SURF LIFE SAVING®
NORTHERN REGION

International Lifeguard Information Packet

SLSNR - Paid Lifeguard Service

2026/2027

WWW.LIFESAVING.ORG.NZ

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INTRODUCTION

All international shortlisted applicants for the Surf Life Saving Northern Region (SLSNR) Paid Lifeguard Service should read and understand this information before accepting a conditional offer of employment from SLSNR.

To find out more about Surf Lifesaving Northern Region please look through the **website.**

Kia ora e hoa! (Māori greeting to a friend)

Interested in applying to work in the Northern Region? We're thrilled you want to join the SLSNR family. This document will cover everything you need to know.

At Surf Life Saving Northern Region (SLSNR), our mission is clear: "No one drowns at the beach in Aotearoa (New Zealand)." We're here to save lives and keep our coastal communities safe, and you would play a key part in that vision.

Your application is just the start of an incredible adventure. As a paid lifeguard, you'll be working in one of the most breathtaking and diverse coastal landscapes on the planet. New Zealand is famed for its jaw-dropping scenery, warm-hearted people, and vibrant outdoor lifestyle. If you are successful, we encourage you to immerse yourself in one of our surf clubs fully – they'll welcome you like one of their own.

To help you through the process, we've collected some essential info in this document.

If you need anything or have questions, our dedicated lifesaving team is here to help. Reach out via email, phone, or drop by the SLSNR office.

We wish you all the best and hope you join us for a safe, successful, and epic season.

Ngā mihi nui (Thank you),

SLSNR Team

ONBOARDING PROCESS

Please Note:
Submitting an application or being shortlisted **does not** guarantee employment. SLSNR reserves the right to withdraw an offer if applicants do not meet the conditions of employment.

Application Submission:
To have your application considered, you must:

- Be eligible to work in New Zealand.
- Possess the necessary qualifications, which can be cross-credited to SLSNZ qualifications.

If Shortlisted:

- Your provided references will be contacted.

If Successful:

- You will initially receive a offer of employment which will include a fixed-term contract.

Post-Acceptance Requirements:
After accepting the conditional offer, you must:

- Complete a background check (Police vetting form).
- Provide evidence of your eligibility to work in New Zealand.
- Become a member of SLSNZ through an affiliated surf club.
- Acquire a New Zealand IRD number and open a New Zealand bank account.
- Complete the necessary employment paperwork.
- Complete the required pre-season inductions, training, and fitness competency evaluations.

KEY DATES	DATE
All applications open	29 June 2026
All applications close	2 August 2026
Interviews	10 August - 21 August 2026
Job Offers	21 September 2026
400m Swim & Run times sent in	13 September 2026
Surf Lifeguard Course (For those that cannot RPL)	Will be run in the International Induction
International Induction - Complusory	TBC
Paid Lifeguard Season Starts	16 November 2026
Paid Lifeguard Season Ends	19 March 2027
Debrief	6 February 2027

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SURF LIFEGUARD
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SLSNZ LIFEGUARD QUALIFICATIONS

To work for SLSNR's Paid Lifeguard Service (PLS) the minimum prerequisites are:

- Current Surf Lifeguard Award (or equivalent).
- 2+ seasons of patrolling experience in a professional lifeguard service.
- 18+ years of age.
- Current First Aid Qualification.
- **Driver's License** (restricted or full).
- IRB Crewman Award.
- Must swim 400m under 7.30 minutes.
- Must run 3kms in under 20mins.
- Complete online paid lifeguard theory test.
- Complete Safeguarding Children Online Module.
- Complete Health and Safety Online Module.

Other awards and achievements that are beneficial to your application are:

- Advanced First Aid Qualification (PHEC).
- IRB Drivers Award.
- RWC Operator Certification.
- CIMs 3 or 4.

Additional pre-requisites for Beach Education

- Knowledge of risk management and supervision of beach education.
- Patrol leadership or similar outside of SLS operations.
- Experience teaching children in junior surf, water safety, swimming or similar.
- Experience managing a team to provide a service/experience to clients/participants.

Other awards and achievements that are beneficial to your beach education application are:

- Teaching or instructor experience or qualifications.

For more information on SLSNZ's wider award structure please click **here.**

The list of awards recognised by SLSNZ is listed below. For lifeguards who do not have any awards listed you cannot work for SLSNZ until you meet the minimum standards.

