

Respondent

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14:00
Time to complete

1. CLUB/SERVICE *

2. Branch *

3. DATE OF INCIDENT *

4. TIME OF INCIDENT *

5. NAME/S OF LIFESAVERS(S)/LIFEGUARD(S) INVOLVED IN RESCUE (check that all nominees are proficient and members on SurfGuard) *

6. LOCATION OF INCIDENT *

7. SURFGUARD INCIDENT NUMBER (if available). *Please note all rescues should be recorded either during or after hours*

8. NOMINATING PERSON NAME *

9. NOMINATING PERSON EMAIL ADDRESS *

10. NOMINATING PERSON CONTACT NUMBER *

11. NOMINATING PERSON CLUB/ORGANISATION *

12. OVERVIEW OF THE INCIDENT *

At 7pm Rob answered a call from his wife Kat who had returned to the beach to take some photos. She said a snorkeler had been swept out to sea through the opening of Spoon Bay rockpool and was in dire trouble and needed assistance urgently. Kat and others on the beach had called 000 but there was no sign of help arriving anytime soon. When Rob looked from the hillside from their holiday rental his heart sank to see the swimmer well out to sea getting pounded by the swell in front of the rocky coastline. Rob grabbed his son's 7 foot foam surfboard and started to run down to the beach. Whilst running down the hillside and through the dunes Rob remembered thinking, "I hope by the time I get to the beach

someone else has rescued the swimmer or maybe she's made her way back shore under her own steam." No such luck! The group of people on the rocks pointed to the sea and Rob could see the swimmer was in serious trouble and was hopelessly attempting to swim against the current. Her time was running out fast. Rob jumped on the board and paddled out through the narrow opening at Spoon Bay, greatly assisted by the powerful rip Rob got to her surprisingly quickly. She said she was ok but Rob could tell she was clearly stressed and exhausted. She climbed onto the board, Rob talked to her for a few moments about getting in, in this short time the rip dragged them further out to sea and they started to get smashed by the waves breaking on the reef/sandbar a 100 metres or so beyond the coastline. It was time to get moving! Initially Rob attempted to paddle back through the opening at the Spoon Bay rockpool but the current was too strong and they could not make any meaningful headway. Additionally the board was too small for two large adults and was making paddling pretty ineffective. Rob asked the snorkeller if she was ok to hold onto the back of the board and kick whilst Rob paddled, knowing it was the only way they would make progress - she said she would give it a go. Rob then decided the only way in was via a rock inlet just to the north. There was no rip there but it was a very narrow opening, there were large waves and rocks to contend with. After some time manoeuvring away from a rock face at the opening of the inlet, it was time to go in. Rob managed to ride in on the back of two large waves and found they were almost there, at the same time there was a lull between waves. Rob paddled hard through the impact zone safely and they managed to catch the next white water wave across the rocks into safety. Rob put the snorkeller on the board by this stage but this left him being dragged by his leg rope across the rocks until he could free himself. Amazingly they got in with barely a scratch. Rob had resigned himself to copping a serious cheese grater shredding but it went surprisingly well with just some minor lacerations. Rob estimates that they were in the water for at least 20 minutes. The police arrived on the beach just as the two got to the shoreline. The patient had taken in a fair amount of water so an ambulance took her to hospital for assessment. Shortly afterwards members of the Wamberal SLSC arrived in a 4WD towing their IRB, and Rob was able to keep enough of a sense of humour about him to joke with them saying, "not to worry lads, North Bondi SLSC had it all done and dusted." The Wamberal IRB team informed Rob that Spoon Bay is a notorious black spot and there have been numerous drownings over the years, including one only 6 months ago. Fortunately on this day it was a happy outcome.

13. SKILL & RESOURCES APPLICATION (40%) (please use brief bullet point format)

- Were the skills used correctly and appropriately as per SOP's?
- Did the rescue/incident require advanced technical skills?
- Was the equipment chosen best for the conditions and skill level of the personnel?
- Was there optimal use of skills within the available personnel? *

Self rescue, using a flotation device in the absence of rescue equipment, reading the currents and swell, conscious rescue, prioritisation of the patient's wellbeing and use of advanced technical knowledge of the ocean, swells, currents and rescue techniques. Not to mention sheer bravery of a level not often seen, demonstrated in front of Rob's wife and young children

14. PROCEDURES FOLLOWED (30%) (please use brief bullet point format)

- Were SOP's followed?
- Was the safety of the rescuers involved appropriately assessed?
- Was there appropriate leadership, chain of command, good scene mgmt, paperwork, follow-ups, etc?
- Was the equipment utilised appropriately? *

Following procedures (calling for help, assessing danger to oneself and others, deciding on a rescue plan) Full assessment of the risk to oneself and one's own abilities Leadership of the rescue, selection of appropriate equipment proper use of equipment available

15. ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS (15%) (please use brief bullet point format)

- Was the incident around rocks, cliffs, or other precarious situations?
- What was the size of the surf, temperature, time, visibility, weather, and other environmental conditions at land or sea? *

Rescue in 2 metre SE swell, in an extremely rocky location, with shear cliff faces in big surf and perilous conditions

16. MEDIA CAPTURE/COMMUNICATION (5%) (please use brief bullet point format)

- Were opportunities maximised in terms of media exposure? Please give a brief overview of media exposure. Any additional articles or media releases can be emailed to lifesaving@surflifesaving.com.au (<mailto:lifesaving@surflifesaving.com.au>) or please paste url in box below *

Nick Bryant (ex BBC correspondent and renown author) witnessed the scene posted on his Twitter account. https://twitter.com/NickBryantNY/status/1481578245942571012?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Etweet