

YOUR IMPACT 2020/2021



The impact of your generosity

Thank you for your dedication to the West Aussie community.

Your gifts ensure lifesavers of the future are supported through our development pathways and training opportunities of surf sports. They also help fund the vital training, equipment and education of our surf lifesaving volunteers and the community, and carry out our most visible function of saving lives on our West Aussie beaches.

Every year, our members and services work hard to make sure our beaches are safer for the public. This year, they've performed more than 135,000 on-beach patrol hours and 570 rescues.

These incredible efforts ensured that no lives were lost between the red and yellow flags on WA beaches last season.

The ongoing impact you have is evident in the growth of the SLSWA movement. Last season, our membership reached more than 23,700, a 6% increase from the previous year. This included a 10% growth in Nippers and 7% in youth membership.

It's thanks to YOU that our volunteer surf lifesavers are there, season after season, and this report outlines just some of the ways your generosity is making a difference.

Thank you again for being part of our surf lifesaving family. I hope this leaves you proud of the impact you have in WA.



Craig Smith-Gander AM
President
Volunteer Lifesaver



HOW YOUR SUPPORT MADE A DIFFERENCE ON WEST AUSSIE BEACHES

This year, with your support, our 23,776
SLSWA members helped perform:



574
RESCUES



74,734
PREVENTATIVE
ACTIONS



3,383
FIRST AID
TREATMENTS



560
SHARK
SIGHTINGS



JET-SKIS: OUR SPEED ON THE WATER



Each year we see an increase in demand for our lifesaving services. With your support, we have been able to expand our eyes on the water and in the sky to keep beachgoers safe.

Drones: our eyes in the sky

SLSWA's Drone Patrol gives important support to our club-based beach patrol activities and Westpac Life Saver Rescue Helicopter service. With the help of this exciting technology, volunteers can identify dangerous conditions in the water.

Since the introduction of drone patrols to five beaches in 2017/18, this year we conducted 162 hours of drone patrol at 13 beaches from Quinns Rocks Beach to Twilight Beach in Esperance.

In a recent drone patrol at Port Bouvard, the Drone Patrol operator saw something that alarmed them. The Drone Patrol quickly sent an IRB to respond to the situation. A volunteer on the IRB assisted the two swimmers, who were completely unaware of the danger they were in.

The action taken by the volunteer surf life savers and the Drone Patrol operator that day prevented what would likely have been a more serious rescue operation.

Thanks to the wonderful response from supporters to our Winter Appeal, we can continue to increase and replace our available equipment and train lifesavers to be ready for action. This means that more patrols will be able to get to people even faster in an emergency, as was the case with two search rescues that took place earlier this year.

Our Wesfarmers Emergency Response Team (WERT), based out of the Albany SLSC, sent two jet skis and four volunteer lifesavers to support the search for a missing person at Ledge Bay, near Gull Rock, approximately 10km east of Albany.

While searching that area, the team was alerted to a separate and more critical incident at Mermaid Beach at Cheynes, approximately 50km east of Albany, where two men fishing off the rocks had been swept into the water.

The WERT diverted to the scene and was able to rescue one of the missing persons from the water and assist him back to shore. Meanwhile, the missing person at Ledge Bay was located by WA Police and taken for medical assessment.

Jet skis were vital in conducting thorough searches of both areas, which spanned approximately 10km of remote coastline. Larger vessels, like the Albany Marine Rescue vessels, which also responded, are unable to get close to shore in all sections of the search areas due to water conditions and submerged hazards.

Specialised equipment like jet skis give our volunteers the power and speed they need to reach people quickly when things go wrong in the water.



Thanks to your support, we are out in the broader community all year round, educating people of all ages and backgrounds about first aid and coastal safety through our training, education and public awareness programs.

At the beginning of the 2020/21 year, COVID-19 lockdowns and restrictions had a significant impact on our ability to deliver training and education, and many activities planned during that time had to be cancelled or postponed.

However, some essential training could proceed, and SLSWA aligned with government guidelines and strict protocols to ensure we could offer these essential first aid training services during this period.

This included using full-body manikins for patient simulation to comply with physical distancing, and the use of simulated breathing to avoid mouth-to-mouth contact with manikins.

As restrictions eased, it was wonderful to be able to resume training in the wider community. From August, apart from a couple of abrupt lockdowns, our volunteers were able to go ahead with most training, while continuing to observe government health requirements.

