

# SLSA Policy Statement

No: 5.4

Name: Proficiency and Patrol Hour Requirements for Competition Eligibility

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## SUMMARY

Surf Life Saving Australia (SLSA) competition is for registered, qualified and proficient members of surf lifesaving clubs who have fulfilled their Club, patrol, financial and other membership obligations.

All members who wish to compete at any SLSA competition must be registered, proficient and carry out required patrol duties, in accordance with the proficiency and patrol hour requirements detailed in this policy.

This policy covers all SLSA competition, including, but not limited to a competition which is referred to as a carnival, display, interclub, or championship, and irrespective of when such a competition is held.

Where the policy specifically refers to a "Championship" competition, it includes Regional, Branch, State and Australian Championships for all competition including Open, Age, Masters, Pool, IRB, Endurance and all other competitions deemed to be a Regional, Branch, State or Australian championship. It also includes ILS and ILS member country Championships. "

## ELIGIBILITY TO COMPETE

To be eligible to compete in any SLSA competition or to receive endorsement to enter ILS or ILS member competition, a SLSA member must:

- Be a registered and current financial member of SLSA.
- Be the holder of the appropriate SLSA award relevant to the age category as detailed in the latest version of the Surf Sports Manual or hold the equivalent overseas ILS member country award.
- Be SLSA proficient as prescribed for the relevant SLSA Award required for competition eligibility.
- Be eligible under the necessary age category.
- In relation to championship competition, have met their patrol commitments as detailed in this policy and met all their Club, Branch and State Centre requirements.
- Not be in default with their Club, Branch, State Centre or SLSA (or overseas ILS member associations) in relation to their service, financial or discipline obligations.

- Have met any other competition eligibility qualification requirements for specific events e.g. IRB, Surf Boat (sweep), Patrol Competition, First Aid.

**Note: Position Titles Variation**

This policy refers to various positions held within SLSA such as Director of Lifesaving, Director of Surf Sports etc. It is recognised that some Clubs, Branches and States (and in some cases at a National level), may use a different term to describe the principal office bearer responsible for Lifesaving or Surf Sports within that Club, Branch, State or at a National level. Examples may include Chair of the Lifesaving Committee, Surf Sports Manager etc. Where the term Director of Lifesaving, Director of Surf Sports etc is used, it refers to the principal person responsible for lifesaving or Surf Sports as applicable.

**1. ALL COMPETITORS MUST BE PROFICIENT**

- 1.1 All continuing members from the Under 15 up to and including Masters age categories who wish to compete at any SLSA competition are required to undertake the SLSA Proficiency Test relative to their Award by 31 December each year (31<sup>st</sup> July in the Northern Territory). With the approval of SLSA, this date or similar may also apply to areas of Northern Australia outside of NT.
- 1.2 Members who are not proficient as at December 31<sup>st</sup> are not permitted to patrol, or compete in any SLSA competition, until they have obtained the required proficiency.
- 1.3 Members completing their proficiency between December 31<sup>st</sup> and January 31<sup>st</sup> are eligible to patrol and compete from the date of the proficiency.
- 1.4 In relation to eligibility to compete, the date of proficiency must be prior to the close of entries for the event that the member wishes to compete in.
- 1.5 Any member completing their proficiency after 31<sup>st</sup> January each season shall be eligible to patrol but shall not be permitted to participate in any SLSA Championship competition until 1 May later in that year except where exceptional circumstances prevented the member from completing their proficiency by the cut off (31<sup>st</sup> January). Note: this exceptional circumstance must be validated and endorsed by the relevant State/Territory Director of Lifesaving.
- 1.6 A member completing their proficiency after January 31<sup>st</sup> will be eligible to compete in interclub competition (non championship).
- 1.7 Those members gaining their Surf Rescue Certificate or Bronze Medallion in the period from 1 June of the preceding year will be considered as satisfying the proficiency requirements for entry to competition.
- 1.8 New members who gain their respective award (or proficiency in the case of recognition of an ILS overseas equivalent member country award), after the closing date of entries for a championship, are not permitted entry to that competition.
- 1.9 Proficient age group members, who gain their Surf Rescue Certificate or proficient Surf Rescue Certificate Members who gain their Bronze Medallion after the close of entries of a championship, are considered as continuing members, not new members, and therefore may be entered as a late entry into competition.
- 1.10 Non proficient age group members, who gain their Surf Rescue Certificate or non

proficient Surf Rescue Certificate Members who gain their Bronze Medallion after the close of entries of a championship, are not eligible late entry into that competition.

