal Safety Team at bsef@slsa.asn.au.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the BSEF Acquittal?

The acquittals form part of the funding agreement requirements with the Australian Government. They provide a measure of assurance that the funds have been used for their intended purpose and in accordance with the BSEF Terms and Conditions listed in this circular.

Where can I access the BSEF Acquittal Form?

Clubs can access the Acquittal via this link.

When is the acquittal due?

Clubs must submit the Acquittal Form with tax receipts (invoices/quotes will NOT be accepted) by **1 May 2027** to comply with the BSEF reporting obligations and to remain eligible to receive future funding. Surf Life Saving Clubs can purchase vital front-line equipment and Patrol Uniforms from **1 July 2026 – 31 March 2027** for $5,500 if GST registered or $5,000 if non-GST registered.

Note: Failure to submit the acquittal by the due date will result in SLSA requesting the return of the full funding amount. It may also result in future funding from the BSEF being withheld.

Who can complete the acquittal?

Delegated club administrators are to complete the BSEF Acquittal process. The administrator must ensure that the club's acquittal form adheres to the BSEF Terms and Conditions listed in this circular. If required, an alternate club officer can review the acquittal information prior to submitting the form.

Can funding be accumulated by the club for the next Financial Year?

No. Funding cannot be accumulated and must be spent in accordance with the BSEF Terms and Conditions outlined in this circular.

What if the total funding amount is not spent?

If the total funding amount is not used in accordance with the funding agreement, SLSA will provide details on the process to return unspent funds.

Note: Do not return any funds until the club receives advice from SLSA.

Can BSEF be spent in conjunction with other funding?

Yes, an item can be part funded by BSEF in conjunction with other funding or grants (e.g. $20,000 for Side-by-Side vehicle acquitted using BSEF and State [other] funding).

Note: It is not permissible to receive payment from multiple funding grants for the same item or expense. For instance, if rescue boards cost $5,000, a club is not allowed to receive $5,000 from BSEF and another $5,000 from state funding. This practice, known as double-dipping, is prohibited. It is important to distinguish that BSEF funding is separate and distinct from any State/Territory funding or grants.

Is the BSEF inclusive of GST?

No, GST is not included in the funding amount. GST registered clubs should invoice for $5,500. Clubs that are not GST registered should invoice for $5,000 without GST applying.

What items *cannot* be purchased or acquitted using BSEF?

Items that are NOT ELIGIBLE to be purchased from the Beach Safety Equipment Fund.
(List is indicative only, not a full exclusive list. If you are unsure, please contact the Coastal Safety team at bsef@slsa.asn.au prior to purchase).

- Freight, Postage, Shipping, Handling
- Racing Boards (as opposed to approved rescue boards)
- Water Safety & Nipper Uniforms (i.e.: rash vests and noddy caps)
- Second-hand equipment/uniforms
- Surf Sports Uniforms and apparel
- Club Uniforms and apparel
- Non-approved Patrol Uniforms
- Infrastructure/Club Maintenance Equipment (i.e.: lawn mower, fridge, esky, repairs)
- Patrol Tents
- Logbooks
- Swim Can/Buoys
- Repairs and Servicing of equipment and assets
- Flares/EPIRBS
- Laptops/Phones
- Shark Bite Kits
- Metronome
- Mini Anne Manikin
- Bunting/cones
- Range finders
- Fuel/Oil

The items below are eligible to be purchased subject to approval by relevant State Lifesaving Services (Written approval from State body is to be provided to SLSA with your acquittal).

- Rescue Watercraft (RWC)
- Drones (UAV) and accessories

If the equipment isn't listed on the SLSA Gear and Equipment List, can we still purchase it?

Contact SLSA via email (bsef@slsa.asn.au) prior to purchasing the equipment so it can be assessed.