I Club Overview

1.1 Life Saving Victoria

Life Saving Victoria (LSV) was formed in 2004 as an initiative of Surf Life Saving Victoria (SLSV) and the Royal Life Saving Society Australia - Victoria branch (RLSSA - V) and comprises 58 affiliated lifesaving clubs and approximately 20,000 club members.

Why LSV?

- One stop water safety and lifesaving shop
- Create economies of volunteer effort
- Ensure government has only one agency to consult regarding water safety
- Ensure common standard of lifesaving service delivery
- Integral to the shift into emergency services portfolio

Mission statement

“To be the peak aquatic safety education, training and service organisation”

Values

- Preservation of human life
- Volunteerism
- Teamwork and mutual respect
- Honesty and integrity
- Lifelong learning
- Equity and diversity

Vision

All Victorians have learnt water safety and to swim, and will have ready access to a broad range of safe and healthy aquatic environments and venues.
Primary objective

It is the primary objective of LSV to manage the risks posed to human life by all aquatic environments in Victoria. This includes coastal and bay waters, inland waterways such as rivers, lakes and dams, public and private swimming pools.

A lifesaver’s role is prevention, recognition and rescue. Over the last century Victorian lifesavers have rescued over 20,000 people from coastal and bay waters.

This role has been calculated, with the average value of a human life equal to $625,065 and over 20 lives saved annually, to be valued at an estimated $12.5 million per year.
1.2 Organisational structure

In providing for lifesaving operations LSV has a network of councils, committees and panels that are overseen by directors. These councils, committees and panels are made up of dedicated volunteers and professional staff who are tasked with developing operational standards, communications and resources.
The main role of each council is outlined below:

The **Council of Youth and Leadership Development** is responsible for the facilitation and coordination of the development and implementation of youth and leadership related activities that foster increased participation by young people in the broad range of current and future activities offered under the LSV banner.

The **Council of Aquatic Sport** is responsible for reviewing existing competition, operational practices and procedures; improve, develop and implement the highest standards of lifesaving competition for Victoria, using the most constructive policies and procedures from either or both organisations.

The **Council of Lifesaving Operations** is responsible for the strategic direction of lifesaving services in Victoria; coordinating the consistency of lifesaving operations on a Victoria wide basis; and providing a safe beach and aquatic environment through the provision of lifesaving services.

The **Council of Community Aquatic Education** is responsible for strategic direction, facilitation and coordination of development and implementation of education and training programs, resources, materials and service for public and private schools, swimming pools and waterways and for community safety programs in the broad range of current and future activities offered under the LSV banner.
1.3 Club Services and Activities

Lifesaving

The primary role of LSV’s clubs is to provide a lifesaving service to the public who visit Victoria’s beaches. Some clubs also respond to incidents ‘out of hours’ when called out by the Police or other emergency services. LSV provides a professional lifeguard service on behalf of Local Councils and clubs often assist by providing equipment and facilities for lifeguard use. Clubs also provide water safety at aquatic sporting events and organise community displays with aquatic safety as the primary theme.

Education and training

As a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) LSV is able to provide a wide range of aquatic based qualifications and programs to clubs, schools and the wider community. Clubs provide lifesaving, resuscitation, first aid, boat and Jet Ski training to members and through the Academy, training to the community in many of these areas. Education programs that are provided include; Telstra beach to bush, meet a lifeguard, resuscitate a mate and school surf league enable the local community to experience lifesaving and provides them with an opportunity to join a club. This encourages membership growth within a club and further enhances the clubs position within the community.

Competition

Competition plays a vital role in maintaining and developing a lifesaver’s proficiency in rescue techniques and the physical capability to perform their patrol duties. Participation in state and national patrol competitions combines the skills and knowledge of a lifesaver with the highly competitive environment of surf sports competition.

“Surf sports” competitions are conducted at every level of the association and its parent bodies from club championships to regional and state carnivals, highlighted by the annual Australian Surf Life Saving Championships. The “Aussies” is the second largest amateur event in the world in terms of participants. Only the Olympic Games host more competitors.”

(SLSA Club Operational Manual 1995)

LSV conducts competitions in various lifesaving skills for nippers, seniors, masters and school groups.
1.4 Club Management

In order for a lifesaving club to grow and be successful it needs to function effectively. Often the most successful clubs are those that are well managed.

The people in a lifesaving club management team are typically from diverse backgrounds and have varying motivations for their involvement. For the club to maintain stability and consistency it is necessary to have formalised procedures in place that give direction to the decision makers. Clubs with established systems and processes are more likely to be successful as their volunteers know what to do and how to do it.

