

2025/26 SLSNSW PRE-SEASON INFORMATION PACK



SURF LIFE SAVING
NEW SOUTH WALES



Introduction

The Surf Life Saving NSW Pre-season Information Pack focuses on:



Changes to policies or procedures



Links to key reference material to review prior to the season



Key tasks to complete before the season starts



Key dates to be aware of

The information is divided into the following sections and aimed at:

Club Management

Directors of Administration, Presidents & Treasurers

Lifesaving

Club Captains & Directors of Lifesaving

Education

Chief Training Officers & Directors of Education

Surf Sports

Directors of Surf Sports

Membership

Directors of Member Services & Junior Activity Chairs

Information for all

SLS Hub

SLSA launched a [new Hub](#) in July which replaces the Members Area. Members need to reset their password before accessing the Hub and linked services (e.g. Operations app, Assessing app).

Lifesaving CPR

SLSNSW will be introducing **Lifesaving CPR** this season – an evidence-based, simplified, and standardised approach to improve survival from cardiac arrest on and off the beach. TAFs and endorsed delegates will be updated during their pre-season meetings, with the changes being rolled out to patrolling members during skills maintenance.

To ensure that members don't have to repeat their skills maintenance, **please ensure that your club is aware that skills maintenance for CPR should not commence prior to your club's TAFs being trained in Lifesaving CPR.**

We suggest that clubs consider using the Club Lifesaving Equipment Grant (CLEG) and Beach Safety Equipment Fund (BSEF) to purchase any additional equipment required to ensure a successful roll out.

Executive Training Calendar

SLSNSW delivers a range of online sessions throughout the season designed to support members of club management teams. We recommend that all new club and branch officers attend the **Club Management Induction** in August and that all new and existing club and branch officers attend the **Optimising Board**

Performance session in October. See the full suite of sessions and register via the [Club Executive Training Schedule](#).

Child Safe

With 30,000 junior members and 30% of patrolling members under the age of 18, Surf Life Saving NSW is committed to the safety and wellbeing of every child and young person who takes part in our activities, programs, events or services.

All **patrolling members** aged 18 years and over, along with those in the following roles, are required to complete the **online SLS Child Safe Awareness** course:

- Club and Branch Officers
- Coaches and Officials
- MPIOs and Complaints Managers
- Trainers, Assessors and Facilitators
- Age Managers

A new **Child Safe Awareness for Young People** course is being released this season for members under the age of 18.

The following child safe resources are also available to support clubs to identify and manage child safe risks for SLS activities.

- A **Club Child Safe Risk Management Document** to support you to review your club's child safe practices in line with the NSW Child Safe Standards.
- A **Child Safe Activity Planning Guide** to support clubs with child safe risk management when planning for activities involving members under the age of 18.

These resources are available on the [SLSNSW Child Safe webpage](#).

Club Management



Key Changes

- SLSNSW has added new workshops to its **Club Executive Calendar** including sessions on youth engagement, optimising board performance, social media and marketing your club, lifesavers with pride and volunteer leadership. We recommend that all new club and branch officers attend the **Club Management Induction** in August and that all new and existing club and branch officers attend the **Optimising Board Performance** session in October.
- The **IT Systems User Account Application Form (Form 49)** is now automated. Using this automated form, branches now manage SurfGuard access requests, with SEMS requests managed directly by SLSA.
- With Workplace by Meta being retired in the next few months, SLSNSW will be migrating its networking groups for **Complaints Managers, MPIOs and Child Safe Coordinators to WhatsApp**. Please ensure that members holding these positions are recorded in SurfGuard to ensure they receive the invite to join in August.
- The **SLSNSW Club Guide** has been updated and is now available on Manula – an online searchable platform. Club Guide is designed for Club Management Team members and supporting officers to help them effectively manage SLS clubs in NSW. SLSNSW suggests club officers review this guide regularly for role-relevant information and support.
- With the launch of the **SLS Hub**, clubs will need to review their websites to ensure that any links to the SLS Members Area are updated to redirect members to the Hub (see link on page 2).

Reminders

- There is a **12-month access limit to SurfGuard** for all users. Branches will provide clubs with a list of current users in August, and clubs will be required to indicate which members still require access. Users not verified by a club by **12 September** will be deactivated the following week.
- **Charitable fundraising numbers (CFNs)** are valid for a period ranging from 1 to 5 years, based on the selection made during the application process. Clubs and branches are advised to check the expiry date of their CFN for the upcoming season and renew through Services NSW if their expiry date is approaching.
- Clubs and branches must meet the requirements detailed in the **Annual Club Compliance Circular** to ensure access to state funding distributions for the 2025/26 season.

