

Surf Life Saving Queensland Magazine

ISSUE SIX



Queensland

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As we wrap up 2024 and reflect on another remarkable year, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to everyone who has supported and contributed to the success of Surf Life Saving Queensland and all our Clubs, affiliates, and services. Your commitment and dedication ensure we continue to protect and save lives along our coastline.

This year has been one of exceptional milestones. We secured a 10-year funding agreement with the Queensland Government, an extraordinary commitment that will bolster our lifesaving operational capacity and support our mission into the next decade.

In addition, we welcomed a new partnership, Anaconda, who join forces with our iconic red and yellow to strengthen our capabilities and enhance our community outreach. Thanks to SLSA, we have also recently announced a new partnership with Qantas who will promote our brand and beach safety message to millions of domestic and international visitors. These are exciting opportunities ahead.

We hosted and celebrated the Lifesaving World Championships 2024: the best and most inclusive Worlds ever! Thousands of competitors from around the globe joined us, creating unforgettable memories and showcasing the world-class talent of our movement (and particularly our local Queensland Members!).

This year also marked the launch of our very first Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion strategy, a forward-thinking framework to ensure SLSQ is a place where everyone feels welcome and valued; now and into the future.

The summer festive season is always a busy time for our organisation. With thousands of people flocking to Queensland's beautiful beaches, our lifesavers and lifeguards step up to ensure safety remains a top priority. Amidst this bustling period, I encourage you to take moments to share joy with your loved ones and reflect on the meaningful work we do as part of this incredible movement.

I would like to specifically acknowledge our North Queensland volunteers, who have reached the end of their patrolling season. Thank you for your dedication and resilience. Your service has ensured that both locals and tourists felt safe each time they entered the water. North Queensland lifesavers play a vital and reassuring role in our collective efforts to save lives, and your performance has been outstanding.

To all our Members, volunteers, staff and supporters across the state, thank you once again for your contributions throughout 2024. Your efforts are the foundation of everything we achieve. May you all have a safe and joyous festive season, and I look forward to continuing our lifesaving work together in the new year.

Gerard O'Brien
President, Surf Life Saving Queensland

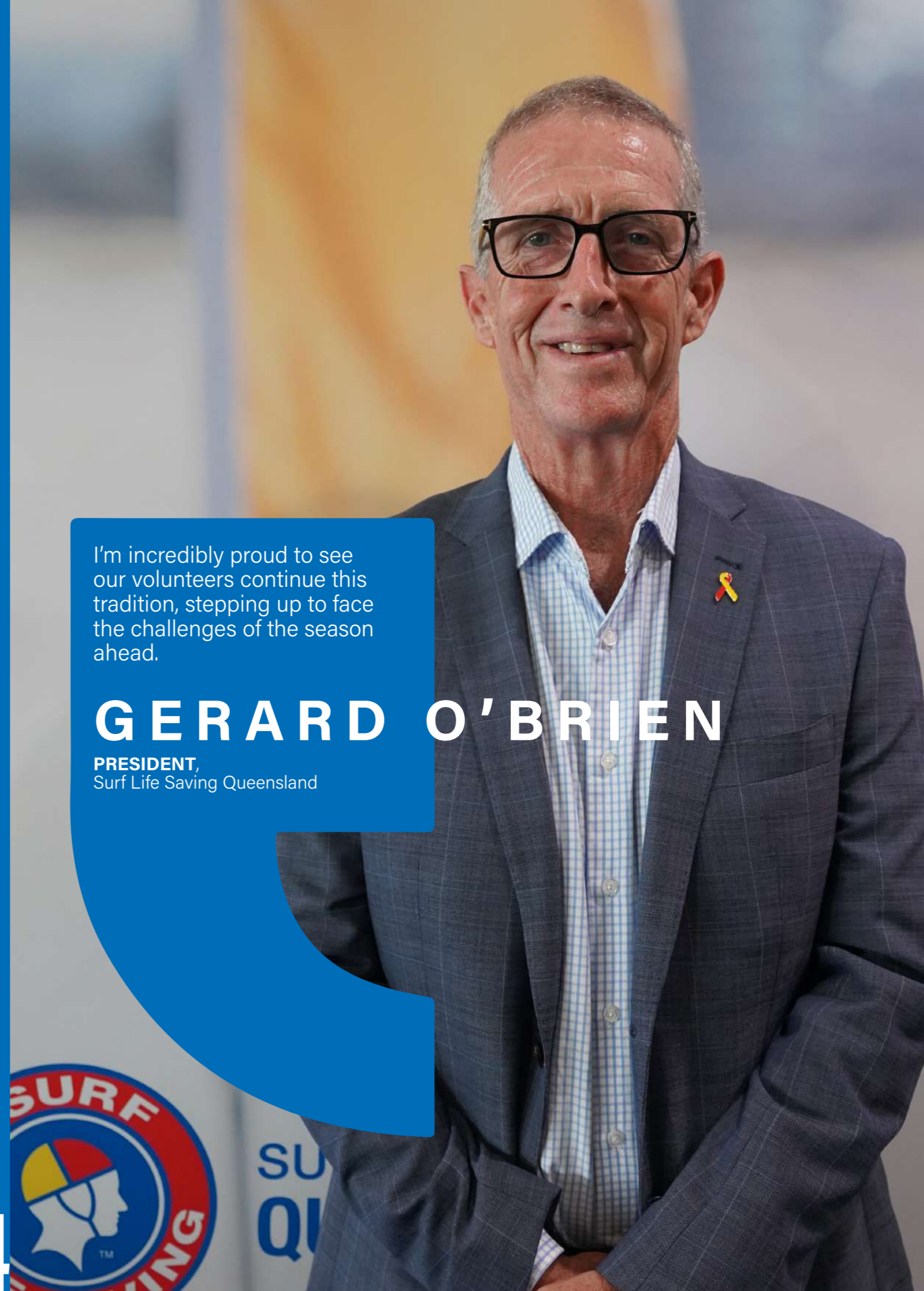
I'm incredibly proud to see our volunteers continue this tradition, stepping up to face the challenges of the season ahead.

GERARD O'BRIEN

PRESIDENT,
Surf Life Saving Queensland



SURF
QLD



CEO'S MESSAGE

As another year comes to a close, it's a privilege to reflect on the incredible dedication, achievements, and spirit of our Surf Life Saving Queensland family. The December issue of Shoreline is a celebration of this, showcasing stories that capture the heart of our movement and the people who make it so special.

In this edition, we shine a spotlight on Rory Sanders, our Queensland and Australian Lifeguard of the Year. Rory exemplifies the resilience and quiet excellence of our lifeguards, who often work tirelessly behind the scenes, saving lives and protecting our beaches. He's just one of many outstanding individuals, but in these pages, we pay tribute to his hard work, passion, and love of photography.

We also celebrate other award winners, including the formidable Lana Rogers, whose accomplishments in Queensland's waters continue to inspire. The S.A.S.S.Y program, another standout from our Awards of Excellence, highlights the power of community programs, especially in supporting the safety of women in the CALD community.

You'll also enjoy a feature on the incredible Port Douglas Surf Life Saving Club. Nestled in one of Australia's most picturesque locations, this small but mighty Club is building a vibrant community along our tropical shores. And for the science enthusiasts

among us, Dr. Karl takes us on a unique dive into lifesaving, providing his signature mix of insight and curiosity.

This issue also reflects on our sporting achievements, from the North Aussie Championships to the adrenaline-pumping world of surf boats. These stories showcase the remarkable talent and strength of our surf sports competitors.

Like Shoreline, this year has been packed full of highlights—too many to name. What matters most, however, is the collective effort of everyone who wears the red and yellow. Whether you're a volunteer, a paid staff member, or a club leader driving your team forward, your commitment is what makes everything possible. From the bottom of my heart, thank you.

As we head into the festive season, I wish you all a safe and restful break. May it be a time to recharge, reflect, and reconnect. I look forward to seeing what we can achieve together in the year ahead.

Dave Whimpey
CEO, Surf Life Saving Queensland

From moments of triumph to years of dedication, these stories highlight the heart and spirit that drive our organisation forward.

DAVE WHIMPEY

CEO,
Surf Life Saving Queensland

RORY SANDERS: LIFEGUARD OF THE YEAR

Queensland
2024
Lifeguard
of the Year
Rory
Sanders

North Coast Queensland

In the world of beach safety, Rory Sanders was recently announced our 2024 Lifeguard of the Year at the Surf Life Saving Queensland and Australian Awards of Excellence. He is currently based in Rainbow Beach as a permanent Lifeguard, Drone Pilot, and Auxiliary Fireman. Rory has been recognised and praised for his exceptional vigilance and commitment to public safety as his contributions go well beyond routine patrols. In addition to life-saving duties, Rory is also a talented photographer, capturing the beauty of Arctic Regions and Coastal horizons.

Beginning of the journey

Rory's passion for Surf Lifesaving began as early as seven years old where he became a Nipper at the Noosa Heads Surf Life Saving Club.

"My parents encouraged my brother and I to join and gain valuable experience with water safety as well as other lifelong skills such as CPR and basic first aid."

After finding his love for the ocean, Rory soon began patrolling for Noosa Heads as soon as he was old enough to do so.

"During this time, I gained a sense of what it was like to patrol the beach, and this sparked the passion to pursue a future career in Lifeguarding."

From Nippers to a Career in Lifeguarding

After finding his passion and undergoing extensive education and training, Rory became a full-time certified Lifeguard. Out of the many memorable rescues he has performed, Rory recently was involved in a multiple person rescue off a remote, unpatrolled area. Many people aren't aware of how challenging performing a rescue of this nature by yourself would be.

"I left that incident knowing if I hadn't been there, two fatalities would have likely occurred."

To avoid near fatal rescues like this, Rory shared his main piece of advice for beachgoers to remain safe at our beaches.

"Always swim to your ability and in a patrolled area. Read and follow lifeguard instructions, and get your child into Nippers, it provides them with crucial water safety skills for life!"

Aside from the tough rescues and intense training, Lifeguarding has allowed Rory to thrive in the realm of leadership and mentoring. Being able to share his expertise and experience with up-and-coming Lifeguards has been such a rewarding moment for him.

