

Circular XX Member Protection 2008

Surf Life Saving Northern Territory is committed to the health, safety and wellbeing of all its members and is dedicated to providing a safe environment for those participating in surf life saving activities.

All members are expected to comply with SLSA Policy 6.5 'Member Safety & Wellbeing' and the two annexures to this policy 'Child Protection' and 'Codes of Conduct'. This policy was updated in February 2008.

SLSNT also has a policy, adopted in 2004 which provides some relevant guidance on procedure and application.

Most state/territory governments have passed Member Protection legislation or are in the process of developing the legislation. The Northern Territory Government has developed legislation that is expected to come into force later this year. It will introduce an Ochre Card which will be issued after the required Criminal History Checks have been satisfactorily completed. The NT Ochre Card will need to be renewed every two years and the majority of SLSNT members are expected to complete the process of obtaining an Ochre Card at the beginning of the 2009 season through their annual sign-on days or normal membership application processes.

In the 2005, 2006 and 2007 seasons many existing members satisfied the requirements of the relevant policies. SLSNT received this information and kept these records in a locked and secure location. The summary result of this information (date and acknowledgement of successful compliance) is now being entered on Surfguard as required by SLSA and can be accessed by clubs.

For the 2008 season clubs should follow the procedure outlined in this Circular and use the resources supplied from SLSNT. This procedure should be applied to all new members, aged 18 years and over, and any existing member whose compliance was received more than two years ago. The cost to members is \$5.

This procedure is now widely adopted by all community and sporting groups in Australia. Members are assured that information supplied to SLSNT by the NT Police will be kept in the strictest confidence and will only be conveyed to the Club President if the information suggests a risk to other members.

SLSNT intends to be fully compliant with SLSA policies and no exceptions for any member will be made. In 2009 we intend to be a champion organisation for the NT Ochre Card.

Procedure

The following steps of the 2008 SLSNT Member Protection Procedure requires action by clubs, members, NT Police and SLSNT.

1. **Club Interview & Referee Check:** Clubs must conduct a member interview and check two referees according to the Guidelines on the document 'Member Protection Interview and Referee Check'. Make sure the member and the interview panel sign and date the document. It is permissible for the Interview Panel to act as referees. For many members the Interview and Referee Check can be conducted at the same time as 'Sign-on Day' or other club events. Following a successful Interview and Referee Check the member should be given the 'SLSNT Member Protection Letter' and the 'Authority to Release Criminal History'. The 'Member Protection Interview and Referee Check' must be retained in club records.
2. **Member Criminal History Check:** To lodge an application for a Criminal History Check a member must attend a Police Station with the following:
 - a. SLSNT Member Protection Letter
 - b. Authority to Release Criminal History
 - c. Identification (eg Drivers Licence, Passport, Birth Certificate)
 - d. \$5 payment
3. **NT Police Check:** The NT Police will conduct a Criminal History Check and send the result to the SLSNT Chief Executive Officer.
4. **SLSNT:** The Chief Executive Officer will authorise clear and satisfactory checks to be recorded on Surfguard. Unsatisfactory Checks will be advised to the Club President only. Guidance on the range of actions that may occur for unsatisfactory checks is in the SLSA policy.