

Date: 19 July 2022

To: Club Chairs, Club Lifesaving Committees and Local Area Lifesaving Committees

From: Andy Kent – National Lifesaving Manager

Subject: Proposed changes to the Senior Lifeguard Award - Patrol Captain - Consultation.

What are we doing?

The National Lifesaving Committee has recommended a change to the minimum age for a person to gain the Senior Lifeguard - Patrol Captain Award (PC Award) from 16 years to 18 years of age. This is based on a paper first submitted by the Otago Operations Committee. SLSNZ has reviewed and agrees with this recommendation but also believes that the Senior Lifeguard Award - Patrol Captain Award (PC Award) becomes a requirement for those wishing to act as a PC for patrols that require a Patrol Captain. Therefore, SLSNZ is now proposing that:

1. The Senior Lifeguard – Patrol Captain Award becomes a requirement of a patrol which require a Patrol Captain
2. The minimum age to be a Patrol Captain is 18yrs.

SLSNZ is now asking clubs for their view as per the [SLSNZ Consultation Process](#). The process and timings for the consultation process are set out in the table below. As this is a significant change, a 'Red Level of Consultation' will apply to this process.

Why are we doing it?

The Patrol Captain plays a critical role in delivering safe beaches across the country; they hold the primary leadership role that interfaces between our organisation and the public, they maintain oversight of beach management and emergency responses on patrol. With so much relying on what our PC's provide on the weekends to deliver safe beaches, it is important they hold a level of maturity and are suitably trained. While 18 is still a relatively young age for a position of high responsibility, it is also an age where society recognises people as young adults and entrusts them with a higher level of social responsibility.

SLSNZ believes that as it stands; the lack of policy and direction from SLSNZ on what constitutes best and safe practice for the supervision of a lifeguard patrol and therefore, the standard of beach and patrol management, is an operational risk to SLSNZ, its Clubs & Members.

This is because as it stands currently;

- No SLSNZ policy stipulates that the appointed Patrol Captain on a patrol must hold a PC Award, making the award a 'nice to have'.
- SLSNZ policy stipulates that a minimum of two qualified and refreshed surf lifeguards must be present during the period during which the patrol is in operation. As you can qualify as a Surf Lifeguard at 14, therefore, in theory, a Patrol could have a Patrol Captain who was only 14 without a PC Award qualification or any training in how to be a PC.

The PC Award requires a review, but first SLSNZ needs to ensure that the PC Award is fit for its purpose & these proposed changes will contribute to this evaluation.

Impact:

From the 2020/21 SLSNZ CRM the following data has been extracted:

- 880 **active** lifeguards held PC Awards.
- How old were these members when they gained their PC Award:
 - 345 (39%) of these members gained their PC award when they between the ages of 16-17
 - 348 (39%) where between the ages of 18 & 29
 - 51 (22%) were over the age of 50
- 325 (37%) were female, 555 (63%) were male
- 4 clubs did not have any PC awards. These were;
 - Ngati Porou
 - Buller SLSC
 - Far North
 - Tolaga Bay
- 2 clubs only had 1 person with a PC award. These were;
 - Baylys Beach
 - Maketu

Therefore, this tells us that there could be a significant impact if this change was made, so we need to discuss, consult and plan for it. This will mean ensuring Clubs and Members are supported and have plenty of access to the PC Award courses.

In 2020/2021 patrols conducted 2,771 days of volunteer patrols across 74 locations. 43% of locations patrolled more than 40 days. A full list of club's patrol days and the number of PC Awards is in **Appendix 2**

Consultation timelines for Step 1 of the Red Consultation process are below:

Title	Change	Consultation starts	Consultation end
Proposed change to SLSNZ minimum standards for patrols	The Senior Lifeguard – Patrol Captain Award becomes a requirement of patrol which require a position of Patrol Captain	21 July 2022	23 September 2022 (9 weeks)
Proposed minimum age for Patrol Captains	The minimum age to be a Patrol Captain on a Patrol is 18yrs.	21 July 2022	23 September 2022 (9 weeks)

Implementation

The implementation would need to be broken into two parts

1. Increase to minimum age a member could start the Senior Lifeguard – Patrol Captain Award.
2. Proposed change to SLSNZ minimum standards for patrols

To review the submissions, SLSNZ will put in place a volunteer working group. This working group will review all submissions and make recommendations to the SLSNZ Senior Management Team who will make the final decision on any changes moving forward.