"I love the sense of working in a team and working toward achieving a desired outcome to the best of our ability."

A Life Through the Lens

During his time as a Nipper and lifesaver, Rory picked up a camera in 2016 where he developed yet another huge passion and "fell in love with capturing images." His first few photographs were taken "in the top of Norway, capturing the Aurora Borealis." He soon came to realise that the Arctic Regions were his favourite place to encapsulate the beauty of the "dramatic weather and huge changes in seasons." In and amongst his busy schedule as a Lifeguard, Rory is currently working on a book for his local region of Rainbow Beach/ Fraser Island.

"I've been taking photos here for the last 5-6 years using helicopters, drones, water housings, and a normal DSLR to capture images that have not yet been documented for the most part. I have dedicated many early mornings and late nights towards

putting together what I aspire to be a masterpiece and a legacy that I hope inspires others to get out and explore."

Rory's natural desire to motivate and inspire people through his work is one of the many reasons he was chosen as this year's award recipient. His tips for pursuing a career in photography are to "not get caught up in what gear you're using. Get out, explore, and take thousands of photos. Just like anything in life, practise makes perfect. Enjoy the process and the photos will come!"

What's Next?

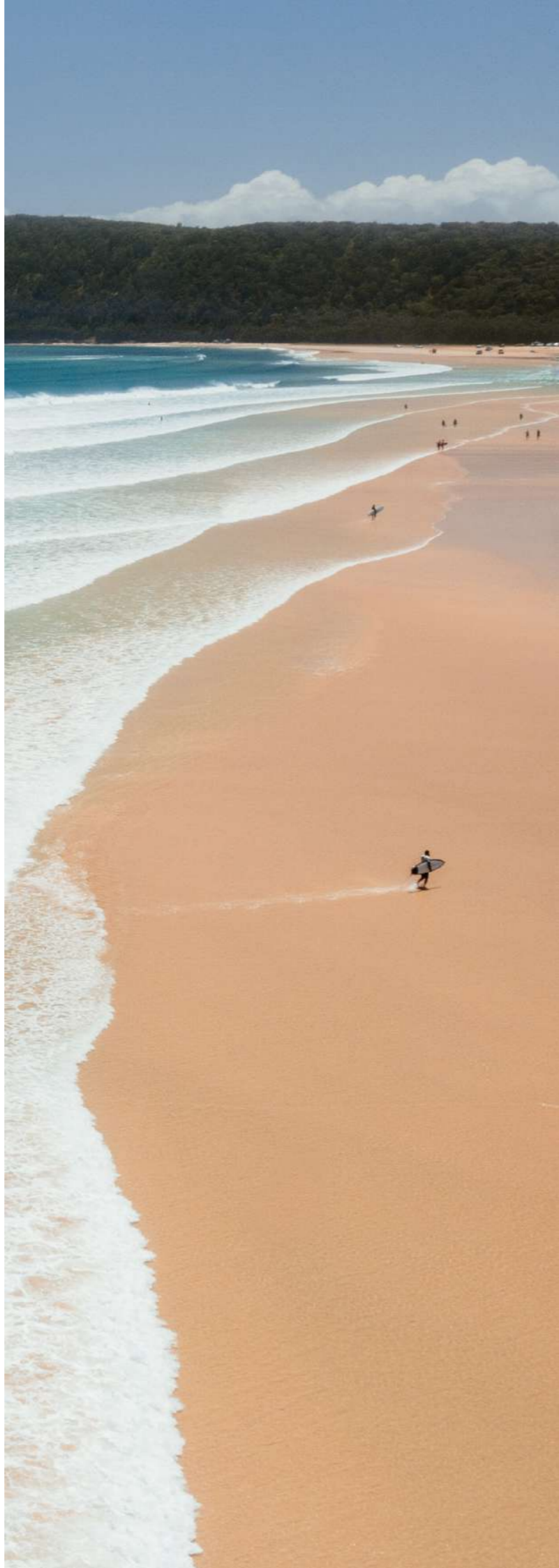
So, what is next for our State and National Lifeguard of the Year? As much as Rory loves his current role as a permanent Lifeguard, Drone Operator, and Auxiliary Fireman, he is someone who strives towards continuously bettering himself and learning as much as he can to give back to the community. That said, he hopes to "keep building on my resume of Qualifications and start to instruct others in Lifeguarding/Drone Operations." On top of this, Rory is also currently enrolled in additional Cert IV Training and Assessment courses, as well as further studies with Drones.

Rory consistently exemplifies what it means to be a dedicated and humble role model in our community.

"It's a huge honour, so many others I feel were also deserving of this award due to the amazing work each and every one does!"

This statement really reflects Rory's character—he continuously acknowledges the collective efforts of his fellow Lifeguards while putting in the hard work to excel in his own role. His unwavering commitment to safety, education, and community service not only sets a high standard for his peers but also inspires future generations of lifeguards (and photographers).

Rory's recognition is a testament to his remarkable dedication both on and off the beach, where he truly embodies the spirit of excellence that this award represents.



The Little Lifesavers program is a great introduction to surf lifesaving for kids aged 5-12 without having to travel to a surf beach or join a surf lifesaving club.

Activities included in the program are:

- ★ Board paddling
- ★ Dolphin diving
- ★ Beach sprints
- ★ CPR
- ★ Wading
- ★ Flags
- ★ Rescue techniques
- ★ Patient care

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 **Little Lifesavers**



Queensland

TOWNSVILLE LIFE GUARDS MAKE HISTORIC DEBUT AT 2024 COOLANGATTA GOLD

In October this year, Townsville Lifeguards made history at the iconic Coolangatta Gold, a prestigious endurance event in surf lifesaving, by fielding the first-ever team from the region to compete in the Long Course. The team of 4 consisted of Brianna Free taking it out on the Ski, Tiago Vazquez Bertani hitting the surf for the swim leg, Garielle Dewar battling it out on the board, and Liam Arkcoll bringing it home on foot for the last run leg. As the event is known for its brutal combination of land and water skills, the Coolangatta Gold is not only a test of physical strength but also of mental toughness. For the Townsville team, taking part in this competition was both a personal milestone and a powerful opportunity to put their skills to the ultimate test on a national stage.

The Motivation Behind the Challenge

For the Townsville Lifeguards, the Coolangatta Gold was more than just an event—it was a chance to elevate their training, push their limits, and represent their community in one of Australia's most respected surf sports competitions. "Having this event as motivation to increase our training and put our skills to the test, while also being part of such a prestigious national competition, was an honour," said the athletes. The event had always been a fixture in the surf lifesaving world, and the team of 4 thought it would be exciting to train hard and put Townsville on the map.

A Historic First

As far as the team knows, this year marked the first time a group of Townsville Lifeguards had competed in the Coolangatta Gold Long Course, making their debut an exciting and historic moment for the region's surf lifesaving community. "Representing Townsville in such a prestigious event was definitely a huge honour," the team explained. "Being able to compete at this level, and finish in such a respected competition despite the differences in our training conditions compared to competitors from Southeast Queensland, is something we're all incredibly proud of."

For the Townsville team, regimes looked a bit different in comparison to SEQ athletes due to some wildlife and environmental considerations. Each team member tailored their training to their specific event, making sacrifices and taking on unique challenges along the way. For instance, "Liam's training often took him up the steep Castle Hill in Townsville, while Tiago sacrificed early mornings in the pool, following black lines to build his swimming endurance. Gabby had to contend with the wildlife of North Queensland, paddling along The Strand while keeping an eye out for crocodiles. Bri's training was no less intense, regularly paddling across the waters to Magnetic Island just to grab a coffee."

Team Spirit and Camaraderie

The success of the Townsville Lifeguards team wasn't just about physical preparation—it was also about the strong bonds they share. "We have such an incredible team culture because we're all extremely close friends," one member shared. The team fostered a supportive environment where everyone held each other accountable, offering encouragement during the tough training sessions and through the stresses of competition. "Sometimes we'd train together just so we could grab coffee afterward," they said. "It's these little things that make all the difference when things get intense."

Although the team went and competed with just the 4 of them, they were not alone throughout this journey. From training support to race-day assistance, their colleagues, friends, and families played a pivotal role. "We had so much support around us from our coworkers leading up to the event," they noted. Riley DeRooy, a fellow Townsville lifeguard, helped by paddling alongside them as their safety board paddler. The team was also buoyed by their families, with Jason and Kim Free stepping in as handler and team host, and Gabby's, Liam's, and Tiago's families joining as cheer squads, both in person and virtually. "With this entire group of people behind the scenes it meant that we could focus on racing and helped the day go so much smoother."

Looking to the Future

Having completed the Coolangatta Gold, the Townsville Lifeguards are eager to continue working hard and return next year. "We've all been inspired to compete in more events within Surf Life Saving," the team shared. "We're excited to come back as the same team next year and compete in the Long Course again." And there's even talk of their parents getting involved! Rumours are circulating that they might form a team to compete against the lifeguards.

The legacy that these athletes have created just goes to show how hard work and some motivation can pay off. "Having our team compete in the Coolangatta Gold demonstrates that it is possible for North Queensland athletes to compete in high level competitions and we are hoping that this helps foster greater participation from smaller and more regional areas." The team hopes that from their efforts, they can motivate the younger generation of athletes in North Queensland to compete at high levels of competition within our sport."

Advice for Young Athletes

For young athletes in North Queensland who aspire to follow in their footsteps, the Townsville team offers simple yet valuable advice: "Just enter the events and give it a go," they said. "You never know how you're going to do unless you try. And even if you don't place at the top, it's about doing the best you can and having fun."

As the Townsville Lifeguards look to the future, their historic achievement at the Coolangatta Gold has already made a lasting impact on both their personal journeys and the future of surf lifesaving in North Queensland.





THE S.A.S.S.Y. PROGRAM: EMPOWERING WOMEN FROM DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS IN SURF SAFETY

Anita Moore is on a mission to bring surf safety to women from culturally diverse backgrounds, and it all started with a close call of her own. Growing up on Malaysia's East Coast, she was just nine years old when she found herself caught in a rip current—something she didn't even know existed at the time. Thankfully, her father had encouraged her to learn to swim, a skill that allowed her to survive that unexpected challenge. Her close call sparked a lifelong passion for ocean awareness and safety, and years later, it also served as the foundation for a transformative program for Alexandra Headland: S.A.S.S.Y. (Surf Awareness, Salt, Soul, and You).

