



SURF LIFE SAVING SYDNEY STRATEGIC PLAN | 2026-2030  
PROTECT. CONNECT. INSPIRE.

# SURF LIFE SAVING SYDNEY

**PROTECTS** lives along our Sydney coastline from South Head to the Royal National Park, by delivering world-class lifesaving, rescue, & emergency response.

**CONNECTS** through strengthening community engagement, inclusion, and belonging.

**INSPIRES** by empowering our youth, volunteers, and future leaders for a safer, stronger, and more united future for all.



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# OUR PURPOSE

We are life savers.

# OUR MISSION

Turn the tide on coastal drowning.

# OUR VISION

Zero preventable deaths along our coastline.

## FOREWARD FROM THE PRESIDENT



Surf Life Saving Sydney has always stood for people, those who serve with courage, compassion, and a shared sense of purpose. Our communities rely on us to protect lives, and we rely on one another to ensure the strength and sustainability of our movement. Through innovation, education, and connection, we continue to evolve as a trusted leader in aquatic safety and emergency response, keeping our organisation relevant in an ever-changing world.

Our values, **Safety. Trust. Responsibility. Belonging. Integrity. Excellence.** define who we are and how we operate. They guide our decisions, strengthen our relationships, and inspire our actions. Together, they reflect the heart of Surf Life Saving Sydney, a community built on service, teamwork, and commitment to protecting others.

We are committed to empowering our youth, giving them a voice, and ensuring they play a leading role in shaping our future. Their ideas, energy, and leadership will help us navigate the social and environmental challenges ahead. By fostering inclusion and opportunity, we build a culture that welcomes all and ensures our continued relevance and impact across generations.

To remain strong and effective, we must continue to innovate. Harnessing data, technology, and collaboration allows us to enhance our lifesaving capability, modernise our governance, and strengthen our engagement with communities and partners. Through these actions, we ensure Surf Life Saving Sydney remains a trusted, agile, and future-ready organisation.

Our guiding principles are simple yet powerful, to **Care. Lead. Grow. Excel.** We care deeply for our communities, lead with integrity, grow through innovation, and excel in everything we do. Guided by these principles, Surf Life Saving Sydney continues to **Protect** lives, **Connect** people, and **Inspire** a safer, stronger, and more united future for all.

**Elissa Hancock**  
President  
Surf Life Saving Sydney

# OUR VALUES

## OUR SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY

### SAFETY

Prioritising the well-being of people at all times.

### TRUST

Building confidence through reliability, transparency, and consistency.

### RESPONSIBILITY

Being accountable for our actions, our communities, and each other.

### BELONGING

Fostering connection, inclusion, and a sense of community.

### INTEGRITY

Acting with honesty, fairness, and ethical purpose.

### EXCELLENCE

Striving for the highest standards in all we do.





# OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

## CARE

We care for people by placing their safety, wellbeing, and experience at the centre of everything we do. This principle guides how we serve our communities, support our members, and create an environment where everyone feels valued, included, and respected. Caring is reflected in our actions, from the vigilance on our beaches to the way we welcome and empower individuals across all ages and backgrounds.

## LEAD

We lead with integrity, setting the standard for professionalism, accountability, and ethical decision-making. Leadership in Surf Life Saving Sydney means acting with courage, clarity, and transparency, while inspiring confidence in those around us. By modelling strong values and embracing collaboration, we foster a culture where people are motivated to contribute their best and step forward as leaders in their own right.

## GROW

We grow through innovation, continuous improvement, and the pursuit of new opportunities. Our open-minded approach encourages us to challenge traditional thinking, invest in our people, and embrace emerging technologies and ideas that strengthen our capability. This reflects our commitment to learning, adapting, and ensuring our organisation remains relevant and resilient in a rapidly changing environment.

## EXCEL

We excel by striving for high standards in everything we do from lifesaving operations and member development to governance, service delivery, and community impact. Excellence is not just an outcome but a way of working, grounded in discipline, professionalism, and pride. By aiming higher and delivering consistently, we honour our legacy while shaping a stronger future for Surf Life Saving Sydney.

# OUR BELIEFS



PRIDE.  
PURPOSE.  
COMMUNITY.

- 1** Our communities depend on us to protect and save lives, and we take pride in fulfilling that responsibility with care and commitment.
- 2** Every volunteer is the heartbeat of Surf Life Saving Sydney, the strength of our past, the passion of our present, and the promise of our future.
- 3** The actions we take each day make a lasting difference, changing lives and helping to build safer, stronger communities.
- 4** By fostering an inclusive, welcoming and respectful culture, we attract and retain the people who embody our values and keep our movement thriving.
- 5** Strong, supportive and adaptable leadership enables us to navigate change with confidence and purpose.
- 6** We can all be proud to be part of an iconic organisation whose work continues to shape communities and save lives.

