



SURF LIFE SAVING
NEW ZEALAND

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Annual Report 2009



SLSNZ ANNUAL REPORT 2009



Surf Life Saving New Zealand is the National Association representing the nine Districts and seventy two Surf Life Saving Clubs in New Zealand. Over 15,000 people are members of our organisation.

Our purpose is to prevent drowning and injury in New Zealand. We do this through leadership, membership development and the recognition of being an essential service to the New Zealand community. Prevention is a key part of what we do; we work with the public to prevent people getting in trouble, first. That's why last summer our lifeguards performed over 105,388 preventative actions.





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Surf Life Saving – a member focused organisation united by a common purpose – drowning and injury prevention. Our people belong to 72 Clubs throughout New Zealand and each Club is unique and has its own culture, creating a lifetime bond between the Member, Club and Surf Life Saving.

IN IT FOR LIFE

Patrons' Message



His Excellency the Honorable Sir Anand Satyanand GNZM, QSO
Governor-General of New Zealand
and Her Excellency Lady Susan Satyanand



Her Excellency Lady Susan Satyanand
PATRON

His Excellency the Honorable Sir Anand Satyanand GNZM, QSO
Governor General of New Zealand
PATRON

Greetings, Kia Ora, Kia Orana, Fakalofa Lahi Atu, Taloha Ni.



The 2009 Annual Report recognises the significant progress being made by Surf Life Saving New Zealand to prevent injury and drowning on our nation's beaches. The report reveals that volunteer lifeguards patrolled New Zealand's beaches for more than 194,846 hours, saving 1,300 lives as well as offering first aid 2,010 times and completing 285 searches.

As a nation with more than 18,000km of coastline where most people live within an hour's drive of the sea, the foreshore holds a special place in the lives of all New Zealanders. While the Annual Report figures are impressive, they only tell part of the story of the contribution of surf lifesavers' and Surf Life Saving New Zealand.

They do not capture, for example, the enjoyment that New Zealanders and overseas visitors experience in being able to enjoy our beaches confident that that trained and



experienced lifeguards are on patrol. More poignantly, the figures do not capture the families' grief of tragically losing someone to the waves.

In 2010, the New Zealand surf lifesaving movement will mark its centenary. It will be an opportunity to celebrate the essential work of New Zealand's surf lifesavers and their passion for others and commitment to human life. It is a record of volunteering of the highest calibre.

As Patrons of Surf Life Saving New Zealand, we wish to thank everyone involved in New Zealand's surf life saving movement for their outstanding contribution and commitment. We also send our best regards for next year's centenary celebrations.

No reira, tena koutou, tena koutou, kia ora, kia kaha, tena koutou katoa.



President's Message

The past season will be remembered for a range of events. The most talked about will be the Organisation Review (Project Groundswell) and more will be discussed after this report goes to print.

On the beaches our volunteer lifeguards have excelled in their vigilance and service duties in protecting the public during the patrolling season giving us the satisfaction of 'no lives lost between the patrol flags.'

Although the recorded number of rescues during the season are lower than the previous year, it does show the preventative actions taken could be the reason for this, noting also that the hours patrolled are considerably up on the 2008-2009 season.

The more recent introduction of event lifeguarding has also added another dimension to the capabilities of the Surf Life Saving movement and having seen it in action, it does give lifeguards additional skills.

My personal highlights for the year come from the many invitations from districts and clubs to attend their recognition and award presentations. One memorable highlight was an invitation from the Otaki Surf Life Saving Club to open their new clubhouse extensions. This was truly a great demonstration of clubbies and families who get together and make a dream come true.

There were many more 50 year badges presented this year which means many of the older lifeguards are still interested in the movement and in some cases still participating.

I must make mention of our 21 Club which has come under the stewardship of Syd Jago. The Club continues to ensure that the members get the opportunity to meet up once a year at the NZ Championships to renew friendships and discuss past happenings.

Again I take the opportunity to thank our family of sponsors and acknowledge their past and present assistance in all areas of lifesaving equipment and uniforms which can be seen on all beaches during the summer season.

In conclusion I would like to congratulate, in advance, all the award winners and to thank you all for your friendship and assistance during my term as your President. To Geoff Barry and our Board of Directors a special thanks for putting up with me; I have enjoyed meeting and being a member of the team. To all SLSNZ in Wellington, Tauranga and Auckland; thanks in many ways and keep up the good work.

