



SURF LIFE SAVING
NEW ZEALAND



annual report
2007

Surf Life Saving New Zealand is an organisation of people, ordinary people who do extraordinary things. And while they may be ordinary people with ordinary jobs, last summer over 1400 people owed their lives to them.

Surf Life Saving New Zealand is the National Association representing the nine Districts and seventy one Surf Life Saving Clubs in New Zealand. Nearly 13,000 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 218,332 safety interventions.



**LIVING IN A COUNTRY
ENCIRCLED BY THE SEA, MOST
NEW ZEALANDERS ASSOCIATE
THE BEACH WITH RECREATION
AND HAPPY TIMES. BUT
BEACHES CAN ALSO BE
TREACHEROUS PLACES.**



By the start of the 20th century drowning had become so common it was referred to as 'The New Zealand Death'. Combined with the growing popularity of surf bathing this led to the birth of the surf lifesaving movement in New Zealand.

In the 2010 / 2011 season surf lifesaving will celebrate 100 years of service to communities throughout New Zealand. Today we have 13,000 members who belong to the 71 Surf Life Saving Clubs around New Zealand.

Surf Life Saving is primarily an essential service. Each year we provide over 150,000 hours of volunteer patrol hours saving, on average, 1,800 lives per year. Many New Zealanders also benefit from our public education programs which are a proactive approach to making their time at the beach a safer and a more enjoyable experience.

Surf Life Saving is also a sport in which members as young as 7yrs through to Masters can enjoy the opportunities to participate and compete at a wide variety of competitions and events.

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Every year more than 2.3 million people go to the beach at least once during the summer. Unfortunately on average 127 people drown each year in New Zealand.

It is likely that our drowning and water-related injury rate would be much higher without the efforts of Surf Life Saving New Zealand's volunteer and paid personnel.

In the 2006 – 2007 season, volunteer Surf Lifeguards across the country performed more than 1,400 rescues and 218,332 safety interventions. Surf Lifeguards also undertook 1,734 first aid treatments and, in more than 40% of these, the injuries were from beach activities other than swimming.

Our Labour-led government has recognised that the current drowning and water-related injury toll is unacceptable. The first tangible commitment to reducing the toll is the Drowning Prevention Strategy: Towards a Water-Safe New Zealand 2005 – 2015, which was launched in August 2005.

Alongside other key partners, Surf Life Saving New Zealand has played a significant role in the development of the Drowning Prevention Strategy. The SLSNZ Board, its Chief Executive, many paid staff and volunteer members have involved themselves and their communities, ensuring they have had their say in making the Strategy as relevant as possible to the work and purpose of SLSNZ. I commend them for this.

The increased use of our coastline for recreational pursuits is recognised in the Drowning Prevention Strategy, and Surf Life Saving New Zealand's own planning is well advanced to adapt and respond to the changes in the environment, reflecting the health of Surf Life Saving as a volunteer organisation.

It is a tribute to Surf Life Saving that it can respond to the ever increasing demand placed on it by our communities and work with our government and other groups to support the goals of the Strategy.



Ruth Dyson
Minister for ACC

a water-safe New Zealand,
free from drowning.

It's the New Zealand way of life, heading to the beach in the hot summer months and enjoying New Zealand's beautiful coastline.

While many of us are focused on having fun at the beach, we often forget that a smaller number of people on the beach are focused on keeping us safe.

Along with the sand and the surf are the people who saved the lives of more than 1,400 of us in the past year – because we underestimated the power of the sea. As we look at the season which has passed, 1,430 people, their families and their friends, have the lifeguards of Surf Life Saving New Zealand to thank for being alive.

The statistics from surf lifesaving activities on our beaches are impressive; 1,430 lives saved, 218,332 safety interventions, 1,734 first aids and a massive 162,845 hours of voluntary time given by the lifeguards.

These hours are a reflection on the health of the Surf Life Saving movement and its ability to respond to the ever-increasing demand placed on it by our communities.