Committee positions within a club

Core positions:
- club president
- lifesaving services manager/club captain
- secretary
- treasurer
- membership officer
- member development manager
- chief instructor/training manager
- junior coordinator
- competition manager
- OH&S officer
- rescue equipment officer
- gear steward

Additional positions:
- vice-president
- IRB officer
- first aid officer
- radio officer
- fundraising officer
- sponsorship / grant coordinator
- patrol coordinator
1.5 Club management structure

**Life Saving Clubs**

**SMALL CLUBS**
- Club President
- Lifesaving Services Manager/Club Captain
- Competition Manager
- Development Manager
- Administration Manager

**MEDIUM CLUBS**
- Club President
- Lifesaving Services Manager/Club Captain
- Competition Manager
- Development Manager
- Administration Manager
- Lifesaving Team Patrol Manager
- Rescue Equipment Officer
- First Aid Officer
- Radioc Operator
- IRB Officer
- Support Services Officer
- Competition Team
  - Board & Ski Captain
  - Beach Captain
  - IRB Captain
- Development Team
  - Chief Instructor
  - Nippers Instructor
- Administration Team
  - Treasurer/Financial Manager
  - Secretary
  - Membership Manager

**LARGE CLUBS**
- Club President
- Lifesaving Services Manager/Club Captain
- Competition Manager
- Development Manager
- Administration Manager
- Lifesaving Team
  - Patrol Manager
  - Rescue Equipment Officer
  - First Aid Officer
  - Radioc Operator
  - IRB Officer
  - Support Services Officer
- Competition Team
  - Board & Ski Captain
  - Beach Captain
  - IRB Captain
- Development Team
  - Chief Instructor
  - Junior Captain
  - Nippers Instructor
- Administration Team
  - Treasurer/Financial Manager
  - Secretary
  - Fundraising Officer
  - Sponsorship Coordinator
  - Media & Promotions Manager
  - Social Coordinator
  - Membership Manager
1.6 Club governance

It has been suggested that the role of management committees is difficult to define as it is more than just advisory but not really management. It is essentially a role of general oversight and control, usually termed governance.

Governance can be defined as:

‘The overall guidance, direction and supervision of the club’

Therefore the committee is the key agent of strategic management and is responsible for steering the club through changing circumstances. This is the case regardless of whether there is paid staff or not.

Committees play a critical role in the structure, organisation and management of community organisations and clubs. A well functioning committee is the cornerstone of an efficient and effective organisation. Committees exist to manage decisions and take responsibility for the organisation and as a result, the processes surrounding the committee’s operations are vital in securing the long term future of the organisation.

Principles of best practice

Governance concerns three key issues:

1. How a club develops strategic goals and direction
2. How the committee of a club monitors the performance of the club to ensure it achieves these strategic goals; and
3. Ensuring that the committee acts in the best interests of the members

Effective club governance requires leadership, integrity and good judgment.

Additionally, effective governance will ensure more effective decision making, with the club demonstrating transparency, accountability and responsibility in the activities undertaken and resources expended.
It is commonly accepted that governance structures have a significant impact on the performance of a club. Poor governance has a variety of causes including office bearer inexperience, conflicts of interest, failure to manage risk, inadequate or inappropriate financial controls, and generally poor internal business systems and reporting. Ineffective governance practices not only impact on the club where they are present, but also undermine confidence in the wider lifesaving movement as a whole.

Additionally, lifesaving bodies are subject to increasing levels of performance scrutiny. Two of the most common areas where clubs will be scrutinized are: ensuring that funding outcomes from parent and external bodies have been achieved, and that current changes within the organisation are followed. The governance principles outlined below help build a strong club structure, assisting with the management and response to these changes. Governance principles ensure sound and effective governance, ultimately resulting in effective leadership and decision making.

In keeping with best practice in governance, a club's committee members should operate and enact their role focusing on five major principles:

1. Clear delineation of governance roles
2. Effective governance processes
3. Effective governance controls
4. Governance improvement
5. Member responsiveness

**Key committee responsibilities**

The committee has a responsibility to manage the club on behalf of the members. The committee should:

- Conduct long-term planning of activities so that the aims and objectives of the club are fulfilled (strategic and/or business planning)
- Develop policy and procedures: Developing a policy is like developing a set of rules to assist the decision-making within the club. Policies assist members to respond to issues in a consistent and fair manner rather than spur of the moment responses. Procedures document the process or
actions that can be taken in a particular set of circumstances e.g. an emergency fire drill procedure and a procedure for disciplining members.

- Manage external relations and advocacy issues
- Obtain resources and ensure that all financial and legal matters are properly managed
- Carry out the recommendations of members
- Regularly communicate with, and provide information to members about the running of the organisation (newsletters, annual reports)
- Evaluate the performance of trainers, coaches, officials, employees (if any), subcommittees and, importantly, itself
- Provide detailed written records and job descriptions to a newly elected committee to facilitate transition into their roles
- Ensure that all members of the committee act as leadership role models
- Succession planning

In most lifesaving clubs the committee will make decisions about a wide range of issues that may include policy, service provision, market research, planning, event organisation, staffing (including volunteers), coaching, budgeting and sponsorship.