The S.A.S.S.Y. program was developed specifically for women from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds, who might not have had early opportunities to learn surf safety or swimming skills. "Seeing how many people from diverse backgrounds wanted to try surfing but lacked surf survival knowledge was a wake-up call," says Moore. "Watching them struggle in the water or feel uncomfortable after falling off their boards really highlighted the need for this program."

Building Skills and Confidence from Pool to Surf

One of S.A.S.S.Y.'s core elements is the gradual progression from pool sessions to beach sessions, giving participants time to build swimming skills in a safe, controlled environment. During the first five weeks in the pool, participants focus on breathing techniques, learning efficient swimming strokes, and acclimating to the water. Guided by experienced trainers like Tony Loughlin and Lesley Street, participants are supported every step of the way, building both practical skills and a sense of confidence in and around the water.

Once the women transition to the surf, the training takes on new dimensions. Learning to read ocean conditions, identifying rip currents, and understanding that rips can sometimes be used strategically to navigate beyond breaking waves are some of the crucial skills they acquire. Moore emphasises that, "Learning not to panic in the surf and even mastering body-surfing techniques has been transformative for many of these women."

Safe and Supportive Environment

Creating a welcoming and safe atmosphere has been paramount for Moore and her team. By conducting sessions on calm, sunny days and ensuring a strong participant-to-trainer ratio (three trainers for every 10 participants), they make sure each woman feels secure. "The pristine conditions and supportive setup helped alleviate any initial anxiety," Moore explains. As participants grew more comfortable, many returned to the beach even on days with more challenging conditions, a testament to their increased confidence.

The controlled pool setting allowed participants to practice swimming skills without the added concerns of ocean currents, waves, or depth, making it easier for them to progress at their own pace. For some, the pool sessions offered a safe starting point, and Moore notes, "The ability to stand up or cling to the pool's edge provided a comfort level that was essential for building their confidence."

Fostering Friendships and Lifelong Ocean Skills

As S.A.S.S.Y. grew, it quickly became more than a swim and surf program. “The participants not only learned ocean safety but formed new friendships and a sense of community,” says Moore. Some have even introduced their friends to the program, leading to plans for a new session to welcome more women and a follow-up program for those who have completed the first session.

Moore hopes that after completing the 10-week program, participants will feel equipped to enjoy the ocean with a new sense of freedom. “Our ultimate goal is for them to swim with confidence, to understand the conditions, and to inspire others to do the same. The program is not just about physical skills; it’s also about self-confidence, self-worth, and learning to be patient with oneself.”

Breaking Barriers for CALD Women

For women from culturally diverse backgrounds, the program has removed many barriers that might otherwise prevent them from embracing the surf. With S.A.S.S.Y.’s encouraging and non-competitive structure, participants are encouraged to ask questions and learn through demonstration, an approach that has resonated deeply with the group. Moore shares, “From the very beginning, we made it clear that improvement is personal, and it’s not a competition. This understanding has helped create a relaxed learning environment, supporting women to take pride in each milestone.”

The participants’ achievements have been inspiring. Three women completed a 1 km Solstice swim, and one participant is already preparing to earn her Surf Rescue Certificate (SRC). Another is now motivated to learn how to surf, while several others continue swimming regularly in the pool and the ocean.

The Future of S.A.S.S.Y.

Moore sees a bright future for S.A.S.S.Y. with the potential to expand beyond Alexandra Headlands, and has received interest from other Clubs wanting to bring the program in to their communities.

For women who may be hesitant to join, Moore’s advice is simple and heartfelt: “Life is short. If you have children or grandchildren, you want them to be safe in the ocean, and to ensure that, you need to feel safe yourself. Playing confidently in the surf is about more than fun—it’s about vitality and leaving the beach with a clear mind and renewed energy.”

As the S.A.S.S.Y. program continues to grow, it offers CALD women not only practical surf skills but also a gateway into a community that values both safety and joy in the water. Moore’s vision has become a platform for empowerment, resilience, and connection—one wave at a time.





FROM CYCLONE RECOVERY TO CARNIVAL CELEBRATIONS: THE PATROL SEASON IN PORT DOUGLAS SLSC

As Port Douglas Surf Life Saving Club wraps up another vibrant season, Club President Irene Cats reflects on a year filled with notable achievements, community dedication, and memorable moments. From major events that brought the community together to Club successes that signal growth for the future, Irene shares what has made 2024 a standout year for Port Douglas SLSC.

The Highlight of the Year: Port Douglas Carnival

For Irene, the annual Port Douglas Carnival remains a seasonal highlight, bringing Members from all North Queensland Clubs together for a weekend of competition, camaraderie, and celebration. "It's always great to see our Club Members come together for that event and really work as a team," Irene explains.

Another highlight that comes to mind is the bustling Port Douglas Beach Day, a beloved community occasion featuring kites, games, music, and food stalls. "We literally have thousands of people on the beach all day," she shares, recalling how the Club gears up to provide extra patrols for the influx of visitors. "It's always a great day where we get as many people as possible on patrol, even if it's just for a few hours, to keep everyone safe."

Celebrating Young Talent

A significant achievement for the Club this season was the selection of three young Club Members to represent Port Douglas in the branch state team for the upcoming QLD State championships. "It's really exciting to see Elise, Ruby & Marlee set this as a goal and achieve it," Irene enthuses. "It's been quiet on that front the past few years, so having three girls together, training and preparing for state, is a big boost." This accomplishment not only reflects the hard

work of the athletes but also the strong, supportive environment the Club provides, allowing Members to thrive and pursue their goals.

A Year of Resilience and Community Impact

The season began amid recovery efforts following Cyclone Jasper that left a mark on the community. Many Douglas Shire families and businesses were affected by this weather event and while the Club wasn't directly involved in emergency rescues, their presence offered a place for their Members to enjoy time with family and friends. "Having the Club as a happy place for our community to spend time together was very important in the aftermath of this significant event," Irene recalls.

A Quick-Thinking Patrol Moment

Though Port Douglas may be known as one of Australia's safest beaches, a unique situation unfolded recently when a beachgoer mistook a floating tree branch for a crocodile. Irene recounts how the patrol, led by Captain Michael Bolt with help from Nikki Harty and Matty Critchley, jumped into action to investigate the report. "After Michael closed the beach and directed people out of the water, Nikki went up to the lookout, and Matty took the IRB out. They coordinated through radios to check the area thoroughly," she says, chuckling as she recalls the relief when it turned out to be just a tree. While no real danger was present, the event highlighted our Lifesavers' readiness and the trust the community places in them.

A Welcoming Community Spirit

Port Douglas SLSC serves a vital role for both locals and the many tourists who flock to the area. Irene describes the Club's proactive approach in ensuring visitors feel safe and informed. "People come from overseas and down south with all these questions and fears," she shares. "They've heard stories about crocodiles or stingers, and we're here to help them understand that our beach is a safe place to enjoy." This welcoming atmosphere and commitment to safety have solidified the Club's bond with the community, creating a space where everyone can confidently enjoy the pristine beach environment.

Looking Ahead: Growth and Expansion Goals

With the season drawing to a close, Irene and the Port Douglas SLSC team are already looking ahead. "We're focused on growing our membership," Irene notes, highlighting the ongoing need to recruit new members, particularly given the transient nature of Port Douglas. "We're hoping to see the enthusiasm among our junior members translate into more patrolling members and committee leaders." The Club has also secured funding for facility expansion, which will enhance their ability to serve both their members and the local community.

Looking forward, Irene is optimistic about the future of Port Douglas SLSC. With a dedicated team, supportive community, and plans for growth, the Club is well-positioned to continue its legacy of safety, connection, and service.



INTRODUCING IT'S A RAP - CELEBRATING OUR PATH TO RECONCILIATION

across Queensland beaches and the celebration of Indigenous Round at the Fastest on Sand event. Each story emphasises the importance of unity and respect within the SLSQ community.

To stay connected with this journey and learn more, visit It's a RAP for an in-depth look into SLSQ's ongoing reconciliation initiatives.

[Read a snippet here](#)

INDIGENOUS ROUND - FASTEST ON SAND

On Saturday, May 11, 2024, Surf Life Saving North Queensland hosted the inaugural Indigenous Round of the Fastest on Sand at Yorkey's Knob, Yirrganydji Saltwater Djabugay Country.

This event was more than a competition—it was a day of unity, learning, and celebration, showcasing the power of coming together.

Participants, many of whom travelled from afar, were Welcomed onto Country and invited to stand in silence—Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians, Surf Life Saving members, and community members alike. Standing between the iconic red and yellow flags, they joined in solidarity. Young Aboriginal dancers from Forest Beach SLSC, and students of St Theresa's College, Abergowrie, opened the event with a powerful performance, their movements stirring the sand beneath them as they called on their ancestors to join the celebration. The group leader invited everyone to clap along with the rhythm of the didgeridoo, a moment of unity in the spirit of reconciliation.

The first edition of It's a RAP has been launched by Surf Life Saving Queensland (SLSQ) to keep Members, stakeholders, and supporters informed on the journey toward reconciliation. This quarterly update highlights Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement across SLSQ, celebrates achievements, and outlines ways to get involved.

It's a RAP offers valuable insights into SLSQ's work with First Nations communities through the As One framework and Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), showcasing initiatives, events, and programs that foster inclusivity and strengthen partnerships. The update also highlights SLSQ's commitment to building trust, promoting cultural recognition, and expanding participation across the organisation.

This edition covers recent highlights, including the symbolic raising of the Australian, Aboriginal, and Torres Strait Islander flags



Scan the QR Code to read more





A SURGE IN VISITORS: PREPARING LIFESAVERS AND LIFEGUARDS FOR A BUSY FUTURE

Queensland's tourism industry is booming, with 24.9 million domestic and 2.1 million international visitors arriving in the year ending March 2024. As the state continues to see record-breaking numbers, the increase in beachgoers is inevitable, especially from international markets.