- 1.11 Proficient award holders (other than Age Group members, Surf Rescue Certificate and Bronze Medallion) who gain their Surf Rescue Certificate or Bronze Medallion after the closing date of entries of a championship, are not permitted late entry to that competition.

## 2. PATROL REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL COMPETITORS

- 2.1 All members who wish to compete in any SLSA championship competition must fulfill their patrol hour requirements detailed in this policy.
- 2.2 Note that participation in non championship competition may also require a patrol hour entry requirement.
- 2.3 Under no circumstance shall any member be granted patrol or Club duty exemptions solely upon, or for, competition reasons.
- 2.4 The patrol hour requirement does not apply to Surf Rescue Certificate members wishing to compete in Junior Activities events (Under 14 and/or under competitions or events).
- 2.5 Further, to be eligible to participate in competition, members must also adhere to any additional patrol obligations as required by their Club (as per the Club's constitution, regulations and/or rules).
- 2.6 Members and Clubs must refer to the individual carnival bulletin entry requirements (if any) for competition and championship patrol hour entry requirements.

## 3. PERSONAL PATROL HOURS

- 3.1 For all Active and Under 15 members and any other categories of membership not mentioned, the minimum number of personal patrol hours required for the period of 1 January to 31 December of the preceding year of any SLSA Championship shall be:

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|---------------------------------|----------|
| a) NSW and QLD                  | 25 hours |
| b) All other States/Territories | 16 hours |

- 3.2 For Reserve Active members, the minimum number of personal patrol hours required for the period of 1st January to 31st December of the preceding year of any SLSA Championship shall be:

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|---------------------------------|----------|
| a) NSW and QLD                  | 12 hours |
| b) All other States/Territories | 8 hours  |

- 3.3 Hours shall only be calculated on the personal patrol hours completed by the competitor as follows:

- a) Rostered patrols;

- b) Substitute for other members (Note: These hours will be credited to the member who has actually done the patrol - NOT the member for whom the substitution was done);
  - c) Voluntary patrols;
  - d) Make Up patrols for approved absences as determined by the Club to cover illness, study, competition etc.
  - e) Water Safety for Junior Activities;
  - f) Water Safety at both Senior and Junior carnivals
  - g) Voluntary patrols for SLSA approved Support Operations e.g. Helicopter, Jet Rescue Boats, Offshore Rescue Boats, Rescue Water Craft, Radio Commands.
  - h) Duty Officers from the time that they are tasked to an incident and when at the scene of an incident for which they have been tasked, and which they are actively monitoring/supervising.
- 3.4 Personal patrol hours for water safety for junior activities can only be counted if the activity is endorsed by the Club and available to all junior activity members of that Club. It does not include water safety for personal coaching or training squads.
- Note:**  
Personal Coaching refers to instances where a coach (paid or unpaid) provides specific tuition in aquatic skills to individual members or a select group of members, i.e. it is not open to all members of that club;  
Training squads refers to a group of selected members who are being trained by a coach (paid or unpaid) and the squad is not open to all members.
- 3.5 Personal patrol hours for water safety for both senior and junior carnivals can only be counted if the member is signed on for water safety activities. It does not include officials performing other carnival activities such as judge in boat etc.
- 3.6 Penalty patrol hours shall not be used as credit for a member's patrol hour total for competition eligibility.
- 3.7 All patrol hours must be recorded in the patrol or service logbook and logged to SLSA in either SurfGuard or SurfMate as appropriate. Note: Clubs may record directly into SurfGuard/SurfMate with the permission of the relevant State.
- 3.8 Members who are employed lifeguards, helicopter crew or beach inspectors are not exempt from fulfilling personal voluntary patrol hours obligations.
- 3.9 A member will be credited with and recognised for all beach patrol hours completed irrespective of where those hours were completed. The practical aspect of this is that a member may patrol for one SLSA club and compete for a different SLSA club. Providing that they are not in breach of their financial, club

obligations, or patrol hour requirements, at either the club for whom they are competing, or the club for whom they are patrolling, they will be eligible to compete.