Behind these figures are the people, including 13,288 volunteers who gave up their free time during the past summer season to keep us safe.

In this Annual Report you will read about Surf Life Saving New Zealand's champions as well as the thousands of unsung heroes who turn up to guard our beaches. On behalf of us all, I congratulate members of Surf Life Saving New Zealand on their contribution to the sport and to the community at large. Keep up the great work!



Trevor Mallard
Minister for Sport & Recreation



vaughan skiffington
red beach surf life saving club

A lot of the Clubs renewed success was due to the commitment of one of its long time members and competitors Vaughan Skiffington.

Surf Life Saving has been part of Vaughan's life for a long time. He was a competitive member when the Club was at the top of the national surf sports scene in the early 1990's and had the determination and passion to ensure that the 2006 season was one of Red Beachs' best.

While taking on the demanding role of Club coach, Vaughan also continued to train himself and represented his local District at Surf Life Saving New Zealand's premier event, the Lion Foundation Surf League.



Red Beach Surf Life Saving Club has a proud history of success in surf sports.

The Club has won the Alan Gardner Trophy for the top Club at the National Championships numerous times and has produced a number of top international Surf Lifeguards and athletes.

Although Red Beach dominated the National Championships in the early 1990's, members from that time slowly started retiring from competition and at the end of the decade the Club wasn't as strong. However, the Club slowly started rebuilding and at the 2006 National Championships they once again won the Alan Gardner Trophy.

Thanks to Vaughan's dedication and skill Red Beach Club went on to win back the prestigious Alan Gardner Trophy at the New Zealand Championships, for the first time in 15 years, with a total of 30 medals.

Vaughan also took a team of Red Beach Lifeguards to the Australian Championships in February where they performed with distinction, bringing home three gold medals, a silver and a bronze. Earlier in the season one of his athletes, Erin Taylor, was named in the New Zealand Surf Life Saving Squad.

Vaughan's hard work and dedication saw him awarded the 2006 DHL Coach of the Year after being awarded the Northern Region Coach of the Year in July at the Northern Awards of Excellence, where three of his squad members also won sporting awards.

President's Message

Jim Campbell

Surf Life Saving has been caught up in the 'climate change' phenomena as last season was the third in a row with a late summer. Nevertheless our Lifeguards were on duty through this cooler period even though there were fewer people on the beaches. Club patrols were up to their highest standards and their patrolling statistics are listed below.

I say "thank you" to all the volunteer Lifeguards who performed these services.

In saying thanks, I wish to include Club and District Presidents, Chairmen, Administrators, Treasurers, Club Captains etc for the great commitment and many hours these positions require to carry out their roles. Maybe it is time to compile a list of hours worked by people in these positions and log them in the same way we do our patrol statistics.

Throughout our organisation we are forever grateful to all our sponsors, funders and supporters. It is very pleasing to read in the various published Community lists the allocation of funds to our service.

Clubs should be aware and take special note of the assault on one of our instructors at Whangarei

Heads. The assault took place on the beach and this member suffered a broken neck and was in a 'frame' for some considerable time. He is now recuperating slowly from this serious injury.

During the season my wife and I have been privileged and honoured to be invited to many District and Club presentations and dinners. On all occasions we were well looked after during our stay. There are some invitations we have been unable to accept but feel sure these will be on the list for next year.

I am sure we have all enjoyed the surf competitions this summer especially so because of the manner in which they have been conducted by the management of the events and the participation and talents of the competitors. My summing up of this side of our movement is that the organisation has got it right. The judging is carried out in a professional manner and all we have to tidy up is the crowd control. We again say a big thank you to all concerned.

This first year as your President has been an enjoyable one, especially being able to meet so many of our members. This has been possible through the help and advice of our CEO, all the staff in Surf House and around the Districts.