For our lifesavers and lifeguards, this means an even busier few years ahead as more people flock to Queensland's iconic beaches — many of whom may not be familiar with basic beach safety.

Tourism growth, especially from countries like New Zealand, China, the USA, Japan, and the UK, signals a growing need for eagle eyes on our beaches.

With visitors coming from diverse cultural backgrounds, there's a heightened chance that many beachgoers won't fully understand or adhere to essential beach safety practices. This makes your role as lifesavers and lifeguards more critical than ever.

Preparing for the Future

With international visitors returning in record numbers, especially from diverse countries like South Korea, Canada, and Thailand, we need to be prepared for a wide variety of languages and cultural understandings. Your proactive approach to beach safety education will help ensure Queensland's beaches remain safe, even as they get busier.

As more people enjoy our beautiful coastline, your role as a frontline protector of lives is more important than ever. Keep an eye out for tourists who might need extra guidance and use the tips above to ensure everyone enjoys Queensland's beaches safely.

Communication Tips for Non-English Speaking Beachgoers

One of the key challenges you'll face is communicating effectively with international tourists, particularly those who don't speak English fluently. Here are some tips to help you engage with these visitors and ensure they stay safe in the water:

1. Use Simple, Clear Language

When speaking to non-English speakers, avoid jargon or complex terms. Stick to simple, clear words like "safe," "swim between flags," "danger," or "help." Pairing these with gestures can also be helpful.

2. Point to Visual Cues

Signs, flags, and other visual tools can be incredibly effective in communicating beach safety. Point to the red and yellow flags, explain what they mean, and emphasize the importance of swimming between them.

3. Utilise the International Safety Page

To provide further clarity, direct non-English-speaking visitors to Surf Life Saving Queensland's International Safety page. This resource is available in multiple languages and covers essential beach safety information, making it easier for tourists to understand key messages.

4. Learn Key Phrases

It might be useful to learn a few key phrases in languages common among tourists, such as Mandarin, Japanese, or Spanish. Simple phrases like "dangerous" or "swim here" can go a long way in communicating effectively.

5. Use Hand Gestures and Demonstrations

For some visitors, physical demonstrations can be more effective than verbal explanations. Show them where it's safe to swim, how to identify rips, and where they shouldn't go. Gestures like pointing to flags or mimicking swimming motions can help bridge the language gap.

FANCY LEARNING A FEW LANGUAGES?

HERE'S HOW TO SAY "SWIM BETWEEN THE RED AND YELLOW FLAGS" IN EACH LANGUAGE, ALONG WITH THE PRONUNCIATION IN ENGLISH:



MANDARIN (CHINESE)

TEXT: 在红黄旗之间游泳

PRONUNCIATION: ZÀI HÓNG
HUÁNG QÍ ZHĪ JIĀN YÓU YǒNG



KOREAN

TEXT: 빨간색과 노란색 깃발 사이에서 수영하세요

PRONUNCIATION: PPAL-GAN-SAEK-
GWA NO-RAN-SAEK GIT-BAL SA-I-
E-SEO SU-YEONG-HA-SE-YO



ITALIAN

TEXT: NUOTA TRA LE BANDIERE
ROSSE E GIALLE

PRONUNCIATION: NWOH-TAH
TRAH LEH BAN-DEE-AIR-EH ROH-
SEH EH JAH-LEH



AUSTRALIAN

G'DAY COBBAH, STICK TO THE RED AND YELLOW FLAGS, MATE—DON'T BE A DRONGO AND GO SWIMMING IN THE WRONG END AND END UP IN STRIFE!



HINDI

TEXT: लाल और पीले झंडों के बीच तैरें

PRONUNCIATION: LAAL AUR PEELE
JHANDON KE BEECH TAIREN



PORTUGUESE

TEXT: NADE ENTRE AS BANDEIRAS
VERMELHA E AMARELA

PRONUNCIATION: NAH-JE EN-TREH
AHS BAHN-DEY-RAHZ VEHR-MEH-
LYAH EH AH-MAH-REH-LAH



FRENCH

TEXT: NAGEZ ENTRE LES
DRAPEAUX ROUGES ET JAUNES

PRONUNCIATION: NAH-ZHAY AHN-
TRUH LAY DRAH-POH ROOZH EH
ZHOHN



RESTART A HEART DAY



SAVING LIVES ONE COMPRESSION AT A TIME



This year's Restart A Heart Day, led by Surf Life Saving Queensland (SLSQ), saw Clubs across Queensland join forces to teach the public lifesaving compression-only CPR techniques. With the initiative spanning local communities, SLSQ collaborated with lifeguards, regional trainers, and various community groups, all driven by a single mission: empowering everyday people to make a difference in life-threatening moments. Tonya Pade, Member Training Manager, shares insights into the event's success and the value of CPR education for all ages.

The Power of Compression - Only CPR

"Compression CPR is better than no CPR," Tonya explains, noting that many people feel intimidated by the traditional CPR technique involving breaths. "COVID heightened that concern, making people less likely to intervene." However, studies show that more individuals are willing to perform CPR if compressions alone are required. "Good compressions are often enough to keep someone going until emergency services arrive," she says. "While breaths are encouraged if you're able, compression-only CPR has shown that even the simplest of actions can save lives."



Overcoming the Barriers

Tonya shared some unique challenges faced when engaging the public. "When we ask, 'Would you like to try CPR?' the most common response is actually 'no.' It's something we need to reframe, as CPR is not just about saving someone random; it's often about being prepared to save those we care about." She emphasises that many people might be called upon to perform CPR for a family member or friend, making this a skill for the home as much as it is for public spaces.

Building Lifesavers from a Young Age

The day wasn't just about adults learning CPR. SLSQ's efforts reached young people as well, from school-aged kids to even younger children learning to call for help. "We saw kids as young as six and seven giving it a go," says Tonya. "Even if they're too young to perform CPR fully, teaching them to call for help or know their address is invaluable. There's national research indicating that many children don't know this basic information." This reflects a growing focus at SLSQ on instilling essential skills early.

Lifesaving Beyond the Beach

As a proud representative of SLSQ, Tonya

highlighted how Restart A Heart Day aligns with the organisation's larger mission. "We are not just surf lifesavers—we're lifesavers, full stop. Many of us have used our training away from the beach: in restaurants, on the road, anywhere it's needed. That's in our blood." With these lifesaving skills, SLSQ members are equipped to help in any environment, embodying a culture of readiness and service that extends well beyond the water.

The Road Ahead

Reflecting on the day, Tonya sees room for even more growth. "This is exactly what Surf Life Saving should be doing—empowering our communities. We've set a great foundation, but we can go bigger. CPR awareness should be a part of our Club open days, driving membership while educating people on CPR." With a vision to make CPR training part of Queensland's DNA, SLSQ looks forward to increasing public participation in future events, reinforcing the vital role that every community member can play in saving lives. Jen Wiebe, our Client Services Manager to our commercial delivery team, is the driving force behind our team of experienced trainers in the delivery of CPR and First aid courses to commercial clients. Jen, with 18 years' experience as a paramedic, trains our trainers to a high level of skills and knowledge, equipping them deliver a high quality course

SLSQ offers nationally recognised training in CPR and First Aid to businesses, large and small, schools and other organisations at locations and times to suit their needs. All profits made from these courses goes back into SLSQ Clubs to support members. Jen was conducting CPR training at a local business on Restart a Heart Day.

As Tonya puts it, "We are more than our Clubs, more than Queensland. We're part of a world organisation dedicated to protecting our communities." And through the hands-on training offered like on Restart A Heart Day, SLSQ is well on its way to fulfilling that mission, one compression at a time.

If you are interested in booking a course with Jen or any of our training team contact us on: <https://lifesaving.com.au/commercial-courses>

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: RILEY MITCHELL, WESTPAC LIFESAVER RESCUE HELICOPTER SERVICE

Riley Mitchell has been a dedicated volunteer with the Westpac Lifesaver Rescue Helicopter Service (WLRHS) for over three years. His journey reflects a passion for community safety and a commitment to advancing his skills as a lifesaver.

Recently, Riley shared insights into his role, experiences, and the unique aspects of volunteering with this critical rescue team.

From Rescue Crew Officer to Aircrew Officer

Riley's journey with the WLRHS began as a Rescue Crew Officer, patrolling the Sunshine Coast and Gold Coast coastlines.

His role evolved recently as he transitioned to Aircrew Officer, working closely with pilots and the rest of the crew. This position

involves coordinating the timing and positioning of the helicopter during rescue operations over water or land, ensuring the utmost safety and precision in challenging environments.

Reflecting on his motivation to join, Riley says, "I wanted to further advance my lifesaving knowledge to better support our community on and off the beach." His commitment to extending his skills highlights the WLRHS's mission to protect the community, not just in the surf, but wherever the need arises.

The Reward of Continuous Learning

For Riley, one of the most rewarding aspects of his role is being surrounded by a team of individuals who share the same drive and dedication to supporting their community.

"There's always something new to learn," he explains. "That continuous growth is really fulfilling." Working in a fast-paced environment requires adaptability and teamwork—skills that Riley values both on the helicopter and in daily life.

Engaging with the Community

Although rescues are a regular part of the job, some of Riley's most memorable experiences come from interactions with the public, lifesavers, and lifeguards. Educating the community about the work of the WLRHS, he says, is incredibly rewarding. "I get a lot of enjoyment speaking with people about what we do," he shares, emphasising the importance of public engagement and awareness.

Skills That Go Beyond the Role

As a volunteer, Riley has developed invaluable skills that extend beyond his role with WLRHS. The ability to work efficiently as a team and prioritise tasks quickly are essential in a rescue setting, where every second counts. These skills have proven useful in his personal and professional life, enhancing his capacity to handle challenges under pressure.

Advice for Aspiring Volunteers

For those interested in joining the, Riley offers practical advice. "Get involved in your Club, operations support, and talk to any of the crew," he suggests. "This will provide you with a holistic overview of what is involved." While he acknowledges the commitment required, he assures potential volunteers that the opportunities are vast for those willing to put in the time and effort.

