



# Annual Report 2024/2025

## Nowra-Culburra SLSC



Nowra-Culburra  
SURF LIFE SAVING CLUB INC

## Table of Contents

<b>History and Profile.....</b>	<b>3</b>
Charitable Purpose.....	3
Season Snapshot.....	4
Messages.....	5
Major Sponsors.....	6
Statistics 2024/25.....	7
<b>Committee Reports.....</b>	<b>8</b>
President.....	8
Director of Administration.....	11
Director of Lifesaving.....	12
Director of Finance.....	14
Chief Training Officer.....	14
Director of Equipment.....	15
Junior Activities.....	16
<b>2025 Tilbury Classic.....</b>	<b>18</b>

## History and Profile

Nowra-Culburra Surf Life Saving Club was founded in 1954 by Hal Leslie who was drawn to surf lifesaving after the 1938 Black Sunday drownings at Bondi Beach. The Club formed on the 6th December 1954 in Culburra Beach with the foundation members a mix of Nowra based business people, tradesmen and community spirited people.



For the first ten years the club was housed in a small weatherboard building at the northern end of the Warrain Beach car park. The current building with a public hall upstairs was opened in 1964. Our members recently celebrated the Club's 70th Anniversary.

The Nowra-Culburra SLSC is one of the nine clubs in the SLSNSW South Coast Branch. Our primary role is to save lives on Warrain Beach and protect beachgoers on weekends and public holidays each season. In addition to that we provide roving patrols in the peak season (by All Terrain Vehicle, Inflatable Rescue Boat or Jet Ski) along Culburra Beach, from Tilbury Cove to Crookhaven Heads. We also provide a year round on-call aquatic rescue service covering an area from the mouth of the Shoalhaven River into Jervis Bay.



## Charitable Purpose

The Nowra-Culburra SLSC is a charitable organisation whose objective, as a member of South Coast Branch (SC Branch), Surf Life Saving New South Wales (SLSNSW) and Surf Life Saving Australia Limited (SLSA), is to protect and preserve life in the aquatic environment. The Club promotes and administers surf lifesaving as a volunteer based, community emergency service for the safety and protection of beachgoers in Culburra Beach.

## Season Snapshot

### Nowra-Culburra SLSC Committee 2024/25

#### Directors

President	Col Lawrence
Director of Administration (Secretary)	Dom Cooper
Director of Finance (Treasurer)	Brad Lilly
Director of Lifesaving (Club Captain)	Josh Chambers
Director of Equipment (Gear Steward)	Simon Fillery

#### Officers

Vice President	Vacant
Public Officer	Brad Lilly
Chief Training Officer	Brad Lilly
Power Craft Captain	Josh Chambers
Junior Activities Co-ordinator	Andy Fenech
Child Safe Co-ordinator	Amanda Bagnall
Member Protection Information Officer	James Hooke
Complaints Manager	Dylan Anderson
Member Services Officer (Registrar)	James Hooke
Surf Sports Officer	Chad Poland
Safety Officer	Andy Fenech
Emergency Call Out Officer	Brad Lilly
Radio Officer	Pete Heald
UAV Co-ordinator	James Hooke
First Aid Officer	Amanda Soper
Junior Captain	Hannah Doyle
General Committee	Ron Letters

### Nowra-Culburra SLSC Founding Member

Hal Leslie

### Nowra- Culburra SLSC Life Members

1 - Jack Heily (1967)	9 - Gary Hinkley (1990)	17 - Col Pakes (2008)
2 - Les Cooper	10 - Steve Jones (1992)	18 - Lloyd Smith (2012)
3 - Tom Looney	11 - Darryl Woolmer (1992)	19 - Pete Adlington (2015)
4 - John Bracher (1984)	12 - Roger Mearns (1996)	20 - Mitch Pakes (2023)
5 - Keith Rosskelly (1984)	13 - Kevin Bowden (2004)	21 - Steve Richardson (2023)
6 - Jim Stoneham (1984)	14 - Greg Strong (2004)	22 - Col Lawrence (2024)
7 - Les Woolmer (1986)	15 - Ron Letters (2005)	
8 - Ian Wallis (1990)	16 - Mark Higgison (2007)	

## Messages

**From the President:** First and foremost we are a small country Surf Life Saving Club with a rich history, but there is so much that goes into keeping the club going. Thank you to all of our sponsors, stakeholders, community supporters, parents, nippers and our patrolling volunteers who make the Club more than just a place to set up the red and yellow flags on the weekend. We aim to be an organisation that the local Culburra Beach community is proud of and keen to get involved.

