



SURF LIFE SAVING

NEW ZEALAND

IRB

CHAMPIONSHIPS

27-29 MARCH GISBORNE 2026



TEAM MANAGER
CIRCULAR

Event Information:

The 2026 bp New Zealand IRB Championships will be hosted at Waikanae Beach. With three days of action-packed racing, we are really excited to be welcoming members from across New Zealand.

Event Management Committee

Luke Smith – National Events Manager

Johnny Clough – Event Referee

Sam Blackmore – Event Safety Officer

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Rules & Regulations:

This event will be conducted under the rules contained in the following documents:

- [Surf Life Saving Competition Manual \(Nov 2025\)](#)
 - Please review as there have been changes to rules
- [SLSNZ Equipment Specifications Manual](#)
- [SLSNZ Constitution](#)
- [SLSNZ Regulations](#)
- [Sport Integrity New Zealand](#)
- Any additional documents or amendments as communicated by SLSNZ and/or Event Management

Clarification – Rule 5.1.5(d): IRB Driver Control of Tiller Arm

"At all times, the driver must maintain control of the throttle arm whilst the motor is running and in gear."

Clarification

1. Engine Starting (Neutral)
 - a. The driver may start the engine using either hand or both hands, provided the engine remains in neutral. During this process, contact with the tiller arm is not required.
2. Motor Engaged in Gear
 - a. Once the motor is running and placed into gear, the driver must have physical contact with the tiller arm immediately and must maintain that contact at all times while the motor is running and in gear.
3. Application
 - a. This clarification applies to all IRB event starts and all transitions within Mass Rescue and Teams Rescue events.

Enforcement

Failure to maintain contact with the tiller arm while the motor is running and in gear will result in disqualification under:

- DQ 116 – IRB Start: Driver does not have contact with the tiller arm whilst the engine is both started and in gear.
- DQ 128 – IRB Course: Driver does not have contact with the tiller arm whilst the engine is both running and in gear.

Rationale

This clarification ensures drivers maintain control of the IRB whenever propulsion is engaged, while allowing flexibility during engine starting for strength, disability, or situational requirements, without compromising safety.

Communication:

Event Management utilise a variety of tools to keep you updated with the latest event information and news.

TeamReach will be the primary platform for communication leading into and during the event. TeamReach can be downloaded from the App Store or Google Play. Group Code = **SLSNZIRBS**

- [SLSNZ Website](#) (event documentation)
- [SLSNZ Sport Facebook](#) (event photos & highlights)
- [SLSNZ Sport Instagram](#) (event photos & highlights)
- [LiveHeats](#) (programme and results)

Liveheats (Team Manager Dashboard):

All Team Managers should have access to the Liveheats Team Manager dashboard.

This is where you can make any team changes required.

Liveheats does not check for each event eligibility, so we have high trust in clubs to ensure any changes being made are still within the rules of each event, including age groups, genders and qualifications.

Event Programming:

The programme will be made available on the [SLSNZ Website](#). Please note this may be subject to change based on entry numbers or other logistical considerations.

Friday – Tube Rescue (Heats through to Finals)

Saturday – Assembly Rescue (Heats through to Finals), Mass Rescue (Heats to Semis), Teams Rescue (Heats)

Sunday – Mass Rescue (Finals), Single Rescue (Heats through to Finals), Teams Rescue (Semis to Finals)

Age Groups & Divisions:

Age groups are determined by the competitor's age at midnight on 30th September 2025.

The age categories for this event are:

- Under 19 (15-18 years old)
- Under 23 (15-22 years old)
- Open (15+)
- Masters (30+)

* Patients may be 14 years of age

Key Times:

Tuesday 24 March

Team Managers Online Briefing: 7:30pm

Thursday 26 March

Scrutineering 1:00pm – 6:00pm

Friday 27 March

Low Tide: 7:37am
Scrutineering & Fuel Allocation: 8:00am – 11:00am
Surf Officials Meeting: 10:00am
Team Managers Meeting: 10:30am
Opening Whakatau: 11:00am
Marshalling: 11:45am
Start: 12:00pm
High Tide: 1:44pm
Team Managers Meeting: 6:00pm (if required)

Saturday 28 March

Surf Officials Meeting: 7:00am
Team Managers Meeting: 8:00am
Marshalling: 8:15am
Start Time: 8:30am
Low Tide: 8:37am
High Tide: 2:44pm
Prizegiving: 30 minutes after the conclusion of racing
Additional Fuel Distribution: At the conclusion of prizegiving

Sunday 29 March

Surf Officials Meeting: 7:00am
Team Managers Meeting: 8:00am
Marshalling: 8:15am
Start Time: 8:30am
Low Tide: 9:36am
High Tide: 3:44pm
Prizegiving: 30 minutes after the conclusion of racing

Scrutineering:

Scrutineering will be carried out on the days and times indicated at Waikanae SLSC.

Please follow the instructions of the scrutineering team to ensure that this critical safety compliance check is completed.