With his dedication, passion, and eagerness to grow, Riley Mitchell exemplifies the spirit of the Westpac Lifesaver Rescue Helicopter Service. His journey serves as an inspiration to those considering a role in lifesaving and to all who strive to make a difference in their community.





HELPING OUR PEOPLE RISE: SLSQ'S COMMITMENT TO MEMBER DEVELOPMENT

It's hard to forget that sometimes we are not just dedicated to saving lives on the beach—we are also a community that believes in developing and empowering its Members. Through a broad range of development programs, SLSQ provides opportunities for personal growth, leadership training, and professional development. These programs ensure that lifesavers are equipped with the skills needed to face the challenges of the beach and beyond.

Zoe Breitreutz, SLSQ's Member Development Manager, is passionate about the role these programs play in strengthening the organisation.

"At SLSQ, we believe that an empowered membership base is the foundation of everything we do," Breitreutz explains. "When our Members are well-equipped with the right skills and knowledge, they can navigate changes, whether they're dealing with lifesaving operations or taking on leadership roles within their Clubs."

Lifelong Learning for All Ages

One of the key strengths of SLSQ's development programs is their inclusivity—there's something for every Member, regardless of age or experience level. From young lifesavers just starting out to long-time volunteers taking on leadership responsibilities, SLSQ ensures that every individual can find a program that suits their needs.

"We offer a range of programs designed to suit all ages and roles within lifesaving,"

"Whether you're 16 and just beginning your journey with Surf Life Saving or 86 and still actively involved in your Club, there are learning opportunities at every stage. It's our mission to create a culture of lifelong learning, where Members are constantly growing and evolving."

This philosophy is woven into every aspect of SLSQ's training and development framework. The organisation recognises that the surf lifesaving community is diverse, with each Member contributing in their own way. By offering tailored programs, SLSQ ensures that every individual can continue to make valuable contributions, whether it's on the beach or behind the scenes.

Building Tomorrow's Leaders Today

Among SLSQ's most celebrated offerings is its focus on leadership development. Programs like the Youth Excellence Program (YEP) and the Leadership Excellence Program (LEP) are designed to inspire the next generation of leaders within the surf lifesaving movement.

YEP, which is aimed at 15-17-year-olds, brings young lifesavers together from across the state to develop their leadership and teamwork skills.

"YEP is such a special program for our young Members," Breitreutz shares. "It not only helps them build confidence and form lifelong connections, but it also introduces them to the many pathways within SLSQ, helping them see where they can make the biggest impact in their community."

Similarly, LEP provides a pathway for Members aged 18 and above to take their leadership skills to the next level. The program focuses on developing resilient

leaders who can manage the uncertainties of both lifesaving operations and the broader community.

“Leadership is about more than just being in charge,” Breitreutz emphasises. “It’s about inspiring others and creating positive change. LEP helps our Members see themselves as agents of change, ready to take on the future challenges of lifesaving and beyond.”

Ensuring Excellence in Lifesaving Operations

Lifesaving is at the heart of SLSQ’s mission, and programs like the Lifesaving Development Program (LDP) and Advanced Lifesaving Development Program (ALDP) ensure that Members have the technical skills and knowledge needed to excel in this crucial area. The LDP, which targets Members aged 16-20, offers intensive training that equips participants with a wide range of lifesaving awards and skills. Through realistic scenarios, Members gain hands-on experience in everything from first aid to incident management.

“The LDP is about more than just gaining qualifications,” says Breitreutz. “It’s about building a strong foundation of lifesaving expertise and creating confident, capable individuals who can handle any situation between the red and yellow flags.”

For those looking to advance their skills even further, the ALDP offers more specialised training in areas like incident management and tactical leadership. This program is designed for Members over 18 and focuses on creating future leaders in lifesaving operations.

“ALDP pushes our Members to the next level,” explains Breitreutz. “We’re training them to

not only manage critical incidents but also to mentor and lead others in high-pressure situations.”

Adapting to a Changing World

One of SLSQ’s key values is its commitment to continuous improvement. As the world of surf lifesaving evolves, so too must the organisation’s development programs. SLSQ regularly reviews its training offerings to ensure they are fit for purpose and reflect the current challenges faced by Members.

“Our programs are not static,” Breitreutz says. “We’re always looking for ways to adapt and improve. Whether it’s incorporating new safety protocols, addressing mental health needs, or responding to environmental changes, we make sure our training is always relevant and forward-thinking. Lifesaving is an ever-changing landscape, and we want our Members to feel prepared for anything.”

This adaptive approach is evident in the breadth of SLSQ’s development programs, which cater to emerging trends and the needs of the membership. For example, the Mentoring Program provides new leaders with the support they need to succeed in their roles, while the Volunteer Leadership Program offers online training designed to inspire and engage volunteers at all levels of experience.

Strength in Community

SLSQ recognises that its strength lies in the people who make up its ranks. From patrolling Members and administrators to Club leaders and trainers, every person plays a critical role in the success of the organisation. This is why SLSQ places such a strong emphasis on

personal and professional development, ensuring that Members have access to the tools and resources they need to succeed.

“As an organisation, we are only as strong as our people,” says Breitreutz. “That’s why we place such a high value on development. By supporting our Members at every stage of their journey, we’re building a community of confident, capable leaders who can carry SLSQ’s mission forward for generations to come.”

Whether it’s the Lifesaving Leaders Network (LLN), which connects current and emerging leaders from across the state, or the Mentoring Program, which links new position holders with experienced volunteers, SLSQ is committed to fostering a culture of continuous improvement and collaboration.

“We want every Member to feel supported and empowered to grow within SLSQ.”

To enquire about any SLSQ Development Programs, email the team at membership@lifesaving.com.au



EMPOWERING LEADERS: 2024 CLUB CAPTAIN AND CHIEF TRAINING OFFICER WORKSHOP IN PORT DOUGLAS



The 2024 Club Captain (CC) and Chief Training Officer (CTO) Workshop held in Port Douglas this November brought together Surf Life Saving Queensland’s finest leaders for a week of skill-building, teamwork, and inspiration. This event, designed by SLSQ, is a cornerstone of our commitment to upskilling those who guide our Clubs and shape the next generation of lifesavers. Over the three days, CCs and CTOs engaged in a dynamic mix of sessions focused on enhancing their lifesaving expertise, leadership skills, and knowledge of best practices.

One of the workshop’s strengths was its balance between essential soft skills and hands-on beach training. During soft skills sessions, participants received the latest updates on lifesaving policies and procedures, learning the fine details that keep our lifesaving operations safe, efficient, and in line with best practices. Off the sand, these sessions equipped our leaders with the tools to manage their teams effectively, communicate clearly, and foster a positive Club culture that encourages growth, resilience, and a commitment to lifesaving excellence.

On the beach, it was a different kind of learning. Participants took part in scenario-based training sessions that simulated real-world situations, from complex rescues to challenging first-aid responses. These practical exercises aimed to build confidence and prepare our CCs and CTOs to handle any situation with skill and precision. By refining their on-the-ground techniques, our leaders are better prepared to not only perform in emergencies but also to mentor and inspire their teams back at their home clubs.

Natalie Edwards, SLSQ’s Lifesaving Manager, was a driving force behind the event and saw firsthand the dedication of every participant.

“I’m incredibly proud of the professionalism and commitment each participant brought to this event,” Natalie shared. “Their eagerness to learn and grow is truly inspiring. It shows how seriously our leaders take their roles in saving lives and building strong, community-minded people.”

Natalie also expressed her gratitude to North Queensland for hosting, noting that the unique beauty of Port Douglas added a special element to the workshop experience.

“It was wonderful to showcase such a beautiful part of our State and to bring together our leaders in a place that showcases the natural beauty we work within.”

“The success of the workshop was made possible thanks to the support of SLSQ Clubs from across Queensland, who ensured their leaders could attend and engage with this essential learning opportunity. We are grateful for each Club’s commitment to building a strong foundation for our future by investing in their CCs and CTOs.”

At SLSQ, we are dedicated to continuous education. Whether it’s rescuing someone from the water or teaching a new Member the best practices of lifesaving, our mission is to equip our leaders with the skills they need to excel. The 2024 CC and CTO Workshop was more than just a week of learning—it was a celebration of our shared commitment to excellence and our vision for a strong, connected lifesaving community.

Thank you to all involved for making this event an outstanding success. Your passion and dedication show that SLSQ is in great hands and that together, we’re moving forward, ready for whatever challenges lie ahead.





LANA ROGERS: FROM NIPPERS TO IRONWOMAN TRIUMPHS AND LIFE AFTER SPORT

Surf lifesaving champion Lana Rogers has been making waves in sport since childhood. Now an experienced athlete, she continues to inspire both through her competitive successes and her commitment to community and personal growth. In this interview, Rogers shares how her journey began, her proudest achievements, and the lessons she's learned along the way.

“Following in My Sister’s Footsteps”: The Beginning of a Lifesaving Journey

Rogers started surf lifesaving when she was just five years old, inspired by her sister and the deep-rooted family connection to the ocean. “I started my surf lifesaving journey at Cronulla Surf Life Saving Club. My sister was there, and I was just following her everywhere—whether it was the pool or the ocean. My dad was an Olympian and a surf champion, so we were kind of straight into the water as soon as we could be.”

Her early start laid a strong foundation, fuelling a passion that has carried her through years of dedicated training and competition.

A Defining Moment: Winning the Iron Series

When asked about a career-defining moment, Rogers didn't hesitate: her third Iron Series win. “Last season, when Josh Minogue told me I'd won my third Iron Series, that was really special,” she says. “I went into that series hoping for consistency, with no pressure on me, and when it sunk in that I was starting to make a name for myself in the sport, it was a powerful feeling.”

This accomplishment not only solidified

Rogers' position among the top competitors but also highlighted her dedication and resilience, often competing without focusing on rankings or pressure.

Guiding Lights: Key Mentors and Supporters

Over the years, Rogers has been guided by several mentors who have shaped her journey. “The three main ones are obviously my sister, who taught me so much about racing and training.” Rogers also credits her first open coach at Noosa, Sharlene Kelly, and her current coach, Naomi Flood at Northcliffe. “Naomi's teaching me skills that I can use after my sports career, and she's helping me keep improving as a 28-year-old athlete. It's about life skills, too, and I'm so grateful for that.”