- 3.10 Any member who is a member of more than one SLSA club shall be entitled to compete in intra club events of all such clubs of which they are a member.
- 3.11 New members joining a SLSA club on or after 1 January, and prior to the closing date of entries in that year must fulfill new members requirements (patrol hours) which have been set at a minimum of four (4) hours. In addition, new members must also adhere to any additional obligations as required by their Club.
- 3.12 The personal patrol hour obligations of new members joining after January 1 and before December 31 of the preceding year shall require completion of their hours on a proportionate basis (refer table below) from that calendar year from when they have obtained their award/become proficient (as applicable).
- 3.13 The following table sets out the minimum annual personal patrol hour obligations for members joining after January 1 and before December 31 of the preceding year:

Award Gained/Returning member proficiency date	Min. Annual Patrol Hour requirement Active and Under 15 QLD/NSW	Min. Annual Patrol Hour requirement Active Reserve QLD/NSW	Min. Annual Patrol Hour requirement Active and Under 15 Other States & NT	Min. Annual Patrol Hour requirement Active Reserve Other States & NT
January	25	12	16	8
February	24	12	15	8
March	20	12	12	8
April – September	16	8	8	4
October	12	8	8	4
November	8	4	8	4
December	4	4	4	4

- 3.14 The minimum patrol hour requirement for a new member, a member rejoining a club (was not a member of SLSA during previous season - 1<sup>st</sup> October to 30<sup>th</sup> September), or a member returning after a leave of absence must not be less than 4 hours before the close of entries for that competition the member wishes to enter. Note: For a leave of absence to be recognised in relation to this policy, it must be constituted by the member’s club, and the individuals who meet the leave of absence criteria should be noted in club minutes and endorsed by the respective Branch/State centre by 31 December each year.

- 3.15 SLSA reserves the right to select members from some, or all entries, and to ask the respective State Centre to examine the eligibility of these members.
- 3.16 Where clubs consider their members are disadvantaged by the minimum patrol requirements in this policy, they may make an application for a variation to the patrol hour requirement through their respective Branch and/or State Centre. This application must be on an annual basis.
- 3.17 A member's patrol default hours and/or missed patrols will be dealt with entirely by the member's Club, or Clubs, when a member of more than one Club. If a member's Club believes that the member has fulfilled his/her patrol obligations then, subject to the minimum number of patrol hours being completed as determined within this policy, and all other requirements as set out in this policy being met for the member's Club or Clubs, then that member will be able to compete.
- 3.18 SLSA has provided the following guidelines in relation to default hours.
- a) Default hours are recorded when a person who is rostered to a patrol is absent from that patrol without club approval or has not appointed a substitute member. It is a requirement that the member performing the substitute has, at least, the same minimum qualifications of the person for whom the substitute has been arranged. This will ensure that the minimum patrol strength and qualifications are retained on patrol. For example, a Bronze award member must have at least a Bronze award member substitute for the member who requires the substitute, similarly, a qualified patrol captain must have at least a member with a patrol captain's qualification, etc.
  - b) If the member arranges for a substitute to cover a patrol, they are not in default if the member who accepted the substitute is absent from the patrol. If the member who accepted the substitute does not attend, then the person who accepted the substitution is the defaulting member.
  - c) A substitute is another qualified proficient member.
  - d) Penalty patrols are excluded from recovering default hours.
  - e) Make up hours are permitted to recover default hours.
  - f) Competitors must not be in default of patrol hour obligations (as determined by their club) as at the closing date of entries. While it is a requirement for competitors to complete their minimum annual number of patrol hours set out in this policy by 31<sup>st</sup> December in each year, competitors will have the period from 31<sup>st</sup> December to the closing date of entries, to make up any default hours that may apply.
- 3.19 Penalties including the forfeiture of entry fees shall apply to Clubs entering members who have not fulfilled their minimum patrol hour obligations.

