



AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE

National Award Winners 2018

Surf Life Saving New Zealand (SLSNZ) has today celebrated and honoured the country's top surf lifeguards and members for their efforts of preventing and reducing drowning and injuries on New Zealand beaches, at their annual Awards of Excellence ceremony.

SLSNZ club members from around the country gathered at the Heritage Hotel in Auckland tonight for the presentation of the prestigious lifesaving, sport and service awards including the BP Rescue of the Year, TSB Official of the Year, and DHL Volunteer of the Year.

Every year, awards are given to SLSNZ members to officially recognise them for their hard work and dedication to Surf Life Saving in New Zealand. Most awards are nominated locally with winners from their regional Awards of Excellence ceremonies then becoming finalists for the national awards.

Wanganui Surf Life Saving Club (SLSC) took home the BP Rescue of the Year award for a very difficult rescue off rocks at Kai Iwi Beach in February this year. With the weather deteriorating and the swell getting bigger, they were called in by Police to help rescue two stranded people.

It was too dangerous for the local rescue helicopter to winch the patients from the rocks due to an unstable cliff, while the Coastguard couldn't get close enough due to the surf conditions, leaving Inflatable Rescue Boats (IRBs) and Surf Lifeguards as the only option. Ultimately, they saved the two people after navigating the conditions and using all their skills.

Meanwhile, Debbie Hutchings of Waikanae SLSC in Gisborne has been awarded the TSB Official of the Year award for her commitment to Surf Life Saving sport. She dedicated over 300 hours officiating at sport events, with potentially hundreds more hours spent preparing for events, being on three different committees, and mentoring six new officials, among many other things she's done to help athletes, event organisers and fellow officials.

The highly valued DHL Volunteer of the Year award was won by Adam Fraser from Fitzroy SLSC for his unwavering dedication to surf lifesaving. As a volunteer, Adam made a valuable contribution to all facets of surf lifesaving; from doing patrols and keeping to the public safe, to being a senior instructor at the National Lifeguarding School, to managing the Taranaki callout squad, and everything in between.

He also became the Chairman of the National Lifesaving Committee and completed multiple New Zealand Search and Rescue qualifications during the past season.

One of the most prestigious awards, New Zealand Lotteries Grant Board Lifeguard of the Year was awarded to Todd Velvin from Fitzroy SLSC, who was awarded the respected award for his commitment to his club. He did a total of 72 hours on patrol watching over members of the public, while instructing 30 new IRB crewman, 2 IRB drivers, and countless hours mentoring and helping surf lifeguards get their qualifications.

SLSNZ Chief Executive, Paul Dalton, said he's always amazed by the work of surf lifeguards who make such an invaluable contribution to communities around New Zealand which is highlighted at these awards.

"All of the award winners tonight have made a huge impact in their communities around the country. From saving lives through rescues, to teaching young people about surf safety, and coaching young athletes to be the best they can be, they've all excelled and we're very proud of that.

"In fact, leading up to these awards, we heard so many fantastic stories of the impact all of our volunteers have had around New Zealand. It was really difficult to present only one recipient per award, because there are so many great volunteers out there. But tonight is all about thanking our award winners who have done great things around the country."

Surf Life Saving New Zealand and the 18,600 members now turn to their attention back to the fast-approaching summer season. Patrols are set to start from next month in some areas, with many volunteers currently finishing up their training and qualifications to be ready in time.

SLSNZ Awards of Excellence - Winners

BP Rescue of the Year – Wanganui Surf Life Saving Club

TSB Official of the Year: Debbie Hutchings, Waikanae SLSC

TSB Coach of the Year: Matt Cairns, Papamoa SLSC

TSB International Sport Performance of the Year: Danielle McKenzie, Mairangi Bay SLSC

DHL Instructor of the Year: Max Jones, Whangamata SLSC

DHL Volunteer of the Year: Adam Fraser, Fitzroy SLSC

London Trophy: Kotuku SLSC

Gudsell Trophy: Mairangi Bay SLSC

New Zealand Lotteries Grant Board (NZLGB) Lifeguard of the Year: Todd Cations-Velvin, Fitzroy SLSC

Service Awards:

- Sam Baker, Spencer Park SLSC
- Kevin Barugh, Pukehina SR
- Denise Bracken, Pauanui SLSC

- Shane Burke, Orewa SLSC
- Aidan Callaghan, Westshore SLSC
- Alison Cole, Fitzroy SLSC
- Carolyn Edwards, Sunset Beach LS
- Ross Fearon, Mairangi Bay SLSC
- Mark Goodhew, Muriwai VLS
- Dean Isherwood, North Beach SLSC
- Trevor Keinzley, Orewa SLSC
- Leanne McAlister, South Brighton SLSC
- Nathan Mitchell, North Beach SLSC
- Adam Moffitt, Westshore SLSC
- Damien Molloy, Muriwai VLS
- Nick Mulcahy, Titahi Bay SLSC
- Leif Neilson, United North Piha SLSC
- Byron Reid, Fitzroy SLSC
- Allan Roberts, Muriwai VLS
- Matthew Williams, Muriwai VLS/Pauanui SLSC
- Richard Wilson, Ocean Beach Kiwi SLSC

50 Year Badges:

- Dave East, North Beach SLSC
- Gordon Finlayson, Mangawhai Heads VLS
- Colin MacKenzie, North Beach SLSC
- Allan Roberts, Muriwai VLS
- Robert (Bob) Dickson , Waimarama SLSC
- Peter Gibbons, St Kilda SLSC
- Murray Kemp, Waikanae SLSC

Distinguished Service Awards:

- Duane Dalton, Mairangi Bay SLSC
- Michelle Newton, Red Beach SLSC

Life Membership:

- Gareth Neilson, United North Piha SLSC