A Shift in Goals: Focus on Friendship and Balance

With a number of competitions on the horizon, Rogers' goals have evolved over time. “If you'd asked me a few years ago, my goals would have been performance-based,” she says. “Now, I want to focus on the special moments under the tent, the friendships I've built, and bonding with the girls I train with every day.”

Rogers understands the importance of balancing training with personal wellbeing. “Training three to four sessions a day can be intense, and maintaining health is a tricky balance,” she admits. “I've learned to bring myself back to basics and find time for what matters outside of surf lifesaving.”

Looking Ahead: Goals Beyond the Beach

Rogers is also preparing for life beyond her career in surf lifesaving. "I've started my journey into real estate, and I'm enjoying it," she shares. "It's a way to transition into the next chapter while I'm still competing."

She's especially looking forward to competing in the 2025 Queensland Surf Life Saving Championships in March 2025, where she plans to participate in team events and individual races like the belt race. "What I love about the State Champs is that it's a chance to do every event," she says, adding that it's an opportunity to compete with a focus on camaraderie rather than just the Ironwoman race.

Staying Grounded: Finding Balance and Motivation

For Rogers, managing competition stress and staying motivated on tough days means focusing on the basics and staying connected to those around her. "Surrounding myself with friends is a nice distraction, and it helps me stay calm," she says. "I know that with the highs, there are lows, and I've learned to go back to basics. I give myself a break and remind myself that I'm doing a good job. It's hard, but it's so important."

Her go-to snack on heavy training days? "I love a Rockabye smoothie!" she says with

a laugh, revealing one of her small but essential rituals. Rogers' advice to young athletes interested in surf lifesaving is simple but heartfelt:

"Join a Surf Club. I've created friendships and learned skills that I'll use in the ocean and in everyday life. It's shown me how to give back to my community and be part of something special."

As she continues her journey in surf lifesaving and beyond, Rogers remains a grounded and inspirational figure, not just for her athletic achievements but for her dedication to growth, balance, and the joy of being part of a supportive community.





NORTH AUSSIES
WRAP-UP

Over the last weekend of October, Mackay put on a show and proudly hosted the 2024 North Aussie Surf Life Saving Championships. From the pool to the surf, we saw nothing but sunny skies and perfect conditions that set the stage for three fantastic days of competition.

A huge special mention to Emu Park SLSC who just took out their 3rd consecutive championship win. Also, massive congratulations to Tannum Sands SLSC in 2nd, and Cairns SLSC making it to the podium in 3rd place. Emu Park's Team Manager Michelle McRae made a note that "even though we had a smaller team this year, they did fantastically well in all of their age groups, we we're really proud of the team winning a 3rd straight overall club title."

As for results in the pool, congratulations to Tannum Sands SLSC taking the title, followed by Emu Park SLSC in 2nd, and Elliot Heads SLSC coming in third place.

Our first ever Adaptive events were showcased at this year's North Aussies competition. It was truly inspiring to see the talent we have in those events. This will be the first of many years we see these athletes take on the surf. One of our Adaptive Open Female Competitors and Australian Paralympians, Rhiannon 'Mini' Smith spoke on the event and mentioned "although we may have had 4 of us competing, that's 4 more than we've ever had. So hopefully we can build on that." This will be the first of many years that we get to witness such amazing athletes in the Adaptive events. Also want to make special mention to our athletes who competed as hard as they could to be named on the QLD Country 2024 team. Athletes from all clubs will go on to represent QLD Country at our 2025 Interbranch competition on the Sunshine Coast. Our Emu Park SLSC and 2024 QLD Country Head Coach, Ted McLeod touched on the significance on being selected on a team like this.

"The QLD Country Team is an opportunity for country competitors to make a representative team and go head-to-head with the best athletes in the state. Striving to make this team requires the athletes to organise and plan around their commitments such as education, training, other sports etc. which assists with their personal development and growth. All competitors are proud to be selected in this team each year, whether they have previously made represented QLD Country, or missed out on selection; all athletes who compete at North Aussies continue to work hard and strive to make the team each year."

Whilst there was such a healthy spirit of competition during the event, our SLSQ Sport Manager Stuart Hogben says that these championships are more than that.

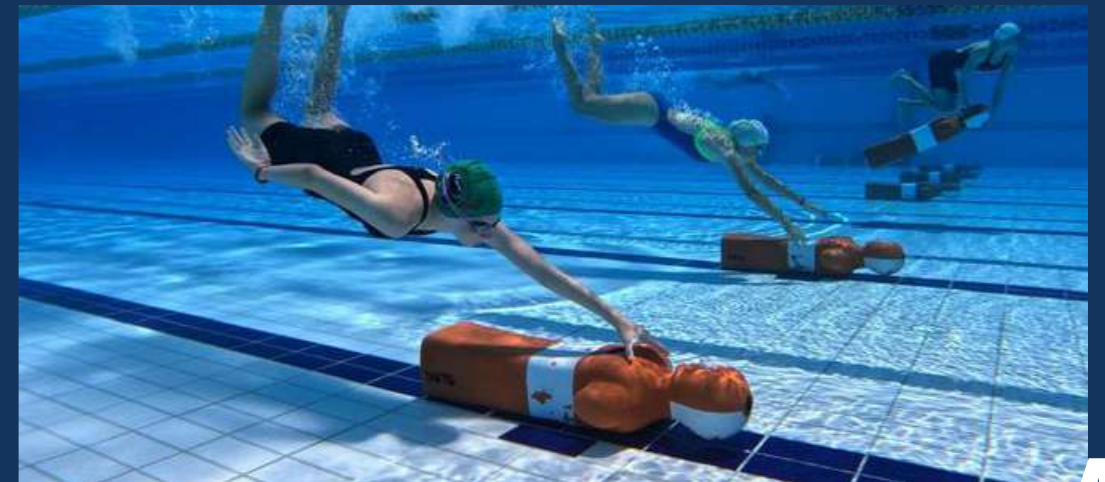
"The skills that they learn here in the pool and in the ocean could play a huge part in them rescuing one of their mates or saving one of their family's lives if they do get into trouble."

As exciting as competition is, Surf Life Saving is such an important and valuable skill to have, especially at a young age.

A massive thank you to all officials and water safety, spectators, parents, and of course the athletes who all helped in making the event happen! And a special thanks to Mackay SLSC for yet again hosting this annual competition. Once again it was a huge success, and we hope to see many more competitors join us next year.



NORTH AUSSIES





SURF BOATS: FROM RESCUES TO RACING

A CONVERSATION WITH GARY WILLIAMS

For decades, surf boat racing has been a cornerstone of Australian Surf Life Saving culture, fusing strength, teamwork, and bravery. At the pinnacle of this exciting sport in the Queensland region, is Gary Williams, President of the Australian Surf Rowers League Queensland (ASRLQ).

With a history deeply rooted in the sport, Gary's journey from competitor to leader offers a unique perspective on the evolution of surf boats, from safety measures to gender equality, behind the scenes of competition preparation, and the promising future of the sport.

The History and Evolution of Surf Boats
Surf boat racing has its origins in the early 1900s, used as a necessity by Lifesavers to conduct in-ocean rescues. "They were originally created or wharfed out of fishing boats that people would use back in the day," says Gary Williams, who has been involved in the sport since 1986.

"From there, they evolved and began using the 200kg crafts for competition. Eventually, as IRBs (Inflatable Rescue Boats) were introduced, surf boats became purely for competitive purposes as IRBs were a safer way to conduct rescues." Gary's passion for the sport began as a competitor, and his perspective on the changes over the years is informed by both his personal experience and his leadership role with ASRLQ.

"I remember when I first started competing in 1986, there were no girls, nor were there any intentions of having girls compete." "I'm sure that everyone can agree with me that the biggest change I have seen is the inclusion of females in the sport."

The first female surf boat race was an exhibition event in 1992-93, and the inclusion of women soon led to the creation of additional divisions, including the U23 women's category. Around seven years ago, the ASRL introduced the under-19s division, expanding opportunities for younger female athletes to get involved and showcase their talent.

"The ASRL had enough interest, entries, and sweeps to develop the under-19s category," Gary adds, reflecting on how the growth in female participation has reshaped the sport.

A Shift Toward Safety: The Impact of Risk Management

The evolution of surf boats hasn't just been about who can compete, but also how the sport is approached in terms of safety. The 1996 tragedy of 15-year-old Robert Catenby, who tragically passed away due to unsafe conditions in a surf boat, marked a turning point in the sport's safety protocols.

"Back in the day, not many guys wanted to be

the first team to pull out of a race if conditions were bad," Gary recalls. "You would line up, and if you didn't want to start, you would tell the officials. But now, we have a full risk management process that we go through before every carnival and training session, which really helps keep the athletes safe."

Today, the sport employs a detailed risk assessment process before every carnival and training session. This includes evaluating surf conditions, deciding whether safety helmets are necessary, and determining which divisions should start first. These measures, alongside the development of a boat panel system, reflect the growing emphasis on ensuring safety while competing in sometimes treacherous conditions.

New Opportunities: Short Course Championships and Surf Boat Relays

Another recent development in the sport is the introduction of the Surf Boat Short Course Championships, which has proven to be a game changer.

"In other surf sports, such as board or ski races, athletes have multiple opportunities to win medals. But for surf boats, until the short course was implemented, there was only one chance," explains Gary. "This has been a great addition, as it gives athletes more of an opportunity to make teams and win state and national medals."

The short course format has also brought more spectators into the fold, allowing for an exciting, action-packed event. Additionally, a new event on the horizon, the Surf Boat Relay, is set to provide Clubs with more opportunities to showcase their depth and teamwork. "The relay event will give Clubs with a lot of depth the chance to compete against each other and be part of a whole Club experience," says Gary, noting that the ASRL has been a big force in driving these changes to keep the sport evolving.