You can find a full Scrutineering Check Sheet [here](#). (Please use this prior to turning up at the event)

Any issues need to be detected prior to the event, not as our Scrutineering team is inspecting your equipment. Your assistance with this will eliminate large delays during the scrutineering process.

Please indicate your arrival estimate here:

[bp New Zealand IRB Championships - Scrutineering – Fill in form](#)

Fuel:

Clubs will be allocated 10 litres of fuel per crew entered. Fuel collection times are specified in event timings above.

A re-fuelling station will be set up with a SOPEP oil/petrol spill mat, warning signs and a fire extinguisher. There is to be no re-fuelling of bladders in club tents on the beach.

Trailer Parking & Equipment Storage:

Trailer Parking will be on the grass area next to Waikanae SLSC, please follow the work crew who will park trailers in to fit all clubs. Please do not just park in the middle!

There will be overnight security 6:00pm – 6:00am from Thursday through to Monday, but equipment storage and security is still the responsibility of the clubs.

Club Tents:

Club Tents can be set up on the grassed area behind the event arena from Thursday afternoon.

Clubs need to ensure you have waratahs for all tent legs and appropriate bracings.

There are to be no circus tents bought to this event.

Toilets & Waste Management:

Portable toilets and hand washing stations will be located across the event zone.

Please dispose of rubbish properly, bins and recycling stations will be available throughout the event site.

Protests & Appeals:

A fee of \$100.00 will be imposed when lodging an appeal. This must be presented in cash.

However, if an appeal is upheld, any appeal fee paid shall be returned.

The process can be found in section 8.4 of the Competition Manual.

Trophies:

We require all National trophies to be returned to event admin by Thursday 4:00pm. Please ensure all trophies have up to date engraving and are in respectable condition.

Event Merchandise:

Official merchandise is available online now and will also be on sale at the beach, thanks to NZ Uniforms. We've launched a fresh range of gear including tees, hoodies, and caps – perfect for athletes, supporters, and anyone proud to be part of the surf lifesaving community.

[Check it out here](#)



Event Safety:

- Please note that all SLSNZ rules and regulations apply during warm-ups, as they do throughout the event. Please ensure compliance and follow the instructions of Event Management and Surf Officials.
- Return to Shore: Situations have arisen in past events where craft and or people have been stranded on the IRB Race Course in the direct path of rapidly approaching IRB crews, whom are unaware of the hazard that lies ahead due to the inability to see the stranded craft/person due to sea conditions, which poses significant risk to people and craft.
- The purpose of this procedure is to put in place systems to help identify these situations and immediately draw competitor's attention to the need to immediately 'throttle back' and precede with caution, to prevent potential collisions and harm to people and craft.
 - EMC/nominated officials – upon identifying that a person and or craft are stranded within the race arena, the following actions must be implemented as soon as practicable.
 - a) Have the starter activate the all-round **RED** flashing light atop of the starter pole.
 - b) Raise and wave a **RED** flag on shore from the starters stand.
 - Drivers – upon sighting the red flashing light or waving of red flag, drivers must throttle back and proceed to shore, unless directed to provide assistance by the designated water safety crew.

Health & Safety:

This event will abide by the facility safety measures put in place and will adhere by the rules instructed by the facility management and lifeguard team.

Parent, Guardian, Coach, Team Manager and Club Obligations

It is the responsibility of clubs, through their coaches and manager, to ensure that each individual competitor is competent to safely compete.

Pre-Existing Medical Conditions

All participants and volunteers with a pre-existing medical condition must complete and submit a 'Pre-Existing Medical Conditions Declaration' form prior to the close of entries. These forms are to be submitted to the Event Manager via by email as early as possible. Once submitted, the forms will be reviewed by SLSNZ and a decision will be made on whether a 'Competitor Waiver' form is required to be completed.

It is important to note that a pre-existing medical condition includes a **concussion event** that has occurred prior to this event. Information on concussion can be found [here](#)

Competition Uniform & Equipment:

- All equipment used in competition must comply with the Equipment Specification Manual.
- Only SLSNZ sealed engines are to be used in Competition.
- No engine may be removed from the beach prior to the completion of the day's competition without clearance of the Event Referee.
- IRB Hulls & Engines purchased via Central Government Funding cannot be use for Sport and/or Competitions.

Photography & Imagery:

By entering this event clubs and members acknowledge and agree that SLSNZ may use images and video taken during the event for media and marketing purposes.

Media accreditation:

Only applications from Surf Life Saving Members and Media Agencies will be accepted for consideration.

If you are wishing to take photos at our competition then complete and submit the [Media Accreditation Application Information here](#) to media@surflifesaving.org.nz at least one week prior to the competition for access into competition areas.

Please note Use of Cameras and Video devices rules are outlined in the Competition Manua

Key Contact:

If you have any queries or concerns, please feel free to contact Luke.

For event management & delivery

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MAJOR PARTNERS



NAMING RIGHTS & PRESENTATION PARTNERS



COMMUNITY PARTNERS



MEDIA PARTNERS



Full Site Map



Competition Arena, bp Event Hub & Club Tent Area



Scrutineering & Trailer Storage