1,430
Rescues

1,734
First Aids

304
Searches

218,332
Safety Interventions

162,845
Total Hours Patrolled

Surf Life Saving
New Zealand's purpose is to prevent drowning and injury in New Zealand and our members have risen once again to accept the challenge this presents. In the year ended 30 June 2007 our Lifeguards have achieved inspiring statistics. These are the visible signs of the dedicated efforts of members from all over New Zealand. In an era when volunteerism is reportedly on the wane, our membership remains strong and the quality of our essential service is improving.



Governance Report Graeme Cullen

The hours of patrol service do not fairly reflect the other hours that are required to train physically and to remain up to date and refreshed in the practical aspects of our work. Statistics do not indicate the significance to individuals, families and communities of the actions of our members. The people saved from drowning, helped with first aid and protected from dangerous situations by the early intervention of our members continue to contribute to society as a result of the activities of our members.

Surf Life Saving NZ is governed by a Board of Directors. The Board employs the Chief Executive, Geoff Barry. Geoff and the Management Team have been responsible for a significant improvement in the performance and the position of the organisation over the last few years. Their commitment and skill is greatly appreciated.

The 2006 Annual General Meeting saw the departure of Jim Warwick from the Board and the election of Grant Florence to the Board for the first time. Individual Directors have continued to participate in various courses organised by SPARC and the NZ Institute of Directors. The annual review of Board performance was undertaken using facilities provided by SPARC that have been designed specifically for use in organisations like ours. We are continuing to seek appropriate opportunities to improve our individual and collective performance.

Further development of the Drowning Prevention Strategy for New Zealand has been a major undertaking for our whole sector in the last year. This activity has the potential to change the way key organisations in our sector interact with Government and with

each other. This continues to be a very significant activity for Surf Life Saving New Zealand.

Considerable effort has gone into working with District Boards to assess their needs in relation to the challenge of providing effective governance in a volunteer organisation. This work will continue in the coming year as we strive to ensure that our members have the training and the tools necessary to succeed in their roles.

We have continued to play our part in International Lifesaving circles with representation on key committees in Lifesaving and Sport. We have also been involved in activities within the Asia/Pacific Region. We are looking forward to the review of the ILS Strategic Plan which is up for consultation in the coming months and the Board has taken some time to ensure that we have representatives who have the level of recognition necessary to be appointed to groups that are relevant to us.

The Board has adopted in June the 2007–2011 Strategic Plan. The plan is in summary form on page 12. The direction this plan outlines reflects the maturing of our organisation and will ensure our ongoing relevance to communities throughout New Zealand. The Strategic Plan represents a broadening of Surf Life Saving's environmental interest and this will influence future decision making and resource allocation. The Board is looking forward to the opportunity to engage with stakeholder groups over the next twelve months to outline its thinking and evolve the management implications to the Strategic Plan.



Grant Florence

Being elected to the Board of SLSNZ has been an enlightening and rewarding experience. Having come from primarily a "feet in the sand" membership role in Surf Life Saving over the past years, the scope of issues addressed and considered by the Board is considerably wider than I previously thought.

SLSNZ has come a long way in its structure and standing over the past years and its financial position is generally sound. The increasing value and recognition of the Surf Life Saving brand is exciting.

From this platform, the challenge for the Board is to continually seek sound growth across the total lifesaving community in New Zealand whilst recognising the changing environment (social, demographic, political etc) we live in. This changing landscape does offer threats and challenges to us all but, more importantly, it provides significant opportunities for us to grasp, shape and implement to ensure a sound future.

The thinking, discussion and decisions behind the strategic plan development during the year have been a valuable forum to challenge and debate these key issues.

It is vital that support and resource is made available to all Districts and ultimately all Clubs to ensure our service and profile is maintained across New Zealand and opportunities for growth at all levels from Club through to the National office are captured by us all.

Congratulations to all members of our Surf Life Saving family for another year's job well done. The commitment and dedication shown by everyone is again truly outstanding.