## From the Shoalhaven City Council Mayor:



**Patricia White**  
Mayor  
0447 416 329 | [patricia.white@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au](mailto:patricia.white@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au)  
PO Box 42, Nowra NSW 2541 Australia



27/11/2024

Nowra – Culburra SLSC  
Farrant Ave  
Culburra Beach  
NSW 2540

By email: [president@nowraculburraslsc.asn.au](mailto:president@nowraculburraslsc.asn.au)

Dear members,

**Letter of Appreciation – Nowra Culburra SLSC**

On behalf of Shoalhaven City Council I would like to congratulate the members of the Nowra-Culburra Surf Life Saving Club for an outstanding seventy years of service and commitment to the Shoalhaven community.

The Nowra-Culburra Surf Lifesaving Club was officially formed on 6 December 1954, and since then, the members have provided countless hours of their own time volunteering with wholehearted enthusiasm for the well-being and safety of locals and visitors alike.

I would like to formally acknowledge all members for their community service, your efforts to provide a safe beach environment at Warrain Beach, an emergency call-out service from the Shoalhaven River into Jervis Bay and to train the next generation of qualified lifesavers is a credit to your Club and to you as individuals.

The Shoalhaven City Council is proud to collaborate with the Shoalhaven Surf Lifesaving Clubs, we greatly appreciate your efforts and the very important community service that you provide.

If you need further information about this matter, please contact Melissa Perrin, Mayor's Executive Assistant on (02) 4429 3251. Please quote Council's reference 75417E (D24/515619).

Kind regards



Patricia White  
Mayor  
75417E  
D24/515619

shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au   
- This letter may not necessarily represent the position of the Shoalhaven City Council as a corporate body -

## Major Sponsors

### Local Club Sponsors

The Halloran Trust  
Burra Beach Eats  
Ray White Culburra Beach  
IT Basecamp  
2ST/Power FM  
Kel Campbell Pty Limited  
Shoalhaven City Council  
Holiday Haven Tourist Parks  
Culburra Districts & Community Health Service  
Culburra Beach Bowling and Recreation Club  
ClubGRANTS (Shoalhaven Ex Servos & Bomaderry Bowling Club)



### State and National Sponsors

Ingenia Holiday Parks  
Your Local Club  
Oakberry  
Sharkskin  
Ampol  
DHL  
Dulux  
Isuzu  
BRP  
QANTAS  
Westpac



## Statistics 2024/25

### Membership and Lifesaving



**183**  
**Total**  
**Members**



**51**  
**Active**  
**Members**



**80**  
**New**  
**Members**



**77**  
**Junior**  
**Members**



**2,372**  
**Total Hours**  
**Patrolled**



**47.5**  
**Average Patrol**  
**Hours per**  
**Lifesaver**

### Safety Outcomes



**8,281**  
**Beach**  
**Visitors**



**7**  
**Rescues**



**224**  
**Preventative**  
**Actions**



**6**  
**First Aid**  
**Treatments**

### Key Achievements



**8**  
**Bronze**  
**Medallions**



**43**  
**Education**  
**Awards**



**6**  
**Powercraft**  
**Awards**

# Committee Reports

## President

2024/2025 was another successful season for the Nowra-Culburra Surf Life Saving Club. I am pleased to report that due to the dedication and hard work of the Surf Club members no lives were lost in our patrolled area. We continue to rely on the cohesion and flow between the various aspects of our life saving club to perform our individual roles. From the education team, lifesaving operations, our gear and facility managers and the social aspects of patrolling the beach, our connections have allowed us to focus on keeping the beachgoers in our community safe.

Our Club Constitution was reissued during this past season. This was long overdue as the previous version was clearly created on a typewriter and was well out of date. The significant change was the creation of a Surf Club Board of Directors (President and Directors of Administration, Finance, Lifesaving and Equipment) with these five positions being elected at the AGM. All other Club Officers will now be appointed by the Board making it much easier to manage in-season changes. The new constitution is available to all members through the Surf Club website and I am pleased to report that feedback has been positive so far.

