

SLSQ Peer Support Procedure

Subject: SLSQ Peer Support Procedure	Department: Membership Services
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Purpose

Surf Life Saving Queensland (SLSQ) operates in an environment which has the potential for traumatic incidents to occur. These can include many types of incidents both on the beach and within the Surf Club surroundings. These incidents can include direct, cumulative, and vicarious trauma. SLSQ is committed to offering support to members should they experience a traumatic incident while performing lifesaving measures or other events relating to their involvement with SLSQ. This document will outline the Peer Support Process within SLSQ.

Scope

Peer Support Officers (PSO) within Surf Life Saving Queensland (SLSQ) can offer support to members should they have experienced a critical incident whilst on duty or whilst performing lifesaving measures. A Peer Support Officer (PSO) is a fellow member of Surf Life Saving Queensland who has had lived experience being a patrolling member. The aim of Peer Support is to help members develop coping, problem-solving and stress management skills or to help identify when professional treatment is required. It should be noted that peer support is not a form of counselling. A PSO is there to help all members who may have been in an incident at an approved activity by SLSQ. Please refer to the [Peer Support Framework](#) for more information. Experienced PSO's will handle the more critical incidents.

The Peer Support program is a confidential process. The member's personal or identifying information may only be released if there is a perceived risk a person may cause harm to themselves or others. In this instance, immediate support from an appropriate source should be obtained. In all other situations, before any information is disclosed, permission must be obtained from the individual concerned.

A Peer Support Officer must be trained by Surf Life Saving Queensland and must attend a refresher course once every three (3) years. Peer Support Officers are recruited annually with a requirement for Club and/or Branch President's to endorse their applications.

To become a Peer Support Officer please fill out the [Expression of Interest](#) form.

Definitions

CEO - Chief Executive Officer

PC - Patrol Captain

DO – Duty Officer

PSO - Peer Support Officer

SLSQ - Surf Life Saving Queensland

SOCC - State Operations and Communications Centre

Roles

SLSQ Membership Staff

- SLSQ Staff are assigned to assist, coordinate, and support the Member Welfare Advisor and PSOs.
- Manage the rostering of PSOs during patrolling season.
- From the 2023/2024 Season Southeast Queensland Clubs will have a roster to ensure a 7-day week response during the season.
- Will refer to the rostered PSO if an incident occurs outside of a SOCC event.
- Will provide members requiring professional treatment with information about how to access this and initiate a Work Cover Claim if appropriate.
- Will facilitate PSO recruitment, development, and training.

Member Welfare Advisor

- Provides leadership and advice within the Peer Support area.
- Is qualified in psychology, social work, or in welfare or health related field and have an active interest/ involvement in Peer Support activities within surf lifesaving.
- To assist in the development of guidelines on the coordination of Peer Support Program, Member Protection Information Officer, Critical Incident, Bullying Awareness and Child Safety
- Assists to coordinate recruitment of Peer Support personnel as and when required.
- Assists to coordinate assignment and availability of Peer Support personnel when necessary.

Peer Support Officer

- Have the option to be rostered throughout the week at designated times as per the roster for the region.
- Available to assist outside the rostered times if required, (e.g., when there is a critical incident).
- Provide support via telephone or in person to SLSQ members. Help members understand when it is important to be referred to a GP, Psychologist or Counsellor or be able to provide the support to get the member back to their duties.
- Assist members to understand the potential impact of stressful events.
- Educate members on the impacts of stressful events and provide coping strategies.
- Helping members to identify when professional treatment may be required.
- Provide educational material pertaining to possible impact of critical incidents to members.
- Offering a follow up call 14 days after the incident
- Providing confidentiality to all those who receive Peer Support, this includes any information communicated via phone or email.

Members wishing to lodge a Work Cover claim can contact SLSQ via volunteerwc@lifesaving.com.au

Please refer to [SLSQ Procedure GOV10](#) – Member Injury Reporting for more information.

Patrol Captain

Following an incident, the Patrol Captain (PC) will ensure appropriate documentation of the incident is completed and an assessment of members' mental state made. This includes their immediate safety such as ensuring they are in a suitable condition to drive home etc.

Duty Officer

The Duty Officer (DO) will work with the Patrol Captain/ Club Captain/ or those involved to provide incident particulars and will have the responsibility to make the referral for Peer Support through the State Operations and Communications Centre (SOCC). In the absence of the DO the PC will make the referral.

State Operations and Communication Centre (SOCC) personnel

SOCC personnel will collect from the DO or PC information about the incident and relevant member details including names, contact and involvement in incident. If a minor is involved SOCC will provide details on the members parental and/or caregiver contact information.

SOCC personnel will then contact the rostered PSO, inform them of the incident, and provide the contact details of all members involved, including an email contact utilising Surfguard if necessary.



Step 1	An incident occurs – State Operations Communication Centre (SOCC/Surfcom) shift supervisor creates the incident in LIMSOC
	SOCC/Surfcom notify Peer Support Coordinator (PSC) of incident in progress.
Step 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SOCC/DO to obtain member names and each members contact details and record in IRL notes ● DO's report to shift supervisor ● SOCC/Surfcom to contact rostered on Peer Support Officers (PSO) ● SOCC/Surfcom to provide roster on PSO's member details <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ensuring all members under the age of 18 have the parents or guardian's permission before talking to the member
	Operational Debrief conducted at scene by Duty Officer/Patrol Captain. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Please use the form here
Step 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Advise of the Peer Support Program but focus on the Operational Debrief ● SOCC/Surfcom to record in IRL notes that the Operational Debrief has occurred and by whom
Step 4	PSO to contact Members involved within 24-48 hours after the incident occurred. PSO provide Members with traumatic flyer and Service referral flyer after chat with member
Step 5	PSO/s conduct any member follow ups over phone as required and provide support to members involved in incident.
Step 6	PSO's complete the Peer Support Form, within 7 days of talking to the member.
	#Please note this form is confidential and only the Member Welfare Officer and Peer Support Officer assigned to the incident can see this

If in doubt, contact SOCC.

SOCC personnel must keep PSO phone numbers confidential and should not share these contact details with any other party.

Referral for Peer Support not Through SOCC

Referrals during patrolling hours will be made by SOCC personnel as per the above role descriptions.

Referrals during business hours are to be directed to the Member Welfare Officer via 07 3846 8023 or peersupport@lifesaving.com.au or mcaughlan@lifesaving.com.au.

If a President asks you to provide Peer Support to a member in your club without going following the above procedure, please contact Maddison via mcaughlan@lifesaving.com.au or 0429 365 561.

Please note that Peer Support is not a 24-hr crisis service. Members requiring urgent support should contact 000 or Lifeline on 13 11 14. More Support Services can be found on the [SLSQ App](#).

The PSO will endeavor to make contact either in person or via telephone within 24-48 hours of the incident. The PSO will then use their discretion regarding further contact. However, the PSO should make additional contact approximately one to two weeks after the initial session for a follow up assessment unless this offer is declined by the member.

Within 7 days of the incident the PSO will submit a confidential [Peer Support Form](#), or a confidential verbal report, for each member offered Peer Support to the Member Welfare Coordinator.

For further information with posters on How to Access Peer Support, please refer to the SLSQ App [Here](#)

If you have any concerns or questions, please reach out to the Member Welfare Officer

Email: mcaughlan@lifesaving.com.au

Phone: 0429 365 561