

# FSC LIFESAVING

## MONTHLY UPDATE - FEBRUARY 2019



### UAV UPDATES

The DPI surveillance and research project has now ended at both Tathra and Pambula SLSCs and my thanks to the pilots in those clubs for their efforts to get the drones up as much as possible and collect data.

The drones will remain at both Tathra and Pambula until the end of the season and can be used for patrol surveillance, nippers, events and call outs as needed.

We also now have 2 additional drones in the Branch to be used by Duty Officers as part of support operations. One is dedicated to the Central area (Bermagui and Narooma) while the second is based in the North (Batemans Bay, Broulee, Moruya). The Support Ops drones are sponsored by Westpac and in addition to call outs you'll see them up and about during patrols in those areas and also at water events such as the Broulee Bay to Breakers ocean swim.

We currently have 30 qualified pilots in FSC Branch between Tathra, Pambula and Duty Officers.

### WHAT'S INSIDE

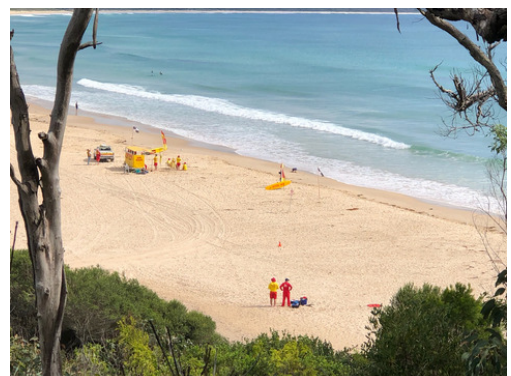
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### FSC CALL OUTS

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### FSC LIFESAVING NEWS

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We hope to have more information soon on additional training opportunities over the winter with a goal of rolling them out in more areas for next season. We have a lot of people across the Branch who've expressed interest and I'll keep you posted as courses become available.

# CALL OUTS FOR FEBRUARY

## A quieter month for FSC

February has been a lot quieter for call outs than December/January with just 3 to report:

### **Haywards Beach, Bermagui: 23rd February**

A boat launched a flare around 8 am after getting into trouble around 300m of Haywards Beach. Marine Rescue Bermagui was tasked along with the Bermagui SLSC call out team given the proximity to the beach. Both were stood down when a recreational fishing vessel arrived at the scene and got the stricken vessel under tow back to Bermagui Harbour.

### **Moorhead Beach, Bermagui: 24th February**

The joint training between Marine Rescue Bermagui and Bermagui SLSC was put to the test around 2:45 pm on the 24th February when a boat lost power. The original call to MR had the boat positioned approximately 3nm offshore.

A second call around 20 minutes later saw the boat much closer to shore and with no anchor. When the third call came in 5 minutes later the boat was 400m offshore and moving quickly towards the surf zone pushed by the south easterly winds.

With 3 young children on board the boaters released 3 flares and an all boat mayday was put out and Marine Rescue called 13-surf for assistance. Bermagui was running IRB Driver and Crew training at the time and had 2 IRBs on the water. They were on scene within 5 minutes, arriving neck and neck with Marine Rescue (well, ok, just slightly ahead for the record :)).



In the end it was a relatively straight-forward tow with the IRBs flanking the vessel under tow until it was safely back across the bar.

Even though they initially suspected it might be a training scenario as soon as they got around the point and saw the smoke from the flare it was apparent it wasn't an exercise. The whole team responded quickly and professionally, well done to all involved.



### **Snapper Island, Batemans Bay: 24th February**

Around 4:45 pm the Batemans Bay call out team and Lifesaver 23 were tasked to reports of a kayaker in distress off Snapper Island.

The Batemans Bay IRB launched and arrived near Snapper Island to reports the kayaker was no longer with the kayak and no longer visible in the water.

The IRB team found him on the shoreline of the island. It turns out his kayak had started taking on water and became unmanageable. After signalling for assistance he abandoned the kayak and swam for the island. The IRB was able to return both the man and his kayak to Corrigans Beach.

The response time to get the crew on the water was yet again very swift, great work team.

# FSC LIFESAVING NEWS

## SLS Drones to feature in search

Following the success in incorporating UAV assets into January's missing person search in Eden, the NSW Police State Coordinator for Land Search and Rescue has requested our support for a new search in Eden on 16th and 17th March requested by the Coroner.

This is the first time in the State that SLS has been requested to support this type of search with drones and it's a great opportunity for FSC Branch to be leading the way. This search will give us the chance to work with detailed grid search patterns at varying heights searching for anything from the size of a credit card up.

The drone capability includes being able to download a detailed map of the exact search lines and locations along with capturing all of the footage which allows for further review. All of our current drone pilots in the Branch have been invited to take part.

## Radio care

We've had a bad run recently with Branch radios with 4 being lost in the water over the space of just a few weeks. Two were lost during water safety and two during RWC training.

Sometimes things are out of our control but all 4 recent losses were avoidable if we followed standard procedures. The radios are expensive and not easily insured for operational losses.

Care for equipment will be part of annual proficiency for RWCs and multiple losses will be factored in moving forward so please make sure each time you go out you have your radio properly secured and in a water proof bag.

## Did you know?

SLSNSW has specific responsibilities as part of the NSW State Tsunami Plan. In the event of a tsunami SES is the lead agency and SLSNSW fills a number of support roles. At a Branch and Club level we're responsible for:

- Closing patrolled beaches on receipt of a NSW Tsunami Warning or upon observation of unusual ocean behaviour indicative of a tsunami (notify Surfcom if you're concerned about ocean behaviour and they'll take the lead in informing Police, SES and others)

- Assisting with the rescue of people from the surf zone following the impact of a tsunami.

To be able to assist following tsunami impact, our call out teams need to be proactive in moving all powercraft and other necessary equipment to high ground as soon as we receive a tsunami warning. That way it can be deployed as soon as practicable for search and rescue ops.

## Rescue of the Month Deadline

The deadline for nominations for Rescue of the Month for February is 8th March. If you have a rescue you'd like to nominate please send it to [surflifesavingfarsouthcoast@gmail.com](mailto:surflifesavingfarsouthcoast@gmail.com) by the deadline.

More details and nomination forms are available at:

<https://www.surflifesaving.com.au/resources/rescue-month>