Relevant Links

- [Club Executive Calendar: Tasks, Resources and Workshops](#)
- [Annual Compliance Circular](#)
- [Club Guide](#)
- [IT Systems Tasks for Pre and Post Season](#)
- [IT Systems Access \(Form 49\)](#)
- [Check CFN Expiry Date](#)
- [Member Assistance Program](#)
- [Verify Working With Children Checks \(WWCCs\)](#)

Key Tasks

- ☐ Complete annual compliance requirements as outlined in the above circular.
- ☐ Access the Club Executive Calendar and encourage club management team members to access online workshops.
- ☐ Encourage new members of the club management team to attend the Club Management Induction in August.
- ☐ Encourage all new and existing club and branch officers to attend the Optimising Board Performance session in October.

Key Dates

- SLSNSW Awards of Excellence – Saturday 16 August 2025 (Hyatt Regency, Sydney)
- Compliance Part 1 Deadline – 12 September 2025
- Compliance Part 2 Deadline – 31 October 2025



Key Changes

- The **SLSNSW Public Safety Standard Operating Procedures (PSSOPs)** are in the process of being updated and will be released in September. Club Captains and Branch Directors of Lifesaving will be communicated with directly when they are available and provided with a summary of changes.
- After introducing **flexible patrolling options** last season, SLSNSW have listened to feedback and will be updating the options and the accompanying matrix ahead of the 2025/26 season. The key change will be to remove the temperature-based requirements for enacting the different patrolling options. Updates will be included in the revised SOPs.
- The **SLSNSW Patrol Operations Manual (POM)** - the template that clubs complete outlining club-specific communication protocols, hazard and risk management plans, beach management strategies, and emergency operations plans - has been updated for use ahead of the 2025/26 season.
- The **Rescue Services application process** has been updated and a new online application form will be available on the SLSNSW website in the coming weeks. This form will also be used for the re-endorsement of Rescue Services personnel (including Duty Officers, RWC operators and Offshore Rescue Boat operators).
- SLSNSW will be introducing **Lifesaving CPR** this season – please ensure you have read the information related to this in the **Information for all** section on page 2.
- Patrolling members aged 18+ are required to complete the **SLS Child Safe Awareness course** this season. The new **Child Safe Awareness for Young People course** is being released this season for members under the age of 18 – please encourage members aged 15-17 years to complete this.
- After two successful pilots in June 2025, SLSNSW will be hosting four **Lifesaving Development Programs** this season alongside **Advanced IRB Programs**. Dates will be confirmed and expressions of interest will open in the coming weeks.

Reminders

- All vehicles used by clubs (ATCs, SSVs, Tractors, 4x4s) must have the **appropriate registration** (which may be conditional). Where conditional registration applies, it is highly recommended that the registered area of operation be as broad as possible and that it realistically reflects potential locations of vehicle operations, including during incident responses (e.g. all areas in proximity of the Surf Life Saving Club, adjacent parks, cycle ways, neighbouring surf clubs and beaches, etc.). The intent of this is to ensure that the vehicle is registered to be driven through car parks, pathways, storage sheds and other areas within the vicinity of the club, or when attending to incidents away from the 'own' club and beach (e.g. adjoining park areas). Use of unregistered vehicles may result in liability not being covered by insurance.
- **Incident reporting is available via the SLS Operations app** to be used in place of the paper log. The app displays existing incidents and allows for new incidents to be created. Please contact the State Operations Centre with all member injuries.
- **Gear and equipment inspections can be managed via the SLS Operations app.** The app integrates with SurfGuard and helps to reduce the administrative burden associated with gear and equipment inspections. Branch Inspectors need to be registered on SurfGuard to access the app. Please inform Hamish Jones (hjones@surflifesaving.com.au) of your inspectors so that access can be provided.
- Clubs and branches must meet the requirements detailed in the **Annual Club Compliance Circular** to ensure access to state funding distributions for the 2025/26 season. This includes requirements related to gear and equipment and emergency call out teams.

Relevant Links

- [Public Safety Standard Operating Procedures \(SOPs\)](#)
- [Patrol Operations Manual \(POM\)](#)
- [SLS Operations App User Guide](#)
- [Annual Compliance Circular](#)
- [Gear & Equipment Inspection Program](#)
- [Gear, Equipment & SLS Vessel Registrations, Sales & Disposals](#)
- [SLSNSW Skills Maintenance Circular](#)
- [Critical Incident Support](#)

Key Tasks

- ☐ Plan patrol roster (using Lifesaving Service Agreement).
- ☐ Update Patrol Operations Manual (POM) and provide a copy to all patrols.
- ☐ Complete gear and equipment inspections, attaching Defective Equipment Tags as required.
- ☐ Update the Emergency Call Out Team mailing group in SurfGuard.
- ☐ Register new Surf Rescue vessels, along with any existing vessels which are not on SurfGuard.
- ☐ Manage the sale or disposal of Surf Rescue vessels in line with requirements.
- ☐ Ensure Rescue Services members re-endorse using the online form before 31/12/2025.

