



SURF LIFE SAVING AUSTRALIA POLICY

Title:	Limiting and Permanent Disability Policy
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Responsible Portfolio:	Lifesaving
Authority	This Policy is made under clause 39 of the SLSA Constitution. It is binding on all Members of SLSA and is to be interpreted in accordance with the SLSA Constitution.

1. DEFINITION

For the purpose of this Policy a disability shall refer to an individual who suffers or has suffered from any disease or any physical or mental disability (eg, epilepsy, diabetes or any permanent disability to a limb, eye or ear) likely to affect their efficiency as a Club Member, it may affect their safety and the safety of the public.

2. BACKGROUND

In the Public Safety Industry there is, due to the nature of work performed, a requirement for the majority of people to be able-bodied. However, to encourage participation in the organisation by all members of the community, special needs may be addressed in relation to those units which can accommodate special needs.

This will see all non-discriminatory association criteria fulfilled along with further aquatic safety evaluation, deemed necessary by the association and upon the advice of specialist interest groups.

It cannot be over stressed, as an aquatic based community rescue service, the importance placed upon water safety, rescue and survival, in all activities conducted under the auspices of the association.

Surf Life Saving Australia (SLSA) considers all members should have an ability to survive in the aquatic environment.

This is not more clearly brought into focus than in the fact that Members wish to compete from seven (7) years of age to death must have a basic survival/proficiency pre-requisite for all competition.

3. AWARDS

3.1 General

SLSA has developed an award program that meets the challenges of modern day rescue in an often, hazardous environment.

The award syllabus reflects what can reasonably be expected, in the way of knowledge, skill and application of a Surf Lifesaver holding that award.

The SLSA award structure has perimeters in place to utilise the skills of applicants whom may not be suited to or have their strengths within the hazardous environment of surf rescue. Specialisations such as First Aid Officer and Radio Operator are active roles within the club membership that provide members an opportunity to participate in surf rescue outside of the traditional roles.

No individual or group of individuals has the authority in instruction or examination to deviate from the examinable syllabus, stated in manuals of the association.

3.2 Procedure

Should any person with a known or obvious limiting and permanent disability seek an award, which requires skills, and abilities, which may be doubtful due to that disability, the following procedure will apply:

- a. The Club will forward to its State Centre a copy of SLSA Membership Form (Form No. 76) and details of the proposed award to be attempted and the applicant's doctor's address.
- b. Upon receipt of the application, the State Centre will supply, to the applicant's doctor, details of the award (requirements etc) and a declaration for completion.
- c. The completed declaration will be returned to the State Medical Officer (State Officer will copy same to the National Medical Officer).
- d. The State Centre Medical Officer in council with the State Director of Lifesaving, will make decision as to:
 - i. the "bona fide" of the application
 - ii. whether training should proceed
 - iii. whether the application should be processed through "The State Tribunal for the Evaluation of Limiting and Permanent Disabilities".

Note:

As stated not all persons with limiting and permanent disability will need to provide a declaration. A judgement must be made as to whether the person can safely fulfil the complete award syllabus, ie. A person confined to a wheelchair wishing to obtain the Radio Operator's Certificate would not need a Doctor's Certificate. However, an amputee, may have problems fulfilling the requirements of the Bronze Medallion, with safety.

- e. Should d(iii) be the decision made by the State Director of Lifesaving, the Tribunal for Evaluation of Limiting and Permanent Disabilities will make recommendation as to:
 - i. the safety aspects of the candidate attempting the award;
 - ii. further testing that the candidate may need to be subject to.
 - iii. activities individuals may not be able to participate in.

Note:

Candidates must fulfil all patrol hour requirements etc and successfully complete any other test prescribed by “The Tribunal for the Evaluation of Limiting and Permanent Disabilities” before approval to participate may be given.

4. PATROL

4.1 General

SLSA has identified the need for specialist officers within the patrolling structure. Every effort must be made however to ensure the “Award” patrol person is not compromised by having demands placed on them that are outside their specialist training. That is, the award Member should not wear the patrol-swimming cap and should have clothing that designates their speciality.

4.2 Procedure

Members who gain lifesaver support awards, should be rostered to patrols and services as required and identified as the speciality requires.