Our committee has covered a lot of work across the broad scope of surf lifesaving activities. Brad Lilly as Treasurer, Dom Cooper as Secretary, Josh Chambers as Club Captain and Simon Fillery as Equipment Officer have all been critical to the club maintaining a strong financial state and compliance with Surf Life Saving requirements. Life member Ron Letters has also continued to provide beach safety training at local schools. Their volunteer hours over and above their beach patrol obligations are unheralded and have brought great credit to the club.



Our club captain Josh Chambers focus has been on surf club operations including a trial of flexible patrol rostering. Josh has co-ordinated our patrol captains, patrol members and emergency call out crews across an extremely busy holiday season. The 2024 Christmas period saw an influx of tourism and big numbers of beach goers in our area. Our volunteers were extremely busy fulfilling patrol obligations and providing support from Lake Wollumboola through to Crookhaven Heads and the Shoalhaven River. We have had a couple of complex rescues and a large



number of preventative actions in our area. I am very proud of the positive feedback we received from our local community and the holidaying public.

Special thanks to Josh Chambers and Simon Fillery for their dedication in maintaining our Jet Ski, Inflatable Rescue Boats, All Terrain Vehicles and other rescue equipment. Our gear is kept in the very best condition and is the envy of visiting clubs. This season and with thanks to our sponsors, we were able to replace the Jet Ski and purchase a new All Terrain Vehicle. These two pieces of rescue equipment are absolutely vital to our operations.



This season we had a few new Patrol Captains enter the roster and a large number of patrolling members upskilling their knowledge and qualifications. Our ability to fulfill our patrol obligations is entirely reliant on our training program. We welcomed a new bunch of Surf Rescue Certificate and Bronze Medallion holders in December and March. Brad Lilly and his crew of assessors will be looking to increase participation next year; any suggestions are welcome.

We had members attend South Coast Branch Championships, NSW Country Championships, NSW State Masters and Aussie Masters. Special mention again to Chad Poland. Chad commenced as a Nowra-Culburra nipper in 1988 and is now a regular masters competitor on the surf lifesaving carnival circuit. Last year Chad was announced as the South Coast Masters Competitor of the Year. It is great to see our blue and yellow colours on display at carnivals.



Our new Junior Activity Co-ordinator, Andy Fenech and his band of Age Managers have had another successful nippers season. Andy stepped in at short notice at the start of the season and has worked tirelessly to deliver the nipper program. A number of our first year nippers have progressed tremendously under the guidance of our dedicated water safety team. A special thanks again to Ray White Culburra Beach for their sponsorship of our nippers which provides them with their hi vis vests and competition jerseys.



Our Child Protection Officer, Amanda Bagnell has continued to focus on our obligations to safeguard young people who participate in surf lifesaving activities. In the off season we have installed partitions in all shower stalls in our bathrooms to enhance safety, privacy and inclusion

and remove barriers to participation. Sunday morning is still my favourite day at the beach, there's always a wave to be caught and a happy bunch of nippers.

Our Club hosted the annual Tilbury Classic ocean swim on Easter Saturday. The weather was extremely challenging this year and even though we had to relocate the course, it was a successful day. The swim is a credit to our volunteers. It is a major fundraiser for our club and would not happen without the dedicated few who organise it. Thank you to all involved behind the scenes.



On behalf of our club members, thank you to our local sponsors, The Halloran Trust, IT Basecamp, Shoalhaven City Council, Culburra Beach Bowlo, Holiday Haven Tourist Parks, Burra Beach Eats and 2ST/Power FM.

I must also acknowledge all levels of government for their support of surf lifesaving. The Shoalhaven City Council for their maintenance of our club facility and the surrounds, the NSW Government Office of Sport for the Surf Club facility grant program under which we have installed a solar power system to the club, the NSW Department of Communities and Justice for the Community Building Partnership which funded a repaint of our club house and the Federal Government for the Beach Safety Equipment Funding which directed \$10,000 towards the purchase of the new ATV. We could not operate the Surf Club without the financial assistance from our supporters.

At the 2025 Nowra-Culburra SLSC Presentation Night, several of our members were recognised for their achievements in the 2024/25 season.