#### 4. EXEMPTIONS FROM PATROL HOURS

- 4.1. A club may give special consideration for full or partial exemption from patrol obligations to members who fall into any of the following categories:
- a) Principal Club Office Bearers - President, Club Captain, Club Vice Captain, Lifesaving Director, Chief Instructor, Chief Training Officer, Education Director, Patrol Supervisor, Treasurer, Secretary, and Junior Activities Chair. Note: Exemptions for principal office bearers are limited to the above defined roles although it is recognised that some clubs have different titles for members fulfilling these roles. Application may be made to Branch/State for clarification/exemption in relation to principal office bearers.
  - b) Life Members.
  - c) Long Service Members.
  - d) Reserve Active Members. Note: Partial exemption is provided within this policy.
  - e) Members carrying out lifesaving duties in other areas such as offshore rescue boat, aerial services, support services, operational support and similar areas of active surf life saving.
  - f) Members holding office in the Association at Branch, State or National level. Note: This is limited to members who hold principal office and does not include members of committees. Application may be made to Branch/State for clarification/exemption in relation to principal office bearers.
  - g) Members on special SLSA assignment e.g. members of national SLSA/ILS representative teams for the duration of the competition, instructional tour and/or other approved activity.
  - h) Special deployment on Military Service.
- 4.2. Any exemptions listed above must be constituted by the member's Club, and the individuals who meet criteria should be noted in club minutes and endorsed by the respective Branch/State centre by 31 December each year.
- 4.3. SLSA will recognise all Club members listed as a Long Service or Life Member as recorded in SurfGuard/SurfMate. In other words, no annual endorsement of Long Service or Life Members is required providing that these members are correctly recorded within SurfGuard/SurfMate.
- 4.4. SLSA also recognises the service performed by Long Service and Life Members from other Australian surf life saving clubs, that is, the exemption from patrol hours applies to a Long Service or Life Member irrespective of where that service was carried out.
- 4.5. It is recognised that some Clubs may require additional patrol hour obligations of

members transferring from another Club. It is a matter for the individual Club whether they believe that a member has fulfilled their patrol hour obligation under their individual Club requirements.

- 4.6. When applying for exemptions, copies of all relevant documents, e.g., extracts from constitutions, by laws and/or minutes of meeting must be attached.
- 4.7. The information required to be submitted to Branch/State for exemption includes
  - Name of member
  - Age
  - Reason for exemption – office bearer (position to be included – Club, Branch, State, National as applicable), duty performed in other support operations etc, special SLSA assignment (reason to be specified) and/or military service.

## 5. ENTRIES

- 5.1. It is essential that all Clubs completing competition entries ensure the correctness of the current proficiency details included, and where required by entry bulletin, submit proficiency and/or assessment documentation with their entries.
- 5.2. SLSA reserves the right to conduct random or detailed check of entries and, under such circumstances, selected clubs will be required to submit appropriate documentation to substantiate the current award, proficiency and patrol hour status of those members entered.
- 5.3. The proficiency and assessment documents shall also be marked clearly to highlight the competitors names listed on the entry forms.

## 6. AWARDS AND ENTRY CLOSING DATES

- 6.1. New members who obtain their award after the closing date of entries are not permitted late entry to a competition.
- 6.2. Proficient age group members who gain their Surf Rescue Certificate or their Bronze Medallion after the close of entries, are considered continuing members, not new members, and therefore may be entered as a late entry into competitions as detailed in this policy.
- 6.3. Non proficient age group members, who gain their Surf Rescue Certificate or non proficient Surf Rescue Certificate Members who gain their Bronze Medallion after the close of entries, are not eligible for late entry into competition.
- 6.4. Proficient award holders (other than Age Group members, Surf Rescue Certificate and Bronze Medallion) who gain their Surf Rescue Certificate or Bronze Medallion after the closing date of entries, are not permitted late entry to that competition.



