

FSC LIFESAVING

MONTHLY UPDATE - OCTOBER 2019



POWERCRAFT WEEKEND '19

Members from 6 FSC clubs came together in Tathra on the weekend of 19/20 October to join in a pre-season powercraft and UAV weekend.

With 40 people participating including 5 trainers and coaches from Maroubra, South Maroubra and North Cronulla, the weekend was full of advanced skills development, tips and tricks to hone our skills for the start of the new season.

It was fantastic to see the collaboration and support among the different age groups and skill levels. Based on the feedback we've had so far everyone took something positive away from the weekend. Lots of new ideas to make their way back to clubs.

The joint training was so popular that we're planning another Branch-wide training day towards the end of the season and we'll keep you posted on dates.

Our thanks to the Tathra team for hosting us and to Jeff Bricachek for the amazing catering!

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CALL OUTS FOR AUGUST/SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER

Busy so far with 13 call outs compared to 4 this time last year

Gillards Beach: 14th - 16th August

27 members from 5 clubs participated in a 3 day search for a missing swimmer at Gillards Beach just north of Tathra. While the missing person turned out to be a hoax it was a great opportunity for our team to test our response and refine our practices for next time. With IRBs, RWCs, drones and support teams involved to assist with catering and search support it was an all around team effort. Nick Huggins also did a stand out job on his first call as a Duty Officer. Well done to all involved.

Tathra: 27th August

A Tathra IRB crewed by Mark Freedman and Tony Rettke joined Duty Officers Euan McKenzie (RWC) and Bruce McAslan and Cheryl McCarthy (UAV pilots) to assist Eden Water Police in the removal of a dead whale near the Tathra Wharf. Our team worked smoothly with the Police and BVSC for a successful operation.

Green Cape: 3rd September

In another first call for a new Duty Officer, Emma Prowse did an outstanding job in a call out to Green Cape for a missing rock fisherman. With the Pambula call out not tasked due to the approaching darkness, Emma was still tasked to liaise with Police. The fisherman was found quickly and Surfcom were impressed by the professionalism of Emma's response.

Bermagui: 7th September

The Bermagui call out team was tasked with activating Bermagui Surf Club as an evacuation centre for the Cobargo fire on the afternoon of the 7th. The centre was open within 10 minutes and fortunately it was a much quieter evening than last time with only 15 evacuees checking in.

Surf Beach, Batemans Bay: 14th

September Batemans Bay call out team responded to reports of a dark object in the water 100m off the beach. The IRB was launched to investigate. The object ended up being a seal which took off quickly when Andy Pustavrh tried to get friendly!

Tuross: 1st October

Duty Officers Andrew Mizzi and Anthony Bellette responded to reports of two body boarders stranded on rocks at One Tree Beach. Before the Tuross-based RWC could be launched Lifesaver 23 was able to winch the two to safety.

Tathra: 13th October

A member of the public went directly to the Tathra Surf Club for assistance when two kayakers got into trouble off Kianniny. Peter George and Ben Potter were on the spot and launched the IRB. They were able to assist both kayakers and their craft back to shore at Kianniny.

Batemans Bay: 19th October

Harley Dengate and the Bay call out team responded to reports of someone jumping of the Bay Bridge and not re-surfacing. The person was found before the IRB hit the water.

Snapper Island, Batemans Bay: 25th October

Duty Officer Anthony Bellette noticed from the road a boat that appeared to be in trouble off Snapper Island. He had the North Duty Officer UAV with him and stopped to get it in the air to take a closer look. They had a V-sheet out so Anthony called it in to Surfcom who got Marine Rescue on the way. Great work and use of the UAV.

Pambula: 26th and 31st October

Pambula responded to two calls within a few days and were fortunately stood down on both occasions before hitting the water. First one to a boat in trouble off Pambula Main Beach and the second to two swimmers in trouble at Pambula River Mouth.

Innovation Award

The FSC Support Operations team is up for the Innovation Award at the SLSA Awards of Excellence next weekend for the development of joint operations capability with other emergency services. The nomination focuses on the transport of IRBs on Marine Rescue vessels along with the capability to launch UAVs from their deck. The assist to NSW Police by the UAV team for a land search at Eden is also featured. Good luck team!

WHAT'S GOING ON IN FSC

Duty Officer Team for 2019/20

with the increase in call outs we're seeing across the Branch having a strong Duty Officer team is critical. We're fortunate to have an experienced and highly capable team down here on the FSC. The Duty Officers are all part of the Support Operations team do a great job of managing incidents and supporting club call out teams. The team this year consists of:

Ben Bate
Anthony Bellette
Ken Bellette
Harley Dengate
Andrew Edmunds
Andrew Holt
Nick Huggins
Bruce McAslan
Cheryl McCarthy
Euan McKenzie
Andrew Mizzi
Emma Prowse

The Duty Officers are always the first to be tasked and the last to wrap up when we have an emergency call out. Please make sure you thank them next time you run into them.

We've also welcomed Kirsty Campbell to the team this year as Deputy Director of Lifesaving and she rounds out a strong team that will continue to lead the way across the state in terms of emergency response and innovation.



UAV Program

FSC Branch is seeing an increase in UAVs this season with Batemans Bay joining Tathra and Pambula in being part of the DPI Shark Management program.

In addition to those three clubs we also have two Support Ops drones based with Duty Officers with search and rescue as the primary purpose. Those drones call also be called on to assist with events and carnivals.

Taking on the new FSC Branch UAV Coordinator role this season is Pambula's Connor Leayr. If you're interested in taking your pilot training please get in touch with Connor at cleayr@gmail.com



Multi-Agency SAREX

A multi-agency Search and Rescue Exercise is planned for November 23 and 24. It will involve assets from NSW Police Marine Area Command, Marine Rescue NSW, Surf Life Saving and the Westpac Lifesaver Helicopter.

All call out team members are invited to take part and it's a valuable opportunity to see how search operations run and learn how to work effectively as part of a multi-agency response.

The 23rd is a desktop exercise and theory day and we have a few spots if you'd like to attend.

Sunday 24th involves two on-water search exercises. One will be held out of Batemans Bay and the other out of Bermagui (changed from original location). If you'd like to take part please email Cheryl at fsclifesaving@gmail.com