

shore break



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The life of the beach.

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From the President

During a recent conversation, I was asked what were the benefits of surf life saving. This made me really think, not whether there were benefits (as there is strong proof that there are) but rather could I quantify and qualify them. There are strong economic, social (community) and personal benefits. In this issue, I would like to address some of the economic benefits and, in future "Shore Breaks" I will look at the other categories.

According to a report by **The Allen Group** (October 2005), the total value of service life saving services in 2003 – 04 (based on our national membership percentage) was around \$14 million. This includes the imputed value of time spent by volunteers and the value of salaries for volunteer services. Current value, I would suggest, would be far higher.

According to estimates developed by the Australian Institute of Criminology, the value of a life, in 2004 terms is \$1.7 million. It is estimated that 5% of total rescues conducted by surf life savers would have resulted in a fatal drowning. With over 1400 rescues conducted last season from Manly to North Palm Beach, this would equate to over 70 fatalities with an economic value of over \$120 millions (2004 values). Also, 3% of rescues would have resulted in a permanent incapacitation – another 45 people at an economic value of around \$50 million.

If I were to place an estimated hourly rate (with on costs) the direct labour costs for last season's volunteers would be in excess of \$7 million. This excludes all other costs.

According to a report by **Aurora Practical Solutions** (September 2005):

- 84% of people interviewed agreed that there are important economic benefits to the businesses in beachside suburbs from having surf life saving at the beach
- It is estimated that there were 300 beachside businesses from Manly to Palm Beach with a combined spring / summer revenue of \$559 million
- Non locals represented 53% of annual turnover (40% in Autumn / Winter and 60% in Spring / Summer)



- The average amount spent per beach goer on a day at the beach was \$16.32
- Non locals accounted for more than 54% of the annual spend at beachside businesses (ie more than the locals)
- The main economic benefits that surf life saving provides include:
- Encouraging more visitors, especially from overseas
- Safe beaches which encourages tourism
- Encourages more people to visit the beach because it is a free service that they provide
- Some tourists come to the beaches to see the surf life savers
- If they weren't there, people would not feel safe and therefore they would not come to the beach nor spend at the beachside businesses
- Tourists feel safe and therefore come to the beach in greater numbers and spend their dollars
- The well patrolled beaches are more popular and the visitors spend their money at that beach
- Beachside businesses derive a lot of money from tourism
- Tourists need surf life savers so they feel safe and come to spend their money
- Tourists would not come if they did not feel safe
- Attracts more people to the beach and hence more business
- They come for safe surfing as well as for carnivals.

These macro economic benefits are significant and definitely impact on the local and wider economies. I will go through micro economic benefits in future issues.



National Report reveals increase in coastal drowning deaths—males at greatest risk, representing nine in ten incidents.

The recently released 2008 National Coastal Safety Report, supported by Westpac has revealed some alarming trends relating to coastal drowning deaths. As we enter what is typically the busiest and most dangerous time on Australian beaches, the findings serve as a strong reminder to all Australians of the need to be surf safe and to swim between the flags at all times.

Produced by Surf Life Saving Australia (SLSA) and supported by major partner, Westpac, the annual report revealed that 88 lives were lost along the Australian coast during 2007-2008 due to a drowning death. This is a seven percent increase on the previous season and higher than the five year average.

Another concerning trend to come out of the report is the overrepresentation of males in coastal drowning deaths, with males representing an alarming nine out of ten fatalities (89 percent). While males typically dominate coastal drowning figures, last season has seen a notable increase from 69 to 78 deaths. According to Andrew Bedford, Surf Lifesaver of the Year, this could be attributed to men taking more risks in the surf and having a tendency to overrate their swimming ability.

Exposing a new risk group, the report has found that for the first time in recent years, the 20-29 year old age bracket had the highest representation, at almost a quarter of all coastal drowning incidents (24 percent).

"Both of these trends demonstrate only too well that age and strength are no protection in the surf. All beachgoers need to be aware of surf safety and swim between the flags this summer to prevent more lives being lost," Andrew Bedford said.

An overwhelming majority of rescue and preventative actions last season arose from swimming at ocean beaches.

Almost six in ten (58 percent) coastal drowning deaths where the person was swimming or wading involved rips. When combining rescue and preventative

actions, this figure increases to almost nine in ten (89 percent), reinforcing that the safest place to swim is between the flags.

The National Coastal Safety Report was launched simultaneously with the announcement of the Westpac Surf Safety Campaign – a community awareness initiative designed to educate Australians on the importance of surf safety, with a strong focus on rips. The campaign is being spearheaded by Olympic champion, Grant Hackett, who said, "As a former volunteer surf lifesaver, I understand the importance of surf safety education and am proud to be part of an initiative that is helping to save Australian lives in the surf."

