

# LS9

## SURF EMERGENCY RESPONSE SYSTEM

SURF LIFE SAVING  
NEW SOUTH WALES



# LS9.1 SURF EMERGENCY RESPONSE SYSTEM (13SURF)



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## PURPOSE

To outline the Surf Emergency Response System (13SURF) within NSW with the aim to:

- Improve casualty survival rates.
- Reduce the response time of lifesaving and rescue services to casualties.
- Maximise the quality of a coordinated emergency response system.
- Minimise ambiguities into the most appropriate resources to utilise.
- Reduce the risk to responding personnel.

## POLICY

Surf Life Saving NSW (SLSNSW) requires personnel to follow the provided guidelines to ensure the effectiveness of the Surf Emergency Response System (13SURF) as the notification/tasking process for emergency services to contact and activate lifesaving services in NSW.

## Definition

An emergency response is a request for assistance from any of the following agencies/organisations:

- Emergency Services (Police, Fire, Ambulance, SES etc).
- Volunteer Marine Rescue (Coastal Patrol, Coastguard etc).
- Lifesaving Services (Contracted Lifeguards, Council Lifeguards, SLSCs etc).
- National Parks and Wildlife Service Rangers.

## Background

The nature of emergency response often results in a situation where:

- Incident is at an unpatrolled location/time.
- There is limited information – unknown circumstances/details available.
- Patients are in the mid-latter stages of the drowning cycle.
- Response time is critical to the casualties survival/recovery.

## PROCEDURE

1. The SLSNSW administered Surf Emergency Response System (13SURF) shall be the notification/tasking process for Police, Ambulance, Fire, SES and other emergency services to contact and activate lifesaving services in NSW (including SLS volunteers, ALS Lifeguards, Council Lifeguards and SLS Life Saver helicopters).
2. The SLSNSW administered Surf Emergency Response System (13SURF) shall be the process for upward notification of locally identified/notified major incidents from lifesaving services (either directly outside SurfCom hours, or via SurfCom).
3. No lifesaving service shall implement duplicate/contrary systems which do or may undermine the Surf Emergency Response System (13SURF) at local/regional/state level.
4. Regardless of the origin of the request for assistance or agencies involved, the Surf Life Saving Surf Emergency Response System (coordinated by the State Duty Officer) shall utilise the nearest/most appropriate resource from any agency/organisation for assistance to ensure the quickest response time.
5. The integrity of the State Duty Officer (on-duty) shall be maintained at all times. No other person shall assume the role, function, authority or call-sign of the on-duty State Duty Officer, unless delegated to by that person.

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6. The contact number for the Surf Emergency Response System (13SURF/137873) shall not be communicated by any party to the public or media. The system shall be referred to externally as the 'Surf Emergency Response System'.

## Communication and resource types:

- **Primary Resource Notification:** The surf rescue resource which is deemed nearest/most appropriate to respond to an incident and is notified/tasked first.
- **Secondary Resource Notification:** The surf rescue resource/s which may provide value to an emergency response and is notified/tasked after the primary.
- **Advisement:** Where a surf rescue service/resource may not have available resources and/or where primary resources are more than adequate for the response and/or have completed the task. An advisement call is made to the relevant services to notify them of the incident.

## Control and Command

The Surf Emergency Response System (13SURF) is primarily responsible for disseminating emergency information to lifesaving services on behalf of the NSW Police Force (and other emergency services) and providing updated/SITREPS to those agencies as appropriate.

For a surf rescue incident NSW Police are the combat agency and have 'control'.

Regardless of day, time or council area, responding organisations shall retain 'command' of their assets/personnel under their own incident command structures/systems (i.e a branch shall be responsible for what/how their own services respond and will likely appoint a SLS Incident Commander/Duty Officer on-scene). ALS and Council Lifeguard Services shall do likewise.

On-scene, the various incident commanders shall establish a joint incident command post, and under the control of Police establish a joint response-plan. If appropriate and agreed, a 'forward incident commander' may be delegated to oversee a task involving assets from multiple organisations.

The State Duty Officers who deliver the Surf Emergency Response System shall take a 'Command' function for responding SLS/ALS services only if:

- No local service 'incident commander' is available (Duty Officer/Supervisor).
- The local service 'incident commander' is delayed/some period of time away.
- Requested to take on that role by the Duty Officer/Supervisor.

## Response Sequence of Actions

In alignment with 'Search and Rescue' best-practice, the Surf Emergency Response System (13 SURF) has a sequence of actions that relate to each of the search and rescue stages.

These are as follows:

### Awareness Stage

- a) The State Duty Officer will advise the most appropriate lifesaving services.
- b) Lifesaving services will alert their personal, and ascertain what resources are available to respond.
- c) The State Duty Officer may promulgate information to the relevant SLS Officers and Management personnel from agencies involved with the incident to aid in enquiries from the community/media stations.

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## **Initial Action**

- a) The State Duty Officer will begin monitoring the situation.
- b) Lifesaving services will respond under their internal protocols advising the State Duty Officer (via 13SURF) of response details.
- c) The responding lifesaving service shall appoint and respond an Incident Commander (Duty Officer or Supervisor) or request 'command' support from their State Duty Officer if not available/delayed.
- d) The 'Incident Commander/s' shall begin monitoring/coordinating their response.
- e) The State Duty Officer will contact other non-priority agencies for 'advisement' as deemed appropriate.

## **State Duty Officer – Lifesaving Service Communication**

The initial notification/tasking call from the State Duty Officer to lifesaving services shall provide any/all available information as provided by the authority/combat agency (Police/SES etc). It shall be recognised that available information initially may be limited.

The initial call from the State Duty Officer to the lifesaving service shall include:

1. Notification of incident – including all relevant information held.
2. Advisement of what other resources have been/are responding.
3. Request for regional/local asset availability status.
4. Request for SITREP via 13SURF or SLS Radio once responding.

## **Advisement of non-primary services/resources**

Where a paid lifeguard service (Council/ALS) or SLS service may not be the "nearest/most appropriate resource" to activate as 'first-call' or have no on-duty/available resources to respond at all, the State Duty Officer shall still contact the lifeguard service contact/supervisor or Branch Duty Officer as soon as practical, to advise of the situation. Note: This should not be given priority over primary response coordination however. The State Duty Officer will make the decision when this call is to be made i.e. during the incident for significant incidents or post incident.

## **Planning**

- a) The State Duty Officer (or delegate) will review existing plans (if in existence).
- b) The Incident Commander/s (Duty Officers/Supervisors) should provide SITREPS on the Initial Action Stage.
- c) The State Duty Officer (or delegate) should review SITREPS, weather reports and operational information for an action plan.

## **Operations Stage**

### **State Level**

The State Duty Officer will:

- a) Assume communications control of operations (where able – i.e SOC) and monitor the situation.
  - b) Advise other agencies at State level, particularly the NSW Police VKG/Marine Area Command.
  - c) Assist and or provide SITREPS and assist as able with information to the Media Manager.
  - d) Acquire and coordinate dissemination of information to both internal and external support resources as appropriate.
  - e) Will assume the position of 'Incident Commander' in their absence (SLS/ALS).
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## **Regional Level**

The Incident Commander/s (Duty Officers/Supervisors) will:

- a) Activate and assume 'command' of their lifesaving operations;
- b) Advise other agencies of their requirements for support and arrange that support and establish appropriate on-site liaison;
- c) Liaise with other agency Incident Commanders and personnel;
- d) Arrange to provide logistic/operational support for out-of-area groups; and
- e) Liaise with or act as the Incident Controller (Police).
- f) Coordinate communications with on-site SLS Life Saver Helicopters.