5. COMPETITION

5.1 General

Award holders who have a limiting and permanent disability which may deny them the opportunity of gaining the Surf Rescue Certificate, Surf Life Saving Bronze Medallion or remaining proficient and who fulfil the non-discriminatory requirements, required by the Association Constitution By-Laws, Rules and Manuals, may apply for entry into SLSA through the following procedure.

5.2 Procedure

- a. Clubs shall supply to State Centre, a copy of the applicant’s Membership Form (Form No. 76), details of the awards held, copies of the relevant patrol information, name address of the applicant’s doctor and any further information that may be of assistance.
- b. The State Centre shall forward to the applicant’s doctor a description of the association’s competitive events along with a minimum competitive qualification test for those with limiting and permanent disabilities and a declaration (National Form No. 76) for completion by the applicant’s doctor.
- c. The State Centre Medical Officer in council with the State Director of Life Saving will make decision as to:
 - i. the “bona fide” of the application;
 - ii. whether training should proceed;
 - iii. whether the applicant should be processed through “The State Tribunal for the Evaluation of Limiting and Permanent Disabilities”.

- d. The Tribunal for the Evaluation of Limiting and Permanent Disabilities will make recommendations as to:
 - i. the safety aspects of the candidate attempting the competitive qualification test;
 - ii. further testing the candidate may need to be subject to; and
 - iii. recommend activities individuals may not be able to participate in.

Note:

Candidates must fulfil all patrol hour requirements etc, and successfully complete the Competitive Qualification and any other test prescribed by the “Tribunal for the Evaluation of Limiting and Permanent Disabilities” before approval to participate may be given.

Further, the Competitive Qualification Test and other requirements will be re-tested annually or more often if recommended by the Tribunal by the State/Branch Director of Lifesaving/Superintendent or his nominee.

6. THE TRIBUNAL FOR THE EVALUATION OF LIMITING AND PERMANENT DISABILITIES

The Tribunal will consist of the following personnel:

- a. The State Director of Competition
- b. The State Director of Life Saving
- c. The State Medical Adviser
- d. A representative of the Special Interest Group to be the Authority on the particular limiting and permanent disability in question.
- e. One other who is deemed appropriate ie. Anti-Discrimination Board, Australian Sports Commission, etc.

7. TRIBUNAL “TERMS OF REFERENCE”

- a. To assess the capability of the applicant to fulfil the requirements of the award/test.
- b. To consider safety aspects of the applicant’s participation ensuring that the applicant will not be placed in a situation of unacceptable risk or place other people at risk.
- c. Recommend any further evaluation the applicant should undertake.
- d. Identify any activity in which the applicant should not be permitted to participate.
- e. Further recommendations with regard to capability and safety as required

8. THE COMPETITIVE QUALIFICATION TEST

The Competitive Qualification Test, along with other requirements recommended by the Tribunal for the evaluation of limiting and permanent disabilities, is to be re-tested annually.

8.1 Junior Activities Member

This membership category is required to maintain age group proficiency. In cases where a limiting and permanent disability stops the member from doing the run sections, the swimming component and other requirements will only need to be satisfactorily completed.

8.2 Award Members

Award members, with a limiting and permanent disability, whom are fulfilling all non-discriminatory requirements for entry into Association competition ie patrols etc, must complete the following Competition Qualification Test to be eligible to compete:

- a. Pool or enclosed water swim (prior to open water test), swim 200m in 5 minutes or less in a pool no less than 25m in length, or a measured enclosed water course.
- b. Open Water Survival test
 - i. Swim 100m to sea from waist depth water, in a continuous effort of a recognised swimming stroke;
 - ii. Tread water/float for one minute without an aid;
 - iii. Support a supposedly injured person for one minute; and
 - iv. Return to shore using a continuous effort of a recognised swimming stroke, taking advantage of surf conditions.

Note:

This is to be done without resting, touching the bottom, swimming aids etc, once having started the swimming to sea and until the candidate has returned to shore.

- c. Knowledge Test
 - i. Surf Survival
 - ii. Surf Awareness
 - iii. Signals and Signs
- d. Demonstrate assessment of patient and basic EAR/First Aid Skills.
- e. Any additional test requirements identified by the State Tribunal for the Evaluation of Limiting and Permanent Disabilities.

Dear Doctor,

Reference:

(Name)

The person whose name appears on this form has asked to be given the opportunity to participate in Association rescue award training or in competition.

As the Association is an aquatic based rescue and open water competition group, we have an overriding concern for the safety of both our members and the public within our care.

