



Westpac
LIFE SAVER RESCUE
HELICOPTER

SOUTH COAST

Westpac Life Saver South Coast

The Westpac Life Saver Helicopter Rescue Service (Southern Region) will provide a helicopter rescue service on the NSW south coast, providing aviation search and rescue support to the volunteer, council and statutory emergency services in the region.

Operations

Our service area boundaries will be Shoalhaven Heads (in the Shoalhaven Council LGA) to the north and the Victorian border to the south (in the Bega Valley Shire LGA). Whilst core operations will be focused on the marine and coastal environment, the aircraft, equipment and crew can operate at any location inland.

The coastline of south-east NSW is predominantly rugged cliffs and rock ledges, occasionally inter-dispersed with sandy beaches. The area is well known for its remote locations and rescue services often have difficulty in accessing most locations along the seaboard. The NSW south coast is a well known SLSA "black-spot". A number of drownings have occurred in this region over the years.

Operations will be proactive surf patrols and reactive callouts from 13SURF (the Surf Lifesaving Emergency Response System) and other agencies.

Surf patrols will be undertaken on weekends and public holidays during the summer holiday period. **Emergency Callouts** would be undertaken exactly the same way as the Westpac Life Saver operates in Sydney. There is immediate activation from Police, AusSAR or 13SURF. Other requests for assistance are confirmed with 13SURF prior to departure. (see *Tasking Arrangements* on page 3.)

Operations will be based at Moruya Airport.

Operational Periods

Daylight Savings period:
0900 hours (9.00 am) to 1900 hours (7.00 pm)

Outside of Daylight Savings:
0800 hours (8.00 am) to 1800 hours (6.00 pm)

After Hours Activation

Due to Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) regulations, the Westpac Life Saver is required to maintain a Fatigue Management System, which is based around rosters, duty hours and rest periods. As a result, there will be no ability to task the aircraft after its normal operating hours. This does not preclude the aircraft from completing a mission that extends beyond its daily cessation time.

In the event of an emergency where the services of the Westpac Life Saver is required before its normal commencement time, the Service should be contacted to discuss possible options.



Crew

At any given time, the duty crew will consist of a Pilot, Air Crew Officer and a Rescue Crew Officer.

The pilot has overall command of the helicopter. They have extensive experience in search and rescue aviation, winching operations and low-level flying.

Air-crew provide support to the pilot during missions and coordinate rescue operations at the scene. They act as the winch operator when dispatching or retrieving rescuers and patients from and to the helicopter.

Rescue crew have extensive experience as volunteer surf lifesavers or professional lifeguards. They have an outstanding fitness level and can perform rescues in all surf conditions. During winching operations the Rescue Crew Officer goes "down the wire" to retrieve the patient or the person being rescued. Whilst the aircrew have specific tasks and responsibilities, they work as an integrated team.

Aircraft

The helicopter being used for the south coast service is a BK117-B2 twin engine helicopter which has a long and proud history around the world as an excellent rescue helicopter. The Westpac Life Saver has used this type of aircraft for the last 14 years. The aircraft's callsign is *Lifesaver 3*.

It will carry a crew of three and it has the capability of carrying an additional specialist crew, such as an ambulance paramedic, doctor or police officer. It is capable of carrying two patients.



Lifesaver 3 is fitted with a two person winch, a Nitesun search/flood light and an array of specialised rescue equipment suitable for the Service's rescue operations. The aircraft can cruise at 120 knots (230 km/h) and can remain airborne for 2½ hours.

Tasking Arrangements

The Service will be made available to our current partners, particularly the NSW Police Force, AusSAR and Surf Life Saving NSW (via their local clubs and the Australian Lifeguard Service) through the current arrangements already in existence.

If other agencies require the use of the Westpac Life Saver to assist with a rescue mission, the agency should contact the NSW Police in the first instance and request the helicopter through the Rescue Coordinator.

If the mission is not urgent or is not a rescue tasking, it is suggested that they contact the Duty Pilot in the first instance to confirm the availability of the aircraft and to ensure it is operationally capable of achieving the tasking. If it is possible to achieve the tasking, the Duty Pilot will seek authorisation from the Chief Executive Officer or Chief Pilot before confirming its attendance.

Inter-agency Training and Development



The Westpac Life Saver is available to attend familiarisation and training programs with our emergency services partners. These sessions can range from providing information about the Service and safety briefings through to being involved in multi-agency exercises.

Emergency Service Managers should contact the Chief Pilot or CEO to request or discuss these opportunities.

Base visits, even at short notice, are always welcome but will depend on the availability of staff. It is always wise to phone ahead.

Contact Information

Physical Address:

Westpac Life Saver Rescue Helicopter Hangar
Moruya Airport
Bruce Cameron Drive
MORUYA NSW 2537

Postal Address:

Westpac Life Saver Rescue Helicopters
PO Box 61
MATRAVILLE NSW 2036

Base phone: (02) 4474 2066
Emergency Number: (02) 4474 2022
Fax Number: (02) 4474 2488

Email: southcoast@lifesaver.org.au

Chief Executive Officer: Stephen Leahy 0406 353 266 (24 hours)
Chief Pilot: Captain Peter Yates 0416 212 330

Further Information

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