

Junior Activity Search and Rescue Procedure

Background

Search and Rescue (SAR) techniques are taught by SLSA at various levels, including a basic technique in the SLS Bronze Medallion. Lifesavers are taught the skills to conduct an in-shore or shallow water search and rescue (SAR), as well as the operational processes required to conduct the search.

In the Bronze Medallion and Surf Rescue Certificate, surf lifesavers are taught the technique of surface dives, which is a series of 'duck dives' through the surf to locate a submerged victim and or objects. The other SLSA awards are the Silver Medallion Beach Management (SMBM), Silver Medallion Aquatic Rescue (SMAR) and Power Craft Operator awards. These awards provide specific detail on SAR techniques using rescue power craft and the procedures required to conduct such SAR effort.

In shore / white water SAR procedures

In Australia all SAR operations must be controlled and coordinated by the relevant SAR Authority, which as noted that in most cases will be the Police / Water Police (the Authority).

The appointed Club Incident Controller (Patrol Captain/Lifeguard or Water Safety Supervisor) and/or the Authority will be responsible for instigating the commencement of the search as quickly as possible.

The Authority will be responsible for the implementation and conclusion of the search.



For Junior Activities the existing technique of surface dives, which is a series of "duck dives" through the surf to locate a patient and or objects will be implemented in a managed environment and undertaken by proficient surf lifesavers.

The in-shore/white water search will only be conducted after an appropriate risk assessment has been conducted to evaluate and mitigate risks to SAR personnel. The 'Risk Rating' section within the SLSA Operations App can be utilised at this stage.

Dye and grid maps can be utilised to determine current and surf movements and search area.

Response, commencement and order of events

In the event of missing/submerged persons in Junior Activities, response time is crucial. The following points outline the initial response to be initiated by the appointed Club Incident Controller (Patrol Captain/Lifeguard or Water Safety Supervisor) until such time the Authority arrive to coordinate SAR.

In all incidents where a search is required, the highest priority must be to focus on a safe and rapid response to commence the search.

The following points detail Junior Activity SAR response before handover to the relevant Authority.

1. Where practical to do so, an immediate response to commence the search can be undertaken by proficient lifesavers, who have been identified and signed on as the Water Safety Response Team. This is to be a maximum of 20 members at this initial stage.

Each member of the Water Safety Response Team will wear a high visibility lycra vest and fluoro cap. The high visibility vest and cap shall be one of the 5 approved colours and preferably not the same as the Junior Activities members. It is noted that the colour is not significant, only that the Water Safety Response Team is immediately identifiable in a different colour for their safety. Rescue tubes and boards will be utilised by this team. This initial response team must be supervised by the Water Safety Supervisor.

The Junior Search and Rescue Kit (JSARK) will be activated at this time under the control of the Club Incident Controller.

2. Before embarking on an initial SAR the Club Incident Controller must obtain relevant incident details focused on the 4 P's initially, and then moving to additional information.
 - i. Problem – What is the emergency?
 - ii. Position – Physical location/address?
 - iii. People – Number, age and sex?
 - iv. Progress – What response is being undertaken?
 - v. What assistance is required
 - vi. Direction of wind, currents and tidal movement
 - vii. Whether the use of aids contained within the SAR kits (Grid Maps, Dye) will assist; and
 - viii. Updated risk assessment of the search area.

3. The Club Incident Controller will initiate the request of Emergency Services through SurfCom or by dialling Triple Zero (000) if SurfCom not available.

4. If appropriate, the IRB Driver and crew in consultation with the Club Incident Controller will release dye into the water to assist in determining the Search Pattern and Search Area.

The Search Pattern will be determined on the day in accordance with the SLSA Silver Medallion Aquatic Rescue Award (SMAR), attached at document end. The incident controller will brief members on the search pattern to be followed.

5. The Club Incident Controller will brief all IRB Drivers and Crew. After the briefing the search must commence.
6. Water safety personnel and proficient surf lifesavers will form a maximum of 2 search and rescue teams (maximum of 4 teams) of 8-10 persons per team, with a leader appointed in each.
7. Search personnel are to assemble and prepare for the search in the last known sighting of the person. This area will be marked with a single flag on beach, and an anchored buoy at the last known location point.
8. A buddy system will be in place for each team, each buddy must account for their partner before continuing their next dive and/or progress within the surf. Each buddy must endeavour to remain no more than 2 metres apart.
9. At least 1 team member must enter the water with a rescue tube (mandatory) and swimming fins (optional).
10. Each team member must wear a high visibility cap and a lycra vest before entering the water. Optional goggles and fins provided from the Junior Search and Rescue Kit (JSARK).
11. The IRB Driver will monitor and coordinate the search teams from the shoreward side.
12. Each team will be observed by a water safety team leader.
13. All search personnel will work under the direction and to report to the Club Incident Controller.
14. The Club Incident Controller will maintain communications and report to the Authority in charge and work under their direction once they arrive at the scene.
15. Upon retrieval of the nipper by the members of the search team, a decision will be made on transporting the patient to shore using the most appropriate method. The Club Incident Controller will coordinate the management and response.
16. A concise written record should be maintained during the course of the SAR by an appointed Patrol or Club member as requested by the Club Incident Controller or Duty Officer.
17. A debrief for all search personnel involved should be held as soon as practicable after the retrieval. This process will be coordinated by the Duty Officer and supporting team members.

