

Circular 3336

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SURF LIFE SAVING
NEW SOUTH WALES



Personal Protective Equipment and High Visibility Garment Clarification for NSW Membership

Attention: Club Presidents, Club Secretaries, Club Competition Officers, Team Managers, Coaches and Competitors.

Actioned by: All current financial members participating in Surf Sports Activities

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Summary	Surf Life Saving Australia has recently made changes to the use of Personal Protective Equipment
Objective	To provide members, Clubs and Branches in Surf Life Saving New South Wales with a summary of the recent safety initiatives being implemented by Surf Life Saving Australia in relation to the use of Personal Protective Equipment and High Visibility Garments.

Surf Life Saving Australia (SLSA) has recently made changes to the minimum requirements surrounding the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) during lifesaving and surf sport competition activities. There are some significant changes relating particularly to surf boat rowing and IRB operations. This Circular aims to provide clubs, Branches and members with a summary of the equipment required when participating in Surf Life Saving activities.

The information provided in this circular is a summary only and does not contravene the minimum standards that have been set by SLSA. As outlined in the SLSA Safety Initiatives, States, clubs and branches may implement further regulations as they see fit.

The new SLSA Bulletins can be found here:

- <http://sls.com.au/safety>

The matrix below can be used as a guide by all members to check that they have the correct equipment required to participate in Surf Life Saving activities. There are also some *frequently asked questions* that may provide further assistance.

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Frequently Asked Questions:

1) I am organising an Ocean Swim event for my club. Does each of the entrants need to wear a High Visibility Garment?

As a minimum, all entrants in a SLSNSW sanctioned/special event (including Ocean Swims) must wear a High Visibility Swimming Cap. For more information regarding High Visibility garments in Surf Life Saving and other activities; follow this link to circular #56: <http://www.slsa.com.au/default.aspx?s=adminresources&id=879>

For information on Applying for Involvement in a Special Event, follow this link:

<http://www.surflifesaving.com.au/members/resources/surf-sports/guidelines-for-safer-surf-clubs-event-sanctioning-and-management.pdf>

2) What colour vest should I be wearing while competing and training?

From October 1 2013, all members participating in **surf life saving competition must wear a high visibility garment**. The colour of the garment may be one of the 4 approved colours (Red, Pink, Green or Yellow). Event organisers may impose restrictions on selected colours (i.e. SLSNSW State Championship events require the wearing of Pink vests) however; all participants and all age groups must wear the same colour – e.g. no Green vests will be permitted for athletes at the SLSNSW State Championships – it must be Pink.

For competition training, it is **highly recommended** that each participant wears a high visibility garment. The colour may be any one of the 4 approved colours however; for ease of supervision, it is recommended that each training participant is in the same colour i.e. each person at training is wearing Pink.

For further information, follow this link: <http://www.slsa.com.au/default.aspx?s=adminresources&id=879>

3) I am the sweep of a surf boat crew and I want to take my crew for a row on the local river for some flat water training. What equipment do I need?

It is highly recommended that each crew member and sweep is wearing a High Visibility Garment during training regardless if training is taking place on the ocean or in a flat water environment.

Secondly, as part of the new safety initiatives introduced by SLSA, if training in a surf boat is being conducted in a flat water environment then helmets are not required. If training or competing in a surf zone from 1 January 2014, all crew members and sweeps must wear a certified surf helmet.

For information regarding certified helmets and the full SLSA Bulletin, click here: <http://sls.com.au//safety>

There are no current requirements for personal floatation devices for surf boat rowers or sweeps at this stage. SLSA is conducting ongoing research in an effort to find a suitable device.

SLSNSW would also like to remind all surf boat crews and sweeps that if training is being conducted in a flat water environment, that they are aware of any Maritime regulations including lights on surf boats at night. For more information please follow this link: http://www.surflifesaving.com.au/news/memo-surf-boat-rowing-and-navigation-at-night/memo_surfsports_surf-boat-rowing-and-navigation-and-night.pdf

4) As part of my training, I paddle my surf ski some long distances off-shore. What safety gear do I need?

If training on a surf ski, regardless of the location (ocean or enclosed waters) it is highly recommended that the participant wears a High Visibility Garment.

Life jackets are required in certain situations when paddling a SLSA spec surf ski – these laws are enforced by the NSW Maritime Authority:

- When training on *enclosed waters with others* – irrespective of distance from shore – no life jacket is required.
- When training on *enclosed water solo* – further than 100m from shore – a life jacket is required.
- When training on *open (ocean) water* – further than 500m from shore – a life jacket is required.

For further information regarding these NSW Maritime regulations, follow this link:

http://www.surflifesaving.com.au/news/memo-slsnsw-surf-ski-exemptions-re-nsw-maritime-lifejacket-laws/memo_surfsports_sls-surf-skis-lifejackets.pdf

5) My club is starting IRB training for competition – does everyone need a helmet and lifejacket?

High Visibility Garments are highly recommended for all IRB competition training while in actual competition they are compulsory.