I look forward to continuing on the Board and have every intention and commitment to add value wherever I can.



Heather Kohn

Another good year for SLSNZ. One of consolidation and confirmation, through sustained membership in a society that sees volunteers becoming scarce, that we as an organisation are heading in the right direction.

At the 2006 AGM I was proud to read Rocky Hall's citation for Life Membership of SLSNZ. In compiling his citation I based it on some of the values we have in SLSNZ's Strategic Plan. The process of thinking what the words meant to me and this Lifeguard who was being acknowledged for his contribution was a powerful affirmation of why I am part of this movement.

The Board has invested a significant amount of time, intellect (not just our own) and energy this year into reviewing the Strategic Plan and making it a living document going forward over the next few years towards the centenary of Surf Lifesaving in New Zealand. We are fortunate to have a great team of staff at Surf House and out in the Districts. This, together with the huge commitment of volunteer time in Districts and Clubs, gives us the impetus and energy to keep moving forward and growing.

I am once again putting myself forward for re-election to the Board, believing that my contribution is still a valid one. It would be wonderful though to see more women putting themselves forward for Directorships at the District and national level.

Finally, a thank you to the members for your contribution to the work done and the fun had in the 2006/07 season. I look forward to seeing you on the beach next season.



David Lean

The Board has continued to focus on long term strategy and planning to ensure SLSNZ is well positioned as we approach a century of surf lifesaving in New Zealand. As with all planning – the results are always further down the track, but the commercial opportunities that will present with the year-long centennial celebrations are a once in a lifetime chance for our movement.

SLSNZ's financial position remains sound, with management generating increased cashflow through new business opportunities, and sponsor satisfaction seeing the retention and expansion of many of our long term partners.

The Drowning Prevention Strategy for New Zealand has not been resolved to date and if it is to be finalised, it is likely that government will need to lead that exercise with willing and effective partners.

Increasing District alignment to ensure SLSNZ demonstrates a standard and consistent approach to Lifeguard operation throughout New Zealand is always going to be an enormous task. I remain available to work with Districts on this matter – no matter how hard it may be for all parties.

That's my intention and commitment in the year ahead as a member of your Board.



Tony Roddan

It is again a pleasure to congratulate the organisation on another exceptional year. I remain impressed by the calibre of people throughout the organisation and pay tribute to everyone in our extended family that contribute to the greater cause.

Like many service and sport organisations we face a changing and challenging environment and with the impressive history of considerable personal investment of so many comes a great responsibility for the directors of SLSNZ to ensure the governance of the organisation is conducted properly and with diligence. It is a responsibility we do not take lightly and I remain thankful for the excellent stewardship provided by Chairman and CEO.

The recently released strategic plan illuminates the path forward for the organisation as we seek to build on the solid platform already in place and it is apparent that Districts, Clubs and Members are now very much involved in helping to define the direction for the organisation. There is a greater sense of cohesion, stability and trust between us all as we share a common vision, purpose and goals.

The changing environment gives us opportunity to consider new commercial initiatives, our place and role in aquatic rescue, safety and education and how best the organisation can move to support, develop and assist districts to be effective in their role.

I remain committed to my role on the board and thank you for another highly rewarding year as a director.



Brian Velvin

The past 12 months as a Board member has proved most rewarding as trust and camaraderie has knitted all members into a tight and cohesive unit. The vigorous debate and differing views have been kept at the table and never allowed to become personal. If we all agreed all of the time then meetings would be unnecessary.

One of the strengths of the Board is the diverse background from which we all come, both in the commercial world and in the various experiences and aspects of surf lifesaving. This certainly adds to the combined knowledge base from which we can draw when making decisions.

The sound platform that has been developed over previous years has meant a lot of our time has been available to plan for the future and look at strategic options that will ensure we are not only financially successful but remain as leaders in the aquatic safety environment regardless of the political climate.