We have prepared a list for possible questions, which you may have in **Appendix 1**, which we know will need to be taken into consideration with any decisions.

What happens next?

There will be no immediate change to either the age or minimum standards for the 2022/2023 season & any recommendations the working group makes will also need an implementation plan.

Timetable:

Date	Details
21 July 2022	EOI of Working Group released & Consultation Opens
August 2022	Working Group formed
23 September 2022	The consultation ends for the proposed changes
September 2022	Working Group meets to review/discuss all consultation submissions
October 2022	Release of working groups recommendations for the minimum age for Patrol Captains for stage 2 of the red consultation process
October 2022	Release of working groups recommendations for SLSNZ minimum standards for patrols for stage 2 of the red consultation process
The timeline of stage 2 of the consultation process will depend on the recommendations from the working group	

How to make a submission?

The consultation period is for 9 weeks (ending Friday, 23rd September). During this consultation period, members are invited to send thoughts and feedback to the National Lifesaving Manager (NLM) through this link:

[Submission on the proposed changes to the Senior Lifeguard Award – Patrol Captain](#)

Ngā mihi nui,



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Appendix 1: Q&Q:

I'm 16 years old & I've just completed my PC Award – what does this mean for me?

A 'grandfather rights clause' would be introduced, meaning those PC's who are under the age of 18 years as of 1 October 2022 may continue to hold the position in the 2022/23 season. At the start of 2023/24, all patrol captains would need to be 18 years or older.

My birthday is in January so when I turn 18, I will then need to complete the award, depending on how long the course takes to complete and availability of courses I'll probably be 19 before I can be a PC – I wouldn't be the only one!

The minimum age to start the PC Award hasn't been set. Depending on the consultation, the working group will need to look at this. Also with the course review, components / modules are likely to be online. The working group will need to look at options for Vice – Captains / mentoring for those members under 18.

I have been a patrol captain for over 10years but never have done a PC course – does this mean that I can't be a PC anymore?

The existing Recognition of prior learning (RPL) process would need to be implemented to ensure we don't lose good Patrol Captains who have valuable skills and experience.

Will all patrols require a Patrol Captain?

- Not necessarily. After the consultation, SLSNZ will put in place a working group to decide the next steps, as many current patrol locations are very close to each other & work together already where 1 patrol is the base & others are satellite patrols.
- We also need to look at scenarios where clubs are very close together

Looking into the future we need to consider scenarios where a new patrol location can link with an existing patrol but also, a new patrol location that needs to be standalone.

Will the Paid Lifeguard Service also require anyone acting as a PC to be 18 and hold the PC award?

Yes, of course. It is 'reasonable' for the public to expect the same level of 'service' from Paid Lifeguards and Volunteer Lifeguards in all cases.

Appendix 2 – 2020/2021 Data - Club patrol days & Number of Active Senior Lifeguard Award – Patrol Captain on SLSNZ CRM