Helmets for patients in IRB competition will be compulsory from 1 October 2013 and are to be utilised in both training and competition. For information about helmets and IRB competition, please follow this link:

<http://www.slsa.com.au/default.aspx?s=adminresources&id=880>

In relation to life jackets and the associated requirements when IRB racing – both driver and crew person are required to wear an approved life jacket while training for competition and while racing from 1 October, 2014. There are still some specific rules of IRB racing that will need to be reviewed (e.g. Tube Rescue event) however; clubs are encouraged to begin the phase in of all new safety equipment.

For more information on the new safety requirements surrounding IRB racing and competition, please visit:

<http://www.slsa.com.au/default.aspx?s=adminresources&id=880>

6) If I am driving or crewing in an IRB in either a patrolling or rescue situation, do I need to wear a lifejacket?

From 1 October 2014, it is mandatory that both IRB drivers and crew persons are wearing an approved lifejacket during all IRB patrolling operations.

It is highly recommended that Clubs begin phasing in lifejacket use.

7) If I am wearing a lifejacket in an IRB, can I also wear my long sleeve patrol shirt or jacket?

Patrol shirts or jackets are not to be worn in an IRB.

For sun protection, it is recommended that a long sleeve patrol rash shirt is worn. Members can purchase these from the SLSA Surf Shop.

8) Do I need to wear a high visibility garment while on patrol?

No

9) Do I need to wear a high visibility garment in the IRB while on patrol?

No

10) Do nippers need to wear high visibility vests during normal Sunday activities?

While it is not a requirement for nippers to wear high visibility garments, other than in competition, it is highly recommended. Some clubs and branches however; have made high visibility garments mandatory for all water-based nippers activities. Seek advice from your club or branch.

11) Do the high visibility vests have to be singlet style?

No, you can wear any form of top (long-sleeve, short sleeve, singlet) as long as the predominant colour on the garment (front and back) is one of the approved high visibility colours. While there are no restrictions on the size/shape of any sponsorship or branding on the garments, the branding on the garment must not reduce the prominence of the high-visibility colour.

12) Does my helmet need to be painted in club colours when I compete or do I have to wear my club cap over the helmet?

From January 1, 2015, helmets will need to be painted in club colours, or alternatively, you can fix a club cap over the top of the helmet.

13) I'm training Bronze Medallion candidates/trainees; must they wear high visibility garments and caps for in water activities?

It is highly recommended that each participant wears a high visibility garment. The colour may be any one of the 4 approved colours however; for ease of supervision, it is recommended that each training participant is in the same colour i.e. each person at training is wearing Pink.

PERSONAL PROTECTION REQUIRED IN NSW – 1 OCT 2013

KEY: X = Not required ✓ = Required

Based on SURF LIFE SAVING and SURF LIFE SAVING NSW requirements but does not include Branch or Club applying further requirements. Competition refers to "Surf Carnivals" or SURF LIFE SAVING Events.

Event Type	Activity	High Visibility Vest?	Helmet?	Lifjacket?
Swim	Training (including Sunday Swim)	X - Recommended	X	X
	Competition	✓	X	X
Board	Training	X - Recommended	X	X
	Competition	✓	X	X
Surf Ski	Training on <i>enclosed water with others</i> – irrespective of distance from shore	X - Recommended	X	X
	Training on <i>enclosed water solo</i> – further than 100m from shore	X - Recommended	X	✓
	Training on <i>open (ocean) water</i> – further than 500m from shore	X - Recommended	X	✓
	Competition	✓	X	X
Surf Boats	Training – Flat	X - Recommended	X	X
	Training – Designated Surf Zone	X - Recommended	✓ - From 1 Jan 2014	X
	Competition	✓	✓ - From 1 Jan 2014 (in surf zone)	X
IRB Racing	Training	X- Recommended	✓ - Patients	✓ - From 1 Oct 2014
	Competition	✓	✓ - Patients	✓ - From 1 Oct 2014
Nippers	All Activities	X – Recommended ✓ - Competition mandatory	X	X
Lifesaving	Member Training (i.e. Bronze)	X - Recommended	X	X
	IRB Patrolling	X	X	✓ - From 1 Oct 2014
Water Safety	In IRB	X	X	✓ - From 1 Oct 2014
	In Water	✓ - Orange Cap Orange Rash Shirt	X	X
SURF LIFE SAVING Sanctioned/ Special event	Conducted by SURF LIFE SAVING outside the SURF LIFE SAVING framework of lifesaving, sport or junior activities with SURF LIFE SAVING State/Territorial approval. E.g. Ocean swims and triathlon/aquathon events	✓ - Vest or Swimming Caps (Ocean Swims only)	✓ - From 1 Jan 2014 in Surfboats in Surf Zone	X

HIGH VISIBILITY VEST EXEMPTIONS:

- Beach events (flags, march past, first aid competition) and reel persons in belt races and R&R would not require high visibility vests to be worn.
- Participants in SURF LIFE SAVING pool rescue competition are exempt from wearing high visibility vests.