In recent years there have been increasing expectations that committees should be more proactive, particularly with respect to growing awareness of the individual legal responsibilities of committee members.

This applies equally to small and large clubs and your club’s management system should reflect the individual needs of your club.

Whatever the size of your club your members want to see a management group that:

- Communicates with the members
- Demonstrates leadership
- Are organised and efficient
- Controls policies and operations standards
- Are happy and positive
An effective, well-functioning management committee is the key to an effective club. The management committee is responsible for the overall control and governance of the club. The committee management process must therefore be approached strategically by the key committee leaders in order to plan for the long-term future of the club. A balanced and representative committee should facilitate smooth committee transitions, coordinate external relations and implement appropriate accountability procedures.

**Constitution, by-laws & club policies**

All committees need solid guidelines from which to work. This results in continuity, consistency and makes decision making easier. The rules of the club can be laid down in a three-tiered system that enables change without too many restraints:

1. The Constitution
2. By-laws
3. Club policy statements

1 The Constitution

The club constitution contains rules and procedures that normally can only be changed by a general meeting. For this reason the constitution in organisations such as lifesaving clubs should be kept relatively simple and should contain very little, other than the normal unchanging elements of the club (refer to www.lifesavingvictoria.com.au – Club Members section for ‘how to write your club constitution’)

Affiliation with LSV means that the club is bound by the constitution and by-laws of its parent association. The club’s constitution must be consistent with the LSV constitution. The club cannot have conflicting rules such as minimum ages, membership categories etc. Clubs should consult the LSV constitution and by-laws before writing the club constitution.

2 By-laws

The remainder of the rules and procedures should be recorded as club by-laws. The by-laws should
complement the constitution and actually set down the day to day rules by which the club shall run. They will always be specific to the particular club. A useful working tool is to have three sets of by-laws.

**Volume 1 Administration**
- Office bearers – names, duties, terms
- Standing orders at meetings
- Rules regarding standing committees
- Discipline
- Wind-up
- Quorum
- Membership categories

**Volume 2 Beach Operations**
- Patrol rules and regulations
- Board and ski rules and regulations
- Surfboat rules and regulations
- IRB rules and regulations
- Beach vehicle rules and regulations
- First aid room rules and regulations

**Volume 3 Competition and Trophies**
- Club competition rules including eligibility
- Guidelines for club awards e.g. best club member

By-laws should be structured to suit your club’s individual needs. Procedures for changing the by-laws are easier than the changing of the constitution as these are the everyday rules of the club. However, clear procedures for changing either the constitution or the by-laws should be laid down in terms of notice to be given, e.g. for a notice of motion to a general meeting, postal ballot, eligible voters, quorum etc.

**3 Policy statements**

Club policies can be set up by the management committee to cover such matters as:

- Subsidising gear for competitors
- Touring team policy
- Fundraising policy
- Subsidising coaching fee
- Reimbursement of expenses
- Borrowing/removal of club equipment
- Water usage
1.7 Club overview checklist

What is the total membership of active patrolling members and associate members?

Active
Associate

What is the breakdown of active membership group by age in your club?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15-18 yrs</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19-25 yrs</td>
<td>%</td>
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<tr>
<td>26-35 yrs</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-55 yrs</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55+ yrs</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How many of the core management positions do you have filled in your club (tick box)?

- Club president
- Lifesaving services manager /club captain
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Membership officer
- Development manager
- Chief instructor
- Junior coordinator
- Competition manager
- OH&S officer / rescue equipment officer / gear steward

Do your Committee members operate and enact their role in the following way (circle answer)?

- Communicate with the members: Yes/No
- Demonstrate leadership: Yes/No
- Are organised and efficient: Yes/No
- Control policies and operations standards: Yes/No
**Does your club have a written constitution?**

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

**When was the last time the constitution was reviewed?**

**Do your by-laws cover the following areas?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Partly</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beach operations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Competition and trophies</td>
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Club Overview feedback form

LSV welcomes feedback to help us improve the quality and effectiveness of this Club Development Manual. If you would like to provide feedback on this section please do so using this form.

Please consider each question and rate them on a 1 to 5 scale, where 1 is poor and 5 is excellent (please circle the appropriate number).

**How did you rate the quality of information?**
1  2  3  4  5

**How can it be improved?**

**How did you rate the design and presentation of this section?**
1  2  3  4  5

**How can it be improved?**

**If you would like to see additional information in this section please specify;**

Please photocopy this form, complete and return to:
Administration Life Saving Operations
200 The Boulevard
Port Melbourne Vic 3207

Or fax to:   (03) 9681 8211