Club Person of the Year – Annett Jenner  
Junior Club Person of the Year – Archie Soper  
Cadet Club Person of the Year – Ellie Cooper  
Club Rookie of the Year – Eloise Howard  
Patrol of the Year – PC Andy Fenech/Ron Denovan  
Patroller of the Year – Harrison Fillery  
Most Hours Patrolled – Ron Denovan (230)  
IRB Award – Simon Fillery  
Level Headed Spirit Award – Brad Lilly  
Most Promising Senior Competitor – Oskar Driscoll  
Excellent Achievement in Surf Sports – Chad Poland



Two National Service Awards were also awarded; First Clasp to the National Medal to Ron Letters and the National Medal to Col Lawrence.

Ron joined the Nowra-Culburra SLSC in 1993 after moving to the South Coast. Ron's family have all been actively involved in Club activities and he has served on various positions on the Committee, particularly as Club Captain and Training Officer during the 1990's. Ron is a Life Member and was awarded the National Medal in 2014. Congratulations Ron, your service to surf lifesaving and over 1100 voluntary patrol hours at the Nowra-Culburra SLSC over 25 years is greatly appreciated by the Club and the community.



Col joined Nowra-Culburra SLSC as a nipper parent and achieved his bronze medallion in 2007. He has been the Tilbury Classic event co-ordinator since 2013, the Club President for the past three seasons and was awarded Life Membership in 2024.

The Nowra-Culburra SLSC was founded in 1954 by Hal Leslie and in December 2024 we celebrated our 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary. It was great to see so many Life Members, current and past members at the event.



Finally and most importantly, thank you to all of our volunteers, we can't do the job without you.

Col Lawrence  
President

## Director of Administration

Over this season the club committee has been committed to progressing improvements to the club facilities, equipment and making the club a welcoming place for all our members, guests and members of the public. Without the support of the club members however none of this would be possible and even with our small membership we have achieved a lot.



We have completed a (popular) renovation of the club showers, the function area upstairs, a new awning for the canteen area and better wifi to name but a few. In the lifesaving capability area the Club now has its own UAV, with a plan to get more pilots trained for the next season.

Dom Cooper  
Secretary

## Director of Lifesaving

A great deal of work was completed pre season this year, commencing with the annual SLS NSW Lifesaving Conference in July. Isaac Sleath, Dominic Cooper, Andrew Fenech, Amanda Soper and myself attended. It was a great opportunity for our members to expose themselves to the greater SLS NSW movement, sit in on forums and discuss ideas, issues and resolutions experienced by clubs, with respect to how they do business. The weekend was strongly enjoyed by all and was extremely valuable. Members returned with further insight into Surf Life Saving and a drive of passion which was seen throughout the season.



This season the club trialled a flexible patrol roster whereby the patrols were made up based on availability throughout the season rather than having dedicated patrol teams. This was completed in an effort to provide members greater flexibility as to when they are available for patrol. As a result this did place additional pressure on members to fill patrols when patrol teams were short members. The upside saw a huge increase in individual patrol hours with 22 members completing over 50 hours compared to 9 members the previous season. I would like to thank the patrol captains for their diligence and understanding as we trialled this roster style. As a result of the trial it was determined that a membership base in excess of 1000 would be needed to continue this roster style. The upcoming season will be reverting back to fixed patrol teams.

Throughout the season we experienced an increase in adverse weather, resulting in our beach being closed 35 times. Beach attendance spiked over the summer holiday period as expected and during the easter long weekend with the highly anticipated Tilbury Classic. The Supervision and Surveillance Report for Warrain North Beach was also released this season by SLS NSW. This document provides insight into beach statistics, from attendance to conditions and weather. Many of the statistics in the report are derived from our Operations App usage, highlighting the importance of accurate record taking on the app during the patrol. These statistics also drive the draft of our Life Saving Agreement, which outlines our minimum requirements for patrol strength, duration and season.

