

View results

Respondent
194 Anonymous

70:50
Time to complete

1. CLUB/SERVICE *

Bondi Surf Bathers Lifesaving Club

2. BRANCH *

- ☐ Far North Coast
- ☐ North Coast
- ☐ Mid North Coast
- ☐ Lower North Coast
- ☐ Hunter
- ☐ Central Coast
- ☐ Sydney Northern Beaches
- ☒ Sydney
- ☐ Illawarra
- ☐ South Coast
- ☐ Far South Coast

3. DATE OF INCIDENT *

30 Jan 2024

4. TIME OF INCIDENT *

19:15

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

Names of rescuers
Alice Holstein - Coogee
Brad Allen - Coogee
Brodie Mezei - Bondi
Charlize Smith - Bondi
Cooper Harris - Bondi
Daniel Lavery - Coogee
Elijah Magee - Bondi
Emily Leung - Bondi
Glen Mussillon - Bondi
Jade Melvey - North Bondi
Julie Pritchard - Bondi
Kenneth Yardy - Coogee
Kristy Smith - Bondi
Lara Stock - Coogee
Logan Ryan - Bondi
Nicole Krite - Bondi
Paul Byrnes - Elouera
Ronny Krite - Bondi
Simon Ranguis - Bondi
Temaika Mason - Bondi
James McLennan (Duty Officer - Sydney 17)
Gerald Stephenson (Duty Officer - Sydney 15)

6. LOCATION OF INCIDENT *

Bondi Beach - Southern end, "Backpackers Rip"

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

8. NOMINATING PERSON NAME *

Simon Smith

9. NOMINATING PERSON EMAIL ADDRESS *

clubcaptain@bondisurfclub.com

10. NOMINATING PERSON CONTACT NUMBER *

0414410537

11. NOMINATING PERSON CLUB/ORGANISATION *

Bondi Surf Bathers Lifesaving Club

12. OVERVIEW OF THE INCIDENT *

On the evening of January 30th, the Bondi IRB Race Team, led by Coach Nicole (Nixy) Krite, exemplified exceptional heroism and skill in a critical rescue operation at Bondi Beach. During their biweekly training session, the team, consisting of 20 members, was alerted by a member of the public to two individuals struggling in the dangerous Backpackers Rip, after lifeguards had left for the day.

- There were two IRBs in use in this session, as well as the SSV (Support Safety Vehicle). The team consists of members who, even though some have never worked with each other in a rescue environment, showed synchronicity and adherence to SOPs (Standard Operating Procedures), indicating the training across Sydney Branch is consistent and effective.
- Approximately at 7:00pm, a team member called Surfcom to indicate their plans to finish training a few minutes before Surfcom was expected to close for the day. Surfcom indicated that they would likely be still online until the team had finished their training.
- Approximately at 7:10pm, the team was getting ready to pack up the training gear. One IRB was out the back collecting the training cans, while the second IRB was on shore ready to be lifted onto the trailer.
- At 7:15pm, a member of the public approached team member Simon Renguis, alerting him that there were two people out the back of Backpackers Rip who were requiring assistance. Since the Lifeguards had already left the beach for the evening, Simon alerted the team, and all available hands launched the IRB with Julie Pritchard driving and Nixy Krite crewing. The IRB proceeded at haste to Backpackers Rip. Several other team members ran south towards the incident location.
- The IRB crew found that two Persons of Interest (POIs) in Backpackers Rip were being assisted/held up by two surfers. They lifted both POIs into the IRB, called Surfcom to indicate they had just rescued two people, and proceeded back towards the launch location.
- Meanwhile, as the remaining team members were making their way towards Backpackers Rip by foot, they noticed two further people requiring assistance closer to shore approximately in front of Bondi Ramp 2. Kristy Smith and Logan Ryan found two people laying on their backs in knee-deep water, appearing unconscious and barely responsive. Both patients were dragged to dry sand and were semi-conscious. They were assessed, and one patient started to vomit. Kristy and Logan placed the patient on his side, managed their airways, and cleared the mouth after each vomiting episode. Simon assessed the second patient, finding him semi-conscious and breathing.
- The IRB that was doing the rescue, noticing the team had gathered on the shore in front of Bondi Ramp 2, proceeded towards that location and returned to shore. Julie and other members assisted the two patients from the IRB, assessed them, and found them not to require any further assistance.
- As the Bondi SSV was making its way towards the scene, team members called for it to return to the club and collect Oxygen and Defib for the scene. Nixy assisted Simon, applying oxygen once it arrived from the SSV. Both patients showed signs of drowning and were treated for suspected drowning.
- Nixy then called Surfcom approximately at 7:20pm, notifying that apart from the first two POIs rescued by the IRB, a further two POIs were pulled from the water, requiring ambulance assistance. Both patients were reading as low oxygen on the oximeter.
- Personal and event details were taken from all patients and their friends by team members. Approximately at 7:45pm, several ambulance teams arrived, and the patients were handed over by the team. Several police and duty officers arrived around the same time as the ambulance and provided further support.
- Both patients were driven up to the Bondi promenade by the ATV with team members and Paramedics. One patient, in a critical condition, was transported to St Vincent's Hospital, while the other was taken to POW Hospital.

