

2024-2025 ANNUAL REPORT



Presented at:

AGM
4 April '26



Prepared by

Neil Harray
Donna Pfefferle
Lucy Scown
Letham White

CHAIR'S REPORT



Presented by Donna Pfefferle

It amazes me how fast twelve months go by, but it's because the Club was so busy both during patrol season and the winter months. The Board focused on building more resilience in the Club, from ensuring we had fit-for-purpose lifesaving equipment and resources, investing in the development of lifeguard capability, and attracting new lifeguards.

The Search and Rescue squad continued to train regularly, extending their training to include the new swift-water strategy while continuing regular surf-based training. Investment in more technology, including night-vision goggles and other equipment ensured the team was supported while out in challenging conditions.

With 13 assists to safety, 7 rescues, 11 searches and over 6,800 patrol hours during the 2024/25 season, our presence continued to impact the lives of many people and their families. These statistics remind us of the value of our presence, the dedication of our lifeguards, the passion of our volunteers and the support from our communities. It is this synergy that is the Club's strength.

The 2024-25 Board continued to be a group of hard-working, passionate individuals who collaborated to advance the Club's financial health and members' well-being. The goals for the season were to continue securing our sustainability:

- Continued flood mitigation strategies around the clubhouse
- Beginning the Bowentown Rescue Hub project
- Starting to scope the redevelopment of the damaged lower level
- Installation of a canopy over the deck
- Securing funding to build financial sustainability to allow for a high standard of service delivery

Just before winter 2023, the Club was significantly damaged by a major flood to the downstairs infrastructure. This season, numerous hours were spent working through redevelopment options and what the future needs of the Club will be. The flooding presented an opportunity to redevelop the ground level more quickly.

Sadly, we said farewell to some of our forefathers this year: John Butler and Kevin Steel. It is important to honour their contribution to the movement and the Club. Their legacy remains strong and is evident throughout the Club.

deck canopy

Installation of the deck canopy has extended the Club's available space for hosting sports events, hiring out the building during the off-season, increasing patronage to the Club's bar and kitchen (The Deck) and has allowed this space to be used in adverse weather conditions. The canopy's design has integrated well with the clubhouse, and our members regularly enjoy this space.





The Club received strong support from the community, and we would like to acknowledge the respect shown to our lifeguards and volunteers. The local community understands our charity status and helped us often during the season to purchase essential equipment and resources. Special mention to the Waihi Beach Community Shop, the Rugby Legends, and Ryan Fox, who each year provide us with significant funds to complete some of our major projects. Community helping community is a powerful success story.

At the grassroots level, lifeguard contributions, volunteer support, junior surf, and lifesaving sports were in a strong position, demonstrated by the Club's positive and healthy culture. Since the delivery of our programmes relies on volunteer energy and commitment, it is essential to retain our existing members while focusing on growth to meet future needs.

The season ended on a high with the Club being presented with the Coromandel Club of the Year 2024/25 at the SLSNZ Awards of Excellence. We also had seven lifeguards and volunteers as finalists. Three lifeguards were awarded some of the top honours, plus one U15 sports award and two service awards. These awards are a testament to the contribution Waihi Beach volunteers are making to the community and the surf lifesaving movement.



Waihi Beach Lifeguard Services lifeguards and volunteers at the Eastern Region Awards of Excellence 2025

Congratulations to Award of Excellence Winners 2024/25;

- Nick Wagstaff – DHL Surf Lifeguard of the Year (the top regional honour) + Patrol Captain of the Year
- Luc Rochat – Paid Lifeguard of the Year
- Andrew Cochrane – bp Powercraft Contribution of the Year
- Simiosi Tukia – U15 Surf Lifesaving Sport Athlete of the Year
- Donna Pfefferle & Maddie Scown – Distinguished Regional Service Awards

What a season; I am proud to be involved.
Donna Pfefferle

local government award finalists

The flood mitigation work, in collaboration with the Bay of Plenty Regional Council, to build greater resilience in our changeable conditions, resulted in our project being nominated and securing a finalist position in the Taituara Local Government Award 2024.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT



Presented by Neil Harray

As we reflect on the previous season of 2024/25 one of the standout factors was the continuation of severe weather events from Cyclone Gabrielle of 2023. These weather events continue to have such an impact on our ability to travel, to hold events and effectively plan - there always has to be a contingency now.

Last year, as we prepared to hold the AGM, club champs, and prize giving, another major storm came through, and the days leading up to Easter meant we had to cancel the AGM and prize giving and move them to 31 May 2025.

The end of this season saw several lifeguards and volunteers recognised at the Eastern Region Awards of Excellence. Nick Wagstaff won the coveted DHL Surf Lifeguard of the Year. As part of his award recognition, Lucy Scown, who was the then Director of Lifesaving, reflected on Nick and commented, "his leadership and dedication to volunteer lifesaving have been outstanding. He's streamlined training, delivered key modules, and ensured our guards are always rescue-ready. His commitment to building club culture and supporting others' development makes him an invaluable member of the Waihi Beach team". It is hardly surprising that Nick has now stepped into the Director of Lifesaving position on our board.