## 7. INTERNATIONAL COMPETITORS

- 7.1. International competitors wishing to compete in any SLSA championship for their own International Club, need to obtain an endorsement from their ILS member organisation that they are not in default of their service, financial or discipline obligations.
- 7.2. International competitors wishing to compete in any SLSA championship for a SLSA Club, must satisfy entry requirements as outlined within this policy.
  - a) SLSA recognises International Lifesaving Federation equivalent awards.
  - b) All International competitors must satisfy the proficiency and patrol hour requirements as set out in this policy
  - c) International competitors must not be in default with their overseas ILS member associations in relation to their service, financial or discipline obligations.

## 8. ADDITIONAL ENTRY ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

In some SLSA competitions, additional entry eligibility requirements may apply. e.g.

### 8.1. IRB

- a) Participation in IRB competition requires IRB Drivers, IRB Crew, and patients to hold and be proficient in additional awards and statute licensing requirements (refer SLSA Manuals and relevant bulletins),
- b) Participation in the Patrol Competition requires competitors to hold (and be proficient in) Advanced Resuscitation Certificate (or equivalent i.e. Advanced Resuscitation Techniques) awards. Refer SLSA manuals and/or relevant bulletins for detail,
- c) To be eligible to sweep surf boats in all SLSA competitions, sweeps shall have demonstrated competence in boat sweeping (checklist on SLSA website) to the satisfaction of a nominated accredited boat sweep, and also hold a Level 1 Surf Coach Certificate as a minimum requirement. Note: Each State Centre is required to maintain a list of qualified sweeps for reference by Clubs, Branches, and officials conducting surfboat competitions.

### 8.2 MARCH PAST

- a) To compete in the Open Age category March Past event members must have fulfilled SLSA requirements in regards to membership status as decided by SLSA from time to time, be a minimum of 13 years of age, and comply with one of the following requirements:

- i. Be a proficient SLSA Bronze Medallion or Surf Rescue Certificate awardee.
  - ii. Hold as a minimum, and be proficient in, a SLSA Resuscitation Award.
  - iii. Be a SLSA Bronze Medallion or Surf Rescue Certificate awardee, and have fulfilled the resuscitation requirements of the SLSA Bronze Medallion proficiency.
- b) Further to this, members wishing to compete in the Open March Past event must fulfill their Patrol Hour obligations relevant to their membership status and the award to which they are qualified. (For example, an active Surf Rescue Certificate or Active Bronze Medallion holder must do patrols whereas a Life Member Bronze Medallion holder or an Associate member holding a Resuscitation Certificate do not need to do patrols, providing that the Club for which they wish to compete does not have additional patrol hour obligation requirements for those members).
- c) To compete in the Under 23 March Past, competitors may be Under 15, Under 17, Under 19 and/or Under 23 year age category members who are proficient award holding members relative to their age category (i.e. SLSA Surf Rescue Certificate or SLSA Bronze Medallion) and who have fulfilled SLSA patrol requirements as detailed within this policy. Note: members must be a minimum of 13 year of age, and hold as a minimum, and be proficient in, a SLSA Resuscitation Certificate.
- d) The Under 17 March Past event may be contested by Under 15 and/or Under 17 year age category members who are proficient award holding members relative to their age category (i.e. SLSA Surf Rescue Certificate or SLSA Bronze Medallion) and who have fulfilled SLSA patrol requirements as detailed within this policy. Note: members must be a minimum of 13 year of age, and hold as a minimum, and be proficient in, a SLSA Resuscitation Certificate.