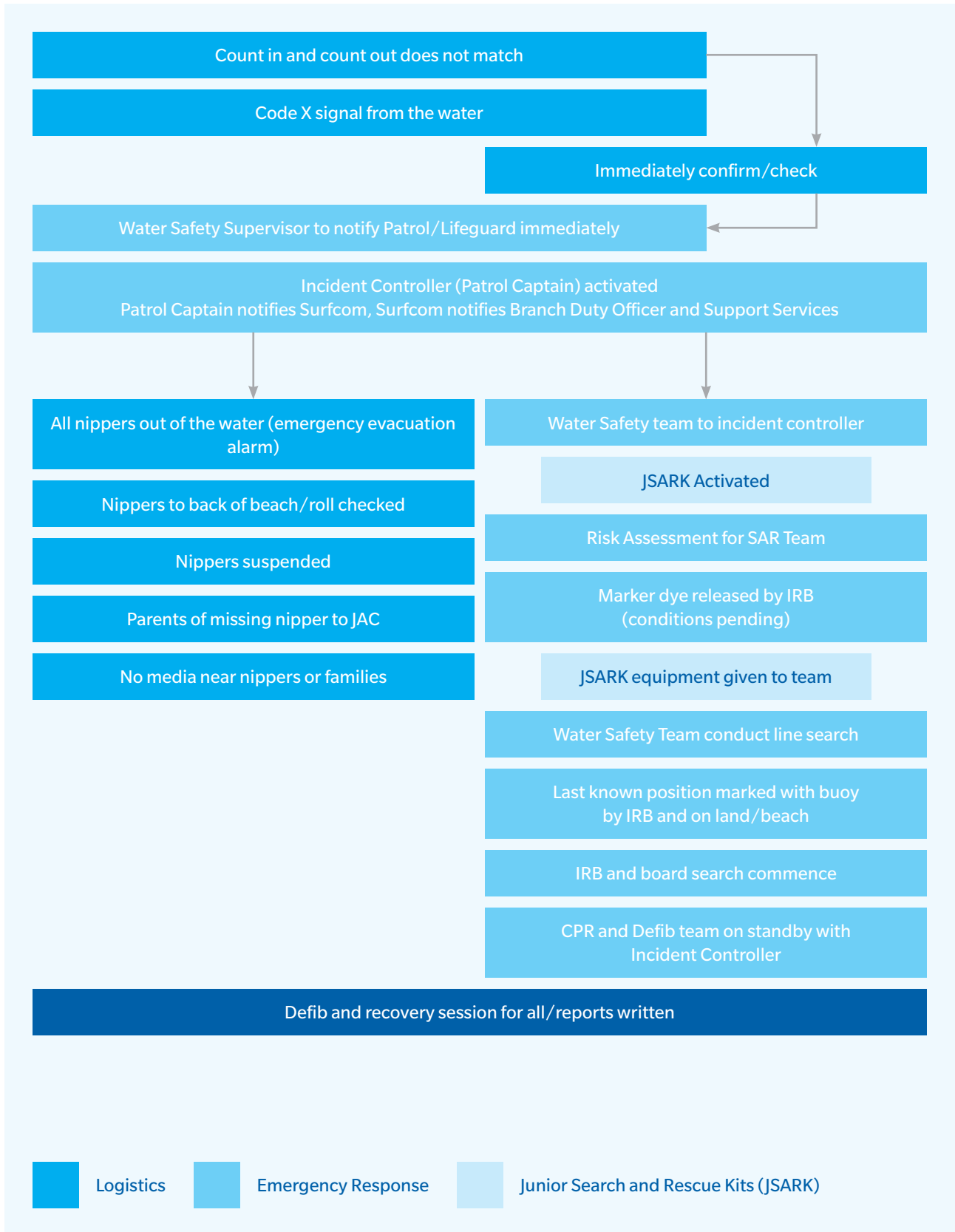
Rescue & equipment

During Junior Activities, a JSARK shall be readily available on the beach. Each kit, at a minimum, will contain the following:

- i. 10 x high visibility yellow caps
- ii. 10 x high visibility yellow lycra vests
- iii. 4 x grid maps of the area being used and dye
- iv. 1 x airhorn
- v. 1 x anchor kit and marker buoy
- vi. Swim fins and goggles/masks
- vii. Signal flag or beach marker to mark last known point on land


Note that an IRB, Tubes and boards will already be on the beach as part of the Junior Activity set up

Missing Nipper Flowchart



 Logistics

 Emergency Response

 Junior Search and Rescue Kits (JSARK)

Junior Activity Search and Rescue Plan

Club Search and Rescue Plans

Text in blue will need to be amended/removed to meet your club/area resources and plans.