I would like to sincerely thank all active patrolling members for their valuable contribution to beach patrols, this is the surf club's core role to the community. Our goal for the following season is to boost patrol numbers and experience through patrol captain engagement with patrol teams, mentoring upcoming patrol captains and conducting training courses. A big shout out to the committee for their continued support, specifically Dominic Cooper for taking on the Director of Administration (Secretary) role. The AGM is coming up on the 17th August, your attendance is encouraged with some roles still remaining vacant. Conducting additional roles and responsibilities at the club is very rewarding with a role to suit everyone. Lastly, I'd like to applaud the Nipper families, both parents and children for their enthusiasm and support. Seeing the Nipper program grow to over 80 Nippers this season is humbling knowing that the club's future trajectory is positive.

A sincere thank you to the following members who committed above their 100% patrol requirement.

### Patrol Hour Awards

Ronnie Denovan	230 hrs
Simon Fillery	119 hrs
Andrew Fenech	113 hrs
Isaac Sleath	75 hrs
Amanda Soper	72 hrs
Dominic Cooper	71 hrs
Elosie Howard	71 hrs
Chad Poland	70 hrs
Andrew Ling	69 hrs
Colin Lawrence	68 hrs
Jonathan Wlash	66 hrs
Tamsin Walsh	65 hrs
Klara Barak	60 hrs
Stephen Richardson	58 hrs
Harrison Fillery	57 hrs
Brad Lilly	55 hrs
Grant Cournane	53 hrs
Amanda Bagnall	51 hrs
Archie Soper	51 hrs
Joshua Chambers	51 hrs
Rose Howard	50 hrs
Ron Letters	50 hrs



Josh Chambers  
Club Captain

## **Director of Finance**

The club has been very fortunate this year to stay in a good financial position whilst allowing us to refresh club equipment and, through the efforts of president Colin Lawrence, continue to make improvements and upgrades to the facilities. The club has been able to secure more grants for the upgrade of the solar system to allow for batteries to be installed as well as a new electric hot water service to take advantage of the amount of solar power our roof can provide.

Our applications for beach safety equipment funds grants, as well as passing club compliance have allowed the injection of decent capital and our major equipment purchase for this year has been the acquisition of a new ATV all-terrain vehicle. These vehicles, with our harsh beach conditions, usually only allow for two to three years of use before we feel they need to be moved on and replaced.

The canteen, through the stewardship of Annett Jenner, has also been a successful income generator. Thank you, Annett, for your continued support. In June 2025, we are also fortunate enough to secure another \$20,000 donation from the Halloran trust. The committee has decided that this money will go into replacing our nipper boards, which have seen a good life.

Despite weather conditions, the Tilbury Classic, through the effort of members, was also a success for the club as a fundraiser, with comments from many participants saying they will be back next year for a well run event.

I would also like to thank Burra Beach Eats for providing food for our patrolling members at half price. The Culburra Bowling Club also donated funds to the club through raffle ticket sales.

We enter the 25/26 season in a good position. I would like to thank the committee for their support, Clifton Accountants who assist with our bookkeeping and our auditors, Morton and Cord.

Brad Lilly  
Treasurer

## **Chief Training Officer**

This season saw the operation of two Bronze Medallion/SRC courses as per usual. As per standard practice we operate one course either side of the Christmas break which run for 5-6 weeks. Theory is conducted via Zoom midweek with Sunday being used to concentrate on Beach training and practical activities. In the second course, starting February, the course only attracted a few participants, and therefore, we did a combined course with Shoalhaven Heads SLSC. This course was run in conjunction with CTO Karl Poulton from Shoalhaven Heads. It proved to be quite successful with our participants seeing a range of conditions both at Culburra

Beach and Shoalhaven Heads and also allowed for sharing of training methods between the clubs. I think everyone still found the sausage sandwich and maybe a donut from Shoalhaven Heads needed especially on colder days.

We also run an IRB crew course, and thanks to the assistance of James Hooke, Simon Fillery, Andy Fenech and Josh Chambers, driving IRBs and giving up Saturdays in allowing the training to occur.



Shoalhaven Heads / Nowra Culburra combined Bronze / SRC Course.

Brad Lilly  
Chief Training Officer

## Director of Equipment

The 2024/2025 was a challenging season for maintaining our clubs equipment, some equipment required extra attention to keep in operational order (namely boards and ATVs). The club acquired several new replacements and additional assets. To start with, the club received a new IRB in July 2024, donated by The Halloran Trust. We then received a new RWC (jetski) in August which remains a state asset, this replaced the old RWC which was a branch owned asset.