Key Dates

- SLSNSW Awards of Excellence – Saturday 16 August 2025 (Hyatt Regency, Sydney)
- SLSNSW and Club Pre-Season meetings – 1 & 2 September
- Club gear and equipment inspection deadline – 12 September 2025
- Emergency call out team members entered into SurfGuard – 12 September 2025
- Patrol season starts – 27 September 2025
- Patrol season ends – 26 April 2026

Key Changes

The opportunity to discuss the below key changes in more detail will be available to all Trainers, Assessors, Facilitators (TAFs) and Chief Training Officers (CTOs) at the upcoming branch pre-season meetings. They will also be presented in the online pre-season module which will be released in August. Completion of the online module is a requirement for annual TAF re-endorsement.

Key changes to be communicated include:

- Surf Lifesaving NSW will be introducing **Lifesaving CPR** this season – please ensure you have read the information related to this in the **Information for all** section on page 2.
- Outside of the introduction of Lifesaving CPR, changes to **skills maintenance** this season include:
 - The replacement of the 'run-swim-run' with a 'run-swim-rescue' to better reflect the operational requirements of patrolling members.
 - Demonstration of the new crew and driver techniques rolled out last season for IRB award holders.
- Due to the above, only endorsed IRB Trainers, Assessors or Facilitators can conduct IRB Crew skills maintenance this season (i.e. not Endorsed Delegates).
- In May 2025, SLSA released refreshed learning and assessment resources for the **Rescue Watercraft (RWC) course**. This includes new eLearning, a new digital training manual specifically for RWC, and a new Delivery & Assessment Guide and Assessment Portfolio. As of 1 July 2025, the new RWC course resources (available on the SLS Document Library) are the only RWC resources to be utilised in NSW. RWC Operators will be upskilled with any changes via Skills Maintenance in the 2026/27 season. To better support the increasing need for RWC training across the state, SLSNSW will be supplementing branch RWC training with **state-run courses** this season.
- To improve the member experience of accessing First Aid training via the volunteer-delivered process, **pre-course eLearning** is now available in the SLS eLearning platform.
- The **Silver Medallion Patrol Captains Bridging course** has been

streamlined for experienced patrol captains wishing to update to this award. The online learning includes just three (3) modules (Surf Risk Rating, Leadership and Incident Management), and the pre-requisite requirement no longer requires a 100-word essay. Delivery resources can be found in the SLS Document Library.

- A new **Nipper Safety Assistant (NSA) Award** has been created nationally to assist clubs with additional resources for water safety during Nippers. See the **Membership** section on page 7 for more information.
- Minor updates have been made to the **SLSNSW Education Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)**. The key changes are that:
 - First Aid Facilitator awards are now re-endorsed like all other TAF awards (not re-appointed).
 - Trainer and Assessor awards are now available for the Silver Medallion Patrol Captain award (it is no longer a Facilitator-only award, noting that Assessors cannot assess participants they have trained).
- From 1 July 2025, SLSNSW will be operating under the new **Standards for RTOs 2025**. Under the revised Standards:
 - There is an opportunity to re-engage former TAFs with older versions of TAE qualifications and skill sets.
 - Some Endorsed Assessors will be able to move to Assessors, no longer operating under the Supervisory Framework.

SLSNSW will work directly with CTOs and Branch DoEs to identify affected TAFs and support any transitions.
- Minor updates have been made to the **Co-Delivery: Quick Reference Guide** to clarify that there are no tenure or ratio requirements that apply to this process. TAFs and CTOs are encouraged to discuss co-delivery arrangements on a case-by-case basis, with SLSNSW available to support these discussions if required.

Reminders

- Fully **subsidised First Aid training** delivered by the SLSNSW Australian Lifesaving Academy (ALA) continues to be available for new ART award holders, proficient ART award holders (who need to update by July 2026),

and ART and Bronze Medallion TAFs. Contact your Branch DoE or the SLSNSW Training & Education Team to find out more.

- **Working with Children Checks** are required for TAFs who volunteer (or are likely to volunteer) with members under the age of 18 for more than 5 days in a calendar year.