LIFE SKILLS FOR LIFE

This interactive introductory training delivered to 1,300 primary school students uses CPR manikins and a training defibrillator to give students the knowledge, confidence, and skills to respond in a real-life emergency.

Surf survival and beach activities

Qualified SLSWA surf lifesavers provide on-beach training on how to negotiate surf breaks, recognise hazardous surf conditions and where to swim safely. More than 1,000 students regularly attended the weekly sessions, culminating in a carnival-style activity using their newfound skills and confidence.

Surf life saving cadets

SLSWA's Cadets 20/21 in-school program taught 200 high school students how to become a lifesaver through a range of activities and courses, including Community Surf Rescue Certificate, first aid and Bronze Medallion certifications.

In 2020/21, approximately 1,300 students participated in the program, resulting in:



133

FIRST AID CERTIFICATES



12,029

PEOPLE TRAINED IN FIRST AID



Future leaders of our community

Sixteen-year-old Secret Harbour SLSC's Nicholas Graydon was awarded Youth Lifesaver of the Year 2021.

With four years of patrol experience under his belt, he is one of the club's youngest drone operators.

"I'm excited that drone technology is available to help save lives on the beach," says Nicholas. "As the youngest drone operator at my club and ambassador for its use, I encourage kids who may not be confident in the water to explore technology as a way of using their skills to save lives."

Nicholas was even involved in a rescue on the first day he operated a drone on patrol:

"On my first accredited drone patrol at Penguin Island, I spotted someone in distress, so it really does work."

Looking to the future, Nicholas hopes to progress through the ranks and become a Surf Life Saving trainer:

"I want to get my jet ski certification and then progress to flying helicopters. I've always wanted to be a pilot, and it's another skill that I can use on patrol to save lives."

Congratulations to Nicholas for his outstanding achievements and thank you for supporting our youngest members.

OUR BRIGHT FUTURE

We're so proud of our Youth members and the incredible passion and vision they have for the future of our clubs from such an early age. Developing a more structured pathway from our Woodside Nippers program right through to our Youth Leaders Program allows us to identify and nurture future leaders of our organisation, just like Secret Harbour SLSC's Nicholas Graydon. In harnessing their potential through these development pathways, the sky's literally the limit for our surf lifesaving movement.

"I just want to be the best version of myself, to be open to trying anything, and be able to support those who need my help."

Youth programs and engagement with SLSWA 2020/21:



161

YOUTH LEADERS PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS



6.5%

INCREASE IN YOUTH MEMBERS



10%

INCREASE IN NIPPERS

TRAINING

South West Development Centre update

As you may know, our South West Development Centre proposal has been approved by the Shire of Augusta and Margaret River, and we have commenced demolition of the existing structures, building the three new facilities and refurbishing the existing Margaret River Lodge.

The new centre will feature purpose-built training rooms and on-site accommodation. These can be used by surf lifesaving clubs throughout WA for training programs, residential camps and courses for passionate young volunteers to become skilled beach patrol leaders and coaches. It will also provide a place to connect with other clubs, members and like-minded organisations in the wider community.

Soon, our volunteers will be able to use this facility to train and be motivated to work together to save lives on West Aussie beaches each summer.

Thank you for making this important surf life saving facility for our members and community a reality.

SURF SPORTS UPDATE

Surf Sports play a key role in the surf life saving movement. As well as giving members the opportunity to participate on a competitive level, these activities help our volunteers develop the skills they need to save lives on our beaches.

Every year thousands of SLSWA members participate at club, state and national level. These carnivals give our surf lifesavers the opportunity to hone their lifesaving skills across a range of disciplines.

Highlights include:



After the cancellation of the WA Championships and The Aussies due to COVID-19, the new WA Ironman Series provided the ideal event for athletes to strive for and proved a great success, with 148 competitors from 14 clubs.



A new coaching program for youth members, Surf Squad provides aspiring young surf sport athletes access to specialised board, surf swimming and Ironman training. The initial program attracted more than 100 participants.



The SunSmart WA Surf Life Saving Championships are the pinnacle events of the year where athletes showcase their skills across the range of surf sports disciplines. While a number of the 2020 winter championship events were cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions, a record number of eager athletes from across WA turned out to take part.

Thank you so much for all the lives you've helped to save this year. With your support, we look forward to another wonderful season this year, keeping West Aussies safe on our glorious beaches.



**WESTERN
AUSTRALIA**