PROTECT.  
EMPOWER.  
THRIVE.



## OUR SHARED FOCUS

### ENHANCING

the experience of our members to make every interaction meaningful and rewarding.

### STRENGTHENING

the sustainability and long-term resilience of our clubs so they can thrive today and into the future.

### OPTIMISING

structures, resources, and digital tools to empower our frontline teams to save lives and make a real impact.

### ENSURING

Surf Life Saving Sydney remains relevant and continues to deliver lasting value to our communities.

### REDUCING

drowning through proactive prevention, education, and safety initiatives.

# REDUCING DROWNING IN UNPATROLLED LOCATIONS

1

Use data insights to understand where and when unpatrolled locations are most at risk.

2

Bring modern lifesaving tools and equipment to high-risk areas so both our members and the community can stay safe.



3

Explore creative ways to expand our presence and reach more people.

4

Share clear, focused safety messages highlighting the importance of patrolled areas whilst keeping safe in unpatrolled locations.

TRAINED. EQUIPPED. READY.

ENGAGE.  
EMPOWER.  
ADAPT.



## IMPROVING OUR MEMBERS EXPERIENCE

- 1** Support and grow leadership at all levels, encouraging tenure, succession, gender diversity, and providing young people meaningful pathways.
- 2** Embed our culture where everyone feels included, respected and heard.
- 3** Strengthen our Nipper program and sports opportunities to be more fun, engaging, and rewarding, helping juniors and youth to develop confidence, skills, and a sense of belonging.
- 4** Create pathways that encourage & engage people to join and contribute so that more members, especially youth, can get involved.
- 5** Open new doors for Nipper parents, youth, community groups, and special interest participants to help strengthen our patrols and community impact.
- 6** Engage the wider community and develop programs that reflect the challenges and opportunities of today, keeping our organisation relevant and effective.



SUPPORT.  
INSPIRE.  
ACHIEVE.

## SUPPORTING OUR CLUBS

- 1** Deliver practical, hands-on support to clubs, helping them thrive in their local communities.
- 2** Understand what makes clubs healthy and successful, and work with them to strengthen their people, programs, and impact.
- 3** Facilitate our clubs to connect, share ideas, and learn from one another, to help unlock their potential.
- 4** Empower youth and emerging leaders to have a voice in their clubs, ensuring the next generation shapes the future.

# ENHANCING & STRENGTHENING OUR FRONTLINE CAPABILITY

1

Find smarter and easier ways to upskill & train our members to strengthen our frontline capability.

2

Make it easier for clubs to access SLS equipment, rescue services, and resources using modern tools and technology.

3

Connect Rescue Services operations with frontline patrol teams to ensure smooth, effective support for everyone on the ground.



4

Share information clearly and transparently, keeping members informed without overwhelming them.

5

Use innovation to create new opportunities for members to engage, learn, and take on leadership roles.

INNOVATE. ENGAGE. EMPOWER.



LEAD.  
INNOVATE.  
UNITE.

## REMAINING RELEVANT, VALUED & TRUSTED IN THE COMMUNITY

Strengthen our role as a trusted provider of coastal aquatic safety and emergency services, keeping communities safe across our coastline.

Lead the way in lifesaving innovation by researching, testing, and applying the latest technologies, equipment, and operational approaches.

Continue to provide our 24/7 emergency response via our Rescue Services so help is always available when it's needed most.

Embrace new digital tools and media to reach and inspire communities.

Connect with local communities in meaningful ways, forging partnerships, sharing knowledge, and building trust.

Engage the public in lifesaving programs through outreach, education, and activities that encourage participation and strengthen community bonds.



## OUR KEY ENABLERS

The successful delivery of our strategy depends on maintaining a strong focus on critical enabling initiatives. In particular, we will continue to:

- 1** Make sure our operations and resources respond to what communities need most and address key risks.
- 2** Engage closely with partner agencies to collaborate effectively and achieve shared outcomes.
- 3** Build strong relationships with government and stakeholders to drive positive change and support our mission.
- 4** Keep our governance modern, transparent, and fit-for-purpose so everyone can trust and contribute to our work.
- 5** Explore new ways to grow and diversify funding to ensure our programs thrive and remain sustainable.
- 6** Create a culture where people feel valued, rewarded, and inspired to contribute their skills and energy.

LEARN. PARTNER. LEAD.



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## PROTECT. CONNECT. INSPIRE.

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which we gather, and pay respect to Elders past, present, and emerging. Their enduring connection to land and water continues to guide and inspire us as surf lifesavers, protecting our coastline, our beaches, and our communities.

**SURF LIFE SAVING SYDNEY**

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