

## Surf Life Saving New Zealand – Lifesaving Policy Statement

**CONTENT CODE:** SLS005

**SUBJECT:** Body Recovery / Discovery

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**TOTAL PAGES:** 2

### BACKGROUND

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for Surf Lifeguards who deal with body recovery(s). Its intention is to cover situations where the victim is considered to be beyond any life support measures.

From time to time Surf Lifeguards are called upon either in the line of duty or by the Police to help search for and/or recover a dead body. It is important that all actions be made in liaison with, (at least) the Police and the Ambulance Service.

If the body is on land then it shall not be tampered with. All actions must be in liaison with the NZ Police. If the body is at sea, then all care should be taken in securing the body and returning it to shore.

Respect should be shown to the deceased at all times. Unpleasant situations such as this can be used to project Surf Life Saving in a positive and professional image. Bystanders, the deceased family and friends and the media will create impressions of our organisation based upon the attitudes, behaviours and actions shown by Surf Lifeguards.

### POLICY

- The Police and / or Ambulance Services are contacted immediately
- If the body is on land then no one shall interfere with or move the body unless instructed to, by the Police.
- The first person on the scene and any witnesses that may be able to help the Police shall be encouraged to stay and assist in this process
- All efforts should be made to ensure that a SLSNZ Member under the age of 18 years is not involved in body recovery activities
- If the body is at sea, then all care shall be taken in securing and returning it to shore using an appropriate body recover kit
- Bystanders are to be kept well clear of the scene
- No immediate discussion shall be entered into with the news media or bystanders concerning the Incident.
- All reasonable steps shall be taken to identify and comfort any next-of-kin who may be present. The next of kin are then to be released to the Police / Ambulance Service upon arrival
- SLSNZ Incident Report Forms shall be filled in immediately PLEASE ENSURE A POLICE TASKING NUMBER IS OBTAINED
- Contact your Regional Manager as soon as possible by phone, making them fully aware of all circumstances involved with the incident.

- Fax / Post the Incident Report Form to your regional SLSNZ office ASAP
- Make critical incident debriefing and support available to all persons involved, through the Regional Critical Incident Network.

*For further information—see SLSNZ Policy SLS020 on Critical Incident Management Procedures*

- Review the incident thoroughly to ensure all procedures were correctly followed and whether any improvement in the emergency management procedures could be made.