Further, it is an Association requirement that all members fulfil the basic open water survival testing and/or rescue awards, should they wish to participate in rescue or competition activity.

It is with this background that Surf Life Saving Australia looks to your expert opinion in declaring that the person, nominated on this form, has no limiting disability that would see them at an unacceptable risk during open water rescue training or competition.

Note:

Should a limiting and permanent disability place an individual at a greater risk than that which can reasonably be expected for a person without that disability, then the risk is unacceptable.

I have attached a synopsis of the Relevant Surf Life Saving Award and the Competitive Qualification Test, for your information and guidance. Further, could you please complete the attached declaration and return it to the State Centre marked CONFIDENTIAL and for the attention of the Medical Officer.

9. THE COMPETITIVE QUALIFICATION TEST

The Competitive Qualification Test, along with other requirements recommended by the Tribunal for the evaluation of limiting and permanent disabilities, is to be re-tested annually.

9.1 Junior Activities Member

This membership category is required to fulfil the age category “s” badge. In cases where a limiting and permanent disability stops the member from doing the run sections, the swimming component and other requirements will only need to be satisfactorily completed.

9.2 Award Members

Award members, with a limiting and permanent disability, whom are fulfilling all non-discriminatory requirements for entry into Association competition ie patrols etc, must complete the following Competition Qualification Test to be eligible to compete:

- a. Pool or enclosed water swim (prior to open water test), swim 200m in 5 minutes or less in a pool no less than 25m in length, or a measured enclosed water course.
- b. Open Water Survival test
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 - ii. tread water/float for one minute without an aid;

- iii. support a supposedly injured person for one minute; and
- iv. return to shore using a continuous effort of a recognised swimming stroke, taking advantage of surf conditions.

Note:

This is to be done without resting, touching the bottom, swimming aids etc, once having started the swimming to sea and until the candidate has returned to shore.

- c. Knowledge Test
 - i. Surf Survival
 - ii. Surf Awareness
 - iii. Signals and Signs.
- d. Demonstrate assessment of patient and basic EAR/First Aid Skills.
- e. Any additional test requirements identified by the State Tribunal for the Evaluation of Limiting and Permanent Disabilities.

10. BRONZE MEDALLION

10.1 Pre-Requisites

Candidates shall:

- a. be a minimum of 15 years of age on the date of the examination; and
- b. have completed a 400m swim in nine (9) minutes or less, in a swimming pool of not less than 25m or over a measured open water course.

10.2 Practical and Theoretical Examination

Candidates for this award will display a sound knowledge of Surf Awareness, Survival, Patrol and Rescue Procedures.

The examination will encompass the demonstration of:

- a. run (200m), Swim (200m), Run (200m) within a time of eight (8) minutes; and
- b. simulated rescue using:
 - i. Rescue Board
 - ii. Rescue Tube
 - iii. IRB (as Crew);
- c. patient approach/escape/support;
- d. team carries;

- e. radio maintenance and procedures;
- f. Expired Air Resuscitation (EAR), Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), and Oxygen enriched EAR;
- g. knowledge of operation of the IRB as Crew; and
- h. SLSA Signals.

Candidates will have a sound knowledge of Emergency Care, Physiology, Local Emergency Service and Patrolling Systems.

Candidates do a written or oral test encompassing the above topics.

Candidates must satisfy the majority of the Examiners in respect of their competence in all aspects of the examination.

11. DECLARATION

I declare that I have examined _____
(Name)

and, having familiarised myself with the requirements of the relevant Surf Life Saving Australia Award _____ and Competitive Qualifications Test and have no reservation in suggesting _____ will quite ably cope with the activities required for the relevant award and / or Competitive Qualification Test of the:

a. Relevant SLSA Award _____ (initial if YES)

(Name of Award)

b. Competitive Qualification Test _____ (initial if YES)

Name _____

Address _____

I acknowledge and agree that I have the consent of the applicant to provide this information to SLSA. The applicant and I acknowledge that SLSA may collect, store and handle the information I have provided on this form in accordance with the SLSA Privacy Policy. SLSA may store this information for statistical purposes, and may disclose it as necessary to the applicant's club, state or national level branch for the purposes of determining the applicant's suitability of participation, or as required by law. The information I have provided on this form is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I may correct or edit any details via the SLSA website: www.sls.com.au

Signature _____

Date _____

Please return this Declaration to the Association Medical Officer in the State.