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If an emergency arises during Junior Activities (Sunday nippers, competition or training session), correct control and discipline shall be maintained under the direction of the designated Club/Activity Water Safety Supervisor (WSS) and/or the Junior Activity Chairperson (JAC).

If a patrol is on the beach, the <Patrol Captain (PC) OR Lifeguard Service> has ultimate responsibility under SLSA guidelines. If there is no patrol on the beach, the <Lifeguard Service Name> have legal responsibility for beach safety (if applicable).

During an emergency, any member of SLSA entering the water or handling any rescue gear must only do so at the direction of the Club Incident Controller (Water Safety Supervisor, Patrol Captain/Lifeguard) and/or under the direction of the Police or emergency authority.

All members and bystanders not engaged in actual rescue work should assist in maintaining a clear area so that any rescue attempt can be carried out efficiently.

Club Emergency Details

First Aid Sites:

On normal nippers day – Club First Aid Room, Patrol Tent and roving patrols

If no patrol on the beach – Club First Aid Room <Lifeguard Office>

Medical Facilities:

<Advise of closest Hospital / 24 Hour Medical Centre>

Water Safety:

Under control of Water Safety Supervisor, ensure water safety ratios are met (SLSA Policy 1.01)

On normal nippers day an IRB and crew may be available, as may a fully resourced Patrol.

<Lifeguards have board and/or Jet Ski resources available>

Emergency Vehicles:

Club / Lifeguards possess an <All-Terrain Vehicle/Side by Side Vehicle> for transport of resources over sand

Ambulances can travel to <insert closest location to Club>

Emergency Services:

On a normal nippers day requests for emergency services to be made by the Patrol Captain through SurfCom or by dialling Triple Zero (000) if SurfCom not available.

If no patrol on beach, call SurfCom and then inform lifeguards (if on duty).

Dial Triple Zero (000) if SurfCom not available.

Emergency Responses

1. Injury during Nippers

- Water Safety personnel are to manage basic first aid and reassure the patient.
- Water Safety Supervisor to be notified.
- Parents to be identified and informed in a calm manner.

If Patrol is on the beach

- WSS to notify Patrol Captain who will task first aid resources and request external intervention if warranted. Patrol will fill in an Incident Report.

If no patrol is on the beach (and injury is minor)

- WSS to task Water Safety personnel to conduct first aid and refer to medical help. WSS is to fill in an Incident Report.

If no patrol is on the beach (and injury is serious)

- WSS to call SurfCom and then inform lifeguards (if on duty).
- Dial Triple Zero (000) if SurfCom not available and request external intervention if warranted.
- WSS is to fill in an Incident Report.

2. Suspected Spinal Injury

Airway is first priority. Do not panic – assess and manage the situation as per your Bronze Medallion or Surf Rescue Certificate training.

If patient is not responsive

- Extract patient whilst taking as much care as possible and practice DRSABCD whilst keeping the patient in the neutral position

If patient is responsive

- Immobilise and protect the patient and keeping the neck and spine in the neutral position whilst WSS is informed and spinal rescue is organised.
- WSS to task spinal qualified personnel to take charge of situation and notify Patrol <and/or Lifeguards> for assistance.

Note it may be safer to take patient out to deeper water to avoid waves until a collar & spinal board arrive.

- Parents to be identified and informed in a calm manner
- All water areas to be cleared and children moved to the back of the beach
- When Patrol and/or Lifeguards have attended, Water Safety to follow all directions
- Patrol will fill in an Incident Report. If no Patrol, WSS is to fill in an Incident Report

3. Swimmer requiring assistance

As per their training, Water Safety Personnel to practice Recognition, Rescue & Recovery

- Swimmer to be quickly and carefully approached and assistance offered.
- Water Safety Personnel to signal whether assistance is required
- Personnel not involved in the rescue to notify WSS
- WSS is to organise additional resources if required to facilitate rescue.
- Swimmer is to be brought back to shore and assessed as per SLSA training guidelines.
- WSS to notify Patrol/Lifeguards of any suspected complications and they will take the appropriate action. Patrol or WSS to fill in Incident Log.