The Westpac Surf Safety Campaign was released on the first day of summer and includes a Surf Safety DVD hosted by Grant, to be screened in Westpac branches nationally. In addition, a wallet sized surf safety reminder card, which includes instructions for resuscitation and how to spot a rip will be available free of charge from Westpac branches. Surf safety messages will be printed on Westpac statement envelopes, ATM receipts and feature across various other materials within the branch environment. The Westpac Surf Safety Campaign complements a thirty five year partnership between Westpac and Surf Life Saving Australia and supports Westpac's ongoing commitment to help save Australian lives.

"Rips continue to pose one of the greatest risks on Australian beaches. People are aware of the dangers of rips, but cannot necessarily identify them or know how to get out of them. The surf safety reminder cards demonstrate how to spot a rip and are free to members of the public from Westpac branches nationally," Andrew Bedford explained.

"We have the best beaches and coastlines in the world and they are there to be enjoyed. To ensure you don't become a surf rescue statistic, remember to swim between the flags and talk to your local volunteer surf lifesaver or lifeguard. Or if you can't do this pop into a Westpac branch or visit www.westpac.com.au/surfsafety for more surf safety information," Grant Hackett added.

NSW—the most dangerous State.

Despite an 18 percent decrease in New South Wales during 2007-2008, the state still contributes to the greatest number of coastal drowning deaths in Australia.

The New South Wales figure of 33 fatalities is more than four times the number in Queensland and Tasmania (eight fatalities), three times the South Australia and Western Australia figure (11 and 10 fatalities respectively) and almost double the number of coastal drowning deaths in Victoria (18).



Bailey lends his support to Surf Life Saving

Well-known Channel TEN weather presenter and northern beaches resident Tim Bailey is helping make our beaches safer this season by promoting surf safety messages during his live weather segments on TEN News at 5pm.

Bailey will dedicate part of his weekend weather report every Friday afternoon to promoting Surf Life Saving and will deliver a series of surf safety messages developed in conjunction with SLSNSW. "Surf Life Savers do a wonderful job each weekend to keep our beaches safe so I am more than happy to do this to support their efforts and hopefully help save a life or two" said Bailey.

The arrangement was put in place by Surf Life Saving Sydney Northern Beaches but will benefit all Clubs in the State. "TEN News has a Statewide audience of over 750,000 viewers so this is a great way for us to get our message out to the wider community on the eve of each weekend" said SNB CEO Steve McInnes.

We thank Tim and Channel TEN for their generous support !



Surf Lifesavers launches school holiday program for kids.

A new holiday program targeting kids aged between 9 and 15 has been launched by the *Surf Life Saving School* - part of Surf Life Saving Sydney Northern Beaches.

The holiday programs will run during the January school holidays and will offer parents the opportunity to get their children involved in a healthy and active program which is both educational and fun.

The Surf Life Saving School is in its 5th year and provides surf awareness and surf safety programs to schools throughout NSW. "This term alone over 7,000 students have participated in one of our programs and the popularity of our school programs has driven us to develop the holiday programs" said Surf Life Saving School CEO, Steve McInnes. "Our one, two and three day programs are run by experienced surf life savers and are designed to cater for children with all levels of experience" Mr McInnes added.

The holiday programs will offer a great range of activities both on the beach and in the water and will include surf skills, board relays, beach flags, chariot races, and lots of other fun activities and games. At the same time, the serious aspects of surf awareness and surf safety will be discussed so that kids are

aware of the dangers associated with the beach and can develop self survival techniques under the watchful eyes of their instructors.

The Surf Life Saving School holiday programs commence on 13 January 2009 at Collaroy Beach and operate from 10am to 3pm. For further information and bookings see www.surflifesavingsschool.com.au or call 9913 8066.

New Major Sponsor for Sydney Northern Beaches

Unilever Australasia has recently signed a 3-year contract with SLSSNB to be the major sponsor for the Branch. The sponsorship will see the Streets brand of ice creams promoted and sold through all club kiosks and patrol tents provided by Streets

Director of Sponsorship and Marketing for SLSSNB, Mr Alan Mason said "We had several companies vying to become our major sponsor following Coke's decision to reduce their level of sponsorship. Streets represented the "best fit" for us in meeting our sponsorship objectives and we are delighted to enter into this partnership with them and to have them as our major supporter.

As part of the sponsorship arrangement, Streets are proving the 21 Surf Life Saving Clubs between North Palm Beach and Manly with a patrol tent to protect patrol members from the

elements whilst on patrol.

The first of the new Streets patrol tents were delivered at the beginning of December and have been put to good use by club members.

COASTAL AMBASSADORS SOUGHT FROM LOCAL SURF CLUBS

Pittwater Council's Coastal Environment Centre (CEC) at North Narrabeen and Surf Life Saving Sydney Northern Beaches are once again joining up to offer local surf club volunteers free environmental education training through their 'Coastal Ambassadors' program. CEC Coordinator Jo Tulau said that the free program is in its fourth year and is unique to the northern beaches. "It offers volunteers from the northern beaches surf clubs in-depth training in coastal systems, ecology and marine life which they can then share with junior members of their club, tourists and schoolchildren," she said. The innovative program was awarded a high commendation in 2006 by the Federal Minister for the Environment in the Australia-wide Coastal Custodians Award. Mayor David James said he was hoping to see more volunteers from surf clubs on Pittwater's upper beaches become involved in the program.

