

Surf Life Saving New Zealand – Lifesaving Policy Statement

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SUBJECT: Accreditation of Callout Squads

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PURPOSE

To ensure callout squads meet SLSNZ minimum standards.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all club captains, callout squad coordinators, the National Lifesaving and Education Manager (NLEM) club development officers (CDOs) and programmes and services managers (RPSMs) and regional Lifesaving and education managers (LSEMs).

BACKGROUND

Callout squads operate around New Zealand in various forms. These include club-based squads, centralised squads and surf lifeguards attached to external agencies. Surf lifeguards involved in callout need to be refreshed, suitably qualified and equipped. As call-outs typically involve multiple agencies, it is also important callout squads take part in regular search and rescue training exercises (SAREXs). These exercises strengthen the working relationship between organisations and provide a safe environment to practice interagency response.

This policy is designed to maximise the safety of members involved in call-out by ensuring minimum standards are met, and ensure surf lifeguards attached to external agencies are properly trained and equipped. The accreditation process also allows SLSNZ to compile a national capability matrix. This is used to brief external agencies on our operational area and range, response times, available resources, and how to activate a response. It ensures the information provided to external agencies is accurate and up-to-date.

DEFINITIONS

- 'External agency' refers to any search, rescue or emergency service not operated by SLSNZ or an affiliated club eg. (Rescue helicopter service, NZ Police).

REFERENCES

SLS018 (Annual Volunteer SLG Refreshers), SLS026 (Minimum Equipment for SAR), SLS025 (Billing for Rescue Assets), SLS010 (Patrol Operations Manual – Club), SLS006 (Patrol Support Members), SLS023 (Search and Rescue Operations).

POLICY

The National Lifesaving and Education Manager (NLEM) is responsible for call-out activity in each SLSNZ region.

It is the responsibility of NLEM through the RPSM, LSEM and/or CDO to:

- Verify the refresher status of surf lifeguards on callout squads and attached to external agencies
- Update callout squad member contact lists every 3 months
- Review geographical areas of operation and estimated response times every 12 months
- Update the POM for centralised callout squads
- Coordinate involving clubs and callout squads in regional SAREXs.

CLUB AND CENTRALISED CALLOUT SQUADS

Accreditation is required annually and achieved by submitting a POM. The POM must list the names, contact numbers, qualifications, availability of callout squad members and detail any location specific standard operating procedures (SOPs). Patrol support members who can help with call-out should be listed, but clearly identified as support personnel only.

The minimum age for surf lifeguards attached to callout squads is 18 years. Callout systems must ensure a senior lifeguard aged 18 or over is present (or available by cell phone/radio) to give advice and operational support during an incident. The minimum age for membership of centralised callout squads is 18 years.

The POM will state the geographical response area of the callout squad, location-specific SOPs, available equipment and facilities for search and rescue (eg. Kitchen, hall, overnight accommodation, ATV etc.), and should also include estimated response-times to local and outlying areas during patrol hours and after-hours or out-of-season.

Information from the POMs will be collated by SLSNZ NLEM and form the basis of the national capability matrix.

SURF LIFEGUARDS ATTACHED TO EXTERNAL AGENCIES

Surf Lifeguards attached to external agencies must be 18 years of age, refreshed, and receive SLSNZ approval. The recommended qualification for this role is the Senior Lifeguard Award (old framework) or Advanced Lifeguard Award (2010-11 framework).

Each SLSNZ region shall keep a register of Surf Lifeguards attached to external agencies by the programmes and services managers (RPSMs) and or regional Lifesaving and education managers (LSEMs).

NLEM will meet with external agencies that use Surf Lifeguards for water-rescue every 12 months and as required to:

- Determine initial and ongoing training requirements
- Develop and review response protocols and SOPs
- Approve SLSNZ members attached to the squad
- Review incidents, issues and plan combined training exercises etc.
- All SLSNZ members attached to external agencies must note that SLSNZ must comply with "Schedule 4" of the Joint Service Level Agreement between Maritime New Zealand (Rescue Coordination Centre New Zealand), The New Zealand Police, The Secretary for Transport (for and on behalf of the New Zealand SAR Council) and Surf Life Saving New Zealand Incorporated, on the subject of Health and Safety during the provision of search and rescue services. Each individual must act in a way that is consistent with these obligations at all times during their involvement within that external organisation. The schedule is attached below for reference.

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(CLAUSE 8)

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Police and Rescue Co-ordination Centre New Zealand (RCCNZ)

1. Require SLSNZ to verify their capability to manage health and safety during Search and Rescue (SAR) activities
2. May periodically assess or re-verify the health and safety management capability of SLSNZ and any contractors or subcontractors to SLSNZ , through any means they deem appropriate
3. Will provide SLSNZ with any health and safety information specific to the particular SAR operation for which SLSNZ's services are being engaged. This information, where relevant, will be provided at the time of engagement to enable SLSNZ to determine whether they have the capability to undertake the activity safely

SLSNZ

4. Agree to comply with all legal requirements and standards that apply to the provision of the services or assets provided during co-ordinated SAR activities
5. Will develop and maintain systems to manage the health and safety of employees, volunteers, contractors and subcontractors during co-ordinated SAR activities
6. Will ensure that all employees, volunteers, representatives, contractors and subcontractors are properly trained and have the necessary competence to undertake their tasks in a healthy and safe way
7. Will report all serious harm incidents sustained in the course of activities provided under this agreement to the enforcing authority in line with statutory reporting requirements
8. Will report all serious harm incidents sustained in the course of activities provided under this agreement to the NZSAR Secretariat as soon as possible after the event
9. Agree to permit access at a mutually agreed time to the Police, RCCNZ or their nominated representative for the purpose of verifying any aspect of the operators' activities or systems relevant to meeting the health and safety requirements of this agreement
10. Will report health and safety performance data to NZSAR annually or on request
11. Will participate in the NZSAR Strategic Health and Safety Committee on request

Performance reporting

SLSNZ agrees to report the following information to NZSAR on an annual basis or on request:

12. Number of health and safety incidents recorded over the past 12 months during co-ordinated SAR activities.

13. Any health and safety enforcement activity which has occurred over the past 12 months in conjunction with co-ordinated SAR activities.
14. The number of people provided with health and safety training over the past 12 months in order to participate in co-ordinated SAR activities.
15. The results of any internal or external health and safety audits on co-ordinated SAR activities.