4. Mass Rescue (2 or more swimmers)

As per their training, Water Safety Personnel to practice Recognition, Rescue & Recovery

- Assistance required signal immediately raised with WSS (One arm, waved back and forth above the head). WSS to notify Patrol and/or Lifeguards.
- WSS to task appropriate personnel with appropriate equipment (IRB / Boards) to attend patients.
- All water areas to be cleared and nippers are moved to the back of the beach as age groups and marked off
- When Patrol &/or Lifeguards are in attendance, Water Safety to follow all directions from them.
- Patrol will fill in an Incident Report. If no Patrol, WSS is to fill in an Incident Report
- Club Captain & Branch Duty Officer to be informed to respond

5. Lost / Missing / Submerged Nipper

This situation may be witnessed or determined as a result of a discrepancy in 'Count In, Count Out' or could be signalled via 'Code X' from water safety personnel. The alarm must be immediately raised with the Water Safety Supervisor.

Initial notification

- WSS to notify Patrol and Lifeguards immediately
- Club Incident Controller activated (Patrol Captain)
- Water Safety team to report to the Club Incident Controller
- People who last sighted nipper to be identified and brought to WSS / Patrol Captain

Nipper Logistics

- All nippers cleared out of the water by Age Managers and Water Safety Personnel
- Nippers are moved to the back of the beach as age groups and marked off
- Nipper activities suspended and water area flags down and kept at incident site only
- Parents of missing nipper identified, informed and supported in a calm manner by Junior Activity Chairperson

Note – Age Managers to help ensure no media near the nippers or families on the beach or in the club. All media to be directed to the Duty Officer or Patrol Captain.

Junior Search and Rescue Kit (JSARK) to be activated under the direction of the Club Incident Controller.

Search and Rescue

- Risk Assessment conducted by Club Incident Controller for the Search and Rescue Team
- IRB to mark the last known position of nipper with a marker buoy and Club Incident Controller to mark the area on beach with a single flag.
- If suitable the IRB in consultation with the Club Incident Controller to release marker dye into the water to assist in determining Search Pattern and Search Area. Note this is only to be conducted in extreme cases due to the clouding of water visibility.
- IRB and/or Board paddlers tasked to conduct immediate search at last known position if in water deeper than standing depth
- All available Water Safety Personnel to report to water's edge to search if instructed
- Junior Search and Rescue Kit (J-SARK) resources handed out under the direction of the Club Incident Controller
- Water safety team conduct in water search (as instructed and coordinated by Club Incident Controller who will determine the Search Pattern and Search Area)
- A buddy system will be in place for each water safety team member. Buddies must account for their partner before continuing to the next dive. Each buddy must remain no more than 2 metres apart.
- CPR team (including Defib) on standby with Club Incident Controller
- Patient to be recovered to shore as quickly as possible
- The Club Incident Controller will coordinate the appropriate response and management
- When Patrol and/or Lifeguards have attended, Water Safety to follow all directions
- Patrol will fill in an Incident Report. If no Patrol, WSS is to fill in an Incident Report
- Club Captain and Duty Officer to be informed to respond

6. Lost / Missing Nipper (on the land)

The situation may be advised by a parent or Age Manager, or as a result of a discrepancy in the count on and count off. The alarm must immediately be raised with the Age Manager and the Junior Activity Chair or Authorised coordinator of the activity.

Initial notification

- Age Manager to be notified immediately
- Club Incident Controller activated
- People who last sighted nipper to be brought to Patrol Captain to provide details (age, sex, height, clothing, time last seen, what they were doing, any medical problems, what are they carrying eg money, mobile, surfboard, backpack)

Nipper Logistics

- All nippers cleared out of the water by Age Managers and Water Safety Personnel
- Nippers are moved to the back of the beach as age groups and marked off
- Nipper activities suspended and water area flags down and kept at incident site only
- Parents of missing nipper identified, informed and supported in a calm manner by Junior Activity Chairperson
- Note – Age Managers to help ensure no media near the nippers or families on the beach or in the club. All media to be directed to the Duty Officer or Patrol Captain.

Search and Rescue

- Search and rescue log to be created
- Attend site where belongings may have been left. Are they still there?
- Have someone attend canteen / local shops / home / friend's house. Has the missing person returned there?
- Arrange foot / vehicle patrols
- Notify lifesaving services either side of site
- Arrange for a general broadcast over the Club loudspeaker / public address system
- Arrange for a general broadcast over the local SurfCom channel
- Have the JSARK on standby
- Have a parent or guardian remain at the Clubhouse to identify and accept missing person if located
- Arrange Emergency vehicle access
- Coordinate search for victims with Police
- Patrol will fill in an Incident Report. If no Patrol, Club Incident Controller, Junior Activity Chairperson or equivalent is to fill in an Incident Report
- Club Captain and Duty Officer to be informed to respond