Jim Campbell
President



Governance Report

Graeme Cullen
Chairman

The members of our organisation continued to honour their commitment to their communities over the last year. The hours volunteered is counted in the hundreds of thousands and the preventative actions, rescues, first aid cases and searches undertaken by members continue to be significant and of tremendous value to New Zealand. In order to support this level of service our membership has increased and there were 870 Surf Lifeguard Awards and 300 new IRB Driver and Crewman Awards earned during the season.

The details of these achievements are reported separately in this document. The 2008/2009 season also saw our representative team securing second place in the International Lifesaving Federation Rescue 2008 event, our world championships, which is contested in both pool and ocean events.

These achievements are the items that it is possible to count, but it still understates the amount of time and energy necessary to maintain the activities of surf lifeguards. Each Surf Lifeguard Award is supported by hours of tutorial effort and physical training. Each patrol hour is conducted by a volunteer who already earned their Surf Lifeguard Award, paid to belong

to their club, trained to ensure they can achieve the physical fitness standard that is tested each year, undertaken an annual test to ensure they can apply the key skills of the Lifeguard. In each Club these volunteers have also ensured that there are enough people, tools and resources to ensure that the safety of the people visiting their beach will be protected.

Over the last 18 months we have undertaken an organisation review (Project Groundswell). This project has included; surveying our members and other stakeholders, examining other organisations, and talking to people. We have looked at structure and service delivery (to members and the public). From this research we distilled a set of issues that need to be addressed. We tested these conclusions externally. A group of experienced business-people who are also Lifeguards was established to consider the issues that need to be addressed and to frame a set of recommendations that would be presented to the membership. We conducted a Club Conference in early May where the Board of SLSNZ presented to the membership a proposal that contained substantial change.

Clubs and Districts have been discussing the proposal presented by the Board and the Board has subsequently met with each District (in some cases more than once) and then will all the District Chairs. Initial feedback indicated that the proposal has significant support within the organisation. This indication of support has led the Board to prepare a revised Constitution that is currently out for consultation.



The engagement with members and consultation that has been undertaken in relation to Project Groundswell has been unprecedented and large sections of the membership have taken the opportunity to have a say. The proposal is dynamic and has been adjusted to accommodate feedback from members.

The feedback on the draft has identified a number of elements that need further revision and a final draft will be circulated for approval by the membership at the SLSNZ Annual General Meeting in September.

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This has been a remarkable period to have been involved in the governance of the organisation and the Board is confident these changes will create a solid platform for the organisation to move into its second century of community service. I would like to thank Heather, Brian, David, Tony and Grant for the commitment they have shown and guidance they have provided over what has been a particularly intense time in the governance of SLSNZ. Over the past year the Board has also enjoyed the additional support of Peter Fitzsimmons, SLSNZ Life Member and professional Director, as an expert, independent of the Board, who has helped with the Project Groundswell consultation and development.

A couple of years ago the Board adopted a Drowning Prevention Strategy that was intended to frame the practical activities undertaken by our members. The development

of the Coastal Public Safety Assessment Tool, working in cooperation with SLS Australia and RNLI, is the next step in matching risks with drowning prevention responses. This is 'site specific' and identifies the risk mitigation interventions appropriate to each location. Around 100 beaches have been assessed with reports being written over the winter. It is our intention to expand the capability of this assessment tool so that it can be applied to other aquatic environments such as 'blue water', lakes and rivers. This is an innovative piece of work that will provide many benefits into the future.

This has been a period of significant activity within the organisation. Alongside the practical matters described above, we have continued to participate actively in the ACC-led Drowning Prevention Council, we have further developed our close working relationship with the New Zealand Coastguard Federation and we have continued to build on our access to and influence over the conduct of drowning prevention activity at an international level.

The Board has been very well served by Chief Executive Geoff Barry and his team and particular mention should be made of the work Paul Veric has done in relation to Project Groundswell. This professional team has enhanced the voluntary contributions of members and has allowed us to improve the experience of members and the public alike. Thank you.

The year that has been interesting and rewarding, but the real test is in what is going to happen next. This is particularly true in the challenging economic environment that we are facing currently.

In August the respective Boards of SLS Australia and New Zealand will meet in Sydney to renew relationships and look how activities of mutual interest can be enhanced and developed. While we compete with vigour in the sporting context, there is much to be gained by working co-operatively in the business of drowning prevention.

2009/2010 will be the period for implementing the changes identified during the Project Groundswell activity. This will involve significant organisational and staffing alterations and it will be essential to move through this period without any loss of service provision or satisfaction for members.

