

PLS PATROL CAPTAIN – Piha Area POSITION DESCRIPTION



SURF LIFE SAVING
NORTHERN REGION

Reports To:	Lifesaving Support Officer	
Location:	Piha Area	
Position Status:	Fixed Term/Casual	
Key Relationships:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Other Patrol Captains- Vice Patrol Captains (VPC)- Senior Paid Lifeguards- Paid Lifeguards- SurfCom Operators- Duty Officer(s)- Lifesaving Support Officer (s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Lifesaving Manager- Club Liaison Officers- Volunteer club members- Piha Operations Manager- Public- External Emergency Response Agencies (Police, Ambulance, Coastguard etc.)
Date Prepared:	August 20, 2025	

ABOUT SURF LIFE SAVING NORTHERN REGION (SLSNR):

SLSNR IS THE PRIMARY ORGANIZATION FOR DELIVERING BEACH AND COASTAL DROWNING PREVENTION OBJECTIVES TO MILLIONS OF PEOPLE IN THE UPPER NORTH ISLAND OF NEW ZEALAND.

WWW.LIFESAVING.ORG.NZ

OUR ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE STATEMENT

Clubs are at the heart of everything we do. We support our clubs, volunteers and each other through our values of:

Collaboration • Integrity • Respect • Wellbeing • Fun

We are an organisation that our People are proud to work for and our whanaungatanga (sense of kinship, connection, relationships through shared experiences and working together) provides our people with a sense of belonging.

POSITION PURPOSE

To lead and coordinate the Paid Lifeguard Service patrols across the Piha costal area, inclusive of North Piha, South Piha, and Waitetura–Helipad, ensuring a consistently professional, proactive, and community-focused lifeguarding operation that aligns with Surf Life Saving Northern Region’s values and Surf Life Saving New Zealand’s standards.

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KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Patrol Operations

- Implement and oversee the beach management plan, ensuring flags, signage, and rescue gear are positioned in accordance with NSOPs/CSOPs.
- Monitor beach and water users, providing education on safe practices, intervening to prevent incidents, and coordinating rescue responses as needed.
- Maintain personal and team safety during all patrol activities.

2. Leadership, Communication & Team Development

- Demonstrate exceptional communication skills, fostering open, transparent dialogue with Paid Lifeguards and Vice Patrol Captains (VPCs).
- Embolden and empower VPCs to independently manage assigned patrol locations, providing guidance, coaching, and trust in their decision making.
- Build and sustain high-trust relationships with VPCs through regular one on ones, feedback sessions, and shared accountability.
- Provide clear leadership via weekly inductions, daily briefings/debriefings, and ongoing skills refreshers.
- Design and manage an equitable and operationally appropriate rostering process for daily patrol duties.
- Coordinate and facilitate lifeguard training and upskilling throughout the season, enhancing fitness and technical proficiency.

3. Equipment & Facilities Management

- Manage and maintain all PLS facilities, vehicles, IRBs, and lifesaving equipment under the Paid Lifeguard Service Venue Hire Agreements.
- Conduct regular inspections, log faults, and escalate resourcing needs promptly to avoid operational gaps.

4. Risk Management & Compliance

- Apply risk-management principles by identifying, assessing, treating, and reviewing hazards via surf risk assessments and operational checklists.
- Complete all required paperwork, incident reports, statistics, and administrative tasks accurately and on time.
- Ensure strict adherence to SLSNR and SLSNZ policies and standards at all times.

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5. Stakeholder Engagement & External Relations

- Build and maintain exceptional relationships with Piha and United North Piha clubs, including leadership, members, and the Piha SAR Team.
- Serve as the primary liaison to local club leadership and external emergency agencies, coordinating joint exercises, shared rescues, and mutual support.
- Foster collaborative ties with SurfCom operators, volunteer club leadership, SAR teams, and SLSNR stakeholders to ensure seamless communication.
- Represent the Paid Lifeguard Service, SLSNR, and SLSNZ positively in all public and interagency interactions.

6. Continuous Improvement

- Conduct informal reviews of daily operations and incident responses, capturing lessons learned during team debriefs.
- Gather frontline feedback and share practical insights to refine patrol practices, enhance response times, and boost overall effectiveness.
- Encourage a culture of open discussion, where lifeguards feel empowered to suggest improvements and innovations.

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

The appointee should have and be able to demonstrate:

1. Behavioural Competencies

- Professionalism and maturity
- Initiative and proactive problem-solving
- Strong organisational skills with meticulous attention to detail
- Sound decision making under pressure and in unsupervised contexts
- Honesty, reliability, and personal integrity
- Leadership qualities, including the ability to mentor and empower others
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- Capacity to build high-trust relationships with stakeholders (patrol teams, volunteer clubs, emergency agencies)
- Collaborative team player with a continuous improvement mindset
- Adaptability to changing beach and surf environments

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2. Mandatory Certifications & Requirements

- Current membership of Surf Life Saving New Zealand at commencement
- SLSNZ Surf Lifeguard Award (or recognised RPL equivalency)
- Valid Surf First Aid certificate (Unit Standards 6400, 6401, 6402 or equivalent)
- Marine VHF Radio Award and/or SLSNZ Radio Communication Module
- IRB Crewperson certificate
- Valid New Zealand driver's licence (Restricted, Full, or international equivalent)
- Completion of paid lifeguard online theory test
- Completion of Safeguarding Children, Health & Safety, and SLSNZ Fuel Handling online modules
- Ability to swim 400 m in under 7 minutes 30 seconds
- Ability to run 3 km in under 20 minutes

3. Desirable Qualifications & Experience

- Refreshed lifeguard training within the past two seasons
- Minimum two seasons' professional surf patrolling experience
- SLS Advanced First Aid certificate
- Pain Relief Module
- IRB Driver (Operator) Award
- RWC Operator certificate
- Board Rescue Module
- Intermediate Lifeguard Award
- Senior Lifeguard Award (Patrol Captain/Advanced Lifeguard)

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