My involvement as a New Zealand representative on ILS has continued. There has been much contentious debate over the past year on the rules for Rescue 2008 and my thanks to those who have assisted with advice and support. I head into my last year with ILS as I will retire at Rescue 2008 after 12 enjoyable years.

My thanks to the Chairman and fellow Board members for their friendship and support and in particular to Geoff and the staff. We must be the envy of many organisations for the quality of the people dedicated to Surf Lifesaving.

I will be offering myself for a final term as a Board member should that be the wish of the membership.



purpose

Preventing drowning and injury in New Zealand

vision

New Zealand's leading aquatic essential service

By 2011 Surf Life Saving New Zealand will:

- Be recognised as the #1 authority in drowning and injury prevention in aquatic environments.
- Have effective partnerships in the aquatic sector.
- Be flexible and responsive to community needs in water safety.
- Have Clubs, Districts and the National Association functioning effectively and will be vibrant and well resourced.
- Have a 'one organisation' view to drowning prevention and our sport.
- Have members who do better in life than non-members.
- Ensure all stakeholders reflect positively on their relationship with Surf Life Saving.

priorities

1. Organisation

To have all Clubs and Districts functioning efficiently and effectively and committed to a 'one organisation' approach to our vision.

Strategic Initiatives

- 1.1** Establish the most effective organisational structure (Club, District, National) for the future of Surf Life Saving in New Zealand.
- 1.2** Provide Districts and Clubs with governance and management support to enhance their performance.
- 1.3** Develop means of streamlining administrative process for Districts and Clubs.
- 1.4** Align Districts and Clubs key framework documents, policies, procedures and practices with SLSNZ.
- 1.5** Provide leadership and development opportunities for volunteer leaders and staff at Club and District levels.

2. Service

To have Surf Life Saving delivering world leading services to communities throughout New Zealand.

Strategic Initiatives

- 2.1** Effective strategic partnerships, both international and domestic, with groups who can add value in essential service management.
- 2.2** Develop and enhance the preventative action and rescue activity of our Districts, Clubs and members.
- 2.3** Improve the aquatic safety knowledge of New Zealanders through an effective public education strategy.
- 2.4** Identify and develop a hazard management programme to ensure safer aquatic environments.
- 2.5** Enhance the survival capability of New Zealanders in the aquatic environment.

3. Members

To ensure our members have the willingness, capability and capacity to meet the changing environment within which Surf Life Saving delivers its essential service and play our sport.

Strategic Initiatives

- 3.1** Develop a cohesive national sport system that demonstrates strategic leadership and a clear direction.
- 3.2** Deliver a well structured coach and official education and development programme.
- 3.3** Provide members with the opportunity to participate in events that encourage participation and high performance.
- 3.4** Provide leadership programmes and opportunities.
- 3.5** Provide a safe environment for all our members.
- 3.6** Value the contribution made by our members.
- 3.7** Deliver a successful Centenary.

4. Business

To have the financial resources, governance and management capability, communication and marketing strategies required to ensure long-term sustainability.

Strategic Initiatives

- 4.1** Enhance the governance of SLSNZ.
- 4.2** Develop relationships at all levels of surf lifesaving activity.
- 4.3** Enhance financial management, and the underpinning financial systems, to provide improved financial outcomes.
- 4.4** Identify and develop new income sources.
- 4.5** Protect and enhance the Surf Life Saving brand.
- 4.6** Develop the effectiveness of SLSNZ's marketing activities to improve public awareness of the activities of Surf Life Saving in New Zealand.
- 4.7** Enhance information and communication capability and effectiveness.
- 4.8** Introduce an effective media strategy.
- 4.9** Develop a pro-active approach to ensuring our working environment makes surf life saving the 'employer of choice'.
- 4.10** Undertake research.

2006/2007 has been a significant year for Surf Life Saving New Zealand (SLSNZ).

