

Respondent

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**300:28**  
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*

73426

8. NOMINATING PERSON NAME \*

Nicole Cooney

9. NOMINATING PERSON EMAIL ADDRESS \*

lifesaving@southmaroubrasurfclub.com.au

10. NOMINATING PERSON CONTACT NUMBER \*

0413025512

11. NOMINATING PERSON CLUB/ORGANISATION \*

South Maroubra

12. OVERVIEW OF THE INCIDENT \*

At approximately 2.20pm Michael the IRB crewman, stationed at the northern patrol flag, identified a male swimmer standing approximately chest deep in the water at the end of the second sandbank. The swimmer tried to swim and slowly started to drift outside of the flagged area onto the sandbank. Michael tried to signal the person to get back into the flagged area, but was not successful. At the same time the swimmer appeared to be already exhausted, but it looked like he would be able to make his way back to the beach. The swimmer was at the time standing outside the flagged area in hip-deep water on the second sandbank approximately 70m+ off-shore when a wave between 1m-1.5m behind him

dumped onto him and he was struggling to get back onto his feet. Michael realised the danger the swimmer was in and alerted Rene, the IRB driver, who was patrolling at the southern flag as well as other patrol members to the dangerous situation. While alerting the patrol members a second wave dumped onto the swimmer and he started to drift further into a rip where he appeared to be struggling to stay afloat. At the time the Michael and Rene and 2 other patrol members were running to the IRB which was stationed approximately 70m north of the flags, positioned in the best launch position due to the sandbank. Michael and Rene launched the IRB and had to choose a path through the rip located north of the flags to avoid getting stuck on the sandbank. While going out to the swimmer the IRB had to negotiate challenging surf with multiple waves with short periods. When driving towards the swimmer it was clear he in a very dangerous situation, as he was not able stay with his head above the water and was visibly in the process of drowning. The IRB team drove up to the swimmer and did a rescue pickup in heavy surf with the IRB crewman lifting the swimmer into the IRB and the IRB driver grabbing the legs of the person since he was quite tall and heavy and not in a physical condition to hold onto the boat himself. After getting the person into the boat the IRB driver was trying to communicate with the swimmer since the IRB crewman needed to focus on keeping the bow of the IRB in a position to ensure the IRB can return to shore safely in the heavy surf. The POI was breathing but did not respond and showed signs of breathing difficulties raising concerns of having swallowed a significant amount of water. The IRB team reached the shore and the Randwick Council Lifeguards were already present. The IRB driver briefed the lifeguards on the situation with the major concern of secondary drowning. The swimmer was able to say a few words and indicated he could not breathe and did not appear to get any better. The IRB team carried the swimmer onto dry sand where they and council lifeguards administered oxygen and assessed him for further injuries. At this time the patrol captain and council lifeguards communicated with SurfCom to coordinate for an ambulance to attend. While looking after the swimmer the lifeguards were able to establish the person was not alone on the beach and the patrol captain managed to find the persons partner who was then able to provide further details to the lifeguards and patrol team. After a short period, an ambulance arrived, and the paramedic took over the treatment of the person and decided to take him to the hospital for checks to ensure no secondary drowning is occurring or any other injuries were present. If it would not have been for the vigilance of the IRB crewman and the quick reaction of the IRB team this situation very likely would have ended with the drowning of the person.

### 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? \*

- all skills and resources were as per SOPS - in tricky conditions the IRB team showed great skill in ensuring the boat was in the right poition for a quick launch as well as negotitating the surf to get to the swimmer as quickly as possible. - the right equipment was used for this situation and conditions - the patrol team worked together to launch the boat quickly and get to the swimmer as quickly as possible as well as working well with Council Lifeguards to administer care once back on shore.

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? \*

- all SOPs were followed - Rescuers are skilled in the IRB and prepared to handle the conditions - correct chain of command was used. incident recorded. follow up by assistant director of lifesaving after the incident with all involved. - all equipment was used as intended

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? \*

- incident took place in decent surf of approx 2m - conditions on the day were dangerous - a small set of flags were erected approx 12pm in order to control crowds at the beach and give them a safe place to swim. There were no flags at the northern end of the beach on this day. - flags were approx 25/30m and had up to 100 swimmers

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 [ROTMNOMINATION@surflifesaving.com.au](mailto:ROTMNOMINATION@surflifesaving.com.au) (<mailto:ROTMNOMINATION@surflifesaving.com.au>) or please paste url in box below \*

None