For more information on SLSNZ's recognition of prior learning policy please click **here.**

TRANSFER OF LIFEGUARD QUALIFICATIONS

Country	Organisation	Qualification
Australia	Surf Life Saving Australia	Bronze Medallion (Currently Proficient)
Great Britain	Surf Life Saving Great Britain	Beach Lifeguard Award (Currently Proficient)
Great Britain	Royal Lifesaving Society UK	National Beach Lifeguard
UK	Combined Surf Lifesaving Great Britain, Surf Lifesaving Wales, Royal Lifesaving Society	National Vocational Beach Lifeguard Award
South Africa	Lifesaving South Africa	Beach Lifeguard Award
IRB Crewpersons Module		
Australia	Surf Life Saving Australia	Inflatable Rescue Boat Crew Certificate
Great Britain	Surf Life Saving Great Britain	Inshore Rescue Boat Crew (Surf Endorsed)
Great Britain	RNLI (Royal National Lifeboat Institute)	Inshore Rescue Boat Crew (Surf Endorsed)
Senior Lifeguard Award - IRB Drivers		
Australia	Surf Life Saving Australia	Inflatable Rescue Boat Driver (Silver Medallion)
Great Britain	Surf Life Saving Great Britain	Inshore Rescue Boat Driver (Surf Endorsed)

SURF LIFEGUARD
TSB
RESCUE
MERCURY

VISA INFORMATION

All international surf lifeguards employed by SLSNR for the Paid Lifeguard Service must have legal authorisation to work in New Zealand. SLSNR does not sponsor work visa applications. We recommend that international lifeguards apply for working holiday visas if eligible.

Australian citizens and residents do not usually need a visa to travel to New Zealand. More information **here.**

Eligibility

- **Age:** Usually between 18-30 years old (some countries extend this to 35).
- **Passport:** Valid passport from an eligible country.
- **Funds:** Proof of sufficient funds (usually around NZD 4,200).
- **Health and Character:** Meet health and character requirements.

Steps to Apply

- **Check Country Eligibility:** Ensure your country is part of the working holiday scheme.
- **Create an Account:** Register on the Immigration New Zealand (INZ) website.
- **Complete the Application Form:** Fill out the online application form accurately.
- **Provide Documents:** Prepare and upload necessary documents:
  - Passport copy
  - Proof of funds
  - Health insurance (if required)
  - Medical certificates (if required)
- **Pay the Application Fee:** Pay the non-refundable fee online.
- **Submit Application:** Review and submit your application.
- **Wait for Approval:** Processing times can vary, so be patient and start early.

Important Considerations

- **Travel Insurance:** Highly recommended even though NZ has ACC.
- **Tax Obligations:** You'll need an IRD (Inland Revenue Department) number for tax purposes.
- **Accommodation:** Plan for your accommodation in advance.

Useful Resources

- Immigration New Zealand
- Working Holiday Scheme Eligibility
- United Kingdom Working Holiday Visa
- USA Working Holiday Visa
- Other nationalities

IRD NUMBER

To get an IRD (Inland Revenue Department) number in New Zealand as an international:

Gather Required Documents

You will need to provide the following:

- A valid passport
- Your working holiday visa
- Proof of your current address in New Zealand, overseas mailing address.
- Proof of your tax identification number from your home country (if applicable)

Complete and Submit the Application Form

Complete the appropriate IRD number application form. You can download the forms from the Inland Revenue website. You can submit your completed application form and the required documents online.

- **IRD number application – resident individual (IR595)**
- **IRD number application – non-resident/offshore individual (IR742)**
- **Inland Revenue Website**

Wait for Your IRD Number

Once your application is processed, you will receive your IRD number. This usually takes around 8-10 working days.

OPENING A NZ BANK ACCOUNT

To be paid through the SLSNZ payroll system, you will need a New Zealand bank account. Opening a bank account in New Zealand generally involves a few key steps. Here's a guide to help you through the process:

Choose a Bank

Research and decide which bank you want to open an account with. Some of the major banks in New Zealand include:

- ANZ
- ASB
- BNZ
- Kiwibank
- Westpac

Gather Required Documents

You will need to provide certain documents. Common requirements include:

- **Proof of Identity:** Passport, New Zealand driver's license, or other government-issued ID.
- **Proof of Address:** Utility bill, rental agreement, or a letter from your employer.
- **Proof of Visa/Immigration Status:** Visa or residency documents, if applicable.
- **IRD Number:** Your New Zealand tax number, which you can apply for online if you don't have one.