## **Local (Operations)**

The responding service will:

- a) Advise and establish liaison arrangements with their Incident Commander (Duty Officer/Supervisor), SurfCom, other emergency services and participating organisations.
- b) Establish a joint response plan with other organisations/agencies – setting clear tasks/goals/milestones and always considering risk/safety.
- c) Commence operations.
- d) Call for assistance/support via their Incident Commander (Duty Officer/Supervisor) if required.
- e) Maintain constant communications through such things as SITREPs with their Incident Commander (Duty Officer/Supervisor).

## **Conclusion**

- a) All responded lifesaving services shall be accounted for and stood down before the incident is declared 'over.'
- b) The appropriate Incident Commanders and emergency services (Police VKG/MAC) shall be advised.
- c) The Incident Commander or other appropriate Officer may co-ordinate a debrief.
- d) Lifesaving Services will refuel, replenish and undertake post operational checks.
- e) All parties will complete the necessary documentation.

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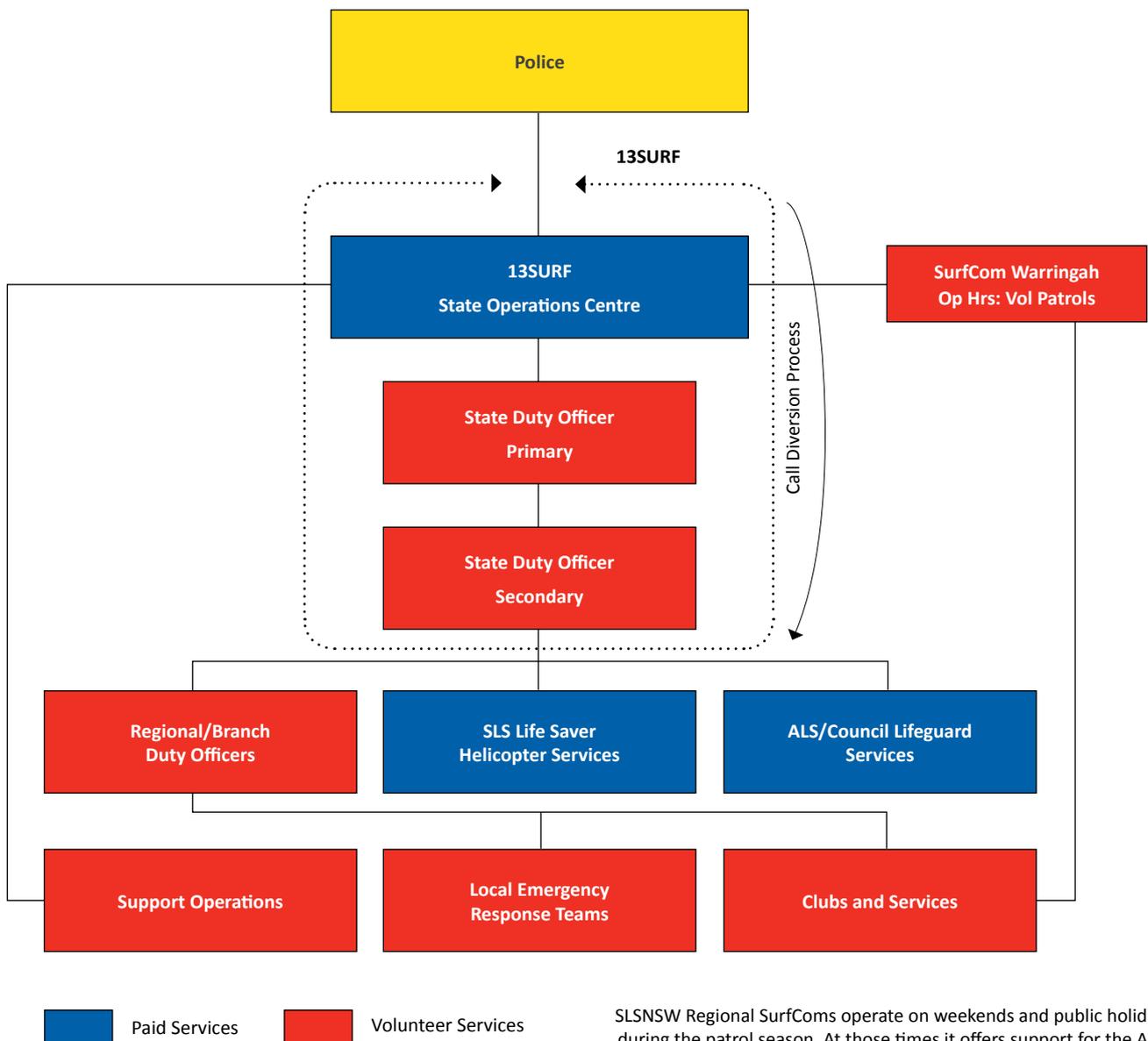
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d) The State Duty Officer (or delegate) should communicate the



# LS9.2 STATE DUTY OFFICER

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## PURPOSE

To provide policy, procedure and best practice regarding the role of a State Duty Officer within the Surf Emergency Response System.

## POLICY

A coordinated system of control/command/communication is required at Club, Branch and State level for any major emergency and/or after-hours incident that may occur.

The flow of communication from external agencies to the correct lifesaving services is essential to ensure an optimal response of appropriate resources in a coordinated, efficient and effective manner.

At the upper level of this system sits the role of the State Duty Officer.

## PROCEDURE

### State Duty Officer Definition

A Board appointed role within SLSNSW which provides operational communication, command, coordination and external liaison to emergency incidents within NSW.

### State Duty Officer Objectives

To provide communication, coordination and liaison support to all lifesaving services for search and rescue emergencies (including SLSC, Support Operations, SLS Life Saver Helicopters, Council Lifeguards, ALS Lifeguards).

### Scope of Operation – Coverage

The State Duty Officer role shall operate 24 hours a day, 365 days a year within the Surf Emergency Response System.

### Roles/Responsibilities

Primarily the State Duty Officer is responsible for:

- Acting as the single, central Surf Life Saving contact/liason for communications/tasking bodies within NSW Police, Fire, Ambulance, AusSAR, SES, ADF, BOM, DPI for any search and rescue incident or natural disaster (flood, tsunami, fire) in NSW.
- Informing lifesaving services of a search and rescue incident (as advised by external agencies) which will see them respond their specific resources under their specific 'command' structure.
- Acting as the SLSNSW lifesaving service 'controller' for all operations in the event of a major emergency or natural disaster.

Where an area has no available Incident Commander (Duty Officer, Supervisor) or when requested by that Incident Commander, the State Duty Officer may activate and command local lifesaving services directly and undertake a SLS command position for that incident.

# LS9.2 POSITION DESCRIPTION – STATE DUTY OFFICER



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<b>Title:</b>	State Duty Officer
<b>Reports to:</b>	SLSNSW Director of Lifesaving
<b>Role:</b>	A Board appointed role which provides operational communication, command, coordination and external liaison to emergency incidents within the NSW.
<b>Term:</b>	12 months (before re-appointment by Board of SLSNSW)

## PURPOSE

1. To act as the primary lifesaving service contact point within NSW for all external emergency services and agencies.
2. To task/notify appropriate lifesaving services to reported coastal and aquatic emergencies in NSW (including inland waterways/harbours).
3. To provide support to responding Incident Commanders (Duty Officers/Lifeguard Supervisors) to a major search and rescue incident.
4. To deliver the primary SLSNSW control/command function for all lifesaving services for a major State disaster/emergency (Tsunami, flood etc).

## ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Promote a professional image of Surf Life Saving NSW internally and externally.
2. Action the response of lifesaving services in NSW to incidents and emergencies activated through the Emergency Response System.
3. Act as the Incident Command of lifesaving response to state/national emergency or natural disaster, and liaison for all external agencies.
4. Promote positive interaction between all lifesaving services, and appropriate external organisations.
5. Help ensure suitable de-briefings and/or peer support is undertaken at Branch/Regional and State levels as required.
6. Where required act as media liaison and/or direct enquiries to the appropriate Media Manager.
7. Ensure appropriate reports, recommendations, and statistical data are forwarded to relevant surf life saving personnel e.g. Lifesaving Manager and State DOL.
8. Take immediate steps to report/rectify any serious breach of Surf Life Saving safety policies and/or patrol deficiencies identified.

## Minimum Qualifications

- Active and financial SLSA member
- Endorsed by Board of SLSNSW
- SLSA Bronze Medallion/Cert II (proficient)
- Basic Beach Management
- Class C Drivers License
- Branch Duty Officer experience (or emergency services)

## Desirable Skills/Qualifications

- Silver Medallion – Radio Controller

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Certificate III in Public Safety (Beach Management)

SurfCom experience

IRB/RWC/ORB/JRB experience

EMA courses

## **Attributes**

Leadership and decision making qualities

IT literate (computers/iphones/ipads/internet)

Sound communication skills

Professionalism (Respected within SLS)

Customer orientated manner

Ability to multi-task

Ability of work under pressure

## **Essential Knowledge**

A significant background/understanding of lifesaving services throughout NSW

## **Internal Liaisons**

Duty Officers

SurfComs

Branch DOL

State DOL

State Lifesaving Manager

SLSNSW Media Manager

SLS Life Saver Helicopters

Lifeguard Supervisors

## **External Liaisons**

Rescue Helicopter Services (Police, Ambulance)

NSW Police

NSW Fire

NSW Ambulance

SES

Bureau of Meteorology

DPI (Fisheries)

Media

# LS9.3 BRANCH DUTY OFFICER SYSTEM



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## PURPOSE

To provide policy, procedure and best practice for the function of a Branch Duty Officer system.

## POLICY

All Branches are required to have an emergency response system of which a Duty Officer component is fundamental.

## PROCEDURE

### Duty Officer Definition

Lifesaving personnel that within a local system provides operational command, coordination and external liaison for regular patrolling and emergency incidents.

Duty Officers are to be Branch appointed volunteers.

### Scope of Operations – Coverage

A Duty Officer system shall function in 2 capacities:

- Rostered on-duty shifts (normally during the regular patrol season)
- Emergency Response/Callout (24/7/365 days)

### Regular Patrol Season Days/Times

At least 1 dedicated Branch Duty Officer shall be on active rostered duty at any one time during normal patrol hours, during the lifesaving patrol season. This Duty Officer does not need to be at a beach for the whole period (however this is preferred), but must be 100% contactable and able to respond during that rostered time.

### Emergency Response/Callouts (After-hours/Out-of-season)

After hours/outside season a rostered on-call Branch Duty Officer system is highly recommended. Using a branch-level mobile phone divert protocol will ensure that any request for assistance through 13SURF is immediately answered.

### Information Management

All Branches should maintain a specific Branch Duty Officer Manual (updated regularly) and available in soft and hard copy.

All active Branch Duty Officers shall be updated annually in SurfGuard and details provided to SLSNSW. All new/prospective Duty Officers shall complete the 'Support Operations Application Form' and submit to Branch.

Personnel and contact detail changes should be regularly checked and updated within the Branch resources, on SurfGuard and communicated to SLSNSW.

The Branch shall ensure all club/service callout team information is updated annually on SurfGuard and details maintained by each Duty Officer.

### Training/Exercises

- Branches should conduct a pre-season briefing for all Duty Officers.
- Branches should conduct an in-depth induction with all new Duty Officers.

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- Branches should conduct at least 1 exercise involving all Duty Officers and club/service callout teams annually.
  - Branches should facilitate club/service callout team briefings/induction exercises annually.

## **Key Duties (See position description for full details)**

- Provides support and guidance to Patrol Captains/SurfCom Operators.
- Liaise with emergency services.
- Act as incident commander of lifesaving response to a reported emergency at unpatrolled locations or after-hours/out-of-season.
- Act as incident commander or other role as delegated to by Patrol Captain at patrolled locations.
- Co-ordinate lifesaving services at unpatrolled locations.
- Co-ordinate post incident debriefing and facilitate counselling for personnel.
- On-site media liaison (directs media to the appropriate Branch/State personnel).

# LS9.3 POSITION DESCRIPTION – DUTY OFFICER



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<b>Title:</b>	Duty Officer (Branch)
<b>Reports to:</b>	Branch Director of Lifesaving
<b>Responsible for:</b>	Active/on-duty Surf Life Saving personnel/assets within branch/council area (on a given day)
<b>Role:</b>	The Duty Officer will be responsible for the provision of support to on-duty lifesaving services and take command of Surf Life Saving response to emergencies at unpatrolled locations/times.
<b>Term:</b>	12 months (before re-appointment by Branch Director of Lifesaving)

## PURPOSE:

1. To command and coordinate Surf Life Saving service response to/at major incidents, during operational hours in support of the Patrol Captain and outside operational hours/at unpatrolled locations within the emergency response system.
2. To liaise with State Duty Officer/SurfCom in relation to the deployment of resources to emergencies at unpatrolled locations/times.
3. To liaise with SurfCom/Patrols/Services in relation to the deployment of resources in a proactive capacity to 'at-risk'/high-risk localities and times.
4. To liaise with external stakeholders/emergency services as required for proactive risk mitigation and emergency response.

## ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Promote a professional image of Surf Life Saving to internal and external partners.
2. Promote positive interaction between lifesaving services and external organisations.
3. To ensure that identified high risk areas along the coastline are appropriately covered with Surf Life Saving services in a proactive capacity.
4. Assist in ensuring the effective deployment of lifesaving resources to an incident.
5. Assume command of Surf Life Saving resources at major incidents (unpatrolled beaches/after-hours or as delegated to by Patrol Captain).
6. Arrange for suitable de-briefings and counselling for personnel when required.
7. Where required, act as initial media relay - directing enquiries to the appropriate Branch and State personnel.
8. Ensure appropriate reports, recommendations, and statistical data are forwarded to relevant Surf Life Saving personnel for further action.
9. Maintain contact with respective Branch DOL in relation to reviewing lifesaving service delivery standards and major incidents.
10. Take immediate steps to rectify any serious breach of Surf Life Saving safety policies and/or patrol deficiencies identified that pose an unacceptable risk to the public or members.