Ideally we would like to have Coastal Ambassadors from every club teaching children how to care for their local beach," said Cr James. Surf Life Saving





Sydney Northern Beaches President, Gordon Lang, said that sustainability as well as environmental awareness and education had become key goals within the surf life saving movement. "It supports a policy statement released by the organisation endorsing conservation initiatives as part of the SLSA vision," he said. "This is an exciting expansion of surf life saving's role – not only protecting lives but also helping to protect our coastal area." The Coastal Environment Centre ran the workshops and field trips for volunteers from 25 November, finishing on 13 December.

The Manly Daily High School Surf Challenge

Eight teams from surrounding high schools took part in the 2nd Annual Manly Daily High School Surf Challenge. The conditions were superb for the day's racing which involved team based events such as board relays, swim teams and beach relays. Teams were made up from kids in years 7, 8, 9 and 11 with the prime focus of the day being for everyone to have fun whilst in a competitive arena.

The boys team from St Augustines were victorious from Pittwater House and St Paul's College after several hours on Queenscliff beach. The Girls event was won by the Northern Beaches Secondary College team.

Overall the day was a great success and it should only grow in 2009.

Thankyou Pittwater Council for your ongoing support



Pittwater Club Presidents receiving annual grant from Pittwater Mayor, David James

STOP PRESS! STOP PRESS!

Sydney Northern Beaches dominant force at NSW Interbranch.

Spurred on by the amazing talents of Manly's "Eagles angel" Naomi Flood and with the words of Sea Eagles coach Des Hasler ringing in their ears, a determined Sydney Northern Beaches Branch team romped away with NSW Inter-Branch Surf Life Saving Championship trophy at Catherine Hill Bay on the weekend. The pride of peninsula surf lifesaving scored an emphatic victory, amassing 1,334.5 points to easily account for arch rivals Sydney (1,344.5) by 35.5 points with Central Coast (1,269.5) 65 points behind in third place.

Flood, a dominant force in national and international competition, showed all her skills, her team work and her fitness to chalk up nine victories – including the open iron woman, surf race, board race and single ski final as well as playing her part in the iron woman teams, the open female rescue-tube-rescue, the coveted lifesaver relay, taplin relay and the board teams.

It was one of the single most dominant performances ever seen at an Inter-Branch competition and set the team up for a triumphant weekend.

She combined in the teams events with her Manly team mate Rebecca Keelan and Freshwater's Alisha Miller, who also took out the under 19 iron woman and board finals and the under 19 board rescue with Rachael Crerar.

Collaroy's Kendrick Louis again stamped his authority on the event, winning the under 19 iron man and single ski and also combining with brother Bart to win the under 19 board rescue before taking a third place to under 19 Coolangatta Gold winner Hayden White in the board final.

The team went to the Hunter region location with the spirit of Manly's 40-nil NRL grand final victory very much on their minds after a stirring motivational speech from Eagles coach Des Hasler. The maestro who steered the Eagles to that memorable premiership victory in September spoke to the team on the eve of the Championships, impressing upon each and every one of the team they had to take things "minute by minute."

Sydney Northern Beaches head coach Scott Jones said Hasler's words rang true on the final day of the competition. "Des got them to concentrate on the little things, the things you can control and not to worry about the final result and it worked," said Jones.

"We held a good lead after the first day's competition but on day two I noticed how relaxed the athletes were and they were all yelling 'minute-by-minute' to each other before their races – I knew then we were in for something special.

"The team work displayed by the entire squad was amazing and they were certainly a credit to the Sydney Northern Beaches Branch.

"There is no doubt that that peninsula beaches are in the very best of hands and our future is very exciting."

The two-day event could not have had two more contrasting sets of conditions with day one dishing up a mix of driving rain, a one metre shore dump on a dropping tide with back markers having a field day, while Sunday saw calmer, more even conditions.

The South Curl Curl women and the Mona Vale men both proved to be unstoppable, both claiming victories in the respective open boat finals.

But the surf conditions certainly didn't bother the Sydney Northern Beaches sprinters with veteran coach Bobby Langbein's squad proving to be the dominant force on the sand, winning both the senior and junior all age beach relays.

North Curl Curl's Michael Kember and Queenscliff's Laura Shorter claimed the prestigious open men's and women's beach sprint crowns while Mona Vale's Thomas Trbojevic (under 12) and Collaroy's Baden Donegal (under 17) both won the beach sprint-flags double. Other beach victories also went to Newport's Jake Lynch (under 19 beach sprint), Manly's Robbie Jones (under 15 beach sprint) and Queenscliff's Jamie-Lee Britt (under 19 beach flags).

The Branch also dominated the under 13 surf events with Warriewood's Jake Reese winning the under 13 iron man, Freshwater's Joey Lussick the under 13 board with the pair combining to win the under 13 surf teams.

In the women's events it was Freshwater pair Georgia Miller and Nicola Stirton who won the under 13 board rescue and iron woman teams.