Relevant Links

- [TAF Re-endorsement](#)
- [SLSNSW Education SOPs](#)
- [Skills Maintenance](#)
- [Co-Delivery](#)
- [Becoming a TAF](#)
- [Training Resources & Forms](#)
- [SLS Hub](#)
- [SLSNSW Assessing App support](#)
- [RPL Service](#)

Key Tasks

- ☐ Assist TAFs to ensure currency in the latest HLTAID units of competency (CPR annually, First Aid and Advanced Resuscitation every three years).
- ☐ Support TAFs to complete the SLSNSW TAF pre-season online module (available in August 2025) and then complete the online re-endorsement/re-appointment form.
- ☐ Ensure TAFs and patrolling members complete skills maintenance before 31/12/25.
- ☐ Work with Branch DoE's to ensure that appropriate supervision is in place for all assessments conducted by Endorsed Assessors and that supervisory activities are recorded through the Record of Supervision Form.
- ☐ Add/update the appropriate 'Endorsed Delegate' award to endorsed delegates for skills maintenance in SurfGuard for each club.

Key Dates

- Training Officer Certificate courses – quarterly intakes
- Assessor and Facilitator courses – intakes as required
- Branch Education Pre-Season Meetings – August/September 2025
- SLSNSW Awards of Excellence – Saturday 16 August 2025 (Hyatt Regency, Sydney)



Key Changes

- During the season it is anticipated that the **carnival entry process** will transition from SEMS to Live Heats. Detailed information will be provided well in advance of any changes.
- Surf Lifesaving NSW will be introducing **Lifesaving CPR** this season – see the **Information for all** section on page 2. The changes will require updates to the **scoring sheets for Champion Lifesaver & Patrol** and **First Aid competitions**. The changes will be made in September and will align with updated content in the Public Safety Aquatic Rescue (PSAR) manual.

Reminders

- Branch SEMS training** is available and can be coordinated through the SLSA IT Helpdesk. User guides and webinars are also available.
- All competitors will be utilising **Live Heats** at most branch carnivals and all state events. All competitors at these events will require a Live Heats wrist band to compete. Additional wristbands can be purchased directly via contacting Teresa.Vombruch@sls.com.au.
- All Branch level carnivals and above must be advised to the State Operations Centre (SOC@surflifesaving.com.au) **in advance of the carnival date** (i.e. type, age groups, expected numbers).
- Branch and Local Carnival Safety & Emergency Management Coordinators **must sign on/off with the State Operations Centre using call sign 'Carnival & [Location]'** for all carnivals and events they are overseeing. This protocol extends to all Special Events a club may be involved with.
- Special Events** (any activity which is not specifically described in the Surf Sports manual (SSM) e.g. ocean swims, water safety/first aid for sports/community events run by other organisations etc.) may only proceed if approved as a Special Event. The level and type of insurance coverage and/or limitations will be advised as part of the approval process.

- Working with Children Checks** are required for coaches and officials who volunteer (or are likely to volunteer) with members under the age of 18 for more than 5 days in a calendar year.
- Coaches and Officials are required to have completed the online SLS **Child Safe Awareness course**. This requirement will be checked by SLSNSW during the reaccreditation process.
- All coaching and official **re-accreditation documentation** is to be sent to ssaccreditations@surflifesaving.com.au.

Relevant Links

- [Surf Sports Weekly](#)
- [Surf Sports Manual](#)
- [Surf Sports Event Calendar](#)
- [Live Heats Device Guide](#)
- [SEMS User Guide](#)
- [Special Event Application Form](#)
- [Officials](#) and [Coaches](#) [Reaccreditation Forms](#)

Key Tasks

- ☐ Ensure your club's officials and coaches accreditation is up to date if their accreditation period is ending on 31/12/2025.
- ☐ Ensure members' awards, proficiencies and patrol hours are updated in SurfGuard by 31 December relevant to their age group to compete.
- ☐ Ensure your branch has procured the relevant hardware to utilise the Live Heats platform.
- ☐ Ensure your branch has an adequate supply of Live Heats wristbands prior to the start of the season.
- ☐ Ensure your club's competitors have a Live Heats wrist band allocated to them.
- ☐ Encourage key personnel to subscribe to Surf Sports Weekly to keep up to date with all sport-related information.