### 8.3. FIRST AID COMPETITION

- a) Members holding as a minimum, a current Senior First Aid certificate (or equivalent i.e. Apply First Aid), or a current proficient Bronze medallion, may compete in First Aid competitions providing they have fulfilled all other requirements such as patrol hours as defined within this policy. Refer to competition/event bulletins.
- b) For clarity, proficient members with a bronze medallion (and without a Senior First Aid Certificate) may compete in a first aid competition, as well as members without a bronze medallion, but with a senior first aid certificate, providing the senior first aid certificate is current.

## 9. JUNIOR ACTIVITIES MEMBERS

- 9.1. Junior Activities members (i.e. members comprising Under 14 and below), are not required to perform patrol hours to compete in Junior Activities competitions (i.e. Under 14 and below age categories). However, if they wish to compete in Under 15 competition, they must fulfil their patrol hour obligations as set out in this policy.
- 9.2. Under 8 to Under 14 members who wish to compete at SLSA Under 8 to Under 14 Branch, State or Australian championship competitions must have the appropriate age award and have completed the Junior Competition Evaluation.
- 9.3. Note: It is a requirement that Junior Activities members wishing to compete at interclub (non-championship) competitions must complete a Junior Competition Evaluation prior to being eligible to compete. Guidelines can be found on the SLSA web site ([Admin and Resources – Junior Development – Junior Preliminary Skills Assessment](#)). All clubs must ensure that all Junior Activities members satisfy the criteria set out in the [Junior Competition Evaluation](#) prior to entering members into Junior Activities interclub (non-championship) competitions. This is an annual requirement for existing members (i.e. 1 January - 31 December each year). In the case of new members the evaluation requirement must be completed by the entry date of the competition.
- 9.4. Under 8 members shall not be permitted to compete in water events other than the Wade Relay (the Junior Competition Evaluation does not form part of the Junior Preliminary Skills Assessment for Under 8 members).

## **10. RULINGS ON COMPETITION ELIGIBILITY AND RIGHT OF APPEAL**

- 10.1. A Club, or an individual member, may seek a ruling on competition eligibility.
- 10.2. An application for a ruling on whether a member is eligible to compete under this policy is directed to the State Director of Lifesaving.
- 10.3. The application shall be considered and approved or declined by the respective State Director of Lifesaving after consultation with the relevant State Director of Surf Sports
- 10.4. The State Director of Lifesaving may seek additional information and consult with the relevant State Centre, Branch, Club or member as appropriate.
- 10.5. A right of appeal to the SLSA National Director of Lifesaving exists in the event the member and/or member's Club, feels that the decision of the State Director of Lifesaving is inconsistent with this policy. In this instance the SLSA National Director of Surf Sports will be consulted by the SLSA National Director of Life Saving prior to a decision being made.