Visit the Bank or Apply Online

Many banks in New Zealand allow you to start the application process online. However, you might still need to visit a branch in person to finalize the account setup. During your visit or online application, you will:

- Complete an application form.
- Provide the necessary documents.
- Choose the type of account you want to open (e.g., checking, savings, or business account).

Tips for Internationals

- **Open an Account Before Arrival:** Some banks allow you to open an account before you arrive in New Zealand.
- **Non-Resident Account**: Inquire about non-resident account options.
- **Currency Exchange:** Consider the bank's policies and fees on foreign currency exchange if you will be transferring money from abroad.

Contact the Bank for Specifics

It's a good idea to contact the bank directly or visit their website for the most up-to-date information and any additional requirements they may have.

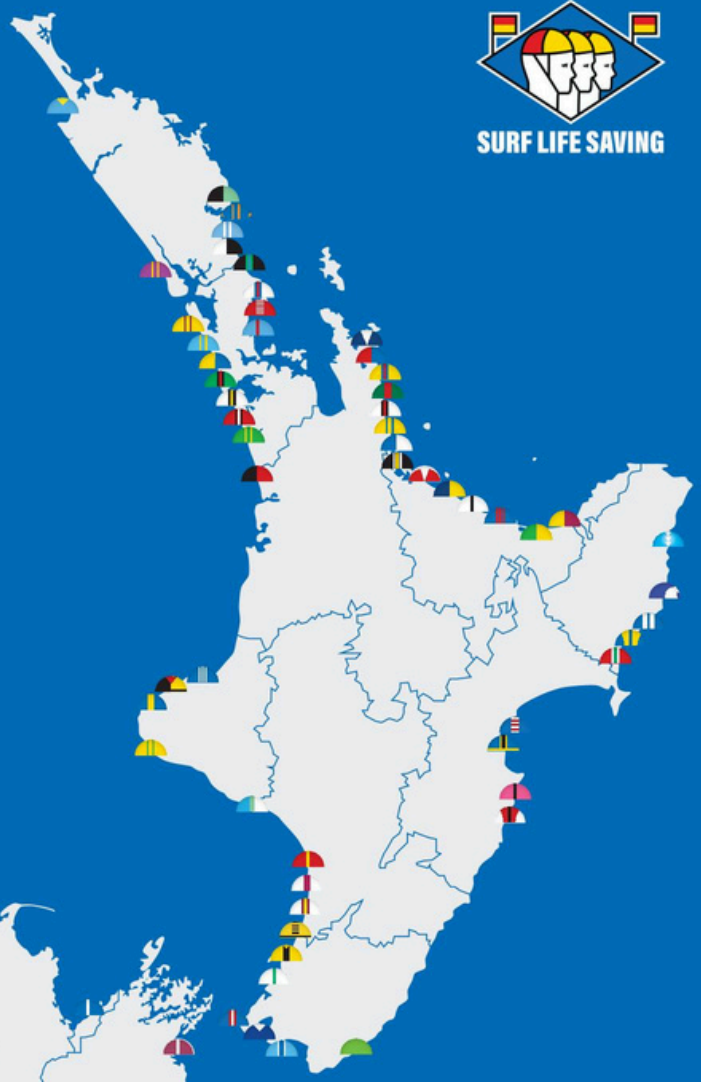
SURF LIFE SAVING
SURF RESCUE
YAMAHA

SURF LIFE SAVING

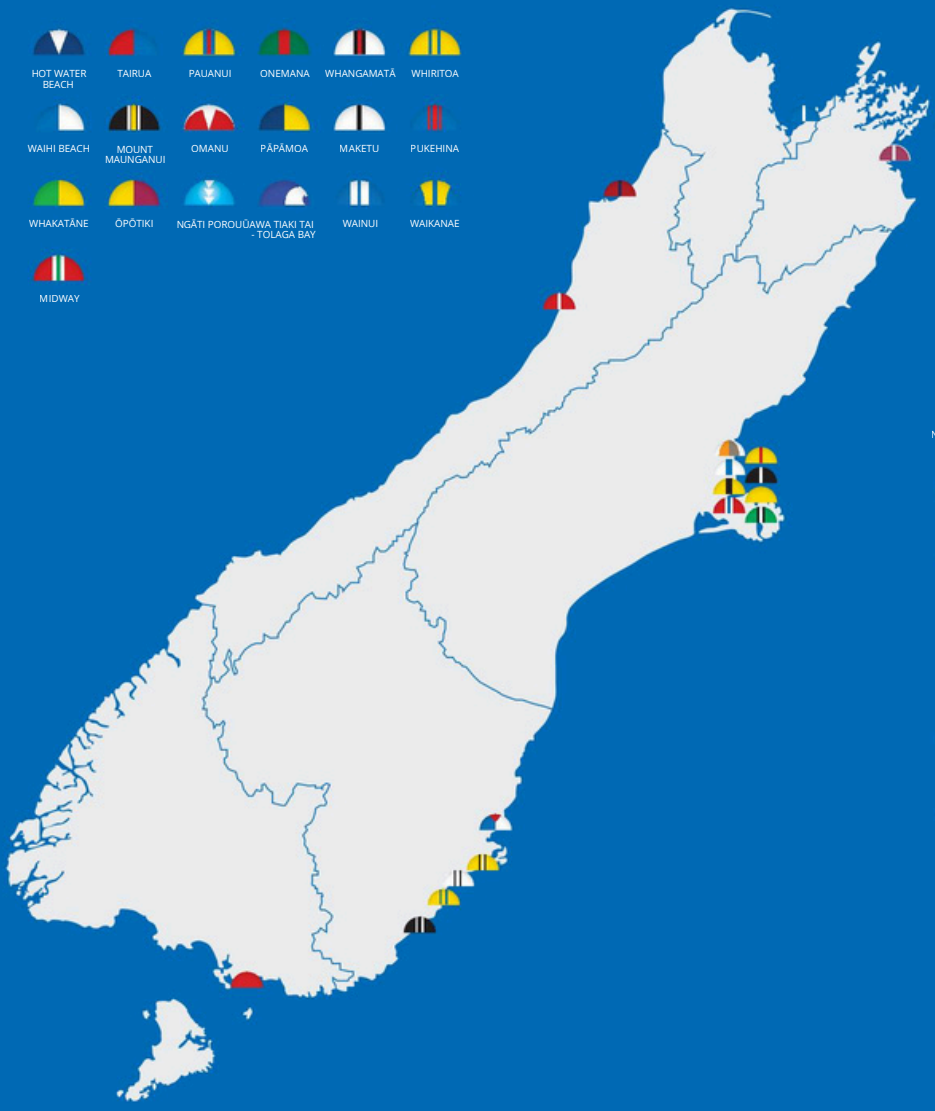
OUR VISION

No-one drowns at the beach in Aotearoa, New Zealand.

NORTHERN Te Tai Tokerau

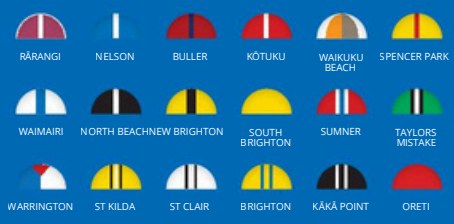


EASTERN Te Tai Rāwhiti



CENTRAL Te Upoko o Te Ika-a-Māui

SOUTHERN Te Wai Pounamu



In it for life.

BECOMING A MEMBER