Strong Partnerships: ASRLQ's Sponsorship with the Navy

One of the key drivers behind the growth of ASRLQ has been its partnership with the Australian Navy Defence Force. This sponsorship not only provides essential funding for each Navy Round—but also enables ASRLQ to support their youth programs and take part in prestigious events like the ASRL Open. "The sponsorship gives us the opportunity to participate in the ASRL Open, a national event similar in size to the Aussies," Gary explains. "On the Saturday of this event, there's a break in the competition for a test series between Australia and New Zealand. It's a fantastic opportunity for athletes to get exposure on an international stage."

Training, Selection, and the Future of Surf Boats

Training for surf boat athletes is a demanding mix of strength, endurance, and technique. With the surf boats weighing over 200kg, it requires athletes to develop significant strength to move them through the surf.

"In addition to strength training in the gym, we focus a lot on endurance and in-boat sessions, including flat water and river training for technique," Gary explains. The usual training regimen includes a combination of surf sessions for skill development, gym workouts, and time on the ergo rowing machines to build cardiovascular strength.

When it comes to selecting the best athletes for Queensland teams, performance is key.

"We have an established points system based on three local carnivals. After the third event, the top two scoring crews in each division are selected, plus one wild card team," Gary notes. Wild card entries are given special consideration if a team performs exceptionally well at one or two carnivals despite not attending all three.

ASRLQ is also actively working to expand the number of sweeps (the people who steer the boat), which is central to the sport's growth.

"We run an initiative called Learn to Sweep, which is designed to train rowers and anyone interested in getting involved to become accredited," says Gary. "Once they're accredited, they can start in flat water and progress to the surf and competition levels. It's a fantastic program that helps bring new athletes and sweeps into the sport."

Additionally, ASRLQ hosts regional development programs to give rowers from North Queensland the opportunity to gain experience in the more challenging surf conditions of South East Queensland.

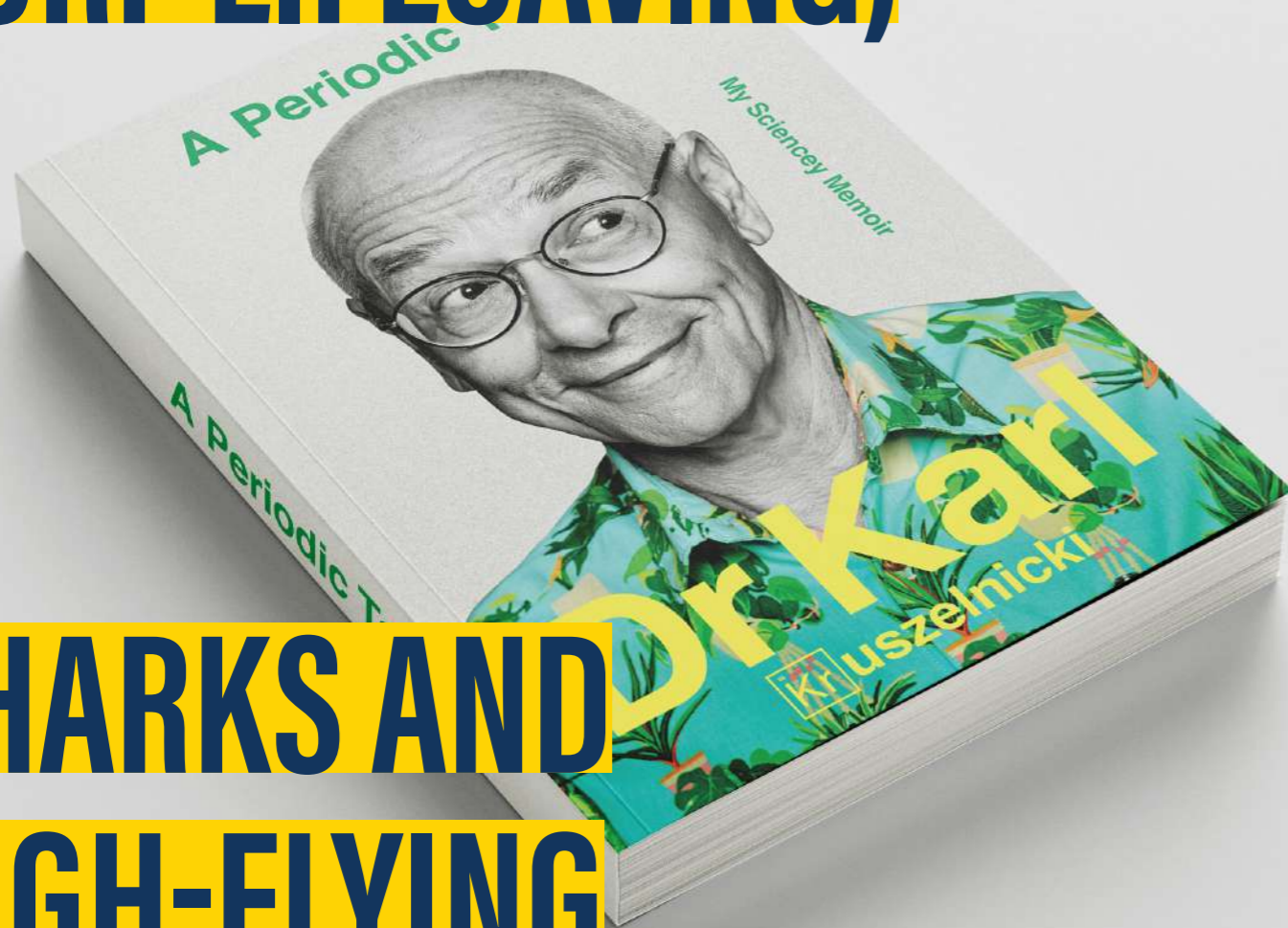
Looking Ahead: A Bright Future for Surf Boat Racing

Looking to the future, Gary is optimistic about the direction that surf boat racing is heading. "The sport is growing, with the introduction of new divisions and events, we hope to see the numbers back to where they used to be," he says. "There's also a strong focus on getting more sweeps involved, as they are the foundation for building up entry numbers."

With the commitment of dedicated leaders like Gary Williams and the support of organisations such as ASRLQ, the future of surf boat racing is bright. The sport is continuously changing, evolving, and growing—ensuring that it remains one of Australia's most thrilling and revered surf sports for generations to come.

DR KARL'S DIVE INTO HISTORY: SURF LIFESAVING,

SHARKS AND HIGH-FLYING ADVENTURES



Surf Life Saving Queensland Magazine

The first person to be saved by the official Australian surf life saving reel was also the first to fly a plane across the Pacific Ocean.

Charlie Smith was only 10 when he and his cousin were hauled out of the wild Bondi surf in 1907. Lifesavers used the life saving reel to pull them back to safety. They were very lucky. The life saving reel had just been introduced on 23 December 1906, in a public demonstration at Bondi Beach. This was only 11 days before their accident!

Sir Charles Kingsford Smith - or "Smithy" as he was known to his mates - went on to become Australia's most famous aviator. He set many flight records. They included the first USA-Australia flight, the first crossing of the Atlantic Ocean from east to west, the first non-stop crossing of Australia, and the first round-the-world flight with an equatorial crossing. But it was in the end a watery grave for Smithy. In November 1935 Sir Charles and his plane the "Lady Southern Cross" disappeared off the coast of Burma.

Before surf lifesavers and their safety equipment were available on the beach, swimmers got into lots of difficulty. At Manly beach alone 17 people drowned before 1902. People who had never even seen sea water before would arrive at the beach and dive straight in! The tides and rips would take them completely by surprise and wash them right out to sea.

Safety measures had to be taken. At Bondi a group of strong swimmers got together and trained themselves in rescue procedures. They were organised largely by Lyster Ormsby... Ormsby and his offsider, John Bond, claimed to have designed and made a model of the first ever life saving reel. They say they showed their original design to a coachmaker called G.H. Olding. He was also a regular surf swimmer. Olding, however, always claimed that the whole idea was his alone!

Anyway, it was Olding who made up the first life saving reel. He used a cedar drum mounted on a wooden frame. A line was wound in or out around the drum by a windlass handle. The line attached to a belt worn by the best swimmer in the Club. The best swimmer would then race out to the drowning person. The rest

of the life saving team fed the line out until the lifesaver got to the person in trouble. Then they would haul them both back to the shore. A later improvement was a brake which stopped the line unwinding too quickly and tangling around the lifesavers and swimmers.

Australia has an excellent surf life saving record. Since the introduction of the surf life saving reel in 1907 over 100 000 rescues have been made. Our safety reputation is known all over the world. In fact Wollongong was the first place in the world to have a shark plane. We even have groups of Japanese lifesavers coming to train and learn from our Life Saving Clubs. No wonder we tend to give little thought to drowning these days.

Maybe we should also worry less about shark attacks. Frank Beaurepaire is one person who even benefited from a shark attack. His now massive car tyre business started with a shark attack! In 1922, Frank was at the peak of his swimming career. He had represented Australia on six overseas trips, had set 14 world swimming records and had won over 200 titles. In November of that year, he saved Milton Coughlan from a shark attack at Coogee beach!! The grateful New South Wales Government gave him a reward of £500. He used this to set up a car tyre business which evolved into Beaurepaires tyres.

So, it was Frank Beaurepaire, and not the shark, who made a killing on the whole affair! Actually, sharks are not that dangerous. Each year, only 50 people are taken by sharks over the whole planet. But 150 people are killed by lightning. So, if you're down at the beach, and you can see shark fins in the water, and then a wild electrical storm comes along, you'd probably be safer in the water.

To explore more of Dr Karl's fascinating stories and experiences, grab a copy of his memoir, *A Periodic Tale*, available now for \$45.00 at all leading bookstores.

EXTRACT FROM A PERIODIC TALE:

This is an edited extract from Dr Karl Kruszelnicki's memoir, *A Periodic Tale*, ABC Books, \$45.00, available now.

Finally, also at the age of twenty-eight, I learned to swim properly. It was life-changing. Somehow I had grown up and gone to school near the beach in Wollongong and never learned to swim, and it was always something that held me back. I signed up for adult swimming classes and felt truly liberated and, finally, fully Australian!

My new job was located a few hundred metres from the beach at Little Bay, and swimming at lunchtime became an absolute pleasure for me. Sometimes I'd run down to Little Bay and swim the 100 metres across the bay and another 100 metres back again. Then I'd run back to hospital, shower, change into scrubs and be ready for the next patient.