In January 2025 the club purchased a UAV that Dom Cooper has put to good use for club photos and adds an extra resource for



search and rescue. The purchase of a new Can-Am Defender SSV (side by side vehicle ATV) through the BRT Grant arrived in April and replaced the 2021 model Defender which was sold in June. A frequent SSV change over, of usually 3-4 years is required due to rusting issues.

A further donation by The Halloran Trust will see the purchase of new nipper boards for the upcoming season. Finally a special thanks goes out to Simon Carr for his help behind the scenes in equipment maintenance.

And I must mention the awning on the Canteen window. I am very pleased to report that Annett and her coffee making crew are now happily shaded from the Culburra sun.

Simon Fillery  
Equipment Officer

## Junior Activities

It is my pleasure to present our Junior Activity report for the 2024/2025 season.

Our nippers group continues to rebuild with a whole bunch of new kids joining the program this season. It's exciting to see their development as they gain confidence in the surf. It was also great to see some of our returning families back on the beach too. We encourage parents to participate and a few even took up the challenge to gain their Bronze Medallion.

We had stable weather over the nipper season and were able to run most of our planned nipper Sundays. By seasons end, most of our nippers were confident not only in the beach events but also in the water with swimming and board events.

I want to thank the team of dedicated volunteers who turned up every week to help out. Nippers would not happen without our Age Managers, water safety and patrol teams who are all great role models for our young surf lifesavers.

A special mention to Annett Jenner and her band of canteen helpers for all their work and dedication. Sunday mornings are a social gathering at the Surf Club and, after being in the ocean for a couple of hours, those coffees are the best in town.



A particular thank you to Ray White Culburra Beach who again this year sponsored our all-important pink water safety vests and caps for all our nippers.

It was a steep learning curve for me in my first season as JAC, and I look forward to seeing all of the kids back on the beach for the 2025/26 season.

Andy Fenech  
Junior Activities Co-ordinator



## 2024/2025 Season Nipper Awards

### Perpetual Awards

#### President Award – Standout Nipper

Louie Mitchell

#### Harry Scouller Award – Most Promising Junior Competitor

Vicky Lindsay & Sophie Webber

#### George Pakes Award – Most Outstanding Achievement

Monica Lindsay

### Age Champions

#### Under 8

Isabel Satchell  
Frederick Tauni

#### Under 9

Monica Lindsay  
Logan Smith

#### Under 10

Zoe Marum  
Kai Satchell

#### Under 11

Vicky Lindsay  
Ollie Soper

#### Under 12

Beth Howard  
Jack Webber

#### Under 13

Abigail Doyle  
Lennox Lindsay

#### Under 14

Nil



## 2025 Tilbury Classic

The 22nd Tilbury Classic ocean swim was hosted by the Nowra-Culburra SLSC on 19 April 2025. Easter Saturday served up challenging conditions with large swells hitting the east coast. Organisers decided to shift the swim to the 2 km back up course at the Ocean St Beach. Whilst numbers were down, 101 hardy competitors set out at 10am to swim the challenging course from Ocean St to Tilbury Cove and back.

First time winner, Chad Poland, completed the course in 29 minutes. Chad is a member of the Nowra-Culburra SLSC and has come second in the swim on several occasions. The first female across the line in third place overall was Charlotte Neville.

Special mentions to Lawrie Stubbs leading home the 60+ age group in eighteenth spot and Jill Pettifer who is the only swimmer to have completed all 22 Tilbury Classics. All of the swimmers enjoyed the hospitality of the Surf Club afterwards on a sunny day. Full results are available on the Tilbury Classic facebook page.

A very special thanks to all of the Nowra-Culburra SLSC volunteers. Surf Club Life Member Pete Adlington said 'The Tilbury Classic is an important fundraiser for the surf club and we are fortunate to have an alternate course when the conditions are like today. We hope to see everyone back next year.'

All of the competitors enjoyed the challenging ocean swimming conditions and were appreciative that the event was able to go ahead. Tilbury Classic winner Chad Poland commented, 'I am stoked to finally win my home ocean swim. Big thanks to the water safety crew out there. We all felt safe in their hands and it's through their efforts that we were able to swim today. This is a pinnacle in my ocean swimming career, I might have to retire now with a win.'

Nowra-Culburra SLSC is proud to host this great community event.