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? *

Correct and Appropriate Use of Skills as per SOPs:

- IRB deployment was rapid (~40 seconds from alert to arrival at POI), indicating adherence to SOPs for rapid response.
- All rescue operations, including patient care and first aid, were executed in compliance with standard operating procedures, showcasing the team's professionalism and training.

Requirement for Advanced Technical Skills:

- The rescue operation leveraged advanced technical skills, particularly in the deployment and operation of the IRB and the provision of first aid and patient care, including the use of oxygen and thermal blankets.

Equipment Suitability for Conditions and Skill Level:

- The choice of the IRB for the initial rescue was optimal for the rip current conditions and within the skill level of the rescue team, facilitating a quick and effective response.
- The absence of equipment for the shore-near rescue was mitigated by the use of life jackets, which were on hand due to ongoing IRB training, indicating adaptability under resource constraints.

Optimal Use of Skills Within Available Personnel:

- Effective utilization of available personnel was evident, with team members who had ART and First Aid awards leading patient care, supported by others who secured necessary equipment.
- The collaborative effort in launching the IRB, with many hands available, demonstrates optimal use of personnel for tasks requiring physical coordination and speed.

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? *

Adherence to SOPs:

- All actions during the rescue event were conducted in accordance with Standard Operating Procedures, ensuring a standardised and effective response.

Rescuer Safety Assessment:

- Safety assessments were implicitly considered, as evidenced by all members wearing life jackets during the inshore rescue operation, even in knee-deep water.

Leadership and Scene Management:

- Leadership was effectively established with IRB team coach Nixy Krite assuming command and maintaining communication with Surfcom, ensuring a coordinated response.
- The scene was managed efficiently, with patients treated by separate teams under clear leadership, facilitating focused and effective patient care.

Equipment Utilisation:

- Despite the initial lack of equipment for inshore rescue, the team adapted by using life jackets and employing manual rescue methods (two-person carry and one-person drag).
- Thermal "space" blankets and therapy level oxygen were appropriately used based on patients' conditions and oximeter readings, showcasing adaptive and appropriate equipment use.
- The defibrillator was prepared and ready for use in response to a patient's low consciousness level, demonstrating foresight and preparedness.

Privacy and Follow-up Actions:

- In the absence of blankets or towels for privacy, the team improvised by forming a visual blockade with team members, illustrating adaptability and respect for patient dignity.
- The transition of care to the ambulance service upon their arrival indicates efficient follow-up and handover procedures.

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 Location and Precarious Situations:

- The incident did not occur around rocks, cliffs, or in other inherently precarious situations.

Surf and Sea Conditions:

- Surf size was moderate at 3ft from the south, indicating manageable but present surf conditions.

Temperature and Weather:

- Warm air temperature around 24°C with clear skies, contributing to good overall visibility and comfort levels.

Time and Visibility:

- The incident occurred before sunset at 8pm, with still plenty of light, albeit slightly low, ensuring good visibility.

Beach Conditions and Safety Measures:

- Not many people were in the water; however, small crowds were present on the sand.
- Red and Yellow flags, as well as surf warning signs, had been removed, and Waverley Lifeguards had left the beach, indicating a potential decrease in immediate rescue resources and safety guidance for beachgoers.

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 or please paste url in box below *

It was noticed that some media were present on scene.

During the incident, the media did not impede or approach the team.

The police asked some individual members to provide details of the incident throughout, which was complied with.

After the debrief in the club shed with the two DO's, there was a media representative who had taken some footage of the team packing up the equipment.

The following day, SLSNSW had arranged some team members to assist with media interviews from various media networks.

Media coverage...

Bondi OnScene

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7qQJUpMJl0>

https://www.onscenebondi.com.au/314-four-rescued-from-drowning-after-life-savers-respond-during-training-session-at-bondi-beach?fbclid=IwAR1yZelPrM1xLe7_JzHfP8m8PBwZ_rtZb60mRcLDUSCZ3-kRrDaap-dnY9o

7News

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9ic7CHPjp8c>

9News

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vmtLO0MCnfU>

WA Today

<https://www.watoday.com.au/national/four-swimmers-rescued-from-surf-at-sydneys-iconic-bondi-beach-20240131-p5f18v.html>

Sky News

<https://www.skynews.com.au/australia-news/four-swimmers-rescued-two-of-whom-were-taken-to-hospital-after-getting-caught-in-a-rip-at-sydneys-bondi-beach/news-story/aa2776bd64688c413d2084df6f526ff2>

ABC Radio

<https://www.abc.net.au/listen/programs/sydney-mornings/mornings/103386524>

Social Media

<https://www.instagram.com/reels/C2vwKfXul20/>

<https://www.instagram.com/p/C2w9lptPM9v/>

https://www.instagram.com/bondi_irb_racing_team/

Surf Lifesaving NSW

<https://www.surflifesaving.com.au/news/off-duty-lifesavers-in-daring-evening-rescue-at-bondi/>