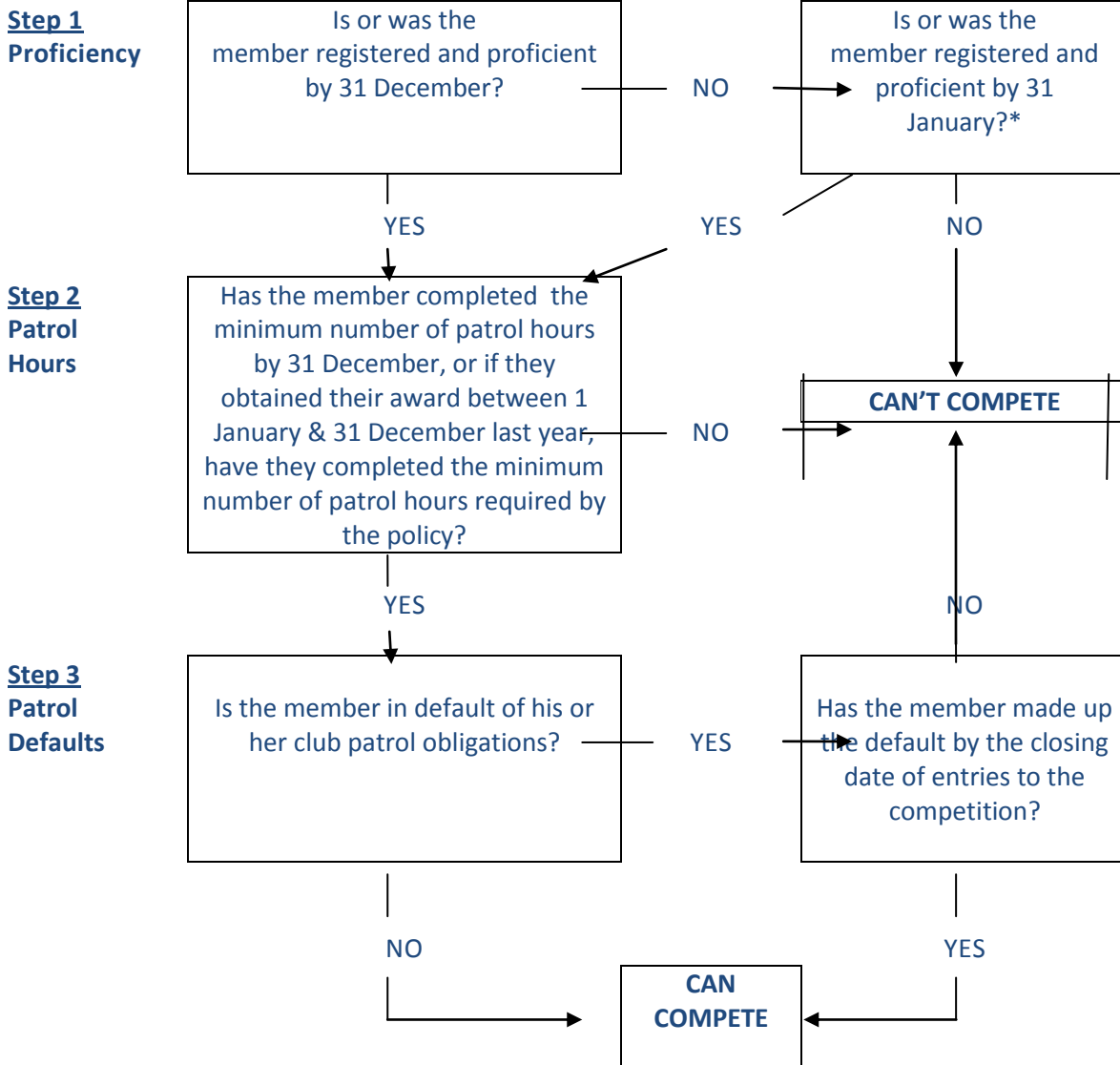
- 10.6. Appeals must be made in writing within 24 hours of receiving a decision or prior to the start of the championship event in question, whichever occurs first. The SLSA Director of Lifesaving may seek additional information and consult with the relevant State Centre, Branch, Club or member as appropriate.
- 10.7. All decisions by the State (or National) Director of Lifesaving shall be made prior to the commencement of the championship event in question.
- 10.8. Where an appeal is made within 24 hours of the championship event commencing, the State (or National) Director of Lifesaving will use his or her best endeavours to finalise the appeal prior to the commencement of the championship event. If however the appeal is unable to be finalised prior to the commencement of the championship event, the member will not be permitted to compete.
- 10.9. The decision by SLSA in this matter shall be final. This decision shall not be subject to the SLSA Appeals process.
- 10.10. The SLSA National Director of Life Saving jointly with the SLSA National Director of Surf Sports will be responsible for all matters, of which final settlement is not covered in this policy.

#### **FURTHER INFORMATION**

For further information or enquiries, please contact SLSA on (02) 9300 4000 or [info@slsa.asn.au](mailto:info@slsa.asn.au)

## CHECK LIST FOR SLSA CHAMPIONSHIP COMPETITION

The following checklist is provided for guidance only. Please refer to the detail contain within this policy for final determination of proficiency and patrol hour requirements for competition eligibility



\* If the member obtains his or her proficiency after 31 January they can compete in any SLSA championship event conducted after 1 May of that year, provided steps 2 and 3 above have been fulfilled. Members are not permitted to compete or patrol after December 31<sup>st</sup> if they are not proficient