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## **Minimum Qualifications:**

Active and Financial SLSNSW Club member  
Endorsed by Branch  
SLSA Bronze Medallion/Cert II (proficient)  
Advanced Resuscitation Techniques Certificate  
Senior First Aid  
Basic Beach Management  
Class C Drivers License

## **Desirable Qualifications:**

Silver Medallion – Radio Controller  
IRB Drivers Award

## **Skills and Attributes:**

Leadership and decision making qualities  
Sound communication skills  
Professionalism  
Customer orientated manner  
Ability to multi-task  
Ability of work under pressure

## **Essential Knowledge:**

A background within Surf Life Saving and understanding of Surf Life Saving operations  
Experience as Patrol Captain or Lifeguard  
Clear understanding of SLSNSW SOPs  
Understanding of SurfCom/radio operations

## **Internal Liaisons:**

Club Patrols & Support Operations  
State Duty Officer  
SurfCom  
Club/Branch Emergency Callout Teams  
Branch DOL  
SLSNSW Media Manager  
SLS Life Saver Helicopters  
Lifeguard Services

## LS9.3 POSITION DESCRIPTION – DUTY OFFICER



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### **External Liaisons:**

Rescue Helicopter Services (Police/Ambulance)

NSW Police

NSW Fire

NSW Ambulance

SES

DPI (Fisheries)

NSW Maritime

Bureau of Meteorology (BOM)

Media

# LS9.4 DUTY OFFICER CODE OF CONDUCT

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## PURPOSE

To outline the Duty Officer code of conduct.

## POLICY

All Surf Life Saving NSW (SLSNSW) State and Branch Duty Officers are expected to adhere to the following code of conduct.

## PROCEDURE

### Act responsibly and with professionalism

As a Duty Officer you are providing leadership and support to lifesaving personnel and representing Surf Life Saving to external agencies/emergency services.

As an operational figurehead other agencies and our members have high expectations of your conduct, image and professionalism.

### Promote a culture of safety

As an operational leader the Duty Officer should at all times promote safety within lifesaving. The Duty Officer must understand his/her role in assessing risk while co-ordinating the response of lifesaving resources and promote safety at any opportunity.

### Be prepared

The time-critical nature of the role requires a Duty Officer to become an asset to an emergency response almost immediately. Duty Officers must ensure that the minimum equipment and information required for the role is readily available whenever on duty.

### Communication

Maintaining good communication with lifesaving services is essential in optimising a response. Building good relationships with key lifesaving service personnel is important.

### Follow/strengthen operating procedures

SLSNSW provides Standard Operating Procedures for lifesaving services and adherence to these should be promoted by Duty Officers. Specific procedures and contingency plans should be developed, maintained and exercised within your local/regional area and reflected in Branch Duty Manuals and Club Patrol Operations Manuals.

# LS9.5 DUTY OFFICER EQUIPMENT

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## PURPOSE

To outline the minimum equipment requirements for a Duty Officer.

## POLICY

Duty Officers are expected to carry the specified minimum equipment to ensure the effectiveness of their duties.

## PROCEDURE

Duty Officers shall carry the following equipment with them when on duty as a minimum:

### Minimum Equipment

- Handheld radio (SLSNSW approved make/model/programmed)
- Car inverter/radio charger
- Radio waterproof bag
- Rescue Tube + Fins
- Mobile Phone (personal or role specific)
- Torch (waterproof)
- Binoculars
- Area coastal map, with high risk locations, secondary names and hazards identified
- First Aid Kit
- Pen/Notebook
- Emergency Contacts List (Branch)
- SOPs Manual
- Incident Logbook
- Clipboard + RFA Forms,
- Lifesaving Operations Procedure Guide
- Critical Incident Debrief Kit (Debrief Forms)

### Recommended Equipment

- Smart phone (Iphone – with up-to-date emergency contacts)
- Ipad (tablet) with up-to-date maps and resource information
- AED + Oxygen Resuscitation Kit
- Body Recovery Kit
- Helicopter Landing Kit
- Night Operations Kit
- Incident Command Kit
- Throwsticks (in pairs)
- Phone charger (car & wall types)
- Handheld FLIR unit

# LS9.6 DUTY OFFICER UNIFORM

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## PURPOSE

To outline minimum uniform requirements for a Duty Officer.

## POLICY

Official Duty Officer uniform may only be worn while on duty and/or responding to an after-hours incident. It may not be worn at any other time.

## PROCEDURE

<b>Shirt</b>	Red polo shirt SLS Generic Logo on the left chest
<b>Name Badge</b>	Red background SLS Generic Logo Arial Narrow
<b>Hat</b>	Red peak cap or wide brim hat SLS Generic Logo Chequered ribbon on both sides
<b>Jacket</b>	Red/Yellow SLSA Jacket SURF RESCUE across back SURF RESCUE on front right chest (Capitals, Arial Narrow, Red) SLS Generic Logo on front left chest
<b>Vest</b>	Orange Night/Day Reflective Lined DUTY OFFICER, SURF RESCUE across back SLS Generic Logo on the left chest

# LS9.7 DUTY OFFICER PRE-OPERATION CHECKLIST



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## **PURPOSE**

To provide a guideline for Duty Officer start-of-shift requirements.

## **POLICY**

The on-shift Duty Officer shall be contactable via radio and/or mobile phone at all times. If for unplanned or temporary reasons the Duty Officer is uncontactable the Duty Officer shall inform SurfCom of such (prior to and once back in contact).

## **PROCEDURE**

1. Ensure the correct uniform is worn.
2. Check radio and phone are charged.
3. Check the contents of the Duty Officer Kit.
4. Conduct radio check with SurfCom and 'sign-on' 15mins prior to commencement of first lifesaving services.
5. In conjunction with SurfCom:
  - Ensure SurfCom holds correct mobile phone number.
  - Discuss forecast weather and surf reports and expected beach patronage.
  - Discuss possible high-risk localities, periods and contingency plans.
  - Discuss any actual or potential service shortfalls.
6. Listen to lifesaving services morning sign-on.
7. Visit or contact lifesaving services of identified/expected high-risk locations to discuss management planning.
8. Where a lifesaving service is found in breach of their lifesaving service requirements, the Duty Officer in consultation with lifesaving service shall assist the lifesaving service to rectify the problem both immediately and long term.

# LS9.8 DUTY OFFICER POST-OPERATIONS CHECKLIST



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## **PURPOSE**

To provide a guideline for Duty Officer end-of-shift requirements.

## **POLICY**

Duty Officers are required to ensure the appropriate hand-over and planning/preparation actions are undertaken at the end of shift, to ensure ongoing effectiveness of a Branch Duty Officer/Emergency Response System.

## **PROCEDURE**

1. Listen to lifesaving services 'sign-off.'
2. In conjunction with SurfCom (in person or via mobile phone):
  - Ensure all SLS clubs/services have signed-off and are safely offline.
  - Identify any service extensions being undertaken or required (and maintain support).
  - Complete the patrol log and any SITREPs for the day's activities.
  - Note any activities for follow up and notify Branch DOL.
  - Ensure the recording of all information is complete.
3. 'Sign-off' with SurfCom only after all patrols/services are offline.
4. All equipment is to be appropriately stored.
5. Any replacement equipment needs to be documented and requested.
6. Radios/phones to be placed on charge.
7. Appropriate phone diverts/answer messages engaged.

# LS9.9 CLUB/SERVICE CALLOUT TEAMS (Emergency Response)



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## **PURPOSE**

To outline the requirements of club/service emergency response systems.

## **POLICY**

Due to the benefit to the community, all volunteer lifesaving services in NSW should have emergency response (24/7 callout) capability.

This should be achieved through a coordinated system of suitably qualified personnel with access to appropriate rescue equipment, responding within specific emergency response plans.