In addition, we had several other lifeguards recognised as finalists:

Chiara Woodford – Instructor of the Year

Fiona Swain – NZ Lottery Grants Board Volunteer of the Year

Andrew Cochrane – Powercraft Contribution of the Year

Simiosi Tukia – Athlete of the Year

Nick Wagstaff – DHL Surf Lifeguard of the Year (Coromandel) + Patrol Captain of the Year

Zac Armstrong – Rookie Lifeguard of the Year

Luc Rochat – Paid Lifeguard of the Year

We are widely known for our strong community relationships and for making significant efforts to maintain and strengthen existing ones and to foster new ones. One of the ways we do this is through the annual events during the summer holidays. This is our way of giving back to the community, but it also shows a different side of the club and, hopefully, a way to welcome people to become part of the club as well. The annual summer events of the NY sports day, sand art, Bowentown to main beach fun run, and Orokawa swim were really well attended. These events can only be as successful as they are because of the massive volunteer support we get from our members. Everyone is busy at this time of year, and we appreciate that. Helping with any of the tasks during this time reinforces how amazing our volunteers are.

regional distinguished service awards

Also at the Eastern Region Awards of Excellence Donna Pfefferte and Maddie Scown received Regional Distinguished Service Awards. These awards recognise the huge number of hours and, at times, the intense thinking and planning that go into running this club.

As a board, we had some major projects that needed attention. The first was the changes to the Incorporated Societies Act. Only those directly associated with a club or an incorporated society will know the investment required to rewrite the constitution. Letham White led this project, and he was super effective at ploughing through the main changes and updates. At our 2024/25 AGM we ratified the constitution.

The other project that was quickly becoming a priority was the preparation for the 90th celebration. One of the key decisions was to appoint a lead person and define their role. There was little doubt that Natalie Lloyd was the right person for the job. At the next AGM, this topic will be reported on but I am sure you have heard it was a massive success. From the conception, we all knew this was going to be a significant celebration for the club.

The Club's lifesaving sport programme had a highly successful 2024–25 season, with strong participation and performance across all levels. The season began with a solid foundation through winter pool rescue competitions, including the New Zealand Pool Rescue Championships, progressing into a busy summer of surf carnivals and regional Events.



Our Junior Surf programme continued to thrive, while our senior and masters athletes remained highly active across a full competition calendar, reflecting a well-rounded and engaged programme. Across local, regional and national events, these competitions provided valuable development opportunities, with many new competitors gaining experience alongside consistent podium finishes across multiple age groups. Club members achieved excellent results, including multiple regional titles, national podium finishes at both the Oceans Festival of Surf Lifesaving and the New Zealand Surf Lifesaving Championships, and national titles in Masters competition across both surf and pool disciplines. Across all disciplines - including surf, beach, IRB and surf boat competition - athletes represented Waihi Beach with consistency and determination.

athlete highlight

A particular highlight was the continued development of our younger athletes, with Simiosi Tukia selected for the Surf Life Saving New Zealand Youth High Performance Development Squad, recognising his dedication and performance.

Equally important has been the contribution of our coaches, officials and volunteers, whose dedication ensures athletes are well supported. The continued strength of the sport programme reflects a healthy, growing Club and a promising future for surf lifesaving at Waihi Beach.



The Club also had the privilege of hosting the Trans-Tasman Surf Boat Series and the North Island Surf Boat Championships in February 2025, welcoming both New Zealand and Australian high-performance surf boat crews to Waihi Beach. Alongside delivering these events, our surf boat crews achieved excellent results across the season, including podium performances at the national level, highlighting the strength of this programme within the Club.

The successful delivery of this event is a credit to the dedicated event organisers, officials and volunteers, including our outstanding Deck Support crew, whose commitment and mahi behind the scenes ensured all events ran smoothly and to a high standard.

The season concluded strongly at the Eastern Region Rookie Championships, where our emerging lifeguards demonstrated the effectiveness of the Club's development pathway, with outstanding individual performances and overall titles. This was a fitting culmination of a year defined by commitment, growth and collective effort.

Ngā mihi,
Neil Harray

illustrations

In a lighter moment this season, Waihi Beach lifeguards Jake and Byron were featured in Toby Morris' Sunday Star Times illustrations - a fun reminder of the personalities behind our patrol flags.



LIFESAVING REPORT



Presented by Lucy Scown

The 2024/25 season was a strong demonstration of the commitment, capability, and generosity of our lifeguarding community. Across the season, 87 lifeguards and patrol support members patrolled 58 days, contributing a total of 6,842 hours to keeping our beach and community safe. On average, our active members contributed approximately 56 hours each, collectively overseeing an average headcount of 254, reflecting both the depth of need and our members' sustained commitment.

