

Oct 15

Rescue of the Month
 Randwick Surf Rescue 30
safer beaches, safer ocean, safer lives



Skills

“The strength of the team is each individual member. The strength of each member is the team.” As a team we applied our life saving skills in creative ways.

Outcome

As Surf Life Savers we all worked as a team – consultation, co-operation and coordination was key: with each other ; with Police; with Police Rescue; and importantly with Ambulance Intensive Care Paramedics. This young female patient was fortunate indeed .

Media

Media interest in this story was both national and international. It was covered in radio, print and TV media – it even being reported in the UK’s Guardian

Dramatic rock rescue brings out the best in our surf life savers

“Surf Rescue 30 has taught me all kinds of skills. You go out there and think on your feet, work with others and achieve things you feel incredibly proud about. That's what life's all about.”

Andrew Lissenden, Surf Rescue 30 Rescue Driver (North Bondi SLSC)

At around 1325 hours on Sunday 11 October 2015, Surf Rescue 30 patrolled into Gordon’s Bay, a popular ocean inlet nestled between Clovelly and Coogee in Randwick’s East. The waters were a crystal clear aquamarine, there was hardly a breath of air, and people were swimming and sunning themselves on the rock platforms. After a productive morning of training with new crew, Surf Rescue 30’s rostered crew were all looking forward to an hour or so of respite. Not more than 5 minutes after

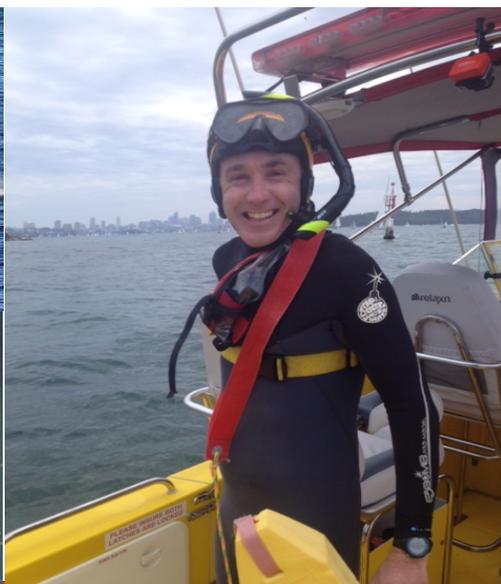
dropping anchor, a radio call came over the Surf UHF radio from SurfCom Sydney, asking all stations to please remain silent until further advised; followed immediately by a request that Surf Rescue 30 update SurfCom with its current location. All the crew were experienced operators – and I guess we all knew what this meant; this was no mere "welfare check".

SurfCom advised us that Police had 'reached out' to Surf on the 24-hour emergency response system and requested our assistance at Sydney



Harbour near Nielsen Park, Vaucluse for a tricky patient extraction – more details would be forthcoming. In the interim, could we start making our way to Sydney Harbour. At 1331 we were underway and heading north up the Sydney coastline.

Skimming across the water that day in Randwick’s bright yellow Surf Rescue Boat was Richard Lissenden (Skipper, Maroubra); Andrew Lissenden (Driver, North Bondi); and Jed Goggin (Trainee Driver and Crew, Maroubra). Jed, with several years’ naval officer experience, drove like a pro – trimming



"Surf Rescue 30 should be congratulated on the professionalism of its crew"

NSW Ambulance service
Paramedic

craft to perfection for optimum performance for the trip north up to the Harbour. Meanwhile, Andrew assumed the role of Rescue Crew, and suited up with wetsuit, Gath helmet, UHF Radio and mask, snorkel and rescue fins at the ready. We arrived at Nielsen Bay in Sydney's Eastern Suburbs around 1400 hours and it wasn't long before we located the patient on the western cliff face of Nielsen Park Headland. The patient was a young 15-year old female who had tumbled over the cliff edge bouncing onto the rock platform below. She was perched under a rocky overhang and was being attended to by Ambulance Paramedics, Police Rescue, and Police for spinal injuries, a suspected broken pelvis and broken ankles

We were able to manoeuvre the boat quite close to the patient on the rocks. Andrew exited the vessel and swam ashore to the rocks, where he discussed patient extraction options with emergency services personnel.

It was decided to proceed with a stokes litter extraction and he radioed the crew on Surf Rescue 30 to prepare our floating titanium stokes litter.

Andrew advised surf Rescue 30 and swam back to the craft to collect the floating titanium stokes litter which Richard and Jed had assembled.

Further consultation with paramedics and police rescue occurred when Andrew swam the stokes litter back to the rocks and it was decided to use Surf Rescue 30's spinal board which fitted neatly into our floating stokes litter. Andrew again swam back to the craft to collect the spinal board.

Paramedics were becoming quite concerned with the welfare of the young patient who was in considerable pain. They requested the assistance of a crew to manage the head of the stretcher during the transfer from the shore to the craft, the primary concern being that swell from a passing cruiser or ferry could potentially add to the patient's trauma and complicate matters. After a risk assessment it was decided that we would comply with the further request.

Intensive care paramedics indicated a preference to be on our vessel to provide patient care and pain management. They requested Surf Rescue 30 meet them at Rose Bay wharf for this purpose. As an added bonus the ambulance and stretcher would be waiting at the wharf when the patient was extracted.

After collecting the intensive care paramedics from Rose Bay wharf at around 1500 hours we transported them back to the incident site. At Surf Rescue 30's command the crew then carefully transported the patient back to Surf Rescue 30 strapped into the floating stokes litter and delicately manoeuvred her into the craft for specialist assessment.

The trip back to Rose Bay wharf was slow as the patient was in considerable pain. The paramedics administered pain relief.

Once back at Rose Bay Surf Rescue Crews and Duty Officers assisted the patient onto the ambulance stretcher – an operation that took 7 of us in total.

The intensive care paramedics praised the Surf Rescue 30's Crew – indicating that without the craft and its crews to assist with tricky extraction, they were faced with land extraction back up the rocks, which was potentially dangerous not only for the patient but also emergency services.

This rescue involved the Surf Rescue 30 crew applying their surf lifesaving skills in a trailblazing way. It demonstrated that unity is truly strength – and showcased when there is teamwork and collaboration on a broader scale wonderful things can be achieved.