## **PROCEDURE**

### **Local Emergency Response System**

Lifesaving services should have emergency response systems in place that fall in line with the Surf Life Saving Emergency Response System; namely:

- Response areas (maximum) – Lifesaving Service Agreement/Contract.
- Equipment preparedness (suitable 24/7 'rescue ready' equipment).
- Formally established and administered callout teams.
- Local response plans – included in their Patrol Operations Manual.
- A formally administered personnel contact list (based within SurfGuard).
- A consistent notification/tasking process (Cell/SMS/Pager etc).

### **Declining a request for assistance**

Lifesaving services/personnel may decline a request to respond to an emergency if they feel it would create a level of unacceptable risk to do so:

Examples of inhibitors may be:

- Insufficient personnel;
- Insufficient equipment;
- Dangerous conditions; and
- Geographical distance (outside achievable response area).

Appropriate local emergency response planning/preparedness (equipment and procedures) will minimise the above inhibitors and maximise the ability to render assistance.

### **Planning/Preparedness**

To maximise emergency response effectiveness and personnel safety, it is recommended that clubs/lifeguard services maintain the following equipment/logistical preparedness:

#### **Equipment**

- Two rescue tubes, two sets of fins and two rescue boards should be located in a known and easily accessible location at the facility at all times.
- At least one IRB/RWC should be fully set up with a full tank of fuel located in an accessible location (fuel storage container).
- An ATV (if available) should be fuelled and positioned "ready to go."
- The O2/Resus Kit, AED Kit and First Aid Kit should be easily accessible either on the ATV or in the first aid room.

# LS9.9 CLUB/SERVICE CALLOUT TEAMS (Emergency Response)



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- Two radios with aqua bags should be on charge and easily accessible by lifesaving services personnel.
- Personal telephone contactable 24 hours with contacts.
- Emergency back-up contacts.
- Night operations kit available (if endorsed for night operations).

## **Logistics**

- Surfguard should be utilised to maintain and administer club/service callout team contact information (updated pre-season, post-season and when otherwise changes).
- Surfguard SMS functions should be utilised and/or other suitable emergency notification systems.

## **Training/Exercises**

- All club/service callout teams should conduct an annual pre-season induction/briefing.
- All club/service callout teams should conduct at least scenario/exercise annually.

## **REFERENCE**

Lifesaving Service Agreement

Patrol Operations Manual

# LS9.10 IRB OPERATIONS (LOW-LIGHT)



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## PURPOSE

To outline guidelines and procedures for low light emergency response operations.

## POLICY

Any low light operations shall be delivered by pre-identified, trained and resourced Branch Groups (or Branch endorsed clubs).

Low light IRB operations (or any on-water low-light operations) will form part of Branch Support Operations.

## INTRODUCTION

Surf Life Saving personnel and assets may be tasked to perform search/rescue operations during low light conditions. This Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) sets out to offer guidelines and procedures to be followed when responding to emergency response operations during low light conditions. Low light conditions are considered to be the period leading up to and shortly after sunset.

On water Night Operations are to only be conducted in surf conditions in the lead up to sunset and up to 1 hour (60 minutes) following sunset. Low-light/Night IRB operations can be conducted on enclosed (flat water) at all times following an appropriate risk assessment, approval granted from the on-call State Duty Officer and sufficient navigation/safety equipment requirements are available.

## LAND PROCEDURE

Land based searches between sunset and sunrise (night operations) are to be conducted under the instruction and direction of the appropriate combat agency i.e. NSW Police.

## WATER PROCEDURE

### Roads and Maritime Service Regulations

- Powered vessels of less than seven meters in length shall exhibit a white light visible all round and separate port/starboard sidelights.
- Navigation lights should be positioned so they are not obscured by the vessels superstructure or interfered with by deck lights.
- Do not travel at excessive speeds.
- Type 2 PFD must be worn by Driver and Crew at all times.

### SLS Operational Requirements

The following must be adhered to:

#### 1. Endorsement for IRB Night Operations

Any Club/Service in New South Wales can participate in 'Low-Light Operations' if the following is adhered to:

- Club/Service is Branch and SLSNSW endorsed for low light operations.
- Proposed members complete 'Support Operations Member Application Form' and are endorsed by Branch and SLSNSW before commencing training.
- The Club/Service holds the minimum required equipment.
- Appropriate member/s are available and trained in 'Low-Light Operations.'
- Member/s are saved in SurfGuard under a Branch Low-Light Operations Group. E.g. SNB – Low-Light Operations Group.

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## 2. Training

Initial training will be conducted with the club/service by authorised SLSNSW Facilitators and Branch Trainers (Low-Light Operations).

Low-Light Operations training will include:

- Standard Operating Procedure – IRB Operations (Low-Light)
- Team/Service Procedure Review
- Managing Risk
- Standard Operating Procedure – Emergency Response System (13SURF)
- Communications
- Navigation
- Emergency Service Partners
- Equipment Setup/Training (lights, EPIRB etc)
- Command & Control
- Response Operations
- Practical Training
- Operational Environment
- Lighting/Night Vision

## 3. Emergency Response Procedure (responding to incident)

Most reported night-time emergencies will come through 000 Police to the Surf Emergency Response System (13SURF). Information flow will usually follow the following:

1. State Duty Officer receives call from NSW Police through 13SURF.
2. State Duty Officer calls the Branch Duty Officer/Emergency Coordinator.
3. Branch Duty Officer to dispatch Low-Light Operations Group/personnel (as per branch/local procedures).
4. Before any launch the Branch Duty Officer/Incident Commander, IRB Driver and IRB Crew must unanimously agree that it is safe to launch and signing the Risk Assessment Form.
5. The Branch Duty Officer will advise the State Duty Officer of the intent to launch subject to SDO approval.
6. A land-based incident commander and back up IRB, Driver and Crew (or other emergency service vessel – Water Police, Marine Rescue) must be on-site and contactable (Note: Not required in an inland waterway).

At no time can RWCs operate between sunset and sunrise (at night).

## 4. On-scene response conditions/parameters

IRBs cannot respond at night/low light if:

- The on-beach surf is deemed by the Duty Officer to be above 2 meters and/or > 25 knots wind (excluding inland waterways).
- If an incident is further than 1km out to sea from the beach.
- If no land-based incident commander and/or backup IRB + crew (or other emergency service vessel) is available.
- If the missing person is not sighted by an emergency service personnel or Surf Life Saving representative.
- If the IRB cannot remain in visual sight of the Duty Officer/Incident Commander at all times.