One day, when I got out of the water, I was surprised to see people up on the hill frantically waving at me. I ran up to them and they told me in a panic that, as I started swimming across the bay, a huge shark (at least half as big again as me) came out of nowhere at high speed.

They watched in dread as it slowed down and swam just a few metres off to one side, closely tracking me all the way across the bay. When I did a U-turn to swim back, it lost interest and headed out to sea again! I had no idea it had been there, thankfully. (I almost had a heart attack just hearing about it, but it would have been poor form to be the patient in my hospital, not the scientific officer!) And despite this close encounter, I kept on swimming whenever I had the chance.

Unfortunately, in 2022, a swimmer was attacked and killed by a great white shark in Little Bay, the first fatal Sydney shark attack in six decades. There were people fishing nearby, and it's thought the fish bait in the water attracted the shark. Overall, the general fear of sharks is totally unjustified given how few people actually die from shark bites. Averaged over the last five years, the number of unprovoked shark attacks

across the whole world is around seventy, but only about five to ten deaths happen each year. (In 2020, there were at least a hundred deaths from ladders in the United States alone, so being strictly rational, we should be more scared of ladders than sharks! When will the Ladder Lifeguards be formed to protect Australians from the dark, lurking threat of death by ladder?)

As the old saying goes, the only two things you can't avoid are death and taxes. I survived the shark, but the taxes were coming to get me!



Left: Channelling Tarzan staring into the distance, 1971.

Below: My taxi driver ID, 1972.



Above: Yup, a literal flower-munching hippie, 1971.



Above: In Fiji in 1987 at the same time as a coup was declared. Nothing was open and our last \$2 had just been spent on beer by Mary!

Right: I was so lucky to be with Mary, c.1987.

Below left and right: Big Karl and Little Karl.



THE TINY PARTICLES INFILTRATING OUR BODIES AND CAUSING BIG PROBLEMS FOR AUSTRALIA

As lifesavers and lifeguards we love the ocean, we value the ocean and we care about the ocean. Microplastics are a huge issue for our beloved seas, this SBS article takes us in-depth into the murky underwater world of microplastics.

Oceans, soil, and the air we breathe, and our blood. They're just some of the things microplastics have infiltrated, but there are ways to reduce your exposure.

They're the tiny particles causing big problems, and while microplastics may be out of sight, they're front of mind for scientists across the globe.

"We find plastics in almost every trawl that we do," said Khay Fong, a senior lecturer at Monash University's School of

Chemistry. "That's the most shocking part. We have microplastics everywhere we go — the Whitsundays, the Pacific, everywhere."

What are microplastics?

They're tiny plastic fragments — measuring less than five millimetres — that end up in the environment as a result of the breakdown of larger plastic products and industrial pollution.

Evidence suggests humans are ingesting microplastics through contaminated seafood, but that's not the only way they can enter the human body.

As well as oceans, they've infiltrated soil, the air we breathe, some tap water and bottled beverages.

Scientists have found microplastics in our blood and even the placenta.

Trawling Australia's iconic Sydney Harbour

Fong and a team of scientists are trawling Sydney Harbour to determine the scale of pollution in one of the world's most iconic waterways.

"We are trying to look for microplastics all the way down to the size of the width of the hair," she said.

In a haul from a recent outing, she detected what she believed to be tiny plastic particles in just seconds.

Khay Fong and her team found microplastics in every sample collected from the Sydney Harbour

The samples have been taken back to a lab for testing, and while the results are still being analysed, Fong said one thing is for certain.

"There are plastics in every single sample, and a lot of them," she said.
"It's a concentration that's akin to the

Mediterranean which is one of the most polluted places in the world, mainly because it's one of the most populated."

Three Olympic-size swimming pools worth of microplastics

Further north, a different mission is underway. But it's yielded a similar discovery. University of Queensland researchers have collected surface sediment samples from 50 sites across Brisbane's Moreton Bay.

"We found plastics at all of these sites," lead researcher Elvis Okoffo from the University of Queensland's Alliance for Environmental Health Sciences said.

Marine plastic pollution

He said the samples were taken back to a lab to be analysed, and once the data was extrapolated, the researchers were able to make a startling estimation.

"There are about 7,000 metric tonnes of microplastics in the bay," Okoffo said. That's equivalent to 1.5 million plastic bags or three Olympic-sized swimming pools worth of plastic.

"This was surprising, looking at the fact that the bay is very protected and we were not expecting to see this much plastic."

The main types of plastic detected were polyethylene, found in single-use items like plastic bags, bottles and food wrapping, and polyvinyl chloride, used in pipes, building materials, electronics, and clothing.

"That actually tells us there is a direct link between the amount of plastics we consume in Australia and the amount that's being washed into the environment."

Scientist estimate by

2050

plastic will outweigh all fish in the sea

What are the risks of microplastics?

Despite the ubiquity of microplastics in the environment, scientists don't fully understand the direct and long-term impacts on our health.

"We definitely know we're exposed every day. We know that we are breathing in plastics every day, and we know that we're ingesting them through food and water," Cassandra Rauert, a senior research fellow also based at the University of Queensland's Alliance for Environmental Health Sciences, said.

Rauert is leading a study into the risks of human exposure to microplastics. Her team is seeking to establish whether they pass through our bodies, or whether they can enter our bloodstream and organs.

There are an estimated

65 trillion

trillion pieces of plastic in the ocean

"We're still at the very early stages yet, so we can't really draw any conclusions at this point," she said. "[But] we're developing new instrumental methods that can really help to fill this knowledge gap and answer these questions."

Can we reduce our exposure? We can, Rauert said.

Synthetic fibres, found in some clothing, are one of the two biggest sources of microplastics, she said. And if small fibres come off garments, we can breathe them in. "So where it's appropriate to change over to, say, a cotton shirt instead of a polyester shirt," she said.

100%

of all plastics created are still in existence

The second major source is tyre wear, whereby small pieces of plastic detach from car tyres when they are being driven.

"Reducing the number of cars on the roads helps the environment in many different ways," she said. "So I'd say catch the bus where you can, or ride your bike."

Avoiding single-use plastic can also limit exposure.

Rauert said her current research suggests that such plastics, like takeaway containers, shed a lot of particles.

"So try and avoid those plastics by using stainless steel (containers) if you can," she said.

"That will also reduce the amount of plastic that's ending up in your food that you're eating. Use a reusable water bottle instead of buying bottled water, try and avoid single-use plastics. All those small things can make a big difference!"

What you can do:

Swap plastic bags for reusable ones

Reduce usage of disposable cups and bottles

Use metal or glass food containers

Take public transport where possible

Avoid clothing made from polyester



EATING SMART OVER CHRISTMAS WITH BONNIE HANCOCK

Did you know? The average Australian puts on 0.8-1.5 kgs over the Christmas period.

Christmas is a wonderful time of year, where we indulge in more food, more drink and unfortunately often end up feeling a little out of shape come mid-January when the second half of the surf season begins to roll out, and the State Championships are just around the corner.

The good news? It certainly is possible to have the best of both worlds. It's all about moderation. You can enjoy all the wonderful things Christmas has to offer, the food included, yet still fit into your cossies and race fast in January, **by following a few handy tips:**

1. Don't indulge at every Christmas gathering

Multiple events can leave you feeling less than ideal, especially after making poor food and drink choices. Try mixing it up at social events by drinking plenty of water and eating healthy foods and enjoying a few higher-calorie beverages if you choose.

2. Drink a little more water.

At Christmas time, we can often find ourselves consuming more soft drinks, and for adults, coffee and alcohol. This, along with warmer weather, will dehydrate you, so make sure you drink eight glasses of water a day. This will keep your body hydrated and help prevent unwanted fatigue. A water bottle at every training session is a must; add an electrolyte powder such as an Endura Rehydration or diluted Gatorade or Powerade if you feel fatigued.

3. Don't arrive at a party hungry. Enjoy a small snack before you arrive.

Focus on foods that contain protein to help satisfy you and prevent you overeating later. Suitable snacks might include a handful of raw natural nuts, veggie sticks with hummus, a boiled egg, organic trail mix or a two-egg omelette with mixed veggies.

4. Eat slowly.

Chewing your food thoroughly helps to slow the eating process and gives our brain a chance to keep up with our stomach and tell us when we are full, as well as optimising the digestion and absorption of the food we are eating. Put your knife and fork down in between mouthfuls and enjoy savouring the taste and texture of the delicious food you are eating.

5. Pile up the vegetables on your plate.

The more veggies you eat, the more nutrients your body receives and the less room there is for other not-so-good choices that your liver may not appreciate later.

Another great way to up the greens is to include some fresh vegetable juices, which will help protect your immune system.

6. Indulge in only the most special treats.

Skip the cheap, shop-bought chocolates but do save some calories for special homemade treats, such as mum's pavlova or pudding. Train yourself to indulge in quality, special foods and skip cheap stuff you can have any day of the year. Just don't try to completely deprive yourself over Christmas - your willpower will eventually snap, and you'll end up overeating.

7. Pour the gravy and sauces lightly.

You may not be able to control what's being served at a holiday meal, but you can make the turkey, roast beef, and even mashed potatoes and stuffing much healthier by leaving the sauces or spooning on just a small amount.

Have a safe and happy Christmas with loved ones and look forward to seeing you all on the beach in January!

DO IT NOW.



ENGINE

- CHAMPIONS CHOOSE ENGINE -

Our Values



INNOVATION

Continually explore cutting edge technologies and systems as we work towards our beach and Clubs of the future.



SAFETY

Prioritise and take responsibility for safety at all levels across the organisation, both on and off the beach.



RESPECT

Treat each other with respect, value each other's contributions, and celebrate our people who strive for excellence.



COMMUNITY

We will not only protect the community we serve but we will reflect the community we operate within and foster a welcoming culture.



TRUST

Ensure that trust and accountability are the cornerstones of our organisation; through open and honest communication, and by always delivering on our commitments.



INTEGRITY

We will display the quality of honesty and having strong moral principles.



Our Partners

PRINCIPAL PARTNERS



GOVERNMENT



COMMUNITY



MEDIA



BUSINESS





Queensland

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