



Circular 129:17

Date: 5th October 2017

Subject: Request for feedback on recent SLSNZ policies

Attention: All members

Action: Respond to survey

Circulars are available at: <http://lifesaving.org.nz/lifesaving/lifesaving-operations-circulars/>

The release of several operational memos by SLSNZ pertaining to: helmet use in powercraft and lifeguarding around rocks, temporary ban on all club rock rescue training for new lifeguards, compulsory removal of the right foot strap in IRBs, and removal of Stiffneck cervical collars has prompted a lot of discussion and concern amongst clubs. The concerns range from how the changes were communicated to clubs and the consultative process, through to implementation and operational issues that have a direct impact on lifeguarding and club activities.

The Lifesaving Advisory Group (LAG) through the chair Johnny Clough (who represents SLSNR on the SLSNZ National Lifesaving Committee), and SLSNR staff have had a lot of dialogue with SLSNZ and they have been advised that it is the intent of the SLSNR Operations Committee to conduct our own review of these policies based on feedback from the SLSNR membership.

Since this decision to conduct a review, feedback received at the recent SLSNZ club chairs workshop held on September 23rd resulted in the SLSNZ Board advising mandatory use of helmets in powercraft will now not come into force until **Labour Weekend 2018** (excluding SLSNZ run events and IRB racing) and a project committee will be formed to review this decision over the next 12 months. This will include consultation with clubs. Clubs have been requested to provide feedback on this decision direct to SLSNZ by **October 6th** and of course SLSNR Clubs are encouraged to do so. However, the Operations Committee feel more time is needed to provide feedback on the actual issue of helmet use in powercraft and the removal of the right footstrap in IRBs and so clubs and members are encouraged to complete a simple online survey. SLSNR is also to seek guidance from WorkSafe NZ who have recently confirmed that SLSNR has a primary duty of care for patrolling members.

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There will be no feedback sought on the decision to remove Stifneck cervical collars from service as this recommendation comes from the SLSNZ medical director and is supported by the New Zealand Resuscitation Council. All clubs are requested to comply with this directive and remove/dispose of their cervical collars immediately.

Although we are happy to receive feedback on rock rescue training, SLSNR have already been working closely with SLSNZ and will ensure there are a series of rock rescue training courses run this summer, either as part of the SLSNR Intermediate Lifeguard Schools or specific Regional courses for the clubs who often conduct rock rescues. More information will be available on these courses shortly.

We fully support SLSNZ initiatives designed to improve the health and safety of the membership, and it is not the intent of this review to simply see these policies rescinded. We do however want to know what the operational implications are for SLSNR clubs if these policies are implemented. To this end we invite all members to complete an online survey by clicking [here](#). The survey is open until Sunday the 22nd of October.

[Click here](#) to see the policies.

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