Prevention remained a key focus throughout the season. Our members completed 1,513 preventative actions, involving approximately 74,000 beach users. This proactive, prevention-first approach continues to deliver positive outcomes and remains central to our patrol philosophy. When intervention was required, our teams responded professionally and effectively, delivering 71 minor first aid treatments, 4 major first aid incidents, 11 searches, 13 assists, and 7 rescues across the season.



Maintaining a high level of operational readiness was a priority, with strong participation across training, development, and refresher programmes. This season we qualified 11 new Surf Lifeguards and one Patrol Support member, with 66 members completing their refresher, ensuring our beach could be patrolled for the full season. Our development pathway continued to strengthen leadership and technical capability, with seven members attending Intermediate Lifeguard School and two members attending National Lifeguard School, gaining their Advanced Surf Lifeguard Award.

sports & training

Our club was well represented at lifesaving sports, Nationals and IRB Nationals, where athletes competed in challenging conditions and delivered a strong overall performance. Participation in surf sports and IRB competitions continues to play an important role in developing the fitness, skills, and decision-making that directly support lifeguarding excellence on patrol and are a key retention tool. I would like to thank all coaches, officials, managers, and volunteers who work behind the scenes to support our sport teams and competitions.



First aid capability remained a key strength, with nine members earning their Surf First Aid Award and two achieving Advanced Surf First Aid, alongside 15 and 11 members completing refreshers respectively. Specialist and operational capability was also well represented, with 11 members achieving their rock rescue award, 13 gaining their radio operator award, and 12 completing board rescue training. Powercraft capability remained strong, supported by four new RWC operators (with a further nine refreshed), one new IRB Driver (28 refreshed), and 15 new IRB crew members.

I would like to sincerely thank our club instructors and examiners for their tireless work developing our members and maintaining high operational standards. In particular, I would like to acknowledge and thank our four Patrol Captains this season Madeleine Schnackenberg, Nick Wagstaff, Chloe Poulter, and Christiaan Maarhuis along with their Vice Patrol Captains, for their leadership and commitment throughout the season.

Our paid lifeguarding service provided consistent coverage across our three patrol locations, with 25 paid lifeguards patrolling a total of 3,075 hours. Paid lifeguarding continues to be a key retention and development pathway for our volunteer lifeguards, strengthening experience, confidence, and continuity of service. Strong preventative practices resulted in five rescues and 10 assists to safety, reinforcing the effectiveness of a prevention-first approach.



I would like to sincerely thank our Board, committees, instructors, officials, paid staff, and every volunteer lifeguard and Patrol Support member for their commitment and professionalism throughout the 2024/25 season. In particular, I acknowledge the Lifesaving Committee, chaired by Madeleine Schnackenberg, for their leadership and tireless work in keeping the club operating smoothly.

Your collective efforts continue to ensure the safety of our community and the strength and sustainability of our lifeguarding service.

Ngā mihi nui,

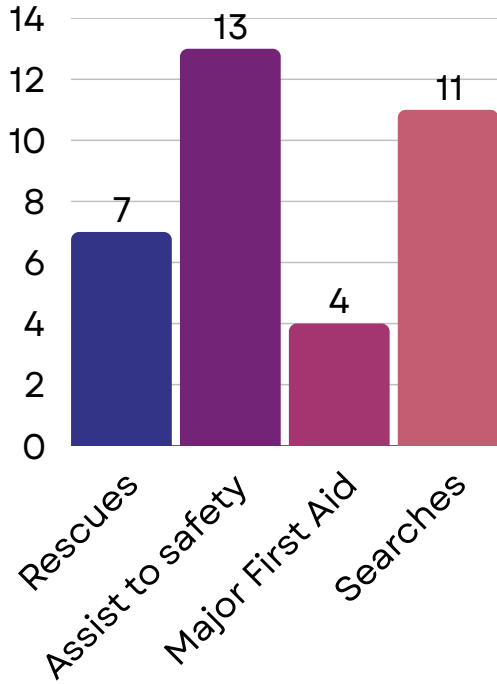
Lucy Scown 'in it for life'

rookies

Congratulations to our Rookie team, who delivered an excellent performance at Pukehina. A huge thank you to Rookie Coordinators Rosie Swain and Chiara Woodford, along with their dedicated mentoring team, for their commitment to developing and inspiring the next generation of lifeguards.

A YEAR IN REVIEW

24-25 STATS



6,842 Patrol hours
73,923 safety interventions
1,513 preventative actions
71 minor first aid

life members

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

***With thanks to all our members, volunteers,
 donors & supporters.
 We couldn't do it without your support.***

TOGETHER, WE ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE.

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR SPONSORS AND DONORS