When the Duty Officer/Incident Commander, IRB Driver, and IRB Crew are on scene they all must agree on the following prior to launch:

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- 
- That visibility is clear enough to be able to respond
  - That conditions are safe enough to respond
  - That all minimum equipment and support is in place (radios, land-based team, command point established)
  - The details of the task/operation

## 5. Equipment

Minimum gear & equipment required for Low Light IRB Operations:

- A current approved make and model of IRB (as per SLSA approved gear and equipment list)
- Mountable IRB Navigation lights (Port, Starboard, White) – must be switched on at all times
- 3 x Radios – 2 IRB, 1 Duty Officer/Incident Commander
- 2 x Type 2 PFDs with reflective patches – worn by IRB Driver and Crew
- 2 x Waterproof Torches – 1 IRB, 1 Duty Officer/Incident Commander
- 2 x Personal strobes – worn by IRB Driver and Crew
- 2 x torches
- 2 x personal EPIRB/PLB (attached to driver and crew)
- 2 x Wetsuits – worn by IRB Driver and Crew
- 2 x Set of waterproof 'Mini Flares'
- 1 x V sheet
- 1 x High viz vest – worn by Duty Officer/Incident Commander
- 2 x Outboard lanyard (attached to driver and crew)
- 2 x Beach navigation markers
- 6 x red/green/white cyalume sticks (glow sticks)
- 1 x Pelican case (or similar) with Night Operations clearly marked
- 25 x Cable ties
- 1 x Shears/scissors
- Spare batteries

## Recommended

- FLIR
- Helmets (Gath type) with in-built radios
- Search Dye

# LS9.11 INCIDENT CONTROL DEFINITIONS

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## PURPOSE

To enable all emergency response agencies to have a common understanding a national agreement has been reached on the use and interpretation of the terms Control, Command and Coordination.

## POLICY

Surf Life Saving NSW (SLSNSW) provides the following definitions for use with lifesaving services to ensure effective operations.

## PROCEDURE

### Definitions

#### Control

Control is the overall direction of response activities in an emergency situation. Authority for control is established in legislation or in an emergency response plan. It carries with it responsibility for allocating tasks to and coordinating other agencies in accordance with the needs of the situation. Control relates to situations and operates horizontally across agencies.

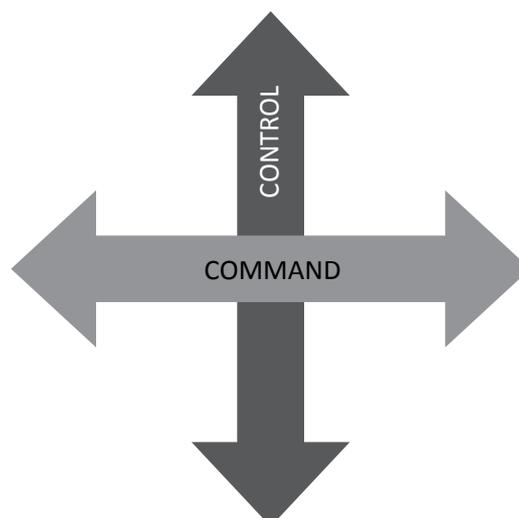
#### Command

Command is the internal direction of members and resource of an organisation in the performance of the organisations role and tasks.

Authority to command is established by agreement within an organisation. Command relates to individual organisation and operates vertically within an agency.

#### Coordination

Coordination involves the bringing together of agencies and other resources to support an emergency management response. It involves the systematic acquisition and application of resources (organisations, manpower and equipment) in accordance with the requirements imposed by the emergency or emergencies.



# LS9.12 PRINCIPLES OF INCIDENT CONTROL SYSTEM (ICS)



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## PURPOSE

To outline the Incident Control System (ICS) principles within Surf Life Saving NSW (SLSNSW).

## POLICY

The use of an ICS ensures that all vital management and information functions are adequately performed and that an incident is dealt with in the most effective manner.

## PROCEDURE

### Principles of Incident Control System (ICS)

The Surf Life Saving Incident Control System is tailored towards Surf Life Saving, based off the following principles:

- One Incident Controller
- Functional management
- Management by objectives
- Management plans
- Span of control

If Surf Life Saving were not to have an incident control system problems may occur. These include:

- Control not being established
- Control being established by more than one Incident Controller
- Inappropriate action being taken by personnel working without supervision
- Coordination of organisations not occurring
- No plan being established to manage the incident
- A disorganised approach being followed
- Communication problems being encountered
- Safety of personnel being compromised

### One Incident Controller

It is essential that one officer, the Incident Controller, establish control of an incident. He/she is responsible for managing the entire response to the incident. The Surf Life Saving Incident Control System (SLICS) is designed to provide that person with the necessary organisational support to ensure effective command, control and coordination.

### Functional Management

Functional management is the use of specific functions to manage an incident. The SLICS is based off the Australian Inter-service Incident Management System (AIIMS). SLICS uses the following four functions:

- Control
- Operations
- Planning
- Logistics

Depending on the size and complexity of an incident further delegation of tasks and functions and the transfer of coordination responsibility may be necessary. A factor of any ICS is its ability to expand and contract in an orderly manner to meet the needs of an incident.

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# LS9.12 PRINCIPLES OF INCIDENT CONTROL SYSTEM (ICS)



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Control can develop from a small incident where the Patrol Captain/Lifeguard manages all functions, to the largest incident which involves the creation of an Incident Management Team (IMT) and the filling of all positions. (See Surf Life Saving Incident Control System SOP for more information).

## Management by Objectives

Management of an incident requires an objective or desired outcome to be identified. The control of the incident revolves around the objective being communicated to all those involved in the operation.

Outcomes should be based on the SMART principle

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Realistic
- Time guided

## Management Plans

Once the objective has been selected a plan outlining the strategies and tactics to be used to manage the incident is developed. Surf Life Saving NSW uses an Incident Action Plan and Situation Reports (SITREPS).

The Incident Action Plan includes the following:

- Overall operational objective and strategies
- Continuity and control of operations
- Effective use of resources
- Total resources in use and anticipated in the future

## Span of Control

The span of control is a concept that relates to the number of teams or individuals who can be successfully supervised by one person. Where span of control is exceeded the supervising officer should consider delegating responsibility to others.

Where the span of control is lower or the tasks are fewer the supervisor may reassume responsibility or reorganise delegation to scale down the structure to fit the tasks required.

Under the principles of span of control up to four reporting teams/individuals/resources is considered to be desirable. This maintains a supervisor's ability to effectively task, monitor and evaluate performance.

Small Incident	Medium Incident	Large incident
1-5 Individuals	4-10 Team	>10 Teams
Mental Plan	Mental to Written Plan	Written Plan
Limited Duration	Medium Duration	Large Duration
IMT 1 person	> 1 IMT	> 3 IMT

\*In Surf Life Saving terms a team may be described as a lifesaving service that forms communication i.e. IRB, RWC, 2 Lifeguards.

# LS9.12 PRINCIPLES OF INCIDENT CONTROL SYSTEM (ICS)



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## **Roles for Non-SLS Personnel**

Many of the roles within an IMT (especially in a large incident) do not require the expertise and experience of emergency service personnel. The SLICS provides opportunities for participation by non-operational personnel including:

- Planning
- Logistics
- Office administration (i.e. telephone answering, admin support etc)
- Technical fields

# LS9.13 INCIDENT CONTROL SYSTEM STRUCTURES



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## PURPOSE

To outline the structures of Incident Control Systems (ICS) within Surf Life Saving NSW (SLSNSW).

## POLICY

The use of an ICS ensures that all vital management and information functions are adequately performed and that the incident is dealt with in the most effective manner.

## PROCEDURE

### Identifying the lead combat agency

Lead agencies are determined by legislation or policy and are responsible for the management of specified events. The Incident Controller will thus be appointed in accordance with agency procedures. An Incident Controller will be responsible for assuming control of the incident and applying the principles of the ICS.

Local arrangements in place may mean that the below table is structured differently in your local area dependant on the remoteness of your area and staffing arrangements for emergency services agents.