Key Dates

- SLSNSW Awards of Excellence – Saturday 16 August 2025 (Hyatt Regency, Sydney)
- NSW Interbranch Championships – 29-30 November 2025
- NSW Country Championships – 23-25 January 2026
- NSW Surf Lifesaving Championships – 19 February-1 March 2026

Membership 2025

SURF LIFE SAVING
NEW SOUTH WALES



Key Changes

- SLSNSW has launched a statewide **Youth Strategy** focused on improving engagement of members aged 11-17. A series of face-to-face forums will be hosted in August this year to launch a suite of tools and resources to better support club Youth Officers to deliver engaging programs and retain youth members (see **Key Dates** section).
- A new **Child Safe Awareness for Young People** course is being released this season for members under the age of 18. Patrolling members aged 18+ are required to complete the **SLS Child Safe Awareness course**, along with other role holders listed on page 2 of this pack.
- After two successful pilots in March and June 2025, SLSNSW will be hosting two **Emerging Volunteer Leader Programs** for members aged 18+ this season. See **Key Dates** section below. Expressions of interest will open in August 2025.
- This season SLSNSW will be hosting two programs aimed at members aged 18-25. The programs aim to broaden members' awareness of SLS pathways and support the development of a network for members in this age range. See **Key Dates** section below. Expressions of interest will open in September 2025.
- Wellbeing remains a priority at all levels. In the 2025/26 season, position titles have been updated to better reflect role responsibilities and minimise confusion.
 - Peer Support Officers** (previously Branch Peer Officers) will continue to provide on-the-ground support following critical incidents, assisting Duty Officers with scene management, conducting well checks post-incident, and referring members to professional support services as necessary.
 - Wellbeing Officers** (previously Club Peer Supporters) will focus on promoting wellbeing and providing support within their local club community. They will encourage early help-seeking behaviours and offer personal and club-related support within regular club activities. Expressions of interest are open until 1 September 2025.

- The **SLSA Age Manager Course** has been updated with a refreshed look and improved content including interactive learning modules on diversity, equity, and inclusion, as well as information on supporting neurodiverse children. There is no requirement for existing Age Managers to complete this course, however Age Managers must complete the annual proficiency by watching the SLSA Age Manager video available via the SLS eLearning platform.
- Proof of age (e.g. birth certificates) is no longer required to be sighted for new members** joining Nippers. This change aligns with other community sport sign-up processes, simplifying the process for members.
- A new **Nipper Safety Assistant (NSA) Award** has been created nationally to assist clubs with additional resources for water safety during Nippers. NSAs can support water safety personnel during Nipper activities when it has been deemed suitable by the Water Safety Supervisor and when:
 - Conditions are confirmed as low risk conditions with an assessment completed in the Surf Risk Rating (SRR) tool.
 - The age group is U8 or below.
 - Activities are shallow water only.
 - NSAs do not make up more than 50% of the water safety team for the Nipper activity.

The award is available for members aged 13+ and requires completion of a 50m swim, 2-minutes of treading water, signals and rescue tube orientation and practice in its usage.

The **Signals Poster** and **NSA Sign Off Sheet** (both available on the SLS Document Library) are the only resources required to deliver this award, which can be delivered by SRC/BM Trainers, Assessors, Facilitators (TAFs) or Endorsed Delegates.

Clubs are encouraged to consider expanding their Endorsed Delegate pool to ensure the delivery burden does not fall solely on existing TAFs.

More information can be found in Policy 1.01A Water Safety Procedure and Policy 1.01B Nipper Safety Assistant Award Procedure.

Reminders

- Special Events** (e.g. camps, fun days etc.) may only proceed if approved as a Special Event. The level and type of insurance coverage and/or limitations will be advised as part of the approval process.

Relevant Links

[SLS Document Library & eLearning Platform](#)
[Member Wellbeing and Critical Incident Support](#)
[Wellbeing Officer Expressions of Interest](#)
[Workers Compensation](#)
[Member Development Programs](#)
[Member Recognition](#)
[Junior Activities Resources](#)
[Nipper App User Guide](#)
[Active Kids Vouchers](#)
[Child Safe Resources](#)
[Working with Children Check Requirements](#)
[Verify Working With Children Checks \(WWCCs\)](#)

Key Tasks

- ☐ Ensure that WWCCs are verified with the Office of Children's Guardian and that verification details are recorded in SurfGuard.
- ☐ Ensure that any expired WWCCs are renewed.
- ☐ Ensure that Age Managers have completed their training (including the annual Age Manager Video) to remain current.

Key Dates

- SLSNSW Awards of Excellence – Saturday 16 August 2025 (Hyatt Regency, Sydney)
- Youth Forums
 - Newcastle – Saturday 23 August
 - Coffs Harbour – Sunday 24 August
 - Ulladulla – Saturday 30 August
 - Sydney – Sunday 31 August
- 18-25 Programs (Sydney)
 - 21-23 November 2026
 - 17-19 April 2026
- Junior Lifesaver of the Year Program – April 2025
- Volunteer Leader Programs (Sydney)
 - 5-7 December 2025
 - 20-22 March 2026