

Waihi Beach

LIFEGUARD SERVICES INC



**ANNUAL
REPORT
2020-21**

THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Once again, it has been an honour to be the President of WBLGS. As I recount the 2020-2021 season, it is rewarding to see the Club continue to build momentum despite enduring the start of COVID restrictions and challenges.

There are several areas of the Club that deserve special mention. The lifeguard's ongoing commitment to skill development and leadership abilities. The member's capabilities have significantly supported the professional lifeguarding services we provide to the community.

The Board continues to ensure the clubhouse remains one of the most incredible resources. Maintenance is front of mind with additional upgrades to the office, amenities and secure entrance to the guard's accommodation block.

In the lifeguard space, we continue to ensure our rescue gear is age and reliability appropriate. We replaced an old UTV beach vehicle during the season, purchased a rescue watercraft (jetski) beach trailer for quick launch, a storage racking system for our inflatable rescue boats, and an outdoor defib for public use during after-hours. The Club's gym was provided with a significant injection of funds from a local business to replace old and tired gym gear.

The above purchases were generously supported by community groups, companies and grant providers. Without their support, the Club could not maintain the level of services around Waihi Beach and the greater region.

Junior and senior surf sports programmes continued to be offered by the team of coaches and coordinators. COVID has seen some challenges, but we stayed strong by continuing the junior surf Sunday programme and providing training to the junior and senior athletes.

The team behind these programmes continue to help build new lifeguards and provide the development of qualified lifeguards. We have seen IRB (inflatable rescue boat) racing revived, and a benefit of this is evident in the development of the drivers and crew persons.

With over 50% of rescues conducted with an IRB, the value of this sport links directly with lifesaving. With the demand for the Search and Rescue Squad services, significant investment in member training and resources was achieved during the season. Waihi Beach SAR squad is working in line with the new SAR NZ framework within the Surf Lifesaving NZ organisation.

I am looking forward to working with the Board to steer our Club to greatness and achieving the goals of both our organisation as well as Surf Lifesaving NZ.



THE CHAIR'S REPORT

Reflecting on the 2020/21 season, our results and achievements remind me of the strength and commitment the lifeguards and members of the Waihi Beach Lifeguard Services possess.

It was a year of challenges working around lockdowns, then a substantial number of beachgoers, several serious rescues and the impact of sharks in the region. It is often under adverse conditions that we learn the most about ourselves, which has led to growth.

4800 volunteer hours and 5300 preventative actions during a short season reinforce how hard everyone worked. In addition, the Lifesaving Committee has been instrumental in driving the new National Standard Operating Procedures and keeping the lifeguarding services we provide fluid.

One of the Board's pillars is education/training in lifesaving, sport and leadership. The introduction of a new initiative to build an extensive range of lifeguarding, life skills and expertise. The Fit For Purpose programme spans many disciplines to support lifeguard development. As a Club, we must ensure we can meet the increased demands from the public, both between the flags and the surrounding community.

A highlight of the 2020/21 year was the introduction of government funding to reduce the operational costs pressure on Clubs. It has taken many years for Surf Lifesaving NZ to demonstrate to the government the impact on the community if we were not on the beach.

The partial funding has removed significant financial pressure on the Board, and now we can focus on securing funding for resources required to lifeguard and provide search and rescue services.

With COVID restrictions impacting the Club's ability to raise necessary funds during winter, The government funding arrived when our cash flow was severely stressed. As a result, we finished the year with a small reserve to start the new season. We have upgraded the amenities blocks that were very long overdue. The financial support from the Waihi Beach Sports Committee (retired lifeguards) was enormous, and the members of the Club are eternally grateful for their contribution.

The Board's goal is to continue upgrading the facilities, including the downstairs kitchen/lounge and changing rooms, plus renovate the bar and lounge area. Lifeguards and members deserve modern and fresh facilities.

To the Board, Lifesaving Committee, lifeguards, members, volunteers, grant providers, the local community and businesses, we are very grateful for the support you all provide to ensure the health and wellbeing of the Club.

In it for life



THE DIRECTOR OF LIFEGUARDING REPORT

The 2020/21 season was another great season for lifeguarding at Waihi Beach. Somehow, New Zealand dodged a COVID bullet, and we all managed to have a fun-filled summer at the beach. The season proved to be a busy one for our lifeguards with numerous rescues, searches and first aids incidents.

Thanks to an excellent team of instructors and drive from the Lifesaving Committee, we managed to qualify the highest number of IRB Drivers & Crewpersons in the Eastern Region. IRB qualifications have a domino effect with needing more IRB drivers to create more IRB instructors and thus further drivers.

Lifeguard numbers remain strong, with Waihi Beach averaging around 90. Over 60% of our volunteer patrols were supported by at least ten on duty lifeguards.

Regarding newly qualified lifeguards, after a lull in the previous 2019-20 season, we started to near back to our 2018-19 highs (28 new lifeguards) with 23 new lifeguards qualified during 2020-21. With multiple COVID lockdowns, it was difficult to run lifeguard camps and training sessions.

First aid training is paramount at any lifeguard club and thanks to the Board the Club has been able to fund actively patrolling lifeguard's first aid courses. Over 50% of lifeguards on patrol during the 2020-21 season held first aid level 2 or higher.

Lifeguard higher education is a strong focus of both the Board & Lifesaving Committee. This season resulted in seven candidates attending Intermediate Lifeguard School to further develop their essential skills. Waihi Beach hosted both the Intermediate Lifeguard School as well as the advanced National Lifeguard School this season.

Our regional lifeguard program continues to run strong, with ten council-funded lifeguards across three patrol locations – Main End, Island View and Bowentown.

I would like to make a special mention of and commend the actions of all lifeguards, supporting Board Members, Committee Members, parents and friends involved in the shark incident at Bowentown in January 2021. An incident of this nature is something no Club can plan for and will remain in the history books.

All of us are very proud of the lifeguard's conduct and post-incident actions. There has been much praise for the professional high standard of lifeguarding and support that unfolded during this incident.



2020-21 PATROLING STATS

LIFE MEMBERS

- 4800 volunteer hours
- 5300 preventative actions
- 5 rescues undertaken
- 11 search and rescues
- 23 assisted to safety
- 75 first aid incidents

- John Beeston*
- Bill Burton
- Dennis Butler
- John Butler
- Wray Clark
- Graeme Cullen*
- Mark Godwin
- Dan Harris
- Justin Hawkes
- Ben Heath
- Michael Hickey
- Barry Jesney
- Reece Mead*
- Murray Munro
- Jack Pattillo
- Henk Postmaa*
- Ian Robinson
- Kevin Steel
- Barry Timbers*
- (*deceased)



Thank you
to our
supporters

*we couldn't do it
without you!*