<b>Incident</b>	<b>Lead Agency</b>
General Beach Operations	Surf Life Saving NSW, Council, NPWS
Aquatic Search and Rescue	NSW Police
Tsunami	NSW State Emergency Service
Flu Pandemic	NSW Health
First Aid and Emergency Care	NSW Ambulance Service
Coastal Flooding	NSW State Emergency Service

### Support Agencies

Legislation or policy will also determine which organisations normally support the lead agency at an incident.

### Identifying the need for delegation functions

As an incident grows in size or complexity, its management becomes more demanding. The Incident Controller needs to consider delegating responsibility for operations, planning and logistics.

The incident controller assumes overall responsibility with the functional areas manned as required and delegated. Where such delegation occurs the incident controller and their persons responsible for each established function form the Incident Management Team (IMT).

**Note:** it is not advisable but should a higher authority person within the SLS Incident Command Structure wish to assume control without permission of the current Incident Controller they may do so.

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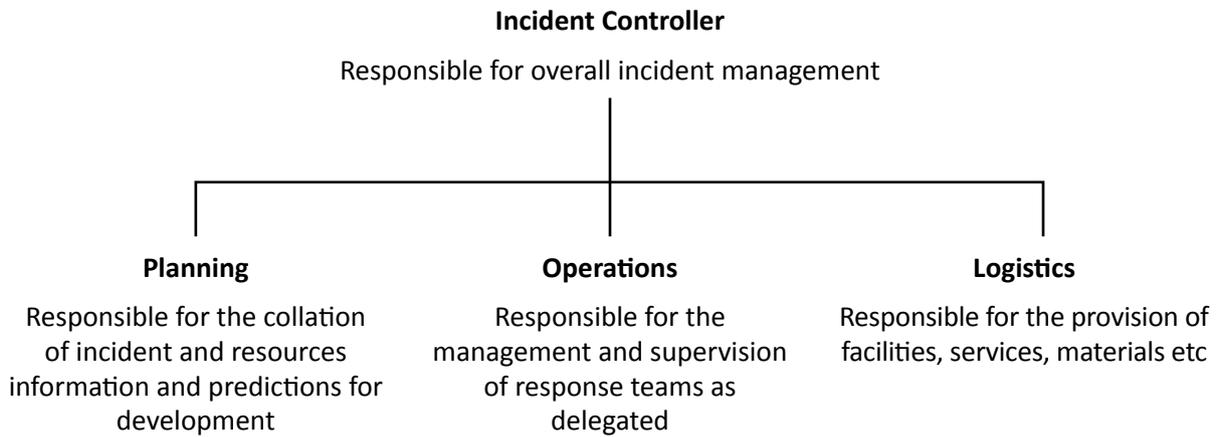
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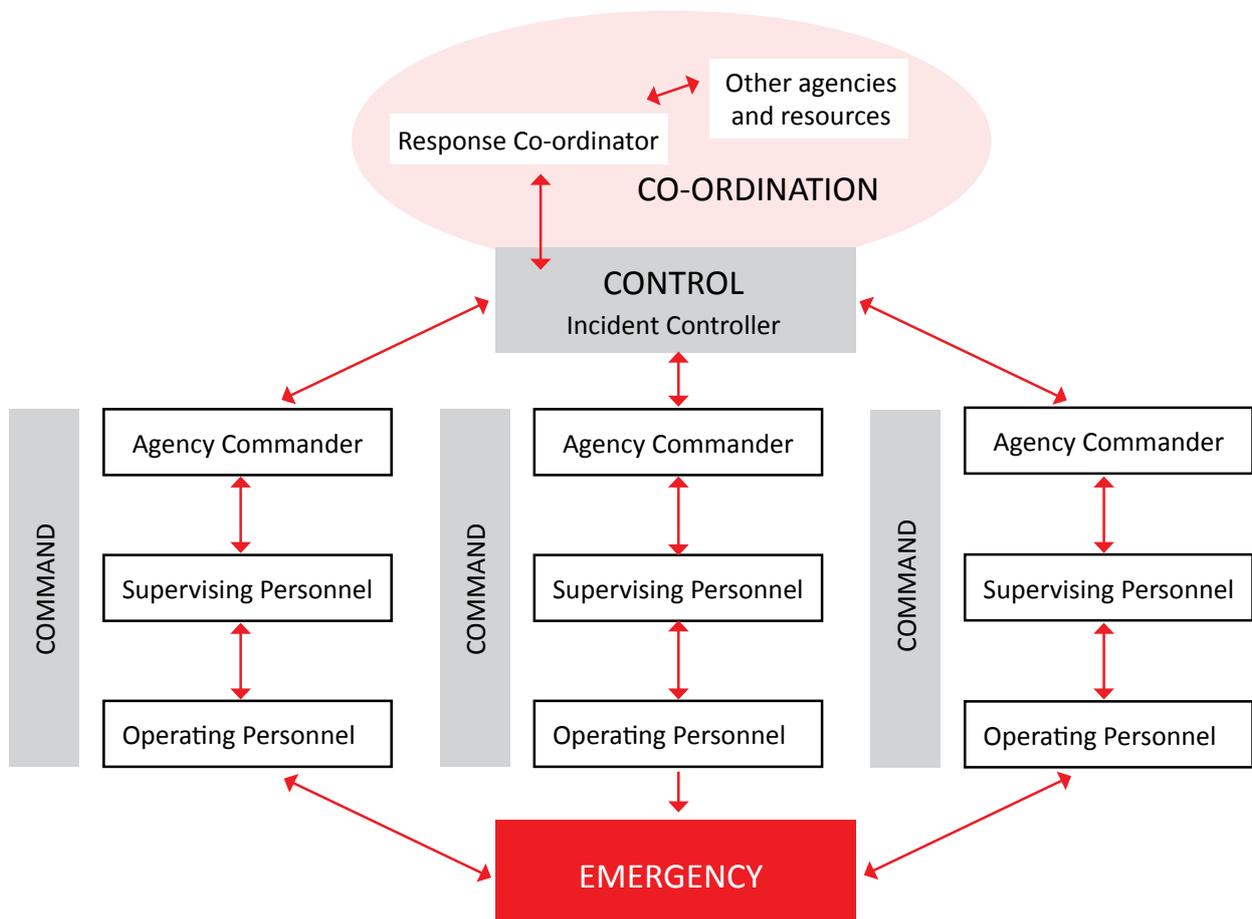


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## Identify appropriate control structure

Members of an IMT may also need to delegate responsibility for activities conducted within their functional areas. An example of this specific to Surf Life Saving in NSW is described in the SLICS.



# LS9.13 INCIDENT CONTROL SYSTEM STRUCTURES



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The following table highlights generic emergencies/threats where SLS may be required to offer support to controlling agencies.

<b>Emergency/Threat</b>	<b>Control Agency</b>
<b>Accident/Incident</b>	
Aircraft	Police
Marine	Police
<b>Fire or Explosion</b>	
Marine	Fire
<b>Natural Event</b>	
Flood	SES
Tsunami	SES
<b>Rescue</b>	
Land	Police
Water	Police
<b>Search</b>	
Land and Water	Police
<b>Other</b>	
Marine Casualty	Police

# LS9.14 INCIDENT CONTROL SYSTEM ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES



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## PURPOSE

To outline the roles and responsibilities with the Surf Life Saving NSW (SLSNSW) Incident Control System (ICS).

## POLICY

SLSNSW provides the contained guidelines to be followed in relation to ICSs.

## PROCEDURE

Where all functions have been delegated, an Incident Management Team (IMT) comprises of the Incident Controller, Operations Officer, Planning Officer and Logistics Officer. The team of people now share the burden of controlling the incident.