	# Volunteer patrol days	Number of active Lifeguards with PC Awards	# PC's who were 16-17yrs at the time they received their award.
Baylys Beach SLS	17	1	1
Bethells Beach SLSP	64	20	2
Brighton SLSC	41	18	7
Buller CRS	3	0	-
East End SLSC	37	16	8
Far North SR	15	0	-
Fitzroy SLSC	38	9	4
Foxton SLSC	31	9	6
Hot Water Beach LS	39	16	6
Kaka Point SLSC	30	6	5
Karekare SLSC	53	2	1
Kariaotahi SLSC	53	13	3
Kotuku SLSC	9	4	2
Levin-Waitarere SLSC	28	18	7
Lyll Bay SLSC	31	14	5
Mairangi Bay SLSC	55	35	16
Maketu SLSC	10	1	-
Mangawhai Heads VLS	53	3	-
Maranui SLSC	24	10	4
Midway SLSC	36	2	1
Mt Maunganui Lifeguard Service	50	21	6
Muriwai VLS	53	3	1
Nelson SLSC	27	9	2
New Brighton SLSC	38	9	1
New Plymouth Old Boys SLSC	32	7	3
Ngati Porou SLSC	5	0	-
North Beach SLSC	38	8	3
Ocean Beach Kiwi SLSC	34	20	15
Omaha Beach SLSC	53	15	2
Omanu SLSC	47	18	6
Onemana SLSC	22	11	10
Opotiki SLSC	13	5	4
Opunake SLSC	32	10	4
Oreti SLSC	35	7	2
Orewa SLSC	54	12	4
Otaki SLSC	31	15	6
Pacific SLSC	35	7	4
Paekakariki Surf Lifeguards	38	15	3
Palmerston North SLSC	37	7	3
Papamoia SLSC	50	21	7
Pauanui SLSC	52	21	11
Piha SLSC	53	18	2
Pukehina Surf Rescue	32	3	1
Raglan SLSC	53	12	3
Rarangi SLSC	35	5	-

Red Beach SLSC	40	6	2
Riversdale SLSC	44	15	11
Ruakaka SLSP	52	4	-
South Brighton SLSC	38	13	8
Spencer Park SLSC	32	18	8
St Clair SLSC	41	24	9
St Kilda SLSC	41	21	7
Sumner SLSC	39	26	11
Sunset Beach LS	53	15	4
Tairua SLSC	28	13	1
Taylors Mistake SLSC	38	25	10
Titahi Bay SLSC	30	12	6
Tolaga Bay SLSC	33	0	-
United North Piha Lifeguard Service	53	13	3
Waihi Beach LS	49	24	15
Waikanae SLSC	39	10	5
Waikuku Beach SLSC	38	8	4
Waimairi SLSC	39	16	2
Waimarama SLSC	43	26	11
Wainui SLSC	37	10	1
Waipu Cove SLSC	44	5	1
Wanganui SLS	0	6	-
Warrington SLSC	34	12	7
Westshore SLSC	45	18	13
Whakatane SLSC	36	19	4
Whangamata SLSC	71	23	13
Whangarei Heads SLSP	54	5	-
Whiritoa LS	36	10	5
Worser Bay LSC	28	7	3
	2771	880	

Appendix 3: Explanation of Green, Amber and Red Consultation Processes

SLSNZ operates under a 'Member Consultation Policy' if we put forward a case to change a policy or process this will fall under one of the categories below as either 'green,' 'red' or 'amber,' these are explained in the table below:

Green	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change is expected to be viewed as having a negligible or positive effect on clubs. • Clubs will not to manage or can implement immediately. • Non-controversial topic. • Will not add cost to clubs/members or costs will be minor. 	<p style="text-align: center;">No Club Consultation</p> <p>SLSNZ make the decision on its own or with the advice of advisory groups (e.g. NLC, NSC), member surveys, expert groups or stakeholders and then advise the clubs.</p>
Amber	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk that some clubs or sections of the movement will view themselves as negatively impacted. • Will take some effort and resources for clubs to implement. • Potentially controversial/ polarising topic. • Will add more than minor additional costs to clubs/ members. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Single-stage Club Consultation</p> <p>This is what we are thinking of doing – do you agree? SLSNZ to take into account club feedback when making the decision, and then advise clubs/ members</p>
Red	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The expectation that the majority of clubs or large sections of the movement will have significant interest in the topic and/or see themselves as negatively impacted. • If potential decision outcomes implemented (quickly), they could create problems for clubs. • Known to be a controversial/ polarising topic. • Will add significant financial cost to clubs/ members. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Two-stage Club Consultation</p> <p>Stage 1: This is what we are thinking about – what are your views? Stage 2: This is the feedback we received from you. On this basis, this is what are planning to do – do you agree? SLSNZ to take into account club feedback when making the decision, and then advise clubs/ members.</p>