To cross-credit your equivalent qualifications, you need to become a member of Surf Life Saving New Zealand (SLSNZ) by joining an affiliated surf club. You should contact a club of your choice directly. Once your membership is processed, you will appear in our database and be issued a unique membership number. This will grant you access to our online Learning Management System (LMS).

Surf Life Saving New Zealand is divided into four regions: Northern, Eastern, Central, and Southern. The Paid Lifeguard Service operates nationally with systems and processes managed regionally by one of the four regional offices. A Regional Manager oversees the contractual and stakeholder relationship aspects of the service, while a Regional Lifesaving Manager handles the operational aspects. Only the Northern and Eastern regions employ international surf lifeguards for their respective Paid Lifeguard services.

Eastern Region
The Eastern Region is divided into three areas: Coromandel, Bay of Plenty, and Gisborne/Tairāwhiti. The Paid Lifeguard Service in the Eastern Region employs around 140 seasonal lifeguards, providing services to 24 locations across 19 clubs.

Northern Region
The Northern Region (SLSNR) is unique compared to the other regions as we have a governance Board of Directors and operate as an organization within the SLSNZ umbrella. Therefore, the Northern Region is not directly managed by SLSNZ like the other regions, although we adhere to SLSNZ standards and are strongly affiliated. The Northern Region covers the area from Auckland to the Far North and as far south as Raglan on the west coast.