Our continued commitment to leadership within the water safety 'sector' and engagement with New Zealand communities has elevated SLSNZ's profile and has created a greater awareness of who we are and what our purpose is within New Zealand.

There is a very real sense of direction and purpose driving Surf Life Saving in New Zealand. We are absolutely committed to drowning and injury prevention and aware that we can play an ever increasing role in achieving lower long term drowning and injury statistics.

This year sees the end of our current Strategic Plan. Surf Life Saving is, through the efforts of all stakeholders, an organisation in very good health and well positioned to move forward.

The Board

The Board continues to apply effective stewardship over SLSNZ.

Chairman Graeme Cullen leads a Board of six Directors. The Board has met seven times during the year and a comprehensive Board Development Plan ensures that time is allocated to the important tasks of forward thinking, stakeholder relationships and risk management. In 2006/07, the Board spent considerable time assessing the future environment within which we will provide our service and activities. The outcome of this is the 2007–2011 Strategic Plan.

The Board has co-opted a number of people to attend meetings. This helps ensure that dialogue provides diversity and challenge. Legal, governance and futuristic consultants have attended meetings. The Board has invited several partner organisations to meetings to discuss future relationships and there have been three meetings where there has been interaction between the National and District Boards.

the year in review

The Management Team

The Management Team provides the management extension of the Board's strategic thinking.

We are very well served by the employees of SLSNZ. I have a highly capable and hard working team who are very passionate about delivering continuous improvement. There have been a small number of changes in the team during the year. This creates a healthy work place environment because change brings new ideas and thought processes.

During the year a decision was made to grow our base at Mount Maunganui. Most of our sport resource (staff and capital) are based in the Mount and many of our events are located in the wider area so there are significant gains from this change. A Lifesaving Development Manager (new position) will be based out of the Mount office from September. The focus of this role is working alongside Districts to support the development and implementation of regional lifesaving plans. Once again accessibility to the critical mass of lifesaving outputs makes the Mount the ideal location for this employee.

An important part of our Management Team are the contractors who work with us. Maria Clarke (Legal), Glenda Hughes (Media), Jane Ahern and Anna Revell (Graphics and Design), Vince Gooding (Television), Jonathan Alsop (Data Management) and Hayley King (IT) are all significant contributors to our success.

The Membership

The membership - the 'heart and soul' of our organisation.

Our membership is made up of individual members, 71 Clubs and 9 District Associations. While the national organisation can provide direction and some initiatives, without the effort of all the other parts of our membership Surf Life Saving would not be the organisation it is today. Within our cascade structure SLSNZ relies heavily on Districts to coordinate and facilitate activities in the regional 'space'. With increasing demands and expectations this is providing its own challenges especially for the smaller Districts.

Partnerships

The contribution, financial and intellectual, of our partners, funders and supporters cannot be underestimated. We have a wide range of supporters from corporate, to charity gaming, to cause association, to lottery grants to crown entity. The basis of this support is built around the relationship between the people in the respective organisations. Thank you to all of you for your current and future contributions.

Looking Forward

The Board has, through the adoption in June of the 2007–2011 Strategic Plan, articulated the way in which SLSNZ will respond to the challenge of 'Preventing drowning and injury in New Zealand'. This strategic plan reflects our organisation's desire to promote the use of New Zealand's fantastic aquatic resources but do it in a way which is safe.

Key to this newly articulated direction will be:

- Staying relevant in drowning and injury prevention
- Broadening view of our role in health and recreation
- Being responsive to the changing 'environment'
- Increasing capacity and capability.

These challenges are consistent with the past and an important part of our success has been the willingness and ability of our members to respond. With the pace of environmental and technological change increasing at a faster rate we also need to improve our responsiveness. There are exciting times ahead for Surf Life Saving. We are confident that in 2010/2011, when the Centenary of Surf Life Saving is celebrated, that the vision articulated in the 2007–2011 Strategic Plan will have been delivered through the actions of our members, partners and staff.