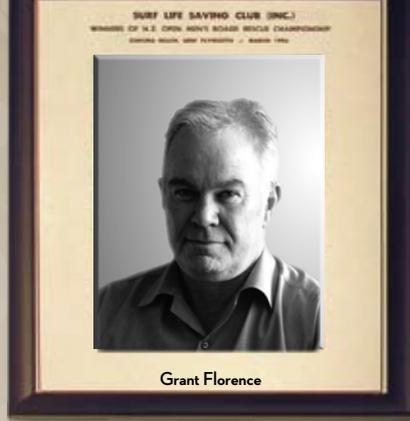
Finally, we will be moving into the final season of the first 100 years of surf lifesaving activity in New Zealand. The final planning of centenary activities for 2010/2011 will be undertaken and we expect the sense of excitement in relation to the centenary to build throughout the year.

Graeme Cullen
Chairman

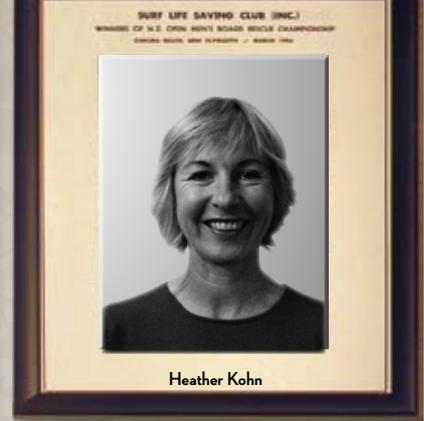
99 years ago

Surf Lifeguards began patrolling beaches in response to the growing popularity of our coastline and much of what we do appears little different today. Clubs and members are still our greatest assets. However, the environment continues to change and so too does the need for us to respond, so Clubs and members continue to remain our greatest assets.

The Board



Grant Florence



Heather Kohn

The past 12 months has seen the pace of change we are experiencing accelerate to a new level. This has been highlighted by the rapid deterioration of the global economic situation during the past year that we have all observed and experienced. The progress of our own Project Groundswell has also highlighted change for our surf lifesaving family and our stakeholder community.

Although this change has been happening all around us we cannot ever forget our purpose of surf lifesaving through the country in "Preventing drowning and injury in New Zealand"

I am delighted that we have completed another year of successful activities in supporting our purpose and I congratulate all the volunteers and professional staff involved. A job very well done by all.

Surf Lifesaving in New Zealand continues to grow and our balance sheet remains sound. The value of our Brand remains highly regarded as illustrated by the ongoing interest across the country of people and companies willing to provide support.

There has been an enormous amount of work undertaken with Project Groundswell. From Club feedback groups, to Club Chairman's forums, to District Chairman's sessions and the Board and its PGS sub committee the commitment by all has been astounding. Although there is still much work ahead, I am sure the outcome of all this effort will provide an excellent platform for Surf Lifesaving in NZ to continue in the years ahead.

I remain committed to my role on the Board, thank you for your support and look forward to the year ahead.

As a long serving Director of SLSNZ I had thought that 2009 would be my last year of service but that was before I volunteered to be on the Board's Sub-committee for Project Groundswell.

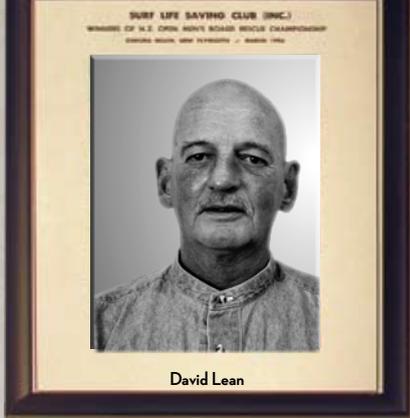
What an experience that has been, as the celebration of a century of Surf Life Saving in NZ rapidly approaches. Reflection on where we have come from, what is good and great about our organisation, what isn't so good, looking forward to where we want to be as a voluntary community service and a national sporting organisation, and the best way to achieve our vision, has been challenging and rewarding. It has been a privilege, through the many meetings around the country and the work with the Solutions Group, to confirm in my own mind the calibre of people within our movement. The next generation seems prepared to involve themselves in determining their futures and are not apathetic regarding this.

The 2009 Annual General Meeting, whatever the outcome, will be hugely important in determining the success of future lifeguards in New Zealand.

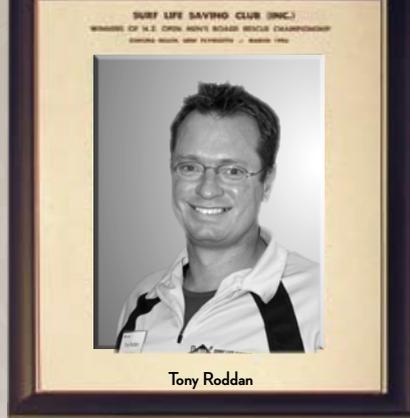
I am a firm believer in finishing something you start and therefore, anticipating that the electorate will be supportive of the Boards recommended changes, am putting myself forward again for a final but shortened term. 2010 will be an important transition time and I would like to be part of that.