Choosing a club? Visit our **website here.**

STAFFING STRUCTURE

Clubs within the Northern Region are supported by 18 fulltime staff which includes 3 departments - Lifesaving Operations, Member Services & Corporate Services.

The Paid Lifeguard program is managed and delivered by the Regional Lifesaving Manager and the Lifesaving Support Officers (LSO) with each LSO supporting an area of the region.

Regional Lifesaving Manager: Chase Cahalane			
Maraea Whiu	**Emma Baker**	**Samantha Larson**	**Cory Harvey**
Club Locations: • **Far North** • **Baylys** • **Whangarei Heads** • **Ruakaka** • **Waipu Cove** • **Mangawhai Heads** • Te Arai	**Club Locations:** • Pakiri • **Omaha** • Omaha RWC • Tawharanui • Wenderholm	**Club Locations:** • **Orewa** • **Red Beach** • Long Bay • **Mairangi Bay** • North Shore RWC • Takapuna • **Kariaotahi** • **Sunset** • **Raglan**	**Club Locations:** • **Muriwai** • **Bethells** • **United North Piha** • **Piha** • **Karekare**

*Red indicates that the location is a Satellite Patrol and not based at a volunteer surf club

KEY CONTACTS

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SURF LIFEGUARD
RED BEACH SLSC
SURF
RESCU
BEACH CONDITIONS
Patrol Start
Patrol Finish
SAFESWIM
Visit Safeswim.org.nz for the latest beach conditions and safety information.
SWIM BETWEEN THE RED & YELLOW FLAGS
AON

FAQ

Q. My Surf Lifeguard award is not recognised by SLSNZ, what do I do?
A. You will need to join a New Zealand Surf Life Saving club and complete your SLSNZ Surf Lifeguard Award through a club. You must be a recognised New Zealand Lifeguard before you can trial to become a Paid Lifeguard.

Q. What is the PLS competency assessment?
A. The PLS competency assessment is conducted in two parts:

1. **Initial Submission:** International applicants complete the first part by submitting results for a 400-meter pool swim and a 3-kilometer run during their application process.
2. **In-Person Evaluation:** The second part of the assessment is job-specific and is completed in person during the induction.

Q. When does the Paid Lifeguard season start?
A. Typically Paid Lifeguards begin in the middle of November and end middle of March. However, the majority of Lifeguards will only be required over the peak season. The peak season operates for eight weeks (Mid December till beginnings of February). Full season work is limited, only applicants who trial exceptionally well and have the required experience will receive work in the shoulder season.

Q. Where will I stay while working as a Paid Lifeguard?
A. We provide accommodation during the week (Monday morning - Friday morning) at the surf club you are working at (or alternate accommodation in some instances). Some clubs do provide accommodation over the weekend, however this needs to be negotiated between the guard and club management. Clubs ***are not*** obligated to provide accommodation over the weekend. Another option is billeting through the SLSNR community for weekend accommodation. If you are sourcing accommodation, be aware that in some areas, accommodation can be very limited, especially during the summer months.

Q. Will I need my own form of transport or is there good public transport?
A. Yes you will need your own form of transportation, a lot of our beaches are in remote areas where there is little to no public transport. While there are public transport options available from Auckland International Airport to Auckland City, you will need your own transportation to get to and from work.

Q. What beach will I work at?
A. After the assessment period, applicants are evaluated and if successful they are deployed where their skills can be most utilised. Managers do take into consideration what might work best for each individual however lifeguards will be allocated upon the needs of the service. You may be placed at one beach or a range of beaches across the season.

Q. What other job opportunities are there within Surf Life Saving New Zealand / Northern Region?
A. The Community Education program runs throughout Term Four and Term One of the School year (Oct-April). You will have to complete the same RPL process as the Paid Lifeguard Service however you will only need to complete this process once. Community Education includes the Beach Education programme - teaching school aged children at the beach, and Surf to School - teaching school aged children at their school. You can chat to our Community Education Manager for further information.

Annielle Ryland-Higgins
annielle.ryland-higgins@surflifesaving.org.nz
021 507 510

Q. Is there an Induction Day for Community/Beach Education as well?
A. Yes, attendance at the Community/Beach Education Induction Day is compulsory for Instructors.

Q. Can I work as a Paid Lifeguard and a Community Educator/Instructor?
A. Yes, the Community Education program runs earlier and later than the Paid Lifeguard Service so there is a great opportunity to do both roles.