The IMT should meet as determined by the Incident Controller, to assist the incident controller to ensure that control of the incident is being:

- Properly planned;
- Adequately resourced within the constraints;
- Suitably implemented;
- Provides for the safety and welfare of people involved in controlling the incident;
- Minimises impact on the community on the environment; and
- Is effective and efficient.

## Control

The Incident Controller is appointed in accordance with the organisations policy or legislative requirements and is responsible for the overall management of the incident.

Incident Controllers roles become more of a leadership role as the structure expands and the functions of operations, planning and logistics are delegated. Incident Controllers must have the technical training and experience to manage the incident and be capable of using sound managerial practices to implement their strategies in the safest and most effective manner.

The Incident Controller must be able to organise people to allow time to consider the issues critical to the incident. Minor information and other distractions must be avoided. The Incident Controller must be kept informed with relevant information and be available to the principal members of the IMT to make important decisions.

The responsibilities of the Incident Controller at an incident are to:

- Assume control and assess the situation;
  - Plan response to the incident and approve any plans;
  - Allocate tasks;
  - Maintain safe practices;
  - Appoint staff/members;
  - Co-ordinate and forward reports to the responsible agencies;
  - Review any incident plans;
  - Organise changeovers and briefings;
  - Liaise with support personnel; and
  - Manage the media.
-

# LS9.14 INCIDENT CONTROL SYSTEM ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES



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## Planning

Complex incidents demand high levels of planning. The Incident Controller will experience great difficulty in managing an incident that is large, complicated in nature or extends over a lengthy period unless the planning function is delegated. An efficient planning officer is important to the smooth running of complex incidents.

When appointed the planning officer is important to the smooth running of complex incidents and needs to:

- Obtain a briefing from the Incident Controller;
- Process information relating to the current and predicted incident situation;
- Maintain records about the location and deployment of teams;
- Provide management support;
- Maintain an information service;
- Liaise with technical specialists;
- Conduct planning meetings with other members of the IMT;
- Develop alternative control objectives and strategies;
- Co-ordinate the development and distribution of the Incident Action Plan;
- Organise incident demobilisation;
- Plan for the future (6-24 hour plans, 1 & 2 day plans); and
- Maintain a log of activities.

## Operations

As an incident develops the Incident Controller may decide to delegate some functions. The Operations role is normally delegated to a person from the principal leading organisation. The Operations function is a major role at all incidents. Where delegation of the operations functions occurs, the responsibilities assumed by the operations officer are:

- Obtain a briefing from the incident controller;
- Develop the operations portion of the Incident Action Plan;
- Brief and allocate personnel in accordance with the plan;
- Manage and supervise incidents at the incident;
- Establish and maintain assembly staging areas;
- Determine the need for and request additional resources;
- Assemble response teams from available resources;
- Re-allocate response teams;
- Initiate recommendations for the release of resources;
- Report special incidents and accidents; and
- Maintain a log of activities

## Logistics

The Logistics Officer is appointed by the Incident Controller and is responsible for providing support materials and services for the incident. The Logistics Officer participates in the development of the plan and reports to the Incident Controller.

The main responsibilities are:

- Obtain a briefing from the incident controller;
- Plan the organisation of logistics section;
- Allocate tasks to logistic personnel;
- Process requests for additional resources;

# LS9.14 INCIDENT CONTROL SYSTEM ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES



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- Estimate future services and support requirements; and
- Maintain a log of activities and resources.

## **Liaison Officers**

The role of a Liaison Officer is to represent an organisation or perform an emergency management function within a SurfCom like facility. Liaison Officers are experts in relation to their organisation area of specialisation and therefore can advise others accordingly.

The Liaison Officer duties include:

- Reporting to and liaising with the Incident Controller;
- Knowing the resources of their organisation;
- Maintaining active communication with other liaison officers;
- Making decisions without hesitation;
- Preparing and forwarding SITREPS to organisations regularly; and
- Remember that their role is coordination not operation.

# LS9.15 SURF LIFESAVING INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM (SLICS)



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## PURPOSE

Under the operations that Surf Life Saving is actively involved in there exists a need for a incident control system to effectively and efficiently manage all incidents.

## POLICY

SLICS has three levels of Incident Commander which are responsible for the management of incidents and vary in applications depending on the Incident. These are known as:

- Patrol Captain/Lifeguard
- Duty Officer (Branch/Regional based)
- SLSNSW Duty Officer

## PROCEDURE

### Lifeguards/Patrol Captains

For the majority of Surf Life Saving incidents the Patrol Captain shall assume the role of the Incident Commander and be the Incident Management Team (IMT). The Patrol Captain is responsible for a small band of members whose key role is prevention, recognition and rescue.

Roles and responsibilities of Patrol Captains/Lifeguards can be found in the relevant Standard Operating Procedures.

Through major incidents the Patrol Captain/Lifeguard may have to delegate their authority to a Duty Officer who will resume the position of Incident Controller. In this situation it is advisable that the Patrol Captain become the Operations Officer for the incident.

### Duty Officers/Lifeguard Supervisors

For incidents that involve between 4-10 different units or teams, the Duty Officer assumes the role of the Incident Commander and will be supported by the IMT. The Incident Management Team would normally be as follows:

- Operations Officer – Patrol Captain/Senior Lifeguard.
- Planning Officer – SurfCom operator.
- Logistics Officer – Nominated person.

Duty Officers should normally control all search and rescue incidents within a council area and incidents that involve the notification to the State Duty Officer.

### State Duty Officer

The State Duty Officer will assume the role of Incident Commander at after-hours emergency responses and large scale incidents that are normally supported by a written plan (i.e. Tsunami).

(In the case) The Incident Management Team may be formed the following way:

- Operations Officer – Duty Officers.
- Planning Officer – Nominated.
- Logistics Officer – Nominated.
- Public Relations Officer – Nominated (usually SLSNSW Media Officer).

# LS9.16 TASK REGISTRATION & ANALYSIS

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## PURPOSE

To outline Surf Life Saving NSW (SLSNSW) task registration and analysis process.

## POLICY

SLSNSW provides the following information to ensure the effective management of task registration and analysis processes.

## PROCEDURE

A request for assistance only becomes a task after it has been confirmed that it is not a duplicate call and it requires action. The status of a task for allocation purpose is either:

<b>Action</b>	Task requires action by resources under the control of SLS
<b>Completed</b>	Task has been completed by resources under the control of the SLS
<b>Referred</b>	Task passed to an external agency resources for action, e.g. if the task is a fire to be actioned by the relevant fire fighting agency. A referred task is treated as complete.

Check if the Request for Assistance (RFA) is a new task, duplicate or worth revisiting.

The RFA could be:

- A new task.
- A duplicate call – the original caller or related parties have called again about an existing uncompleted or completed task.
- A possible revisit – to a previously completed task which requires further action.

To work out which it is, check the address on the RFA against the register.

Duplicates can be generated because:

- A different person has called; or
- The person could be impatient and ring back.

### New Task

If the task is not in the register then the RFA is a new task.

Fill in the next blank row of the request for assistance register, and then write the new task number in the task number box on the top right hand corner of the RFA.

Now the RFA is a new task with a unique number.

### Duplicate Task

If the incident is already in the Request for Assistance Register it is a duplicate task. In this case write DUPLICATE in the RFA Box under the number.