Change brings uncertainty and sadness as we say goodbye to things that may have been, it can be challenging and exciting, we have a great deal to be positive about as we move forward to the future.

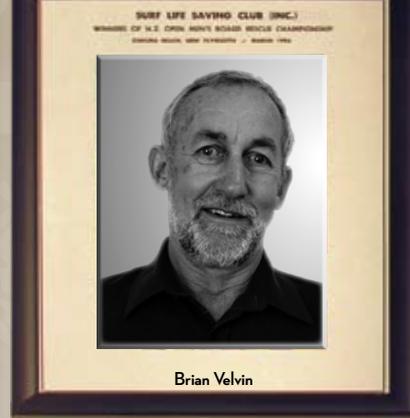
Congratulations all in SLSNZ's family on another landmark year, I look forward to the future and the challenges contained within it.



David Lean



Tony Roddan



Brian Velvin

The 2008/2009 year has been most challenging for every member of Surf Life Saving in New Zealand. Having allocated resources in 2007 to undertake a comprehensive review and assessment of how we currently and collectively “do business” throughout New Zealand – your Board expected nothing less..

On reflection; had we not made that bold, strategic step then, surf life saving as we have known it for nearly one hundred years – would now be starting to face the many challenges, threats and possible insolvency issues that are currently “table talk” for many other national sports and community based, service organisations.

Collectively; Surf Life Saving and its members have demonstrated the tenacity to consider new options, when new options were required - even when those decisions have been very difficult and sometimes threatening to the way we have always operated in the past..

We are not “out of the woods” yet and the months ahead will be the real test. But I suggest that Members collective input into Project Groundswell has highlighted what is possible, when you choose to be the author of your own destiny – rather than leaving it to chance or losing it by default. That pathway will require collective responsibility and can be achieved, provided we all retain Surf Life Saving as our primary focus and reason for being and seize significant opportunities that are not too far away. I for one don't intend to be distracted.

I'm proud to work for, and with Lifeguards throughout New Zealand who want to see Surf Life Saving in New Zealand send a consistent, standard and positive message to all New Zealanders and the International Stage. We can achieve that together if we work together and lead by example.

That's my commitment to the future of Surf Life Saving in New Zealand, as a member of your Board.

2008-2009 term will go down in history as a period of significance where great courage was demonstrated by the membership. It takes considerable courage for people in an organisation to introspectively ask if the organisation can operate in a more efficient and sustainable manner. I applaud the courage of everyone who has undertaken this process with an open mind and without agenda.

The very exercise of self evaluation creates an opportunity to consider operational and organisational performance regardless of the outcome and so whatever the results of Project Groundswell the organisation will be better off having been through the process.

Directors, Management and Membership all share a significant responsibility to ensure the sustainability of Surf Life Saving New Zealand and I am clear of my responsibility in that regard. I am absolutely and totally satisfied that the process has been thorough, transparent and inclusive and I acknowledge the considerable efforts by the leaders and the wider team to give effect to this issue.

The organisation is heading towards its 100 year anniversary with the next 100 years in mind and while there will be challenges I remain confident that the capability and commitment of the membership will ensure that the organisation is well placed to continue to serve our communities in time to come.

It has been a great pleasure for me to remain involved with Surf Life Saving New Zealand and I feel greatly privileged to work with the other Directors, the Chairman and the CEO and his team and I remain committed to seek outcomes that will benefit the organisation and the membership.

The period ahead is an exciting time with the expectation of change mixed with a sense of celebration and I look forward to working to effect the most positive outcome for the organisation and I thank you for your support and commitment.

The past 12 months as a Board Member have again proved to be both challenging and exciting. Seeing the progress of Project Groundswell and having the opportunity to mix and engage with the membership in the various forums has been very rewarding.

The Board itself has continued to provide a stimulating experience with members diverse experiences and interests contributing to thorough and rigorous debate. This being conducted at all times with respect for other members views and with participation being encouraged.

The support and depth of information provided by Geoff and his staff in support of the Board can not be understated. It makes for informed decisions based on researched data.

It has been my pleasure to serve on a Board that while looking and planning for the future, has always been mindful of our past history and progressed with only the best interest of Surf Lifesaving at heart.

Thank you all for your friendship, camaraderie and assistance and I hope I have in some small way contributed to our great organisation.